STEVIE WONDER
The Century Award
Billboard’s highest honor for distinguished creative achievement
A Portrait of the Artist
By Gail Mitchell
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Thanks For The Holiday
Weekend Is Mixed Bag For U.S. Retailers

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—The Thanksgiving weekend kicked off with a bang for U.S. music retailers, turned into a whimper and rebounded nicely.

"Friday exceeded our expectations and then Saturday was softer than expected," reports Bob Higgins, chairman/CEO of Trans-Nov. 30 from Warner Bros.

The set could very well debut at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 in next week's issue (see A Look Ahead, page 8).

"It's a possibility," Warner Bros. Records chairman/CEO Tom Whalley says. "But I try not to project. The U2 album ("How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb") could make it tough for us."

(Continued on page 72)

Linkin Park, Jay-Z Come Together On 'Collision Course'

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

Multiplatinum acts Jay-Z and Linkin Park are the latest to merge musical forces in a legally sanctioned mash-up. With the help of MTV, the two acts have taken it one step further.

Instead of simply doing a mash-up remix of one track, as other artists—Kylie Minogue and New Order, Dannii Minogue and Madonna—have done, Jay-Z and Linkin Park have created an entire CD/DVD project based on the mash-up concept. The result, "MTV Ultimate Mash-Ups Presents: Jay-Z/Linkin Park: Collision Course," arrived Nov. 30 from Warner Bros.

The set could very well debut at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 in next week's issue (see A Look Ahead, page 8).

"It's a possibility," Warner Bros. Records chairman/CEO Tom Whalley says. "But I try not to project. The U2 album ("How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb") could make it tough for us."

(Continued on page 73)

Customer Service: Biz Still Needs Help

This story was reported by Ed Christman, Brian Carrity and Gay Waddell.

All areas of the music industry have been hit hard by declining sales: The concert business had one of its most brutal summers, record retailers continue to cut staff and close stores, album sales remain lackluster, and most digital-music services have yet to find their niche. While executives scramble in their boardrooms to find quick fixes, one key ingredient to success has been overlooked: customer service.

Consumers today are more savvy than ever before. They won't blindly pay $15 for a concert ticket, $20 for parking and $25 for food and beverage in on-site concessions stands. They won't pay $18.99 for an album just to hear the one song they like—why would they, when they can have that song for free via an illegal peer-to-peer network or download it for 99 cents from iTunes? They won't go to record stores (Continued on page 72)
December 11, 2004 • Volume 116, No. 50

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8 Universal Music Publishing Group's David Renzer plans to focus on catalog acquisitions on a global basis in his expanded role as chairman/CEO.

Music
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21 Jazz Notes: Michael Wolff and his band perform at New York's Jazz Standard to celebrate its "Dangerous Vision" release.
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Billboard Music Awards
Dec. 8 at the MGM Grand Arena, Las Vegas.
Information: 646-654-4600

The Next Big Idea: The Future of Branded Entertainment—West
Information: 646-654-5169

Billboard Music & Money Symposium
Information: 646-654-4660

Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards
April 25-26, 2005, at the Hotel InterContinental, Miami.
Information: 646-654-4660

billboardevents.com
U.K. Digs In To Digital

Music Downloads Soar In Q3 As Legit Biz Bows

BY LARS BRANDLE

LONDON—The British public’s appetite for music shows little sign of waning, but the methods of consumption in the world’s third-biggest music market are changing.

New statistics from labels body the British Phonographic Industry confirm that the territory’s download market flexed its muscle in the third quarter of 2004.

The July-Sept. 30 period saw the arrival in the United Kingdom of legitimate download services in the form of Napster, Apple Computer’s iTunes Music Store and Sony’s Connect. The BPI says consumers purchased 1.25 million downloads during the quarter. In the previous three months, it says, 660,000 downloads were sold.

U.K. downloaders are now acquiring tracks at the rate of 250,000 each week, the BPI says in its quarterly sales report, issued Nov. 26.

In addition to the growth of the new format, the trade body reports that album shipments during the quarter reached a record 52 million units, underpinning 3% overall volume growth for the market.

“With the launch of the major online music services, this has already been a historic year for the U.K. record industry, and to see album sales now reaching an all-time high illustrates its current good health,” Napster VP/U.K. GM Leanne Sharman says.

Analysts at London-based Informa Media Group predict that the British digital music market will gather pace in the years to come. The research company says revenue generated from downloads in Britain is expected to jump from an estimated £15.9 million in 2004 to £44.7 million in 2005.

“It’s going to be a steady increase rather than a big explosion,” Informa music analyst Simon Dyson says. He estimates that by 2010, the British digital music market will account for £355.3 million in sales.

RECORD SHIPMENTS

The strong third quarter helped bring the year-to-date shipments tally to a record 237 million units. Revenue for the year to Sept. 30 increased 2.7% to £1.22 billion ($1.92 billion).

(Continued on page 44)

U.S. Digs In To Digital

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(Continued on page 44)
Will Biz Warm To Snocap?

Fanning Service, Other Legit P2P Hopefuls Face Big Hurdles

BY BRIAN GARRITY

Shawn Fanning is back. The programming guru responsible for putting the concept of peer-to-peer file sharing on the map six years ago with Napster now has a new solution to help copyright owners profit from the promise of P2P technology. This time, he wants to rein in the pirates who have overrun it.

Fanning’s latest brainchild, unveiled Dec. 3, is Snocap, a copyright management and content filtering system that seeks to broadly expand the amount of music that’s available online, while at the same time keeping unauthorized works out of P2P networks.

The technology helps guide P2P network users toward commercially licensed content registered with Snocap, and blocks them from distributing or accessing licensed or unrecognized files. However, it also aims to grow content catalogs by capturing digital “fingerprints” of live, rare and unreleased works that users are attempting to share, and reporting the results to content owners. The goal is to help labels and prioritize what music they should be clearing for sale.

San Francisco-based Snocap—which is bowing with $10 million in venture capital funding, and a deal in place with Universal Music Group—is at the fore of the recording industry’s hopes of making legitimate P2P services a reality.

Snocap is ambitiously attempting to serve as a central repository of information about the world of music online by fingerprinting everything in a P2P environment, and enabling distribution based on usage rules and any digital rights management associated with the content. But its success hinges on convincing content owners and P2P networks to use the solution.

A number of label and P2P executives are betting that if anyone can do it, it is Fanning and his team. The company’s management group also includes co-founders Jordan Mendelson and Ron Conway, COO Ali Ayal and business development chief Alex Rofman. The financial backers are led by private equity firms WaldenVC and Morgenthaler Ventures and Angel Investors. Widespread adoption of filtering solutions is just one of a host of challenges still facing efforts to clean up P2P networks.

As P2P attempts to go commercial, concerns persist over what becomes of file sharing’s most popular feature—the ability to listen to songs without payment.

In the world of label-sanctioned P2P, embracing the notion of “free” remains a tricky proposition. Labels and P2P service providers are still trying to agree on a promotional system that would allow consumers to hear full songs on a “try before you-buy” basis but ultimately encourage a content purchase.

“Everyone’s talking about try before you-buy, but no one has figured it out yet,” a major-label technology executive says.

Proposed try-before-you-buy concepts include downloads of diminished sound quality, files (Continued on page 71).

A LOOK AHEAD

‘Collision’ Could Crash No. 1 Spot

BY GEOFF MAYFIELD

LOS ANGELES—The first authorized mash-up album by major recording artists could be the monster of next week’s Billboard 200.

First-day sales cited by retailers have chart hawks predicting that Linkin Park’s collaboration with Jay-Z, "MTV Ultimate Mash-Ups Presents Jay-Z/Linkin Park: Collision Course" (WARNER BROS.), could rally first-week sales of 330,000-350,000. Depending on the erosion that U2’s "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb" sees in its second week, that start could be large enough to mount a No. 1 debut for the set.

Rock and rap albums that start with large numbers—like 200,000-340,000 copies that place U2’s new Interscope release atop this week’s chart—usually see second-week declines of 50%-60%.

"Bomb" also loses the Thanksgiving-week traffic that aided the band’s best-selling "Freebird Soundtrack" week.

In 2000, U2’s "All That You Can’t Leave Behind" saw a 59% drop during its second week.

The second-highest bow on next issue’s Billboard 200 will belong to veteran rapper Nas’ "Street’s Disciple" (COLUMBIA) is expected to move 225,000-240,000 copies. Its last album, "God’s Son," which arrived a week before the Christmas frame of 2002, began with 156,000.

"American idol" champ Kelly Clarkson will battle rapper T.I. for the big chart’s third-highest bow, each expected to sell about 200,000. T.I.’s "Urban Legends" (ATLANTIC) had a bigger start, but Clarkson’s first album rang strong weekend sales in 2003, which might bode well for her new "Breakaway" (J).

Renzer New UMPG Chairman/CEO

BY TAMARA CONNIF

Universal Music Publishing Group is looking to expand its reach into emerging markets like China, India and Latin America. So says David Renzer, who has been promoted to chairman/CEO of UMPG.

Renzer was most recently president of UMPG. In his expanded role, he will continue to oversee the company’s global activities and report directly to Zach Horowitz, Universal Music Group president/COO.

During Renzer’s eight-year tenure at Universal, the publishing catalog has grown from 250,000 songs to almost 1.25 million.

Renzer spearheaded the integration of PolyGram Music Publishing and Rondor Music into UMPG, acquired more than 70 major catalogs (including Interscope, All Nations Music, Anxious Music, John Phillips, Ronnie Van Zant and Momentum Music) and launched Universal Christian Music Publishing and Universal Music Publishing Group Latin America.

For 2005, Renzer is looking at "more catalog acquisitions on a global basis."

"My vision for the company is to keep growing the business," Renzer adds. "We’re established in every major music territory in the world, that will continue to grow in both major and minor markets."

Horowitz notes: "David has presided over a period of remarkable growth for Universal Music Publishing Group. This promotion recognizes his dedication, passion and vision."

UMPG’s roster includes Mariah Carey, Paul Simon, Prince, Ludacris, Dave Grohl, U2, 1 Ruie, Ashanti, Shania Twain, 3 Doors Down, Anastacia,法兰克·费丁汉姆, the Darkness, 50 Cent, Godsmack, Ice Cube, Mary J. Blige, the Coors, Eve, Music, Brian McKnight, No Doubt, Blink-182, Beastie Boys, Fatboy Slim, DMX, Gloria and Estefan Jr. and Glen Ballard. It counts the music of Elton John, Heniy Mancini and Leonard Bernstein among its catalogs.

Kazaa Trial Focusing On User Info, File Filters

BY SUSAN BUTLER

The largest copyright infringement case in Australian history is becoming one of the most widely watched music-industry cases around the world.

At center stage of the federal court trial in Sydney are peer-to-peer network Kazaa and other technology that “piggypacks” on the service to provide advertisements and other digital files.

The major labels and 25 other record companies sued Kazaa owner Sharman Networks and its CEO Nicola Hemming; Sharman partner Altnet and its CEO Kevin Bermeister; two technologists and other “respondents” for copyright infringement, misrepresentation, unconscionable conduct and civil conspiracy to inflict harm (BILLBOARD, Dec. 4). The music companies want to prevent further unlawful file sharing and recover damages for past infringements, which some observers say could amount to billions of dollars.

At the trial began Nov. 29, the labels’ lead barrister, Tony Bannock, declared that 100 million Kazaa users — fans of the record companies’ music— are sharing unauthorized copies “to the tune of 3 billion files per month.”

He demonstrated Kazaa to Justice Murray Wilcox by downloading version 2.7.2— on which most of the evidence is focused—through a wireless connection in the courtroom. During a search for music by the Sex Pistols, the network revealed that 2.1 million users were online and almost 1.2 billion files were being shared at that moment.

Sharman’s barrister, Anthony Meagher, admitted that Sharman is aware that users are infringing copyrights. However, the respondents claim that Kazaa is not sophisticated enough to filter music being downloaded.

He also claimed that the vast majority of Kazaa users are based in the United States, “where the distribution of Kazaa software and similar file-sharing software is perfectly legal.”

This was a clear reference to the Aug. 19 decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco that P2P distributors Grokster and StreamCast were not liable for copyright infringement by users of their decentralized versions of P2P software. A petition seeking review of the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court is pending.

As part of the same case, claims by film studios, labels, songwriters and publishers against Sharman are pending in the District Court of Los Angeles.

For the remainder of the Sydney trial, which is expected to last three weeks, the expert witnesses will focus on three technical claims made by the labels.

They will be asked to look at whether (Continued on page 71)
Adriano Celentano

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Royalties For Nonfeatured Artists Waiting To Be Claimed

BY BILL HOLLAND

Jo-Anne McGettrick has a daunting task: to discover the identity and whereabouts of session musicians and nonfeatured background singers who are owed payments from a number of royalty streams. McGettrick is the manager of the Intellectual Property Rights Distribution Fund, which is co-administered by the American Federation of Musicians and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

The fund is the only U.S. body that distributes royalties to session players and background singers. Other than a few computer savvy helpers, McGettrick is also the group’s only full-time researcher.

“There is almost no way to describe the complexity of what Jo-Anne has to do in order to make distributions to thousands of nonfeatured musicians and vocalists,” says IRPDRF administrator Dennis Dreith, who is also a composer and arranger. “She’s doing angels’ work.”

McGettrick says, “If you are a session player or singer and you’ve worked on albums that were popular, we might have royalty money for you.” She points musicians to raroyalties.org, which lists the names of people for whom the organization is holding money and allows musicians to file a claim.

MORE ROYALTIES AVAILABLE

In the past, nonfeatured performers never got a split of traditional “for records sold” contractual royalties. Instead, they were paid a fee for their session services.


The session players’ payments are drawn from the two-thirds of the royalty pie that goes to labels and artists. (The remaining one-third goes to songwriters and publishers.) Session players get 2.625% of the labels and artists’ share, background singers receive 1.375%.

Session players also benefit from fees collected from rental shops in Japan, one of the few countries where rental of sound recordings is legal and big business. U.S. recordings account for about 20% of that market. Featured artists on hit rentals get about two-thirds of the moneys; nonfeatured artists get one-third. The Japanese also pay a home taping royalty, as do Netherlanders, and session folks see a similar small split from that money.

Dreith says this year’s distribution, paid in November, was $1.5 million, with $1.3 million going to about 4,000 players and singers after operating expenses of about 14%. The 2003 amount was about the same.

Newer delivery systems like satellite radio and webcasting will increase the royalty stream for all artists, says Linda Bocchi, executive director of the Alliance of Artists and Recording Companies, a group that the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) has tried to pass along ’90s-era domestic and foreign home-taping and rental royalties to labels and featured artists.

AARC sent out about $3 million last year, with 60% of that going to about 2,000 artists.

Like McGettrick, Bocchi has problems contacting performers; she says featured recording artists or their agents can go to arocroyalties.com and sign up.

The royalty stream for session players and background singers includes payments from cable and satellite TV music services such as Muzak and Music Choice as well as satellite radio broadcasters XM and Sirius. Increasing royalties from webcasting and ephemeral licensing also play a part.

These delivery systems should yield increasing revenue in the coming years, with projections for more than $4 million in annual revenue (Continued on page 7).

Artie Mogull Dies At 77; Helped Build Many Acts’ Careers

BY MARGO WHITMIRE

Longtime music executive Artie Mogull died of heart failure Nov. 25 at his home in Beverly Hills. Cali. He was 77.

Mogull, who signed Bob Dylan to an exclusive contract with Warner Bros. Publishing in 1959, was also instrumental in the early careers of Bill Cosby, Kenny Rogers, Gordon Lightfoot, Peter, Paul & Mary, Laura Nyro, Olivia Newton-John, Deep Purple, Crystal Gayle, Wilson Phillips and Hootie & the Blowfish.

Mogull got his first taste of the music industry as a song plugger for his cousin Ivan Mogull’s start-up music publishing company. In 1949, he became road manager for Tommy Dorsey’s orchestra.

He went on to work for Ray Anthony’s publishing company before founding the Kingston Trio’s publishing company in 1958.


Before becoming president of United Artists Records in 1976, Mogull served as VP of A&R for MCA and Capitol Records, where he signed Helen Reddy.

In 1979, he purchased United Artists from Trans America and released Rogers’ massive hit “The Gambler.”

Earlier this year, Mogull co-founded Burdick, Calix—based indie label Irene Records International, whose acts include alternative rock act the Hopeless, techno-pop newcomer Julie Collins and rock quartet A Race Called Man.

In addition to his cousin Ivan, Mogull is survived by a brother, three daughters and four grandchildren. A Los Angeles memorial service is planned for Jan. 16.

NEWSLINE
THE WEEK IN BRIEF

Universal Music Group and satellite TV provider EchoStar Communications are in talks to launch a new 24-hour music channel, sources confirm.

The as-yet-unnamed channel—an intended alternative to the likes of MTV and Fuse—would be scheduled to bow early next year on EchoStar’s Dish Network. Andy Schuon, formerly president of programming at Infinity Broadcasting, is taking a lead role in the development of the new venture, sources say.

Schuon was previously under the UMG umbrella as chief of the now-defunct farmclub.com and is also a veteran of MTV. A representative from UMG could not be reached for comment at press time. EchoStar declined to comment. The Dish Network—rival to the satellite TV space to New Corp.’s DirecTV—currently claims more than 10 million subscribers.

BY MARGO WHITMIRE

Three major studios—Paramount, Universal and Warner Bros.—have announced that they will release films on Toshiba/NEC/Sanyo’s high-definition DVD format during the next few years.

The studios are the first to announce support for one of the next-generation DVD formats apart from Sony, which is one of the developers of the competing high-definition DVD format.

Universal Studios Home Entertainment will issue select titles on HD DVD in fourth-quarter 2005, which is when Toshiba will launch its first HD DVD player/recorder in the United States. Paramount Home Entertainment will release new and catalog titles on HD DVD starting in 2006. Warner Home Video and its sister division, New Line Home Entertainment, have not announced specific HD DVD release schedules.

The Recording Academy has named Brian Wilson the MusiCares 2005 person of the year. Chosen for his accomplishments as a musician and humanitarian, Wilson will receive his honor at the MusiCares benefit dinner, to be held Feb. 11, 2005, at the Palladium in Los Angeles. Proceeds from the evening, which will include an all-star tribute to Wilson, go to MusiCares’ financial assistance program, which provides medical and financial aid to members of the music industry.

Melinda Newman

Videogame company Atari has appointed music industry veteran Jim Caparro president/CEO. Caparro will run day-to-day operations for the company while Bruce Bonnell, who gave up the CEO and president positions to make room for Caparro, will continue as chairman/chief creative officer.

In its most recent fiscal period ended Sept. 30, Atari recorded a loss of $16.9 million, or 14 cents per diluted share, on revenue of $71.4 million. For the first six months of its current fiscal year, Atari’s net loss totals $5.7 million on revenue of $181.7 million.

Caparro has a track record of leading companies to financial prosperity. While the videogame business may be new to him, its distribution mirrors the music industry in many ways, particularly in that Atari sells to practically the same account base. While he has a long background in distribution, Caparro put himself on the map through a series of innovative policies when he headed PolyGram Group Distribution during the 1990s.

Ed Christman

The senior executive lineup at Sony BMG Music Entertainment France has been finalized.

The company is now headed by former Sony Music France president/CEO Olivier Montfort as chairman/CEO.

Christophe Lameignere, previously BMG France president, is named Sony BMG France executive VP/president of the music division. Montfort reports directly to London-based Maarten Steinkamp, head of Sony BMG Music Entertainment operations in Continental Europe. Lameignere reports to Montfort and Steinkamp.

Alain Prigent is named senior VP/Prigent, formerly senior VP at Sony Music France, will oversee finance, administration, IT, operations and sales. He reports to Montfort.

Tom Ferguson

Greg Thompson, former GM/executive VP of Elektra Entertainment, has joined the advisory board of digital music label Digital MusicWorks International. Thompson’s role, according to DMI CEO Mitchell Kollurou, will be to advise artists and the music industry about the advantages of digital downloads. In other DMI news, the label has signed three-time Grammy Award nominee Liz Story. The pianist previously recorded for Windham Hill and RCA Records.

Melinda Newman

For the latest breaking news, go to billboard.biz.
AMAZING GRACE, "Gcin' My Name," "It features ROD STEWART's "Stardust...The Great American Songbook Volume III" Chapter three of an unprecedented musical phenomenon. This acclaimed album entered the charts at #1 and features sensational duets with Bette Midler and Dolly Parton plus historic appearances by Stevie Wonder and Eric Clapton.

FANTASIA Free Yourself The astonishing voice, the electrifying soul and the stunning debut America has been waiting for! Fantasia is music's major new star. Just listen to "Truth Is," "Free Yourself," "Air I Gon' Beg U" and "I Believe" and see why the critics are raving.

KENNY G At Last...The Duets Album Kenny G is the #1 Instrumentalist of all time. He returns with a brand new studio album featuring star-studded great duet performers including LeAnn Rimes, Clay Aiken, Chaka Khan, and Earth, Wind and Fire performing a dazzling collection of modern classic hits.

ALICIA KEYS The Diary of Alicia Keys This album debuted at #1 and has now sold over 6 million units worldwide. It features three #1 hits: "You Don't Know My Name," "If I Ain't Got You," "Diary" and the next chart-topper "Karma." There's no stopping this all-time new star!

MAROON 5 Songs About Jane 6 million albums sold worldwide! Back-to-back #1 hit singles with "This Love" and "She Will Be Loved" catapulted Maroon 5 into MTV's Best New Artist in 2004. The newest smash "Sunday Morning" from the band that redefines what a career is all about.

VELVET REVOLVER Contraband They're the #1 new rock band in the world. With two #1 singles, "Slither" and "Fall To Pieces," two sold out tours plus over 1.100,000 copies of their debut album sold in the U.S. since June, Velvet Revolver is in a class by itself.

MAROON 5 Songs About Jane "This Ain't Love," "Let Me Love You," "She Will Be Loved," "This Love," "Don't Want You," "Secret Door," and "Running Back To You."}

KELLY CLARKSON Breakaway She begins a new chapter in a sensational career. Already multi-platinum with a #1 album, this brand new album features another #1 hit, "Breakaway," her explosive new smash "Since U Been Gone" and many future classics.

MARIO Turning Point Mario returns with a scorching new album, Turning Point. Its first single "Let Me Love You" is exploding to #1. Check out his future hits "Couldn't Say No," "How Could You," "Girl I Need" and "Boom." Mario is ready to shine in Stores Dec. 7th!

DIANA DeGARMO Blue Skies She sang her way into the hearts of millions on American Idol. Her stunning new album includes her first #1 single and is filled with one hit song after another! In Stores Dec. 7th!

SILVERTIDE Show & Tell "This Ain't Rock, It's Marble" - NME The next great new American rock band. Tours in 2004 with Velvet Revolver and Van Halen have sparked a feverish reaction. The debut album that everyone is talking about.

SARAH McLACHLAN Afterglow The wait was worth it! Over 2 million albums sold. Two Top 10 singles, "Fallen" and "World On Fire." Also check out Afterglow Live, the brand new CD/DVD - 24 tracks, exclusive backstage footage and the ground-breaking video for "World On Fire."

ANGIE STONE Stone Love She scored with her funky first single "I Wanna Thank Ya," featuring Snoop Dogg. Her newly released "Stay For A While," a duet with Anthony Hamilton, is receiving rave reviews. Stone Love is a must in your collection.

CLAY AIKEN Merry Christmas With Love This album is sure to become the holiday favorite for all ages. Showcasing all-time Christmas songs performed as only Clay Aiken can, tracks include "Silent Night," "O Holy Night," "Joy To The World," "The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting)" and much more.

GAVIN DeGRAW Chariot This album is already certified Gold. And now comes the smash hit single "I Don't Want To Be." Gavin DeGraw is establishing himself as the breakthrough artist of the year.

GAVIN DeGRAW Chariot His soul stirring new masterpiece features the hit "I Need An Angel," written and produced by R. Kelly. It includes definitive new versions of all the inspirational classics you've ever wanted in one album including "Amazing Grace," "Going Home," and "Runnin' Back To You."

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ROD STEWART Stardust... The Great American Songbook Volume III Chapter three of an unprecedented musical phenomenon. This acclaimed album entered the charts at #1 and features sensational duets with Bette Midler and Dolly Parton plus historic appearances by Stevie Wonder and Eric Clapton.

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JULIETTE LEWIS Time Capsule Time Capsule is the next stage of Juliette Lewis' illustrious career. Her latest album includes her third Top 40 hit single "Rockstar" and "I Don't Wanna Love You."

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The Digital Rights Bundle: Real Progress For Copyright Owners?

In April 2005, BMI will mark the 10th anniversary of the music industry's first license for the digital performance of music over the Internet. During those 10 years, BMI has collected more than $10 million in license fees for digital media, including the sale of ringtones and the performance rights and the blanket license for composers and songwriters. The growth in this arena is exponential. A new plan to bundle digital rights may have the unintended effect of putting that royalty stream at risk.

BMI, its fellow performing-right organizations and their digital licensing customers have created an entirely new marketplace. In fact, a performing-right license is the easiest for music users to obtain. A customer has to ask BMI or ASCAP for a license and one will be automatically granted, pursuant to our contracts.

A wide spectrum of lawmakers and policy experts, from the Cato Institute to the Electronic Frontier Foundation to members of Congress and the U.S. Copyright Office, have opposed the collective administration of rights and the blanket license as used by the performing-right organizations as the preferred business model for licensing in the digital age.

Last year, BMI's digital-licensing revenue grew by more than 70%. We have signed marketplace-driven, long-term agreements for more than 3,700 digital-music outlets, including more than 200 ringtone and mobile entertainment providers. Each quarter, BMI processes hundreds of millions of digital performances and reports Internet and ringtone royalties with transparency to our writers and publishers. In this fast-growing area, BMI, a non-profit entity, has become a paradigm of the trusted broker creating a marketplace with a state-of-the-art management system at a very low administrative cost and with a high level of customer service. Our sister collecting societies in Europe and Asia, where the ringtone market is more developed, have paid hundreds of millions of dollars to songwriters and copyright owners during the past several years.

We understand the challenges of building the market for digital copyrights. While our efforts have focused on establishing an independent digital royalty system, we have also supported our colleagues in music publishing and recorded music as they have also played a role in the unique challenges of licensing the mechanical, synchronization and master-recording rights. We applaud efforts to simplify and accelerate the licensing of recording rights for master ringtones and ringbacks, provided the rights and income of writers and publishers are not compromised.

A recent guest commentary in this magazine (Billboard, Nov. 27) announcing a new initiative in this regard was silent on the role of the performing right. The initiative, however, raises fundamental questions: if performing rights are included in the licensing plan, how are they valued, and how will the performing-right royalties be accounted for and paid to songwriters and music publishers?

Are we looking at a business model that circumvents such performing-right organizations as BMI and ASCAP? If so, this may not be real progress for songwriters, composers or publishers. If the performing right is devalued or neglected, songwriters and composers who rely on their performing-right royalties may find their income reduced or eliminated in some of the most important future markets for their works. The result would jeopardize the multiple and distinct income streams that have benefited songwriters, composers, music publishers, recording artists and labels alike. Further, it could permanently disrupt what is a viable marketplace for administration and licensing of music copyrights.

The agreement proposed in the Billboard guest commentary—and others recently announced—may not include the bundling of the performing right. But, if it is the intention to license the performing right along with other rights—which is an available option—we would certainly hope that the royalties flowing to songwriters and music publishers for the performing right would at least match what BMI and other performing right organizations have established during the past several years.

Today, the performing right is alive and well and working to the benefit of songwriters, composers and music publishers in the digital arena. In many cases, it is their economic lifeblood. Let’s not tinker with something that is working so well, for so many.

Del Bryant is president/CEO of BMI.

Bling & Booty Don’t Play At The Polls

Why did the incredible efforts made by the music community to get out the vote and influence the 2004 election have so little effect? Despite an unprecedented number of concerts, campaign appearances and fund-raising, less than 20% of eligible U.S. voters ages 18-30 went to the polls—the same pitiful percentage as in 2000.

Weren’t we all incredibly naive to expect that musicians could influence voters when the vast majority of today’s music does not communicate on any kind of meaningful level? The rush for the lowest common denominator by labels, radio, MTV and greedy music companies encourages and rewards music that connects with people on only the most superficial levels. It has become all about bling and booty.

While we should applaud efforts to get out the vote and influence elections, why would a fan head to the polls when we’ve taught them that chasing sex, riches and fame are what really matters? Many of us joke that Republicans just aren’t as sexy as Democrats, but isn’t the Republican party the home of the kind of wealth and power that much of today’s music celebrates?

The music community needs to remember that the deepest, most lasting relationships between art and the public are based on connecting on a far deeper level. Only then will artists be able to influence their audience on issues that really matter. And then perhaps artists can also expect their fans to support them by buying CDs and tickets because the art they are sharing actually matters.

Bruce Houghton
President, Skyline Music
Los Angeles

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Billboard Awards Combine High-Tech, Great Music

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Cutting-edge technology and steady doses of humor are expected to inject high energy into the 15th annual Billboard Music Awards.

“American Idol” host/radio personality Ryan Seacrest will host the BMA telecast, which will air live on Fox Dec. 8 from the Grand Garden Arena in the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas. For a look at the finalists, see page 7.

Bob Bain, executive producer of the show for the ninth consecutive year, says he is focused on making the BMAs “a variety show for the new millennium. We want to make this an entertaining event whether you follow the music scene or not.”

To attain that goal, Bain says that the telecast will air the inaugural ringtone award and will feature the cast of “Mad TV,” which is celebrating its 10th anniversary.

In November, Billboard launched the Hot Ringtones chart, which ranks the top 20 best-selling downloads of master ringtones for cell phones. It is the first chart of its kind in North America.

“We basically want to own the ringtone real estate. It’s a huge part of the business and it is very accessible to the public,” Bain says. “The cast of ‘Mad TV’ is also thrilled to be joining us to make this more than just an award show. The show is popular with the public and resonates very positively with the music community.”

BMA producers Michael Levitt and Paul Flattery say that the new show elements will complement the true focus of the two-hour telecast—the music.

The BMAs will feature seven A-list performances including an all-star tribute to Billboard Century Award winner Stevie Wonder.

“It’s all about the music,” Levitt says. “Every artist that is performing is putting a lot of time and thought into their presentation.”

Though the telecast will not include an off-site artist performance as it has in years past, Levitt says that “we will spend a lot of time in making each performance unique. Artists are drawn to our show because we put a real emphasis on production value.”

Viewers will also be treated to a new “electronic sticky note” feature, according to Flattery.

“Throughout the telecast, we will show interesting trivia and factoids about the performers, presenters and winners,” he says. An example that could be shown during Usher’s performance would note that he made history this year for being the first artist in 34 years to have four songs reach No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100 in a calendar year.

Flattery says set designer Roy Bennett has joined the production team to create a stylishly hip presentation.

“We are paying more attention to entrances and we are probably going to build onto one of the sides a home base for ‘Mad TV,’” he explains.

The BMA producers hope that all of these details will attract viewers amid a Preview of our star performers.

BNA: Show resonates with music biz

Billboard 2004

Here’s what to expect from this year’s show, plus a preview of our star performers.

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The BMA producers hope that all of these details will attract viewers amid the secret to making each moment count.

(Continued on page 22)

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Evanescence

Hometown: Little Rock, Ark.
Label: Wind-up
Manager: Dennis Rider, Rider Management
Song performing: “My Immortal”
Total U.S. album sales: 6 million
Chart fact: “Fallen” peaked at No. 3 on The Billboard 200 in June 2003 and spent 43 non-consecutive weeks in the top 10. The set spawned two top 10 singles on The Billboard Hot 100, “My Immortal” and “Bring Me to Life.”
Latest news: The band released a two-disc CD/DVD set Nov. 23, “Anywhere but Home.”

Acts Pay Tribute To Wonder

When Stevie Wonder receives the Century Award at the Billboard Music Awards, a number of artists, including Diana Ross and Mary J. Blige, will be on hand to salute a man whose music has played a large role in their lives.

“What better way to pay tribute to the Century Award winner than through a special performance featuring some of Stevie’s nearest and dearest friends,” says Michael Levitt, producer of the Billboard Music Awards. “We’re particularly honored to have Diana Ross, who is making her first Billboard Music Awards appearance to honor a man who has such special meaning in her life.

“We wanted this tribute to be extra special,” Levitt continues, “because this is a man with such heart that is so beloved and cherished by people everywhere. He deserves a tribute he will never forget.”

Sheryl Crow

Hometown: Kennett, Mo.
Label: A&M/Interscope
Manager: Stephen “Scooter” Weintraub
Song performing: “Days Go By” with Keith Urban
Total U.S. album sales: 14 million
Chart fact: Crow has earned five top 10 albums on The Billboard 200, including 2003’s “Very Best Of” collection, which peaked at No. 2.

Green Day

Hometown: Berkeley, Calif.
Label: Reprise/Warner Bros.
Manager: Pat Magnarella, Mosaic Media Group
Song performing: “Boulevard of Broken Dreams”
Total U.S. album sales: 15 million
Chart fact: Green Day has had five top 10 albums during its career, but didn’t earn its first No. 1 until this year’s “American Idiot.”
Latest news: The act launches a European tour Jan. 11.

Usher

Hometown: Atlanta
Label: LaFace/Zomba
Manager: Jonetta Patton, JPAT Management
Song performing: “Bad Girl”
Total U.S. album sales: 16 million
Chart fact: Usher has earned seven No. 1 singles on The Billboard Hot 100, including this year’s “Yeah!” featuring Lil Jon and Ludacris. He has spent 29 weeks at No. 1 in 2004 so far, making him the only artist in history to rule the Hot 100 for more than half a year.
Latest News: Usher has a deal with Dimension Films to star in a drama about a young man who finds inspiration in music.

Keith Urban

Hometown: Caboolture, Australia
Label: Capitol Nashville
Manager: Betsy Cook, Borman Entertainment
Song performing: “Days Go By” with special guest Sheryl Crow
Total U.S. album sales: 3 million
Chart fact: Urban has landed five No. 1 cuts on the Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart, including this year’s “Days Go By.” His album “Be Here” debuted at No. 3 on The Billboard 200 in October.
Latest news: Urban wraps a U.S. tour Dec. 16 and then heads home.

Gwen Stefani

Hometown: Anaheim, Calif.
Label: Interscope
Manager: Jim Guerinot, Rebel Waltz
Song performing: “What You Waiting For?”
Total U.S. album sales: With her group No Doubt, she has sold more than 15 million albums.
Chart fact: No Doubt’s “Tragic Kingdom” spent nine weeks atop The Billboard 200 beginning in late 1996.
LOS ANGELES—I hear Stevie Wonder before I meet him.

As I sit in his studio reception area, the sound of Wonder’s harmonica wafts into the room. He’s playing a soulful version of what he later calls a favorite, Herman’s Hermits’ 1967 hit, “There’s A Kind Of Hush.”

And in that moment the Waiting police sirens outside the nondescript building in Koreatown here abruptly fade, as does the start of rush-hour traffic playing across three security monitors. The outside world has given way to Wonderland.

Nearly 45 years after his “Fingertips, Pt. 2” helped him simultaneously conquer three Billboard charts, Wonder’s musical charm still enthralled. From preteen wunderkind to adult visionary, his musical evolution embodies a “What’s next?” curiosity that still burns brightly as fans anticipate his first new Motown album in 10 years.

“Hopefully, that little boy will always stay in me,” Wonder says. “The part of me that’s still eager to discover; who welcomes new, unbroken ground. When that ground is being broken, there’s a place that says to me, ‘Take the you in there who is aware, but let the youth in you that remains curious lead the way.’”

That dictate has served him well in an illustrious career that includes 22 Grammy Awards, an Academy Award for best original song for “I Just Called To Say I Love You” (from 1984 film “The Woman in Red”), the Recording Academy’s lifetime achievement award in 1996, induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1989 and the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2000.

Add the Billboard Century Award to Wonder’s list of accolades. The honor salutes the creative achievement of an artist’s still-developing body of work. Jeweler/sculptor Tina Marie Appo Evans will once again design the Century Award trophy. Now in its 13th year, the Century Award was introduced in 1992 in anticipation of the Billboard centennial. Late editor in chief Timmy White created the award in tandem with then-publisher Howard Lander.

Wonder will receive the Century Award Dec. 8 at the Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas, which will be telecast live on Fox.

Since he first began making music, Wonder’s life has taken on almost mythic proportions. He was born Stevland Morris May 13, 1950, in Saginaw, Mich., though his biological father was named Calvin Judkins.

Six weeks premature, Wonder, by most accounts, was blinded when he was administered an excess of oxygen during the 52 days he spent in an incubator. Though his mom, Lula Hardaway, sang in the church choir, Wonder calls his talent “truly God’s gift” since none of his other siblings—Milton, Calvin, Larry, Timmy and Renee—were musically inclined. That gift manifested itself in Wonder learning the harmonica, piano and drums by the age of 9.

The family’s hardscrabble life improved somewhat when his mother moved the family to Detroit in 1954 and she began working in the fish markets there. In 1961, fate stepped in when the Miracles’ Ronnie White finally agreed to his brother Gerald’s entreaties to listen to one of his friends. White then introduced Wonder to songwriter Brian Holland of Holland-Doxter-Holland fame. From there it was an audition for Motown founder Berry Gordy, who Wonder recalls was more impressed “by my harmonica playing than by my squeaky voice.”

Some remember Gordy rechristening the preteen as “Little Stevie Wonder.” Others say it was Gordy’s sister Esther. Whatever the scenario, the moniker and the music grabbed people’s attention in 1963 when “Fingertips, Pt. 2” hit No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100 and the R&B singles chart.

Concurrently, “Little Stevie Wonder/The 12 Year Old Genius,” the album that spawned the hit, also went to No. 1.

Working with producer/mentor Clarence Paul and with songwriter/producers Henry Cosby and Sylvia Moy soon made Wonder one of Motown’s most reliable hitmakers. Among the achievements are two classic R&B/pop crossover hits, “Uptight (Everyday’s Right)” and “I Was Made to Love Her.”

Sandwiched between those was a hint of Wonder’s future course, a cover of Bob Dylan’s “Blowin’ in the Wind.” His later teaming with singer/songwriter and future wife Syreeta Wright yielded such Wonder hits as 1970’s “Signed, Sealed, Delivered I’m Yours” and fueled his desire for more hands-on control.

Wonder, then 21, formally acted on that desire in 1971 when he renegotiated his Motown contract to accommodate the then-rare inclusion of his own production and publishing companies (Black Bull Music) plus a higher royalty rate. With that came full artistic control of his recordings—and a quartet of albums that forever sealed his creative legacy: “Music of My Mind” (1972), “Talking Book” (1972), “Innervisions” (1973), “ Fulfillingness’ First Finale” (1974) and double-album “Songs in the Key of Life” (1976).

Wonder’s vision shattered the hit single mold of his earlier albums. Having taken music theory classes at the University of Southern California and having built his own studio, the reinvented artist began writing, arranging, producing and playing nearly all the instruments on albums that became cohesive, complex, rhythmic treatises on love, life and racial and social issues.

Experimenting with the Moog synthesizer, Wonder also stretched beyond his smooth, gospel-infused R&B/pop confines, morphing into funk, rock, reggae, jazz, African and other world rhythms. And riding those rhythms was a voice that evolved from “squeaky” to versatile. The experimental and issues-conscious personas reflected in the mid-’70s manifested themselves on such subsequent albums as “Journey Through the Secret Life of Plants” (1979), the Martin Luther King holiday-driven “Hotter Than July” (1980) and “In Square Circle” (1985), which addresses apartheid. Further examples include his work on the charity singles “We Are the World” and “That’s What Friends Are For.” Along the way, he has crossed paths with the Miracles, Aretha Franklin, the Spinners, Rufus, Paul McCartney, Michael Jackson, Spike Lee, Minnie Riperton, Whitney Houston, Babyface ... the list goes on.

There have been a few bumps along the way. A near-fatal 1973 car accident that left him in a coma; a plagiarism suit filed over “I Just Called to Say I Love You”; the commercial disaster of his last studio set, the 1995 release “Conversation Peace”; and Wonder’s death in July 2004 of cancer.

But it’s an easygoing, soft-spoken Wonder—sans dark shades, with his trademark braids pulled back by a black scarf—who alone greets and then spirits me under an archway emblazoned “Wonderland.” We spend the next four hours in the Wonderbox, the nickname for the small, enclosed room that houses his recording equipment.

Whether passionately assessing the presidential election he campaigned for Sen. John Kerry, recalling old memories or talking about his new album, Wonder frequently punctuates his conversation with the words “God,” “love” and “fun.” Or he lapses into mimicking some of the particular sounds an instrument makes as he describes various songs.

Listening—and watching him listen—as he plays several tunes from the upcoming project, one indeed witnesses the boy Wonder. He’s still discovering, still seeking that higher ground to universal love.
The reality is there's nothing you can do. You have to make the best of it.

So now for a question that's on everyone's lips: When is the new album going to be released?

I'm hoping it comes out in April. I wanted it to come out earlier. As an artist, you get anxious and excited, you want to show what you can do. But for me, I had to make a real decision not to rush. I wasn't feeling that the timing is right. A lot of what I do when I am an album is based on whether the timing is right.

Did you think 10 years would elapse between your last album, "Conversation Peace," and your new project?

I really wasn't thinking about it either way. I didn't mean for that to happen. On the other hand, it wasn't a panic-mode situation, either, where we've got to do this or we're going to have a problem up in here.

The album was first slated for release last March. The next date was July. Then before that, Motown president Kedar Massenburg resigned.

Obviously, there are different changes happening. From Kedar resigning to me coming to know Sylvia [Rhone, president of Motown VP of Universal Records] and building a relationship, connecting and getting a feel for each other. There's a legacy of Sylvia Rhone and a legacy of Steveland Morris/Ste-" tley " and I'm trying to make the "Iheards" to get to the "what is". And that's a process within itself.

But we've already talked about some interesting things between myself and Motown new management. I've wanted to do for years, but having them done the right way. And those things will make a difference.

Like what?

Well, we've talked about me having a serious label. I'm not talking about creating a label just because [I am] an artist. I'm talking about a serious label. The way in which I will do this won't reinvent the wheel, but it will be a different kind of thing.

Like the Energizer Bunny, you have outdated various Motown regimes. Have you ever thought about moving to a different label?

Well, I have confidence in the discussions we've had. So if our words are true, there's no backing down from is real, then things will happen on the good tip. Obviously, the Motown from back in the day can't be duplicated. There won't be another Motown Revue, Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, Supremes or Funk Brothers. Life has a definite thing about it, and that is change. However, I have true pleasure in the fact that I had the honor of meeting and knowing these people and being blessed to be at that space and time in my life.

Is the new album, "A Time 2 Love," still a single CD?

Yes, although in these nine years I've done more than just the songs that will be on the album. And it's going good. In these nine years I've found the songs that feel most comfortable for me. One song, "If the Creek Don't Rise," is something I wrote a while back that I recently revisited. My daughter Aisha is also on the album.

Are you concerned about competing with your artistic legacy?

I don't think about competing against myself. But I am my best critic. "Best" is better than saying "worst," because you can be one's best critic if you've given constructive criticism. Obviously, I can take my critics better than anyone else's, but I'm open to some feedback. If it feels right, I receive it. If it's a challenge to do something different, I receive that.

I think I'm a perfectionist to the point where it's got to be real but not forced. I've kind of loosened up on myself a little bit, because you've got to keep the naturalness of it in there. As long as you can perfect keeping it natural, that's OK.

You mentioned that you revisited an earlier song. The popular theory is you have a hidden vault of songs from the last 20-30 years that you can pull music out of on a whim.

The vault travels in my head. I have songs in various forms of incompleteness and completion.

You have worked with relatively few outside producers. Do your future plans include collaborations with your production contemporaries?

I've thought about it. When I was younger I worked with Clarence Paul, Henry Cosby, Norman Whitfield, and I think Holland-Doxter-Holland did something on me. Then there's Quincy [Jones] on "We Are the World," and Babyface and I did something together. So I've worked with people, though not recently.

There are some young contemporary producers who I think are good.

For example, Raphael Saadiq is very talented. For a long time, I've talked with Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis about doing something together. They're exceptionally talented.

You have also only written and/or produced a few acts like Aretha Franklin, The Spinners, Rufus and Minnie Riperton.

You're right. I haven't done a lot of production for other artists. I would like to. But there's a kind of mode you have to be in; you have to have the songs. Probably after I put together the label, I will concentrate more on that. The challenge in producing others, though, is finding different ways to make it sound nothing like Stevie Wonder, to make it sound like that particular artist. That's a challenge I'll welcome, because it will be fun.

Your studio must hold a lot of special memories. Do you spend a lot of time here?

I spend a lot of time here because it's a comfort place where many great things have happened. When I say "great," it hasn't all been happy moments. There have been moments of sorrow. But at the end of the day, there's great energy in this building.

Besides the messages in your lyrics, your album covers from the 70's onward tell their own stories. How do you conceive your cover concepts?

A lot of it really happens just from me talking to people when I come up with the title. "Talking Book" hap- pened between myself and Malcolm Cecil, one of the engineers. We were just talking about the whole deal with him asking me about the different songs. That I was coming from the song, "Visions," which was there before the "Innervisions" title was there.

"Fulfillingness" was just me working the word: the idea of fulfilling and fulfilling is like a female. The other part of that title, "the first finale," was sort of referencing an ending of the period after "Music of My Mind" and these three albums.

"Songs in the Key of Life" was like the beginning of another kind of place. Its title came from a dream I had where I was asking, "How many songs are there in the key of life?" Then it became the challenge of starting again and doing it a different way.

What three albums represent the quintessential Stevie Wonder?

You're asking for three, but honestly all of my albums are different versions of me. But to answer the question, I'd say "Songs in the Key of Life," "Journey Through the Secret Life of Plants" and a buzz between "Talking Book" and "Innervisions."

I chose "Songs" because its 21 songs represent a complete set, "Secret Life."

Q&A
CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY
honors and celebrates
Billboard's 2004 Century Award Honoree

Stevie Wonder

for his legendary contributions to music
was an experimental project with me scoring and doing other things I like; challenging myself with all the things that entered my mind from the Venus's flying to Earth's creation to coming back as a flower.

With “Talking Book” I had a California thing going on with songs like “Maybe Your Baby” and “Superstition.” I was doing different things with backgrounds. Then I like “Innovations” because of the acoustic feel to it.

Then limiting yourself to three quintessential songs would be more difficult.

That would be really hard. Let me explain my thing about songs. I might have a “Superstition” day, a “You and I” day or a “Visions” day. I might have a jazz day, a blues day; things happen at various times, so I can’t really limit myself like that.

Even though “Secret Life” ultimately didn’t garner the acclaim of your other albums, is that challenge something you would tackle again?

I will definitely do it again. I love the idea of orchestrating and composing. And technology is making that more accessible to the blind with MIDI and other tools where you can play all the parts. It’s exciting to get the proper musicians to play what you wrote. I would like to see “Secret” done as a ballet. I just think if you have a love for music, you cannot limit yourself to any particular kind of music. You’ve got to be able to be receptive to all the various things out there.

What’s exciting about “A Time 2 Love” is we’re putting together some great combinations like the combination that happened with “Pastime Paradise.” When I first did that track, I started playing drums like Barry White and I began to sing a “shmo” sound on top of that, but it didn’t feel right. I said, “Hell no. It ain’t happen-

I also had the West Los Angeles choir sing on the song. So on the song we’re talking about people and living in those times again where there’s such a lack of tolerance, people having their own differences and “Hey, I don’t want to work with you.” But you’re no different than me; we’re created by the same God.

It really worked. It was an amazing experience putting all of that together.

And you’re doing some of that on “A Time 2 Love”?

Yes. On one song, “If Your Love Cannot Be Moved,” I have myself singing, some symphony musicians from here and Doug E. Fresh doing a little beat-box thing. I also have a female talking-drum player from Nigeria. And we’re going to have the West Los Angeles choir sing. I’m going to the choir at the church.

You were instrumental in using techniques like the Moog synthesizer to give the music. Do you think there’s too much reliance on machines in contemporary music?

I think we’re living in a time where that definitely to some degree has peaked. You’re hearing more people playing live instruments, and some soul artists like India.Arie are playing acoustic guitar or playing the piano. So it has become a combination with drumming along to some sequenced tracks, along with the live stuff, marrying the two together.

And there’s a growing desire to hear live music again. I know that live performers are touring more because there’s nothing like hearing a band play live or hearing someone acoustic play live like Norah Jones.

Speaking of touring, I attended one of your shows at House of Blues in Los Angeles, and you were onstage, no break, for more than two hours. How do you keep that energy going?

Sylretta wasn’t doing well back then. So I was inspired by thinking about her, doing the songs we did together. I’m motivated by memories of different things. So what I do is relive the experience or memories of a particular song. Then I go forward and do the best performance I can.

There was a time when I was on the road a while and I started changing the songs around and singing them differently. Then I went to someone else’s concert. The person came out and did his songs, but flipped them and changed them around. And I said, “Oh man, this is ridiculous. I don’t want to hear this like that. I want to hear the real deal.”

Then I flashed back to myself, and I’m thinking, “Wait a minute. If you think like that, what about when you change your stuff around?” That was a wake-up call for me. People want to hear it like the record. There can be slight variations because you’re human, not a machine. You can’t always do the exact same thing as you did it before or originally.

In 1969, you put out an instrumental album, “Eivis Rednow.” Will there be another one in your future?

I’d love to do another one. Maybe I’ll be Stevie Wonder this time [laughs]. But I’ve actually talked with Herb Alpert and he and other people about this, a jazz album with harmonica. I’d also like to work with Toots Thielemans, who is incredible.

The way you play the harmonica, it seems like it’s your second voice.

It is. More I play the harmonica, the more I have an affection for it. I love the sax, and the harmonica is my small version of that.

What other albums are in your head after you finish “Time”?

I have three immediate goals after that. Besides the jazz album with harmonica, I want to do a gospel album and then work on doing a musical.

What inspired your epiphany at 21 when you restructured your contract to include your own publishing?

I just thought as I began to understand more about the business and artists’ rights, it was only right for me to have my own publishing company and to really secure that part of my life. My lawyer at the time and I met with different people, like Curtis Mayfield, to get a sense of what other people had been able to do under different situations. When you think of record companies, well, it’s really almost like a stable. You have all these different artists; they sing and do their thing. For the most part, they don’t own their masters.

There has to be something that is given to artists to continue their livelihood. It’s imperative that artists have the right to be able to own their masters after a period of time. Artists and record companies can work out something where they mutually agree that after the companies have made back the money they put out in terms of downloading. In one sense it has deepened the value of an incredible art form. In another sense, it’s a reflection of where society is: lack of respect for an art form... for women... for life itself.

Your music has been sampled, most notably “Pastime Paradise” for Coolio’s “Gangsta’s Paradise.” What is your criteria for allowing your songs to be sampled?

Sampling is OK as long as it doesn’t get out of hand. I’m not really feeling when someone samples a whole song and puts a whole other melody on it. I’m also not going for songs that call women out of their names. If I want to OK a song, it’s got to be for something that at the end of the day it won’t be so crazy that the parent can’t supervise or explain it to his child.

Would you say you’re more musician or more activist now?

I’m more musician. My way of expressing how I feel when I’m talking about political or social positions is better served when I do it through my music. It’s not to say I can’t express myself verbally. But music is the vehicle I’ve been given as a way to do that.

You also express your activism by owning Los Angeles radio station, urban outlet KJLH, which is promoting your ninth annual House Full of Toys holiday benefit. How does KJLH fare against such major-league owners as Clear Channel?

Musically and as a community force, the station is getting better. As you know, it’s been part of my life since great things happening under GM Karen Slade and PD Aundrae Russell. We’ve also got some new faces on staff and are tapping into those energies.

The one major criticism against that station has been its weak signal. Any plans to increase its power?

We’ve been talking with the [Federal Communications Commission]. We are serving a certain part of American culture, and it would be appropriate for them to give us more power to reach and fulfill that commitment. It’s a long process. But we’re the only privately owned and independent black station [in Los Angeles]. There are certain things we can do as a station that others cannot do.

With kudos being showered on the Ray Charles biopic, have you entertained the notion of a film about your life?

I plan to do a book, and I’m excited about the prospects of a film. But maybe I wouldn’t limit it to one film. There are some things that could be talked about in the first part of my life. It would be very inspirational in the things that I went through growing up as a little boy being blind and the things my mother had to contend with plus my brothers and sister in the days...
before Little Stevie Wonder and Stevie Wonder. Then maybe there would be another film about the second half of my life. We’re still telling that story now.

More than anything, I want to do a musical. I’d also like to do an acting role. I have a couple of ideas I’ve been working on, film storylines that are pretty good.

Early on, you were sometimes called Baby Ray. In fact, one of your first albums was titled “Tribute to Uncle Ray.” Did you and Charles ever talk about working together?

We talked about it. There’s a song I wrote, and I was hoping we would be able to do it. It’s called “You’re Too Much For My Eyes to See, I’ve Got to Touch You.” It’s really a nice song.

Time-wise, though, we just couldn’t work it out.

When I say “Lula Hardaway,” what are your first thoughts?

Your mother is your first love. She’s the one who brought me into this world, and I thank God for allowing me to come through her. She handled my blindness a lot differently than maybe other mothers would have. As much as my being blind hurt her in the beginning, she did not limit me to just being in one place. She allowed me to discover.

And it was through my discovering that I got the thirst for wanting to know. “What is that? What is it made of? I know how it sounds, but how does it look? Can I touch it? What’s a radio? Where are the people? Why do they come out of the radio?”

There were times when she would say, “Don’t go out back.” But I’d go anyway, one time stepping in dog poop and getting my butt whipped [laughs]. But it was just about wanting to know and having a better understanding of things.

Berry Gordy?

With everything he had to go through, he was truly a genius with what he did in pulling Motown together. He was a great songwriter, writer, the artists. The whole idea of the Motown family.

And in the midst of all that excitement, here I come. I heard from different people that Berry will cheat you out of your money; that you shouldn’t go to Berry because he can’t do what you really need to get done. But I was excited about a black person taking a chance, going out there and doing it. It was an incredible experience. I thank Berry for enabling me to fulfill the dream I had for my mother to be queen for a day. And I got far more than that. I thank him for the challenges of “I don’t agree with this way, I don’t think so.”

Me saying “Songs” is going to be a double album and him saying, “That’s ridiculous. You’re ridiculous.”

The marriage of myself, Berry Gordy and Motown . . . all of that couldn’t have happened at any other place.

Motown Revue?

The Charlies, Sparrows, the Vandellas on the bus. The little girls I met on the road [laughs]. The kisses. Me throwing my tie into the audience and getting excited.

Benny Benjamin and James Jamerson of the Funk Brothers?

Benny would call me “Little Papa.” He was an incredible drummer. At that time there were words out that didn’t have that little Benny Benjamin pickup on them. He and James revolutionized the whole drums and bass marriage. All of the Funk Brothers . . . forgot about it. They put together Latin rhythms, African rhythms, blues, jazz, New Orleans, all that.

Benny and Marvin Gaye were the first to show me how to play the drums, how to hold the drumsticks right. Marvin was very well-read and intelligent. He loved football, basketball and music. We would sit in the studio when I was 11 or 12, me playing drums and him playing piano. Just having fun.

The Beatles?

I have such respect for where they were coming from as a group and individually. I think of my life when I listened to them; of those in my community who couldn’t relate to them and called me “white boy” for listening [laughs]. Me just having a great love for their music. When I heard “Michelle,” I loved that song so much I was inspired to write “All I Do.”

Bob Dylan?

When I talk about great lyrical writers, Bob Dylan is very high on that list. He has done some incredibly great songs. His creative rhymes are done in a unique way. You go on a kind of excursion with him when those rhymes come into your head.

And Minnie Riperton?

That was my heart. I was crazy about Minnie Riperton. Even before I met her, I heard her sing. I felt like no one in the world could come close to singing like Minnie. When I heard her and got these thoughts in my mind [laughs]. It’s funny. Syreeta and I always loved each other, but we agreed that we disagreed and got divorced. When I was separated, I later saw Minnie. And I’m like, “Oh yeah, I want to get with her.” Then I hear [adopts a deep voice]: “Hi, this is Dick,” her husband. Oh, man, I wasn’t trying to hear that.

But we became great friends. Actually, I talk about Minnie on the new album.

Let’s talk about your post “Songs” albums. Would you say “Hotter Than July” launched your act into a new level in earnest?

I was focused then on the Martin Luther King Day holiday, and we, in part, did the Hotter Than July tour to promote that idea and get petitions signed to demand a national holiday. And Berry supported that.

I think it was 1990 when I told Coretta Scott King about this song “Happy Birthday!” I had written and that I thought it was possible for there to be a national holiday. She wished me luck but didn’t think it would happen under that current administration. The numbers on the signed petitions had to be half a million, but we got more than that.

Also on that album’s “Cash in Your Face.” I wrote that about someone who worked for me. He was in an interracial marriage. When he and his wife went in person to see an apartment they had called about, they were told the landlord didn’t have anything available. And this was in California. From that I wrote, “You might have the cash but you cannot cash in your face.”

On “In Square Circle” I was working with the whole apartheid thing. I’d already done “The Woman in Red.” I marched against apartheid, was arrested, all that kind of good stuff. When “I Just Knew I Said I Love You” was announced as the Oscar winner for best song, I couldn’t believe it. Then I began to think this deep thought: “Wow, in another part of this world there’s someone who has been in prison over 20 years.” So when I went up to the podium, I said I accepted this award in honor of Nelson Mandela. I could just hear TVs clicking off and people saying, “What the hell?”

My thing was not to use the Oscars as a political platform. But it was time for me to speak on what was on my heart. So even if it even using this platform for making a statement, it was my moment to speak on what I felt. I didn’t regret it. And when Motown said, “They’ve bared your records, and they’re not playing them any more,” I said, “Well, OK, that’s what that is.” So on “In Square Circle” I did “It’s Wrong (Apartheid).” We even had some singers from South Africa singing on that.

“I Just Called . . .” also prompted a plagiarism lawsuit.

It was said that I’d stolen the song. That wasn’t the case at all. I used to play the beginning of what ultimately became “I Just Called . . .” at different birthday parties. The reality was we’d had that history, proof through tapes and other things. That experience was a deep one: It was my first time going to court. And it was an amazing pain to go through, feeling that you’ve failed. But God got me up and out of that.

It’s amazing what people will do. I don’t know particulars about all the Michael Jackson stuff, but I feel bad about how everyone has gotten on the Jacksons. Back in 1978, from the district attorney to people who used to work with him to people who’ve been around him, this is about him to the media. It’s easy to make fun of a situation when it’s not you in that position.

If you’re in a glass house, you shouldn’t throw any stones. I’m really disappointed in Eminem [who mock-sings Jackson in the video for “Just Lose It.”] Ricking some people to hear, and they will feel it. We’re doing some classic Stevie, but there is always new ground to break. And I believe we’re breaking some of that ground.

You have talked about moving to Ghana. Is that still an option?

I do see myself moving to some part of Africa. Most likely the place would be Ghana. I like the people there; it’s slow but not too slow. It has culture, the history of being the first country where they talked about Pan-Africanism. I also like the fact that it accepts people of the various ethnicities.

Research on your career shares one assessment: that you peaked in the ’70s. Your response?

Obviously, that’s with your livelihood. But my focus really is working with music and doing different things. The ’70s was my first chance at total expression; being able to do things the way I felt. But I am as excited now as I was at the beginning.

For me to say I’ve reached my peak is to say that God is through using me for what he has given me the opportunity to do. And I just don’t believe that.
Charity Albums: Work For Free Or Charge A Fee?

"Tis the season to actively market charity CDs—those compilations, sold locally or nationally, where the proceeds go to charities.

Among the most generous contributors for these projects are artists, labels, songwriters and publishers who typically lend their names and forgo certain compensation rights to benefit the charities. How many of them become unwitting marketing tools or profit centers for commercial interests?

Major labels and publishers generally reduce this risk by requiring specific details from the project producers before licensing recordings or compositions. Indie labels, artists and publishers, however, rarely have an attorney review the "gratis" deals. As a result, they may end up in uninscrupulous or inequitable deals.

An easy way to determine whether someone other than the charity will benefit from the artists' and songwriters' contributions is to request complete information about the donation amount and the costs for the project before licensing the work.

For example, charities rarely receive "gross" proceeds or revenue—the CD purchase price paid by consumers. Typically the promise is to donate all "proceeds" or "profits."

When asked to define these terms, project producers often respond with such phrases as "net profits" or "proceeds after costs." Pressed for more specifics, they may provide general expense categories, such as production, manufacturing, shipping and marketing—without amounts. Sometimes they will state a per-unit cost, such as $3.25 per unit sold. But such answers do not tell the whole story.

Understandably there are almost always costs associated with charity events. Simply put, not everyone can donate their work. While large companies may be able to donate some time or products, smaller companies and individuals—those most likely to be willing to work on smaller charity projects—cannot afford to take time away from their profit-making efforts or to pay for costs out of their own pockets.

Remember, however, that artists and labels or songwriters and publishers are asked to donate their time or copyrighted material. So it is reasonable for them to require sufficient information about other participants' financial involvement before deciding to grant—or deny—a request to be part of a charitable project.

For instance, requesting an itemized budget that includes the names of those who will provide the services or goods, what they will provide and how much they will charge in fees and costs can be helpful.

Fees may include services provided by a project producer or coordinator, a person who clears rights, a graphic artist for advertisements and CD artwork, a publicist and others. Costs for a CD could include mastering, manufacturing, printing the booklet/cover, packaging, shipping and advertising/promotion.

If a producer promises that costs will not exceed some per-unit amount, it is helpful to do the math and ask more questions before agreeing to the request. For example, it's not unusual for producers to say that CD costs are in the $3-and-up range. However, commercial charges—full price before any charitable discount—for manufacturing, printing and packaging a CD can be as little as $1.50 per unit.

If the promised per-unit cost is $3.25 and 25,000 units are sold, a studio will accept the additional $43,750 in costs go (based on a $1.75 differential times 25,000) Don't assume it will be part of marketing or will be donated to the charity, some producers charge a percentage of revenue as a deferred fee that may be listed as a project "cost."

If others are charging for their work, consider whether they are trying to make a profit or simply cannot afford to provide their efforts for free. If such work is being done for profit, then creative contributors should not feel obligated to donate their work without some payment or fee.
Wolff Unveils His ‘Vision’ Through Live Music

Pianist Michael Wolff and his band Impure Thoughts celebrated the Nov. 9 release of their new album, “Dangerous Vision” (Artemis Records), with an exuberant live performance Nov. 17 at New York’s Jazz Standard.

Wolff, with a spirited two-handed pounce on the keys, led his all-star rhythm team—including drummer Mike Clark, East Indian tabla player Badal Roy and Brazilian percussionist Airto Moreira—through a dynamics-packed set. They played originals (including “Rupak,” a reflection based on a rhythm the pianist learned from Roy, and the freely improvised “In the Moment”) and new renditions of jazz classics (hearty jaunts through Nat Adderley’s “Work Song” and John Coltrane’s “A Love Supreme”). Former “Arsenio Hall Show” bandleader and sideman (with various groups, including Moreira’s), Wolff told the crowd, “We’re all about live music.” A similar sensibility carries “Dangerous Vision,” a CD of studio cuts recorded before a live audience, in the spirit of one of his heroes, Cannonball Adderley.

In the album’s liner notes, Wolff says, “When we perform, our band doesn’t have a complete map of where we’re going musically. We have a general idea of the basic melodies and structure of each composition, but we respond and create differently each night according to the spirit of the environment.”

Backstage after the first set, Wolff explained how “Dangerous Vision” came to be released by a rock-oriented label. “One of my best friends was Warren Zevon,” Wolff said. “And he introduced me to [Artemis head] Danny Goldberg.”

Wolff played at Zevon’s funeral and also wrote a tribute piece, “Hugh: Requiem for Warren Zevon,” that he performed last spring with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra at the Cannon Center for Performing Arts. Regarding his album’s hot take on Coltrane’s spiritual classic, Wolff said, “I was listening to a lot of Medeski, Martin & Wood and Bad Plus music at the time. That tune by Coltrane is so pure, I thought, ‘Why not cram all this melody into three minutes and just go with it?’” It’s a great way to unleash energy while at the same time performing in a thoughtful space.”

UNDER THE RADAR: As always happens during the year, many fine records are released but fade from view shortly thereafter. At the top of the list is veteran Fourplay drummer Harvey Mason’s swinging, rollicking, grooving “With All My Heart” (RCA).

The straight-ahead CD of various trios features an incredible cast of pianists (including Kenny Barron, Chick Corea, Fred Hersch, Bob James, Cedar Walton, Brad Mehldau, Herbie Hancock and Hank Jones) and bassists (Ron Carter, Eddie Gomez, Charlie Haden, Larry Grenadier and George Mraz).

“My whole legacy is tied up in this record,” says Mason, who has played with a range of talents from James Brown and Freddie Hubbard to Barbra Streisand and the London Symphony Orchestra.

Another slipper that deserves multiple spins is “Dreamtale” (Adventure Music), a sublime album of completely improvised tunes by vocalist Claudia Villela accompanied by pianist Kenny Werner. The music is haunting, romantic and whimsical.

Easily luminous is the second collaboration between guitarist Steve Tibbetts and Tibetan Buddhist nun Choying Dolma on their ethereal “Selva” (Six Degrees Records), with instrumental support from percussionist Marc Anderson. Dolma’s chant-like voice is a revelation, and Tibbetts quietly paints the soundscape with his evocative acoustic and electric musings.

THREE DOT LOUNGE: The Coastal Jazz and Blues Society, the producer of Vancouver’s annual jazz festival, has joined Vancouver Community College to establish a nine-day creative music apprenticeship. Vancouver Creative Music Institute will take place June 18-26, 2005. Headlining the program are Wyja Masanka (toto, electronics), George Lewis (trombone, computer installations) and François Houle (composer, clarinet) . . . JazzReach, a New York-based organization that brings jazz into schools across the country, celebrates its 10th anniversary with a Dec. 16 benefit starring Christian McBride, Jack DeJohnette, John Scofield, Kenny Garrett, Nicholas Payton and Jason Moran at the John Jay College Theater in Manhattan . . . The second annual Panama Jazz Festival, founded and directed by pianist Danilo Perez, will take place Jan. 20-22, 2005, in Panama City. It is dedicated to Panamanian jazz piano legend Victor Boa and features sets by him and other local artists, as well as such imports as Charlie Hunter, Joe Lovano and John Patitucci.

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Newsboys Return To Their Worship Music Roots

Of all the acts that have become prominent figures in the contemporary worship movement, the Newsboys' impact might be the most surprising.

The band has come a long way from the flying saucers and rotating drum kits that were part of the phase surrounding its 1996 gold-selling album, "Take Me To Your Leader," to the current success of new Sparrow Records worship project "Devotion" and its predecessor, "Adoration: The Worship Album."

"Devotion" debuted at No. 5 on the Billboard Top Christian Albums chart, and "Adoration" has scanned 423,000 units to date, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Newsboys frontman Peter Furler says the group's recent praise and worship direction is a result of changes in their personal and spiritual lives, and he says the band is not alone in its desire to worship.

"Ten to 12 years ago in America, you couldn't pay people to come out and worship," he recalls. "It was usually something people did at a church. In the past few years people's hearts have been really turned toward it."

Furler sees worship music as a return to the band's roots. "We started out as a youth-group band playing worship songs," he says, "and I felt like I moved away from that, which is probably not a good thing, because that's sort of the essence of our lives—being a musician—to lead people into worship."

Like many musicians, Furler found that life on the road kept him from regularly attending a church at home. "Even though I believe that Jesus was the way, I was still lost," he admits. "My life really wasn't different than anybody else's—a believer or nonbeliever. Something was still missing, and I had to go back to the basics."

After becoming more involved in a Nashville church and a Bible study group, Furler found his focus returning to the worship music of his youth. "Making 'Devotion,' nothing was forced," says Furler, who produced the record. "It was like writing a story. Sometimes you have to be obedient to the story and let it tell itself as opposed to trying to force it . . . into something that it's not."

"There was no big plan to [record] another worship record," he continues. "I compare "Devotion" to a lot of the early stuff. It feels like a continuation of us making music, our walk in life."

In addition to his Newsboys duties, Furler is a partner in Inpop Records, a Franklin, Tenn., based label he launched in 1999. Its roster includes fellow Newsboy Phil Joel, Shane & Shane, Ian Eskelin, Tree 63, Super-Chick, Paul Colman and Matt Kearney, who is close to lining a mainstream deal but will remain on Inpop.

"We've made it through that three- year itch. They say, 'Either you fold or keep going.' It has been awesome," says Furler, who adds that he is very hands-on with the label. "We have a lot of things happening."

In fact, Furler admits there are some changes afoot for the indie label, but nothing has been firmed up yet.

In the meantime, Newsboys are wrapping up the second leg of the successful Adoration tour, during which it has been handing out free copies of "The Purple Book," which shares the gospel.

"We were doing 250 shows a year at one point, and now we are at about 80-100," observes Furler, who says touring has gotten easier. "A lot of the time we charter a plane. We leave home at four in the afternoon, and we are back home about one in the morning, so that's awesome."

LEE'S NEW VIBE: Russ Lee has launched a new label, Vertical Vibe Records, which is being distributed by New Day Christian Distributors.

The venture's first project is Lee's Christmas album, "Hear Those Bells."

Lee, who will head the company, says he is excited to "build a ministry-based label from the ground floor up. Because we are small, we can focus on excellence and meeting the needs of our artists."

Produced by Zane King, "Hear Those Bells" includes such classics as "Joy to the World," "O Holy Night" and "Do You Hear What I Hear?" It also contains some new tunes, among them "Baby Boy" and the title cut, both of which were written by James Isaac Elliott and Lee, who served stints as lead vocalist for Newsong and Truth, previously recorded as a solo artist for the Butterfly Group. (The company recently filed for bankruptcy.)

In addition to launching Vertical Vibe, Lee just returned from another tour of Iraq, where he performed for troops in Balad, Mosul and Baghdad. He is currently headlining another tour, called A Night of Christmas.

"A lot of people understand that this is going to be the last place they have a profile in front of their fans and the Grammy voters" before the holidays, Flattery says. "We're also one of the only label owners who falls into that crucial sales period between Thanksgiving and Christmas. An appearance on the Billboard [Music] Awards is a great way to say that this artist's CD would make a great stocking stuffer."
I.M.P. Has Good Year At Merriweather

BY RAY WADDELL

A focus on customer service and selective booking helped Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, Md., perform well during what was generally a down year for amphitheaters.

In its first year of exclusively programming the Washington, D.C., market shed, promoter I.M.P. noted some premier bookings, including Kenny Chesney, Sarah McLachlan and Dave Matthews Band.

But I.M.P. president Seth Hurwitz says an eye toward improving the amphitheater experience also contributed to the successful year.

"People were saying, 'You're probably getting killed.' Actually, no, we did pretty well," Hurwitz says. "The fact is, we made money."

Hurwitz and Rich Heinecke, principal partners in I.M.P. and owners of 9:30 Club in Washington, D.C., signed a contract to book and operate the 15,000-capacity amphitheater beginning this year (Billboard, Nov. 8, 2003).

I.M.P. signed the contract with Rose Co., which owns the pavilion. Clear Channel Entertainment had programmed the venue for summer 2003.

What is Hurwitz's formula? "Treat people right, make good theater, buy selectively," he says. "Rick and I really want to give people the best night out we can, as opposed to that being a derivative from some sort of corporate edict."

ON FAMILIAR GROUND

I.M.P. has a history at Merriweather, having promoted shows there from 1998 to 2002 through an agreement with then-leaseholder Nederland. That contract transferred to CCE through its SFX acquisition in 2000.

Severely burned from Columbia is the D.C. market's other shed, the $25 million, 25,000-capacity Nissan Pavilion in Bristow, Va., which CEO owns and operates. Cellar Door Concerts, which opened the venue in 1995, was later acquired by SFX, and then CCE.

Some had perceived CCE's bookoing two sheds in the market as a conflict of interest, maintaining that the promoter would be more likely to steer plum concerts toward its own venue.

In 2003, Merriweather's schedule—booked by CCE—incuded dech Chesney, a two-day jazz fest, Broos & Dunn, The Dead, Neil Young, Jimmy Buffett, Blue Man Group, Jackson Browne, Iron Maiden, Mariah Carey, 5:11, Radiohead, Tori Amos, the Liquid Sprite tour and Crosby, Stills & Nash.

This year, Merriweather hosted a slightly higher number of shows—21—that grossed more than $7 million and drew 178,076 people.

Among them were Diana Krall, Dashboard Confessional, Indigo Girls, Harry Connick Jr., Evanescence, the Cure, Barenaked Ladies/Alanism Morris, Counting Cross, Kid Rock. Jack Johnson and Incubus.

"The real moneymakers were the acts that aren't the usual USA Today headline material," Hurwitz says. "I'm talking about the stuff that is not ridiculously priced—good, solid acts that do not tour often and who can sell $25 lawn seats and do quite well."

Hurwitz says that what he didn't book was just as important as what he did. "When I got calls on acts that wanted ridiculous guarantees or that just shouldn't be touring, I said no," he explains. "My pass/offer ratio was easily 10-to-1."

Larry Wehman, VP at the agency Little Big Man, believes I.M.P.'s strategy at Merriweather is working. "They didn't try to do every show," Wehman says. "They picked and chose carefully."

Wehman says that since Merriweather's capacity is significantly smaller than Nissan's, it makes the venue a "smarter choice" for many acts. "There are very few bands that can do over 25,000 people, and a smaller venue will look better at 13,000 or 14,000 people than a larger one," he says.

Two acts, Dave Matthews Band and Chesney, opted to play Nissan and Merriweather in 2004, selling out both amphitheaters. DMB and Chesney grossed $805,888 and $827,541, respectively, at Merriweather, the shed's top two grosses of the year.

MARKET INSTITUTION

Hurwitz says Merriweather has become an institution in the D.C. Baltimore market, similar to Wrigley Field in Chicago. Rummblings that the owners might rethink or even raze the shed helped spur concerts into action, he believes.

"It made people realize how much they enjoyed going to Merriweather," Hurwitz says.

Given that 9:30 Club is one of the most popular clubs in the country, I.M.P. set about giving Merriweather a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Tour</th>
<th>Estimated Fee</th>
<th>Leverage</th>
<th>Dealmakers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cracker Barrel</td>
<td>Grand Ole Opry</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>Cookie Band, an Opry radio advertiser for the past 29 years, becomes the first presenting sponsor in the venue's 79-year history.</td>
<td>Dave Olender, VP marketing, Co-Op Entertainment, and Chris Thomas, VP of marketing, Cracker Barrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cracker Barrel Old Country Store</td>
<td>Studio No. 7</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>Vereenagle: winery brand is steering sponsorship as part of a marketing effort to reach 14-to-25 year-olds. As part of deal, Jack Daniel's is sponsoring a series of concerts by alternative Latino acts.</td>
<td>Patrick Stanovich, East Coast Hispanic marketing manager, and Campbell Brown, national brand manager, Jack Daniel's, LaSamba, Stock Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald's</td>
<td>Destination's Child tour, nine-plus counties, 2005</td>
<td>$5 million</td>
<td>Partnership builds on McDonald's 2-year-old music-centric marketing campaign that includes partnerships with Latin Timberlake, Alejandro Fernández and other music celebrities. McDonald's will play an integral role in McDonald's worldwide brand campaign, including appearances in TV ads and in-store marketing collateral. The acts will also serve as good ambassadors for World's Children's Day at McDonald's, the company's annual global food drive</td>
<td>Dave Barren, senior VP global marketing officer, Bill Lamar, senior VP chief marketing officer, and Larry Light, executive VP global chief marketing officer, McDonald's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starbucks Duets</td>
<td>Rock Bottom Remotes tour, October</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>Coffee just aligned with tour to tout its co-branded credit card and support its-beneficiary America SCORES, a charity that provides after-school learning and sports programs for low-income kids. Duets was promoted on-site with sign-ups and VIP gift bags. Starbucks promoted on-lin and in print. Band comprises Stephen King, Amy Tan, Dave Barren and other been-selling-a-lot.</td>
<td>Paul Cascino, executive director, America SCORES, and Ted Habib, general manager/promoter, Rock Bottom Remotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Navy</td>
<td>College Music Awards, featuring Skid Row, Living Color, Sealing Sunday, Something Corporate, October-December, 10 shows</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>U.S. Navy aligned with the inaugural music tour to reach college students, the sponsorship affects an integrated presence on college campuses, including on-site booths, as well as TV ad spots on Zip TV and Zip 2. Dealt deals with the I.M.P. sponsorship on behalf of the armed forces, all of which are increasingly upping their sponsorship efforts to meet recruitment goals.</td>
<td>David Isaacs, CEO, 720 Networks, Inc., and David Fauser, executive VP advertising and marketing, Navy Recruiting Command</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IEG/BILLBOARD TOUR SPONSORSHIP ROUNDPUP

BILLBOARD DECEMBER 11, 2004

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Compiled by William Lipsky, special editor, IEG Sponsorship Report sponsorships.com

MERRIWEATHER POST PAVILION IN COLUMBIA, MD., HAS A CAPACITY OF 15,000.
Phish Manager Closes Up Shop

With the final, rain-soaked Phish fest in Coventry, Vt., now in the books after a lengthy refund reconciliation, band manager John Paluska will dismantle the band’s Burlington, Vt.-based management company, Dionysian Productions. “Dionysian Productions will be a non-entity as of the end of the year,” says Paluska, Phish’s manager for 16 years. “I’m taking a sabatical, and I don’t know where I’ll re-emerge. It may be in the music business, or it may not be.”

Paluska started managing Phish while he was still in college, he tells Billboard. “My entire adult life has been consumed with this band,” he says. “It has been an amazing 16 years.”

Phish, which announced earlier this year it would disband after the Coventry fest (billboard.biz, May 25), will maintain a small headquarters in Vermont, headed by longtime Phish archivist Kevin Shapiro. “The rest of us are all splitting out and doing different things,” Paluska says.

Phish’s total staff, including the band’s merchandising company Phish Dry Goods, numbered more than 25 when the band was on the road.

Jason Colton, a key executive at Dionysian, will continue as manager for Phish bassist Mike Gordon, who is recording a second album with Leo Kottke this month. The pair will tour together again.

Keyboardist Page McConnell just released a DVD, “Live at the Fillmore,” with his band Vida Blue & the Span Abstains on Image Entertainment. Drummer Jon Fishman’s side project, Pork Tornado, currently has no dates booked.

Sources say guitarist Trey Anastasio is close to announcing a major deal with Dave Matthews Band manager Coran Capshaw, but the move could not be immediately confirmed.

Anastasio will likely tour in 2005, sources say. Like Phish and DMB, Anastasio is booked by Chip Hooper at Monterey Peninsula Artists.

Meanwhile, the last major effort of Dionysian was orchestrating the mass refund effort for those who could not attend the Coventry festival.

The fest, held Aug. 14-17, sold out and grossed more than $8.8 million, but at least 10,000 people could not make the festival because of torrential rains that closed roads in the area. The event, like past Phish fests at L.L. Lemonwood, Big Cypress, the Great Went and Clifford Ball, was produced by Phish and Dave Werin at Great Northeast Productions.

All of those who did not make it to the show received full refunds and a limited edition Danny Clinch photo documentary of a decade of Phish. Each member of the band hand-signed every copy. “That in itself was quite an effort,” Paluska says. “We rented space, and seeing all those books was quite a sight. It took the band a couple of days of signing to get it done. I hope people appreciate the gesture, because it was heartfelt. The band put a lot into it, and I think it was somewhat therapeutic for them.”

On its final tour Phish stayed true to its history, keeping ticket prices at the band’s normal rate (in the $40 range) when it likely could have charged three times as much. “It would have been a little late to change our whole strategy,” Paluska says. “These guys will continue to have careers as musicians, and hopefully Phish fans will follow them in their new careers. So there wasn’t any thinking of this is our last chance to squeeze every penny out before it ends.”

Phish’s final tour of 2005 grossed $27.5 million from only 25 stops, capping one of the most remarkable chapters in the history of the concert business. For more successful and focused on the road than in the studio, Phish routinely played well above 95% capacity, and built a loyal following of fans—known as Phishheads—that was arguably rivaled in their passion only by the Grateful Dead’s legendary Deadheads.

Phish: Autographed Books for Shut-OUT Fans

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Mario Faces Career ‘Turning Point’

BY GAIL MITCHELL

The transition from teen to young adult can be difficult enough on its own, but imagine making that change in front of a fickle public. That was the situation facing 3rd Street/J Records artist Mario as he began preparing his sophomore album, “Turning Point.” However, judging from the reaction to lead single “Let Me Love You” and the 18-year-old’s new look, the transition is going smoothly.

“With the dearth of teen idols, I was a bit concerned that Mario’s more mature look might alienate some of his fans who loved him as a younger-modeled star,” BET senior VP of music programming Stephen Hill says. “It seems like that concern may have been unfounded. His video is so smooth and his appeal so broad that he is simply growing with his audience.”

With the album’s Dec. 7 release fast approaching, “Let Me Love You” is nestled in the top five on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart and The Billboard Hot 100. On the Billboard Radio Monitor R&B/Hip-Hop chart, the single jumps from No. 7 to No. 4. And it is crossing over to mainstream top 40 radio as well.

“Since it started the show in our love show,” says Elroy Smith, operations manager/FD of Chicago urban outlets WGCI, WGRB and WVAZ. “We have since moved it to all-day play. The song has all of the ingredients to grow massively.”

To further strengthen Mario’s male audience, the single will get a club remix, featuring DJ Jadakiss, in advance of the album. Available for sale separately, the remix will also be included on the album.

“We got [the song] out there at a good time, when radio wasn’t too crowded,” says Moran Williams, VP of urban marketing at J. The key, Williams notes, was to be a bit more progressive without alienating the younger demo.

“The last time out, Mario was very appealing to young girls and women,” she adds. “Now we want to make sure he appeals to guys as well. That’s one reason for the remix. Mix show DJs will play this and build male audience.”

Discovered at age 11 by his manager, Troy Patterson, Mario signed with J at 14. He released his full-length debut album in 2002, reaching No. 4 in R&B and pop with “Just a Friend” and top 20 R&B with “Braid My Hair.” According to Nielsen SoundScan, “Mario” has sold 586,000 units.

Work on “Turning Point” began a little more than a year ago, following Mario’s summer tour with B2K.

CONSCIOUS CHANGES

“When we sat down, we were very conscious of the transition,” Patterson says. “We were looking at what was out there, what was coming and where he would fit.”

Those discussions gave Mario a goal: to fashion a coming-of-age record à la Michael Jackson’s 1979 hit, “Off the Wall.”

“We wanted to make an up-tempo ‘Off the Wall’ for 2005,” J executive VP of A&R Peter Edge says. “All original songs, no covers. It was important that the material on this album reflects where Mario is now. It took a minute to get people’s head around where he was at. He’s not a kid. He’s not just talking about getting with a girl anymore.”

“It was kind of a funny change, singing mature songs,” Mario admits. “But it was natural. All the songs are about friends and the situations I’m going through.”

In addition to Scott Storch, who produced “Let Me Love You,” the album’s producers include Lil Jon, “Mario” collaborates the Underdogs and Harold Lilly, Sean Garrett and Dr. Dre associate Riff “Neff-U” Feenster. Mario also co-wrote several songs for the first time.

“I write here and there,” Mario says, “but I got a chance to do more writing on this album. And I want to do more the time out.”

Along with the musical retooling, Mario revamped his image. The transition began during the video shoot for his last “Mario” single, “C’mon.”

“We wanted to make sure the transition wouldn’t be a total shock,” Patterson says. “But we were beginning to educate fans that he was maturing.”

(Continued on page 26)

Usher, Pitts Prepping First Us Release For 2005

In the midst of a banner year, Usher is ramping up activity on his previously announced label, US Records (Billboard, Aug. 24, 2002). Helming the J Records-affiliated company is Mark Pitts, who is also senior VP of Zomba Label Group, where his duties include A&R, artist relations and marketing.

The US roster includes rapper/songwriter Rico Love and One Chance, a five-man R&B group based in Chicago. Love’s album will be first out of the chute, late next year, according to Pitts, with a possible single coming in the first quarter.

Pitts began his industry career as a manager for the Notorious B.I.G., Changing Faces and Shyne. He parlayed that experience into making records, securing a production deal with Universal (Rising Tide) and subsequently through LaFace/Arista (Bystorm); he also served as Aristat’s VP of A&R.

Pitts assumed his current post in September, after Arista was folded into Zomba and RCAJ. Among the artists Pitts works with at Zomba are Ciara and Donell Jones.

Also on Pitts’ docket: a movie on the life of B.I.G. (aka Christopher Wallace) in association with the late rapper’s mother.

“It has taken 14 years, working behind the scenes with a lot of people,” Pitts says of his career. “But everything has finally come together.”

PRINCE OF CHARTS: The Purple One’s triumphant return to the charts this year has led to another achievement, “Call My Name” counts 29 weeks on the R&B/ Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart, giving it the longest reign of any Prince single.


Meanwhile, two new songs are available online through Prince’s NPG Music Club: “Sister Jose Jam” was recorded live during his Musicology tour, and he completed the demo “Glass Cutter” at his Paisley Park studio earlier this year.

CARPET REPORT: Heard on the red carpet at the recent second annual Vibe Awards:

After co-writing (with Ciara and others) and co-producing “Got Me Waiting” on Fantasia’s “Free Yourself” album, Jermaine Dupri is finishing work on a new Bow Wow set, as well as collaborating with Jagged Edge and Mariah Carey.

Russell Simmons declined to give more details about the new record label he is launching, saying only that he is still looking for distribution.

Usher attended the show with his management client, rapper Petey Pablo. Speculation has Pablo extending that relationship to join the roster of Knight’s The Row label. At press time, a Jive/Zomba representative said that Pablo remains on Jive.

Following up a conversation Billboard had with Vibe president Kenard Gibbs in the previous issue, he says ratings for the second annual ceremony rose 26%. As to whether the show will return to UPN next year, Gibbs says it is not yet time for those talks.

“There’s a period of time that elapses even if the show had gone positively,” he says, referring to the violence that marred this year’s event. “So we wouldn’t know until this point in time. But they share in our disappointment, because last year was such a success.”

MUSICAL NOTES: Cleveland singer Conya Doss follows up her noteworthy independent debut, “A Poem About Ms. Doss,” with “Just because.” The sophomore set is due Jan. 4, 2005, through Unique Beats Entertainment.

Sounds of Blackness is back with a new holiday album, “The Night Before Christmas II.” The project is a joint venture by Sounds of Blackness Records and Atomic ‘K’ Records. SOB is already looking to next year’s holiday season, with plans to launch a major holiday tour and a possible TV special. According to the group’s director/producer, Gary Hines. In the meantime, SLR Records/WEA will relaunch SOB’s “Soul Symphony” in February.

BOTTOMS UP: Nelly’s Apple Bottoms clothing line for women appoints Nelly’s cousin, Yoni Martin, president/managing partner. Concurrently, the company announces that Apple Bottoms’ licensing agreement with Check Group now extends to Nelly’s male apparel line, Vokal.

Check Group, which also carries underwear and loungewear licenses for Phat Farm, Adinkam and OutKast, will manufacture, sell and distribute Vokal and Apple Bottoms for four years and nine months, respectively.

The Apple Bottoms/Vokal team also includes partner Ian Kelly.
### Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong> Drop It Like It's Hot</td>
<td><strong>#1</strong> Flo Rida featuring T-Pain</td>
<td>Interscope Records</td>
<td><strong>#1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#2</strong> Lean Back</td>
<td><strong>#2</strong> Ciara</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong> Let Me Love You</td>
<td><strong>#3</strong> Jamie Foxx</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong> Wonderful</td>
<td><strong>#4</strong> Florida Georgia</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#5</strong> Break Ya Back</td>
<td><strong>#5</strong> Ludacris</td>
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<td><strong>#6</strong> The Dream</td>
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### Hot R&B Singles Sales

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<th>Label</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#1</strong> Lose My Breath</td>
<td><strong>#1</strong> Mario</td>
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<td><strong>#2</strong> Got That Money</td>
<td><strong>#2</strong> Mario</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#3</strong> Drop It Like It's Hot</td>
<td><strong>#3</strong> Flo Rida featuring T-Pain</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>#4</strong> Over And Over</td>
<td><strong>#4</strong> Ludacris</td>
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<td><strong>#5</strong> Let Me Love You</td>
<td><strong>#5</strong> Jamie Foxx</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### HitPredictor

**NEW RELEASES WITH TOP 10 COLLABOT POTENTIAL LILO & THE EAST SIDE BOYZ
didn't love this one.**

**DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT
didn't love this one.**

**OVER AND OVER
didn't love this one.**

**LET ME LOVE YOU
didn't love this one.**

**MY BOO
didn't love this one.**

**WONDERFUL
didn't love this one.**

**GET BACK
didn't love this one.**

**BALLA BABY
didn't love this one.**

**KARMA
didn't love this one.**

**BROOKLYN THE GAP
didn't love this one.**

**WHEN I GROW UP
didn't love this one.**

**WHAT U GON' DO
didn't love this one.**

**OYEH MI CAN'T
didn't love this one.**

**LEAN BACK
didn't love this one.**

**EAT IT
didn't love this one.**

**COME BY
didn't love this one.**

**LET IT GO
didn't love this one.**

**OYEH MI CAN'T
didn't love this one.**

**PRODUCER
didn't love this one.**

### Music

**Mario**

Continued from page 25

Out were the jeans, T-shirts, and throwbacks. In was a more mature, stylish look. The biggest makeover move, however, was cutting Mario’s trademark braids. Although Williams and Patterson came up with the idea, they left the final decision to Mario. It took him some time, but he did have the braids cut off.

“Carolyn and I looked at this as something that would separate him from other artists,” Patterson says. “And we were right. Women have been going crazy.”

“When artists have a huge first single like ‘Just a Friend,’ it’s hard to come back,” Arista’s senior VP of urban marketing Jeff Burroughs says. He wanted to create a forward, compelling image. Something that would have some shock value but also [was] definitive—something he could call his own.”

**BOOST FROM MOTOROLA**

Following the Oct. 22 premiere of the “Let Me Love You” video on BET, Mario embarked on a Motorola Boost-sponsored promotion tour.

The Oct. 28-Dec. 4 itinerary included Detroit, Atlanta, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Orleans, St. Louis, Philadelphia and New York, with samples distributed at each stop.

Consumers who purchase “Turning Point” from Wal-Mart can download the exclusive non-album track “Who.” Other retail visibility campaigns involve Circuit City, Target, Trans World and independent outlets.

Radio One syndicated morning show host Russ Parr is conducting a “Win Mario’s Magnum” car contest. The grand-prize winner of the Dodge model will be announced the week of the album’s release. The car will come with a Motorola Boost phone, clothing and other gifts.

Additional coverage ranges from a February piece in Teen People to stories in USA Today and Vibe, online chats on bet.com and msn.com and appearances on the “Soul Train” Christmas special and “Steve Harvey’s Big Time.”

With college and a role in the feature film “Destination Fame” on his agenda, Mario may still be in transition. Yet he is doing a “good job of changing lanes,” Burroughs says. “Competition is very fierce, but he’s off to a great start.”

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**Billboard**

December 11, 2004

### Billboard Chart

**Billboard**

**December 11, 2004**

**Billboard**

**December 11, 2004**

**Billboard**

**December 11, 2004**
**Chile’s Henriquez Steps Out On His Own**

BY MARCELO FERNANDEZ BITAR

SANTIAGO, Chile—Colored pictures of 9-year-old Alvaro Henriquez, wearing a snorkel, fins and mask, are featured on the unusual covers of two vinyl singles—“Amada” and “Recién Cansado”—released in Chile in September and October.

The imaginative packaging was part of an unorthodox marketing scheme for the first solo album by Henriquez, the celebrated frontman of legendary Chilean rock band Los Tres. The self-titled album was released Nov. 25.

Warner Music Chile president Alfonso Cardone took Henriquez’s suggestion of releasing vinyl singles as a personal challenge. One thousand copies of each single had to be pressed in the Czech Republic, because they couldn’t be manufactured in Chile.

“We also turned his idea into a distinctive element of the marketing plan, and a special deal was struck with [etailer] Feria del Disco, where fans could pre-order the album and receive the singles as a gift,” Cardone says.

The plan worked too well: The singles soon sold out. Cardone estimates the album will reach platinum status (20,000 units) by mid-2005.

Henriquez has received intense airplay and press attention since September, when the first single, “Amada,” was shipped. The song is a catchy, quick gem (only two minutes and eight seconds long) that pays homage to the Beach Boys and Phil Spector—the mix was even made in mono.

“It is the shortest and most beautiful coposition I have ever made,” Henriquez says.

The album is eqal parts 1960s pop, post-punk rockabilly and a Chilean folk rhythm called cueca. These elements, plus the cover photo of the young Henriquez, make the album an evocative journey into his past.

“I wanted to regain the ability to be surprised, sor that is natural when you are small, but then becomes less intense,” Henriquez explains.

It is not surprising that Henriquez has received attention as a soloist. During Los Tres’ heyday in the 1990s, the band was one of the most important forces in Latin rock. (Café Tacuba honored Los Tres on the 2002 EP “Yale Caláluma.”) Once the group disbanded, Henriquez created another successful band, Peténillés, in 2001.

Peténillés broke up earlier this year, when two of its original members left in the middle of a nationwide tour that was completed with new musicians. After that experience, Henriquez decided to go solo.

“I always liked to lead a band, but somehow hidden among other members, as an underlying,” he says. “I really enjoyed composing songs and sharing them with the rest of a group, but I found out that I ended up making even every decision and got bored of trying to reach a consensus.”

“Alvaro Henriquez” includes 10 original songs, plus a version of the traditional folk standard “Le Tengo Dicho a Mi Negra.” There is also a cover of Los Tigres del Norte’s “Jete de Jetes.” Special guest performers include members of Chilean band Los Bunkers and Café Tacuba.

“My main influence from artists like Café Tacuba is their sense of liberty and playing music as you truly feel it, without thinking about formulas,” he says.

Henriquez is planning to tour in support of the album.

---

**Season Sees Surge Of Spanish Holiday Sets**

While holiday albums are a staple of the U.S. marketplace, the notion of numerous Spanish-language Christmas albums has never quite taken hold. However, this year has already seen the release of a dozen compilations, as well as a handful of titles that labels hope will find eager ears anxious for new readings on holiday standards.

Most prominent among these is “Rafael Vuelve Por Navidad,” a collection of nine newly recorded Christmas tracks by veteran Spanish icon Raphael. The album, due Dec. 14 on ENI Latin, includes a remastered version of Raphael’s original recording of “El Tamborilero,” the Spanish version of “The Little Drummer Boy.”

The album also includes “Llegó la Navidad,” a Spanish version of John Lennon’s “Happy X-Mas (War Is Over).”

Already out on CanZon, Sony is Christian singer Marcos Witt’s “Tiempo de Navidad,” a collection of standards in Spanish and a few original tracks. The album was recorded at Abbey Road Studios in London with the London Philharmonic and Dublin Film Orchestras.

Due Dec. 21 is “Sábados, Edición Especial,” a reissue of Elvis Crespo’s album “Sábados,” released earlier this year on Ole Music. The new edition is a CD/DVD with four music videos plus three new tracks, two of which are brand-new Christmas songs. The first, “Viva la Navidad,” was penned by Alejandro Jaén, while Crespo wrote “Una Copa.”

Upcoming albums by Universal artists Toño Rosario and Domingo Quintero. will also include Christmas singles. Finally, new on Unlimited Records is “Una Navidad Con Todos.”

The album, due Dec 20, is a CD/DVD collection of tracks and videos recorded by the contestants of reality TV show “Objetivo Fama.” Notable collections include Universal Music Latin’s annual “Posadas, Piñatas y Navidad” and “Fandangando en la Navidad,” both out Dec. 3, and a series of Univision compilations—“Recuerdos Navideños,” “Bachata Navideña” and “Fiesta Navideña”—a l.o of which were released Oct. 12.

INTERNET HOLIDAY: AOL Latino is getting into the Christmas spirit. The Spanish-language Internet service provider l.auched a holiday radio station Dec. 2, “Mayo A

Latin, that will air some 100 Spanish-language tracks around the clock and in all genres, through the end of December. The playlist ranges from José Feliciano’s “Feliz Navidad” to “Gingle Bingle,” performed by reggaeton artist El General. Navidad Latina is AOL’s first all-Latin holiday radio station. It can be accessed through AOLRadio@Network.

REALITY SETS IN: Even as “Objetivo Fama” contestants celebrate Christmas with an album, the Puerto Rico-based TV show’s first three winners have something else to sing about. First-prize winner Janina received a recording deal with Unlimited Records, and a check for $25,000. The pop/rock artist’s debut album, produced by Eduardo Reyes, is set to bow in March 2005. Second- and third-place winners Stella and Ector, respectively, signed contracts with Univision label Fonovisa and each received a check for $10,000. Their albums are expected to street in first-quarter 2005.

“Objetivo Fama,” produced by ES Television, originally aired on only Univision in Puerto Rico. But strong ratings led Univision-owned Telefutura to air the show in the United States. The winners were selected from a group of 18 contestants.

Now, ES is preparing a second edition of the show, for which auditions have been held throughout the United States. The program will air simultaneously on Univision in Puerto Rico and on Telefutura in the States, beginning in January. Voting will be available to viewers nationwide.

“Objetivo Fama” will go head to head with “Nuevas Voces de América,” a reality show produced by the Telemundo network and Estefan Television Productions. A mix of “Operación Triunfo” and “American Idol,” “Voces” has also held auditions nationwide to find 20 contestants who will be groomed for stardom in an academy-type setting.

The winner will receive a recording deal with a to-be-confirmed label, although show producer Emilio Estefan Jr. told Billboard in May that it would be Sony (Billboard, May 29).

While Spanish-language music reality shows have gone on to be huge successes in Spain and various Latin countries, comparable shows in the States have had more modest viewership. Producers are hoping that added media attention, coupled with nationwide auditions, will boost interest.
Esta es la quinta ocasión en que los PREMIOS QUE BUENA le harán justicia nuevamente a la Música Regional Mexicana y a sus creadores, porque todos ellos merecen una noche de gala.

Es evidente que ninguno de los premios existentes, reconoce honestamente y en toda su extensión a la Música Regional Mexicana, como lo hacen los PREMIOS QUE BUENA. Porque éstos son galardones, que los mismos radioescuchas se la "QUE BUENA" escogen.

"De entrada los primeros que creyeron en estos premios fueron los radioescuchas y obviamente la gerencia de la "QUE BUENA" se la jugó con esta propuesta que tuve" indica Garza. "También Eduardo León, Vice Presidente de Programación, me apoyó incondicionalmente e inmediatamente posteriormente el Presidente.

Hay que enfatizar que después de la Segunda y Tercera entrega de los premios, quedó muy claro que los PREMIOS QUE BUENA son escogidos por el público angelino, porque artistas que ni siquiera tenían compañía discográfica, lograron ganarle a cantantes muy famosos.

La QUE BUENA es una estación que se ha destacado por tocar, no los "grandes éxitos" de los grandes intérpretes" de la Música Regional Mexicana, sino las "canciones buenas de muchos artistas locales buenos" y lo más gustado de los consagrados.

Ahora bien cada año los radioescuchas de la QUE BUENA básicamente votan por sus cantantes predilectos a través de la Página de Internet de la QUE BUENA: www.aquisuena o en boletas que son distribuidas en diferentes partes.

La lista de los nominados, la conforman todos los intérpretes que más sonaron el año anterior, sin importar que sean famosos o no. Por eso son premios muy reales, porque la gente es la que da su aprobación de quién quiere que se lleve el PREMIO QUE BUENA.

Es importante señalar, que cada año los angelinos esperan con gran ansiedad y emoción la NOCHE de los PREMIOS QUE BUENA, se preparan, aborran para su boleto y se visten con sus mejores galas. Porque la NOCHE de los PREMIOS QUE BUENA, es una NOCHE de JUSTICIA para los EXPONENTES más POPULARES de la MÚSICA REGIONAL MEXICANA: es una NOCHE donde los RADIOESCUCHARS pueden ver desfilar a sus CANTANTES PREDILECTOS, como no pueden ver en otras ceremonias de premios, es una NOCHE donde los ARTISTAS son tratados con respeto y como se merecen y, es una NOCHE donde la famosa frase creada por GARZA: "AQUI SUENA LA QUE BUENA", se hace imprescindible.
Solista del Año
Lupillo Rivera
Valentín Elizalde
Adán Sánchez
El Coyote
Jorge Gamboa
El Chalinillo
Jessie Morales “El Original de la Sierra”
Adolfo Urias y su Lobo Norteño

Mejor Grupo Norteño
Conjunto Primavera
Intocable
Los Huracanes del Norte
Los Tigres del Norte
Los Tucanes de Tijuana
Los Morros del Norte
Los Rieleros del Norte
Grupo Palomo
Las Voces del Rancho

Mejor Canción con Grupo Norteño
“Nadie es eterno” – Adán Sánchez
“Hazme olvidarla” – Conjunto Primavera
“Te perdí una vez” – Los Huracanes del Norte
“La botella” – Los Morros del Norte
“No tiene la culpa el indio” – Los Tigres del Norte
“Camarón pelao” – Voces del Rancho
“Qué me lleve el diablo” – Adolfo Urias y su Lobo Norteño
“Mi amor inesperado” – Los Tucanes de Tijuana

Mejor Canción con Banda
“Qué tal si te compró” – Lupillo Rivera
“La más deseada” – Valentín Elizalde
“Me cansé de morir por tu amor” – Adán Sánchez

Mejor Grupo Duranguense
Montez de Durango
Horóscopos
Patrulla 81
Conjunto Atardecer
Kpaz

Mejor Canción Duranguense
“Que tontos, que locos” – Horóscopos
“Yo te enseñé” – Conjunto Atardecer
“Cómo pude enamorarme de ti” – Patrulla 81
“Lágrimas de cristal” – Montez de Durango
“La Milpa” – Los Astros de Durango

Mejor Grupo de Tierra Caliente
Betos y sus Canarios
La Dinastía de Tuzantla, Michoacán
Trini y la Leyenda
Los Players

Mejor Canción Urbana
“Estoy enamorada” – Yolanda Pérez/Don Cheto
“Mujer fea” – AKWID
“Al estilo mexicano” – Jae-P

Revelación Musical del Año
Patrulla 81
Horóscopos
Grupo Pesado
Grupo Climax
Conjunto Atardecer
NOMINADOS EN LA 5a. ENTREGA

Mejor Duet o Interpretación a Dúo
Los Dos Grandes de la Sierra
Horóscopos
Voces del Rancho
Adán Sánchez y Yolanda Pérez

Mejor Intérprete Femenina
Yolanda Pérez
Jenny Rivera
Rocío Sandova “La Peligrosa”

Artista del Año
Montez de Durango
Adán Sánchez
Lupillo Rivera
Valentín Elizalde
Adolfo Urias y su Lobo Norteño
Jenny Rivera

Artista Urbano del Año
AKWID
Jae-P
Crooked Stylo
Don Abusivo

Canción Movida del Año
“Za, za, za...la mesa que más aplauda” – Grupo Climax
“Camarón pelao” – Voces del Rancho
“Mono de alambre” – Oro Norteño
**Por siempre y para siempre: Adán “Chalino” Sánchez**

Genuino y digno heredero de una gran leyenda musical como lo fue su progenitor y precursor de un estilo único y sincero, Adán Santos Sánchez Vallejo, mejor conocido como Adán “Chalino” Sánchez “El Compitá”, no sólo es el último del legado musical heredado.

Además de toda la rivalidad y cargado de la presión de ser el nombre como el de Rosalito- “Chalino” Sánchez, Adán Santos Sánchez Vallejo, nació el 6 de abril de 1948.

**ACONTECIMIENTOS IMPORTANTES en la vida de Adán “Chalino” Sánchez**

1984 - Adán Santos Sánchez Vallejo, mejor conocido como Adán Sánchez “El Compitá”, nace el 6 de abril de 1984 a las 7:00 de la mañana en la ciudad de Torrance. Sus padres Maricela Vallejo de Sánchez y Rosalito “Chalino” Sánchez Félix.

1984-1982 - Durante estos años, Adán vive una infancia feliz al lado de sus padres y su hermana menor Cantú, en su casa en la ciudad de Torrance. Va a la escuela como cualquier otro niño de su edad, sin imaginar lo que el destino le tenía preparado.


1993 - Con menos de 11 años Adán fue su mano derecha en el escenario, precisamente en El Farallón de Lynnwood, cuyo dueño, Carlos Franco lo invitó. Después de que Adán se viera en la marquesina de ese Night Club y de muchos otros más.

1995 - Nuevamente bajo el seudónimo Rosalito Sánchez y de la mano de su madre, Adán lanza su segundo disco “Adán antiguo del 84”, que se distribuye en Cinco Años.

1996 - Llega su tercera producción discográfica: “Diles me m’gna”, que distribuye en su propio nombre.

1997 - Finalmente graba su cuarto material discográfico: “Clavetas negras”, que distribuye en el roster.

1998 - Adán comienza a despertar y hace una serie de conciertos y promociones que lo llevan a conocer California, Arizona, Colorado y Georgia, entre otros estados de la Unión Americana.

1999 - Este sería un año muy importante en la vida musical de Adán, porque firma contrato con la discográfica Luna Records, sello afiliado a la poderosa Sony Music. Así llega el lanzamiento de su quinto disco, con grupo coro: “La corona de mi padre”.


2002 - Realiza un gira muy intensa por el norte, Sur y Centro de California, Arizona y regresa exiliándose a Baja California, México.

2003 - Vive una de las mejores épocas de su carrera musical. Se abren nuevas giras de conciertos y regresa a California, Washington, Illinois y por primera vez se presenta en Colorado y Minnesota. Vuelve a Baja California y Sonora.

2004 - Hoy día, Adán es uno de los más grandes artistas musicales de su generación. Logra una excelente posición en la lista de popularidad de la revista Billboard. A pesar de su joven edad, Adán ha logrado una carrera musical imparable.

2005 - Hoy Adán sigue construyendo su carrera musical, dando conciertos en todo el mundo, y continuando su camino hacia la gloria musical.
### Billboard Hot Latin Tracks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td><strong>NADA VALGO SIN TU AMOR</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td><strong>ME CEDIQUE A PERDERTE</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>TODO EL MUNDO</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>ESTA LLORANDO MI CORAZON</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>TE BUSCARÁ</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>NO ME QUEDE SOLO</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>TU VUELVE</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>09/12/2004</td>
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<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
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<tr>
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### Billboard Latin Pop Airplay

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<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>LAS AVISPA</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>TODO EL MUNDO</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>ESTAMOS JUNTOS</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>NO ME QUITES</strong></td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>LA LUCERNA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
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<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Billboard Tropical Airplay

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td><strong>TODO EL MUNDO</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>NO ME QUITES</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>LA LUCERNA</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
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### Billboard Regional Mexican Airplay

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
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<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>LAS AVISPA</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>TODO EL MUNDO</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>ESTAMOS JUNTOS</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
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<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>NO ME QUITES</strong></td>
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<td>09/12/2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/12/2004</td>
<td><strong>GREAT GAINER</strong></td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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**Note:** The chart positions are based on airplay data from Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems and Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems Radio Track Service. The data represents the top-performing Latin tracks on the charts for the specified week.
Brits Snub Dance; Indies See Upside

BY LARS BRANDLE

LONDON—When the Brit Awards celebrate their 25th anniversary Feb. 9, 2004, dance music won’t be at the party. The British Phonographic Industry’s Brit Awards committee recently dropped the dance category from its annual gala, replacing it with a new British live act accolade.

The national media pounced on the news, holding it up as evidence that the genre was on its knees. Leading executives in the British dance music business tell Billboard that the reality is somewhat different.

“The general feeling in the community is that the corner has been turned and that the music now is better than in recent years,” said Jason Ellis, director of EMI affiliate Positiva. “Dance records are topping the charts.”

Positiva scored one of the biggest breakthrough dance tracks of 2004 with Shapeshifters’ “Lola’s Theme,” which topped the Official U.K. Charts Co.’s singles listing in July and has been certified silver, having shipped more than 230,000 copies there, Ellis said.

James Horrocks, managing director of London-based indie Resist Music, maintains that although the genre has suffered in recent years, the latest negative exposure is not warranted.

“The whole dance industry has suffered from bad press,” he argues. “The pressure from the rock community to wipe it off the face of the earth has been quite heavy. A lot of the mainstream media and the older media has been very rock-oriented, and many of them have taken potshots at dance.”

Horrocks launched Resist Music earlier this year from the assets of now-defunct compilations staple React Music, where he served as A&R director. Two of Resist’s early compilation albums successes—from the “Bongers” and “Drum&BassArena” series—have each shipped 40,000 units in Britain, he adds.

Since it was introduced into the Brit Awards format in 1994, dance music has had its own award category. A spokesman says BPI’s view is that “the categories change over time quite naturally.”

The decision to drop dance from the U.K. industry’s showcase event draws stern criticism from Lohan Presencer, managing director of powerhouse British dance music specialist Ministry of Sound.

“The BPI have obviously taken the view that because [the majors] don’t have any artists in this genre, they would much rather devote an award to something that is going to allow them to sell records of the artists that they have signed—hence the best live act award,” Presencer says.

In its current Statistical Handbook, the BPI says that dance music remained a leading player in 2003 with Britain’s album buyers. Dance was ranked as the fourth most popular genre behind pop, rock and R&B, respectively. At the same time, sales of dance albums accounted for 7.2% of the total market last year, down from 9.5% the previous year, when it was the third most popular genre.

On the basis of solid sales at MOS, Presencer reckons the overall market is poised for growth.

“We will have sold close to a million dance albums in the last quarter of this year, which is probably the best performance for three years,” Presencer says. “The U.K. compilations chart is absolutely packed with dance records, and there is a high volume of records that [are] shifting 200,000-400,000 units.”

Mark Doyle, A&R director at Hed Kandi, is also upbeat. “Dance music itself is an incredible, cyclical thing. The business is going to balance out. It’s all about entertainment and having fun doing it.”

In August, Hed Kandi scored a top 10 debut on the U.K. singles chart with “Put Em High” by StoneBridge Featuring Therese.

New BPI statistics indicate dance’s share of compilation sales in third-quarter 2004 reached 27.1%, representing the biggest quarterly share for two years and a rise from 25.6% in the same period the previous year.

According to BPI director of research and information Chris Green, sales in the third quarter increased 19.1% on the same period in 2003.

Several big-selling titles released in the quarter boosted the market. They included “Rush Hour” (UMTV), “Clubland 5” (All Around the World/UTM) and the triple set “Cream Classics” (Wanner Dance). Those titles were among the United Kingdom’s five best-selling compilations during the quarter, according to the BPI.

MOS delivered one of the biggest records of the year to date with Eric Prydz’s Eurochart Hot 100 Singles chart-topper “Call On Me.” The track topped the U.K. singles chart for five weeks in October and November and is closing in on gold status in the United Kingdom with 350,000 shipments, Presencer says.

International shipments through its network of global license partners are approaching 750,000 units, he adds.

BPI figures highlight MOS’ status as a key player in the U.K. compilation albums market. The London-based independent had a 7.7% share of the sector in 2003, topped only by majors Universal Music, EMI and Warner Music, respectively.

Presencer says he has his sights set on a million branded album sales worldwide in 2005, representing growth of 20%-30% on anticipated sales for 2004.

“The U.K. leads the world dance scene. British DJ Steve ‘Savage’ says. She calls the dropped dance category a betrayal. “Dance music is here. It’s as good as ever and people will always want to hear it.”

Israel’s Nissim: An ‘Offer’ You Can’t Refuse

Sure, the name Offer Nissim may not yet be on your radar screen. But this is likely to change in the coming months.

Earlier this year, the Tel Aviv, Israel-based DJ/producer made inroads into the U.S. club market with two tracks, “Searching” and “That’s the Way I Like It.” Released by Star 69 Records, both featured Israeli singer Maya.

Both tracks will be included on Nissim's U.S. debut full-length, which Star 69 will release in March 2005. Maya will be featured throughout.

“The album is a real collaboration,” Nissim tells Billboard. Maya writes all the lyrics and melodies, he acknowledges. “But I have the last word.”

Nissim believes the album may surprise some people—particularly those who are expecting “searching” sound-alikes.

“The album is rooted in my dance music background,” he offers. “But it shows different sides of me and the sounds I like.” (Nissim has, after all, worked with 1988 Eurovision song contest winner Dana International.)

Preceding the album’s release will be Peter Rauhofer and Andy Morris (of Narcotic Thrust) remixes of “That’s the Way I Like It.”

On the remix front, Nissim counts Suzanne Palmer’s 1998 Eurovision song contest winner

A CENTERFOLD MIX: Playboy is no stranger to clubland. In the past few years, the men’s magazine has partnered with Astralwerks and Surge Recordings to release the Dimitri From Paris-helmed “After the Playboy Mansion” and the Chris Coco-mixed “Chill’in” at the Playboy Mansion,” respectively.

On Jan. 11, 2005, Koch becomes the latest label to connect with the global brand. In conjunction with Playboy Enterprises and digital record label Ingrooves, Koch will release “Playboy: The Mansion.”

Beat-mixed by Felix Da Housecat, the 12-track “Playboy: The Mansion” is the aural accompaniment to the Groove Games/Arush Entertainment videogame of the same name.

The CD is a mix of tracks featured in the videogame (Armand Van Helden’s “Fly Away Love”) and others (Mazi & Lori’s “Your Touch”) from the Ingrooves Web site, ingrooves.com.

DISCO INFERNO: With this issue, multi-artist compilation “Fired Up!” logs 48 weeks on the Top Electronic Albums chart. According to Nielsen SoundScan, it has sold 347,000 units.

Because of the success of this collection, Razor & Tie is preparing a second “Fired Up!,” due Feb. 6, 2006. Like its predecessor, it will highlight the more mainstream side of dance music.

TWO STEPS BACK: Those in need of a Basement Boys refresher course are encouraged to snap a copy of the Baltimore act’s two-disc collection, “15th Anniversary Mix—History of House Music” (Basement Boys Records), mixed by Teddy Douglas and DJ Spen.

Disc one is home to the Boys’ earlier productions. These include such dancefloor classics as “It’s Over Now” (Ultra Nate), “Lift Every Voice” (Mass Order), “Gypsy Woman (She’s Homeless)” (Cystal Waters) and “Searchin’” (33 1/3 Queen).

Two spotlight’s more recent fare, including Jasper Street Company’s “God Helps Those (Who Help Themselves)” and Ann Nesby’s “Praisin’ His Name.”

Similarly, Philadelphia DJ/producer Josh Wink is celebrating the 15th anniversary of his Ovum label with “Ovum: The Fall Collection” (Ovum/System Recordings). With this disc, one cannot help but revel in the musical diversity the Ovum brand.

High points are aplenty and include David Alvarado’s “Klugh,” Wink Featuring Ursula Rucker’s “Sixth Sense” and Liora’s Akapoomix Mix of Alexkid’s “On My Mind.”
At 18, Larsen Has An ‘Education’ In The Music Biz

Blaine Larsen may only be 18 years old, but he already has experienced the highs and lows of a career in the music business.

At the moment, he’s in the midst of one of the best highs the business offers. His first single for his new label home, BNA Records, is climbing the Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. An affecting song about teen suicide, “How Do You Get That Lonely” stands at No. 36 this issue.

His major label debut, “Off to Join the World,” will be released Jan. 25, 2005. The album is almost identical to the one he released in May on independent label Giantslayer Records. BNA added one new track. Larsen landed his first record contract with Sony Music Nashville when he was 16. But he says that deal “never really went anywhere,” and he asked to be released after the executives who signed him, president/CEO Allen Butler and head of AGR Blake Chancey, were let go.

Larsen chose not to wait and, with Sony’s blessing, went shopping for another deal. When no offer immediately materialized, Larsen’s producers, Royce Lee Feek and Tim Johnson, started their own label, Giantslayer, as a vehicle for Larsen.

They released one single, “In My High School,” which spent one week in June, at No. 60, on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. Larsen says charting the song, even for just a week, was “a big deal for us. That song getting noticed the way it did for an independent is what got me over to” BNA parent RCA Label Group.

The story of how Larsen came to be signed to RLG is an interesting one. “In My High School” was getting airplay in Seattle and caught the ear of local BMG Distribution employee Sandy Conklin.

She e-mailed RLG chairman Joe Galante, whom she did not know, and asked him to check out Larsen’s Web site. “Believe it or not,” Larsen says, “he did.”

After listening to clips of some of Larsen’s songs on the site, Galante asked Conklin to send him a copy of the album. Conklin did not have any contacts in Larsen’s camp, so she went to Wal-Mart, bought the album and mailed it to Galante.

A few days later, Larsen was in the RLG offices in Nashville successfully auditioning for Galante and senior VP of A&R Renee Bell. Ironically, he was with his brother and Bell had passed on Larsen two years prior, before he signed with Sony. He says the last two years of label deals and near misses has been “a good education.”

In addition to a major label, Larsen now has an A-list team around him. He is managed by International Management Ser-

 Bryce Higham, who also handles the career of Larsen’s BNA label mate Kenny Chesney. Larsen is booked by James Yelich at Mon-

terey Peninsula Artists.

Despite his age, the SESAC-affiliated Larsen is an accomplished songwriter and wrote most of the songs on his album. And while he did not write “How Do You Get That Lonely” (it was penned by Feek and Jimmie Allen, Travis Tritt, to be mentioned later), he did write “This Is My Life,” the album’s second single. Larsen says he got chills when he first heard it and related to it instantly, since one of his friends had tried to commit suicide and the brother of another friend went through with it.

The song is eliciting a higher-than-normal volume of calls at radio. And Larsen has received e-mails at his Web site from teens telling him it saved their lives.

“I’ve always felt that a song like that can really touch people and change their lives,” he says. “But to really see it happening is a whole other thing.”

Larsen felt so strongly about the emotional power of the song that he made it a negotiating point with RLG that it would be a single.

“There was no doubt in my mind it had to be the next single, and I wasn’t going to let anything get in the way of that,” he says. “I knew that RLG had been equally involved in select-

ing a director and concepts for the upcoming video. He spent a month rejecting treatments before finally choosing one from Deaton Flanigen Productions, and he had some definite ideas about how the video should look. He insisted the video not show any ‘graphic display of suicide. ‘I didn’t want any guns, or anyone shooting themselves or any dead bodies,” Larsen says. “We all know what that looks like, and I felt it didn’t have a place in the video.”

Also wanted to make sure the treatment wasn’t going to offend anyone or paint anyone in a bad light,” he says. Specifically, Larsen rejected one treatment that showed the parents at fault. He didn’t want parents of other suicide victims seeing that and being made to feel guilty.

Larsen, a recent high school graduate, lives with his family in Buckley, Wash., near Seattle. He has no plans to move to Nash-

tville. And while he travels here often for writing sessions, he is content for the distance from the company town.

“T’m so far away from the music business I’m able to be fresh all the time,” he says. “I don’t get caught up in the [Nashville] way of thinking, and I do my own thing.”

SIGNINGS: Grammy Award-nominated songwriter Gary Harrison has signed a long-term, worldwide co-publishing agreement with Famous Music. Among the many hits he has written are George Strait’s “I Hate Everything” and Deana Carter’s “Strawberry Wine.” Harrison’s songs have also been recorded by Reba McEntire, Tim McGraw, Kenny Chesney, Trisha Yearwood, Emmylou Harris and Martina McBride.

Harrison was senior director of AGR at Mercury Records in Nashville from 1994 until 2001. More recently, he was managing partner of Big Picture Entertainment, a publishing and production company he founded with veteran producer Keith Stegall.

Famous Music is the music publishing division of Viacom’s Paramount Pictures.

Western Award Winners

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Sons of the San Joaquin were the top winners at the annual Western Music Assn. Awards, held Nov. 20 at the Doubletree Hotel in Albuquerque, N.M. The veteran outfit nabbed the accolades for entertainer and traditional Western group of the year.

Singer/piano player Patty Clayton, whose forebears arrived in Oregon by covered wagon, scored her first win in the female vocalist of the year category, while New Mexico cowboy R.W. Hampton won the male vocalist of the year honor.

Perennial favorite Don Edwards won in the traditional Western album of the year category for “Last of the Troubadours.” The Texas Trailhands were named the year’s top Western swing group.

Ginny Mac’s “Sweet Sentimen-
tal Dreams” was named top Western swing album of the year. Mac also won the Crescendo Award, which recognizes rising talent. She received a Taylor guitar as part of the Crescendo prize.

Rich O’Brien was named instrumentalist of the year. Curly Mustgrave received the songwriter of the year honor.

Rip Calahan, who won the Crescendo Award last year, took home the song of the year trophy

Although their respective replacements at Sony, John Grady and Mark Wright, were supportive of Larsen’s music, he says they asked him to “wait around for a few years. They thought I was too young.”

By Phyllis Stark

www.billboard.com • www.billboard.biz

BILBOARD DECEMBER 11, 2004
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**Notes:**
- **Albums with the greatest gains this week.**
- **Top Country Albums** is a chart that ranks the top-performing country albums in the United States. It's published weekly by Billboard, a weekly music business magazine. The chart is based on sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. The chart measures the performance of country albums based on sales, streaming, and other metrics. The chart is one of the most important indicators of the country music industry's health.

**kwastik:**
- The chart covers the period ending Sunday, December 12, 2004.
- The chart is based on data from sales of physical albums, digital albums, and streaming of music.
- The chart is updated weekly and is available online at www.billboard.com.
**ALBUMS**

**NEW & NOTeworthy**

**BEBE**
Pauhara Tarahara
EMI Latin 7243 8 664610
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 9

When you listen to Spanish newcomer Bebe, quickly skip the inconsequential, dance-tinted first track. From that point on, you’ll encounter a surprising songwriter and a heartfelt, distinctive and convincing performer with a unique voice—the kind that comes around very sporadically in Latin pop.

"Pauhara Tarahara" mixes Spanish flamenco sensibilities with tinga-tinga dance, electrónica and, sometimes, Beatles-esque lusciousness ("Con Mis Manos"). Bebe, who writes all her material, has an appealingly childlike voice that can turn almost nihilistic on tracks like the sparse "Siempre Me Quedaras," mostly set over a guitar and drums. It’s creative, compelling stuff. Even if you don’t go for the melodies, you listen to the cadence, the words and the voice. For commercial about, look at the flamencadence vibe of the single "Malo," a hit in Spain.—**LC**

**KELLY CLARKSON**

**Breachway**

**PRODUCERS:** Various

RCA 282676 64194
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 30

Kelly Clarkson’s second studio effort, "Breachway," is that rare exhibition of substance over style. While the majority of today’s hitmakers rely upon gimmicky collaborations and novelty arrangements to court popular appeal, her "I’d" verse is a burst of anticipation to showcase kepsake melodies and vocal prowess to claim her place in the spotlight. Throughout, Clarkson exhibits the ability to dominate some fairly aggressive material ("Behind These Hazel Eyes," "Gone"). She’s also not afraid to tackle two beautiful ballads, "Because of You" and "Where Is Your Heart," which will thrill fans. But for the most part, the guitars are amped up here, maintaining universal appeal and a boatload of potential hits to rival Avril Lavigne and the likes of Ashlee Simpson and Lindsay Lohan. Clarkson proves that she’s the real thing, packed with enough potency to ensure radio that she’s here to stay. Here’s a bit of a female artist who has the chops for lasting success.—**CT**

**ALISON KRAUSS + UNION STATION**

**Roleys Runs Both Ways**

**PRODUCERS:** Alison Krauss + Union Station

Rounder 1161 0525
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 23

In her first studio date in three years, multi-grammy Award-honoree Alison Krauss stays true to her bluegrass roots as well as her commitment to sharing the spotlight with her superb picking and twangin’ gal band. On the winning "Lonely Runs Both Ways," Krauss and company weigh in on tunes written by their favorite songsmiths, including G. Llism Welch and David Rawlings. But the best are those by Robert Lee Castleman, who contributes four numbers to the collection, including "Restless." Originals include dobro player Jerry Douglas’ instrumental "Unionhouse Branch," anankle/guitarist Ron Block’s ballad "A Living Prayre" and Krauss’ collaboration with Alison Brown, "This Sad Song." On the ten songs Krauss sings lead, she delivers radiant and alluring vocals in down-home fashion.—**CT**

**NELA & GARFUNKEL**

**Old Friends:** Live on Stage

**PRODUCERS:** Not listed

Warner Bros. 48962
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 30

So what if there’s nothing significantly new on Nela & Garfunkel’s two-CD live retrospective? Recorded last year at Madison Square Garden and the New Jersey Continental Airlines Arena, the triumphant "Old Friends: Live on Stage" finds the divorced reunited duo making its first appearance side by side in 20 years. S&G deliver more than 20 of their classic songs, sparked back to life. The performance supports the premise that the duo ranked among the top creative partnerships of the ’60s. The bulk of the songs are Simon compositions rendered with whimsy and beauty, angst and spunk—all with S&G’s trademark vocal harmonies. Highlights include between-song banter about theirarduos friendship and a "Bye Bye Love" cause them to mention the Everyly Brothers. The dividend: a remarkably apropos new studio song, "Citizen of the Planet," penned in the early ’80s but left unfinished.—**DO**

**DANCE/ELCETRONIC**

**GAELLE**

**Translant**

**PRODUCERS:** Eric Stanille, Gaelle Adisson

Naked Music Recordings MMN17
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 23

Mainstream jazz fan love to beat up on Kelly G. on his new Pro Tools and programmed CD, "At Last. " The Duet's Album," the saxist safely plays the smooth and R&B jazz cards with a pack of collaborators, including such heavy hitters as saxophonist David Sanborn, pianist David Benoit (who is wasted on a humdrum, straight instrumental take on Jesse Harrist’s "Don’t Know Why"), and a toll call of classA singers, including Ciba Khan, LeAnn Rimes and Gladys Knight. They all enter G’s melodic material汉堡 Steeped jazz world—edgier, lightweight, snazzy—with the result being fine wallpaper jazz best piped into suburban halls. Plus, G’s soul beats and ornamental frills scum the same from song to song. Two bright spots: "At Last" with trumpeter Arturo Sandoval and, remarkably, "The Music That Makes Me Dance" with Bartha Streisand.—**DO**

**COUNTRY**

**CARLY GOODWIN**

**Carly Goodwin**

**PRODUCERS:** Carl Jackson

Dreaming Bear Music DBM00002
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 9

Carly Goodwin’s debut album showcases a talented woman with enough vocal chops to entice a duet with Willie Nelson on the latter’s classic “Can’t Get Enough of Your Love, Child.” Carl Jackson’s production brings insistent percussive and acoustic elements to such spritely cuts as “Just Another Mountain” and the deliriously twisted "Take Me Back to the Days when We Used to Live Together." At 23, Goodwin’s voice owns impressive range and personality on uptempo cuts like “Destination Heartache” and sounding more like a Patty Loveless than B.B. King. Likewise, the piano-based “Homecoming Day” is a gorgeous torch song, and “Baby Come Back Home” is a passionately rendered, somewhat cliché, tearjerker ballad about the actors who could have huge appeal these holidays. Racked by Bayside.—**RY**

**JAZZ**

**ROBERT DONWENY JR.**

**The Futurist**

**PRODUCERS:** Jonathan Elias, Mark Hudson

Sony Classical ASK 92654
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 23

Robert Downey Jr. joins the actors who raised eyebrows this year by stepping out as a recording artist (William Shatner notwithstanding). The public has written Downey off more than once, but his tendency to resurface with a surprising performance pops up on “The Futurist.” Nay-sayers should not blindly assume that the jazzzy AC album is a train wreck, but the journey does make pit stops. Downey wrote eight of its cuts, played piano on some and sings all. His tone roughly mimics Peter Gabriel, and his wife that could have huge appeal these holidays. Racked by Bayside.—**RY**

**PHILIP DAVISON**

**New Releases Predicted to Hit the Top Half of the Chart in the Corresponding Format. CRITIC’S CHOICE:** (■) New-releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended by the editors. All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send album review copies and singles review copies to Michael Paoletta (Billboard, 770 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writer in the appropriate box.
SINGLES

Edited by Michael Paoletta

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

B5 All I Do (3:47)
PRODUCERS: Rodney Jerkins
WRITERS: B. Holland/Kingston
PUBLISHERS: Stone Diamond Music/Gold Forever Music (BMI)

Bad Boy/Universal 21365 (CD promo)
Having engineered and co-produced Adrian Marcel’s act New Edition, Sean “P. Diddy” Combs is grooming a new boy group to follow in those footsteps. The newcomers are the five Breeding brothers from Atlanta. Dustin, Kent, Patrick, Carmell and Bryan range in age from 11 to 17. The siblings’ first project is a cover of the Jackson 5’s 1975 R&B hit “All I Do Is Think of You,” which was a No. 1 R&B hit for Troop in 1996. The quintet turns in a faithful interpretation, complete with a Michael Jackson-esque lead singer. The harmonies are engaging, as is the mellow-spoken word-accompaniment. That, combined with photogenic looks, gives B5 a leg up on filling the void left by the implosion of B2K. It will be interesting to hear what else B5 can do on the original tip. The group’s debut album, due in March 2005, boasts the talents of Sean Garrett and Vett Renn, among others.—GM

AC

BRIAN MCKNIGHT Everyday You Go Away (4:06)
PRODUCER: Brian McKnight
WRITERS: B. McKnight
PUBLISHER: Cancelled Lunch Music/Universal PolyGram International (ASCAP)
Motown 213203 (CD promo)
If there’s one thing Brian McKnight knows his way around, it’s a love ballad. For proof, you need look no further than two of his major R&B/pop hits, “Anytime” and “Back at One.” “Everytime You Go Away” doesn’t shatter that mold. Once Pow’r goes, theross voice is accompanied by his sparse, understated piano. The big plus here is the other acccents: a brief rock guitar interlude and crescending strings, the latter adding a lush framework that’s too often missing from contemporary music.—GM

MODERN ROCK

▶ 3 DOORS DOWN Let Me Go (4:00)
PRODUCER: Johnny K
WRITERS: Arnold, Roberts, Harrell, Henrietta
PUBLISHERS: Escalawpa Songs/Songs of Universal (BMI)
Republic 213262 (CD promo)
Even though it has yet to release its third album, 3 Doors Down has become a core act of the new millennium. Its first two albums have gone multi-platinum, containing multiple radio hits at rock and top 40 radio. Yet it is somewhat inexplicable how it attained its status, as its music is mostly generic meat-and-potatoes rock. However, the millions that picked up 3 Doors Down’s first two albums would not doubt enjoy “Let Me Go,” the first taste of third set “Seventeen Days.” It’s no great deviation from the act’s other songs, yet it has already gained traction at rock radio, debutting simultaneously on the heritage, active and modern charts. And with the success of straight-forward rock bands like Switchfoot at top 40 and AC, “Let Me Go” should effortlessly cross over to those formats as well. There is nothing particularly memorable about the midtempo song, but if its first week is any barometer, radio won’t be getting it anytime soon.—BT

COUNTRY

▶ PHIL VASSAR I’ll Take That as a Yes (The Hot Tub Song) (3:24)
PRODUCERS: Frank Rogers, Phil Vassar
WRITERS: J. McIntyre, V. Melamed
PUBLISHERS: EMI Songs/Vista Large Music/Senior Vincente Music (BMI)
Arista 16676-66013 (CD promo)
Phil Vassar’s last single, “In a Real Love,” topped the Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart for two weeks. This single effort has the potential to reach the summit, too. Penned by Jon McIntyre and Vince Melamed, the playful lyric looks at how a romantic encounter can escalate from a foot rub to a hot tub. Vassar sounds sultry and soulful, combining sex appeal with a sense of light-hearted fun. It’s one of those songs listeners will gravitate to because of Vassar’s charisma and energy in the production. Culled from his current album, “Shaken Not Stirred,” this track captures the fire of Vassar’s live performance, demonstrating why this piano-pounding singer/songwriter is one of the format’s stealth weapons.—DEP
RED’s Web Biz Seeks Strictly Digital Deals

BY TODD MARTENS

RED Distribution says it hopes to start signing labels to digital-only distribution deals next year.

The independent distribution arm of Sony BMG says Web sales through its digital division, RED-D, have surpassed expectations. The New York-based company reported Nov. 18 that more than 25,000 tracks and 12,000 albums have been downloaded since RED-D opened in April.

RED-D operates with three full-time staffers and one intern. Depending on the demand for ringtones and other digital merchandise, such as videos and cell phone wallpaper, the department may expand, Fink says.

“There are all these untapped markets that we’re just getting into,” he says. “We’re opening up numerous different revenue streams to complement our digital distribution. Before, our labels used videos for promos, but now a kid will be able to buy it for their cell phone or MP3 player.”

Sony BMG helps RED-D with data input and back-end reporting.

“They have great relationships with the service providers on the technical side of things,” Fink says. “If there is ever a delivery problem or an album up there that shouldn’t be up there, the power of the parent company helps us get these issues resolved a lot faster than if it were just one indie.”

RED-D will be offering the catalogs of the Fat Wreck Chords and Equal Vision labels in the coming weeks. However, Antonelli says it is not just the younger, rock-orientated labels that have an online demand. He points to Los Angeles-based Americana label New West, which has sold more than 20,000 tracks and 4,000 albums since joining the service in May.

New West founder and president Cameron Strang says, “We had some digital plans, but we hadn’t made everything available. So when Ken and Russell said they were putting this program together and would handle all the digital retail accounts, it saved us a lot of time and energy. We have an eight-year relationship with Ken, so it was an easy decision to make.”

Other labels that have deals with RED-D include Basement Records, Dualtone, Emergent, Ruthless and Victory Records.
Engine Fuels Artists' Careers With Studio, Digital Services

By seizing the marketing power of the Internet, Chicago's Engine Studios may have found the middle ground between pure independence and a typical record contract.

Run by former Cash Audio leader John Humphrey and Cali- fone drummer Brian Deck—whose producer credits include Modest Mouse—Engine is signing artists to digital-distribution deals and turning the recording studio into one-stop shop of sorts. Artists can still book their own time at the studio, but Humphrey and Deck envision Engine eventually becoming a modern production company.

"We are not a record company in any way, shape or form," Humphrey says. "We're helping artists we want to work with facilitate their careers in a way that hadn't been thought of. We'll sign deals with artists, we'll produce and create more adult-themed work. Singer recalls his conversations with Humphrey about the album. "We said, 'What happens if we centralize where we make the record and see if we can deal directly with the people who want to buy the record? I'm sure that's what everyone says, but this is being super productive for us.'"

The album has been available on iTunes for more than three months, and Singer says it has sold about 1,000 copies. This is ahead of the pace of his Deep Elm recordings. Singer hopes his Engine connection would lead to a new label deal, but he is starting to think Engine may be enough.

"It's doing so much better than I expected that we would have to get an offer that bowled us over," he says. "I can make more selling 5,000 this way than I can selling 50,000 on a record label."

Still, Humphrey views an Engine contract as a steppingstone to a larger deal. He points to a current project, Spanish rock act No More Lies, which records for B-Core Records in its native country. "They're young and kind of an aggro-rock thing, and they're looking to do more than us," Humphrey says. "We're using this as an effort to get them signed by someone else."

FANTASY DEAL: Los Angeles-based jazz label Concord Records completed its acquisition of indie Fantasy Records Nov. 24. Concord is believed to have paid about $3 million for Berkeley, Calif.-based Fantasy, which counts the Creedence Clearwater Revival catalog among its holdings. Concord, which is owned by an investment group led by TV producer Norman Lear, outbid a number of Fantasy suitors in June. Concord is having a banner year, thanks to the success of Ray Charles' "Genius Loves Company." The former indie switched its distribution from IDN to Universal earlier this year.

Fantasy was put up for sale in January by a group led by label chairman Saul Zaentz. Its extensive catalog includes the Contemporary, Kicking Mule, Prestige, Riverside, Specialty, Stax and Taloma labels.

ONTANA UPDATE: Universal Music & Video Distribution's indie arm, Fontana, continues to ramp up staff for its launch next year.

Bill Pollet has been named head of West Coast sales, John Nutter and Bright Riley have been named label-relations managers, and David Zierler is director of business development. Pollet most recently worked in the West Coast sales office of Arista and before that was a branch manager for PolyGram. Riley has been CEO of Los Angeles-based indie Aerie Squad, and Nutter was marketing and sales director for L.A.-based Immortal Records.

The four join a team that includes head of marketing Tom Overby, head of sales Ken Gullic and GM Steve Pritchett.

U.K. Sales

Continued from page 7

For positive annual growth to be achieved in 2004, the EPI estimates that fourth-quarter trade deliveries need to increase by less than 1% from the same period last year. "Prospects for the final quarter are good," the trade group says, on the basis of a strong release schedule with albums from Eminem, U2 and Robbie Williams, and the anticipated further development of the DVD and download markets.

However, initial feedback from retailers suggests that this target may be difficult to accomplish. "Q4 is going to be [relatively] tough in terms of market volumes," says Steve Gallant, London-based product director at U.K. market leader HMV. "It's already looking tougher than last year."

Gallant indicates that some front-line titles are not selling as well as would normally be anticipated for this time of year. But he expects the Christmas trading rush to come with a flurry. "We expect the last week before Christmas to be enormous compared with last year," he says. "We've already seen a week-on-week lift in the lead-up."

The strong performance of local repertoire has long been a significant feature of the U.K. recorded-music market. British-signed acts provided 13 of the top 20 artist albums during the third quarter, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co., which measures over-the-counter sales for the BPI. (The figure includes U.S. act Scissor Sisters, which is signed internationally through Polydor U.K.)

For the first time since the trade body began publishing quarterly singles charts in 2000, British acts delivered all five top-selling singles during the period. "The British record industry's continued investment in new bands and talents is paying off," BPI chairman Peter Jamieson says.

Despite a strong performance in terms of volume, downward pressure on pricing at retail resulted in a 1.7% decline in the overall third-quarter market value to slightly more than £243 million ($345 million). Additionally, the physical singles format continued its trend of double-digit declines, with volume down 17.9% to 7.3 million units.

By Todd Martens tmartens@billboard.com
AEC, Source Interlink See Growth After Merger

The proposed merger of Alliance Entertainment Corp. and Source Interlink will realize at least $12 million in cost savings for the new company and should produce an incremental $100 million in sales from the DVD category alone. That's the word from a conference call the companies held Nov. 19 with Wall Street analysts.

Leslie Flegel, chairman/CEO of Bonita Springs, Fla.-based Source Interlink, said the combined entity will be able to offer mainstream retail chains a full assortment of home-entertainment product, including magazines, movies, books and music.

Source Interlink is apparently banking on AEC’s expertise in movies to grow its business. In addition to traditional magazine distribution, Source Interlink controls product placement in displays at checkout stands in about 80,000 stores.

Accounting for multiple checkouts per store and customers who visit more than once a week, Flegel said, the company controls about 250,000 checkout locations, which are used by 500 million shoppers—all ready to make impulse purchases.

Source Interlink fills most of those slots with magazines, but Flegel said the company considered adding DVD even before its management visited AEC’s Coral Springs, Fla., headquarters to check out its operations.

“The minute I looked at that operation, it was apparent to me that [Source Interlink] wasn’t prepared to do this,” Flegel said. “There is much more involved in getting DVDs out and doing it correctly and having the right assortment and the buyers with the knowledge.”

From DVDs alone, Flegel envisions $1.00 million in incremental income within two years.

He said DVDs are the most sought-after home entertainment product and make ideal impulse purchases because they are small, lightweight and colorful.

If Source Interlink places six competitively priced or budget DVD titles in its 250,000 point-of-purchase displays each week, the format will get frontage in 1.5 million locations where impulse purchases are high, Flegel noted.

For vendors, this may sound like a price-and-positioning opportunity they don’t want to miss, but it also sounds like it’s going to cost them a pretty penny.

Both companies also see a more traditional revenue growth opportunity:

If the merger is completed in March as anticipated, Source Interlink will close its headquarters and move into AEC’s facility, and AEC president Alan Tuckman will become executive VP at Source Interlink.

Between them, the companies have a considerable amount of warehouse space in more than a dozen buildings. Flegel said Source Interlink has not determined how it will rationalize those operations. But he suggested that while warehouse functions might change, the facilities will not close if the company meets its anticipated growth.

AEC expects to spin off certain noncore assets related to its All Media Guide and Digital On Demand businesses before the merger is complete.

The merged companies have a strong revenue base. For the fiscal quarter ended July 31, Source Interlink reported net income of $4.1 million on sales of $91.4 million.

In its most recent fiscal year, ended Jan. 31, Source Interlink reported net income of $10 million, or 51 cents per diluted share, on revenue of $333.1 million. The company’s stock closed Nov. 9 at $10.77 to give it a market capitalization of $252.3 million.

In AEC’s most recent fiscal year, it had revenue of $931 million. Since AEC is not publicly traded, it does not reveal profitability.

But sources say its operating profit is similar to Source Interlink’s, which means that the combined company could have $40 million-$50 million in cash flow.

According to a Securities and Exchange Commission filing, there will be a three-month lock-up period for shareholders of AEC parent Yucaipa, after which one-third of their shares become eligible for sale. By nine months, Yucaipa investors could trade all of their shares.

During the conference call, however, Flegel said there have been “no indications that they have an interest in cashing out.”

It is easy to see how the merger would benefit AEC and Source Interlink. But the main benefit for Yucaipa, clearly, is the ability to turn its nonliquid investment into a liquid one.

Yucaipa is on its second trip down this path: A proposed merger with publicly traded Liquid Audio fell through in 2002.

On Dec. 1, Source Interlink shares closed at $13.80, up 21.8% from their price of $10.80 when the deal was announced Nov. 18.

Redux

Continued from page 43

which as a gift for some people is probably too low, and a boxed set, which is too much.”

“Price is very important,” notes Emily Butt, director/GM of HMV Hong Kong and Singapore. The chain has been selling the series at a regular $220 Hong Kong ($28), but sales take the price down to $145 Hong Kong-$180 Hong Kong ($18.60-$23.10).

“Visual products have become very popular in the last two years,” Butt says, “and for people that like to collect catalog, you’ve got all the music on two CDs, then you’ve got a visual as well.”

Dave Bartholomew, London-based sales manager for Universal Strategic Sales, says that while HMV has “led the way” in racking the series prominently, Universal recently closed a deal with Virgin Megastores to stock 10-12 titles.

RACKING CONCERNS

Some retailers have expressed concern about displaying the items, which are the height and width of a DVD but deeper, to accommodate these discs. Accordingly, UMI is considering adapting the package for other potential partners. Bartholomew says U.K. supermarket chain Asda was enthusiastic about the series, but the package “physically will not fit” in the retailer’s music racks.

In Hong Kong, Butt noted that since HMV was racking with adjustable racks, displaying the series is not a problem. “We generally put them in with our chart music CDs, but we will put some in with our DVD music,” she says.

Notable success has also been recorded in Denmark, one of several Scandinavian markets to advertise the range on TV. Retail chain Fona purchasing manager Jakob Kroll says the consumer response “depends on the artist. ABBA for instance, has been positive because Universal did a TV ad campaign, so it’s a big hit. So far, response to other artists hasn’t been overwhelming. But it’s a great product.”

Kroll adds that Fona stocks the packages in its DVD section, because they do not fit its regular CD racks.

Another Danish retailer, Coop DK, says it does not carry the sets, chiefly because of the size obstacle.

Seven Deluxe Sound + Vision titles have been released in the United States so far; the Marley release is the sales leader, according to UMI, followed by Kiss: “Gold.”

UMI added its first classical titles to the range Oct. 25, when packages by Luciano Pavarotti, Kiri Te Kanawa, Bond and the Three Tenors hit European stores. More catalog sets will appear in first quarter 2005, utilizing for the first time the company’s jazz repertoire.

Additional reporting by Charles Ferro in Copenhagen.
New Programming, Execs Put Charge In Web Radio

BY BRIAN GARRITY

Competition is heating up in the online radio space. Terrestrial radio giant Clear Channel Communications is looking to move in on turf dominated by the likes of America Online, Yahoo and Microsoft's MSN with a new focus on Internet programming.

As previously reported, CCC has tapped AOL Music GM Evan Harrison to oversee its Internet radio division (Billboard, Dec. 4).

The company, which streams 200 of its 1,200 stations over the Web, is looking to create an online music programming strategy similar to that of AOL.

In addition to its existing online simulcasting efforts, CCC will push original offerings—in-studio performances, custom music videos and artist interviews—and initiatives aimed at premiering music on the Internet.

"The number of people listening to radio online has grown fivefold over the past five years, and it's time to step up our programming here," Clear Channel Radio CEO John Hogan says.

The move by CCC comes as a host of new technology players—online and via satellite—are challenging terrestrial radio's dominant grip on music programming.

MSN Radio, the new Internet radio system operating within the Microsoft Windows Media Player 10, offers more than 1,000 stations patterned after terrestrial radio outlets.

Using monitored airplay data licensed from Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, the Web stations play virtually the same songs as the stations on which they are modeled. MSN is calling them "just like" stations and using the call letters and slogans of the broadcast stations to describe the channels.

Elsewhere, companies like AOL are ramping up their programming efforts by hiring radio executives to deliver content that the companies believe is comparable to or better than what is on terrestrial radio.

AOL recently hired five music directors, a production manager and a senior marketing manager to join the AOL Radio Network, which comprises Radio@AOL and Radio@Netscape.

Among the hires are R&B/hip-hop director Donya Floyd, who has worked at WOWI Norfolk, Va.; WPGC Washington, D.C., and WUSL (Power 98) Philadelphia. Also new to AOL is alternative/rock director Pete Schieke, formerly music director/afternoon jock at WXTM (Xtreme Radio) Cleveland.

OUTOUR ADVERTISERS

As the sophistication of Internet radio grows and listenership expands, advertisers are starting to venture into the space.

The four biggest providers of Internet radio services in the United States—AOL, MSN, Yahoo and Live365—earlier this year formed an alliance to market themselves collectively to media buyers that traditionally buy advertising time on national syndicated network radio.

Ronning Lipset Radio—a specialist in selling ad space on streaming radio—is now positioning the four Internet services to advertisers as a single network with more than 33 million monthly listeners.

Meanwhile, Launch, the music destination on Yahoo, earlier this year became the first Internet media property to be monitored by Nielsen BDS, which tracks its audio and video streams.

Arbitron estimates that more than 38 million American listeners listen to Internet radio every month; more than 19 million listen to online radio every week.

CCC believes that with well-known formats with such names as Kiss, Power, Lite and Z100, it has established franchises to which listeners can gravitate online in much the same way they do offline. Programming will be tailored to format-specific platforms.

"It's a way to round out the relationships radio currently has," Harrison says. "Fulsy embracing this medium is the natural next step for the fan that's experiencing the broadcast—they now also have an opportunity to experience it online."

NEWTECH

Warner Home Video is introducing a mini-DVD player this holiday season, hoping to take advantage of the growing portable-video market.

The player, manufactured by CyberHome, comes with built-in speakers, headphones, a rechargeable battery, charger cradle and an AC adapter. It is slightly larger than a portable videogame player and carries a suggested retail price of less than $120. Players will be available in select markets this month and will roll out nationally in March 2005.

The CyberHome player reads special mini-DVDs, which are compatible with standard DVD players. About 30 titles will initially be available, with more than 50 due in stores by spring.

Consumers will receive three mini-DVDs with the purchase of a player and will be eligible to receive two more free by mail. Mini-discs will range from $9.98 to $24.98 each.

Analysts say the portable-video-player market is much larger for children than it is for adults.

"The market here in the U.S. is different than the one in Japan, where a far greater percentage of the population has a long train ride to work in the morning," says Ross Rubin, director of industry analysis for Port Washington, N.Y.-based NPD Group. "At $120, though, people may be willing to purchase it. Kids certainly are voracious consumers of video, and parents love to have something for them to watch for long rides in the back seat."

However, Rubin adds trends indicate that parents are more likely to buy players with larger screens; mini-DVD players have a 2.5 inch display. He also wonders whether consumers will be willing to buy the specially formatted content required.

EMusic Thrives

EMusic has sold more than 3 million downloads since it relaunched in September with a new editorial team featuring former New York Times and Rolling Stone writers. The company reports more than 1.5 million downloads per month in October and November—a 50% growth in volume from its prerelease levels. EMusic, which focuses on indie-label content from the likes of SpinArt’s Frank Black—sells MP3 downloads on a subscription basis. Packages start at 40 downloads for $9.99 per month.
Hitting The Right Note In Pitch For Auto-Tune

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NEW YORK—The Nov. 8 broadcast of NPR’s “Morning Edition” featured two of the recording industry’s top engineer/producers and one controversial piece of technology.

New York-based Pat Dillett (David Byrne, Mary J. Blige, They Might Be Giants and Los Angeles-based Ed Cherney (the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Bonnie Raitt) were featured on the broadcast, which is part of a “Morning Edition” series on science and art. The subject: pitch-correcting software, particularly Auto-Tune, made by Antares Audio Technologies.

Introduced in 1997, Auto-Tune was created by Dr. Andy Hilderbrand. The research that led to its creation was far from the music business, however. The algorithm used in Auto-Tune was first developed by Hilderbrand, then working as a geophysicist, to analyze seismic data for locating oil under the earth’s surface.

But, as “Morning Edition” science correspondent David Kestenbaum explained on the program, “it also happens to be really good at identifying pitch and cycles in a singing voice...Software like Auto-Tune essentially allows you to change the pitch while keeping the overall phrasing and sound the same.”

To the ears of many listeners, the emphasis on technical perfection in modern pop production has extracted the qualities that make music interesting—quirks and imperfections in a given performance, for example, or a vocalist’s unique characteristics.

The degree to which pitch-correcting software and hardware is relied upon by some artists has brought no small amount of criticism. By association, Auto-Tune has also come under fire.

But such criticism, Dillett and Cherney say, is not fully deserved.

“It’s a great and totally acceptable tool,” Dillett tells Billboard. “We’ve been trying to fix pitch for years. Well before Auto-Tune, we’ve had tons of methods—even before sampling—to speed things up, slow them down, fly them back in [to the track] and get them right. It [was] really hard. So I’m glad it’s easy.”

“It’s good at fixing small errors in an otherwise interesting or moving or just tolerable performance,” Dillett adds, “and not having to totally discard something or wear yourself down working on the same word or line over and over just because there’s one [note] that’s that hard to hit.”

Before pitch-correcting software, Cherney says, a degree of pitch manipulation could be accomplished with such equipment as an Eventide Harmonizer, a hardware-based effects processor. Cherney says he has used Auto-Tune on several artists’ vocals, but sparingly, and often only because the artist is travelling or otherwise unavailable.

“They use it on country records,” Cherney says, “and I hate that. These are some of the greatest singers that ever walked the earth. Some of the great singers—Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Rosemary Clooney—didn’t need Auto-Tune. They got through 50, 60, 70 years of recording history without needing it, and we heard some really, really great performances that we still hear today.”

The most concentrated use of pitch correction, not surprisingly, is in the teen pop genre.

“They are more interchangeable,” Dillett allows, “in the way their productions are done, where it’s probably one of the four or four producers and they’re doing a very similar ‘soundscape’ to every other song they did. The vocal has to be dead on, and there’s usually 100 of them all stacked up. That’s where I don’t like it.”

December 11, 2004

Billboard's No. 1 Singles (December 4, 2004)

Masterdisk, NYDVD Merge

New York-based mastering facility Masterdisk has merged with DVD development and authoring firm NewYorkDVD. The alliance allows Masterdisk to offer its music clients full-service DVD production and postproduction, authoring, design and replication.

In May, Masterdisk was acquired by Mesa, Ariz.-based Viastar, a music, film, distribution and production company (Billboard, May 11). The merge with NewYorkDVD, Masterdisk CEO Doug Levine says, is a similar effort to reduce the facility’s dependence on traditional music mastering, given the music industry’s contractions and consolidation in recent years.

“I was really looking at DVD,” Levine says. “I still believe it’s got a lot of growth potential. We’re getting more content clients and movie clients.” With the addition of some corporate DVD clients, Levine says, “we really want to build that something.”

Masterdisk’s DVD operations will be handled by NewYorkDVD founder and lead producer Brian Brodeur.

“His fantastic,” Levine says. You know how say ‘it’s not rocket science?’ DVD is rocket science, and Brian is a rocket scientist. “We just finished a great Rod Stewart DVD—NTSC and PAL versions—and it was very time-sensitive,” Levine says, referring to Rod Stewart Live at the Royal Albert Hall. “Without Brian overseeing the project, my hair would have fallen out by now. It might not have gotten done.”

NewYorkDVD is known for instructional and studio music titles and has also worked on such music DVDs as the “Drummers Collective 25th Anniversary Celebration & Bass Day 2002.”

Brodeur plans significant expansion of DVD-Audio and Super Audio CD title production for Masterdisk. Though NewYorkDVD began moving into Masterdisk’s 545 W. 49th St. facility in July, terms of the merger were finalized only weeks ago, Levine says.

Scholars: BerkleeMusic.com, the online extension of Boston’s Berklee College of Music, has announced the recipients of its first online music scholarship program.

Five musicians representing the United States, Pakistan and South Africa were selected from applicants around the world. Each will receive a scholarship named after a modern musician.

Arooj Aftah, from Pakistan, was awarded the Steve Val scholarship. Timothy Peter Kroon, of South Africa, was awarded the Steven Tyler scholarship. Madison, Wis., resident Brett Richard Koenz was given the Tom Snow scholarship, while Monica Orth of Lowell, Mass., received the Patty Larkin scholarship. Jose Luis Revelo, a native of Colombia who lives in Jersey City, N.J., received the All Clausen scholarship.

The scholarships will include six online music courses and up to two years of study at berklee.com, along with required Berklee Press books. Recipients can also enroll in berklee.com, the New England Asst. of Schools and Colleges-approved program for credit that can be transferred to another college or university (billboard.biz, Aug. 10).
Sony BMG’s Goodrem Delivers Down Under

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

SYDNEY—The immediate success here of Delta Goodrem’s sophomore album, “Mistaken Identity” reflects the Australian public’s continuing love affair with the multi-platinum singer/songwriter. Now, Sony BMG is looking to take the Aussie’s career to an international level.

“Mistaken Identity,” released Nov. 8 in Australia, debuted at No. 1 on the Australian Record Industry Assn. chart. Sony BMG Entertainment Australia says the set shipped 54,000 units in its first week.

The album marks 26-year-old Goodrem’s return to music after a battle with cancer. In August 2003, she was diagnosed with a form of lymphoma; she completed a course of radiotherapy and chemotherapy in December of that year.

Although Goodrem was unable to perform for more than a year, sales of her debut, “Innocent Eyes,” mounted curing her illness and convalescence. Sony BMG says the set has shipped more than 2.3 million units worldwide, including 1 million in Australia.

Several of Goodrem’s new songs reflect her experiences of success and despair during the past two years. She points to one album track, “Extraordinary Day,” as an important personal statement. “How could I ignore the day,” she asks, “when I was told I had cancer?”

The songs Goodrem wrote in the immediate aftermath of her diagnosis were, she says, “dark and introspective. Then as I got better, they became more positive.”

One of those positive songs is “Out of the Blue,” which she wrote about meeting her then-boyfriend, professional tennis player Mark Philippoussis. The song, released Sept. 24 in Australia as the album’s lead-off single, entered the ARIA chart at No. 1.

The initial performance of “Mistaken Identity” brought early Christmas cheer for Australian retailers. (Continued on page 53)

After being diagnosed and treated for cancer, Delta Goodrem’s career is back on track. The 26-year-old is expected to make her U.S. debut next year.

BBC Radio’s Douglas Wins Woman Of The Year

BY PAUL SEXTON

LONDON—BBC Radio 2 controller Lesley Douglas was named the U.K. music industry’s Woman of the Year Nov. 24, as the annual awards ceremony reached its 10th anniversary.

The WOTY honors, which recognize achievement in four categories across the music business, took place at the InterContinental Hotel here.

Mark Lamarr, a TV personality and Radio 2 host, presented Douglas’ award. He described her as “the most powerful woman in the U.K. music business.”

According to Radio Joint Audience Research, AC-formatted Radio 2 is Britain’s top-rated station, with an average annual listener share of more than 16.3%.

In front of an audience of 500, Alison Donald, managing director of publisher Chrysalis Music, was presented with the award for outstanding contribution by Chrysalis Group chairman Chris Wright. The Accolade Award went to Karen Williams, owner of TV promotion agency Big Sister. Her honor was presented by Sue Whitehouse, manager of the Darkness, one of Williams’ clients.

Music entrepreneur/TV personality Simon Cowell presented the special achievement trophy to his personal assistant, Nikki Watkins. Additionally, Sharon Osbourne collected the WOTY plaque she won in 2002 but was too ill to receive at the time. She attended this year’s event with husband Ozzy.

Three of the awards are chosen by a committee of 15 female industry members; the special achievement category has the year-round input of an all-female academy of almost 200.

INTIMATE EVENT

The event’s founder and awards committee chair is EMI Records U.K. & Ireland communications manager Karen Millard. She says the awards have raised more than £250,000 (£474,000) for Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy and the BRIT Trust.

Millard says discussions are under way to expand the event. She hints that the awards could eventually encompass under-recognized male achievement. “We get so much different feedback,” she adds, “but the one thing that comes across is that it’s a very intimate event.”

Tickets for the show and dinner cost £150 (£294), relatively cheap compared with those of other industry occasions. “It’s awful turning people away for tickets, because of the fundraising aspect, but we don’t want to exploit it too much,” Millard says.

Nordoff-Robbins and the BRIT Trust are also the chosen charities of the U.K. Music Industry

(Continued on page 52)
## Hits of the World

### Japan

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<thead>
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<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Destiny's Child</td>
<td>COLUMBIA ALLOW STARDUST... THE _GREAT FMUFLLED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Within Temptation</td>
<td>1001 _STARBUST THE GREAT FMUFLLED</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Faith Hill</td>
<td>AMERICAN IDIOT GREEN DAY</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>ANGEL MUSIC, BABY PETER CALL TO TOUCH ME</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Masayuki Kubo</td>
<td>GREATEST HITS: Encore starlite/TOKYO AIR ZONE</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Toshiki Hayashi</td>
<td>BEST OF SHINJA TWAIN</td>
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| 15       | Yuki Yonezu | HITS OF THE WORLD

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<td>Christina Aguilera</td>
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<td>マイ・プリローギティブ・ジェイヴェー</td>
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<td>Jessie J</td>
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<td>P!nk</td>
<td>WE WILL ROCK YOU</td>
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<td>&lt;p&gt;Kool &amp; The Gang&lt;/p&gt;</td>
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<td>&lt;p&gt;Everybody's Changing&lt;/p&gt;</td>
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<td>&lt;p&gt;My Premonition&lt;/p&gt;</td>
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Hits of the World is compiled by Billboard/London.
South African Star Hones Street Beats

M’dou Masilele is generally acknowledged as the godfather of kwaito—the high-pitched hybrid sound that has dominated South African youth culture for a decade.

M’dou’s recent releases were low-profile affairs, but he is back at center stage with “Ya Rocka,” the first album under a new deal that sees his like a difficult time to launch a London-based reggae label. The genre has had a stormy year in the British media, with anti-gang lyrics from such acts as Beenie Man and Vybz Kartel generating adverse publicity.

But Paul Anthony, founder of A&R marketing at U.K. reggae label Jet Star, is plugging ahead. His HZ imprint bowed with the Nov. 29 release of the compilation “Contemporary Roots Reggae Vol. 1.” Anthony will serve as CEO of HZ and sister urban music label Hypnotize.

“We’re sticking to the conscious roots’ side of reggae, he explains, adding that HZ will release titles by established artists and up-and-comers.

H2 has global rights for the compilation, which includes licensed tracks from Morgan Heritage, Capleton and Anthony B. Nova. Pinnacle is handling U.K. distribution, Rough Trade will release the album Dec. 6 in select European markets.

HIGH-PRICE HUI: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia-based Galaxy Productions is guaranteeing the country’s biggest single-concert paycheck for a Feb. 19, 2015, show by veteran Canadian pop-vocalist/actor Sam Hui.

The concert promoter says it is paying Hong Kong-based Hui $630,000 for his one-off show at the 70,000-capacity Bukit Jalil Stadium. Local promoters confirm that is the largest sum ever guaranteed for a Malaysian gig.

“Hui is a perennial favorite in Malaysia whose albums sell consistently,” Universal Music Malaysia managing director Sandy Montero says. “His concert will be the season’s biggest draw.”

The 56-year-old Hui signed to Polydor Hong Kong in 1970 and was a major regional star during the next two decades. He retired 10 years ago but re-emerged this year, signing to EMG Hong Kong and selling out dates in June at the 12,500-capacity Hong Kong Coliseum. MDO estimates the concert—Hui’s only planned date in Asia—to renew interest in the artist’s Universal-owned label, particularly the two-CD “Champion Hits” set Universal Malaysia issued in June.

CHRISSIE LEO
Blue Rodeo Digs Through Archives For New DVD

BY LARRY LeBLANC

TORONTO—Blue Rodeo founders Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor are amused by the archival TV and concert footage featured in the VE's retrospective DVD “Blue Rodeo in Stereovision.”

“It was funny seeing the DVD at a movie theater with everyone,” Cuddy says. “Each one of us has scenes that made everybody laugh. Either being so young or [having] stupid hair or staring into the camera.”

Keelor adds, “It’s very pleasant nostalgia.”

The DVD, a retrospective of Canada’s best-loved country-rock band—which is entering its third decade—was released here Nov. 16. The title debuted at No. 3 on Canada's Billboard Top 50 Music Video chart with sales of 3,138.

To get the archival material, researcher Heather Pollock culled more than 180 hours of footage. Cuddy and Keelor decided which 12 performances to use for the DVD, and Susan de Carteret, head of Blue Rodeo management firm Starfish Entertainment, sought license clearances.

“It was intense and expensive negotiating the licenses,” de Carteret says, pegging the cost at more than $200,000.

“The hand did not do this DVD the easy way,” she adds. “They didn’t film a concert at Massey Hall and then throw in some B-roll stuff.”

In addition to the archival footage, the DVD—produced and directed by Ron Mann—features the 18-minute performance piece “Sweet Soul Music” by author Paul Quarrington. There are also reunion performances of the band’s original lineup with drummer Cleave Anderson and keyboardist Bobby Wiseman.

Cuddy recalls “standing there not having rehearsed, having cameras around and everybody saying, ‘Go!’ What were we thinking? We are lucky all it came back to us.”

LEGENDARY BAND

Blue Rodeo—which today also includes co-founder and bassist Bazil Donovan, keyboardist James Gray, drummer Glenn Mitchell and cellist guitarist Bob Eggen—enjoys cult status in Canada comparable to that of the Grateful Dead in the United States. Blue Rodeo also has modest following in the States, Germany and Australia. The band’s 11-album catalogue has bumped around various Warner-affiliated labels (Atlantic, EastWest, Discovery, Sire) in the States. However, Blue Rodeo is now with Rounder, which issued the 2002 album “Palace of Gold” in the States. De Carteret expects that the label will release the DVD in the United States in early 2005. Cuddy and Keelor met in 1973 at North Toronto High School. Prior to forming Blue Rodeo, they worked together in the Hi-Fi’s (1978-81) and Fly to France (1981-84). Blue Rodeo formed in 1984 and established itself by playing bars in Toronto’s Queen Street West district.

Keelor says, “The Hi-Fi’s were about having a few beers and making everybody dance in the bars. Early Blue Rodeo was the same.”

Warner Music Canada president/CEO Steve Kane adds, “The original lineup practically invented alt-country 20 years ago. They brought back 12 to 15 styles to people that were being attracted to the vanguard of punk rock.”

The band’s country-rock stance, often topped with pop-power riffs, is well-suited to Canadian audiences, Cuddy says. “I don’t think we could have done this if we were based in the United States. I don’t think people would have felt as comfortable with the hybrid that we do. Canadians don’t feel like everything has to be etched in stone.”

To launch the DVD, Blue Rodeo took another walk down memory lane by playing shows with past and present lineups Nov. 15 and Nov. 17 at Lee’s Palace in Toronto. “It’s nice to see we can still pack Lee’s on a Monday night,” Cuddy quipped to the packed crowd at the first show.

“When we played those shows, I realized that the original band was created to play bars,” Cuddy says. “We were the perfect blend for bars, and people usually stayed until the end of the night. With the current lineup, the music suddenly got more expansive. That’s because we play theaters and small arenas.”

Competitiveness, as well as artistic and business differences, have often defined Blue Rodeo. Rumors of a breakup were in full force in the mid-1990s, but Cuddy and Keelor issued solo albums. But the breakup talk has petered out. Today, the members all work on side projects.

“A large part of our longevity is that we’ve been able to do what we want,” says Keelor. “It keeps us engaged with the Untimed, featuring members of the Sadies. “Also, there has never been any set criteria for the songs we record as Blue Rodeo. It has always been open people.”

Blue Rodeo is completing its 10th studio album, intended for a March 2005 release. The set, Cuddy says, marks a return to the acoustic direction of the band’s 1989 sophomore release, “Diamond Mine.”

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Shinko’s New ‘Curator’
Japan Music Publisher Sells Overseas Catalog To Fujisankei

BY STEVE McCLURE

TOKYO—Japanese media conglomerate Fujisankei Communications Group is looking to dust off the copyrights in a “museum” of international songs.

Fujisankei has bought the international catalog of Tokyo-based music publisher Shinko Music. While the purchase price was not disclosed, Fujisankei says it is investing 63.5 billion yen ($593 million) in the new company.

Insiders say Shinko was a pioneering Japanese publisher when it came to acquiring rights to overseas catalogs. Through the years, it has become the Asian (excluding China) subpublis her for a 20,000-song catalog of international repertoire, including such standards as “Ode to Joy,” “Moonlight Serenade” and “Santa Claus Is Coming to Town.”

Ichiro Asatsuma, president of Fujisankei publishing arm Fujipacific Music, says the catalog is “a wonderful library of U.S. hit standards” from the 1910s to the 1980s. “It is nothing short of miraculous that we were able to add this library to our catalog.”

He compares the acquisition to a museum containing great works of art on a day-to-day basis.

Asatsuma sees the deal as an example of a general trend in the Japanese market where companies are conducting business aimed at achieving increased efficiencies and rationalization.

Shinko Music Entertainment chairman Shoichi Kusano says, “The transfer of our foreign music catalog to a mass-media organization like Fuji TV and Fujipacific, where it will be used multifariously and multidirectionally, is something that is required in this era.”

As part of the deal, Fuji Music Partners takes a minority stake in Shinko and will assist in exploiting Shinko’s remaining catalog of domestic repertoire.

“We believe that this will enhance the value of the works and lead to an increase in the incomes of the authors,” Kusano says.

However, one Tokyo-based publishing source questions the wisdom of Fujisankei’s acquisition, noting that subpublishing deals are not always permanent.

Asatsuma confirms that in the case of the Shinko catalog, “some of the subpublishing deals are renewable,” while others are “for the lifetime of the copyright.”

Goodrem
Continued from page 49

HMV Australia, which claims a 10% music market share, anticipates that the album will be a steady seller through the rest of the summer.

“Brilliant inspired album with a long shelf life and certainly stay in our top three sellers until Christmas, at least,” says Pete Smith, commercial director for Australian operations at HMV.

“Innocent Eyes” was the chain’s best-selling album ever, Smith adds, shifting 50,000 units through HMV’s 33 Australian outlets. “These figures are beyond exceptional—they’re a dream run,” he says.

Derek Durrant is CD and product manager at 39-store chain JB Hi-Fi.

“We tend to sell more alternative releases,” he says, “but Delta’s still selling strongly for us.”

Sony BMG Australia also has been working “Mistaken Identity” extensively at retail. It initially released the album in two formats: a standard version and a limited-edition deluxe version with a bonus DVD. The album was backed with customized display bins, T-shirts for shop staffers, posters and displays. “This was identified as one of the best played albums at retail,” says Dennis Handlin, chairman/CEO of Sony BMG Entertainment Australia/New Zealand.

The company also set up mobile-phone and online campaigns with telecommunications company Hutchison 3 and download site NineMSN, respectively.

Six on-air radio stations across the board played “Out of the Blue,” paving the way for Goodrem’s sixth consecu tive No. 1 single.

Goodrem also has announced her first Australian tour, set for mid-2005. The 10-date tour, the first for her since the promotion of her local company Dainty Consolidated Entertainment, went on sale Nov. 29.

To set up “Mistaken Identity” outside Goodrem’s home territory, Sony BMG arranged select advance interviews in primary markets—including the United Kingdom, New Zealand and parts of Asia—while she was recording the album in Los Angeles. “It was important that the public get a feel for the direction of Delta’s new work,” Handlin explains.

“Mistaken Identity” bowed Nov. 29 in the United Kingdom, where “Out of the Blue” peaked Nov. 20 at No. 5. Most con tinental European markets will release the album Jan. 31, although Germany, Switzerland and Austria released it simul taneously with the United Kingdom.

The album was released Nov. 8 in New Zealand and it has since been rolled out in seven Asian markets. According to Sony BMG, “Innocent Eyes” has shipped 60,000 units in New Zealand and 100,000 in Asia.

In the States, Goodrem is signed to Sony imprint Daylight Records, which is headed by Sony Music Label Group U.S. executive VP of A&R David Massey. Before her illness intervened, Goodrem was to have made her U.S. bow in the second half of 2003. Her first U.S. release will now come in April 2005, in the form of a still-untitled set combining tracks from both albums.

Handlin confirms that negotiations are under way for Goodrem to guest on Hawaii-based Fox TV drama series “North Shore” and contribute to soundtrack around the time of the U.S. album’s release.

Such a move would echo Goodrem’s experience in Australia, where she appeared on several episodes of the Ten Network soap “Neighbours” in 2002 (Billboard, Jan. 25, 2003). That move was essential to establishing her in Aus tralia and the United Kingdom, where the show has a loyal following.

Goodrem is managed by her mother, Lea, in Sydney and by Dave Holmes, president of DC Music, who is based in Los Angeles.

Sony BMG expects that Goodrem will establish a presence in the States to promote her album, Handlin says. “She’ll do whatever it takes.”

FOR THE RECORD

In the Dec. 4 article “Measuring CRAs’ Worth,” a quote was misspelled. An apology to rep Yvonne Valne of Last Tango Productions in Toronto said, “CRAs is a good example of what a community station should be.”
Site Helps Build Fan Base Before A Deal

BY JIM BESSMAN

Its motto is “Your fanz are your future,” but Ruth McCartney looks to the past to explain her innovative ifanz.com fan development/e-mail marketing service.

“We’re trying to reverse the order of the way people think of their careers,” says McCartney, CEO of ifanz parent company McCartney Multimedia. “You finish your CD, press a thousand up, go out on the road, get a manager, get signed — then get famous and start a fan list. But with us you start a fan list first.”

Since its September launch, following a year of intensive beta testing, the Los Angeles-based ifanz has attracted a clientele of established acts including Clint Black, LeAnn Rimes, REO Speedwagon and James Ingram. These artists rely on ifanz for such services as interactive database management and direct marketing of CDs, DVDs, concert tickets and merchandise.

But McCartney, who learned database management by organizing stepbrother Paul McCartney’s fan club when she was 4, notes that the ifanz “virtual fan club” and direct marketing functions are especially valuable for unsigned singer/songwriters.

“If you’re a singer/songwriter who dreams of getting signed and have managed to collect 5,000 names over a three- or four-year period, you’re in a better negotiating position when you go to make your deal,” she says. “You’re bringing 5,000 customers with you who will buy your record right out of the box.”

A singer/writer’s database can be employed in other ways, McCartney continues. “One thing our members have done is go to their fan list and say they need to raise X amount of money to make a new album, and ask the fans to pre-order the album now and basically finance the project. Then we press up the album and deliver it. So they’re saying, ‘People, help me make better music and be part of the dream’ — instead of going to a corporation.”

ifanz president Andrew Frances notes that the company’s “virtual label,” ifanz Recordings, is set up to facilitate one-at-a-time, “burn on demand” CD and CD booklet manufacturing, “thus no warehousing costs, no ‘can’t fills,’ etc.”

“If you’re Clint Black, the record company makes your record and it’s a receivable expense,” says Frances, a veteran label executive who managed singer/songwriter McCartney when she was signed to Jupiter/BMG in Germany in the early 1990s. Frances has also been a management consultant for David Bowie.

“If you’re REO at ifanz, not only is [the recording] not a receivable expense, but you don’t have to press your own records at your own expense,” Frances says. “And you can set your own sale price, out of which we take our piece for manufacturing, and then send the rest to the artist. So there’s no cost in advance to the artist, which is a quantum change for artists who want to sell CDs or merchandise but can’t afford to buy in quantity from a manufacturer. All ifanz Recordings artists retain control of their masters and other copyrights, Frances says. “With the old record company model, masters are owned in perpetuity as a work for hire,” he says. “At ifanz, we give artists complete and total artistic freedom, and they retain copyrights to their material.”

ifanz uses the Knack to illustrate additional ifanz promotional rewards.

“Knack vocalis/guitarist and ‘My Sharona’ co-writer Doug Fieger approached the company about digitally distributing the song—which the Knack now owns. The song, Frances says, was not available as a download.

“We added it to our ifanz Recordings roster and in within one week of placement with iTunes — and with no promotion of any kind — it was already making hundreds of dollars for the band. A TV executive surfing through iTunes then downloaded it and it became the theme song of the NBC series ‘Hawaii.’”

Similarly, ifanz is servicing Orleans’ “You’re Still the One” at iTunes, Frances adds.

BEATING BOOTLEGGER

Dina LaPolt heads the Los Angeles-based boutique law firm LaPolt Law. As a specialist in intellectual property and entertainment law, she believes the ifanz model can also be an important anti-piracy tool.

LaPolt represents the estate of Tupac Shakur, for which ifanz serves as a “virtual merchandise system” in offering 88 Shakur items.

“We get 180,000 hits on our site a day, average,” LaPolt says. “People register with ifanz on the site, and everybody wants to tell us about themselves.”

Relating this personal fan connection to file-sharing and bootlegging, LaPolt says, “Fans are fans. If you have an artist who is admired and respected by the fans, and if that artist reaches out and establishes a personal connection with them, they will buy albums.

“The best way to combat piracy, then, is for the artist to directly establish a relationship with the fans,” LaPolt says. “They want to read liner notes, see who played on your record, read inspirational messages on how you created it. They want to see that stuff—which you can’t get when you file-share or copy the CD.”

Plus, LaPolt says, “Ifanz gives an indie artist a viable means of marketing and obtaining information on their fans, which they were never able to do before.”

UMPG Wraps Admin Deal For Orbison Catalog

Universal Music Publishing Group has signed a worldwide administration deal — excluding the United States and Canada — for Barbara Orbison’s music publishing catalogs (Roy Orbison Music/Barbara Orbison Music) that contain the classic songs penned by her late husband, Roy Orbison.

Included in the pact are such much-covered rock’n’roll classics as “Oh, Pretty Woman,” “Only the Lonely,” “Crying,” “Running Scared,” “In Dreams” and “Blue Bayou.”

“Roy Orbison was one of the true pioneers of country/pop-based rock’n’roll, and this is truly a classic catalog,” UMPG chairman/CEO David Renzer says. “We are thrilled that Barbara Orbison, who is a very savvy publisher in her own right, has entrusted UMPG to handle the foreign administration for this prestigious catalog.”

It’s all about people that you know, and I know a lot of Universal people in Europe — so it’s not like a big learning curve for us,” Orbison tells Billboard, looking forward to further exploiting her catalog holdings. Foremost among upcoming endeavors in this regard, she adds, is a high-definition broadcast and DVD release of Orbison’s 1987 Black and White Night—which remains the top PBS pledge-drive program — and a new album using Orbison masters opposite new tappings by soon-to-be-announced acts.

She previously announced the re-introduction of the domestic Orbison Records catalog with Eagle Rock Entertainment via RED Distribution, including the new Roy Orbison Hits! Hits! Hits! collection. Eagle Rock is also issuing a new edition of the “Greatest Hits” CD/DVD package.

FATEFUL TRIBUTE: In one of those fateful ironies, Cy Coleman died only three nights after being honored at the Johnny Mercer Foundation’s second annual awards gala, held Nov. 15 at New York’s Rainbow Room. The event featured Tony Bennett, Chita Rivera, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Margaret Whiting, Glenn Close and Kathie Lee Gifford in a musical tribute to the Broadway legend.

The evening benefited the Johnny Mercer Foundation, which is dedicated to the preservation of the great American songbook — of which Coleman’s work has played so great a part.

The foundation also sponsors Accentsuate the Positive, an arts-education program that teaches New York City public school teachers how to include the works of great American songwriters in their curricula. It also supports the Sundance Institute for young songwriters and actors.

One magical moment of the evening was an exuberant performance by the Accentsuate the Positive Kids.

Gifford, meanwhile, has partnered with the foundation to promote the national expansion of Accentsuate the Positive. A songwriter who has collaborated with David Friedman and David Fosteran, Gifford notes, “The joy in songwriting is taking a simple truth we discover in life around us and somehow bringing that truth to life in lyric and melody in such a way that it becomes everyone’s truth.”

Accentsuate the Positive workshops, in which students learn how songs are conceived and written while being introduced to great American works, have been held in more than 50 classrooms throughout New York City and Long Island. The program is growing in the the tri-state area and Georgia and Florida, with additional expansion planned throughout the current school year.

The foundation is also making the workshops available in connection with Gifford’s new show, “Under the Bridge,” so that they can be used to enhance school trips to the show.
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES: Universal Motown Records Group in New York appoints Samuel “Tone” Barnes executive VP of A&R. He is a member of producer/songwriter duo Trackmasters.

Arista/J Records in New York appoints Jeff Burroughs senior VP of urban marketing. He was head of management/production company Rise Entertainment.

EMI Music North America in New York names Thomas V. Ryan senior VP of mobile development. He was a consultant to Virgin Mobile.

EMI Music Marketing in Los Angeles taps Bob O’Neill VP of legal and business affairs. He was VP/general counsel at Warner Strategic Marketing.

Concord Records in Beverly Hills, Calif., names David Morrell VP of promotion. He was director of promotion at Red Ink.

Capitol Records Nashville appoints Jimmy Harnen senior director of national promotion. He was VP/associate manager at Refugee Management International.

DISTRIBUTION: EMI Christian Music Group Distribution in Brentwood, Tenn., promotes Kelly Weaver to director of channel development. She was manager of retail merchandising.

PUBLISHING: Dimensional Music Publishing in New York appoints Joel Schoenfeld president/CEO. He adds that title to his role as Dimensional Associates’ managing director.

RADIO: Journal Broadcast Group in Tucson, Ariz., names Diane Frisch VP/GM of Tucson operations. She was VP/GM of Tucson TV stations KMSB and KTTU.

Country WCTR Myrtle Beach, S.C., taps Nick Danon as PD/morning host. He was assistant PD/morning host at country WPXK Springfield, Mass. Mainstream top 40 WXKB Fort Myers, Fla., names Matt Johnson PD. He was PD at mainstream top 40 WDFF Dayton, Ohio.

MUSIC VIDEO: Picture Vision in Nashville appoints Nicole George executive producer/director of operations. She was manager of video promotion and marketing at Arista/Media.

CONCERT PROMOTION: Clear Channel Entertainment/Ron DeSener Presents in New York taps Joel Peresman as COO. He was president of entertainment/executive VP at Madison Square Garden/Radio City Entertainment.

HOME VIDEO: New Line Home Entertainment in Los Angeles promotes Marshall Carr to senior VP of operations and distribution and Karla O’Leary to senior VP of marketing, finance and administration. They were VPs of those respective departments.

Discovery Consumer Products in Silver Spring, Md., names Tracey L. Beeker VP of home entertainment. She was VP of marketing and consumer products at PBS.

Home Vision Entertainment in Chicago appoints Catherine McBride acquisitions manager. She was marketing manager at Facets Multimedia.

RELATED FIELDS: Consulting firm Lieberfarb & Associates in Los Angeles names John Calkins president. He was senior VP of corporate business development and strategy at Warner Bros. Entertainment.

Bandcamp Rocks Knitting Factory

Independent rock band Bandcamp performed Nov. 19 at the inaugural “Billboard Underground: Live at the Knitting Factory” showcase series in New York. Pictured, from left, are Bandcamp’s Kris Mazzarisi and Steve Ruchelman, Billboard co-executive editor Tamara Conniff and the group’s Matt Bair and Sean Gould.

Clive’s AMA Bash

BMI North America chairman/CEO Clive Davis, center, threw a party celebrating the American Music Awards Nov. 14 at the Esquire House in Beverly Hills, Calif. Big Bop of OutKast, left, and Usher were among the night’s biggest winners. Usher took home the most awards (four), while OutKast won three prizes. (Photo: Larry Busacca/WireImage.com)

Avon’s Good Cause

Harry Connick Jr. performed at the Avon Foundation’s fourth annual Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer Awards celebration, held Nov. 8 at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Frederick P. Rose Hall in New York. Vanessa Carlton also performed at the charity event, which organizers say raised more than $2 million for the foundation’s Breast Cancer Crusade. Pictured, from left, are “Today” news anchor/media leadership award recipient Ann Curry, Avon Products chairman/CEO Andrea Jung, Connick and Avon Foundation president Kathleen Walas.

Now, Hear This...

TH’ LEGENDARY SHACK*SHAKERS

Artists to Watch
“Believe,” Th’ Legendary Shack*shakers’ debut album on Yep Roc Records, fairly explodes out of the speakers. The collection is a hard-to-describe mix of Southern swamp gothic, manic punk, rockabilly and bare-bones swing, driven by a rock-solid rhythm and the boundless energy of psychobilly frontman Col. J.D. Wilkes, who also plays harmonica. Th’ Legendary Shack*shakers’ regular lineup also consists of slap-bassist Mark Robertson and guitarist David Lee. They enlisted numerous guest musicians on “Believe,” augmenting a fierce musical presentation with mind-blowing lyrics rife with biblical references and ruminations on life, death, sin and redemption.

“Th’ Legendary Shack*shakers harken back to an era when being ‘like nothing you ever heard’ was a good thing,” principal songwriter Wilkes says. He calls the “Blind Belt pandemonium” captured on the album “six parts inspiration, six parts perpetuation and six parts damnation. In short: 100% rock’n’roll!” The band is booked by David “Boche” Viecelli at the Billions Corp., and managed by Kip Krones. Known for outrageous live shows, the Shack*shakers tour constantly, and are on the road until the end of the year.
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FEES

Continued from page 7

the day of the show.

"Basically, we tried to listen to the consumer, who has told us, 'Tickets are too expensive, and the "plus, plus, plus strategy is aggravating," Rapino explains. "So we're eliminating two pluses there."

Rapino is not exaggerating when he says the move will cost millions. A conservative estimate--$3 service charge removed from 30 concerts at 30 venues averaging 8,000 people in lawn attendance--puts the potential loss at $21.6 million.

Realistically, the program will likely be much more costly, particularly when box office fees and other CCE shed initiatives are considered.

"We're taking a multimillion dollar risk to drive traffic to our venues," Rapino admits.

WELCOME CHANGECCE will roll out a massive pro-motional campaign in early 2005 to educate fans about the change and other customer service-related issues at the company's venues.

Meanwhile, the industry is still weighing the move.

Initially conceived by venues--including theaters, arenas and performing arts centers--as fees collected to aid in facility upkeep and other vaguely defined services, facility fees have evolved into what is basically just another revenue stream, observers say.

Those in the concert industry, most of whom were unaware of the strategic shift, including House of Blues Entertainment, North America's second-largest shed operator, are viewing the CCE move with surprise and interest.

Greg Trojan, CEO of HOB, tells Billboard that reducing or eliminating some or all facility fees "is something we've looked at in the past and would consider in the future."

Tour producers like the sound of ditching ticket price add-ons. "If this is the case, I applaud them," says Louis Messina, president of the Messina Group. Though once in the shed business, Messina is now one of many outspoken opponents of add-on fees.

"They represent 70% of the industry, and their actions affect me, even if I'm promoting a show elsewhere," Messina says. "This is a very positive step."

Similarly, agents and managers will likely view the CCE move with favor, as they would any development that gets rid of ticket revenue not shared by the artist.

"If eliminat-ing fees and some other changes are made to make the shed deals more transparent, it will be healthy for the business," says Peter Grosslight, worldwide head of music for the William Morris Agency. "Additionally, such a move may stem the tide of the trend of arenas having facility sur-charges, as well."

Whether cash-strapped arenas will also eliminate service fees remains in question. "Any revenue stream is very difficult to give up, but obviously we have to stay competitive," says Robert Hunter, senior VP/GM of the Air Canada Center in Toronto.

"When you give up a piece of the pie, you have to make it up somewhere else," Hunter adds. Facility fees "literally came out of giving the artists too much money."

Many believe promoter-owned stadiums included facility fees in the first place to make up for higher guarantees paid to acts.

It is doubtful arenas will drop their fees just because CCE has, as facility upkeep for a $200 million arena is much more expensive than an amphitheater, which costs more in the $20 million range to build.

"We reimburse over $5 million back into our facility every year, so in our case it really is a capital investment fee," Hunter says.

Also, most arenas today are primarily reserved seats, and even CCE is not yet ready to give up fees on higher-priced reserved seats where consumers have shown price is less of an issue.

"We don't see ourselves reducing service fees, as arenas are generally an all-reserved house," says Peter Luukko, president of Philadelphia-based facility management firm Comcast-Spectacor Ventures.
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Two Thumbs Up For Henry Rollins, Film Buff

Let it be known that Henry Rollins does not want to be the next Roger Ebert.

Rollins says that his new monthly Independent Film Channel TV series, "Henry's Film Corner," which debuts at midnight ET/9 p.m. PT Dec. 4, was made on the premise that "everybody's a critic." The half-hour show, which IPC has initially picked up for 10 episodes, will air the first Saturday of every month (Tuned In: The Tube, Billboard, Nov. 27).

"Henry's Film Corner" will feature Rollins reviewing films and interviewing guests. There is also a regular segment called "Typecast" in which working professionals critique how their jobs are portrayed in the movies. In the premiere episode, real firefighters discuss "Ladder 49."

Rollins says that Swift River Productions pitched the show to him and his manager about two years ago. Rollins, expressing his opinion with trademark Snuness, adds that what appealed to him about the show was that there are no restrictions on what movies he chooses to discuss. According to Rollis, "I want to talk to a director about how he directed a scene a certain way, and IPC fans like to see something like that. They'll appreciate a weird Johnny Depp film over 'I Know What You Did Last Summer.' Someone like Jay Leno would never have David Fincher on his show. But Rollins would, and did. Fincher, the director of such films as "Seven" and "Panic Room," sat down with him for a rare TV interview in the premiere episode. David Lynch and Oliver Stone are also on his interview list. Rollins has also been working on two movies due in 2005: the horror flick "Feast" (which will be the subject of Bravo's new "Project Greenlight" season) and the romantic comedy/drama "The Abs." His company, 2.13.61, will release a new Rollins concert film DVD, "Shock and Awe," on Feb. 15, 2005.

In Brief: As expected, the surviving members of TLC (Tionne "TBoz" Watkins and Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas) have inked a deal with Fox Television Studios to do a reality series on UPN sometime next year.

Bow Wow has signed another development deal with the WB network to star in a TV series that is expected to be a comedy. A 2002 comedy pilot Bow Wow made with WB has never aired.

Varese Sarabande Records will release the score soundtrack to Fox series "24" on Dec. 7. The show's composer, Sean Callery, who spoke on a Nov. 17 panel at the Hollywood Reporter Film & TV Music Conference, said that composers can have creative control in making these soundtracks but should expect to cover some of their own expenses.

On Dec. 4, the Great American Country channel premiers its new concert series, "Country on the Gulf." Performers on the show's first season will include Mark Chesnutt, Lee Ann Womack and LeAnn Rimes.
HERE'S WHAT THE INDUSTRY HAS TO SAY ABOUT THE NEW BILLBOARD RADIO MONITOR

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- Dave Reynolds
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**U2’s ‘Bomb’ Anything But**

U2 hammers its biggest Nielsen SoundScan week, as “How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb” squares 840,000 copies for an easy bow at No. 1 on The Billboard 200, marking the band’s sixth chart-topping set.

Yet even as fireworks continue in the top 10, November’s troubling trend lingers. The new hits deliver strong numbers, but overall album sales lag.

Not only does “Bomb” almost double U2’s previous best SoundScan week, it also ranks as the 17th largest debut week since SoundScan opened its doors.

The accomplishment is worthy considering the band’s vintage. Of the 13 acts that have managed larger first-week sales (three did it twice) only the Beatles have a longer discography than U2. U2 first saw U.S. chart ink in 1981, while the Beatles’ invasion—as most music fans know—happened in 1964.

Next to these two, the artist with the longest chart history among SoundScan’s 20 best opening sums is Garth Brooks.

Brooks, who first charted in 1989, owns the eighth and 12th largest starts with “Double Live” (1.1 million in 1995) and “Sevens” (897,000 in 1997), respectively. The Beatles’ “Anthology 1” started with 855,000 in 1995, in the wake of ABC’s three-part Fab Four documentary, “Anthology.”

![Image of Billboard chart](image.jpg)

Perhaps you were aware that U2 had a new album out? Lead track “Vertigo” has been hard to escape on network and cable TV since early October as the soundtrack of Apple Computer’s iPod commercials, it was even used during the opening scene in an episode of popular CBS series “CSI: Crime Scene Investigation.”

“Vertigo” was No. 1 for four weeks on the Modern Rock chart. Sales of that song’s download registered 37,000 for the tracking week ending Oct. 3, the largest single-week sum by any title since Billboard added the Hot Digital Tracks chart in July 2003.

U2’s vigorous promotional activities carried on through the album’s Nov. 21 release, including a “Saturday Night Live” appearance and a Nov. 20 video shoot on the streets of New York that culminated in an outdoor concert, events that drew widespread media attention.

**99 PROBLEMS BUT THE HITS AIN’T ONE:** With album sales beating those of the prior year by more than 7% for the first eight months of 2004 and the likes of Eminem, U2, Shania Twain, Toby Keith, Clay Aiken and Gwen Stefani scheduled to hit stores in November, things looked rosier, right?

(Continued on page 64)
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<td>A Hangover You Don’t Deserve</td>
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<td>Gavin Degraw</td>
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<td>Charmed - Stripped</td>
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<td>Franz Ferdinand</td>
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<td>Franz Ferdinand</td>
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<td>Jesse McCartney</td>
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<td>Beautiful Soul</td>
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<td>EMI/REPRIEVE (92609)</td>
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<td>Casting Crowns</td>
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<td>Papa Roach</td>
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<td>Getting Away With Murder</td>
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<td>Lonestar</td>
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<td>Let’s Be Us Again</td>
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<td>Lil Wayne</td>
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<td>Tobymac</td>
<td>SONY MUSIC (92654)</td>
<td>Welcome To Diverse City</td>
<td>11.98 CD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dean Martin</td>
<td>CAPITOL (92487)</td>
<td>Dino: The Essential Dean Martin</td>
<td>28.98 CD</td>
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<td>Kidz Bop Kids</td>
<td>SONY MUSIC (92654)</td>
<td>Kidz Bop 28</td>
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<td>Maroon 5</td>
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<td>22.98 Acoustic (EP)</td>
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<td>Hoobastank</td>
<td>UNIVERSAL SIRE (93983)</td>
<td>The Reason</td>
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<td>Hilary Duff</td>
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<td>Metamorphosis</td>
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<td>The Used</td>
<td>SONY MUSIC (92654)</td>
<td>In Love And Death</td>
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<td>Mos Def</td>
<td>SONY MUSIC (92654)</td>
<td>The New Danger</td>
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<td>Soundtrack</td>
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<td>Spider-Man 2</td>
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<td>Newsboys</td>
<td>SONY MUSIC (92654)</td>
<td>Debut</td>
<td>9.98 CD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beautifully Human: Words And Sounds Vol. 2</td>
<td>SONY MUSIC (92654)</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Over The Counter

Continued from page 61

Yet the tide has turned ugly, as even with U2’s winning week and 19 albums listing 100,000 or in the crucial Thanksgiving period, sales lag those of the same frame 2003 for an 11th straight week.

That trend is particularly beguiling in light of the week’s very robust top 10. Those titles all up to 3.6 million units, the largest top 10 volume since 2001 and 68% larger than the top 10 we had during Thanksgiving 2003, when Jay-Z’s “The Black Album” was No. 1 with 260,000.

Further, this is the first time in the Nielsen SoundScan era that seven albums sold 250,000 or more in one week during a month other than December. But, even though volume on The Billboard 200 is 6.2% ahead of that from the same year a year ago, overall album sales are down by 5%.

The fourth quarter slide has some pundits thinking that the quirk of the calendar that yields a 53rd week for the 2004 tracking period might be the only factor to keep album sales ahead of last year’s volume.

STAR POWER: The Top Heatseekers chart looks like a page from TV Guide, as Oprah Winfrey guest Robert Downey Jr. bows at No. 1, while Marlo Thomas and Kevin Spacey’s “Beyond the Sea” soundtrack enter at Nos. 23 and 37, respectively.

Although famous in their acting careers, all three qualify for the developing-artist list, which is open to any act that has charted in the top half of The Billboard 200.

SNAPSHOTs: Gwen Stefani bows at No. 7 on The Billboard 200 with her new album “The Sweet Life,” which sold 47,000 copies. She also turns in a solid performance on the upcoming movie “The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie”...
### Top Holiday Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1047</td>
<td>Clay Aiken</td>
<td>Merry Christmas With Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1050</td>
<td>Jessica Simpson</td>
<td>Joy to the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1053</td>
<td>Mannheim Steamroller</td>
<td>Christmas Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1055</td>
<td>Bebe' Winans</td>
<td>Dear Santa Clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1057</td>
<td>Trans-Siberian Orchestra</td>
<td>The Lost Christmas Eve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Greatest Gainer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1060</td>
<td>Snoop Dogg</td>
<td>Christmas in Dixie</td>
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</table>

### Top Heatseekers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1063</td>
<td>Robert Downey Jr.</td>
<td>The Futurist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1064</td>
<td>Crossfade</td>
<td>Christmas in Dixie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top Independent Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1067</td>
<td>Lil Jon &amp; The East Side Boyz</td>
<td>Cuteness Overload</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

All Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa releases, which usually start between November 1 and December 31, are eligible for inclusion in Top Holiday Albums. The Top Heatseekers chart is for new and emerging artists. The Top Independent Albums chart is for new and emerging independent artists. Artists and albums are ranked based on sales data provided by Nielsen SoundScan. Nielsen SoundScan collects sales data from over 100 retail outlets, including record stores, mass merchants, and online retailers. The charts are updated weekly and reflect sales measurements from the previous week. All sales data is rounded to the nearest dollar. © 2004, Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

www.billboard.com • www.billboard.biz
### Billboard Top Jazz Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Ending</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Chali 2na</td>
<td>Ice Cream For Cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Lalah Hathaway</td>
<td>Daydream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Robert Glasper</td>
<td>Black Radio 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Joe Sample</td>
<td>The Year Of Col Porter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Al Jarreau</td>
<td>Christmas Time Is Here &amp; Accomplice The Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Billboard Top Classical Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Ending</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Andrea Bocelli</td>
<td>One Night In Central Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Josh Groban</td>
<td>Closer</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Sarah Brightman</td>
<td>Live From Las Vegas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Andrea Bocelli</td>
<td>My Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Josh Groban</td>
<td>In Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Andrea Bocelli</td>
<td>Pure Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Sarah Brightman</td>
<td>Magic</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Yo-Yo Ma</td>
<td>Sinfonia, Quintet For Strings &amp; Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Andrea Bocelli</td>
<td>At The Movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Amici Forever</td>
<td>20th Century Classics Volume 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>The Irish Tenors</td>
<td>Heritage</td>
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### Billboard Top Contemporary Jazz

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Ending</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>KENNY G</td>
<td>At Last... The Dells Album</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Norah Jones</td>
<td>Come Away With Me (Live At The West Coast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Will Downing</td>
<td>Christmas, Love And You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Jamie Cullum</td>
<td>Twentysomething</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Chris Botti</td>
<td>A Thousand Kisses Deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Kenny G</td>
<td>Ultimate Kenny G (CD/DVD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Boney James</td>
<td>Pure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Norman Brown</td>
<td>wanna heal your heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Hot Since 82</td>
<td>Forever, For Always, For Luther</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Norah Jones</td>
<td>Come As You Are</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>Carys Tisdale</td>
<td>Hang Time</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Ingrid Jensen</td>
<td>Adventures In The Black Silence</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Greg Chaisson</td>
<td>Midnight Moon (DIYF)</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Smooth Jazz VNUKA 95.5 CD Sampler Volume XII</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>A Jazzy Little Christmas</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Playboy Jazz: In A Smooth Groove</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Dave Koz</td>
<td>Saxotonic</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Medeski Martin &amp; Wood</td>
<td>End Of The World (Last Case)</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Fourplay</td>
<td>Journey</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Everette Harp</td>
<td>All For You</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>George Benson</td>
<td>Irreplaceable</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Smooth Jazz KKS 157.1 Sampler For AIDS Relief Volume Fifteen</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Marvin, Teddy &amp; Luther: A Smooth Urban Jazz Love Letter</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Ronny Jordan</td>
<td>After E</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Regina Belle</td>
<td>Lazy Afternoon</td>
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### Billboard Top New Age Albums

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<th>Week Ending</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER</td>
<td>Christmas Celebrations</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>A Windham Hill Christmas: I'll Be Home For Christmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>GEORGE WINSTON</td>
<td>Montana - A Love Story</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Jim Brickman</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Vangelis</td>
<td>Alexander (Soundtrack)</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Ultimate Yanni</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Westwind Ensemble</td>
<td>New Age Christmas</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER/C.W. McCALL</td>
<td>American Spirit</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Yanni</td>
<td>Euphonia</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Danny Wright</td>
<td>A Christmas Blessing</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>The Healing Garden Collection</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER</td>
<td>Romantic Melodies</td>
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<td>December 11</td>
<td>STEVEN ANDERSON</td>
<td>100 Church Classics</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER</td>
<td>Halloween: Moost Mixter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>AMETHYSTUM</td>
<td>Evermind</td>
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</table>
With 70% of the Adult Contemporary stations on our panel now playing wall-to-wall holiday songs and the other 30% sprinkling in Christmas tunes here and there, the AC chart is taking on a festive glow.

The all-holiday programming position became a popular alternative for stations at the beginning of the decade and really took hold in 2001 as stations found the music to be a soothing respite for listeners who were still emotionally fragile from the events of Sept. 11.

Because of the now annual Christmas infiltration, a holiday song has made its way to the top of the AC list for five consecutive years, as "Believe" by Josh Groban flies 1-9 in its third week on the chart.

Mirroring the Billboard album chart policy, only holiday titles released for the first time in the current season are eligible to appear on the radio charts. "Believe" is Groban's fourth No. 1 at AC and his second holiday-themed chart-topper in three years, following "O Holy Night" in 2002. "Believe," which is featured on the "The Polar Express," makes the biggest climb to No. 1 on the AC chart in the Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems era.

The prior mark belonged to the first No. 1 holiday track that decade, NewSong's "The Christmas Shoes," which jumped 10-1 during the 2000 season.

Besides "Shoes" and Groban's pair of No. 1s, the other two holiday songs to top the AC chart in the 2000s were by Jim Brickman. His holiday rerecording of "Simple Things" (with Rebecca Lynn Howard) hit No. 1 in 2001, and "Sending You a Little Christmas" (with Christy Starling) went to No. 1 a year ago.

By climbing to No. 1 in three weeks, "Believe" matches the record ascent for the chart last accomplished by "O Holy Night" and "The Christmas Shoes." The only non-holiday track to climb that fast on the AC list was Bob Carlisle's "Butterfly Kisses" from 1997, which was also heavy on sentimentality.

**HOMECOMING QUEEN**

Crossover star LeAnn Rimes returns to prominence in the format that launched her career with the 1996 phenomenon "Blue," as "Nothin' Bout Love Makes Sense" becomes her first top 10 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks in more than four years.

Although Rimes has remained commercially consistent even without a major country hit since "I Need You" rose to No. 8 in the issue dated Oct. 21, 2000, most of her significant airplay chart feats during that frame were achieved at top 40 and AC radio.

"Sense" is Rimes' 10th top 10 on the country chart. She claimed her first No. 1 with "One Way Ticket (Because I Can)," which spent two weeks atop the list in December 1996.

Rimes' track is only one of 10 songs on the chart that is detecting at each of the 121 stations used for chart tabulation. How this apparent country format consensus will play for Rimes in the coming weeks remains to be seen, especially considering the format's long-held propensity for supporting programming of its artists.

Now, backed by the delivery of a significant country hit, Rimes—who recently expressed her renewed commitment to the format—should be able to maintain a relationship between the artist and the format's programmers.

**DOWN PAYMENT**

50 Cent switches Hot Shot holdings on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks with the No. 38 debut of "Disco Inferno," the first single from "The Valentine's Day Massacre" album, due in stores Feb. 15, 2005.

In the same vein as his biggest hit in "Da Club," the Dr. Dre-produced track is the highest entry for the G-Unit ringleader at R&B/hip-hop. "Disco" is the eighth title this year to start its run in the top half of the chart, with only three tracks posting a better entry.

Linkin Park joins a short-list of rock acts to cross to the R&B/hip-hop charts. Lenny Kravitz charted earlier this year with "Storm," also featuring Jay-Z.

An additional rock act to chart this week is O2L, featuring Marques Houston and Dallas Austin. "Ready" is the duo's third entry on the R&B/hip-hop chart, following "Ready" and "I'm Ready" in 2003.
Finalists
Continued from page 7

“The Diary of Alicia Keys” (J) also earns the R&B songwriter a finalist spot in the female artist, female R&B/hip-hop artist, song of the year, and songwriter of the year categories.

Other top finalists include rock/pop artist Maroon 5 with nine and hip-hop duo OutKast and rap newcomer Kanye West with seven each.

Usher, Ne-Yo, Grand Day and Gwen Stefani are among the featured performers scheduled for the Dec. 8 ceremony. Hosted by Ryan Seacrest, the two-hour awards show celebrates its 55th anniversary this year with a live Fox broadcast at 8 p.m. ET. Among the presenters will be Britney Spears, making a rare public appearance, as well as Chingy, Duran Duran, Macy Gray, Paris Hilton, Big & Rich and Hedkast and (see show preview section, pages 13-14).

Soul act Mono-y will be presented with the 2004 Billboard Century Award, the magazine’s highest honor for creative achievement (see story, page 15). Destiny’s Child will receive the artist achievement award.

Following are finalists for awards scheduled to be presented on the show:

**BMA Awards Reflect Fans’ Favorites**

Recipient of the Billboard Music Awards are truly chosen by the fans.

Finalists and winners are pulled from the magazine’s Year in Music spotlight, which documents the overall performance of acts on the weekly Billboard charts from December 2003 through November 2004. The week-end current and radio information compiled by Nielsen SoundScan and radio information compiled by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems.

“Every time someone listens to the radio, downloads a song or buys an album, they are casting a vote (for the BMA),” says show producer Paul Flattery. “Everybody votes on our awards. Our awards are based on hard empirical and statistical data.”

Additionally, producer Michael Levitt notes, the artists and managers also understand the significance of these awards and generate a lot of buzz. Where others are award shows out there that perhaps tweak or modify results in an effort to get the biggest names. When it comes to Billboard, that stands up there with the Grammys as an award show that is highly credible. They know that the charts don’t lie.

Don’t Want You Back),” Eamon; “I Believe,” Fantasia.

Hot 100 single of the year: “If I Ain’t Got You,” Alicia Keys; “This Love,” Maroon 5; “Burn,” Usher; “Yeah!” Usher featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris.

Mainstream top 40 artist of the year: Maroon 5, OutKast, Britney Spears, Usher.


Modern rock artist of the year: Incubus, Jet, Linkin Park, Three Days Grace.


New female artist of the year: Ciara, JoJo, Ashlee Simpson, Gretchen Wilson.

New male artist of the year: J. Kwon, Ruben Studdard, Kanye West, Mario winans.

Hot 100 artist of the year: Alicia Keys, Maroon 5, OutKast, Usher.

Hot 100 songwriter of the year: R. Kelly, Alicia Keys, Lil Jon, Kanye West.

Hot 100 single sales of the year: Solitaire/The Way,” Clay Aiken; Dreams,” Dina D’Argo; “F**k It (I Don’t Want You Back),” Eamon; “I Believe,” Fantasia.

Hot 100 artist of the year: Alicia Keys, Beyoncé, Britney Spears, Norah Jones.

Male artist of the year: Toby Keith, Usher, Twista, Kanye West.

Female artist of the year: Alicia Keys, Beyoncé, Britney Spears, Norah Jones.

Star in the year: 50 Cent, Lil Jon, Maroon 5, OutKast.

**Snocap**

Continued from page 8

with periodic voice-overs identifying them as trial downloads, ad-supported models and downloads that expire after a certain amount of time.

Nothing is settled. Label sources say that it is one of several reasons why start-up music services figure to survive in the long term if it can find a way to escape the P2P space, rather than existing file-sharing networks that now traffic in free, unauthorized repertoire.

**Challenges Ahead**

Ongoing uncertainty around legitimate P2P is not stopping a growing number of players from targeting the new market.

Snocap confirms that it is working with Marlin, the new legitimate P2P offering in development from former Grokster boss Wayne Rosso.

Other start-ups include Peer Impact, whose parent, Sangesa Sango, NY, based in the Media Light World; announced content licensing deals with Sony BMG, UMG and Warner Music Group just before Thanksgiving (billboard.biz, Nov. 24).

But some analysts question just how effective the sales pitch of a legitimate P2P network will be with consumers. Industry watchers say that recent downloads have been on the rise.

“On the road, there is a challenge for such new P2P services to effectively brand themselves when going head to head with better financed download sellers like Apple Computer.”

This is why Snocap wants to start out finding out what the folks using the P2P networks were all about free, or if they were all about the ability to search, discover and find music in a way that was not being presented to them—a legitimate music industry “partner,” Gardner researcher analyst Mike McGuire says.

Moving forward, legit P2P technology may end up serving primarily as a cost-effective back-end solution for retailers rather than a marketable consumer feature.

“The consumer is not going to know the difference between a legitimate P2P service and other services, with one possible exception—the performance,” says Phil Leigh, president of research firm inside Digital, “Peer-to-peer allows for potentially faster, more efficient delivery of content.”

That could be important as retailers start selling bigger media files, including photos and other video content, in addition to music.

But in the short run, labels and P2P operators are focused on basic licensing agreements for P2P distribution solutions.

Legit P2P services that do enter the market in 2005 will try to at least match the sampling rights that download retailers like iTunes and Napster enjoy. Under existing standard licenses, consumers can listen to free song clips before they buy. The clips are typically limited to 30 seconds.

“The types of deals P2P services are able to negotiate with the labels are going to be a key to whether they are successful,” Leigh says.

Label sources say advanced sampling features that go beyond short clips—either on a downloading or streaming basis—trigger a host of licensing and payment issues for copyright owners that are not yet resolved.

Look for some new services using P2P technology to compensate by aggressively employing inventive programs that reward customers with download credits for referring other consumers to new music.

World Media: Peer Impact is touting it “pays to share” on the home page of its service. World would not comment about specifics of what that will mean to consumers. The service is scheduled to launch in first-quarter 2005.

**Kazaa**

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the Kazaa system as currently configured makes user information available. The respondents have chosen not to record or act upon such information.

If it is determined that user information is not available, the expert will be asked whether it is possible to reconfigure the application to enable the company to determine whether the respondents could record the information.

Finally, the experts will be asked if it would be possible to include an appropriate filter for the respondents to prevent continued infringing use.

The labels are also trying to establish who really owns and controls Kazaa. Sharman—formed in the South Pacific no-tax haven of Vanuatu where the secrecy of private companies is sacred—has refused to reveal its ownership. Bannon said in court that the evidence infers Alt-net’s Bermeister—not Sharman’s acts, work with a manager and an attorney; therefore, they are not as far below the radar” as session players. Sidersen usually don’t have managers and may not know they are owed money or remember sessions they played on years ago.

McGettrick uses a mixed bag of tools to identify players who played in a recording session—old union contracts, recording studio marginalia, liner notes, discographies and Web sites like the All Music Guide that often list sidemen and background singers.

A quick look at part of the fund’s website shows that the type of input McGlackton’s job is. In the Japanese rental-royalties section, for example, there are album listings for two best-selling Nat “King” Cole compilations spanning decades of his work as a jazz trio leader and as a pop balladeer backed by full orchestras.

The listings show 150 sidemen, background singers and music players whom the fund has identified and approved. Yet there are more than 40 for whom there is no contact information, including the estate of the late arranger Nelson Riddle.

Another top CD rental in Japan is “The Best of Van,” which draws from more than 30 years of Van Morrisons’ recordings. The compilation lists 99 nonfeatured artists. Yet the fund has been able to contact only 31 of them.

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A massive promotional campaign next year will alert fans to the changes at CCE amphitheaters, which include allowing fans to bring blankets—and perhaps even coolers. Consumers are demanding such perks, Rapino adds, as the cost of a night at a concert has gone up. Rather than the fan experience deteriorating over the last few years, Rapino thinks the market is more about the price/value proposition. With the rising price of entertainment, the consumer starts demanding a higher level of service.

BIG INVENTORY, LITTLE SERVICE

Executives are also looking for answers to the customer service question at retail. A typical record store has only a few thousand titles, but a good big-box retail site in the United States, with a breadth of product second only to bookstores. While average record stores can take in 20,000-30,000 titles, superstores, even those in the multimedia category, more than double that, often carrying as many as 70,000 music SKUs. Additionally, today’s savvy consumers—thanks to information via the Internet—expect retail clerks to not only be familiar with their store’s inventory but also have historical knowledge, even for out-of-print titles. While the music catalog is growing, requiring more expertise than ever, profitability at music retail has declined precipitously, making it harder to pay for such help.

I don’t see service improving in many record stores—because the music industry has become a loss leader and unfortunately there is not gross profit there to reward people,” says John Maire, president of 152-store Hastings Entertainment in Amarillo, Texas.

Mike Dreese, CEO of the 25-unit Newbury Comics in Brighton, Mass., says record store service is not as bad as label executives tend to think. “But it could be much improved in most circumstances,” Dreese adds. “It seems that the major chains are more interested in labor cost minimization than they are in providing the customer with a unique or memorable shopping experience.”

One way to gauge the quality of help is to look at the percentage of part-time staff vs. full-time employees. Dreese says the problem is, “you also get what you pay for,” he notes. With a high part-time turnover rate, few employees hang around long enough to develop the product knowledge needed to deliver quality customer service. While Newbury Comics tends to pay its sales help better than most chains, it wrestles with a different kind of service problem. The in-store music-buying demo skews older. Dreese says. In contrast, young and musically knowledgeable salespeople tend to be somewhat elitist about musical taste.

With industry sales trending toward big-box retailers and away from traditional record stores, service is even more of an issue. Big-box stores typically do not look for knowledgeable music staffers, but rather employees who have a general knowledge of many product lines, because their staff is often moved around to different parts of the store.

One of the things helping record stores improve service is the influx of listening-post kiosks that often contain product information as well. The store is solving some of the problems, Dreese says. “We now have mix-and-burn kiosks, and there are a lot more people using them as listening posts than there are actually selling something.”

Jim Urie, president of Universal Music & Video Distribution, says one possible path to better customer service is (Continued on page 73)
Mash-Ups

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According to Whalley, the label shipped between 750,000 and 1 million units in the first week of release. "It's what we thought the marketplace could bear."

The TECHNOLOGY SPAWNED Mash-Up Trend

BY KEITH CALLFORD and MICHAEL PAETTMANN

In 2002, groundbreaking bulletins like "Smells Like Boothy" (Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" and "Bleed to Live") and "A Stroke of Genius" (Christina Aguilera's "Genie in a Bottle" and the Strokes' "Hard to Explain") helped put mash-ups on the radar of many music fans. In fact, mash-ups became ubiquitous in the United Kingdom, where the term quickly became part of the pop lexicon.

It wasn't until a year later that the concept became part of the American mainstream. In 2003, hip-hop producer Danger Mouse created "The Grey Album," which interwove elements from the Beatles' "White Album" and Jay-Z's "The Black Album." As the recordings were not properly licensed, the mash-up was illegal. But it was one of the most downloaded recordings of the early file-sharing era.

Mash-ups became a global phenomenon as file sharing increased in popularity and editing software for computers became less expensive. This trend spawned mash-ups in increasing number of clubs, as well as bedroom DJs, experimented with mashing two songs together.

Other popular mash-ups were the call-and-response pop-including "I Wanna Dance With Numbers" (Whitney Houston's "I Wanna Dance With Somebody" and Kraftwerk's "Numbers") and "Whenever, Wherever in the Night Fever" (Alicia Keys' "Whenever, Wherever" and the Bee Gees "Night Fever").

Mash-ups have been clannestine endeavors, created without approval from copyright owners and record labels. This helps explain why most are released as bootlegs; CDs or made available online in peer-to-peer sites.

The video component, too, brought its share of rights wranglings. "It's not just about an 8.5% mechanical royalty rate," says Nicholas Firth, chairman of BMG Music Publishing Worldwide. "There is no set royalty rate for video [because that involves negotiated synch licenses]. That's what makes this a particularly big deal.

With no set royalty rate, Firth says that both sides had to come to an understanding. While Firth is unable to disclose exactly how he does the combined royalty rate for the CD/DVD package is higher than a standard CD. Justice and Big Jon confirmed this.

There has been a lot of mythology surrounding this bad-mouthing of the inability to license these hybrid products," Firth says. "This is a beautiful example to disprove that.

Mash-ups on "Collison Course" are "Dirt of Your Shoulder/Lying From You," "Big Pimpin'/Dinner Party," "Numbers/What a Fool," "Izzo/In the End" and "Points of Authority." Problems/One Step Close.

Shindda adds that it was cool to see his band's "usually more serious" music in a "more light-hearted and fun" atmosphere.

WHAT'S NEEDED IN THE END

The uninitiated, a mash-up intertwines two different songs, often placing the vocals of one track atop an instrumental section of another track (see story, this page).

For example, "Can't Get Blue Monday From My Head," features Kylie Minogue's vocals from her hit album "Can't Get You Out of My Head" married to the synthesized waves of New Order's "Blue Monday."

Sister Dannii Minogue's "Don't Wanna Lose This Groove" merged the vocals of the singer's "Don't Wanna Lose This Feeling" with the drum beats of Madonna's "Into the Groove."

Jay-Z, it should be noted, was no stranger to mash-ups. Earlier this year, DJ Reset's mash-up "Frontin'" on a digital mixtape was well reviewed. Fraser Williams featuring Jay-Z's "Frontin.

The artists and Interscope approved it.

And DJ-producer Danger Mouse's unlicensed "The Grey Album" — which featured vocals from Jay-Z's "Black Album" — slotted beats created using the Beatles' "White Album."—pushed mash-ups into the mainstream.

EMI, which owns the Beatles' cat, sold Danger Mouse a cease-and-desist order in February. While Jay-Z's Roc-a-Fella label did not take any action (Billboard.biz, March 8).

MTV's Calefornia credits the global popularity of mash-ups to a generation that knows no boundaries when it comes to music.

Today, there are so many kinds of "music," he says. "One kid will like rock, rap, hip-hop and electronic. So it's natural for them to take different sounding records and merge them together."

In this way, "The idea comes down to the depth of their [musical] libraries."

With the Jay-Z/Linkin Park collaboration, the mash-up became three-dimensional. "Fans are watching the artistic, CIUSealive music," he says.

BMG's Firth believes this type of collaboration is precisely what's needed to spark the industry. "With the ways they are, we need innovative products."

Zomba's Mela adds, contributing, "With this unprecedented Jay-Z/Linkin Park CD/DVD set, we are offering a solution. Technology, coupled with necessity, will result in labels and publishers working more in tandem. We are headed in a positive direction."

Customer Service

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ice lies in changing how stores are merchandised. "If I don't like the way stores are laid out," Urie says, "the layout needs to be rethought with today's consumer in mind."

Maybe that means getting away from genre-based layout and categorizing music by demographics—maybe creating something like an adult music category that might contain titles from such artists as Diana Krall, Andrea Bocelli and Rod Stewart, Urie explains.

A DIGITAL EDUCATION

Digital music services face a different kind of conundrum: online executives acknowledge that the way the online web of Internet distribution is relatively new to many consumers and technology issues can pose a snag.

As a result, the biggest challenge facing the industry is basic education.

"Companies have done a poor job of educating consumers about how they can use their products effectively," says Zack Zalon, president of Virgin Group's online music division, Virgin Digital.

Customer service issues in the digital realm tend to be centered on core technical issues: What's a subscription service? Where are downloads going on a computer after they are purchased? What happens if there is a hard drive crash?

Those issues are expected to be compounded by another subscription portability becomes a reality, and as Microsoft ramps up its efforts to diversify the digital music experience away from Apple's iTunes, and as a number of Windows Media-compatible music services and portable devices.

Unlike a physical retail environment, the digital world has no sales clerks to immediately attend to shop customers and ensure their needs are being met. Instead, users must proactively seek help online and over the phone. Virtually every digital music service offers a combination of e-mail support, call center service, FAQ pages and bulletin boards to troubleshoot consumer problems.

Virgin's Zalon acknowledges that the costs and staffing issues associated with customer service do not scale well in an online environment.

Nonetheless, Virgin is attempting to offer a more personalized touch in its approach to customer service with a real-time messaging feature, Ask the Expert. This service allows shoppers to e-mail a Virgin customer service agent who can quickly provide assistance and address technical problems.

Nagay COO Laura Goldberg says the most pressing challenge facing digital music services is finding ways to connect technical support situations into opportunities that engage consumers to build the music business.

She adds, "Virtually all retailers will tell you that customer service is a function they want to turn into a sales organization instead of just being a troubleshooting organization."

Top tip of the power of the Billboard archives: www.billboard.biz
Chris Blackwell has spent his 45-year entertainment career on the cutting edge of music and film.

Through his Island label, which was first based in Jamaica, Blackwell turned the world on to reggae with the jams of Bob Marley and signed U2, a band that had been rejected by every major label in England.

Such innovative acts as Cat Stevens, Steve Winwood, Tom Waits, King Sunny Ade, Melissa Etheridge and the Cranberries released acclaimed projects under Blackwell.

Six years ago, Blackwell extended his reach by establishing Palm Pictures, an audio and film company.

Palm has released a slew of inventive projects, including the CD/DVD package “1 Giant Leap,” a travelogue-style film that features music from 25 countries, and the documentary “Dig!,” a 2003 grand jury prize winner at the Sundance Film Festival that explores the relationship between the Brian Jonestown Massacre and the Dandy Warhols.

“Chris Blackwell has been an inspiration and a mentor to me from the very beginning of my career,” says Jimmy Iovine, chairman of Interscope Geffen A&M Records. “He was a great record producer and in founding Island Records pioneered the concept of the power and impact that a label could have on culture.”

On the eve of his latest venture—the inaugural Goldeneye Film Festival, to be held Dec. 8-13 in Oracabessa Bay, Jamaica—Blackwell spoke with Billboard about what he thinks should be driving the music business.

Q: How did you manage to have a hand in so many musical acts that turned into superstars?

A: It's mainly because most of the things I get involved with I really personally like. When I personally like it, I feel I can get more people to like it. It has nothing to do with airplay or radio or what exists at the moment; it's more about personal interests.

I work with a recording artist or band and develop the artist, and hopefully things come to fruition for all of us.

Q: What is the role of an independent record label in this era of consolidation?

A: All of the ideas pretty much come from independents, because they are by nature coming up with fresh ways of doing something. If they don't have that, they have no value, in a sense. They would sign the same acts that the majors would sign and treat them in the same ways. Fresh ideas seldom come from people who are already market leaders.

Q: Do you feel that the spirit of Island Records has been maintained since it was sold to a major?

A: I understand that it has to change. When it is privately owned, there is a different way of operating. You don't have the same constraints and you don't have the same quarterly pressures that you have at a major company. An independent really can work much more creatively in general.

Island is not the same company as what it was... I am personally very, very proud to know that it still exists.

Q: What do you think is the most interesting music being made right now?

A: It's world music. In my head, world music is music that is not sung in English. I'm very, very interested in music made out of India, out of Africa, out of all different parts of the world.

I'm hoping to be working with Michael Franti. He has had a few records out, and I think Island released his first record when he was part of Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy—he has made quite a few records under the name of Spearhead. I am very excited about him. He is very, very talented.
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