Box-Office Records Fall As McCartney Wraps Tour

BY RAY WADDELL
NASHVILLE—Paul McCartney wrapped his 50-date North American arena tour Oct. 29 at America West Arena in Phoenix, having grossed about $100 million, and left a trail of house records in his wake. A critical and financial winner, the tour likely will end up the top-grossing of 2002, averaging about $2 million per night. "Nobody goes out [on tour] to lose money, but the main thing is the audiences are having fun," McCartney tells billboard. "In some ways, [the response] has reminded me of the early Beatles tours."

Longtime McCartney tour director Barrie Marshall of London-based Marshall Arts was equally

(Continued on page 82)

Portable Players Await Yule Joy

Digital Devices Get Smaller, Capacity Grows; Will Consumers Respond?

BY BRIAN GARRITY
NEW YORK—Five years after their introduction into the marketplace, portable digital-music players still haven't found a home in the psyche of most consumers.

Manufacturers including Apple Computer, SonicBlue, Sony, Panasonic, and RCA are hoping to change that with a new generation of products this holiday season. The new players tend to be smaller and lighter yet have increased capacity to store music. Depending on their features, the players range in price from under $100 to about $500.

There are three primary categories of digital-music players, each presenting a different approach to the issues of size, price, and storage capacity. This array of choices could work against consumer adoption of digital-music players in much the same way that multiple-format issues thwarted other new music configurations in recent decades.

What's more, there are compatibility issues. While all of the portable devices can play back unsecured MP3 files—the primary use of such products—they are not all capable of playing the music being offered through legitimate channels in such formats as Real Audio and Windows Media Audio.

Consumer acceptance of the portable devices is of strategic importance to the music industry, which is attempting to build up its digital-music offerings via subscription businesses like MusicNet, Pressplay, and Rhapsody and

(Continued on page 84)

Inspired By Tragedy, TLC Survivors Carry On

BY GAIL MITCHELL
LOS ANGELES—There was a point when Arista considered compiling a TLC greatest-hits package and adding on the new songs that the trio had recorded before the untimely death of Lisa “Left Eye” Lopes in April. But that notion was nixed.

"When Lisa passed, it was so tragic for all of us," Arista president/CEO Antonio "L.A." Reid recalls. "We had already started to record the album. Immediately after the accident, we just kind of left things alone and didn't respond to calls about it. But then this momentum kicked

(Continued on page 81)

Tropical Music Falters Despite Latin Boom

BY LEILA COBO
MIAMI—Amid the growing attention to all things Latin in the U.S., tropical music—the style that defined the Latin sound for the better part of the 20th century—has fallen into a serious sales decline that has prompted labels to trim their tropical rosters

(Continued on page 83)

Esposito President Of WEA: Page 3 • Sudden Loss Of Jam Master Jay: Page 8 • Santana Album Debuts At No. 1: Page 69

ARTISTS & MUSIC
Ja Rule Flexes Talents With New Album, Film

SEE PAGE 11

The new album Corporate America featuring the first single "I Had A Good Time"
This is how we remind you of the incredibly special song that catapulted NICKELBACK to super-stardom, leading to 2 additional #1 Mainstream Rock tracks in 2002, "Never Again" and "Too Bad" - together selling 7 million copies of Silver Side Up.

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RECORD OF THE YEAR
BY GAIL MITCHELL

The push to limit the length of recording artists’ contracts has moved east, to New York. The Artistic Freedom Act (Bill A1326), introduced Oct. 28 in the New York State Assembly in Albany, would give unrepresented artists the right to terminate their recording contracts at the end of three years, while artists represented by qualified legal counsel would earn termination rights at the end of seven years.

The Recording Industry Assn. of America opposes the measure. A spokesman said: “The recording industry is an extremely important economic driver for the state of New York. We do not believe the legislation will do anything to further harm an industry that is experiencing difficult business times, particularly if it means creating a new law to regulate contracts between private parties.”

The bill, introduced while the Assembly is not in session, is sponsored by a group of Democratic lawmakers, including state Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (Manhattan) and Assembly member Roger Green (Brooklyn). In a statement, Silver said of the legislation: “Locking aspiring and emerging artists into exclusive contracts that can last for decades creates a situation where these individuals or groups are exploited and taken advantage of for their entire music-making careers.”

Over the past few years, artists, trade associations and the Recording Industry Assn. of America have issued booklets and documentation for full debate on the issue of artists’ contracts in Albany next year.

Among its supporters are the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, the American Federation of Musicians, and the Artist Empowerment Coalition (AEC), which kicked off the first in a national series of Artist Power fundraising concerts at New York’s Beacon Theatre on the date that the legislation was introduced.

Hosted by Doug E. Fresh and Free of BET’s 106 & Park, the three-hour inaugural concert presented a diverse array of music, from gospel to rap, featuring performances by Stevie Wonder, Faith Evans, DMX, Montell Jordan, Hezekiah Walker, Roberta Flack, and Naught by Nature. Massive raised were earmarked to fund the AEC and to raise awareness of artists’ issues.

“Naught by Nature is on the front line of this,” member Vincent “Vinny” Brown says, “because artists deserve better-structured deals. Artists also need to have more control over their music and understand the business end of this industry.”

According to AEC general counsel L. verdell Milliman, a New York-based entertainment attorney, the organization is planning more concerts in different cities for 2003. McMillan declined to give any specifics.

In tandem with the tenets behind the proposed Artistic Freedom Act, the AEC’sconcerts are “part of a movement to showcase the diversity and power of our culture, while advocating artists’ rights,” McMillan says. He stresses the need for such an organization, saying that, in some cases, “manufacturers, distributors, labels, and promoters are paid more money than the creative sources of the music. What’s going on in this industry is ludicrous, creatively and economically. It’s all backwards, especially in black music.”

The AEC, a nonprofit organization based in New York and Washington, D.C., comprises recording/performing artists, musicians, songwriters, producers, and music support personnel. Among its key priorities are the development of standards, guidelines, and best practices for managing artists and recording contracts. The AEC is also one of the several organizations at the moment advocating rights for artists in an industry.

“RAC is very focused on this,” says the RAC’s Stephen Kline. “The RAC is a major supporter of recording-artist legislation introduced by Calif. state Sen. Kevin Murray (D-Culver City) in Sacramento to that is similar to the Artistic Freedom Act. The proposed Murray bill, on hold until the new session next year, aims to repeal portions of a California law that states an artist can be held liable for damages on undelivered albums if he or she chooses to leave his or her label at the end of seven years.

The RAC, Kline says, “will be asking as many members of Congress as possible to support the bill.”

Besides other artists’ rights advocates, who have not yet seen the actual text of the legislation, the RAC views the bill as a “potentially bad” measure.

The RAC is expected to release a “policy statement” on the bill after the meeting.

RAC’s initial efforts to reach the Senate and House of Representatives are expected to be coordinated with a group of artists and the RAC’s grassroots efforts.

Additional reporting by Bill Holland in Washington, D.C.; Richard Hall in New York; and Erik Greenfield in Los Angeles.

Eaposito To ‘Build On History’ In New WEARole

BY ED CHRISTIAN

NEW YORK—Returning to the distribution fold as WEA Corp. president (Billboard, July 27), as he has been closely associated with Caparro. As then-president of PolyGram Group Distribution (PGD), Caparro hired Esposito away from the Wiz—where he was COO for the chain’s music and movies operation—to become PGD’s head of catalog. When Caparro moved over to become chairman of the Island Def Jam Music Group, Esposito joined him there as executive VP/MG. Both exited that company last December.

Esposito says that no matter what changes are eventually made at WEA Corp., “we will start with the cash and understand what the consumer is trying to tell us with where, when, how, and why they buy music. It is important to listen to the marketplace, retailers, and WEA employees so that changes may make a change as a result of that feedback and reading the tea leaves.”

The experiences of Caparro and Esposito at Island Def Jam will help them build a company that is sensitive to artists and labels. “I have always strived to combine creativity and commercialism,” Esposito says. “They don’t always have to be thought of as being incompatible.”

ASCAP Creates White Award

BY CAROLYN MORRITZ

NEW YORK—The annual ASCAP Deems Taylor Awards—which celebrate print, broadcast, and new-media coverage of music—will this year introduce the Timothy White Award for outstanding musical biography. Planned as an annual honor, the award is named for the Billboard editor in chief, who died in June at age 50.

This year’s recipient will be Charles R. Cross, for his book Heaven Has a Jazz Band: A Biography of Kurt Cobain (Hypersonic). White, the winner of four Deems Taylor Awards, wrote acclaimed biographies of Bob Marley, Brian Wilson, and James Taylor. The “Deems Taylor Awards” are given annually by ASCAP.

The Deems Taylor Awards will be presented during a reception Dec. 4 at Lincoln Center in New York. Other winners include the NPR program Fresh Air, named in the radio category; the new PBS program “Fiddlers Three” for TV broadcast; and musicamerica.com for outstanding Web site.
***Top of the News***

8 Renowned producer/engineer Tom Dowd dies at 77.

9 Executive Turntable: Kevin Law is promoted to senior VP of A&R/staff producer for Universal Records.

11 Country band Trick Pony is "On a Mission" with its new album.

12 Craig David explores new sounds on his sophomore Wildstar/Atlantic release.

12 The Beat: N'ER'DO takes home the second Shortlist Prize.

16 Soundtracks: S-Curve celebrates the Baha Men's success with Greatest Movie Hits.

17 The Classical Score: Violinist Maxim Vengerov goes solo on his latest EMI Classic set.

18 Touring: Celebrity bands tour to build credibility as viable music acts.

19 Boxscore: Billy Joel and Elton John do it again, grossing more than $13 million from seven sellout shows.

22 Reviews & Previews: Santana, Tori Amos, and Jahliloe are in the spotlight.

25 R&B: Newcomer Vivian Green steps into her own on her Columbia debut, Love Story.

27 Words & Deeds: Ms. Dynamite has dominated the British music-awards scene recently.

29 Beat Box: V2 Records shuts its dance imprint, MTA.

31 Country: Country hopefuls get a shot at the big time, courtesy of Nashville Star.

34 Latin Notas: Gisselle takes a pop turn on her latest BMG U.S. Latin disc.

48 Jazz Notes: Drummer Terri Lynne Carrington returns as leader on Real Life Story: Jazz Is a Spirit.

49 Songwriters & Publishers: Songwriters gather for the 18th annual Frank Brown International Songwriters' Festival.

50 Studio Monitor: Nashville's the Sound Station serves as a haven for country acts.

***International***

51 This year's Australian Music Day places the focus on the country's independent acts.

52 Hits of the World: Foo Fighters debut atop three international albums charts.


***Merchants & Marketing***

57 Opposition may sink Liquid Audio’s proposed merger with Alliance Entertainment.


59 Retail Track: Compact Disc World executives discuss CD burning at a recent convention.

60 Home Video: D.A. Pennebaker's Monterey Pop makes its way to DVD.

***Features***

66 Country radio expresses disappointment over Faith Hill's alleged move away from the genre.

67 Music & Showbiz: Mick Fleetwood's rock 'n' roll survival story finally comes to the small screen.

75 Chart Artist Index

80 Chart Song Index

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**Chart Beat** by Fred Bronson

HER WORD IS HER BOND: Madonna's latest single continues to rewrite the history books. Her James Bond theme "Die Another Day" (Warner Bros.) makes an 18-8 leap on The Billboard Hot 100, giving Mrs. Ritchie her 25th top 10 hit. That pushes her past the 34 top 10 hits racked up by the Beatles and puts her just one top 10 hit away from matching Elvis Presley's total of 36.

"Die Another Day" set another record only two weeks ago, when it became the 44th top 40 hit of Madonna's career. That's the most top 40 hits by any solo female artist, just ahead of the 43 top 40 hits collected by Aretha Franklin. Madonna has an impressive ratio of hits: Her 44 top 40 hits come from a field of only 48 chart entries.

"Die Another Day" is Madonna's highest-charting song since "Don't Tell Me" marched to No. 4 in February 2001. When it comes to Bond themes, this "Die" is cast well. It's already the highest-ranking 007 song since Duran Duran's, which is the only Bond tune to reach the top. "A View to a Kill" spent two weeks in pole position in July 1985.

SMOOTH MOVE: While it may seem like yesterday, it's been three years and 10 days since a Santana album moved into the No. 1 slot on The Billboard 200. Supernatural advanced to the summit the week of Oct. 30, 1999, and had a 12-week reign. This issue, Shaman (Arista) becomes the highest-debuting Santana album of all time, as it enters in pole position. Supernatural opened at No. 19.

HAD TO BE HIM: Another artist with a high-debuting album this week is Rod Stewart. His debut on Clive Davis' "imprint, It Had to Be You ... The Great American Songbook, is new at No. 4. It's Stewart's 30th chart album and his highest-ranking set since Unplugged ... and Sealed went to No. 2 in June 1993.

It Had to Be You and Unplugged are Stewart's highest-ranking albums of the past 22 years. To find a Stewart album that reached a higher position, you'd have to go back to February 1979, when Blondes Have More Fun spent three weeks at No. 1.

If you list Stewart's 30 albums in order of chart ranking, It Had to Be You would place seventh.

TWO MUCH: Gerald Levert's The C Spot (Elektra) is No. 2 on Top R&B/Hi-Hop Albums for the second week. Amazingly, it's the seventh Levert album in a row to peak at No. 2, the longest string of second-place finishers in the history of this chart.

The run started in September 1994, when Groove On went to No. 2. Unlike Creedence Clearwater Revival—which had five No. 2 singles on The Billboard Hot 100 without ever going to No. 1—Levert's first solo album, Private Line, spent two weeks on top in April 1992.

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EAST COAST DATES

11/22: Toledo, OH at Stranahan Theater
11/23: Columbus, OH at Veterans Memorial
11/24: Dayton, OH at Memorial Auditorium (2 Shows)
11/25, 11/26: Akron, OH at E.J. Thomas Theater
11/27: Grand Rapids, MI at Van Andel Arena
11/29: Cincinnati, OH at Aronoff Center
11/30: 12/01: Detroit, MI at The Opera House
12/03: Youngstown, OH at Powers Auditorium
12/04: Buffalo, NY at Shea's
12/05: Erie, PA at Warner Theatre
12/06: Pittsburgh, PA at Palumbo Center Theater
12/07, 12/08: Cleveland, OH at CSU
12/10: Hampton, VA at Hampton Coliseum
12/11: Washington, DC at Constitution Hall
12/12: Richmond, VA at Carpenter Center
12/13: Hershey, PA at Giant Center
12/14: Camden, NJ at Tweeter Center
12/15: Wilkes Barre, PA at First Union Arena
12/17: Toronto, Canada at Massey Hall
12/18: Rochester, NY at Auditorium Theatre
12/19: Syracuse, NY at Landmark Theater
12/20: Wallingford, CT at Oakdale Music Hall
12/21, 12/22, 12/23: NYC, NY at Beacon Theater
12/25: Baltimore, MD at Symphony Hall (5 Shows)
12/27: Portland, ME at Cumberland
12/28: Lowell, MA at Tsongas Arena
12/29: Schenectady, NY at Proctors Theater (5 Shows)
12/30: Providence RI at PACC

WEST COAST DATES

11/22: Minneapolis, MN at Target Center
11/23: Green Bay, WI at Brown County Arena
11/24: Milwaukee, WI at The Rave
11/25: Madison, WI at Alliant Energy Center
11/26: Chicago, IL at Cadillac Theater
11/27: Kansas City, KS at Memorial Hall
11/29: St. Louis, MO at Fox Theatre
11/30: Colorado Springs, CO at World Arena
12/02: Denver, CO at Magness
12/04: Boise, ID at Bank of America Center
12/05: Spokane, WA at Opera House
12/06, 12/07: Seattle, WA at Moore Theatre
12/08: Portland, OR at Rose Garden
12/10: San Jose, CA at Fлиnt Center
12/11: Sacramento, CA at Memorial

12/12: San Diego, CA at Cox
12/13: Los Angeles, CA at Universal Amph.
12/14: Las Vegas, NV at Aladdin
12/15: Tucson, AZ at Tucson Convention Center
12/17: Albuquerque, NM at Kiva Auditorium
12/18: El Paso, TX at Haskins Center UTEP
12/19: Amarillo, TX at Civic Center
12/20: San Antonio, TX at SBC Center
12/21: Dallas, TX at Next Stage Theater
12/22, 12/23: Houston, TX at Arena Theater
12/26: Orlando, FL at UCF Arena
12/27: Boca Raton, FL at Mizner Amph.
12/28, 12/29: St. Petersburg, FL at Mahaffey Theatre
12/30: Atlanta, GA at Fox

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**Tom Dowd, Revered Innovator, Dies**

**BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH**

NEW YORK—Renowned producer/engineer Tom Dowd, who crafted an extraordinary number of classic rock, pop, soul, and jazz recordings, died Oct. 27 in Aventura, Fla. He was 77 and had battled respiratory disease for two years.

In a career spanning more than 50 years, Dowd worked with such acts as Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, John Coltrane, the Allman Brothers Band, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Eric Clapton, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Wilson Pickett, and the Young Rascals. For more than 20 years, he was an integral component of Atlantic Records, recording and co-producing artists at the label's New York studio. Later, his technical and creative skills made him a highly sought independent producer.

“Tommy was a wonderful, wonderful person,” says Ahmet Ertegun, Atlantic Group co-chairman/co-CEO and Atlantic Records founder. “He really spent his life serving others. He was very self-effacing. That’s why he was such a great person in the studio—he accommodated all the wishes of the artist and became a great friend to them.”

Dowd first came to Ertegun’s attention in 1947, when Ertegun and partner Herb Abramson employed the services of Apex Studios in Manhattan, where Dowd was an engineer. “As Tom was working for me and the others, he was in the ’50s, as an Atlantic partner and producer Jerry Wexler recalls, “it soon became apparent that he had musical talent as well as engineering. It was just a matter of time until we turned him loose and he became a significant producer. Although I was technical his boss, in a way he was really a mentor for me.”

Wexler refers to his autobiographies, *Rhythm and the Blues: A Life in American Music* (Knopf): “Back in the ’50s, Tommy had put us years ahead when he and us buy an eight-track Ampex. . . . We were the first record company to go eight-track, enabling us years later to put out sides from the vault in true stereo. In association with MCI—not the mega-corporation but a Florida-based high-fidelity outfit—Tommy, with me, helped develop a dramatically improved eight-track in the ’60s.”

By 1967, Dowd was recording and mixing one hit after another at Atlantic Studios. Paired with the recently signed Franklyn, Dowd and Atlantic producers Ertegun, Wexler, and Arif Mardin formed a team that seemingly couldn’t miss. With Franklyn’s unrivaled vocals and piano; Mardin’s string, horn, and woodwind arrangements; and the spare but funky rhythm sections, Dowd captured moments that are revered today, setting a standard for generations of recording professionals. Ertegun recalls, “He was a major part in the creation of what we called ‘the Atlantic Sound.’”

Between Feb. 8 and Dec. 17, 1967, Dowd recorded and mixed Franklyn’s “Respect,” “Chain of Fools,” “Baby, I Love You,” and “Since You’ve Been Gone.” Those tracks topped the *Billboard* R&B chart, pushing Franklyn’s *My Life* to the top of the *Billboard* 200 and *Rolling Stone’s* landmark No. 1 list.

As time passed, more hits came, including the landmark *Back on the Block* album. The album’s hit single, “Feel Like Making Love,” was a Top 5 R&B hit and a Top 20 pop hit.

Dowd’s work extended beyond Atlantic to other labels, including Bell, Reprise, and Warner Bros. Records. He produced hits for such artists as the Bee Gees, the Emotions, and the Jackson 5.

In 1967, Dowd was named president of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences’ (NARAS) Trustees Award. “Tom did landmark work with multitracking and was a ground-breaking technician in the studio,” reads a statement from Garth Fundis, chairman of the NARAS board of trustees. “The academy truly has lost a brother and a soul mate. He will be sorely missed.”

“Tommy was a rare person,” says engineer/producer Al Schmitt, who began working with Dowd at Apex in 1950. “My career would not be where it is today if it wasn’t for Tommy Dowd’s mentorship. He was a confidante and a dear, dear friend. I’m going to miss him terribly.”

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**In The News**

- The Recording Industry Assn. of America, the National Music Publishers’ Assn., the Songwriters Guild of America, and the Motion Picture Assn. sent a letter to a 1,000 top U.S. corporations, urging them to take steps to ensure that their computer networks are not being used to infringe copyrighted works.
- Clear Channel Communications reported third-quarter net income of $212.5 million, or 34 cents per diluted share, compared to a net loss of $232.2 million, or 39 cents per diluted share, in the same period last year. The San Antonio media company benefited from a new accounting rule that eliminates goodwill amortization. Revenue ticked up 2% to $2.34 billion. However, revenue for the entertainment division (formerly SFX) slipped 16% to $789.8 million, as event-attendance declined. The division’s earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (ebida) fell 18% to $78.9 million. Radio revenue rose 11% to $694.1 million, and ebida was up 18% to $418 million on stronger ad sales.

**Market Watch**

**A LOOK AHEAD**

**Eminem’s ‘8 Mile’ To Debut At No. 1**

**BY GEOFF MAYFIELD**

LOS ANGELES—On next issue’s *Billboard* 200, Eminem’s acting debut will add a No. 1 album to his résumé—his second in less than half-a-year—as the soundtrack from *8 Mile* appears on course to surpass 675,000 units in its first week.

Based on first-day sales culled from retailers, some sales executives believe the multi-act *8 Mile* album will even exceed 700,000 units, which would be one of the year’s six-biggest sales weeks and the largest since Dixie Chicks’ *Home* led *The Billboard* 200 with 780,000 units in the Sept. 14 issue.

The rapper’s latest studio album, *The Eminem Show*, had the year’s largest sales frame—1.3 million—in its first full week at retail and has sold 6.3 million to date. Now No. 7, it has never ranked lower than No. 9 in 23 chart weeks.

Other releases primed for big starts from the “Super Tuesday” slate of Oct. 29 are the latest from Christina Aguilera (RCA) and a long-awaited Nirvana anthology (Gerffen/Intercope). Chart prognosticators figure the former’s *Striped* will open in the neighborhood of 300,000-325,000, while the simply titled *Nirvana* will hover at around 250,000 units.

The most startling arrival on next issue’s charts may be the sophomore album by Lyric Street/Hollywood’s Rascal Flatts. An executive close to the project thinks the group’s *Melt* will start at 175,000 units, but a sales chief at a rival label thinks it will top 200,000. Tori Amos’ first album for Epic and the solo debut by Backstreet Boy Nick Carter (Jive) should each exceed 100,000.

**DVDs Lead Sony Gains In Second Quarter**

**BY MATTHEW BENZ**

NEW YORK—Sony Corp.’s music division had revenue of 147.9 billion yen ($1.21 billion) in the second quarter ended Sept. 30, up 6.6% from the same period last year. U.S.-based Sony Music Entertainment (SME), which generated 71% of the division’s sales, saw revenue rise 15%, as DVD manufacturing for Sony’s film and game units increased. Sales at Sony Music Entertainment Japan (SMEJ), which accounts for the remainder of the division, fell 5%.

The music unit’s operating loss of 5.6 billion yen ($46.3 billion), compared with a loss of 5.3 billion yen ($43.9 billion) one year ago. SME’s U.S. market share for the quarter was 16.2%—up from 14.6% one year ago—according to Nielsen SoundScan, though its operating loss rose as a result of costs associated with restructuring and talent. In addition, in August, SME acquired Aucff Rose Music Publishing for $157 million in cash. SMEJ posted an operating profit, vs. a loss last year, thanks in part to lower expenses.

Overall, Sony Corp. reported a 0.5% increase in revenue to 1.79 trillion yen ($14.5 billion). Net income was 44.1 billion yen ($359.5 billion), compared with a loss of 13.2 billion yen ($107.6 billion) in the same period last year. But Sony chair/CEO Nobuyuki Idei warned of further deterioration in consumer confidence and said the company will look to cut costs.
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GILLIAN WELCH
WILLIE NELSON
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TRAVIS TRITT
MONTGOMERY GENTRY
TRAVIS TRITT
GEORGE JONES
KEITH STEGALL
TONY BROWN
NORMA WILSON
BERG WILSON
HALL OF FAME
HALL OF FAME
HALL OF FAME
HALL OF FAME
EDDIE STUBBS
KARL STODDARD
JAMES STROUD
RASCAL FLATTS
GLEN DUNCAN
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Run-D.M.C. Co-Founder Jam Master Jay Killed In Studio

BY RASHAUN HALL
NEW YORK—The hip-hop community has lost one of its pioneers with the death of Jam Master Jay (aka Jason Mizell), who was shot and killed Oct. 30 in his Queens, N.Y., recording studio.

According to police reports, two men were buzzed into the second-floor studio shortly before shots were fired at 7:30 p.m. Jam Master Jay, a Queens native, was shot once in the head in the studio's lounge and died at the scene. Another victim, 25-year-old Ureico Rincon, was shot in the leg. Although there were others reported to be in the studio at the time, none were hurt. At press time, no arrests had been made.

Born Jan. 21, 1965, Jam Master Jay joined Joseph “Run” Simmons and Darryl “D.M.C.” McDaniels to form Run-D.M.C. in 1982. The trio signed to Profile Records and released its first single, “It’s Like That,” a year later. The single peaked at No. 15 on the Billboard Hot R&B-Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart. The group went on to score hits with such tracks as “My Adidas,” “King of Rock,” and “Down With the King.” The group's biggest chart success came via its cover of Aerosmith's “Walk This Way” — featuring the Boston-based rock act — which peaked at No. 8 on the Hot R&B-Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart and No. 4 on the Billboard Hot 100, arguably re-igniting Aerosmith's career.

Run-D.M.C. achieved a number of firsts for a rap act. Its eponymous debut album was the first rap album to be certified gold. The group was also the first rap act to appear on American Bandstand, Saturday Night Live, and the cover of Rolling Stone.

In addition to his success with Run-D.M.C., Jam Master Jay also had an ear for talent. The DJ/producer was responsible for the early success of Onyx, whom he signed to his MJ imprint. He also produced much of the group's debut. Jam Master Jay also worked closely with Shady/Aftermath/Interscope recording artist 50 Cent.

Run-D.M.C. recently experienced its own career revival, touring with heroin and Kid Rock. Arista/BMG Heritage released a Greatest Hits set, which debuted at No. 56 on the Billboard Top R&B-Hip-Hop Albums chart. Last year, the act released its Arista debut, Creem Royal, its first studio set in eight years. That set debuted at No. 22 on the same chart. The group was said to be planning a new album for next year celebrating 20 years of music.

Jam Master Jay is survived by his wife and three sons, as well as a host of family and friends. There are plans to establish a scholarship fund for his children. At press time, funeral arrangements had not been finalized.

Coalition Asks EU For Help To Deter Piracy

Film, Music Industries Lobby For ‘Enforcement Directive’ To Strongly Penalize Perpetrators

BY LEO CENDROWICZ
BRUSSELS — A coalition from the music and film industries met in Brussels Oct. 29 to lobby the European Union (EU) for stiffer penalties to help deter piracy.

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), the Motion Picture Assn. (MPA), the International Video Federation (IVF), and the International Federation of Film Producers’ Associations said the current plans for an EU “enforcement directive” on copyright should contain concrete measures to stamp out the illicit trade.

Brussels is in the final process of drafting the much-delayed directive, and it should be unveiled in December. The cross-industry union pleaded in Brussels for a tough political message from the European Commission (which serves as the executive body of the EU), with particular emphasis on the countries hoping to join the 15-nation EU.

The IFPI warned, “The problem threatens to get worse as the EU enlarges to include countries with extremely high levels of piracy.”

“We need strong measures now so that they can be adopted by the countries coming in,” MPA VP Doris MacGreery said. “We want to see genuinely deterrent levels of damages. We noted that pirates are increasingly ingenious, putting up to 18 different language tracks on the DVDs and up to five different films on one disc.

The draft directive is aimed at instructing EU countries to set proportionate and dissuasive penalties. At the same time, the commission plans to update its customs rules, allowing officers to seize goods even if they are merely suspected of being counterfeit. The IFPI’s regional director, Frances Moore, added that piracy blighted culture and was a drain on economies, saying, “We need a directive that deals with sanctions across the board.”

IFPI trade advisor Yolanda Smith says new technologies help boost piracy. “High-speed CD-burner towers can produce [CDs] on a large commercial scale,” she said, pointing to industry estimates of some 950 million pirate CDs sold last year. “This is often linked to organized crime, which uses the profits from piracy to finance drugs and arms trafficking.” The IFPI has pushed for a mandatory use of a source identification code to be planted on CDs and DVDs.

VP director general Charlotte Lund Thomsen said it was not enough to look abroad and blame imports. “The problem is also about applying the rules. There are already some good laws on the books. But in, say, Italy, they can do seizures but let the perpetrators go free when it reaches the courts.”

The IFPI’s latest global pirate report indicates world sales of pirate music discs rose about 48% and were worth $4.3 billion. Commercial CD-R pirate sales tripled in the 13 million units. Approximately 35 million counterfeit or pirated articles with a legal EU market of more than 2 billion euros ($1.96 million) were intercepted at the EU’s external borders in 2001, according to statistics published by the commission in July (Billboard Bulletin, July 29).

VU Net And Sister UMI Strike Wireless Deal

BY JULIANA KORANTENG
LONDON— Universal Music International (UMI) has established a stand-alone subsidiary devoted to exploiting its database of master rights. The company, UMI Wireless, will work with Richard Gunter, VU Net for Mobile’s London-based content and marketing director, and Bert Cloeckaert, UMI senior VP of strategic marketing and commercial affairs, to set up VU Net for Mobile’s first localized units in the U.K., the Netherlands, France, Germany, Spain, and Italy.

This arrangement gives a framework to the informal relationships UMI already has with 10 major European mobile operators, including Telecom Italia Mobile (Billboard Bulletin, March 13).

UMI’s involvement is different because, to date, the publishing arms licensed music to service providers, as monophonic ring tones are considered to be arrangements of the original recordings.

But the advent of polyphonic ring tones and the ability to re-transmit full tracks have advanced the record labels’ sales. “The master rights for [music dedications and music greetings] reside with the recording arm,” a spokesperson explains. “In addition, as technology permits more and more sophisticated ring tones, it will also apply to ring tones.”

Other wireless products to be offered include multimedia messaging and wired games linked to musical recordings and other such content as blockbuster movies. VU Net for Mobile already has a year-long European deal with movie distributor New Line Cinema for Austin Powers in Goldmember.

After Europe, the company plans to set up units for Africa and the Middle East before considering other international markets.
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Rap/Hip Hop #2

Billboard's latest Rap/Hip Hop spotlight examines the trends and new directions in this genre. We check out the status of female MC's, look at Billboard Rap/Hip Hop listings and report on activity in various markets around the world. Plus we've got an exclusive interview with Irv Gotti of Murder Inc. Don't miss out!

Publication date: Dec 7
Ad close: Nov 8

Andy Anderson 646.654.4692 • aanderson@billboard.com

Upcoming Specials

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Sterling Sound 33 1/3 Years • Issue Date: Dec 21 • Ad Close: Nov 26
Year In Music • Issue Date: Dec 28 • Ad Close: Dec 3
Year In Video Business • Issue Date: Jan 11 • Ad Close: Dec 16
MIDEM • Issue Date: Jan 18 • Ad Close: Dec 20

Hard Music/Metal #2

Billboard's latest Hard Music/Metal spotlight zeros in on marketing strategies, edgy, innovative packaging and additional features such as DVD video, bonus tracks and web links. Plus we take a look at how hard music fared this year on the concert circuit and metal/hard music trends in Europe.

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Las Vegas

A critical tour stop, Billboard looks at the vibrant Vegas music scene with a report on arenas, artists, and the local music businesses. We reveal what's ahead for Las Vegas in 2003 and provide an in-depth listing of music retailers, radio stations, record labels, recording studios and clubs around town.

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Michelle Wright 323.525.2302 • mwright@billboard.com

Latin Music 6-Pack #6

Billboard's sixth installment of Latin Music 6-Pack focuses on Latin radio in the U.S. We talk to programmers and research firms about the art and science of playing music, report on the latest Arbitron ratings, highlight which Latin genres are hot and provide an update on the latest news in the Latin music community. Be a part of this important spotlight!

Issue date: Dec 14
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Warner’s Trick Pony Is ‘On A Mission’ To Prove Its Versatility

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE
NASHVILLE—With its eponymous debut, Trick Pony burst from the chute as one of country music’s most successful new acts while establishing a reputation as one of the industry’s premier party bands. With its sophomore effort, On a Mission, the Warner Bros. trio is looking to prove there’s more than one side to its musical personality.

“We don’t want to get pulled into the party band thing,” says lead vocalist Heidi Newfield, who along with Keith Burns and Ira Dean makes up Trick Pony. “With the singles we’ve put out so far, they’ve been somewhat light-hearted, fun, energetic singles, but that’s not all we are about. There is certainly more to us than that.”

Still, Newfield admits, the new album has its share of lighter fare. “This record is a lot of fun. A perfect example is the first single [the title track]. It’s a good-time, kind of perfect-morning show song. The thing that differs on this album is we experimented a little more. I feel like there was a little more confidence about all three of us, both instrumentally and vocally. I felt more confident and like my feet were underneath me a little more.”

Warner Bros. CM/Senior VP of marketing Chris Palmer says the success spawned by the first album—including an American Music Award for favorite new country artist, gold sales status, three hit singles, and a coveted slot on Brooks & Dunn’s Neon Circus tour—provide a strong launching pad for the group’s sophomore effort. “You have to ask if it’s going to be tough to have a new artist like Trick Pony releasing when Faith Hill, Shania Twain, and Tim McGraw and all the heavy hitters are also coming out,” Palmer says. “I don’t believe it’s a bad thing to be out in the marketplace competing when you have so much great music driving people to retail to buy music. I’m glad we have the Trick Pony record on the shelves.”

Each member of Trick Pony (they all have co-publishing deals with Warner/Chappell Music) contributed—in varying configurations—to nine of the album’s 12 tracks, thus involving more of an emotional stake in this record than the previous one. Dean and David Lee Murphy co-wrote a compelling song about alcoholism, “The Devil and Me,” on which Dean sings lead vocals.

“We’ve grown on this album,” says Newfield, who co-wrote two cuts. “I feel like we’ve raised the bar a little bit.”

On a Mission continues what Newfield hopes will become a Trick Pony tradition—featuring a special guest artist. “We are going to try to do that on every album to come,” she says. “It’s our way of paying tribute to people we grew up listening to and their influence on us and their music. The first album [featuring] Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings.

“This time, it’s Willie Nelson, because we talked about the kind of artist that seems to keep getting better, and Willie was the first name out of our mouths,” she continues. “We thought of all the great songs that he’s cut, which one should go, and in the same breath, all three of us said ‘Whiskey River,’” even though he didn’t write that. It is a Johnny Bush song, but [Nelson has been opening his show with that for years."

Managed by Herb Graham and Chuck Howard, the group will benefit from exposure on CMT and Great American Country as well as in-store appearances during street week at Wal-Marts in six key markets. Trick Pony also recorded a cover of the Vogues’ "Five O’Clock World," which will be featured on The Drew Carey Show. (Since it was recorded after the completion of the album, the song will not appear on the set.)

Ja Rule Offers ‘Last Temptation’

November’s The Month For Murder Inc./Def Jam Artist

BY RASHAUN HALL

NEW YORK—Will Smith may be “Mr. July,” but in a few weeks Ja Rule may be dubbed “Mr. November.” With the release of his fourth Murder Inc./Def Jam set, The Last Temptation, Nov. 19, and the debut of his first starring role in Sony Pictures’ Half Past Dead Nov. 15, Ja Rule could follow in the footsteps of collaborator Jennifer Lopez and become the second musician/actor to top the charts and the box office in the same week.

“The movie comes out four days before [the album’s] release, so that will put him in a new light in the public’s eye,” Def Jam/Def Soul head of marketing Deidre Graham says. “He’s going to be introduced to a new audience with this movie; [co-star] Steven Seagal alone brings a different consumer to the table.”

In addition to his on-screen exposure, Ja Rule is also attracting attention on the airwaves with lead single “Thug Lovin’,” which features Bobby Brown. Ironically, the idea for the single came from Brown’s own film career.

“I was sitting at home watching A Thin Line Between Love and Hate, and [Stevie Wonder’s] ‘Knock Me Off My Feet’ comes on,” says Ja Rule. “I thought of this idea that I could take Bobby’s verses and put it to a hip hop beat and take the whole song up a notch!”

Having issued four multi-platinum albums in as many years—with the last two debuting at No. 1 on The Billboard 200—Ja Rule is a franchise artist. And Def Jam has crafted a marketing campaign worthy of his stature.

“Ja has achieved a lot of accolades, and now our goal is to get him a Grammy,” Graham says. “We want to put him in that popular setting. He needs to be in that Grammy world. He consistently sells records, as well as having written hits for Jennifer Lopez and Mary J. Blige. Now it’s his time.”

Ja Rule will be featured as the Yahoo artist of the month for November, while The Last Temptation will be featured on bet.com’s Get It First page. The rapper will also appear on a host of TV programs throughout November, including Saturday Night Live, BET’s Access Granted, MTV’s Spinning New Music Week, a live Total Request Live performance with Bobby Brown, and 106 & Park.

Mudum Inc. CEO Irv Gotti believes that like his previous albums, The Last Temptation will mark the next step in Ja Rule’s career.

“Venni Vetti Vecci sold 2 million worldwide, Rule 3:36 sold 4 million worldwide, and Pain Is Love sold 6 million worldwide, so I’ll take 8 [million],” Gotti says with a laugh. “All jokes aside, this album is humongous.”

Managed and booked by Ron “Gutta” Robinson for New York-based Murda Management, Ja Rule recently wrapped a brief European tour with Ashanti that testified to his star power overseas. “It was a nine-day tour, and we sold out everywhere with 10,000 people or more,” Gotti says of the jaunt, which included stops in London, Manchester, England; and Amsterdam. He’s scheduled to return to Europe later this month to promote the album, which will be released Nov. 18 there.

“We found something out when went overseas—the people love this music, but a lot of U.S. artists don’t go over there,” Gotti notes. “The people who do travel there are appreciated by the fans, and as a result our [album] sales skyrocketed. With Pain Is Love, Ja sold over 2 million records outside the U.S. He sold over 1 million units in the U.K. alone.”

According to Gotti, there are also plans for a worldwide Murder Inc./tour featuring Ja Rule, Nas, Ashanti, Charli Baltimore, and Fat Joe, beginning in early 2003.

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BILLBOARD NOVEMBER 9, 2002
David Moves To Keep U.S. In Pocket
Sophomore Set For Atlantic Features Cover/Collaboration With Sting

BY PAUL SEXTON

Few British chart stars have crossed the Atlantic in recent times as successfully as Craig David.

His critically heralded debut, Born to Do It, was still yielding U.S. singles only a few months ago, leading seamlessly into the Nov. 19 American commencement of phase two in David's story, the new collection Slicker Than Your Average. That's eight days after the U.K. and international release of the set, considered to be one of the key sophomore sets of 2002.

The R&B-pop vocalist, who hails from Southampt-
ton on England's south coast, swiftly became one of the U.K.'s hottest properties with a series of hit singles including the No. 1 hits "Fill Me In" and "Seven Days."

Born to Do It was already a major best seller by its U.S. release in July, and the album was charting on The Billboard 200 as recently as the Oct. 5 survey, its 62nd chart week. Unlike the divide between domestic and U.S. sales for many of David's British peers, the U.S. market has made a significant contribution (of 1.3 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan) to the album's worldwide tally, put by Wildstar at 7 million.

"That was pretty darn respectable," says Atlantic VP of marketing David Burrier of the U.S. scorecard. "Even better than that, everyone that bought the record is a real fan."

Burrier emphasizes that David's label and his audience are, like the artist himself, in it for the long haul. "I've seen plenty of artists who've sold a million, 2 million, and who cares? But I've seen Craig at enough different [U.S.] events and once the van turns the corner, there are literally hundreds of kids chasing him down the street."

A FORTUITOUS DELAY

David says that the later U.S. release of Born to Do It proved to be fortuitous.

"I was lucky enough, the way it worked out, to be able to stay [in America] and live there for a period of time, because if you would be very naive to think you can go there and people would embrace you straight away."

With uncommon maturity for a 21-year-old whose achievements also include six Brit Award nominations in 2001 and three MOBO (Music of Black Origin) trophies, David adds, "I might not do one thing, but if I do another, the third one will be so difficult; it'd be like starting all over again.

"I've experienced the 'myth' of being able to take off on America, and I've come back the wiser," David continues. "I've got a lot more compulsion this time—I'm not running around like a headless chicken. It's a British album, still representing British music."

Leading off the album is "What's Your Flava," which debuted at U.K. radio Sept. 23 and swiftly became an airplay hit. It's not tabled in such magazines as Details, People, and the "Brit Beat" supplement of Vanity Fair's November music issue is confirmed. Also, a two-week U.S. radio tour is planned for December.

David's manager, Colin Lester of Wildlife Entertainment in London, applauds the label's approach.

"The history of Atlantic is all about career artists," he says. "They've been good at the very same environment for Craig by continuing to operate with conviction and integrity."

Another key track on Slicker Than Your Average is "Ridin'," which not only samples Sting's "Shape of My Heart" acoustic-guitar motif, but it is also a fully fledged collaboration between the two artists. "It was the perfect collaboration that I'd always wanted to do with someone," David says, "but I didn't want to do it for the wrong reasons. That was a real executive decision."

David, who plans local and international touring next year, is booked in the U.K. by Pete Nash of Helter Shelter and in the U.S. by Cara Lewis at Williams, O'Donnell, Hats are published by Windswept Pacific.

"The only way I see it is in songwriting terms is that my last song is my best song," David concludes. "It represents where I am at the moment."

DOWN TO ONE: By the time N.E.R.D. collected the Shortlist Prize for Artistic Achievement in Music for its Virgin album In Search Of... on Oct. 29 in Los Angeles' Henry Fonda Theater, there was no doubt that the second annual ceremony had accomplished its aim: moving the award closer to its goal of becoming the U.S. equivalent of the U.K.'s prestigious Mercury Prize.

The growth from the inaugural event was primarily evident through the move from last year's ceremony, at the much smaller Knitting Factory, to the larger venue, which was sold out. Additionally, founders Tom Sarig and Greg Spotts had to spend precious little time explaining the genesis of the awards, as most of the attendees seemed to understand the idea behind them.

The Shortlist Organization heralds albums that generally fall outside of the mainstream. The nominees, selected by 24 listmakers, including U2's Larry Mullen, Beck, Iggy Pop and directors Baz Luhrmann and Spike Jonze, must have been released no earlier than July 1, 2001, and must have been certified gold for sales of more than 500,000 units at the time of the ceremony.

This year's winner was selected by nine of the listmakers in a dinner before the ceremony. The Neptunes' Chad Hugo and Pharrell Williams, who make up two-thirds of N.E.R.D., served as listmakers in the first two rounds but were not allowed to vote for the winner.

Cee-Lo, whose Cee-Lo Green and His Perfect Imperfections was one of the nominees, opened the evening with a spirited set that effortlessly weaved rock, rap, and old-school R&B. Cee-Lo's voice can go from strident on the musically menacing, yet compelling "Live (Right Now)" to surprisingly sweet with traces of Al Green.

DJ Shadow performed selections from his nominated The Private Press, as well as reaching back to material more from than a decade ago. The highlight was the performance of tribal, hypnogic single "Six Days." He drew one of the evening's biggest laughs when he described the nominees, himself included, as "all the people who couldn't go gold; the best of the worst."

N.E.R.D.'s high-octane set was short-circuited by Williams' tireless bawling of the audience for not reaching the level of "pandemonium" he required. A little seasoning will hopefully teach him that great performers know they can't dictate an audience's reaction.

The evening ended with an electrically performing listmaker Pop, who was backed by the Hives' Pelle Almqvist and Mike Vigilante (themselves nominees), bassist Mike Watt, and Pete Yorn, who filled in on drums. The set included down and dirty versions of the Stooges' "I Wanna Be Your Dog" and "No Fun."

The winner received a trophy, a $3,000 gift certificate from Guitar Center, and $3,000 from towerrecords.com.

MUSICAL CHAIRS: VH1's Save the Music Foundation, which has donated $21 million in instruments to more than 900 schools since its inception in 1997, will launch a new fundraising effort this month.

The evening will feature top songwriters performing acoustically and talking about the inspiration behind some of their best-known hits.

The evening, which will be moderated by Bernie Taupin, stars Matchbox Twenty's Rob Thomas, Jewel, the Neptunes, and Jimmy Jam. Each writer will play two of his or her hits, as well as a song the writer wishes he or she had written. The 400 tickets for the event are $750 and can be purchased in advance.

"The idea was to create something different, something unique," says Bob Morrison, executive director of Save the Music. "By keeping it small, it gives everyone in the room the sense that they're a VIP."

Morrison credits EMF Music Publishing executive VP of creative for North America Evan Lamberg for creating the evening's concept. Lamberg, who is co-chair of the evening, says, "The No. 1 goal is to bring awareness back to the New York area for VH1's Save the Music Foundation, and also to raise some money for the cause."

"The intention is for it to be an ongoing series," adds fellow co-chair Michael Lippman, who also manages Taupin and Matchbox Twenty.

There aren't any plans to put out an album from the event; however, Save the Music is one of the beneficiaries of For the Kids, an album out Tuesday (5) on Nettwerk America. The project features Sarah McLachlan, Darius Rucker, Barenaked Ladies and Semisonic's Dan Wilson, among others, singing classic children's songs.

By Melinda Newman
Derek Bell, who played harp like an Angel on Earth, is now wearing his heavenly crown.

To all harpists on Earth: You may move up one seat.
To all harpists in Heaven: Move Down.

Derek Bell, MBE
1935 - 2002

With love,
The Chieftains and all at Macklam/Feldman Management
The Pretenders’ Artemis Debut Bears The Fruits Of Free Agency

BY CHRIS MORRIS

After more than 20 years and seven albums with the majors, the Pretenders make their indie-label arrival Nov. 12 with the Artemis release Loose Scare.

Artemis executive VP Michael Krumper sees it as reflective of a larger trend. He notes, “You look at examples of any number of acts that have returned to indie after having been at majors… It’s not like they stopped making good records years ago—it’s that people stopped noticing.”

‘RETURN TO FORM’

Since its debut in 1980, the band—which today includes founding vocalist Chrissie Hynde and drummer Martin Chambers, guitarist Adam Seymour, and bassist Andy Hobson—had been part of the Warner Bros. family, via their association with the Sire imprint.

“Well, Warners dropped us,” Hynde says. “My manager said, ‘Look, if you’re not that interested, let us go.’ In the cold light of day, I would say they dropped us, to simplify things.

Artemis feels a lot more like Sire did when they signed us in the first place, before the label got consumed by Warners,” she continues. “It’s feeling like a return to form with us. We had a very happy relationship with Warners for years. But toward the end, not only did I not know where their headquarters were, but I didn’t know who was in the company or anything about it anymore. We weren’t selling bucket-loads of records, and corporations don’t like that, so they drop you.”

Hynde says that the group’s free-agent status brought it a remarkable amount of freedom in the studio.

“We made this record before we were signed,” she says, “so we knew we could make the record we wanted, how we wanted, and if anyone liked it enough, they’d want to sign us. And Artemis was the company who liked it enough.”

Cut with producers Kevin Bacon and Jonathan Quarrthby, Loose Scare returns to the classic, sleek Pretenders pop sound. But it also includes reggae-inflected numbers and tunes with a strong R&B feel.

Hynde says, “We [always] wanted to make a sort of reggae-influenced record. What Warners would have said is, ‘In America, they don’t know what reggae is, so don’t do it.’ But we were free at last. I’ve been wanting to make a reggae album ever since I heard reggae for the first time in 1974, when I went to England. By no means is this a reggae album—there are three tracks on there which are like reggae songs.”

A strong R&B orientation can be heard on the tracks “Time” and “Kinda Nice, I Like It.” Hynde says, “I kind of messed around with it on [1980’s] Get Close. I was in an R&B band in Cleveland in 1975. I moved to London, and then back to Ohio, and I was in an R&B band called Jackrabbit. We were doing Isley Brothers songs and stuff. That’s really when I learned how to sing, and that was by listening to Candi Staton and the singers of that time. I’ve kind of downplayed that—not as much as I’ve downplayed my natural country voice, which I would hope that no one ever hears.”

COVERING ALL THE BASES

Artemis’ promotion of the album includes a strong Internet component, according to Krumper. “We’re launching a gorgeous package, where people will get to hear the whole of the record. It’s on pretendersband.com. We’ve also hired an independent Internet marketing company called Special Ops to get this out there everywhere they can. We set up a promotion with Amazon where people can stream the record if they buy it in advance.”

The direct-response route is also being incorporated. “We’re doing a postcard campaign with Time-Life,” Krumper says. “Time-Life has a huge database of people who bought classic-rock compilation records over time. We’re doing a postcard mailing to tens of thousands of buyers who bought through them, with people being able to buy the Pretenders record through this mailing, and order it through Time-Life.”

Indie stores are being targeted.

Artemis has hired Flea Marketing, the indie marketing firm headed by ex-Warner executive Jo Lenard, to push the album with retailers who buy from one-stops.

Krumper adds, “Chrissie is going to be answering a big batch of questions submitted to her by indie retail stores all across the country that buy from Alliance Entertainment Corp., and that’s going to run in their Amped newsletter.”

Major chains are not being ignored. Krumper says, “Barnes & Noble is giving away a sampler we’ve got, called This Is Our Art, at the beginning of November, with two tracks each on it by the Pretenders, Susan Tedeschi, Josh Joplin, and Steve Earle.”

The Pretenders, who are managed by Gail Colson of Gail Force Management and booked by Barbara Skydel of the William Morris Agency in New York, plan a January 2003 tour of theaters to promote the album.

But the group has already done what Hynde describes as an “awesome” eight-show stint with the Rolling Stones in September.

“It’s been amazing,” she says. “The audience has been generous to us. They haven’t told us, ‘Fuck off and go home,’ we want the Stones, although I wouldn’t blame ‘em if they did. It’s a compatible audience, our audience and the Rolling Stones’ audience. I don’t think these people feel put out that they have to listen to us for 45 minutes.”

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- An Irish Blessing

IN MEMORIAM
THE CHIEFTAINS'
DEREK BELL, MBE
1935-2002

www.americanradiohistory.com
Audra Gets Happy. Famed musical-theater performer Audra McDonald offers songs from the Depression era on her Nonesuch set, Happy Songs. "Performing songs by great composers like Howard Arien and Irving Berlin was a joy," she says. "They wrote songs that were evocative of the time, yet so hopeful."

Get Loudermilk? DreamWorks band Loudermilk is currently promoting its debut, The Red Record, a rock collection produced by George Drakoulias (Tom Petty, the Black Crowes). Singer Davey Ingersoll says the title was chosen because "red is the most volatile color. It represents love, rage, jealousy, and warmth. It's a color that definitely reflects the subject matter of this record." Pictured, from left, are band members Mark Watrous, Isaac Carpenter, Ingersoll, and Shane Middleton.

BARKING AT MOVIES: As a long-time fan of the Baha Men, it has been fun to watch the group evolve from its Bahamian junkanoo musical roots into a straight-up pop outfit. We admit to preferring the act's earlier material, though there's no denying that tunes like the massively successful "Who Let the Dogs Out" are wildly infectious—not to mention good business.

Of course, the set opens with "Who Let the Dogs Out," which was featured in both Ruggrats in Paris and Men in Black II. Beyond that track, much of the set comprises stadium-styled chant jams, as evidenced by "Best Years of Our Lives" (from Shrek), "Move It Like This" (from Big Fat Liar), "Get Your Party On" (from Miss Congeniality), and "Get Your Head in the Game" (from Like Mike). Each song is etched with peppy, island-spiced rhythms and air-punching choruses that have lent energy to numerous film scenes.

The Baha Men have shown signs of exploring new avenues with "Scooby Doo" (from Scooby-Doo), which has a sharper hip-hop flavor. Also extra appealing is the group's funk-fortified revision of Elton John's "Crocodile Rock" (from Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course). In all, Greatest Movie Hits is lightweight fun that leaves the listener wondering where the Baha Men will turn up next.

"I only hope that American audiences will continue to embrace the Baha Men as a group the way they embraced "Who Let the Dogs Out" as a song," Carey says. "We love what we do—all of what we do—and we want to get the people into it."

SOUNDTACK HONORS: Howard Shore's score for The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring won awards during the second annual World Soundtrack Awards. Both the 180-plus members of the World Soundtrack Academy and film music enthusiasts from all over the world voted Shore's score best soundtrack of the year.

In addition to soundtrack of the year, Shore also won the public choice award. Soundtrack and film music fans worldwide were invited to cast their vote for their favorite movie-related music of the past 12 months (for any film released between July 1, 2001, and June 30, 2002). Votes were cast at www.soundtrackawards.com.

Also honored were Patrick Doyle (composer of the year for Gosford Park), Randy Newman (best original song written directly for a film, for "If I Didn't Have You" from Monsters Inc.), and Klaus Badelt (discovery of the year, for The Time Machine). A lifetime achievement award was presented to legendary producer/composer Sir George Martin.
SOLO FLIGHT: Of all the performance formats available to a violinist, playing solo must certainly be among the most daunting challenges. The soloist must fly alone without the support of an accompanist or ensemble, much like a trapeze artist performing without a net. For violinist Maxim Vengerov, however, the challenge is more than offset by the opportunity to demonstrate his instrument’s capabilities to their fullest. The Siberian-born virtuoso—who was crowned artist of the year at the 2002 Gramophone Awards this month—embarks upon solo flights composed by Bach, Eugène Ysaÿe, and Rodion Shchedrin on his latest disc, due out Tuesday (5) on EMI Classics.

“There are many notes, as you can imagine!” Vengerov says with a laugh. “And there is nowhere to hide—the spotlight is on you alone. You can say that this can be a disadvantage, but I don’t think of it that way, because you can create so much beauty in this way, too. You can create a fantastic atmosphere, establish a more intimate contact with the audience, and tell a great story with the violin while showing what it is capable of doing on its own.”

In creating the program for his disc, Vengerov used Bach as his lodestone, as did many of his predecessors, both violinists and composers alike. Instead of recording one of Bach’s familiar sonatas or partitas, however, Vengerov opted for one of the composer’s most famous pieces, the Toccata and Fugue in D minor for organ. Recent scholarship has suggested that the ubiquitous work might actually have originated as a violin sonata; here, Vengerov makes his recorded debut on a period violin in a recreation of that hypothetical sonata, arranged by Bruce Fox-Lefrèche.

“I’m not trying to create doubt or start a revolution,” Vengerov says of the unusual repertoire choice. “Whatever the facts are, it sounds good on the violin, and it’s a privilege to be one of the first to actually add something to the solo Bach repertoire.”

Turning to his modern instrument, Vengerov performs four solo sonatas by Ysaÿe, who was himself a virtuoso violinist and dedicated each of his sonatas to a star performer. Bach was never far from Ysaÿe’s mind when he wrote his sonatas; his No. 2, which opens the disc, begins with both a Bach quote and the plaintive melody “Dies irae.” The composer makes incredible demands of the soloist; Vengerov responds impulsively, revealing the drama, joy, and beauty in Ysaÿe’s pieces.

Completing the program are two works by contemporary Russian composer Shchedrin (whose Concerto Cantabile was on Vengerov’s EMI debut disc in 2000), the ingenious Echo Sonata, which also quotes Bach, and the delightful encore piece “Balalaika.” Aside from being a crowd pleaser, the encore section has an even deeper significance for Vengerov, who played it during a recent trip to Uganda as an honorary Envoy for Music for the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), a position he has held since 1997.

“I met with children that had been abducted by the Sudanese Army,” he says, “and they were deeply traumatized. I spoke to them, but they could hardly speak. So I took my violin and played ‘Balalaika’ and immediately saw the most wonderful smiles on their faces. It proves that music can break all boundaries, whatever you can imagine.”

Opening a North American tour at New York’s Carnegie Hall on Friday (8), during the coming weeks Vengerow will perform his solo recital in Chicago, Washington, D.C., Seattle, Vancouver, and San Francisco. After that, he plans to take a little time off from the violin . . . but only in order to learn an entirely new instrument for his next EMI recording.

“I’ve already recorded Britten’s Violin Concerto,” Vengerov says, “and we had been discussing what the pairing should be.” Fellow British composer William Walton’s violin concerto was suggested as a possible disc mate, but Vengerov demurred. “Then a crazy idea came to me: Why not record Walton’s Violin Concerto? I personally prefer it musically; to me, it has more depth. So since May, I’ve had to learn to play the viola.”

Mindful of the mirth that surrounds his newly adopted axe, he adds, “You can imagine all the jokes already!”
Celeb Bands Reach For Stars
Acts Work Hard And Tour Heavily To Help Transcend Novelty Status

BY SUSANNE ALKT

LOS ANGELES—Although already adored by a host of fans, celebrities embarking on musical careers ironically have a tough time moving from novelty to mainstream acts.

Yet several celeb-related bands that have released debut albums during the past year, like 30 Seconds to Mars, fronted by teen heartthrob Jared Leto; Phantom Planet, with cult-film hero Jason Schwartzman (Rushmore) on drums; and Deadsy, featuring Cher and Gregg Allman’s son, Elijah Blue, on vocals, are rising commercial stars: 30 Seconds wrapped an opening arena gig with Incubus in September. Phantom Planet opened for Elvis Costello for several September and October dates. Deadsy was part of Korn’s 2002 summer festival tour, With No Name.

In booking up such acts with established talent, Minneapolis-based Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) talent buyer Rich Best says, “You don’t put artists on dates that musically don’t fit and aren’t artistically viable. It’s definitely helping them. It makes [them] look credible.”

Granted, such Hollywood acts as Billy Bob Thornton, Keanu Reeves’ Dogstar, Rhythm & The Blues Brothers, and Russell Crowe’s 30 Odd Foot of Grunts (TOFG) have headlined a number of clubs around the U.S. during the past couple of years.

Still, “an artist like 30 Seconds to Mars has the potential to develop outside a 4,000-seat venue and do arenas. That’s very different from a Dogstar or Billy Bob,” explains Best, who promoted 30 Seconds to Mars from Hollywood to a full house at Minneapolis’ 4,000-seat Ascot Room. “Somebody like a Dogstar or Billy Bob—you can bring these artists out every 10 to 18 months and do them again for the 10,000 people. But you couldn’t do that every other week, because it would get stale. [Their music] feels like a hobby for them.”

Best, who also publicized Phantom Planet’s first Minneapolis show at the Ascot in March, adds, “But Phantom Planet and 30 Seconds to Mars don’t seem like hobbies to me. It’s almost like a second career. It’s a much different deal.”

Actually, celeb bands are in some ways hindered before they get off the ground. They are often eaten up by critics who believe that they won label deals not with their sound but with their recognizable faces. “Someone with my situation comes with a negative automatically,” Blue says of his 40 rock-minded band. “My whole life I never measured anything about being the son of famous parents. The gatekeepers frown on, say ‘Why should I help this kid who obviously comes from privilege’ when they can help some kids from the Midwest?”

Then, stars spend much of their time in production on film and TV projects, making a long touring schedule (often a requirement in developing baby bands) out of the question. With Reeves currently locked up filming sequels for The Matrix, for instance, Dogstar has not been able to tour the U.S. at all this year. And Chrisie Hynde has been quoted as saying she’s TOFG to open for her anticipated Pre-tenders tour early next year. But a spokesperson for Artemis Records, the label for both acts, points out that what depends on whether TOFG’s Crowe can squeeze the tour into his busy filming schedule. And if the stars can get paid as little as $250-$1,000 for a club gig—a small fraction of what they’d make from a movie or TV role—leads the record industry to view their music ambitions as purely a side project.

“Your name helps get you in the door, but talent will override anything else,” says New York-based CCE talent buyer Randy Henner, who worked on several of Phantom Planet and 30 Seconds’ respective Costello and Incubus openers. “You can’t necessarily have to push a celebrity name.”

Seattle-based House of Blues talent buyer Adam Zack says of the celeb factor in certain bands, “I think it hurts them more than it helps. They are Deadsy before anyone hears them. It’s like a celebrity marriage: There are a lot of collisions before you get started.”

Tellingly, not only Deadsy but Phantom Planet and 30 Seconds also seem to actively work to swipe the stars out of their fans’ eyes. A picture of 30 Seconds’ Leto never appears in any of the band’s show promotion materials. Henner and say, “Russell and Leto are, I think, the only two members of Phantom Planet’s Schwartzman are prominently featured on the group’s Web sites.

And glancing at album sales, people who seem to buy right into the music behind the music of the music. Phantom Planet’s The Guest has sold 123,000 units since its February release, debuting and peaking at No. 133 on The Billboard magazine. Bacon’s third CD, 120,000 units since May, debuting and peaking at No. 100; and 30 Seconds’ eponymous CD, 40,000 units since August, debuting and peaking at No. 107. (In contrast, TOFG’s September 2001’s Bastard Life or Clarity, has moved 13,000 units and has never charted.)

From a touring standpoint, there is a lot to know about visiting stars, especially if you show them to their fans. “They’ve got to keep moving people and artist fans, which spanned nearly every venue,” says Debbie Page. “It was a great audience, we knew what to expect, and we had a lot of repeat customers,” Page says. “It’s unbelievable. We’re just happy to be there. We just kept selling shows. We knew they could sell both on their own, so it was just a matter of finding out what else we could do together—and it turned out it was six.”

Likewise, the five sellouts at the Electric Theater took in close to $10 million. “I think this is one of the best bookings in the business,” says Clear Theater president/CEO Richard Krezwick. “Where else can you sit down and see 100 hits performed by two of the biggest names in the music business? We sent 20,000 people a night home happy.”

Krezwick is not surprised that the tour ran up five sellouts in Boston. “I pushed hard to get a sixth and, I believe, could have sold it out, as well. Now we’re hoping for a return engagement.”

Krezwick may get his wish. Afra and Rose say discussions are under way for Joel and John to go out together again in 2003, beginning in February. Afra says, “This was our fourth straight year, and we still haven’t played all the arenas in North America.”

Rose adds, “We’re still putting it together, but we’re looking at doing 30 dates. We’re trying to give audiences what they want.”

Joel/John Still Jumping
Record-Breaking Run Grosses More Than $65M In 2002

BY RAY WADDELL

NASHVILLE—In what has become the most successful touring package of all time, Billy Joel and Elton John have completed yet another run, this time of 34 arena dates that grossed about $65.7 million. The tour wrapped Oct. 13 at the Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, N.Y.

Born as a stadium tour of Australia, Japan, and North America in 1994, Joel/John has developed into a boomer franchise for arenas, averaging about $2 million per night at the box office. The co-headlining trek—which began playing arenas in 1999—features top-notch but unobtrusive production elements, gross-boosting 360-degree seating, and the kind of well-heeled demographics that make arena managers and promoters alike salivate.

“We’re thrilled,” says Howard Rose of the Howard Rose Agency, booking agent for John. “This show is very audience-friendly. The buildings have loved us being there, and I think the audiences have loved us being there.

Indeed, this co-headlining trek has been one of the few bulletproof entities in an unstable touring marketplace. “This tour was the first real big test after 9/11 and has proved to be one of the ultimate shows that the buildings and communities want,” says Dennis Arfa, president of Artists Group International and Joel’s booking agent. “These artists work very well together. This is one of the few times that one plus one equals five.”

They also equal big box office. Concert-goers have not balked at tickets priced $35-$85, with gold-circle ducts in the $175 range. “We charge the same for the arena shows as we did the stadium shows in 1994, except for the gold-circle seats,” Arfa says. “And the most expensive seats sell first, from Greensboro [N.C.] to Syracuse [N.Y.].”

The Joel/John tour, promoted in each market by Clear Channel Entertainment in 2002, is that rare touring entity capable of sitting down in a market for multiples, resulting in some grosses that are nothing short of remarkable. The $13 million from six sellouts at the First Union Center in Philadelphia is destined to be the year’s top concert employment. The duo also added record-setting runs in several other markets.

“We broke the state records in Pennsylvania, Florida, Massachusetts, and Connecticut for the biggest concert grosses ever in those states,” Arfa says. “We sold out three Office Depot Centers [in Sunrise, Fla.], six First Union Centers, five FleetCen- ters [in Boston], and four Hartford [Conn., with $6.8 million], on top of nine New York-area shows.”

The six-night play in Boston—which spanned nearly two weeks (Feb. 13-24)—worked on every level, according to First Union Center GM John Page. “It was a great audience, we knew what to expect, and we had a lot of repeat customers,” Page says. “It’s unbelievable. We’re just happy to be there. We just kept selling shows. We knew they could sell both on their own, so it was just a matter of finding out what else we could do together—and it turned out it was six.”

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Rose adds, “We’re still putting it together, but we’re looking at doing 30 dates. We’re trying to give audiences what they want.”
GROWING KORN IN NEW YORK: Korn’s sold-out concert at New York’s Hammerstein Ballroom, digitally simulcast to movie theaters across the U.S. on the eve of the release of its new album, UnPredictables, will be released as the KORN Live DVD (Epic/Immortal) Nov. 19. The DVD showcases the group’s June 10 performance in its entirety. “It was quite the epic event—a stadium-level show in a ballroom,” says Mike Donovan, senior talent buyer for Metropolitan Entertainment, which produced the show with Epic Records and Korn’s management company, the Firm. “It was the most over-the-top technologically advanced set for that room; a 24/7 work effort for an entire weekend from the Firm, Epic, and Metropolitan Entertainment.”

Donovan says Korn lived up to the end of the bargain. “They were so on. Watching them come out and slam was fun after all that work.” Meanwhile, Korn is in the midst of its Pop Suex’ tour of primary and secondary markets. Presented by MTV and PlayStation 2 and sponsored by Sony, the tour features Disturbed and TRUSTcompany and wraps Nov. 22 at the World Arena in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Independent promoter Jon Stoll’s Fantasma Productions promoted Korn’s Oct. 21 show at Teco Arena in Estero, Fla. (near Fort Myers) and an Oct. 24 date at the Ice Palace in Tampa, Fla. “They both did very well,” Stoll says. “We did over 9,300 at the Ice Palace and over 5,000 people in Fort Myers on a Monday night. This is a good package; Disturbed really helps. And keeping ticket prices under $40 also helps.”

Stoll obviously applauds Korn’s decision to work with individual promoters on a market-by-market basis. “That’s what made sense,” he says. “Independents can give more attention to the advertising when it’s their dollars.”

BOCA SHED: The aforementioned Fantasma’s new $6.5 million, 5,000-capacity Mizner Amphitheater in Boca Raton, Fla. (Billboard, Aug. 10), will open Nov. 22 with the Strokes and Jimmy Fallon. Other shows on the books at the shed include Kenny G (Dec. 6), the Transiberian Orchestra (Dec. 27), R & B Sun Band with Population People (Dec. 29), and a New Year’s Eve show featuring Meat Loaf. January 2003 bookings include Jose Carrera, the B-52s, Judy Collins/David Crosby, and the Pretenders.

ROUTEBOOK: Michelle Branch, Paula Cole, Deborah Cox, Sheryl Crow, Norah Jones, Reba McEntire, Joni Mitchell, Stevie Nicks, Susan Tedeschi, and Trisha Yearwood will join Don Henley for Stormy Weather 2002, a benefit for Walden Woods Nov. 13 at the Wiltern Theatre in Los Angeles. Accompanying the performers will be the 64-piece El Nino Orchestra. Henley is executive producer of the concert, which benefits the Walden Woods Project and the Thorne Institute at Walden Woods. Kelly Osbourne, daughter of Ozzy Osbourne and one of the stars of MTV reality TV series The Osbournes, has signed a deal with Marsha Vlasic of MVO for exclusive booking and representation in North America. Kelly Osbourne’s debut album, Shut Up!, is due Nov. 26 on Epic.

The Blind Boys of Alabama—who collaborated with Peter Gabriel on two songs from his new album, Up—with open for Gabriel on his North American tour, beginning Nov. 12 at United Center in Chicago and concluding Dec. 17 at Key Arena in Seattle.

The Irish Tenors will take out their third consecutive Christmas Spectacular tour again this year, beginning Nov. 23 at Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater, Fla., and concluding Dec. 21 at the Mohagen Sun Arena in Uncasville, Conn. The Irish Tenors are booked at Nat Farnham at Evolution Talent. Singer/songwriter Shannon McNally will follow her summer supporting slot opening for John Mellencamp with two weeks of solo acoustic dates in November. The tour begins Nov. 1 at Luther’s Blues in Madison, Wis., and includes a dozen shows in the Midwest and Northeast, including two dates opening for Rhett Miller.

Touring
HOB Entertainment
Off The Market

BY RAY WADDELL

NASHVILLE—House of Blues (HOB) Entertainment is being pulled off the market, sources at the multifaceted entertainment company say.

On the block for most of the last year, the company had retained investment banking firm Allen & Co. to find a buyer for HOB assets, including the HOB club chain, HOB amphitheaters, and HOB Concerts.

HOB is owned by a group of private equity investors. It appears now, however, that the company will press forward in its present form.

Among those making a run at HOB during the past year have been Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG), Clear Channel Entertainment, and a combination of the two; former Ticketmaster CEO Fred Rosen’s Key3 Media; and a group headed by manager Howard Kaufman (Billboard Bulletin, March 8).

“There was a high level of interest in purchasing the company, and given the current capital market it wouldn’t have been prudent not to listen to them,” HOB president/CEO Greg Trojan says. “It wasn’t even a necessity to sell the business. Our business is performing well, and our board is happy with our performance.”

One industry source close to the situation says an inability to sell at the desired asking price is why HOB is off the block. “The owners of House of Blues have diminished the value of this asset, which is why they can’t sell it at the prices they want,” says the source, who wishes to remain anonymous.

While admitting that no offer came forward that was impressive enough for the HOB board to accept, Trojan believes that is more a reflection of currently low valuations for entertainment corporations and the general economic environment. “This is a tough environment in general and super-tough for media and entertainment companies,” Trojan says. “Given the environment out there, we didn’t see anything that was attractive enough to move forward with a transaction.”

Despite healthy revenue in its core areas of $410 million in the U.S. and Canada for fiscal 2001, the company says “weak capital markets” have prevented growth. In response, a year ago,
HOB downsized its content and digital ventures, expanded Internet ticketing, and sought joint-venture financing for venue projects (Billboard, Oct. 2001). This reorganization resulted in pink slips for 39 employees, primarily in new media at HOB's Hollywood offices. Among those to exit were Lou Mann, formerly president of media properties for HOB.

HOB Concerts (formerly Universal Concerts) and its multiple amphitheater properties were acquired by HOB in 1999 for $190 million. The deal at that time included Universal's amphitheater business, with large sheds in Denver; Atlanta; San Diego; Dallas; Toronto; George, Wash.; and Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, and the 7,800-capacity Universal Amphitheatre in Universal City, Calif.

HOB has since added a 20,000-seat amphitheater in Austin and is in negotiations for a new shed in San Jose, Calif. The company also announced plans to add at least five new HOB club venues to its existing seven, and it partners with Nederlander Concerts in booking and operating the Greek Theater in L.A.

Fiscal 2001 saw HOB increase its club business by 34% and concert business by 5% in a tough year, according to Trojan, who spoke with Billboard in an earlier interview. Concert business has grown 27% since HOB acquired Universal Concerts. In recent months and a flat concert market, sources believe that figure has dropped to about 20%.

Even so, this has been an active year for the company, whose concert division boasts one of the more veteran executive staffs in the business. HOB recently entered into a joint venture with AEG to book and operate the 7-month-old NextStage, a $65 million, 6,350-capacity venue in Grand Prairie, Texas.

HOB was also involved in the promotion of the successful Down From the Mountain (DFTM) tours, a joint production of Immortal Entertainment, the United Talent booking agency, and promoters HOB Concerts and Metropolitan Entertainment. DFTM grossed nearly $4 million from a limited small-venue tour last winter that sold out 18 of 19 shows, and in this summer's run at larger venues, DFTM grossed $10.4 million from 43 shows, drawing 256,678 people.

Additionally, HOB got in on the record-setting Paul McCartney tour, promoting the Oct. 18 stop at the Rose Garden in Portland, Ore., that grossed a house record of $1.8 million (see story, page 1).

"I've admired the House of Blues team a long time, they're very good," McCartney tour director Barrie Marshall of Marshall Arts says. "They deserved a date, and we're very pleased to have them."
TORI AMOS
Scarlet's Walk
EPIC 86142
Tori Amos engages in a physical, spiritual, and emotional quest on Scarlet's Walk, a sonic novel of songs that weave one intricate story and stand on their own as individual tales. Touching on elements of Native American history and Amos' own Eastern Cherokee heritage, lead character Scarlet meets ex-lovers, relatives, and acquaintances while exploring her own beliefs about her country and her psyche as the nation does the same in a post-Sept. 11 world. Similar to the artist's Under the Pink in tone and continuity, Scarlet demands repeated spins to fully appreciate its chapters' musical and lyrical complexities as it recounts such adventures as the discovery of a betrayal during the Shawn Colvin-esque "Taxi Ride" and meeting a blowhard messiah in "Panca." On this collection, Amos' artistry—especially on the title cut, "Gold Dust," and "Your Cloud"—makes one of its most profound expressions. 

SANTANA
Shaman
PRODUCTS: various
Arista 14733
For most artists, following up a multi-Grammy Award-winning album like 1999's Supernatural would have been a creative nightmare. But 1996 Billboard Century Award honoree Carlos Santana is not "most artists." With Shaman, Santana delivers an album that will, no doubt, please fans of its globally successful predecessor, while at the same time not in new ones. Over the course of 16 tracks (a couple tracks too long), Santana paints a musically rich and vibrant landscape, with spicy (primarily) instrumental jams like "Fool Poo" sharing time with such vocal offerings as "You Are My Kind" and "America," featuring, respectively, Seal and P.O.D. On the electronic-laced "Feels Like Fire," Santana teams with Dido for some chilled-out bliss. As good as "Fires" is, though, the set's crowning glory is its lead single: the Michelle Branch-fronted "The Game of Love," which is as buoyant as they come. Color Shaman a smash. —MP

★ TIN HAT TRIO
The Rodeo Eroded
PRODUCTS: Tin Hat Trio, Hans Wendt
Ropeadope Records 0-7567-93134
Following two critically lauded albums for Angel/EMI, the Tin Hat Trio shifts to the Atlantic-distributed Ropedope imprint for the ventureous instrument- al group's most engaging, impressive album yet. As intimated in the title, the Americana strains of The Rodeo Eroded have been filtered and refreshed with incanatic affection, not to mention virtuosic invention. Following the precedent of Tom Waits on Tin Hat's 2000 Huzzle set, the new album boasts an iconic vocal guest—Willie Nelson, who sings a particularly affecting, cliché-free version of "Willow Weep for Me." In a just world, Nelson's tenderly plangent vocal and the tune's pitch-perfect, tumbleweeds-tumbling-in-the-breeze arrangement by Tin Hat guitarist Mark Orono would resonate from radios across the country. Yet the entire disc brims with brimming sounds; with rare élan, Orono, violinist Carla Issert, and guitarist Rob Burdge (along with guests from Medeski, Martin & Wood and Phish) manage an evergreen rap- paratus of instruments (strings, accordion, pump organ, banjo) and fresh, refreshing ideas. —BB

★ TONY FURTADO
American Gypsy
PRODUCT: Cooke Mareno
What Are Records? 60062
Tony Furtado first gained notice as a banjo-playing bluegrassster, but it's been a while since he was that easy to categorize as a musician/songwriter. Nowadays, it's his virtuosic slide guitar playing that captures the imagination, while his stylistic repertoire seems to be growing in several directions at once. Furtado displays his agile slide touch from track to track, but do make note of his work on "Bottlerocket" and "The Angry Monk." He revisits his banjo on the delightful Irish jig "Tinker's Fancy." One of the major highlights of the album, "Oh Berta, Berta," is a Furtado arrangement of a traditional tune, driven by a deep, swamp blues rhythm, and Furtado's razor-sharp slide guitar. He sings convincingly on this number and also handles the vocals on a great version of "Stagger Lee." American Gypsy

BECKETT & GARY LUCAS
Songs to No One: 1991-1992
PRODUCTS: Hal Wilner, Sascha van Oertzen
Evolver/Carat Media EYL-2006
Since Jeff Beck's tragic death at age 30 in 1997, Columbia has offered balm to his still-devoted fans via the two-disc study of in-progress material (For My Sweetheart the Drunk) and the excellent live compilation Mystery White Boy. Both were autotune, sensibly reconstituted. But Columbia's current Legacy will issue a boxed set of rare EPs associated with Beck's humble beginnings. The set boasts singles, studio outtakes, great

(Continued on next page)
five material, and such covers as "Lost Highway." Also in the works is an ex-
travaganza that will be a two-disc edition of "Grace." With these commendable projects wait-
ing in the wings, who would seek to go it alone with the collection of demos and live board tapes? Gui-
tarist Gary Lucas collaborated with Buckley in the downtown New York Band Gods & Monsters; along the way, Lucas wrote the music to the title track of Grace and its fellow classic "Moi P'tit." There is a similar minor wave of Songs to No One, a long, other-
worldly demo of the vintage French chanson "Hymn to an Amour." The attem-
taking "Satisfied" is the same radio broad-
cast as issued on Sketches. Despite spurious of mercurial brilliance, the rest of this disc is plagued by variable sound and uneven performances. Hal Willner no doubt shepherded the project to make the most of some-
thing objectionable. Buckley would not have been proud of this. —BB

THE REUNION SHOW

KILL YOUR TELEVISION

PRODUCER: Rick Ninkovicz

Flamin' Groovies

The Reunion Show might fit per-
fectly into the 1980s music scene. Its synthesizer-heavy, upbeat instrumentals and tunes almost seem like missing pages from an earlier, less serious era, and bands such as the Cars come to mind when listening to tracks like "Groovies Fash-
ion," about our TV-obsessed masses. Throughout the project, the group deftly performs powerful, melodic and cut-gauging tracks, as on the infatuation song "Stuck on You" and "On a Scale From One to Ten You're Pretty Great," a highly catchy track about escaping into outer space with a lover. Lyrically, the Reunion Show seeks to establish itself as a bit of a rock outsider. The song "New Rock Revolution," for example, is introduced with the verses "I am right and you are wrong and you will fall." Fans of contemporary rock will also find many gems here. —JK

ORIGINAL CAST RECORDING

Kooky Tunes

PRODUCER: John Yap

Jay Prodjects

Keith Thompson is one of those New York theater mainstays whose only rea-
son for not already claiming a Tony Award is the simple, inopportune luck of the draw. His Kooky Tunes has been cir-
culating the New York cabaret circuit since 1998 and, at last, it has been com-
mitted to a live recording that truly delivers on its lofty gift for both script-
ning and composing. Brought to life by four charismatic performers—Jay Rogers, Perry Page, Patrick DeGen-
naro, and Vanessa A. Jones—Kooky whisks listeners through a melange of comic tales and tunes, staying true to the central theme that individuality may sometimes be funny as hell, but it's also
endearing and the essence of humanity. Rogers, a fervent Harvey Feinstein, com-
mands the funny material, including the truck driver-profiling "Haulin’ Hun-
piness" and R-rated "Treasurer Drawer Blues." Other shining moments: Jones's sexy, sensual "Gourmet Meat" and DeGennaro's breezy tune "What If." The Cleveland quartet of Krayzie Bone, Lil' Bone, Layzie Bone, and Wish Bone—a group's fifth member is currently incarcerated—is back, sounding better than ever. Walk-
ning that fine line between good and evil, BTNH again provide a balance between inspirational lyric and wild rhymes. Lead single "Get Up & Get It" (featuring S1W and newcomer Feclet) is a positive and catchy re-introduc-
tion to the foursome. Elsewhere, group members indulge themselves on the hilarious, Bosch-produced "Bad Weed Blues." "Set It Straight," which addresses the notion of real group growth, proves almost ironic in light of the group's recent tension (Words & Deeds, Nov. 2). —RH

DANCE/ELECTRONIC

★ GABIN

Gabin

Kooky Tunes

Astrealworks 42279

As spring evolved into summer, Italian-based duo Gabin (Massimiliano Bottini and DJ Filippo Clary) discover-
ed that Italians couldn't get enough of its jazzy house track "Doo Eup, Doo Eup, Doo Eup," which gloriously references Duke Ellington's "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)." A crossover smash in the land of wine and pasta, "Doo Eup" has been cracking up the tastemaking club DJs in the U.S. and it's one of many highlights on the twoosome's eponymous full-
length. Its title track, heartbreaking, breezy, sensu-
al sound owes as much to jazz (Bott-
ini has played with many jazz groups including Dee Dee Bridgewater) as it does to mood-enhancing electronic music (Clary has manned the decks at numerous clubs in Rome), particularly on tracks like "Delire et Passion" (featuring Momo Negra vocalist Ari Culiboh) and "La Maison (di Battista's Dream)" (featuring Italian saxophonist Stefano di Battista). Fans of Saint Germain will surely find much to admire here. —MP

LATIN

★ VARIOUS ARTISTS

Voices of Hope—Sabra Foundation

PRODUCER: Nacho Cano

Ark 21 168610082

Benefit for Palestinian songwriters are com-
modable—and common—efforts. But Voices of Hope, the album that brings together a plethora of Latin and non-
Latin artists, to benefit the Sabra Foun-
dation in Calcutta, breaks the mold in several ways, primarily because much of the material was composed and recorded specifically for this project. The disc's starting point—"Let Your Soul Be Your Pilot"—which features Sting performing with flamenco guitarist Vicente Amigo and the Sabra Foundation Girls (the foundation provides music lessons to children in Calcutta), offers a blueprint for an album in which every virtual song is imbued with special meaning. Equal parts taste and sincerity, the con-
cept doesn't degenerate into preach-
iness but instead soars, particularly in "Quo Bono" (Rosario), "Offer" (Mamis Morisette), and "La Aurora de Nueva York," performed by Antonio Bandera, Alejandro Sanz, and Vicente Amigo. The final touch are the performances by Pablo Padilla, Raykan areas has incor-
porated here as duets with multiple stars, in such a manner that they become ensembles and not merely gestures.—LC

COUNTRY

★ TRICK PONY

On a Mission

PRODUCER: Chuck Howard

Warner Bros. 48236

First time out, Trick Pony served up a hometown record with just the right amount of beer-soaked edge, and the exuberant trio takes that con-
cept up a big notch with its sopho-
more WB release Featuring Heidi
Newfield vocals and a crafty mix by helmsman Chuck Howard power such driving fare as "Redneck Dad" and the backwoods boogie "Hillbilly Blues," and they deliver a reverb-laced shambles on "Nobody Ever Died of a Broken Heart." Later, they achieve a sense of urgency on such fine mod-
er-n-era country as the insistence. "I'm Not Thinkin' Straight Anymore," the Hammond-fueled "Leavin' Seem to be the Cool Thing" with a kickin'
thing from the band, and "A Boy Like You" with Keith Burns vocal, then Newfield shows a winning way with a ballad on mood-inducing stuff like "I Love You More Than I Know," "Hard and Rain." Newfield's smoky vocal on Willie Nelson's classic "Whiskey River," with Nelson on harmonica, is a real winner, a lot of whiskey. Meanwhile, the sparse, "The Devil and Me," with vocals by Ira Dean, could, and should be a sleeper hit. A perfect blend of old-school attitude and contem-
porary flair, we should all just stand back and let this Pony run. —RW

JAZZ

★ TOM SCOTT

New Found Freedom

PRODUCER: Gerald McCauley

Dave Redieu, Tom Scott

Higher Octave Jazz 42375

It's the little touches that make a contempo-
rary jazz release stand out from the pack, and most are intrinsic to the nature of jazz that it is a wonder how often they are ignored. Four-year sax-
ophonist and session player Tom Scott bases his songs around the usual pop melody, but with this record never relegates himself to blandly restat-
ing themes, preferring to add enough improvisation and grt to his lines that they become again and again, he allows such guests as Billy Preston, Craig Chaquico, and Phil Upchurch ample room to make their unique talents and presen-
ted experience known. Scott's mix of ballads, up-tempo instrumentals, and urban vocal songs never lapse into repetitive from track to track, and with each song boas-
ting its own flavors, the overall release has far more personality than a myriad of similar projects. —SG

JOHNNY CASH

American IV: Man Comes Around

PRODUCER: Rick Rubin

Lost Highway 33922

To be considered a landmark in a remark-
ably inspired and prolific collabora-
tion between Johnny Cash and Rick Rubin, much had to be said about per-
formances and ambitious song selection, finds the legendary artist in a reflec-
tive but nonetheless fearless mode—
how about that? Still kicking ass at 76, Cash begins the CD with his Armageddon wake-up call of a cut. "The Masquerade Will Stand up," he proclaims, and guess what, he's not kidding. Cash sounds weary, yet sage and resolute on Trent
**SPOTLIGHTS**

**COUNTRY**

**Vince Gill**

*The Next Big Thing* (CD)

**PRODUCER:** Vince Gill  
**WRITERS:** V. Gill, A. Anderson, J. Hobbs  
**PUBLISHERS:** Vinnie Mae Music/Stairway to Jitter's Music/Flamingo Box Music, BMI  
**MCA 02339 (CD promo)**

The first single from Vince Gill’s forthcoming MCA album is a frisky slice of fun with a rowdy, roadhouse feel. Lyrically, it’s a tongue-in-cheek look at the perils of success and the fickle nature of the modern audience. Gill muses in the chorus, “When you finally hit the top/Man, you know what that means/Well, everybody’s ready for the next big thing.” Peppering with tasty guitar licks and honky-tonk piano, the production percolates with energy and personality. Gill’s vocal performance is playful and endearing. For a man who has done it all in country music, this may well be the next big thing.—DEP

**SHAGGY**

*Strength of a Woman* (3:48)

**PRODUCER:** Shaun “Sting Int.” Pizzonia  
**WRITERS:** O. Barratt, R. Ducent, M. Darson, M. Fletcher, S. Pizzonia, C. Birch, R. Browne  
**PUBLISHERS:** not listed  
**MCA 250906 (CD promo)**

“Shaggy displays a changed attitude on this four-minute glorification of the woman,” says one reviewer. “So amazing how this woman was made/wonder if God is a woman.” From a production standpoint, “Strength” marks a new achievement for Shaggy single: His vocal is entirely solo and background singers add harmony to the chorus, not to mention the added texture of strings. A pro-female message never burts the top 40 support, of course, so this will be the one to get Shaggy back on the radio.—EA

**Kylie Minogue**

*Come Into My World* (4:06)

**PRODUCERS:** Cathy Dennis, Rob Davis  
**WRITER:** C. Dennis  
**PUBLISHER:** not listed  
**Capitol 17566 (CD promo)**

The third U.S. single from Kylie Minogue’s platinum Farmer maintains the superstar singer’s knack for matching intoxicating beats with indelibly catchy melodies and making hit records sound like the easiest thing in the world to come up with. “Come Into My World” is written and co-produced by Cathy Dennis, who is on quite a roll as part of the team that brought us Kelly Clarkson’s recent “Before Your Love” and Minogue’s previous “Can’t Get You Out of My Head” (not to mention the American Idols theme song). This time out, the groove bounces along at a midtempo pace as Kylie playfully invites listeners to “Take these lips that were made for kissing and this heart that you see through/Come into my world.” Programmers were quick to indulge the American public in first single in “Can’t Get You Out of My Head,” which tickled America’s penchant for uptempo pop and danced right into the top 10. Follow-up “Love at First Sight,” while equally appealing, had a difficult time cracking the top 40, with lyrics that lightening can indeed strike twice. Again, “Come Into My World” is so obviously hitworthy that to deny it a place on your com-pressed playlists would be more than a crying shame. Kylie should be for keeps.—CT

**NEW & NOTEWORTHY**

**TIFFY**

*Come Along* (3:34)

**PRODUCER:** Tore Johannson  
**WRITERS:** P. Svensson, J. Berg  
**PUBLISHER:** What’s Publishing/ Cannoli Songs  
**Lava/Atlantic 3007770 (CD promo)**

In her native Sweden and across much of Europe, the name Tiffany (pronounced Ti-YEE-Yo) has been recently associated with some pretty significant radio hits, like the soul-grooving “1989” and the moody “Come Along.” But as she bears her U.S. launch on Lava, make no mistake: This is not Swedish pop as we’ve come to think of it in recent years. With looks like Cher meshed with Ronnie Spector, grimey, blues-soaked melodies; and blue-eyed soul coming across her full-length Come Along, this is the kind of music to accompany tequila and dirty downtown dives. This hip aural imaging has earned Tiffany four Swedish Grammis Awards, for best female artist, album song, and newcomer. In the U.S., “Come Along” is already garnering attention before its bid for radio action as the teaser music behind NBC’s fall season rollout campaign, as well as for commercials for Star/Bacardi and Six Flags, and a placement on the soundtrack to the NBC series Providence. One listen and you’ll get it. This is cool, atmospheric music, the kind of stuff that ably serves as a soundtrack to life. You’ll remember this one for a good, long time.—CT

**CONTRIBUTORS:**  
**Eric Aliese, Lesa Cobb, Deborah Evans Price, Rashaan Hall, Chuck Taylor**  
**SPOTLIGHT: Reeves deemed the review editors to disclose special attention on the basis of musical merit and/or Billboard chart potential. NEW & NOTEWORTHY: Exceptional releases by new or upcoming artists. PICS: New releases predicted to hit the top 52 of the chart in the corresponding format. CRITICS’ CHOICES: (x) New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. Send review copies to Chuck Taylor (Billboard, 70 Broad St., New York, N.Y. 10035) or to the writers in the appropriate home town.

“I feel like black music in this country has been here from day one and has never really got the appreciation, respect, and acknowledge- ment it deserves,” she says. “This [MOBO] award is very important, because it gives that.”

Her song of reminiscences, “Dynamo-tee,” burst into the top five in September. “That was my way of showing that I’d been through the same kind of things that other young girls go through,” the EMI Music-published artist says. Her next single, the female empowering anthem “Put Him Out,” will be released Dec. 2.

IN THE LOOP: Swedish hip-hop quartet Looptroop releases its sophomore album, The Troubled Continues, Dec. 9 via its own label, David vs. Goliath/ Burning Heart Records. The production is very strong, and the hip-hop-friendly music and English-delivered reality rhymes are quite accessible. Despite its tackling social issues like depression and starvation, the title track, which is underpinned by a lilting reggae rhythm, has pop crossover potential.


HOT R&B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY


ONSTAGE: Blacktronica is a British collective whose electronic and left-field, black-music genre-blending style embarks on a Guinness Foreign Extra Stout-sponsored national club/workshop/ seminar/tour in November. Its DJ lineup includes Charlie Dark (Attica Blues), Deigo (4Hero), and King Brit (Sylk 130) . . . R&B singer Beverley Knight releases Shape of You—Reshaped (Parlophone/EMI), an upbeat party joint produced by and featuring Wyclef Jean and new rapper Holland- wood. It’s flipped by the original “Shape of You,” the midtempo R&B cut on Knight’s gold-certified 2002 Mercury Music Prize-nomi- nated Who I Am album. Its Nov. 18 release precedes Knight’s U.K. tour in December.

Another Anglo-American collabora- tion is the promo-only vinyl release of Alchemist’s remixes of Morcheeba’s “Women Lose Weight,” which features humorous rhymes by Slick Rick. The pop/hip-hop group plays London’s Brixton Academy Nov. 22-23.

Words

by Kwaku

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**Greatest Gainer**

**The Rebirth Of Kirk Franklin**

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NATURAL BLUES: As reported in last issue’s The Beat column, V2 Records is “getting out of the dance music business,” according to the label’s U.S. president, Andy Gershon. In other words, V2 has shuttered the doors to its dance/electronic imprint, MTA.

In the process, MTA’s Geoffrey “DJ Geofic” Colon (promotion), Alyssa Miller (press), and Dave Bell (marketing) were laid off, as were 18 other V2 employees. MTA was home to Pure- tone, Rinocerose, and Aphrodite, among others. At press time, all acts remained part of the V2 family.

“In the end, the label simply wanted to move from one style of music to another,” Colon says. “In this case, from dance/electronic music to indie rock.”

Colon acknowledges that the experience has left him with a bad taste in his mouth. “But it’s not just us,” he notes. “Strictly Rhythm recently closed its doors [Billboard, Oct. 12].” We couldn’t be surprised if others are also in trouble. The Internet and downloading technology has so affected the dance music industry—more so, I believe, than any other genre.”

FLASHBACK: Without question, Vic Latino is one of the few radio DJs who actually lives and breathes dance music. “I’m a huge fan of the music and the artists,” he says. “I love the energy and the excitement.”

Beat Box

by Michael Paeletta

For the past 13 months, Latino has captivated listeners in the tri-state area with his nightly four-hour show (7XU/ House Party With Vic Latino) on WKTU New York. “I bring the excitement and energy to the airwaves,” he notes. “I’ll gladly talk about the intro or outro of a song, but in the end, people want the music. Period.”

Prior to taking the helm at WKTU, Latino worked at WYPO Orlando, Fla., and WXPX Long Island, N.Y., among other stations. Through the years, he’s had a hand in breaking numerous tracks, including Ian Van Dahl’s “Castles in the Sky,” Sandy B.’s “Make the World Go Round,” and Darude’s “Sandstorm.” Most recently, he introduced New Yorkers to such tracks as Tiësto’s “Rapture (Tastes So Sweet),” Angelo Venuto’s “‘L-Italiano,” Kas Ketchum’s “The Ketchup Song (Hey Hadi),” and Wildefire’s “I Don’t Want U.”

And that’s just one side of the man. On Oct. 8, Tommy Boy Records issued Vic Latino Presents: 808 Now! a retro-splashed seven that injects new life into pop hits from the decade of scrunch socks and cut-up sweatshirts. In the Oct. 26 issue, the set debuted at No. 8 on the Top Electronic Albums chart.

Half of the 14 tracks are exclusive, including DJ 5-Om’s remix of Corey Hart’s “Sunglasses at Night,” and DJ Work’s rev- up of Berlin’s “Take My Breath Away.” Also featured are radio hits like Madhouse’s “Like a Prayer” and Dee Robert’s “Separate Ways.”

When asked if he’s surprised at the immediate chart success of 808 Now!, Latino can’t help but smile. “I guess what surprises me most are the other artists I’m surrounded by on the chart. I’m very good company.”

After passing for a moment, Latino adds, “I’m not a club DJ/producer who trots around the globe. I won’t get the same respect as Paul Oakenfold or DJ Tiesto—I know that. At the end of the day, I’m a radio DJ who happens to be a huge fan of dance music.”


SECOND TIME AROUND: A few lucky individuals, us included, have scored advance copies of Dee Robert’s newest 808 Music single, a cover of Shunk Ananas’s “Brazen (Weep).” Robert, who’s been enjoying crossover success with her take on Journey’s “Separate Ways,” recently premiered the potent track at one of the nightly showcases at the ninth annual Billboard Dance Music Summit.

While some may consider a remake of this classic Ananas track blasphemous, we must admit to liking the new version’s big-room sound. Our advice? Before passing judgment, first give a listen. “Brazen” should arrive just in time for the holidays.

BY TAMARA PALMER

“A house sound name in England, John Peel strikes a chord of recognition among die-hard indie rock and dance fans in the U.S., mainly through his celebrated Peel Sessions albums and Internet broadcasts of his thrice-weekly Radio 1 shows (Tuesday-Thursday, 7 p.m.-midnight GMT).

After 35 years on the air, Peel is about to take a bold step, releasing his first mixed CD. Streeet Dec. 2 in the U.K. (Dec. 3 in the U.S.), Peel’s FABRICLIVE: John Peel set is part of the FabricLive series (on Fabric Records) from the popular Fabric club in London.

“It goes back, I would have thought, to the fact that I was asked to play records at last year’s Sonar festival in Barcelona,” Peel recalls, trying to make sense of how the compilation theme came about. Seconds later, with a touch of self-deprecation, he adds, “Actually, I think that gig came about because people could take the piss out of me.”

“..But it worked remarkably well,” he adds. “Some bloke dived over a table and cracked the top of his head open. And when the audience is being taken away in ambulances, you know you’re doing a good job. Somebody from Fabric must have been there or something and thought, ‘Why don’t we get John to do something?’

“So, then DJ’d in the smallest room [at Fabric]—well, not the toilet, but you know what I mean. And again it went down quite well, and I’ve done another one since. I guess they thought it would be a good idea for me to do something else.”

Peel’s mix features songs that leapfrog from reggae, punk, and moody Mancunian rock to Motown soul, go-go beats, and straight-up dance tracks. As such, it will certainly distance itself from the glut of dance-oriented compilations that often seem narrowly focused or wildly self-hyping. Highlights include the Softedal Brothers’ “Break Em on Down,” the Fall’s “Mr. Pharmacist,” the Underlones’ “Teenage Kicks,” Trouble Funk’s “Let’s Get Small,” and Kingswood’s “Party Vacant.”

“I can’t mix or anything,” Peel openly acknowledges, though it’s clear he’s a bit hard on himself. “With the kind of records I play, you couldn’t mix them anyway. They’re all different styles of music and different tempos, and so on. It would sound ludicrous if you tried to mix them together. So all I can do is segue one track to the next, and I can’t do that terrifically well either.”

Peel cites club DJs like Jeff Mills, Richie Hawtin, Dave Clarke, and Carl Cox (who have all done on-air Peel Sessions for him) as impressive mixers, though he doesn’t aim to reach their staggering technical zenith. “I’ll never be able to do that; mine is a different function.”

With such a high-profile figure helming this collection, one might expect promotional overkill from the label. “Think again: The club largely prefers to sit back and let the music speak for itself as much as possible.

“We’re pretty keen to not do things that are kind of the common trapings of the compilation market,” asserts Fabric press officer Nick Doherty, who handles Peel’s bookings and management for this project. “It’s supposed to be just a little music club, really. So, nothing too heavy.”

Doherty says the club plans to promote Peel’s disc in the same manner as the other releases in the series, mainly through flyers, posters, and word-of-mouth. New York-based Studio Distribution will handle the release in the U.S.

The CD will also be available at a lower price through Fabric’s Web site (fabriclive.com) for a signing up for a subscription to one of the company’s two mix-CD series.

“If you’ve been into English rock at all in the past 20-plus years, then you know who John Peel is,” observes Mike Battaglia, dance/electronic manager of San Francisco’s Amoeba Music store. “He’s the transcends the dance genre and the rock genre.

“It has the potential to do really well. The guy’s a legend,” Battaglia continues. “But good [retail] placement and something to call attention to who he is and what is going on will be crucial. I think it could really win over a lot of people who consider themselves strictly into one type of music.”

Peel says, “I don’t see it being the status of a whole new alternative career or anything, but it’s quite nice to have copies of something to give my own children.”

• New Order, Back To Mine (OMC album), the latest volume in the Back To Mine series, programmed by British outfit OMC. New Order is quite the groovy mix. Missy “Misdemeanor” Elliott’s “The Rain (Supa Dupa Fly)” is saddled alongside the Velvet Underground’s “Venus In Furs” and The Rolling Stones’ “Paint It Black.”

• New Order’s “My Love” comes with a flyer to announce their first anniversary of the My Love series.


• Tutto Matto, Hot Spot (Tummy Touch U.K. album). Hankering for some Prelude-era, disco-styled funk? If so, don’t let this import (handled by Studio Distribution in the U.S.) pass you by. During the course of 10 tracks, Tutto Matto masterminds Paolo Guiglielmo and Jurij Preite mine colorful grooves, ranging from soul and Afro-Cuban to jazz and house. Flavorful beats abound, particularly on cuts like “Stay Forever” and the title track.

• Various artists, Electro Nouveau (Newhouse Music album). This festival on wax released includes tracks and remixes from the likes of Chicks on Speed, Ladytron, Adult, Felix Da Housecat, and Miss Kittin. Sidewinder, “Pink Vs. Northern Life’s “Everybody Loves You” is good, twisted fun.

MICHAEL PAELETTA

For the Beat Box Hot Plate

www.americanradiohistory.com
always been this way. I don’t see any change in the way I do business lately than I have over the past 16 years. It’s just more of a fight with the publishers to get the songs.

Has the process of finding hit songs gotten easier or harder?

It’s been harder the past few years because there have been so many artists. The publishing community has gotten bigger as well: more independent publishers and pluggers, more to keep up with and stay on top of in regard to songs.

What percentage of your job is spent scouting talent, and how much is spent scouting songs?

It’s probably 60% songs to 40% artists. We have anywhere from six to eight song/artist meetings every day.

Of the artists you have discovered and/or nurtured to success, which one or two have been your proudest achievements?

Kenny Chesney and Sara Evans. [With Kenny, it’s] just watching him grow as an artist on his records and in his live shows. Every time I see him, I’m blown away. And Sara [is] because she was my first signing when I started here at RCA.

Anyone who ever had aspirations of working at a record label dreams of having a job just like yours. Is it as much fun as it seems?

I love my job, and I’m very blessed to have it, but it’s a lot of work. I can’t imagine doing anything else. There’s nothing like hearing a voice and a song that brings tears to your eyes for the first time. It totally amazes me.

ON THE ROW: Songwriter Max T. Barnes is named to the newly created position of VP of production at Island Bound Music. He also re-signs as a staff songwriter with the company, where his new responsibilities include signing and producing new writer/artists.

Universal South VP of promotion Bryan Switzer has promoted West Coast regional promoter Denise Roberts to the newly created position of director of national promotion, effective Jan. 2, 2003.

VPR Records Northeast regional promoter Suzanne Alexander exits the label to take over hosting duties on Great American Country’s (GAC) Country Request Side series featuring Bobbie Eakes, who shifts to hosting duties for GAC’s Top 20 Country Countdown.

TV and the music business have one thing in common, Silverman says: Both are “about hits.” With Nashville Star, he says, “I think we’re going to find a hitting artist and an enduring one, I also think the show will be a hit.”

USA Network originally announced in August that Universal Music would provide the grand-prize recording contract. But when Universal later passed on being involved in the show, Reveille turned to Sony, which had expressed interest. Silverman calls Sony “a tremendous partner so far.”

The nationwide talent search kicked off at Nashville’s Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum Oct. 22, where approximately 500 hopefuls showed up to audition. The talent search is now going nationwide, with more than 30 radio stations organizing auditions before year’s end. A group-wide deal with Infinity Broadcasting gives that company exclusivity in the 17 markets where it has country stations. (The remaining partner stations, including WSM in Nashville, are not affiliated with Infinity.)

Unlike the youth-oriented American Idol: The Search for a Superstar, contestants for Nashville Star may be any age from 18 and up, although they must be solo artists.

Local winners go on to compete in five regional competitions to be held in January 2003. Ten finalists will then live together in a house in Nashville for two months. Cameras will capture both their domestic life together and their performances in a series of live competitions during that time. Eliminations will be made in each round of competition.

Reveille’s George Verschoor, one of Nashville Star’s producers, says that in the show’s early rounds, one contestant will be eliminated by judges and one by the audience. When the contestants are whittled down to a smaller group, eliminations will be determined exclusively by TV viewers, who will vote by phone.

In Nashville, hopefuls lined up early to get a chance to sing a snippet of a song in a nerve-wracking assembly line for judges—most of them Nashville music-publishing executives—set up in booths in the Hall of Fameoyer. For the wait for the start of the auditions began to get long, the assembled contestants entertained themselves by breaking into a spontaneous singalong of “Friends in Low Places.”

Contestants had to choose from a song on an approved list of country hits, which was available on USA Network’s Web site. And while there were many songs for women on the list, an overwhelming majority of the females chose to sing Martina McBride’s “A Broken Wing,” which could be heard echoing through the foyer about once every five minutes.

Among those waiting in line to audition were Belmont University sophomores Adam Davis and Kelly Deitz, both music-business majors at the Nashville school. Davis, from Louisville, Ky., sang Keith Urban’s “But for the Grace of God.” Deitz, a Pittsburgh native, sang Patsy Cline’s “I Fall to Pieces.”

Davis said he was there in an effort to “reach my ultimate goal of becoming a country-music recording artist. And the chicks that come along with that wouldn’t be bad either.” Deitz, meanwhile, said she was just hoping to “make it to the finals so I can live in the house and live out my Real World fantasy.”

Those who passed that quick audition in the foyer moved on to a theater in the museum, where they sang a cappella for about one minute onstage in front of three more judges. Those who didn’t pass the first round were escorted to the door.

Both Davis and Deitz made it inside the theater, where Deitz told judges that was the accident that led her to give a cord for a week inspired a renewed vigor for songwriting once she recovered. Davis traded quips with the judges, inspiring one to tell him he got “extra points for being a small town.” Both singers passed the second round as well, in which the group of 500 was narrowed down to about 100. That group will audition again Nov. 5 at a new Nashville club, the Tramp. Of these competitors, just one or two will be selected to go on to the regionals.
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**Notes:**

- Albums with the greatest sales gains this week.
- According to Industry Analyst of America, a RIAA certification for an album of 500,000 units sold (Platinum). A RIAA certification for vinyl copies of 150,000 units sold (Gold). A RIAA certification for compact discs of 600,000 units sold (Platinum). A RIAA certification for a digital download of 100,000 units sold (Gold). A RIAA certification for a digital download of 200,000 units sold (Platinum). A RIAA certification for a digital download of 500,000 units sold (Diamond).

**Billboard 200**

- Tracks and albums are tracked by Nielsen SoundScan.
- Artwork and titles are subject to change.
- Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.

**Billboard Country Chart**

- Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.
- All rights reserved.

**Billboard Country Catalog**

- Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.
- All rights reserved.
MIAMI—This is the season of the international Latin music awards show. September saw the third Latin Grammy Awards. October will see the first MTV Latin America Awards. And November will see the birth of Mexico’s Premios Oye!, one in a slew of recently announced local awards shows to be inaugurated in various countries. What will be the role of the Latin Grammys in this new panorama? Manolo Diaz, new president of the recently created board of the Latin Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (LARAS), spoke with Billboard and outlined the new, improved goals of a more autonomous academy and awards show.

The ratings for this year’s Latin Grammys were far lower than those of the first year. Some say it was a lack of interest, but you see it as a lack of promotion. Is there room for improvement?

There are many things that can be improved, but what’s perfectly clear is that if you have a product you want to sell, people have to know it exists. That was the problem. No one knew the Latin Grammys took place Sept. 18. There has to be a marketing campaign in place that is far more directed toward your objective audience, which—generally speaking—is the big cities. The Latin Grammys have to be directed toward an English-speaking audience that’s more cosmopolitan and urban and toward a Latin audience that’s bilingual. And generally, that population is in the bigger cities. But our ratings were acceptable. [We need to improve] in that the people who tuned in didn’t leave the show—even though it [featured some] debatable things.

Next year, what will be the board’s role in the production of the show and in the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS)?

We’ve created the TV Grammy— which was created this year but wasn’t able to provide input because it was already too late. But next year, it will be responsible for working alongside the production company to help them achieve that kind of common ground between what gives ratings and what’s genuinely Latin, because we can’t just obsess about ratings. What the academy aspires to is to have a democratic mechanism in place that isn’t bureaucratic and that allows us to point the academy in a more authentically Latin direction. When non-Latinas decide what’s good and what’s bad [in Latin music] or what’s Latin or not, then you fall into stereotypes, like the musical Evita, where Evita is portrayed as having a relationship with Che Guevara, whom she never met. These are ingredients added to get more sales. We disagree with that. We understand there are concessions to be made for ratings but not concessions that go against the essence or authenticity of what’s ours.

What other changes should we expect?

One of the most important things for the Latin Academy (LARAS) is first, that it wants autonomy—not total independence from NARAS, but we want autonomy. And second, we want to really be more in control for what happens inside the Latin Academy. We need to take control of the future of LARAS. We need a very competent organization with few people, which doesn’t need to mirror NARAS. Our academy has members from all over the world, and NARAS is American. So our needs and our objectives are different, within our common ground—which is the protection of the Grammy brand.

Now that every country has its own awards, do you think the Latin Grammys should become the U.S. Latin Grammys?

No, The U.S. Latin market is part of the U.S. total market, as much as hip-hop or R&B, and is well-represented in the U.S. Grammy. What we want to do is meet with the various academies that exist around the world and explore the possibilities of working together with those that use similar objectivity and quality standards. The Latin Academy should one day become the music academy of [Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries]. This would be the international academy, and the other could work within their own countries.

It’s complicated to have this international award that boasts the majority of voters here in the U.S. What do you think the voting pool will balance out?

Yes, it will. We want to balance it. Right now, maybe half of the voters are here in the U.S., but until very recently, 80% of them were here. The music professionals of Spain—led by their copyright society, SGAE—have understood the international importance of the Latin Grammys, and Spain now has as many voters as Mexico and Brazil together.

Will the nominating process change?

In my opinion, it needs fine-tuning.

LEILA COBO

Mexico Wins Big At Ritmo Latinos

BY LEILA COBO

The fourth annual El Premio de la Gente Ritmo Latino Music Awards took a decided Mexican spin when rocker Alejandro Guzmán and regional Mexican star Joan Sebastian tied with Spaniard Alejandro Sanz for multiple awards, taking home two each.

Guzmán won rock en español artist of the year and female pop artist of the year, while Sebastian took home the composer and regional Mexican artist of the year awards. Sanz won male pop artist of the year and song of the year for “Aprendizía” (Student).

Two other Mexicans, Pilar Montenegro and Luis Miguel, won new artist of the year and album of the year, respectively. The awards show, which took place Oct. 25 at Los Angeles’ Kodak Theatre, presented awards based on sales of albums in all U.S. Ritmo Latino stores between Nov. 1, 2001, and May 31, 2002.

Awards were presented in 14 categories. Additionally, the Estrella de la Gente (Star of the People) Award went to Los Tigres del Norte, and the El Tributo (Tribute) Award went to Christian artist Marcos Witt. This year, as with the Latin Grammy Awards, a new Christian music category was added to the list of awards, with Rubito winning Christian artist or group of the year.

The Ritmo Latino Awards boasted an impressive array of performers, including Montenegro, Paulina Rubio, Jennifer Peña, Los Tucanes de Tijuana, and Jerry Rivera.

The awards will air at 9 P.M. Sunday, Dec. 8 on the Telemundo network.

GOOD DEAL: Puerto Rican all-band Circo has signed a multi-album deal with Universal Music Mexico. The band’s current album, No Todo Lo Que Es Pop Es Bueno (Not Everything That’s Pop Is Good), will be released in Mexico in February, and the band plans to begin recording a new album in 2003.

The band, which originally released No Todo Lo Que Es Pop Es Bueno on indie label Head Music, was nominated for two Latin Grammy Awards this year, including best new artist. Now, Universal has acquired the rights to the album and the band. Circo’s core membership—singer Foté Abreu, drummer David Pérez, and keyboardist Eggé Santiago—formerly belonged to El Manjar de los Dioses.

In related news, regional Mexican star Carmen Jara has also inked an exclusive deal with Universal Music Latina, which will release Jara’s 10th album in 2003.

AWARDS FEVER: Yet another awards show is on the horizon. This time, it’s the inaugural Galardon La Raza (La Raza Awards), scheduled to take place Nov. 13 at Los Angeles’ Universal Amphitheater. The awards, produced by Spanish Broadcasting System and L.A. radio station La Radio Z97.9, honor Mexican norteros and grupera music. Awards will be presented in 14 categories, including bands of the year and nortero group of the year, while Joan Sebastian, Ramsén Ayala, Banda el Recodo, and Los Tigres del Norte will all receive awards for musical excellence. Although regional Mexican music was a focus at the recent Latin Music Industry Awards, and many nominees at the upcoming Columbia House awards, organizers of Galardon La Raza evidently still felt there was a void to fill.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK: At the City of Hope’s first Latin Music Industry Night honoring Sony executive Tomás Muñoz, performer Julio Iglesias had this to say to his one-time mentor: “Artists, many. Opportunities, few. And you’ve given opportunities to many of us. Congratulations on having created a school of spanosiders” —At the MTV Video Awards Latin America awards, the Latin American Academy of Music, the excitement centered on those performances that were short on over-production and deep in musical quality. Hearing English-language pop and rock acts as Rolling Stones to Anastacia—speaking in Spanish! Priceless —And in a week full of concerts, the stand-out was Mana’s. The band played a sold-out Miami Arena and then launched an hour-plus set with a special-guest appearance from Carlos Santana. But our favorite part, we confess, was an onstage phone call from singer Fler to his mom in Guadalajara, Mexico. Only a Latin son could be this sweet.

TO OUR READERS

America Latina will return next week.
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| 1    | 6    | LIBERACION | Historia Musical | 50 | 1 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 7    | CONJUNTO PRIMAVERA | Perdoname Mi Amor | 50 | 6 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 8    | VARIOUS ARTISTS | Viva La Raza! | 50 | 5 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 9    | LUPULO RIVERA | Amor de Corazon | 50 | 4 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 10   | LOS RAZOS | Dambo La A La Hilacha | 50 | 3 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 11   | CHUY VEGA | Mas De Lo Que Necesitas | 50 | 2 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 12   | JENNIFER PEÑA | Libre | 50 | 1 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 13   | THALLA | Thalla | 50 | 6 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 14   | VARIOUS ARTISTS | 15 Estrellas De Amor | 50 | 5 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 15   | CHAYANNE | Grandes Exitos | 50 | 4 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 16   | VARIOUS ARTISTS | 2002 Latin Grammy Nominees | 50 | 3 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 17   | LOS TEOREMIOS | La Hora Sonidera | 50 | 2 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 18   | LOS RAZOS | Una Lagrima No Basta | 50 | 1 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 19   | CRISTIAN | Grandes Exitos | 50 | 6 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 20   | LOS ACOSTA | Historia Musical 30 Pegatitas | 50 | 5 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 21   | SIN BANDERA | Sin Bandera | 50 | 4 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 22   | VICENTE FERNANDEZ | Historia De Un Idolo Vol. 1 | 50 | 3 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 23   | LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE | La Reina Del Sur | 50 | 2 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 24   | GILBERTO SANTA ROSA | Viceversa | 50 | 1 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 25   | VARIOUS ARTISTS | Viva Cabaret! | 50 | 6 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 26   | SOUNDTRACK | El Cien | 50 | 5 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 27   | VARIOUS ARTISTS | 40 Exitos Gigantes Vol. 2 | 50 | 4 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 28   | BANDA EL RECOYO | No Me Se Rajo | 50 | 3 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 29   | LOS TUCANES DE Tijuana | Juego A La Vida | 50 | 2 | Sony Latin
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| 1    | 32   | VARIOUS ARTISTS | 14 Grandes Exitos | 50 | 5 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 33   | PILAR MONTEREGIO | Desespo | 50 | 4 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 34   | VARIOUS ARTISTS | Confesiones Vol. 8 | 50 | 3 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 35   | RAMON AYALA Y SUS BRAVOS DEL NORTE | 20 Exitos Gigantes Vol. 2 | 50 | 2 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 36   | VARIOUS ARTISTS | Puras Cambias Soniederas | 50 | 1 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 37   | LA Onda | Toda Onda | 50 | 6 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 38   | MANU CHAO | The Live Album | 50 | 5 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 39   | MARC ANTHONY | Libre | 50 | 4 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 40   | GISSELLE | En Alma Cuerpo Y Corazon | 50 | 3 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 41   | VARIOUS ARTISTS | 20 Exitos Nueicas Canciones | 50 | 2 | Sony Latin
| 1    | 42   | MARC ANTHONY | Mis De Mi Alma | 50 | 1 | Sony Latin

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### Hot Latin Tracks

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<td>Banda El Recodo</td>
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<td>Area 3</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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<td>Te Vas</td>
<td>La Doda</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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<td>Jordy</td>
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<td>Marc Anthony</td>
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### Greatest Gainer

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### Hot Shot Debut

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<td>Los Tenentes</td>
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<td>Arboles de la Barranca</td>
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<td>Con Ella</td>
<td>Cristian</td>
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<td>Donde Estara Mi Primavera</td>
<td>Marco Antonio Solis</td>
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<td>Carito</td>
<td>Carlos Vives</td>
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<td>Tu Forma de Ser Cumbia</td>
<td>Alberto Y Valeria</td>
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<td>Adulto Usis Y Su Abuela</td>
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<td>Mi Derrota</td>
<td>Gente Y Sus Camarones</td>
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### Classic Tracks

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Street smarts and sacrifice have taken J&N Records founders Juan Hidalgo and Nelson Estevez from small-time retailers to giant killers, as tropical music's No. 1 independent label celebrates 20 years in the business. Trendsetters who have left their mark on the Latin music landscape, the half brothers from the Dominican hamlet of San José de la Mata have managed to keep their edge in an industry where success often stifles innovation.

Among the genres the label has helped popularize are merengue hip-hop, merenhouse, rap en español, instinto tropical and, most recently, bachata. "We were the top bachata label at a time when nobody believed in bachata," says Juan, who runs J&N's Miami headquarters. "Only now are the big labels making inroads into the genre because they see it's selling."

J&N's diversity extends beyond its catalog. Its operations span North America, the Caribbean and South America and include distribution and music publishing, as well as retail and production arms.

Such diversity has served the company well in uncertain times. "At what they do, they're the best in the business—by far," says Jeff Young, VP at Crescent Moon Records. He handled J&N's products as a marketing executive at EMI Latin and later Sony Discos, both of which distributed J&N. "For lack of a better term, they're a hit machine. And they compete with the multinationals."

Young attributes J&N's success to the uncommon working relationship between the two brothers. He notes that Nelson, by working out of the Dominican Republic, can keep his ear to the ground and stay ahead of the trends before they go statewide, where Juan, based in Miami, oversees the label's marketing and distribution activities. "They have a great division of talents," Young says. "It's very hard for partners to stay together over time without stepping on each other's toes. But they've really meshed."

**TAPPING A TALENT NETWORK**

Young says J&N has used its limited resources intelligently, designing its marketing campaigns, when appropriate, on a regional basis in order to maximize returns. He says the brothers have also focused on developing their core product lines. As a result, they can tap a network of talented Santo Domingo-based producers and songwriters. But little has ever come easy for the immigrating siblings, whose father, a factory worker, fled their homeland in 1960 because he made one enemy too many months into his imprisonment by the late Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo at the corner of 40th and St. Louis.

Shortly after reaching working age, Nelson, now 51, and Juan, 43, hustled after tips in New York City luxury hotels until late 1980, when record shop owner Luis Mato decided it was time to sell his 1,100-square-foot store in Corona, Queens. The brothers plunked down their savings and arm-twisted the remaining cash from relatives to purchase the store for nearly the sum of $10,000," says Nelson, who heads the company's office in the Dominican Republic.

The early years were lean. Receipts sometimes totaled less than $100 per day, recall the brothers, who kept their hotel jobs—Juan working as a bartender at the Manhattan Sheraton, Nelson waiting tables at the Regency Hotel on Park Avenue. The brothers continued to pour all their earnings back into the business. Several years later, weekly sales had climbed to between $25,000 and $30,000, and the store, originally called Big Apple Records, evolved into a local landmark.

But it was not the sweaty-looking apple with its tongue hanging out adorning the storefront that attracted customers.

"The people kept saying, 'I'm going to Juan and Nelson,'" says Nelson. "We didn't have any choice but to change the name of the place, because if you said, 'I'm going to Big Apple Records,' nobody would know what you were talking about."

Risko-takers from the beginning, Juan and Nelson were soon selling records, stereo components, musical instruments and, perhaps most fortuitously, home video.

"People saw we were crazy at first," Juan says, "but we became one of the first video outlets in the city to cater to Latinos. Whenever something new came around, videos or anything else, we wanted to get in on the action."

**SHARKS AND WIPEOUTS**

It wasn't long before the pair became involved in the industry's creative side. Juan's popular remix of the Ramón Orlando hit "La Bamba" (Drink and Drink) sold thousands of units and marked their entry into production and distribution. Orlando, one of the top merengue artists of the '80s and early '90s, was so impressed that he awarded the brothers distribution rights. The relationship soon blossomed, and Orlando recorded his next seven albums on the J&N label.

A couple of start-up projects failed, Juan and Nelson remember. Those were merengue act Juan Carlos y su Conjunto Crystal and balladeer José Alberto. "We were wiped out," Juan says.

But, circa 1990, the brothers released a song called "Bomba, Bomba" (Jump, Jump) by an upstart merengue-rap act from Washington Heights, Proyecto Uno. The song was a huge hit at Latin dance halls but was quickly eclipsed by the success of the act's followup, "El Urbanillo" (El Shark), which became an international smash. Sales of In de Humo, the album featuring "El Urbanillo," tallied 500,000 units worldwide, including some $50,000 in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, Juan says. The label picked up established performers such as Orlando, Alex Bueno and Cucy Valoy to round out its roster of emerging acts, which included Proyecto Uno, Eddie Herrera, La Rotalanda and Los Toros Band. At about the same time, J&N struck a distribution deal with Puerto Rico's Prime Records, featuring some of the hottest rap en español acts of the day—Vico C., Lisa M. and Francheska, as well as merengue idol Tito Rosario. "We had a hand in nearly all the songs that were hitting in New York at that time," Nelson says.

In the early '90s, the one-time mom-and-pop retailers were raking in millions of dollars worth of sales and joining forces with like-minded entrepreneurs in places like Puerto Rico, Colombia and Venezuela. The brothers hit peak in the mid-'90s, when Juan relocated to Puerto Rico and signed acts that would reap considerable dividends as the merengue-bomba craze exploded.

**MERENGUE BOOM**

By 1995, J&N's total units topped 2 million annually, fueled by strong sales in Puerto Rico and the profound impact of merengue boom groups like Zafer Negra, Rikarena and La Makina.

The merengue boom of the late '90s—epitomized by... Continued on page 40
They're an indie at a time when the record industry faces its direst moment. They specialize in tropical music at a time when the genre has hit an all-time low.

Call it a double whammy. But not for J&N Records. As tropical music's most successful indie celebrates its 20th anniversary, it also celebrates two decades as the most visible trendsetter in the genre. From salsa to merengue, from bachata to reggetón, half brothers Juan Hidalgo (J) and Nelson Estevez (N) have heard it all—before anyone else did. And they've translated that knack for knowing what works on the dance floor into a profitable, self-contained family business (six family members, including Hidalgo's son, work at J&N) that includes a retail store, a label, a publishing house (J&N Publishing), a distributor, a recording studio, radio stations (three in the Dominican Republic) and, now, a management and concert-promotion arm. Over lunch in their Miami offices, Juan and Nelson spoke to Billboard about all things tropical.

You've been at the forefront of finding new talent for a long time. Exactly what do you look for?

Nelson: Well, in music, you have to have charisma and "angel" (an aura). Maybe you're not a great singer, but onstage everything is forgotten.

Well, aren't charisma and "angel" the same thing?

Nelson: Sort of. Charisma is something you have to demonstrate. An artist has to learn how to use it in front of the audience. Some artists lose their charisma because they don't know how to use it.

Juan: An angel is someone who exerts attraction. In this business, we go to a small, simple club, and there are three guys sitting there; one's playing the guitar, another's doing something else, and there's one that stands out. And those that have "angel," they last a lifetime. They'll always do things, even if they're old. They don't disappear. There are many singers who've arrived and then can't go on. No one wants to go hear them.

But that also has to do with the fact that you work in a genre that demands playing live. For example, have you signed artists without having seen them perform?

Nelson: Yes. We've signed artists from listening to tapes.

Juan: Although it happens with groups—with concept groups—which is different. For example, Rikarena was a concept.

Nelson: Los Toros Band had never recorded either. Rocabanda was a concept. So was Proyecto Uno.

Juan: Proyecto Uno was a special case because it was tailor-made for us.

But the band was together when they came to your?

Juan: It was an invention. They came to us as a merengue band, but we asked them for more things. This was when rap was starting to hit hard—'90 or '91. And that's when we told them we were looking for something with a more Americanized sound beneath, and a little bit of rap. We were driving in the car, and they told me, "We have a rapper. His name is Magic; he's from Jersey, his parents are Dominican, but he was born here. He can do it." And that's when we put that rap section on "Ian Interesado," and that was it.

And you signed them sight unseen?

Nelson: Well, most of the groups we've done have never been seen anywhere before.

So, in this case, if the rapper didn't work, 

Continued on page 44
From your family of "Artists", congratulations on your 20th Anniversary.

Juan & Nelson Records

AGAPITO PASCUAL
ALEX BUENO
ALINNA VARGAS • ANTHONY
BRAHO • CHUCHITO VALDEZ
EDDY HERRERA
EL PRODIGIO • FLIA BOYS
FRANK REYES
FUERA DE LEY
GEOVANNY POLANCO
HENRY HIERRO • JOE VERAS
KINITO MÉNDEZ
LA MAKINA • LUCCHO PANIC
LUIS MANUEL
MAGIC JUAN • MALA FE
MARIA DÍAZ
MELAO CRIOLLO • MIGUEL ANGEL
MONCHY & ALEXANDRA
PUERTO RICAN POWER
RAULIN RODRIGUEZ
RIKARENA • VANNESA
WILBERT MANUEL
WILFRIDO VARGAS
YOSKAR SARANTE • ZAFRA NEGRA

32 AND COUNTING

WWW.JNRECORDS.COM
The Artists Of J & N:
A diverse roster of new and established acts spans genres and markets

BY KARL ROSS

Breaking new acts—and even new genres—has kept sales brisk for J&N Records while competitors in the tropical marketplace have seen their product stockpiling in warehouses and at retail. The outlook at J&N for third-quarter 2002 remains upbeat, despite an industry-wide slump, increasing piracy and free-falling economies in some key markets, label execs say.

Bachata duo Monchy y Alexandra is keeping the charts steamy with its sophomore release, Confesiones..., which the label says has surpassed 200,000 units, making it one of the year’s hottest-selling tropical titles. Label execs say nearly a third of those sales are tallied west of the Mississippi, as Monchy y Alexandra continue to make inroads into new markets from Galveston to San Bernardino. Several other leading bachateros on the label, such as Frank Reyes, are adding West Coast swings to the tour itineraries.

At a time when merengue sales are in decline, bachata,

In the beginning: Juan (left) and Nelson

New imprints continue to crop up for J&N, such as Flia Records, an urban reggae-rap label. In Colombia, J&N is a partner in JAN Music and, in Ecuador, the upstart Tranza Records.

"As independents, we have to find the niches the multinational labels miss," Juan says. "The boss at a multinational is sitting in his chair while we’re in the street smelling the marketplace."

SONGWRITERS AND PUBLISHING
The company’s publishing arm, J&N Publishing, has grown almost exponentially since the early ‘90s, and its roster includes roughly 400 songwriters, says Marti Cuevas,

Continued on page 42

Continued from page 37

the crossover success of Sony Discos’ Elvis Crespo—was followed by a bust, as Puerto Rico radio stations have all but abandoned the genre in recent years.

J&N has been able to keep its market share above 10% of tropical sales with a strong showing from its bachata roster—especially the duo of Monchy y Alexandra—which has opened markets in Mexico and the U.S. Southwest and which Young says is "the most surprising act of the year."

In the beginning: Juan (left) and Nelson

SONGWRITERS AND PUBLISHING

The company’s publishing arm, J&N Publishing, has grown almost exponentially since the early ‘90s, and its roster includes roughly 400 songwriters, says Marti Cuevas,

Continued on page 42
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE KINGS OF QUEENS FOR 20 YEARS FULL OF SALSA, BACHATA AND MEREN HITS!

CONGRATULATIONS JUAN AND NELSON FROM YOUR FRIENDS AND DISTRIBUTOR - SONY DISCOS.

Sony Music International
THE ARTISTS
Continued from page 40

a genre once considered too crude for mainstream consumption, has filled the void to become the label's top-selling genre.

Tony De Valdivia, J&N's director of sales and marketing, says the label expects an additional boost with this month's release of Alex Bueno's next CD, tentatively titled Bachata Internacional or Paloma. As good as his name, Bueno's previous two releases—Bachata a su Tiempo (1999) and Canson Dora (2000)—each sold more than 100,000 units, he says. "His voice has that special angel," De Valdivia says. "Everything Alex Bueno sings—whether merengue, bachata or salsa—he sells."

Other established bachata acts on J&N's roster include the above-mentioned Reves, the underrated Joe Veras and Raulin Rodriguez. Rodriguez and Reves, it should be noted, have both charted with their late summer releases—Dorsoche de Anvo (Outpouring of Love) and Dejaine Exites en Ti (Let Me Inside You), respectively.

TOPS IN THE REPUBLIC

On the cusp of international acclaim is bachatero Yoskar Sarante, who charted on his label debut with the single "Llora Alme Misa" (Cry My Soul) and went on to start with his follow-up disc, ... No Es Casualidad, released in July and racking up sales of nearly 40,000 units in its first two months, De Valdivia says. "He's been voted the top bachatero in the Dominican Republic for the past two years," De Valdivia says, noting that Sarante was

20 years of Winning in the Latin Music Business
CONGRATULATIONS!
twice the recipient of that country's Premio Casandra.

Nelson Hidalgo, co-president at J & N, says bachata sales, led by Monchy y Alexandra, have surged because the label has endeavored to make the music more accessible to a broader audience. "We've toned down the twangy guitar that's typical of traditional bachata and replaced it with a more melodic sound," Hidalgo says. "We also softened the lyrics. I see it as a fusion of boleros, tro music and American blues."

The label's new emphasis on bachata acts doesn't mean it has abandoned its previous staple, merengue. Streething this month is a release from La Makina, Un Tablazo (A Blast), a Puerto Rico-based act which label execs hope will mark the beginning of a merengue-bomba revival. De Valdivia says the label expects sales comparable to past releases topping 100,000 units. Also hitting retail this month is Kinito Mendez's latest effort, Sigo Siendo el Hombre Merengue (I'm Still the Merengue Man), featuring the Mexican evergreen "El Rey" as the lead single. As a novelty, Mendez recorded a version of his late 1990s smash, "Ca-chambas," with the tongue-twister about "a crazy man watching a girl who is seated on a branch, sticking out of a tree..." sung in reverse. Another upstart act, Mía Fe—led by Javier Gutierrez—continues to stay hot after breaking out with its 1999 hit single, "La Vaca" (The Cow). And, on J & N imprint Fia Records, expect chart noise from the solo debut of former Proyecto Uno front man Juan Wilson, better known by his stage name, Magic Juan. "It's hip-hop, it's street, it's more of an underground product, but it's also radio-friendly," De Valdivia says about Wilson's "La Prueba" (The Test), which was shipped to retail Sept. 17. "We're putting the whole company behind Juan's product," he adds.

**CHUCHO'S SON**

J & N's search for a new sound has even sired a Dominican-based act, K-Taplum, that performs in a style reminiscent of Ecuador's chart-topping band Azul Azul with a pantu-singed, at times techno, sound. De Valdivia says the group's debut is scheduled for early next year, with the expected lead single, "Muevate Como Yo" (Move Like Me). Further diversifying the label's roster is Chuchito Valdés, son of Cuban piano legend Chucho Valdés. Chuchito's label debut, La Timba, was set for release this month, De Valdivia says.

So what's the next big thing in Latin music? J & N execs hope it's old-school merengue, known variously as percí o tipico or, more simply, tipico.

The accordion-driven sound was first introduced to the Latin mainstream in the mid-1990s by New York-based rappers Fulamitio. If audiences are ready for the "real thing, they are likely to find it with J & N standouts Agapito Pascual, El Prodigio and Geovanny Polanco (whose record was slated for release late this month). All three have sizable followings in the Dominican Republic, where Pascual's "Le Cantaron Bingo"—sung with Quinito Mendez as a guest artist—is a party favorite.

"Right now, tipico is like bachata used to be three years ago," De Valdivia says. "It's not very well-known, but it's getting there."

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**Mock Roll Salutes**

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Your friend Marti Cuevas &

CAMPESINO ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC.
MAYIMBA MUSIC, INC.

Q&A WITH J&N

you could have changed him. You were interested in the concept...

Nelson: Yes. The mix of merengue with American music.

Juan: And we were very lucky in that the producer—Pavel—had a good thing going with the guys [in the group]. I would say what works best in music is teams. That's why debuts are always successful. Because, after the second or third album, the team falls apart. That always happens. The Proyecto Uno team finally broke, too.

Not so with Puerto Rican Power...

Nelson: No, because Puerto Rican Power is headed by Luisito Ayala, and he's a musician. He always works with another producer from the label. But Luisito is the head of the project, and it's always been that way. Another thing we've always looked for, and which has been fundamental in our development, is that we try to use specific producers with our groups [as opposed to having the groups produce themselves]. Why? Because we know what people want. You tell the producer what you need and give him the basis for him to develop it. But it's jointly with us and with knowing what the street and what the people want. We're always looking for things we think are on the rise.

You started the label at the same time you opened your shop and established distribution. What did you do before that?

Nelson: I worked in a hotel. First as a waiter, then as a dishwasher. Then as a bus boy.

Juan: I started at a dance club. When I left there, I went to a hotel where my brother recommended me [they both laugh]. And I also started as a dishwasher. When I got there, the guy said, "I'm not for you." And I asked, "What job is that?" He said, "Washing dishes." And I said, "That's what I want to do." And I did.

So you had no music-industry experience?

Nelson: Only at the club. Look, the poor man's amusement is a record and a drink, because he doesn't have anything else.

And a dance partner...

Juan: Well, all together. Music leads to that.

So, how do you make the leap from working in a hotel to opening a shop and distributor?

Juan: When I was at the hotel, I would go to a record store that belonged to a friend of mine and help him out. I always loved music. And, one time, I told him that if he ever thought of selling to let me know. And he called. We reached an agreement. It cost us $10,000, but the beauty of it was we had no money. I had $1,500 in the bank, and [Nelson] had $3,000. But we did it.

Nelson: We were looking for our own business. When you've worked in a hotel for 12 years, you want your own business. I stayed at the hotel three more years because we weren't making enough money, but things grew.

Was it initially called J&N?

Nelson: No, that was an accident. Everything was an accident—buying the business, growing as producers and distributors and signing artists. But we wanted to know: How do they record? How do they make an album? We really had no idea.

Your first signing was Ramón Orlando, who was already an established star. Why did he choose to sign with such a fledgling company?

Nelson: Because we made him a great offer. We would distribute him, and he owned his albums.

Juan: Ramón opened the door so many people would come to us. We released a hit, "Rin Rin," and from that
tiny little store—it was a basement; we still have it—we sold 67,000 copies, which at the time, without massive distribution, was a lot of copies. That’s when Toño Rosario came to us for distribution. We had three or four years of constant growth.

**Nelson:** It was very fast and very strong. It’s hard for us, even. It’s as if all these people come to your house for dinner and you have nothing prepared. So you say, “OK, what do we have in the fridge?” and you make a sancocho. And that’s the best sancocho ever. And that’s what happened with us. We developed step-by-step. We didn’t know anyone in radio. I think we’re unique in that sense. That we developed a label without having radio or press contacts, without being musicians. The only thing we had was good intentions and a lot of work.

**Do you think that, in a way, ignorance was bliss?**

**Juan:** There’s one important thing I always recommend for people who start in the business. People get into it because it’s flashy, it’s flamboyant. But, we tried to learn from the business. I think I’ve read every article and book on the music business, because it’s a tough business. And I don’t want to say that all people in it are unappreciative, but many are. There are a lot of ingrates and a lot of treason. So, you have to learn so you don’t get disillusioned or lose your life’s savings.

**You’ve tried to get into pop. Have you been successful?**

**Nelson:** Pop for us is difficult, because it’s another monster.

**Juan:** It’s not so much the quality of our product but the fact that radio and press see us as a tropical label. So, if we take a single to radio, they don’t imagine it’s a pop record, and they tend to give those spots to other labels.

**How do you compete with multinationals in radio?**

**Juan:** The quality of the music and knowing the genre. It’s not the same thing to be sitting at a desk, or to know what’s happening in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Miami and New York and do things. When we record a merengue, we’re sure it’s something people will buy. It’s not the same as someone who produces pop and then does merengue. We know what we want.

**Now that you mention pop and merengue in the same sentence, does J&N have artists who record those two genres on the same album?**

**Juan:** No. If you’re merengue, we’ll do merengue; if you’re pop, we’ll do pop. The ultimate goal of many labels is being at the top of the Billboard charts, so they make all these versions to be No. 1.

**Perhaps the multiple versions have been a factor in the downturn of tropical sales…**

**Nelson:** It’s hard to say. If those “salsa” versions that pop acts record weren’t on the radio, tropical music would grow as a genre because you would find more tropical acts on the tropical charts. Now, with Monchy y Alexandra, we did a balada, merengue and bachata version of “Te Quiero Igual que Ayer.” But, personally, if I had to sign a paper saying that, as a label, I wouldn’t do it, I would sign, because it’s hurt the genre.

**Do you really think people want to hear these balladeers sing salsa?**

**Nelson:** I don’t know that they want to, but if they hear it on the radio, and it’s a big name, they’ll listen. But it’s confusing, and, many times, those versions aren’t even on the album.

Continued on page 46

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Congratulations to
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on your 20th Anniversary.

I wish you continued success for another twenty.

Cariños, Kinito Mendóz
(su amigo)

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A Business of
INTERNATIONAL PAPER
Q&A WITH J&N

Continued from page 45

Back to J&N. Sony distributes you, and, prior to that, you were distributed by EMI. Has this been beneficial, or do you feel you've lost control?

Juan: We've never lost control. If I want to give a client a discount, I can do that. But we were never able to be everywhere either, and that's what they've helped us with.

On the West Coast, your artists receive no airplay, yet they do very well touring. What do you do in lieu of radio?

Nelson: It's very hard to have a hit without radio.

Juan: But now in New York there's an interesting phenomenon. All the American discos are playing tropical music, which was taboo before. Now, every hip restaurant has tropical music. On the other hand, people are no longer going to these massive clubs. They like more intimate places.

Nelson: But that's what we do. Because, if a DJ plays Monchy y Alexandra for 2,000 people, they're forced to listen to the track. It's even more direct than radio. But, if you have small clubs, you have to do the work 10 times.

So the whole guerilla-marketing concept is something you've always done?

Juan: We've been doing that for years. That's always been our formula: the street. We take albums to restaurants, to discos. Rocashanda never played on the radio, and we sold 100,000 copies.

Piracy disproportionately affects Latin music and, specifically, tropical and regional Mexican music. How badly is it affecting you?

Nelson: It affects all of us. And, if it keeps up, it'll put us out of business. It's a robbery that everybody sees and no one stops. How do you explain that? It's a mystery.

But we're searching for strategies to stiff them by putting out material similar to what they have.

You now have your own publishing company, as well, and you've been very careful in how you exploit your catalog.

Juan: You should see the story of Merenbits [one of J&N's best-selling compilations]. It's not just about putting out a compilation. We've tried to create a name brand, and every November we put out Merenbits. We've released it before or after, so we can have that success. Every Christmas, people expect their Merenbits. We have several series and compilations, and the idea is to put out one album a year of each. Veracruz and Bachata, for example, come out in the summer.

And all the music is part of your publishing arm?

Juan: Eighty percent of what we record is from J&N Publishing. Expanding that division is our top priority. From the moment we understood the meaning of publishing, it's been a priority.

And how do you compete with a big publishing house that can offer a huge advance?

Juan: We give personalized attention. One of our pluses is that you don't have to go through 17 people to talk with me. I'm here. If you have personal problems, I'll help out. That's the advantage of an indie, and it's something artists and composers should realize. Maybe I can't give you 50 grand, or half a million, but, if you stay with me, you might end up making more money.

How about concert promotion? Are you into that as well?

Juan: It's one of the things we're working on. And we're also establishing a management office that is starting in the Dominican Republic. Because that's the future of the business: handling artists jointly with the record label.

You've always been at the forefront of tropical music trends. Can you tell us what happened with bachata? It was huge with Juan Luis Guerra, and then it really never left the Dominican Republic until you guys came along with this more folksy brand.

Nelson: The thing is, Juan Luis was so strong, his music [a more contemporary bachata] didn't allow anything typical to go through.

Juan: It's like Carlos Vives and vallenato. Vives hasn't strengthened traditional vallenato, because people from outside Colombia only know his sound. That's the problem. So, with bachata, we changed the typical bachata sound a little bit. That repetitive little rhythm that the normal listener objects to, we took it from the forefront and placed it in the background. And the rhythm will keep on changing. Who knows if tomorrow we won't hear a bachata sung half in Spanish and half in English?

Nelson: It's the most similar thing to country. Because of the lyrics, the guitars, because it's so very popular. It appeals to the masses.

Juan: It also has blues influences. All our new Dominicans listen to the blues. We have to buy them B.B. King albums.

How about merengue? Do you think its moment is over?

Juan: I think it's the only music that the entire world can dance to [because it's so easy]. You can never stop that. Even if merengue isn't played on the radio, you go to a disco and you'll hear a set every 15 minutes. Like all genres, it has its ups and downs.

Nelson: It's the only genre that doesn't make you look bad on the dance floor.

What new trends do you see coming up?

Juan: Reggaeton.

Nelson: Reggaeton and bachata. We're looking everywhere. You never know where you'll find the next thing. And I don't care what they say, tropical music is still marginalized at the multinationals, at least in comparison to pop.

And how ironic, because recording a tropical album costs a fraction of a pop album.

Nelson: Yes. The video alone costs you more than the entire production. But, thanks to that, we can make a living.
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Sony’s Naranjo Speaks Up For ‘Bad Girls’

The album will be launched Nov. 11 in France and Spain; earmarked for future treatment are the U.K. and other more traditionally “easy” territories in which to launch English-language product, such as Germany and Scandinavia. It will be released in Italy almost certainly before Christmas.

With regard to a U.S. and Latin American launch, Sony Continental European VP of artist marketing Mark Bond says, “It is premature to put flesh on the bones—let’s see how it does in the U.K. first.”

But why release Bad Girls in Spain only one year after the relative failure—selling fewer than 200,000 units—at the same album in English?

“Monica is the most important female Spanish artist that exists for the world outside Spain, and we are launching a major international campaign beginning in France,” Sony Spain president José María Canskaro says. “I decided to release Bad Girls in Spain because I think it will have a much bigger impact than Chicá Malas had. She has a very mixed fan base here, and they’ll love her performing in English.”

The first single, “I Ain’t Gonna Cry” (“No Voy A Llorar” on Chicá Malas), went to French radio in September, but Canskaro says that like all the English versions, the songs have been given completely different mixes. New videos have also been made for non-Spanish audiences.

The idea for Bad Girls began in Sony Spain and soon combined the efforts of Sony Epic A&R director Jennifer Ces and international A&R teams. The project outside Spain is led by Sony Europe’s marketing and A&R Bond says, “It’s going to France first simply because Sony France had the hottest reaction. But we intend to work Bad Girls in all territories, including the U.K., after it has been successful elsewhere."

Throughout the years, Carrington has continually sought an answer to one question that frequently comes up in conversation and interviews: “I am always asked what jazz means to me,” she says, “and it always bothered me, because this was the one question I could never answer.” The proper response, she says, came during a conversation with Reeves. “Dianne told me that Abbey Lincoln often explained jazz by saying that jazz is a spirit,” Carrington recalls, “and that notion has stuck with me ever since.”

That concept turns up as the title of Carrington’s first release as a leader since Real Life Story. Jazz Is A Spirit, recorded for the German ACT label and released domestically Oct. 15, builds its foundation upon Carrington’s notion of jazz as a creative spirit, ripe with a sense of history, that guides and nurtures music and, in the larger sense, life itself. If one is defined by the rhythm around them, Carrington is in good company: pianist Herbie Hancock, trumpeters Wallace Roney and Terence Blanchard, and guitarist Kevin Eubanks are among the musicians who contribute to the project.

Carrington’s compositions largely echo the melodic, unfiltered sounds of the late ’60s and early ’70s, referencing an era when musicians were free to explore the outermost reaches of their ability while drawing liberally from any number of influences. But Jazz Is A Spirit opens and closes with pieces that exhibit a more contemporary, hip-hop flavor. “I put samples and loops into those two tracks [which feature Malcolm-Jamal Warner of The Cosby Show fame on spoken word and bass] because I thought that point to different directions I might explore on future recordings,” Carrington says. “These compositions are like the front and back covers of a book, and between them is a journey for the listener to take.”

Carrington will tour as a featured member of Hancock’s band throughout the fall, with the pianist adding a selection from Jazz Is A Spirit to his set each night. Retail tour support will include co-ops with Borders Books & Music, Barnes & Noble, Tower Records & Video, A&R, and Virgin for end caps, listening stations, and new release walls. ACT is distributed through Big Daddy Distribution in the U.S. The full release is being serviced to jazz radio through Jazz Promotion.

“Because Terri Lynne has a certain amount of name recognition from her TV appearances [including the drum stool of the late night TV show], she has been able to give her exposure in outlets that do not necessarily feature jazz,” says Jim Eigo, media contact for ACT. “There are many resources necessary to successfully market a jazz release throughout the U.S., and often only the major labels can pull it together. In this case, there are a lot of people who already are curious to know more about Terri Lynne, and that allows her to put out this record on a small label and still pull together everything necessary to market it.”

AND: New York’s village Vanguard, along with proprietor Lorraine Gordon, will be honored at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Seventh Annual Gala and Manhattan Rhapsody Benefit Concert, to be held Nov. 11 in Avery Fisher Hall. Opened in its current downtown location by Max Gordon in 1935, the club began focusing on jazz in the late 1940s. Lorraine Gordon took over operations when her husband died in 1989. The evening will also find drummer Max Roach honored with the Award for Artistic Excellence. The proceedings will help raise funds for Jazz at Lincoln Center’s educational programs, concerts, and radio broadcasts.

Trumpeter Hugh Masakela releases Time, his first collection of new material in three years, Nov. 4 through Legacy/Columbia. The 69-year-old Masakela is joined by several musicians from his native South Africa, including trumpeter Prince Lengoza, saxophonist Mceoy Mu- bata, and guitarist Lawrence Matshiza. Masakela describes Time as a companion disc to his previous two studio releases, 1997’s Black to the Future and 1999’s Sixty.
Aparo's anguished "Cry" originally appeared on The American, which came out in 2000 on Melissa/Arista and was produced by Matt Serletic, who had signed him to the label. A tour opening for Matchbox Twenty followed, as did a VH1 aired video for the first single "Spaceship." But after two more singles (including "Cry") and 18 months of roadwork, the label changed hands, and Aparo lost out in the shuffle. But the BMI writer kept touring constantly and in March released Weapon of Mass Construction—consisting largely of cover material—via his own Pottymouth Records label.

Old pal Serletic, meanwhile, produced Willie Nelson's The Great Divide album. "That got him into the country-music world," Aparo says of Serletic. "Then he told me that Faith Hill liked 'Cry'—though it took a year or so to get it on her record. But it was worth the wait, especially for a voice like hers!"

Still, hearing Hill's version came as a surprise—and perhaps a harbinger of growth for Aparo as a songwriter. "It's funny to think of songs you thought the world might never hear because the record you had them on just didn't make it," Aparo continues. "It's interesting to see them reborn, but bizarre: Being a singer/songwriter, you only picture yourself singing them—but I couldn't wait to hear Faith sing 'Cry.'"

Aparo adds that "in a weird way, when you don't picture anyone else but yourself singing on your songs, you don't picture yourself writing for other people. But this gave me a whole different viewpoint on songwriting: I still want to be a solo artist, but now when I work on songs, it's always with the mind-set of writing, regardless of whether I picture myself singing them or not."

Currently in the middle of writing a song that could conceivably be a country song, Aparo—an otherwise intensely personal songwriter—is starting to schedule "meaningful meetings" in Nashville in search of potential collaborators—but that's a whole other animal besides just writing for other people.

Meanwhile, Aparo is relieved to find new vitality in a virtually dead album. "The biggest thing for me was that this song that I believed in on The American is giving all the other ones on that record life again—if other people want to do them," he says. The album, he adds, is getting new notice from Hill's mention on her Web site. "I tour constantly, and I can see people are starting to find it because of her doing the song."

UNFORSEEN: Few songs are so intrinsic to the entire character of a movie as Tex Ritter's title theme from 1952 Gary Cooper western High Noon. Now, Artisan Home Entertainment has aifty way for those of us who want to hear the Academy Award-winning Dimmable opening lyric. "The opening tune over and over again on its newly released High Noon Collector's Edition DVD: It has designated the song as an actual chapter stop in the disc's index. "Normally it would just say 'Opening Credits,' " Artisan DVD productions manager and in-house producer Kate Nayberg notes. "But in this case, the song truly was the opening—and it really spearheaded the plot and drove the movie. It included the film's title in the lyric. In fact, it's almost like the whole movie is summed up in the song—it's almost an opening credit in and of itself. So it's a more creative way of labeling the opening credit sequence as opposed to typically calling it 'Opening Credits' and thereby overlooking the song."

Nayberg adds that unlike contemporary movie soundtracks, "High Noon"—with its unforgettable opening lyrics—gave "that 'I'm in love with you'—the song in High Noon. So she doesn't see how the song could be a hit, except for movie producers who could similarly denote songs, "since they have so many more options."

"Best 10 Days Of The Year" At Frank Brown Festival

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Songwriters from around the world are once again flocking to the Gulf Coast for the 18th annual Frank Brown International Songwriter's Festival Nov. 7-17. The festival showcases writers from different genres throughout 16 venues, ranging from clubs to churches, spread out along 35 miles of the Florida/Mississippi Coast.

The event was named in honor of the late Frank Brown, who was the night watchman at the Flora-Bama Lounge for 28 years until his retirement at age 91. It was Brown's suggestion that clubs draw visitors during the off-season by holding a songwriter's festival.

These days, the event draws songwriters, publishers, producers, record companies and A&R executives, as well as the average civilian music lover. "If they don't come, they are missing out," festival coordinator Reneda Cross says of the event, which has been so successful that the Flora-Bama has scheduled a full week of events during the off-season.

The festival is also a great time for songwriters to network. "Newcomers really benefit by meeting people and getting a chance to arrange meetings and co-writing sessions," Golden says. "More than a chance to get cuts, they also make great contacts."

Those involved in the festival are also looking toward the future and inspiring the next generation of songwriters. "We promote songwriting and the creative writing aspect in schools," Cross says. "We take songwriters into the schools and perform for the kids. They also get the kids to help them write songs. Casey Kelly is heading that up for me. He goes into the schools. So does Jimmie Hinson, Kim Tribble, Mark Alan Barnett, and the list goes on and on. So many volunteers.

Cross notes that one other community benefit of the festival is the sale of raffle tickets. She says, "One hundred percent of the proceeds will go to scholarships at high schools in Gulf Shores and Pensacola."

Cross anticipates another highlight to be the "Bluebird Night" Nov. 14 at the Flora-Bama. Amy Kurland, owner of Nashville's famed Bluebird Café, will bring some of the songwriters often featured at the Bluebird, including Hugh Prestwood and Richard Leigh.

In addition to showcasing country, pop, and blues songwriters, the festival also spotlights gospel music. Perdido Key Methodist Church will be the site of a showcase featuring Cordle, Three for Thee, Jerry Salley, and Stu Phillips.

Hinson credits much of the festival's appeal to its laid-back atmosphere. "It's the only time songwriters are around each other where we're not competing for something and dressed in a suit," says Hinson, who has had his songs cut by the Oak Ridge Boys, Tammy Wynette, Steve Earle, and Reba McEntire. "It's just a great hang. You get a chance to see people sing their songs that you might not have otherwise. It's a convention of the community of songwriters. And it's a lot of fun for the fans in the audience, because they get to be right there in the room and see where the song came from without a lot of production around it."

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Bearsville Studios Restructures

With Studios A & B Closing, Focus Now Moves To Turtle Creek Barn

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

BEARSVILLE, N.Y.—Bearsville Studios, a multi-room, residential recording facility with a long and distinguished history, is undergoing a significant transformation. The facility’s Studios A and B, a spacious tracking room and overdub/mix suite, respectively, will close and the building in which they are housed is to be sold. All studio services will focus on the Turtle Creek Barn studio, a separate studio at the Bearsville Complex that has long been a favorite of artists, producers, and engineers.

Offering sanctuary in a rustic, wooded setting, the Turtle Creek Barn, to be known as Bearsville @ Turtle Creek, is a century-old rough-hewn barn that initially served as a project and rehearsal studio for Robbie Robertson and Garth Hudson of the Band. Later, it was inaugurated as Bearsville’s third recording studio with Muddy Waters’ Grammy Award-winning The Muddy Waters Woodstock Album in 1975. The control room houses an API Legacy console with 16 Neve modules, housed in an extension of the original barn.

Components of Studios A and B have been allocated to Bearsville @ Turtle Creek, while major additions and upgrades are also in progress. The studio now features a Pro Tools HD system, while the living accommodations within the Barn, as well as the three on-site Turtle Creek Apartments, are all to be upgraded. High-speed Internet access, gourmet meals, and a helipad are among the services offered.

Bearsville Sound Studios was founded by music impresario Albert Grossman, who shaped the careers of Bob Dylan, Peter, Paul & Mary, Richie Havens, Odetta, and John Lee Hooker, among others. He also managed such rock acts as the Band, Paul Butterfield Blues Band, Janis Joplin, and the Electric Flag. Grossman died in 1986.

While Bearsville Sound Studios has hosted recent sessions by many top acts, including Matchbox Twenty, Guster, Derek Trucks, the Dave Matthews Band, and Medeski, Martin & Wood, it has become increasingly difficult for any multi-room recording facility to maintain a busy booking schedule. Shrinking recording budgets and the explosion in digital studio workstation-based home or personal studios have deeply affected facilities in urban markets, as well as “destination” studios such as Bearsville. The Ulster/Dutchess County region has also seen a number of new facilities in recent years.

“I don’t think people ever want a big room like [Studio A],” Bearsville owner/Ceo Sally Grossman says. “It’s the antithesis of what people are feeling. But people like the Barn so much — there are all kinds of people who like it. It has that kind of a vibe, so it’s private there.”

Studio A’s vintage Neve 8888 console, built for the Who’s Ramport Studio in 1977, will be sold. Grossman hopes that the building housing Studios A and B will become a residence upon its sale. “I think for the neighborhood, it will be great as a house,” she states. “My biggest problem is the tape library.”

Bearsville @ Turtle Creek will be staffed under studio manager Chris Laiola, who has been with Bearsville for 15 years. Victor Segal is the facility’s chief technician. Also on staff is engineer Bill Sycar, who has worked with Steve Jan and Matchbox Twenty.

RE-SOUNDING: Who knew that two recording studios in the Nashville area share the same name? Not me, obviously. In the “Rooms at the Top” roundup of top recording studios featured in Billboard’s Studios and Recording Equipment Spotlight (Sept. 28), I referred to the wrong Sound Station, to my regret.

The No. 2 mixing studio, based on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart from July 14, 2001, to July 13, 2002, was indeed Sound Station, not only the Sound Station I described. The Sound Station responsible for a combined 12 weeks at No. 1 belongs to Keith Stegall, who produced Alan Jackson’s “Drive,” which spawned the No. 1 songs “Drive (For Daddy Gene),” and “Where Were You (When The World Stopped Turning).” Stegall also produced Jackson’s “When Somebody Loves You,” featuring the No. 1 song “Where I Come From” and Jamie O’Neal’s “When I Think About Angels,” which topped the Country chart at No. 2.

Clearly, Keith Stegall knows a thing or two about the art of hit records.

Sound Station is rarely idle. “We just finished mixing the Alan Jackson Christmas album, which is called Christmas, released Oct. 22,” he says. “We’re really thrilled about that.”

The Solid State Logic G-equipped Sound Station, like many studios, combines old and new recording technology. A producer-owned facility, it resembles a hybrid of commercial and private: the SSL G+, analog tape machine, and Mitsubishi 32-track digital tape machine are supplemented by six Pro Tools systems, Stegall explains, the better to faithfully capture the timbre of each instrument and enjoy the convenience of waveform editing.

“On hit records, we’ll track with the Mitsubishi and an analog machine at the same time, so we’re getting the best of both worlds,” Stegall states. “We try to leave the things that traditionally sound better analog, and the things that communicate and speak a bit better, like on ballads, remain digital. Piano is obviously a little quieter when you can get digital, and usually acoustic guitar will remain digital. But the harsher instruments, like fiddle or mandolin, we leave analog, once they hit tape. The majority of our editing, of course, is in Pro Tools. We end up bouncing everything to digital at the end, when we want a little bit of a lot of analog is as analog, so it maintains some of that low-end warmth and big, fuzzy bottom that I’ve always loved.”

Though he jokes that Sound Station operates “a little bit in the Dinosaur Age,” given the continued reliance on analog, Stegall (specifically Quantegy 456), Stegall is serious about retaining access to it, despite his extensive use of Pro Tools. “Analog tape now is getting more and more expensive,” he observes. “I hate to say it, but there’s going to be a point in the future where it’s going to be hard to find this stuff. Especially for kids making garage music — it’s almost cost-prohibitive to buy a $160 roll of tape, whereas with a one-time price of a Digi 001 or something like that, you’ve got it and you will do your thing. If I have to, I’ll talk to someone and say, ‘Please, just make a limited supply, because it’s very important to the way I make records!’

TODAY I SING THE BLUES: Tom Dowd, responsible for an almost-imaginable number of classic recordings of the last half-century, passed away Oct. 27 in St. Augustine, Fl. An appreciation appears on page 6.
By Christie Eliezer

Melbourne, Australia—The focus at this year’s Australian Music Day (AMD)—where media, retail, and artists join forces to champion homegrown music—will be firmly on the country’s independent acts.

During the past 12 months, such acts as the Whirlwinds, the John Butler Trio, and the Waifs have emerged from their Australian indie background to enjoy crossover success in Australia. Along the way, they’ve encouraged strong public demand for alternative music, AMD national coordinator Emily Kelly explains. “It’s a purer-driven,” she says. “They’ve seen them on music festivals like Big Day Out and on [the government-funded alternative rock radio network] Triple J, and they’re searching for artists who are not top 40 acts.”

To help feed this demand, AMD has allied itself this year with the three-day Music Business Adelaide (MBA) conference, with its series of industry seminars, workshops, and showcases for new artists. MBA is now 5 years old and is funded by the south Australian state government to drive industry executives and musicians to Adelaide.

AMD was established in 1999 by then-Prime Minister Bob Hawke to try and help raise sales of domestic talent.

Confab Spotlights Oz Indies

Australian Music Day Will Celebrate Crossover Success Of Indie Acts

“Warner Names Chou To New Mainland China, Taiwan Post

By Tim Culpan

Taipei, Taiwan—In a move to integrate Warner Music International’s (WMI) operations in China and Taiwan, WMI Taiwan managing director Samuel Chou has been appointed managing director/CEO of Warner Music Mainland China and Taiwan, effective Nov. 1.

Taipei-based Chou will report directly to Warner Music Asia Pacific president Lachie Rutterford in Hong Kong, while WMI mainland China managing director, Beijing-based Zorro Xu, retains his position handling day-to-day operations. He will report to Chou.

In September 2000, WMI became the first major label to set up a full-scale record company in mainland China, when it established Beijing-based Warner Music China (WMC) in association with the state-owned China National Culture and Arts.

“My job will be to integrate resources from both sides,” Chou tells Billboard, acknowledging that a key priority will be tackling mainland China’s piracy rate, estimated by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry to be more than 90%. To do this, he anticipates spending nearly half his time during his first year on the job in mainland China.

“There are a lot of fundamentals that need to be done there,” Chou says, pointing to China’s Nov. 10, 2001, entry into the World Trade Organization as an important step in enabling WMI to establish its own distribution network in the country.

Overseas companies have previously not been allowed a controlling share in any Chinese company; that situation is now changing.

Artist development is also high on Chou’s agenda. The mainland is becoming an increasingly important source of Mandarin repertoire, most of which currently comes from Taiwan. Chou adds, “With the mainland opening up, more artists will be expected to come from there.”

But industry estimates suggest that local acts still contribute only 23% of major-label turnover and account for 25% of commercial radio airplay.

This year, about 50 events around the country will be held under the AMD banner. These range from small pub gigs to the Queenscliff Music Festival—which draws 15,000 people—and the Australian Live Music Awards, which will be televised through pay-TV Channel [1]. Radio networks will heavily feature Australian records, while major TV shows will also profile domestic acts.

AMD runs largely on the good will of its participants, and support for it does ebb and flow. This year, for example, while music retail chains Sanity and HMV are not involved, the Leading Edge group of more than 200 independent music stores will increase promotion of domestic acts in-store around the event.

Leading Edge managing director Gavin Ward says, “We’ve got a fantastic industry here to celebrate, but if it can miss out due to competition from overseas releases. Like new releases and new merchandising, a day like Australian Music Day creates excitement at retail and allows a greater interaction between the talent, retailers, and the customers.”

For all that, AMD has had a checkered career. Melbourne-based Ausmusic—which teaches technical and business acumen to aspiring musicians and people keen to work in the music industry—recently celebrated its first six years. But Ausmusic lost its state funding in 1996 and shrank to a one-city office, funded by corporate sponsors and the proceeds of its own educational programs.

Subsequently, Ausmusic set up the Australian Music Foundation (AMF) to coordinate AMD activities. This year’s event is organized by the Melbourne-based AMF and an Adelaide company, Ausmusic SA. A similarly themed but completely separate operation from its namesake, Ausmusic SA aids young musicians and entrepreneurs from the state of South Australia in developing music industry skills.

Paul Gildea, manager of Festival Mushroom Records chart act Motor Ace, remembers when he played as a member of the band Icehouse, along with five other acts, at the Sydney Entertainment Centre to 15,000 fans as part of the inaugural AMD. “The industry has changed since then,” he says. “But the same things remain—the fanatical passion fans have for live music in this country and the drive [by musicians] to learn and be better.”

France Still Reporting Rising Music Shipments

By Lisa Pasold

Paris—While the global music market continues to suffer from harsh market conditions, the French industry is still consistently reporting rising music shipments.

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) recently published global figures for the first six months of 2002 that showed shipments from its members down 11.2% in unit terms and 9.2% in value compared with the same period in 2001 (Billboard, Oct. 19). But the good health the French music market enjoyed between January and June (when shipments rose 5.2% in value and 3.6% in units) shows no sign of being sapped: New figures from the country’s IFPI affiliate SNEP show recorded shipments up 10.6% in value and 8.8% in unit terms during the first nine months of 2002. In that period, the value of shipments rose to $410 million euros ($587 million), compared with 759 million euros ($718 million) in the same period last year.

Despite such a rosier picture, SNEP director general Hervé Romy remains cautious. “High-speed Internet connection is an increasing phenomenon, with its increased pirating risk,” he observes, making particular note of the recent marketing deal between the Kazaa file-sharing network and leading European Internet service provider Tiscali (Billboard, Oct. 5), commenting: “The new Kazaa agreement will allow people to download entire albums. To be frank, we’re worried.”

But so far the French remain loyal music purchasers. According to SNEP, none of the 10 bestselling albums of the past nine months were Francophone titles, with Celine Dion’s A New Day Has Come the lone English-language exception. In the singles market, seven Francophone titles are featured in the top 10. Singles shipments rose 11.7% in value and in volume during the nine-month period; album shipments rose 10.4% in value and 7.6% in volume.

Romy suggests that the one reason for the ongoing success of the French market is that it is more conservative than the major Nordic or Anglo-Saxon markets, which encourages loyalty to artists from consumers. “This is a problem for emerging artists,” he concedes, “but once a French artist is established, our conservative atmosphere results in a loyal audience throughout the artist’s career. The top 50 is very stable and slow-moving here. The French tend to be skeptical, but once we find out something, we’re very committed.”

Warner Names Chou To New Mainland China, Taiwan Post

By Tim Culpan

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Hits of the World is compiled at Billboard/London.
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Walker Sets New Aims For HMV Canada
Revised Team, Strategies To Emulate HMV’s Success In The U.K.

BY LARRY LEBLANC
TORONTO—Despite facing a shrinking music market and increased competition from mass merchandisers and music/audio hardware dealers, HMV North America president Chris Walker is enthusiastic about his recently finalized five-year strategy for Canada.

HMV’s operations in Canada are overseen by Walker, who was brought in to run umbrella operation HMV North America on an interim basis following Peter Luckhurst’s resignation as president of HMV North America in January (Billboard, Jan. 19). Walker continues to act as chairman of HMV Australia. With 37 stores nationally, HMV is Canada’s retail-music market leader. HMV also has 12 U.S. stores, overseen from Canada.

Prior to Luckhurst’s departure, there were significant executive layoffs at HMV North America throughout 2001. As a result, Walker had to assemble a new executive team, which included key HMV executives from the retailer’s U.K. operation: HMV Canada VP of product Jonathan Rees, former head of rock and pop in the U.K., and as HMV Canada VP of operations, Gary Warren, who had been northern (U.K.) divisional manager.

“We’ve got a new team that’s still feeling its way in many cases,” Walker says. “We pulled in people from our stores to head up each of the [music] genres. We’ve got [product and marketing] people with real product knowledge who also understand the stores.”

Sources continue to suggest that HMV seeks to replicate many of its U.K. strategies in Canada. Walker denies it—yet acknowledges that HMV affiliates “around the world are trying to emulate the sort of key performance indices that the [U.K.] get.”

While suggesting that the U.K. “has to be an aspirational territory for us,” he adds, “you can’t just lift up policies from there and drop them down here. Canada has unique features that we have to allow for.”

Rees adds, “The biggest problem the Canadian market faces is that so much of it is U.S.-led. In other territories, you perhaps have more control over when an album comes out, for example.”

A need to control inventory ever more tightly in a music market that is being skewed by high distribution costs has changed HMV’s buying and advertising strategies during the past year. HMV has moved toward a more centralized strategy model—in its operations elsewhere—for its major music wholesalers—for its decisions in buying and co-advertising, taking away much of the flexibility its stores’ management previously enjoyed.

“HMV seeks to get a balance between central buying and store buying,” Walker says. “The vast number of titles in our stores are bought by the stores, but the large-volume titles are put together centrally. We can then ensure that the level of support across the chain for a big release is consistent and, working in conjunction with the record company, can maximize sales.”

Walker emphasizes that HMV strives to deliver on the uniqueness of Canadian regions. “Each geographical market is quite different, and we study them. We also look at what the competition do well, and we’ll take it. We exploit every opportunity they give us.”

Particularly challenging is Quebec, a province with a primarily French-speaking population of 7 million and 17 HMV stores. “Fortunately, there are Francophone artists that perform well there, but it is often difficult for us to get the pitch on what non-Francophone artists will perform in [Quebec] far beyond their ‘English Canada’ performance,” Rees concedes. He cites Peter Gabriel as one such artist, noting “his sales in Quebec far outselling our share of Quebec sales, normally.”

Walker, however, claims the suggestions emanating from several label executives that HMV had begun to increase emphasis on top-line product while restricting catalog buys. HMV, he states, will continue building its major for its classical, jazz, and Francophone repertoire and aggressively exposing new artist product within all genres.

“I’m frankly shocked to hear that anyone within HMV would say that we’re moving toward a top 40 focus,” Walker says. “It’s absolutely wrong. Nobody in the world is better at doing range than us. We want to enhance that and not diminish it. At the same time, I don’t believe anyone breaks new artists better than us—globally. We want to increase our abilities in that area as well.”

While Canada’s music industry continues gaining up for the return of the singles configuration (Billboard, March 16) in an early 2003 rollout, HMV is committed to establishing a Canadian market for CD singles. “Our view is that North America’s decision to drop singles was an act of madness,” Walker says. “We’re going after singles as hard as we can. We believe that a strong singles market would lead to a stronger compilation market.”

Walker also advocates the greater availability in Canada of international releases with special features or extra tracks. “We want to find ways of getting that product in here,” he says. “Record companies give us a variety of reasons why they won’t bring it in or why they haven’t. When a market is in decline, they should be doing everything possible to enhance sales.”

Japanese CD-Rental Chain CCC Strikes Cost-Cutting Deal

BY STEVE MCCCLURE
TOKYO—Japan’s biggest CD-rental chain, Culture Convenience Club (CCC), has entered an alliance with electronic giant Seiko, which rents and sells CD-related audiovisual software.

Tokyo-based CCC operates the Tsutaya chain of retail outlets, which rents and sells electronic software. There are some 1,100 Tsutaya stores nationwide, of which 90% are franchises. The company racked up about $35 billion yen ($263 million) in revenue for the fiscal year ended March 2002.

Before joining forces with Seiko (also based in Tokyo), CCC used a subsidiary, Japan Software Service, to source product from audiovisual soft-

ware makers. “But we decided to tie up with Seiko instead of competing with each other, because we want to sell more CDs,” CCC executive VP Seiichi Tsuda explains.

Kasahara says that despite the current grim state of the Japanese music market, he believes CCC can boost its music sales by opening more stores around the country.

One media report here says that transferring its wholesale operations to Seiko would help CCC cut costs by nearly 1 billion yen ($8 million) in the year through next March.

The CCC group of companies re-

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First Czech Cable-TV Music Channel Promises Salvation For Scandal-Stricken Station

BY MARK ANDREWS

PRAHVE—Stanice O, the Czech cable-channel dedicated to music videos, launched Sept. 30. With it came a promise of salvation for the country’s largely stagnant TV-music scene.

Until the channel’s launch, Czech artists had limited outlets for video airplay, having had to rely on video slots on Eso, the Czech Republic’s only televised chart show, which is screened weekly on commercial channel TV Nova.

Stanice O broadcasts via satellite and cable 24 hours a day, targets 15- to 30-year-olds, and aims to offer a mix of domestic and international repertoire, said station director Jiri Nemecek the evening of its launch.

Some music BonTon managing director Zbynek Knobloch says, “At the moment, Stanice O can’t be seen everywhere, but the principle is good; the idea is fantastic. If the channel is funded enough and prosperous, it’ll be good for us, because at

the moment we don’t have anywhere to play our videos.”

To keep costs to a minimum, Nemecek has recruited some 290 fresh-faced-music students from Prague’s drama schools—to host the music programs.

Penetration, however, remains minimal, although that shouldn’t prove a problem for the sale of video cassettes with major cable companies in the Czech and Slovak Republics.

Immediately after launch, Stanice O was accessible to some 300,000 people. From Note: I, Nemecek says that “with time, the number will be able to watch his channel in the Czech Republic; by the end of year, Stanice O will have some 2.5 million potential Czech viewers.” Nemecek also hopes to snag an additional 1 million viewers in neighboring Slovakia by the end of the year.

Nemecek believes there are enough quality Czech music videos to maintain a healthy domestic and half international repertoire, but he adds: “We have received signals from the music labels that they will make more Czech videos, because they’ll now have a place to show them.”

Early signs of cooperation include the filming in early October of locally signed Universal Music star Anna K’s video “Moza” (Mayday at Stance O Prague studios). The broadcast aims to be involved in future co-production of music videos in the future. “Any cooperation with music labels is welcome,” Nemecek says, “whether it be in making videos or their advertising with us.”

During what the station estimates will be peak-time viewing (4 p.m. to 7 p.m. and from 10 p.m. to midnight), Stanice O broadcast theme music programs fronted by a presenter. “Our presenters make short, sharp appearances. They come on and off quickly. The idea is to have more video and less music,” Nemecek says.

The emphasis is on the natural—if a music technician needs to fix a presenter’s microphone while on air, he’ll do so.”

Warner Music Czech Republic marketing director Iva Milerova welcomed the station: “It’s really positive that such a 24-hour music channel is available here. Once UPC offers it in its basic package, this will be a significant step. The more successful Stanice O is and the more people it will reach, the bigger impact it might have for our local artists and their videos.”

Until now, Czech music videos have invested money that might otherwise have gone toward making a video on other marketing or promotional activities, mainly because of the minimal exposure that video historically has had. But an EMI Records spokeswoman comments: “Something like Stanice O is definitely needed here. It will be very important for us. It will open the door to them to make their money while on air.”

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According to Yolanda Larroque, presenter and Bro’Sis are the station’s first single, “Daylight Angels and Daylight Angels” (in Spanish), became the station’s first single in 2001, after it had been put together from the more than 4,300 wannabes who auditioned the previous year. Bohne reports that No Angels have sold a total of 2.5 million singles in Germany and 2.8 million singles internationally.

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Advertising will initially finance the free-to-view channel, although Nemecek concedes that Stanice O eventually could become a subscription service.

Germany’s ‘Popstars’ Keep Market Afloat

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR

HAMBURG—The German record market has been shrinking during the last five years, but its decline in the last 24 months undoubtedly would have been steeper had it not been for the success generated by the local version of the UK TV talent show, Popstars.

Developed by TV station RTL 2, Popstars has thrown up two hit acts—No Angels and Bro’Sis—in its first two series for Universal Germany’s Polydor imprint via a deal with the program’s production company, Cheynne Media in Munich.

According to Polymer managing director Tom Bohne, No Angels and Bro’Sis have together sold in excess of 2.5 million albums and more than 6 million singles in Germany and the rest of Europe, and they have the potential to cross over into non-German languages, territories.

Bohne says, “The two acts succeed in a market that we slated them for European-wide release. Their professionalism and the international quality of their productions have ensured strong European-wide performance.”

GIRL POWER

First to emerge from the show was girl group No Angels, which made its chart debut in February 2001 after it had been put together from the more than 4,300 wannabes who auditioned the previous year. Bohne reports that No Angels have sold a total of 2.5 million singles in Germany and 2.8 million singles internationally.

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Is AEC, Liquid Audio Merger Going Down The Drain?
Dissenting Voices Oppose Reverse Merger, Citing Weak Financial Performances And An Unstable Digital-Music Marketplace

BY MATTHEW BENZ
NEW YORK—A vote by Liquid Audio shareholders is expected later this year on the digital-music services firm’s proposed merger with music distributor Alliance Entertainment Corp. (AEC). Although Liquid has modified the deal to make it more attractive to shareholders, a vocal dissident group remains opposed to it and claims it has enough support from other shareholders to vote down the deal.

Having rung up losses as a standalone digital-music firm, Liquid says it makes strategic sense to combine with the more established AEC. But opponents say Liquid and AEC’s recent financial performances have been shaky. They paint a bleak picture for the prospects of a combined company, citing declining sales of physical music and a still largely unformed market for digital offerings. They also assert that Liquid shareholders, not AEC, are entitled to what they see as Liquid’s most precious asset: as of June 30, its remaining $81 million in cash.

Announced June 13, the deal is structured as a reverse merger in which the privately held AEC would merge with the publicly held Liquid Audio to form a single, publicly traded company. It has been approved by the boards of both companies and will be voted on by Liquid shareholders at a special meeting. AEC’s controlling shareholder, the Yucaipa Cos., agreed to vote in favor of the merger.

As originally structured, the merger would give AEC shareholders 67% of the merged company; Liquid shareholders would own the rest. The combined firm’s board will have nine positions: six controlled by AEC and three by Liquid Audio.

After meeting with certain shareholders, Liquid modified the proposed merger in mid-July. It agreed to distribute $30 million in cash to shareholders by buying back 10 million of its shares at $3 per share. Doing so means AEC shareholders would own 74% of the combined firm and Liquid shareholders the rest.

Yet even the revised plan is “a bad deal for the existing [Liquid] shareholders,” claims Jeffrey Halis, general partner at Tyn dall Partners in New York, which owns about 2.6% stake in Liquid. Opponents say Liquid should abandon the merger, cease operations, and distribute all of its cash to shareholders.

AEC declined to comment. Liquid declined to comment.

EVIDENCE OF OPPOSITION

Halis says the voting results at Liquid’s Sept. 26 annual meeting are evidence of shareholder opposition to the merger. The dissident shareholders—James Mitarotonda and Seymour Holtzmann, president/CEO and chairman, respectively, of MM Cos., which with affiliated firms own 6.9% of Liquid’s shares—were elected to Liquid’s board of directors over the incumbent nominees, veteran entertainment industry executive Raymond Doig and Liquid president/CEO Gerald Kearby.

Halis says that, though “as a technical matter the merger was not voted on,” based on the results of the voting at the annual meeting, “I think the shareholders have already voted it down.”

According to Mitarotonda, of the 17.4 million shares that were voted, 14 million were in favor of him and Holtzmann. Passage of the merger requires a majority of the shares voted, in person or by proxy, at a special shareholder meeting. Mitarotonda adds, “If the vote for us is any indication, I don’t think the merger will be ratified.”

Ever since staking their position in the company in October 2001, MM Cos. (formerly known as musicmaker.com) has been pressuring Liquid to sell itself to the highest bidder or otherwise distribute its remaining cash to shareholders.

Those who oppose the deal note that the per share cash value of the company is greater than the company’s current $2.66 share price—a further indication, they say, of investor sentiment. Shareholders that have publicly stated their opposition to the merger include JMB Capital Partners—which owns a 5.1% stake in Liquid—Dolphin Limited Partnership (3.3%), and SC Fundamental (2%).

In late September, Liquid reached a settlement with another dissident shareholder, New York investment fund Steel Partners II, which owns 9.1% of Liquid. Steel, which had offered twice to buy Liquid and criticized management via press releases and Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) filings, agreed to cease discussing Liquid publicly.

AEC and Liquid have argued that the merger will unite two established firms with complementary capabilities in the physical and digital distribution of music.

“I think the critical issue is advancing AEC under the moniker of a commerce-solutions provider for the home-entertainment marketplace,” AEC president/CEO Eric Weissman told Billboard in June. “We want to be able to help our customers deal with the management of digital distribution of entertainment media. We look out and look at the landscape and felt that Liquid Audio offered the best foundation for us to layer this capability into our business. It’s one that will become increasingly important as time moves on.”

Weissman would be president/CEO of the new entity and continue to be based at AEC headquarters in Coral Springs, Fla. Kearby would remain in Redwood City, Calif., where Liquid is headquartered, and head the digital business.

LIQUID LOSSES

Opponents note that through the first half of 2002, Liquid posted a net loss of $10.5 million, or 46 cents per share, on revenue of $286,000. A year ago, its net loss was $25.3 million, or $1.12 per share, on sales of $2.7 million.

According to SEC filings, AEC—which emerged from bankruptcy in 1999—posted a profit last year of $1.1 million on $588.6 million in sales. After a preferred stock dividend, stockholders’ loss was $8.3 million, or 12 cents per share.

What’s more, the stock of the combined firm could be delisted from the Nasdaq National Market. Because the merger will result in a change of control, Liquid must satisfy the requirements for initial inclusion on the national market, including the minimum bid requirement of $3 per share. Liquid has appealed Nasdaq’s determinations and could do a reverse split to regain compliance.

Liquid recently sold the rights to 16 technology patents and pending patent applications to Microsoft for $7 million in cash and has pared back staff to 30 in Redwood City. Meanwhile, AEC is spinning off its All Media Guide and RedDotNet kiosk business into a private company that will be controlled by the Yucaipa Cos.

Liquid and AEC say the moves will streamline the firms as they prepare to merge and enable them to capture synergies. “A lot of the customers that they’re working with to do physical distribution are a lot of the same customers we already have relationships with on the digital side,” a Liquid rep said when the merger was announced. “They have a lot of retailers in the physical world that maybe don’t have digital-music stores, and so we can kind of bounce off one another.”

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Orders payable in U.S. funds only. All sales are final.
BY CATHARINE APPLEFOLD OLSON

In a bid to forge a deeper relationship with its audience, MTV is opening its promotional gateways to a campaign that enables tech-savvy viewers to create music-inspired MPEG clips using their computers. Under the all-in-the-family umbrella of MPEGS, the campaign encourages viewers to visit the mtv.com Web site, download a clip from its music library, and use desktop tools to edit the music and layer visuals on top. A 90-second musical statement in the form of an MPEG clip is created.

The MTV promotion staff will select between seven and 10 clips per month for viewers to feature on their MTV channel. The first 25 clips will be shown on sister channel MTV2 and mtv.com. The new campaign is designed to reinforce the relationship between music and technology.

Olson says that viewers have not all gotten to approve the music industry for approaching celebrities, because we don’t want too many celebrity spots to dwarf this thing.

Another player that will get its share of MTV airtime is advertising partner Sony Electronics, which has more than 20 MPEG video-clips depicting a variety of Sony products targeted at the “Generation Y” market. The spots—which feature products ranging from portable music players and computers to digicams, camcorders, and wireless speakers—will be preselected clips by major-label artists using Flash-based video-editing tool Visualo.

Winning clips—including one for the band Sum 41, which received a whopping 3,905 submissions—have been rotated at a rate of one per month through MuchMusicTV. But the promotion is likely to close in the near future, according to MuchMusic’s VP of programming Norm Schoenfeld. “Something about the effort we are making at MuchMusicTV is designed to bring the viewer and the network together and create an environment where the corporation is invisible. It is our agenda for the viewer, using the web and other technology, to influence, control, and impact how and what the network is every day.”

While more garage-style in nature, the MTV promotion has a celebrity touch as well. Eminem, Ludacris, and the Crystal Method are among the handful of acts that have created MPEGS that will be streamed on the-air mix. She says, “We have not gotten to see the aggressive about approaching celebrities, because we don’t want too many celebrity spots to dwarf this thing.”

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Toyota And Collins Share Drive Time

BY MATTHEW S. ROBINSON

In the latest example of record labels using advertising to gain exposure for acts that are no longer played as readily on mainstream radio, Atlantic Records is teaming with Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. to debut the latest single from Phil Collins, "Can't Stop Loving You," in a series of TV spots for the 2005 Toyota Avalon.

The deal was made by Phil's manager, Tony Smith, in mid-2002, Atlantic senior VP of marketing Vicky Germaine explains. "He quickly put Atlantic's marketing team together with the folks at Toyota."

The partnership's first manifestation was in September, when Collins performed at a private party for 5,000 Toyota dealers and guests.

"That was a big thrill to have him play for us," Toyota VP of marketing Steve Sturm says. "It was a great kickoff to the program that we have put together."

According to Sturm, Collins was an ideal choice. "We like the synergy of what he stands for and that he has transcended many generations of music," Sturm says. "His music is vibrant and energetic and brings a lot of strong motion to the brand."

Since the first single had not been chosen for Collins' latest album, Testify (due Nov. 12), Germaine says that Toyota left it up to Collins and his team to pick which song to use. "Toyota had agreed to go with whatever our single choice was. It worked out beautifully, as we chose 'Can't Stop Loving You,' which worked perfectly for their demographic and is proving to be a huge success at radio."

Sturm agrees that "Can't Stop" is especially well-suited to the Avalon: "We thought that the song had a lyric that fit our car perfectly, because so many people love our car."

Shot in Prague, the spot was greatly inspired by the song itself. "We let the agency take the song and marry the spot to it," Sturm says. "It is very romantic."

Though they had been courting Collins for two years, Sturm says that the ultimate timing of the partnership worked well for both sides: "As he was coming out with his new album and we were coming out with a new model of the car, it seemed to be a good time to work with him on some sort of cross-promotion."

Germaine explains, "We piggy-backed on each other's media to really make the most of our respective strengths."

Elements of this cross-promotion include tags and stickers on a variety of Toyota merchandise and every CD being stickered with the line "Includes the hit single 'Can't Stop Loving You' as featured in the new Toyota Avalon commercial." Toyota is returning the favor by mentioning the name of the song and the album in the spots.

Germaine says, "Toyota came through for us in a big way by chyroning their TV spot MTV-style."

Toyota will also sponsor a Nov. 12 live radio concert that will be syndicated on more than 150 Clear Channel AC stations, all of which will run simultaneous contests on their Web sites.

Sturm says, "We want to capitalize on the freshness of both products."

In addition to "Can't Stop Loving You," Toyota has licensed another song to be used in a future commercial for their Camry model.

"We are currently working on the second song," Sturm says. "We have to decide which it will be."

Germaine adds, "This is just the start of our partnership with Toyota."

Double the store count to 19 units. "The merger allows us to run stores instead of 10," he said, "with very little addition to our corporate payroll."

Lang noted that there is still work to be done in order to make the mergers successful. For instance, the two chains have completely different computer systems, which have to be combined. "Also, there is a cultural difference, which we will try to bridge," he said. "We won't try to impose ours on theirs or theirs on ours. We will take the best of both."

In addition to CD burning, another thing the chains has to contend with during the holiday selling season is a price war that he predicted. In fact, "the price war this year will be worse than it was in 1994," Lang said. "Make no mistake: This will be the toughest fourth quarter ever. I won't be surprised if one of the [discounters] have the top 20 at $9.99."

He pointed out that most new releases are already being priced by discounters below cost, and despite that, store traffic is still down. He lamented, "Price is down, sales are down, and margin is down."

The price war is being driven by what Lang referred to as "the big four": Wal-Mart, Target, Best Buy, and Circuit City -- all companies that use music as a price identifier. He says these companies represent CD World's main competitors, not music specialty retailers like Trans World or Musicland.

Another major CD World competitor nowadays is "the customer" because of their CD-burning and file-sharing. But Lang warned CD World store managers, "The customer is our competitor, but we can't compete with them. We have to attract them into our stores."

He said that one way they are doing so is by lowering prices. "We sold 3,500 Springsteen albums at $10.98, but we lost $3,000 on it, which we will have to make up somehow."

Another way to bring customers in is through exclusives, Lang added. He pointed out that until recently, the mass merchants were the main beneficiaries of exclusive product, as well as obtaining superior versions of albums. But he said a concerted effort by independent retailers and their coalitions and music specialty chains has been successful, and consequently the discounters are not getting as much superior product nowadays.

 Nonetheless, Lang pointed out that Target recently had an exclusive Hoobastank item. "Can you imagine that our target customer, our bread-and-butter customer, the music fan, is going to Target for their music?"

But while CD World is fighting the discounters through price and by obtaining exclusives through participation in Music Monitor Network, Lang noted that the main thing that separates the chain from the big boxes is "customer service." Also, CD World carries used CDs and videos, which distinguishes the chain as well. Moreover, CD World has a broad offering of pop-culture accessories, which "makes us cool," as well as providing higher margins.

"So we are fighting with price, promotions, added values, and, let's face it, we have cool stores," Lang said. "Two reasons we have great stores is that Rita [Donato Edward, VP of stores] and you guys are taking special pride in your stores and are working on them. The best tool we have is you and the way you merchandise and organize your store and interact with the customer."

Lang urged managers to "never be satisfied with the way the stores look. If a manager should finally get the store the way they want it, they should still change something. "The only constant about your stores should be change, and there is always something more you can do."

Vicky Germaine, Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. VP of Marketing. Her phone number is (203) 335-9082.
Spiritual Memories Captured in
Criterion ‘Monterey Pop’ DVD Set

BY JIM BESMAN

NEW YORK—In their hit song “Monterey”—commemorating the landmark Monterey Pop Festival of June 16-18, 1967, in northern California—Eric Burdon & the Animals sang the lyrics: “Young gods smiled upon the crowd/Their music being born of love/Children danced night and day/Religion was being born/Down in Monterey.” These spiritual and musical memories are also reflected in cinema verité pioneer D.A. Pennebaker’s 1968 documentary Monterey Pop, now being issued for the first time Nov. 12 as a three-disc DVD set by the Criterion Collection ($79.95).

The project will also be available as a less inclusive, two-tape VHS set for $29.95.

Monterey Pop—considered by a range of film buffs, rock historians, and music fans to be one of the greatest rock movies ever—is a 79-minute program featuring career-defining performances by Jimi Hendrix, Otis Redding, the Who, Big Brother & the Holding Co., with Janis Joplin, and Ravi Shankar.

‘DOING IT JUSTICE’

The DVD box, which contains a 65-page historical booklet, boasts a number of special features. The first disc includes a new, high-definition transfer of the film, which also starred Canned Heat, Country Joe & the Fish, the Electric Flag, Jefferson Airplane, the Mamas & the Papas, Hugh Masekela, and Simon & Garfunkel. It has been augmented by a 5:1 audio mix in both Dolby Digital and DTS and includes interviews with Pennebaker, festival producers Lou Adler and John Phillips, producer Bob McNutt, and film scholars Jon B. Freeman, Mark A. Harris, and John Cohen.

The DVD also contains an additional 80 pages of bonus materials, including liner notes by critic tattoos on the set, b-roll and outtakes, rare photos, and a 1969 concert set.

Notting the DVD’s high cost, Hendrix adds that the company’s “initial attention” has been focused on the “production values of the release. They’re trying to get the best the world can offer.”

Ironically, Shankar nearly backed out of the historic gig. “I was really impressed by some of the musicians,” Shankar said. “I was impressed with the way they played so beautifully.”

But amazon.com DVD store senior editor Doug Thomas isn’t put off by Monterey Pop’s price point. “We do extremely well with big-ticket items and boxed sets,” he says. “With the power to cross-promote, a music DVD with our music store, we expect to do very well with the piece. This year’s other hits are DVD The Last Waltz, No. 1 on the charts, and Honey in the Hat.”

The inclusion of a number of active DVD extras, such as a DVD-ROM Activision Spider-Man game and a “record your own commentary” feature, is something that will particularly appeal to fans. Shankar says: “The whole process of making a movie [now] is more interactive than I would have expected. We saw reactions [online] while we were making the movie. The fans want to participate interactively.”

Spider-Man has been pitched by video retailers as the potential top-seller of the quarter (Billboard, Oct. 5). The film has grossed more than $877 million worldwide, according to studio reports.

JINGLE BELLS: Though it’s not quite time to sing Christmas carols, another nice project of new holiday-themed home videos are already becoming available for the whole family to enjoy.

Warner Home Video is offering a slate of new projects, including Scooby-Doo: Winter Wonderdog ($14.95 VHS, $19.98 DVD), Scary Movie 5 ($12.95 VHS, $19.98 DVD), and Child Smart’s Your Tiny Toot ($12.95 VHS). The Scooby DVD features children’s games and drawing activities. Warner’s VP of marketing entertainment Wewa Martinoff says the releases will be featured in many retailers’ Sundance advertisements.

Other major studio releases include Buena Vista Home Entertainment’s Beauty and The Beast: The Enchanted Christmas available Nov. 12 ($22.99 DVD, $29.99 VHS), and The Santa Clause Special Edition ($14.99 VHS, $29.99 DVD). The Beauty DVD includes a behind-the-scenes feature and a sing-along extra, while Santa features a trivia adventure game, a DVD-ROM screensaver, and a holiday tea gift featuring a free DVD.

Big Idea Productions is taking advantage of interest in its recent theatrical release; A VeggieTales Movie; VeggieTales in Search of Star of Christmas ($14.99 VHS, $19.99 DVD), Big Idea senior VP of marketing and sales Dan Merrill says, “In December, local PBS stations in 80% of the country have picked up [the title] to air.”

BBC Video has released Robbie the Reindeer in Hooves of Fire ($9.95 VHS, $14.98 DVD), Blackadder’s Christmas Carol ($9.95 VHS), and Father Ted: A Christmas Tale ($14.95 VHS). The company’s VP of home video, Burton Cromer, says, “The challenge with Christmas titles is posting the right amount, because they don’t sell the rest of the year.”

NOTABLE: Video-on-demand company Interactive, which has filed an antitrust lawsuit against AOL Time Warner, Vivendi Universal, and Sony accusing the companies of price fixing (Billboard, Oct. 12), has indefinitely shut down its Web site until it can “work out a fair business model with the companies,” a statement posted on the site says. Blockbuster has entered into online DVD rentals with an investment in dvrentalcentral.com, which offers four rentals at a time for a $19.95 monthly fee.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>LABEL DISTRIBUTING LABEL &amp; NUMBER</th>
<th>WEEK AT NUMBER</th>
<th>PRINCIPAL PERFORMERS</th>
<th>RATING</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WINDTALKERS</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>R 26.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOOBY-DOO (PAN &amp; SCAN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG 26.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (SPECIAL EDITION)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>G 29.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSOMNIA (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>R 26.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOOBY-DOO (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG 26.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONSTERS, INC.</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>G 29.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSOMNIA (PAN &amp; SCAN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>R 26.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENOUGH</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 27.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SCORPION KING (FULL FRAME)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG 26.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SCORPION KING (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG 26.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANIC ROOM</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>R 27.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>R 26.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASON X</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>R 26.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SORORITY BOYS</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 27.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIFE OR SOMETHING LIKE IT</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 27.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLADE 2</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE WERE SOLDIERS</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAPUNZEL</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGING LANES</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A HARD DAY'S NIGHT</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMERICAN IDOL: THE SEARCH FOR A SUPERSTAR</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREASE (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIG FAT Liar</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREASE (PAN &amp; SCAN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRAILTY</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>PG-13 29.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 19.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: HALLOWEEN</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRTY DANCING</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURDER BY NUMBERS (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESERVOIR DOGS: ALL COLORS</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BOONDOCK SAINTS</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUDY</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VAN WILDER (UNRATED)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PULP FICTION: COLLECTOR'S EDITION</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL ABOUT THE BENJAMINS</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURDER BY NUMBERS (PAN &amp; SCAN)</td>
<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO BIZ</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Week At Number 1</td>
<td>NR 23.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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63
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Events Calendar

NOVEMBER
Nov. 4, ASCAP Country Awards, Opryland Hotel, Nashville (by invitation only).
Nov. 5, BMI Country Awards, BMI Nashville office (by invitation only).
Nov. 5, Second Annual Country Radio Broadcasters Fall Forum, Nashville Renaissance Hotel, 615-322-4487.
Nov. 6, 36th Annual Country Music Assn. Awards, Grand Ole Opry House, Nashville. 615-244-2840.
Nov. 6-9, Impact Music Marketing Conference, Royal Palm Crowne Plaza, Miami Beach, 212-253-1125.
Nov. 7, Musicians’ Assistance Program (MAP) Awards, House of Blues, Los Angeles. 310-556-9334.
Nov. 7, SESAC Country Music Awards, SESAC Nashville office (by invitation only).

For the Record

The No. 3 title on the Top Classical Albums chart in the Oct. 26 issue should have been Mahler: Symphony No. 1 by the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. The catalog number for the Delos album is 9902.

Solution to this issue’s puzzle (page 86)

D R A F T S M A R K S A N D P R E V I O U S ISSUE
H O P T O N A L A N D C O N T E N T
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S K I M M I N G
I D E O D O N T A R O M A S I M U L A T E
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A R I O N C A R E D A R R A
B A D H I G H T O P O K E R
A D D E R E D N E W S T O R T S
E V E N T S Y S T E M S

Good Works


FEBRUARY
Feb. 4-6, Digital Content Delivery Expo (DCD Expo), San Jose Convention Center, San Jose, Calif. 978-474-9392.
Feb. 6-8, Ninth Annual Billboard/ Airplay Monitor Radio Seminar & Awards, Eden Roc Resort, Miami Beach. 646-546-6460.

MARCH
March 10, Fourth Annual Best Cellars Wine Dinner, presented by the T.J. Martell Foundation, Loews Vanderbilt Hotel, Nashville, 615-256-2002.
March 12-16, South by Southwest (SXSW) 2003 Music Conference and Exhibition, Austin Convention Center, Austin. 512-467-7979.
March 16-19, 2003 NARM Annual Convention and Trade Show, Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando, Fla. 856-596-2221.

Submit items for LifeLines, Good Works, and Events Calendar to Margo Whitmire at Billboard.com, 5055 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90036 or at mwhitmire@billboard.com.

Life Lines

BIRTHS
Girl, Presley, to Belinda and A. Jay Popoff, Sept. 19 in Fullerton, Calif. Father is lead singer of rock group Lit.

DEATHS
Adolph Green, 87, of natural causes, Oct. 24 in New York. During a collaboration with Betty Comden that lasted more than six decades, the team of Comden & Green wrote the lyrics to Tony Award-winning Broadway musicals Wonderful Town, Applause, and Hello, Dolly!, along with such standards as Peter Pan and The Will Rogers Follies. The ASCAP members also co-wrote the Academy Award-nominated screenplay It’s Always Fair Weather, The Band Wagon, and Singin’ in the Rain. Working with composers like Leonard Bernstein, Julie Styne, Morton Gould, Cy Coleman, and Andre Previn, the pair is best-known for such songs as “The Party’s Over,” “Make Someone Happy,” “Never Never Land,” and “New York, New York (it’s a Hel- lown Town).” Green is survived by his wife, singer Phyllis Newman, two children, and two step-grandchildren.

Hannah Russell, 89, of a short illness, Oct. 17 in Los Angeles. Russell was CEO of Harrison Music Publishing and composed the music to several children’s films in England. Most recently she wrote and produced SpaceSongs, a fully orchestrated CD that teaches astronomy basics to children in U.S. schools and planetariums. Russell, the sister of the late song- writer Bud Green, is survived by two children, five grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Norbert Schultz, 91, of natural causes, Oct. 14 in Bad Toelz, Germany. Schultz was best-known as the composer of “Hill Marlene,” a song that became a kind of anthem for World War II soldiers of both sides and was later translated into 30 languages and performed by Marlene Dietrich, Edith Piaf, and others. The contrapposto composer was unhinged in his homeland of Germany for several years after World War II for composing the score to several Nazi films. He is survived by his wife and five children.

happening, and to provide an overview of the entire music industry. The No. 11 event will be followed by a post-concert reception featuring a performance by Tony Award winner Heather Headley. Contact: Jackie O. at 718-789-1818.
Faith's Album Is No. 1, But Radio Balks

WB, Management Insist Hill Has Not Abandoned Country Radio

BY PHYLLIS STARK

NASHVILLE—Despite a decade of hitmaking that has made Faith Hill one of country’s most reliable superstars, some country PDs have directed a surprising amount of venom at her in recent weeks. The barbs spring from disappointing research results for Hill’s latest single, “Cry,” and from her new album of the same name, which some industry watchers hold too far astray of the format.

For their part, Hill’s management and label are surprised not only that “Cry,” which peaked at No. 12 on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart, didn’t get more benefit of the doubt from radio, but also at the angry nature of some of the attacks.

Her latest album, Cry, debuted at No. 1 on last issue’s Billboard 200 albums chart and on the Top Country Albums chart with first-week sales of 472,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But the No. 12 peak for the title track is Hill’s lowest showing for an official single since “But I Will” reached No. 35 in 1994.

“We are not without supporters at radio,” KHYQ Ventura, Calif., PD/brand manager Mark Hill reports that “thus far, the new Faith […] is pacing very well for us.”

It was also the No. 1 -positioned record at WYCD Detroit for the chart week ending Oct. 20, and it was in the top five at WWYZ Hartford, Conn., the same week.

“We’re PD Mac Daniels says “Cry” has “no negatives [in my research]. It’s testing like a hit record for me.” And based on the album’s Nielsen SoundScan debut, Daniels says, “I don’t think some of my [core listeners] are out there buying it. She’s a huge artist in this market.”

But while most of the programmers whose PDs found recently polled expressed sentiments like those of Frank Bell, VP of programming for Keymarket Communications, who characterizes audience response to the single as “underwhelming,” Hill is confident she has the next Celine Dion, but at least put some country instrumentation in the mix so it doesn’t sound so odd in between George Strait and the Dixie Chicks.

WMZQ Washington, D.C., senior PD/music director Jon Anthony says, “Faith’s new album is a huge disappointment. It’s not bad, but she’s not getting any traction.”

“At first I thought it was going to be any payoff for my audience,” says Mitch Mahan, PD of WIRK West Palm Beach, Fla. “She should have done at least one country song on the album. I can’t imagine her selling the kind of albums she wants to sell without the country fan base. The lyrics to ‘Cry’ were close to country, but the production of the new album, they’ve produced her way over the top. It’s almost like Cry was a movie soundtrack.”

“I don’t get it,” he says. “For 10 years we have been working closely with country radio and always putting country first. I have no idea why we’re getting such an angry reaction from country radio. We’re not tuition them or showing anything down their throats. We’re OK with them saying they can’t play that record, but we expect respect. We have no idea what we did to warrant this response. She has done nothing but be a great ambassador for country in the mainstream.”

“What is going on here? Where is the benefit of the doubt? Why are they driving her away? She has not changed formats. There has never been a decision to date to go pop,” Borman continues. “She has not abandoned [PDs]—they are abandoning her, and I think that’s a bad decision. This is a time for families to band together, not to rip each other apart.”

Borman adds, “I invite any programmer to call me and let me know how we’ve insulted them to warrant this kind of response, because we think it’s undeserved.”

Warner Bros. GM/senior VP of marketing Chris Palmer calls programmers’ comments “hurtful,” particularly in light of Hill’s track record of success in partnership with country radio. “All of [Hill’s] major accomplishments, including this wonderful debut [for Cry], are due to the country music industry.”

A FAST START

Warner Bros. senior VP of promotion David Haley also believes the single may have ultimately been damaged by its fast start at country radio. At one time when country singles often take half a year to break, “Cry” was top 15 in four weeks, subjecting it to research expectations that no PD would have had for a country artist. “Sometimes these singles can outrun research, particularly ones that start out of the chute [fast],” Haley says. “If we had a more traditional build, we may have gotten the same result. But in this current climate, radio lives and dies by research.”

Consultant Mike O’Malley says, “To expect any artist, superstar or not, to always buy a thousand is unrealistic. Some have been on incredible rolls that have continued into this fall. Others may not have the impact we had hoped for or delivered the type of product we as programmers might have wanted them to. But artists need to make music that reflects who and where they are right now. If that happens, we don’t have the benefit of the doubt.”

WB, meanwhile, is planning a old right back on the horse. Hill is expected to sing the next single, “When the Lights Go Down,” during Wednesday’s (6) Country SoundScan calls, and the label plans to have it in country programmers’ hands that week. Borman says the song was chosen based on feedback from country radio.

Speaking for his own company as well as Warner Bros., Borman says, “We are going to go out of our way to meet the needs of country radio. We want to give country radio the tools they need to be our partner.”
BRAVO TO FLEETWOOD: Mick Fleetwood’s life is a fascinating rock’n’roll survivor story, so it’s not surprising that a movie has been made about it. The Mick Fleetwood Story: Too Sticks and a Drum will reach a mass-media audience when it premieres Sunday (3) on Bravo as part of the network’s Bravo Profiles series. The movie was originally released two years ago on home video by Image Entertainment. The drummer and co-founder of Fleetwood Mac tells Billboard that he didn’t want the biography to be sensationalistic. “Going for the blood-and-guts scandal” is tempting but too obvious,” he says of the documentary. “Certainly, it does cover the ups and downs of my life, but I wanted it to be more personal than just another Fleetwood Mac story. We took our time—about two years—doing this film.”

The movie includes a wealth of Fleetwood’s personal home-video footage that has not been seen before. The documentary even features a rare interview with former Fleetwood Mac member Peter Green, whom Fleetwood cites as having a tremendous influence on his life.

As for the much-anticipated new Fleetwood Mac album, due next year, Fleetwood says that the still-untilted album is in the mixing stages and that the band is planning to launch a major tour by summer 2003. “We’ve made an album that we love, and we’ve definitely pushed some envelopes. People will be surprised.”

The album will be the first all-new Fleetwood Mac studio album since Lindsey Buckingham and Stevie Nicks since 1987’s Tango in the Night. “Lindsey has done the lion’s share of the producing,” Fleetwood adds of the new album. “The whole energy in Fleetwood Mac right now is incredible. Our story is a really happy one at the moment.”

Though he says he will never lose his passion for playing music, Fleetwood concedes, “In 10 years, I’d love to be running a record company.”

IN BRIEF: Tim McGraw will be featured in a documentary film to be digitally simulcast Nov. 25 to movie theaters in more than 20 U.S. cities. This will be the first movie-theater simulcast for MovieTunes, one of the companies behind the event. MovieTunes president Robert Karasaki says that the company plans to stage several more movie-theater simulcasts, “at least once a quarter.”... Hype Williams has joined the list of music-video directors who have crossed over into network TV production deals (Music & Showbiz, Billboard, Oct. 5). Williams and NBC Studios have signed a deal for the director to develop, produce, and helm NBC’s TV projects.

Emmis Communications says that senior VP/New York market manager Judy Ellis will exit since she chose not to renew her contract, which expires Feb. 28, 2003... VH1 has changed the name of its annual fan-driven awards show to the VH1 Big in 2002 Awards, which will take place in December at a date and a Los Angeles venue to be announced. The event was previously called the My VH1 Music Awards. In other news, VH1 has canceled the Liza Minnelli/David Gest reality TV series Liza & David before the show went on the air. VH1 says that it did not promise the network access. Compiled by Carla Hay.
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ENCORE: Proving that its 1999 blockbuster Supernatural was no fluke comeback, Santana’s new Shaman becomes the first album in the band’s long and storied career to debut at No. 1 on The Billboard 200. The new title moves 299,000 units in its first week, more than triple the 72,500 that Supernatural sold when it started at No. 19. Propelled by Christmas-shopping spikes and huge exposure from a big night at the Grammy Awards, the title racked up six weeks during which it sold more than 300,000, including two frames north of the half-million mark. That album spent a dozen weeks at No. 1 and sparked a rally for Legacy/Columbia’s 1998 set The Best of Santana. The band’s Arista debut also broke a cold streak that dated back to 1985, during which time neither the band nor leader Carlos Santana placed an album as high as No. 50. Shaman’s arrival elevates shades of ’99, as a new Legacy compilation, The Essential Santana, opens at No. 125 on the chart, while Supernatural garners the Greatest Gainer ribbon on Top Pop Catalog Albums (28-8, up 38.5%) and by far the highest rank it has seen in any of the 21 weeks it has spent on that chart. The band has been omnipresent on TV since playing the Latin Grammys Sept. 18, hitting Today, Late Show With David Letterman, A&E’s Live by Request and Biography, the VH1 Fashion Awards, and the MTV Latin Awards on MTV2. During several of those televised performances, the band was joined by Michelle Branch, featured vocalist on lead track “The Game of Love,” which is winning friends at radio, bulleted at No. 9 on The Billboard Hot 100, No. 6 on Top 40 Tracks, and No. 3 on Adult Top 40. Santana’s big week also spikes Arista’s current-albums market share. In most recent weeks, the label has ranked sixth or seventh, but this round’s 8.12% slice is topped only by Columbia, with 8.33%.

REASON TO BELIEVE: The biggest surprise on the big chart belongs to Rod Stewart, whose It Had to Be You... The Great American Songbook enters at No. 4 on Nov. 15,000. First-day sales suggested that his J Records bow would start in the range of 60,000-70,000, but like many adult-leaning albums, it picked up steam as the week progressed. A little more than 7,000 of those units came from direct-response sales, and that advertising vehicle obviously fed the title’s retail sales. This is Stewart’s biggest non-Christmas week of the Nielsen SoundScan era and his highest rank since 1995’s Unplugged...and Seat-ed five weeks at No. 2. During that year’s Christmas frame, it sold 136,000.

The big starts by Stewart and chart-topper Santana continue one of 2002’s predominant themes, a year that has seen lots of adult-skewed albums pull big numbers. Their bows also place a bright feather in the cap of Arista and J/Def co-producer both top five albums.

ALSO LARGE: New entries on The Billboard 200 career-high marks for rock band Foo Fighters (No. 3, 121,500 units), Christian artist Michael W. Smith (No. 14, 57,500), and R&B’s 3LW (No. 15, 53,500). Two earlier Foo sets peaked at No. 10, with their 1999 album doing 111,000 in its biggest week. Two of Smith’s prior eight chart titles reached the top 20; he peaked at No. 16 in 1995, and two other albums had bigger sales weeks than his new one. Three-turned-duo 3LW saw its first album peak at No. 29 last year.

The solo debut of Destiny’s Child member Kelly Rowland enters at No. 12 on 77,000 units. It includes “Dilemma,” her hit collaboration with Nelly, one of the summer’s biggest tracks (see Singles Minded, this page). Another of Destiny’s children, Michelle Williams, peaked at No. 57 earlier this year. Group anchor Beyoncé Knowles won’t make her solo bow until 2003.

RALLY MONKEYS: Growing radio tracks help Las Ketchup pick up The Billboard 200’s Greatest Gainer (84-65, up 29%) and Paul Oakenfold earn that list’s Pacesetter award (196-134, up 48.5%). The former act, which is No. 1 on Top Latin Albums, also benefits from widespread ink from the likes of Time, Newsweek, Entertainment Weekly, People, and USA Today. Improved store positioning at several key retail chains assisted Oakenfold’s rise to No. 1 on Top Electronic Albums...Island Def Jam Music Group recalled a defec-tive run of the new W.C. album, but enough copies hit bins for it to bow at No. 51 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and No. 170 on the big chart. The set will be reintroduced Nov. 12.

LOVE WINS: Eminem earns his first No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100, as “Love Yourself” climbs 2-1 on the strength of its third consecutive Greatest Gainer/Airplay win and its fourth in five weeks. “Lose” gains 10 million audience impressions for a total of 112.6 million.

“Lose” makes it to the top of the Hot 100 in just its sixth chart week, making it the second airplay-only song to top the chart in such a short span since Billboard began including such titles in December 1999. The second track to do so is the one bounced from the chart’s peak this issue after 10 non-consecutive weeks, “Dilemma” by Nelly Featuring Kelly Rowland. “Dilemma” hit No. 1 in its sixth chart week in the Aug. 17 issue.

DAY BREAK: “Die Another Day” by Madonna climbs 47-1 on Hot 100 Singles Sales, as the maxi-CD title scans 28,500 units in its first full week at retail. “Day” is her third No. 1 on the Nielsen SoundScan-compiled chart, following “Music” in September 2000 and “Don’t Tell Me” in February 2001. On the Hot 100, the sales points push “Day” 18-8, giving Madonna her 35th top 10 single on the chart (see Chart Beat, page 4).

FLEW THE COOP: With the chart’s largest increase, Dixie Chicks take the biggest jump inside Hot Country Singles & Tracks’ top 10 in two years, as “Landslide” flies 7-2, Up 555 detections, the five-notch hike is the first in this part of the chart since Phil Vassar’s “Just Another Day in Paradise” leapt 10-5 in the Oct. 28, 2000, issue. Although “Landslide” logs 5,065 detections, it trails Keith Urban’s “Somebody Like You” by 914 plays, the fourth-largest gap between a No. 1 and No. 2 title in the 13 years since we adopted monitored airplay from Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems (BDS). The Chicks also debut with “Landslide” on both Adult Top 40 Tracks (No. 40) and the Adult Contemporary chart (No. 27). It’s the trio’s first track to reach a radio chart other than country. The addition of pop airplay props “Landslide” to No. 20 on Hot 100 Airplay, giving the Chicks their highest position yet on that chart. “Landslide” rises 29-22 on the Hot 100.

Urban’s fourth week atop the chart is the longest No. 1 stay for Capitol’s Nashville operation in a decade. Garth Brooks is the only other Capitol artist in the modern era to stay four weeks at No. 1 on the country chart. He did so in February 1992 with “What She’s Doing Now” and in October 1990 with “Friends in Low Places.” “Friends” closed a gap of 17 years for a month-long ride at the top for Capitol, previously achieved by Merle Haggard’s “If We Make It Through December” in 1973. At the time of Brooks’ 1992 feat, the Capitol logo had been temporarily retired by then-label president Jimmy Bowen in favor of the Liberty seal. The switch back to Capitol came in early 1995.

EMOTIONAL RETURN: Faith Hill scores her third No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary chart with “Cry.” Hill had previously spent a combined 25 weeks at No. 1 on the AC chart with her two previous chart-toppers: “Breathe” (17 weeks on top starting in Apr. 2000) and “There You’ll Be” (12 weeks beginning in July 2001). Only one other artist has spent more than 20 weeks at No. 1 on the AC chart in this still-young decade. Garth’s 29-week tallied 21 weeks in the top earlier this year with her only No. 1 of the past three years, “A New Day Has Come.”

SLOW SWITCH: After a roller-coaster ride on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart, Sean Paul’s “Gimme the Light” reaches a new peak, moving 5-3. In its 30th week, it is the longest trip to the chart’s top triumvirate in the Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems/SoundScan era. Earlier this year, “Lights, Camera, Action!” by Mr. Cheeks tied the snail’s pace set by Joe’s “I Wanna Know” in March 2000, with both singles needing 28 weeks to hit the top three. Eventually both tracks hit No. 1.

“Light” initially received enough airplay in some major markets to rise to No. 37 in July, where it seemed to reach its plateau after 14 weeks. As the record began to descend, bottoming out at No. 55, the release of the video in August and subsequent play at BET was a major factor in turning the fortune of “Light” around. Increased radio airplay and sales soon followed. More recently, Atlantic tapped into the track’s success with a joint distribution venture, providing VP Records with radio promotion needed to propel it to its current perch.

Additional reporting by Patrick McGowan in New York.
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<th>Number</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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**November 9, 2002**

**S1 GREATEST GAINER S1**

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### Billboard Top Jazz Albums

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<td><strong>#16</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#24</strong></td>
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### Billboard Top Classical Crossover

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<td><strong>CHANDOS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><strong>ANDREA BOCELLI</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHANDOS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong></td>
<td><strong>MARIO FRANQUISOS</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHANDOS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>BAY</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHANDOS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#6</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHARLOTTE CHURCH</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHANDOS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#7</strong></td>
<td><strong>YO-YO MA &amp; THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#8</strong></td>
<td><strong>SARAH BRIGHTMAN</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHANDOS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#9</strong></td>
<td><strong>DANIEL RODRIGUEZ</strong></td>
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### Billboard Top Classical Albums

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<td><strong>CARRERAS-DOMINGO-PAVAROTTI</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PHILIP GLASS</strong></td>
<td><strong>DECCA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#7</strong></td>
<td><strong>YO-YO MA</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TONY KALIUSTI</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#15</strong></td>
<td><strong>RICHARD JOO</strong></td>
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### Billboard Top New Age Albums

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<td><strong>#3</strong></td>
<td><strong>JOURNEY</strong></td>
<td><strong>Decca</strong></td>
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<td><strong>#4</strong></td>
<td><strong>VARIOUS ARTISTS</strong></td>
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**Note:** Sales data for Classical, Jazz, and New Age albums compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. Charts based on Net Shipment of each album to retailers. Sales data for Classic Rock albums compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.
### November 9, 2002

#### Chart 1: Heatseekers

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<td>STEVE EARLE</td>
<td>RTI Records</td>
<td>Jerusalem</td>
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<td>THE USED</td>
<td>Sub Pop</td>
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<td>SUGARCULT</td>
<td>Friska</td>
<td>Start Static</td>
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<td>THIERRY CORPORATION</td>
<td>Vagrant</td>
<td>The Richest Man In Babylon</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUGARCULT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>007</td>
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<td>Groovin'</td>
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#### Chart 2: Top Independent Albums

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<td>You Can Play These Songs With Chords</td>
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<td>Children Sing For Children: Christmas</td>
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<td>More Sounds Of Halloween</td>
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<td>DELBERT MCCLINTON</td>
<td>RTI Records</td>
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<td>AIMEE MANN</td>
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<td>DEJA VU</td>
<td>RTI Records</td>
<td>Alley: The Return Of The Ying Yang Twins</td>
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<td>JACOLOU</td>
<td>RTI Records</td>
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<td>JACOLOU</td>
<td>RTI Records</td>
<td>The Places You Have Come To Fear The Most</td>
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*Note: The charts list the top-selling albums and independent albums, defined as albums whose sales have not reached the top 30 of the Billboard 200 chart. The album and the artist's subsequent albums are immediately ineligible to appear on the Heatseekers chart. Top Independent Albums chart includes albums only from independent labels. Only albums with at least 500 copies sold the previous week are eligible for this chart. Chart positions are determined based on sales data provided by Nielsen SoundScan. The chart is compiled by Billboard and distributed by Nielsen SoundScan.*
| NOVEMBER 9, 2002 | BILLBOARD | MODERN ROCK TRACKS
<table>
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<td>I AM MINE</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>BANGER</td>
<td>Kasabian</td>
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<td>Queen Of The Stone Age</td>
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<td>ONE MORE MINUTE</td>
<td>Anthony Zero</td>
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<td>GIRL ALL THE BAD GUYS WANT</td>
<td>Autoharp</td>
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<td>HATE TO SAY I TOLD YOU SO</td>
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<td>SHE LOVES ME NOT</td>
<td>Pape Rouch</td>
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|| NOVEMBER 9, 2002 | BILLBOARD | ADULT CONTEMPORARY
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<td>I CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU</td>
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<td>SUPERMAN (IT'S NOT EASY)</td>
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<td>A MOMENT LIKE THIS</td>
<td>Kelly Clarkson</td>
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<td>SOAK UP THE SUN</td>
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<td>DO IT FOR LOVE</td>
<td>Daryl Hall &amp; John Oates</td>
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<td>A NEW DAY HAS COME</td>
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<td>NO SUCH THING</td>
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<td>WHERE YOU BELONG</td>
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<td>THE LIGHT</td>
<td>Chad Kroeger featuring Joss Stone</td>
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<td>Sammy Hagar and The Wabos</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>DROWNING</td>
<td>Luxury</td>
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| NOVEMBER 9, 2002 | BILLBOARD | ADULT TOP 40 TRACKS
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<td>ONE LAST BREATH</td>
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<td>WHERE ARE YOU GOING</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>YOUR BODY IS A WALKING MIRACLE</td>
<td>Shed</td>
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<td>UNDERNEATH IT ALL</td>
<td>No Doubt</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>DISEASE</td>
<td>Korn</td>
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<td>IN A LITTLE WHILE</td>
<td>Daron Nori</td>
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<td>KEEP ON KOMING</td>
<td>Scott Weiland</td>
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<td>WHERE YOU WILL GO</td>
<td>The Calling</td>
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<td>SOMEBODY ELSE THERE</td>
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<td>Crazy Town</td>
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| 18 | DROWNING | Liquid Jack

Compiled from a national sample of outlets supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems' Radio Data Service. All mainstream rock stations, 10 modern rock stations, 8 adult contemporary stations and 80 adult Top 40 stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Top 40 Tracks stands under the assumption that increases in listenership over the previous weeks are limited according to chart movement. A chart which has been on the chart for more than 20 weeks will generally not receive a boost, even if it registers an increase. Records below the top 25 (top 15 in AC and Adult Top 40) are removed from the chart after 20 weeks. Airplay weighted by ratings appearing in the top 30 on both the Nielsen AIM and Audience charts for the first time with increases in both departments and audience. Top 40 Tracks excluded. Weekly available © 2002, WOW! Multimedia, Inc. All rights reserved.
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November 9, 2002
Hot 100 Airplay

Hot 100 Singles Sales

www.billboard.com
www.americanradiohistory.com

BILLBOARD NOVEMBER 9, 2002
in, inspiring everyone to focus on putting the new album together. They asked us to give them space to work, and I did for a couple of months."

For remaining members Tionne "T-Boz" Watkins and Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas, there was no room to discuss. "When the first time this idea was put out there, I said, 'It's not time for that now. I'm not done.'" Watkins recalls. "Nobody knows Lisa better than us girls. She'd said, 'Girl, you better get out there and finish this.' When you know how someone would act if they were still here... that's why we had to finish this album and share Lisa's spirit."

The result of Watkins' and Thomas' insprational momentum is TLC's fourth album, 3D, released Nov. 11 and U.S. release the following day. A little more than half of the 13-track album was completed before the car accident in Honduras that left Lopes dead. She already had conceived the title, devised the visuals, and written six songs, including lead single "Girl Talk."

"Obviously, a lot of questions are being asked regarding what this album really is," Ariana senior VP of marketing and artist relations Mark Shimmel says. "It's actually TLC's premiere with some solid participation on Lisa's part before her passing. So we were able to build a legitimate TLD record around the work she left."

"It's the old TLC flavor," Watkins says, "but in the new era of TLC's CrazySexyCool [the group's 1994 album] to the 19th degree, I gave us the T-Boz that Lisa liked about me on this album and the same for Chilli."

Envisioned by Lopes as another look at the three different personalities that comprise TLC, 3D finds the threesome once again setting their sexy, saucy, girls-just-want-to-have fun attitude to music while also showing a vulnerable side. The dishy "Girl Talk"—described by Watkins as "No Scrubs, part two—and peppered with Lopes' signature salty rap—takes male half-stoppers in relationships to task, while the lush "In Your Arms Tonight" calls to mind old-school Prince. "Damaged," one of the six songs Watkins penned, paints a moving picture of a woman who is scarred to go forward with a new relationship.

It was also a little scary for Watkins and Thomas going back into the studio after Lopes' death. Both of them would not watch TV—too much reality. "And Watkins would not allow anyone to play Lopes' songs when they worked. "We would psyche ourselves up," Thomas says. "telling ourselves Lisa's on her way to the studio or just leaving, we can do this. But I believe she was truly overseeing everything."

For TLC manager Bill Diggs of New York-based Biggitt Entertainment, the new album's pending release is a bittersweet moment buoyed by the group's positive energy. "TLC started out as the excited young girls getting together," he says. "Then they became superstars, and bagage got attached. 3D was the first time the three had been in the studio together in a long while. It was also a place in time for the three of them to reignite what really excited them about music and take different elements of the past three albums and embody those on this one."

Sticking with what Thomas calls "our original formula and adding extra touches." TLC collaborated again with past producers Organized Noize, Dallas Austin, and Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds. The "extra touches" included teaming up with producers Edmund "Eddie Hustle" Clement ("Girl Talk"), the Neptunes ("In Your Arms Tonight"), Timbaland and Missy Elliott ("DIRTY"), and Raphael Saadiq ("So So Dumb"). Rodney Jerkins was brought in for three tracks—"Hey Hey, Over Me," and the eloquent, inspirational "Turntable," which was penned by Watkins and is dedicated to Lopes.

"Personally, the song [represents] all the experiences I've been through: sickle cell, 9/11, Lisa's death," says Watkins, who is affected with sickle cell anemia. This personal approach is nothing new for Watkins, who penned TLC's No. 1 hit "Unpretty" about female self-image. Of "Turntable" she says, "It's about the fact that good can come after bad. The tables can turn, and I'm living proof. As far as TLC is concerned, it's dedicated to Lisa. But everyone can get something out of it."

**MARKETING CHALLENGE**

"Girl Talk" currently stands at No. 38 on The Billboard Hot 100 and No. 30 on Hot RB/Hip-Hop Songs & Tracks. With the album and lead single in place, there is still the challenge of marketing the project, which is compounded by the death of one group member and the health situation of another. Rather than focus on the fanfare around 3D, Thomas says, "TLC's last studio album as a trio, Arista has devised a marketing plan that celebrates the new album, as well as Lopes' life.

"The interesting thing at Lisa's funeral was how celebratory it was," Shimmel says. "We've taken that sort of energy and are using it to launch a celebration of Lopes and the new project."

With that in mind, the label has commissioned a "Girl Talk" video. Planning to premiere the video Wednesday (6) on BET and MTV, Arista remains mum about further details. Reid will only say, "It's really special, with incredible concepts. It was difficult, but they found a cool, creative way to deal with [Lopes' absence]."

Tied around the video's premiere is a TLC mini-promotional tour in the top 15 radio markets. At movie theaters in these markets, radio station winners will see the new video, be treated to TLC album gift packs, hear the new album, and view past TLC videos, with Watkins and Thomas calling in to radio stations the day of each promotional stop. The pair are also taping various BET shows, including 106 & Park and Access Granted. Also on Wednesday, TLC will co-host MTV's Total Request Live (with Carson Daly). The video, directed by Dave Meyers, will premiere in Times Square on a Jumbotron video screen.

In the meantime, TLC is set make the media rounds, including Prime Time with Diane Sawyer, Today, Good Morning America, CNN, Entertainment Tonight, The View, Access Hollywood, CBS This Morning, and a VH1 Coming Home segment. Feature stories will run in USA Today, People magazine, US, Vibe, and Newsweek.

To further promote the album, the label is launching a promotional campaign to raise money for the TLC FanMail 4.7, a techology-of-fan campaign that includes promoting the album through this technology, fans can directly communicate with TLC through text messaging," Regis explains. "This is done by integrating off- and online programming by cell phones, so the fans feel more personal connection to TLC.

Owing to Watkins' ongoing battle with sickle cell and Lopes' absence, touring is not in the offing. Personal appearances are being considered on a case-by-case basis. "I think touring is over," Watkins says. "Chilli and I are just going day to day. If you think too far ahead, you might hurt yourself."

**BEYOND 3D**

There's no question that the curiosity factor behind 3D is high. As Rico Brooks, Atlanta district manager for Pepermint Music, notes, "The new TLC album will be an instant collector's item, because of the events surrounding the anti-terrorism of the album, the buzz started early, with customers wanting to know when the new TLC album was dropping. With 'Girl Talk' blazin', I look for Arista to go three singles deep on this record.

But beyond that, what's in store for the group? Reid says at some point there will be a greatest-hits album. In the meantime, he adds, "We have so much material that didn't get on this album. There are opportunities for us to replicate and create special projects."

One such opportunity is the domestic release of Lopes' aborted solo debut, Supernova. "I didn't want to release it here," Reid says. "We released it in Europe and didn't have huge success with it. Since then we've gone back, worked on it, and have plans to release it."

As for their ongoing solo projects, Watkins and Thomas say they have been both concentrating so hard on 3D that they are not thinking about doing anything else musically just yet. Outside of that, Watkins and producer Austin have teamed up on a movie production with Overbrook and Warner Bros. The script is based on Jelleybean's, the Atlanta skating rink where Watkins, Thomas, and Austin used to hang out. "It's a hip hop song about an aspiring rap star," Austin says. "Thomas is writing the script."

During the MTV Video Music Awards in August, TLC announced the establishment of a scholarship fund in Lopes' honor. The fund is at $25,000. "If we can help one student to get an education, that will be great," Thomas says. "Lisa would always help anybody. I know she'd be happy with the fund."

While time will tell how popular 3D will ultimately be, the bottom line for Watkins and Thomas is that the album represents a labor of love. "I'm glad I did this," Watkins says. "I wouldn't change it for the world. We're no different from other people, like everyone else, we got into disagreements. But we learned more than anything, and it will stay that way, no matter what. She was our girl."

Thomas adds, "She was our sister. And this is something we need to do: Carry on the legacy. Despite the squabbles, we loved each other. And I hope people come away from this album feeling the love between the three of us. There's no breaking up of this group."
Box-Office Records Fall As McCartney Wraps Tour

Continued from page 1

pleased. “The money is obviously very important, but even more important is the response we saw,” Marshall says. “Setting house records night after night was phenomenal, and we could not have asked for a more happy and successful tour. This has been a joy.”

The tour comprised two legs, in the spring and fall. The spring leg, under the Driving USA banner, grossed $53.2 million from 27 shows and drew 407,183 people. The top-grossing stop was a two-night stand at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas that took in $5.6 million; $4 million doubles were also notched at Dallas’ Reunion Arena, Madison Square Garden in New York, and the United Center in Chicago.

The 23-date fall run, called Back in the U.S., began Sept. 21 at the Bradley Center in Milwaukee and primarily played markets that were missed during the spring leg. Among the highest was a $4 million gross for two shows Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at FleetCenter in Boston.

“This tour [was] the ideal size,” McCartney says. “After the first leg, we said, ‘What we need is a nice holiday,’ so we took some time off; I got married [to model/actress Heather Mills June 11] and had my honeymoon—a wonderful time.”

Ticket prices were mostly in the $50-$250 range, easily the highest the artist has ever charged; McCartney last toured in 1993, when his New World stadium tour grossed more than $35 million from 30 shows, drawing more than 1 million people. Tickets in 1993 were $16.50-$32.50 in most markets.

“I suppose some people would balk at [ticket prices], but no one who has come to the show wants their money back,” McCartney says.

McCartney’s band for the tour included Paul “Wix” Wickers—who played with McCartney on the 1989-1990 and 1992-1993 tours—and concluded his tour’s run on keyboards; guitarist Rusty Anderson, who first played with McCartney on the 2001 album Driving Rain; Brian Ray, guitar/bass, who performed with Paul at this year’s Super Bowl; and Abe Laboriel Jr. on drums. The 35-song sets tilted largely toward Beatles material but also included tunes by Wings and solo cuts.

“I’ve played with most of these guys before, and we have a nice selection of songs,” McCartney understates. “This band has really taken off.”

McCartney’s 2002 North American touring efforts have taken the artist into many arenas for the first time, and he has been impressed. “I love ‘em,” McCartney says. “They’re great for taking our show in and out. We’re looking at playing some dates in England, and they don’t have any places like this here.”

Marshall adds, “My dream would be to take one of these buildings back to London—any of them. It’s a shame a city like London doesn’t have one.”

If McCartney and crew love the arenas, the feeling is mutual. “This was one of the finest shows we ever had,” says Dave Brown, director of Reunion Arena, where McCartney grossed more than $4 million for shows May 9-10. “Everything clicked, no glitches. We could’ve probably done a third show, given the opportunity.”

MULTIPLE PROMOTERS

Marshall put together a unique tour-promotion model for McCartney. Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) promoted the bulk of dates on the first leg, with Anschutz Entertainment Group’s Concerts West promoting the remainder. A similar setup was used in the fall, with House of Blues Concerts getting in on the action by promoting the Oct. 18 date at the Rose Garden Arena in Portland, Ore. In total, CCE promoted 33 dates and Concerts West 12; there were four co-promoters between the two.

“The model worked very well,” Marshall says, citing CCE touring VP Brad Wavva, production director Dave Clarke, and tour director Tim McWilliams as “top-notch people that really cared.” At Concer West, he applauds co-CEO Paul Gongaware and production manager Tom Rye. Of the two companies, he says, “The promoters got on with each other, as well.”

Wavva says the tour was challenging yet rewarding. “From the very start, Paul McCartney and Barrie Marshall had a vision of what they wanted to accomplish. The message was delivered clearly, and I think we executed the way it was envisioned,” Wavva says. “Paul demands perfection, he deserves perfection, the audience deserves perfection, but delivering perfection every night is not an easy task.”

Gongaware agrees. “It was flawless. Barrie Marshall knows what he’s doing . . . I’ve been doing this since Presley, and this has to be the best tour I’ve been on.”

McCartney had particularly high praise for his crew. “You couldn’t have asked for a better group of people,” he says. The team was made up of production director Jerry Stickells, production manager Mark Spring, his assistant Diane Eichorst, stage manager Scott Chase, front-of-house sound engineer Pat Boothroyd, and video director Paul Becher. Roy Bennett designed the lights and video with McCartney.

“There is not one person on this tour that is not first-class,” Marshall says. McCartney agrees, remaining appreciative of the crew’s work ethic. “He conducted this interview via phone from Las Vegas, and when told his last stop there grossed more than $5 million, he responded, ‘Oh yeah? Well, the drinks are on me, then.’”

I’m from Liverpool,” he says. “I had a number of jobs that didn’t pay as well as this one does. I was second man on a lorry, and I used to be a coal winder.”

INTERNATIONAL DATES

While he has wrapped things up in North America, McCartney has not completed his concert work for the year. The tour goes to Mexico City for concerts at Palacio de los Deportes Saturday (2), Sunday (3), and Tuesday (5) and then Japan for shows at the Tokyo Dome Nov. 11, 13, 14 and the Osaka Dome Nov. 17 and 18. Oceania Presents promotes the Mexico City shows; Kyodo Tokyo promotes the shows in Japan.

McCartney is no stranger to Tokyo, the site of his notorious 1980 pot bust. “I’ll be better-prepared this time,” he jokes. “I know how to pack now.”

McCartney postponed what was to be his final concert of the year—and his only Australian show—out of consideration for the victims of the recent terrorist attack in Bali. The Nov. 23 date in Melbourne was to be his first date in Australia in more than a decade.

Meanwhile, highlights from the tour will air Nov. 27 on the two-hour ABC special Back in U.S. A DVD and concert album of the same name will street Nov. 26 via Capitol. There is also talk of more dates in 2003, including a run through Europe, a possible performance at Red Square in Moscow, and a tour of Australia. Marshall admits, “Next year is a very exciting prospect.”

It is obvious that McCartney is still invigorated by the opportunity to perform live. “The thing with the Beatles was that we were all just kids and had never done it before,” he says. “At Shea Stadium [in New York in 1965], we were playing through the baseball PA system. We’re a little more at home now; this band is a great live band, and I’m surprised I still love doing this as much as I do.”

82
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B I L L B O A R D  N O V E M B E R  9, 2002
Tropical Music Falters Despite Latin Boom

Continued from page 1

Top listeners to [connect]. What long focused on tar major shift sales of Puerto...salsa, and merengue, and Colombian cumbia. Some of the tropical greats of recent decades include Perez Prado, Tito Puente, Ruben Blades, and the Fania All-Stars. The reasons cited for the genre’s current decline are many, including lack of radio support, a slowdown in new artist development, the economic downturn (particularly in Puerto Rico, a bastion for tropical music), shifting tastes among young consumers, professional CD piracy (which disproportionately affects Latin music), and stagnation in the genre itself. Whatever the cause, all agree that sales of tropical music have plummeted to the lowest point in recent memory, and getting the beat back may require a major shift in the way the music is viewed, created, and performed.

BRIGHT SPOTS

There are some bright spots, name-ly the rise of bachata, a traditional, guitar-based Dominican genre that has seen solid growth in the past two years, thanks to such rising stars as Monchy & Alexandra and Yoskar Serrante. And the best-selling title on the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart this year continues to be Marc Anthony’s Songs (Sony), a solid salsa disc. EMF’s Carlos Vives, who plays a blend of vallenato and pop, is also charting well.

But generally, “tropical music is in the dumps,” says Universal Music Latin VP of A&R Eddie Fernandez, a Cuban raised in Puerto Rico who has long focused on the genre. “The way salsa stands today, it’s hard for young listeners to connect. What I think will happen is [that] fusions will grow within tropical music; fusions that younger...death. But there is a catch. When those fusions do emerge, radio is reluctant to play them. And so, with few exceptions, tropical music has become the realm of a few big stars, with little room for new acts.

“Generally speaking, tropical music is now for older people,” says Ian Frat- icelli, head buyer of Puerto Rico’s Distribuidora Nacional de Discos, which distributes product to more than 100 outlets in the Caribbean. “In the late ’80s, salsa was youth music. Now, the trend is regéton [a blend of reggae, rap, and tropical], which is real street music—not like salsa, which has become such a thought-out product that kids really love it. This is not the first time that tropical music—salsa, specifically—has hit a hump in the road. But through the decades, some form of tropical dance music has remained at the forefront—from mambo to rumba to sons, salsa, and merengue—and has been em- blematized of Latin music as a whole.

Today, that is simply not the case. According to mid-year figures from the Recording Industry Assn. of America, tropical music accounts for 11% of all Latin shipments, compared to 53% for traditional Mexican and 36% for Latin pop on an overall basis. The tropical share has slipped from the 13% reported six months ago and the 16% reported at year-end 2000.

Tropical also takes a back seat on the radio. Of the top 20 Spanish-language stations in the U.S. monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, 54 report in regional Mexican, 39 in pop, and only 17 in tropical (up from one last year), including stations that report as both tropical and pop. According to Arbitron’s 2002 study on Puerto Rico, adult contemporary is the most popular format on the island, followed by top 40 and tropical. But the results are driven by women and men in tropical listener-ship but out-pace them in the other two formats.

Tropical music’s decline can be traced back three or four years, to the time before the rise of salsa and the hub of tropical music for the U.S.—started switching from salsa and merengue to other formats.

“With these radio stations—which were considered part of the Latin genre in Puerto Rico—the hub of tropical music for the U.S.—started switching from salsa and merengue to other formats.

“With these radio stations—which were considered part of the Latin genre in Puerto Rico—the hub of tropical music for the U.S.—started switching from salsa and merengue to other formats. The same can be said of Universal, which has15 active broadcasters including Danielito el Bachatero. Additionally, Universal acquired the catalog of RMM, an all-tropical label that folded last year.

Beyond the number of acts, Melén- dez says listeners’ reaction to tropical music—as measured by his station’s research—has been declining in recent years. Many of those interviewed for this story say there is a “sameness” in the music, from melodies to arrangements to “boring” romantic lyrics. “The salsero stops buying albums, because he feels he’s getting the same thing every year,” says Sony Music artist Blades. “People buy salsa not only because they want to dance but because they want popularity. There’s a repetition of formulas, of arrangers, composers, and songs. The singers are being cloned. Are people abandoning salsa as a result? No. They’re buying old albums.”

Retailers confirm that catalog al- umns still sell briskly in the genre. They say that simply isn’t the case.

PLenty OF TalEnt

Further, sales have not greatly dropped the assertion that there is not enough tropical music to choose from. Jorge Fuentes of indie label Miami Records—the U.S. arm of Colombia’s Discos Fuentes, whose catalog in- cludes Joe Arroyo and Prayú y sus Tesos—says indies are handicapped because they cannot afford to spend the radio-promotion dollars available to majors. “If radio gave a window to all these artists and this music and didn’t tell people that there’s only five artists in salsa and merengue, then people would know how rich tropical sounds from all over the are. But radio doesn’t allow it.”

Tony Moreno, president of MP Rec- ords, says the way for indie suc- cess is through greater creativity, “[Do] not copy sounds but create new ones.” Moreno says, “Everything has its stage, but the new stage has to be new music, and have this music play on the radio.”

One radio station in Miami has explained its definition of “tropical” music and is breathing new life into a tired genre.

“Salsa is more than just a genre of music. To me it’s the juice, the spice, the essence of the party and the genre things.” WRTO Miami PD Leo Vela says. The station has broken ground by programming a mix of tropical genres—from salsa and merengue to reggeón and tap and tropical pop from the likes of Juanes and Capab—while also inserting tracks in English and Spanglish.

“It just made sense to me,” Vela says, explaining his programming decision. “Miami is no longer just a small Cuban enclave. It’s a multinational city. We have to grow up and reflect that. We are a bicultural, bilingual city.”
Portable Players Await Yule Joy

Continued from page 1

with à la carte downloads through a shopping service as Best Buy, amazon.com, CNet, and MTV Networks. But the industry has not adopted a standard format or rights-management rules for its digital files.

One of the devices that only plays MP3 files is Apple Computer’s iPod. The sleek little iPod is perhaps the best bet to push through the clutter this holiday season. It is benefiting from a mountain of hype and a growing cult of fans, thanks to its pleasing design, ease of use, and—with the high-end version—its ability to carry as many as 4,000 songs.

The size of a deck of cards, the iPod—with models retailing at between $299 and $499—is emerging as a potential breakout product for Apple as it attempts to expand its presence in the computer and peripheral market—a domain long dominated by rival Microsoft. In fact, Apple is so bullish about the iPod that it has just released a Windows version of the item and—in an unconventional move for the computer maker—is lining up distribution in such mass-merchant locations as Best Buy and Target.

FINDING THE RIGHT MARKET

But Apple and its competitors in the music-player space still have their work cut out. Little more than 5 million portable players have been sold since the category hit the market in 1998, according to the Consumer Electronics Assn. (CEA), a trade group in Arlington, Va. What’s more, a majority of those that the CEA surveyed said they did not have any plans to buy such devices.

“Three years ago, the general perception in the industry was that volumes would be a lot larger than they are today,” says Gil Miller, director of product marketing for SonicBlue, one of the leading makers of portable devices.

Despite the slow start, Miller and other consumer-electronics executives say the market will pick up steam as devices become cheaper and can hold more music.

Apple executives say their iPod has the right formula. “Remember the revolution of the Walkman several years ago and how big that was?” Apple director of hardware Greg Joswiak asks. “We know there is something there [with digital music], yet it is so untapped, because the other players in the market aren’t fulfilling that need.”

Apple’s high hopes for iPod are rooted in its performance last Christmas season, when with minimal marketing, 125,000 units were sold in the six weeks following its introduction. But executives at competing manufacturers maintain that satisfying consumers’ different needs when it comes to digital-music portables remains a challenge. A recent study by research firm Ipsos Reid found that the main factors in deciding which MP3 player to purchase were, in order of importance: memory, quality, price and pricing, style, and the inclusion of FM radio.

“People always ask me, ‘What should I buy?’ and I say, ‘What do you do?’ Miller says. “There isn’t any one kind of equation that works for everybody.”

THE COMMON CATEGORIES

Most digital-music players fall into one of three categories: devices that are essentially portable computer hard drives, devices that store files on a format called flash media, and CD players that can play MP3 files and other compressed audio.

The iPod is perhaps the best-known example of a hard-drive based device, though others from the likes of Creative Labs and SonicBlue exist. Additionally, SonicBlue’s line of Rio players are among the most popular flash-based devices; some come with FM receivers. Sony, SonicBlue, and RCA, among others, also make CD players that can play back MP3 files.

Each type of product has its advantages and disadvantages. The main appeal of the hard-drive devices is their ability to carry a massive amount of music. The high-end iPod, for instance, offers tremendous capacity but at a hefty price tag.

Hard-drive devices are not nearly as dainty as flash-based ones, which trade storage capacity (they hold roughly two hours of music) for size (they can be as slender as a pen) and affordability (the newest Rio costs between $129-299). There are CD players that play back MP3s that were burned to discs. While perhaps the least elegant of all the options, they are the most affordable (they can be as low as $80-$100) and fit well with the CD-burning culture. Storage capacity is inexpensive. Consumers can store 14 hours of MP3 audio on individual blank CDs.

“I think that people are definitely looking for more storage,” Miller says. “But people are going to make the right tradeoff between what’s the right cost for storage and their use requirement.”

In an attempt to bridge the best elements of the three types of digital devices, Sony Electronics is pushing a fourth option: the Minidisc.

The company is marketing an updated version of the product called the MD, which offers the ability to store and play MP3 files on Minidisc media. The benefit, Sony argues, is a CD-like experience from a unit that is closer in size to a flash device and has storage capacity comparable to a hard-drive device. The Minidisc blanks—which retail for about $2 per disc—are also rewritable, like a hard drive. Minidisc units range from $179-$349.

Sony Electronics senior VP of personal mobile products Robert Ashcroft says, “You have your capacity play; you’ve got your really tiny play; then you have your flexible, all-around play of the Minidisc. That’s the promise of the Minidisc. It does a little bit of everything.”

It is also one of the more aggressively marketed music devices. Backed by Sony’s promotional muscle, the product has been featured in a series of spots that run regularly on MTV.

HERE COMES CHRISTMAS

The approach appears to be working. According to NPD Intellect data, when factoring it into the digital-play market, Sony’s Net MD claimed a 24% market share on a value basis between May and August. Apple represented 15% of the market and Rio held 14%, with the rest of the market split among more than a dozen other manufacturers.

Apple is looking to change that landscape this Christmas. While it does not give any projections, executives say they are “optimistic” about what iPod will do over the holiday season. “We are now entering the season when these products are sold in their greatest numbers,” Joswiak says. “And the amount of attention, buzz, and early sales are encouraging.”

The CEA reports that 78% of U.S. households are likely to purchase at least one consumer-electronics product as a gift during the upcoming shopping season. Comparable gadgets with similar price points—as such as digital cameras—have proved to be popular gifts.

Indeed, Apple executives point to the digital-camera market as proof that consumers are not afraid to pony up for pricier gadgetry. “When you look [digital-music players’ sales], it is amazing to look at the digital-camera market, which certainly has devices that are significantly more expensive than standard MP3 players,” Joswiak says. “But the sales of digital cameras are substantially larger than music players. And right there you’ve got to say: ‘This is odd.’ It’s not often when you see a more expensive device sell in greater numbers to what you would think is a similar crowd.”

Miller says hard-drive players have a great advantage in the long run because of their storage capacity. The question, he says, is if they will be competitively priced.

If hard-drive players can just start coming down in price, then I think we’re going to see a growth in the market,” he says. “Unfortunately, that’s not the case. The market tends to favor硬 drives. Instead of going down in price, they go up in storage size. We’re going to have to see where the hard-drive market goes and see if anybody’s got an advantage in maintaining lower storage requirements and trying to bring the price down.”

In the meantime, Miller and others remain hopeful about consumer interest in flash devices. “Coming into this space with new players and the flash-market player would be flat. But that’s not what we’ve seen,” Miller says. “Flash players have the ability now to really come down in price, especially when you look at the cost of memory formats like SD cards, where you can actually buy a 128 megabyte card [which holds four hours of music] for under $60.”

LABELS CAN GIVE A LIFT

Sony’s Ashcroft says the education of the consumer continues, albeit slowly. “Gen Y absolutely gets it,” he says. “They know about portable digital-music devices; they know to choose between flash devices, hard drives, and Minidisc in general. But there is a much bigger market out there that is not really aware of the benefits of these things.”

Device makers say that is where relationships with the labels and new label services can be helpful.

The likes of iTunes and Rio are forging compatibility deals with such subscription-service operators as Pressplay and Real Networks—which offer the Real One version of MusicNet—in order to promote the idea that the services’ music files can be transferred to their respective devices.

Meanwhile, Ecast—a specialist in Internet-connected play-play/for-play jukeboxes, and a recent acquisition of RioPort, a leading provider of digital singles to the likes of MTV and Best Buy, partially in anticipation of the coming market in kiosk sales of digital music—”The labels are beginning to understand that portable devices will help them in their desire to grow their own digital-content business,” Miller says. “People want to be able to take music with them, and if the hardware providers and the content providers can work together to come up with some innovations, it will help drive both online distribution and hardware products.”

That said, Apple is on the sidelines when it comes to compatibility with label-backed digital services. While in the long run Apple sees the opportunity for tie-ins with the commercial digital-music market, for now it is focusing on promoting fairness and anti-piracy messages in association with iPod.

Certainly, standards are difficult to create, Ashcroft says. “People want to be able to take their music with them. So obviously, being able to take your music to a portable device is a value to consumers. But how we manage that in terms of security and a common standard is the issue the industry has been, and still is, grappling with.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HARD-DRIVE PLAYERS</th>
<th>MANUFACTURER</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
<th>MEMORY</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iPod</td>
<td>Apple Computer</td>
<td>$299-$499</td>
<td>5 GB-20GB</td>
<td>6.5-7.2 oz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archos Jukebox</td>
<td>Archos Technology</td>
<td>$333-$419</td>
<td>20 GB</td>
<td>10.2 oz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rio Riot</td>
<td>SonicBlue</td>
<td>$242-$359</td>
<td>20 GB</td>
<td>10 oz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nomad Jukebox</td>
<td>Creative Labs</td>
<td>$279-$399</td>
<td>20 GB</td>
<td>10.5 oz</td>
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<tr>
<th>FLASH PLAYERS</th>
<th>MANUFACTURER</th>
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<th>WEIGHT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rio S50</td>
<td>SonicBlue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nomad MuVo</td>
<td>Creative Labs</td>
<td>$134-$165</td>
<td>64 MB</td>
<td>1 oz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Panasonic SV-SD80</td>
<td>Panasonic</td>
<td>$189-$299</td>
<td>64 MB</td>
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<tr>
<th>REMOVABLE MEDIA PLAYERS</th>
<th>MANUFACTURER</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
<th>MEMORY</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Net MD (Minidisc)</td>
<td>Sony Electronics</td>
<td>$179-$349</td>
<td>296 min/disc</td>
<td>4.48 oz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rio Volt (MP3 CD Player)</td>
<td>Sony Electronics</td>
<td>$125-$199</td>
<td>700 MB/disc</td>
<td>8.3 oz</td>
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<tr>
<td>TDK Mojo (MP3 CD Player)</td>
<td>TDK</td>
<td>$79-$141</td>
<td>700 MB/disc</td>
<td>9.4 oz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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For purposes of comparison: 20 GB = more than 200 hours of music; 64 MB = about 2 hours of music

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Billboard and ABC Radio Networks have agreed to extend their longstanding licensing relationship for an additional seven years. Under the deal, ABC Radio produces two weekly syndicated shows based on Billboard’s charts: American Gold and American Country Countdown.

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For information on issue dates and advertising opportunities, contact Gene Smith at 646-654-4616 or gsmith@billboard.com
Blake Shelton: Who’s Hunting Who?

A s the old saying goes, sometimes you get the bear; sometimes the bear gets you. It looked like the latter scenario might be played out for country singer Blake Shelton, who enjoyed a face-to-face encounter with a bruin while on a recent five-day Colorado elk bow-hunting trip with fellow singer/ sportsman Andy Griggs and their respective stepfathers.

“The first morning I went out, I came up on a big cliff, and it was beautiful looking off with my binoculars,” Shelton recalls. “I stood there about 10 minutes and when I turned around, about 20 steps away, there was this big black bear looking at me.”

Shelton says he thinks the bear was trying to figure out what kind of long-haired creature Shelton might be. “We looked at each other for two or three seconds, long enough for me to crap myself and him to realize what I was,” he says. “Then the bear took off through the woods.”

The experience was “humbling,” Shelton says. “It’s overwhelming to be staring at a wild animal like that, in his house.”

Hunting and fishing have been lifelong passions for the Ada, Okla., native, culminating in many ways with the Warner Bros. artist’s recent purchase of 460 acres of deer-infested property near Centerville, Tenn., west of Nashville. Like many outdoor enthusiasts, Shelton believes sportsmen get a bad rap.

“Hunters are the best conservationists that exist,” he says. “A lot of organizations talk a good game about saving animals, but when it comes down to it, we’re the only ones getting it done, spending millions of dollars every year on hunting and fishing licenses, constructing and preserving habitats.”

Shelton points out that hunting keeps animal populations in balance via prudent game management.

“There are more animals now than there have ever been, and the animals are healthier now,” he says. “Harvesting is the best way to keep herds healthy.”

Which, of course, is not Shelton’s only goal. “I’m not gonna say my whole goal is to preserve wildlife. I love to hunt. It’s something I was taught to do and will continue to do. It’s my therapy.”

Even so, Shelton is doing his part to create habitat on his own corner of the country, rehabilitating acreage on his Hickman County land. “Three hundred and forty acres of my land had been timbered, without a blade of grass there,” he says. “I’ve made it my goal to build this place back up and make it suitable for wildlfe again.”

As for the harvesting part, that’s coming along as well. “My goal was to make enough money to have my own land to hunt on, whether it was 20 acres or 2,000 acres,” he says. “I just shot my first doe out there a week ago, with my bow. I learned a long time ago you have to take a good share of does off a place to keep the population in balance. Plus, anything you can get with a bow is a trophy.”

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