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A Global Response
Events, Recordings Aim To Raise Millions For Tsunami Victims
A Billboard and Billboard Radio Monitor staff report.

As the world continues to respond to the devastation in Southeast Asia following the Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunami, the global music community is coming together in an unprecedented outpouring of support for relief efforts.

(Continued on page 60)

Latin Biz Awaits Download Boom

BY LEILA COBO
Latin music fans who visit legal music download stores may experience a sense of déjà vu.

In these virtual music racks, Spanish-language tracks are almost an afterthought—scarce and often lumped under the world music category—as was the case with most major retailers as recently as 15 years ago.

(Continued on page 61)

Kenny Chesney’s Choice
Country Star Gets Personal At Caribbean Retreat

NASHVILLE—After more than a decade of hit records and rollicking touring, Kenny Chesney ascended to the top of the country format last November when he claimed the entertainer of the year prize at the Country Music Assn. Awards. Now he’s exercising his hard-won creative clout to take something of a musical left turn.

On Jan. 25, BNA Records will release “Be As You Are: Songs From an Old Blue Chair,” a singer/songwriter album that contains tunes Chesney wrote or co-wrote mostly at his Caribbean home. For him, this album is as personal as it is unintentional.

(Continued on page 27)

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

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Acts, Fans Demand Safety After Fatal Fire

BY MARCELO FERNANDEZ BITAR and LEILA COBO

BUENOS AIRES—Even as Argentina continues to mourn the 187 who died here in one of the deadliest nightclub fires in recent memory, local officials have snapped into action to establish new security measures and tighten laws.

Immediately following the Dec. 30 fire at club República Cromagnon, Buenos Aires Mayor Aníbal Ibarra closed all similar clubs and dance halls in the city for 15 days. He also announced that, for the foreseeable future, no live performances will be permitted in dance halls.

The first government casualty in the fire’s aftermath was local Secretary of Justice and Security Juan Carlos Lopez, who resigned two days after the fire. His replacement, Juan José Alvarez, was slated to present the mayor with a new security plan by Jan. 7. To that effect, government officials have been meeting with members of the Buenos Aires Chamber of Dancehall & Entertainment Entrepreneurs.

“This is a 9-11 situation for show business in Argentina,” concert promoter Daniel Grinbank says. “We must act fast and swiftly, with true responsibility. There is no economic consideration possible, and we should not even evaluate possible losses or greater costs. This has to be solved by everybody involved in the business.”

The República Cromagnon fire was sparked by flares thrown by fans—allegedly including a 10-year-old boy—during a concert by rock band Los Callejeros. The flares ignited the club’s ceiling and filled the crowded hall with smoke. In the pandemonium that followed, fans rushed for the doors and reportedly found the emergency exits blocked. Many of the victims were trampled to death or died as a result of smoke inhalation.

Club owner Omar Chabán has been jailed and charged with homicide.

According to reports, Chabán’s situation is aggravated by the one emergency exit having been locked. (Continued on page 48)
E.M.I. Group CFO Swings Back To Publishing Unit In Multi-Year Succession Plan

BY SUSAN BUTLER and EMMANUEL LEDRAN

E.M.I. Music Publishing will begin a three-year transition Feb. 1 as it grooming its next chairman/CEO. London-based Roger Faxon, E.M.I. Group's CFO, will become the new CEO April 1, 2006, when the two will share the CEO title. Faxon will become sole CEO April 1, 2007, while Bandier remains as full-time chairman until March 31, 2008.

After exiting the company, Bandier will remain under a consulting contract for an additional three years. During his more than 30 years in music publishing, Bandier has earned the respect of the industry as a creative contributor to the art of music.

Although Faxon's title implies he's a "numbers guy," Bandier tells Billboard, "He's more than that and has proven that in the past. He's managed creative businesses and dealt with creative people and [loves music]. He has a sensitivity to the creative process and to the creators." Bandier says the two will share ideas and responsibilities, reflecting his long-standing business philosophy within the company. "Roger and I have always talked about major decisions, what the strategy for the future is and what the planning is. I can't imagine that changing."

Given the challenges that digital music, new technology and copyright licensing and protection present the industry during the next few years, Faxon says they will be looking for new ways to optimize the business to "perform for our writers.

Bandier notes that as music publishers—who are not reliant upon manufacturing or distribution plants to sell music—they can be flexible in changing the direction of their business based on where opportunities lie. "Roger and I agree that the opportunities lie everywhere," Bandier says. "At the end of the day, music is an integral part of everything that the world does, whether it's digital or it's hard copies. Our strategies will be the same to exploit the music in our business, utilize our music as best as possible and maximize the money for our shareholders and our songwriters."

While the overall company strategy will remain the same, Faxon adds, the tactics—the specific ways one makes things happen, which are based on what is going on in the marketplace at any given moment—will be adjusted as necessary.

"Marty has always had an eye for the long-term future growth of the business," Faxon says. "You can see the proof of his ability to do that in the results in the company, which have been spectacular." An EMI spokeswoman says that the latest figures from 2004 indicate that the publishing unit had a 25.5% operating profit, the highest of any music publisher.

EMI Group chairman Eric Nicoli says the "smooth" succession plan "comes at the right time and is the right thing to do."

"Most companies deal with succession (Continued on page 59)

Download Blitz
Holiday Gifts Drive Record Sales

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—Digital music sales notch a third straight record-breaking week this issue, thanks to the ripple effect from a Christmas-inspired sales surge of MP3 players and download gift cards.

Digital track volume spiked another 1.6 million transactions for the week ending Jan. 2, making a seven-day total of 6.7 million downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The jump marks an all-time high for download sales in a single week, breaking the benchmark set seven days earlier, when 5.04 million tracks were sold for the week ending Dec. 26.

This marks the first time in the history of the Billboard Hot Digital Tracks chart that download sales have posted volume increases of more than 1 million transactions in successive weeks. As previously reported, week-over-week track sales rose by 1.1 million transactions to surpass the 5 million mark the week ending Dec. 26 (Billboard, Jan. 8).

The impact of gift card sales on the holiday growth spurt is particularly notable, label distribution executives say.

"A hot Christmas gift-giving item was the ability to give digital (Continued on page 48)

Audience Impressions Now Drive Hot Country Singles & Tracks Chart

Effective with this issue of Billboard, the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart will be based on audience impressions as tracked by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems.

Previously, the rankings were based on airplay detections, also provided by Nielsen BDS.

The change, which was announced in November, returns the country chart to the audience-based ranking system that was used from January 1990, when Billboard began using BDS information in its airplay charts, to December 1992, when the switch was made to total detections.

Other key radio charts, including Hot 100 Airplay, Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay and Billboard's four Latin radio charts, already are based on audience impressions.

"An audience-based chart represents a more precise reading of both programmers' decisions and the number of people who actually hear a song," says Geoff Mayfield, director of charts for Billboard.

Wade Jessen, country charts manager for Billboard, adds, "Historically, audience-based charts have slightly different than charts ranked by detections. We will work in tandem with our partners at Nielsen BDS to properly illuminate the progression of tracks in this new environment to promotion executives, radio programmers and our readers at large."

Under the new methodology, total audience impressions are determined by cross-referencing exact times of airplay with Arbitron listener data for those times, based on Arbitron's metro plus-average quarter-hour total persons for the specific station.

Most other chart elements and rules remain unchanged. Airpower honors go to songs appearing in the top 20 on both the BDS airplay and audience charts for the first time with increases in both detections and audience.

Bullet policy is modified to give consideration to titles that increase in detections but decline in audience. Such titles will receive bullets only in cases where the audience erosion does not exceed 3% from the prior period.

The return to normal, post-holiday programming, coupled with the conversion from detections to audience impressions, causes some minor chart anomalies.

An abundance of bullets this week, though such a situation is not unusual for the first week of January. While some odd chart moves (songs slipping a few spots while maintaining bullets) are caused by the "weeks-on" chart column reflecting weeks accumulated from Billboard's detection-based chart. Some songs that previously charted on the audience list show up as debuts this week. (Details, see page 56).

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Artie Shaw, Swing Royalty And Hitmaker, Dead At 94

BY BILL HOLLAND

Artie Shaw, the adventurous, swing-era clarinetist/bandleader, died Dec. 30 at his home in Thousand Oaks, Calif. He was 94.

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Shaw’s popularity rivaled and sometimes surpassed that of such other swing-era giants as Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey. (For an appreciation of Shaw, see page 10.)

But Shaw’s lifelong conviction that art should trump commercial popularity led him to walk away from his career in several instances. In 1954, he put down the clarinet for good, although he later returned to the music scene as a bandleader.

“I was a compulsive perfectionist,” he once explained to a reporter, “and in the world we live in, the compulsive perfectionists finish last.”

By some accounts, Shaw sold more than 100 million records during his multifaceted career as performer, composer and arranger.

Born Arthur Jacob Arshawsky, Shaw began playing professionally at 15. He had his first 1 million seller in 1933, at the age of 25 with a bouncy, swing makeover of Cole Porter’s usually languid “Begin the Beguine.”

Shaw’s theme song, the minor-mode, noir waft “Nightmare,” also sold 1 million copies, as did five other hits. His cool, breezy arrangement of “Moonglow” helped make that tune a standard.

He bristled at the notion that jazz should be just dance fodder and referred to dance-crazed jitterbuggers as “morons.” Even an early 1935 success, “Interlude in B-Flat,” matched his hot clarinet with a string quartet. Later, he incorporated modernist classical and Latin influences into his work.

Shaw fought against racial discrimination and was the first white bandleader to feature a black vocalist, the young Billie Holiday.

At the height of his career, fans adored Shaw and hisclownish antics and referred to him as “King of Swing”—Shaw or fellow clarinetist/bandleader Goodman. Shaw’s Hollywood-handsome looks certainly didn’t hurt, and his eight marriages, including one to Rita Hayworth and Ava Gardner, among others, kept the Tinseltown gossip columnists busy for decades.

During his various absences from the music scene, Shaw farmed and wrote a number of well-received books.

In the early 1950s, Shaw re-formed his popular small group, the Gramercy Five, and launched several progressive units.

In the early ’80s, he occasionally conducted a reconstituted band, but true to his word, Shaw never played his clarinet onstage again.

Throughout the ’30s and ’40s, Shaw recorded for Bluebird and Victor, early RCA imprints that are now BMG heritage labels. He later recorded for Decca, Clef and Verve, now all in the Universal Music Group vault.

Audio Trade Group Debuts

META Will Announce Formation At CES; Quality A Concern

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

Several of the professional recording industry’s top engineers and producers have teamed to create the Music Engineering & Technology Alliance. The group will announce its formation Jan. 8 at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

META comprises engineer/producers Al Schmitt, Phil Ramone, George Massenburg, Elliot Scheiner, Chuck Ainley, Ed Cherney and Pat Phillips, along with Rony Kaplan, formerly of Digital Theater Systems, who serves as president, and acting CEO Bill Neighbors, who has held positions at such companies as AES and Worldrom.

META’s mission is multifaceted.

The group aims to evaluate and certify professional and consumer audio technologies, as well as recording and playback equipment. Its members speak of a desire to collectively perform research and development, make technical recommendations, educate and mentor aspiring recordists and encourage compatibility and communication among competing manufacturers.

Members have met informally for years at such trade events as the Audio Engineering Society Convention. Several were members of the Music Producers’ Guild of the Americas. Established in 1997 to address multiple issues, the MPG later became part of the Audio Engineering Wing of the Recording Academy, as it is known today.

META, Filippeti says, “is about a lot of things, but it’s an organization we’ve been kicking around for several years. Every once in a while a bunch of us would get together and talk about the state of the music industry and lament the fact that everybody’s downloading MP3s. We sort of all went into the studio trying to get things to sound right, and it comes to a MP3 that’s being played on an iPod or on computer speakers.

Enginers are concerned about the lack of standardization of software systems and in the archiving of master recordings, Filippeti adds. They also note the ongoing development of ever-cheaper digital recording equipment, which has blurred the distinction between professional and “prosumer” gear and, they say, resulted in inferior products and recordings.

Further, the diversity of playback

(Continued on page 59)
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opinion

Bandleader Broke The Rules, Made Music Swing

Artie Shaw: No Regrets

By Tamara Conniff

Six months ago, I had the pleasure of spending a sunny California afternoon with Artie Shaw. I had tracked him down to talk about my late dad, Ray Conniff. He played trombone and arranged for three of Shaw’s bands. I was thirving for some sort of swing into the swing era, into Shaw’s world and who my dad was as a young man. I think somehow I wanted to touch my dad through Shaw. I was nervous—I somehow seemed daunting to sit down with the greatest clarinet players of all time. Shaw was the rock star of his day. He married and dated the most glamorous women (including Liza Minnelli, Edie Adams, Ava Gardner and Evelyn Keyes) and had groupies following him around the country.

Shaw sat in his living room, sun on his face, a view of his swimming pool and garden. This great man, who spoke with extreme spiritual clarity, encaptured me. “I look back at my life; that’s all I’ve got to do now,” Shaw said. “I look back at my life, and I have no regrets. I can’t think of anything I did that I’m sorry about. It was what I had to do then. Would I do that now? No. I’m no longer that guy. But what I did was what I wanted to do.”

I was endlessly curious about why Shaw hung up his clarinet in 1984 to pursue his dream of being a writer. “You can’t do both,” Shaw said. “Writing is more scope. It’s broader. For me, that’s the major medium. Music can be fine, but I was not aspiring to be that. No, I just wanted to do what I wanted to do with music when I quit.”

“Did you always want to be a writer?” I asked.

Shaw nodded. “Yes, from the beginning. But I knew enough to know I couldn’t support myself. I had a talent for music, and the better I got, the more money I made, and the more I got tangled up in it. Life took over, until I finally had enough guts to say, ‘I’m through with it.’ People say, ‘Why did you quit? Why did you quit?’ You can’t explain that.”

Shaw had no regrets about retiring from music, mainly because he said he created one of the best big bands to ever grace the stage. My father was lucky enough to be a part of that particular Shaw incarnation, which also featured Billy Butterfield (and later Hot Lips Page) on trombone, Johnny Garies on piano and George Auld on tenor sax. I grew up hearing stories about this band. My father and I would sit for hours listening to cuts, admiring the musicianship, the excellence and spirit of all those great players working together.

“There is a very curious thing about playing swing,” Shaw explained. “One night, we had a night in a place, it had a low ceiling, and it was a big band with strings. And we hit a groove. It happened. It just suddenly took over. Swing is when your band is doing what it does unconsciously.”

My dad once described that same night to me. “It was just perfect,” he said. “The band just starts to swing. It’s like there’s something in the air, and we’re all tuned in together. It’s so exciting, it’s so electric, that the audience catches on and they start dancing.”

In response to the passing of Artie Shaw (Billboard, Dec. 11, 2004), It was hard not to love Artie. He had an ingratiating personality, a devilish charm, boundless energy and a complete disregard for general accounting principles.

He thrived in the early stages of the modern era of the music business, the ’60s and ’70s, when the folk singers emerged and when the customs were being formed and the rules of engagement were not too clear. He recognized early on that the musical tastes of our country—indeed, of the world—were changing, and he capitalized on it.

Artie had a real talent for recognizing talent and for attaching himself to people who could recognize talent. But rarely did he receive a fair share of the benefits of this talent. All too often he was rewarded with a modest bonus or raise in salary while the companies for which he worked made small fortunes.

He spoke in conspiratorial tones when none were required. A telephone call from him was always a breathless one, revealing a confidence you knew he had already disclosed to others or would immediately following your conversation. And many times the confidences were accurate, as he was a master at picking up the latest gossip.

As an industry he gave him no special recognition, no dinners in his honor, no hospital wards named after him. But it is undeniable that he made a substantial contribution.

David A. Braun

Los Angeles

Mogull Remembered

A memorial service for Mogull will be held at 5 p.m., Jan. 16 in Los Angeles at 818-8211-2515.

Opinion

Editors/Commentary/Letters
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Spears Gives KIIS ‘Mona Lisa’ Smile

Britney Spears surprised fans when she showed up at KIIS Los Angeles Dec. 30 to play a new song, “Mona Lisa.” She also told the top 40 station’s listeners that she will have a new album out this summer.

This marks a switch from the November 2004 letter on her Web site in which she extolled the virtues of domesticity and her desire to take time off to spend with new hubby Kevin Federline.

According to a Jive representative, “No album is scheduled at the moment,” but she added that “Britney is in the studio working on some material.” There are no plans to service “Mona Lisa” to radio.

Spears has been without a manager since parting ways with Larry Rudolph this past fall. Despite published reports, she has not hired Dan Dymtrow as her new manager, according to the representative. He has been part of her “team,” says the spokeswoman, and continues in the same capacity for Spears that he had before Rudolph’s departure.

The Game Looks Like Latest G-Unit Winner

BY GAIL MITCHELL

He started rapping less than four years ago, but the Game is already positioned to become one of 2005’s early breakout acts.

The 25-year-old’s status can be attributed to the year-long buzz surrounding his forthcoming Aftermath/G-Unit/Interscope album debut, “The Documentary.” Create! under the enviable stewardship of rap pioneer Dr. Dre, it comes out Jan. 18.

The album boasts the chart-climbing single “How We Do,” featuring 50 Cent. The track stands at No. 6 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart and at No. 11 on The Billboard Hot 100. Adding to the buzz is the Game’s pre-Aftermath album, “Untold Story,” on Get Low, which sits at No. 23 on Top Independent Albums. There’s also his profile-raising appearance on the recent TV campaign for Boost Mobile. “The Anthem,” co-starring two hip-hop heavyweights: Kanye West and Ludacris.

“The Game has a good buzz going. His two street singles, ‘Westside Story’ and ‘How We Do,’ have set him up to have a successful first week,” Saeed Crumpler says. The urban buyer for music store Rasputin’s in the Bay Area, projects that “The Documentary” will log somewhere between 200,000-300,000 units its first week.

“People are going to be shocked,” Crumpler adds, “We haven’t seen a new West Coast artist do the type of numbers I think Game will do in a long time.”

No one is more shocked at his prospects for success than the Game himself. Three years after signing with Dr. Dre’s Aftermath, the Compton, Calif., native (aka Jayceon Taylor) says he still has to “ground himself” when he gets in the studio with the legend’s mentor, teacher and boss.

As for the attendant buzz, the Game notes, “At the end of the day, I’m just a human being, living up to expectations I didn’t set myself. I’ve only been rapping a few years. That’s not a long way from poverty and struggle. I haven’t forgotten where I’ve been to get to this interview. Several times I saw myself quitting,” he continues. “I saw legends like Rakim and Ice Cube fall off the label, and here I am, the new kid. But I stayed humble and worked it out.”

HARD-KNOCK LIFE

Perhaps it’s fate that the Game is partnered with one of his major musical influences. The neophyte rapper’s hard-knock life mirrors that of two other successful Dr. Dre protégés: Eminem and 50 Cent.

Nicknamed by his late grandmother because he was game for anything, the rapper spent third through ninth grade in a foster home. Once he was living with his mother again, Game began running with his older, gang-member brother. A college basketball scholarship based on the 6’4” artist’s prowess

(Continued on page 46)
62nd Golden Globes Recognize Musicals

It's the season for major awards shows, and this year's Golden Globe Awards (presented by the Hollywood Foreign Press Assn.) have taken significant notice of music-oriented films.

The Warner Bros. Pictures musical "The Phantom of the Opera" landed three nominations: best motion picture (musical or comedy), best original song for "Learn to Be Lonely" and best actress in a motion picture (musical or comedy) for Emmy Rossum. "The show is a show," says of "Voices of the South." "It's a great musical tradition." Stateside Choir and Mississippi Choir are both nominated in the event category. The following are best song nominations in the music category:

Best original score, motion picture: Clint Eastwood, "Million Dollar Baby." Christian Bale, "The Aviator."

Best original song, motion picture: "The Prayer," by Michael Kamen and James Horner, from "The Passion of the Christ." "The Prayer" is also nominated for best original song. "The Prayer" is a song performed by Celine Dion and Andrea Bocelli, which was released in 1998. It was nominated for two Grammy Awards and won one for Best Pop Collaboration with Vocal.


Best performance by an actress in a motion picture: Uma Thurman, "Pulp Fiction." "The Pulp Fiction" is a 1994 American crime comedy-drama film directed and co-written by Quentin Tarantino. "The Pulp Fiction" is one of the most critically acclaimed films of the 1990s and is considered a cult classic.

Best performance by an actor in a television series: Tom Hanks, "The Best Damn Thing." "The Best Damn Thing" is a Canadian television series that aired from 1988 to 1990. "The Best Damn Thing" is a comedy-drama series that aired on the CBC television network in Canada. "The Best Damn Thing" is known for its satirical and irreverent portrayal of Canadian politics.

Best performance by an actress in a television series: Debra Messing, "Will & Grace." "Will & Grace" is an American sitcom that aired from 1998 to 2006. "Will & Grace" is a comedy series that aired on NBC from 1998 to 2006. "Will & Grace" is known for its portrayal of gay and lesbian characters.

62nd Golden Globe Nominees

- "Elektra," due Jan. 11 on Wind-up Records, features several new tracks, including Evanescence's "Breathe No More," Jet's "Hey Kid," Taking Back Sunday's "Your Own Disaster" and Alter Bridge's "Save Me.
- 20th Century Fox's action film "Elektra" opens Jan. 14 in U.S. theaters, and is the spinoff to the 2003 film "Daredevil," whose hit soundtrack was also on Wind-Up.

SOUNDTRACK ROUNDUP:


MTV Films/Paramount Pictures releases the high-school basketball drama "Coach Carter" Jan. 14. The movie stars Samuel L. Jackson and features Ashanti making her big-screen acting debut. The 15-song soundtrack to "Coach Carter" includes songs from artists such as "Baby Let Me Hold Your Hand" and "You Don't Know Me/Drawn in My Own Tears.

Music at Sundance: The Sundance Film Festival usually has a number of music-oriented events, and this year is no exception. The 2005 festival takes place Jan. 20-30 in Park City, Utah.

On Jan. 26 at the Kimball Art Center's Sundance Film Festival, Beverage will host a director/composer roundtable titled "Music & Film: The Creative Process." The panelists are composers Alexandre Desplat, George Clinton, Golden Globe-nominated filmmaker Michael Kent, Michael Bacon, Aaron Zigman, Ed Shearmur, Peter Goult, Walter Weroza and BT, and directors Kevin Bacon, Melissa Pinter, Richard Shepard, Jeff Fenco and Rusty Cundieff.

Music documentaries will include "New York Doll," about the late Arthur Kane, and "The Devil and Daniel Johnston." There will also be a slew of artists performing at showcases and parties. For Web information on the festival sundance.org/2005.

In Brief: MTV Films/Paramount Pictures has inked a development deal with The Soweto Gospel Choir. The film will be directed by Al Wash, who presented the Hopeville tour.

Soweto Choir Brings S. African Gospel To U.S.

Gospel music has always been fueled by great choirs, and though names like Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir and Mississippi Mass Choir are legendary, the United States is not the only country to produce such great musical traditions. Stateside audiences will soon become familiar with the considerable talents of the Soweto Gospel Choir.


The Soweto Gospel Choir was formed in 2002 by its musical director, David Mulovhedzi. "We ended up with 34 very good members with very good voices," he says. "The first tour was Australia and New Zealand in April 2003. The venue that stands out most in my mind is the Sydney Opera House. It was just wonderful." The choir's profile in its native land increased in November 2003 when Nelson Mandela launched a worldwide campaign to raise awareness of the impact of AIDS in Africa and invited the group to perform along with Bono, Queen, Peter Gabriel, Jimmy Cliff and Eurythmics. Mulovhedzi says the choir recorded its first album to have something to sell during the Australian/New Zealand tour. "We perform most of the songs from the very same CD, and it's selling well and it already has made its mark," he says of "Voices From Heaven," which originally came out in South Africa and Australia in 2003. "Blessed!" followed in 2004. "Our goal in recording is to reach out to the outside world." Mulovhedzi says the choir has also performed in Germany, Singapore and the United Kingdom. Mulovhedzi says touring North America has always been a goal.

"The whole choir is excited about performing in the States, because we are bringing our traditional gospel," he says. "We as Africans are here to thank God for all the wonderful things he does for us. We have got different ways of doing that, because we sing, we dance, drums, and there is dancing. When people come in the bank, they'll enjoy it, because there's a lot of action within in the music itself.

Mulovhedzi says South Africa's Ladysmith Black Mambazo has helped pave the way for his choir. "We respect them and love them a lot," he says. "They have opened doors for most of the chooral groups throughout the world." The Soweto Gospel Choir is using those open doors to help others. It recently launched its own charity in association with Nkosi's Haven, an AIDS care project named for Nkosi Johnson, an 11-year-old AIDS victim who addressed the United Nations international AIDS conference. When someone passed the choir's music to Shanachie GM Randall Gras, he was immediately impressed. "I listened and obviously heard the quality of the music. Then I saw that they had a 35-city tour outlined for the U.S.," Gras says of the IMG Artists-Booking outgoing. "Not only were the number of cities impressive, but so were the kind of places that they were performing for an artist who hadn't had an album out here yet." Shanachie already had experience with South African music, as the label has released many recordings, including those by Ladysmith Black Mambazo, in the United States. "I feel some of the same excitement that I did when we first released Ladysmith," Gras says.

The plan is to release "Voices From Heaven" next year. "It's not reinventing the wheel here in the beginning because, happily enough, there's a lot to work with," Gras says. The label is being promoted by Al Wash, who presented the Hopeville tour.

Gras sees a broad audience for the Soweto Gospel Choir. "The shows have great costumes and dance. A lot of people don't realize dance is a part of church services in many parts of Africa. Some people in America might see that and say, 'It's show business,' but no, it's their worship. There are many dimensions. It's not just people standing there singing. It's the whole pageantry of it and all the emotion and energy.

On the Road: In celebration of Black History Month, Yolanda Adams, Martha Munizzi, Juanita Bynum, Kelly Price, Raven and Sheila E. hit the road Feb. 1 on the Sisters in the Spirit tour. The 21-city concert series kicks off in Columbus, Ohio. The tour is being promoted by Al Wash, who presented the Hopeville tour.

Soweto Choir Brings S. African Gospel To U.S.
Yundi Li's Fortunes Rise With Hometown Boom

Yundi Li is a pianist whose star is definitely on the rise. His eloquent playing has won accolades around the world, including first prize at 2000's International Chopin Competition—the first time in 15 years that judges deemed any player worthy of a first prize.

People outside the world of classical music are also beginning to take note. Along with such athletic superheos as Lance Armstrong and Serena Williams, the 22-year-old Li was featured in Nike's "You're Faster Than You Think" ad campaign, which aired internationally during the 2004 Summer Olympics.

Unlike many other artists of his generation whose passions lie far outside mainstream culture, Li's popularity in his native China rivals that of any rock star, particularly in his hometown, the boomtown city of Shenzhen.

"Shenzhen is young," notes Li, who says that his hometown has grown from nothing into a major industrial port with a population of more than 7 million during the course of only a few years.

The Beat

Continued from page 13

reaching more people, Urban says. "I'm not very open to changing my music to fit other formats. I like doing what I do, and it fits best in country radio. If mainstream radio allowed me to leave my things with banjos and mandolins on it, then that would be good. You'll Think of Me" didn't have those instruments on it anyway, so we didn't have to change anything."
**Oz Winery Tours Have Grape Expectations**

**By Christie Eliezer**

Melbourne, Australia—Australian wineries have used classical, jazz and adult-oriented-rock concerts to draw a 40- to 60-year-old demographic since 1984. But in the past year, the circuit has expanded to reach younger music fans and include more international acts. The shows are now incorporated into winery tours and attract sponsorship dollars.

Much of the growth stems from the A Day on the Green shows, which Roundhouse Entertainment introduced in 2001. Based in Melbourne as part of Michael Gudinski’s empire (which includes Frontier Touring and Premier Harbour agency), Roundhouse is run by former Premier booker Mick Newton and wife Anthea, formerly a Frontier publicist. Roundhouse works exclusively with winery shows.

“We’re now in our 40s,” Anthea says. “We realized there was an audience out there like us, who still liked to listen to live music but not necessarily in pubs or in festivals.”

Roundhouse began by tapping such veteran Aussie acts as Renee Geyer and Stephen Cummins, who drew up to 2,000 people per show. Last year, they tested their first international artist, Jackson Browne.

Since then, Elvis Costello, Bob Scaggs, Rod Stewart, Bryan Adams and Norah Jones have included ADOGT shows in their tours, drawing up to 6,000 people who pay between $40 Australian ($117) per ticket.

Booking Jewel was the turning point. She drew younger crowds, predominate in their 30s. Of the 27 ADOGT shows to be held in the current summer season, among them are such recent chart makers as Britain’s Jamie Cullum and Australia’s Pete Murray, Missy Higgins and the Waifs.

Mick says, “Winery tours are simply a unique form of entertainment. They’re a way of exploring Australia.”

Roundhouse now presents tours around the country. After releasing a branded CD this year, it intends to release a ADOGT DVD and is contemplating an entry into the American market.

Increasingly, the wineries are realizing such shows achieve more than boosting wine sales. “They increase our brand recognition and make us stand out from other wineries,” says Helm of The Treasury of Rochford Winery.

Wine sales are “significantly higher, on the day of the concert,” says Adrian Bohm, managing director of Adrian Bohm Winery, and the tour promises to bring in over $100,000 in sales. Bohm’s tour promises to bring in over $100,000 in sales. Bohm believes that winery tours need to remain special events. He uses such veteran talents as Stewart, Cliff Richard, Tony Bennett, Julio Iglesias, Michael Crawford and Shirley Bassey, often with a 60-piece orchestra.

A “Barossa Under the Stars” concert with Australian singer John Farnham drew 17,000 over two nights.

Bohm makes the day a 12-hour event, with extra entertainment and mini-villages of market stalls. The capacity of 7,000-9,000 tickets shifts each time, with “seats only” tickets upwards from $90 Australian ($76) to $175 Australian ($136). Bohm believes that winery tours need to remain special events. He uses such veteran talents as Stewart, Cliff Richard, Tony Bennett, Julio Iglesias, Michael Crawford and Shirley Bassey, often with a 60-piece orchestra.

*Bohms annual tour of South Australia takes an estimated $1 million.
Krauss Cuts Deal With Cracker Barrel

A sponsorship deal between Alison Krauss + Union Station and Cracker Barrel Old Country Store will link the Lebanon, Tenn.-based restaurant chain with the bluegrass star and company for all of 2005.

First tipped on billboard.biz Dec. 9, the alliance, which industry sources value in the high six figures, is for the group's Lonely Runs Both Ways tour, which begins Jan. 12 at the Chattanooga (Tenn.) Auditorium.

The deal was brokered by ARS manager Denise Stiff. Cracker Barrel VP of marketing Chris Tomsom & Marcie Allen Cardwell, president of live event marketing firm MAC Presents.

Stiff says much of the money will be put into tour production, including a year-long bus lease. ARS' only other major sponsorship has been with Martha White Flour.

"This is a natural fit with a product we genuinely love," Stiff tells On The Road, adding that the deal is a rare commercial endorsement for the group. "We're very selective.

Tomsom adds, "Given the mutual admiration, it didn't take long to come to terms. I think the demographics of our audiences match up very well, and this is a great complement to our successful heritage music series." The tour supports ARS' new Rounder release, "Lonely Runs Both Ways," and could include as many as 100 dates during the course of 2005.

As part of the sponsorship, ARS (featuring Jerry Douglas) will perform at least four times this year at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. Cracker Barrel has a multi-year sponsorship deal with the Opry, of which Krauss is a member.

Additional elements of the deal include a Cracker Barrel wrap for the tour bus, consumer Web site and Internet promotions, meet and greets, promotional tickets, inclusion in TV and print promotions, venue signage and on-site marketing opportunities at all venues hosting performances.

ARS is booked by Keith Case & Associates. Stiff says ARS will work with several promoters in 2005, but many dates go to Knoxville, Tenn.-based A.C. Entertainment and Nashville-based Backyard Concerts.

"Both of these companies understand this music and that our audience isn't necessarily best-reached through just mainstream country music advertising," Stiff says.

HOT WINTER TOUR: Epic hard rock band Chevelle will headline this year's Winterfest SuNCoro tour presented by MTV2. The trio will top a lineup that features Helmet, Crossfade, Future Leaders of the World and Strata. The 40-date trek begins Jan. 22 at 8:15PM in Vail, Colo. Darryl Eaton at Creative Artists Agency books Chevelle.

DOLLY RAMA: Dolly Parton's Hello, I'm Dolly tour wrapped in December with a gross of nearly $5 million. The tour was produced nationwide by Steve Moore's Moore Entertainment (Billboard, Oct. 2, 2004) and included many Arena Network Theatre Group in-house promotions.

Based on the tour's success, it is likely that Parton will take the elaborate production out again this year. "We'll evaluate it, see what people take to and what they don't take," Parton told Billboard in an earlier interview. "I'm an entertainer and a singer, and I love the audience and being onstage. So the next few years I want to go back on the road before I'm too old to do it."
BY GAIL MITCHELL

Some of the biggest names in R&B and hip-hop released albums during fourth-quarter 2004. Destiny's Child, Eminem, Ludacris, 2Pac, Nas, Snoop Dogg and Lil Jon & The East Side Boys are among the acts that provided end of the year fireworks.

Outside that superstar arena, however, awaits a host of diverse up-and-coming R&B/hip-hop acts. And though they may not be household names, a few sparked some buzz in 2004 and deserve honorable mentions now that the holiday dust has settled. We will spotlight several of these acts here and in the next issue.

SLOW TRAIN SOUL

"Soul electro" is a term coined to describe the music of Anglo-Danish duo Slow Train Soul. Singer/songwriter Lady Z (aka Michelle Nicholl) and keyboardist/product Morten Varano bowed in the United States last September with first album "Illegal Cargo" on Tommy Boy. Initially released in Europe a year ago, "Illegal Cargo" sports the singles "Naturally" and "Blacker of Night." Pairing live and electronic instruments, the album's warm, atmospheric sound reveals the 3-year-old duo's love of '60s and '70s music, not to mention a range of artistic influences, from Billie Holiday, Jill Scott and Terry Callier to Fela Kuti, the Roots, D'Angelo and Jimi Hendrix.

"This is warm electronica," says Trinidad-born, London-bred Lady Z. With a background in jazz and performance poetry, she has been described as Grace Jones meets Elia Fitzgerald.

"It's not just about the clicks and beats," Lady Z says. "It's about a whole journey."

It's Wright Move For UMPG

Singer/songwriter/producer Betty Wright has signed with Universal Music Publishing Group. The exclusive worldwide co-publishing deal includes Wright's complete catalog.

"Betty is a true soul-music icon who has stayed relevant through the strength of her spirit," says David Renzer, chairman/CEO of UMPG.

EWGF HEAT: Earth, Wind & Fire shows no signs of slowing down after 33 years. The group this year added another Grammy Award nomination to its plaudits. "Show Me the Way" featuring Raphael Saadiq is up for best R&B performance by a duo or group with vocals. The venerable outfit was the centerpiece of December's inaugural Grammy Jam, organized by the Recording Academy's Los Angeles chapter.

A diverse lineup of artists/musicians, including Jill Scott, Stevie Wonder, Yolanda Adams and Egypt Sherrod, performed signature EW&F songs to benefit various music and education programs.

First-quarter 2005 will witness the release of EW&F's 23rd album, through Sanctuary Urban Group. Illumination brings together Saadiq, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Organized Noise, Vikter Duplaix and Brian McKnight, among others. In addition to "Show Me the Way," the set includes "Let Me Love You," featuring Floetry; "This Is How I Feel," with Sleepy Brown; and bonus track "The Way You Move," with Kenny G.

MUSICAL NOTES: Celebrating its fifth anniversary this month, music publishing firm Reach Global has signed several new deals: Virgin Records rapper Guerilla Black inks a worldwide publishing administration agreement for songs on his producer management to its compila- tion and licensing divisions.

Among the producers the company now represents are Steven "Lenky" Marsden (Sean Paul's "Get Busy"), Matthew Beykin (OutKast's "Roses"), Domingo Padilla (Fat Joe) and J. Marty (Lumidee). Sahirah Uddah has established SU Entertainment. Serving as a broker between producers and artists, the Los Angeles-based firm recently placed Universal Asian artist Sun with the Underdogs, Fresh & Danny Thomas. The pair wrote and produced "Ends of the Earth" for Sun's new album, which will be released in the United States next month. Uddah formerly headed artist development for the Tonos music web site.

EREDALE, Fla. Urban Mystic comes by his R&B/gospel sound naturally. The son of a minister and church organist, he began working toward a professional music career at 13.

His childhood experience inspired "Ghetto Revelations," Urban Mystic says, "I'm from the hood, while the "revelations" part of the title speaks to my spiritual background. I still sing in church.

For the album, he worked with such producers as Eddie F. Troy Taylor and Debarge (who guest on "Mystic's Spot"). The KayGee-produced first single "Where Were You?" helped garner Urban Mystic "next" profiles by BET and VH1, video play on "MTV Jams" and a performance at the Jan. 3 Orange Bowl Beach Bash with OutKast. A second single, "Long Ways," goes to radio later this month.

"Her continued relevance is also a testament to her continuing to be an inspired writer/producer, having worked in recent years with everyone from Gloria Estefan, Enrique Iglesias and Jennifer Lopez to Joss Stone," Wright earned her standing in R&B/hip-hop history as an artist with the 1971 classic "Clean Up Woman," and later won a best R&B song Grammy Award for "Where Is the Love?". Her list of hits also includes "Baby Sitter" and "Tonight Is the Night." Wright also operates her own label, Ms. B. She has helped shape Stone's breakthrough projects. The current Grammy nominee for best new artist worked with Wright on her 2003 S-Curve Records EP, "The Soul Sessions," as well as her 2004 full-length debut, "Mind Body & Soul."
### Billboard Top R&B/Pop Catalog Albums

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Label</th>
<th>Sales Data</th>
<th>Certification</th>
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<td>Goodies</td>
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<td>Turning Point</td>
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Eminem

March 17, 2004. The album came out Sept. 13 and has been certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry for shipments exceeding 100,000 units.

The group has already announced another tour in 2005, the Road to Reheb.

Goldie Lookin’ Good For A Laugh

This week’s column was written by Emmanuel Legrand in London.

With Mike Skinner, aka the Streets, and Dizzee Rascal having put Britain on the global hip-hop map, along comes an unexpected development—a British rap act that doesn’t take itself too seriously.

Goldie Lookin’ Chain is the latest hip-hop sensation to dent the U.K. charts. The eight-member collective originates from Newport, Wales, and the least that can be said about it is that it has a wicked sense of humor.

For a start, the group’s debut album is titled "Greatest Hits." The first three singles were "Guns Don’t Kill People (Rappers Do)."

"You Got A Pen," and "Your Mother’s Got A Pen," which includes a sample from Eric Clapton’s "Behind the Mask."

After recording a few tracks and issued a series of CD-Burns, Goldie started building a local fan base and caught the attention of major labels. It signed to Atlantic U.K. (then known as West End) on March 17, 2004. The album came out Sept. 13 and has been certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry for shipments exceeding 100,000 units.

The group has been referred to as a white Wu-Tang Clan, but it is closer to the Beastie Boys in attitude. Its
tongue-in-cheek humor is sometimes risqué and not necessarily in good taste, but it works. "Your Mother’s Got A Pen" likely wouldn’t get airtime on U.S. radio, but surprisingly, it received pretty solid airplay in Britain.

Another of the group’s strengths is that it can perform live. Goldie has played at the major British summer festivals, and in October it embarked on a sold-out tour of Great Britain, calling An Orange Don’t Come For Free, a direct reference to the Streets’ latest CD. "A Grand Don’t Come For Free." Goldie ended the year in Newport, playing two Christmas shows at the City Live Arena.

It was triggered by the rise in 2003 of hip-hop superstar MC

Scribe, who is signed to Festival Mushroom Records. In early 2004, the Christchurch-based artist went to No. 1 with "Dude (The بوogie)."

In September, Scribe won seven Tuis at the NZ Music Awards. A month later, he and his producer, P-Money, won NZ’s top songwriting prize, the Australasian Performing Right Assn. Silver Scroll Award, for the song "Not Ms," which had also found recognition in Australia and the United Kingdom.

P-Money had solo success with his FMR single "Stop the Music." It featured Scribe and debuted at No. 1 on the RIANZ chart. His album "Magic City" entered at No. 2.

Other success stories included Miss Fits of Science, whose single "Fools Love" (BNG) held the top spot for four weeks. The Fast Crew had two top 10 singles — "I Got" and "It’s the Incredible," — and Adessa’s "Getting Stronger" (Dawn Raid Universal) was the No. 12 most-played track of the year. Also, Del Hando returned after a break with the single "We Go Ride" (Hi-Rays Universal), which was No. 1 for five weeks.

Leon Wratt, PD of Auckland-based national top 40 network The Edge FM, says the surge of hip-hop tracks on the airplay charts coincides with a sudden rise in the number of radio-friendly rap projects released in the country. "Hip-hop doesn’t have the negativity it used to," Wratt says. "It’s become part of the mainstream.

Many NZ artists have managed to strike a chord with local audiences with their lyrics, and their production quality is really good."

Strong releases from such acts as Nesian Mystik, whose 2002 debut album, “Polysaturate” (Bounce Records) debuted at No. 1, are expected through 2005. But Wratt is not certain if radio’s love affair with hip-hop will continue. “These things are all cyclical,” he says.

Additional reporting by Christie Ellezer in Melbourne, Australia.

NEW ZEALAND RAPS: While New Zealand radio played more local acts in 2004 than before, according to airplay charts by collector RadioScope, homegrown hip-hop received unprecedented radio support.

Beats

Rhythms

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**Notes:** Units refer to the number of copies sold in a particular week. **EMI** refers to Epic/Mercury Records. **ATO** refers to Atlantic Records. **NAR** refers to Norteña Records. **HIT** refers to Hit Records. **RCA** refers to RCA Victor. **IBERIA** refers to Iberia Records. **SUNT** refers to Sun Records. **HIT** refers to Hit Records. **SUN** refers to Sun Records. **SANTO** refers to Santo Records. **ELVIS** refers to Elvis Presley. **CAPITOL** refers to Capitol Records. **UNIVERSAL** refers to Universal Records. **FONOVISA** refers to Fonovisa Records. **DISA** refers to Disa Records. **ARTISTS** refers to Various Artists. **PRIMAVERA** refers to PrimaVera. **CONCHA Y LUCAS** refers to Concha Y Lucas. **HERMANOS FERNANDEZ** refers to Hermanos Fernandez. **VINILO** refers to Vinyl. **SUPREMA** refers to Suprema. **DUCAS** refers to Ducas. **LOS TUCANES DE TIJUANA** refers to Los Tucanes de Tijuana. **VARIOS ARTISTAS** refers to Various Artists. **Mc ARTISTAS** refers to Mc Artists. **MUSICA MEXICA** refers to Mexican Music. **ALACRANES MUSICALS** refers to Alacranes Musicals. **CARDELLENAS DE NUEVO LEON** refers to Cardelenas de Nuevo Leon. **INTOCABLE** refers to Intocable. **MOMENTOS DE COLECCION** refers to Momentos de Coleccion. **GRUPO CLIMAX** refers to Grupo Climax. **CARLOS VIVES** refers to Carlos Vives. **DADDY YANKEE** refers to Daddy Yankee. **JUANES** refers to Juanes. **Luis Miguel** refers to Luis Miguel. **GRUPO CANTANO** refers to Grupo Cantano. **GRAU DE VEZ** refers to Grau de Vez. **RAMON ALAYA** refers to Ramon Alaya. **JOSE ALFREDO JIMENEZ** refers to Jose Alfredo Jimenez. **MANUEL MANUEL** refers to Manuel Manuel. **CARLOS VIVES** refers to Carlos Vives. **DADDY YANKEE** refers to Daddy Yankee.
### Latin Pop Airplay

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### Tropical Airplay

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### Billboard Hot Latin Tracks

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**Note:** The data is from January 15, 2005, and includes various ranks and positions for different music tracks and artists. The table format allows for easy comparison and understanding of hit songs and their labels. The data is sourced from Billboard magazine.
Christian Acts Build Following In Puerto Rico

BY IAN MALINOW MACEO

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Although urban reggaetón is currently dominating the Puerto Rican music market, a dramatically different kind of music, characterized by its soulful expression, is making a sales impact on the island.

Christian music is growing in popularity and commercialization and has become a bright spot in the Puerto Rican music industry. According to local distributors, buyers and radio DJs, more than 50% of album sales on the island today are reggaetón titles. But at the same time, they say, popular Christian acts are selling more albums today than popular merengue, salsa and even Latin rock acts.

**GAINING GROUND**

"Christian music has crossed over into the mainstream music market, and it has really picked up among the island's youth," says Pablo Aponte of Disco Hit Productions, one of Puerto Rico's biggest music distributors. "Two years ago their first catalog with about 20 titles. Today, I have more than 150." The list of rising Christian music stars in Puerto Rico also includes reggae-based group León de Judá, Abrahán Velázquez, René González and Daniel Carveth. The jump in popularity is attributed to a variety of factors, from better product and a growing Christian population to savvy marketing that has taken the music to the masses.

Of course, Puerto Rico is no stranger to sacred music. In the 1980s and 1990s, the island saw its share of relatively successful gospel artists, including Richay Biz, Bobby Cruz, Dagmar and Domingo Quiñones. But their music never really broke into the mainstream, primarily because their albums couldn't compete with the high-quality productions and powerful marketing machine of their pop counterparts.

In early 2003, however, things changed. Christian music began to carve a niche in the island's market with the release of several chart-topping albums by such acclaimed international Christian pop music singers as Jali Velazquez, Rabito, Marcos Witt and Roberto Orellana. "The launch of the albums by Witt and Orellana revolutionized the entire music industry in Puerto Rico last year," Aponte observes.

But the real Christian music explosion, he says, came later in 2003 when Samuel Hernández, a Puerto Rican Christian singer who releases his music on his own label, SH Productions, put out the album "Jesus Siempre Lleva a Tiempo." Its single, "Levanta Tus Manos," was treated as a pop release and included a music video that went into rotation on Puerto Rico’s mainstream music channels.

"People went nuts because they had never seen a sexy reggaetón video or a rock video, followed by one with a religious message," Aponte says. By May 2003, the album had notched seven consecutive weeks at generation of Christian music singers is being heard not only because of the message but because of the way we are presenting the music to our fans," he adds.

As recently as 15 years ago, Latin Christian artists had to fight budget productions, with simple arrangements and budget-conscious art and packaging. Hernández says that today's new wave of artists is creating a product that's not only as competitive as secular albums but is marketed and promoted with solid, thoughtful plans.

The efforts have paid off.

"Our section of Christian music has doubled in the past two years," says Tatiana Frangoulou, multimedia head for Modern Books & Music in Puerto Rico.

"Before we used to carry only about 100 titles, while today we have more than 250." Sam Torres, a former DJ with radio station Nueva Vida (97.7 FM), the most established Christian music station on the island, thinks radio played a big role in taking the genre to the masses. But he also thinks that the population of Christian followers is increasing as a result of what he calls "today's global social crisis.

"The Christian community on the island is big," says Torres, a DJ for KQ-105. "And things aren't easy here. More people each day are asking God for answers. This explains why Christian music entered mainstream radio and how it is becoming more popular and profitable for big, multinational record labels."

"The most recent example of that success is Juan Luis Guerra's album "Para T" (Vene/Universal), which owes a substantial chunk of its sales to Puerto Rican radio," Torres says. As for Hernandez, although it has been more than a year since the release of his blockbuster album, he shows no signs of slowing down. In mid-December, he put out a best of DVD, "Hemos Visto la Gloria de Dios: Conoce la Historia." He is also currently working on a new album, "Dos Siempre Tiene el Control," due in April.

"That the album is remaining faithful to God's message, because we are living in tough times," he says. "The rest is just making sure that you have meaningful lyrics, good arrangements and a solid marketing plan."

**MESSAGE, PRESENTATION MATTER**

Radio played a major role in pushing sales of Hernandez's album. Pop station WRAQ (104.7 FM) San Juan was the first to play Hernandez's single, but other stations quickly followed, and eventually "Levanta Tus Manos" became a Christian music anthem heard throughout Puerto Rico.

"I think I was successful because there's a need in people's lives today to turn to spirituality to help them cope with the ills of this society," Hernandez explains. "But I also think that the new

Hernandez helped lead the Christian explosion.
Bluegrass Is Greener For Lawson Band

Bluegrass superstars Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver have signed a multi-album recording contract with Rounder Records.

The group, which marked its silver anniversary last year, has won the International Bluegrass Music Association’s Song of the Year award for its version of the traditional tune “I’m a Wheelman.”

Doyle Lawson and his band have been performing together for more than 20 years and have released several albums on the Sugar Hill label. The band’s latest album, “Quicksilver,” was released in 2004.

Lawson and his band are known for their innovative use of the ukulele, which they incorporate into their bluegrass shows. The band’s sound is a blend of traditional bluegrass and contemporary instrumentation.

The band’s new contract with Rounder Records is a significant milestone for Lawson and his band. Rounder Records is a respected label in the bluegrass and folk music genres, and the band is excited about the opportunity to work with the label.

Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver are currently in the studio working on their next album, which is expected to be released later this year. The band is also planning a tour to promote the new album.

Music Assn.'s vocal group of the year award the past four years and has notched numerous Grammy and Dove award nominations. In addition to vocalist/mandolin player Lawson, the group includes Terry Baxter, Jamie Dailey and J.W. Stockman.

The group’s Rounder debut, “You Gotta Dig A Little Deeper,” is due in March. The act, which will tour in support of the new album, formerly recorded for S & G's Crossroads Records.

KEEPING COUNTER: Nashville-based Compendia Music Group has laid off six employees in the wake of its November 2004 sale to Sheridan Square Entertainment. The cuts, mostly in the financial and legal areas, were positions deemed redundant with those held by staffers at Sheridan Square, owner of Artemis Records and Musicarama. Compendia president/CEO Michael Olsen, who describes the layoffs as “a painful and unfortunate part of the job,” says those "back-office functions" will be consolidated within Sheridan Square's new office. Compendia now has 18 staffers in Nashville. As part of the recent changes, the company has closed its affiliate office in Atlanta. Among those let go are Compendia head of legal and business affairs John Rolfe and manager of regional sales and marketing Debbie Loring. CFO Daley Kennedy will exit in a few weeks.

OWEN UPPED: Jason Owen has been promoted from VP of media, artist relations and creative services to senior VP of those departments at Universal Music Group Nashville. His responsibilities include the DreamWorks, MCA Nashville and Mercury labels. Also at UMG Nashville, Reta Harvey Hatfield has been named VP of video production, reporting to Owen. She was senior director. In addition to DreamWorks, MCA and Mercury, her duties encompass sister label Lost Highway.

Plans to name Sony/ATV's Quicksilver Atlantic debut, “When The Sun Goes Down,” at No. 1 on the Top Country Albums chart and The Billboard 200. BNA is currently working "Anything but Mine," the fifth single from "When The Sun Goes Down." When asked if she thinks radio programmers might start airing cuts from "As You Are," Linn acknowledges that could happen, but says, "The promotions department is considered to be well to radio just what this record is.

ONE HOT ARTIST

According to Galante, the BNA staff thought releasing a single from "As You Are" would cause consumer confusion. "You have an artist like Kenny who tours eight months out of the year and has records that last a year-and-a-half, there's never a right time," Galante says of releasing a single from a specially album. "So I made a decision that we really couldn't release a single, because no matter what we did, it would land somewhere in the middle of a record we had," he explains.

KMPR’s Seattle music director Tony Thomas says radio might gravitate to the new material regardless of the game plan because Chesney is such a hot act. "Kenny not only won the CMAs top title, he's truly the people's champion," Thomas enthuses. "His fans are psyched for new music from him. Even without a single I wouldn't be surprised if we grab on to a cut or two. I think listeners will love that these songs have personal meaning to him and to Sirius Satellite Radio will roll out a special "As You Are" album premiere Jan. 14, and Sirius director of country programming Scott Lindy is a fan of the new album. "Kenny's done a good job in making these songs about his life and . . . his career without making it a 'Hey, look at me' album," says Lindy. "The sound of this project is full of island stylings, but seems to be more of that sound that is only Kenny's that he's developed over the past year," he says. Lindy describes it as "a blend of crisp, acoustic guitars; island-influenced country; and Kenny's approach to the lyrics that seem more personal than ever.

Lindy predicts the album will do very well. "For not being worked to radio, I predict that this CD will be his biggest to date," he says.

Galante admits he's not sure what to expect in terms of sales. "We're (Continued on page 46)
TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS

1. Patsy Cline - "Crazy" - 8 Weeks at Number 1
2. Shania Twain - "Come On Over" - 7 Weeks at Number 1
3. Garth Brooks - "Fresh Horses" - 5 Weeks at Number 1
4. Alan Jackson - "Drive" - 4 Weeks at Number 1
5. Toby Keith - "Thank God for Kids" - 3 Weeks at Number 1

TOP COUNTRY CATALOG ALBUMS

1. Garth Brooks - "Fresh Horses" - 8 Weeks at Number 1
2. Shania Twain - "Come On Over" - 7 Weeks at Number 1
3. Alan Jackson - "Drive" - 5 Weeks at Number 1
4. Toby Keith - "Thank God for Kids" - 4 Weeks at Number 1
5. Garth Brooks - "Pati's Record" - 3 Weeks at Number 1

**Notes:**
- Billboard is a weekly magazine that ranks the top albums in the United States based on sales and airplay.
- The charts are updated on a weekly basis.
- The magazine also includes a special section called "Top Country Albums" which lists the top 25 selling country albums for the week.
- The charts are compiled by SoundScan, a research firm that tracks retail sales of CDs and digital downloads.
- The data is compiled from sales of physical albums, digital downloads, and streaming services.
- The charts are updated on a weekly basis.
- The magazine also includes a special section called "Top Country Catalog Albums" which lists the top 25 selling country albums for the week.
- The charts are compiled by SoundScan, a research firm that tracks retail sales of CDs and digital downloads.
- The data is compiled from sales of physical albums, digital downloads, and streaming services.
- The charts are updated on a weekly basis.
ANU DIFRANCO
Knuckle Down
PRODUCERS: Ani DiFranco, Joe Henry
Righteous Babe RBR-042-D
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
"Knuckle Down" finds Ani DiFranco trying some different approaches to her music. In a first for her, she paired with another musician (Joe Henry) for production duties, and she changed her writing style by consciously com- posing for the first instead of writing songs and later determining how they would fit as a collection. The results are a selection of high quality that veers between brightly spirited live show recordings and the very quiet moods. The quiet is well matched by the music for a pleasing overall effect.

KRONOS QUARTET
Magum Sayagi—Music of Franghiz Ali-Zadeh
PRODUCER: Judith Sherman
Nonesuch 79804
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11
Franghiz Ali-Zadeh was born in 1947 in Balakurd, Turkey, to a mother of Persian and Russian elements in her legacy. She writes music that explores the range and comment- ments on just these influences, but more recent ones as well, includ- ing her heroes Olivier Messiaen, George Crumb and John Cage. This release features four recent works: 1998’s “Oasis,” which contains the area’s water dripping and men’s murmuring voices; 2001’s evocative “Asphorn Quintet”; the electronic “Music for Piano,” completed in 1997; and 1993’s haunting “Magum Sayagi,” which the Kronos Quartet gives an electrifying reading. (Ali-Zadeh herself performed as a pianist in the quintet and on “Music for Piano.”) The Kronos Quartet is in top form here, and this exciting release should catapult Ali-Zadeh’s name to the forefront of contemporary music.—AT

BIUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB PRESENTS
MANUEL GUJARO MIRA?AL
Buenavista Social Club Presents
Manuel Guajiro Mirabal
PRODUCER: Nick Gold
Nonesuch 79810
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 4
Buenavista Social Club offers yet another reminder that reggae or, indeed, any music of African descent, is not just the work of men. This is an essential part of the rich cultural diversity of the Americas. The group’s “Parameters” is a terrific reading of an instrument but veers from the forefront of their best, showcasing their stellar talent.

THE WAITORS
A Brief History...
PRODUCERS: the Waitors
Jahrr 7 4394
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11
Bob Dylan thought enough of this Australian group to put it on his North American tour, and this live double album testifies to his good sense. The tunes were recorded in several venues in Australia between 2002 and 2004, and they provide an excellent aural portrait of this extraordinary crew’s musical vibe. The Waitors have sold a bunch of records and built a strong following with a unique, original style that is found in none other. The album is a treasure trove of acoustic and electric arrangements, all with great musicians in tow.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Sounds Eclectic 3
PRODUCER: Nic Harcourt
Palm CD2136
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11
Every city should be lucky enough to have a station like KCWR, the commercial-outlet of the Los Angeles area’s small Santa Monica College. Every station should have a program like the wildly honored daily show “Morning Becomes Eclectic” and its weekly syndicated program “Sounds Eclectic.” The latest in a series of compilation CDs, “Sounds Eclectic 3” contains mostly tracks recorded live at KCWR. Show producer/host Nic Harcourt’s taste is neither too esoteric nor predictably “edgy.” This set of songs and artists could anchor a format called “progressive mainstream.” Performances include the Flaming Lips, Lush, Unwound, Dinosaur Jr., Looper, and others, and the eclectic mix of tracks sound like a mixture of work by the young and the veteran. The album is a wonderful addition to the series, giving listeners a chance to hear some of the best music of the moment, and a chance to learn about some of the most talented musicians working today.

JACOB ZACHARY
Fury and Spinn
PRODUCER: Brian Morkyen
Unseen UR00102
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11
Jacob Zachary’s debut sounds like a collection of basement songs from the hog next door, the quiet type who knows how to express his sincerest sentiments. “Fury and Spinn” strongly mimics Duncan Sheik’s gorgeous 1996 folk-pop debut, with thoughtful, shiny production and a vulnerable tempera- ment. The arrangements are romantic and catchy, but it’s Zachary’s potent lyrics that transcend his ordinary songwriting: he stabs at the mystical, wrestling with the nature of God and humanity, and juxtaposing belief with unbelief. On “Human,” he sings: “We keep breaking for the love of our- selves/but oh, now are we to know/The price we should pay/And what could we really expect from a nature so human, weaning similar to Christian artists like Brian Kriat and Derek Webb. Zachary has created a well-rounded, promising first effort.—KN

JENNIFER GENTLE
Valado
PRODUCERS: Jennifer Gentle, Marco Fosolo, Alessio Castaldello
Sub Pop SP058
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
“Valado” opens with a cracking acoustic number, and its second song is an all-out “Nugget’s-era rocker, complete with handicaps, a vintage keyboard and indefinable scruffles. Frontman Jennifer Gentle goes to a more atmospheric direction. Don’t be fooled by the name; This is a duo, and an odd one at that. Imported from Italy via Sub Pop, this is the act’s third proper album, all of them home- recorded. Yet “Valado” feels more like it was created in a demented carnival. “Hesessapos” is all symphonic crashes and haunted-house noises, and “Liquid Coffee” hypnotizes with a mixture of low-fi industrial percussing and an underlying rhythmic ticking. At times compelling in its eccentricities, this redneck technological experiment rather than theatrical. —TM

AMANDA & THE MARBLES
Angels With Dirty Faces
PRODUCERS: Amanda & the Marbles, Dan Boyd
Sick House SHR004
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
Amanda & the Marbles pulled critical praise for their 2002 album, “More Seduction,” and now they’ve released a new pop sound “neo neo wave pop punk.” It’s an accurate description for the dozen tracks comprising “Angels With Dirty Faces”, particularly with the addition of keyboards that further flesh out the band’s early-80s rol- ler-rink tunes. But it’s the 12 tracks sound so repetitive that the lyrics are the only way to discern one song from the next. With subject matter like “Lipstick,” “I’ve to Rock” and “Seven- teen,” they are sticky with retro bubble gum that is made more cloying by Amanda Marble’s too earnest warbling, which sounds like an attempt to emul- date the dusky tone of the Motels’ Martha Davis. Covers of the Past Cars’ “Kids Just Want to Have Fun” and the band’s “Cheap Tragedies” are included, but they don’t make much of a difference.—CLT

R&B/HIP-HOP

SOUNDTRACK
Coach Carter
PRODUCERS: various
Capitol U.S. 461364
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11
Like 1989’s “Lean On Me,” starring Morgan Freeman and Robert Townsend, “Coach Carter” revolves around academic performance. The film, starring Samuel L. Jackson, is inspired by the story of Richmond, Calif., high-school basketball coach Ken Carter, who benched his entire undefeated squad in 1999 for poor grades. While the “Lean” soundtrack featured such R&B, rap and rock favorites as Thelma Houston, Big Daddy Kane and Queen, “Coach Carter” superizes the hip-hop quotient. Name-checking credits include the St. Lunatics, Common, Fabolous, Chingy, Ciara and Twista. The St. Lunatics turn in a notable performance on “Time.” Memorable R&B accents are provided by Faith Evans and critically acclaimed newcomer Van Hunt. Two other rockers who shine here: rapper the Game (“Southside,” featuring Lil Scrappy) and singer Trey Songz (“About the Game”). —CM

(Continued on next page)
Editorial content removed
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES: Warner Strategic Marketing in Burbank, Calif., appoints Rachael Eckerton VP of business affairs. She was senior director of BMI Strategic Marketing Group.

RCA Label Group in Nashville promotes Jo Beth Rupple to manager of finance. She was senior financial analyst.

DISTRIBUTION: Handleman Co. in Troy, Mich., names Roy Johnson VP of business support and analysis and promotes Vice President of Finance. Johnson was Handleman VP of budgeting and forecasting. Moser was manager of rebuying and Babcock was children's, karaoke and Latin budget product manager.

Universal Music Video/Distribution/Visual Entertainment in New York appoints Matt Costine regional sales director. He held the same title at WEA Corp.'s video division.

BOOKING AGENCIES: William Morris Agency in Beverly Hills, Calif., promotes Dave Wirtz for president, Irwin Weintraub to COO and Michael Dales to CFO. Wirtz was executive VP worldwide head of motion pictures, Weintraub was executive VP/CFO and Dales was senior VP of finance.

The Agency Group in Beverly Hills names Corrie Christopherson an agent. She was founder of music agency Fierce Talent.

RADIO: ABC Radio Networks in New York promotes James Robinson to president. He remains president/ GM of ABC's adult top 40 WRQX and smooth jazz WJZQ, both in Washington, D.C.

Archway Broadcasting Group in East Point, Ga., promotes Al Vicente to vice chairman. He was president/CEO. The company also names Kathy Stinehour president/CEO. She was VP/marketing manager at Cumulus Broadcasting.

Infinity Broadcasting in New York appoints Tony Jarva senior VP of research. He was senior VP/director of strategic insights group at MediaCom.

Sirius Satellite Radio in New York names Bill Bailey senior VP of regulatory and government affairs. He was senior counsel for the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee.

MUSIC VIDEO: MTV Networks in New York promotes Larry Disney to president of ad sales. He was COO of ad sales. The company also names Doug Rohrer executive VP/senior advisor to Disney. He segues from his position as executive VP of ad sales.

MTV in New York appoints Nicole Vories senior director of production development and Ethan Goldman director of production development. Vories was VP of alternative TV development at the Firm, and Goldman was manager of East Coast development at VH1.

DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT: Music Choice in New York names Justin Prager director of technical development. He was director of music programming and talent at MTV and MTV2.

Digital Musicworlds International in Sacramento, Calif., appoints Dennis Griffith director of production. Griffith was an independent producer. Griffith was vice president of production operations at Warner Bros. Records.

RELATED FIELDS: Clear Channel Entertainment in New York promotes David Anderson to president/COO of theatrical North America and Dominic Roncace to president of North American theatrical real estate. Anderson was president of North American theatrical real estate, and Roncace was COO of music.

Firm/TV company Mark Haefeli Productions in New York appoints Richy Vescely senior director of creative and marketing. He was associate director of television marketing at Warner Bros. Records.
Hot Fashion ... FANTASIA

"American Idol" third-season winner Fantasia has teamed with M.A.C Cosmetics for the new line of Fantabulous lip glosses, inspired by the singer. The product comes in two shades, Fantabulous 1 (orange copper) and Fantabulous 2 (reddened bronze), and is sold at select M.A.C locations.

In other music-meets-fashion news, Mariah Carey will launch a fashion line this year called Miss Risi, which will initially offer... "Lil' Kim has teamed with World Recognition International to debut a women's fashion line titled..."}

Saluting College Music

Marky Ramone, pictured, was a performer and award recipient at the first College Music Awards, held Dec. 16 at New York's Irving Plaza. The Ramones received the Icon Award, and Ramone accepted on behalf of the band. Rolling Stone magazine, Z100, Navy and Mobliss presented the show, which honors acts who have made an impact on the college radio and music scene, long an incubator for alternative talent. The Walkmen and Flyleaf also performed. Other College Music Awards winners were Taking Back Sunday (band of the year), Jason Mraz (best male rock artist), Norah Jones (best female rock artist), Yellowcard's "Ocean Avenue" (best album) and Kanye West (hip-hop award). (Photo: Dimitrios Kambouris/WireImage.com)

Mariah Does Mickey Proud

Mariah Carey hangs with Mickey Mouse at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. Carey was among the performers at the annual Walt Disney World Christmas Day Parade, which ABC televised Dec. 25. Other artists at the event included Wynnonna, Ashanti and former "American Idol" finalists Josh Gracin and Diana DeGarmo.

Like A Hawk

Chingy received a personalized Atlanta Hawks jersey when he performed Dec. 9 at Atlanta's Philips Arena as part of the all-star Frosty the Snowman concert. The show, presented by Atlanta's mainstream top 40 WWWQ (Q-100), also featured performances by Alicia Keys, Good Charlotte and Diana DeGarmo. Pictured, from left, are Philips Arena director of business development Kevin Preast, Chingy and Philips Arena VP of bookings Trey Feazell. (Photo: Rick Diamond)

Place In The Sun

Tim McGraw became the first inductee in the Mohegan SunWalk of Fame at a Dec. 3 ceremony held at the Mohegan Sun Arena in Uncasville, Conn. McGraw was the first artist to play at the arena, and he has performed several sold-out shows there since that 2001 debut. Pictured, from left, are Mohegan Tribe chairman Mark Brown, McGraw and Mohegan Sun senior VP of sports and entertainment Paul Munick.
New ‘Songbook’ Series Shows EMI Synergy

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—“The Definitive American Songbook,” a just-completed 10-CD series, represents a cross-company effort between EMI Music Publishing and EMI Records to capitalize on their extensive catalogs.

“EMI Publishing has always prioritized catalog exploitation of our incredible songs,” EMI Music Publishing chairman/CEO Martin Bandier says. “EMI Records presents an incredible opportunity for us to maximize [EMI Music] Group profits by matching up with their vast and magnificent master recording repertoire.”

The “Songbook” set is now available through EMI’s direct response company Castalian Records, but tracks were also licensed to Sony, BMG, Elektra, Universal, Atlantic and Concord Jazz.

“I naturally included a significant number of EMI-published copyrights—more than 50 songs—while maintaining the credibility of the concept by choosing titles from all the other major catalogs,” Warner says. So he notes that the project “not only signifies Capitol/EMI’s long-term commitment to a series spotlighting some of the greatest examples of American popular song, but it also is an illustration of the synergy between EMI’s record and publishing operations.”

Warner, who is credited as reissue producer for “The Definitive American Songbook,” says the concept originated at Castalian after staffers polled their parents in compiling a list of most-remembered songs.

“David Munns [EMI Music North America chairman/CEO] sent me the list and asked that I identify the best Capitol/EMI-owned recordings,” Warner says. “Anita Stewart, who runs Castalian, then brought me in, and I developed the concept—in co-ordination with Castalian’s Peter Holden—into a series of multi-artist albums.”

EMI Music Publishing first published the rich vaults at sister company Capitol Records, but tracks were also licensed from Sony, BMG, Elektra, Universal, Atlantic and Concord Jazz.

“I felt it necessary to limit the time period covered,” he explains. “Therefore, the compositions themselves date from the 1920s through the 1950s.”

The discs are presented thematically. “Songs That Won the War” features ballad and novelty favorites from the 1940s, “When Swing Was King” includes big band hits, while “Hollywood Hit Parade” features memorable songs from the movies. “Songs That Stopped the Show” is a disc of Broadway memories.

The first two discs are “The Best of the Definitive American Songbook,” volumes one and two. The final two salutes 36 outstanding “First Ladies” and “First Gentlemen” from the golden age of popular song, including Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Tony Bennett, Ella Fitzgerald, Billy Holiday and Peggy Lee.

The remaining titles are “The Thrill of Romance,” a love song collection, and “This Is My Song,” a set of signature tunes like Judy Garland’s “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.”

STELLAR PERFORMANCES


The song was written for, but never used in, a Marx Brothers movie, according to Warner. It was finally introduced in “The Strip,” a 1951 musical film noir starring Mickey Rooney and a performance by Armstrong himself.

Warner also cites a “rarely heard” version of the Jule Styne-Betty Comden-Adolph Green song “The Party’s Over,” sung by Diahann Carroll and arranged and accompanied by Andre Previn.

“What was particularly gratifying as the compilations unfolded was Anita Stewart’s total belief in the project and her determination that the albums would be sold via a half-hour infomercial, thereby guaranteeing the kind of exposure that gives the series its very best shot,” Warner says. If the package is successful, it adds, it could be an ongoing series.

“Saluting the initial direct-response offering, Munns concludes, “This package has been compiled by some of our best music people, and the flow and continuity in its makeup is testament to their expertise. Not only does it represent a definitive account of American music history, but it also provides hours of tremendous listening.”

Spirit Songs: Cash’s Dharma, Cohen’s Karma

Rosanne Cash gave an extraordinary trio of performances at the end of last year at Manhattan’s Rubin Museum of Art, a new cultural and educational institution dedicated to the art of the Himalayas and designed to explore connections among world cultures.

The “Acoustic Cash” programs featured Cash accompanied by her producer/husband, John Leventhal, on guitar, performing songs inspired by Tibetan painting “The Wheel of Life” that illustrates the essential Buddhist teachings.

Cash also engaged guest artists Marshall Crenshaw, Teddy Thompson and Black 47’s Larry Kirwan in song and conversation, so each informal evening was part music, part monologue and part talk show—an innovative and intriguing format worthy of further exploration.

In fact, Cash will do just that Feb. 10 as part of Lincoln Center’s “American Songbook” series (which also includes Lisa Loeb, Nellie McKay and Elaine Stritch). She is likely to perform new material from her next Capitol album, due later in 2005. And maybe she’ll cover the still mysterious, monumental 1967 Bobbie Gentry hit “Ode to Billie Joe,” as she did with Kirwan at the Rubin Museum series’ Dec. 3 finale.

I read recently that Bobbie Gentry thought the most compelling part of the song was the nonchalance with which the family discussed the suicide—and I get that,” Cash said afterwards, having delivered a more lengthy analysis of the much-discussed and disputed Tallahatchie Bridge incident that is at the heart of the song. “I see why that moved her the most. Of course, we Philistines are just obsessed with what she threw off the bridge: The most obvious— and the answer with the most votes over the years—seems to be a baby. But, maybe it’s just too easy. Maybe it was a written vow—or a ring. But I love that people are still discussing this 30 years later. It gives me hope as a songwriter.”

WARNES ON COHEN: Reticent singer/songwriter genius Leonard Cohen, not surprisingly, proved unavailable to discuss his new Columbia album, “Dear Heather.”

Still, these are productive times for the 76-year-old Cohen’s repertoire. Rhino recently released “Judy Collins Sings Leonard Cohen: Democracy,” which of course includes her classic 1966 version of “Suzanne,” plus three new recordings. Former Cohen backup vocalist Perla Batalla has her own upcoming album-length homage.

Lucy, another one-time Cash backup singer, Jennifer Warnes, whose 1987 album “Famous Blue Raincoat” remains the standard for Cohen tributes, stepped in with her ever-insightful thoughts about her friend and mentor.

“Lucy is one of the most special people in company with Leonard, while doing something otherwise boring and simple—like sharing a cup of coffee—when I am struck by the possibility that ordinary life is art,” Warnes says. “Art being not something we do but something that we are, and the product we create flows outward from this place.”

As a singer, she brings her “complicated heart to his songs, and all my various parts have been given something to sing,” Warnes says.

“Non-Cohen songs often leave me wanting, unless their simplicity is quite profound,” she continues. “Leonard refers to ‘Blueberry Hill,’ for instance, as one of those great simple/profound ones. He didn’t write it, but during [his] many long hours in silent retreat, Leonard must have refined his understanding of the power of little things—how these fit into the big picture and how the delicate timing of words can release this understanding to others.”
Targeting Illicit Uploaders
New Service Identifies Piracy Source

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Internet security firm BayTSP is adding a tool to its arsenal in the fight against piracy.

The Los Gatos, Calif.-based company has debuted its FirstSource service, which identifies the first user who uploads copyrighted content to the eDonkey and BitTorrent peer-to-peer networks.

BayTSP (TSP stands for “tracking security protection”) says it has record label and studio clients but declines to provide specific names.

Though industry experts applaud FirstSource, they say the speed with which media files are being distributed on P2P networks means the service will not have a long-term effect against piracy.

“You can alert infringers early and hope that it has an impact. Unfortunately, the content may have already started to multiply exponentially,” says Eric Garland, CEO of P2P market research company BigChampagne. He says FirstSource “is another tool, but this kind of piracy is here to stay.”

According to BigChampagne, overall P2P use continues to grow. In November 2004, P2Ps had almost 7.5 million simultaneous users worldwide, up from 5.3 million the month before. Usage last year reached its peak in April, with about 7.6 million simultaneous users.

“Hopefully this announcement will reaffirm to individuals that they can’t be filing a subpoena with the individual’s ISP to learn the individual’s name and address,” Ishikawa says. “Our idea is that if you can make people understand that we can identify them as the first uploader, they run a very high risk of being held liable for damages incurred when the pirated files they made available are copied hundreds of thousands of times.”

The Motion Picture Assn. of America says FirstSource should make P2P uploaders wary.

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**Ninja Tune Ramps Up Licensing Efforts**

London-based electronic label **Ninja Tune** has been aggressive in the licensing department, employing two full-time staffers to "shop things as much as possible," says Jeff Wayne, who runs the company's North American office in Montreal.

This year Ninja Tune will issue a set of limited-edition toys, each sold with a 3-inch CD. The label will release two full-length CD editions of *Amon Tobin*’s soundtrack to the latest videogame in Ubi-Soft’s "Splinter Cell" series. In the last few years, Ninja Tune has licensed songs to more than a dozen games.

Yet the label is still selective in its ventures. "When I hear songs in commercials, I always get a dirty feeling," says Wayne. "Videogames are still the gold in line with the music industry. A lot of them are developed by good independent companies, so it doesn’t feel as gross. It’s better than selling novelty cars." Indeed, Ninja Tune products stay away from TV advertisements.

Wayne says there’s a constant struggle between his independent ethos and the need to find a wider audience for his recordings. "There’s a million holes in the theory, obviously," Wayne says, "but I would assume the majority of people buying Ninja Tune records are playing videogames as opposed to buying BMWs."

UbiSoft will release "Splinter Cell 3" in March for Xbox. Ninja Tune will issue a stereo mix of the CD this month in related sectors, and a 5.1 surround mix of the soundtrack will arrive in the spring. It’s a far larger roll-out than Ninja Tune typically gives its acts. Wayne says the "Splinter Cell" games sell about 2 million copies, and he wants to take advantage of that reach.

Wayne aims to have the album stocked alongside the game: "We’re searching for good indie game retailers," he says. "Most retailers are set in their ways, but we’re finding plenty who are adventurous." He says Ninja Tune retains the master and publishing rights of most of its catalog, making it easy to license quickly. Yet as major jump on the videogame handwagon, he fears Indies may lose that outlet. "Hopefully [videogames] won’t get to the point of major Hollywood movies, where songs are just paid to be in a movie and don’t make any sense.

**RECORD PACE:** Shares in New Hope, Minn.-based *Navare* closed Dec. 21, 2004, at $17.69, near the all-time high price ($18.08) they reached on March 29, 2004, the highest stock price in the company’s history. The stock price then fell back to $13.08. At the end of 2004, the stock rose back to $17.69. If the stock price continues to rise, the company could reach its historic high price.

**THE INDIES**

**By Todd Martens**

**tmartens@billboard.com**

**NYSE:** The U.S. stock market is the largest in the world, with a value of over $20 trillion. The NYSE is the main stock exchange in the United States and is located in lower Manhattan, New York City. The NYSE is a nonprofit organization and is the world's oldest stock exchange. It is also the largest stock exchange in the world in terms of market capitalization.

** stocks**

**NAVARE**

Navare was the big winner among publicly traded music companies in 2004. The company, which is based in Minneapolis, is one of the few companies that make money in the music industry. The company’s stock price rose 150% in 2004, making it one of the best-performing companies on the Nasdaq. Navare’s success is due to its strong focus on digital music, which includes downloads, streaming, and mobile music. The company has also been successful in licensing its music for use in videogames and other digital media.

**BIG JUMP AT BIG BOXES**

Moving to the mass merchants, Troy-based Kmart enjoyed the biggest jump. Its stock (KMR) more than quadrupled from its 2003 close of $23.95, finishing 2004 at $98.95. Kmart filed for Chapter 11 protection in January 2002 and emerged in April 2005, and the stock market rewarded its turnarounds. Kmart’s shares reached $109 in November 2004 before falling back to $50 by the end of the year.

**THE INDIES**

**By Todd Martens**

**tmartens@billboard.com**

**NYSE:** The U.S. stock market is the largest in the world, with a value of over $20 trillion. The NYSE is the main stock exchange in the United States and is located in lower Manhattan, New York City. The NYSE is a nonprofit organization and is the world's oldest stock exchange. It is also the largest stock exchange in the world in terms of market capitalization.

** stocks**

**NAVARE**

Navare was the big winner among publicly traded music companies in 2004. The company, which is based in Minneapolis, is one of the few companies that make money in the music industry. The company’s stock price rose 150% in 2004, making it one of the best-performing companies on the Nasdaq. Navare’s success is due to its strong focus on digital music, which includes downloads, streaming, and mobile music. The company has also been successful in licensing its music for use in videogames and other digital media.

**BIG JUMP AT BIG BOXES**

Moving to the mass merchants, Troy-based Kmart enjoyed the biggest jump. Its stock (KMR) more than quadrupled from its 2003 close of $23.95, finishing 2004 at $98.95. Kmart filed for Chapter 11 protection in January 2002 and emerged in April 2005, and the stock market rewarded its turnarounds. Kmart’s shares reached $109 in November 2004 before falling back to $50 by the end of the year.
Is Warner Music Group IPO On The Horizon?

It is widely believed on Wall Street that Warner Music Group is poised to do a public stock offering, maybe as soon as this summer. This comes on the heels of WMG's third successful refinancing (Billboard, Jan. 8) since an investment group led by Edgar Bronfman Jr. and Thomas H. Lee Partners (which includes Bain Capital, Providence Equity Partners and Bronfman's Lexa Partners) acquired WMG in February 2004.

In the latest refinancing, the company issued some $700 million in debentures, which was used to pay equity shareholders a $680 million return.

Since putting up $1.25 billion toward the $2.6 billion acquisition, the investment partners have taken out about $1.23 billion, leaving about $200 million in equity. As of Sept. 30, 2004, shareholders' equity was listed at $978 million, but that was before a $350 million payout announced in October and the latest $680 million return, which was split between a dividend and a share buyback.

While those numbers suggest that the balance sheet actually carries a negative net worth for shareholder equity, a source familiar with the situation suggests that some of the $350 million payout reported in October was made before Sept. 30 and that a small amount of shareholder equity remains in WMG.

If a financial company had acquired a retailer through a leveraged buyout and then somehow removed most of the equity, the majors would have squealed like stuck pigs, since they provide credit to retail.

That's exactly what happened when Sun Capital acquired Musicland Group by merely assuming the company's liabilities, without putting any equity in the chain. It took awhile before all the majors agreed to continue providing credit and other normal terms of trade to Musicland under the new ownership.

But in the current situation, there is little risk to retail, because of the WMG leveraged balance sheet. When dealing with suppliers, retailers' main concern is whether or not a particular label or distributor has the financial wherewithal to assume responsibility for returns.

With WMG expected to eventually achieve $500 million-$600 million in earnings before interest, deprecation and amortization, retail need not worry.

Indeed, what really shows the strength of the WMG turnaround is that sophisticated Wall Street institutional investors were eager to buy into the private debt placement of the company, even though they could see that the refinancings would leave behind a balance sheet that is debt-laden but almost equity-free.

With Wall Street's hunger for WMG securities, there seems to be a belief that an IPO is imminent. Listen to what Bishop Cheen, a director at Charlotte, N.C.-based Wachovia Securities, has to say: "The next shoe to drop is the proposed IPO. That could come as soon as the summer of 2005." WMG had no comment.

There is no guarantee that it will occur, but when one looks at the various bonds and notes issued by WMG, one of the offerings has an unusual call structure: If it's not exercised beginning on June 15, the actual premium to bondholders increases within three months, Cheen reports.

If WMG issues stock before the premium kicks in, it can buy back the bond at par, saving the company money and increasing shareholder value. That makes for a "motivating window," according to one Wall Street analyst, if the shareholders determine at that time that the market is favorable to a public equity offering.

Another executive familiar with the U.S. capital markets and the music industry says the word on the Street is that a well-known New York investment bank is already preparing for an IPO that will value WMG at $6 billion.

That's more than double the $2.6 billion paid for the company. The amount may sound far-fetched to some, but consider that Scott Sperling, managing director of Thomas H. Lee Partners, valued WMG at $3.5 billion only four days after his group acquired it. And that was before WMG initiated a restructuring that included topping off $250 million in overhead.

So far, the new management has shown that it is good at cutting costs, which is what the debt market has bought into. But is that enough to make an IPO fly? Another Wall Street analyst says that Bronfman and company are likely to be touting the new revenue streams from downloads and wireless when selling any offering.

"It will all be about the future . . . about Apple downloads and mobile phones," he says. "But they have yet to do anything that shows that they can grow the business."

That analyst is of course talking about whether Lyor Cohen and the management teams he has installed or inherited at the various WMG labels can spark market-share growth after years of erosion.

That remains to be seen, but it is clear that Bronfman and his investors have been betting on Cohen's track record as an integral part of the plan from the very beginning. If an IPO occurs this summer, it almost takes out of the equation the A&R factor and whether management can build the company, since it will still be too early to pass judgment.

"If they can get the company valued at even $3 billion in an IPO, with the initial investors already getting back almost their total investment already, Tommy Lee and Bain and company will look like geniuses to their investors," the executive familiar with the capital markets says.

CATCHING UP: The Sony BMG Music Entertainment Sales field staff has been set for a while, but Retail Track hasn't had a chance to report on it.

In Los Angeles, Gary Kelly is the sales manager, and Bobby Sherman is the marketing director. Christine Eichelberger is marketing director in Seattle. For Dallas, Drew Kanton is the marketing director, and Jerry Wilkie is the sales manager. In Chicago, Wayne Chiodo is the marketing director, and Tony Camardo is the sales manager, while Diane Steffens is marketing director in Detroit.

Coming east, in New York, Larry Feldstein is the marketing manager, and Steve Kennedy is the sales manager. In Atlanta, Chris Stone is the marketing manager, and John Hawn is the sales manager.

On the national staff, Paul Calabretta has been named senior director of sales, while Barry Levine is senior director of marketing. The label relations staff includes David Smith, John Conway and Patty Schreiber.

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Wireless Biz Ironing Out Music Kinks

BY ANTONY BRUNO

The outlook for mobile music in 2005 can be summed up in one word: more.

Wireless operators say they will introduce more content, more services, more music-optimized devices and more partnerships with music labels—which they hope will lead to an increase in customers and sales.

“A big part of [this] year is increasing our take rate and pulling in more customers outside of the hip-hop user base,” says Eileen Mercilliott, director of digital media products for launch’s album “Destiny Fulfilled.”

But the ultimate goal for the music and wireless industries is to enable more advanced music services that use broadband wireless networks and music-optimized phones as the means of distribution.

ISSUES IN NEED OF RESOLUTION

Both industries expect consumers to be able to purchase, download and play digital music on their wireless devices before year’s end. Behind the scenes, major efforts are under way to resolve the outstanding digital-rights-management issues that concern music labels. But the mobile industry faces other issues as well, including establishing a standard content rating system, managing support for various digital music file formats and working out business models with content providers.

Essential to the success of these initiatives is a close working relationship with the music industry, and wireless executives hope their counterparts in the music field will match their level of activity and commitment. Although labels receive the largest portion of revenue gained from mobile music services, some in the wireless industry are concerned about the music sector’s contributions to the market’s development.

“To date, the wireless industry has been doing all the leg- work, going to the labels and asking them to get on board with initiatives,” says Michael Gallelli, director of content and acquisitions for T-Mobile USA. “[The innovation] has been done by the wireless side, and I think it’s important for labels to start contributing to the innovation pool.”

The wireless industry recognizes that DRM concerns are largely responsible for the music industry’s careful pace.

“It’s a concern for everybody,” says Mark Nagel, director of entertainment and premium content for Circular. “It’s not something we’re going to let completely dominate the business, but it is something we’re working on.”

Another wireless industry initiative expected to gain traction this year is a technical rating system for content. Wireless carriers want to expand the range of content they offer subscribers, and at the same time they want to avoid overwhelming younger first-time wireless consumers. A rating system, they say, is necessary to ensure a smooth user experience, particularly when offering over-the-air music download services.

“It’s important to advise customers of the content they’re accessing, and it makes it easier to roll out edgier content if they understand what they’re getting,” Mercilliott says.

The wireless industry also hopes to resolve such traditional issues as competing file formats for digital music. But questions about business models, like how subscribers will be charged for wirelessly downloading music and how the revenue will be shared, remain the biggest hurdles.

“We may have a technical solution before we have a business model,” Gallelli says. “Publishers and labels have to find a way to work with each other so we don’t stall or hinder the pace of development. Future opportunities will require fast deployment and a willingness to try new business models.”

The music industry has devoted much time recently to finding solutions to licensing-rights issues. For example, EMI Music Publishing and Sony BMG Music Entertainment forged an agreement Dec. 17 that sets guidelines for clearing rights between the two companies for master ringtones, ringbacks and other digital delivery options (Billboard, Dec. 25, 2004). Warner/Chappell Music Publishing and Warner Music Group have also forged an alliance.

Digital Entertainment

No. 1: Nelly, left, and Tim McGraw’s duet refuses to die, far outpacing the rest of the Launch streams field during the past month.

LAUNCH:
Top 20 Streams


1 NELLY FEATURING TIM MCGRAW One in a Million universal 5,339,515
2 CIARA 1 2 3 Step JIVE 3,640,269
3 MARIO Let Me Love You Jive 3,132,706
4 EMINEM Like Toy Soldiers AMERICAN RECORDINGS 3,060,932
5 SIMPLE PLAN Welcome to My Life LA 2,886,020
6 EMINEM Need Love LA 2,565,958
7 GREEN DAY Boulevard of Broken Dreams WARNER BROS 2,513,371
8 SNOOP DOGGY Drop It Like It’s Hot GREEN DAY 2,494,408
9 DESTINY’S CHILD Say My Name LA 2,175,838
10 DESTINY’S CHILD Soldier Man LA 2,041,563
11 LINDSAY LOHAN Like It or Leave It 2,316,957
12 USHER FEATURING ALCIA KEYS My Boo JIVE 2,114,455
13 ASHANTI Only U JIVE 2,267,611
14 KELLEY CLARKESON Since U Been Gone LA 2,197,389
15 GWEN STEFANI What You Waiting For 4 Non Blondes 2,116,641
16 JESSE McCARTNEY Ivented Love JIVE 2,094,828
17 JAY-Z/LinkIN PARK Numb/Encore WARNER BROS 1,999,209
18 INO Baby I’m Still Blackout LA 1,923,264
19 FANTASY Truth LA 1,858,353
20 ASHLEE SIMPSON Lullaby LA 1,797,834

The top 30 tracks and video streams (unranked) for the two weeks ending Jan. 2.

Source: Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems

Digital Lifestyles Group is targeting the 33-million-strong teenage demographic with “hip-er,” a PC and media system designed by teens.

The system’s centerpiece is the hip-e “node,” a modular digital media hub that offers Internet access, instant messaging and online shopping. Users can access all hip-e content and services through a portal dubbed the “hip-e hangout,” which links to selected teen-oriented Web sites.

The node includes a built-in TV tuner with digital recording capabilities, CD/DVD player/recorder and MusicMatch digital music store connectivity. It also contains docking slots for such optional hip-e accessories as a 512MB MP3 player and a prepaid wireless phone with service from Sprint.

All of the elements are modular and interchangeable. For instance, the flat-screen monitor can be detached from the computer and hung on the wall like a TV screen. The unit’s speaker system can be removed and integrated with the MP3 player for a portable digital boombox. Digital Lifestyles says it designed the hip-e system after conducting focus group sessions with teenagers. This interactive philosophy also spills over to its marketing strategy. The company recruited more than 1,000 teens in the top 10 markets to host online sessions with their friends to promote hip-e.

The system retails for $1,700-$1,900, depending on the hardware bundle selected.

Mobile Dead

Deadheads may soon augment their mini-van bumper stickers with Grateful Dead images on their mobile phones, thanks to a partnership between mobile media application provider Summus and Grateful Dead Productions.

To mark the band’s 40th anniversary, the companies have made available a collection of classic Grateful Dead artwork and icons. Fans may also download more than a dozen videoclips selectively edited from the recently rereleased DVD “The Grateful Dead Movie” to install as mobile phone screensavers.
Creative Group’s 5.1 Boom

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NEW YORK—The growing demand for high-resolution, surround-sound audio mixing and sound design is vividly illustrated at Creative Group, a large and fast-growing technical and creative services provider based in Times Square.

Founded as a visual business, the privately owned Creative Group now features three identical surround mixing suites among the 18 studios in its 30,000-square-foot facility.

With a client base that includes media giants like Viacom, Disney and Time Warner, Creative Group makes audio recording studios look antiquated. To call its suites “cutting-edge” does not do them justice.

Indeed, the breadth of work the facility’s sound designers and clients can accomplish—and the speed at which it happens—is dizzying.

“I’ve done this 22 years, did a lot of major records in L.A., and I’ve done a lot of post-production,” says sound designer/mixer Troy Krueger, a veteran of recording studios including the Village, Sunset Sound and Sunset Sound Factory, all in Los Angeles. “This is hands-down the finest studio I’ll ever work in. Many people come back and say they’re the finest studios in New York, if not the country, for what we do.”

Krueger, with sound designer/mixers David Jaunai and Doug DiFranco, occupy Creative Group’s audio suites featuring Pro Tools high-definition workstations and a custom-built, 5-terabyte Rorke Data storage area network.

“We have these Pro Tools systems that are definitely on steroids,” says Krueger, who has programmed a database of 59 music libraries comprising 415,000 music cuts, as well as 215,000 sound effects. “I’m getting to the point where there’s no outboard gear that’s auxiliary to our mixing; it’s all internal plug-ins.”

Among Jaunai’s clients is IN Demand Networks, a video-on-demand and pay-view provider. It is a relationship that ensures more surround-sound work for Creative Group.

“They have two HD channels coming out, full-blown,” Jaunai says, “so everything on there is 5.1-channel.”

Creative Group’s own HD TV channel, Fangoria TV, is negotiating a carrier agreement. “We soft-launched on the INHD network, which is owned by IN Demand,” Creative Group president Joseph Avallone explains. “We started by broadcasting New York’s [Greenwich] Village Halloween parade in HD.”

Most recently, Creative Group announced the acquisition of assets of the Star-Log Group, publishers of the "Fangoria" and "Star-Log" horror/ci-fi magazines. The Star-Log acquisition adds another member to Creative Group’s growing family, which includes subsidiaries 91 East in Smith, Hampton, N.Y.’s L电ive Group (CT) in Bristol, Conn.; and New York-based design and production company Moe Greene Associates.

At a time when many recording studios are downsizing, Creative Group is averaging 25 projects per day at its Times Square headquarters.

“I have to provide a facility that makes the producer extremely productive,” Avallone says. “What we create has to be better than what he can get anywhere else, and I have to meet his price point. If I can do those things, I can be very successful.”

Schmitt Up For Five Grammys

Al Schmitt, winner of 12 Grammy Awards, is a multiple nominee for the 47th annual ceremonies, to be held Jan. 13 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

This year, Schmitt earned five mentions. Two are for best engineered album, non-classical, for Diana Krall’s “The Girl in the Other Room” and “Genius Loves Company,” which paired the late Ray Charles with various artists.

Schmitt’s three other nods are also for “Genius,” in the categories of album and record of the year (for the song “Here We Go Again”), as well as the inaugural best surround sound album award.

Topping off his Grammy-related endeavors is his appearance in “Tom Dowd and the Language of Music,” a nominee for best long-form music video.

“I thought it was a terrific effort and a very courageous effort on her part,” Schmitt says of Krall’s album. It is a departure for her because it features several original compositions.

“She deserves the right to do this; she’s been wanting to write for a long time and has been writing fabulous melodies.

Some of it was made at Avatar Studios in New York,” Schmitt adds, “but most of it was done at Capitol [in Hollywood], and we mixed it at Capitol.” Schmitt also mixed “Genius Loves Company” there.

But it is “Tom Dowd and the Language of Music” for which Schmitt reserves the most praise. Along with his uncle, engineer/studio owner Harry Smith, Schmitt calls Dowd a primary influence on his career.

“He just took me like a kid brother and taught me everything,” Schmitt recalls. “He was an amazing human, a giving guy, a fun guy to be around. I’m happy for the Dowd family that this recognition has come now, and young guys get a chance to see that this is all about what we’re doing.”

Schmitt says of Krall’s album, “It is a departure for her because it features several original compositions. She deserves the right to do this; she’s been wanting to write for a long time and has been writing fabulous melodies. Some of it was made at Avatar Studios in New York, but most of it was done at Capitol. I mixed it there. Schmitt also mixed ‘Genius Loves Company’ there.”

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ACQUISITION: Shortly before Christmas, Tokyo-based Yamaha Corp. announced that it had reached an agreement to acquire 100% of the common stock of Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH (billboard.biz, Dec. 22, 2004).

The acquisition includes Steinberg’s U.S. sales operations, Yamaha’s U.S. subsidiary, Yama\na\ Corp. of America, will over-
HMV Shuns iPod Users
Microsoft To Develop Software For British Retailer

BY TOM FERGUSON and JULIANA KORANTENG

LONDON—HMV’s new music download service will be available to U.K. consumers in the second half of this year—unless they happen to be iPod users.

HMV Group announced its plans for the service, which is being developed with Microsoft, in a Dec. 22, 2004, statement to the London Stock Exchange. A spokesman says HMV “will be offering a software situation that is not iPod-compatible.”

The British retailer says it is investing about $10 million (€19.28 million) in the launch, including capital and marketing costs. The service will be available at the retailer’s existing U.K. Web site, hmv.co.uk.

HMV has not begun negotiations with record companies about licensing repertoire for the service. Accordingly, no information on pricing has been issued.

The service will be based on software that will create a customized “virtual jukebox.” HMV says this will enable customers to “find, buy, enjoy and manage their music online in all one place.” Microsoft and HMV are developing the software, which will be available on disc in stores or as a download from the Web site. Songs downloads will be compatible with Microsoft’s Windows Media Audio standard.

A limited number of digital players are already available in HMV’s 200 U.K. stores, and the company is looking at expanding that range. Although HMV stocks Apple Computer’s iPods, the spokesman says that situation “will be reviewed.”

HMV currently offers downloads on its U.K. site through a deal with digital music service supplier OD2. However, OD2 has not been involved in the development of the new project. HMV says it is in talks with several companies to handle fulfillment and back-room functions. OD2 did not

(Continued on page 46)

UMI Opens ‘Factory’
New Division Connects Repertoire, Manufacturing

BY EMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—With the music business developing a wider range of physical carriers and digital platforms, Universal Music International has reshaped its manufacturing and logistics operations to better accommodate the needs of its creative units.

Central to the plan is the creation of the Virtual Factory, a London-based division that will link UMI’s repertoire centers and its manufacturing arm.

UMI VP of asset management Rahym Kress has taken the new role of managing director of Virtual Factory. The division has 18 staff in London and 20 in Hanover, Germany, the homebase of manufacturing operation Universal Manufacturing & Logistics.

London-based Kress reports to UMI executive VP/CFO Boyd Muir and executive VP of marketing and A&R Max Hole. Kress joined Universal 10 years ago and was named VP of asset management in September 2000.

Muir says, “The formation of the Virtual Factory is a progressive step to help the labels find the most effective route to a changing marketplace through manufacturing—whether physical or digital—and through our retail and distribution partners. Those partners, in turn, bring our music to consumers in all the various formats which they want today.”

Kress will act as liaison between the repertoire units and the division responsible for producing and delivering music to distribution and retail partners. Hence the dual reporting structure, according to a UMI spokesman.

Muir says Kress and his team have been instrumental in “the successful digitization of the company’s entire back catalog. He is uniquely qualified to manage the transition of our business in this complex, challenging and fast-changing area.”

For Hole, the creation of the Virtual Factory “will ensure that we can produce and deliver our repertoire in all current—and future—formats and through all distribution channels.”

Muir adds that the organizational changes position UMI “to deliver our repertoire to (Continued on page 44)
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**THE CANADA**

**ITALY**

**SPAIN**

**AUSTRALIA**

**SWEDEN**

**NORWAY**

**SWITZERLAND**

**HITS OF THE WORLD**

**NEW** = New Entry  **RE** = Re-Entry

Hits of the World is compiled at Billboard/London.
Field Leads F.O.D. Label Into U.K.

Canadian-born, British-based rock artist Chris Field is spearheading the independent F.O.D. label's arrival in the U.K. market with his debut album, "Yours Square." The set will be released Feb. 28, preceded a week earlier by the single "Make It Tonight," on which Field duets with English vocalist Sam Brown.

BMG is the best place for me to start this new chapter in my career," the label confirms that a new album recorded in the United States, will be released in mid-2005.

CHRISTIE ELIZER

NATIONAL EXPOSURE: U.K. rock act Grand National will make its North American live debut in March, with an appearance confirmed for the South by Northwest Music Conference in Austin and another in the works for New York.

The duo recently wrapped its first full U.K. tour in support of its debut album, "Kicking the National Habit," released in April 2004 by BBC Radio 1 DJ Rob Da Bank's Sunday Best label.

"There's always the cliché about how it's impossible to break America, so we're taking it day by day," Da Bank tells Billboard.

Sunday Best is negotiating a North American major-label licensing agreement for "Kicking the National Habit" and a separate distribution deal for its three other acts. U.K. distribution is by Vital.

Grand National's songs have "a timeless quality," Da Bank says.

"As I speak, they're writing the second album," he adds. "Although the first record has been out for a fair while, this is really just the start of the whole project worldwide."
Uni Ringtone Reversal
German Court: Song Fragments Require Secondary License

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR and EMMANUEL LEGRAND

HAMBURG—A German court ruling is forcing Universal Mobile, a division of Universal Music International, to rethink the way it licenses repertoire for use in ringtones it produces. The Regional Court of Hamburg ruled before Christmas that the use of compositions for monophonic or polyphonic ringtones is not covered by a license granted by collecting societies. Such tunes, the court ruled, require a secondary license from the publisher of the music, on the ground that they are an “adaptation” of the original works.

The case was brought in September 2004 by EMI Music Publishing Germany against Universal Music Germany. EMI argued that under German law, Universal’s mobile unit did not have the right to license works that had not been cleared by publishers.

Before the ruling, Universal supplied monophonic or polyphonic ringtones to German mobile companies, believing that the license granted by collecting societies was sufficient. The court’s judgment has not yet been made available in full to all the parties. However, legal experts suggest that by clearing ringtones as fragments of works that need to be treated as “adaptations,” the ruling vindicates publishers and authors.

Hallmark
Continued from page 41

first promotional Christmas music release in the mid-1980s and has continued each year since, through its advertising and promotion division. In 2005, the division will introduce its first exclusive Valentine’s Day album, Martina McBride’s “My Heart.”

Hallmark launched its year-round Hallmark Music line in 1998. The series originally consisted of contemporary instrumental pop titles and some classical releases. In 2002, the line was broadened to include popular vocal artists.

Somerset scored the Hallmark license following bidding by more than 30 companies. The decision to move to an outside source for a music line licensed under the Hallmark name and sold in its stores represented a significant change for the company.

“We felt they were doing music programs themselves, it was not their expertise, and they recognized that,” Somerset director of premium brands Jennifer Ainsley says. “They felt an outside company could do it better.”

A source tells Billboard that this was the position of EMI and publishers in general. “Like any adaptation, it needs to get the approval of the authors, and that should be done through their publisher,” the source says. “What the ruling says is that Universal was shopping ringtones with rights that it did not control.” The source says that most of the other ringtones into Germany have been seeking copyright clearance from publishers, and that the court decision should bring Universal to do the same. “We hope they’ll come to a decent view on this situation and work with [publishers] the way most of the other ringtones suppliers do,” the source says.

Intellectual property lawyer Jens Schippmann of Hamburg-based law firm Kamin & Wilke says the ruling is of “crucial importance.” He stresses that based on this ruling, the licensing of music works for ringtones “must always be determined on a case-by-case basis by applying for permission from the publishers representing the authors of the works.”

Hamburg-based Peter Ende, president of EMI Music Publishing Continental Europe, says, “This decision confirms the legal position of authors and publishers. It again stresses the key status of copyrights held by owners with respect to use as ringtones.”

Universal Music International says it plans to appeal the decision. “The legal questions on which the ruling was based were addressed in a summary manner, and the grounds for the court’s decision have not yet been presented to any of the parties,” the company says in a statement. It also points out that while Universal Music Germany wants to receive the judge’s ruling in full, it will be seeking adaptation licenses for other ringtones through intermedial agreements with publishers.

Master ringtones, which are original recordings of works, are not included in the ruling. However, a German publisher says they are also fragments of works, and therefore constitute an “alteration of the copyright,” which requires a specific license from the original owners through their publishers.

U MI
Continued from page 41

consumers irrespective of whether the format is physical or digital. The new division was announced before Christmas as UMI was realigning its senior management in this sector.

At Universal Manufacturing & Logistics, senior VP Cor van Dijk has become nonexecutive chairman. After 31 years with the company, he is taking what is described as “the first step toward retirement.” He continues to be based in Baarn, the Netherlands. UMI CFO Roger Morgan adds stripes as head of operations, reporting to Muir. Reporting to Morgan at UMI are Bodo Weichmann, managing director of manufacturing, and Yorck Rohm, managing director of logistics. They previously reported to van Dijk.

According to the UMI spokesman, Morgan will oversee the day-to-day operations of UMI, splitting his time between Hanover and London, while van Dijk “is still very much involved and will make sure that the transition is smooth.”

“Cor is a legend in his field—the consummate professional,” Muir says. “It’s gratifying to know that he will continue to represent Universal Music in a number of board positions, work on various projects and assist in the transition to UMI’s Virtual Factory concept.”
The ideal candidate will have a dynamic, outgoing personality and will have strong relationships in the music recording, production and manufacturing industry. This person must be familiar with technical and creative dynamics, business issues and leaders in the industry. Exemplary communication skills including presentation and consensus building are necessary.

Please forward your résumé to: Trish Ellis, The Wentworth Company, Inc.
Fax 310-732-2315 Wentworthjob23@wentco.com

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HMV Shuns iPod Users
Continued from page 41
return calls by press time.
Mark Mulligan, U.K.-based senior analyst/research director at Jupiter Research, says the industry should not be shocked that HMV has decided to take control of its digital-music operation.
“This isn’t a reflection of the service that O2I has been providing, but a natural progression,” Mulligan says. “HMV has a huge amount of retail expertise. It knows a lot about selling physical CDs online. So it’s natural for them to want to own the [digital] service for themselves.”
Mulligan says traditional brick-and-mortar retailers could be the dark horses in the increasingly competitive digital-music sector.

FOR THE MAINSTREAM CONSUMER
He notes that digital is still a young business that appeals mostly to early adopters. “The next stage in the sector’s growth is when the mainstream music consumer comes online,” Mulligan says. “Music is becoming more competitively priced, with lower margins for retailers; they now want to own the relationship with the consumer. HMV is basically saying that the time is right to make that move.”

According to HMV Group chief executive Alan Giles, the new service will offer “a unique opportunity to leverage the HMV brand, customer base and store network to establish a strong position in the newly emerging market for paid-for music downloads.”

Alistair Baker, Microsoft U.K. managing director/VP of Europe, the Middle East and Africa, adds: “I’m delighted that the partnership extends to the development of the player, which will be constructed by a joint team from Microsoft and HMV, combining the industry knowledge of the HMV team with our hardware development, product expertise and consulting skills of Microsoft.”

Stuart Rowe, HMV Europe’s London-based e-commerce director, is heading the development of the service.

Outside of Britain, HMV offers downloads on its Australian Web site through a deal with ninemsn, a joint venture between Microsoft and Australian media conglomerate PBL.

The HMV Web sites in Japan and Canada do not yet offer downloads. HMV will study the progress of the download service in Britain before making any decision on rolling it out to other territories.

The Game
Continued from page 13
as a high-school shooting guard took a backseat to the Game’s street life of stealing cars and dealing drugs.
Then the Game’s home was broken into on Oct. 2, and he was shot five times. While recuperating, he began studying the techniques of his rap role models, among them Dr. Dre, Easy-E, Jay-Z, Ice Cube, Snoop Dogg and 2Pac.

The result is “The Documentary,” initially titled “The Game, Vol. I,” the album weaves such themes as peace, truth and hope within its house music-influenced tracks. Besides Dr. Dre, producers include Kanye West, Just Blaze and Scott Storch. Guest artists range from Nate Dogg and 50 Cent to Floetry and Faith Evans. Even Dr. Dre does some rapping. (“Don’t ask me how I did that,” Game says.)

While he doesn’t like to dwell on the shooting incident, the Game also doesn’t apologize for the album’s often frank, autobiographical tone.

“The Documentary” is pretty much my life,” he explains. “There are 17 tracks representing the 17 years since I was put in a foster home. I’m on a straight path and have a son now. Music can be instrumental to a child, and I want to paint as positive a picture as possible. But this is my life told through me. There is graphic and violent language, but I’m not trying to glorify the lifestyle I led.”

The imaging/marketing package for “The Documentary” revolves around several heavy-handed attempts by out-of-town “tastemakers’ genuine response to the Game as an artist.” Interscope Geffen A&M head of sales and marketing Steve Berman says A.D.V that tells his story is also part of a limited edition collector’s package, of which 200,000 copies will be available at retail.

The Game will be featured in a print campaign on behalf of the Sean John clothing line, which is held by Sean “P. Diddy” Combs. It is said to tentatively kick off next month.

Then there is the rapper’s first-time acting stint in the forthcoming theatrical film “Millionaires Boys’ Club.” The independent movie, which he is putting together himself, also features Michael Williams (“The Wire”). The Game is currently shopping it around for a distributor.

Looking back, the Game has no regrets, because “my life has made such a dramatic turn. Rap is my thing now. I’m not a star or better than anybody else. I’m just a hip-hop artist in the rawest form, down to earth and approachable.”

Chesney
Continued from page 27
not anticipating anything,” he says. “I didn’t expect to do that, because I want to, and you’re supporting me because you want to. Whatever the fans want to buy, they buy.”

Chesney fans in six cities will have the chance to hear the album up close and personal when he plays another series of Reg in the Closet tour dates on college campuses, as he has done previously.

“We are still looking at dates and looking at colleges,” Chesney says of the shows, whose proceeds go to charity. The short college tour will give his band a chance to rev up before his regular tour kicks off in March.

ISLAND LIFE
Chesney is anxious for people to hear the album and says he’s grateful for the label’s low-key marketing plan.

“I really felt like I wanted it to be a project, totally for my fans,” he says. “For the first time as a person and as a songwriter I felt more confident about putting myself out there on a silver platter … I didn’t want to miss a beat as far as promoting my other stuff, because the big sound systems and the big crowds are very much a part of my life, but when people hear this record, they’ll hear a very much more hushed, laid-back Kenny.”

“My whole life is about time and expectation and schedules when I’m on the road, and there’s something about my life [in the Caribbean] that melts all that away. That’s the essence of this record.”

Listeners can hear the waves on the track “Somewhere in the Sun,” which is actually the only song not written in the Caribbean. Chesney penned the tune two years ago when snow and ice cancelled one of his shows in Austin, leaving him stranded on his bus in a Holiday Inn parking lot, longing for the islands. He wrote the song with his bus driver, Danny Tucker, and crew members Tim Holt and Dale Hobby.

Chesney wrote “French Kissing Life” after his exhausting 2003 Mar- garitas ‘n’ Senoritas tour. “Island Boy” is a portrait of a carefree friend who Chesney says taught him to live in the moment. “There’s Something Sexy About the Rain” is a sultry, romantic ballad inspired by another friend’s island date.

“I never knew under what circumstance or conditions or what life experiences are going to lead you to a song,” he says. “That’s what I love about this record, because I didn’t write one song thinking it was going to get played on the radio. I wrote every song from the heart and every song from my life experience or about a true living person.”

Chesney admits it’s difficult to assign a genre to “Be As You Are,” which he co-produced with Buddy Cannon.

“I’m still a country singer, but if you listen to the tracks of this record, I just wanted people [to feel like they were] on my boat when they heard it,” he says. “I didn’t necessarily want them to go to a honky-tonk. It isn’t rock’n’roll and it isn’t country. It’s just a bunch of cool songs.”

One known artist can draw fire from critics for trying something new, but he’s not worried. “Not slamming the artist who did this, because I think artists should be free to do what they want to do, but this is not a Chris Gaines proj- ect,” he says, referring to the album in which Garth Brooks adopted a pseudonym and rock persona.

“This new song Chesney. If critics don’t like it, I understand it. But deep down, everybody—no matter who you are—is suffering for the truth, and I’ve never made a more truthful record.”
Programming

Ford Puts Sirius In The Driver’s Seat

Billboard Radio Monitor’s Paul Heine reports that Ford is expected to sign up 1 million new Sirius Satellite Radio subscribers for its 2006 and 2007 model year vehicles. Aggressive marketing by Ford could help the No. 2 satellite broadcaster make up some ground lost to rival XM Satellite Radio. In December, General Motors signed its 1 millionth XM subscriber and said that 1 in 3 GM vehicles sold comes equipped with a factory-installed XM radio. GM currently offers XM in 50 car and truck models and has played an important role in making XM the leading satellite.

Ford and Lincoln Mercury will offer Sirius as a factory-installed option beginning this summer on four 2006 model year vehicle lines: Ford F-150, Ford Explorer, Lincoln Mark LT and Mercury Mountaineer. The automaker is targeting up to 17 additional vehicle lines for the Sirius factory-installed option, but those won’t come until the 2006 and 2007 calendar years. Ultimately, about 80% of all Ford and Lincoln Mercury vehicles will have Sirius as a factory-installed option.

Ford and Lincoln Mercury vehicles sold with factory-installed Sirius radios will include a six-month or more subscription to the satellite service. GM vehicles factory-equipped with XM come with a three-month trial subscription. When the trial period ends, roughly 60% of customers sign up for a paid XM subscription, according to OnStar.

SYKES OUT? John Sykes may soon be on his way out as CEO of Viacom’s Infinity Broadcasting, a position he has held since March 2002. So reports Katy Bachman at Billboard sister publication Mediaweek.

Joi Holland, who was named president/COO of Infinity in May 2003, is believed to be the leading candidate to replace Sykes. An announcement is expected by Jan. 20, when Infinity holds its managers’ meeting, according to sources familiar with the situation.

Sykes, who prior to Infinity served as president of VH1, is likely to take a new management position within Viacom.

SKIPPING TO DETROIT: Radio One has recruited R&B radio vet Skip Dillard as operations manager for its three-station Detroit cluster: R&B/WJDZ, ADW/N/T-DETROIT CLUSTER and WCHB. While the trio did not previously have an OM, Lance Panton had served as PD of WJDZ and WCHB until his recent exit.

“We’re just thrilled to have Skip as part of our organization,” says Carol Lawrence-Dobrusin, VP/GM for the cluster. “We’re looking forward to great things from him in this very competitive urban market.”

Dillard added: “Ever since programming [Clear Channel adult R&B] WXXD in the mid-90s, I’ve been sold on this city, its people and its radio scene. I’m really happy to be back for an opportunity to assist the great people at Radio One Detroit.”

Dillard was most recently PD at KBTB San Francisco, before it flipped from R&B/WJDZ to dance-leasing top 40. He has also programmed R&B stations in Buffalo, N.Y.; New Orleans, Norfolk, Va.; and Greensboro, N.C.

Dillard previously worked for Billboard sister publication PPM Monitor (now Billboard Radio Monitor) as R&B and top 40 managing editor.

BOUVAULT TO PEOPLE METER: As part of its strategy to speed the commercialization of its Portable People Meter technology, Arbitron announced Jan. 4 that it had named company veteran Pierre Bouvard to the new position of president of Portable People Meters and international. He previously was the company’s president of new ventures and international.

The new post consolidates responsibilities formerly shared by who retired at the end of 2004, and Owen Charlebois, the company’s president of U.S. media.

In his new position, Bouvard is responsible for introducing a PPM ratings service in the United States, according to Mediaweek’s Katy Bachman.

Arbitron, which has invested more than $80 million to develop the PPM, has been testing the portable, passive measurement device since 2000 in Philadelphia. The company is currently preparing to launch a demonstration of the TV and radio ratings service in Houston beginning in the second quarter of this year.

One of Bouvard’s main challenges will be to convince the radio industry that it’s time to move to electronic measurement. At least two major groups, Radio One and Cox Radio, have refused to participate in the Houston trial.

Bouvard reports to Steve Morris, president/CEO of Arbitron. Reporting to Bouvard is Jay Goyther, senior VP of domestic PPM marketing; Brad Bedford, VP of international PPM marketing; and Carla Carneiro, VP of Latin American marketing.

Linda Dupree, who is heading up Project Apollo, the company’s joint effort with Billboard parent VNU that combines the PPM with ACNielsen’s consumer panel, will continue to report to Morris as senior VP of product development, Portable People Meter.

David Lapovsky, executive VP of integration and implementation,
Stocks
Continued from page 5

Analysts are quick to point out that whereas most big-media stocks with music holdings were trading north of $70 per share five years ago, today they trade at half that amount. At the same time, leading radio and TV broadcasters saw their stock prices cool in the last year amid concerns over the challenge from new technologies like the Internet and digital video recorders.

"Media companies were more or less moving sideways," says Harold Vogel, an independent media analyst. "I don't think investors were all that impressed. These companies are looking tired, and they're finding organic growth to be difficult."

MAKING EFFORTS TO RECOVER

While growth remains a source of concern, the parent companies of the major labels all posted stock gains in 2004, continuing a slight upward trend that started in 2003. The stock of Universal Music Group parent Vivendi Universal bettered its 2003 finish by 32%, ending 2004 at $32.67. The stock movement was driven by the conglomerate's ongoing efforts to streamline its businesses and slash debt.

Sony Corp.—which completed its deal with Bertelsmann to merge Sony Music Entertainment with BMG—saw its stock price rebound from a disappointing 2003, ending the year up 12% at $18.96. EMI shares were up more than 68%, driven by improved operating results and ongoing speculation of an eventual merger with the now privately held Warner Music Group. EMI's stock ended the year at £2.64 ($4.95), after opening 2004 at $1.59 ($2.98).

As for Time Warner, owner of AOL and former parent of Warner Music Group, its shares ended the year up 8.1% at $19.45.

Broadcasters and live-entertainment specialists found themselves struggling. Stock in radio and touring giant Clear Channel Communications ended 2004 down 28.4% at $33.49, amid a flat year for the overall U.S. touring business and flat performance in radio.

Stock in MTV and Infinity Radio parent Vacom dropped more than 16% to $37.08 in a year filled with management turbulence and concerns about growth in the radio and movie divisions.

Univision Communications also slid in 2004, falling 26% year over year to $29.27. The industry's biggest gainers were linked to new distribution formats.

Shares in Apple Computer ended 2004 valued at $64.40, after opening the year at $21.37—a jump of more than 271%. Credit that to high-flying sales of the iPod digital music player and associated download purchases through iTunes Music Store.

Among other digital music retailers, Napster showed the greatest percentage growth, rising more than 95% to $9.36. During the course of the year, the company jettisoned its core CD-burning business to focus on digital music services and changed its name from Roxio to Napster.

RealNetworks, which launched an à la carte download service at the beginning of the year to complement its Rhapsody subscription service, ended 2004 up 15.9% at $6.02.

Shares in Loudspeakers Technologies—which acquired European digital music service OD2 during 2004—closed the year up 5% at $2.05.

Two companies that figure to have a growing presence in the digital distribution market in 2005—Yahoo! and Amazon.com—cooled slightly in the last year. Yahoo!, which acquired MusicMatch for $160 million, closed down 16% at $37.68. Amazon slipped 15.8% to $44.29.

SATELLITE SPARKS ACTIVITY

Some of the most actively traded stocks this year were in satellite radio.

Sirius Satellite Radio's stock bounced alongside a mountain of publicity late in the year from its mega-dollar deals with Stern and Karmazin. Its shares closed the year at $7.62 after starting at $3.16 in January—a gain of more than 141%.

Despite the hype surrounding Sirius, Wall Street continued to place its bets with rival XM Satellite Radio. XM shares ended the year at $37.62—up 43% from the end of 2003.

Promoter
Continued from page 6

is planned. The 176-page decision by Judge Robert P. Patterson Jr., says the plaintiffs failed to present evidence to support their antitrust claims or evidence of conspiracy in restraint of trade.

Creative Artists Agency and the William Morris Agency, along with independent promoters and producers JAM Productions in Chicago and Beaver Productions in New Orleans, were among the remaining defendants in the case.

The Agency for the Performing Arts, followed by Variety Artists, Clear Channel Entertainment and the Howard Rose Agency, had previously settled with the black promoters and were subsequently dropped from the suit. Sources say the settlements totaled in the tens of millions of dollars.

"CONSPIRACY" CHARGED

In November 1998, the plaintiffs filed a $700 million lawsuit against numerous booking agencies and concert promoters (most of the latter now under the CCA banner), alleging antitrust and civil-rights violations for "maintaining and profiting from a conspiracy to do business only with white promoters and to exclude black promoters."

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(Billboard, Nov. 20, 1998.)

"Because of an all-white concert promotion fraternity, the black concert promoters are systematically excluded from the promotions of concerts given by white promoters. . . . and top-drawing black performers," the suit alleged. All of the booking agencies and promoters named in the action are controlled by whites, the suit said.

The plaintiffs added that "the entrenched racism and exclusionary practices in the concert promotion industry which this lawsuit seeks to remedy are a repulsive vestige of another era . . . On some occasions, certain defendants have even ridiculed plaintiffs' demands, laughing in the plaintiffs' faces at the very suggestion of contracting with black promoters to promote concerts to be performed by white and major black artists."

But Patterson found no conspiracy to discriminate by any of the defendants. "The court concludes, after weighing all the evidence in this case and drawing all inferences in favor of the plaintiffs, that the plaintiffs have raised no genuine issue of material fact and that no rational trier of fact could find for plaintiffs on any of the myriad claims made in this action," Patterson wrote.

"Thankfully, the judge realized the same things we realized, that [the black promoters] were trying to extort us and black us," says Jam co-president Jerry Mic孔elson. "We feel fully vindicated. The court system really works."

The four promoter plaintiffs in the suit on flare-throwing during concerts Promoters Assn.—were Rowe Entertainment in Atlanta (Leonard Rowe), Sun Song Productions in New York (Jesse Bossman), Summit Management of Memphis (Fred Jones), and Lee King Productions of Jackson, Miss.

Rowe tells Billboard that Judge Patterson's ruling is not the end of the suit. "We're disappointed with the court's decision, and . . . we're working on an appeal," Rowe says.

The suit was marked by piecemeal in front of the Beverly Hills, Calif., offices of CAA and WMA. Well-known civil-rights activist Dr. Joseph Lowery, chairman of the Black Leadership Forum, also joined the case.

In 2001, high-profile litigator Willie E. Gary joined the legal team representing the plaintiffs in their suit for $47 million. At the end of 2003, the case he was handling was dormant.

Dowload Blitz
Continued from page 6

music via digital gift cards," says Susan Roberts, senior VP of new media at Universal Music & Video Distribution. "So I think we're seeing a response to the iPod sales over the holiday season but also the redemption of some of those gift cards."

Clara's "1, 2, Step," is the top-selling track on the current Hot Digital Tracks chart with 49,500 downloads. Four tracks on the chart surpassed the prior one-week sales record of 37,000 units, set by U2's "Vertigo" in October 2004.

On Niebo SoundScan's new Digital Songs chart, which combines multiple versions of tracks, Snopp Dogg's "Drop It Like It's Hot" sets a new collective sales mark with 57,500 paid transactions.

Pelé's track sales top 142 mil- lion downloads for 2004, not includ- ing full-album downloads.

Apple Computer's iTunes Music Store appears to be driving the bulk of the downloading volume because of the popularity of its iPod music players.

Apple declined to comment. However, the company recently an- nounced that it has sold more than 200 million downloads—both sin- gles and album bundles—since the introduction of iTunes in 2003.

Additional reporting by Silevo Pirotoluono in New York.
Bonus Week Boosts Biz

After a rough fourth quarter that saw the lead in album sales over 2003 slide from 5.8% at the start of October to as little as 1.2% the week before Christmas, the new year might just start off on the right foot.

As has been mentioned in this column and other Billboard pages during recent weeks, the way the calendar breaks adds a 53rd week to Nielsen SoundScan's 2004 tracking year, the first time that has happened since 1998.

The sales charts in this issue reflect that extra week. Since there was no 53rd frame in 2003, you will not see any references to the same week of last year on this page's Market Watch report. That said, it is appropriate to compare this week with the first frame of 2004, as both reflect weeks that followed a Christmas stanza, and if you do that, the latest New Year's Day week comes out a winner.

The week after Christmas 2003, OutKast's "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below" lead The Billboard 200 with 151,000 copies while industry-wide album sales stood at 15.6 million units. Those numbers trail comparables from the frame that followed Christmas of 2004 as Eminem's "Encore" leads the list with 198,000, 31% more than OutKast rang in the 2003 week. Album volume of 15.9 million units represents an uptick of 1.9% over the frame that followed Christmas 2003.

What makes the win even more satisfying is that the week's strongest album picture developed even as the sale of digital tracks went through the roof (see story, page 6).

That snapshot, like the year-end numbers of 2004 (see story, page 5), suggest that physical albums can remain vibrant, even as digital distribution grows. The way those numbers play against each other in the weeks and months to come will shape one of the most intriguing stories of 2005.

FINALLY: The No. 2 position on Top Pop Catalog represents the end of an era for Norah Jones' first album. The title hit its second birthday 45 weeks ago, but held on to current status for an extended stay because it never fell below No. 100 on The Billboard 200 until the post-Christmas sales frame. The album's 148-week tenure on the big chart represents the longest by any since Shania Twain's 1997 set "Come On Over" clocked 151 weeks.

During Jones' esteemed marathon, her "Come Away With Me" held the No. 1 slot on Top Contemporary Jazz for 143 consecutive weeks, the longest reign by any title since that chart bowed in 1987. For combined weeks on the big chart and the catalog list, it trails Pink Floyd's "The Dark (Continued on page 32)"

This Song's Been Around

Between 1974 and 1991, Daryl Hall & John Oates scored 34 chart entries on The Billboard Hot 100. The duo's 35th song to appear on the survey—its first chart entry in 12 years—is this week's Hot Shot Debut, a remake of the Spinners' 1973 hit "How Could You Fall in Love With Me?" (see story, page 6).

The new Hall & Oates single is the pair's fourth cover version to appear on the Hot 100. The others were the Righteous Brothers' "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'" in 1988, Mike Oldfield's "Family Man" in 1983 and a medley of the Temptations' "The Way You Do Things You Do My Girl" in 1985.

In 1972, "I'll Be Around" was the Spinners' first hit for Atlantic after their stint with Motown. "Around" was originally intended as the B-side to "How Could I Let You Get Away", which charted first. But it stopped at No. 77, as radio preferred the flip, which peaked at No. 3.

This issue, the Hall & Oates version is not only the highest new entry, it's the only new entry in a week where there are usually few or no debuts.

GOING DOWN: Just six weeks ago, Josh Groban set a record on the Adult Contemporary chart when "Believe," his song from the soundtrack to "The Polar Express," made a 19-1 leap, the biggest jump to the top in the history of this survey.

But with the holidays over and AC radio returning to non-Christmas fare, "Believe" drops 1-15. It's not a record for the biggest plunge, though. The week of Jan. 13, 2001, NewSong's "The Christmas Shoes" had a more dramatic decline, from 1-24.

"The Christmas Shoes" only spent two weeks in the top 10 and four weeks on the entire chart. The song debuted at No. 18, then moved 10-1-24. "Believe" had a longer stay in the top 10—five weeks in all, and all spent in pole position. That makes "Believe" the only No. 1 song in the history of the AC chart to spend its entire run in the top 10 at No. 1, never occupying any other position from No. 2 to No. 10.

X-PHILE: Now Sweden has fallen under the sway of the "Idol" franchise. Daniel Lindström, winner of the first season of the Swedish "Idol" TV series, has the No. 1 single ("Coming True") and the No. 1 album (a self-titled set) on the Swedish charts.

Meanwhile, in the United Kingdom, the winner of Simon Cowell's TV series "The X-Factor" has the new No. 1 single. Steve Brookstein is the second artist to have a No. 1 hit with "Against All Odds." In 2000, a version by Mariah Carey and Westlife topped the chart. The original, by Phil Collins, peaked at No. 2 in 1984.

TWO-STEPPING: "1, 2 Step" (Shu'auli-Music/LaFace) by Ciara featuring Missy Elliott is No. 2 on The Billboard Hot 100 for the second week in a row.

The song is tied with Len Barry's 1965 hit "1-2-3" as the highest-ranking song in the history of the chart with a title that begins with the digit "1."
| ARTIST | IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL | Title | WEEKS AT NUMBER 1 | WEEKS AT #1 | ISSUE DATE | Nielsen SoundScan | Chart Position | Sale Data Compiled by
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<td><strong>NEW 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>JOHN LEGEND</strong></td>
<td><strong>GET LIFTED</strong></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>JANUARY 7</td>
<td><strong>TOP 20</strong></td>
<td><strong>118.98 CD</strong></td>
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<td>Nielsen SoundScan</td>
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**HEATSEEKER IMPACT**

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<td><strong>The Chronicles Of Life And Death</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Life Like You Were Dying</strong></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>The College Dropout</td>
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</table>

Note: This chart represents the top 20 songs on the Billboard charts for the week ending January 15, 2005. The chart includes various musical genres and artists from different labels and dates. The chart is a snapshot of the music industry at that time, highlighting popular songs and artists.
Side of the Moon” by a mere 1.282, . . . , and counting.

RAP, ROCK and REEL MUSIC: Regular readers of this column likely recall that the week after Christmas has proved to be a strong one for rap-hardened edge, while soundtracks find good chart traction at the start of a new year. The Billboard 200 looks at those trends still hold true.

During my teen years, a well-meaning relative who knew that I was a music fan gifted me with a Cowills album, I cannot remember if I swapped it for the Beatles’ "Revolver" or Jefferson Airplane’s "Surrealistic Pillow," but that personal snapshot helps explain one of the reasons that rap and rock shine after Santa Claus splits. Kids trade in CDs they don’t want, or own, they already own, for ones they crave. Gift certificates also feed those beast.

In a week when most albums sell less than The Kites during the Christmas frame, rock’s Green Day and hip-hop’s Lil Jon & The East Side Boyz are poster children for post-Christmas uprisings, as both own the smallest declines by albums in the top 20. Both consequently soar. The former’s “American Idol” rises 9-2 as the album weathers a 39% slide, while Lil Jon’s "Crunk Juice" climbs 15-3 with a 34% sales drop. Those moves are instructive as we hear our sales charts behave in the early weeks of a new year. Is it more likely that an album loses fewer sales than those in neighboring rungs, rather than indicating an increase in sales. It’s no, only 13 albums on the chart sell more than they did, and more those of Christmas week (No. 141, up 128%)

CRADLE WILL ROCK: Developing artists represent another category that flourishes on the earliest charts of a new year, illustrated this week by Snow Patrol capturing Pacesetter honors on The Billboard 200 with a 192-91 jump as it scores a 14% gain. In a week when the Christmas charting album has both the largest unit increase and the biggest percentage growth, as “Garbage” does this week, the one with the second-largest percentage spike wins the Pacesetter.

Among the developing acts who make chart moves this issue: My Chemical Romance (101-48, down by only 1%), Korn (112-81, down 29%), Chevelle (122-82, down 26%), The Used (135-84, down 18%) and Interpol (119-136, down 23%).

You may have noticed that a lot of those bands rock, which ties into another of this week’s themes.
### Top Pop Catalogs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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### Top Heatseekers

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### Top Independent Albums

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Chart Oddities Follow Holiday Festivities

As our rankings on Hot Country Singles & Tracks move from Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems—provided detections to audience impressions (see story, page 6) and the post-holiday season playlist adjustments kick in, a handful of chart anomalies occur this issue.

With Christmas tunes stored away for another year, the return to normal programming leads to but three titles on the country chart earning bulletins. The first week of January usually gives us atypical chart movements, with some tracks falling a few spots while earning bulletins. But the switch to audience-based Billings makes for a more volatile list as the "last week" and "2 weeks ago" columns reflect the detections-based rankings from those issues. Although we have maintained an audience chart in tandem with the detections chart since 1997, the "weeks column" is based on the cumulated chart weeks for each title under the previous detections-based rankings. Further, some titles that appear as new entries this week actually clocked time on the audience list before the change—among them: No. 1 Shot Debut at No. 51. Pat Green's "Someone Between Texas and Mexico," which spent 15 weeks on the audience chart, while this week it moves 10-8 on the detections-based rankings.

POST-HOLIDAY RUSH: Mario's "Let Me Love You" holds at No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100 for a third week and posts near-record audience numbers with 171.2 million listener impressions.

"Love" is the fourth track in the history of the chart to surpass 170 million weekly impressions. It is third behind Usher featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris' "Yeah" (178.8 million) and "My Boo" from Usher & Alicia Keys (173.2 million).

The rest of the Hot 100 is immune to the post-holiday flush, as some older titles reboot and a new rebel, including Yellowcard's "One Thing" (35-29) and "Lean Back" by Terror Squad (39-31). Most titles gain points this issue, but as we normally do this time of year, we've raised the bullet criteria and rewarded only those titles that showed significant growth.

Titles from the formats that devoted the most air time to holiday programming—country, AC and adult top 40—benefit the most from the Hot 100. John Mayer's "Daughters" takes the greatest Gainer/ Airplay award with an increase of 5.8 million impressions, 3.6 million of which are derived from play at AC stations.

This is only the third time since January 2003 that a track that is neither R&B nor hip-hop has earned the airplay gainer honor. Both previous times occurred in the week following Christmas.

In the Jan. 11, 2003, issue, Faith Hill's "Breathless" was the champ, while Sheryl Crowe's "The First Cut Is The Deepest" took the title in the Jan. 17, 2004, issue. On the AC chart, "Daughters" jumps 21-11, which is a now peak for the track. The song is one of a few titles that reaches higher levels in both detections and AC chart rank than it did before the holiday influx.


HAMILTON HOPS BACK: The Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart increase of more than 100% at WBLS New York, which backed off the track and all its current fare during the holiday week. In fact, its gain in audience at that station (1.6 million) was larger than its overall gain on the chart (1.4 million).

Other tracks clocking 30 weeks or more and rebounding on the R&B/hip-hop chart include "Goodies" by Ciara featuring Petey Pablo (28-25), "Lean Back" by Terror Squad (31-28) and "If I Ain't Got You" by Alicia Keys (45-39), all of which hit No. 1 during 2004 and most likely enjoyed additional spins during New Year's weekend on stations' retrospective 2004 countdowns.

With the dearth of new releases.

Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks adds another notable distinction to this issue's chart abnormalities: the absence of any debut titles, the first time that has happened in the Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems era.
Continued from page 6

Bandier

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—The DVD format maintained its allure for consumers in 2004, when hardware sales and software shipments reached new highs, according to the Digital Entertainment Group. At the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, L.A.-based DEG announced Jan. 6 that more than 57 million DVD players were sold in the United States last year. That is a 10% increase from 2003. The hardware figures, which were compiled by the Consumer Electronics Assn., also revealed that more than 127 million DVD players have been sold since the format launched in 1997.

DVD player sales set a record in fourth-quarter 2004. More than 17 million players were sold during that period, a slight increase over the 16.9 million players sold in fourth-quarter 2003. DEG further reported that the total number of DVD households has reached 70 million and that about 45% of DVD owners have more than one player. The group projects that more than 80% of U.S. households will have at least one DVD player by the end of this year.

On the software side, DEG said U.S. consumers spent a record $21.2 billion renting and buying DVDs in 2004. Total home video spending, including VHS sales and rentals, was $24.5 billion, a 9% increase over 2003.

Retail DVD sales reached $15.5 billion, a 33% increase over 2003. Spending on DVD rental totaled $5.7 billion, up from $4.5 billion in 2003.

More than 1.5 million software units shipped in 2004, DEG reported, bringing shipments since 1997 to more than 2.9 billion discs. Software figures were compiled by Kaplan, Swoede and Simha on behalf of DEG.

The fourth quarter was also a record-setter on the software side. About $30 million DVDs shipped to retail, a 3% increase over the previous year’s fourth quarter.

DEG also announced the winners of its second annual awards in Las Vegas. Best Buy was named retailer of the year for 2004. The award was determined by votes from DEG members.

Three digital innovation awards, named for Emel N. Petrone, the late founder of DEG, were determined by a panel of product reviewers. The Sony Qualia 004 SXR projector won the Petrone Digital Innovation Award for sight, the Pioneer Elite DV-20AV1 DVD player won the Petrone Digital Innovation Award for sound, and the Denon 1779 receiver won the Petrone Digital Award for sound.

Five DEG creative excellence awards were determined by a panel of DVD reviewers. New Line Home Entertainment’s “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King Extended Edition” DVD was named theatrical DVD title of the year. Warner Home Video’s “Gone With the Wind: Collector’s Edition” won catalog title of the year.

The TV-on-DVD title of the year was Sony Pictures’ “Entertainment Weekly: Screeched Seasons 1 & 2.” The direct-to-DVD title of the year was Buena Vista Home Entertainment’s “The Lion King DVD.” The music-on-DVD title of the year was Universal Music Group’s “Bon Jovi—This Left Field Right.”

Nicoll dismissed as “nonsense” reports that the succession plan was announced because Bandier, 63, was planning to acquire EMI Music Publishing and was rebuffed. While he remains at EMI, Bandier says he would not be permitted to make a public acquisition of outside publishing catalogs. However, he will be free to do so in 2008.

The announcement surprised many in financial circles. “It is not something we anticipated,” London-based UBS analyst Helen Snell says. “But it looks like a good deal. It will keep Martin in the business for some time, while Roger Faxon will gradually play an increasing role.”

Nicoll says the decision to begin the process was facilitated by the fact that Bandier and Faxon worked together already and have mutual respect. “Their relationship is a proven one,” he adds.

Martin Stewart, CFO of British Sky Broadcasting Group, replaces Faxon as EMI Group CFO.

Bob Faxon will remain in his post as the publishing unit’s U.S. president, and no other personnel changes are expected, a spokeswoman says.

Bandier has EMI Group’s most lucrative financial package. According to the company’s 2004 annual report, he paid a total of $5.318 million ($6.24 million last year). The base salary of $1.819 million ($3.42 million) was augmented by benefits and incentives worth $1.55 million ($2.74 million).

Faxon’s full remuneration as CFO reached £850,000 ($1.66 million). The publishing unit annually contributes about 35% to the overall group’s profit, an EMI spokeswoman says.

Nicoll declined to reveal the financial terms of Bandier’s contract renewal. He says they are “appropriate terms that I am comfortable with, and so is the board.”

Bandier and Faxon say they are looking forward to working together again. “We had fun the last time we did it: it will be great fun now,” Faxon says.
Tsunami
Continued from page 1

More than 155,000 people were killed in the disaster. Relief organiza-
tions say it will take years, if not decades, to rebuild affected areas.

In recent days, artists have an-
ounced new benefit concerts and recordings on a continuous basis. Additionally, major music corpora-
tions and radio groups are putting together fundraising efforts that will likely stretch into millions.

Artists lending their names to the cause will also help raise additional millions for relief agencies.

Celebrity involvement “has a huge impact, because it helps edu-
cate the public with what we do and what our resources are,” says Karen Ogden, development officer in dis-
aster fundraising for the American Red Cross.

One of the first acts to respond to the disaster was Linkin Park. The band donated $100,000 to the American Red Cross through a new fundraising initiative, Music for Relief.

“Everyone has a responsibility to get involved,” Linkin Park singer Chester Bennington stresses. “But ultimately, it all comes down to responsibility, because bands like us have fans who have supported us and who have given us this blessed life, and we have an obligation to give back.”

Here is a look at selected efforts

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The mother said her heart broke when her daughter looked at her and asked if they were going to die. Luckily, that family made it.

Q: What are the long-term prospects for Sri Lanka?
A: Aside from the immediate medical con-
cerns and disaster relief efforts, obviously there will be long-term reconstruction efforts needed to rebuild the roads, homes and hotels. Tourism in Sri Lanka had recently increased due to the ceasefire. However, I’m guessing the war will likely decline and the entire economy dependent on tourism will suffer.

Also, entire fishing villages were wiped out. The price of fish has dropped precipitously, as people are worried about the animals coming back. I’d say that even if the animals only had a one-
minute warning, that would have been enough time to get far enough inland.

They are also talking about a giant mental health issue that they are unprepared to handle.

Post-traumatic stress, survivors’ guilt. I saw an article which compared the mental health con-
sequences to 9-11, except they do not have the necessary mental health infrastructure here.

BILL HOLLAND

www.americanradiohistory.com
Tsunami

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dialogue has been extremely positive,” Universal Music India managing director Rajat Kakar says. “The extent of pain and suffering in the tsunami-ravaged region is extremely distressing,” he continues. “Our employees and partners in the affected parts of South India and our associates in Sri Lanka are safe and healthy, which is a small added relief measure, which is a daunting task.”

• In France, Universal Music will release a charity compilation album Jan. 17, with tracks from such acts as Florent Pagny, Calogero, Johnny Hallyday and Isabelle Boulay, Zazie and De Palmas.

OTHER LABEL INITIATIVES

• In Asia, Hans Ebert, Hong Kong-based EMi Music South East Asia executive director, tells Billboard that EMi is working with Pan-African broadcaster Star TV to create a public service announcement “to bring attention to the ongoing work of the various relief organisations and how everyone should give generously and support the efforts of UNICEF. Oxfam, the Red Cross, etc.”

The PSA, which will begin airing across the continent, will feature messages from EMi artists. EMi hopes to adapt the PSA to other territories.

EMI Group made a corporate donation of $1,000,000 ($1.87 million) to UNICEF. Additionally, the company will match employee donations up to a maximum of $500,000 ($397,438), with proceeds also going to UNICEF.

UMG and Universal Music International are coordinating a relief plan with their artists and affiliated companies. “The response is about rebuilding schools, villages, towns, communities,” Ebert says. “Everyone here feels the same way. We know people who have friends and relatives who have died or are missing. All of us are affected, even one step removed,” says David Loiter-ton, Universal Music South East Asia VP of strategic marketing, who is based in Hong Kong.

• EMI Music Group is making $1,000,000 in donations to AmeriCares and Save the Children. It will also match employee contributions of up to $20,000 with proceeds split among the EMI International Relief Fund, Save the Children, UNICEF and Sony BMG Music Entertainment.

Sony BMG Music Entertainment is exploring a number of initiatives to benefit those affected in specific years by a company donation to an international relief organization, according to a Sony BMG representative.

BROADCASTERS

• Chicago radio and TV broadcasters handed together Dec. 29 to air PSAs throughout the day urging listeners and viewers to donate money to the local American Red Cross.

• Starting Jan. 3, Clear Channel is airing PSAs on its more than 1,200 U.S. stations asking for support for the United States Fund for UNICEF.

• On Jan. 5, U.S. radio stations observed a three-minute silence in honor of those who died in the tsunami. Some stations that did not fall silent, such as London’s 95.8 Capital FM and Kiss 100 FM, instead broadcast details of how listeners could donate to the appeal.

• On Jan. 10, representatives of all 10 Los Angeles Viacom/Infinity media partners, including eight radio stations and two TV stations, will be at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena and Knott’s Berry Farm in Buena Park collecting donations. Contributions can also be made at the offices of the stations and through individual station Web sites. Events include a free concert at Knott’s Berry Farm by saxophonist Dave Roz, who is also morning co-host on smooth jazz outlet KTWV. The 7:30 p.m. show is free with a suggested $20 donation. Roz says to expect special guests.

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‘You Can’t Run A Company The Way We Started Anymore’

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

Great risks often yield great rewards. Vicki Mack Latalaide typifies that philosophy.
In 1992, the veteran music executive had the faith to launch her own label, GospoCentric, which has become one of the industry’s most successful independent ventures.
Its major claim to fame has been the platinum success of gospel phenomenon Kirk Franklin, whom Mack Latalaide signed in 1992. Franklin issued four albums on GospoCentric before exiting late in 2004 to start his own label, Fo Yo Soul Entertainment (Billboard, Oct. 30, 2004).
In October, Mack Latalaide surprised the gospel music community by selling GospoCentric Records LLC, which includes the GospoCentric Records and B-Rite Music labels, to Zomba Label Group. She has remained as president, reporting to Tom Carrabba, senior VP of sales and marketing/GM of Zomba Label Group.
“Knowing Vicki and her passion and her entrepreneurial mind-set, there’s a lot of similarities between GospoCentric and Zomba. This is a perfect fit.” Carrabba says. “A lot of people in the music industry try to become an entrepreneur, but she’s one that has actually done it.”

Q: How did you get started in the music industry?
A: My first job in the music industry was as an intern for RCA Records. [They] gave me a stool, and that was to count Elvis inventories. There weren’t computers back then. Everything was manual. I was an inventory specialist, and we counted product. I loved it. I got an appreciation for sellers like Elvis.

Q: What were some of the things you learned early in your career that helped shape the way you operated GospoCentric?
A: I got hired on in sales at RCA. The thing that stuck with me was working Dolly Parton and listening to people like [longtime RCA executive] Joe Galante and some others talking about strategies that would bring country to mainstream. That’s how I learned the dual-marketing approach, and that’s why GospoCentric has been so successful in crossing over gospel.

Q: Tell me about your stint as an artist.
A: The name of the group was Rejoice. We weren’t on a label. I wouldn’t have signed me to a label [she laughs]. We were a group of three girls who would take the songs of the day—this was in the 70s—and change them into Christian kind of songs.

Q: Why did you decide to start GospoCentric?
A: [My daughters listened to] the Imperials and they were OK with that, but it wasn’t competing with Bobby Brown. That’s what the kids wanted. They said I was in the music business and for me to do something about it.

Q: Did you have any idea how big Kirk Franklin would be?
A: Absolutely not. I thought this was a great record and it would sell about 50,000 units, but it did that in one month. That’s when I knew something was happening. It did 50,000 in one month, and about a year or so later it did 100,000 in one week. [My husband] Claude and I took everything we had and kept putting it back into the project.

Q: Who was your distributor when you broke Franklin?
A: The distribution deal was with Sparrow, which was strictly Christian distribution at the time, and . . . right after we had the distribution deal [with them], they were purchased by Liberty. Liberty was [owned] by EMI. So, very quickly we went from just having Christian distribution to Christian and secular distribution.

Q: How much heat did you take for releasing gospel music that was so edgy and worldly in its musical approach for the time?
A: I had people tell me I was the devil. We got a lot of hate mail and [were] told we were going to hell.

Q: What were some of the tactics you employed at GospoCentric that made the label so successful?
A: The dual-marketing approach [targeting gospel and mainstream consumers] and not playing by any of the rules. We put more money into our projects. We would do whatever we needed to do for our artists.

Q: You have always been a strong advocate for women in business. What has spurred your convictions?
A: A woman should be able to get her education, graduate, have that in place and raise a family on her own terms, take the time to do it and still get paid.

Q: What’s been the most difficult thing about being a woman heading up her own label?
A: When I first started, I had people come to me and say, ‘Why do you want to do this? You should be a good secretary,’ or ‘Women should be at home.’ I even had a man that told me I reminded him of their maid, and ‘Boy, could she clean a toilet,’ I’ve had stuff like that.
But then on the other hand, I’ve had people like [President Music Group president/CEO] Terry Hemmings . . . and [Zomba Group president/CEO] Barry Weiss—they always kind of got me. They treated me like another guy in the business, and I like that.

Q: Is it true some people did not believe you owned the label?
A: When I started in gospel there were no women in gospel in any kind of [executive] positions. VP or president and owner of anything. They were mainly secretaries. That was expected of you . . . Most people could never understand that I was the owner. People would say that I was fronting the company for someone else.
I had to have bodyguards at one time. I was being threatened that people were going to come and shoot me if I didn’t hand over Kirk Franklin’s contract.
Once SoundScan came in, that was the kiss of death for me, actually. It was great for the artists, because you could record the sales. For me, it just made me a mark, because we were getting so much of the market share, a lot of people had a lot to say about it. There were people at that time who felt they could just come in and take over my company.

Q: How did you remedy that?
A: One of the things I found . . . helpful when you have problems like that was trying to align myself with credible record companies, and try to make sure people don’t come after you the same way.
When you are black and a woman and everybody knows you did this with $6,000 of your dad’s postal retirement money, and you’ve got records going platinum in a business when nobody else is doing that, it’s very difficult.

Q: What prompted you to sell GospoCentric?
A: The music business has changed. I’m 50, which actually I’m very excited about because I’m at a company with Clive Davis, so I’m a young girl and that has really encouraged me in terms of my future, but . . . the industry changed so much. It was beginning to be very difficult. You can’t run a company the way we started GospoCentric anymore.

Q: If you started GospoCentric today with that $6,000, could you have grown it to what it has become?
A: No. I do not think I would be able to do that today, because the industry is so different. Retail is so different. The computer age is here. Downloading is here. I might have done something, but no, I wouldn’t be able to do what we’re doing now the same way. No way.

Q: What do you think about Franklin starting his own label?
A: Nobody deserves it more than him . . . When we started with him, he was a kid. Now he’s a businessman. That’s great.

Vicki Mack Latalaide: Career Highlights
1975: Started as an intern at RCA Records in Los Angeles and worked her way into the sales department.
1978-1980: Worked in marketing and promotion at Lait Records and was instrumental in the careers of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Barbra Streisand.
1988: Hired by Sparrow Records, where she developed and directed Sparrow’s gospel division.
1992: Launches GospoCentric in her garage with $6,000.
2001: Sells GospoCentric to Zomba Label Group.

The Last Word

A Q&A With Vicki Mack Latalaide

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