DVD Enjoys Big Role In Black History Month

BY JILL KUPNIS
LOS ANGELES—A wealth of new DVD titles are hitting store shelves just in time for this year's celebration of Black History Month. Audio titles are less evident than in past years, but several music-related promotions are also planned for the month, which honors the contributions of African-Americans.

The key video title this Black History Month is the film adaptation of Alice Walker's The Color Purple, which will be released Feb. 18 as a double-disc DVD ($27.95) from Warner Home Video (WHV). The 1985 film, which is the story of an African-American girl growing up in the rural South in the early 1900s, was directed by Steven Spielberg and stars Oprah Winfrey, Whoopi Goldberg, and Danny Glover. The project was nominated for 11 Academy Awards.

Among the country stars currently without a label deal are, clockwise from top left, Clint Black, Lorrie Morgan, Billy Ray Cyrus, Collin Raye, Chely Wright, and Bryan White.

Country's New Reality: Stars Without Label Deals

BY PHYLLIS STARK
NASHVILLE—In his current country single, "Next Big Thing," Vince Gill sings about an industry obsessed with finding new stars, often to the detriment of established ones. Gill sings, "When you finally hit the top, Man, you know what that means/Well, everybody's ready for the next big thing" (see story, page 31).

That song, while tongue in cheek, speaks to a larger truth. An astonishing number of country acts that were gold and platinum sellers as recently as the 1990s no longer have label deals.

The roll call of free agents reads like a who's who of country music: Clint Black, Randy Travis, Billy Ray Cyrus, Wade Hayes, Ty Herndon, Chely Wright, Bryan White, Collin Raye, Suzy Bogguss, Billy Dean, Lorrie Morgan, Ricochet, the Kinleys, David Lee Murphy, Lila McCann, Rick Trevino, Kevin Sharp, and Paul Brandt. (Travis has released two Christian music albums in the past few years but has no country deal, although some of his Christian music has been worked to country radio, including "Three Wooden Crosses," which is No. 39 on Hot Country Songs & Tracks this issue. Brandt remains successful in his home country of Canada but has no U.S. deal.)

The collective success of these 18 acts is dramatic. Among them, they have 29 platinum or multi-platinum awards to their credit.

Indie Pub Catalogs Are Hot Investment Ticket

BY RANDY POE
NEW YORK—Independent publishing catalogs have seen their market value rise more than double in the past decade, and at least three companies now hope to take advantage of that trend. But with the music industry financially strained by declining CD sales, many large publishers and other potential acquirers of such assets are experiencing sticker shock when examining the price tags of the would-be targets.

"In my opinion, [valuations] have become unreasonable and unco-" nomic," BMG Music Publishing president Nick Firth says. "There is no way that with some of the multiples being proposed that we can make the kind of return on investment that Bertelsmann requires or that any other sane company requires."

Among publishing jew-els said to be open for the taking for the right figure are the catalogs of blues and R&B specialist Arc Music, the non-proprietary rock and pop assets of Leiber & Stoller Music, and the catalog of U.K. classical music house Bossey & Hawkes.

The asking price for each of these catalogs, as well as many much smaller ones, is said to be more than 15 times the gross margin on the assets—a metric known as net publisher's share (NPS), which is a proxy for free cash flow. In some cases that figure is even higher than 15 times.

Foes Swap Barbs At Radio Ownership Hearings

BY BILL HOLLAND
WASHINGTON, D.C.—Depending on who was testifying Jan. 30 before the Senate Commerce Committee, big radio today is either a bullying brute who bosses around record companies and recording artists and has snuffed out local programming input, or it is a diverse media platform under attack by the meanies of cable, satellite programming, and even the Internet.

It is a classic fight between the Goliaths and (Continued on page 41)

Retailers Plan Digital-Music Service; BMG Claims Record Earnings For 2002: Page 3 • Ted Turner, Norio Ohga Exit: Page 8

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On February 23rd, we celebrate their nominations.

(Every other day we celebrate their music.)
Retailers Echo Majors’ Online Presence

BY BRIAN GARRITY

Word that a consortium of six of the largest music retailers in the U.S. plans to launch a digital-music subscription service, either via major-label retail operations, as MusicNet and Pressplay marks retail’s most aggressive move to date to embrace digital distribution.

The retailer in question—Best Buy, Harman International Industries, Privateer Records, Trans World Entertainment, Virgin Entertainment Group, and Wherehouse Music—has tinkered with promotional and commercial downloading via the likes of Liquid Audio and Rhapsody for years. But concerns of regaining everything from revenue sharing and pricing control to customer-data ownership have kept them on the sidelines in the on-demand subscription business, until now.

With CD sales in a tailspin and competition in cyberspace rising, the consortium’s members are hoping to use the venture, called Echo, to control their own destinies in the subscription arena. Retailers are billing Echo as a vehicle for collecting content licenses and providing back-end technology that will power numerous merchant-specific offerings.

The move also represents a bet by merchants that they can drive consumer adoption of online services—that says the deal is essential to the success of online music and Internet companies by using in-store promotion and sales of physical CDs to drive subscriptions. Ideas include bundling Echo start-up discs with physical goods, offering access to free downloads with the purchase of a CD, and offering locked content in bulk that could be transferred to iPod-like portable hard-drive devices and later opened.

But specific details surrounding the venture are limited. The retailers each have invested an equal, undisclosed sum in Los Angeles-based Echo, formerly Echo Networks, a streaming music service.

Echo founder Dan Hart will head the new company, in which the consortium holds a controlling interest. Representatives from the six retailers—plus as Arnin Bernstein, former president of the National Assn. of Record Merchandisers, and Strauts Zelnick, former CEO of BMG Entertainment and an Echo investor through ZelnickMedia—will serve on the Echo board of directors.

Each of the retailers will also launch their own branded service, using Echo as the engine, and will control pricing.

Beyond that, there is still much to be decided. Echo has not actually inked a distribution deal with any of the six retailers yet. And an investment in Echo does not necessarily preclude the retailers from cutting deals with other services. (In fact, another leading online music offering says it is in advanced talks regarding a distribution agreement with an Echo investor.) Plus, Echo still has to acquire content licenses from the labels—a problem that has kept the project on hold.

But those in the digital industry view the venture as a potential serious rival that even in its nebulous state commands instant legitimacy, courtesy of the six retailers.

“The echo consortium was established to create a viable business strategy that combines physical and digital distribution,” Hart says. “Music retailers can utilize their long histories and expertise in building and cultivating relationships, marketing, and breaking new artists to provide a digital music experience that truly serves the consumer.”

Hastings Entertainment CEO John Marvin adds, “We have always excelled at selling music to consumers, and we plan to expand our consumer relationships from the physical world into the digital world.”

Wherehouse Music CEO Jerry Comstock notes that the initiative reflects that retail has always been about more than merely selling CDs. He says, “We are in the customer-relationship business.”

Alan Malasky—of Porter Wright Morris & Arthur in Washington, D.C., and antitrust counsel to leading digital distribution companies, calls what he calls “real competition” to the digital-music marketplace: “Under the terms of the venture, each retailer participant will independently market and price the digital-entertainment product offerings, in a manner that will best serve its consumers.”

Schmidt-Holtz Hints At Record BMG Earnings

Unconfirmed Reports Say That Profits For 2002 Exceed $100 Million

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR

MUNICH—“Two years ago we were a born victim, today we are an equal partner.” These are the words BMG chairman/CEO Rolf Schmidt-Holtz uses to describe his company’s progress.

Without stating any figures, Schmidt-Holtz claims record earnings for 2002 and says BMG has exceeded expectations. The company’s market share has widened from 8.2% to 9.9%, he says, but he does not expect to see a repetition of the record-breaking earnings for 2002 and says BMG has exceeded expectations. The company’s market share has widened from 8.2% to 9.9%, he says, but he does not expect to see a repetition of the record-breaking earnings for 2002 and says BMG has exceeded expectations. The company’s market share has widened from 8.2% to 9.9%, he says, but he does not expect to see a repetition of the record-breaking earnings for 2002 and says BMG has exceeded expectations. The company’s market share has widened from 8.2% to 9.9%, he says, but he does not expect to see a repetition of the record-breaking earnings for 2002.

“By returning to GSA, Stein wants to make Germany a more profitable. Stein reveals that earnings have

The new, leaner BMG organization to be implemented will be more profitable. Stein reveals that earnings have
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BY BRIAN GARRETT

The music industry has long been reluctant to go after individual consumers in litigation efforts to stem the spread of digital piracy. However, a pair of recent court rulings—one in the U.S. and another in Norway—indicate that the business is shifting its thinking on that front.

The Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) recently won a court decision that found that telecom giant Verizon must turn over the identity of a subscriber whose identity we were seeking so we can let them know that what they are doing is illegal.

Meanwhile, a Norwegian court, in response to a legal action brought by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), recently fined a 24-year-old student a reported $14,000 for operating a copy-cat Napster service known as napster.no.

But the ability to go after such consumers won’t have a fight. Verizon is appealing the Jan. 20 decision.

Indeed, legal experts have argued that the only truly effective litigation strategy against individual consumers could have “a major impact” on P2P activity due to the fact that most consumers are “litigation-averse.” With P2P viewed by many as impossible to stop completely, the ultimate goal, analysts say, is reducing the number of overall file sharers.

So far the industry has focused on pursuing individuals it views to be egregious uploaders of content and enablers of file trading—not casual downloaders. Executives are trying to avoid what one major-label new-media chief has termed “the ground-breaking effect of having a policeman arrest a young kid in his home because he’s been downloading from a file-sharing service.” But the ability to go after such consumers won’t come without a fight. Verizon is appealing the Jan. 20 court ruling, and Black says he expects the telecommunications industry to be resistant to similar moves from the RIAA. What’s more, Black says it remains to be seen just how significant the impact of an industry litigation strategy against individual consumers will be. He notes that it may viewed by many consumers as the equivalent to “jaywalking or a speeding ticket.”

“The music industry has long been reluctant to go after individual consumers in litigation efforts to stem the spread of digital piracy. However, a pair of recent court rulings—one in the U.S. and another in Norway—indicate that the business is shifting its thinking on that front,” the article states.

The article goes on to discuss the recent court decision in which the RIAA won its case against a subscriber whose identity they were seeking. It also mentions a Norwegian court's decision to fine a 24-year-old student for operating a copy-cat Napster service.

The article notes that the industry's focus on pursuing individuals it views as egregious uploaders and enablers of file trading is not aimed at casual downloaders. Executives are trying to avoid what one major-label new-media chief has termed the “ground-breaking effect” of having a policeman arrest a young kid in his home for downloading from a file-sharing service.

Despite the ability to go after such consumers, there are challenges. Verizon is appealing the Jan. 20 court ruling, and Black expects the telecommunications industry to be resistant to similar moves from the RIAA. He notes that it may be viewed by many consumers as the equivalent to “jaywalking or a speeding ticket.”
Eddie Levine
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Value Music Files For Bankruptcy

BY ED CHRISTMAN

The “perfect marriage” created by the merger between Value Music and Central South four months ago wound up in bankruptcy court last week, as the retailer was forced to seek Chapter 11 protection due to $3.6 billion in accounting inconsistencies discovered after the merger.

At the time of the merger, Rob Perkins and Randy Davidson, the presidents, respectively, of both chains, said the new company would result in a perfect marriage that would comprise one chain with about 125 stores and $140 million in annual revenue.

But when the two companies were integrating their accounting systems one month after the merger was completed, “it was discovered that Central South had $3.6 million in accounts payables that had not been recorded and had not been discovered by RPMG in the process of completing its audit report,” according to court documents.

The unrecorded liabilities meant that many of the Central South stores that looked profitable before the merge, were, in fact, losing money. Making matters worse, it also caused the few companies—which is doing business as Value Central Entertainment, but is corporately named Value Music Concepts—to be in violation of some of the financial covenants of the $25 million revolving lending facility provided by Fleet National, which immediately tightened up on credit.

Randy Davidson was unavailable to comment, but a source familiar with the situation said that there wasn’t any attempt by Davidson to defraud Value Music. “Central South was a privately held company that had never undergone an audit before,” he explains. “I don’t believe [Davidson] would have defrauded anybody. Whether he should have known as CEO about the discrepancies, that is another matter, and you can question his management abilities. But once the errors were identified he tried to deal with them in a very upstanding manner.”

Davidson is said to have forked over $1.75 million in funds and assets— as well as cancel payments due the Central South Christian distribution company—in order to compensate for the $3.6 million shortfall, in a settlement with Value Music. Davidson and the other Central South partners also forfeited their 50% ownership in the merged company.

The Value Central filing on Jan. 27 in Atlanta, in the Northern District of Georgia’s U.S. Bankruptcy Court, marks the second retail filing already this year, coming one week after a Chapter 11 filing by Wherehouse Entertainment. Billboard has been unable to obtain the Value Central filing, although various motions filed with the court have been made available.

According to sources, the senior secured lender is Fleet Financial, which is owed about $5 million, while the majors, secured, but subordinate to both Fleet and the value music, according to court documents. In addition, Value Music owes other product suppliers about $12 million, all of whom are unsecured, according to sources.

Improving the chances for a successful reorganization, Fleet has agreed to supply $15 million in debt, in possession financing. Also, the filing allows Value Music to shutter 34 stores and gives them time to scrutinize another 20 marginal stores, to see whether landlords will provide rent relief that would make them profitable or if they should be shuttered. Financial executives at the majors are optimistic that Value Music will have a successful reorganization that will yield a high return to creditors.

Turner Out; AOL Q4 Loss $45B

BY MATTHEW BENZ

NEW YORK—AOL Time Warner (AOL TW) reported a net loss of $44.9 billion, or $10.94 per share, for fourth-quarter 2002, while vice chairman Ted Turner said he will step down at the company’s annual shareholder meeting in May.

The massive loss is due to a $45.5 billion non-cash, goodwill writedown—and which consists of mostly a $33.5 billion charge to write off anything related to music. It follows a similar non-cash writedown of $54.2 billion taken in first-quarter 2002 (Billboard, May 4, 2002).

In The News

• Sources say Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) is developing a service in which live concerts will be recorded, then sold on CD to attendees as they exit the show. The name and launch date of the service have yet to be determined. CCE had no comment.

• On Jan. 27, the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed without comment an appeal that Mattel had filed in its battle against MCA recording group Aqua. Mattel previously lost a lawsuit in which it had accused Aqua of tarnishing the image of Mattel’s Barbie doll with the band’s “Barbie Girl” song. The dismissal brings the case to a close.

Sony: Record Quarter, Ohga Exits

BY MATTHEW BENZ and STEVE MCLURE

Music sales and operating income slipped, but strong film results pushed Sony Corp. to its highest quarterly profit for the period ending Dec. 31, 2002.

Meanwhile, Norio Ohga has retired as chairman of the board and director of Sony. In 1968, he became senior managing director of the newly established CBS/Sony Records—now known as Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) (SMJ) —and played a key role in Sony and Philips’ joint introduction of the CD. CEO Nobuyuki Idei is interim chairman. For its fiscal third quarter, Sony reports net income of 125.4 billion yen ($1.05 billion), up 96% from the same period the year before. Sales rose 1% to 2.3 trillion yen ($19.2 billion).

Sony’s music division had total operating income of 20.9 billion yen ($174 million), down 9.5%; sales fell 3% to 198.8 billion yen ($1.66 billion). At Sony Music Entertainment (SME), which generated 74% of the division’s revenue, operating income fell 10% due to a 1% sales decline, higher artist expenses, and ongoing restructuring costs.

Market Watch

BY GEOFF MAYFIELD

LOS ANGELES—Fans remember Smashing Pumpkins frontman Billy Corgan. The debut outing by his new band, Zwan, threatens to become the first album among those released in 2003 to reach No. 1 on The Billboard 200. Based on first-day sales reports from retailers, one chart protagonist estimates the lowest possible tally for Zwan’s Mary Star of the Sea will be 90,000 units, while another offers a high-end forecast of 120,000. If the Martha’s Music/Reprise/Warner Bros. title comes in the lower end of that range, it will be a clinch for The Billboard 200’s top five. Should it manage to start at more than 100,000 units, it could well snag No. 1, halting the three-week run staged by Norah Jones’ Come Away With Me (Blue Note). Jones’ set made a run for the chart’s summit when it snatched eight Grammy Award nominations (Over the Counter, Billboard, Jan. 19) and has surpassed the 100,000-unit mark for eight straight weeks.

Next issue’s No. 1 could be a threehorse race, with Zwan and Jones facing off against the soundtrack from Chicago (Epix), which moves to the runner-up slot with a second-week gain of 10.5% (see Over the Counter, page 53). It trails Jones by a 22% margin.

If Zwan prevails, it will be Corgan’s second No. 1 album, as Smashing Pumpkins’ Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness (Virgin) opened on top with 246,500 units in 1995. Four of the band’s other albums reached the top 10.
"We don't need a weekly map in the music business as we have Billboard as our guide, our bible, our informational highway"
Alex Hodges. Executive VP, House of Blues Concerts

"Ray may be a pest, but he's our pest... who cares enough about the touring business to dig deep and get it right"
Irving Azoff, Owner, Azoffmusic Management

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Jim McCue, VP of Sales & Marketing, Portland Rose Garden Arena

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"Ray Waddell and his team have brought the sophisticated reporting that Billboard has been known for to the live aspect of the entertainment industry"
John Scher, Co-CEO, Metropolitan Talent Inc.
Bryan Turner Back In The Fray With Melee Entertainment

BY MELINDA NEWMAN
LOS ANGELES—After selling urban-oriented Priority Records to EMI in 1998 and ultimately leaving the company in 2001, Bryan Turner decided to turn his attention to the entertainment industry’s fastest-growing segment—the DVD market.

He’s now formed Melee Entertainment, a new joint venture with DreamWorks Records, which bows March 4 with the DVD release of Entertainer’s Basketball Classic at Rucker Park: The Second Season. The title looks at the world’s top street basketball tournament and its participants, including Kobe Bryant and Allen Iverson.

In addition to licensing a number of tunes from top hip-hoppers for the DVD, the package will be bundled with a CD featuring unreleased material from Fat Joe and Mobb Deep. A soundtrack will come out this summer on Melee.

Turner says he also expects to start releasing DVDs next year from artists he’ll sign to the label in year two, “but we’ll start establishing them now through the DVDs, so when we put out their albums, they aren’t brand new.”

After leaving Priority, “it felt like I had gone through 15 rounds,” Turner says. “I didn’t want to get back immediately into the music industry.” Instead he researched the DVD market and found “economics very similar to when I started Priority in 1985,” he says. “Then you could sell 100,000 units and make [a] $300,000-$400,000 profit because we didn’t use indices, we weren’t focused on airplay—our expenses were making the record.”

He linked with DreamWorks Records because he felt principals Mo Ostin, Lenny Waronker, and Michael Ostin best understood the company’s goals. “To be honest with you, I made a worse financial deal than I could have elsewhere, but they clearly got it and saw that this could be the future of home entertainment as it relates to music and visuals.”

Although he wouldn’t give specifics about the deal, Turner says DreamWorks will front the money for the new company and will receive “a fair amount more than 50%” of the profits. Melee will be housed in DreamWorks’ Beverly Hills, Calif., headquarters.

DreamWorks’ Michael Ostín calls the deal “a perfect extension of our business. Bryan will help tremendously in drawing people to the label. This will prove to be a great asset.” Ostín expects Melee to release four to six titles this year.

Turner’s deal does not limit his music projects to DreamWorks’ artists: His second venture will be a DVD on TLC, which is signed to Arista. Other upcoming titles include DVDs on Wayne Gretzky and an instructional DVD from choreographer Tina Landon.

Additionally, DVD titles from DreamWorks artists will now be put out in tandem by DreamWorks and Melee, with Melee handling sales through its own staff. Distribution for all titles will go through Universal Music & Video Distribution.

Melee has hired a number of Priority alumni, including Scott Aronson, who will head of business affairs, and Shellsie Fontana, head of acquisitions and marketing. Additionally, Turner has brought on Marcus Morton, head of film production, and Mike McCloud, head of sales.

House Of Blues Concerts Prez Exits

Company Reorganization Leads To Integration Of Its Concerts, Club Divisions

BY RAY WADDELL
House Of Blues (HOB) Concerts president Jay Marciano, an 18-year veteran of the North American concert promotion company, has stepped down from that role, effective immediately, and HOB’s concerts division will be integrated with the company’s club division.

With this reorganization, the concert team will be led by executive VPs of concerts Alex Hodges and Adam Friedman and senior VP of concerts John Van Zeelbroek. All three report to HOB entertainment president/CEO Greg Trojan. HOB Concerts senior VP Larry Vallon is believed to have one year remaining on his contract with the company.

Marciano oversaw Universal Concerts (UC) until HOB Entertainment acquired it from Universal Music Group for $150 million in 1999. He was originally hired by Vallon to run UC’s Universal Amphitheatre when the company was still known as MCA Concerts. Marciano opened HOB’s Fillmore Green Amphitheatre in Denver in 1988 and Hi-Fi Buys Amphitheatre in Atlanta in 1989.

“Over the past 18 years, the landscape of this industry has changed considerably,” Marciano tells Billboard. “I’m proud of our accomplishments over that time. We opened many world-renowned facilities, and we built a market in Canada, and we had a great team of people, with a lot of continuity in the management ranks. I worked with Larry Vallon 18 years and never had a bad day.”

There isn’t a non-compete clause attached to Marciano’s separation agreement with HOB. “I’m looking at all opportunities and hope to return to the industry shortly,” he says. While Marciano would not be specific as to where he might resurface, sources say that Los Angeles-based rival promoter Anschutz Entertainment Group is a likely candidate for Marciano’s services.

Marciano is the second high-profile exec to exit the company recently. HOB Concerts senior VP talent buyer Melissa Miller announced her resignation last week to pursue other interests (Billboard Bulletin, Jan. 27). Her departure is tentatively set for March.

Miller was involved in programming HOB sheds and booked and promoted Lilith Fair, Down From the Mountain, and Blink-182, among other tours. She joined HOB in 1995 from Delsener/Slater Enterprises.

UMG Brokers Liquid, Anderson Deal

BY MATTHEW BENZ
Liquid Audio is selling its digital-music fulfillment business to Geneva Media, an affiliate of Anderson Merchandisers, for $3.2 million. Liquid co-founder and former president/CEO Gerry Kearby will oversee the business as head of Anderson’s new digital-media division.

Universal Music Group (UMG), which last fall launched a large digital-download program via Liquid, played a key role in the transaction. UMG had an option to purchase digital-music distribution assets from Liquid. Liquid ceased operations, and, Kearby says, “ultimately made the introduction to Anderson.” A spokesman for UMG confirms that it facilitated the deal.

UMG chairman/CEO Doug Morris says the involvement of Anderson—rankjobber to Wal-Mart and others—makes the deal a milestone in the evolution of music distribution: “This is really, in my opinion, the most significant news in the industry since the advent of the CD, because for 100 years the record business has been a packaged-goods business—selling little round things in stores. And now they’re going to sell things electronically.”

Moving to Anderson are approximately 20 Liquid employees and most of its digital-media assets, including hardware, software, licenses, and agreements to operate digital-music stores for retailers and others. The new Anderson unit likely will adopt the Liquid Audio name and remain based near its current Redwood City, Calif., offices.

In a statement, Charlie Anderson, CEO of Amarillo, Texas-based Anderson, said, “This acquisition provides the perfect promotion vehicle for our physical distribution business.”

Kearby stepped down as president but remained a consultant to Liquid after it terminated its proposed merger with distributor Alliance Entertainment in November 2002. He says he thinks Liquid fits well with a physical distributor but cautioned that the future is uncertain. “None of us can predict when the download business is going to happen. It’s still a while off.”

With the sale to Anderson, there is little left of the original Liquid Audio. It sold other technology assets last October to Microsoft for $7 million and is proceeding now with a cash distribution of $2.50 per share, which will use $57 million of the $81.4 million in cash it held as of Sept. 31, 2002. BeMusic sued last December to prevent the distribution but has since settled with Liquid.
U.K.’s EasyInternet Café Chain Found Guilty Of Illegal CD Burns

BY LARS BRANDL
LONDON—The ongoing drama surrounding the record industry’s fight against piracy grabbed the limelight in the U.K. mainstream last week when a High Court judge in London found the EasyInternet Café chain guilty of music copyright infringements.

In a summary judgment issued Jan. 28, Mr. Justice Smith ruled that the EasyInternet chain—a division of entrepreneur Stelios Haji-Ioannou’s sprawling Easy Group—was liable for damages for offering an unlicensed music service to its customers.

Speaking after the ruling, British Phonographic Industry (BPI) chairman Peter Jameson declared: “We are delighted that we have won this ruling, which sets an important precedent and is also an important endorsement of our licensed services. The court will now determine penalties. Within hours of the ruling, Haji-Ioannou announced that he plans to appeal the decision.

The BPI launched civil proceedings against the cafés last July on behalf of its member companies after learning that EasyInternet offered customers an unlicensed service for downloading tracks to subsequently burn onto disc. Café staff would collect a charge of £5 ($8.20) for use of the service, of which half the fee was attributed as a charge for downloading, with the remainder profession charge.

During the first half of 2001, the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) and local investigators in the U.K., Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Italy, France, and Belgium gathered evidence of the burning of IFPI-member recordings and made representations to EasyInternet cafés across Europe. The BPI says that in March 2002 EasyInternet granted forensic experts access to inspect two hard drives used for burning CD-Rs in U.K. stores, from a “substantial scale” of evidence of the burning of sound recordings onto CD-Rs was revealed.

In its defense, EasyInternet declared it had ceased the infringing commercial service in mid-2001. It denied liability since the outset of the BPI’s complaint.

The decision “confirms the fact that it is illegal to copy and sell other people’s music without their permission,” the London-based trade body comments. “The BPI is delighted with the court’s decision.”

Foes Swap Barbs At Radio Ownership Hearings

Continued from page 1

the Davids. The Goliaths, in this case, are the powerful lobbying forces of the National Assn. of Broadcasters (NAB) and its most potent radio member, the powerful lobbying forces of the National Assn. of Broadcasters (NAB) and Congress."

Other witnesses were CCC chairman/CEO Lowry Mays, NAB president/CEO Eddie Fritts; Short Broadcasting Co. president Robert Short; Don Henley, recording artist and co-founder of the Recording Artists’ Coalition; and Jenny Toomey, an indie recording artist and executive director of the Future of Music Coalition.

Toomey presented a chart showing that 10 radio companies control 67% of industry revenue. “The rest of the industry—a total of 4,600 owners—controls just 33%,” she said. “One gets much the same picture from the numbers on listenerhip. The same top 10 firms control 65% of radio listeners.”

In his written testimony, Henley told the committee, “The (monetary) consideration sought for radio airplay found that “77% of consumers believe their favorite local radio stations provide the music that they like either all of the time, most of the time, or some of the time.”

Fritts also expressed concern that without further deregulation, new media platforms could take away advertising revenue from traditional radio stations.

Radio consolidation, however, appears to have an unintended consequence that members of Congress may find irritating enough to wish to remove: with the reduction of local programming time, many members of Congress are finding it more difficult to appear on local shows to speak to constituents. For now, comments at the hearing make it clear that Republican majority members agree with the radio industry and oppose any new regulatory legislation. But Feingold expects growing support for his bill. He told Billboard, “Since originally introducing this legislation in June of 2002, I have seen a groundswell of interest both in Congress and among artists, consumers, independent radio stations, and local promoters in restoring fairness to radio.”

Additionally, sources say leaders from both parties on the Senate Judiciary Committee are preparing their own legislation to study the anti-competitive concerns voiced by proponents of radio deregulation.

Kazaa Charges RIAA, Others With Antitrust

BY ERIK GRUENWEDEL
LOS ANGELES—Sharman Networks Ltd., owner of the Kazaa peer-to-peer file-sharing network, has filed a countersuit against the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA), the National Music Publishers’ Assn., and the Motion Picture Assn. of America.

The suit filed Jan. 27 in Los Angeles District Court—is in response to the trade groups’ 2001 action against Kazaa, Morpheus, and Grokster, alleging that they cater to the unlawful exchange of music, movies, software, and images (Billboard Bulletin, Oct. 4, 2001). Last summer, the RIAA included Sharan in the complaint after the company acquired Kazaa’s assets.

The counterclaim alleges that the entertainment industries—by litigating against, instead of working with, Sharman—conspired “to allow the alleged infringement of their copyrights to continue.” The action claims that the entertainment companies violated federal anti-trust laws in an effort to further their own “monopolistic digital-delivery business.” Sharman says it is committed to using its network for “legitimate business purposes.”

The suit seeks a jury trial and unspecified damages. The RIAA—which calls Sharman the “world’s largest piracy network”—describes as “laughable” the claims that a lack of licensing opportunities have hindered the network’s development. An RIAA spokesman says, “Sharman’s claims are akin to the thief who plundered Fort Knox and is still wealthy because Fort Knox declined to buy their second-rate security system.”

Shallett Leaves Nielsen REI; Sisco Promoted to CEO

Nielsen Retail Entertainment Information (REI) CEO and Nielsen SoundScan and Broadcast Data Systems (BDS) president Mike Shallett has retired from those roles. Nielsen Executive VP/CM Rob Sisco is promoted to Nielsen REI CEO and Nielsen Music president.

Shallett co-founded SoundScan in 1991 and launched the VideoScan and BookScan services. Shallett led Nielsen REI from the time it was acquired from partner Mike Fine in 1998 by VNU, parent company of Billboard Music Group.

Shallett will assume the post of chairman emeritus-SoundScan and continue as a strategic consultant to VNU, working closely with Nielsen REI.

Shallett’s news also will have him overseeing the day-to-day activities of Nielsen SoundScan and Nielsen BDS while directing the operational aspects of Nielsen REI’s suite of businesses, including leading Nielsen VideoScan, Nielsen BookScan, and Nielsen Entertainment Marketing Solutions.

Shallett says of retiring, “How lucky can one get to have the gig of a lifetime, and have had— in all places, the music, video, and book businesses? To me, work has always been about relationships, and I have had the good fortune to get to know and work with so many outstanding people.”

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Christine Chinetti 44.207.420.6067 • cchinetti@eu.billboard.com
We will rock you: Even though Puddle of Mudd’s double-platinum Flawless/Interscope debut, Come Clean, is still high on the charts, the band is recording the follow-up that could put them as early as late spring.

The project is being produced by John Kurzweg, who also helmed Come Clean. “He’s a truly great guy,” frontman Wes Scantlin says of Kurzweg. “We also kind of produced it ourselves with him, together as a team.” Scantlin says he started writing songs for the new record as soon as Come Clean was completed. “I wrote a bunch of songs a year-and-a-half ago, right when I got out of the studio with the first record. People will forget about you, so we try to stay ahead of the game. Man, you can’t stop writing music because this is what everyone dreamed about doing when they were little kids and we got a chance to do it now. We just gotta stop? This is our dream.”

Fred Durst, who signed Puddle of Mudd to Flawless, is wrapping up work on his band’s next Flap/Interscope set, Less Is More, which is due in April.

Durst tells Billboard, “We wrote 30 songs, and it’s Limp Bizkit’s best album yet.” A number of the tunes address issues in Durst’s life, both internal and external. On a further Fred note, Durst is no longer affiliated with the Columbia Pictures skateboard story Lords of Dogtown, which he was set to direct. David Fincher will now helm the picture.

Credited guitarist Mark Tremonti has stepped into the studio to co-produce—with Kirk Kelsey—who was co-producer of Creed's previous album, Human Clay. Tremonti says, “I met him when he was 15 years old, and I’ve kind of just been his big brother. He’s had such talent, I wanted to make sure he made it. We hooked him up with this band and I called our record label and said they really need to check this band out, and they got a deal.” The album will be out later this year.

Tremonti adds he has no illusions of starting his own label now; he just wants to make sure that acts he thinks deserve a chance can find an appropriate label home. Having just come off the road, Nickelback’s Chad Kroeger says his band is ready to return to the studio at any point for its next Roadrunner release.

“The new album is ready to go,” he says. “We’re ready to record it whenever we absolutely have to, which means until somebody cracks the whip and says, ‘OK, guys, it’s time to get into the studio, we’re going on hiatus for six months if we could.’” He jokes that for the next project, “we’ve got 10 songs that sound just like ‘How You Remind Me.’ It’s ‘How You Remind Me, Parts 0-15.’” While we’re sure that would make the label very happy, he reports the new album represents more than the softer side of Nickelback. “We’re stretching in every direction. We made a lot of fans with ‘How You Remind Me’ and we’ve made a lot of fans with the hard rock that we’ve done, too. So every time that we do that, we can’t alienate anybody. We have to keep going further at either end of the spectrum.”

**STUFF:** Peter Gabriel, Alanis Morissette, and STUFF: Peter Gabriel, Alanis Morissette, and the 19th-century American writer was originally based on the works of Edgar Allan Poe, but the visual one. Completely re-worked to be an appropriative project, we would make it available on public radio, heritage rock, and rock-station/college station. Reed’s two-CD, 36-track, two-hour homage to the 19th-century American writer was originally created—and performed entirely in German—for director Robert Wilson’s 2000 theatrical piece, POE-try.

Reed explains, “It was completely reworked to be an audio experience, and not a visual one. Completely re-done from top to bottom, in every conceivable way, so that you were not dependent in any way on seeing anything.”

He says of his continuing fascination with Poe’s oeuvre, “His use of language, his rhythm, his incredible vocabulary, his amazingly vivid imagination, and his remarkably astute psychological renderings and obsessions make him the grand-daddy of all of it—[writer] Hubert Selby, myself, [author] William Burroughs. Everyone should be getting toward Edgar Allan Poe.”

Reed adds of his empathy with the core of Poe’s work, “It’s summed up in an essay called ‘The Imp of the Perverse,’ to which we are drawn to that which is bad for us. Now, most people I know can relate to that statement very easily, but they can’t answer it. But they certainly know what he means, and that’s what he’s always writing about. Somebody like me, who’s very familiar with that particular attitude, is fascinated by it.”

Still, Reed chose to rework Poe’s poetry and short stories in his own words. He explains, “It’s a straightforward rendering in the sense of goal. But everything’s been rewritten. I sat and read him with a dictionary, because the language can get very difficult.”

In a way, Reed serves as a supporting player on his own album, appearing as lead vocalist on only a dozen tracks. Much of the Sire/Reprise set (which went to retail Jan. 28) consists of spoken-word performances featuring a cast of well-known actors; other tracks find Reed taking a back seat to musicians from a cross-section of musical genres.

Reed, who co-produced The Raven with Hal Willner, says, “We had a wishlist of people. We’re in New York, so we have quite a few stage actors available to us. We pulled on a lot of downtown people for musicians.”

The actors include Willem Dafoe, Elizabeth Ashley, Amanda Plummer, and Steve Buscemi. Guest vocalists include David Bowie, who produced Reed’s 1972 breakthrough Transformer, Reed’s significant other Laurie Anderson, Kate and Anna McGarrigle, and the Blind Boys of Alabama.

Jazz saxophonist Ornette Coleman makes a dramatic appearance on the track “Guilty,” Reed says, “I’ve been a fan of Ornette since the 90s, when I would trail him around to every club he played in . . . Willner said, ‘If you could have anybody in the world, who would you want?’ Well, Ornette! So we gave Ornette a call, and he was like two blocks away. He said, ‘I’ll come over.’”

In addition to the full-length two-CD edition of The Raven—what Reed calls “the grand mal version”—Sire/Reprise is issuing a single-disc version that focuses on the collection’s song-based tracks.

Warner Bros. senior VP of marketing Craig Kostich says, “I think [Reed] felt that the one CD would be a way to give people the music portion of it; and for people who wanted the whole conceptual project, we would make it available on the two-CD set.”

Last October, the label serviced the track “The Raven” to public radio, alternative, and college stations for Halloween. A five-song promo CD shipped to public radio, heritage rock, and rock-radio outlets in January.
Shelved For A Year, ‘Nivea’ Nevertheless Nets Top 10 Hit, Grammy Nod

BY CARLA HAY

Sometimes good things come to those who wait. After having her eponymous debut album on Jive Records delayed for more than a year, R&B singer Nivea is starting to see the rewards of having a hit. Sales for the CD have been propelled by her top-10 single “Don’t Mess With My Man.”

Nivea was originally slated for release in 2001, but the album was ultimately released Dec. 10, 2002. The set debuted at No. 1 on the Heatseekers chart in January 2001. Later that year, Nivea’s first solo single, “Don’t Mess With the Radio,” was released and peaked at No. 85 on that chart.

Nivea adds, “We expected the song to do well, but urban radio thought it was too pop and didn’t really get behind it as much as we wanted.”

Frankly, it wasn’t a 10 out of 10,” Khan says of the chart performance of “Don’t Mess With the Radio.” So Jive decided to “take a deep breath and regroup on Nivea’s career.”

“We believed in Nivea’s star quality and vocal ability so much that we decided it would be better if we moved forward after we took some time to do more work on the album,” he continues.

After changing some songs on her album, Nivea was reintroduced to the marketplace last year with “Don’t Mess With My Man,” featuring Jagged Edge singers Brian and Brandon Casey. The strategy paid off: The single vaulted into The Billboard Hot 100, eventually peaking at No. 8. On the Hot 100 Singles Sales chart, the song hit No. 1.

“The pairing with the Jagged Edge members gave Nivea a little more marketing credibility,” Khan notes.

Karen Wild, music director of rhythmic top 40 station KUBE Seattle, adds: “You just can’t help but sing ‘Don’t Mess With My Man.’ The first time we played it, it sounded like a hit. The song is told from a female point of view, but even guys like it.”

In addition to radio airplay, Nivea has benefited from TV exposure. Sales jumped shortly after the singer made appearances on the ABC specials Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve and the American Music Awards.

The video for “Don’t Mess With My Man” also received significant support from MTV and BET. Capping off the song’s success, “Don’t Mess With My Man” has been honored with a Grammy nomination for best R&B performance by or duo or group with vocal.

“I was shocked,” Nivea says of hearing about her Grammy nod. “My manager [Collin Lampkin of Tampa, Fla.] told me all along that the song would be nominated for a Grammy, but I didn’t believe him until it happened.”

Unlike many female R&B singers, Nivea writes or co-writes almost all of her songs, which are published by Zomba (ASCAP). In the year-long interim between the release of her first and second singles, the artist says she used the time wisely to keep honing her craft.

“I feel more comfortable writing when I have down time. I’ve been writing songs since I was 15. Whatever I write, it has to be something people have to find realistic.”

Nivea believes that the attention that “Don’t Mess With My Man” has received could have been helped by fan interest on the Internet: “I know my original album was on the Internet and even before my album came out, there were people who had online fan sites for me.”

“Lots of people first heard the music on Nivea’s album through bootlegs on the Internet,” observes Robert Heredia, music buyer for Tower Records’ North Clark Street location in Chicago. “The word-of-mouth has been a big help, because it started before the radio airplay.”

Nivea’s next single, “Laundromat,” has been released and is getting airplay, even while “Don’t Mess With My Man” is still in heavy rotation at many radio stations. A music video for “Laundromat” is due in February.

CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES FOR THE FUTURE TO ALL OUR NOMINATED MEMBERS!

AND TO ALL THE AUTHORS WHOSE WORKS ARE NOMINATED IN OTHER CATEGORIES
Fronted By Sting's Son, Fiction Plane Continuing Down Road To Success

BY TOM DEMALON

Unlike many acts from the U.K. that arrive on these shores amid a flurry of hype based on a handful of shows or singles in their homeland, the London-based quartet Fiction Plane spent several years honing its skills in clubs prior to signing with MCA Records.

The next phase of the band's career begins March 11 with the release of Everything Will Never Be OK, and it will find the act where it is most comfortable—onstage. "That's what we want to do," says lead singer/guitarist Joe Sumner, the son of Gordon Sumner (aka Sting), "and that's what we are going to do for this year."

It was a show in London—under less than ideal conditions—that led to securing veteran producer David Kahne to helm the sessions for Everything Will Never Be OK. "We had just sacked our drummer, and it was just the three of us," Sumner says. "He came to the gig and, astoundingly, it was one of the best gigs we've played."

With Kahne's help, Fiction Plane has retained the energy of the band's live performances—capturing most songs in one or two takes—and brought in Abe Laboriel Jr. to handle drumming duties. In November 2002, Pete Wilhoit was added to a fold that also includes bassist Dan Brown and guitarist Seton Daunt.

The label will not be approaching radio with an emphasis track until late April, but it will focus on stoking early interest at modern and college rock through the use of samplers. MCA marketing director Jock Elliot says, "Our idea is to take the slow approach and have the band out there working."

Surely helping out is the band's connection to Sting. Although he and the band have no desire to trade on it, the band's manager, Wayne Isaak of New York-based Isaak Entertainment, realizes that "there's no escaping the mention of it." However, music fans preoccupied with that fact would be doing themselves a disservice.
Weinger’s job title—VP of A&R

BY JIM BESSMAN
NEW YORK—Veteran catalog developer Harry Weinger jokes that once when his mother was talking to a friend, she did not know how to answer the inevitable question: “What does your son do for a living.”

While “putting together reissue packages” would be suggested by Weinger’s job title—VP of A&R for Universal Music Group’s catalog development division’s Universal Music Enterprises (UME)—even that does not fully define Weinger’s role.

Not only does he, indeed, assemble reissues and all that those projects entail (finding and optimizing masters, determining contents and sequence, and securing artwork, photos, and liner notes), but he also does so in a unique manner that is drawn from his former profession.

ALBUMS AS JOURNALISM

“I come from a journalist background, so I approach every project journalistically,” says Weinger, who won the 1991 Best Album Notes Grammy for his James Brown career retrospective boxed set Star Time.

“When I look for a piece of tape I always look for evidence, and uncover characteristics of the tape the way I would interview somebody.”

With Star Time as an example, Weinger says he talked to every musician involved in Brown’s material that he could find.

“I talked to James Brown when he was in prison, and even [Brown’s backup vocal group the Famous Flames’] Bobby Byrd’s sister, who was in a gospel group with him.”

Weinger says, “I made sure that we made a record that we all wanted to listen to, that told a story instead of just a collection of digitally restored tracks. But even when I do straight [album] reissues, I always try to tell a story and supply the answer to, ‘What’s the story of that album?’

Weinger’s journalistic sense goes back to 1982, when he brought his experience as an engineer at New York radio stations WABC and WPJZ to a radio editor stint at record business tradepaper Cash Box, where he also profiled such then-new acts as Eurythmics and Robert Cray. He later freelanced for Billboard, and became a staff writer for PolyGram Records in 1987, where after a “daily diet of Bon Jovi press conferences”—and working with the likes of Cameo and Vanessa Williams—he eventually tired of the gig.

“My escape was doing liner notes for the emerging catalog department under [current Universal senior VP of A&R] Bill Levinson,” Weinger says. “When I left the label in ’93, he asked me to do some projects, and I said I’d clean up the James Brown catalog.”

This led to the much-lauded Star Time, cited by numerous publications as the reissue of the year, and a slew of additional Brown reissues.

Weinger continued writing and also began consulting for other labels, and in 1992, after a restructuring at PolyGram, returned to the label as director of A&R for catalog development.

His tenure since has been marked by a joyous plundering of Universal’s Motown and R&B vaults, highlights including comprehensive boxed-set and multi-disc anthologies of the Motown legends, recently developed Millenniun packagings featuring rarities, Essential and Ultimate compilation series, and Deluxe Edition sets, including Marvin Gaye’s What’s Going On, for which Weinger received the ASCAP Deems Taylor Award for liner notes.

Further key Weinger efforts have included Mercury’s Funk Essentials compilation series featuring such acts as Barry White and the Gap Band, and the creation of the motown.com Web site, for which he moderates the bulletin boards.

He also co-produced last year’s Grammy Award-nominated Standing in the Shadows of Motown soundtrack album, which involved highlighting the different members of Motown’s legendary Funk Brothers house band with what he calls “exotic mixes” made by stripping off the voice tracks and making the songs work as instrumentals.

Weinger adds, “I hope this leads to doing different kinds of things with the Motown catalog.”

TENDING TO LIONEL RICHIE

Weinger’s current activities include a two-disc Temptations “psychedelic soul” collection and a full Lionel Richie reissue campaign. “The cornerstone of the forthcoming releases will be a 30th-anniversary remastered and expanded two-disc edition of Richie’s Can’t Stop Dancing. ‘That’s really a piece of investigative journalism’—to find out about the making of the record and tell the story of Lionel Richie at that moment,” Weinger says, adding that “of all the stars in the UME universe, his catalog hasn’t been tended to.”

Saluting his fellow UME catalog developers on both coasts, Weinger notes, “It’s a unique situation in that we have thriving East Coast labels with vaults—Motown, Mercury, Island, Def Jam—and the ability to have an A&R presence here gives us a great opportunity to really get deep into the catalog and make the best kind of product: We can intellectualize about an artist and project, but at the end of the day, after all the investigating and compiling, it comes down to, Does it sound good? How does it feel? Is it right for the project?”
by Deborah Evans Price

TOON IN: For parents looking for positive entertainment options for their children, there are a couple of new characters worth checking out. Lenny & Sid make their debut with the Feb. 25 release of Looney Tunes: Back in Action. The story follows the exploits of shy rabbit Lenny, and his friend, a feisty mouse named Sid.

Toonacious is the brainchild of three friends who met in a Burbank, Calif., Sunday-school class. Toonacious is executive VP of creative production Tony Bancroft is an award-winning animation director, who created Pumbaa, the warthog in The Lion King and Cronk in The Emperor's New Groove. Previously with Walt Disney Studios for 12 years, Bancroft's credits also include directing Mulan. Executive VP of creative development Ben Chambers' resume includes 16 years experience as a voice-over talent, writer, and broadcaster. President Carla Williams says, "And we're going to make sure Toonacious is always going to create something that is safe and acceptable by all parents. This is a company that they can trust."

BANCROFT

by Lisa Collins

LOOKING TO BREAK OUT: EMI Gospel is hoping that is the magic number for Darwin Hobbs, whose third and newest CD, Broken, was released Jan. 28. Hobbs, one of the industry's most sought-after backup vocalists (CeCe Winans, Michael McDonald, Carman & Donnie McClurkin) and prominent worship leaders, is being primed by EMI execs to become one of Gospel's most sought-after male vocalists.

The transformation has been forthcoming given the acclaim earned with his 1999 debut, Mercy, and his sophomore followup, Vertical, which have sold a combined 48,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"Darwin quite simply has what it takes. We believe this project will prove that," EMI Gospel marketing director Carla Williams says. "And we're going to do all that we can to make believers out of the rest of the industry."

"A big part of my artistry is that I'm a worshipper," Hobbs says, "and that comes out wherever I'm singing, and hopefully in my life as a whole. It's who I am." Hobbs also emerges on Broken as a songwriter, having written three of the album's tracks, including "Nobody Like Jesus," a simmering duet with Shirley Murdock that plays up his vocal diversity via a perfect blend of gospel, pop, and R&B.

"There are times of the day when I'm just wanting to groove and bob my head, and still be encouraged and inspired while I'm doing that," Dar- win explains. "Then there are other times when I'm more introspective and in more of a worshipful place. I believe Broken is a pretty even division of the two. It captures where I am spiritually and creatively."

WOW!: The WOW! gospel series enters its sixth year with its 2003 installment, due Tuesday (4). The project—a partnership among Verity Records, Provider, EMI Christian, and Word Entertainment—has sold more than 3 million units since its introduction in 1998 through spotlighting the year's "top 30 songs by the top 30 artists." WOW Gospel 2003 features, among others, Kirk Franklin, Donnie McClurkin, Kurt Carr, Shirley Caesar, Fred Hammond, Richard Smallwood, and Deitrick Haddon, who, like most, was "honored to be among the most elite of the elite artists in the Christian and gospel industry."

In fact, things appear to be heating up for Haddon. His Verity debut, Lost & Found, recently earned him his first Grammy Award nomination (for best contemporary soul gospel album) and he will soon join Hammond, Mary Mary, and Dorinda Clark-Cole on the Power of Life tour. The 40-plus city tour kicks off later this month.

BRIEFLY: Verity also released this month Ben Tankard's Play a Lil Song for Me. The title track features Cantus Spirituals lead Harvey Watkins Jr. Other highlights include arrangements of the classic Quincy Jones / James Ingram collaboration "One Hundred Ways," Dianne Warwick's "What the World Needs Now," and Stevie Wonder's "Overjoyed."
Pansy Division Guitarist Finding Surprising Success With Dirty Power

BY LARRY FLICK

Patrick Goodwin still smiles with equal parts shy surprise and minor disbelief every time he meets a fan of his band, Dirty Power.

"I honestly thought that people would find us to be completely uncool," he says. "There's nothing about this band that's hip or trendy or similar to anything out there right now."

Apparently, that is precisely what is attracting a fast-growing cadre of disciples to the San Francisco-based hard-rock quartet (see story, page 67). In a field of sound-alikes vying for attention with a bottomless bag of gimmicks, Dirty Power delivers a brand of no-frills music that relies exclusively on sharp musicianship and well-drawn songs.

Dirty Power also provides something that few young bands do—historical reverence. The band's eponymous disc, due March 18 on the independent Dead Teenager Records, is rich with loving references to such legendary hard-rockers as Judas Priest and AC/DC.

It is a creative move that could easily register as quaint or creakily well-drawn in these songs. Everything I've learned is here, because those lessons take on a life of their own in the music."

Some of those lessons were passed on to Abair by her father, saxophonist/keyboardist Lance Abair, whose choice of instrument and funky, blue-eyed soul sound she affectionately emulates. "I grew up on the road watching my dad's band," she says, "and he would get up front and take the solo. He's the type of musician that's driven by the audience and the music."

Goodwin formed Dirty Power during a hiatus from Pansy Division, for which he has served as a guitarist. It quickly went from being a "fun side project" to a full-fledged band that is now an underground club favorite on the verge of a mainstream breakthrough.

"Now, people are telling us that anything is possible when you do what you love," Goodwin says. "This is my band. It's my life. I've done many different styles of music, and they all come into play in these songs. Everything I've Learned is Here, because those lessons take on a life of their own in the music."

Metheny has been appointed a Herb Alpert Visiting Trustee at Berklee College of Music, where he was a faculty member in the mid-'70s. The two previously appointed alums were pianist Alan Broadbent and bassist Abe Laboriel Sr. The recipient of the professorship, established in 2000, dedicatess two weeks of three academic years toward educating Berklee students.

"For me, my parents expected me to be able to do anything I wanted to do," says Abair, who named her release after something her son says that despite smooth-jazz radio's tight playlists, Abair's potent mix of jazz, pop, soul, and rock makes her a natural for the format. "I can't recall a new artist breaking out at the format or second, says Goldstein, who nonetheless feels that radio is eager to embrace "fresh music that fits comfortably into the tight parameters that the format sets for itself. Over the last couple of years, the stations have programmed more R&B-only stations, and what we've been doing has been spreading in those stations.

The first single released to radio is the instrumental "Lucy's." Its Just Happens That Way includes a take on Eagle Eye Cherry's pop hit "Save Tonight" sung by Abair, which Goldstein hopes will satisfy urban AC's need to program songs with vocals (Abair co-wrote every other track on the project). "Our goal is to sell at least 100,000 units based largely on radio promotion," Goldstein says. "Mindi has the full package—talent, intelligence, charm, and good looks—but she is determined to be viewed as a musician, not just a pretty face with a saxophone."

Goldstein expects further promotional opportunities from exposure in press outlets not generally associated with jazz, such as teen-oriented publications and women's lifestyle magazines.

FIRST FAMILY: Although five members of the Marsalis family—patriarch Ellis, and his sons Wynton, Branford, Delfeayo, and Jason—make up perhaps the most notable family in jazz, the five musicians have never before appeared together on the same recording. That fact is rectified on The Marsalis Family: A Jazz Celebration (Marsalis Music, Feb. 4), a live date recorded in August 2001 on the occasion of Ellis' retirement from teaching at the University of New Orleans, and in the school's establishment of a chair in his name.

"Performing with my sons was a special occasion, but it wasn't something I could enjoy to the fullest, because I was so busy setting myself up for retirement," Marsalis admits. "I had just returned from performing in Brazil, and there was a lot of stuff going on, but once we got onstage and started to play, it was really great." The concert, also recorded for a DVD and a PBS special, includes a guest appearance by former Marsalis student Harry Connick Jr. on "St. James Infirmary."

Ellis (piano), Wynton (trumpet), Branford (saxophone), Delfeayo (trombone), and Jason (drums) will embark on an eight-city tour in late February, with bassist Reginald Veal in tow. Bassist Roland Guerin appears on the album.

AND: This year's International Assn. for Jazz Education conference, held Jan. 8-11 in Toronto, boasted more than 6,500 attendees flowing from 35 countries. Next year's conference will be held Jan. 21-24 in New York... Guitarist Pat Metheny has been appointed a Herb Alpert Visiting professor at Berklee College of Music, where he was a faculty member in the mid-'70s. The two previously appointed alums were pianist Alan Broadbent and bassist Abe Laboriel Sr. The recipient of the professorship, established in 2000, dedicates two weeks of three academic years toward educating Berklee students.
BY SUSANNE AULT
DENVER—The latest and greatest in box-office trends were fully explored during the International Ticketing Assn. convention (INTIX) here, attended by industry pros and vendors from all over the country. The focus was on ticketing's hottest products and latest technological advances.

There was plenty to take in: Ticket-service providers, at 60 total, were the largest single group of exhibitors INTIX has attracted in its 24 years of existence.

Along with a crowded exhibition floor at INTIX 2003, which ran Jan. 21-24, the educational sessions were also packed. Though 150 people (about 25% of the estimated 600 people in attendance) attended a session explaining how to best start revamping old ticketing systems. One populaar example is a switch from a straight mail and will-call ticket distribution system to one that also enables patrons to print their tickets from their home computers.

This was the first time that the INTIX organization, with membership largely consisting of box-office managers and ticket-related vendors, rolled out the INTIX Intensive, a three-day program where people earned certificates of completion in subjects like ticket technology and marketing.

"People are coming to the show to keep current with this industry," INTIX president Jeffery Latta says, adding that registration jumped about 20% from INTIX 2002. "All the changes in technology make it such a dynamic field, so you can't sit out for too long."

PRINT-AT-HOME REVOLUTION

Many INTIX-goers feel pressured to either hop on the technology bandwagon or get left in the dust. The Internet is primarily driving this movement—in just two years' time, Ticketmaster has reported that more of its tickets are now being bought online than over the phone or at the box office (Billboard, Dec. 21, 2002). Then, so people will be able to resell their season tickets online. That's the Ticket: INTIX Keeps Tabs On Latest Trends

Print-At-Home Sales, Bar-Coding Technology, and Security Concerns Are Top Of Mind At The Denver Confab

BY JULIANA KORENTENG
LONDON—The Mean Fiddler Music Group (MFMG), the U.K.'s music-festival and venue promotion giant, has kick-started its ambitions to expand into continental Europe after becoming the majority shareholder in the revived Doctor Music Festival (DMF) in Spain.

MFMG, already established in Britain—where it owns such top music venues as the Jazz Café and either owns or promotes such festivals as the Reading and Leeds Carling Weekend and the Glastonbury Festival—already has links in the U.S. via the Flah Fest Festival. But by buying a significant stake in the Doctor Music rock and pop festival from Spanish promoter and founder Neo Safa, MFMG's London-based CEO Melvin Benn says the group has begun to make major inroads in Europe's lucrative popular-music festivals.

According to Benn, the newly created joint venture means the festival is able to make a much-heralded return after a three-year absence when Sala was seeking an appropriate partner. "Doctor Music has a great name and is a well-thought-of festival," Benn tells Billboard. "Neo Sala, whom I've known for almost two years and [who] has had a working relationship with other [MFMG] for several years, didn't want to continue with it on its own, hence the [festival's] absence."

This year's three-day event takes place July 25-27 on the picturesque Pala de Tapioles landscape in the province of Gerona near Barcelona and 30 minutes from the Costa Brava beaches and caves. Ticket prices, yet to be confirmed at press time, are expected to be about $100 but will be confirmed with the complete lineup in the spring.

R.E.M. has already verified its presence for July 27, which will be the band's only concert performance in Spain this year. R.E.M.'s participation will continue DMF's tradition of luring major international acts like David Bowie, Bob Dylan, Beck, Garbage, and Massive Attack.

That doesn't seem kosher," he says, acknowledging that "a lot of people are curious about the technology, but it might not be as secure as we'd like it to be."

Beyond the sprouting of fresh ticketing systems, the Internet has also empowered many concert players to sell tickets on their own. Third-party distributors, like Ticketmaster, do provide venues with plenty of convenience with their full-coverage services. But that, in turn, means convenience surcharges for audiences, said Mike Luba, manager for the jam band String Cheese Incident, during the session titled "Whose Ticket Is It?"

Now that the Internet allows anyone to set up an e-commerce ticket operation, Luba tries to negotiate deals with venues to sell some of the band's tickets themselves—thereby avoiding some of these third-party ticketing fees. Normally, String Cheese Incident is granted 10% of the house to sell (the rest going to the venue's normal ticket agency) with relatively low fees attached.

"We're at these weirdo crossroads...And Ticketmaster realizes that the floodgates are open," Luba said. "They are afraid when people realize they are an obsolete business. They're charging $14 [in surcharges] for something that really costs $3 or $4."

That's The Ticket: INTIX Keeps Tabs On Latest Trends

Print-At-Home Sales, Bar-Coding Technology, And Security Concerns Are Top Of Mind At The Denver Confab

Mean Fiddler Has Stake In DoctorFest

Launched in 1996 by Sala's company, Doctor Music, the DMF became an annual event until 1998, when it was postponed for one year until 2000. This was followed by a three-year hiatus that ends this year.

The move adds another 25,000-30,000 spectators to the 5 million attending MFMG's U.K. and U.S. events and venues annually. Benn adds that investment in Spain was astute. He observes, "Spain has a sparse festival program at the moment, and it would appear there's a gap in the popular-music festival market."

While the U.K., with its population of 56 million, is served by up to 12 major international festivals, Spain's population of 40 million appears to have only one other festival brand of this caliber—the Festival Internacional de Benicasim, which is located on the East Coast of Spain. Taking place Aug. 8-10 this year, the Benicasim festival has a capacity of about 35,000 and last year counted Radiohead, Primal Scream, and Belle & Sebastian among its headliners.

Clear Channel Entertainment Europe, which already has a presence in 10 countries, is not yet in Spain. And the most recent local development was early last year, when Spanish promoters Gay & Co. in Barcelona and Madrid-based Sagillocio Group joined together to develop new gigs and festivals. Otherwise, Spain is mostly served by cultural-music festivals mainly aimed at fans of jazz, classical, or world music.

Additionally, Benn says this year's DMF will meet the required health and hygiene standards. At the last fest in 2000, for example, there were 300 toilets, 150 hot-water shower units, 14 drinking bars, cash machines, and a 24-hour medical service.

He continues: "There's an abundance of land in the area, so we shall have no difficulty setting up to meet the same standards expected of us in the U.K."

Founded in 1981, Doctor Music today promotes more than 100 music shows and venues annually. It has estimated 350,000-plus spectators. At present, it is handling the Spanish stadium stint of Bruce Springsteen's latest European tour.

"So clearly, we feel this will enable us to continue the trend of offering Spanish music fans the opportunity to see more internationally renowned artists in the best festival traditions."

BILBOARD FEBRUARY 8, 2003

www.billboard.com
**ARTIST** | **VENUE/ DATE** | **ORDER/TICKET PRICES** | **ATTENDANCE/CAPACITY** | **PROMOTER**
---|---|---|---|---
Cher, Cyndi Lauper | MGM Grand Garden, Las Vegas Dec. 12 | $129.50, $25.75 | 19,140 | Clear Channel Entertainment, in-house
Dave Matthews Band, Karl Deninson’s Tiny Universe | Madison Square Garden, New York Dec. 20-21 | $180.00, $25 | 16,858 | Clear Channel Entertainment
2100 Jingle Ball: Justin Timberlake, Avril Lavigne, Ja Rule, Ashanti, Destiny’s Child, & Others | Madison Square Garden, New York Dec. 12 | $247.75, $20 | 18,222 | Clear Channel Entertainment
The Other Ones Medeski, Martin & Wood, Hot Tuna Acoustic | Oakland Arena, Oakland, Calif. Dec. 31 | $95, $25 | 13,872 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Dave Matthews Band, Jason Mraz | United Center, Chicago Jan. 13 | $240.25, $20 | 19,758 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Shakira, Pity The Girl | United Center, Chicago Jan. 18 | $180, $25 | 14,790 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Dave Matthews Band, Karl Deninson’s Tiny Universe | MCI Center, Washington, D.C. Dec. 22 | $275.75, $25 | 18,156 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Cher, Cyndi Lauper | ARCO Arena, Sacramento, Calif. Dec. 25 | $170.25, $25 | 12,803 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Phish | Madison Square Garden, New York Dec. 31 | $245, $25 | 18,966 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Aerosmith, Andrew W.K. | Joe Louis Arena, Detroit Jan. 23 | $180, $25 | 14,561 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Trans-Siberian Orchestra | CSU Convocation Center, Cleveland Dec. 3-4 | $175, $25 | 21,832 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Aerosmith, Andrew W.K. | MCI Center, Washington, D.C. Dec. 31 | $175, $35 | 13,998 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Cher, Cyndi Lauper | HP Pavilion, San Jose, Calif. Dec. 11 | $175, $35 | 12,802 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Shakira, Pity The Girl | SH & S Center, San Antonio Jan. 23 | $180, $35 | 12,695 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Shakira, Pity The Girl | Compaq Center, Houston Jan. 22 | $180, $35 | 12,375 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Aerosmith, Andrew W.K. | Target Center, Minneapolis Dec. 10 | $180, $35 | 16,076 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Cher, Cyndi Lauper | Key Arena, Seattle Dec. 16 | $180, $35 | 10,291 | Clear Channel Entertainment
The Other Ones, Robert Hunter | Henry J Kaiser Arena, Oakland, Calif. Dec. 5-6 | $175, $25 | 15,963 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Creed | Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Ill. Jan. 20 | $175, $35 | 12,920 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Dave Matthews Band, Karl Deninson’s Tiny Universe | Blue Cross Arena, Rochester, N.Y. Dec. 18 | $180, $35 | 11,096 | Clear Channel Entertainment
String Cheese Incident, Frank Zappa, The B-52s, Head & the Heart, Gomez, Keller Williams | Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, San Francisco Dec. 28-29, 30 | $180, $35 | 25,070 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Cher, Cyndi Lauper | Idaho Center, Nampa, Idaho Dec. 18 | $175, $35 | 9,347 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Aerosmith, Andrew W.K. | Pepsi Center, Denver Dec. 19 | $175, $35 | 18,301 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Cher, Cyndi Lauper | Centennial Garden Arena, Bakersfield, Calif. Dec. 9 | $175, $35 | 8,209 | Dutchlander Organization
Trans-Siberian Orchestra | Orange County, Calif. Dec. 7 | $175, $35 | 15,279 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Yiyo Fest/Chula, Coldplay, New Found Glory, Good Charlotte, Queens of the New Age & Others | Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, San Francisco Dec. 28-29, 30 | $180, $35 | 15,182 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Counting Crows, Toad The Wet Sprocket | Warfield Theatre, San Francisco Dec. 16-17, 20-22 | $180, $35 | 11,256 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Tori Amos, Howie Day | Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, San Francisco Dec. 28 | $180, $35 | 8,878 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Creed, Our Lady Peace | Delta Center, Salt Lake City Dec. 20 | $180, $35 | 8,903 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Gather Herecoming | Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio Dec. 7 | $180, $35 | 14,377 | Clear Channel Entertainment
Trans-Siberian Orchestra | Tweeter Center on the Waterfront, Camden, N.J. Dec. 14 | $175, $35 | 5,479 | Clear Channel Entertainment

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**TOURING**

**FEBRUARY 8, 2003**

**VENUE VIEWS**

by Ray Waddell

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**STILL ON:** Dennis Arfa, responsible agent for Billy Joel at Artists Group International, says Joel's Jan. 26 car accident near Sag Harbor in Long Island, N.Y., was a "non-event," and no dates on the upcoming 35-date Joel/Elton John Face to Face tour will be affected. Arfa says, "Billy's fine, and everything is as normal." The Joel/John pairing is the most financially successful co-headlining tour of all time, and the 2003 trek begins Feb. 21 at the Birmingham/Jefferson Civic Center in Birmingham, Ala. The tour plays several secondary markets this time around, including Fargo, N.D.; Ames, Iowa; and Raleigh, N.C.

**HOT STUFF:** In other news from Artists Group International, Shakira's debut headlining tour of North America, produced by Clear Channel Entertainment, has been a major success. Shakira wraps in the U.S. Feb. 6 in Laredo, Texas, then begins a run south of the border Feb. 9 in Guadalajara, Mexico. She will play dates in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and the Caribbean before heading to Europe and kicking off a tour March 28 in Paris. Middle Eastern and Asian dates are also planned.

**BUT WHAT DO YOU REALLY THINK?** Veteran promoter Barry Fey, Denver-based VP of talent at House of Blues (HOB) Concerts, blamed the consolidation of the concert-promo

promoters drove up ticket prices. "Concerts used to be religion, but now they are just another form of entertainment, which is too damn expensive," Fey told Billboard after his speech. "I don't know what to do, though, except just say no to [performers]. The convenience charges are now more than the tickets used to be." The always-outraged Fey once was the promoter kingpin of Denver, where his Feyline Productions dominated the market in the '70s, '80s, and early '90s.

**BACK TO THE SANITARIUM?** Sources say Metallica is putting together another metal fest stadium package similar to 2000's Summer Sanitarium outing. Metallica last toured in 2000, taking in $40.5 million from only 20 shows. About a dozen of them were Summer Sanitarium dates featuring Kid Rock, Korn, and others and a brief run of sold-out arena shows in January that year.

**COLDPLAY IS HOT:** The University of Miami's new Convocation Center hosted its first concert, a Jan. 22 sellout from Coldplay, which grossed $194,764 and drew 5,947.

**BIG IN BOULDER:** Eric Pirritt has been promoted to head talent buyer for the Fox Theatre in Boulder, Colo. Don Strasburg, who opened the Fox and was its talent buyer for more than 10 years, continue as a consultant to the venue's operations. Pirritt began at the Fox nearly four years ago, handling a portion of the street promotion and booking area rooms like 'Round Midnight and Tulagi. This past year saw Pirritt focusing primarily on the Fox, as well as representing those bands booked in Boulder throughout the state of Colorado.

**PRONUNCIATION NOT NEEDED:** Latin Grammy winners Aterciopelados have their U.S. tour Feb. 19 at SOBs in New York. Additional concerts are confirmed for the Ritz in Elizabeth, N.J. (22); HOB in Chicago (25); the Palace in Los Angeles (27); HOB in Anaheim, Calif. (28); and 4th & B in San Diego (March 1).

**PARAGON OF PRODUCTION:** Paragon Entertainment Group president Richard O. Hoag will explore emerging trends in event production as the keynote speaker at EventPro Forum, the conference for event production pros, Feb. 17-20 at Green Valley Ranch Resort & Spa in Las Vegas.

Additional reporting by Susanne Ault in Denver.
Rhythm, Rap, and The Blues

INDUSTRY BRIEFS: Stephen Hill segues from VP to senior VP of music programming at BET. Since making its transition from Washington, D.C., to New York, the network’s music division has launched such shows as 106 & Park and Access Granted...Persaud Brothers Entertainment establishes Wylde Chyde Entertainment, a youth-targeted management company for artists and producers. With offices in New York, Los Angeles, and Atlanta, the new firm is headed by president Mark Persaud and is sister to the youth-targeted advertising/marketing company Persaud Brothers. Contact: 212-333-7195.

Wylde Chyde producers The Smith Brothers and Raekwon recently collaborated on “The Smith Brothers,” a single that will appear on the latter’s album, due this summer.

BERT’S BEAT: Yes, he’s Brandy’s husband and cousin to Rodney Jerkins. But familial ties aside, Robert “Big Bert” Smith is busy forging his own identity as a producer. “I try to approach each project differently,” the LA-based Smith says. “But overall I do a more simplified, more computerized sound. More authentic with warm drums, piano, and bass lines. I like taking it back to the old school with a little more street.”

According to Raekwon-Paniker, Freeway, who is managed and booked by Troy Carter of Philadelphia-based Ewing Vonder Management, embarked on a pre-promotional tour Jan. 27, where he is meeting with PDs and music directors in major markets across the country.

On the new-media front, there will be an insert with the CD that will enable fans to connect to the Roc-a-Wear Web site to receive a 40% discount off selected State Property merchandise.

With the success of such Roc-a-Fella artists as Beanie Sigel, DJ Clue, Cam’ron, and Jay-Z, Freeway believes he is now in a position to follow in their footsteps.

“It’s been crazy,” he says. “It’s what I’ve always wanted—a chance to get a position and do my thing. I’ve learned a lot. I’ve seen a lot, and I’ve been a lot of places.

The rapper says those experiences have served as the inspiration for Philadelphia Freeway. “It’s a breath of fresh air,” he says of the set. “It’s something out of the ordinary. It’s not the normal album that you would hear from a cat. It’s the same shit, but I’m bringing it totally different.”

Freeway Moves At High Speed

Roc-a-Fella/Def Jam Rapper Keeps ‘Rocking’ With New CD

BY RASHAUN HALL

Philadelphia’s neo-soul explosion of the past few years may have some music fans thinking that every Philadelphia musician is about that particular genre. Not so. "The city’s hardcore rap traditions are alive and well with Roc-a-Fella/Def Jam artist Freeway, who makes his debut Feb. 25 with Philadelphia Freeway.

"Like many of his up-and-coming MCs, Freeway built his reputation with guest appearances. "Rock the Mic," his collaboration with fellow Philadelphian and Roc-a-Fella recording artist Beanie Sigel, served as his introduction to a national audience. The single peaked at No. 16 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart.

"We did that down in Miami," Freeway says of the collaboration. "We were just doing songs. Nobody knew that that was going to be like that. When it started to blow up, it was crazy. I appreciated that. It wasn’t anything special. I heard the beat, we made a hook to it, I laid my rhymes, and Beans heard it and wanted to get on it, so we made it happen."

LINING UP SUCCESS

Roc-a-Fella product manager Estimaneante Comm-Paniker believes such guest appearances enable the setup of Philadelphia Freeway. "That, along with [songs like] ‘I-900-Hustler’ and ‘Burnin’ Up,’ helped build his visibility," Cupy-Paniker says. "Rock the Mic was so much at both radio and video in terms of building his name."

Freeway followed the success of "Rock the Mic" with his own lead single, ‘Line ‘Em Up.’ Featuring Roc-a-Fella labelmate Young Chris, the single peaked at No. 86 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart.

"I just heard the beat, and it came to me—‘Line ‘Em up. Shut ‘Em down,’" Freeway says. "From there, I ran with the concept. Then Young Chris came to the studio and he was feeling it, so let him get on it."

Despite the successful collaborations, Freeway is quick to note that there is more to his debut set than special-guest pairings. "The majority of my album is me vibing and doing what I want to do. The collaborations are when cats were there with me and feeling me."

FREEWAY HITS THE PROMO ROAD

Roc-a-Fella has arranged for a retail promotion to piggyback 50 Cent’s Get Rich Or Die Tryin’. Philadelphia Freeway samplers will be bundled with 40,000 copies of the album, due Feb. 11. Roc-a-Fella has also planned a three-week TV advertising campaign at BET and MTV that will launch a week before release, and Freeway is scheduled to make a number of TV appearances, including on Rap City, the week of release.

SMITH

Five years into his mission, Smith has worked with Toni Braxton, Dave Hollister, and Kelly Rowland; his upcoming Big Bert Entertainment schedule includes projects with Brandy, usher, Angie Stone, Whitney Houston, and Blaque, who recently signed with Elektra. "I see myself as R&B, hip-hop, rock, country...I don’t put a limit on anything," says Smith, who originally wanted to join his dad’s trucking company.

A major pet project is his newly launched charity, All God’s Children. Based in Pleasantville, N.J., the organization “gives children a way out” through mentoring, after-school activities, and other programs.

ON THE RECORD: Black Ice, Def Jam’s first spoken-word artist, says his eponymous debut is now set for April. "I have a live band that I team up with," he says, "and we create this sound that’s not standard hip-hop and not eclectic like the Roots. But it enlightens what I try to do, which is write about my life experiences while making sure people are entertained."...Artists Jocelyn Enriquez and Rome will release new projects via Bayside Entertainment Distribution. Enriquez’s All My Life is set for Feb. 11; Rome’s Do It arrives March 11.

MEETING OF THE MINDS: Several urban industry-related gatherings dot this year’s calendar. Melding music and movies, the Salute to the Greats of Dance in Movies event (April 11-12), presented by Ad Black College Radio (BCR) will inaugurate a hall of fame honoring student air personnel. BCR will also present a salute to the greats of dance in music and movies, with India.Arie, Natalie Cole, Solomon Burke, Angie Stone, B.B. King, Mos Def, and others in tow. Benefiting the Music Foundation, the concert is being filmed for later distribution with Antoine Fuqua (Training Day) as director and Martin Scorsese (Gangs of New York) as executive producer.

R&B, hip-hop, and gospel take center stage April 3-5 at Houston’s Radisson Hotel Astrodome Convention Center. Melding music and movies, the Salute to the Blues bows Feb. 7 at New York’s Radio City Music Hall with India.Arie, Natalie Cole, Solomon Burke, Angie Stone, B.B. King, Mos Def, and others in tow. Benefiting the Music Foundation, the concert is being filmed for later distribution with Antoine Fuqua (Training Day) as director and Martin Scorsese (Gangs of New York) as executive producer.

Becky St. Clair, a Philadelphia-based DJ, is a fixture at the Philadelphia Freeway samplers will be bundled with 40,000 copies of the album, due Feb. 11. Roc-a-Fella has also planned a three-week TV advertising campaign at BET and MTV that will launch a week before release, and Freeway is scheduled to make a number of TV appearances, including on Rap City, the week of release. © 2003 VNU Business Media, Inc. All rights reserved.
### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

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**February 8, 2003**

**Artists:** Eminem, 2PAC, TLC, R Kelly, K-ci & JoJo, CLIPSE, Trick Daddy, Floetry, GZA/Genius, Amerie, Ashanti, Nelly

**Label:** Aftermath, Interscope, Def Jam, Roc-A-Fella, Bad Boy

**Genre:** Hip-Hop

**Charts:** Billboard 200, Billboard Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums, Top R&B/Hip-Hop Catalog Albums

**Source:** Billboard Magazine

**Date:** February 8, 2003

**Links:** [Billboard Website](https://www.billboard.com)
## BILLBOARD HOT R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLES & TRACKS

**February 8, 2003**

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### HOT SHOT DEBUT

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**Notes:** The Hot Spot feature highlights the top 25 performers of the previous week. Single Sales Charts and Spin Doctor are measured for the last week. Chart positions are based on sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. Products are listed in numerical order of peak positions or by year released, with a note of their release date. Billboard magazine is dedicated to providing an accurate representation of the music market. For more information, visit www.billboard.com.
**February 8, 2003**

<table>
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<th>HOT R&amp;B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY</th>
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**January 31, 2003**

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| Ignition | 1 | 17 | 1 | 17
| Want It Bad | 2 | 23 | 1 | 21
| Love Of My Life (Ain't No Other Man) | 5 | 32 | 1 | 30
| Measured | 4 | 27 | 1 | 26
| Bump, Bump, Bump | 7 | 31 | 1 | 31
| Mr. Bully | 8 | 33 | 1 | 33
| I Should Be... | 9 | 34 | 1 | 34
| Good | 10 | 30 | 1 | 30
| You Want Me To Stay Like That | 11 | 24 | 1 | 24
| Make You Look | 12 | 37 | 1 | 37
| Paradise | 13 | 38 | 1 | 38
| Work It | 14 | 42 | 1 | 42
| Sick Of Being Lonely | 15 | 41 | 1 | 41
| Make It Clap | 16 | 40 | 1 | 40
| Cry Me A River | 17 | 35 | 1 | 35
| Come Close To Me | 18 | 33 | 1 | 33
| Satisfaction | 19 | 31 | 1 | 31
| 'Il Bonnie & Clyde | 20 | 29 | 1 | 29
| Do That... | 21 | 28 | 1 | 28

**February 8, 2003**

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| I Care U | 2 | 48 | 1 | 48
| What Happened To That Boy | 3 | 45 | 1 | 45
| Tell Me (What's Going On) | 4 | 49 | 1 | 49
| When The Last Time | 5 | 51 | 1 | 51
| Emotional Rollercoaster | 6 | 54 | 1 | 54
| Launder | 7 | 57 | 1 | 57
| Restless Nigger | 8 | 53 | 1 | 53
| I Miss You | 9 | 50 | 1 | 50
| Our Love | 10 | 52 | 1 | 52
| I Want U | 11 | 47 | 1 | 47
| Runaway | 12 | 55 | 1 | 55
| I'll Be | 13 | 59 | 1 | 59
| The Morning After | 14 | 60 | 1 | 60
| To The Bone | 15 | 62 | 1 | 62
| One Last Chance/Stay With Me | 16 | 63 | 1 | 63
| I'll Be | 17 | 64 | 1 | 64

**HEAVYWEIGHT DJ: Japanese beat-smith DJ Krush brings his next set of instrumental hip-hop state-side this month with The Message at the Depth (Red Ink). Due Feb. 11, the album is the follow-up to 2001's Zen.**

“When I made Zen, I had a message: 'All of the problems of the world were caused by human beings, so why don’t we clean it up?'” Krush explains. “So when the tragedy of Sept. 11 [2001] happened, I thought, ‘What? Not again.’ I didn’t put down thought into making this album. I just let out the feelings that I had.’”

*The Message at the Depth* features guest appearances from indie acts Anti-Pop Consortium and Anti-com, among others. “I felt close to them, because what I do is also not mainstream,” Krush says of the collaborations. “I’m trying to express my feelings regardless of commercial success. I know they feel the same way. That’s why I thought they would be perfect to work with. I sent them the album concept and said, ‘If you agree with what I feel or want to join this work, then please do so.’ I let it open, and luckily they replied.”

**SUPER BOWL BASH: Def Jam president Kevin Liles recently teamed with prominent sports agent Scott Steinberg for Def Con ’03. Held at San Diego’s Blue Tattoo, the party, hosted by Russell Simmons, brought together the worlds of music and sports in a novel way.**

“My NFL clients are enormous music and hip-hop fans,” Steinberg says. “So for a number of years I’ve tried to establish a bridge between music and sports. Obviously, they are two heads of the hydra that is entertainment. We looked around for an entertainment partner and were impressed by the quality and consistency of Def Jam. As a kickoff to this marriage, we thought the Super Bowl, which is a convention of America, would be appropriate.”

Steinberg, whose clients include the Miami Dolphins’ Ricky Williams and the New York Jets’, Chad Morton, is establishing a think tank of sports- and music-industry insiders to spin off future projects that embody both music and sports, which would in turn spin off other entertainment products.”
BY LEILA COBO

The latest Alexandre Pires album to be released in the Brazilian market features the singer in a talkative mood, chatting openly about his childhood, his mother, and the songs he had never published before. This is the first time that all the tracks from the album, Minha Musica (My Life, My Music), have been featured together on a single album. Each album features an up-close-and-personal look at an individual artist. The series is produced by Express Editions and is a joint venture between BMG, Universal, and Sony Music International for marketing Sony Music International Latin America.

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry’s Latin American office approached Express Editions — created as an alternative marketing company for arts, entertainment, music, and sports — to come up with an innovative, self-sufficient project that would raise funds for the labels and support anti-piracy efforts. The labels were so taken with the idea that it became a purely commercial venture. “The idea was to generate a creative solution,” Lopes says, “although it was hard to create a project that wouldn’t compete with what the labels were already doing.”

So, rather than being a purely musical CD, Minha Musica presents an intimate audio portrait of each artist, “and the music is in a highly personalized setting. The format is a throwback to the days of radio drama, with actors sometimes incorporated as a means of dramatizing events.”

“Minha Vida” recounts emotional moments in the life of an artist,” Lopes explains. “For example, we have artists who never had the opportunity to record a single or another they never released. And when the artist says, ‘This was never released, but it’s beautiful,’ and he plays it, that song is important in that context.”

For example, during an interview with Brazilian duo Bruno & Marrone, which performs sertanejo music (the rough equivalent of country), Bruno reveals that he has always wanted to record a Luis Miguel bolero, but he has never had the opportunity. So he performs on the album.

The Minha Vida concept was first tried out last summer in Brazil, a major market that lends itself to testing new product. As well as albums featuring Pires and Bruno & Marrone, the series includes an album by Chitaizinho & Xororó.

Sony Discos Signs Distribution Deal With Indie Z

Following a newly inked licensing deal with California-based indie Titan Records, Sony Discos has signed a distribution deal with another indie, Los Angeles-based Z Records, which features 7 Records artists. Express Editions is in charge of marketing and distributing the respective albums. Express Editions is in charge of marketing and distributing the respective albums.

Sony’s alliance with Z is unusual, because Z is a subsidiary of Prain One. So the deal is a unique product — particularly that of Jesse Morales, his on Original de la Sierra — with great success.

Z Records CEO George Prajin says, “Our distribution deals have mainly been with mom-and-pop stores and people who sell at swap meets, and there are other types of retailers, like Wal-Mart, Target, and Virgin, where to get in you need to be associated with a major distributor. I know I’m missing out on sales by not having my products out there.” Prajin adds that he did not want other clients of Prain One-Stop to think that these artists were getting preferential treatment.

According to Prajin, Sony’s distribution deal will cover his current acts, as well as any artists signed from this point on. It does not include three acts currently under license with Univation Records, among them Jesse Morales. His catalog is also with Univation, and he still owns albums to that label.

Prajin stresses that Morales is in good hands with Univation, which has actively promoted him, but he also wanted to focus on developing brand-new acts and expanding into other types of product, such as DVDs and karaoke DVDs.

The plan to launch five new acts this year. The first will be Cumbre Nortera, a band already popular in the Los Angeles area, followed by Alex Arellano, his style is similar to that of Morales.

In a statement, Sony Discos chairman Carlos Lopes says, “This partnership brings another important source of quality products, as well as the opportunity for Sony’s exclusive artists to tap George’s unparalleled talents as a producer.”
Over the previous week, regardless of chart movement. A record which has been on the chart for more than 20 weeks will generally not receive a bullet, even if it reg-

Regional Mexican) are electronically monitored 24 hrs. a day, 7 days a week. Songs ranked by Audience Impressions. Records showing an increase in audience

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LATIN POP ALBUMS

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"Latin Pop" sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. Billboard Latin Pop charts run on a weekly basis during the Hot Shot debut. To purchase Hot Shot Charts, please call your nearest Nielsen SoundScan representative. Billboard Latin Pop Charts use both U.S. and non-U.S. sales. Nielsen SoundScan's Hot Shot Charts are based on actual domestic sales for the previous week. Nielsen SoundScan's Hot Shot Charts are based on actual domestic sales for the previous week.
Ishioka’s ‘King’ Reigns Over U.S., Japanese Dance Landscape

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

New York—On the dance/electronic landscape, it is not uncommon for independent labels to be here one day and gone the next. This is more true today, given the current state of the economy and the music industry. It is in this environment, though, that New York-based King Street Sounds, which specializes in soulful house music, ably thrives.

In fact, King Street celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. For label founder and president Hisa Ishioka, who moved from Japan to New York in 1985, such a milestone is not taken lightly—nor is its namesake.

According to Ishioka, he owes his career in music to late DJ Larry Levan and the Paradise Garage, the now-defunct club located on King Street in New York’s West Village where Levan ruled the turntables.

“Originally, I moved to New York to study the interiors of clubs and restaurants,” says Ishioka, who, at the time, was employed by a Japanese interior-design firm. “I was going to clubs like the Saint and Area. It wasn’t until a friend took me to the Garage that my views toward club music changed.

“From that day forward, I went to the Garage every weekend, until it closed in 1987,” he continues. “That’s where I received my musical education.”

By the late 80’s, Ishioka was sending DJs like Levan, Frankie Knuckles, and David Morales on club tours of Japan. (Since then, King Street’s catalog is about half of which have gone top 10— including three No. 1s (Kimara Lovelace’s “Circles,” Urban Soul’s “Show Me,” and Pump Friction’s “That Sound”).

“I’m very passionate about the music I release,” notes Ishioka, who promises new albums from Ananda Project, Kerri Chandler, Stephanie Cooke, and Blaze by year’s end. “Whether it’s a vocal recording or an instrumental track, I’m always looking for an emotion, a soul sensibility. It’s that soulful element that can be heard on all our releases.”

The producers of one such track, “Beat Freak” by Loop Trick, wanted a U.S. release. “At that time, I had no desire to open a label,” Ishioka explains. “I didn’t have much money. But I put the track out anyway, with remixes by Pal Joey and Blaze.” King Street was born.

In the years since, King Street (and its 9-year-old imprint, Nite Grooves) has experienced much success on the Billboard Hot Dance Music/Club Play chart, with nearly 30 chart entries—more than half of which have gone top 10—including three No.1s (Kimara Lovelace’s “Circles,” Urban Soul’s “Show Me,” and Pump Friction’s “That Sound”).

The Business of Songwriting... Bug Music, one of the world’s leading publishing companies, recently held a party at New York’s commune club to celebrate its 25th anniversary. Among the many in attendance were artists Lydia Rhodes, Michael Moog, and Hassan. DJs for the evening included Bill Coleman, Nickodemus, Louie Bal, Freddy Bastone, John Martin, and Bug clients Jaymz Nylon and Ursula 1000. Pictured, from left, are West End Records founder Mel Cheren, Bug Music senior VP Cary Veletri, and West End president Kevin Hedge.

DJs, including Joe Claussell, Francois K., and Blaze, to Japan.)

In 1990, Ishioka began compiling/coordinating dance compilations for such Japanese labels as Toshiba-EMI. “I was basically doing A&R for these labels in a work-for-hire capacity,” he notes. “I was finding all this new music for the various compilations.”

Such statements help to explain why the label’s catalog features a who’s who of top producers, DJs, and artists, including Ultra Naté, Evelyn “Champagne” King, Blaze, Morales, Chris Brann (aka Ananda Project), Chandler, Cevin Fisher, Mondo Grosso, Danny Krivit, Peter Rauhofer, and Tony Humphries.

“King Street’s catalog is about quality,” says Judy Russell, VP of sales at independent distributor Downtown 161 in New York. “Which is why we do very well with their product—that is, when it’s available and we can get it back in stock.”

In addition to such recently issued singles as GTS Featuring Karyn White’s “Super Woman” and Stephanie Cooke’s “Rain, Fall, Down,” as well as full-lengths like Ananda Project’s Release, Russell says she does very well with King Street’s many compilation series, especially Abstract Afro Lounge, a label she launched, and Mix the Vibe. (Morales is confirmed to helm the series’ upcoming special 10th-anniversary volume.)

Ishioka acknowledges that several tracks released on King Street (or Nite Grooves) arrive via Hi’s Production USA—which, in addition to coordinating tours for U.S. DJs in Japan, is a production company that brings together Japanese and American artists and producers for musical collaborations.

“We coordinate recordings, mixes, and productions for Japanese artists wishing to work in the U.S.,” Ishioka explains. “Many Japanese producers and artists have a strong desire to go outside Japan to record with other artists and musicians. I bring creative people together. There’s a great synergy between King Street and Hi’s Production.”

In this way, Ishioka has helped nurture the careers of many Japanese artists and producers, including Towa Tei, Mondo Grosso, Monday Michiru, and GTS. “Ultimately, it’s about following my passion, about keeping the New York vibe alive.”

King Street will celebrate its 10th birthday with a party March 19 at the Raleigh Hotel in Miami, which coincides with the Winter Music Conference.

LIKE GOLD: It’s been nearly two years since Norwegian duo Kings of Convenience (KoC) released their gorgeous sophomore set, Quiet Is the New Loud. Since, one-half of the musical partnership, Erlend Øye, has worked on a couple of side projects. He contributed vocals to Röyksopp’s “Poor Leno” and “Remind Me” and recorded the Lee Hazlewood nugget “No Train to Stockholm” for the tribute album Total Lee.

Well, we’ve got great news for those who can’t get enough of Øye’s sweetly melancholic vocals. On Feb. 11 (one day earlier overseas), Source 360/Astralwerks issues Øye’s solo debut, the beautifully understated Universals. A cross between the KoC remix project Versus, his work with Röyksopp, and Pet Shop Boys’ Release, Universals finds Øye fully embracing his fondness for all things electronic, encompassing nu-electro, house, and leftfield.

“Working with Röyksopp, I realized that my voice works in the electronic genre,” Øye says. “And while I would’ve loved to make an entire album with them, they were busy. So, I found others to work with.”

Recorded in 10 cities during 12 months, Universals features several producers, including Schneider TM (“Like Gold”), Prefuse 73 (“Every Party Has a Winner and a Loser”), Komps (“A Sudden Rush”), and Metro Area’s Morgan Geist (“Ghost Trains”).

“I had no technical knowledge when I embarked on this journey,” Øye recalls. “Throughout, I kept asking myself, ‘How can I make an electronic album?’ Now, I see this album as a musical awakening—a way for me to expand my musical horizons.”

As for the future of KoC, Øye says he and Kings partner Eirik Glambek Bøe will “be releasing records until we’re 50. We’ll begin making our new record in the summer.”
**February 8, 2003**

**Billboard HOT DANCE MUSIC**

### Club Play

**Number 1**

**Title** | **Artist**
--- | ---
**EMR** | **Jocelyn Enriquez**
**I'M NOT YOU** | **Andy Hunter**
**DANCE TO THE RHYTHM** | ** coup de force**
**I DON'T KNOW WHY** | **Shuga**
**Somewhere in the Night** | **Tina Arena**
**DIE NOT TODAY** | **Jenni Lewis**
**FULL MOON** | **Kool & the Gang**

### Maxi-Singles Sales

**Number 1**

**Title** | **Artist**
--- | ---
**EMR** | **Fatboy Slim**
**The Days are Rough** | **The Wombats**
**You're Not Alone** | **David Bowie**
**Have a Laugh** | **Kimberley Walsh**
**If Only** | **The Corrs**

### Top Electronic Albums

**Number 1**

**Title** | **Artist**
--- | ---
**THE MATERIAL & OTHERS** | **Materials**
**LOVE COMES BACK** | **L♡ve**
**MIRACLE IN THE LEECH** | **Heaven 17**
**ENJOY** | **Seven Colours**
**DANCE WITH THE ANGELS** | **Cher**

---

**Billboard HOT DANCE BREAKOUTS**

**Club Play**

**No Way No How** | **Jofery Enriquez**
**I Believe** | **Chris Cox & Happy Clappers**
**The Drive** | **Victor Calderone**

**Maxi-Singles Sales**

**No Way No How** | **Jofery Enriquez**
**I Believe** | **Chris Cox & Happy Clappers**
**The Drive** | **Victor Calderone**

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**February 8, 2003**
ON THE ROW: As expected, Curb Records’ new Nashville imprint will be called Asylum Records (Billboard, Jan. 18). LeAnn Rimes will shift from Curb to Asylum, which will release her next single, “Suddenly,” exclusively to country radio March 10. A previous WEA imprint, also called Asylum Records, operated in Nashville for several years before being consolidated into Warner Bros. in 2001.

Katherine Woods has been promoted from VP to senior VP of legal and business affairs at RCA Label Group (RLG) in Nashville. Woods will continue to serve as legal counsel for RLG and its affiliated labels. Prior to joining RLG in 1996, Woods was in private practice in the Nashville entertainment industry.

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Phyllis Stark
by Phyllis Stark

COUNTRY

’Next Big Thing’ For Gill Is A New MCA Nashville Album, Tour

BY PHYLLIS STARK

NASHVILLE—After choosing to delay the release of his latest album while the dust settled from a regime change at his longtime label, MCA Nashville, Vince Gill is finally ready to re-enter the marketplace Feb. 11 with his self-produced Next Big Thing. He’ll be hitting the road to support it. But rather than playing at the larger venues that housed his last few outings, Gill has opted to perform at a series of small clubs on his Back 2 Basics tour.

The 16-city intimate-venue trek not only will bring Gill close to his hardcore fans, it will allow the artist a chance to reconnect with players in radio and retail in an “up-close-and-personal” situation, according to Terry Elam, who oversees Gill’s tour efforts for the management team at Fitzgerald-Hartley.

“For about 20 minutes after each show he’ll meet with radio, retail, and media people,” says Elam, who adds that in-store radio stations are included in the tour schedule for both giveaways and to station appearances are part of the plan.

“Basically, from 2 p.m. until midnight [in each market] Vince will have a chance to reach the PDs, GMs, and jocks and talk to the retail people, as well as his fans.”

The largest room on the route is the 2,500-capacity Massey Hall in Toronto; the smallest is the 650-seat Pantages Theater in Minneapolis.

Despite the small size of the venues, Gill is not skimping on the presentation during the six-week run. “We’re carrying the whole show, which includes an eight-piece band, plus Vince,” Elam says. “A lot of people out there don’t know what a great player he is and just know him as a vocalist. This will give them a chance to see him as a singer, songwriter, and musician.”

Gill says his vision for the club dates is to do “a live listening party for this record. I thought it would be a fun idea.”

“I’ve been touring and playing and doing every conceivable kind of gig I think a human being can do in a career for close to 30 years now,” Gill says. “I kind of felt like, ‘Let’s try something different.’”, I said, ‘Let’s go find the coolest clubs in all these cities.’” Gill says such clubs are the places where he feels the most musical.

By the summer, Gill says he plans to hit the road again for some acoustic shows “with just me and my guitar.” Venues for that part of the tour will include West Coast wineries and some small, outdoor pavilions. For those shows, Gill says, he won’t have a set list and will just play songs that fans request. Gill is booked by Rick Shipp at the William Morris Agency.

While Gill says he misses the old team at MCA and wishes it was still intact, he’s also “excited about the strategy over there and the new blood and [working with] people I’ve never worked with.”

Lewis says the Back 2 Basics tour will be a big part of the marketing plan for the album. And while it “wasn’t meant to be a marketing move,” Lewis says, “I think it’s going to turn out to be a great one for us. I have a feeling it’s going to get him fired up.”

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CELEBRITY GUESTS

Gill, who previously produced an album for lyricist-artist Sonya Isaacs, thinks he may have more such work in his future, noting, “Probably it will be a natural evolution for me to wind up producing.”

His vocal guests on this new album include Emmylou Harris, Lee Ann Womack, Leslie Satcher, Michael McDonald, wife Amy Grant, and daughter Jenny Gill. His studio band included luminaries as Al Anderson and Mac McAnally.

In addition to producing, Gill wrote or co-wrote every track on the album. He co-authored one of its best tracks, the beautiful ballad “Some-"}

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**TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS**

**FEBRUARY 8, 2003**

Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

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ALBUMS

SPOTLIGHTS

JOHNNY MARR + THE HEALERS
Boomslap
PRODUCER: Johnny Marr
iMusic/AristaDirect 80119-01074
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 28

Since the Smiths split in 1987, songwriter and guitar virtuoso Johnny Marr has logged time in significant partnerships with Matt Johnson (aka The The) and New Order’s Bernard Sumner. (The latter collaboration introduced Electronic to the world.) Marr has also played with the Pretenders, Talking Heads, and Beck—as well as produced the debut of British band Haven and written songs for Liam Gallagher and Beth Orton. But Boomslap marks his strongest front as downtown with the Healers, featuring drummer Zak Starkey (current Who drummer and the son of Ringo Starr) and bassist Alona Bevan. While his influential guitar abilities come as no surprise, Marr’s lovely voice—one relic of the back to the Morrissey’s crooning—does a real revelation. Indeed, Boomslap is the album Marr fans have been waiting a lifetime for.

LOU REED
The Raven
PRODUCERS: Lou Reed, Hal Willer
Sire/Reprise 48373
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 28

A wildly ambitious theatrical project revolving around the works of Edgar Allan Poe, Lou Reed’s The Raven often fails distressingly in this double-disc audio presentation: overall, though, the recording imparts with its deeply felt connection to the dark power of Poe’s still-influential art. Willem Dafoe, Steve Buscemi, and Elizabeth Ashley are among the spoken-word performers, while musicians joining Reed’s potter band include free-jazz leg- end Ornette Coleman, Laurie Anderson, and a new Jimme Scott-style singer named Antony (who contributes an otherworldly interpretation of Reed’s classic “Perfect Day”). Beyond Dafoe’s acutely resonant readings, the highlights include Reed’s retake of “The Bed,” (From Berlin) and his affecting new September song, “Who Am I?” There is also a one-disc version of the album, which should please most Reed fans.

STEVEN CURTIS CHAPMAN
All About Love
PRODUCERS: Brown Bannister, Steven Curtis Chapman
Spyware 724354176227
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 28

With this 15-song love letter to his wife of 18 years, Mary Beth Chapman, the four-time Grammy winner Steven Curtis Chapman again proves why he’s the longstanding golden boy of contemporary Christian music. Although a multimillion-selling artist, who by far the broadest media exposure in his genre, Chapman’s valentine to his spouse deftly maintains her very personal, one-on-one feel. Highlights are many here and encompass gorgeous ballads (“We Will Dance”) and a remake of his classic “I Will Be Here”, friendly rockers (“Miracle of You,” “We Belong Together,” “How Do I Love Her?”), and a leaving of edger fare (the title track). Also included are two covers: “I’ll Tame Care of You.” All About, the artist’s 13th studio recording, stands as strong as the love affair of which Chapman so endearingly sings.

RECORDS

NADA SURF
Let Go
PRODUCERS: Chris Fuscari, Louie Lino, Nada Surf
Barsuk Bark 29
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 4

After a four-year hiatus, New York trio Nada Surf returns with its third, and arguably best, effort. With Let Go, frontman Matthew Caws has matured into an astute singer/songwriter, crafting compositions that spark with insightful melodic brilliance far beyond the band’s art-rocky indie-geek hit “Popular” (from the group’s 1996 major-label debut). High-flying Let Go is a more harmonious and introspective alterna-pop affair, reflecting a wide variety of influences, including Frank Black, Coldplay (“Inside of Love”), and Beck (“Neither Heaven Nor Space”). Simon & Garfunkel, Sugar (“Treading Water”), Air (“La Poua Ca”), and Beck (“Flight 5”). Throughout, Nada Surf remains unique: its quirky sensibility has not been lost, nor has the outfit’s power-pop roots. Cuts like “Way You Wear Your Head” and the quasi-80s synth-rock inspired “Hi-Speed Soul” burst with explosive rhythms and infectious melodies that rival recent output by Foo Fighters and the Vines. Nostalgic and current, hazy and vibrant, Let Go is a sumptuous collection that gets better with each listen.

KINSKI
Also Leave Your Station
PRODUCERS: Kinski, Kip Beelman
Sub Pop 620
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 21

This Seattle quartet with a couple of indie releases under its belt makes a raging impression with its third album and first Sub Pop release. This largely instrumental set draws from an international lexicon of influences: Irish fiddler My Bloody Valentine, the Canadian noise commune Godspeed You Black Emperor, the Japanese sonic-damage outfit High Rise, and the hometown Sub Pop-bred blast furnace Earth. Throw in the syncopations of German krautrockers Neu! and the syncopations of indigenous funk band “Sky Away,” both of which Orton. But Boomslang marks his sibling is Beyoncé Knowles of Destinys Child) and New Order’s Bernard Lee “Superstar Pt. 1” to the melodic waltz of “So Be It.” To the melodic waltz of “So Be It.” To the melodic waltz of “So Be It.” As a collaboration, Boomslang shows both his vocal and musical identities get lost in the process. The young artist fares best on such tracks as the uptempo “So Be It” and ballad “Sky Away,” both of which she co-wrote and co-produced. Solo Star isn’t a bad first effort. But next time around, it will be nice to hear the real Solange.

R&B/HIP-HOP

SOLANGE
Solo Star
PRODUCERS: various
Music From Music/Columbia 96999-86354
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 21

A firm believer in the melting pot that is hip-hop, Canadian singer/MC k-os brings his own sound to the masses via his Astralwerks debut. A melodic trip that focuses on issues of life and love, k-os is one of those albums that falls into several categories. From the reggae stylings of “Superstar Pt. 1” to the melodic R&B leavings of “Call Me.” To the album offers a little something for everyone. K-os pays homage to hip-hop with “The Anthem,” an infectious track

DANCE/ELECTRONIC

FLUNK
For Sleepyheads Only
PRODUCER: Lily Napgaard
Guidance Recordings 34561-06902
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 4

Flunk hails from the same land as Royskopp and Kings of Convenience: Norway. And in a riot to both acts, this quartet seamlessly and beautifully puts the electronic into folk music and vice versa. Very late night music on a jam-like mentality. For Sleepyheads Only grooves along at a relaxed pace, which makes it perfect for a Sunday afternoon or some good ol’ head-in-the-bliss. Anji’s sublime vocals on the act’s acoustic cover of New Order’s “Blue Monday” is worth the price of admission alone. Don’t blend in, don’t they’re “Honey’s in Love,” which recalls the stylings of one of the ultimate neo-soul sirens, ambershine. On track like “Magic Potion.” Flunk veers into Massive Attack territory, Jamaica by way of Bristol.

COUNTRY

STEVE WARNER
Steal Another Day
PRODUCER: Steve Warner
SelecTone 826411
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 4

Guitar picker, singerwriter, and allaround good guy Steve Warner debuts on his own SelecTone label here, and it’s a home-grown project that blends recuts of previous hits with new material. Produced by Warner, half of his 16-track debut results, like his past releases, offer strong musicianship, sincere (if sometimes sappy) balladry, and plenty of heart. While he may be hard for some to fault him for it, Warner wears that heart so openly on his sleeve it makes a big target on predictable weepers like “Snowfall on the Sand,” “The Christmas Prayer,” and “Really Don’t Have Anything.” So much so that, while pretty, such tracks are somewhat swoon-inducing. Far, far better are the rollicking “Carmelita” (with Lee Roy Parnell), the hyper-groove of the title cut and the crisp observation of “Welcome to This World.” Likewise, Warner’s attempt to break out on the dance floor with “Exit”-—emotional stance works to perfection on the exquisitely delivered “There Will Come a Day (Holy’s Song)” and the impressive “Blacktop Blues.” Over the years, Steve Warner has been waiting a lifetime for...
Together they’re making beautiful, both are powerful acoustic guitarists. Westerners, despite the language barrier, find musical common ground in 2001 with their song “Yatal Gueew” (Widening the Circle), a plea for tolerance and cooperation among all races. The tune became a rallying song in recent years.

**NEW AGE**

**AMETHYSTYRIA**

**PRODUCER:** Oystein Ramstad Neurodisic/Capitol 7243 5 80835

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 28

**Blues**

**SMOKEY JOE KUBEK & BENNO KING**

**Household Resonance**

**PRODUCER:** Smokin’ Joe Kubek

**Blind Pig 5080**

**RELEASE DATE:** Feb. 4

**Roadhouse Resonance is Kubek and King’s debut with Blind Pig, having cut their previous eight albums with Rounder’s Bullseye imprint. Kubek is an old-school Texas blues guitarist, strongly influenced by Freddie King. Kubek demonstrates the influence in these tracks that he remains one of the most distinctive electric guitarists currently plugged in. His fiery, agile lead guitar is complemented by King’s adroit rhythm guitar and vocals. Roadhouse Research is typical Kubek/King: Half of the songs are in a bluesy feel, while the slow burn “Standing in My Door,” which only comes with a classic, beautifully phrased Kubek guitar solo.—PVV

**GOSPEL**

**DARWIN HOBBS**

**Until We See Jesus**

**PRODUCERS:** Kevin Glass, Michael McDonald

**EMI Gospel 20159**

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 28

**Darwin Hobbs continues to build momentum on his third release, with strong self-production and artistic maturity that only comes with time. Already possessing one of the nimblest, most versatile saxophones of any contemporary music, Hobbs hits one perfect note after another. Easily divided between shimmering, Sunday-morning gospel and steely modern R&B, the 10-song collection could easily be subtitled “Rhythm & Praise.” “Break Me Draw Me” is a plaintive Chanter Chord, led here by the consistent cowboy Chad Kroeger; his brother, frontman/guitarist Chad Kroeger; his brother, bassist Mike Kroege; guitarist Ryan Peake; and drummer Ryan Vikedal were then rejoined by Vikedal and Mike Kroeger for “How You Remind Me,” with a tale of sorcery and subsequent attack justice, the group held its own. Where else would a monster band like this be performing?—CL

**JAZZ**

**CHRISTIAN HOWES**

**On Sale Perish**

**PRODUCERS:** Christian Howes, Federico Lechner, Pablo Martin

**Kheao 2003302**

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 21

**On Sale Perish is Christian Howes’ follow-up to Kheao, violinist Christian Howes team with bassist Pablo Martin and pianist Federico Lechner. The end result is a quiet, lyrical set of tunes. Howes has been referred to as the “Jimi Hendrix of the violin,” but that’s not what’s happening here. Rather, Howes interprets materi- al by Thelonious Monk, Bill Evans, Miles Davis, and Thad Jones, including “Blue Monk” and “Very Early,” and delivers a speculated, understated performance. It’s a lovely, thoughtful album, and Howes is supported very stylishly by his musical partners, both of whom play with a maturity that only comes with time. This group will certainly give jazz fans and critics pause to re- consider Howes’ grasp of the masters and the depth of his emotional com- prehension of the jazz idiom. Racked by City Hall Records.—PVV

**CLASICAL**

**BALTIC VOICES I**

**Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir; Tallinn Chamber Orchestra/Paul Hillier**

**PRODUCERS:** Robin C. Young, Brad Michel

**Harmonia Mundi 907311**

**RELEASE DATE:** Feb. 11

Some of the most involving classical scores in recent years have been composed in the Baltics, and this beauti- fully produced anthology presents the best of the region’s contemporary choral music. The collection features choirs with the passionate precision connoisseurs have come to expect from the Eston- ian Chamber Choir, led here by the versatile Paul Hillier. The collection features premiere recordings by three of the region’s most distinguished composers: ... which was the son of ... by Arvo Part, “Liviston Bourdon” by Veljo Tormis, and the deeply moving “Dona Nobis Pacem” by Peteris Vasks. There are also works by Siim Suviste, Lauri Kivastik, Krykit, Sven and David Sandström; of Sandström’s two works, his elabora- tion on Purcell’s shattering “Hear My Prayer,” 0 Lord is oval where the disc’s many highlights.—BB

**IN CONCERT**

**NICKELBACK**

Jan. 21

The World, New York

The turnout for one of Nickelback’s last dates on Budweiser’s Beer/Music/ Respect in the Morning tour testified to the group’s massive popularity. Dozens arriving at New York venue the World on a dead-end cold night with below-freezing temperatures, a line of fans shoved outside as they waited to get tickets an hour before the doors opened. Luckily, the Canadian act put on a show that was plenty hot enough to revive their followers.

Hitting the stage with “Woke Up This Morning” from its multi-platinum Road- runner album Silver Side Up, vocal- ist/guitarist Chad Krogger; his brother, bassist Mike Kroege; guitarist Ryan Peake; and drummer Ryan Vikedal were in full throttle for the 12-song set. With the boom from Vikedal’s kit vibrating in the audience’s throat, Nickelback took such cuts as “Breathe,” “Leader of Men,” and “Hangin’” to task as if they were unruly charges in need of some disci- pline, doing out blistering riffs and pounding rhythms with plenty of sweat.

Bassist Krogger seemed the ser- ious and bittersweet, more given to grinning and nodding as his younger sibling moved about the stage, ably fill- ing his duties as frontman and keeping up a steady chatter between songs. Inspiring if the crowd had enough beer and apologizing to those who had wait- ed outside in the bitter temperatures, he declared, “We did not bring that cold with us from Vancouver!”

Producing a digital video camera, Krogger cleverly whipped the audience into a screaming throng during the Hen- drix-esque “Where Do I Hide” by intro- ducing it to show “New York fucking rocks” as he panned the camera with the camera to gather footage for an upcoming DVD. The audience got a taste of the mater- ial on the band’s upcoming album with a song listed on the set list as “Figure.” This nice slice of dirty rock n’ roll showed its potential as a single by keeping the party vibe going. Krogger sang in his rough voice about “how I like the dirt on your knees; I like the way you look up at me ... I like the freckles on your chest; I like the wine stains on your dress.”

Keeping two of their biggest hits in their pocket for the encore, Krogger and Peake returned to the stage with acoustic in hand for an unplugged ver- sion of “Hero,” which featured some nice harmonizing between the two. They were then rejoined by Vikedal and Mike Kroeger for “How You Remind Me,” which naturally recharged the room before the show’s closing.

**Chad Kroeger of Nickelback**

With Peake shedding like a man pos- sessed and Kroeger working the club as if it were stadium capacity, Nickelback’s performance vigor was by far A+ professional. The crowd on the floor had the time of its life, but oddly, for the most part, the back of the room was cop- ing with that famous New York altitude and standing still. Where else would a mon- ster No. 1 hit that just snuggled a Gram- my award under its belt turn up a year later be received with bare arms?

Supporting Nickelback was Sacra- mento, Calif.-based quartet Okeanler, which also performed new material from its forthcoming Sanctuary album, Jogride. Despite a slightly muddied sound that did not do its two-guitar band and multi-group well, Okeanler made signature tunes “Why I’m Here” and “Are You There?” transcen- ders themselves, turning the alterna- tive rock pieces into metal-tinged 30-40 sessions honed from speed years on the road. One wonders how far this band could go if it were to release their performances as radio singles.—CL

**DIVISION OF LAURA LEE/BRIDGES Jan. 22**

Horseshoe Tavern, Toronto

Having successfully resisted its init- ial push as the next White Stripes or Strokes, Sweden’s Division of Laura Lee and Philadelphia’s Bridging Hires have nevertheless crept up to the top. The two groups blend the intensity of the Stooges, MCR, or the Yardbirds with the enthusiasm of contemporary “boog- low” act Arctic Monkeys and the drive of Mooney Suzuki. And with the temper- outside well below zero in Toronto, the grations of each band provided energy and multi-energized warmth to the sold-out crowd.

If there was one disappointment to the evening, it was the unexplained absence of Seattle group the Catheters. It seemed like an afterthought once Burn- ing Bridges singer Dimitri Coats took the stage. High-knee socks, high-octane, and executing one quasi-Townsend wind- mill after another, Coats was drenched in sweat by the time the group hit its sec- ond song, “Stabbed in the Back of the Heart.” His consistent manic energy never wavered once. Equal to Coats and his antics was bass player Melanie Campbell, whose thunderous attack caused her to break a bass string during the con- performance of “Overhead Metal Edward.”

The Bridges don’t win a whole lot of points for originality, but it was hard to deny the power of Coats and his over-the-top, blood-curdling howls. Each song tended to veer off into a great guitar bridge, occasionally dabbling into a Mid- dle Eastern rock sound. Division of Laura Lee took a hit longer to get going. But as the lead singer of vocalist/guitarist Per Stalberg, the group was building like a well-oiled machine by the end of “Black City” and its references to death and the Internet. For the most part though, the band was playing to the core. By the hour’s rest stop, tracks like “We’ve Been Playing This For Years” and “How Good Are You?” had certainly made their impression, with Stalberg rocking back and forth.

After almost an hour of music, the Division of Laura Lee had definitely held up its end of this musical and monetary bargain.—IM

**PAPE & CHEKIH**

Moriana

**PRODUCER:** Ben Findlay

RealWorld/Narada 72438-13257

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 28

**Papa Amadou Fall and Cheikhou Kouyaté** created a sensation in Sen-egal in 2001 with their song “Yatal Gueew” (Widening the Circle), a plea for tolerance and cooperation among all races. The tune became a rallying song in recent years. Where else would a monster band like this be performing?—CL

**CLASSICAL**

**EASTERNER**

**PRODUCER:** Gishell Olson

**EXOTIC MUSIC 2508**

**RELEASE DATE:** Feb. 11

**Joan of Arc, So Much Staying Alive and Lovelessness (Ude Tree)**

**FURTHER Seems Forever, How to Start a Fire (Tooth & Nail)**

**Benny Green and Russell Malone, Live at Jazz at the Bistro (Talacar)**

**Also reviewed online this week:**

- Joan of Arc, So Much Staying Alive and Lovelessness (Ude Tree)
- Further Seems Forever, How to Start a Fire (Tooth & Nail)
- Benny Green and Russell Malone, Live at Jazz at the Bistro (Talacar)
ROBBIE WILLIAMS Feel (3:42) PRODUCERS: Guy Chambers, Steve Power, WALTERS: R. Williams, G. Chambers, Chambers PUBLISHERS: BMG/EMI Virgin 17665 (CD promo) The fact that Robbie Williams is one of the world’s best-known singers and yet is nearly anonymous in the U.S. is utterly baffling — for pop fans who follow the international charts — and an embarrassment for American radio programmers whose conviction to melody-based music is at a striking low. Capitol worked valiantly to break the bad boy Brit here and eventually surrendered. Now Virgin has taken on this worthy cause. “Feel” is an exceptional song on all levels — substantive and intelligent, melodic and musical, and song with great passion and panache by the singer/songwriter. In another time, Williams would have an obvious chart-topper here (as it has been in more than a dozen countries) and a probable Grammy contender. What a tragedy it would be for this exceptional talent to remain invisible. This is as obvious a hit song as they come. Car commercial, anyone?—CT

WHITNEY HOUSTON Try It on My Own (4:28) PRODUCERS: Whitney Houston, Whitney HOUSTON: Whitney Houston, Whitney PUBLISHERS: Brownsville One/EMI/Warner-Tamerlane/All About Me, BMI; NBSG 30000/B/E-April/Andie Sosa, ASCAP Artists 821976 (CD promo) If an artist is rarely seen promoting her own music, why should the public rally behind her? Perhaps that’s part of the problem behind Houston’s “Das Whitney,” a very good — albeit very short — album that’s sinking with alarming speed at retail. Third single, “Try It on My Own” is the best song on the album. Classic Whitney ballad that pushes every diva button, from huge celestial notes to a creamy orchestral arrangement. Arista also commissioned Thunderpuss to wring the song into a dance thumper, hoping that tempo will foster radio favor. A previous remake is “I Learned from the Best” and “It’s Not Right But It’s Okay.” It’s heartbreaking to see Houston’s career faltering in the midst of self-admitted personal problems. One has to wonder if she can score a hit in spite of herself.—CT

SWEET HOME ALABAMA Bueno Vista 29126 RELEASE DATE: Feb. 4 Insights into the making of this Reese Witherspoon vehicle are aplenty on this DVD, which includes such features as a deleted-scene library, an alternate ending, an audio commentary from director Andy Tennant, and the Shedsay music video for “Sweet Home Alabama.” The deleted scene feature is most telling, as viewers are truly brought into a filmmaker’s mind as a project’s final sequence is being put together. The alternate ending reveals that he cut his favorite scene in the movie for reasons of timing and flow. Indeed, an entire character was cut out to shed a different focus on Witherspoon’s character, Melanie Carmichael. An extensive alternate ending also highlights how different the film would have played had the action more closely mirrored the project’s opening sequence.—RH

GARY BURTON Live Quantum Leap DL-857 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 28 Gary Burton has been the premier jazz vibraphonist of this past 25 years, and this live set from MIDEM in 1981, while hardly definitive, reveals why. Burton’s double mallet technique is unparalleled, and the many tight shots showing his work does nothing to dispel the magic. This DVD finds Burton with two bands. In the first set, he fronts the Hurry Trio, a French group that rolls through a couple of standards with Burton laying in a glistening cascade through the trio’s energetic accompaniment. Things get more playful when Burton joins the Ahmad Jamal Trio. There’s a bit of danger here as Burton works himself into a false sense of security with some titillating extras. An extensive behind-the-scenes interview segment reveals what the show’s actors think about their respective characters, how they deal with each other, and how shows were created. This is one of the best looks behind the scenes books of any show. It’s a must for all fans.—JN

COUPING: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON BBC Video 1713 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 21 Coupling, a half-hour comedy program focusing on the love lives of six British 30-somethings, is a laugh riot just waiting for a legion of American fans. The hilarious, six-episode first season is presented here, complete with some titillating extras. An extensive behind-the-scenes interview segment reveals what the show’s actors think about their respective characters, how they deal with each other, and how shows were created. This is one of the best looks behind the scenes books of any show. It’s a must for all fans.—JN
Hard Rock Cafe Opens Its Vault Of Treasured Memorabilia

BY ERICA IACONO

After more than 30 years of successful rock ‘n’ roll-themed restaurants, hotels, and casinos, Hard Rock Café International has focused its attention on the memorabilia aspect of the franchise with the opening of the Hard Rock Vault (Billboard, Jan. 11) in Orlando. The Vault, a 17,000-square-foot interactive attraction, is designed to offer an in-depth, behind-the-scenes look at the evolution of music. Through rare memorabilia, guided tours and interactive displays, visitors are given the opportunity to get an inside look at some of rock ‘n’ roll’s most influential artists.

According to Chris Tomasso, VP of marketing for Hard Rock International, the idea for the Vault first arose two years ago at the Hard Rock’s 30th-anniversary celebration in London. “We kept hearing from the public that they would like to find out more about the memorabilia,” he says. “We thought to ourselves, ‘How can we expand on it?’”

One of the first steps was to find a location for the venture and, according to Tomasso, Orlando was an obvious choice. Not only is Hard Rock’s memorabilia warehouse located there, but the city is a massive tourist base, with Disney World and Universal Studio attractions only a few miles away. So while the Vault is primarily geared toward music aficionados, it can still be marketed as a family-friendly destination. “Music fans come in all ages,” Tomasso says. “If you’re a music fan, this is definitely the place to go.”

NOT YOUR AVERAGE ATTRACTION

While the Vault is part of the Orlando tourist scene, Tomasso is quick to point out that it is very different from the typical theme-park experience. Decorated in the same manner as the Hard Rock restaurants and hotels, it is intended to provide a laid-back atmosphere. Plush sofas and funky artwork decorate the lobby, where visitors can stop at a check-in desk to get started on the Hard Rock experience. “We are surrounded by over-themed establishments,” Tomasso says. “This is kind of an escapism.”

From instruments to clothing and autographed mementos, the Vault houses 1,000 pieces of rock ‘n’ roll history, selected from the more than 65,000 pieces that the Hard Rock archives contain. The collection of memorabilia, touted as “the best of the best,” consists of many never-before-seen items. One of the most interesting is a quilt featuring a face card in the image of the late Frank Zappa. The quilt is made completely from the brass and parties that were thrown onstage during Zappa’s 1981 world tour. According to memorabilia acquisition manager Don Bernstine, it is one of the displays that has won the most attention since the Dec. 23, 2002, opening. “People just stare and stare at this thing,” he says. “It’s an amazing piece of art.”

Some of the pieces featured in the Vault are from more current artists. Visitors can find on display the black leather jacket Creed lead singer Scott Stapp wore in the video for “My Sacrifice,” as well as the red vinyl jacket and boots Gwen Stefani wore on No Doubt’s Tragic Kingdom album cover.

TOTAL IMMERSION

Another interesting area of the Vault is the Total Immersion Tour, a five-gallery guided tour highlighting the most important events and artists in music history. The galleries include the Back Alley, which provides a history of garage and punk music; the Dressing Room, which takes a look at the influence that music has had on fashion; Psychidelic Meltdown, which includes memorabilia from such bands as Grateful Dead and the Doors; the Light and the Dark, which pays homage to the British Invasion, namely the Beatles and the Rolling Stones; and the King’s Chamber, which presents an insightful look into the career and impact of Elvis Presley.

According to Bernstine, the Vault’s collection will remain as it is for a while, although any new additions. But that does not keep him from continuing to look for new rock ‘n’ roll treasures: “We’re always in acquisition mode.”

And although Internet and public auctions have become more popular ways to acquire memorabilia—and therefore give more people better opportunities to purchase something for themselves—Bernstine says that it hasn’t created any difficulty for him. For more than a decade he served as director of marketing and promotion for Deep Purple—valuable industry experience that proves helpful when trying to accept orders from musicians. “I think the artists are much more willing to work with me since they know my reputation,” he says. “I’m trying to focus on the artists directly. It’s an untapped market.”

While it may be too soon to predict the success of the Vault, Bernstine is hoping that the first year will be enough of a draw. “There are rock fans all over the world,” he says. “I’m hoping they’ll all be coming here one by one.”

Not Your Average Attraction

Amazon.com Reports Its Second Quarterly Profit

BY MATTHEW BENZ

NEW YORK—Amazon.com has reported a quarterly profit for the second time, helped by a 13% growth in its core North American books, music, and video/DVD (BMVD) division. It also announced that it will offer free shipping on orders of more than $25 on a full-time, year-round basis.

For fourth-quarter 2002, amazon.com posted a net income of $3 million, or 1 cent per share. It had a net profit of $5 million, or 1 cent per share, in the same period the year before.

Total sales for the quarter were $1.43 billion, up 28%. BMVD sales, amazon.com’s largest segment, were $606.1 million, up from $538 million in fourth-quarter 2001.

For all of 2002, amazon.com narrowed its net loss to $149 million, or 39 cents per share, from $567 million, or $1.56 per share, in 2001. BMVD sales were $1.87 billion, up 11% from $1.69 billion in 2001. Total sales rose 26% to $3.93 billion. Amazon.com CFO Tom Szkutak says, “Our continued operational progress and momentum allow us to offer year-round free shipping and at the same time increase our 2003 guidance.” In 2003, Amazon expects sales to rise more than 15%, up from a previous forecast of at least 10%. In first-quarter 2003, it expects sales of $1.03 billion-$1.08 billion, representing growth of 21%-27%.

The 2002 results cap a surprisingly strong year for the Seattle-based Internet retailer. Among the highlights, amazon.com began handling e-commerce activities for Virgin Entertainment Group in North America and Japan (Billboard, July 6, 2002) and took on certain back-end e-commerce functions for CDNow (Billboard, Nov. 23, 2002). Amazon.com also helps manage Web sites for Borders Books & Music and Circuit City (for non-music and movie products).

More notably, despite its continued losses, amazon.com saw its stock rise 75% in 2002. And though the fourth-quarter profit it reported was not as large as some analysts had forecast, the stock inched up further in the days following the results announcement, buoyed by the higher sales forecasts.

For its part, amazon.com said in its results announcement that its fourth-quarter profit “should not be viewed as a material positive event and is not predictive of future trends,” because it would not have been possible without a one-time, one-off gain of $5 million.

It also noted the ill effects on gross margins of its free-shipping offer. For the fourth quarter, shipping costs rose 11% to $151 million, and shipping loss rose 172% to $30 million. Amazon.com said, “We continue to measure our shipping results relative to their effect on our overall financial results, with the viewpoint that shipping promotions are an effective marketing tool.”

Winter Blooming

Universal recording act Gin Blossoms taped an in-studio performance for DMX Music, a provider of music-programming services to business and digital-cable subscribers. DMX Music syndicates audio programming to non-music retailers, restaurants, airlines, and other businesses; it also offers music channels via digital cable to 10 million homes. DMX will feature the Gin Blossoms’ set—which is in support of a newly released DVD, At South of Nowhere—starting Feb. 10. Pictured, from left, are Gin Blossoms’ Scott Johnson, DMX Music associate producer Gina Yates, Gin Blossoms’ Jesse Valenzuela, and DMX Music VP of U.S. broadband Stacey Sampo.
Navarre Sees Sales Increase In 2002

BY MATTHEW BENZ

NEW YORK—Navarre reports sales of $136.9 million for its fiscal 2003 third quarter, which ended Dec. 31, 2002, up 1% from the same period last year.

Navarre Distribution Services (NDS), which handles non-proprietary entertainment products including computer software, videogames, major-label music, and DVDs, saw sales rise 6% to $96 million from $90.4 million in the fiscal third quarter last year.

But Navarre Entertainment Media (NEM), which distributes proprietary products, posted revenue that was compared with $25.7 million for the same period last year.

Quarterly net income for the New Hope, Minn.-based company was $3 million, or 14 cents per share. Navarre had net income one year ago of $3.3 million, or 15 cents per share, including a $1.5 million gain on the repayment of a note by former subsidiary NetRadio (Billboard Bulletin, Oct. 18, 2001). It reported $1.1 million cash at the end of the quarter.

Navarre Sees Sales Increase In 2002

BY BRIAN CARRITY

NEW YORK—Retail sales of videogame hardware, software, and accessories grew 10% in 2002, according to the latest sales figures from market research firm NPD Group. The videogame industry generated $10.3 billion in sales last year, surpassing the previous record sales of $9.4 billion in 2001. Unit sales of videogame software sales were up 15% last year, led by titles including Grand Theft Auto: Vice City, Madden NFL 2003, Super Mario Sunshine, Spider-Man: The Movie, Halo, and Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell.

A pair of Grand Theft Auto titles—Vice City and Grand Theft Auto 3—were among the ten best-selling videogames for the year. GameStop and Best Buy were ranked the two top-selling game retailers for the year.

Sales of videogame hardware systems dipped 4% to $3.5 billion from $3.7 billion in 2001, but the category did post a 10% increase in unit volume. The decline in dollars and increase in unit volumes were attributed to price reductions of all hardware systems. Prices of GameBoy Advance, GameCube, Sony PlayStation 2, and Xbox dropped to almost one-third of their original price in the first half of 2002.

NPD Group senior account executive Richard Ow says, "In 2003, the videogame industry should expect unit-volume growth to outpace dollar-volume growth in the hardware category."

Ow says NPD expects that videogame hardware volume will struggle for continued growth throughout 2003, with the majority of the growth coming from software sales that capitalize on the growing systems sold to date.

He adds, "The full power of the current generation of hardware is still unrealized."

Gaming Sales Rose 10% Last Year

Navarre reported sales of $45 million—an increase of 11.7% compared with the $40.3 million reported in the first nine months of the previous fiscal year.

Navarre president/CEO Eric Paulson said in a statement, "We are extremely pleased with our results in the quarter due to not having a double-platinum release to match last year's volume, our improved roster of artists and labels continues to sustain the overall foundation of our music business."

Quarterly net income for the New Hope, Minn.-based company was $3 million, or 14 cents per share. Navarre had net income one year ago of $3.3 million, or 15 cents per share, including a $1.5 million gain on the repayment of a note by former subsidiary NetRadio (Billboard Bulletin, Oct. 18, 2001). It reported $1.1 million cash at the end of the quarter.
Hearail

TRAFFIC TICKER

Top Music Sites

Traffic In December

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SONICBLUE MULLS SALE: Sonicblue is evaluating its strategic options.

APPEAL IN DVD COPY CASE: Prosecutors in Los Angeles have filed an appeal against the acquittal earlier this month of a local teenager accused of creating and publishing software that enables people to view movie DVDs on the Internet without authorization (Billboard Bulletin, Jan. 8).

The Motion Picture Assn. of America and the DVD Copy Control Assn. (DVDCCA) filed data-theft charges against Jon Johansen in 2000 in Norway, alleging that he had access to a computer that was not licensed with DVDCCA software.

Johansen’s lawyer, Halvor Maanand, says he is not certain whether the appeals court will allow the action. In a statement, Maanand said, “There is a screening principle for criminal cases.”

CIVIL LIBERTIES GAIN: The Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) says that because Norway does not have legislation similar to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act in the U.S., which aimed, in part, at preventing people from viewing DVDs on their own computers on an unauthorized basis—the appeal effort is more.

EFF executive director Shari Scott says, “The lower court ruled unanimously that Johansen did not violate Norwegian law” (see related story, page 6).

WHEREHOUSE: Wherehouse, the largest independent music retailer in the United States, has filed a bankruptcy petition in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware (Billboard Bulletin, Jan. 7).

WHEREHOUSE: On Jan. 7, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware issued a temporary order approving a chapter 11 plan to sell the bulk of its assets.

WHEREHOUSE: To try to sell off the bulk of its assets, the court ordered the company to pay $5 million in cash to a group of creditors.

WHEREHOUSE: With financial adviser Houlihan Lokey Howard & Zukin, the Santa Clara, Calif.-based company—manufacturer of the Rio line of digital-audio players and the Replay TV recorder—is seeking partners to invest or acquire some or all of the company. As of Sept. 30, 2002, Sonicblue’s debt included $145.3 million in convertible debentures and $24 million in other long-term liabilities. Through the first nine months of 2002, the company had a net loss of $72.4 million, or 75 cents per share, on sales of $205.1 million.

WHEREHOUSE: In September, it cut 25% of its staff of 250-300 employees (Billboard Bulletin, Sept. 5, 2002).

MORE CHOICE MUSCI CHOICE: Music Choice, a provider of music programming to cable systems, says its new customer base increased by 1.4 million for the quarter ended Dec. 31, 2002. Music Choice realized a total increase of 4.7 million new customers in 2002, bringing the total of cable and direct-to-TV homes with Music Choice to 25.6 million.

Music Choice president/CEO David DeBeccaro noted, “We are very pleased to report that Music Choice is now in one of every four homes in the United States.”

During the year, Music Choice enhanced its commercial-free music channels with new screens featuring album art, music news, artist facts, music history, news releases, and TV-screen ads. The company also launched a shopping feature for cable systems with interactive TV channels.

MUZE PREVEWS: Muze is offering a preview of Dally Hall & John Oates’ latest release, Do It For Love, in its entirety online at participating retail sites ahead of its Feb. 11 street date.

Full songs for the entire album will be available through Muze’s Muze-Tunes streaming sound-sample service, which is used by such entities as American Radio Network, Value City, kmart.com, and Tower Records.

The offer builds on a September 2002 pact between Muze and RED Distribution that permits Muze to offer clips—and in some cases full songs—of RED-distributed acts ahead of album release.

ARGUING FOR COMPULSORY: A leading civil-liberties lawyer says the recent cross-industry agreement calling for private-sector solutions to the distribution of digital music (Billboard Bulletin, Jan. 15) underscores the need for compulsory licenses.

WHEREHOUSE: In cases where full songs are involved—drafted by the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) and two trade groups—gives the “appearance of industry self-regulation and consensus,” says Fred von Lohmann, senior intellectual-property attorney of the EFF. However, it “doesn’t change the reality that there are 40 million file sharers who aren’t going away.”

WHEREHOUSE: von Lohmann compares the furore over file sharing to the advent of cable TV and the subsequent outcry from the networks. “The cable industry was the Napster of the ‘70s,” he says, adding that the establishment of a compulsory license allowed the networks to continue getting paid and helped cable to flourish.

WHEREHOUSE: The RIAA says setting up compulsory licensing for the distribution of music online means substituting government regulation for the marketplace.

A spokesperson says, “We can’t think of anything worse than music on the Internet. The RIAA questions why labels would continue to invest in artists and finance albums only to have the government mandate ‘some artificially low price.’

Loudeye Seeks Reverse Stock Split

Special Shareholders Meeting Will Be Held March 11

BY MATTHEW BENZ

Loudeye said it will seek approval at a special stockholder meeting March 11 for a reverse stock split at a ratio of 1 for 20.

The Seattle-based digital-media services firm aims to raise its stock price above the minimum bid price of $1 per share that the Nasdaq SmallCap Market requires to maintain a listing. It has about 46.4 million shares outstanding.

Loudeye stock has traded for less than $1 since Feb. 25, 2002. It shifted last summer to the SmallCap Market from the Nasdaq National Market to try to regain compliance with the minimum-price rule.

Late last year, the company signed an agreement with online music company Amazon.com. It also recently renewed its music-samples services agreements with MSN Entertainment and windowsmedia.com.

The company has license agreements with all the major labels and hundreds of indie labels and claims a catalog of more than 3 million music samples from more than 250,000 CDs.
Hearing Bollywood’s Calling, Eros Finds A U.S. Market For Indian Films

BY CATHERINE CELLA

While Eros’ Web-site business is growing, sales are still largely through Indian retail stores. But Ahuja feels that going mainstream is the next logical step. To that end, Eros is stepping into a new era of crossover films, designed to appeal to Indians abroad, with such titles as American Desi and Bollywood Calling. These films are generally less music-driven and have storylines involving Indians living outside of India.

Ahuja notes, “Industry giants have begun to realize what Bollywood has to offer.”

One such “industry giant” is Tower. “We’re actually looking at a smaller, Indian distributor to expand in that area,” Tower VP John Thrasher says. “There are some great films coming out of India.”

Citing the Indian population as huge film buffs, Thrasher also notes that many of Tower’s flagship stores are located in key metropolitan cities. “There’s an ethnic mix there,” he continues. “People have come to our stores for a long time looking for eclectic fare...and we’re happy to provide it.”

POPULAR CHOICES

One such film will be The Mystic Masseur (Columbia Tristar, Feb. 25), directed by Merchant, best-known for producing Merchant-Ivory films. Based on a book by Nobel Laureate V.S. Naipaul, the film is set in India, where Indians have lived for centuries. Merchant—who’s new book, My Passage From India, details his career from Bombay to Hollywood—says, “I knew the lives of people that nobody offers these days, and it’s unreported, because you want to relish that slice to the utmost.”

Merchant also sees the popularity of Indian films growing, especially on DVD. “The audience is comprised primarily of second- and third-generation Indians who live abroad,” he says. “And they’re watching with their friends, too, who then acquire a taste for Indian film. So it’s increasing and will keep on increasing, especially as DVDs become more accessible.”

Before popular titles Monsoon Wedding and even Mississippi Masala was director Nair’s 1988 feature-film debut. Salaam Bombay! Available on a special-edition DVD from Artisan, the film (which was in Hindi) was nominated for an Academy Award and won dozens of international awards, including two at the Cannes Film Festival. The film tells the story of an Indian boy among many homeless children in the streets of Bombay. Its DVD includes six featurettes and commentaries from both the director and cinematographer. Nair’s illuminating contributions should interest any film lover.

“I enjoy doing commentary, and it’s rare to have films which come out right,” she says. “That film was brutally hard to make, but when I finished it, it was like a blessing. It really lasts. So I was happy to revisit it.

“In fact, it’s been a big passion of mine to resurrect this film, because it’s become classic and yet not easily available. That’s why we really worked on this DVD.”

Most impressive to Nair is the 45-minute documentary her assistant directed about where the children are now. All were actual street kids at the time of filming, a legacy of her documentary background.

“Before Salaam Bombay! I made seven cinéma vérité documentaries,” Nair recalls. “While making India Cabaret, [which is] about strippers in Bombay, I met gangs and gangs of street kids. I knew I wanted to work with real kids, because the map of life on their faces is impossible to duplicate with child actors. (To assist street kids, Nair established the Salaam Bombay Trust, which now has 17 centers that have helped 5,000 children.)

“As a filmmaker, I hope DVD will not become as popular as VHS, if only to ensure that people will see films in the way that they were made,” says Nair, who particularly appreciates Criterion Collection DVDs. “You are at the mercy of so many more variables with VHS.”

Thrasher agrees and sees Indian films on DVD as a great opportunity. “MiraMax and Columbia-Tristar have certainly had a lot of good [Indian] films,” he notes. “And then we’ve just had a lot of immigration from India. Plus, this world is getting smaller, and people want to see what other cultures are like. I have a sense that world cinema is much more present than ever.”

In other Palm’s news, the company has collaborated with film directors Spike Jonze, Michel Gondry, and Chris Cunningham for its new DVD line, the Directors’ Series. Each DVD will feature a director’s non-film work, including music videos, shorts, and commercials; new interviews; and unreleased footage from the director’s film projects. The series will debut in August with discs from the three directors, and Palm is in talks with other directors to contribute to the series. Price points are not yet available.

MAGAZINE GOES DIGITAL: Music Video Distributors has signed a deal with Yellow Tape Film & Video Productions to release a quarterly magazine on DVD featuring live interviews, performance footage, and music videos of Indian artists. The first issue of Yellow Tape ($16.95) is scheduled Jan. 28. It runs for 90 minutes and includes an interview with Suge Knight, a feature on the Adult Video News Awards in Las Vegas, and a piece on Miami as a center of African-American entertainment.

Yellow Tape founder and CEO Romel Mason says retailers have already expressed interest. Tower is stocking the first issue on endcaps across the country and will display Yellow Tape posters. BET and MTV will also air Yellow Tape commercials, which will include a direct-response telephone number. Additionally, Yellow Tape is currently planning a nationwide tour to film new material.

WARNER NEWS: Warner Home Video (WHV) has promoted both Marsha King and Ronald J. Sanders to the post of executive VP/GM. King will retain her responsibilities as executive VP of new business development, business affairs, and administration. Sanders previously served as senior VP/corporate-marketing director of Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Both will report to WHV president James Cardwell.
Sound On Sound Opens New Room
Preproduction/Overdub Suite Studio D Features A Digidesign Pro Tools HD 3 System

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH
NEW YORK—In yet another manifestation of the integral nature of the digital audio workstation (DAW) to professional audio recording, Sound on Sound Recording, a multi-room commercial facility, has opened Studio D, a preproduction/overdub suite featuring a Digidesign Pro Tools HD 3 system.

Designed by Larry Swist of Lawrence F. Swist Designs, Studio D, along with several other recently or soon-to-be completed rooms at Sound on Sound, represents a sizable expansion to the midtown Manhattan facility. Along with Studio D, Sound on Sound’s expansion includes a new reception area, technical department, kitchen, lounge, and offices, as well as additional preproduction rooms.

Of the significant expansion—undertaken in the midst of a recession and considerable anxiety in the music industry—Sound on Sound president David Amlen explains, “There are two key factors to this decision. The first is we’re responding to what our clients have asked us for. They said they don’t want to have to leave here to go to other places, for stuff they don’t need. They don’t need everything that the big mix rooms have: they need a Sound on Sound-quality place but at a lesser facility’s price point. We’re giving them that.

“The second thing is—and I’ve always done this—I’ve always put my money where my mouth is and expanded the place when things have been a little crazy. The best time to buy is when prices are low.”

Studio D was constructed within an isolated acoustic shell in its fourth floor location and features the same acoustic treatment and attention to detail as Sound on Sound’s other studios. The Pro Tools HD 3 system includes a 24-fader ProControl surface with EditPack multichannel mixing option. In addition to its 5.1 capability, the suite also features video decks in multiple formats and a 42-inch plasma screen. Clients, Amlen says, “use it as an overdubbing space, preproduction room, and maybe for tracking, if it’s keyboards and vocals.”

Long a rental option and the core of personal and home studios, commercial facilities are increasingly adding dedicated Pro Tools suites as the platform becomes the de facto standard in the DAW realm. Rare is the recording project that does not employ Pro Tools at some stage. Amlen says, “Almost every project we’ve done in the last couple years has involved Pro Tools at one point or another. Even the latest project we did for Concord Records, a jazz project, was recorded to Pro Tools. They did that because they have their own studio in Los Angeles, which is a Pro Tools-based studio. So they recorded to Pro Tools in a nice room with nice preamps, nice microphones, and now they can take it back to their place and mix in Pro Tools.”

In addition to the above, another new Pro Tools suite, adjacent to Studio D, is online and occupied by producer/engineer Jan Folkson, in partnership with Sound on Sound. Of the soundcheck and set up, and when they hit the stage, it’s entirely different— for whatever reason, the balance is absolutely turned inside out! Every time they do it, it is unrepeatable.”

Like Cherney, Remote Recording Services has been tapped to handle recording duties for several Rolling Stones tours, so despite the inherent tension accompanying a live broadcast of this magnitude and the band’s well-documented unpredictability, all is calm in the Silver Studio.

“I got a chance to record last night,” Cherney explains, “and it basically came out great. I was able to get pretty good balance, and we paid attention to getting levels to tape. Today, I have an opportunity to really tweak the mix from the playback of last night. All our levels are set to tape and we’ll have it for post if we need it, and hopefully the balance is going to hold up and it’s going to sound great. We’re going for that big, raw Rolling Stones sound.”

With 33 inputs from the main stage and an additional 27 signals coming from a stripped-down but ample B stage in the middle of the MSG floor, the Rolling Stones’ multifaceted performance has to travel some 800 feet to the Neve console and supplemental sidecar in the remote truck. “All of the microphones come to a central split location that’s under the stage,” Remote Recording tech manager Phil Gitomer says. “They all go through our splitters, and a direct feed goes right back to the PA system and is distributed to the house and monitors.

“The isolated side of our splitter then feeds a couple of racks that we have of Millennia and API preamps, which are essentially line drivers, driving the snakes’ signal down here,” Gitomer continues. “It’s about 800 feet—that’s a long way for a microphone to go all by itself.”

In addition to sending all audio to multiple Studer D827 digital multitrack recorders in the truck, the Remote Recording crew was charged with sending a stereo mix to the video truck for broadcast. Where 18 audience microphones were added to the stereo music mix, for monitoring purposes, Remote Recording’s video counterpart sent back a music-and-audience mix and a synchronized video signal.

“It’s quite a luxury, actually,” Cherney says. “Somebody was thinking ahead. Of course, with the Rolling Stones, it changes. You can do the soundcheck and set it up, and when they hit the stage, it’s entirely different—for whatever reason, the balance is absolutely turned inside out! Every time they do it, it is unrepeatable.”

On the Garden floor, the Rolling Stones’ longtime front-of-house engineer, Robbie McGrath, mixes the concert on a pair of Midas consoles some 20,000 attendees capable in whole-hearted approval. When the band takes to the B stage for their classic raveups from its immense catalog, McGrath makes a seamless exchange, to an adjacent console feeding loudspeaker clusters flown over the tiny stage, as the crowd presses hard against the barriers protecting his minute slice of MSG real estate. Moments later, he is back on the main console for the encore as another 2½ hour show concludes.

“Everybody got very good marks on this,” Remote Recording owner David Hewitt says after the show. “Usually, in these live situations, somebody’s always complaining about compression, or ‘They sent two left channels; ‘Couldn’t hear the vocals,’ any number of things. But this one got off pretty well unscathed.”
K-Rock, Hip-Hop Making Noise In South Korea

BY MARK RUSSELL

SEOUL—In recent years, South Korea has become a surprisingly strong cultural force in Asia. It has the strongest domestic film industry in Asia, and, increasingly, its movies are performing well throughout the continent. South Korea's television dramas are also getting picked up around Asia, from Japan to Uzbekistan. And, music, too, is getting in on the regional act.

Thus far, South Korea's biggest musical successes abroad have mirrored its biggest at home: K-Pop, the peninsula's particular concoction of pretty-girl and pretty-boy dance bands and balladeers. Within South Korea, however, K-Pop has fallen on hard times. Internet file-sharing, high-profile scandals and oversaturation have combined to cut sales.

But, in the wake of those problems, K-Rock and hip-hop are beginning to rise and fill the void and, in the process, beginning to make noise overseas, too.

Taiwan Looks To A&R Efforts For Market Turnaround

BY TIM CULPAN

TAIPEI—Flipping through the TV channels in Taiwan during the first few minutes of the New Year, a viewer could see the same ad at almost every turn.

Warner Music Taiwan's bulk purchase of prime TV commercial slots for the latest album from Sun Yanzi showed the label's commitment to propelling one of its leading acts to top-of-the-mind awareness among music-buyers here. The 60-second commercials appeared right after the New Year countdown on Taiwan's five terrestrial stations, ensuring that at least 80% of the audience saw— and heard— the latest catchy tune from the 25-year-old Singaporean.

The TV ads coincided with 10-second radio spots purchased in the same key time slot. Revellers celebrating the New Year at karaoke parlors also could not escape Yanzi's

Sponsorships And Media Drive Artist Growth In Hong Kong Market

BY CLARENCE TSUI

HONG KONG—Among those familiar with the recent history of pop music in this gateway market—an era dominated by flashy idols singing karaoke-friendly ballads—no one would have expected what the past year brought. The most talked-about acts of 2002 were indeed a curious combination: a pair of fun-loving but squeaky-clean girls, a hunky Taiwanese foursome and a 34-year-old ex-heartthrob who hasn't released a new album in five years.

What surprised most observers about the pop duo Twins (EEG) is the relentless drive they made towards pop stardom. Charlene Choi and Gillian Chung released their debut EP in August 2001, but three of their subsequent releases ranked among the top 10 best-selling records at the 2002 IFPI Hong Kong top sales music awards. Their album Our Souvenir Book was crowned the best-selling Cantones record of the year. They were also named the "most loved group in 2002" by Commercial Radio, the biggest radio station in Hong Kong.

When not working the media to promote its records, the duo gained exposure via sponsorship deals, endorsing products from Coca-Cola to properties in mainland China. But why were Twins able to cover so much ground in such a short time? It came down to complete control, according to Lisa Kan, senior GM at EEG.
Singapore's Acts Go For Regional Impact

BY PHILIP CHEAH

SINGAPORE—Amid the music-retail gloom of 2002, a debut album by Singapore artist A-Do has made a remarkable impact in the world of Chinese-language pop. The disc, Getting Dark, has sold some 700,000 copies in China, Taiwan, Malaysia and Singapore.

The album was released first in Taiwan in April 2001, where it generated a press blitz. A-Do, a former construction foreman, was discovered in 1999 at a singing workshop. A-Do is signed to Yellow Records, a new label set up by Ocean Butterflies Production.

"It's been a long while since we last heard a really touching, sincere album with words and music talking about the real feelings of men," says Billy Koh, executive producer of Ocean Butterflies. "Radio has been flooded by too much junk, with only teenage-ids and R&B in the last three-to-five years in Chinese pop. People are really sick of the canned-food copycat music."

Since Ocean Butterflies set up offices in Taiwan and Malaysia, it could orchestrate its marketing plan across Asia, in Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and China. A-Do's first regional Asian concert tour will take place later this year.

Similar to A-Do, singer-songwriter Stefanie Sun also broke first in Taiwan when she was signed by Warner Taiwan, and that territory remains her strongest market.

Her second album, My Desired Happiness, initially released in December 2000, has sold 380,000 units in Taiwan and some 40,000 units in Singapore alone. Her third album, Kite, released in July 2001, has sold more than 30,000 copies to date. Sun is now Singapore's biggest pop export to China; each of her albums has sold more than 350,000 units in the market, according to her label. To sell her image on the mainland, Sun is featured in one music video singing on China's Great Wall.

"To break a local talent, it was strategically important to sign to a big market like Taiwan," says Kathleen Tan, MD of Warner Singapore. "We positioned her as a regional Chinese act. Sun is just what the market needs after the Chinese pop market collapsed in 1998. She appeals across age and gender, and she is a rare Chinese pop act whose back catalog consists solely of Malay-language genre. Singapore artist Ferhad had to break in Malaysia first, where the singer is signed to Malaysia's Positive Tone label, distributed by EMI. Ferhad's self-titled album has sold more than 10,000 units in Malaysia. Positive Tone's managers, Darren Choy and Ahmad Izhah Omar, booked Ferhad into concert appearances across Malaysia. He also appeared on all the awards shows, even winning a best newcomer award on Anugerah Era 2001, a major industry award. He also had a major hit single, with "Higher Deeper," and the video was promoted heavily on Channel V and MTV Asia, giving him recognition across South East Asia. To raise Ferhad's regional profile further on his next album, Positive Tone plans to record a duet with one of the Philippines' best new acts, Kyla.

"Given that the Singapore market is so small and restricted, most artists will naturally start thinking beyond the local market if they want to be big," says Valerie Lim, MD of EMI Singapore. "In fact, I believe the gateway is up north in Taiwan or China."

Ocean Butterflies' Billy Koh sees the trend in technological terms: "With the rise of mobile phone and internet-based programs, Chinese pop has become a 'world Chinese' market," he says. "Anyone from anywhere, as long as you are really good, you will be well-received anywhere."

The market is bigger and so is the competition. The success of A-Do and Stefanie Sun is not just the effort of the artists themselves. The whole Xin-yao movement [Chinese indie pop] in the early '80s was actually the seed of today's fruit. If you ask me for the 'secret magical formula,' I think, first of all, one must be true to the music, to be able to be touched by the music."
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Favourite Male Artist Winner - Robbie Williams
Favourite Pop Act Winner - Blue
Favourite Video Winner - Linkin Park (Pts of Authority - remix)
Inspiration Award Winner - F4
Best Asian Film Award Winner - Devdas (Director Sanjay Leela Bhansali)
Favourite Artist Hong Kong Winner - Sammi Cheng
Favourite Artist Indonesia Winner - Cokelat
Favourite Artist Malaysia Winner - Siti Nurhaliza
Favourite Artist Singapore Winner - Stefanie Sun
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Asia is shifting. If the standing reliance on pre-packaged lying problem has been Asia’s long— and making their acts low chart— topper Jayic downturn.

Another act that guaranteed massive media coverage in Hong Kong is the Taiwanese boy-band F4 (Sonic). Evolving from a successful Taiwanese TV series, Meteor Garden, the quartet emerged as one of the most successful pop acts of the year. The group’s debut album, Meteor Rain, was one of the 10 best-selling Mandarin albums in Hong Kong, and F4 also achieved impressive sales for its second album, Fantasy 4ever.

Apart from groups looks, F4’s continued appeal lies in a clever marketing strategy that focused on the individual band members as much as the group itself. Sony was not averse to “breaking up” the band temporarily with “solo” records: a stop- gap measure to sustain interest between F4 albums. “We instilled a lot of flexibility in F4’s arrangement so that any one of them could attend promotional activities by themselves—that guaranteed maximum exposure,” says Ariel Fung, MD of Sony Music Hong Kong.

Sony was also adroit in recognizing the potential of the emerging markets that lie beyond Taiwan; the group might be initiated from Taiwan, but, in terms of making some noise, Hong Kong is the best place to do so,” says Fung.

The real surprise package of 2002, however, was a pretty-face towards both the mainland and Taiwan; the group might be initiated from Taiwan, but, in terms of making some noise, Hong Kong is the best place to do so,” says Fung.

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Combustion’s Engine Drives More Than Typical Nashville Fare

BY JIM BESSMAN

On the surface, Combustion Music appears to be the typical Nashville music-publishing company.

“We have a house on Music Row with writers’ rooms, and they come in and write every day,” says Chris Farren, co-president of the company with Vector Management president Ken Levitan. “But our cuts have been so diverse, and our activities are very unlike the typical Nashville publisher.” Indeed, Combustion Music, which also includes a production company and soundtrack label, is the atypical partnership of Farren—songwriter/producer who brought 20 years of experience living and working in Los Angeles to Nashville—and Levitan, a Nashville music-business veteran who manages the likes of Lyle Lovett and John Hiatt.

According to Levitan, the company’s 2-year-old publishing side has scored more than 70 cuts, including India.Arie’s “Good Man” from the Combustion/Sony We Were Soldiers soundtrack album. Co-written by Combustion’s Drew Ramsey, the song was nominated for a Grammy Award in the Best R&B Song category.

“So the main thing we’ve tried to do at Combustion is not be boxed in any matter or limited to any one format,” Levitan notes. “Our cuts range from Aaron Lines to Blake Shelton, Johnny Cash, and Martina McBride on the country side to Dave Matthews, Michael McDonald, India.Arie, and Richie Sambora. We’re also developing new songwriter/artists that the press is jumping all over, like Nathan and Caleb Pollowall of Kings of Leon, which both Rolling Stone and NME have picked as one of the top new alternative bands of 2003.”

Levitan also singles out new signings Simon Bruce—an unbelievable rock alternative songwriter from Australia—Canadian writer/artist/producers Gordie Sampson, and singer/songwriter Andy Gulla- horn, who has penned songs for his artist wife, Jill Phillips.

Combustion’s other writers include Blair Daly, who has written for Lynyrd Skynyrd; Ashley Gorley, who has co-written with Lunes and Kellie Coffey; and Houston Roberts, who wrote “Smoke Rings in the Dark” for Gary Allan.

“We’ve signed 11 writers, but only four are pure country songwriters, and the other seven are in between country, rock, and R&B—we’re diversifying,” Farren continues. “People look at us and scratch their heads, wondering how these guys get cuts by Dave Matthews and India.Arie, but it’s fed the ability of all these Nashviile-based songwriters and give them the opportunity for broader exposure.”

Farren and Levitan joined forces when Farren produced the Warren Brothers, a former Vector Management client.

“When we started the publishing side of Combustion, it was a joint venture with Windswept Publishing, as I’d been a writer there for 12 years,” Farren says. “But we’ve since stepped up to a stand-alone, self-contained publishing company, administered by Windswept.”

Levin’s Journal

Arriving at Combustion Music building, located next-door to Vector. He says, “We have a full state-of-the-art digital studio, and there’s access to both my production clients and Ken’s management clients, and through those connections there’s a big musical stew of our writers, his acts, my acts, and the soundtracks—and they all feed into each other in a very synergistic and positive way.

“But we both feel that it’s clearly a Nashville company,” he adds, “and we want to be part of the community but without being limited by one kind of music.”

HUTCHINSON’S PERFORMANCE:

“When you do something for the love of it and see the changes you have to go through and then look back and have it actually become a business while you’re still holding on to the passion of it...,” says Performing Songwriter founder and publisher/editor Lydia Hutchinson, trilling off but conveying justifiable pride in the 10th-anniversary issue of her Nashville-based magazine.

“It has its own identity,” Hutchinson hastily adds. “It’s not tied into me as it used to be—where I used to know every single person who read it. It’s taken on its own life.”

Farren works out of the Combustion Music building, located next-door to Vector. He says, “We have a full state-of-the-art digital studio, and there’s access to both my production clients and Ken’s management clients, and through those connections there’s a big musical stew of our writers, his acts, my acts, and the soundtracks—and they all feed into each other in a very synergistic and positive way.

“We both feel that it’s clearly a Nashville company,” he adds, “and we want to be part of the community but without being limited by one kind of music.”

Performing Songwriter has indeed come a long way since its conception in Hutchinson’s guest bedroom. She now operates it out of an office with a staff of 15. “It was so much from the heart, because I wanted to find out about artists I loved that weren’t on major labels,” says Hutchinson, who brought her journalism, advertising, and graphic-design background to her new endeavor. “I just wanted something to read, and someone said ‘You can’t start a magazine— which just meant I had to.’”

She says the magazine now has a circulation of 35,000, and she is planning a big circulation/distribution push coinciding with special 10th-anniversary observances. There are also plans for it to grow from eight issues annually to a monthly.

“Everything will have ‘Yip’ on it,” adds Farren, noting that a book of his father’s lyrics is forthcoming, along with a documentary film. “We’re talking ‘Yip’ all the time!”

And if that’s not enough, the foundation itself has moved to a new theater building at 100th Street and 1st Avenue in Manhattan, “about four blocks from where Yip was raised—and a block from both the Yip Harburg room at the Tompkins Square Library and the Yip Harburg Auditorium at Public School 19. It’s a very Yip Harburg neighborhood.”

There’s no change, though, in Harburg’s Gibb’s Gorilla Music publishing company—named, of course, after his “How Are Things in Glocca Morra?” hit from the 1947 Broadway musical Finian’s Rainbow (music by Burton Lane).
Tower Pulls Out Of U.K.; HMV Quits Germany
Sale Of Tower's Mexico Stores Also Announced In Tough Week For Retailers

BY STEVE MOORE

TOKYO—The Recording Industry Assn. of Japan (RIAJ) and the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers (JASRAC) want to make their mark on music.

The two Japanese trade groups say recent tests they conducted show that electronic watermarking technology can be used effectively in copyright management. They claim this is the first time that a labels’ group and an authors’ body have cooperated in such an experiment.

Watermarking technology from four different companies was used in the tests. In one, watermarks were embedded in standard CD audio files, which were then converted into MP3 files and uploaded to the Internet to simulate “an environment of illegal use.” The files were then successfully tracked using JASRAC’s J-MUSE song-tracking system.

Another test, jointly conducted with radio stations Tokyo FM and Osaka FM, established that watermarks used to track songs broadcast via radio. The radio test used Verance Corp.’s ConFiMedia system for both watermarking and monitoring technologies.

In a statement, the two groups said, “We proved that watermarking technology makes it possible for us to grasp what is being used by whom in broadcasting, in an electronic, automatic manner.”

The RIAJ and JASRAC have been working together to investigate the practicality of watermarking technology since the end of 2001, when they created the Audio Watermarking Technology Investigation Team.

It remains unclear when or if the Japanese music industry will begin using watermarking on a day-to-day basis, but according to the RIAJ/JASRAC statement, “both our organizations will continue to do our best to popularize electronic watermarking technology.”

On Jan. 16, the HMV Europe division reported like-for-like sales growth of 6% for the month ending Oct. 26, 2002, compared with the same period in 2001.

Simon Wright, London-based CEO of Virgin Retail Group parent Virgin Entertainment Group, says he is sympathetic to Pryde’s position. “We went to Germany several years ago and subsequently pulled out,” he recalls. “The German music market is particularly bad at present, but it’s also a very difficult market to get into.”

But, Wright adds, “from a music retailer’s point of view, the significant news is Tower’s withdrawal from the U.K. If you couple that with the other closure news that’s been coming from the U.K., it shows that it’s really tough going out there.”

INTERNATIONAL CHANGES
Tower’s announcement of its departure from its two U.K. sites has been expected since it announced in August 2002 that it was shuttering six of its 10 stores in the U.K. and Ireland (Billboard, Aug. 17, 2002), leaving only the chain’s two London stores (one in Kensington, plus its flagship Piccadilly Circus outlet) and two in Dublin.

Tower first entered the U.K. market in August 1985. MTS has been divesting its international operations in recent months, selling its Tower chain in Japan through a management buy-out last October (Billboard Bulletin, Oct. 14, 2002). Shortly after announcing the London move, it confirmed the sale of its four-store Mexican operation to local music chain Mixup, which will license the Tower brand there.

The Tower Records outlets in Mexico are all located in Mexico City. They opened as part of a joint-venture agreement between Tower Records and local businessman David West in 1989. According to Mixup, which operates 42 stores in Mexico, West will no longer be actively involved in running the Tower stores; operations of both Tower and Mixup will be supervised by Mixup founder and head Isaac Massey. "Mixup and Tower will be totally separate," Massey says. "We’ll respect Tower, and it will continue to be Tower.”

Tower currently also has stores in Colombia, Argentina, and Ecuador, which have been operated by local licensees since their inception. In light of that, the Mexico move made sense, according to Tower director of marketing for international licensing Mike Jansta. “We want Tower to be successful, but this limits our risk in those markets,” Jansta says.

Tower Records U.K. CEO Andy Lown will leave the company when the stores are handed over. He tells Billboard, “I’ve been professionally involved in the planning and implementation of this process for 18 months, and while I’ll be sad to see the discontinuation of the Tower stores in the U.K. after more than 17 years, I’m still proud of them.”

Lown says huge rent increases were key to Tower’s U.K. problems. “Piccadilly was our flagship store,” he says, “but it was very difficult going out there. It suffered a rent increase of over 50% about six months ago, which has been a massive crush for customers and the business.”

Lown adds that the increased strength and price-cutting strategies of supermarket chains also contributed to the situation.

STAFF REACTION
Lown says the reaction of Tower’s 186 U.K. staff is defined as “positive, professional, and very heart-warming. But it’s nothing less than I’d expected. We’re committed to working with the vendors, continuing to serve our customers during the wind-down, and then working with Virgin Retail Group on the future.”

The final deal with Virgin is close to completion, Wright notes. “We have agreed on some terms and are in exclusive negotiations on the remainder,” he says. “It’s not a done deal just yet.”

He declines to comment further. Both Irish stores are profitable and will continue to trade, Lown says. “We’re still looking for a strategic partner or franchisee there. Our U.K. based international franchise group is confident that a licensing deal will be completed by mid-year. After the Virgin handover, our Irish stores will report to our U.S. company, and it’s the same for the online operation [tower-records.co.uk], which will become the main focus of the brand in Britain. U.K. fulfillment will continue to be through [distributor] Entertainment U.K.”

Lown joined Tower almost 17 years ago as a sales assistant in the Kensington store. As to his future plans, he says: “I agreed 18 months ago that I would stay on to manage what has been a lengthy transition to its conclusion. Once all the agreements have been finalized and the handover takes place, I’ll be able to take a much-needed break and pursue some other options that I’ve been thinking about. I have a very strong idea about what I’ll do next.”

Additional reporting by Leila Cobo in Miami.
BANGING BEATS: Bhanga, the folk band from Punjab in North India, has spawned an unlikely European pop hit, with the success of Panjabi MC’s “Mundian to Bach Ke” (Beware of the Boys). The infectious dance anthem links a traditional Indian vocal recording in Punjab to Bhanga's

LION’S SHARE: Flemming “Bamse” Jorgensen (“bombe”) is Danish for “teddy bear” and his name is also used by late South African songwriter Solomon Linda when he had a hit in 1975 with “Vimwevje.” He wrote Danish lyrics to “The Lion Sleeps Tonight,” which has been recorded by acts as diverse as the Tokens, Pete Seeger & the Weavers (who called it “Wimoweh”), and Glen Campbell. What he did not know was that the song had been written by Linda, who recorded it in South Africa as “Mibibe.” When Jorgensen recently learned that Linda had received very little payment for the many covers of his hit song, he decided to re-record it with his band, Bamses Venner, and give all the royalties to Linda’s two daughters in Soveto, Johannesburg. The single will be released March 3 in ReArt; an album featuring the track will follow two weeks later. ReArt owner and managing director Jens Ove Fris says the label is considering an English-language version for release alongside the Danish version.

GERMANY FON

HUMAN POP: Belgian band Das Pop delivered one of the country’s most remarkable albums in 2000, I Love (PIAS). Now the group—consisting of Nick Meul, Bent Van Looy, Reinhard Van Bergen, and Lieve Moors—is set to release the follow-up, The Human Thing. Due for release Feb. 14 in Belgium, the album is preceded by the single “You,” which is already achieving airplay on alternative and mainstream stations. The Human Thing is Das Pop’s first release on its own label, Francorchamps Records, and it has been promoted in Belgium and EMI. The group is negotiating individual licensing agreements in other territories. The album comes with four different covers, each depicting different members of the band. The first album was a concept idea about pop music,” Van Looy says. “This new album is more organic and varied, with a more natural feel throughout the tracks.”

MARCA MAES

COMMON CURRENCY

A weekly scorecard of albums simultaneously attaining top 10 chart status in three or more leading world markets.

Reportage source: B, BMG, E, EMG, I, Independent, S, Sony, U, Universal, WH Warner

ARTIST

CHRISTINA AGUILERA

THE NETHERLANDS

SINGLES

1. LOST YOURSELF (U)
2. LOST YOURSELF
3. LOST YOURSELF
4. LOST YOURSELF
5. LOST YOURSELF
6. LOST YOURSELF
7. LOST YOURSELF
8. LOST YOURSELF
9. LOST YOURSELF
10. LOST YOURSELF

ALBUMS

1. LOST YOURSELF
2. LOST YOURSELF
3. LOST YOURSELF
4. LOST YOURSELF
5. LOST YOURSELF
6. LOST YOURSELF
7. LOST YOURSELF
8. LOST YOURSELF
9. LOST YOURSELF
10. LOST YOURSELF

EDITED BY NIGEL WILLIAMSON

GLOBAL MUSIC PULSE
Canada's Be Good Tanyas Emerge From 'Chinatown' To Worldwide Success

BY LARRY LEBLANC
TORONTO—While the Be Good Tanyas were recording their sophomore album, Chinatown, representatives of their label, Nettwerk Productions, deliberately stayed clear of the sessions.

"There was no pressure from Nettwerk," says band member Andrew Parton, "as long as we stayed true to what we do." The band, which recorded Chinatown in Vancouver, released it for online sale in Canada November 2000 and distributed nationally by Festival Distribution (Billboard, July 21, 2001).

After the act signed with Nettwerk, the label released the album in Canada and the U.S. in 2001, followed by the U.K. and Australia in 2002.

Be Good Tanyas online music service provider OD2 is to follow up a pilot program that took place last October in the U.K., by organizing Digital Download Day Europe. Supported by the IFPI, the event aims to promote awareness of legal music services. People registered by OD2 will receive a £5 voucher worth 5 euros ($5.42) to download or stream music from 16 retail Web sites. Once registered, they can choose from more than 150,000 tracks for an additional fee. Speaking at the MIDEM trade fair in Cannes, France, OD2 CEO Charles Grimsdale said the campaign aims to prove to consumers that virus-free, high-quality legitimate services are a better value than illegal peer-to-peer operations.

The second Arion Greek Music Awards are set for April 15 and will once again be held at the Fever nightclub in central Athens. The event, which last year attracted more than 4,700 viewers in Greece, as well as satellite viewers in the U.S. and Australia, will be broadcast live by commercial channel Mega TV. Music-industry and media professionals, as well as 2002 Arion Award-holders, will determine the winners.

The 30-category awards are organized by the local affiliate of the International Federation of Phonographic Industry (IFPI) and Mega TV.

SNEP director general Herve Blof, and Zuco 103. An independent voting academy of 500 members decides the winners. The 30-category awards are presented by its regular backup of bassist Maria Paravantes, singer Galvan, and FRAIC.

Canadian booking agency Booker Live has signed a deal with The Arion Greek Music Awards, will be broadcast live by commercial channel Mega TV. Music-industry and media professionals, as well as 2002 Arion Award-holders, will determine the winners.

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The 30-category awards are organized by the local affiliate of the International Federation of Phonographic Industry (IFPI) and Mega TV.
Australian Market Fell Back In 2002

BY STEVEN PATRICK

SYDNEY—After posting a 10% rise in unit shipments for 2001, annual figures from the Australian Recording Industry Assn. (ARIA) showed a 4.4% fall in volume and a 5.9% decline in value for 2002.

Suppliers shipped 61 million units, including music video, compared with 63 million units in 2001. Value was down to $609.5 million Australian ($333.5 million) from $476.7 million Australian ($273.5 million) during the same period. Total singles shipments fell from 12.4 million units in 2001 to 11.35 million in 2002; albums fell from 49.6 million to 47 million units.

One growing concern is that market share of local repertoire shrunk from 17.2% to 15.6%. Only five local acts—Kyle Minogue (Festival Mushroom Records [FMRI]), Kasey Chambers (EMI), George (FNR), Silverchair (Eleven/EMI), and John Farnham (EMI)—were big sellers during the year, according to ARIA. Those five represented 26% of the total volume of the 20 biggest-selling albums of the year.

ARIA is considering introducing new events to increase the profile of Australian acts among consumers and the media. Last year, initiatives including a new award for chart-topping acts and showcasing debut acts before radio and television programmers proved successful.

Piracy has had an impact on the figures. ARIA chief executive Stephen Peach says, “Piracy is about 9% of the just 3%,” he says, “compared to the U.S., where it is between 10% and 12%. Inevitably, we expect the take-up in Australia to accelerate and create a problem as major as it is in America.”

Among the brighter points for suppliers and retailers in the ARIA figures is the accelerating growth of music DVDs, with shipments of 2.3 million units, worth $36.9 million Australian ($21.4 million), up from 955,000 units, worth $18.9 million Australian ($10.9 million), compared with the year before.

That is good news for independent retailers, which have been losing CD sales to heavy price discounting by mass merchants. Says Gavin Ward, managing director of the 200-outlet indie chain the Leading Edge. “We independents are looking closely at music DVDs,” Ward says, “because mass market retailers don’t understand it and keep away from it. But music makes up 30% of Leading Edge’s DVD sales, and over the next five years, we expect a massive shift in sales from CD to DVDs.”

The ARIA figures also show some signs of movement away from the rock-dominated album market of old; the body says the two biggest-selling album artists of the year were Universal’s Eminem and Sony’s Shakira, both of whom shipped 500,000 units in 2002. The consensus from retailers is that although units were down, a wider range of titles was sold overall, notably in the urban genre.

MTV Asia Awards Draw Industry Approval

BY STEVEN PATRICK

SINGAPORE—Canadian singer Avril Lavigne was the biggest international winner at the MTV Asia Awards (MAA) Jan. 24 at the Singapore Indoor Stadium.

The Singapore artist—who also performed live at the event—collected awards in the female artist and breakthrough artist categories as well as a “Best Video” award. MTV’s second annual Asian music awards show—co-hosted by Shaggy and Sony-signed Hong Kong-born Mandarin pop singer Coco Lee—also saw Asian artists looking beyond their respective home territories and tailoring their music and performances toward more regional and international audiences.

A joint live performance of a medley of their hits by four of the region’s top singers—He Yoo Sun (Decca/Singapore), Kris Dayanti (Warner/Indonesia), Palmy (RPG Records/Thailand), and Sri Nuraliha (SRC/Malaysia)—illustrated that regional approach. Similarly, Singapore’s Stephanie Sun (Warner), who performed her song “Magic” during the ceremony, made a point of thanking her supporters across the region—“whether they are from Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Malaysia”—while accepting her award for female Singapore artist.

Industry insiders attending the event were positive about the progress they see it making. EMI Malaysia managing director Darren Choy says, “The whole presentation of the event was a lot more spectacular than last year. It’s becoming more credible.”

Viewers voted on the awards either via short-messaging service or online between Nov. 1, 2001, and Jan. 15, 2002. A total of 19 awards were presented during the three-hour event—10 national, six international, and three special awards, including the style and movie awards. MTV says the show was broadcast live to 150 million homes regionally and was held in front of an audience of 2,000.

MTV South-East Asia and Network Group senior VP/management director Peter Bailard claims that the show “put the cream of the cream from all over Asia and the world on one stage. The 10 performances (that night) were arguably the best of their kinds, fusing the best of East and West. Both the live event and the finished TV product were world-class by any standards.”

But Choy does not see the event having a direct impact on sales, “because it’s a regional show, and it’s not targeted to a specific market.” The event is, he suggests, “more a statement that MTV makes on the music being produced in Asia.”

Malaysia’s Nurhaliza, Hong Kong’s Sammy Cheng (Warner) and the Philippines’ Regine Velasquez (Viva Music) won their respective countries’ favorite artist awards for the second year running. The remaining national winners were: Mainland China, Yu Quan (Rock Records); India, A.R. Rahman (Sony); Indonesia, Cokelat (Sony); Korea, H.E. Yogan (Entertainment); Taiwan, Jay Chou (Alpha Music/EMI); and Thailand.

Britain’s Robbie Williams (EMI) raised some eyebrows by giving away his international male artist award to a member of the audience during the event, which ended with Blue (EMI/UK), Nelly (EMI/Philippines), Ella (EMI/Malaysia), and a local school choir singing “Amazing Grace” specially composed for the evening. Other performers, who also acted as presenters during the evening, included Velasquez, Missy Elliott (Warner), Atomic Kitten (EMI), and Sade (Sony).

Jaworske. Jon Bovi hit the headlines Down Under recently following his decision to release an acoustic set aboard a barge in Sydney’s Darling Harbor. A crowd of 20,000 people attended the event. Cooling off from the heat of the Australian summer, a number of fans braved the waters, which are rumored to be shark-infested. One lucky soul even made it to the stage to hear Bovi, who was pulled to safety by Jon Bon Jovi, right.

Although the unmanned man was later released without charge, after Bon Jovi paid his fine.

Thai Government Toughens Anti-Piracy Stand

BY ANDREW HIRANSOMBOON

BANGKOK, Thailand—Signaling a stronger anti-piracy stance than it has had in previous years, the Thai government has announced it plans to target not only individual outlets here selling pirated goods but also the owners of the shopping mall where many are located.

A new Thai government report has found that pirated music titles, computer software, and movies are openly sold in 12 major shopping malls and commercial areas in Bangkok, near which it names. They include properties owned by some of Thailand’s most influential business families. Deputy commerce minister Wattana Muangsuk has now gone on record to insist that all who break the law will be prosecuted—with no exceptions.

The need to increase Thailand’s bargaining power in international trade negotiations to counter the country’s reputation as a haven for pirates has been cited as reasons behind the government’s new strong anti-piracy stance, which local industry figures welcome.

Kittisak Chuangarun, COO of GMM Grammy—Thailand’s largest entertainment conglomerate—tells Billboard, “We are in full support of what the current government is doing.”

Chuangarun estimates that of all the products by Grammy artists currently on sale in Thailand, some 40% is pirated product. But he says that this figure has come down from a high of 70% in past years because of both government anti-piracy measures and his company’s decision to cut CD prices in 2001 (Billboard, Sept. 29, 2001). He says that if the government keeps up its anti-piracy battle, that rate could fall to 20%.

Under the current intellectual property law, software and music pirates and retailers of pirated goods can receive prison sentences of up to five years in jail and/or fines of up to S2,500. It is already on the statute books that owners of property on which such activities take place can receive a monetary penalty and/or a custodial sentence that is twice that of the imposed on the actual violators.

In practice, however, property owners in Thailand have not yet faced criminal charges or potential jail time, only the threat of a fine. Muangsuk explains that property owners are never penalized, because the affected parties do not file complaints against them.

Under the new initiative, the Commerce Ministry will file complaints and the ministry will not negotiate any out-of-court settlements, he says, adding that the ministry will begin filing charges this month. Written warnings will be sent to property owners, who will then have one month to remove all pirated goods from their properties.

“Tough action and more severe punishment than we’ve seen in the past will be very helpful,” Chuangarun says. “While we believe that piracy will always exist, measures like these will help control it.”

As part of its campaign, the Commerce Ministry is trying to encourage greater cooperation between various state agencies. Some 13 of them, encompassing police, utilities, tax, customs, and consumer-protection agencies, recently signed a memorandum of understanding, which the government says will lead to further reductions in piracy. All parties to the agreement expressed a commitment to enforcing intellectual property rights and initiating new anti-piracy measures.
Guests at Billboard's “Thank You” reception at MIDEM listen to remarks by Billboard international editor Tom Ferguson.

Pictured, from left, are Billboard associate publisher/international Gene Smith, Billboard European sales director Christine Chinetti, and Pino Sagliocco, managing director of Spanish concert-promotion company Troubleshooter.

EMI Music Publishing Germany creative director Andreas Kiel, left, and managing director Peter Ende flank artist Senait.

Billboard magazine and Billboard Bulletin sponsored a cocktail party at the 2003 MIDEM conference Tuesday, Jan. 21 at the Palais des Festivals in Cannes, France, to thank the international community for its continued support. Billboard staffers Tom Ferguson, Irwin Kornfeld, and Gene Smith spoke about Billboard's plans for international coverage in 2003.

Pictured, from left, are Audrey Powell, deputy program manager of MIDEM Organisation Paris; Peter Hebbes, managing director of Hebbes Music Group in Sydney; Vic Coppersmith-Heaven, a U.K. producer; and David Stark, editor/publisher of Songlink.

Pictured, from left, are Shock Music Australia executive director Francesco Falvo and CEO Charles Caldas.

Pictured, from left, are Billboard Germany bureau chief Wolfgang Spahr and German Music Publishers' Assn. managing director Dr. Heinz Stroh.

Pictured, from left, are South by Southwest creative director Brent Grulke, Music Export Norway managing director Inger Dirdal, and Billboard Bulletin international editor Lars Brandle.
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I CAN HELP YOU

TO FILL?
HBO's Big Music Shows: A lot of full-length concerts are aired on TV, but the ones that come closest to being Home Box Office (HBO) concerts. Usually televised live, HBO's uncensored concerts have become the kind of TV event that receives enormous attention. The production values of HBO concerts are so well-regarded by artists that the shows are often released on home video/DVD instead of a documentary of the tour.

In the past few years, HBO has staged concerts by Madonna, Bruce Springsteen, Janet Jackson, Britney Spears, Cher, Marc Anthony, and 'N Sync. On Jan. 18, the Rolling Stones did their first HBO concert, which was aired live from New York's Madison Square Garden.

One of the factors that sets HBO concerts apart from those shown on other networks is that the shows are so highly produced that HBO "spent marketing each concert," says HBO senior VP of original programming, Nancy Geller, one of the key executives responsible for the concert series. Indeed, it's hard to miss the billboards, posters, and commercials used to advertise a new and approaching HBO concert. Although HBO's ratings are tracked by Nielsen Media Research, Geller notes, "Our subscriber base has changed and grown so much that we can't really use ratings as our only measure of success. What we look at for our shows is if they reached the target audience." HBO won't say which artists that the shows are often re-run, and sold-out concerts have become the kind of TV feel as if they're also there.

We let the music dictate how each concert is filmed," Geller continues. "But what was different about the Rolling Stones concert was that [lead singer] Mick Jagger didn't have a set list for the director until the day of the show. That's not typical, because there's so much advance planning to do for these concerts. Each show on this Rolling Stones tour has had a different set list, which depends on how they feel that day.

As for choosing what artists will do HBO concerts, Geller says, "I get calls all the time for artists to do these concerts, but the timing has to be right. Because of the expense involved, we can only put on a maximum of three concerts a year very few artists don't want to do these concerts. They love being associated with HBO." During the Rolling Stones event, Jagger said of the band's show being televised live. "It's not the kind of thing you see on HBO. The Rolling Stones are like a family, but we're not quite like The Sopranos, and we're not Six Feet Under. But tonight it's Sex and the City."
Airplay Monitor

current travails were, not surpris-
prompted PD suggestions that labels
STARK, and BFtAM TEITELMAN
checks," implying that PDs see the
have always had different goals. Jive
the course for two industries that
empathy, others just see it as par for
"and some who don't." And in defense
an issue. Relationships mean less
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problems that are mutual problems,"
our mutual love of the music. That
Gmeiner says. But, on both sides of the
sympathy, because it affects them.
know who the ones are that care."
But Khan also says that today's
tougher environment means that
"the battle lines are more defined
now and the camaraderie and friend-
ship aspect of this business is less of
an issue. Relationships mean less and
less. Ten years ago, we could all
be at a convention, and even though
we didn't have common goals, there
was still camaraderie, because of
[our mutual] love of the music. That
day is long gone."

A LITTLE BIT OF SYMPATHY

"The professional gentlemen and
women of radio who care about the
business as a whole see the big picture,
understand and empathize with those
problems that are mutual problems,"
Virgin VP of rock promotion/marketing
Gmeiner says. But, on both sides of the
industry, he says the PDs are those that
have their head in the sand, do their
own thing, and don't care about any-
thing but their own thing. They're
insensitive and don't see the big pic-
ture. We know who they are, and we
know who the ones are that care."

Epic VP of pop promotion Tommy
Nappi says, "They had better have
sympathy, because it affects them.
But a lot of these guys don't know
that." One R&B executive, who asked
to remain anonymous, says, "Our
lack of success will affect their over-
all success. I don't believe the larger
group of programmers understand
that." And "even if the PD you work
with is sympathetic, his hands are
tied because of the cor-
porate structure and demands. They
see the labels as another revenue
stream, period. So the PD can't change
him until they change him to.

And while you would think that
labels' decision to work fewer singles
might mean fewer hits for radio, Curb
VP of programming Bob Catania says,
"There seems to be an overabundance
of programming, regardless of the
health of the labels. So I guess it's not
at the top of PDs' list of concerns. If
you're a radio guy, it doesn't affect you
that Geffen and A&M [eliminated
their promo staffs]. There are [fewer]
people calling, but the product doesn't
change because it's absorbed into a
larger conglomerate."

Marc Roberge has had adult
format promotion for DreamWorks,
doesn't "think anybody's working
against us" but that "with consolida-
tion, both sides of the industry are
having the hardest time. PDs are
doing the job with five people used to
do. And I'm [now] tour manager,
road manager, and national promo-
tion. Everybody's trying to keep their
own little job and they don't have
time to be as considerate as they
used to." Despite this, he says,
"we're much more sympathetic to
each other than we very often live to
other parts of our companies."

ASKING FOR LESS? A FEW ARE
So is any of this sympathy trans-
slating into lessened demands for
promotional support? Gmeiner says,
"Those people that see the big pic-
ture are somewhat more under-
standing that they can't have their
hand out all the time. More people
are realizing that [we all have]
problems, and some are being a bit more
reasonable in their expectations."

I don't get their cut-and-dried
requests for promotions like I used
to," the unnamed R&B exec says.
"Instead of saying, 'It's all this or
nothing,' now they might ask for a
[quota], but obviously not because
they know we have certain budget
restrictions." But he adds that
PDs still feel justified in "ask-
ning for artists to perform at station
functions," making it harder to
performing more difficult, because many of the
acts are not making any money yet.

And Khan says most stations
expect the same support from labels
and radio, it's all about the quarterly
numbers, which foster this 'everybody for themselves'
ambience. So no, programmers are
not willing to take less of a pro-
motion or one less favor, if it could
hurt them competitively." That
being the case, how possible is it
really for labels to solve their own
problems, as PDs suggest? Well, when
it comes to file sharing, Khan says,
"it's completely incumbent on the
labels." While he appreciates Clear
Channel's anti-bootlegging ads, "It
has to be solved by us. I don't care if you're
talking about the music business or
movies—if the consumer can get
something for free, why should they
want to pay for it? It's not effective
'to have some rap artist who owns five
cars and is wearing five-karat diamond
earrings telling kids he's losing money
because they buy a bootleg CD.'"

Catania adds, "We obviously have
a problem on the label side that
they are going to have to be addressed." If
radio doesn't seem overly worried about
the record business, he says, perhaps it's
"because they have a confidence that we
will clean up our problems. I hope that
the radio side of the business under-
stands that a healthy music business is
ultimately in their best interest. But we
have to fix our own problems."

But labels disagree vehemently
that the cost of doing business and
the independent promotion system
falls entirely on their shoulders. In
R&B, where indies finally became
entrenched in 2002, Khan says,
"when you get a letter that says, 'Pay
this or good luck,' that's not my
labels designed."

Bryan Switzer, VP of promotion
for country label Universal South,
says, "I do think that we as record
companies have the power to just
say no," to steal a phrase. But that
means letting your records stagnate
for the basis of quality and value instead
of propping up records that are
never going to be hits by giving away
75 free shows so you can get the
'most recorded' record that amounts
to four spins a week overnight."

The bottom line, Khan says,
"at the end of the day, [is that] we
still need radio, and they know that.
No matter how else you try to market
your product, the single biggest tool
sell a record."
With American Idol returning to Fox—with even better ratings than it had when the series became an instant summer hit—the competition from the first generation of Idol finalists re-enters the soundtrack at No. 16 with a 34% spike.

The chart also sees Frida re-enter at No. 21 after its soundtrack won a Golden Globe (up 13%). Blue Crush (No. 23) and Sweet Home Alabama (No. 24) return to the chart following those films’ home-video bows, with the former riding a 44% gain.

HAVING IT ALL: “All I Have” by Jennifer Lopez featuring LL Cool J jumps 5-1 on the Billboard Hot 100, knocking off B2K’s “Bump, Bump, Bump” after only one week at the top. It is Lopez’s fourth No. 1 on the chart and LL Cool J’s first in his long career (see Chart Beat, page 66). “Have” earns Greatest Gainer/Airplay honors with an improvement of 18.9 million listener impressions. That is the largest gain for a song rising to No. 1 since Usher’s “U Got It Bad” gained 20.4 million listener impressions in the Jan. 19, 2002, issue as it reclaimed the No. 1 spot five weeks after losing it to Nickelback’s “How You Remind Me.” You have to go back to the April 13, 2002 issue to find a larger audience gain for a first-week No. 1 song. In that issue, Destinys Child’s “Survivor” improved by 19.7 million listener impressions. The all-time record since Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems (BDS) data became part of the chart equation in 1991 belongs to Celine Dion’s “My Heart Will Go On,” which gained 22.4 million listeners when it reached No. 1 in the Jan. 31, 1998, issue.

If B2K’s “Bump” fails to return to No. 1, it will be the first one-week-and-out No. 1 in almost two years. “Angel” by Shaggy featuring Rayvon made a quick appearance at the top of the page in the March 31, 2001, issue.

EXTENDING CIRCUMSTANCES: A new round of allegations is not enough to deter R. Kelly on the charts. “Ignition” continues to reign on the R&B/hip-hop Singles Sales chart for a 15th week, extending a record for that chart that he set in the previous issue. In doing so, Kelly bests his own mark of 13 weeks at No. 1 for “Bump N’ Grind” in 1994 that was later equaled by Deborah Cox’s “No Body’s Supposed to Be Here” in 1999.

“Ignition” also earns Greatest Gainer/Sales honors on The Billboard Hot 100 with a unit gain of 22%, while the title’s overall audience jumps by 13%, indicating that radio and consumers appear to be unfazed by Kelly’s legal troubles. The title jumps 17-13 on the Hot 100 while holding on at No. 2, behind Kid Rock’s “Picture” on Hot 100 Singles Sales. On Hot & R&B/hip-hop Singles & Tracks, “Ignition” is pushed down a peg to No. 3 by 50 Cent’s “In Da Club,” which earns Greatest Gainer/Airplay honors, thanks to a 20% audience gain that moves it 4-2. Aaliyah’s “Miss You” also posts a modest gain at No. 1, making next issue’s chart champ a tough one to call; the top three are separated by fewer than 200 points. At the rate of its recent week-to-week increases, 50 Cent’s “Club” feels like the favorite.

MAD RUSH: Terri Clark is a crowded top five on Hot Country Singles & Tracks in hopes of scoring that chart’s first No. 1 single by a solo female in almost a year (Singles Minded and Chart Beat, Billboard, Jan. 18). Up 194 detections, Clark’s “I Just Wanna Be Mad” advances 5-3 but trails the No. 2 title by 377 plays and lags 1,116 spins behind the No. 1 song. Meanwhile, Mark Wills claims a fifth week atop the chart with “Just Somethin’,” while Blake Shelton’s “The Baby” gains 11 to hold at No. 2. This chart hasn’t sported a solo female chart-topper since Martina McBride’s “Blessed” reigned for two weeks beginning in the March 30, 2002, issue.

If Clark ultimately fails to hit the summit, the next likely female candidate is Shania Twain, whose “U” gains 37 spins and rises 17-16. Not far behind Twain is newcomer Jennifer Hanson, whose debut single “Beautiful Goodbye” achieves Airpower status in its 27th chart week (24-18). Hanson’s road to Airpower status is the longest since Tammy Cochran’s “I Cry” took 27 weeks to do so in the May 18, 2002, issue. The most weeks to reach Airpower in the BDS era was logged by Gary Allans “Right Where I Need To Be,” which crossed the threshold in its 35th chart week in the issue dated March 31, 2001.

In THE KNOW: After peaking at No. 14 two weeks ago, Norah Jones’ “Don’t Know Why” rebounds 18-16 in its 27th week on the Adult Contemporary chart with a gain of 38 detections, making it four of the past five weeks that it has posted an increase. Due to this growth, “Why” is allowed to remain on the chart even though it rests in recurrent territory (below No. 15 and more than 26 weeks on the chart). “Why” will be relegated to the recurrent chart in the next week that it ranks lower than No. 15 and posts a loss in detections.
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**Greatest Gainer:**

Worship Together: I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever

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**Number 1 This Week:**

Solange

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**New This Week:**

Solo Star

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**New Hot Shot Debut:**

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### Billboard Top Jazz Albums

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<td>1</td>
<td>Tony Bennett &amp; K.D. Lang</td>
<td>A Wonderful World</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Diana Krall</td>
<td>Live in Paris</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Diana Krall</td>
<td>The Look of Love</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Natalie Cole</td>
<td>Ask a Woman Who Knows</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mark O'Connor's Hot Swing Trio</td>
<td>In Full Swing</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>John Coltrane</td>
<td>A Love Supreme (Deluxe Edition)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Pat Metheny Group</td>
<td>For Elise</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Jane Monheit</td>
<td>In the Sun</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Steve Tyrell</td>
<td>Standard Time</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Jacky Terrasson</td>
<td>Smile</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Rosemary Clooney</td>
<td>The Last Concert</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Poncho Sanchez &amp; Latin Jazz</td>
<td>Ultimate Latin Dance Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Karrin Allyson</td>
<td>In Blue</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cassidy Wilson</td>
<td>Belly of the Sea</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Verve/Ume/Umix</td>
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### Billboard Top Classical Albums

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<td>2</td>
<td>Glenn Gould</td>
<td>State of Wonder</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Renee Fleming</td>
<td>Bel Canto</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Salvatore Licitra</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yo-Yo Ma</td>
<td>Classic Yo-Yo</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Caceres-Domingo-Pavarracho</td>
<td>The Best of the 3 Years</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Piano Dreams-Music To Inspire</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>No. 1 Piano Album</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Tolga Kashif</td>
<td>Queen Symphony</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Chanticleer</td>
<td>Our American Journey</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Vanessa-Mae</td>
<td>The Best of Vanessa-Mae</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>John Rutter</td>
<td>The John Rutter Collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cecilia Bartoli</td>
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### Billboard Top Contemporary Jazz Albums

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<td>1</td>
<td>Norah Jones</td>
<td>Come Away with Me</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Kenny G</td>
<td>Paradise</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Hidden Beach Recordings Presents: Unwrapped Vol. 2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>B.B. King</td>
<td>Groovin'</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Fourplay</td>
<td>Heartland</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Al Jarreau</td>
<td>All I Got</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Kim Waters</td>
<td>Someone to Love You</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Norman Brown</td>
<td>Just Chillin'</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Boney James</td>
<td>Ride</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Keiko Matsui</td>
<td>The Ring</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Verve/Remixed</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Tower of Power</td>
<td>The Very Best of Tower of Power - The Warner Years</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Pieces of a Dream</td>
<td>Love's Silhouette</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Bobby Lyle</td>
<td>Joyful</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Will Downing</td>
<td>(Sensual Journey)</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Herb Alpert</td>
<td>Deliver Me</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Masque</td>
<td>Infinite Love 811</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Golden Slumbers: A Father's Lullaby</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Peter White</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Out of the Blue</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Kirk Whalum</td>
<td>The Gospel According to Jazz - Chapter II</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Bob James</td>
<td>Morning, Noon, Night</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Walter Beasley</td>
<td>Midnight Love - The Ultimate Collection</td>
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<td>Joe Sample</td>
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### Billboard Top New Age Albums

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<td>2</td>
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<td>Pure Moods IV</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jim Brickman</td>
<td>Love Songs &amp; Lullabies, Vol. 1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>George Winston</td>
<td>Night Divides the Day: The Music of the Doors</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Woodland Hill Chill</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Enya</td>
<td>Only Time - The Collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jim Brickman</td>
<td>Sacred Well</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Secret Garden</td>
<td>Simple Things</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>John Tesh</td>
<td>Once in a Red Moon</td>
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<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Peace of Mind</td>
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<td>Healing Garden Music - Relaxation</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>Meditation's Dreams of Relaxation</td>
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*Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.*
| Number | Name of the Artist | Song Title | Label | Sales Data
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bon Jovi</td>
<td>'I Need You Now'</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>11.98 / 18.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bob Marley &amp; The Wailers</td>
<td>'I shot the Sheriff'</td>
<td>Island</td>
<td>010.98 / 17.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The Beatles</td>
<td>'Help!'</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>20.98 / 17.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Michael Jackson</td>
<td>'Thriller'</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>85.98 / 18.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>U2</td>
<td>'Where the Streets Have No Name'</td>
<td>Island</td>
<td>19.98 / 16.98</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
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<td>Rolling Stones</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Blondie</td>
<td>'Heart Of Glass'</td>
<td>Chrysalis</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
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<td>Abba</td>
<td>'Dancing Queen'</td>
<td>Polydor</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Led Zeppelin</td>
<td>'Stairway to Heaven'</td>
<td>Swan</td>
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**TOP 50 SINGLES**

| Number | Name of the Artist | Song Title | Label | Sales Data
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<td>Michael Jackson</td>
<td>'Thriller'</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<td>Island</td>
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<td>Island</td>
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<td>'I Need You Now'</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>11.98 / 18.98</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Island</td>
<td>010.98 / 17.98</td>
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**TOP 50 ALBUMS**

| Number | Name of the Artist | Album Title | Label | Sales Data
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<td>'Abbey Road'</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>'Exile On Main Street'</td>
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<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
<td>'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road'</td>
<td>Polydor</td>
<td>11.98 / 17.98</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Dire Straits</td>
<td>'Brothers in Arms'</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fleetwood Mac</td>
<td>'Rumours'</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
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**GREATEST SELLERS**

| Number | Name of the Artist | Album Title | Label | Sales Data
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<td>1</td>
<td>The Beatles</td>
<td>'Abbey Road'</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>'Exile On Main Street'</td>
<td>Rolling Stones</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
<td>'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road'</td>
<td>Polydor</td>
<td>11.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dire Straits</td>
<td>'Brothers in Arms'</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fleetwood Mac</td>
<td>'Rumours'</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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**HOT SHOT DEBUT**

| Number | Name of the Artist | Album Title | Label | Sales Data
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>'Abbey Road'</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>'Exile On Main Street'</td>
<td>Rolling Stones</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
<td>'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road'</td>
<td>Polydor</td>
<td>11.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dire Straits</td>
<td>'Brothers in Arms'</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fleetwood Mac</td>
<td>'Rumours'</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
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**TOP 10 SINGLES**

| Number | Name of the Artist | Song Title | Label | Sales Data
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Michael Jackson</td>
<td>'Thriller'</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>U2</td>
<td>'Where the Streets Have No Name'</td>
<td>Island</td>
<td>19.98 / 16.98</td>
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<td>'Paint It Black'</td>
<td>Island</td>
<td>12.98 / 18.98</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Bon Jovi</td>
<td>'I Need You Now'</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>11.98 / 18.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bob Marley &amp; The Wailers</td>
<td>'I shot the Sheriff'</td>
<td>Island</td>
<td>010.98 / 17.98</td>
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**HOT SHOT ALBUMS**

| Number | Name of the Artist | Album Title | Label | Sales Data
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<tbody>
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<td>'Abbey Road'</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>'Exile On Main Street'</td>
<td>Rolling Stones</td>
<td>10.98 / 17.98</td>
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<td>Elton John</td>
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<td>Polydor</td>
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<td>'Brothers in Arms'</td>
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### Billboard MODERN ROCK TRACKS

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<th>WEEKS AT NUMBER</th>
<th>PEAK CHART POSITION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>When I’m Gone</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No One Knows</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>When I’m Gone</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>All My Life</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Red</td>
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<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Can’t Stop</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>You Know You’re Right</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Still Waiting</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Bohemian Rhapsody</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>All My Life</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>One More River</td>
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<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Weathered</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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### Billboard MAINSTREAM ROCK TRACKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>WEEKS AT NUMBER</th>
<th>PEAK CHART POSITION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>When I’m Gone</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>When I’m Gone</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>All My Life</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>No One Knows</td>
<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<td>Can’t Stop</td>
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<td>Bohemian Rhapsody</td>
<td>Queen</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Queens Of The Stone Age</td>
<td>Roadrunner</td>
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<td>One More River</td>
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</tbody>
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**Notes:**

- The charts are based on Billboard's Hot 100, which counts the most-played songs on radio stations.
- The data is for the week ending February 2, 2003.
- The charts are monitored and compiled by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, Radio Information Systems (RIS). RIS monitors over 200 top 40 radio stations across the country, totaling over 10.5 million radio listeners per week.
- The charts are updated weekly and reflect the popularity of songs over the past week.
- The charts are updated weekly and reflect the popularity of songs over the past week.
Chart Codes: Hot 100 Singles (H), Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles (RBH), Hot Country Singles (CS) and Hot Latin Tracks (LT).

TITLES - Publisher - Licensing Org. Sheet Music Dist., Chart, Position.

COUNTRY THANG (Big Red Tractix, ASCAP/Sony/ATV) TITLES - Publisher - Licensing Org. Sheet Music Dist., Chart, Position.

MALA GENTE (Peermusic), BMI/Camaleon, BMI, CS 17

THE BABY (Cuban Connection, ASCAP/Sony), BMI/De La Gale, BMI, CS 16

BALL, ASCAP/Bigger Picture, ASCAP), WBM, CS 2

MA' BEAUTY (Peachtree St., BMI/Hot Heat, BMI, CS 15

HI, limo 9

THE ZEPHYR SONG (Moebetoblame, BMI/Warner-A Kapo, BMI) RBH 41

WHAT'S UP, ASCAP/Bubba Gee. BMI/Noontime South, ASCAP), WBM, CS 21

ALL I HAVE (Nuyorican, BMI/EMI Blackwood, BMI), WBM, Hue 48

THE PEARL (Eminem/B Motown, ASCAP), ASCAP, Hue 42

WE DO (Mix Master Mike, ASCAP/Black Bull, ASCAP), ASCAP, Hue 44

CRIME (The Streetscape, BMI, BMI), ASCAP, Hue 45

YOU CAN'T HIDE BEAUTIFUL (Lights Of Denver, BMI/Songs Of Universal), BMI, Hue 46

WHERE THE LAST TIME (Terradome, ASCAP/GenMarc, BMI/Hot Heats, BMI) LT 48

THE FREEWAY (The Waters Of Nazareth, BMI/EMI Blackwood, BMI) LT 44

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S (Schaff, SESAC/Walker, BMI) CS 57

IT'S THE END OF THE ROAD (Stevie Wonder, ASCAP/Hot Heat, BMI) LT 46

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING (ASCAP/Let's Talk), BMI, Hue 48

NOCHES ETERNAS (Not Listed) LT 40

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S (Schaff, SESAC/Walker, BMI) CS 57

THE SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE (Genesis, BMG Songs, BMI/Hot Heats, BMI) LT 41

THE LION'S SHARE (ASCAP/Tha Neat, BMI) CS 58

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S (Schaff, SESAC/Walker, BMI) Hue 42

THE HARD WAY (Eminem, ASCAP), Eminem, ASCAP, Hue 52

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S (Schaff, SESAC/Walker, BMI) LT 45

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING (ASCAP/Let's Talk), BMI, Hue 48

NOCHES ETERNAS (Not Listed) LT 40

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S (Schaff, SESAC/Walker, BMI) CS 57
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist Promotion/Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Thug Mansion</td>
<td>ALICIA KEYS/ATLANTIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Family Portrait</td>
<td>ANDREW LEE/REPUBLIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Underneath It All</td>
<td>ARETHA FRANKLIN/JIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Baby</td>
<td>ARIANA GRANDE/MAX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Have You Gotta Act Like That?</td>
<td>BILLY JOEL/REPUBLIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I Should Be</td>
<td>BILLY CURRY/REPUBLIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Jenny From The Block</td>
<td>BITCHFIST/REPUBLIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I Just Wanna Be Me Mad</td>
<td>BONECRUSHER/BILLIONAIRE</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Fall Into Me</td>
<td>BPLL/CAPITOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Lose Yourself</td>
<td>BREDY/REPUBLIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Can't Hold Beautiful</td>
<td>CLAYTON/RCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Satisfaction</td>
<td>CHRISTINA AGuilera/Sony</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. She'll Leave You With A Smile</td>
<td>COLE S/O &amp; PRODUCERS</td>
</tr>
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<td>14. Man To Man</td>
<td>CORKY/REPUBLIC</td>
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<td>15. Sick Of Being Lonely</td>
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<td>17. All The Things She Said</td>
<td>DIZZI FLEX/REPUBLIC</td>
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<td>18. Year Body Is A Wonderland</td>
<td>DURAN DURAN/CAPITOL</td>
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<td>19. I Don't Know Why</td>
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Country’s New Reality: Stars Without Label Deals

Continued from page 1

Dungan says even a gold seller is often now a money-loser. “It’s not-thing to spend $100,000-$200,000 at a radio for a single,” he says. “If you play the game the way the majors play the game, it’s very expensive.”

Some of these acts are still viable and will likely find new major-label deals down the road. Others may follow the lead of numerous other contemporaries—also gold and platinum sellers in the ’90s—who have either signed with such smaller Nashville labels as Audium and Doubleton, gone outside of Music Row (as Kathy Mattea did in signing with Navare), or formed their own labels. These artists—with 17 platinum and 25 gold albums among them—include Joe Diffie, Dwight Yoakam, Steve Wariner, David Ball, John Berry, Sammy Kershaw, Doug Stone, Tanya Tucker, Lari White, and Mattea.

Not all of country’s free agents are still actively pursuing record deals, particularly if they continue to make a living on the road. In a December 2001 interview with Billboard, Morgan said, “It’s really not pressing to find a label right now. If one comes along, amen. We’re not closing our ears and eyes, but we’re not frantic about it, because I’m working and getting shows and have for the last two years without a label.”

For the rest, whether they can land a new deal with a major is, in Dungan’s words, “simply a matter of economics.” And other labels, he says, the top criteria in deciding who to sign and who to keep on the roster is “if the artist you’re looking at has a chance to sell platinum, then it’s worth it.” Dungan also says that “the economics are such that there is no more leeway for vanity projects or for keeping artists on the roster for sentimental reasons.

For artists whose sales have dropped off. “You have to have a strong A&R person and/or label head who is fighting to hold onto that artist for a little longer,” says artist manager Sheila Shubley Biddix, the former head of Decca Records. “But unless they are achieving top chart success and selling records . . . even the strongest label head and A&R head can only fight the passion battle so long. Then, it comes down to profitability.”

Renee Bell, senior VP of A&R at RCA Label Group (RLG), says, “As long as an artist can continue to sell records—meaning, having hits at radio and, more importantly, selling records—they will have a record deal. [Labels] only make our money on record sales, so if an act is not selling, especially for several years in a row, it makes almost impossible to keep them on the roster.”

Scott Siman, president of RPM Management, says, “With marketing costs growing, the number of sales [needed] to justify going forward [with an act] goes up. The cold hard truth is sometimes we do have to let go [of] an act that sells a couple hundred thousand to make room for a new act that might sell a couple of million.”

While the list of country free agents suggests that the format chews up and spits out hit artists at an alarming rate, it is also clear that there are plenty of country acts that continue to perform at radio and continued to sell records for their major-label homes. Every up-and-comer aspires to have a career like that of Alan Jackson, Brooks & Dunn, Tim McGraw, Kenny Chesney, George Strait, or Toby Keith.

Gill is one of those artists who has enjoyed impressive longevity. He pointed out that acts were hardly the norm for the format, calling that decade “the biggest boom in the history of country music, sales-wise. Because the business had exploded, you could expect to see a hit or two and you would sell platinum.” Still, Gill has concerns about today’s country music industry. “I don’t think there’s enough attention being paid to the longevity of artists these days.”

Dungan agrees that radio and the industry as a whole “certainly seems a lot more bleak” than it was today-gone-tomorrow, what-have-you-done-for-me-lately attitude. Having a couple of hit singles doesn’t guarantee any facet of the business is going to support you on the third one.”

Among the key factors explaining why so many once-popular artists lack label deals is the significant decline in the number of country labels in Nashville. Local operations that have shuttered in recent years include Atlantic, Asylum, Giant, Virgin, Rising Tide, A&M, MCG/Car. Curf, Curb/Universal, Decca, Imprint, and Almo Sounds. And most of the remaining labels’ acts, points out that “the number of acts a label can work has gone down based upon several factors, [including] less staff... and the ever-increased time and effort to break singles and establish new artists [at radio]. When I went to work at Sony in the early ’90s we could work 10 to 14 artists per label. I think that number is probably closer to six or seven these days.”

Industry veterans offer other explanations as to why so many once-popular country acts no longer have record deals. Manager Gary Borman, president of Borman Entertainment, says there is “only one reason: They don’t sell records. It doesn’t necessarily have to do with talent or the amount of people that love their music; it just has to do with . . . record sales.”

The criteria for keeping a deal, according to David Corlew, president/CEO of Blue Hat Records and Corlew Music Group, is a simple formula. “You have to have success at radio. Your sales . . . have to be in that 500k-plus [range], and you better have good airplay. If they stumble, they’re gone, especially if the airplay is not translating to retail.”

Churn and Burn

For Borman, whose clients include Faith Hill and Lonestar, the bigger issue is why some acts no longer sell records in significant numbers. He cites a variety of potential reasons. For some, the business has simply moved on. Some may have become exhausted by the business process. Among other factors: Consumer tastes changed, research deemed their label’s music unplayable, they keep making the same record over and over, or they self-destructed or forgot their job is making music for their audience.

The churn and burn in the country format, Siman thinks, has always gone on but is “more noticeable [now], because more acts are getting the axe who sold a decent number of records. Periodically, I look at the charts and wonder who on that list will be gone in a year. It’s the cruel nature of our business.”

“Open format had an incredible number of artists that broke through in the early ’90s,” Robertson says, pointing out that those artists are “now” or “over” their careers. As we have continued to break artists, and chart space and shelf space at record stores have shrunk, something had to give. It seems that only our multi-platinum superstars from that era had enough sales insulation to protect their deals. Unfortunately, some true artists wound up without a place to record.”

Radio consultant Keith Hill says “tastes change. The face and sound of country continues to evolve, and some of these acts simply got left behind.”

Radio consultant Joel Raab, “the attrition is normal. Most of the free agents are ‘B’ level acts from the early to mid-’90s, and they have a shorter life cycle than ‘A’ acts. There needs to be a natural evolution in order to keep the format fresh.”

Dungan agrees. “Every artist, at some point in their career, runs the last lap. Even their fans say, ‘I have seven or eight albums by this artist. Do I really need another?”

“Certainly, if an act could sell enough records, the pure greed within this fine free-enterprise system would ensure that some imprint would have them,” Hill says. “[The bottom line is a lack of long-range vision. Loyalty to artists is something that only happens when you sell a bunch of records.”

RPM’s Seattle PD Becky Brenner takes a more positive spin. “While it is sad for the industry,” she says, “I do not think it is a negative commentary on the format. New artists have come along and others want to take their place. Country is hotter than ever in Seattle. We have had more acts in recent months [in] selling albums for Rascal Flatts, Keith Urban, Chris Cagle, Pinmonkey, and others. Acts like this are less expensive for the label and still sell albums.”

So is country—where artists could once count on longevity after a few hits—now cycling through artists as fast as other formats? Bell says, “We sign our acts with a career in mind, not for short term, and 99% of the time we stick with an act as long as we can—as long as it financially makes sense for us.”

But Corlew thinks the churn and burn of country artists is at “an epidemic stage.” And the bottom line, he says, is that “great artists . . . are losing their deals.”

From a manager’s perspective, Robertson says, “I believe you have to manage careers like anything else over eight years is a gift. In that window you need to create a financial and creative parachute for your client . . . The days of having hits, getting your music positioned at retail, and touring every year for 20 years is gone but for the rare few.”

Nevertheless, Brenner is hopeful that longevity is still possible for country acts. “We find that the audience still wants to bond with the artist,” she says. “If all we are turning out are one-hit wonders, then we lose the sense of family that has always been a strength in country music.”
Indie Pub Catalogs Are Hot Investment Ticket

Continued from page 1

could come closer to 20 times NPS, a level neared in some recent blockbusters.

Given that publishing assets fetched a multiple of less than 10 times NPS a decade ago, that the available catalogs are arguably more modest in size than some other tier-independent catalogs that have sold at equal to lower premiums in recent years, and that mechanical royalty revenue is likely to see ongoing erosion in the face of declining album sales—such multiples are raising eyebrows among those in the publishing community.

PRICES DEFY THE ECONOMY

Kathy Spanberger, president of North America for indie firm Peermusic Publishing, calls the state of valuations "curious... Sometimes there are multiples—especially multiples near and above 20 times—that are thrown around that are completely unrealistic."

Sanford C. Bernstein analyst Michael Nathanson acknowledges that in competitive markets, companies typically pay either the right or slightly-above fair price in making acquisitions. "But what's weird is they haven't come down very much, given the state of recorded music."

Sellers see the situation differently. "I do not believe the market is overvalued are always going to generate substantial amounts of income to justify the kinds of multiples that are being paid right now."

So why do publishing values continue to rise?

One of the reasons publishing valuations have been relatively high is because there are so few accumulations of good stuff," says Michael Sukin, an attorney with the Sukin Rush Law Group who works with publishing clients. "It's not like signing a new artist. There aren't 500 choices. So when one catalog becomes available, it's highly sought after."

"What's more, publishing is viewed as the best place to invest in the music industry right now. It is regarded as a conservative investment that is highly cash generative. And it is prized to take advantage of growing performance revenue, thanks to improvements in copyright law around the globe and the growing media-related use of music."

This has drawn music companies, which, in their quest for stable revenue sources to underpin the recorded-music side of their businesses, have been aggressively moving to expand their catalogs by gobbling up independent entities.

The publishing arms of the major labels and other large publishers have been the most aggressive buyers of the biggest catalogs. Among the most recent deals:

- Sony/ATV Tree acquired Nashville's historic Acuff-Rose Music (founded by Hank Williams) last year for $157 million—a premium of 16 times NPS.
- In 2000, Universal Music Group acquired Rondor Music for an estimated $400 million—a multiple of 18 times NPS.
- EMI Music Publishing bought the Windswept Pacific Catalog for $200 million in 1999 at an estimated multiple of 20 times NPS.
- Additionally, BMG last year picked up Zomba Music Publishing as part of a larger $2.74 billion acquisition deal with Zomba Music Group, and Peermusic last year acquired the publishing catalog of Toronto-based Song Corp., one of Canada's biggest and most important music-publishing caches. (The latter deal was not subject to the approval of the parent companies, and it was expected that the acquisitions would come as part of a bankruptcy settlement.)

Naturally, the majors are said to figure into the discussions regarding the assets currently up for grabs. EMI, for instance, was reported late last year to be looking into the catalog of Boosey & Hawkes, which is home to the rights to compositions by Igor Stravinsky, Béla Bartók, and Sergei Rachmaninov.

EMI Music Publishing chairman/CEO Martin Bandier acknowledges the company is exploring an acquisition of parts of the catalog, however, he cautions that there is no deal at this point. He says, "There's a lot to be done at Boosey & Hawkes for them to be able to dispose of their music-publishing business.

Arche Music—with its classic blues and R&B catalog that includes works by Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Howlin' Wolf, and John Lee Hooker—and Leiber & Stoller-controlled Trio Music/Quarantine—includes works by such songwriters as Jeff Barry, Ellie Greenwich, Phil Spector, John Sebastian, Billy Edd Wheeler, James Brown, John Lennon, George Per Embree, George Jones, and Neil Diamond—also figure to draw strong interest from the majors. Bandier says he is doubtful his company will chase some of the other available assets on the market due, in part, "exceedingly high" valuations.

However, Wall Street investment banks, pension funds, and private equity groups are also looking to get into the act, thanks to the growing size of publishing deals. Among the names said to be exploring publishing opportunities are banks led by Goldman Sachs and Citigroup. Also said to be interested are such companies as the independent Mosiac Music Publishing, which is backed by a Canadian pension fund.

Sukin says, "There are more and more financial groups coming together and trying to make inroads. I think you'll see more of that."

John T. Frankenstein, co-chairman of law firm Loeb & Loeb, which oversaw the Acuff-Rose transaction, says interest in the publishing market on the part of financial institutions and investment groups makes sense.

"They recognize that there is a real opportunity," he says. "If you have a large investment portfolio—you have billions, you have bonds, you have real estate—you also are probably well-advised to have intellectual property assets that have a proven track record and can show proven earnings over an arc of time."

The rise in competition from outside investors for publishing assets is also helping boost valuations.

Spanberger says, "There's more dollars chasing fewer deals, so pure economics drives up prices."

Greater competition for publishing assets comes at a time when the biggest music publishers are back to some of the same well trod ways to pursue acquisitions due to corporate belt-tightening.

Frankenstein says, "A number of larger publishing companies are changing not because of their own performance or their own valuations but because of the current situation of the parent companies, and it makes it more difficult for them to be as aggressive as they would like."

Advisors to publishing deals contend that the multiples that publishing catalogs were selling for previously—a multiple of six to seven times earnings—have come down to a multiple of five times earnings (representing a "severe undervaluing of those assets and of the cash flows that would come from them."

By contrast, they say, the premiun is that publishing catalogs are commanding in the current environment reflect a correction of the market that takes into account such factors as growth in music around the world.

A VINTAGE COPYRIGHT THAT'S GOOD AS GOLD

Bullish expectations for the future of performance royalties and synchronization revenue—fueled by the growing use of music in media around the globe—relatively higher performance royalties for the use of music.

Sukin points out that the proliferation of copyright laws in developing markets is important. In the wake of Clinton-era global trade initiatives, copyright law has spread into regions of the world—where they did not exist before. "Suddenly you have a big chunk of the world where Anglo-American copyright can be exploited that no one ever received money from previously. And in fact, publishers are starting to see money come in from that part of the world."

Copyright extension is also proving to be a boon to valuable publishing catalogs. A recent Supreme Court ruling upheld the 1989 Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act, which extended copyright protection an extra 20 years, to the life of the author plus 70 years—a decision that is being viewed as a huge victory for record companies, recording artists, songwriters, and music publishers, as well as movie studios and other content providers (Billboard, Jan. 25).

In the mid-90s, Europe similarly unified its copyright term and extended it to life plus 70 years. In such key markets as the U.K., which had been operating under a life-plus-50 years standard, copyright owners picked up another 20 years.

PERFORMANCE FEES BOOM

Another huge reason for rising publishing valuations is the growing use of music in movies and the explosion in the number of broadcast networks and cable/satellite programming stations in the past decade—all of which are paying performance royalties for the use of music.

"When you're looking at historical catalogs with evergreen classic copyrights, invariably the significant percentage of income is derived from performance income and license income," Frankenstein says. "So it's the extended and continuing use of such music at higher and higher license prices by film, television, and commercials that really drive the value of these catalogs."

Just how much these assets will fetch is a subject of curiosity in publishing circles. Published reports have speculated that the Boosey & Hawkes catalog will sell for as much as $86 million. The Arc Music and Leiber & Stoller assets could go for even more, sources say.

Some in the industry fear that if the catalogs do sell for multiples that push the boundary of 20 times NPS, return on investment will be difficult to justify. Still, there is near-universal acknowledgement that, like it or not, it is a seller's market.

"It's kind of like the real-estate market—it's a good time to sell," Spanberger says. "You're getting a very high value."
In addition to a digital transfer of the film, the DVD will include four documentaries featuring major retailers, including Wal-Mart. Ads are also running on BET, which will be rebroadcasting some of the programs throughout February.

UrbanWorks has worked out price-and-positioning programs for the series with a variety of major retailers, including Wal-Mart. Ads are also running on BET, which will be rebroadcasting some of the programs throughout February.

Walker, who won the Pulitzer Prize for The Color Purple, says that releasing this DVD during Black History Month really helps bring to light a story that can apply to today's families, who are still struggling with such issues discussed in the film as gender inequality and oppression. "Seeing this film with as many people as we can and explaining the history and sociology to children will help in opening up people's hearts," Walker says. "This is a film that really resonates with people. It's a great teaching and learning film. There has been this building interest in how the film happened and why it has all this heart. People are really ready for this DVD."

WHY VP of DVD marketing Michael Radilof notes that consumers have long been demanding that The Color Purple be released as a DVD special edition: "It's really a movie that appeals to a broad audience of all ages and ethnicities," he says. "But in February, there is a lot of focus on the media on issues affecting the African-American community."

WH, which issued Roots for Black History Month last year, will tailor its marketing campaign to African-Americans and women 35 and older through extensive national print and TV advertising. Ads will also run on national urban radio networks and will be placed strategically on Internet sites.

The 10-part BET series Journeys in Black (Jan. 28) has also been released for Black History Month by UrbanWorks Entertainment. Each VHS or DVD, available individually for $9.98 each, is a biographical look at key African-American figures in politics, music, and business. Profiles include Luther Vandross, Patti Labelle, Master P, Johnnie Cochran, and Louis Farrakhan.

SPECIAL IN-STORE SELECTIONS

"The challenge is how to position the product," UrbanWorks CEO Jeff Clanagan says. "You can walk into a record store and find a hip-hop or R&B section. You can't find that for DVD. We are pushing retailers to create urban sections."

That is exactly what is happening with Virgin Megastores' 23 locations. The Los Angeles-based chain is creating special in-store sections featuring music, video, and books relating to Black History Month. "Black History Month provides a great platform to extend our profile and reach within the African-American community," senior VP of product and marketing in the media on issues affecting the African-American community,"

SPEECH

While major-label participation may not be as extensive as it has been in the past, some companies are coordinating significant campaigns. Among the most notable is Putumayo World Music's efforts on behalf of its Global Soul collection. Released Jan. 21, the compilation draws upon the influence of R&B/soul/hip-hop around the world. The set includes tracks by France's Doc Gynéco; U.S./U.K.'s 1 Giant Leap featuring Yaki Kadafi; and German/African/ South Africa's Joy Denalane. "This music will appeal to the typical world-music fans and almost anybody in the contemporary R&B/hip-hop movement," Putumayo founder and CEO Ben Storper says. "In general, a German/Italian/Italian label isn't going to imagine it's worth investing money to break an artist in the urban world here. What we're trying to do with this compilation is play a role in helping that process along.

The label's belief in the universal appeal of Global Soul is such that it has coordinated a major U.S. marketing campaign to coincide with Black History Month. On the print front, Putumayo is engaging such magazines as Vibe, Oneworld, and Global Rhythm. At retail, the label is doing price and positioning, banners, and listening stations with Virgin Megastores, Best Buy, and the Coalition of Independent Record Stores.

Additionally, 2,500 specialty accounts are stocking the title, according to Putumayo.

In collaboration with BET Digital Networks, Putumayo is also producing a one-hour video program hosted by Speech of Arrested Development. Airing during February on BET's outlets, the program will spotlight artists who have been inspired by contemporary R&B and neo-soul. "People in the U.S. aren't usually as aware of music that's going on outside the U.S.," Speech says. "We have a lot to learn about the colors and textures of music around the world."

SOULS GOES GLOBAL

Speech is also the host of a Global Soul radio special produced for the label's independent Putumayo World Music Hour. In addition to the 120 commercial and noncommercial stations that regularly carry the show, it is being offered to urban radio stations across the country.

"We're trying to reach the urban audience here without compromising the integrity of the music," Putumayo director of marketing and promotion Cassandra Goin says. "There has been some resistance, because getting people to think 'out of the box' is a challenge."

Another key Black History Month event is Right Track Entertainment's The Experience with George Duke, set for Feb. 26 in Chicago. The evening is another installment in the ongoing adult-focused Experience speaker series. Originator Dedry Jones ties the event in with the 38-store urban retail collective Independent Music Group. Former Experience salutes have featured Al Jareau and Will Downing.

Presented in conjunction with Duke's label BPM Records and a retail partner, the event will comprise an interview with Duke, a question-and-answer segment, and an autograph session. Duke will also speak to music students at Chicago State University earlier that day.

"George is the perfect artist to feature during Black History Month," Jones says. "He has worked with everyone from Miles Davis and Cannonball Adderley to Frank Zappa and Kool and the Gang. Not only can he provide a lot of information but also a lot of inspiration."

The Heineken Music Initiative—which supports music education in urban communities in part through sales of artist compilations—is sponsoring a Black History Month radio campaign. The campaign is set to kick off Saturday (1) on such outlets as WQHT New York, KBRT Los Angeles, WDRR Miami, and WVEE Atlanta. This year's showing: Black Ice Myself," a poem about freedom of self-expression. "It's just a quick look at the times; at how a certain point our elders were going through the same kind of generation gap struggles," says Black Ice, who also stars in the current Billboard show Def Poetry Jam.

Evening Times Inc., producer of the hit R&B/soul/hip-hop compilation Putumayo World Music Hour. In addition to the 120 commercial and noncommercial stations that regularly carry the show, it is being offered to urban radio stations across the country.

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TO HAVE IT ALL: It's not the longest wait in history for a No. 1 song on The Billboard Hot 100, but you still have to credit LL Cool J for having a lot of patience. He made his first appearance on the chart 15 years and seven months ago, and this issue he collects his first chart-topper. LL Cool J was most recently in the top 10 with "Luv U Better," which peaked at No. 4 in November 2002.

"It's a great fit," explains Backstreet Boy Kevin Richardson, over late-afternoon coffee at a cafe near New York's Times Square. "It isn't describing the cut of hiscashmere sweater or the feel of acashmere sweater or the feel of a padded futuristic jumpsuit he'll sport on his next boy-band world tour. Richardson, who has just slipped into the cast of Broadway's long-running revival of the musical Chicago, is describing how he feels suiting up for stardom on the Great White Way.

"I've done musical theater before—I was in Bye Bye Birdie in high school, and before the Backstreet Boys I was in Pillow Talk and Barefoot in the Park in regional theater, so this isn't really foreign to me. It feels really good."

Richardson is certainly no stranger to stage door following each performance. "We're supposed to get back in the studio right when I'm done here," Richardson says. "And he found it hard to resist the attention that the Backstreet Boys fans who scream continuously at Chicago's curtain call and assemble en masse outside the stage door following each performance. Still, even this level of fanaticism seems tame compared with the attention that the Backstreet Boys garner when they appear together. "When we walk around as a group, it's impossible," Richardson says. "But we've been out of the limelight for a second—we've had a nice break, a little hiatus—so now when I'm out by myself, it's not as bad.

The Kentucky-born Richardson admits he had "no clue" that another boy-band star—N Sync's Joey Fatone—was appearing in Broadway's Rent when he signed up for his Chicago duties, but he's not troubled by comparisons. In fact, like Fatone—who's popped up in a few indie films—Richardson is considering a similar move: "I've been reading a lot of movie scripts and waiting for an opportunity to come along. I'm just going to follow my heart, and what happens, happens."

One thing already on the schedule is a new Backstreet Boys record. "We're supposed to get back in the studio right when I'm done here," says Richardson, who's scheduled to stay with Chicago through March 9. In the meantime, he's saving the chance to simultaneously record and yet take a break from his role as a pop idol: "That's the great thing about getting to do Chicago, he says. "I get to be in character. I'm not going onstage as Kevin. I go out there as Billy Flynn. That's really cool."

Miller In The Evening

During a tour in support of his solo debut on Elektra, The Instigator, Rhett Miller, left, played at House of Blues (HOB) in West Hollywood. He is pictured with HOB talent buyer Mike Krebs.
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