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HOT SPOTS

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Showtime and other properties.

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The Corrs return stateside to promote "Borrowed Heaven," the Irish family quartet's first studio album in four years.

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Companies rush to tap into hip-hop's marketing power, recruiting rap stars like Eve to pitch products.

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Beasties Deliver! (But Why Rush?)
Capitol Act Eases Back Into The Spotlight

BY JONATHAN COHEN

NEW YORK—Long breaks between records are nothing new for the Beastie Boys: They took four years between 1994's "Ill Communication" and their chart-topping triple-platinum follow-up, "Hello Nasty."

But they are willing to admit that the six years between "Nasty" and "To The 5 Boroughs," out June 15, would have been even longer if they had had their way.

Beastie Michael Diamond (known professionally as Mike D) says only the "friendly prodding from Capitol president Andy Slater and the band's manager, John Silva, kept the band from continuing to tinker with the album for months, or even years."

"Because of the way we choose to work and because we work in our own studio, we could really go on forever," he says.

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There isn’t a formula for a #1 hit. But there is a checklist.
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### Billboard Grammy Awards

- **Global**
  - Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Eddie Holland receive the Special International Award at the 49th annual Ivor Novello Awards.
  - Spiderbait covers Ram Jam's 1977 version of Leadbelly's "Black Betty" and snags a No. 1 hit at home in Australia.

### Billboard Features

- **Retail**
  - Geffen Records and Midway Games cross-market the "Psy-Op" videogame and a new song written by Cold's Scooter Ward.
  - The English: Germany's SPV puts all of its U.S. distribution efforts into Ryko's hands.

- **Home Video**
  - More companies are using companion DVD projects to pump box-office receipts.

### Billboard Quotable

"There's nothing going on in hip-hop today that wasn't going on when Russell Simmons and Rick Rubin and the pioneers kicked the doors down." — Mollis L. Reid
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www.americanradiohistory.com
Freston’s Star Soars At Viacom
Shares No. 2 Post With CBS CEO Moonves

BY CARLA HAY

NEW YORK—Key music industry figure and MTV architect Tom Freston has broadened his portfolio to include a major film studio and book publishing company and is one step closer to the top job at parent Viacom.

On June 1, Viacom appointed Freston and Leslie Moonves each to the post of co-president/co-CEO. They replace Mel Karmazin, who resigned as president/COO.

Moonves was chairman/CEO of CBS, and Freston was chairman/CEO of MTV Networks. (Viacom owns both operations.)

Freston will continue to head MTV Networks, which includes MTV, VH1, CMT and MTV2. His added responsibilities will include overseeing Showtime, BET, Paramount Parks, Simon & Schuster and Paramount Pictures.

Freston has been MTV Networks chairman/CEO since 1987. Sources suggest there will be a replacement in that post by year’s end.

Freston is no stranger to the film business. Under his leadership, MTV Networks has expanded into the film world with MTV Films and Nickelodeon Films, whose 2003 movies included “The Fighting Temptations” and “Rugrats Go Wild,” respectively.

Freston’s acumen at selling youth culture through MTV Networks could mean that MTV Films and Nickelodeon Films would be more integrated with Viacom’s film operation.

(Continued on page 71)

NIPP Settles Suit
Promoter Claimed Clear Channel Ran A Monopoly

BY RAY WADDELL

In a development some will see as a clear victory for independent concert promoters, Nobody in Particular Presents has settled its lawsuit against Clear Channel Communications and several of its subsidiaries.

The terms of the agreement are confidential.

“The case is settled, and we’re very happy with the agreement,” says Jesse Morello, who resigned from NIPP in January but remains a partner in the company and has been a point man for NIPP in the case.

News of the settlement comes after a federal judge in Denver on April 2 allowed NIPP to proceed with its suit against Clear Channel, finding sufficient evidence that the latter company had attempted to create a monopoly (Billboard, April 24). A trial had been set to begin Aug. 2.

NIPP originally filed the suit in August 2001 (Billboard, Aug. 18, 2001), charging that Clear Channel’s “monopolistic, multimedia empire was ‘severely harming NIPP’s ability to compete . . . resulting in higher prices and fewer offerings for consumers’ looking to attend live music events in Denver.

NIPP alleged that Clear Channel’s Denver radio stations played songs by artists whose concerts were promoted by Clear Channel Enter- tainment but did not play songs by bands that NIPP promoted.

(Continued on page 71)
Virgin Rings Up UMG Deal
Mobile Phone Service Gets D12 Exclusive
BY SCOTT BANERJEE
SAN FRANCISCO—Virgin Mobile USA hopes to attract new users through ringtone exclusives.

The youth-oriented mobile operator has teamed with Universal Music Group to provide exclusive access to master ringtones from the Shady/Interscope album “D12 World.”

The new program, dubbed First Dibs, is reminiscent of the iTunes Music Store’s exclusive downloads and AOL’s First Listen and First View programs.

The three-month deal with UMG—which started May 17—marks the first time downloadable master ringtones have been available on an exclusive basis.

“It’s another big step in Virgin Mobile’s strategy to build relationships with key brands and content to grow their user base,” says Mark Frieser, CEO of Consect, a New York-based mobile-market consultancy.

Virgin Mobile already has an alliance with MTV, providing such exclusive wireless content as MTV games, MTV News updates and voting on videos. According to a source, Virgin Mobile paid MTV more than $30 million in that deal.

“There are always going to be smart people out there who want to get their hands on great content,” says Howard Handler, chief marketing officer with Virgin Mobile USA. “We want to be known as the place to get the hottest music first.”

Handler says First Dibs will eventually be available year-round and include partnerships with other labels. He says D12 fits the profile of the “newest, latest, greatest” act that appeals to Virgin’s 1.75 million users, 70% of whom are under age 30.

Unlike most mobile companies, Virgin’s services are not (Continued on page 71)

Copy Protection Under Scrutiny
BY LEO CENDROWICZ
BRUSSELS—In the controversial issue of copy protection, a series of court cases in Europe have been decided in favor of the music industry.

A few weeks after a French court dismissed legal action against labels that had released copy-protected CDs, a Brussels court dismissed a suit that the Belgian consumers’ watchdog Test-Achats/Test Aankoop brought against four major record companies for installing copy-control devices on CDs.

Test-Achats says it plans to appeal the ruling, which has been hailed by the industry.

“Courts have recognized the importance for the industry of using technological measures to protect audiovisual works and recordings,” a spokeswoman for the Brussels-based European regional office of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry says.

“These technological protection measures are essential to protect the recording industry against the piracy that is decimating the sector,” she says.

(Continued on page 57)

McDonald’s, Sony Get Connected
BY LEILA COBO

McDonald’s is partnering with Sony’s Connect download service to offer free digital music to its patrons.

Through the international Big Mac Meal Tracks promotion, McDonald’s customers who buy a Big Mac Extra Value Meal will receive an access code that allows one free song download from the Connect music store.

The promotion kicks off June 8 in the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada. It will run for six weeks. The promotion launches in early July in the United Kingdom, France and Germany.

For Connect, the partnership means increased visibility and a way to draw traffic to its online store.

McDonald’s sees the partnership as a customer service, according to Rick Marroquin, McDonald’s USA director of marketing.

He says the restaurant hopes to give customers easy access to one of their “greatest passions”: music.

Because the promotion will provide access to all kinds of music, the June 3 press conference in Los Angeles anunciing the launch featured artists from many different genres. They included Justin Timberlake, Ashanti and Alejandro Fernández.

Timberlake is a McDonald’s spokesman. Fernández is “someone who we are beginning a relationship with,” Marroquin says.

“(During the press conference) he’s going to serve as our Spanish-language artist, who will talk directly to our customers about the Connect program and will be able to say, ‘You’ll even be able to get music in Spanish.’”

McDonald’s will advertise the Big Mac Meal Tracks promotion on Spanish-language TV and radio. The company will also feature bilingual points of purchase.

“We’re going to do our best to communicate this to our Hispanic customers,” Marroquin says.

The promotion will not be available in Latin America, where Connect is not in place. The Connect music store is accessible through connect.com, connect.com/canada or connect.com.eu.

The Big Mac Meal Tracks promotion is part of McDonald’s worldwide “I’m Lovin’ It” consumer campaign.

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The Big Mac Meal Tracks promotion is part of McDonald’s worldwide “I’m Lovin’ It” consumer campaign.
Long Live El Rey: Jiménez Lyrics See New Light

BY LEILA COBO

The legacy of José Alfredo Jiménez, immortalized in his own legendary recordings and in the voices of virtually every singer in Latin music, is set to begin a new chapter.

It is bound in a black notebook—in Jiménez’s own handwriting—that contains lyrics to 117 songs he wrote between 1949 and 1973 but were never set to music. Jiménez died in 1973.

Now, those songs may see the light of day. On June 2, BMG Music Publishing purchased all 117 titles to a co-publishing deal.

Through the agreement, the newly discovered compositions join a roster of approximately 100 other Jiménez works under BMG’s Mexican division, known as “El Rey,” his signature song, and “Amame En Tus Brazos”—currently signed to BMG Music Publishing through its Mexican offices.

“Mother hadn’t wanted to give the notebook up,” says José Alfredo Jiménez Gálvez, Jiménez’s son. “She said maybe the lyrics didn’t have the quality. And I said, ‘Mom, they’re the kings! How can they not have the quality?’ “

The song “Fugitivo” has already been put to music by Mexican rock group El Fantastic and included on last year’s “XXX” (BMG). The album is a rock homage to Jiménez’s music, featuring a host of artists, including El Tri, Bacilos and Joaquín Sabina.

BMG and Jiménez Gálvez have similar plans for the new catalog and are considering speaking to such acts as Marco Antonio Solís, Ricardo Arjona and Maná to set

Decency Bills Delayed

BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Indecency legislation may get scuttled during this short election-year congressional session. A case in point is the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act, S. 2156.

The House on March 11 overwhelmingly passed its version of the bill, which would drastically raise fines for indecency, obscene or profane programming.

The Senate Commerce Committee adapted its version on March 9 but observers say added amendments hampered the bill’s chances of passing the full Senate.

Like its House counterpart, the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act raises fines tenfold—to $275,000 per incident—for broadcast licenseholders airing indecent material.

Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., author of the Senate version, added an amendment that would target on-air talent and performers with a maximum fine of $500,000.

Brownback is a longtime critic of sex and violence on the media.

Artists’ groups and media watchdogs lobbied heavily against the Brownback amendment, claiming it was unconstitutional on free-speech grounds.

Sen. Byron Dorgan of North Dakota, introduced another amendment that would suspend for a year the Federal Communication Commission’s loosened media ownership rules (see Legal Matters, page 11). This would allow time for the completion of a study on media concentration.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., outgoing chairman of the Commerce Committee, has said the bill might be too encumbered to pass. Sources say McCain has little interest in fighting for the bill’s passage on the Senate floor. McCain’s attention is elsewhere. As a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, he is helping to lead Senate floor action on Department of Defense appropriations.

“Indecency bills are losing the war in Iraq and commitments in Afghanistan make it unlikely that senators will focus any attention on Janet Jackson’s boob,” one observer says.

“They’ve done their thing back in March with all their pronouncements. It’s obvious the broadcast industry and the FCC are tightening the standards.”

Two More Casualties

The Senate may bypass two other bills, observers say.

One is the Copyright Royalty and Distribution Reform Act, H.R. 1417. The House passed it March 3.

H.R. 1417 replaces part-time arbitrators with full-time administrative (Continued on page 71)

Capturing Bonnaroo

Digidesign Will Record Festival’s Performances

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

Although it will be behind the scenes, digital recording technology will have a prominent role at the Bonnaroo Music Festival June 11-13 in Manchester, Tenn.

The principals behind the recording of last year’s Bonnaroo Festival have made significant upgrades to their equipment list, commensurate with the ambitious plan to record all 80 performances and post approximately 50 full sets down (Continued on page 71)
Big Names Have The Edge

By Alan McGlade

W

ich companies are going to dominate the business of selling music downloads and subscriptions? Will it be the early innovators that are first to market or the large, established consumer-branded companies that wield their resources to enter the fray as a second mover?

History offers many parallels where technological transformations enabled new market segments to develop. Take, for example, the personal computer industry. Many would contend that the second personal computer with any consumer appeal was the Apple II, first sold in 1977. While the product sparked the imagination of many, sales were a bit less remarkable—only about 4,000 its first year.

A number of small players soon entered the PC industry, including Commodore, Amiga, and Wang. But it was difficult for these small companies to survive, especially since product benefits, price points, and brand familiarity had yet to evolve to a stage where they could attract the average consumer.

Then, in the early ‘80s, IBM, an established player in the corporate computing sector, entered the PC marketplace.

The IBM PC made an immediate impact—selling 500,000 in just three months—and revolutionized the industry. And, knowing that a high tide lifts all boats, IBM’s participation brought a whole new level of interest and credibility to this market segment.

A similar phenomenon is occurring with digital music. Initially, a few scrappy companies made a lot of noise and promises about their services. Some have since gone dark or are struggling to get by, and others have established themselves as big fish in what is still a small pond. But the promise of this flourishing new market segment is evident to all.

The sale of digital tracks now operates the sale of physical singles. And close to one million customers currently subscribe to some form of music subscription service. Now the big boys have taken notice.

FOUR IMPORTANT FACTORS

While the digital music business has been in a state of constant change for the past few years, we are clearly in the early stage of a major new phase that will dramatically transform the industry.

Similar to the PC revolution, we are starting to see major companies with trusted brands enter the space. Four key attributes make these companies critical to the future of the marketplace:

1. World-class brands: Brands are powerful and play heavily into purchase decisions. Whether a brand stands for trust, fun, quality, coolness or any other association, it represents something consumers value. It takes hundreds of millions of dollars and many years to create a well-known brand that conveys meaning and emotion to consumers. Very rarely can small companies compete, given their limited ability to generate brand awareness.

Sony, for example, has built a global brand across numerous categories, including consumer electronics, hardware, gaming and music. As it enters the online music industry, it will easily be able to apply its brand and the trust, innovation and quality that its brand stands for.

Sony will quickly capture significant market share from today’s smaller competitors and grow the market as a whole by attracting new users to digital music. So too will the Virgin brand, which has massive awareness and enormous credibility with music fans worldwide. Is it poised to be at the forefront of the digital music revolution?

2. A substantial user base: We need to remember that digital music is in its infancy. With brands like Yahoo entering the business, the sector will grow by magnitudes.

Such companies have already invested in customer acquisition and can quickly reach their massive user bases with new digital music offers. It is easier to upgrade existing customers to an expanded service than to acquire new customers from scratch.

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The Corrs

After Four Years, Irish Quartet Returns To U.S. To Promote 'Heaven'

BY PAUL SEXTON

The Corrs will soon learn whether the family that stays together still goes platinum together.

The Irish family quartet releases "Borrowed Heaven" (Atlantic) June 8 in the United States. It arrived May 31 in most international territories.

This is the Corrs' first studio set since 2000's "In Blue." That was the group's first album to surpass the million-sales mark in America. (It sold 1.1 million, according to Nielsen SoundScan.)

A four-year gap may seem a long time to be away following such a breakthrough. But the band says the timeout has been filled with plenty of family activity, in and out of the spotlight.

"We had a good break and did the [new] album at our leisure," says guitarist/pianist Jim Corr, who is joined by his three sisters in the group. "We needed a break, because we'd been working so intensively and traveling so extensively."

"It was important that we did get our lives back for a period of time," he continues. "My sister Sharon got married, Caroline got married and had a baby, and that kind of held us up a little bit."

Caroline is expecting her second child in October.

Since "In Blue," the act released the 2001 "Best Of" album internationally and "VH-1 Presents The Corrs: Live in Dublin" in the United States in 2002. It has also done extensive charity work, most recently with the DHL Foundation.

"We've got a bit of a history," Jim says. "It's not like we've been completely out of the public eye." He says the group's music won't change in tone, since the group tends to deal with "tender stuff."

Caroline says the group's experience touring has helped them "find our voice."

"We're starting to make a name for ourselves," she adds. "We're trying to build a reputation and start to be seen as having the ability and the quality to do it."

The Corrs were formed by Jim and sister Sharon in 1992. The group is fronted by Caroline and sister Karen.

"We've been working really hard," Jim says. "The idea is not to be left in limbo, but to keep going."

The group's new U.S. tour will end at Coventry in Vermont, where the band's two-day fest will wrap up Thursday night.

Bon Jovi guitarist/songwriter Richie Sambora is shopping for a new publishing deal.

"My whole publishing catalog reverts back to me on June 30," Sambora says. "I'm looking for a suitable place for me to be. I'm not sure who that is yet, or what that is."

"There are a lot of interesting propositions and interesting things for me to do, and that's cool," Sambora says.

On the Bon Jovi front, the band is looking at releasing a boxed set.

"We found four albums' worth of songs people have never heard before," Sambora says.

There isn't a timetable for the boxed set, Sambora says. First, the group will tour Europe and then the U.S. in 2005 with Journey.

"We're thinking about putting stuff together," Sambora says. "So far, what we've written for this year is a little bit of a step back. We've been working on this for a year and a half."

Sambora says the group is "closer together," but there are no plans for a "Journey + Bon Jovi" tour.

"We're just as happy doing it together as we are on our own," Sambora says. "It's the perfect situation."
Music

The Corrs
Continued from page 9

notably the “46664” AIDS fundraiser concert in South Africa last November. Although the act has done well in the States, it has truly shined in other territories. Worldwide sales for the band are some 18 million albums, according to Warner Music International. The United Kingdom and Spain are among the Corrs’ many top-selling markets.

Now that attention turns back to the group’s studio endeavors, the auguries are promising.

WHAT ‘HEAVEN’ HOLDS
The Corrs recorded “Borrowed Heaven” in Dublin and Los Angeles with producer Olle Romo. Ladymoth and Black Mamba both provide backing vocals on the title track.

The Corrs wrote every song but one on the album. The exception is “Time for Tears,” by Bono of U2. Gavin Friday and Maurice Sezer. Andrea Curr first performed that song solo for the soundtrack of the 2003 film “In America.”

“Borrowed Heaven” marks the first time the Corrs, signed to Atlantic U.S. for the world, have had an almost simultaneous trans-Atlantic album release. The staggered scheduled dates back to “Forgiven, Not Forgotten,” which charted in America in January 1996, two months earlier than in Britain.

Response has been swift and enthusiastic to the light, upbeat “Summer Sunshine,” the lead track from “Borrowed Heaven.” It debuted at No. 6 on the British singles chart, compiled by the Official U.K. Charts Co.

Ed Breiten, head of music and presentation at AC station Minster FM in York, England, says: “We’ve been playing it on the group playlist for the last three weeks or so, and it’s going down an absolute storm, especially when the sun shines.”

David Burrier, VP of marketing at Atlantic in New York, says “Summer Sunshine” was on 30 hot AC and 25 mainstream AC stations in America by May 21, some three weeks after going to radio.

The song debuted at No. 39 on sister public Airplay Monitor’s adult Top 40 chart for the week ending May 23. It tested well with Promosquad’s Hit Predictor, scoring top 10 callout potential.

Burrier adds that some of the initial radio supporters, such as WPLJ New York, have a history of supporting the Corrs. “‘Breathless’ [from ‘In Blue’] made a lot of inroads for us. It crossed cultural boundaries, and it was [irrelevant] that it was an Irish band.”

TOURING AND OTHER TIE-INS
Promotion has focused so far on the United Kingdom and international markets outside the United States.

The band will soon start a massive international tour, with a month of European dates from June 19 and a North American leg Aug. 2 to Sept. 8. Sales for the North American shows are already brisk, according to Burrier. He cites San Diego and Saratoga, N.Y., dates as particularly fast movers.

In the States. Oxygen Network is using “Summer Sunshine” in its last hour and its own channel advertising. MSN is also using the track in a contest for tickets to the Corrs’ hometown shows at Dublin’s Point Theater June 28 and 29.

“Historically, one of the biggest things is having them [in the United States] for promotion,” Burrier says. “They’ll be here in the last week of July for promo appearances, and we’re starting morning and late-night TV shows right now.

“They’re an extremely professional organization, very hard-working, and when you have your time with them, you have them 100%.”

Until the group arrives Stateside, Atlantic plans to promote the four-site with print advertising in the Irish Echo, Irish Voice and elsewhere. Jim Corr is optimistic about the group’s American prospects.

“We’re confident we have the 100% backing of the record company,” he says. “We’ve come back rejuvenated and with a fresher perspective on things.”

The Beat
Continued from page 9

The band has to get to know the new leadership at Island.

He says he likes new label head L.A. Reid, adding, “We’re going to see about the box set when his new regime comes in and if they get it. We’re hoping it’s going to be great.”

FOUNTAINS OF B-SIDES: Following the breakthrough success of the single “Stacy’s Mom,” the members of Fountains of Wayne are looking at releasing a collection of B-sides. “We’ve got over 20 tracks. I like what we own the rights to,” the band’s Adam Schlesinger says. “A lot of them should have been A-sides or at least A-side-berks.”

A source says the collection, slated to bow 9S-Curve Records’ year’s end, could include a few new cuts.

NONE SUCH FOR LANG: After more than 15 years on Warner Bros. Records, k.d. lang is switching to NoneSuch Records. Her first release for NoneSuch will be a live release of “Hymns of the 49th Parallel,” out July 27.

On the album, lang covers songs by fellow Canadians, including Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, Neil Young and Jane Siberry.

Boutique label NoneSuch, which will release Brian Wilson’s “Smile” in September, had been aligned with Atlantic Records. It switched to Warner Bros. in April as part of the restructuring of Warner Music Group under new heads Edgar Bronfman Jr. and Lynn Cohen.

JEWEL OF A SHOW: Jewel is in the midst of an acoustic tour, and she is the first to admit that it can be tough going—but she is loving every minute.

“Touring acoustic is harder. For somebody to pull off a two-hour show with just your voice and a guitar is hard, and I like that,” she says. “I have not writing a set list. I have not anything planned. I like starting a song and stopping a song before I don’t like doing it. I like the informality of it.”

The acoustic tour will influence her next Atlantic set. “It’s probably going to be a pretty lo-fi record,” she says. “I’m probably going to use some live recordings—do six live, maybe six in the studio. It will be very singer/songwriter.”

ANOTHER MUSICAL JEWEL: Like Jewel, singer/songwriter Lisa Loeb is working on a new album that will show her stripped down—musically speaking.

“It’s half very, very acoustic and half produced,” she says. “My fans keep asking for something that’s more pared down, and it’s so hard to do that in the studio, but really I’ve tried to. A lot of stuff is played live, and it’s very real. I’m very excited about it.”

Loeb adds that she is close to inking a new label deal. Her previous album came out on Arista Records.

THEY’LL BE THERE FOR US: We may not get to hear them every Thursday night at 8 p.m. warbling the “Friends” theme song, but the Rembrandts are still here for us.

The duo just released a greatest-hits record, “Choice Picks,” on its own label, Rembrandt Danny Wilde says. The album is on Aakee Records and is available through arachnom.com.

“We’re also currently about halfway through a new record,” Wilde says. He is also developing a number of artists, including 19-year-old vocalist Rhian.

Of course, “Friends” lives on in syndication, which means the Rembrandts can collect live. Every time the show airs in reruns, which seems to be about every five minutes.

“Whenever does Wilde do when he hears the theme? I clap my hands along and wait for the check to show up,” he says.
Media Biz Awaits Decision On Ownership Rules

This week's column was written by Bill Holland, Washington, D.C., bureau chief for Billboard.

The Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia is expected to hand down a decision this month on the challenges to the Federal Communications Commission's widely criticized ownership rules decision of June 7, 2003.

The FCC ruling allows a single company to own TV stations that reach 45% of households nationwide, instead of the current 35%. It also allows companies to own TV, radio and newspaper outlets in the same market. It was immediately challenged by public interest groups, who thought it went too far, and broadcasters, who thought it did not go far enough.

The case against the ruling has been on the "last track" since the court issued a stay order last September blocking the FCC changes. The court heard oral arguments Jan. 12.

The case is Prometheus Radio Project, et al. v. FCC, et al., docket No. 03-3388. It combines challenges from 16 parties into a single appeal.

"Only in the court system can they say something's being 'fast-tracked' and then sit on it for a year," a veteran communications observer quips. "But the word we're hearing is, a decision will come in June."

Legal Matters

Watchdog groups, including the D.C.-based Future of Music Coalition, say the FCC's decision to allow an increase in the number of media outlets one company can own will result in further media consolidation, less local input in programming and decreased diversity of views.

They point to the fallout following the commission's 1996 deregulation of radio, which, they say, has resulted in homogeneous radio playlists, alleged pay-for-play practices and intimidation of labels and artists through the threat of withheld airplay.

At the same time, a number of broadcast groups that have been rolled into the case challenge the FCC ruling for not going far enough in removing remaining ownership restrictions. They say they cannot compete against new entrants to the telecommunications landscape—such as cable, satellite and Internet companies—with rules that were formulated years ago.

Federal lawmakers have already made it clear they believe the FCC decision went too far. Last year, Congress passed a resolution of disapproval of the deregulations.

In addition, Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., has introduced legislation to probe such big-radio companies as Clear Channel Communications. Feingold says his pending bill would "crack down on anti-competitive practices, such as the new [pay-for-play] system," a practice he says has allowed radio giants to "shake down the music industry."

In March, Feingold sent a letter to the FCC calling on the agency to begin a probe of such schemes at radio.

Insiders are not publicly predicting which way the court will rule. However, they cite two factors that indicate the court's interest in the challenges.

First, they note that the three-judge panel extended the time for presentation of oral arguments. Second, they point out that the court did not remand the case back to a lower court.

"They want to hold on to this one," a source says. "They want to be in the newspaper headlines when they decide on media ownership in an election year."

Other petitioners in the case are Media General, National Assn. of Broadcasters, Network Affiliated Stations Alliance, Fox Entertainment Group, Viacom, NBC, Sinclair Broadcast Group, Media Alliance, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, Tribune Co., Paxson Communications, Emmis Communications, Center for Digital Democracy and Clear Channel.

CHANGE OF VENUE: Samantha Chang, who edited this column, has left Billboard. The search for her replacement is under way. Interested candidates should contact executive editor Ken Schlager (kschlager@billboard.com).
Nordeman, MercyMe’s Millard Get ASCAP Christian Nods

MercyMe lead vocalist Bart Millard and Sparrow artist Nichole Nordeman shared songwriter of the year honors at the 26th annual ASCAP Christian Music Awards, held May 24 at Richland Country Club in Nashville.

Millard was acknowledged for MercyMe’s multi-format hit “I Can Only Imagine,” as well as for “Word of God Speaks” and “Spoken For.” Nordeman was recognized for penning “Holy” and “Legacy.”

“Songwriters write about what consumes their heart, and to be recognized by ASCAP in this way reminds me of the art form I am honored to be a part of,” Millard tells Higher Ground.

The Newsboys’ hit “He Reigns” was named song of the year. The worship anthem was written by frontman Peter Furler with Steve Taylor. It was published by EMI CMG Publishing, which was named publisher of the year for such hits as “Holy,” “I Will Be,” “You Are My King,” “You Get to Me” and “You’re My God.”

Point of Grace received the newly created Partner in Song Award in recognition of “the passion and excellence with which they record the works of Christian songwriters.”

According to ASCAP, during the past decade, the Word Records female foursome has scored numerous hits, including “The Great Divide,” “I’ll Be Believing,” “Dying to Reach You” and “Gather at the River.”

“To be the first recipients of this brand-new award is quite an honor for us,” Point of Grace’s Shelley Breen says. “Not being writers ourselves, we continue to be amazed by the talent in the Christian songwriting community and we’re grateful to be partners with them.”

Hosted by ASCAP senior VP Connie Bradley, this year’s event featured a “Surfing GMA” theme. ASCAP assistant VP Dan Keen joined Bradley in presenting awards to the ASCAP writers and publishers of the 25 most-performed Christian songs of 2003.

During the evening, Rep. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., joined ASCAP in presenting a special citation to the Gospel Music Assn. in recognition of its 40th anniversary.


These labels will now enter the Latin market through the partnership with Integrity.

MOVING ON: After four years as Gospel Music Assn.’s sponsorship manager, Daniel White is exiting (Continued on page 13)
Hancock Plays Playboy Fest; Indies Go For Verve Acts

When Southern California resident Herb B Hancock takes the stage at the Playboy Jazz Festival, it will, remarkably, be his first appearance at the Hollywood Bowl two-day bash.

He will be joined by two Playboy rookies, saxophonist Wayne Shorter and bassist Dave Holland, as well as drummer Brian Blade. The quartet promises to be one of the marquee acts at the 26th annual festival June 19-20.

Other headliners include Hugh Masekela, Brian Culbertson, Bill Cosby's Coz of Good Music IX band, Gerald Wilson, Béla Fleck and the Wynton Marsalis Septet.

Hancock is no stranger to super-star ensembles. He was the piano mainstay in Miles Davis' classic '60s quintet. Afterwards he mixed and matched music with a number of all-star groups, including the 2002 quintet of tenor saxophonist Michael Brecker, trumpeter Roy Hargrove, bassist John Patitucci and Blade.

That group recorded "Directions in Music: Live at Massey Hall," a vibrant spin on Davis' and John Coltrane's music. Hancock and Shorter, another Davis quintet alum, recorded the 1997 masterpiece "1 + 1" and continue to tour as a duo. Verve released both CDs.

"This new group should be interesting," Hancock says. "We've all worked together before."

The quartet will practice in Oregon for three days to prep for its U.S. and European tour, which begins in Medford, Ore., continues in San Francisco, then touches down at the Play Festival.

"Wayne and I have surprising things happen to us when we improve together," Hancock observes. "As a quartet, we may work on material we developed as a duo and see if we can push the envelope in the same way."

VERVE DIASPORA: The Verve Music Group has been a guardian of top drawer jazz artists for the past 15 years. However, in recent years it has been dummier acts—but the Indies are scooping them up as great treasures.

This spring, Heads Up International signed Michael Brecker, Sunnyside picked up the Verve France option to domestically release new CDs by saxophonist Chris Potter and pianist Kenny Barron and Maxjazz has released new albums by vocalist Claudia Acuna and guitarist Russell Malone.

The most recent Verve veteran is immensely talented pianist Danilo Perez, who has yet to find a new home.

"From an A&R perspective, I want to sign established artists to make our roster more diversified," says Dave Love, president of Heads Up, a division of Telarc International. "Michael and the Yellowjackets make a good balance with bands like Spyro Gyra and Pieces of a Dream."

Love says the time is ripe for Indies. "It's like the '60s and '50s, when a lot of the most important jazz was on independent labels," he says. "During the '60s through the '80s, the majors gobble up the best artists. But today, with sales down, musicians are let go by the majors and come to labels like ours to experiment."

Sunnyside owner Francois Zalacain has right of first refusal if Verve in the United States passes on a Verve France release.

"I know the numbers crunch big labels are under," Zalacain says. "They can't afford to release albums that only sell 2,000 units. We're a small operation. We can manage."

Potter's manager, Louise Holland of Vision Arts Management, is thrilled.

Sunnyside relented the saxophonist's newest quartet album, "Lift: Live at the Village Vanguard." "Indies are better suited to jazz," says Holland, who also manages Malo-one and her dad, Dave. "Both are on independent labels (Maxjazz and ECM, respectively). "They can create what they want."

Why the exodus from Verve? President Ron Goldstein admits that economics are the overriding factor.

"To survive as a company, we have to make difficult decisions," he says. "Michael Brecker was at the end of his contract and opted not to renew. He was not dropped, and I wish we were still here. Danilo Perez is a brilliant musician and composer. But the fact is, he didn't sell a lot of records."

Goldstein has been inaccurately quoted as saying he is no longer signing instrumentalists. In fact, he has brought Alice Coltrane back into the fold on Impulse for her first studio album in 26 years (due Sept. 14). He also still believes strongly in Verve's roster, which includes Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Roy Hargrove and guitarists John Scofield and Kurt Rosenwinkel.

"We're still in the jazz business," Goldstein says. "I would love to find new artists to get excited about. I'm looking. My eyes and ears are wide open. But frankly I'm not hearing anything out there that's creatively interesting with a taste of commercial success."

THREE DOT LOUNGE: The nine-day, third annual Rochester International Jazz Festival climaxes June 10-12 with performances by Bobby McFerrin, Brad Mehldau, Cuong Vu, Joe Locke, Jeremy Pelt, Mike Stern and the superb piano/guitar duo of Benny Green and Russell Malone... Vocalist Jackie Allen follows her acclaimed A.J. Music Group debut. "The Men in My Life," with the equally impressive "Love Is Blue" (June 8)... The Manhattan Transfer received the Manhattan Assn. of Cabaret & Clubs lifetime achievement award May 17. Ahmet Ertegun presented the award to the vocal group at a New York awards show.

Higher Ground

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the organization.

White is moving to Austin, Texas, to take a position with EMF Broadcasting. The company recently launched an Austin radio station affiliated with the KLOVE radio network and has tapped White as regional manager.

Following White's departure, Jerry Davis, director of business development, will be handling sponsorship duties in the interim.

Greg Fritz is the new VP of marketing for Big Idea, creator of the VeggieTales line of children's products. He was VP of sales and marketing services for Word Distribution.

Fritz is already familiar with VeggieTales, as he marketed Big Idea's home video and DVD lineup while at Word and previously served on the VeggieTales advisory council.

The VeggieTales animated series has sold more than 35 million videos since 1993. In 2002, the company released its first theatrical film, "Jonah—A VeggieTales Movie."

NEWS NOTES: Tooth and Nail/SEC Recordings rock band Kutless is slated to perform at the summer Olympics in conjunction with ethible.com. The band will perform in Greece at Athens' central Omonia Square Aug. 27; Monastiraki at the base of the Acropolis Aug. 28; and at Koropi Aug. 27.

Virgin Megastores and Metropolis Megastores are sponsoring the first two appearances. Kutless' U.S. fans can follow the band with on-air reports from the event through radio networks KLOVE, Air 1 and Effect Radio Networks.
However, substantial sales occur at alternative outlets. As with many musical fads, no one is able to pinpoint what has struck the public nerve when it comes to música duranguense.

The style is closest to merenka (banda played with acoustic and electric instruments) and uses the traditional tambora. It’s not particularly upbeat and gives a regional tambora. It’s not particularly upbeat and gives a traditional feel. However, there is a distinctly different feel to it.

The style is closest to merenka (banda played with acoustic and electric instruments) and uses the traditional tambora. It’s not particularly upbeat and gives a regional feel.

THE FIRST CITY
Most of the popular música duranguense groups in the United States gained their initial followings not in Durango, the birthplace of the genre, but in Chicago. At first blush, it’s an unlikely source, as Los Angeles has traditionally been the hotbed for regional Mexican musical movements, including nortena, banda, and, most recently, urban/Regional.

But Chicago, which has a large Mexican population, had been dancing to the beat of música duranguense for years. But few people outside of Chicago knew about it.

When I arrived in Chicago in 2001 I noticed it was largely influenced by Los Angeles even though it was a different city,” says Rafael Bautista, program director for WOJO (La Que Buena) Chicago.

‘We pushed it at a national level and we made it available. But it was a music [genre] that was happening.’

—JEFF YOUNG, DISA

group’s first album on the label, 2002’s “El Jaleo,” peaked at No. 43 on the Billboard Regional Mexican chart.

A year later, following an aggressive marketing, promotion and sales push that included in-store appearances, a Latin weekend retailer, “De Durango a Chicago” debut at No. 2.

Suddenly, the vast possibilities for música duranguense were obvious to all. “We pushed it at a national level and we made it available,” says Jeff Young, senior VP of sales and marketing for Disa. “But it was a music [genre] that was happening.”

According to Young, Grupo Montez de Durango exploded first in the Midwest, then caught on in the Southwest and Texas, and finally in California. The group was aided along the way by heavy promotion on TV and radio.

VETERAN ACTS
Within months of “De Durango a Chicago,” Disa and its distributed label Procan released in quick succession albums by Los Horoscopos de Durango, Patrulla 81 and K-Pax de la Sierra.

With the exception of K-Pax, which was formed by former Grupo Montez de Durango members, all were groups that had existed for years but had been released independently. In other words, no groups were created in response to the early success of Grupo Montez de Durango.

Such is also the case of Conjunto Aturdecor, whose sophomore album on Musimex/Universal, “Los Numero Uno del Pasito Duranguense,” debuted in the top 10 of the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart two months ago.

The genre’s popularity also is reflected in the Billboard Regional Mexican airplay chart where last week three of the top five titles were música duranguense, including Los Horoscopos “Pocos Locos” at No. 1.

Could anyone have expected the movement to be this big? “I think anyone who says that would be lying,” Lopez says. “That a local group can sell a couple thousand units because they have a good fan base in a market, that happens every year. But where a genre breaks and multiple groups that were doing the genre jump on board and are able to become incredibly successful, that’s surprising. I can mention 10 groups that have blown up because of this.”

Labels are hopeful that the trend will last. A typical música duranguense album costs less than $40,000 to produce, sources say, and the groups are relentless in their touring and promotion efforts. “I think it will last two to three more years for a cycle of five years, which is typical for musical trends,” says Gilberto Moreno, VP of regional Mexican for Universal Music Latino, which recently signed Banda Preciosa.

Other up-and-coming acts include Braceros and El Congar. “Probably many more groups will come out, there will be market movement and in the end, two or three will remain,” Moreno says. Already, the genre is evolving. Grupo Montez de Durango’s new album, for example, will mix in some urban/regional elements, according to Young.

And last week, Disa released an album of children’s character El Morro performing música duranguense. “Obviously, it may not be as easy anymore [for the new bands],” Bautista says. “It’s all about being in the right place at the right time.”
Family-Friendly Tours Bolster Bottom Line

BY SUSANNE AULT

Family shows don't hit the revenue jackpot as strongly as concerts, but venue managers still enjoy visits from Barney, Clifford the Big Red Dog, the Wiggles and others.

Tickets for family shows typically run a reasonable $10 to $30, encouraging mom and dad to buy four or five seats to a show.

Yet what family shows lack in dollars they more than make up in reliable year-round bookings and crowd-pleasing innovation, venue managers say.

During the past 10 years, tour organizers estimate that family show properties have more than doubled from about six to 20 annual events that wind through the country at any one time.

Most touring groups roll out a huge volume of shows during their season, as well.

In the United States alone, the Harlem Globetrotters normally produce 250 shows a year. Disney on Ice, split between five separate touring units, glides to 100-plus U.S. cities each year. Anc World Wrestling Entertainment performed 327 live events worldwide in 2003.

(Continued on page 17)
BY RAY WADDELL

What can the in-house marketing staff at concert venues offer to promoters? Here are examples from current tours.

Eric Clapton
Alltel Arena
North Little Rock, Ark.

The week before tickets went on sale for Eric Clapton’s June 11 show at the Alltel Arena, the marketing department sent an e-mail blast notifying 10,000 potential ticket buyers of the show. In addition, the venue’s Arena Football 2 League tenant, the Arkansas Twisters, had three home games during which the building promoted the show on its huge video screen and concourse monitors.

The concert also received exposure on the building’s large electronic marquee, located in a high-visibility location off Interstate 40.

Arena manager Michael Marion and marketing director Betty Baster further publicized the show in the local media.

The arena will take these steps to supplement the marketing by the show’s promoter, BearProductions, and will include its services in the building fee.

Kelly Clarkson and Clay Aiken
HP Pavilion
San Jose, Calif.

HP Pavilion’s marketing staff coordinated with promoter AEG Live to put together the promotional campaign for the Kelly Clarkson/Clay Aiken show, which took place April 6.

The marketing budget for the San Jose market was in the $30,000 to $40,000 range. “Our staff met with the AEG staff and discussed which way we would go with radio and newspaper,” says Steve Kissner, director of booking and events at HP Pavilion. “We weighed who would give us the best promotion and the best rate.”

The HP staff recommended an advertising plan tilted toward the San Jose Mercury News and the local light rock radio station.

The concert was promoted at all events in the building, including San Jose Sharks hockey games. Methods of promotion included matrix boards, an outside marquee and video loops on all TVs in the building. E-mail blasts targeted local pop music fans.

The show ended up drawing about 8,000 to the pavilion’s theater setup. It was one of the most successful dates on the tour.

Madonna
American Airlines Arena
Miami

When the American Airlines Arena snagged a date on the Madonna Re-Invention tour, the arena’s marketing staff helped turn one date into two.

AAA is home to the NBA’s Miami Heat, and the arena marketing team made sure Heat fans knew Madonna was coming to town.

“We were completely aware of [promoter] Clear Channel’s advertising plan, and we supplemented it with advertising to Heat season ticket-holders. Heat TV and radio broadcasts and Heat arena sponsors,” says Eric Bresler, VP of bookings and marketing at AAA.

“We interacted with Madonna’s marketing team at Clear Channel and their radio and print advertising,” Bresler says. “We also supplemented that with our own print advertising.”

The AAA marketing team, led by marketing director Liz Roca, oversaw a huge e-mail blast from the arena database and promoted the show at all arena events.

Madonna, who has long had a home in the Miami area, sold out the first show for Aug. 1, and an Aug. 2 show was added. At press time, the second show was near sellout.

Bud Light Playoff Block Party
Wachovia Center Complex
Philadelphia

The marketing staff at the Wachovia Center complex—which includes the Wachovia Center and Wachovia Spectrum arenas, both run by Global Comcast—has taken advantage of the synergy that multiple events offer.

(Continued on page 17)
Family
Continued from page 15

The World Famous Lipizzaner Stallions open their 35th year as a touring company in May. "We are the only show with Lipizzaner stallions and these are very rare," show producer Gary Lashinsky says. "There are less than 3,000 of them left in the world—and we own 40 of them." The tour, which targets different cities each year, will play 40 markets this summer. Managers note that family shows are important to their bottom line.

"The revenue earned with 50 concerts wouldn't compare with the revenue model for families shows. It would dwarf it, but that's fine," says John Page, regional VP of venue management firm Global Spectrum. "You need them to sustain your business."

At Global Spectrum's Wachovia Center in Philadelphia, Page says that he is assured of 50-plus shows per year from Feld Entertainment, which produces the Ringling Bros. Circus and Disney on Ice properties.

Jack Larson, GM at the Xcel Center in St. Paul, Minn., adds, "You can count on family shows. Rather than wait and see what musical entertainment will be out touring, you know that you'll get wrestling and the circus. That helps your planning."

LONG-TERM BOOKINGS

Family shows also will often lock in long-term booking arrangements.

"We have a lot of multi-year agreements," notes Eric Cole, VP of booking for Clear Channel Entertainment's motorsports division, which sells more than 2.5 million tickets for its signature Monster Jam Monster Truck show each year. "You can take your Janet Jackson money and your Monster Jam money and add them up over the last five years—and tell me what's bigger."

Fortunately for managers, there are few signs that family shows are slowing down their hyper-activity. Existing franchises, such as the Wiggles, Ringling Bros., Disney on Ice and the Globetrotters, are power sellers.

The Wiggles, the Australian musical troupe presented by Hit Entertainment, sold out 85% of their shows during their most recent U.S. tour March 30-April 30. According to Billboard Boxscores, the Wiggles drew about $8.7 million from 57 shows reported in 2003.

For the same year, Disney on Ice captured $28.5 million from 332 shows, while Ringling Bros. grabbed $27.7 million from 96 events.

"Globetrotters revenue has grown 16%-18% over the last 10 years. [Show] capacities have increased to 12,000 seats—five to six times larger than they were 10 years ago," reports Mannie Jackson, owner of the Harlem Globetrotters.

Jackson attributes splashy promotion efforts for the steady rise in Globetrotter grosses. Two years ago, for example, the Globetrotters effec-
(Continued on page 20)
 Arenas
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coming out of, the promoter appreciates and trusts us to know our market,” says Eric Bresler, VP of booking and marketing for America Airlines Arena in Miami.

And with new buildings booming in markets large and small, arenas need something to set them apart to attract major tours.

“[They] tell us what the promoter’s expectations are,” Marion says. “If the promoter needs to buy two tickets, then he gets two tickets. If the promoter needs to buy 8,000 tickets, then he gets 8,000 tickets. That way, when we add up all the contracts, we can keep a handle on what the promoter is getting.”

The marketing department at the Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville also charges a commission. “It’s nothing to get rich over, but every little bit helps,” says Hugh Lombardi, GM of the venue. “We feel that in most cases a building’s marketing staff knows the market better than an out-of-market promoter.

But for American Airlines Arena, offering free marketing services is worth the investment in an extremely competitive arena marketplace.

“We know we’re in a highly competitive market, and we view marketing activities we offer as an incentive for [promoters] to come back,” American Airlines Arena’s Bresler says.

At the HP Pavilion in San Jose, Calif., the arena’s primary tenant, the San Jose Sharks of the NHL, routinely packs the house. The HP Pavilion can offer as much or as little input as needed to promoters.

“If it’s a local promoter like Clear Channel Entertainment or another Planet, we’re not as involved,” says Steve Kirsner, director of bookings and events at HP Pavilion. “But if it’s an outside promoter like AEG, we do all of the advertising placement and we’re involved with their staff in creating a media plan.”

At HP and other buildings, marketing services can drive revenue. “Typically we charge a 15% agency commission, depending on the show,” Kirsner says, adding that the fee, like most arena deals, is negotiable. “Sometimes that fee can be waived, but not all the time.”

Not all marketing services carry a price tag at HP. The pavilion can provide such marketing perks as an e-mail database of 100,000 names and video loops on all arena TV monitors, both of which are offered free of charge.

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notes. “We view each show coming in here as a relationship. It starts with booking the show and follows into the marketing effort.”

Liz Roca, marketing director at American Airlines Arena, works closely with the promoter throughout the process. “They know if they’re having trouble selling tickets they can give us a call at the last minute,” she says. “It’s a matter of appreciation and trust.”

Another venue, the Wachovia Center complex in Philadelphia, offers a wide range of marketing packages, most of which are geared to generate revenue for the arena while adding value to events.

“We can do whatever the promoter wishes,” says Bob Schwartz, VP of marketing for facility management firm Comcast Spectacor Ventures, which operates the Wachovia complex.

“If the promoter wants us to place media or do promotions or PR, we can do it,” Schwartz says. Global Comcast buildings package their marketing, be it e-mail blasts, radio calendar listings, cable promotion or in-arena marketing, such as scoreboard postings or PA announcements.

**BANG FOR THEIR BUCK**

Though the service is not free, Schwartz asserts that promoters get significant bang for their buck.

“We’re here 365 days a year, we’re established in the market, we have the PR contacts, the marketing contacts, the sponsor contacts,” he says. “We can be one-stop shopping for the promoter. The cost of our marketing packages is minuscule compared to what it would cost the promoter if he did it on his own.”

The American Airlines Arena staff also considers its marketing services as an absorbed marketing expense to promote the building.

“We do not charge for our services, and that’s not only a sign of a competitive marketplace but also our commitment to the show,” Bresler says. “When a tour comes to American Airlines Arena, [the promoter] knows they will receive a tremendous amount of support and that we will play an active role in making sure the show goes well.”

Alltel’s Marion takes a broad view of what falls under marketing. “Our marketing director, Betty Baxter, also handles our backstage stuff, like catering, dressing rooms, meet and greets, etc.,” he says. “Anything dealing with artist hospitality we consider a marketing function. The same thing goes for box office operations.”

Such attention can provide a competitive edge, Marion believes. “In my mind, it’s adding value,” he says. “We’re trying to bring more to the table, not looking under the table for more money.”
Family
Continued from page 17

tively spread the word about themselves by launching a line of sports clothing with designer FUBU.

In March, Ringling Bros. launched a one-ring circus—shrunken from its standard three-ring production—to better penetrate secondary markets' smaller arenas.

"We believe this was an untapped market. A lot of buildings can't accommodate the Greatest Show on Earth" because of its physical size," says Jerry Guido, VP of North American tours at Feld Entertainment.

"This was an opportunity to expand to a lot of markets that we haven't been able to get to."

Global Spectrum's Page notes that family shows are more willing to journey to secondaries than other live events like concerts. Newcomers this year to Ringling Bros.—thanks to the one-ring show—included the Forum in Rome, Ga., and Calsonic Arena in Shelbyville, Tenn.

Although A-list acts typically prefer to mount treks in major cities, family shows "can deliver first-rate entertainment in markets that aren't normally exposed to it," Page says. He adds that Disney on Ice sold out recent multi-day stints at the Dodge Arena in El Paso, Texas; the Everett Events Center in Everett, Wash.; and Sovereign Bank Arena in Trenton, N.J.

Yet executives of established family shows say it is equally important to avoid overexposing tours.

"One thing in our favor is that we are only able to tour in the United States three months out of the year. It keeps us a hot property," Hit Entertainment senior VP of live events Sloan Coleman says of the Wiggles. "Most family shows go at least nine months."

Barney's "Colorful World" tour, another Hit property, this year ran slightly more than three months, from Jan. 1-April 10. "What we do with Barney," Coleman says, "is we only go back to your city once every two-and-a-half years. So when it does come to your city, it's a special event."

BRINGING IN NEW FACES

Hit frequently alternates its roster of live show characters on the road. Its stable includes Angelina Ballerina, Bob the Builder and Thomas the Tank Engine. Two years ago, Hit launched its Thomas' Day Out tour primarily in secondary and tertiary markets. Set to fill the absence of Barney and the Wiggles, the shows starring the Tank Engine started in mid-April and will run through December. The events feature train rides as its main family attraction.

Iconic kiddie book character Clifford the Big Red Dog made his world stage premiere March 18. Romping through 90 North American arenas through 2005, Clifford the Big Red Dog Live is a Broadway-styled musical from producers Turnstile Entertainment and Creative Battery.

Stuart Snyder, a principal at Turnstile, says the secret to launching a new tour in today's crowded family show marketplace is to focus on evergreen personalities.

Unlike such fad-driven characters as the past-peak Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles or the Power Rangers, Clifford has filled children's books for more than 40 years. Publisher Scholastic has sold more than 110 million Clifford titles during that time. "This has been around forever," Snyder says. "When we were doing our research [before greenlighting the tour], it was always the same reaction. It was not just about my daughter or son loving Clifford. [Parents also] love Clifford.

He adds that it is integral that it not only "entertaining for the kids, but it also has to be entertaining for the parents.

Ticket sales so far are meeting Snyder's expectations, and he is positive about the future of the tour.

While it typically attracts families to its shows, WWE is in the middle of creating a live event geared specifically to the under-12 set.

Kurt Schneider, the company's executive VP of marketing, explains that because WWE airs most of its TV programming at night—such as UPN's "Smackdown" and Spike TV's "Raw"—many younger kids are prevented from being introduced to the franchise.

Starting last month, "The WWE Experience" airs Sunday mornings on Spike. In the near future, this TV show—crafted as a family-friendly spin on WWE programming—will sprout live events. such as "Smackdown" and "Raw" have done.

"Once you can attract the 6-12 year old group, they tend to become fans," Schneider says. "To grow our base, we needed to get these kids in there so that they can grow with us."

E-Mails
Continued from page 17

"We developed block parties and basically created events within events," says Richman, VP of public relations for Comcast-Spectacor.

The concept was sparked two years ago when, in one night, there was a Dave Matthews Band concert at Veteran's Stadium, a Philadelphia 76ers NBA playoff game at the Center and a circus at the Spectrum. Because the venues are all in one central location, the block party concept was born.

The parties are held on the expansive arena concourse, which helps stimulate early arrival, eases traffic congestion and generates revenue through concessions and merchandise sales.

"We looked at it as an opportunity for exposure," says Bob Schwartz, VP of marketing for Comcast Spectacor Ventures. "It's a live band, themed vendors and interactive exhibits. The arena staff coordinates with promoters in producing the parties.

Concerts by Aerosmith, Beyoncé and Britney Spears have all had successful Wachovia Center-area block parties.
**Not Many Phish In The Touring Sea**

All hail the mighty Phish. At its heart the group is nothing more—and nothing less—than one of the all-time great rock’n’roll touring bands. As Phish embarks on its last tour (billboard.biz, May 25), a taking of stock is in order. Rarely has a band connected so well with its fans in a concert format. "I think what they’ll most be remembered for is their skill at live performance and connecting with their audience," says John Paluska, who has managed Phish for 15 years. "Their other most enduring aspect is their ability to improvise as a group," Paluska continues. "They created their own distinct style of improvisation, a little different from anybody else. I imagine that will be one of the saddest things for them to let go."

Indeed, the performances built the following, and it remains a fanatical one. Each show has a place in the Phish canon. It’s likely there is a tape somewhere of every Phish show of the past 15 years. The band allowed the taping of shows from the beginning, a key element in developing its grassroots following, the legendary Phish heads.

Most audiences have been a mixture of Phish heads that travel from city to city and local fans eager to see what the fuss is about. This duality can create a challenge when putting together set lists, according to Phish guitarist Trey Anastasio. "You can’t please one of these groups and not the other one unless you do exactly what you want to do and not think about it at all," Anastasio told this writer in a 2000 interview. "My response to the crowd is, ‘I try not to think about it. There comes a point where everybody’s got an opinion, and they’re all valid. You have to do what’s true to your heart.’"

Describing a 1999 New Year’s Eve show that lasted into the new millennium, Anastasio said, "I felt like a small part of a bigger scene. I met one cool person after another. When you meet all these impressive, cool people, it makes you want to get onstage and create something really soulful. There is no question that it gives you a sense of pride and responsibility."

Paluska says even he was taken aback by Phish’s sudden announcement that it would call it quits after the band’s final festival, Coventry. It will be held Aug. 14-15 at Newport State Airport in the band’s home state of Vermont. "It was somewhat surprising," he says of the news. "But I’m in support of their decision that this is the time to step away gracefully."

As to what will become of Phish’s management home, Dionysian Productions in Burlington, Vt.—which includes management staff, merchandising, a powerful Web presence and several year-round crew—"all of these questions remain to be answered," Paluska says. "We have a tour and an album to focus on, so thinking about the transition is the wrong head space to be in right now."

That said, Paluska admits this summer’s shows should have a "heightened emotion to them." Asked to sum up his tenure with Phish, he says, "It’s hard to turn this experience into a sound bite." Coventry will wrap a relatively light summer touring agenda for Phish. The 13-date route begins with two dates at KeySpan Park in Brooklyn, N.Y., June 17-18 and precedes Coventry at the Tweet Center in Camden, N.J., Aug. 12.

Chipp Cooper of Monterey Peninsula Artists has booked Phish for years. Last summer Phish’s shed run grossed about $14 million over 19 dates, with an average of $726,842 per show. The band’s final festival grossed $82.5 million and attracted some 60,000 fans.
Brands Realize Hip-Hop’s Selling Power

BY JANINE COVENEY

Hip-hop culture is saturating the mainstream through music and marketing.

Companies have awakened to the genre’s selling power, and as rap stars pitch soft drinks, athletic shoes, apparel, automobiles and beer, cross-promotions are born almost daily.

“Companies are just realizing [hip-hop’s wide appeal] because it is contributing to their bottom line in a major way,” says Janelle Spencer, chief marketing officer of Bad Boy Entertainment.

Spencer, who also is president of independent agency Blue Flame Marketing and Advertising, says cross-promotions are “coming from as small a relationship as a product mention in a song to something revolutionary like Jay-Z owning a sneaker line with Reebok.”

 Corporations “finally realized the power of hip-hop music on the community and the world,” rapper/actor Ludacris says. “It’s done nothing but get bigger and expand to become the popular music of today.”

But hip-hop has been serving unofficial product pitches since Run-D.M.C. praised “My Adidas” in 1986.

“Long before corporate America started cashing in and understanding the power of the hip-hop voice, you had a person like Biggie [Smalls] or Lil’ Kim screaming out all these designer labels,” says Shawn Prez, CEO of New York-based guerrilla marketing firm Power Moves and a former Bad Boy executive.

“This hip-hop voice—it’s loud, it’s results-oriented,” he adds.

Entrepreneur Russell Simmons spearheaded hip-hop culture’s move to the mainstream with Def Jam Records in the ’80s.

Since then, he has expanded his business into management, marketing, apparel, TV, jewelry and financial services. In February, Simmons sold his Phat Fashions empire to apparel giant Kellwood for $140 million.

Bad Boy Records founder Sean “P. Diddy” Combs’ apparel line, Sean John, is also growing. The 6-year-old, multi-million-dollar company will open its first free-standing store in June.

Jay-Z and his Roc-a-Fella Records partner Damon Dash spun off their own clothing company in 1999. Rocawear raked in about $300 million last year, according to Dash.

The S. Carter Collection, Jay-Z’s joint venture with Reebok, set the industry abuzz by becoming the sneaker company’s fastest seller.

Jay-Z and Dash also purchased Armadale Vodka.

** VANISHED BOUNDARIES**

Marketing experts agree that Simmons, Combs, Jay-Z and Dash have shown corporate America that hip-hop can generate dollars outside the music business.

“Hip-hop stars define what’s cool for fans,” naming such brands as Cristal, Gucci, Cadillac and Hennessy in lyrics and liner notes and showcasing those brands in videos. Simmons says that when a person comes out of poverty, “you know what the American dream has to offer, because you study it. So they’re very good at picking luxury and mainstream products, because they study it and they love it. They’re excited about it.”

That excitement generates sales. Some 45.3 million consumers worldwide spend $12.6 billion annually on hip-hop media and merchandise, according to Simmons Latham Media Group, the media-content company Simmons co-owns.

When Reebok launched its drive to reach the hip-hop audience, its marketing firm, Davie Brown Entertainment, hired Ayiko Broyard as director of music marketing.

Along with the Jay-Z deal, Broyard helped the athletic-wear company create tie-ins with 50 Cent, Mary J. Blige and OutKast’s Big Boi.

“Nike had [the market] locked down with Eminem, and Reebok saw that Nike was really out there with all these celebrities,” Broyard says. “So they really wanted to get into that particular world of popular music.”

When dismissed as having limited mainstream appeal and buying power, hip-hop is now the hottest selling tool in the Madison Avenue arsenal.

LL Cool J, Eve, Missy Elliott, G-Unit, Ludacris, Baby, Nelly, Baby Bash and Funkmaster Flex are just some of the acts connected to a variety of products.

Why has the trend suddenly exploded? Because rap’s appeal is now universal.

“Hip-hop is not a side category anymore,” Broyard notes. “There used to be a strong line—if you were a hip-hopper, you didn’t listen to Kid Rock and you didn’t skateboard. There are no lines anymore.”

Prez agrees. “I don’t care if you’re Asian, I don’t care if you’re of European descent. The same kids that are listening to Korn or Fred Durst will go and pick up the new Snoop Dogg or 50 Cent CD. This is the hip new thing, this hip-hop culture.”

And that culture has seeped into suburban enclaves and corporate offices, says Morris L. Reid, CEO of Washington, D.C.-based Blue Fusion, a youth marketing agency.

“There’s nothing going on in hip-hop today that wasn’t going on when Russell Simmons and [Def Jam co-founder] Rick Rubin and the pioneers kicked the doors down,” Reid says. “The difference is, the CEOs and senior execs are going home and seeing all this hip-hop culture happening in their own homes.”

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Scott’s ‘Words’ Among Slate Of Summer R&B Sets


The album reunites Scott with several producers from her 2001 multi-platinum debut, “Who Is Jill Scott?” Word and Sounds, Vol. 1.” They include James Poser and Andre Harris & Vidal Davis. Scott also collaborates for the first time with hip producers as Ant Bell and Raphael Saadiq.

On the R&B release horizon for June and July: Trina Brossard (Motown/Universal), Brandy (Atlantic), R. Kelly (Jive), Angie Stone (J/WMG), Stevie Wonder (Motown/Universal) and newcomers Tedra Moses (TNT), JoJo (Blackground/Universal) and O’Ryan (TUG/Universal).

In other album activity, Jesse Powell’s “Jesse,” on Enchanted/Liquid 8 Recordings, appeared June 1. His single, “Did You Cry,” claimed “airpower bound” honors in the May 28 issue of the radio trade sister Airplay Monitor.

‘OZING HISTORY:’ The NBC-TEV special celebrating the Apollo Theater’s 70th anniversary (Rhythm & Blues, Billboard, March 20) airs June 19. However, for a closer look at the Harlem, N.Y., venue, check out “Showtime at the Apollo: The Story of Harlem’s World Famous Theater.”

The book by Ted Fox (who manages Buckwheat Zydeco) originally appeared in 1983. Mill Road Enterprises published an updated edition earlier this year to commemorate the theater’s anniversary.

Fox’s book is chock-full of historical data, first-person anecdotes, artist recollections and priceless photos and reproductions of theater handbills, as well as a new afterword documenting the venue’s current status.

Among the historical tidbits: The Apollo opened its doors in 1934 and flourished under the direction of controversial owner Frank Schiffman. It presented some 31 shows every week through the ’60s. Admission was an unmeasurable dime at the start, progressing to a top price of $6 in 1976, when the venue closed for the first time.

White performers like Buddy Rich were just as popular as black artists who played their trade on the Apollo stage. The theater’s diverse range of black performers has included everyone from Billie Holiday to the Roots.

“‘The Apollo story is the de facto history of black music and black culture in the 20th century,’” Fox says. “The place forces you walk in. ‘The Apollo was home for the black community of Harlem and home for the black performers of America,’ Fox continues. ‘And that’s the key to its success and influence. The Apollo knew its community well and catered to it.”

NBC’s two-hour “Apollo at 70: A Hot Night in Harlem” features Natalie Cole, Willie Nelson, Patti LaBelle, Angie Stone, Ashanti, Yolanda Adams, Herbie Hancock and others. It airs at 8 p.m. ET/PT.

In keeping with the Black Music Month theme, here are two other items of interest:


Hip-hop back in the day is the focus of the DVD “Hip Hop Time Capsule—1992.” More than 20 acts—from Das EFX to A Tribe Called Quest—flow their way through videos, interviews, live performances and freestyles. The DVD arrives through Music Video Distributors and Rap Entertainment.

IN AMAZEMENT: In tandem with the Essence Music Festival’s 10th anniversary (Billboard, May 20) comes another impressive milestone. Mace Featuring Frankie Beverly will be honored for its 10 consecutive years as a popular festival performer.

Essence Communications CEO Ed Lewis will do the honors during this year’s three-day New Orleans soiree (July 2-4).

EMI/”The Right Stuff” will release a comprehensive compilation of the venerable group’s signature tunes Aug. 10. The single-disc, 18-track “Greatest Hits” includes “Workin’ Together,” “Southern Girl” and “Back in stride.”

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KUDOS... to Grammy Award-winning talents Earth, Wind & Fire and songwriter/producers Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis. They will join film composer Elmer Bernstein in receiving the Governors Award from the Los Angeles chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. The ceremony takes place June 8 at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

Previous Governors Award recipients include Clarence Avant, Natalie Cole, Brandy, Janet Jackson and Quincy Jones.
## Billboard Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

**June 2004**

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## Billboard Top R&B/Hip-Hop Catalog Albums

**June 2004**

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<tr>
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*Note: The numbers in parentheses indicate the weeks at number one.*

**Source:** Billboard, a weekly music magazine published by the trade association for the music industry. The charts are compiled based on airplay, sales, and streaming data for the previous week. The data is sourced from Nielsen SoundScan, a national subset of retail sales and streaming data. Nielsen SoundScan uses a combination of various methods to track sales, including point-of-sale scanners, online sales data, and streaming services. The charts are compiled weekly and published on Billboard.com. The data is subject to change and is reviewed annually. For more information, visit the Billboard's official website or the Nielsen SoundScan website. For the most current and accurate information, please refer to the official sources.
JUNE 15 2004
Billboard HOT R&B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY

This week's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay Chart has been compiled based on data provided by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Ratings for each song are based on radio play. The chart is updated weekly and reflects the previous week's data. Data for this week's chart was collected between June 15 and June 21. For more information, visit www.billboard.com. Billboard is a trademark of Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. All rights reserved.

Brands

Continued from page 22

community. And they're getting comfortable with it.

Companies that partner with hip-hop artists gain credibility, even for long-established products, experts say.

"We know what our community wants. We know what America wants. We only help companies define their market," Simmons says.

He believes companies willing to work closely with the artists they enlist will reap the most benefit. "I need to make your product right, I need to make your product better, then I want to market it."

It is a far cry from the time, just five years ago, when prestige brands subjected to being associated with rap acts.

"They'd say, 'We don't want money from these people because this is going against our core audience,' not realizing that was going to be their next audience," Bad Boy's Spencer says.

M.A.C. cosmetics chose Lil' Kim and Mary J. Blige for its print campaign in 2001, according to M.A.C. president John Dennis; "the hip-hop generation is the M.A.C. generation."

The 20-year-old Canadian company's growth into the fourth-largest cosmetics brand coincided with the evolution of hip-hop culture, Dennis adds.

Meanwhile, other companies that once may have been concerned about alienating older demographics are turning to hip-hop campaigns.

Rappers and athletes anointed Cadillac's Escalade as the luxury sport utility vehicle of choice after its 1999 introduction.

The company's new rap rep is "a totally great surprise," Cadillac GM Mark LaNeve told the Los Angeles Times. Parent company GM soon seized on the idea, staging a car show in February that featured rap and sports stars, their cars and music.

According to the Los Angeles Times, Cadillac truck sales grew almost 20% in 2003 compared with the previous year.

This sort of growth encourages companies to not only seek rap stars for product endorsements but also hire such agencies as Blue Flame, Blue Fusion, Dave Brown and Power Moves. These firms use the guerrilla marketing methods developed by their clients to put products in the face of the elusive 12- to 24-year-old market.

"The reason it's successful is it still word of mouth," Power Moves' Frez says. "It's finding there's no better form of promotion."
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**Note:** The above list reflects only Latin albums. Billboard Latin Music Charts is not responsible for the accuracy of the data provided by the respective sources.
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Electro Label F Com Digs Rock

BY JAMES MARTIN

PARIS—After a decade dedicated to electronic music, French indie label F Com Communications is making inroads into rock.

For a label that helped define “the French touch” and put local electronic music on the global map, that could seem like a paradox. But label co-founder Eric Morand says the move is a natural one.

He says it means that “we’ve avoided getting bogged down by passing trends.”

What matters, according to Morand, is following a guiding principle of musical “openness.” The motto of F Com, as the label is generally known, is “electronic with no limits,” he says. “Our aim has always been to highlight electronic music in all its forms.”

Morand founded F Com with DJ Laurent Garnier in 1994. “They’ve never fallen into the trap of trying to be trendy,” says Henri Maurel, president of Paris-based dance radio network Radio FG. “Rather, they’ve always used the force of successful acts to bring on new artists.”

GOING LIVE

Emphasizing F Com’s eclectic approach, label stalwart Frédéric Galliano mixes jazz with African music and electronics. Meanwhile, current acts like Avril or latest signing Think Twice owe more to rock than to F Com’s techno roots.

Avril is the “nom de scene” of Fred Magnon, who says his musical roots in rock predated his embrace of electronic music.


“Members Only” is already available throughout continental Europe. It bows in the United Kingdom June 14.

Avril’s 2002 debut set, “That Horse Must Be Starving,” has shipped 60,000 copies worldwide, according to the label. Morand expects the new album to “at least double that.”

Morand says he is increasingly drawn to acts like Avril or Think Twice that can deliver live performances. F Com has its own live division, which books its artists’ tours. About 10% of the label’s turnover of 2.4 million euros ($2.9 million) in 2003 came from touring revenue.

F Com also has a sister music publishing company.

According to the label, its highest album is Saint Germain’s “Boulevard,” which has moved more than 400,000 copies around the world since 1996. Saint Germain left F Com at the end of the decade, signing with EMI.

Morand and Garnier reacted to Saint Germain’s departure by signing a slew of widely contrasting new acts ranging from Galliano to electronic purist Readymade.

PEDIGREE ACT

When F Com launched, Morand already had a track record on the dance scene. He founded the dance division of indie label Fnac Music, owned by French market-leading music retailer Fnac. He and Garnier decided to join forces when Fnac closed the label.

Garnier says that when Morand created Fnac’s dance division, “he was not banking on provoking a sudden change in mentalities, but on one of Fnac’s logistical advantages: the possibility to export finished product.”

Morand says export is crucial for F Com, with 66% of its current sales coming from outside France. The United Kingdom is one of F Com’s strongest markets. Two of Garnier’s own albums have shipped more than 250,000 units apiece globally, according to the label.

The overseas success is aided by F Com’s relationship with Brussels-based indie label and distribution group PIAS. The latter owns a minor stake in the label, which it has distributed in Europe and the United States since its inception. Other distributors include Beggars Group for Canada and MCD in Brazil.

Consistent album sales have not ruled out one-hit wonders, such as 1999’s “Flat Beat,” an infectious techno track by Mr. Oizo (aka Quentin Dupieux).

“Bean-maker Levi’s plucked the track for an ad campaign featuring a furry yellow puppet called Flat Eric. The song shipped 3 million copies worldwide and is the label’s best-selling single.”

“Our key artists aren’t necessarily those who sell the most,” Morand says. “They are those who allow the label to enter new territories.”

Morand remains convinced that electronic music has proved its legitimacy as a genre.

“Like jazz,” he says, “it may get disproportionate media coverage compared with how it sells, but it’s a more lifestyle than an economic phenomenon.”

For Morand, shipping anywhere between 5,000 and 30,000 copies is respectable for an electronic album.

Georges Fangon, co-founder of independent French retail network Starter, says that “electronic music is a niche which has reached its peak.” But he says this does not detract from F Com’s status as a quality label in a genre “well deserves its place in stores. I hope they continue.”

Trax Set Ain’t Nothin’ But A House Party


The three-disc collection (two beat-mixed by Grammy Award winner Maurice Joshua and Paul Johnson; the other unmixed) is home to one groundbreaking, stripped-down house classic after another. It also marks the first time that Trax has released music on CDs.


Joshua—who owns track “This Is Acid” which is also included in the set—says it was wonderful to revisit the tunes. “It took me back to the good old days when records were made with the sole purpose to make people dance.”

“There was nothing political about the process,” he continues. “No one was worrying about radio play or anything like that.”

Trax founder/CEO Larry Sherman concurs and adds, “We knew these tracks were special—that was musically obvious. The musicians, artists and producers were creating music from the heart.”

Which could explain why the production didn’t follow a cookiecutter method—unlike much dance music today.

“Myth surrounds house music, and deservedly so, but if you’ll only scratch the surface of some longstanding stereotypes, you’ll find the true diversity of the music and the music makers,” dance music historian Brian Chin writes in the set’s colorful liner notes. “It was the alliance of punk/new wave influences with every variety of hardcore dance that created this off-the-wall fusion.”

Accompanying “The 20th Anniversary Collection” is the separately sold “Trax Records: The Next Generation.” With this two-disc set, Sherman and Trax president/recording artist Screamin’ Rachel hope to create magic once again.

“The Next Generation” finds numerous Chicago house veterans—Joshua, Rachael, Joe Smooth and others—creating new tracks for today’s house generation. So, while not necessarily “next generation” in terms of artists, it is “next generation” in terms of new music.

Of course, whether the new tracks will stand the test of time like those featured in “The 20th Anniversary Collection” remains to be seen.

“We can never go back to how it was,” Sherman says. “The naiveté is no longer there—but the camara- raderie is making a comeback.”

Rachael adds. “It’s like all the house people have made a decision to unite and claim what is rightfully ours. The first time around, we weren’t really ready or prepared for the success that came. Now, we’re prepared and ready.”

“The new music has the same kind of heart that was at the center of the earlier hits,” she adds. “We’re 20 years on, but our hearts remain in the groove.”

Peter Rauhofer was primarily known as the Austrian mastermind of Club 69, known for carefree, disco-blessed tracks—not the opposite of Rauhofer’s recent underground fare—Club 69 delivered hit after hit.
### HOT DANCE SINGLE SALES

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### HOT DANCE RADIO AIRPLAY

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### TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS

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**Notes:**
- Nielsen Sound Scan data is used to compile these charts.
- Chart positions are based on sales data from Nielsen Sound Scan.
- Sales data reflects the performance of individual tracks and not albums.
- The charts are updated weekly and reflect the sales data from the previous week.
Little Darlin’ Reissue Collects Paycheck

BY JIM BESMAN

Aubrey Mayhew’s legendary 1960s Nashville indie label, Little Darlin’, Records, is finally getting respectful reissue treatment through Koch Records’ Nashville division. The label was home to classic recordings by Johnny Paycheck, Bobby Helms, Stonewall Jackson and Joeene C. Riley.

Just out is “The Little Darlin’ Sounds of Johnny Paycheck: The Beginning,” the first of a comprehensive reissue program of early Paycheck material. (The artist changed the spelling of his last name to Pay- check before his death.) Also newly released is “The Little Darlin’ Sound of Bobby Helms.” Next up are records from Jackson and steel guitar great Lloyd Green, both slated for July.

Nashville music historian/journalist Robert K. Oermann notes that the reissues celebrate not only an extraordinary label but an extraordinary era in Music City history.

“The company was one of the coolest country independent labels at a time when there were hundreds and dozens of them,” Oermann explains. “Now the majors have virtually a stranglehold on the charts, but in the 1960s, a lot more was possible. Little Darlin’s output and roster are the proof.”

Citing in particular what was then the “radical” sound of Paycheck and Green, Koch Records Nashville GM Nick Hunter says: “It was one of the smallest but most influential labels Nashville has ever seen. It didn’t sell a lot of records, but it was one of the few labels back in those times that was still having fun—maybe the first anti-establishment label Nashville ever had.”

The reissues also bring Music Row veteran Hunter’s career almost full circle. “I was working at a one-stop in Kansas City in 1967 and was enamored with the Paycheck sound. I called Aubrey up, and he offered me a job in Nashville,” Hunter recalls. Heb briedly worked for Little Darlin’ before starting his major-label career with Columbia.

Despite moving to the majors, Hunter stayed in touch with Mayhew and attempted to reissue the Little Darlin’ catalog 10 years ago while Hunter was at Giant Records. But Hunter felt Giant before any action could be taken.

“There a year ago—at Koch—I got to thinking again and called him,” Hunter says. “Slowly but surely, we put the deal together.”

DIGGING UP CATALOG

Hunter now looks to build an extensive, chronological Paycheck reissue series beginning with the artist’s 1966 label debut. Other Little Darlin’ artists with product forthcoming include Riley, who recorded for the label before her own career breakthrough, and Texas rockabilly/coun- try legend Joe Pooyee. He scored the 1966 hit “Heart Full of Love” for Little Darlin’ after changing his name to Johnny Dallas.

“There’s an incredible amount of stuff that we’re still digging up,” Hunter says, pointing to Mayhew’s eccentric catalog.

“There’s an album he put out years ago featuring a radio broadcast by Lee Harvey Oswald in New Orleans that will probably come out some day, and he has four unreleased sides on Clint Eastwood, including ‘Burn- ing Bridges’ from [the 1970 movie] ‘Kelly’s Heroes.’”

But the Paycheck catalog, Hunter adds, is clearly “the centerpiece.”

Mayhew says, “I recorded almost 500 sides on him, and so little got out. The real treasures are yet to be heard.”

Noting the “experimental” nature of the Little Darlin’ recordings, Mayhew says the first Paycheck reissue is “just as it was—very crude. We didn’t enhance it or anything, because that’s the way it was, the way it started. To dress it up would be a commercial gimmick just to sell records, and anybody who understands Johnny Paycheck wants it raw to begin with.”

Mayhew observes Paycheck’s influence on the more celebrated Merle Haggard and George Jones.

“Day would switch in there, and he was probably the best country singer that ever surfaced,” he says.

Koch’s marketing plans will include a syndicated Little Darlin’ radio program for classic country stations.

“By the time we get finished,” Hunter notes, “we’ll have 100 to 150 [Little Darlin’] albums out over a five- to seven-year period, [including] 25 Paycheck albums.”

Laura Cantrell, a country artist on New York indie label Diesel Only and longtime host of free-form station WFMU New York’s country program “Fascinating Shores,” has to have “clean CD copies” of her Little Dar- lin’ vinyl collection available.

“I have a lot of the albums, and they’re very treasured parts of my collection,” she says. “The Paychecks are just classic: great records that really stand up, made with great Nashville players like Lloyd Green who were playing really edgy coun- try music for its time—not the mushy, sappy style that you think of from late-60s Nashville.”

Rediscovering the Classics

Koch Records senior director of production and catalog development Dave Nives notes that the late Pay- check “unfortunately, because he was broke, rerecorded everything he did 50 times—which accounts for real schlock in the marketplace. ‘Now we’re trying to counter that and show that these are his classic, great recordings.’”

Hunter and Nives would like to find other Nashville indies from the era to mine in the manner of Little Darlin.’ Among the potential candi- dates Hunter cites are Chart Records, which starred Lynn Anderson, and Sims Records, which had Patsy Moun- tana and Carl Story on its roster.

“I’d like to see people preserve the history of Nashville that I don’t think has been preserved before,” Hunter says. He adds that he’s “not opposed” to reactivating Little Darlin’ with “current stuff.”

CRS Tackles How To Revitalize Country Format

The tone was upbeat at the regional Country Radio Seminar, held May 24-25 in Las Vegas, with panelists focusing on ways the country format can beat the doldrums.

At the session “All Stars of the Country Industry: Reality Bites,” moderator Michael Powers called country “a struggling industry, but surely some new artists can flourish. There are very bright lights out there.” Powers was until recently senior VP of promotion at Universal Music Group Nashville.

The head of country programming for Sirius XM, Radio, Scott Lindy, agreed. “We are not going to let this format die,” he said. “There are people who are going to take a few riskier chances where we work.”

Lindy said the success of artists like Epic’s Gretchen Wilson is a sign that country may be heading for another boom cycle.

Morris Management Group’s Clint Higham was less optimistic. He said radio consolidation has made people afraid to take risks. Disputing the adage that cream rises to the top, Higham said: “There is a lot of great music that isn’t getting heard.”

And artist Chey Wright called today’s format “homogenized.”

But KPLX (The Wolf) Dallas PD Paul Williams said the problem is not with the format. Noting that con- sumers have so many media options vying for their attention today, Williams said: “It’s the world that’s different. It’s not a problem with coun- try music or country radio.”

Calling country “the greatest format in the world,” Sirius’ Lindy admonished that “it’s something we could all stand to embrace a little bit more.” He encouraged the industry to take more chances and be more experimental.

Higham agreed. “The public is looking for something different right now... As long as we play it safe, we’re going to have this crappy soccer-mom music.”

Wright said her friends at other labels in town are “wringing their hands” about the acts their labels are signing, because those artists are more gimmick than substance. “They swallow fire when they sing,” she quipped.

At another ses- sion, Vince Gill expressed some concerns about label consolidation, which again recently affected his longtime label MCA Nashville.

“We’re cutting the fat out, cutting out the mid- dle man,” he said of the industry.

“With that, our bottom line is better... But you have to ask yourself, ‘Is it ethical? All these people whose livelihoods you’ve cut out, is it worth it?’

“You have to have a heart and be more willing to be not so bottom- line-oriented.” Gill added. “I wish we were more willing to invest in people and not bottom lines.”

ON THE ROW: Larry Shell joins Bro- ken Bow Records in Nashville as VP of A&R and senior VP/creative direc- tor of Broken Bow’s affiliated publishing company. Magic Musta- da Music. The company’s roster of songwriters includes Randy

Music Group as Southwest regional promotion director.

Matt Rollings has signed his publishing company, Zesty Zack’s Music, to a copyright administra- tion deal with Nashville-based Integrated Copyright Group.

SIGNINGS: Kevin Sharp has signed a recording deal with Nashville- based Cupid Records. His first album for the label will be released next year. Sharp is best-known for his 1986 No. 1 hit, “Nobody Knows (Asylum).

Oh Boy Records has signed singer/songwriter Shawn Camp to its artist roster. His first album for the label, “Live at the Station Inn,” is due Aug. 31. Earth Brooks, Brooks & Dunn, George Strait, Kenny Chesney and Patty Love- less have recorded Camp’s songs.

ON THE TUBE: Lifetime Television has acquired the syndication rights to “Reba,” the WB sitcom starring MCA Nashville artist Reba McEn- tire. The cable network will begin televising the show in syndication in fall 2006.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greatest Hits 1</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Arista Nashville</td>
<td>$12.98/18.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatest Hits 2</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>$12.98/18.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatest Hits 3</td>
<td>Reba McEntire</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>$17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatest Hits 4</td>
<td>Faith Hill</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>$12.98/18.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatest Hits 5</td>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>$14.98/24.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatest Hits 6</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>Arista Nashville</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Greatest Hits 7</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greatest Hits 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greatest Hits 9</td>
<td>Faith Hill</td>
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<td>Greatest Hits 10</td>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>$14.98/24.98</td>
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*Note: Prices are subject to change and may vary by region.*
### June 12, 2004 - Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REDNECK WOMAN</td>
<td>Gretchen Wilson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LETTERS FROM HOME</td>
<td>John Michael Montgomery</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF YOU EVER STOP LOVING ME</td>
<td>Montgomery Gentry</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHISKEY GIRL</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LET'S BE AGAIN</td>
<td>Lonestar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THAT'S WHAT SHE GETS FOR LOVING ME</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEPERLY</td>
<td>David Lee Murphy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCO</td>
<td>Randy Flatts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney &amp; Uncle Kracker</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I CAN'T SLEEP</td>
<td>Clay Walker</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOU'LL THINK OF ME</td>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>PASSENGER SEAT</td>
<td>SheDaisy</td>
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<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOMEONE</td>
<td>Reba McEntire</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I GOT A FEELIN'</td>
<td>Billy Currington</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I GIVE UP</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHISKEY LULLABY</td>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I WANT TO LIVE</td>
<td>Josh Gracin</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOU GOOD LOOKIN'</td>
<td>Jerrod Niemann</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHE THINKS SHE NEEDS ME</td>
<td>Andy Griggs</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVE LIKE YOU WERE DYING</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOUGHER THAN NAILS</td>
<td>Joe Diffie</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIRLS Lie TOO</td>
<td>Terri Clark</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAST ONE STANDING</td>
<td>Emerson Drive</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW FAR</td>
<td>Martina McBride</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT ONLY HURTS WHEN I'M BREATHING</td>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME AND EMILY</td>
<td>Rachel Proctor</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE WRONG GIRL</td>
<td>Lee Ann Womack</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I WANNA MAKE YOU CRY</td>
<td>Jeff Bates</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF NOBODY BELIEVED IN YOU</td>
<td>Joe Nichols</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### June 12, 2004 - Billboard Top Bluegrass Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALISON Krauss + Union Station</td>
<td>Alisson Krauss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 CCKEL CREEK</td>
<td>2 Ckcal Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERRY GARCIA &amp; DAVID GRISMAN</td>
<td>Terry Garcia &amp; David Grisman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O CROW MEDICINE SHOW</td>
<td>O Crow Medicine Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM BUSH</td>
<td>Sam Bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHONDA VINCENT</td>
<td>Rhonda Vincent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERIK MCCOURY</td>
<td>Erik McCoury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIE J. SULLIVAN</td>
<td>Willie J. Sullivan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JERRY GARCIA</td>
<td>Jerry Garcia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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</table>

### Billboard Hot Country Singles Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BREAK DOWN HERE</td>
<td>Julie Roberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLAME IT ON MAMA</td>
<td>The Jenkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILD WEST SHOW</td>
<td>Big &amp; Rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HURT</td>
<td>Johnny Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAST ONE STANDING</td>
<td>Scotty Emerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE WATCH</td>
<td>Carolynn Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIE OF A BROKEN HEART</td>
<td>Kathy Mattea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Legend:**
- Songs appearing on the Billboard Hot Country chart for the week of June 12, 2004.
- "Top 40" indicates songs that achieved at least 40 weeks on the chart.
- "Last 50" indicates songs that achieved at least 50 weeks on the chart.
- "Hot Shot" indicates songs that were added to country stations and achieved rapid chart success.
- "Platinum" indicates sales of over one million units.
- "Gold" indicates sales of over 500,000 units.

**Additional Notes:**
- Tracks marked with an asterisk (*) indicate that the song was also a Top 40 hit on the Billboard Hot 100 chart.
- Songs marked with an exclamation point (!) indicate that the song was a "Breakout" hit, achieving substantial airplay and chart success within a few weeks of release.
- Sales data is complied by Nielsen SoundScan and represents sales from the previous week.

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**Billboard Hot Country Singles Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Break Down Here</td>
<td>Julie Roberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blame It on Mama</td>
<td>The Jenkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild West Show</td>
<td>Big &amp; Rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurt</td>
<td>Johnny Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last One Standing</td>
<td>Scotty Emerick</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Watch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Die of a Broken Heart</td>
<td>Kathy Mattea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Additional Notes:**
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- Sales data is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan and represents sales from the previous week.

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**Note:** All information is as of June 12, 2004, and is subject to change based on sales data from the previous week.
**ALBUMS**

**POP**

**THE CORRS**
**Borrowed Heaven**
**PRODUCERS:** Ozone
**Atlantic 83670**
**RELEASE DATE:** June 8

CERTAIN songs might be doled up with Celtic instrumentation, but the latest album from Irish family band the Corrs is very much standard American pop. Lyrically, the Corrs keep it light as well, which could prove annoying for those craving something more substantial. But for those desiring upbeat, sunny tunes—perfect for the gym, pool and patio—“Borrowed Heaven” does not disappoint.—SA

**BEBEL GILBERTO**
**Bebel Gilberto**
**PRODUCERS:** Marius de Vries
**Six Degrees 1101**
**RELEASE DATE:** June 8

Four years after international acclaim greeted her debut, “Tanto Tempo,” Bebel Gilberto returns with her self-titled sophomore outing. Like her first disc, the new set delivers alluring songs driven by gentle grooves and calmed by soothing and whisper-like vocals in English and Portuguese. Sharing equal billing are lyrical pop, jazz-infused atmospheres and textured Brazilian rhythms. Uptempo highlights include Gilberto’s percussive take on Carlinhos Brown’s indelible “Agnájá” and her cooking original “River Song.” There’s not much variation from “Tanto Tempo” besides distancing herself from electronica accunts. But the new disc’s biggest revelation is the show-stopping closer “Next to You,” a simple, string-swelled, passionately sung ballad that introduces a welcome new dimension to Gilberto’s repertoire.—DG

**PI J HARVEY**
**Uh Huh Her**
**PRODUCER:** PJ Harvey
**Island Def Jam 6 02498 66713**
**RELEASE DATE:** June 8

PJ Harvey has never been one for the formulaic. Rather than attempt to recreate the polished, cosmopolitan rock of 2000’s “Stories From the City, Stories From the Sea,” Harvey returns to raw basics musically and thematically. This time, she plays most of the instruments herself and uses simple, often stripped-down arrangements in an effort to create something Sunnyside to a barren production. And whereas “Stories” featur-

**VELVET REVOLVER**
**Contraband**
**PRODUCERS:** Josh Abraham, Velvet Revolver
**RCA 82676-59794**
**RELEASE DATE:** June 8

When ex-Space Temple Pilots vocalist Scott Weiland joined forces with former Guns N’ Roses members Slash, Duff McKagan and Matt Sorum, a rock supergroup was born. (Sorum’s band Kute Kuthers plays guitar in the band.) Weiland’s drug problems often overshadow his vocal skills, but he’s always been a charismatic frontman, and Slash and McKagan had a band in creating “Appetite for Destruction,” one of the most influential rock albums of the past 20 years. While “Contraband” often sounds more like limerick-lyst IT?! UNR, Velvet Revolver has crafted a promising, if not spectacular debut. “Illegal,” “Headpace,” “Sucker Train Blues” and first single “Silencer” are solid rockers, but much of the album lacks a spark that one might expect from these musicians. However, Velvet Revolver’s signature sound is more than a side project signals hope for the band’s future.—BT

**FELIX DA HOUSECAT**
**Devin Dazzle & the Neon Fever**
**PRODUCERS:** various
**Epic 70727**

Two years ago, dance music veteran Felix Da Housecat delivered the critically acclaimed “Kitten & Three Gilts.” Around the world, Housecat became the unofficial poster child for the then-emerging nu-metal scene. Tracks like “Silver Screen” and “Madame Hollywood” became dancefloor staples in the hip-hop club. Remixes for Madonna and other dance music act immediately followed. Now, along comes “Devin Dazzle & the Neon Fever,” the anticipated follow-up to “Kitten.” Unfortunately, “Devin” dazzles a lot less than its predecessor. The new album finds Housecat still mining electro synths patterns out of the ’80s, but it’s not as retro-fresh-sounding as it was a couple years back. Still, a few tracks do stand out: The new Order-shaded “Ready 2 Wear,” the Klein & MRS-spaced “Lick Your MMR Be Your Bed” and “Neon Human,” which sounds like a lost Human League track. Last time out, Housecat introduced the world to the next big thing. Hopefully, he’ll repeat the process on his next album.—MP

**WORLD**

**LOS AMIGOS INVISIBLES**
**The Venezuelan Zinga Son Vol. 1**
**PRODUCERS:** “Little” Louie Vega, Kenny “Dope” González
**Mute 49502**
**Luaka Bop 90054**

**RELEASE DATE:** May 25

For their new album, these Venezuelan Latin/rock band Los Amigos Invisibles hooked up with clubland veterans “Little” Louie Vega and Kenny “Dope” González (who also record under the Masters at Work moniker). Globally known for their reverence of house music, Vega and González infuse Los Amigos’ sonic plate with a decided house vibe—something the band has always embraced in its concerts. But those expecting a wildly housey experience—is it the act’s previous album, “Arepa 2000: A Venezuelan Journey Into Space”—will be disappointed. Sure, the music stays top-notch, but too often, one track melds into the next without much distinction. Of course, there are exceptions: they include “Día” and “Plaza Azul.” Also noteworthy is a feature cover of Touch & Go’s “Erase Your Mind” from the early days of house music. All in all, the band’s horn work explode. More of this would have resulted in a hotter-than-hot, rather than lukewarm, album.—MP

(Continued on next page)
(Continued from preceding page)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Nite Idea

PRODUCERS: various

Putumayo World Music PUT-CD-224

RELEASE DATE: May 25

Here’s another Latin alternative compilation that escapes the slickness of its predecessors, which typically have mutated music from great acts with material by acts who are lesser-known for good reason. Putumayo’s “Nuevo Latino” risers above by featuring sophisticated tracks that blend Latin groove with trip-hop and electronics; this results in a distinct sound within the Latin alternative realm. There are many voices but none overlapping one another, and feel. Standouts include Argentine newcomer Federico Aubele’s new tango “Postales,” the always amusing multicultural mix that is Sergent Garcia, Kad Achouri’s blend of mundane lyrics and irresistible beats and, as always, Jaga-Jaga, superlative in the introspective “El Lado Oscuro.” There is also run-of-the-mill material, including Los Del Abajo’s “El Indio” and Mos Def’s uneven “Rainsong.” But overall, this is a collection of amusing, surprising discovery.—LC

JAZZ

★ GREG OSBY

Public

PRODUCER: Greg Osby

Blue Note 7243 5 97683

RELEASE DATE: June 1

Alto saxophonist Greg Osby will be one of those giants of jazz that critics write about, usually in the context of some band or else standing on their shoulders. He has been cutting tracks since the late ’80s, and during a period when too much emphasis was placed on reinventing standards, Osby was embarking on adventures in original composition. That emphasis on living his art has paid off in that Osby is not only a brilliant player but also a fine composer. “Public” is one of the important jazz albums of the year. The Osby original “Visitation” offers wonderfully muted colors and an enigmatic melody that Osby and pianist McGumi Yonezawa explore with fluent, open-ended solos. Trumpeter Nicholas Payton gives soloing songs, including “Bennie’s Tune,” an up-tempo number which affords him and Osby an opportunity to let extended solos, as well as put together some very pointed exchanges. Also note Joao Osborne’s bluesy vocal turn on “Lover Man.”—PPV

BLUES

◆ DEBORAH COLEMAN

What About Love?

PRODUCER: Randy LaBbe

Telefunken TF 68756

RELEASE DATE: May 25

This is guitarist Deborah Coleman’s second album, but she has put together a powerful group of tunes for her initial outing. Coleman has been a proficient blues guitarists for some time now, and she has never been prone to some of the excesses of other lead guitarists. That is why she can step back on “Undeniable” and give the choice solo to B3 player Ken Clark. But she can also tear it up when she wants to—check her solo on the Phil Everly song “When Will I Be Loved?” For Coleman, the song’s the thing, so when she serves it up, that may have been her rule of thumb for “What About Love?” The sound is tight, Coleman’s vocals are solid and her choice of material is excellent. Everything about this CD speaks of the quiet assurance of an artist who has arrived at her appointed time.—PPV

ESSENTIAL REVIEWS

GOSPEL

◆ THE WILLIAMS BROTHERS & THEIR SUPERSTAR FRIENDS

Soul Link Live

PRODUCERS: Doug Williams, Melanie Williams, Jeremy Peters

Blackberry 1649

RELEASE DATE: May 25

This multi-act, multi-name live recording is a sizzling primer on modern gospel classic music. You will not find a more Southern, more angelic hymns anywhere near this relentlessly rocking collection. Genre luminaries the Williams Brothers, Lee Williams & The Spiritual QC’s, the Canton Spirituals, Slim & the Supreme Angels and the Christianaires take into line takes of signature songs—as well as a high-octane ensemble of the O’Jays’ 1973 smash, “Love Train.” Soulful lead vocals, airlight harmonies and a four-piece band—driven by pounding backbeats and punchy horns—turn the gospel message into retro-fitted ’60s soul. But these are the guys who invented it, and they are still crankin’ it up and turning it out better in the hordes of R&B and rock spirited acts who’ve spawned for decades.—GE

CHRISTIAN

◆ SELAH

Hiding Place

PRODUCERS: various

Curb DJ-78634

RELEASE DATE: May 25

On its fourth album, this talented trio once again serves up a winning combination of classic hymns and new fare, along with a couple of African numbers. The result is one soul-satisfying musical experience. Multiple Dove Award winner Selah (Allan Hall, Nicol Sporborg and Todd Smith) celebrates each member’s wonderfully distinctive voice, here. Each is given ample time to shine. The threesome brings a freshness and passion to such standards as “I Need Thee Every Hour” and “There is Power in the Blood” and should “Use Me” (which Josh Groban has cut) is a stunning highlight, as is the Counting Hymn “Exhale.” The trio also delivers a compelling version of Andrae Crouch’s “Through It All.” Three bonus tracks give fans a taste of the members’ solo projects, due in August.—DEP

SINGLES

Edited by Michael Paioletta

POP

RICHARD MARX When You’re Gone

(3:47)

PRODUCERS: Richard Marx, David Cole

WRITERS: R. Marx

PUBLISHERS: Ch-Boy Music c/o Wixen Pub.

EMI 07086 18252 (CD promo)

Richard Marx has never slowed down as a singer-songwriter and producer. But he took his biggest hit to date—off the year the Grammy Award win for Luther Vandross “Dance With My Father” to remind radio that he’s still got the goods. “When You’re Gone” is as fresh as green grass: It rocks with freewheeling gusto, sketches a meaningful lyrical portrait of creeping insecurity and is a melodic ice cream cone (featuring a gutsy guitar solo from Keith Urban). In his latter making days, Marx was painted into a corner as a soft balladeer. “Gone” will remind adult top listeners this break-through “Don’t Mean Nothing,” with all the potential to turn the page on a hold new chapter for this timeless artist. And this is just a hint of the versatile, full-length “My Own Best Enemy,” out in August. Bulls-eye.—CT

MODERN ROCK

THE KILLERS Somebody Told Me

(3:17)

PRODUCERS: the Killers, Jeff Saltzman

WRITERS: the Killers

PUBLISHER: ASCAP

Island ISL 16049 (CD promo)

The debut single from Las Vegas’ The Killers is as addictive as nickel slots. The retro-leaning song features keyboards squeals that reference The Osmonds and an infectious chorus celebrating androgyny that recalls Blu’s “Girls and Boys”: “Somebody told me, you had a boyfriend, that looks like a girl/and that I had in February of last year/it’s not confidential, I’ve got a boyfriend who’s got the hair that looks like a car but that’s that/the quartet, all in their early 20s, are likely too young to remember the skinny tie era, but they do a great job of bringing it back in all its glory, the song, from the band’s forthcoming album, “Hot Fuss,” recently debuted on the modern chart and should continue their climb well past the album’s June 15 street date.—BT

AC

◆ MELISSA ETHERIDGE This Moment

(3:27)

PRODUCER: John Shanks

WRITERS: M. Etheridge

PUBLISHERS: Songs of Ridge Road/Dillon Jackson Music (ASCAP); WB Music

Island ZIS 16086-2 (CD promo)

Newly married Melissa Etheridge is greeting the summer with a love song, and from the sound of “This Moment,” she is completely read-over-heels herself. The track is cut from the artist’s new album, “Lucky.” It finds Etheridge singing of the moon and the stars and the heavens and angels—leaving no doubt that her head is happily inhabiting the clouds. Lines like “You and I can stay here in this moment/let the world fade away/I just want to stay with you” really need no further explanation. Ditto for “My hand on your skin/We can slowly begin/I am the one who is burning Etheridge, with percussion and tambourine merrily jangling alongside. This is likely to become a new anthem at proms, graduation parties and wedding celebrations.—CLT

◆ CELINE DION You and I

(4:05)

PRODUCERS: Aldo Nova, Peer Astrom

WRITERS: A. Nova, J. Daval

PUBLISHERS: WB Music/Deston Songs (ASCAP); Aldo Nova (SOCAN)

Epic C22-04-000308 (CD promo)

While Celine Dion’s crown as the queen of Las Vegas remains firmly affixed, her national presence as a hitmaker has been scant of late. The plucky “You and I” is an ideal vehicle to launch a full-scale seasonal assault on the airwaves, with its love-my-man themes and kinetic, summer-breeze tempo, akin to her sign-the-ways-the-weather-is-coming anthem “I’m Alive.” Dion dispenses a joyful romp from the mic, sounding fresh and fully at ease, and she riffs just enough to stamp the song with a telltale trade-mark or two. “You and I” is one of two new studio tracks on the upcoming live disc, “A New Day . . . Live in Las Vegas,” due June 15. She’s off to a fine start; this is vintage Celine. Get to it, AC.—CT

COUNTRY

◆ CAROLYN DAWN JOHNSON

Die a Broken Heart

(3:15)

PRODUCERS: Dann Huff, Carolyn Dawn Johnson

WRITERS: C. Johnson, S. Smith

PUBLISHERS: Just Another Girl’s Music, Universal Music/EMI Blackwood Music; Shaye Smith BMI

Arista 82876-60202-2 (CD promo)

Culled from Johnson’s forthcoming album, “Dress Rehearsal,” this plaintive ballad (penned by the artist and Shaye Smith) serves as a perfect showcase for the singer’s sweet, affecting vocals. The lyric finds Johnson issuing the following plea: “Take me fast or take me slow/I don’t really care how fast/Go in the daylight or in the dark/Just don’t let me die of a broken heart.” Backed by a sighing steel guitar, Johnson delivers the lyric with such tenderness and vulnerability that a listener cannot help but be drawn in. In a less vocalist’s hands, the song could come off of a bit maudlin, but Johnson turns it into a poignant look at heartbreak—something most people can relate to.—DEP

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Notting Hill Expands On Worldwide Stance

BY JIM BESMAN

London-based music publishing company Notting Hill Music Group always had a U.S. presence, but last June the firm made a statement by opening a formal stateside office.

"We had been in and out of America, signing a lot of songwriter/producers," notes president Peter Chalcraft, who works out of the Los Angeles office much of the time. He says the move solidified the company's domestic foothold and greatly improved its overall fortunes.

Specifically, Notting Hill's L.A. office signed Robert Walker, the lyricist of Beyoncé's singles "Baby Boy," "Me, Myself and I" and "Naughty Girl."

"Our first record, "Baby Boy," went to No. 1," Chalcraft says. "In March we had seven singles in the Hot 100, and [in April] we had three in the top 10. Those were the aforementioned "Me, Myself and I" and R-Kwon's "Tipsy," written by Notting Hill writer/producer team Trackboyz and Ruben Studdard's "Sorry 2004," penned by the publisher's Ronnie Jackson.

Britney Spears' "Everytime" was co-written by Notting Hill's Annette Artani.

Besides Walker, whose credits include material for Eve and Ricky Martin, and Trackboyz, whose credits include Nelly and Nappy Roots, Chalcraft singles out the writer/producer team Platinum Status. The latter's heavy involvement with B2K includes the "You Got Served" soundtrack hit "Badaboom."

"They just had a hit, "Pop That Booty," with Marques Houston and are now working on B2K lead singer Omarrion's solo album," he says.

Chalcraft cites other recent U.S. signings, including Erick Sermon, Emanuel Officer and G1 (George Archie, whose credits include R. Kelly's "Home Alone" and Dwele's "Find a Way"). But he also praises his key L.A. staff recruits — licensing and administration director Randy Williams, creative manager Qiana Conley and executive assistant Sebek Sanyika — for the office's strong first-year performance.

Notting Hill Music originated in 1990 as the international reper-
toire division of Japan's Nippon Television Music. It became Notting Hill Music after a management buyout in 1993 by Chalcraft, Andy McQueen (now Notting Hill's chairman) and David Loader (its managing director).

"We grew into America five years ago by signing Will Smith to represent his publishing to the world outside the U.S.," Chalcraft says. "This led us to [going] back and forth from England to America constantly to meet artists, managers and attorneys, and it showed how we could compete at a very high level."

The Smith deal also "opened the floodgates," Chalcraft continues.

"We signed Lisa Lopes from TLC and focused very heavily on the R&B/urban market, because R&B was selling very well internationally, and it was something we wanted to concentrate on in America from a music genre point of view."

The L.A. office came about because of Notting Hill's "prolific" domestic songwriter/producers and their broad range of projects, Chalcraft says. "We had to be here to make sure these guys were taken care of — something we couldn't do from London."

Chalcraft started in the music business in 1975 at Bronze Records, an independent publishing and record company in England.

"The philosophy of that company was similar to the one we have here now," he says. "It's not just about sitting back and hoping money turns up, but going out and utilizing skills and tapping all areas of the business [including] film and TV and getting covers."

"We like getting our hands dirty," he says. "That's really important in this day and age, and it's ingrained in the three [company principals], who have enormous amounts of experience in all aspects of the business—which is also really important right now."

With offices in London and L.A., Notting Hill can now take a "worldwide rather than insular" stance, Chalcraft says.

"We have a network of partners around the world who rep our catalogs, and we have American songwriters and producers who travel to Europe regularly to work on European acts and vice versa," he adds.

To illustrate, Chalcraft points to Steve McNerney, who along with the likes of Boy George and Roger Eno, is signed to Notting Hill in England.

"He's not famous by any stretch," Chalcraft says of McNerney, "but he is a fantastic pop-rock songwriter, whom we've brought to L.A. a couple of times now and [who] is writing on some very good projects with [U.S. Notting Hill writer] Colin Wolfe and Robert Walker. It's a whole new area for these guys, because he comes from a Beatles and Monkees background and is mixing it up with their urban background."

Chalcraft notes that Notting Hill has the potential to seek catalog and administration deals in the United States and in Europe.

"Our London office looks after a multitude of catalogs, like the Royalty Network and Mismo International," he says. "In the U.S. we administer the publishing of German indie label SPV, so we also offer services for catalogs that need a home in the U.S."

"The bottom line is, we're a real international company now," Chalcraft says. "So many companies focus on one country rather than all, but since Notting Hill's owners are here and in London, our focus is to look at copyrights on a worldwide basis rather than just American or European."

'Killer Diller' Director Navigates Licensing Obstacles

"'Killer Diller' is an uplifting but unrelieved film about a Christian band of misfits who sneak away from their halfway house operator/bandleader (played by Fred Willard) to play the blues, with an autistic but fantastic rock'n'roll piano player in tow.

Speaking after a screening at last month's Tribeca Film Festival, writer/director Tricia Brock noted the problems she faced regarding music licensing. Now back in Los Angeles, she expands on her past predicament.

"Everybody tells you upfront how expensive it is," Brock says, specifically referring to the classic blues songs that she originally sought. She was then informed that they were already overused in films and commercials, which she appreciated, because she really wanted to rediscover some material.

Brock listened to hundreds of songs from the likes of Robert Johnson, Jimmy Reed, Elmore James and Sonny Boy Williamson — which were all in the movie. She also cites one of her favorites, Slim Harpo, whose "Shake Your Hips" and "I'm a King Bee" are used.

The movie's makeshift blues band has all the energy and charm as that in "The Commitments." Sure enough, that 1991 film's music supervisor, G. Marq Roswell, performed the same service for "Killer Diller."

"He tried to educate me about the labyrinthine process of licensing music," Brock says. She also credits Roswell with bringing film and TV songwriter/composer Tree Adams to the project.

"They've collaborated on many scores and pushed me to use original songs so as not to have to go through licensing — though I dug in my heels on some of the classic blues songs that they reinvented." Brock says. "Tree's the reason that it works, because he completely tutored the non-musicians actors in how to perform and orchestrated the band. If the band didn't work as a band, I did not have a film."

I thought the film had a "Rocky" quality — and cried through the whole thing. Incidentally, Adams was a member of Atlantic Records group the Hatters and is the grandson of Vanguard Records founder Seymour Solomon. He is also a Treehouse Music (BMI) writer whose credits include "Casper," "Auto Focus" and "Felicity."

EVANESCENCE'S IMMORTALITY: Evanescence's "My Immortal" has become the all-time best-selling sheet music download at Internet-based Musicles. Customers have downloaded 8,350 copies of the song since last July. Vanessa Carlton's "A Thousand Miles" was the previous top-seller. She has logged sales of 7,137 copies.

"Downloadable sheet music is still a relatively small part of the overall sheet music market, but it is an emerging market and definitely the future of the business," Musicnotes CEO Kathleen Marsh says.

"Despite low awareness of digital sheet music, 7,000 downloads of a single song is a very meaningful sales number, even in the traditional print market. Our research tells us that digital delivery can dramatically expand the sheet music market, which will be good for consumers as well as music publishers and the songwriters they represent."

Noting that the song carries a premium price of $5.50 per download because of synchronization of the sheet music to the customer's CD, company chairman Tim Reid adds, "We have also mailed a couple of hundred copies of 'My Immortal' at the traditional $3.95 price point. But our customers love the ability to get their sheet music instantly, and they are willing to pay for value-added features."
Publishers Enter 'New Age Of Income'

BY JIM BESSMAN

The decline in CD sales, the uncertainty of radio airplay and the persistence of illegal downloading continue to force music publishers to seek new revenue sources. And they are leaving no stone unturned.

Music publishing has entered a "new age of income," says Peter Chalcraft of Notting Hill Music, driven by new uses for music copyrights and at least one constant:

"Kids don't mind spending money on quality things," Chalcraft says. "We're beginning to see income from ringtones, [legal] downloads and

(Continued on page 40)

Songwriters Await New Hall

Washington, D.C., Home Proposed

BY JIM BESSMAN

The 2004 Songwriters Hall of Fame Awards dinner June 10 in New York will be another star-studded affair. But this year's ceremony, which honors songwriting legends, will also include an announcement of a possible physical home for the Songwriters Hall of Fame in Washington D.C.

Although the deal is not yet complete, Hal David, chairman/CEO of the National Academy of Popular Music/Songwriters Hall tells Billboard there is an agreement "to house the Songwriters Hall of Fame in the new National Music Center and Museum, which will be constructed on the site of the old Washington Convention Center in downtown Washington, D.C."

News of a proposed home for the Songwriters Hall of Fame is just one highlight of this year's dinner, where inductees will include Charles Fox, Al Green, Daryl Hall & John Oates, Don McLean, Barrett Strong and Norman Whitfield. Special awards will go to leading publishers, songwriters and patrons (see story, page 44).

The inaugural Starlight Award, which honors a "rising star," will go

(Continued on page 42)
Anthony Colombo compiled the recaps with assistance from Billboard Hot 100 chart manager Silvio Pietroliango.

The Billboard Hot 100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Publishing Corporation (No. of charted titles)</th>
<th>Publisher (No. of charted titles)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>EMI MUSIC (99)</td>
<td>EMIL APRIL,ASCAP (59)</td>
<td>ANDRE BENJAMIN (3)</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>EMI BLACKWOOD, BMI (35)</td>
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<td>R. KELLY MUSIC (9)</td>
<td>ALMO,ASCAP (10)</td>
<td>AMY PATTON (2)</td>
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Hot 100 Publishing Chart-Toppers

The chart recaps in this special issue on music publishing are year-to-date from the Dec. 6, 2003, issue (the beginning of the 2004 chart year) through the May 15, 2004, issue. The recaps for The Billboard Hot 100 are based on a combination of sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan, gross audience impressions monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems and reported airplay from radio stations. Nielsen BDS does not monitor. Additional publishing chart recaps appear on billboard.biz/pubcharts.

In cases where more than one songwriter wrote a particular song, points are divided equally between the composers. Publisher and publishing corporation points are likewise split evenly. Publishing corporations receive 100% of the point values compiled by any publisher in which the parent company holds at least 50% equity. Publishing corporations also receive 25% of the point value built by publishers that they administer but do not own.

Keeping Track

BY JIM BESSMAN

New uses of music copyrights require adaptation on the part of the performing-rights organizations. "Obviously, each new music use presents a new set of challenges in terms of tracking [royalties]," says Hunter Williams, SESAC VP of royalty distribution and research services.

The best way to handle technological challenges is with technological solutions, Williams says.

"For example, the same type of digital pattern-recognition technology we pioneered for tracking radio performances in 1994 is now being utilized to track Webcast performances," Williams explains. "Where a technological solution doesn't already exist, we work closely with our licensees to create tools that allow them to report performances electronically."

BMI president/CEO Frances W. Preston cites BMI's "robust computing infrastructure" as an example of the society's commitment to new technology. It was created expressly to handle the data associated with such new revenue streams as the Internet, music subscription services and ringtones.

"Our Internet and mobile entertainment licensees routinely send their music-use data electronically to our servers, where it is fed into our distribution systems," Preston says. "New-media licensees provide census data on all performances on their properties. The end result is that billions of performances are tracked each quarter, and royalty payments are made to writers and publishers of all performed songs."

Preston adds that thousands of radio stations utilize BMI's proprietary Electronic Music Reporting software to upload music-use information.

(Continued on page 43)
CONGRATULATES OUR 2004 SONGWRITER’S HALL OF FAME HONOREES

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Johnny Mercer Award  Starlight Award

MICHAEL GOLDSTEIN
Patron of The Arte Award

HAL DAVID & BURT BACHARACH
Towering Song Award, “What The World Needs Now Is Love”

NEIL SEDAKA
Sammy Cahn Lifetime Achievement Award

LES BIDER
Abe Olman Publisher Award
New Age
Continued from page 37
other areas."
Music publishers need to "keep their ears to the ground about new technologies," says Mary Beth Roberts, VP of catalog development at Famous Music Publishing. She points to ringtones, which was perhaps the biggest growth area during the past year for music publishing.
"We're formulating new business models [due to ringtones]," she says. "In some cases, we're doing trial licenses to study how they turn out, and we're being flexible with terms and conditions in our contracts to see what works and what doesn't."

RETOOLING SYSTEMS
Universal Music Publishing Group worldwide president David Benzer also cites "dramatic growth in the ringtone licensing area," both in and out of the United States. "Users come in and request hundreds of songs, so we've had to retool our system to handle them very quickly," he says.
The Harry Fox Agency, which collects mechanical royalties for more than 25,000 publishers, also has been pursuing new opportunities for its affiliates.

Churgin says HFA allows a given company to propose a licensing arrangement, which it then will offer to all of its affiliates. "It's an efficient way of reaching out to one of the largest audiences of U.S. music publishers."
Hit songwriter Diane Warren says the possibilities of new revenue sources are "opening up by the minute for publishers. But you have to keep yourself educated and on top of what's out there and what's next."
ABKCO Music senior VP Iris Keitel notes that her firm has been "more laid-back" with respect to licensing new technology, concerned that a company can inadvertently "dilute rather than enhance catalog."
But ABKCO, which owns the publishing and masters for Sam Cooke and the early Rolling Stones catalogs, did embrace ringtones, she says, and it is becoming a major source of revenue.
Major Songs—which handles the classic pop fare of Carl Sigman, including "What Now My Love" and "It's All in the Game"—has also received a major boost from ringtones.
"While generally favoring newer releases, the ringtone market has been gradually increasing its use of standards," Major Songs president Michael Sigman says. "As a result of these opportunities, we're having by far our best year ever."

Synch Income Still Key
Performance and synchronization royalties remain an essential source of music publishing income.
"We're reshaping our organization to take account of market changes due to the economy," says David Hockman, chairman of Sony/ATV Music Publishing. "We're becoming more proactive in marketing copyrights to potential sync users and focusing personnel resources on that specific area."
"Also important," Hockman adds, "is that we take a global view as opposed to just a North American view. You don't get a full picture simply looking at North America," he continues. "We've seen fairly consistent increases globally in performing and synch fees depending on the state of the economy in each territory."
At EMI Music Publishing, executive VP of music services Joanne Boris says that for EMI Music Publishing, synch activities have expanded from traditional film, TV and advertising outlets to include DVDs and videogames. But TV is still an important resource.
Boris says she counts "a thousand stations and shows you can [target] now, so everybody's producing—and some shows, like 'American Idol' and 'American Dreams,' use songs. I was looking at ESPN the other night and they have six stations, and they're using music, too."
Seeking supplementary synch, Universal Music Publishing Group recently launched a Synchexpress Web site with an iPod giveaway to the first significant licensee. UMPG worldwide president David Benzer notes the company is doing new licensing deals for children's TV and even Japanese animation programming.
"Another thing we're targeting is really significant catalog that's not just about performance income," he says. UMPG promotes its catalog with custom CDs and e-mail samplers, as well as mailings to advertising agencies and other potential users. He cites the company's recent administration deal with Paul Simon as yielding "tremendous success on the synch side."

MUSICAL COOKIE JARS
Next Decade Entertainment also deals in standards, administering the works of lyricist E.Y. "Yip" Harburg, co-writer of "Over the Rainbow" and other classics. For Monica Corton, VP of creative affairs and licensing at Next Decade, creative use of copyrights has become a toy story.
"We've recently had great success in expanding our merchandise licensing," Corton says. "We've secured deals for musical cookie jars, slot machines, magnets and a variety of toys. We consistently strive to increase the pool of potential licenses to combat the decrease of licensing opportunities in traditional market areas."

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Songwriters Hall of Fame president Linda Moran praises this year's trend of having younger talent induct and serenade "mentor" honorees. She notes the increasing significance of the annual induction dinner, which will be held at the Marriott Marquis Hotel.

"It's becoming bigger and bigger, because the writer/artists who are getting inducted now are at a stage in their careers where they're taking greater pride in their songwriting—it's where their roots are," she explains.

She also offers an assessment of the event in the current music business climate.

"Our membership has increased tremendously over the last few years," Moran notes. "With all the layoffs in the music industry, networking is more important than anything. But it's still just a very special evening for the whole songwriting profession and the publishers who are so very involved in it."
directly from their playlist management systems.

"We are continually exploring and testing new digital systems to achieve ever greater efficiencies in tracking and royalty payment processing," she says.

Royalty tracking for new music usages is "more straightforward" at ASCAP, according to ASCAP Enterprises senior VP Chris Amenita.

"We're doing it through our licensing process," he says. "We've been aggressively licensing Web sites since 1995, and as part of our licensing agreement there is tracking information that's reported back to ASCAP.

"We're also using alternative methods to track performances from certain Web sites, such as using our subsidiary company Mediaguide," he continues. "Same with ringtones. We've been very successful in getting fairly complete information from the ringtone providers."

**Sticking To The Basics**

Aside from the attention given to new revenue sources, many music publishing executives stay focused on the basics of their business.

"We have mandated that our A&R departments focus more on artist development and catalog exploitation for our entire roster of writers," says Les Bider, Warner/Chappell Music chairman/CEO.

Cherry Lane Music Publishing marketing and licensing VP Richard Stumpf agrees with Bider's focus on artist development.

"We actively created opportunities to bring new material to new audiences," Stumpf says of one example, the Black Eyed Peas. The band recently composed the title track to the film "Havana Nights," building on its successful album "Elephunk."

Cherry Lane targets "as many platforms as possible," Stumpf notes.

"'Where Is the Love?' the first single off 'Elephunk,' was featured on the TV series 'The O.C.,' and [album track] 'Let's Get It Started' will be used in national commercial spots for the NBA playoffs," Stumpf continues. "Singles from the album, which appear in several video games, have also been among the most successful ringtone downloads of 2003."

JIM BESSMAN
Who’s Who Among Hall’s Honorees

The Songwriters Hall of Fame will bestow awards June 10 on the following notable songwriters, publishers, patrons and songs.

Stevie Wonder
Johnny Mercer Award
Since his debut in 1963 at age 12 with his chart-topping Motown hit “Fingertips, Part 2,” Stevie Wonder has remained one of the most admired and beloved songwriters in popular music. His prolific catalog includes such landmark compositions as “Superstition,” “You Are the Sunshine of My Life,” “Living for the City” and “I Just Called to Say I Love You.”

Les Bider
Abe Olman Publisher Award
Les Bider, as chairman/CEO of Warner/Chappell Music, was instrumental in merging Warner Bros. Music and the Chappell and Inter-Song Music Group, which created Warner/Chappell in 1987. Under his stewardship, the company has become one of the world’s biggest music publishers, with a focus on marketing back catalog as well as hands-on development of acts like Sheryl Crow, Dido and Nickelback.

Michael Goldstein
Patron of the Arts Award
Toy Industry Hall of Fame member Michael Goldstein chairs the Toys “R” Us Children’s Fund. He is also president of the 92nd Street Y, director of the special contributions fund of the NAACP and an advisory board member of the For All Kids Foundation, USTA Tennis and Education Foundation, New York Restoration Project and We Are Family Foundation. In addition, he is president/director of the Northside Center for Child Development and a board and executive committee member of both Reading Is Fundamental and the Queens College Foundation.

“What the World Needs Now Is Love”
Towering Song Award
This year’s Towering Song—written by Songwriters Hall of Fame members Burt Bacharach and Hal David (who is also chairman/CEO)—couldn’t be more timely. “What the World Needs Now Is Love” was a top 10 hit in 1965 for fellow songwriting great Jackie DeShannon, and like so many Bacharach-David copyrights, it remains a much-recorded standard.

Rob Thomas
Starlight Award
Matchbox Twenty lead singer and songwriter Rob Thomas is the perfect choice for this new award, which goes to an emerging songwriter. Thomas has penned songs for his own band and for such veterans as Willie Nelson, Mick Jagger and, most notably, Carlos Santana, for whom he co-wrote—and sang—the Grammy Award-winning single “Smooth.”

Neil Sedaka
The Sammy Cahn Lifetime Achievement Award
A Brill Building songwriting legend, Neil Sedaka differed from his fellow tunesmiths in that he became best known for singing his own songs (written with partner Howie Greenfield), including such hits as “Oh Carol,” “Calendar Girl,” “Happy Birthday, Sweet Sixteen” and “Breaking Up Is Hard to Do,” his No. 1 hit from 1962. But he’s also penned big hits for others like Connie Francis’ “Stupid Cupid” and the Captain & Tennille’s “Love Will Keep Us Together.”

JIM BESSMAN

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Cold’s Hot Game

Geffen, Midway Connect Band, ‘Psi-Ops’

BY STEVE TRAIMAN

A creative partnership between Geffen Records and Midway Games highlights the multi-faceted marketing campaign for Midway’s psychic-combat adventure “Psi-Ops.”

The game arrives June 15 for PlayStation 2 and Xbox consoles.

“Psi-Ops” includes a theme song, “With My Mind,” which Cold vocalist Scooter Ward wrote specifically for the game.

The song’s video, created by Geffen and Midway, is full of game action footage.

The clip debuted April 9 on ign.com. It is now on gamespot.com, ugo.com and gamespy.com, as well as Midway’s dedicated site gamespygame.com, where fans can download it.

For Geffen, the tie-in is a great means of added exposure, marketing director Jenn Littleton says.

“From a label perspective, we’re very excited, as kids are playing videogames more than watching TV or even listening to the radio, so this is a great demographic for selling our music,” she says.

Geffen serviced the music video to broadcast outlets and posted it on the Jacksonville, Fla., band’s Web site, Littleton says.

For Midway, the video helps publicize the title’s delivery date.

“We were looking for innovative marketing programs, which led to this partnership [with Flip’, Geffen],” Midway marketing VP Mona Hamilton says. “We really liked Cold’s music, which seemed ideal for ‘Psi-Ops,’ and the Cold fans are all over the online play.”

Target has signed on as the game’s key retail partner. Customers purchasing “Psi-Ops” at the mass merchant will receive a four-song Cold EP that includes “With My Mind” and previously unreleased track “Came All the Way.”

Cold gave a mini-concert featuring the game track at Midway’s booth at the Electronic Entertainment Expo last May.

Ward recalls, “All we got was the story line and a brief game demo, and the song just came to me.”

Games, DVDs Link To Cross-Promote In Q4

BY STEVE TRAIMAN

Retailers can look to videogame and DVD cross-marketing for a sales boost during the second half of 2004 and well into 2005.

Not surprisingly, the heaviest slate of DVD and game tie-ins is set for the fourth quarter, which accounts for up to 40% of annual DVD and videogame revenue.

This year’s Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) held May 11-14 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, offered graphic evidence that Hollywood studios and their home video divisions are paying more attention to the expanding videogame market.


Game publishers launching videogames to coincide with theatrical releases plan to repackage their titles when the films are released on DVD later this year or in early 2005.

Such film/game tie-ins include Sony Pictures’ “Spider-Man 2” and DreamWorks’ “Shrek 2” (both on Activision), Disney/Pixar’s “The Incredibles” and Warner Bros.’ “The Polar Express” (both on THQ), Universal’s “Van Helsing” (Vivendi Universal), and Warner Bros.’ “Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban” and “Catwoman” (both on Electronic Arts).

At E3, EA previewed its role playing game “The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age.” EA plans a fall release to coincide with the arrival of New Line/Warner Home Video’s special edition DVD of “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King” and a holiday release.

Licensees are looking to licensing as a revenue source amid a changing retail music environment.

Music-based licensing royalties in North America totaled more than $120 million last year and accounted for more than $2 billion in retail sales, according to the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers Assn.

The trade group sponsors the Licensing 2004 expo, which will take place June 10-12 at Jacob Javits Convention Center in New York.

Last year, Bravado International Group introduced Hilary Duff apparel at last year’s Licensing expo.

Bravado International Group uses the expo to introduce Stiff by Hilary Duff, an apparel line from the former star of Disney Channel’s “Lizzie McGuire Show” (Billboard, July 5, 2003).

Shortly after the line’s debut, Duff’s Hollywood Records album “Metamorphosis” hit No. 1 on The Billboard 200.

This year, Midas Records will highlight its artist Anel, a former member of girl group No Secrets. To kick off her licensing program, she will perform songs from her label debut, “Believe in Angels” (Continued on page 46)
SPV Ups Ryko Relationship; NAIL Taps Four Rock Labels

German label SPV has consolidated its U.S. sales efforts at Ryko Distribution. SPV, which is based in Hanover, Germany, formerly split its imprints between Ryko and Navarre Entertainment Media. New Hope, Minn.-based Navarre had handled the SPV label and imprints Steamhammer, LMP, Napalm and Breaker. New York-based Ryko had carried Inside Out, SPV's biggest label, and Hunter. Effective June 1, the labels previously with Navarre shifted to Ryko. “I didn’t really want to work with two distributors,” SPV director of North American sales Thomas Ziegler says. “Now we’re under one roof.”

**REUNION:** Effective June 1, Burnside Records and Sideburn Records shifted from Ryko Distribution to Burnside Distribution in Portland, Ore.

There’s no big surprise there: The Burnside labels and Burnside Distribution have the same ownership. The imprints signed on with Ryko when Burnside Distribution was a regionally focused distributor; it has since expanded its national reach.

**NAILED DOWN:** Nail. Allegro’s indie-rock distribution arm, has sealed four new exclusive distribution pacts.

San Francisco-based Koolarrow Records, previously with IDN, is operated by former Faith No More bassist Billy Gould and Raymond Herrera of Fear Factory. The label’s acts include Mexican death metal band Brujeria and Hog Molly, featuring former Ted lead vocalist Tad Doyle.

The catalog of Important Records in Boston has an eclectic mix, including Daniel Johnston, Merzbow, Acid Mothers Temple and Kimya Dawson. The label was previously with Hepecar.

The roster of Sweden’s Bad Taste Records features Last Days of April, Satanic Surfers (now with Epitaph) and Logh.

Finally, Seattle-based Roslyn Recordings, run by veteran indie publicist Barbara Mitchell, has released projects by Steve Turner of Mudhoney and Marc Olsen of Sage.

**MERGE AHEAD:** Profits from Merge Records’ 15th-anniversary set “Old Enough to Know Better” are earmarked to benefit the Future of Music Coalition, the Washington, D.C., nonprofit organization.

Chapel Hill, N.C.-based Merge—operated by Superchunk singer/guitarist Mac McCaughan and bassist Laura Ballance—will issue the three-CD collection, budget-priced at $14.98, in July.

Two discs feature catalog tracks by 42 Merge acts, including Superchunk, Neutral Milk Hotel, Spoon, the Magnetic Fields, Polvo, East River Pipe, Buzzcocks, the Clean, . . . And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead, Versus and Seaweed.

The third CD includes new, previously unreleased or rare material by the label’s current acts, including Richard Buckner, the Radar Brothers, M. Ward and Spent.

Merge will mount a festival featuring 19 of its acts July 29-Aug. 4 at the Cat’s Cradle in Chapel Hill/Carrboro and the Carolina Theatre in Durham.

**IDN ADDS THREE:** IDN has sealed exclusive U.S. distribution deals with Trax Records, 215 Records and Life Music.

Based in Chicago, Trax is a house-music label with forthcoming releases by Frankie Knuckles, Farley “Jackmaster” Funk and Kevin Irving. (For more Trax news, see Beat Box, page 28.)

Jenkintown, Pa.-based 215 is a new smooth jazz and adult R&B label; its forthcoming releases include the Alan Hewitt Project’s “Noche de Pasion” and Torquato Mariano’s “Diary.”

Life Music’s first release, due May 25, will be “Resistance Iz Futile” by Christian hip-hop unit Corey Red & Precise.

**MOVING ON:** Tone-Cool Records president/partner Dave Bartlett has exited the label after nine years to start his own management and consulting firm. Tone-Cool founder Richard Rosenblatt will continue to operate the Wellesley Hills, Mass.-based blues and roots music label.

Bartlett’s new firm 525 Worldwide, in which he is partnered with former Tone-Cool staffer Matt Cornell, is headquartered in Marblehead, Mass.

Games

Continued from page 45

“Lord of the Rings” DVD boxed set.

“The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age” will be available for PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube and Game Boy Advance.

Ubisoft provided a demo of “Rocky Legends,” which it will release for PS2 and Xbox this fall as part of an exclusive licensing agreement with MGM Interactive. Ubisoft created the game in conjunction with a “Rocky” DVD boxed set in development, according to VP of publishing Jay Cohen.

Neal Haldar, MGM Interactive VP of production and business development, says the Ubisoft partnership and resulting videogame are “the direct result of commercial and critical success from the first ‘Rocky’ game.”

Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment unveiled its much-anticipated “The Matrix Online,” which allows thousands of players to compete through the Internet. WBIE tied the game’s November release to the arrival of “The Matrix” DVD boxed set from Warner Home Video.

**MULTIPLE COMPLEMENTARY PAIRINGS**

For “King Arthur,” a Touchstone Pictures/Jerry Bruckheimer Films summer theatrical release, Konami Digital Entertainment America and Disney’s Buena Vista Interactive previewed games in development for PS2, Xbox and GC. These holiday releases will coincide with the film’s arrival on DVD.

Under an agreement with Empire Interactive and Sony Pictures Consumer Products, BIM Entertainment showed “Starsky & Hutch” GC and GBA games that will ship in late June, close to the DVD release.

Take Two’s Global Star already distributed PS2, Xbox and PC versions of the “Starsky & Hutch” game.

THQ previewed Marvel’s “The Punisher” for PS2 and Xbox. “The games are based on the movie and 30 years of Marvel comic book history,” THQ project manager Jeff Carroll says.

“The Punisher” game is due early next year, as is the special-edition DVD from Lions Gate, which follows the August regular DVD release.

For “The Polar Express,” PS2, GC, GBA and PC games will appear before the holiday movie, as will Xbox, PS2, GC and GBA releases for “The Incredibles.”


“We are already talking with Warner Home Video [about] cross-marketing with an anticipated holiday ‘Terminator’ DVD box set,” he adds.

Hip Games signed a deal with Disney just before E3 for a GBA game linked to the holiday DVD release of “Around the World in 80 Days.” That film will appear in theaters this summer.
Navarre Boasts Record ’04, Sees More Growth Ahead

The good news just keeps on rolling in.

Navarre enjoyed explosive profit and sales growth in its fiscal fourth quarter, ended March 31. The company earned $3.3 million, or 12 cents per diluted share, on sales of $142.6 million.

In the corresponding period the previous year, Navarre posted income of $443,000, or 2 cents per share, on sales of $83.6 million.

The company credited this sales gain to business growing across all of its major product lines: computer software, videogames, music and movies.

“The restructuring of our company has allowed us to continue to focus on growing the high-margin publishing segment of our business while we continue to focus on aggressive organic growth in our core distribution business,” Navarre chairman/CEO Eric Paulson said during a conference call.

Paulson said the company had record performances in both the fourth quarter and fiscal 2004. For the year, Navarre posted $9 million in income, or 37 cents per diluted share, on sales of $475.2 million, compared with income of $4.3 million, or 20 cents per diluted share, on sales of $359.4 million the previous fiscal year.

For the year, sales were up 32% while income increased 100%. The company’s distribution business hit $449.1 million. Of that, computer software accounted for the largest revenue segment, ringing up about $318 million.

Navarre’s independent music distribution arm generated net sales of $57 million. Its wholesale operation to retailers like Sam’s Club accounted for about $30 million in movie-DVD business, $20 million in major-label music business and $25 million from distributing videogames for about 30 software labels.

On the company’s publishing side, Encore Software, acquired in August 2002, tallied about $38 million in videogame business. BCI Enterprises gathered $8 million in sales since Navarre acquired the company last November. But the company backed out $20 million of that $46 million publishing total to avoid double-counting intercompany sales. Last year, publishing accounted for 11% of sales, and it is expected to grow to 15% this year.

“It’s the distribution engine that is driving this locomotive. It provides an efficient foundation for publishing and future acquisitions,” Paulson said.

Publishing and licensing videogames and video are much more profitable than Navarre’s distribution business, typically achieving a gross margin of about 35%, compared with 12% for the wholesale operation.

Paulson and other Navarre executives said the company’s publishing arm and any acquisitions it might make will likely experience sales growth because of Navarre’s distribution clout. They will also benefit from cost reductions, because they will go through Navarre’s wholesale operation.

As an example, the executives pointed to BCI’s distribution and freight costs, which were about 10.5% of its revenue before its acquisition by Navarre. Those costs are expected to be about 5% of its revenue this year.

Overall, the company’s gross margin decreased from 12.5% in fiscal 2003 to 12.1% in fiscal 2004. But that decline stemmed from a $5.6 million charge for a write-off in the Encore division. Without that write-off, the company’s profit margin would have been 13% for fiscal 2004.

The company’s large jump in sales helped to reduce expenses to 10.1% of overall revenue, compared with 11.4% the previous year. Also helping to improve the spread between profits and expenses were returns. These decreased significantly last year to 13.8% from 17.4% the previous year.

During the conference call, Paulson said Navarre plans to continue growing organically and through acquisitions.

In the current year, Navarre anticipates sales will hit $550 million to $580 million, while earnings will range from 69 cents to 77 cents per share.

When asked for details, Paulson said, “Our company has gained traction and momentum over the past several quarters, and I see that continuing.”

He cited a new warehouse, scheduled to open this summer, that he believes will increase efficiency.

Paulson further said organic growth in Navarre’s videogame distribution business should increase sales from $25 million to $100 million before the company will need “some kind of event, like an acquisition, to maintain its growth.”

Paulson also sees growth coming from the company’s strengthening dot-com fulfillment business and increased penetration of its account base, as well as new accounts.

For instance, Navarre has mainly sold to Wal-Mart’s Sam’s Club division, but sees Wal-Mart itself likely to become one of its top five accounts in the next five years. To show its commitment to making that happen, Navarre recently opened a sales office in Arkansas, where Wal-Mart is headquartered.

Navarre announced its results after the close of trading May 26. Since then, the company’s stock has increased 15.5% from $11.13 to $12.86 as of June 1.
It’s Captain America! It’s Black Panther! It’s Thor! The line of Marvel comic book heroes could be the star of one of eight new direct-to-DVD titles, thanks to a new deal between Marvel Enterprises and Lions Gate Entertainment.

The two companies will jointly develop, produce and distribute the titles, the first of which is expected in late 2005. Each feature-length project will star one Marvel character and include DVD extras.

“What we have an opportunity to do here is to build a brand with a broad demographic of fans, including adults and children,” says Glenn Ross, president of Lions Gate’s family home entertainment division.

The video deal stems from the current theatrical relationship between the companies. In February, Marvel granted Lions Gate licenses to create and distribute theatrical films based on its properties “Iron Fist” and “Black Widow.” The companies have additionally agreed to make a sequel to the theatrical release “The Punisher.” “Lions Gate is a great partner and distributor,” Marvel Studios chairman/CEO Avi Arad said in a statement. “We will bring to the DVDs great added value with exclusive commentaries by the artists, writers and tremendous history.”

Marvel will be in charge of creative development and production.

PUTUMAYO GOES DVD: Putumayo World Music will enter the DVD market June 8 with “Travel the World with Putumayo.”

The duo-length project, available for $19.98, will feature 12 music videos and live performances from such world acts as Egyptian singer Hisham Abbas, Senegalese band Tukuleur and Czech musician Vera Bila. Subtitles will be provided in English, Spanish, French and German.

“People are starting to be interested in world music more and more,” says Dan Storper, founder of Putumayo. “We have four music albums that have sold over 200,000 copies. With some luck, I think we can sell DVDs in high numbers.”

Storper says that a direct-response campaign, airing on such networks as A&E and the Travel Channel, will launch in mid-July. The company is also working on getting airplay on video shows.

Storper says that two to four DVDs will be released per year. Most titles will likely focus on music performances.

NOTABLE CATALOG: Two sports-oriented catalog titles are being re-released with some impressive extra features.

Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment’s “Ali: Director’s Cut” (June 1, $24.95)—the story of boxing legend Muhammad Ali that stars Will Smith in the title role—features new footage added into the film, a new audio commentary by director Michael Mann and a documentary about making the project.

“The film is maybe five or six minutes longer,” Mann says. “The drama in this version is much more conflicted. The documentary really shows how Will and I were committed to making this film.”

The bonus features on Universal Studios Home Video’s “Field of Dreams 15th Anniversary Edition” delve into the emotional connection between Americans and their favorite sport. The two-disc DVD set, in stores June 8, is priced at $29.98.

One segment, “From Father to Son: Passing Along the Pastime,” features the film’s star, Kevin Costner; director Phil Alden Robinson; and numerous cast members discussing the sport’s impact on their lives. Other extras include deleted scenes and commentary.

“It is fascinating to see these special voices. You see how the film affected the actors and producers,” Robinson says.

THE CALL OF THE WILD: Ever wonder how lions really move in the wild? A new TV movie, “Pride,” which debuts on A&E June 21 and will be coming to DVD from BBC Video Sept. 7, uses Boulder-cam technology to show how they interact. The Boulder-cam is a video camera camouflaged as a boulder to allow it to move among the lions. “Pride,” a story about the conflicts between two lion prides, uses this wildlife footage and weaves in a family-oriented story.

Computer-generated effects by Jim Henson’s Creature Shop were added to the facial and mouth movements of the animals. Some of the actors that provide the cats’ voices are Kate Winslet, Rupert Graves and Helen Mirren.

The DVD will be priced at $14.98.
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**TOP VIDEO GAME RENTALS**

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EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

SAAL

VILLALOLID

RECORD COMPANIES: Compendia Music Group in Nashville appoints Debbie Loring manager of regional sales and marketing and Paul Colson marketing and promotions coordinator. Loring was sales and marketing coordinator at Curb Records, and Colson was a student at Vanderbilt University. Compendia also promotes Holly Nelson to director of creative services. She was national promotion manager.

DISTRIBUTION: Universal Music & Video Distribution in Universal City, Calif., appoints Vince Szylowski director of catalog, classics, jazz and associated labels. He was senior director of product at Virgin Entertainment Group.

Handleman in Toronto promotes Bill Tucker to GM of its Toronto distribution center and Mike Barker to assistant VP of international operations. Tucker was assistant GM of Handleman's Indianapolis automated distribution center, and Barker was GM of Handleman's Toronto distribution center.

PUBLISHING: BMI in New York promotes Jodi H. Saal to assistant VP of business operations and technology. She was senior director of international systems administration.

BILDBOARD

Backbeat
People/Places/Events

Happy B-Day To Edy

The Country Music Assn. gave veteran performer Eddy Arnold a surprise birthday party May 20 at CMA's Nashville headquarters. Arnold, who turned 86 this year, was named the first CMA entertainer of the year in 1967. Pictured, from left, are CMA executive director Ed Benson, former CMA executive director Jo Walker-Meador, Arnold, CMA associate executive director Tammy Goves and CMA senior manager of membership and industry relations Hank Adam Locklin. (Photo: Amanda Eckard/CMA)

EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

SAAL

VILLALOLID

CAT STEVENS

Cat Stevens, aka Cat Stevens, visited the Billboard headquarters in New York May 17 for a Billboard Café meet-and-greet. Islam was in town to promote his charity, Small Kindness, and his Eagle Vision live-concert DVD, "Majikat (Earth Tour 1976)," a performance from the artist's last tour under the name Cat Stevens. Pictured are Airplay Monitor editor-in-chief Scott McKenzie, left, and Islam. (Photo: Mary Ann Kim/Billboard)

Detroit Hip-Hop Summit

Eminem co-hosted the 2004 Detroit Hip-Hop Summit, presented May 22 by the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network. The second annual event, held at Detroit's Fox Theatre, also drew such music notables as D12, Obye Trice, G-Unit's Young Buck and Lloyd Banks. Shady Records CEO and Eminem's manager Paul Rosenberg, HSAN president/CEO Dr. Benjamin Chavis and Violator Records president/CEO Chris Lighty. Pictured, from left, are Run-D.M.C.'s Reverend Run, Eminem and Def Jam Records co-founder/HSAN chairman Russell Simmons. (Photo: Jeremy Deputat)

Beautiful Fiesta

Luis Fonsi performed at People En Español's 50 Most Beautiful party held May 19 at Splashlight Studios in New York. The third annual event celebrated People En Español's annual special issue spotlighting the magazine's choices for the most beautiful Latino and Latin celebrities. Party attendees included Emilio Estefan Jr., Shalim, Carlos Ponce and Ednita Nazario. (Photo: Dimitrios Kambouris/WireImage.com)

Now, Hear This ... CHRIS STAMEY

Artists to Watch

With the release of "Travels in the South," Chris Stamey is moving his career forward as a master purveyor of pure pop songs, although the marketing plan behind the album trades on his past. Due June 15 on Yep Roc Records, "Travels" is his first record of new pop songs in 12 years. In between solo efforts, Stamey spent that time producing or engineering albums for such acts as Whiskeytown, Ben Folds, Tres Chicas, Caitlin Cary, Amy Ray, Flat Duo Jets, Yo La Tengo and Squirrel Nut Zippers. Before launching a solo career in 1983, Stamey was a founding member of such early power pop/indie rock acts as the Sneakers and the dB's; the latter was an influential band that included singer/songwriter Peter Holsapple. In working the album, Redeye Distribution and Yep Roc are counting on Stamey's own fan base. Tor Hansen, head of marketing and sales for Chapel Hill, N.C.-based Redeye, calls Stamey's following "rabid, very hardcore and underground." But the marketing effort also seeks to help this heritage act by targeting the fans of artists Stamey has influenced. Indeed, many of these artists joined him on "Travels," including Cary, Tift Merritt and Ryan Adams. Stamey will support his new album by touring. He has select dates confirmed, including June 26 in Charlotte, N.C.; July 1 in Alexandria, Va.; and July 4 in Durham, N.C.
U.K.’s Ivor Awards Pay Tribute To Motown Trio

BY PAUL SEXTON

LONDON—A standing ovation for three songwriters synonymous with Motown’s heyday marked the culmination of the 49th annual Ivor Novello Awards, held here May 27 at the Grosvenor House Hotel.

The British Academy of Composers & Songwriters presents the awards in association with collecting society PRS. Attendees warmly greeted career awards for 71st U.K. rock act 10cc, modern rockers Radiohead and hit writer Errol Brown, frontman of Hot Chocolate.

But it was Special International Award recipients Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Eddie Holland who brought the audience to its feet.

Dozier describes the honor to Billboard as “one of the most prestigious awards in the world.”

The ceremony marked 30 years of PRS support of the Ivors. That is the longest continuous sponsorship in the British music industry, according to the society.

PRS has provided increasing levels of support throughout the years, chairman David Bedford says. “I’m delighted that PRS will also be [the] main sponsor for the 50th presentation of the awards in 2005,” he adds.

The Ivors are awarded based on either performance or a vote by a panel of 27 industry professionals.

The PRS trophy for most-performed work went to Radiohead’s “Paranoid Android.” The award recognizes rock band performances. The ceremony marked the culmination of the 49th annual Ivor Novello Awards, held here May 27 at the Grosvenor House Hotel.

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HMV Plans For Life After McLaughlin

LONDON—HMV Group staffers around the world are pondering life without the man most closely identified with the retailer’s rise to global status.

Group COO Brian McLaughlin stunned employees May 20 at the HMV Europe annual business conference in Marbella, Spain, by announcing that he would retire at year’s end.

“I’ve been at work for 40 years—36 of that with HMV—and I owe my wife, Sue, and my family some real quality time,” the 54-year-old executive tells Billboard.

Under parent HMV Group, HMV Europe operates 179 stores in the United Kingdom and Ireland. It is the U.K. market’s leading music merchant.

McLaughlin announced his departure at the conference’s closing dinner. He received a lengthy standing ovation from staff, management and supplier delegates, most of whom were unaware of his plans.

HMV Group confirms that it will retain the COO position, and its board will consider internal and external candidates.

McLaughlin will remain on the HMV Group board after his retirement.

“The board asked me to stay on as a non-executive director, and I’ve agreed,” he says. “I’m thrilled to do that. I feel I’ve still got something to offer the business.”

McLaughlin adds that he will remain involved with group strategy during the next six months, particularly plans for download sales and store openings.

Underlining the latter point, he flew to meetings in Japan after the Marbella conference. HMV plans to open eight to 10 stores in Japan during the 2004-2005 financial year. It currently has 45 stores in the country.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

“Brian has, without any doubt, made the biggest individual contribution in creating the success that HMV enjoys today,” HMV Group CEO Alan Giles says. “Externally, he is the most respected and influential retailer in the music industry.”
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**CANADA**

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<td>COME TO ME NOBODY</td>
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<td>AMERICAN IDIOT</td>
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MAMA AFRICA RETURNS: South African singer Miriam Makeba marks the 10th anniversary of the end of apartheid and Nelson Mandela's June 1994 election as president with her first album in four years. "Reflections" reflects on her five-decade career with new arrangements of many of her classic songs. Heads Up International will release the album internationally June 22. Among the 13 tracks are new versions of "Pata Pata," "Click Song" and other early hits. "These are some of the songs most associated with me from different times in my life," she says, and "it was a joy to sing and record them again." After more than three decades in exile, Makeba returned to South Africa at Mandela's request after his 1999 release from prison. NIGEL WILLIAMSON

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PARISIAN ATTITUDE: “Cruising Attitude” (Discography) is only the second studio album by Dimitri From Paris in eight years. The French DJ’s first, “Sincerely,” housed on Yellow Records/EastWest in 1996 and has shipped 300,000 units worldwide, according to the label. Despite its extended absence from the studio, Dimitri’s reputation as one of France’s best house-music DJs augurs well for his belated second effort, released May 24. So far, Pari- hais Discographies has shipped 20,000 copies throughout Europe, according to marketing manager Pierre- Louis Berlinski. For the moment, Dimitri’s hectic global DJ-ing schedule prevents the album’s main support. “He is currently only playing DJ sets,” Berlinski says. “We would like him to play live, but his music needs 10 musicians, which is far too many. If the album sells, it may well be possible.” Last month, Dimitri played at the Cannes Film Festival party for Pedro Almodovar’s “Bad Education” after the Spanish director personally invited him. Dimitri will play European DJ dates this summer, including stops in the United Kingdom, France and Spain. GARY SMITH

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This report sends a message to governments on this year’s list that it is important to exercise the political will necessary to effectively address IPR-related concerns,” Zoellick says.

The EU situation
The presence for several years of the EU on the PWL may seem surprising. But sources in Brussels say the union is on the PWL mainly for legislative issues that are not necessarily music-related.

According to the 2001 report, the EU “has not demonstrated any willingness to address certain IP-related concerns in a sufficient manner.”

However, new fronts for piracy continue to develop in the music, movie and software industries.

A major concern is Internet piracy, which is rising because of Taiwan’s high broadband penetration and the prevalence of file-swapping sites.

Further, last year’s measures aimed at strengthening Taiwan’s copyright laws seem to have hurt a few of the most active pirates. A strong regime seems intended to keep piracy off the list.

The last-minute changes in the copyright law were a factor in Taiwan staying on the PWL, says John Eastwood, a leading intellectual-property lawyer for Taipei-based law firm Wensig Walliser. According to IFPI’s Lee, the changes were a stipulation allowing Internet content providers to offer music without prior authorization from copyright holders.

Lee says that strict IP enforcement benefits only foreign companies. However, most of the pirated goods investigated last year were Taiwanese.

Lee says the data proves that the piracy market damages the local music market more than the international market.

The U.S. government, as well as the music industry, is particularly concerned about the IP situation of several new EU members, including Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia. All are mentioned on the Watch List.

“The presence of five out of the eight new Eastern European member states on the Watch List is evidence that the EU did not manage to get these countries up to an adequate level of intellectual-property enforcement before accession,” says Frances Moore, regional director of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry for Europe.

“Now [that these countries are members], we are skeptical that the EU will show the political will to take decisive action to improve this situation.”

The next wave of EU accession, scheduled for 2007, includes Bulgaria and Romania, both of which are on the Watch List.

It is further troubling to Moore that Russia and the Ukraine, two of the biggest pirate countries, “now sit against the borders of the enlarged EU. Pressure from the United States is going to be needed for some time.”

According to the 2001 Report, “Russia still needs to enact amendments to its copyright law to bring it into conformity with TRIPS Agreement requirements.” TRIPS requires equal copyright protection from market to market. In Russia, the region needs to improve enforcement of its copyright and trademark laws.

Among the Latin markets, the 2001 report cites Argentina as having “ lax and ineffective enforcement mechanisms” against piracy. The same situation exists in Brazil, according to the report.

In India, IP protection “continues to be weak,” although there are “some tentative signs that the situation may be changing,” the report states.

Indonesia has taken “some noteworthy steps to strengthen its IP regime”—notably a revision of its current copyright law in July 2002—but the report says, “significant problems remain.”

The Philippines is described as a “safe haven” for organized piracy and counterfeiting “as neighboring economies improve their IP enforcement.”

The Taiwanese government is credited with having taken “some concrete positive steps to bolster its enforcement capability.” But these steps “have not produced results, and piracy and counterfeiting levels remain unacceptable.”

For a format or something different, he was always open-minded.

“However difficult any of the terms of negotiations we had with him,” Grange adds, “he would throw humor into it. That’s one of the key things I will miss.”

Grange doubts HMV could have attained its current U.K. status without McLaughlin. “He’s always had the record business on his side,” he says. “He certainly had Universal on his side. And he always had smart people working for him. That’s part of good leadership.”

McLaughlin began at HMV in 1968 as an assistant in its Portsmouth, England, branch. At the time, the chain had nine outlets, all in the United Kingdom.

McLaughlin rose through the ranks, becoming managing director of HMV U.K. in 1987. He was promoted to the same role at HMV Europe in December 1996, and became group COO in January 2001. In that role, he “made an enormous impact across the whole group,” Giles says.

McLaughlin resigned recently as acting managing director of Waterstone’s, the group’s U.K. market-leading bookselling chain, after overseeing a successful two-year restructuring.

ADDITIONAL NEWS
McLaughlin’s announcement overshadowed other news at the Marbella conference. Delegates heard earlier that HMV Europe is on course to open 25 stores this fiscal year, bringing its total to more than 200.

HMV Europe managing director Steve Knott announced that the chain’s U.K. and Ireland sales (in $1.84 billion) mark during 2004-2005. However, executives emphasize that figure is not a specific target for the fiscal year.

A spokesman adds that the group considers 300 stores to be its U.K. ceiling.

“We’re still seeing opportunities,” HMV Europe product director Steve Gallant says, “We opened the stores last year, so we’re accelerating our growth.”

HMV Group will announce its annual results June 30, with HMV Europe expected to show a strong performance, driven by DVD sales.

HMV claims to be the U.K. DVD market leader.

“Music is still a higher proportion of our business than DVD,” Gallant says, “but we expect that to change this year.”

Gallant says the United Kingdom requires stability in DVD pricing, because the window between the release of premium titles at full price and their appearance in reduced-price campaigns is increasingly shorter.

“'For a classic movie or a new release, £20 ($32) is reasonable,” he says. “For most catalog movies, £12-£15 ($22-$27.60) would be sensible.”

Regarding the steadily shrinking U.K. singles market, the company is “not downbeat,” Gallant says.

“HMV has been very vocal about trying to simplify and reignite the market by going for the two-track single retail at £3.99 ($6.45), with a multi-track version—maybe featuring the video—at £4 ($7.35),” he says.

“In the last few months,” Gallant adds, “with a strong singles release schedule, we’ve seen our volumes rise, year on year. So we’re giving the form some more focus. But U.K. [competing] UK competitors have given up on it. It’s not about ringtones and downloads: kids still get into buying music by starting with singles.”

Last year’s HMV U.K. singles market was 19%, and its albums share was 20.9%, according to the British Phonographic Industry.

The retailer’s online operation remains a “relatively small” part of its U.K. business, Gallant says, accounting for 6-7% of sales.

HMV’s research indicates that its online venture drives customers into its stores. Gallant adds, “The two operations complement each other.”

www.billboard.com • www.billboard.biz
BILLOD JUNE 12, 2004
www.americanradiohistory.com
BY LARRY LEBLANC
TORONTO—HMV Canada and EMI Music Canada are not buddies anymore. After several months of failed negotiations, EMI raised prices on product it sells to HMV, effective April 1. The breakdown in relations—which the two parties acknowledged publicly only in the past week—comes at a time when retailers and major labels in Canada are endeavoring to evolve their businesses.

According to EMI Music Canada president Deane Cameron, the price increase on most titles is slightly less than $1 Canadian (73 cents). HMV, which has 100 stores in Canada, responded by downgrading EMI and most of its distributed labels to nonpreferred-supplier status. As a result, EMI-distributed titles do not appear for the most part among HMV’s top-selling titles and do not receive prime floor space. Also, HMV outlets are not playing EMI-affiliated acts.

Furthermore, EMI is selling most EMI-distributed titles—including popular albums by Nickelback, Sarah McLachlan and Norah Jones—at manufacturer-suggested prices. There are exceptions, including publisher discounts and material from EMI-distributed label Distort Entertainment, which has reached an agreement with HMV on terms.

Cameron says HMV wants EMI to maintain its volume discounting, despite what he says was a 25% decline in sales of EMI-distributed product at the chain in 2003. HMV may be evolving from a music specialist to a software entertainment retailer, Cameron says, but he warns, “They have to understand that if their volume continues to drop, and the volume of other accounts is going up, we have to stop trying to support them.”

HMV Canada president Humphrey Kadaner would not comment on specific trading terms or sales figures of EMI-affiliated product. However, he denies that the disputed terms are related to volume discounting. Kadaner says Cameron’s estimate of a 25% sales loss at HMV “is not reflective of our sales results [for EMI product].”

Cameron says he is “upset that HMV has taken such a hard-line stance.” He may have anticipated it, however. Following a breakdown in talks on annual terms with Warner Music Canada in 2000, HMV terminated all product purchases from the label for several months.

Kadaner says, “EMI isn’t offering the same level of support as the other majors. So from our perspective, demands on terms are escalating.”

Ken Kozey, director of the Retail Music Assn. of Canada, says the organization’s goal in recent years has been to get labels to better understand how traditional retail operates amid declining music sales. “There seem to be challenges with each other in understanding where we need to take music retail,” he says.

Kadaner adds, “The business models seem to be evolving on both sides. There appears to be respect and empathy for each other’s side. Hopefully, there will still be a symbiotic relationship.”

Seeking additional revenue in a declining music market, Canada’s majors are attempting to move in new directions. These include expanding the reach of products, selling new releases to nontraditional outlets on a large scale and building online music operations.

Many Canadian retailers, however, are wary of labels’ methods of increasing online business. Tim Baker, buyer for Sunrise Records, which has 32 stores in Ontario, is incensed that the majors offer exclusive tracks to the year-old à la carte download service PlayHitz.

“If labels want to continue giving exclusive tracks for big acts in Canada to Puretracks,” he says, “I have to ask myself, What is their ultimate aim?”

Baker points out that if labels offer exclusive tracks with Puretracks has retailers wondering if we’re heading in the same direction with labels,” he says.

Labels argue that there are downloading opportunities for traditional retailers as well. “We are all working very hard to inspire our retail partners to be involved in the digital world,” Cameron says.

The previous Special International Award recipients are Hal David, Jerry Leiber & Mike Stoller, Brian Wilson, Stevie Wonder and Benny Anderson & Bjorn Ulvaeus of ABBA.

Presenting the Hollands and Dozier with the sixth Special International Award, PRS’ Bedford said the famed Motown production trio have “fitted the art of songwriting to an all-time high.”

EMI Music publishes the trio’s catalog.

DOZIER

The Ivors ceremony marked the first visit to Europe for Brian and Eddie Holland.

“We don’t perform, so it means [PRS and BASCA] have recognized us as songwriters,” Brian says, “and that’s an inspiration in itself.”

The brothers have been working with several artists on their Invictus, DH1 and Hot Wax labels, which Navarro distributes in the United States. Eddie adds that they plan to meet British representatives of Sanctuary, which handles the Invictus catalog internationally.

Dozier says the Ivor is not his only current British connection. “A couple of weeks ago, I finished with Josh Stone,” he says. “I wrote a song for her new album; it’s called ‘Spoiled.’ When you’re actually working with her in the studio, this girl is fantastic. She’s the real thing.”

Dozier adds that he will be working in the United Kingdom, writing with Annie Lennox and former Robbie Williams collaborator Guy Chambers. “Guy is doing an album with [Lennox.] And when his people found out I was going to be here for the Ivor Novello, they [told me] Guy was really keen on getting together. I said, ‘Of course.’ We’ve had several meetings and … she’d been keen to make it a threesome. I said join in and bring some [songs] with me.”

Dozier won an Ivor in 1989 for “Two Hearts,” his collaboration with Phil Collins. He is currently promoting the album “Reflections of Lanort Dozier,” newly released in Britain on the Jam Right label. The set includes rerecorded versions of many Holland-Dozier-Holland chart-toppers.
Legal Editor Wanted

VNU Business Media Publishes over 50 business publications; stages more than 50 trade shows and conferences and operates approximately 200 business-to-business electronic products. We operate around the globe, covering some of the most powerful industries in the world including, entertainment, retail, media, travel and design.

We currently have a career opportunity at Billboard, the international authority on music, video and digital entertainment, for a Legal Editor. This position will be responsible for business and legal coverage for the Billboard Information Group, which includes Billboard Magazine, Billboard.biz, Billboard.com, Entertainment Law Weekly and Airplay Monitor. The Legal Editor will handle editing, reporting and analysis for Billboard’s Entertainment Law Weekly newsletter; write the biweekly Legal Matters column for Billboard; and contribute business and legal news and analysis to all Big Print and electronic platforms.

Qualified candidate must have demonstrated editing, reporting and analytical skills; knowledge of electronic products; ability to plan and host events and to represent the publication to other print and electronic media. Must be competent with editorial software. Five to ten years of professional reporting, assigning and editing experience required, including substantial legal reporting experience. Law degree preferred but not required.

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HELP WANTED

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Qualified candidate must have a minimum of five years sales experience, preferably in advertising sales. Must have exceptional verbal and written communication skills, competency with ACT and Excel preferable. College degree preferred.

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**COPY PROTECTION**

Continued from page 6

In the United States, the Recording Industry Assn. of America closely watches legal developments in this field. The RIAA sees the Belgian court case as a benchmark.

"In the U.S., labels have not yet aggressively launched copy-protected CDs, so they are following all these court cases around the world," an RIAA executive says. "There's a lot of information shared on these issues" between Europe and the United States.

In January, Test-Achats sued EMI Universal Music Group, Sony Music and BMG because of their efforts to prevent consumers from making private copies of CDs.

Test-Achats claimed that private copying was authorized under a 1994 Belgian law that said rights-owners cannot ban copies of sound or visual works made within a family context.

But a Brussels court threw out the case at the end of May, saying consumers do not have a right to make private copies and that CDs without copy controls are exceptions.

Test-Achats' spokesman Jean-Philippe Ducart says the ruling did not offer any solid arguments beyond that.

"The judge ignored, for example, that blank CDs carry a tax that goes to support artists. This is something that implicitly recognizes the right to copy," he says.

The IFPI believes Test-Achats misinterpreted Belgian law.

"Courts have steered clear from interfering with the use of copy-control technologies and have denied the existence of a 'right to private copying' even under national law or on the basis of the most recent EU Copyright Directive," a spokeswoman says.

"This is just the first round," Ducart says. "We will appeal within the next few weeks."

The judgment echoes recent court cases and government proclamations in other countries. In the Netherlands, the Minister of Justice recently told the Parliament that copy-control protections on audio CDs do not raise problems for consumers, given that such discs are designed primarily to be played on CD players.

Earlier this year, a French court threw out claims by consumers' body UFC-Que Choisir against EMI Recorded Music France. But the court ruled that the playback limitations of EMI's copy-protection were "hidden" and ordered the company to reimburse the consumer on whose behalf the case was brought.

The IFPI says copy-controlled discs are a response to the sharp increase in piracy, multiple copying and illegal Internet distribution of recorded music.

The technology aims to protect artists, songwriters, record companies, retailers and everyone else involved in making and distributing music on CD, the IFPI says.

Additional reporting by Emmanuel Legrand in London.
BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NEW YORK—The ability of high-quality, low-cost sound reinforcement and recording equipment to allow more sophisticated performances has been exploited beyond the concert hall, theater and nightclub.

Houses of worship are moving en masse to dramatically upgrade their sound reinforcement and recording capabilities.

This phenomenon has not escaped the attention of Hector La Torre, managing partner of Fits & Starts Productions. A well-known provider of audio production workshops and seminars, La Torre and engineer Mike Sokol have traversed the country producing some 300 events devoted to surround-sound production techniques.

Just under way is Fits & Starts’ latest offering, How-To church audio workshops. These one- and two-day workshops, La Torre explains, are aimed at church audio volunteers charged with operating a house of worship’s audio equipment.

“A year and a half ago, manufacturers started saying, ‘These [recordings] are great, but we don’t make surround sound. How can you help us?’” La Torre recalls. “I said, ‘What do you need?’ Every one of them said, ‘Church audio.’

La Torre researched the specific needs and equipment appropriate to the house of worship sector and this month inaugurates the HOW-TO workshops. Typically, a workshop will consist of an eight-hour session covering microphones and inputs, mixing consoles, processors, amplifiers and loudspeakers, microphone techniques, mixing and recording techniques, and processing techniques.

SOPHISTICATED SYSTEMS

“You go into churches—even small ones with 300 to 500 parishioners—and see very sophisticated sound systems,” La Torre says. “Flown [loudspeaker] arrays, 40-by-eight mixing console, everything from Neumann to Shure microphones. Even the smallest of churches have $60,000-$100,000 worth of gear.

While there’s going to be lots of attendees who are full-time church audio people, the majority of them are volunteers,” he continues. “The major problem is that there seems to be more money in the market than education.”

The introductory schedule for the program includes workshops in Maryland (June 8), a two-day program in Arkansas (June 19-20), South Carolina (June 26), Indiana (Aug. 7), Missouri (Aug. 14) and Virginia (Aug. 21).

The cost of attending—$99 in advance or $125 for walk-up registrants—is modest.

“I don’t intend to get rich on these first [workshops],” La Torre says. “Our intention is to make this into a nationally recognized program, just like we’ve done with the surround seminars. These will be the first of about 25 that will start again in September. We’ll be doing both surround and church audio workshops, almost concurrently.”

Pro Audio

Seminars Show Worshippers How It’s Done

LA TORRE TEACHES CHURCH AUDIO

Unique Recording Studios, a five-room New York-based studio founded in 1978, has closed. Unique Recording owners Bobby and Joanne Nathan cite multiple reasons for the facility’s demise.

“In the past few years, a large part of the recording process has moved to the home studio,” the Nathans told Studio Monitor in an e-mail. “The professional studio business that remains today is what cannot be done at home: live recording and mixing. The overend business has become almost nonexistent, except for the vocal party session with full posse in tow.”

The pair say shrinking major-label budgets force many artists to work at home, and not necessarily by choice.

“Many producers and artists feel that if you get $30,000-$50,000 budget to make a record, a home studio is a better investment. If the record flops, at least you still have a home studio,” the Nathans say.

The Nathans suggest that recording studios are bearing the brunt of new label priorities.

“MTV changed the way in which record labels operate,” they say. “How can one justify an artist spending only $30,000-$50,000 to make a record and $300,000 on a video? We live in an era where musical success has a back seat to hype.”

The pair further blame the labels for missing the MP3 boat. “Even with iTunes’ success in 2003, the major labels still have not adapted to legal online digital music downloads. The public has shown their desire, and the wish is to bring back the single.

Unique Recording was home to the world’s first MIDI studio with the 1983 launch of “Midi City.”

By 1988, all five of its studios had Digidesign Pro Tools 24 MIX-plus digital audio workstations. Ultimately, all of Unique’s studios would feature Pro Tools HD DAW systems.

In a stark illustration of technology’s impact on the commercial recording industry, by 2005 the facility’s vintage Neve 8008 console had been replaced by a Pro Tools HD and Focusrite/Digidesign Control 24 interface.

“We were the pioneers in drum machines, sequencers, samplers and digital recording on personal computers,” the Nathans say. “They underscored that pioneering spirit of embracing new technology with the 2003 founding of URS Plugins, Unique Recording’s series of software products that emulate equalizers found on Neve and API consoles.

“We realized that we can better serve the music industry by making software that makes Pro Tools even better,” the Nathans say. “Our plug-in business is the new baby and requires all of our attention now.”

As Bobby Nathan remarked in a subsequent conversation, “We’ve adapted to change all these years. We’re going forward to the next change.”

DISC MAKING: Pennsauken, N.J.-based independent media manufacturer Disc Makers has selected Plextor, a developer and manufacturer of digital media equipment, to integrate CD-RW and DVD-R drives into Disc Makers’ line of duplicators, as well as for in-house duplication operations.

Plextor’s drives will be integrated into Disc Makers’ Reflex Series manual duplicators and Elite Series automated CD/DVD duplicating systems.
Programming

On-Demand Service Tells Viewers To GotuIt

The on-demand field is filling up with more services. AOL and Time Warner Digital Cable have joined forces to offer a Music Channel, also My MC (tuned in) channel on The Tube, Billboard May 29. Music-video channel Fuse is developing its Fuse On-Demand video service for digital cable or satellite TV.

And now GotuIt Media has teamed with Universal Music Group for a trial run of GotuIt Music OnDemand. The companies are testing the service on a major U.S. cable system, though neither company would identify the market.

GotuIt Music OnDemand offers music videos, concert footage, interviews, discographies, reviews and tour information. Viewers can pick and choose what to watch as well as customize blocks of programming to make their own channels.

Universal Music Group elabs VP of business development Scott Hochgesang says, "There’s a huge demand from consumers to see music videos when they want to watch them. Although UMG is part of GotuIt Music OnDemand's test run, other music companies will likely offer content once the service gets up and running. For more info, visit gotuital.com.

MVPA WINNERS:
With four prizes each, Outkast's "Hey Ya" and Christina Aguilera's "Fighter" were the big winners of the Music Video Production Assn. Awards, held May 20 at the Orpheum Theatre in Los Angeles.

"Hey Ya" won the awards for video of the year, best art direction, best hip-hop video and best direction of a male artist. "Fighter" got the prizes for best pop video, best styling, best makeup and best cinematography.

David LaChapelle won the award for director of the year. He directed No Doubt's "It's My Life," which won two Music Video Production Assn. awards: best rock video and best hair. Special MVPA honors went to director David Fincher (lifetime achievement award), director Michael Gondry (Kraft Award for creative excellence) and the Beastie Boys' "Sabotage" video (hall of fame award), directed by Spike Jonze.

The complete list of winners can be found at billboard.com/awards.

TV DEALS UPDATE: A number of music stars made sitcom deals last year, but now most of these deals have gone bust. ABC passed on Jessica Simpson's self-titled sitcom, Hilary Duff and CBS parted ways over her deal, and MC Hammer's proposed sitcom for the WB is no longer happening, according to the network.

However, Fox has greenlighted "Method & Red," a sitcom starring Method Man and Redman. The new series will premiere June 16.

In Brief: VH1 reality show "In Search of the Partridge Family" will follow the process of casting an all-novel Partridge Family, based on the fictional characters from the 1970s sitcom. "Search" is produced by the same group that produced the initial "Partridge Family," 20th Century Fox Television. The end result: the network.

Ben Taylor (son of James Taylor and Carly Simon) has signed the cast of NBC's "American Dreams," whose third season begins airing in September. Taylor plays an up-and-coming folk singer.
While she grooves to boom-chicka-boom, you're enjoying an even sweeter sound:
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Avril Lavigne makes it look easy, nailing her first No. 1 on The Billboard 200 with a lead of more than 100,000 copies. While it will take months, rather than weeks, to tell if she avoids the sophomore slump tag, a first week of 380,500 copies is a promising start.

Although lead track "Don't Tell Me" did not win as much early radio play as the first three hits from her debut album, some of the marketing steps that led up to the arrival of "Under My Skin" helped make up the difference.

Last summer, the download equivalent of a live EP placed five of Lavigne's songs on Hot Digital Tracks in the issue dated Aug. 2, with four of those in the top 10. She had a music DVD on the market during the fourth quarter and also staged an AOL-sponsored mall tour, the latter an unusual venue for an artist of her stature.

Lavigne participated in other AOL platforms, including performance slots on Sessions@AOL and Broadband Rocks, campaigns that frequently placed her on the Internet service's home screen in the weeks leading up to the album's arrival. And, as reported here last issue, she had four TV appearances during release week, following earlier performances on "Saturday Night Live" and "Today."

The opener for "Under My Skin" beats the best week of Lavigne's first set, scored during Christmas of 2002, by about 17,000 copies. That album, "Let Go," also benefits from the new set's push, up 137-121 with a 16% spike.

Lavigne also beat this week's runner-up, Slipknot, by a healthy margin of about 138,000 units. While the band's "Vol. 3 The Subliminal Verses"
rallies a higher Billboard 200 rank than either of its previous albums, the second one, "Iowa," beat this 243,000-copy start by 12,000 when it reached stores in 2001.

With none of the titles on the June 1 slate a serious contender to reach The Billboard 200's top 10, sales from the first two days of the tracking week suggest a tight fight between Lavigne and previous chart champ Usher for next week's No. 1. Chart watchers say the race is too close to call and expect her album and Usher's "Confessions" to end up in the range of 190,000 to 200,000.

COUNTRY COMFORT: One would expect the May 26 telecast of the Academy of Country Music Awards to pump the genre's sales on this issue's charts, but did you realize that 2004 is shaping up as a boom year for country album volume?

One-third of the titles on the 75-slot Top Country Albums (Continued on page 64)

U.K. Females Storm Hot 100

It has been a rough go for British artists on The Billboard Hot 100 the past few years. But this week's chart sees four U.K. acts on the list. And in a rare event, two of them are girl groups, which is the first time since November 1998 that two British female acts have been on the Hot 100 at the same time.

While Dido has been on the chart for 39 weeks with "White Flag" and Seal has hung on for 16 with "Love's Divine," the other two U.K. acts on the Hot 100 this issue are Mis-Teeq and Sugababes.

Mis-Teeq, formed in Southwest London, first charted in the United Kingdom in January 2001 with "Why." This issue, a 10-point leap finds the trio's first U.S. chart entry, "Scandalous" (456/Reprise), moving to No. 51.

Sugababes have a slightly longer chart history at home. "Overload" marked the trio's debut in September 2000. "Hole in the Head" (Interscope), new at No. 98, spent one week atop the U.K. singles chart last October. "Hole" is Sugababes' first Hot 100 entry.

The last time two British girl groups were on the Hot 100 at once was the week of Nov. 28, 1998. "All Saints" were in their 19th and final week on the chart at No. 22 with "Never Ever," while Cleopatra was holding at No. 81 with "Life Ain't Easy.

Just five weeks earlier, there were three British girl groups on the chart, as the Spice Girls were in their 19th and final week with "Stop" at No. 98.
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Note: The chart includes various artists and their respective titles, along with their positions in the chart for the week of June 12, 2004. The chart is compiled by Nielsen Soundscan.
**Nielsen SoundScan**

Top Internet Album Sales reflects physical album orders placed through U.S. internet merchants, based on data collected by Nielsen SoundScan. Unlike most Billboard album charts, ending dates are included on the Internet and Soundtrack charts. @ indicates weeks with the greatest sales gains this week. * Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units (Gold). + RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum). § certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamond). Numerical following Platinum or Diamond symbol indicates albums multi-platinum level. (Plated, or double albums with a running time of 100 minutes or more, the RIAA awards shipments for the number of discs and/or tapes. RIAA Latin awards = omitted.) @ indicates past or present Heatseeker title © 2004, VNU Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

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The BILLBOARD 200 A-Z (LISTED BY ARTISTS)

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**Over The Counter**

*Continued from page 61*

chart post gains of 20% or more, with three in the top 10 having an increase in excess of 40%. Of the 30 titles thatbullet on that list, 25 are by artists who appeared on the show.

One of them, multiple-trophy winner and performer Toby Keith, scoops up two chart awards on Top Country Albums. His latest, “Shock Y’All,” won Greatest Gainer at No. 4 (up 50%), while “The Best of Toby Keith: 20th Century Masters—The Millennium Collection” motors 43-33 with the Passerucci cup (up 83%).

Also healthy in top 10 are Big & Rich (up 44%, No. 7) and Alan Jackson (up 54%, No. 8).

More significantly, Chris Muratore, director of research services at Nielsen SoundScan, notes that country albums have tallied 27.2 million copies in the first five months of 2004, a larger haul than the genre has seen through May in any of the past 11 years.

In 2002, when the overall album market was down by 10.7%, country albums were up 12% over 2001. Last year, though, country albums slid by almost 10%, a deeper slump than the 3.6% dip that the general market experienced.

There are two Paul Pipers in cowboy hats this year. Kenny Chesney has sold almost 2 million copies of his “When the Sun Goes Down” since its Feb. 3 release, and slightly more than 1 million of the 3.3 million copies that Keith has sold of his “Shock Y’All” were moved in 2004.

Only one country title, the Dixie Chicks’ “Home,” surpassed 1 million in the first five months of last year, although the two best-selling country albums through May 2002 sold more than Chesney and Keith have moved this year.

In ’02, Alan Jackson’s “Drive,” released earlier that year, posted 2.1 million through the end of May, while the “O Brother, Where Art Thou?” soundtrack did 1.8 million in those five months.

Still, this year’s country volume is a fraction of 1% ahead of the pace in 2002 and 9.5% above where the genre stood one year ago.

**FOUR FOR FOUR:** Methinks Oprah Winfrey sees music stars as key draws during TV’s May ratings sweeps. For a fourth straight week, “The Oprah Winfrey Show” affects album sales, with George Michael rising as the latest capacitator.

After his “Patio” bowed at No. 29 on The Billboard 200, his May 26 visit to the daytime show creates a 72% increase, good for the Greatest Gainer award and a jump to No. 12. This marks his highest rank on the chart since 1996 and follows Winfrey-sparked boosts for Luther Vandross, Wynnona and Lionel Richie.

Similarly, on the brink of her 15th birthday, Renee Olstead borrows a trick from ’90s kid actors Ricky Nelson, Shelley Fabares and Paul Petersen. But instead of launching a hit single, she converts exposure from a sitcom into a bow on Top Jazz Albums (No. 4). The day before her set hits stores, she sang twice during the season finale of “Still Standing,” the show on which she appears.

On another network, the Comedy Central premiere of Lane McCrary’s “Guy’s special,” “Get-R-Done,” hurts his album 6-1 on Top Pop Catalog (up 55%), the first time he has led that list and the album’s biggest sales week ever (12,500).

The show was part of a May 23 slate that marked the second-most-watched day and prime-time night in the cable channel’s history. Larry’s Blue Comedy Collar tour pal Ron White also benefits from that block of programming, riding 13-3 on Top Heatseekers (up 45%). Both comics earn Greatest Gainer on those respective charts.

White will unveil his own Comedy Central Special June 27.

**Billboard**

**JUNE 12, 2004**
Sunday, 12 June 2004

**TOP POP CATALOG**

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<tr>
<th>TOP 10 GREATEST Gainer 1</th>
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<th>Label</th>
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**TOP INDEPENDENT ALBUMS**

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<th>TOP 10 GREATEST Gainer 1</th>
<th>Artist/Song</th>
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Usher Rush Continues, This Time With An Import

While Usher continues to hold on to the top spot on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks with "Burn," the singer's presence is felt elsewhere on the list. His "Confessions Part II" is No. 4. "Yeah!" is No. 13 and "Confessions Part I" debuts at No. 60.

"Part I" is not included on the U.S. version of the album "Confessions," but it can be found as a bonus cut on the U.K. import.

"Part I" managed to find its way stateside and enter the chart with 6.2 million audience impressions, along with a No. 1 ranking at WGGC Chicago and additional airplay at 26 other R&B stations.

It is the first import title to hit the chart since "As" by George Michael With Mary J. Blige peaked at No. 57 in March 1999. That track was from a Japanese import of the hits package "Ladies & Gentlemen: The Best of George Michael!" At press time, Usher's parent label, Zomba, had not confirmed whether "Part I" will be made commercially available in the States.

INDIIE CLUB: Fairly or unfairly, country radio has developed a reputation over the years for being less hospitable to most independently distributed releases. Despite those obstacles, a determined indie finally cracked the top 10 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks for the first time in nearly one year, as David Lee Murphy's "Loco" rises 12-8.

Issued on the Audium imprint just days before corporate parent Koch absorbed the label, "Loco" is the first indie single to play in this part of the chart since Craig Morgan's "Almost Home" reached No. 6 in the July 5, 2003, issue.

An indie last topped the country chart when Kenny Rogers took "Way We Were" to No. 1 in 1981.

Dreamcatcher in the May 13, 2000, issue.

Although the country chart has moved slowly since the early '90s boom in sales, Morgan and Rogers took longer to peak than most of their recent major-label counterparts.

Morgan's song took 35 weeks to peak, while Rogers needed 29. At 22 weeks, "Loco" is the oldest bulleted single in the top 10 this issue and it is one of six indie titles competing on the chart.

Meanwhile, Tim McGraw provides a textbook illustration of the rapid chart rise some artists often enjoy at the expense of those that are not as eagerly anticipated.

After a stirring performance of "Live Like You Were Dying" during the May 26 Academy of Country Music Awards show, the track takes the biggest second-week jump chart leap in nearly one year. Up 908 detections in its first full week of airplay, "Dying" takes the chart's biggest gain and rises 36-21.

Although the singer is invariably in the "quick-add" camp, the song's powerful existentialist message fans the already blazing McGraw flame. No song has lurched forward this fast since Alan Jackson & Jimmy Buffett's "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere" vaulted 31-20 in its second chart week in June 2003.

"Dying" is the lead single from McGraw's as-yet-unitled album, due Sept. 14.

STRONG PERFORMANCE: Winners and performers from the recent Academy of Country Music Awards are reaping the benefits of their appearance on not only The Billboard 200 (see Over the Counter, page 61) but also Hot Digital Tracks. All four country musicians listed on the chart were performed on the telecast, and each show strong increases.

"Redneck Woman" by Gretchen Wilson leads the list and is up 15% with 5,500 paid downloads at No. 11. Kenny Chesney & Uncle Kracker's "When the Sun Goes Down" increases 10% and hits a new peak at No. 30. Lonestar has its first charting digital single, as "Let's Be Us Again" debuts with 2,500 copies in its first week of availability. Big & Rich see downloads jump 119% to 2,300 units, as they debut with "Save a Horse (Ride a Cowboy)" at No. 49.

SPELIAL FILL: Effective this issue, all songs from the 45 stations that constitute INDIE CLUB to Hot Country Singles & Tracks panel is incorporated into the audience totals for the Hot 100 Airplay and Billboard Hot 100 charts.

Since listener impressions for the top songs on Hot Christian Singles & Tracks are relatively modest (500,000 impressions for the current No. 1, "Who Am I" by Casting Crowns), the effect on the Hot 100 will be relatively minimal.

Artists garnering airplay in the Christian and secular formats, like Switchfoot and MercyMe, stand to be the prime beneficiaries of the inclusion of Christian stations on the Hot 100 panel, as their titles will get additional listener impressions.
Viacom

Continued from page 5

s have made it easier to access the festival online, with options such as the Viacom Streaming...
All” and criticism of U.S. foreign policy (“Time to Build”). It also frequently pays homage to the trio’s New York surroundings, best evidenced in “An Open Letter to NYC,” a track that is sprinkled with samples of the Dead Boys’ “Sonic Reducer,” the group finds solace in the city’s post-Sept. 11 residencies: “Since 9/11 we’re still livin’/and livin’ life we’ve been given, not livin’/the things we’re/lookin’ away from us/we’re lookin’ pretty and gritty/city in the cause we trust.”

Reinforcing the subject matter, the album’s cover art is a pencil drawing of Beastie Boys members as drawn from its southern tip, with the World Trade Center towers intact.

GOOFBALL HUMOR

But the Beasties very wisely don’t skew their trademark goofball humor. They littered the album with references to such pop-culture figures as Pulp Fiction’s Jules Winnfield, the Krays, Popeye, Herman Munster, Jabba the Hut, Foghorn Leghorn and “Three Company” landlord Mr. Furley. “Seventy percent of the album or more is basically us just trying to entertain each other and have a good time,” Mike D. says. “That being said, it’s only natural that there were certain days we came in and couldn’t help but be thinking about things that were a lot more serious. We really felt there were things we had to say.”

Slaters tells Billboard he expects nothing less from a group that he has been associated with since the early days of Sonic Youth as well as such other critical voices as the Beastie Boys’ Low,” “The Triplets” and “The Rocker.”

There are very few artists that can exist on the alternative chart, make headway on mix shows and ultimately wind up on the pop chart,” Slater notes. “Eminem and maybe OutKast are the only ones.”

It is a sentiment echoed by modern rock WXRX New York PD Robert Cross. The Beasties will anchor his station’s summer Alternative Family Picnic concert. “You’d be hard-pressed to come up with anyone who could rival the Beasties in terms of bands that’ve had more songs work their way into the canon of a format,” he says, noting such modern rock cornerstone songs as “Sabotage.” “So What’cha Want” and “Hey Ladies.”

JUNE PACKED WITH PROMOTIONS

With “Check-It Out” affording Capitol such a strong lead-in to the project, the label is easing the Beasties back into the spotlight with a handful of June live appearances and radio tie-ins. Kicking things off is an ambitious plan to stage multiple street-date performances in New York.

The dates are part of the group’s multi-label taking share, according to senior director of marketing Sharon Lord.

On June 14, the album will have its world premiere with a listening party that radio trade magazine FMQB will syndicate to 200 stations. On June 5, the group is taping an appearance at the MTV Movie Awards that will air June 20. That weekend, a June 15 show from Las Vegas will run as MTV’s “$2 Bill” special. Additionally, the Beasties are Yahoo’s Artist of the Month for June and will be seen in performance June 15 on Sesame Street at MOL. Capitol is also selling retailers six-song album samplers for in-store play.

“It’s hard to get labels to do that, especially in this day and age of piracy,” Virgin Entertainment Group senior music product manager Jerry Suarez says. “But it’s a great thing for consumers, because the band has been away for a while. The buzz is great. We’re expecting it to do extremely well.”

The trio begins its first extended run in five years Aug. 7-9 at Japan’s Summer Sonic Festival. The trek, booked by Doug Muller at Creative Artists Agency, includes a North American arena outing that starts in mid-August.

“The idea with this record and tour, although we may sound like we’re contradicting, is to try to get to as much of the world but at the same time live same family lives,” Mike D. says.

To emphasize the straight-ahead high-energy sound of “Boroughs,” the Beasties will forgo live instrumentation and tour simply with DJ Mix Master Mike, though Mike D says, “That could change at any moment.”

Of course, as Goes, “We’re not going anywhere. We’re not going anywhere. We’re not going anywhere.”
with the company for nine years and also serves on its board of directors. Before joining SESAC, he spent 22 years at ASCAP, where he directed the general licensing and national sales divisions.

SESAC chairman/CEO Stephen Swid and co-chairmen Freddie Gershon and Ira Smith were in Nashville June 1 to announce Collins’ promotion and the departure of the well-liked Velez to the surprised and emotional Nashville staff. Conference calls to the New York and Los Angeles offices followed.

Afterward, Gershon, Smith and Collins sat down with Billboard for an interview. All four executives praised Velez and his contributions to the company.

Addressing Collins’ appointment, Swid says, “Since Pat has been with us he has done an extraordinary job in the very important part of the performing-rights industry—that’s the licensing.

“Pat has a small department, and he built up the department, brought in quality people, developed new ideas and has, with these new ideas and new methods, enabled the affiliate department to expand to new levels and bring on a very wide array of talented individuals.”

Gershon says that in coming from the licensing department, Collins brings a new perspective to the helm of SESAC.

“You have to bring the music to a marketplace. [Pat’s] the guy who’s been bringing our music to the marketplace, who’s felt the pulse of the real world,” he says.

Smith says Collins was a unanimous choice to replace Velez. “We recognize what everybody else recognizes in Pat’s skills and talents,” he says.

GOALS DON’T CHANGE

Collins says the company’s objectives remain the same, despite the leadership change. “Our goals are to be a technological leader among performing-rights organizations, not only in America but in the world,” he says.

“We want to separate ourselves from our competitors domestically by providing the very finest service and expanding the environment in which people want to come and work for us,” he continues.

“We believe that we have a mantra to increase the value of copyrights in the marketplace and to return a higher royalty to our songwriters and our music publishers,” Collins adds.

In 1994 SESAC pulled off a coup by signing Bob Dylan and Neil Diamond over from ASCAP. Before that, most radio stations didn’t even have SESAC licenses, since programmers believed the only SESAC title they were likely to play in a year was the holiday staple “Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer.”

Now, after a 10-year period that Collins characterizes as one of “dynamic growth” for SESAC, he says, “Our testaments note the company’s capabilities. [It] is moving from the dynamic stage of growth to a pattern of more sustained growth, I believe Bill laid an excellent foundation for that sustainability.

“We have a wonderful affiliations department...who identify songwriters and music publishers in the marketplace [with compelling copy],” Collins says. “As our company grows in our ability to function efficiently and effectively, the affiliations department has more latitude to go out and identify more of these...compelling copyrights.”

RAISER FOR VELEZ

Under Velez’s watch, SESAC increased its gross revenue sevenfold during the past 10 years. It has also quadrupled its radio repertory royalty share and increased its TV market share from less than 1% to 12% during the past five years.

Velez will remain with the company as an advisor and mentor to two pending projects, a TV licensing deal and a real estate deal in Nashville. He will step down from the company’s board after completing those tasks.

“Swid adds that Velez helped make the company profitable and contributed to its rapid growth.

“All companies have a hurdle they have to jump and, as they reach new levels, different management skills coincide with different personal changes in life. Those twin issues came together for Bill and SESAC at the same time,” he says.

“His personal life is changing, and I guess he felt he’d done the job long enough. He has contributed greatly to the success up to this point. So he decided that he should move on, and we decided that Pat should replace him,” Swid adds.

SESAC is the smallest of the U.S. performing-rights organizations—the others being ASCAP and BMI. It is also the only one of the three that operates as a for-profit company. Its affiliates include about 5,000 songwriters, publishers and composers, and it employs approximately 110 people at offices in Nashville, New York, Los Angeles and London.

In its 75th year, the company has experienced strong growth in the R&B, Latin and pop formats as well as in the licensing of TV music.

Among SESAC’s best-known songwriters are Diana Ross, Diamond, Cassandra Wilson, Joe Nichols, Jim Lauderdale, Bryan Michael Cox, Billy Mann, Bow Wow and Victoria Shaw.

SESAC will celebrate its 75th anniversary next year.

‘Radio Star’ Continued from page 6

“We have seen what is here is the end result of thousands of local submissions collected in a variety of ways, whether online, through talent contests held in malls and clubs or performances on morning shows,” he says.

10 WEEKS TO FINAL COUNTDOWN

The CC affiliations began broadcasting entries March 19 for the 10-week “Radio Star” contest. Each station submitted one finalist per week.

All local weekly finalist recordings were sent to official contest judges: Sony A&R execs, recording artists and radio programmers.

For each show, seven finalist contestants were chosen to be featured on the next installment of “Radio Star,” which aired each weekend. Semifinalists were then determined by listeners through call-in or online voting before the final countdown May 27 at S.L.R.

During the 10-week’s shows on the Web site, beatstorm.com, logged upwards of 1 million hits and more than 10,000 comments were posted online during the campaign.

Each of the seven semifinalists wins a professional demo, valued at up to $10,000, courtesy of Epic Records.

The grand-prize winner receives a recording contract for one single on Epic, a $50,000 cash prize, the opportunity for a management contract with William Morris Agency and a taste of arena-sized star treatment by performing at CC’s high-profile year-end top 40 concerts, the Z100 New York and KIIS-FM Los Angeles Jingle Balls.

AS THE TENSION BUILD

For the finale, the three remaining contestants perform two original live for a studio audience of about 50.

“This is what the magic of radio has been about for decades, where you can paint pictures with your words,” Z100 morning team and finals host Elvis Duran notes.

“One of the things I love about this is that people are concentrating on the words and the music without being distracted by what you look like,” he says. “That’s why this is such a natural fit for radio.”

Industry veteran Dave Novik, who served as a celebrity judge and will A&R the resulting demos and recording for Epic, concurs.

“From Epic’s point of view, this is a great opportunity to be involved in a project that already has a pre-awareness built in,” he says. “It’s more and more industry people looking to find artists by watching them deliver material to some entity, whether it’s America’s Idol or Radio Star or VB’s Superstar.

“Those are great talent shows for years, but not ones that have this kind of critical mass. Being able to pick and choose the contestants that are best is actually a great way for people to find talent.”

Natalie Loflin won the grand prize. She says the radio experience had been a pleasure.

“It’s so much more intimate than American Idol,” she says. “We’re talking to America, yet there’s the comfort of having only a few people in the room. I think it made it easier, so far.

For Novik, the experience has been new but valuable. “It’s exciting to start finding material for Natalie and help her find a definitive music style and go from there.

“Also got to listen to a lot of music that I otherwise would never have heard,” he says. “Some of it was actually quite impressed by, and we may have the opportunity to revisit it. Some of it I’m happy to say that I never will again.”

Taking Issue Continued from page 8

Beyond advantages in identifying potential customers, established firms benefit from consumer trust.

AOL is a great example. It has billing relationships with millions of customers. It can add value without asking for credit card and personal information and thereby avoid a common reason for check out abandonment. This will prove to be a major advantage for big brands that enter the scene.

3. Marketing muscle: Large, established brands have the marketing budgets and channels to break through the clutter and get the message communicated. Their message can take a product from obscurity to mass market.

For example, in cross-promote its online music service across its powerful radio, TV, event and advertising divisions. Similarly, MTV Networks’ portfolio of music and video cable channels reaches virtually every music lover in the United States. Its ability to expose consumers to marketing messages is almost unlimited when you add in the additional exposure it gets sister Viacom companies like Infinity Radio, CBS and Blockbuster.

4. Business diversity: Companies that offer multiple products or services have the opportunities to reinforce their name and perceived value. More important, the digital music space makes for a good leader that will attract new users and, therefore, more profit, products.

The prime example is Apple, which launched the iTunes Music Store because, among other things, it wanted a sell-through style that had strong quarters first, before any other music downloads and subscriptions.

Big brands are rarely first movers. However, they can and will step in as a marketplace begins to form and take its meaning to the mainstream.

Whether it is IBM during the PC revolution, Verizon during the wireless revolution or Target during the still-developing online shopping revolution, established brands will usually win the day.

With world-class companies like Starbucks, Virgin and Microsoft all throwing their hat in the ring, we are about to see what happens when digital music is brought to the mainstream.

I appreciate the efforts of the early entrants, which have helped bring the industry into the market. It is a battle where the giants are not interested in the industry, but it is giants like Time Warner, Disney and Viacom that have all of the key assets to create a mass market for legitimate, on-demand digital music.

Alan McGlade is CEO of MusicNet.

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‘I Don’t Like Handlers, Because They Can’t Do Things As Well As I Can’

BY CARLA HAY

There is not much to write about Gene Simmons that has not been written before. But the man himself can find plenty to say about his extraordinary life.

As co-founder, bassist and co-vocalist of classic rock group Kiss, Simmons belongs to one of the most commercially successful acts in history. Kiss’ 24 gold-certified albums are tops among American bands, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of America. Amid his Kiss career, Simmons has kept busy as an entrepreneur. Last year he reactivated Simmons Records, which, along with the Kiss Records imprint, has teamed with Sanctuary Records Group for new releases.

Simmons says he is developing a premium-cable entertainment channel, although he could not reveal details. He also has an A&E TV documentary in the works.

On the literary front, he has formed Simmons Books in a joint venture with New Millennium. One title due under the deal is “Kiss & Tell,” an autobiography from Simmons’ longtime romantic partner, Shannon Tweed. (The publication date is yet to be determined.) Simmons also is reenvisioning his long-dormant career as a solo artist.

On June 8, Simmons/Sanctuary releases “Asshole,” Simmons’ first solo album since his 1978 self-titled solo debut. “Asshole” features collaborations with Bob Dylan and Dave Navarro. Simmons says he also wants to release a 100-song boxed set of solo material he has recorded through the years.

Sanctuary Records Group VP of marketing Madelyn Scarpulla says, “Gene Simmons conducts his life’s work with unparalleled focus, energy and dedication. He operates at level 10, 24 hours a day, and expects no less from everyone with whom he works. That’s one of the reasons he is who he is today, and his potential to continue the success of the past is limitless.”

Q: Why did you wait all these years to do a new solo album? And why do you want to put out a 100-song boxed set of your solo material?

A: It’s finally time. Over the years, when we’d do a Kiss record, I would write 15 to 30 songs per album to get the four or five that might be used. Most of those songs were sitting around, and a lot of them didn’t make sense in the context of Kiss. I want to put out a boxed set because I owe it to the songs. It’s not fair that they’re just sitting around.

Q: What do you consider your greatest accomplishment?

A: On a corporate level, having more gold albums in America than any other [American] band. On a personal level, I have to give the cornball answer and say getting up onstage with people going out of their minds and seeing different generations of people in Kiss makeup. It does put a lump in your throat, and it’s heartwarming.

Q: How do you respond to people who say the band isn’t really Kiss unless it consists of the original members: you, Paul Stanley, Ace Frehley and Peter Criss?

A: I used to believe that.

Any rules we have for the band are rules we decide for ourselves. There are lots of bands that have lost members who people might have thought were irreplaceable, but the bands got replacements and the bands got bigger: AC/DC, Van Halen, the Rolling Stones, the Who.

I love Ace, Peter and Paul. They helped me get to where I am. I hate myself for not standing up to Ace and Peter sooner when they were destroying themselves.

Q: There’s a perception that you are the business brains behind Kiss. What are your thoughts on that?

A: Artists always forget the meaning of the word “business” in the music business. It means you sign your own checks. It means the record company works for you, not you for the record company. Once you delegate authority, it means you’re diluting who you are; someone else makes business decisions for you. I don’t like handlers, assistants and bodyguards, because they can’t do things as well as I can.

Q: Why didn’t you assume the management of Kiss?

A: Paul has a lot to do with Kiss’ ideas. He’s one of the best frontmen ever. There’s a friendly, brotherly rivalry with us. If one of us goes a little too far, the other one wants to pull him back. So if I’m managing the band, where does that leave Paul? The thing that keeps this band going is the continuing and abiding respect that Paul and I have for each other.

Q: Last year, Ace Frehley told billboard.com that it was deceptive of you and Paul Stanley to tour as Kiss without him. He asserted that at the time he was “into a health kick” and fit to play. What would you say to Ace right now?

A: I hope you’re happy, but you’re not allowed to be in the band. There’s no way we’d let you onstage and subject people to your erratic behavior. It doesn’t matter if you’re an original member. If you meet up, you’re an ex-member. And that goes for me, too.

Q: If Paul Stanley wrote his autobiography, what do you think he would say about you?

A: He would say that I’m a workaholic and that I’ve got the biggest ego [of anyone] he’s ever met. And I think he’d say, and rightfully so, that I get a lot of credit for ideas he came up with.

Q: Can you give some examples?

A: I didn’t think of the name of the band. Paul did. I didn’t design the Kiss logo. Ace did, and then Paul actually drew the original version, which is used today.

Q: You did some reality-show segments with your family on “Extra” in 2002 that were similar to “The Osbournes.” Would you still want to do a reality series now, considering the problems that Kelly and Jack Osbourne have experienced?

A: The main problems with the Osbournes had to do with drugs. I’d still want to do a reality show about me, but not with my kids involved. Doing a reality show with them wouldn’t be fair to them, because they wouldn’t get a chance to be kids.

Q: Can you explain why Kiss keeps touring even after your so-called final tours? Why call it a farewell tour when most people know Kiss will probably keep touring?

A: We did a farewell tour when it was clear that Ace couldn’t continue. But after the tour was over, it became fairly obvious from fans that they wanted us to continue. Rock bands are a lot like football teams: If a guy is on drugs and messes up, get someone else who’s proud to wear the uniform and be part of the team.

Q: What are the biggest mistakes artists make in their careers?

A: Drugs, this time and every time. I wish more journalists would confront stars with drug problems and ask them, “Don’t your fans think you’re an asshole for getting high?”

Q: What’s your response to people who say there’s too much Kiss merchandise?

A: Actually, we haven’t put out enough, because a lot of it sells out. So whoever says there’s too much Kiss merchandise is not a marketing expert.

Q: How would you describe yourself in one sentence?

A: I love money, I love women, I like to work hard and I don’t use drugs.
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Jonathan Mayers, Superfly Productions
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