UMG's Mobile Move

New U.S. Division To Tap Wireless Market

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—In the latest sign of growing business opportunities for music companies in the North American cell phone market, Universal Music Group is launching a division dedicated to mobile entertainment in the United States. Billboard has learned. Universal Music Mobile U.S. will serve as a separate domestic complement to Universal Music (Continued on page 61)

HOB Still Sold On Biz

BY RAY WADDELL

When House of Blues Entertainment surprisingly announced last month that its concert division might be for sale, it may have appeared that HOB was bailing out of a tepid concert promotion business.

HOB released a statement Dec. 20 saying that the company had retained global financial services firm UBS to evaluate a potential sale (billboard.biz, Dec. 20, 2004). (Continued on page 61)
Introducing the Collaborative Business Experience

Whatever the situation, whoever the opponent. Today, success in tennis or business is almost impossible without collaboration. You need to work with someone who knows and understands you, someone who listens to what you really need and with you, defines realistic objectives and the ways to reach them. Someone who will share with you knowledge, practices, risks. And Results. Discover the Collaborative Business Experience, discover Capgemini, a partner you can count on day after day. A partner who is committed to helping you achieve faster, better and more sustainable results. And puts it on paper.

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DARREN CAHILL
Andre Agassi's coach
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Events Calendar

Billboard Music Conference & Awards April 25-26 at the Hotel InterContinental, Miami Information: 646-654-4660
Billboard/American Urban Radio Networks R&B/Hip-Hop Conference & Awards Aug. 3-5, Atlanta Information: 646-654-4660
Billboard Dance Music Summit Sept. 19-21 at the Union Square Ballroom, New York Information: 646-654-4660

www.americanradiohistory.com
Brazilian Girls Forecast: Catching On, With Verve

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

The Brazilian Girls are not Brazilian—nor are they all girls. But one thing is certain: The New York-based quartet is an essential element in the Verve Music Group's relaunch of the legendary Forecast label.

An international priority for the label, the Brazilian Girls' self-titled debut album, due Feb. 1 (two weeks earlier at Apple Computer's iTunes Music Store), will be one of Verve Forecast's first offerings. It carries a suggested retail price of $14.98.

To be sure, "Brazilian Girls" is poised to set the tone for the imprint's relaunch.

In its new incarnation, Verve Forecast will be home to the non-jazz artists signed under the Verve Music Group banner. In this way, it will focus on the ever-growing adult contemporary market—just don't confuse it with your mother's adult contemporary.

"We don't want to use the adult contemporary label as defined by radio," Verve Music Group president/CEO Ron Goldstein says.

For Goldstein, adult contemporary refers to a college-age-plus audience that buys a great variety of music, whether it be Buena Vista Social Club and Josh Groban or Diana Krall and Norah Jones.

The Brazilian Girls' diverse, left-of-center sounds—equal parts Latin, dance/electronic, dub, jazz and pop—perfectly captures the spirit of this educated, Starbuck-sipping audience.

Also suiting this spirit are the label's other signings: blues rocker Susan Tedeschi; Old 97's lead singer Rhett Miller; former V2 artist Teddy Thompson; Sacramento, Calif.-based singer/songwriter Jackie Greene; and Italian singer Chiara Civello. (Civello's Russ Titelman-produced album, 'Last Quarter Moon,' also arrives Feb. 1.)

Indeed, during the last few years, this adult music market has grown in CD sales and radio spins. This has not been lost on Goldstein.

"Just look at the marketplace," he says. "On the jazz side, in light of declining sales over the last five years, we have to take another look at our approach."

Goldstein continues, "Today, it's not a big leap for some jazz artists to cross over into other markets. Look at Diana Krall—not all of her success is from the jazz audience."

In addition to Krall, Verve has had crossover success with

(Continued on page 11)

Breaking Into The Big Screen

More Recording Artists Are Scoring Films

BY CARLA HAY

NEW YORK—Breaking into film composing is often more difficult than getting a record deal. The same dozen or so top composers get the lion's share of the A-list films, and any newcomer must compete with an array of seasoned composers who have a foothold in the business.

But such artists as Mick Jagger, Wu-Tang Clan member RZA and electronica artist BT have crashed into the elite world of film-score composing, which has traditionally been dominated by composers who have had formal training in classical music.

This new breed of film composers who first gained fame as recording stars are finding that as the movie industry has evolved, it has become more open to hiring nontraditional composers to write scores.

"Part of it is name value: The film-makers might want someone who already has a built-in audience," Lions Gate Films senior VP of music and soundtracks Joel C. High says. "These types of composers also bring

(Continued on page 46)

Gremlin Is Coming

Music Service Inks Deal With Universal

BY ANTONY BRUNO

LOS ANGELES—Universal Music Group has become the first label to reach a digital distribution agreement with MusicGremlin, a New York-based company preparing to launch a direct-to-device wireless music service later this year.

Sources close to the deal say the agreement includes all digitally enabled tracks in UMG's catalog; UMG declined to comment.

What sets MusicGremlin apart from other online music download and subscription services is that it bypasses the PC as the center of the digital music experience. Instead, MusicGremlin believes customers will purchase and download digital tracks directly to a wireless Internet-connected digital music player loaded with its proprietary software.

The company is in discussions with several device manufacturers to

(Continued on page 59)
Online Sales’ Leap Year
IFPI Cites Jump In Legit Digital Retailers, Tracks In 2004

BY JULIANA KORANTENG

LONDON—The legitimate digital music business shifted from niche market to mainstream in 2004, with more product available through more platforms than ever before. But in the wake of this positive news, labels warn that the online piracy battle will intensify this year.

For the first time, labels are reporting significant revenue from online sales. According to “IFPI: 2005 Digital Music Report,” issued Jan. 19 by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, record companies worldwide earned an estimated $300 million from online sales in 2004. That amount is expected to double this year.

The number of digital tracks sold in 2004 was more than 10 times that of the year before, with 200 million sold in the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany alone.

The IFPI report reflects a newfound confidence among record companies in the potential of online revenue. In the report, research firms including Jupiter Media and Forrester Research forecast that digital music will account for 10%-25% of global music sales during the next five years.

Barney Wragg, VP of labs at Universal Music International in London, tells Billboard: “We’ve made really good progress in 2004. In the U.S., we saw business growing nicely in 2003, then we saw the same thing outside the U.S. last year. But there is still a threat from piracy. We’ve got to continue the fight, because it is going to be a threat that will morph. Once you solve one problem, another will appear.”

MORE LAWSUITS ON THE WAY
The fight against illegal digital distribution will continue, the IFPI confirms. “There’s going to be more litigation to come in more countries in 2005,” chairman/CEO John Kennedy said while presenting the report.

He added, “It has been tempting to be complacent over the years. Now we’re putting piracy very high on the agenda in 2005. Litigation is necessary, although we know it isn’t popular.

More than 7,000 lawsuits have been instigated in North America and Europe. “We had to tackle piracy,” Kennedy said. “It was not going to go away on its own accord.”

Other weapons the IFPI uses have included awareness campaigns in the general press and at academic and government institutions in 21 countries. On the information side, the IFPI Web site pro-music.org explains why artists need copyright protection and provides a global directory of legitimate download sites. Additionally, the organization’s affiliates in 10 international markets have delivered 45 million instant messages warning individuals. (Continued on page 59)

Hatch Back In Driver’s Seat Of Senate IP Subcommittee

BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—In a legislative move that should benefit the entertainment industry, sources say Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, will head a reconstituted intellectual property subcommittee.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Arlen Specter, R-Pa., is expected to reinstitute the subcommittee at Hatch’s request.

The move has yet not been officially announced, but a committee source says, “It certainly looks that way.” It could take a few months for the news to be made public.

The change should enable Hatch, Specter’s predecessor, to continue to guide copyright and anti-piracy public policy. He is considered one of the most knowledgeable lawmakers about IP issues and is particularly active on record industry and artist concerns on the Hill.

Hatch’s longtime colleague, Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., is expected to sit on the reconstituted subcommittee as ranking minority member. Hatch and Leahy co-sponsored almost all Senate copyright legislation in the last decade.

“It was smart of Chairman Specter to take advantage of Senator Hatch’s expertise,” says Paul Skraustub of Palumbo & Cerrell, who lobbies for ASCAP.

Recording Artists’ Coalition lobbyist Margaret Cone adds, “It makes a lot of sense legislatively.” In 1995, when he became chairman of the full Judiciary Committee, Hatch revamped the IP panel, which had been chaired by Democrats, preferring to be at the helm of IP legislation himself.

For decades, the subcommittee was (Continued on page 59)

New Publishing Column Bows

A new column joins the Billboard lineup this week. The column, Notable News, will appear every other week in the Songwriters & Publishers section (see page 40). Notable News will focus on the business of music publishing, examining such topics as copyright law, digital rights, licensing, rate negotiations, catalog sales, alternative revenue sources and more.

The newsletter will be written by senior writer Susan Butler, who brings to Notable News her unique perspective as a former industry lawyer. During her 21 years in practice, Butler represented independent artists, record companies, independent publishers, labels and digital startup companies. Notable News will alternate in the Songwriters & Publishers section with Words & Music, which will continue to be written by longtime Billboard contributor Jim Beissman. Now biweekly, Words & Music will focus on the creative side of music publishing, with an emphasis on songwriters, composers and catalog exploitation.

Butler will continue to write her biweekly Legal Matters column in Billboard. She also serves as editor of the Entertainment Law Weekly newsletter, available online at entertainmentlawweekly.com.
Effanel Deal Enables XM
For Live Broadcasts, Remotes

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NEW YORK—XM Satellite Radio has acquired Effanel Music, a New York-based mobile and remote recording company. Effanel will be renamed XM Productions-Effanel Music, founder Randy Ezratty tells Billboard.

Founded in 1981, Effanel has recorded live performances from such events as the Grammy Awards, the MTV Video Music Awards and concerts by U2, Dave Matthews Band, Santana and Madonna, among many others.

More recently, Effanel has worked with XM to provide live broadcasts of events including Phish’s three-day Coventry Festival and the Vote for Change finale concert, both in 2004.

The acquisition, terms of which were not disclosed, demonstrates XM’s commitment to live content, according to executive VP of programming Eric Logan.

CONSISTENT QUALITY

Logan says that live music programming “is an integral part of what we do to differentiate ourselves from other radio.”

“When you talk about live content, origin points and things of that nature,” Logan adds, “you figure out quickly who the pros are in this area. It didn’t take long before we found out that there was one name that kept coming up. Time and time again, that was the reason why the live content was always sounding so good. It was Randy’s company.”

Ezratty says he was ready for a change, despite a banner year for Effanel.

“It was time to reinvent this thing and develop a new model that had opportunities that went beyond my vision and the abilities of a specialty company,” he says. “So I took advantage of the momentum and the kind of year we were having and reached out to a number of different entities.”

In addition to landing XM as a client, Ezratty also became a subscriber to its satellite service.

“I really immersed myself in the service and became addicted,” he recalls. “It’s extraordinary. At the same time, they had had a good experience with us on a few jobs and were focusing on getting some consistency in their live programming and making a statement—establishing in the artist community that they were seriously committed to serving artists.”

Effanel’s flagship recording truck, known as L7, will be renovated and its equipment upgraded.

The new Capecon digital console will be replaced by a Digidesign ICON. Ezratty says. As with brick-and-mortar recording studios, Digidesign’s ubiquitous Pro Tools platform is a primary recording platform for Effanel; the company owns seven systems. The ICON, Ezratty adds, will offer greater compatibility among engineers and studios working with Effanel.

Effanel also maintains a degree of autonomy: It will continue to record concerts for CD and DVD release as well as provide services for clients who choose to remain with Effanel.

“Our mandate,” Ezratty says, “is to continue to be profitable, continue to provide our services to our existing clients and, most important, to continue developing XM’s image in the music community as a quality-conscious content provider.”

Hank Neuberger, a Chicago-based Recording Academy trustee who has worked with Effanel on the annual Grammy Awards telecasts, says the acquisition illustrates satellite radio’s rapid evolution. “Here’s the future of radio distributions acknowledging their need for high-quality, unique live music content by partnering with the premier mobile recording company,” Neuberger says.

New Sony BMG Group
Exec Tim Prescott Creates Global Marketing Team

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

Sony BMG Music Entertainment has a new global marketing team in place ready to work the company’s repertoire around the world.

This new operational structure—named Global Marketing Group—is the brainchild of New York-based Sony BMG executive VP/chief marketing officer Tim Prescott.

He describes the specialized marketing unit, which has staff in all the main regions of the globe, as a tool to support all the repertoire centers and operating companies in the world.

“In today’s fast-moving music world, there is no longer any such thing as an isolated, local market. With this in mind, we’ve appointed this new team as a unified group capable of creating cohesive, fully integrated global marketing plans for the benefit of our artists and projects,” Prescott says.

The team counts a series of newly appointed executives. In Europe, Prescott has moved Tim Delaney to London, naming him senior VP of global marketing, Europe. Until the merger, Delaney served as senior VP of international at the RCA Music Group in New York, where he oversaw international activities at Arista, J Records and RCA. In his new role, he reports to Prescott and oversees all of Sony BMG’s global marketing activities in Europe and serves as a key liaison between Sony BMG U.K. and global marketing.

In New York, former Sony Music International VP of international marketing Daniel Levy has been named VP of global marketing, responsible for developing global marketing initiatives together with Sony Music Label Group U.S., as well as handling marketing for Wind-up artists. Also in New York, Ryan Wright has been appointed VP of global marketing, in charge of repertoire signed to BMG Label Group U.S. He held a similar position at BMG.

Also reporting to New York are two senior VPs of global marketing—Luana Pagani for the Latin region and Nate Smith in Asia/Pacific. They are based in Miami and Sydney, respectively. In Tokyo, Daniel DiCicco has been named VP of global marketing, Japan.

The Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the MGM v. Grokster case March 29. A host of entertainment industry and artists’ groups are expected to file an unprecedented number of amicus (friend of the court) briefs in the case.

The Recording Artists’ Coalition has enlisted more than 40 recording acts, both members and nonmembers, to sign its brief. They include Dido, Avril Lavigne, Barenaked Ladies, Jesse Colyn Young, Tom Jones and opera singer Denyce Graves.

U2, Green Day, Alicia Keys and Tim McGraw are set to perform at the 47th annual Grammy Awards, to be held Feb. 13 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. All four acts are nominated in multiple categories.

CBS will televise the show in the United States. Presenters announced so far are John Travolta, Ellen DeGeneres and Christina Milian. As previously reported, Queen Latifah will host (Billboard, Jan. 22).

CARLA HAY

SoundExchange, the label/artist collection and distribution group, has received the green light to distribute $11 million in initial webcast royalties collected in 2002. The U.S. Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia on Jan. 12 rejected appeals from broadcasters and content owners regarding the fairness of the rates set by the Librarian of Congress in June 2002. Broadcasters found the rates too high; content owners said the rates were too low.

Not counting the new distribution, due in the spring, SoundExchange has allocated $22.5 million in royalties to labels and artists.

BILL HOLLAND

Venerable Western Canadian music and consumer electronics retailer A&B Sound filed for bankruptcy protection Jan. 19 under Canada’s Companies’ Creditors Arrangement Act. The chain announced that it plans to sell its 21 stores to private investment firm Sun Capital Partners Group. The Boca Raton, Fla.-based financial firm owns a wide array of retailers, including the Musicland Group.

Although A&B plans to present a restructuring proposal to creditors within 30 days, Canada’s major labels immediately put shipments to the retailer on hold. A&B owes creditors approximately $50 million Canadian ($40.6 million), according to president Tim Howley.

The chain has increasingly lacked the financial resources to compete in the Canadian market against such U.S. players as Best Buy and Wal-Mart.

Sun Capital Partners Group apparently plans to keep all 800 A&B employees, including senior executives, under similar terms and conditions. It will also retain virtually all of A&B’s outlets in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

A&B and Sun Capital did not return calls for comment.

LARRY LEBLANC

The Department of Justice’s “Operation Gridlock” anti-piracy initiative that was announced last August yielded its first major convictions Jan. 15, when two individuals responsible for illegal peer-to-peer file-sharing were found guilty of felony copyright infringement.

Attorney General John Ashcroft and other federal officials announced that William R. Towbridge, 50, of Johnson City, N.Y., and Michael Chicoine, 47, of San Antonio, each pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit felony copyright infringement.

Both network operators, who ran Direct Connect servers, pleaded guilty in the first federal action taken against criminal copyright theft on P2P networks. The case also involved the attorney general for the District of Columbia.

BILL HOLLAND

Blockbuster says it may still try to acquire video rental company Hollywood Entertainment. According to a Jan. 18 statement, Blockbuster is considering buying Movie Gallery’s $1.2 billion bid for Hollywood, which Hollywood approved Jan. 10.

JILL KIPINS


Asian acts confirmed as performers include India’s Aida Bhosle, Thailand’s Bird Thongchai McIntyre and Tata Young. Japanese stars Juno, Chou, Japan’s Shonen Knife, South Korea’s Shinshe, Malaysia’s Siti Nurhaliza and Indonesia’s Slank.

MTV says the broadcast will be available rights-free and cost-free to all broadcasters globally to maximize distribution and help generate donations for primary recipient UNICEF, as well as additional charities in local markets.

STEVE MCLURE
EVERY GENERATION HAS A KING...

Czar
ENTERTAINMENT

MARIO WINANS
(GRAMMY NOMINATED)
THE GAME
SHARISSA
BLACK ROB
BIG GIPP
GUERILLA BLACK

COMING SOON
THE INFAMOUS TIMES
AMERICA'S MOST CONTROVERSIAL DVD

ALSO
MILLIONAIRES BOYS CLUB
(STARRING THE GAME AND MICHAEL WILLIAMS)
OMAR FROM "THE WIRE"

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A Second Season Of Giving

The publishers have an option

Chief Royalties

Publishers Have An Option

Going Direct For Foreign Royalties

 sometimesit takes a tragedy to bring out the best in people and institutions. Such is the case with last month’s horrifying tsunami, which has caused such grief and destruction in South Asia.

The scope of this tragedy is unimaginable. But the global response has been equally immense. And no segment of the world community has been as quick to the task as the entertainment industry in general and the music business in particular.

The response from artists and music companies has been impressive and inspiring. Many of the planned events, appearances, and recording projects for tsunami relief have been documented in Billboard articles. New efforts are announced daily.

From pop stars in Wales to country greats in Austin to a Sting show in Australia and an orchestral performance in Vienna, these efforts span the musical spectrum. Coming on the 20th anniversary of the landmark “We Are the World” recording project—which raised $63 million for African famine relief—the tsunami aid movement is a reminder of the generous spirit that has long defined the artistic community.

The music industry’s efforts are notable for providing an opportunity for fans to participate by purchasing CDs, concert tickets and merchandise. In this way, the industry adds consciousness-raising to fund raising, both locally and globally.

But the benefits of direct membership are mitigated by a variety of expenses and complexities. A publishing company that is contemplating becoming a direct member of international collection rights societies would encounter three primary difficulties:

1) Financial: In forgoing a subpublisher, the publisher must also forgo subpublisher advancements, which may rely on fund their operations. The loss of subpublisher financial support along with the additional legal and accounting expenses incurred by creating foreign corporations and maintaining foreign bank accounts.

2) Administrative: There is an increased workload as well as a learning curve involved in affiliating, communicating and registering song titles directly with the collection rights societies. Furthermore, certain societies have stringent membership requirements and procedures.

3) Cultural: A publisher needs to understand the local culture and often speak the language of the local collection society in order to have an effective membership. Subpublishers are the beneficiaries of the above factors, which create barriers to entry for the original publisher. Subpublishers can also take actions to increase the benefits of their services, thus diminishing publishers’ desire to pursue direct membership. These actions involve three areas:

1) Royalty statement preparation. Subpublishers should prepare royalty statements that better focus on clarity and transparency while accurately reflecting and

(Continued on page 61)
Brazilian Girls

Continued from page 5

jazz-leaning releases by Linda Ronstadt, Aaron Neville, Lizz Wright and Jamie Cullum—as well as the two “Verve Remixed” collections.

While Goldstein says the Verve Music Group will never lose sight of the jazz genre that put it on the map, he notes the importance of also moving beyond that into a wider range of music.

Enter the Brazilian Girls. According to Goldstein, when he signed the band, the first thought was to release its album on the Blue Thumb imprint (now inactive). “But the band wanted Verve,” he notes. “So, Verve Forecast was born.”

This pleased the multicultural jazz-leaning releases by Linda Ronstadt, Aaron Neville, Lizz Wright and Jamie Cullum—as well as the two “Verve Remixed” collections.

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This pleased the multicultural
Mick Jagger and Dave Stewart’s “Old Habits Die Hard” from “Alfie,” Howard Shore’s score to “The Aviator” and the Ray Charles biopic “Ray” have been winning accolades and appear to be set for Academy Award nominations as well.


A week earlier at the 10th annual Broadcast Film Critics Assn. Awards, held Jan. 10 at the Wiltern Theatre in Los Angeles, Foxx netted another best actor victory for “Ray,” which also won for best soundtrack, while “Old Habits Die Hard” took the best song prize and Shore was named best composer.

Nominations for the 77th annual Oscars will be announced Jan. 25.

Meanwhile, the Orange British Academy Award nominations have been announced for the 57th annual ceremony, to be held Feb. 12 at the Odeon Leicester Square in London. Up for the Anthony Asquith Award for achievement in film music are Shore for “The Aviator.” Bruno Coulais for “The Chorus (Les Choristes),” Gustavo Santaolalla for “The Motorcycle Diaries (Diarios de Motoicleta),” Jan A.P. Kaczmarek for “Finding Neverland” and Craig Armstrong for “Ray.” Foxx is also nominated for best actor.

MORE MOVIE MUSICALS: DreamWorks Pictures has signed on to distribute the big-screen adaptation of the Tony Award-winning musical “Dreamgirls.”

Could a big-screen version of “The Boy From Oz” be one of the first projects under the new deal? Last year, Jackman said backstage at the Tony Awards about the musical: “I have a feeling that [the Broadway run] isn’t going to be the last of the show for me” (Billboard, June 19, 2004).

The album and DVD will be available at all other retailers March 15. The 14-track album includes P.O.D.’s “Boom!,” Sheryl Crow’s “Steve McQueen,” LeAnn Rimes’ “I Got It Bad” and “Star-Spangled Banner” and the previously unreleased “You’ll Never Catch Me” from Smashmouth lead singer Steve Harwell.

“You’ll Never Catch Me” also appears on the “Curse” soundtrack, due Feb. 15 on Treadstone Records/Image Entertainment. The album features first single “Better Next Time” from Collective Soul. Bowling for Soup, Dashboard Confessional, the Crystal Method and Three Days Grace are also on the soundtrack. Miramax/Dimension Films’ were a horror movie “Cursed” (from “Scream” director Wes Craven and writer Kevin Williamson) opens Feb. 25 in limited release.

Shawn Colvin, Emmylou Harris, for Dixie Cups None of the Richer singer Leigh Nash and the Finn Brothers are among the acts on the “Because of Winn-Dixie” soundtrack, which Nettwerk America Records will issue Feb. 1. The 20th Century Fox drama opens Feb. 15 in North American theaters. Dave Matthews has a supporting role in the film.


SOUNDTRACK ROUNDUP: Christina Milian, Black Eyed Peas and James Brown are among the acts on the 13-song “Be Cool” soundtrack, due March 1 on TVT Soundtrax. Milian, who has a supporting role in the film, contributes two new songs: “Ain’t No Reason” and “Believer.” MGM comedy “Be Cool,” the sequel to 1995’s “Get Shorty,” opens March 4 in North American theaters.

Wal-Mart has signed an exclusive deal with Shout Factory and Warner Home Video to be the first retailer to sell the soundtrack and DVD to the Warner Bros. Pictures documentary “NASA: 3-D: The IMAX Experience,” released in theaters in March 2004. Wal-Mart will sell both products exclusively from Feb. 1 to March 14.

“Sounds Eclectic.” “The fact that their sound is a bit different is what immediately attracted me to the Brazilian Girls,” he says. Harr, who believes this will be a “word-of-mouth” project, says he received “feedback straight away” from listeners who wanted to know more about the group. Last year, he invited the band to perform live on “Morning Becomes Eclectic.”

This was followed by the Brazilian Girls performing at a kcrw.com event held during the CMJ conflag in New York. The act begins a 14-market tour Feb. 1, the day of the album’s release. Cities include Los Angeles, New York and Miami, where the band will perform at a party held during the International Film Festival.

In March, the Girls will play at a KCRW showcase in Austin during the South by Southwest conference.

In April, the Brazilian Girls will go to Europe on a promotional tour. The act is scheduled to play numerous festivals in Europe and the United States this summer.


Front and center in this activity is the Brazilian Girls’ music, which is an absolute group effort, Scubauna notes. In fact, she likens it to making love.

“If you make love with one person, it will affect your own love-making style,” she says. “Some lovers bring out something better in you than others. It’s the same with musicians—each one of us affects the other. Hopefully, others will like our musical love-making.”

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The Beat

Continued from page 11

As with many of Matchbox Twenty's best lyrics, Thomas' solo material has a hard-edged wistfulness to it where a happy ending is always wished for even though it is so seldom achieved.

"... Something to Be" will bow May 3.


Not surprisingly, Bandcamp, which is helmed by 17-year-old lead singer/songwriter Matt Bair, has also signed a deal with EMI Music Publishing.

Bandcamp is in a Los Angeles studio recording its label debut with Good Charlotte's Benji Madden.

Lamberg is executive producer for the project and co-A&R'ing the album with Atlantic's Mary Gormley. The album may come out this year. Gerald Bair manages the group.

WE ARE THE WORLD REDUX: It's hard to believe it has been 20 years since a number of top artists gathered Jan. 28 at a recording studio after the American Music Awards and recorded "We Are the World." Although it wasn't the first multiple-artist charity endeavor, it could be argued that the USA for Africa project helped pave the way for such subsequent events as Live Aid, Farm Aid and even the most recent "Concert for Tsunami Relief," which aired Jan. 28 on NBC.

"We Are the World," recorded in response to the famine in Africa, has raised more than $63 million, according to organizers, and now it's time for another round.

To commemorate the occasion—and the Feb. 1 release of a two-disc DVD set featuring footage from the recording of the event on Image Entertainment USA for Africa executive producer Ken Kragen is asking radio stations and video outlets around the world to play "We Are the World" at 12 p.m. ET Jan. 28.

As many of you know, Jermaine Dupri planned to record a new version of the song, titled "We Are the Future," featuring top R&B and rap artists following the Feb. 13 Grammy Awards.

However, those plans were put on hold in the wake of the Dec. 26 tsunami. It's a decision that Kragen completely supports. "Delaying it was smart," he says. "It was the right thing to do."
Tonex Wins Big At 20th Annual Stellar Awards

Tonex was the top honoree at the 20th annual Stellar Awards, taking home six prizes, including artist, contemporary male vocalist and contemporary CD of the year for “Out the Box.” Hosted by Yolanda Adams, Donnie McClurkin and Tonex, the event took place Jan. 15 in Houston.

Bishop Paul S. Morton and the Williams Brothers each picked up three awards. CeCe Winans and Israel Houghton both received two. Martha Munizzi was honored as new artist of the year. “Make Me Over,” penned by A.C. Williams and recorded by Tonex, was named song of the year.

An emotional McClurkin was presented with the Trailblazer Award, recognizing not only his talent but his stature as a role model for youth. Among the evening’s highlights, the Hawkins Family—Tramaine, Walter, Lynette and Edwin—reunited to perform a tribute to Richard Smallwood, who received the James Cleveland Award for his role in the development and advancement of gospel music. Dr. Bobby Jones was presented with the Stellar Legends Award for his contributions to the gospel music industry and dedication in bringing the gospel music community together.

Roberta Flack, actor Dulé Hill, Mom & Pop Winans, Shirley Caesar, Mary Mary and T.D. Jakes were among the presenters. The evening included performances by Israel & New Breed, Ruben Studdard, Tye Tribbett & GA. Fred Hammond, CeCe Winans and Marvin Sapp.

There was a brief reunion of the Caravans when Caesar, Inez Andrews, Dorothy Norwood and Albertina Walker sang a snippet of one of their classic hits as part of the male vocalists of the year presentation.

The show will air in syndication on various outlets from Jan. 22 to Feb. 20. For a complete list of winners, go to billboard.com/awards.

INTEREP GOSPEL REPORT: Radio reps Interem unveiled its second annual gospel radio research report during the activities surrounding the Stellar Awards. Sherman Kizar, Interep’s senior VP/director of urban marketing, presented the findings to gospel music gatekeepers. Kizar says the research “continues to be very compelling that gospel music listeners are ideal consumers.”

Among the study’s findings:

• In 2004, there were 264 commercial black gospel radio stations in the United States, compared with 83 in 1992.
• The “religious” format (primarily consisting of gospel stations) ranks fourth among African-American listeners.
• While most metro areas with large African-American populations have at least one gospel radio station, 53% of gospel listeners are in the Southeast.
• More than 17% of gospel listeners have a household income exceeding $75,000. 71% own their own home; and 42% have at least some college education.

GOSPEL GATHERING: Gospel Heritage 2005 is set to take place Feb. 10-12 in Atlanta. Verity recording artist Dr. Marvin Sapp will open the conference, followed by the annual Gospel Heritage Foundation-sponsored luncheon, featuring Andrae Crouch as keynote speaker.

The annual Gospel Heritage Awards Feb. 10 will recognize the Rev. Daryl Coley, Vanessa Bell Armstrong, Luther Barnes and Fred Hammond. A memorial salute to the late Thomas Whitfield is also planned.

Among the other artists slated to participate are Hezekiah Walker, Stephen Hurd, Joe Pace, Lisa McClendon, Byron Cage, Bishop Noel Jones, Tonex and Tye Tribbett. The event will include the annual live recording session, this year dubbed “Solo-nuff Praise.” There will also be a breakfast event (Continued on page 46)

Imani Winds Blow For Quality And Diversity

Look around any traditional classical concert hall, and chances are excellent that the overwhelming majority of faces onstage and in the audience will be either white or Asian.

While these proportions may take years to recalibrate, a young New York-based ensemble called Imani Winds is doing its part to act as a corrective. The ensemble was founded in 1997 by flutist/composer Valerie Coleman, who wanted to bring together African-American and Latin wind players. Coleman found willing partners in oboist Toyin Spellman, clarinetist Mariam Adam, bassoonist Monica Ellis and French horn player/composer Jeff Scott.

“Imani means faith,” said Scott. “And the chemistry just worked.”

In 1997, Imani Winds (“iman” in Swahili) has quickly established itself as a dynamic and groundbreaking ensemble whose players are lauded not just for their innovative programming but for their precise, vivacious and virtuosic playing.

While Imani Winds’ concert repertoire ranges from Heitor Villa-Lobos and Jean Francaix to John Harbison and Elliot Carter, the group’s newest CD, “The Classical Underground” (Roch, Jan. 25), embraces an even wider swath of the musical landscape. Included are Astor Piazzolla’s “Liber Tango,” the traditional spiritual “Steal Away,” Lalo Schifrin’s “La Novelle Orelane” and clarinetist Paquito D’Rivera’s “Aires Tropicales” featuring two guest artists, jazz vocalist Rene Marie and percussionist Rolando Morales Matos), as well as a concerto for Wind Quintet penned by Coleman and a piece called “Homage to Duke,” written by Scott.

“Our mission, in part,” Scott says, “is to search out music from under-represented, unheard voices, and to commission music from African-American and Latin composers.”

One composer figuring heavily into the group’s consciousness is D’Rivera. On its spring U.S. tour, Imani Winds will debut a new D’Rivera piece for wind quintet, solo clarinet and piano, with the world premiere set for Feb. 17 in Kalama- zoo, Mich. The tour, and the piece, come to New York’s Alice Tully Hall March 1.

Education and outreach are a crucial part of the group’s mission, Scott says. “There really aren’t any African-American instrumental groups doing classical music,” he notes, “and there’s little in the way of role models for young players. We really want to encourage young people of all colors, but especially African-American and Latino kids. We want to get them away from MTV for a little while,” he says with a laugh, “and get them to connect. We’re doing our darnedest to get people involved.”

To that end, Scott observes, “More... (Continued on page 46)
FACES TO WATCH
30 Under 30:
Top Young Acts
And Executives

The music and entertainment business is driven by
numbers—chart positions, sales totals, royalty figures and more.

But the numbers are only a measure of the day-to-day
work of individuals, from interns to chief executives, who
comprise this industry.

Power Players is a new special feature in Billboard
that highlights the achievements of individuals who drive
the fields of music and entertainment forward through
their artistic and business vision.

This first Power Players report focuses on those who
arginably have the greatest potential for achievement, the
youngest members of the business.

An A&R executive once asked whether record labels
often veer to sign acts as young as possible. Other issues aside,
he said, in the face of daunting odds, young artists believe
they can walk through walls. Of course, so do young execs.

This roll call offers 30 snapshots of noteworthy young
achievers under 30 from the United States and abroad.
It includes artists, of course. But it also includes faces to
watch in the record business, music publishing, artist
management, record production, retailing, touring and
digital entertainment.

Billboard writers and editors selected these individuals
after soliciting suggestions from numerous sources during
our research.

One question that arose during those discussions was
whether the music industry still attracts the best and the
brightest young creative minds, as strongly as it has in the
past. Or has the business clowntum led some young
talents to look elsewhere for opportunities?

We welcome your feedback on this question and on the
inaugural Power Players roster of “30 Under 30.” E-mail us
at billboardspecials@billboard.com. We’re listening.

THOM DUFFY

CHRIS BARBOUR
U.S. label manager
Global Underground
Newcastle Upon Tyne, United Kingdom
Birthdate: Feb. 15, 1975

Why we’re watching: Barbour, 29, works with several dance/electroni-

c acts, including recent Grammy Award nominee Sasha, Grammy

winner Deep Dish, Danny Howells and UNKLE.

A 1997 Columbia University graduate who majored in anthropol-

ogy, Barbour has linked cultures via successful strategic marketing

partnerships with M-Audio, Armani Exchange, Bacardi and other

brands. This proactive approach to promoting music helped Global

Underground releases like Sasha’s “Involver” (2004) and Deep Dish’s

“Toronto” (2003) debut at No. 1 on the Billboard Top Electronic

Albums chart.

Separate from his GU duties, Barbour recently launched Elephant

Days Management; his first signing is a Touch of Class Recordings

artist Xavier.

“Chris is passionate and enthusiastic about this music,” Studio Dis-

tribution president Dave Watkins says. “He wants to see the dance/elec-

tronics culture grow. His management company is a natural extension

of this.”

MICHAEL PAOLETTA

CIARA
Artist
Sho’nuff/Musique/LaFace/Zomba
Atlanta
Birthdate: Oct. 25, 1985

Why we’re watching: Newcomer Ciara

is proving that the “crunk & B” sound is a

new force to be reckoned with.

Ciara, 19, grabbed the brass ring her

first time out when her single “Good-

ies” spent seven weeks at No. 1 on The

Billboard Hot 100. Then her debut

album of the same name was certified

platinum—propelled by a second

R&B/pop crossover hit, “1, 2 Step” with

Missy Elliott.

A girl-group stint and a publishing

deal at the age of 15 preceded the

singer/songwriter’s fruitful pairing with Sho’nuff/producer

Jazze Pha.

In 2005, the crunk & B princess will retam with Elliott on the rap

queen’s forthcoming album. In the meantime, Ciara’s third single,

“Oh” featuring Ludacris, rolled out this month, and her first major

tour gets under way later this year.

“Her appeal goes beyond her music,” Peppermint Music/Atlanta

manager Rico Brooks says. “She can also entertain, as she shows in her

videos. Ciara is a female version of Usher: she wins across the board.”

GAIL MITCHELL

ASIF AHMED
Artist manager
Sherman Management
Los Angeles
Birthdate: March 20, 1976

Why we’re watching: Asif Ahmed’s management client TV on the

Radio captured the 2004 Shortlist Music Prize with its

release “Desperate Youth, Blood Thirsty Ladies” besting projects from

such competitors as Loretta Lynn, Dizzee Rascal, Franz

Ferdinand and Wilco.

Ahmed, 28, specializes in bands with commercial and critical
appetite. “Asif has great taste in music and a lot of integrity,” Interscope
Records VP of A&R Debbie Southwood-Smith says. “He isn’t afraid to
support artists who are raising the bar, and he has figured out how
they can earn a living while staying true to their vision.” Ahmed’s
clients also include Interscope’s Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

TV on the Radio starts work on its second full-length album for

Chicago indie Touch & Go in March, while the band’s David Sitek also

plans to produce an album in tribute to This Mortal Coil.

The Yeah Yeah Yeahs are also headed back into the studio, while

Yeas singer Karen O will bow her clothing and accessory line.

Plus, Ahmed continues to steer the careers of developing acts Tri-

angle and Whiteby, whose debut album will bow on the United

Kingdom’s 1234 label.

MELINDA NEWMAN

SCOTT BAKER-MARFLITT
Manager
Big Life Management
London
Birthdate: Dec. 22, 1979

Why we’re watching: Scott Baker-Marflitt’s success guiding Future-

heads has earned him praise as a young British manager.

Management is a sector dominated by older heads, but as a tena-

acious 25-year-old, Baker-Marflitt is guiding the affairs of one of

Britain’s most-noted modern rock bands.

Tim Parry, joint managing director of Big Life, recalls: “Scott

conceived my partner Jazz Summers three years ago, saying he wanted to be

a manager and could he have a job. Jazz

said, ‘No, but go and find a job, and we’ll manage him together.’

Futureheads, hailing from the northeast of England, proved to be that

band. The group is now signed to 679

Recordings and winning audiences on

both sides of the Atlantic with its self-

titled debut.

“Scott is a bright young guy with good

intuition for what’s right for his act,” Parry

adds. ‘He’s a good people person, and he’s

learning very fast.”

PAUL SEXTON

Baker-Marflitt

Deep Dish: Boosted by Chris Barbour

Photo: c. Jeff Fasano

Photo: c. Jeff Fasano
CORNEILLE
Artist
Wagram Music
Paris
Birthdate: March 24, 1977

Why we're watching: Corneille scored a hit solo debut in France in 2004 and will release his sophomore disc later this year, followed by an album recorded in English.

A 27-year-old singer/songwriter, Corneille was born Nyungura Corneille in Germany to parents from the central African republic of Rwanda. He is based in Montreal but enjoyed success during 2004 in France with his solo debut, "Parce Qui'en Vient de loin," which shipped 420,000 copies there, according to his label. In 1994, Corneille witnessed the massacre of his family during Rwanda's civil war. After a spell in Germany, he moved to Canada and signed with Quebec's Level Music, which licensed "Loin" to Wagram, a leading independent distributor in France.

"We believed in Corneille from the start," says Rodolphe Buet, head of music at FNAC, France's leading music retailer. Corneille's sophomore album is set for release in the fall, and he will then turn his attention to an English-language set for 2006.

PAUL SEXTON
JAMIE CULLUM
Artist
Verve Records
New York
Birthdate: Aug. 20, 1979

Why we're watching: This "twentysomething" singer/pianist received a Grammy Award nomination for best jazz vocal album, pitting him against such veterans as Al Jarreau and Nancy Wilson.

Even before the May 2003 release of his U.S. debut, "Twentysomething," Jamie Cullum, 25, was a star in the United Kingdom. Once he hit the United States, the raves continued.

The singer/pianist's eclecticism has made him a favorite at public radio. A version of "Twentysomething" is included on WUFV New York's "City Folk Live Volume VII."

"Anyone that can combine Jimi Hendrix, Cole Porter and his own compositions into a single CD and make it work is a talent to be reckoned with," WUFV host Dennis Elias says. "His dynamic live performance, and this guy has staying power."

This coming year, Cullum will attend the Grammys, work on his sophomore release and slip in some live dates.

CRAIG ROSEN
DIVERSE (AKA KENNY JENNINGS)
Artist
Chocolate Industries
Chicago
Birthdate: July 23, 1976

Why we're watching: Diverse, 28, is currently the hottest rapper living in Chicago.

Kanye West and Twista may hail from the Windy City, but they had to leave the Midwest to find success. Diverse, on the other hand, is staying put, and he's doing just fine.

The college baseball player entered the rap game after a torn ligament ended his athletic ambitions. His soulful backdrops and down-to-earth persona soon attracted such underground production favorites as Madlib and Prefuse 73, who contributed to his upcoming spring album on Chicago's Chocolate Industries. Already a name on the indie hip-hop scene, Diverse turned away bigger labels to work for his hometown pals at Chocolate Industries.

"There's so few rappers in Chicago who are managing to break out," says Stephen Sowleay, buyer at Chicago's Reckless Records, "and he did it without having to guess on a major-label record."

TODD MARTENS
HYWEL EVANS
Synchronization manager
EMI Records U.K. and Ireland
London
Birthdate: Aug. 10, 1976

Why we're watching: In the burgeoning field of "sync" management, Hywel Evans, 26, is adept at finding new outlets for EMI recordings.

Evans joined EMI as a trainee accountant in 1998 before moving into synchronization. He became department manager in May 2004.

LUCIEN FONSI
Artist
Universal Music Latino
Miami
Birthdate: April 15, 1978

Why we're watching: A singer/songwriter-producer, Luis Fonsi, 26, is poised for a major sales breakthrough with his next release this spring.

Fonsi is a veteran with five albums to his name. But many in the mainstream have not heard of him because Fonsi's English-language debut, "Fight the Feeling" (MCA), was released with little promotion in 2002, leaving the fledgling singer in a bit of a lurch.

However, Fonsi has been on the rise, touring Latin America and racking up sales and airplay with his subsequent albums and radio-friendly singles. This past year, his single "Abrazar la Vida" hit No. 1 on the Billboard Hot Latin Tracks chart.

Raised in Puerto Rico and Orlando, Fla., Fonsi boasts a beautiful, velvety voice that blends Latin pop and R&B sensibilities. He also dances, arranges and produces and has penned hits for Olga Tañon and Ednita Nazario. Universal will release his next album in April and calls Fonsi a top priority for 2005.

LEILA COBO
ETHIOPIA HABTEMARIAM
Director of urban music, East Coast Universal Music Publishing
New York
Birthdate: Sept. 24, 1979

Why we're watching: Fresh from signing Ludacris, Ethiopia Habtemariam continues to expand Universal Music Publishing's repertoire.

Habtemariam, 25, closed out 2004 with a radar-raising bang: She brought multiplatinum rapper Ludacris into the Universal Music Publishing fold.

In addition, her stable of songwriters is formidable. Habtemariam handles Dre & Yidal (Usher, Jill Scott), Sanchez (T.I., LL Cool J), Baley Wa Muhammed (Christina Aguilera, Jolo), Dj Twinz (G-Unit, Fabolous), Mary J. Blige, Common, Ashanti, Joe Budden and Candice Nelson.

Just four years ago, Habtemariam was working for Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds and wood Tracey as creative manager of Los Angeles-based Edmonds Music Publishing.

"Ethiopia has learned the lessons of the business well and strategically applies that knowledge," says Jeanie Weems, senior VP of creative affairs for rhythm & soul at ASCAP. "She's a strong executive in the making."

GAIL MITCHELL
MATT HOMAN
Assistant GM
Colonial Center
Columbia, S.C.
Birthdate: Aug. 25, 1977

Why we're watching: Matt Homan is one of Global Spectrum's rising arena management pros.

At 27, Homan is already a veteran of several buildings, and now he is an assistant GM at the Global Spectrum-managed Colonial Center at the University of South Carolina.

Homan's responsibilities at the 18,000-seat arena include booking events (along with GM Tom Pucetti) and overseeing event services, box office, group sales and day-to-day operations. "It's mostly about making sure all the clients are happy and booking lots of events," Homan says.

"Matt is incredibly talented, and he shown amazing potential to run large-size arenas anywhere in the country," Global Spectrum COO John Page says. "The future looks very bright for Matt Homan."

A USC grad, Homan returned to his alma mater after a stint as event services manager at the Global Spectrum-managed Sovereign Bank Arena in Trenton, N.J. "My immediate goal is to become a GM," Homan says. "I'm thankful for all the opportunities that Global Spectrum has given me."

Homan is a second-generation concert industry professional. His father, Dave, is COO of New Era Tickets and a former 25-year executive with Ticketmaster.

RAY WADDELL
LARRY JACKSON
VP of A&R
J Records
New York
Birthdate: Sept. 29, 1980

Why we're watching: Larry Jackson has worked with the biggest names in the business—from Ruben Studdard to Santana—and he's just getting started.

You've heard Jackson's handiwork before. Albums by Santana, Tyrese, Studdard, Mario and current "American Idol" champion Fantasia carry the stamp of this 24-year-old A&R exec. All this comes after sharpening his ears as music director/air personality at R&B KMLE, San Francisco.

Jackson's 2005 slate is already shaping up nicely, thanks to forthcoming projects by Whitney Houston, Monica, Aretha Franklin and Babyface. And that's not counting three budding acts he has on tap for second- and third-quarter release.

"Larry Jackson is one of the most talented label executives in the industry," says Phil Thornton, head of artist management firm Bright Star Entertainment. "Institutional in creating some incredible projects, he is professional, creative and one of the most humble people I know."

GAIL MITCHELL
**Power Players**

**MIRANDA LAMBERT**
*Artist*
*Epic Records*
*New York*

**Birthdate:** Nov. 10, 1983

**Why we’re watching:** Last May, former “Nashville Star” finalist Miranda Lambert tied a country chart record for the highest debut for a first single when “Me and Charlie Talking” opened at No. 42 on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. “I knew from the first moment I saw Miranda on ‘Nashville Star’ that she had the gift,” says Kevin Mason, OM of WQMX Akron, Ohio. “She writes, she sings, she plays and, most importantly, she relates to women, men, the young and the old.” Lambert, 21, may be young, but she considers herself an “old soul” who has seen enough heartbreak to write relatable songs. Her parents are private investigators, and in helping them with their work, she has “seen a lot of broken people.” Her first album for Sony, “Kerosene,” is due March 15. She wrote 11 of the set’s 12 songs, mainly before her 20th birthday.

**YUNDI LI**
*Artist*
*Deutsche Grammophon Hamburg*

**Birthdate:** Oct. 7, 1982

**Why we’re watching:** At age 22, Yundi Li displays a crisp, cool pianism that has won accolades from critics and audiences alike. Li’s profile will soar in 2005 with the recent release of his third Deutsche Grammophon album, “Chopin: Scherzi and Impromptus,” and a 15-date U.S. tour. The outing, which is set to run from late February until May, will feature performances at New York’s Carnegie Hall, Philadelphia’s Kimmel Center and Seattle’s Meany Hall. The pianist’s affinity for Chopin—the composer whom Li calls his “first love”—is marked by Li’s signature performance style, which mixes intellect, power and raw emotion. In 2000, Li won first prize at Warsaw’s International Chopin Competition, marking the first time in 15 years that the judges saw fit to give the top award. In addition to his dazzling abilities at the keyboard, Li’s good looks and charisma are attracting a lot of attention as well. During the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Nike featured Li in its “You’re Faster Than You Think” campaign, which also included Lance Armstrong and Venus and Serena Williams. “He plays with an old soul, and plays the way an old master would play,” says Henry Wong, owner of music store/venue An Die Musik in Baltimore. “He has such a great future in front of him.”

**LINDSAY LOHAN**
*Artist*
*Casablanca/Universal Records*
*New York*

**Birthdate:** July 2, 1986

**Why we’re watching:** Lindsay Lohan is a leader among a new generation of talented stars, finding success in various forms of entertainment. At 18, Lohan has established the type of career that eludes many veteran entertainers. Already a well-known movie actress (with such hits as “Mean Girls” and “Freaky Friday”), Lohan is now aiming to conquer the music world. Lohan tested the waters as a singer by appearing on the soundtracks to her films “Freaky Friday” and “Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen.” The success of those soundtracks led to her signing with Casablanca/Universal Records, which released Lohan’s debut album, “Speak,” in December. The album debuted at No. 4 on The Billboard 200, and the first single, “Rumors,” reached No. 23 on the Billboard Mainstream Top 40 chart. Lohan, who represents and models for Doorly & Bourke’s handgun/accessories line, continues her red-hot career in 2005 with several movie projects, including the release of “Herbie: Fully Loaded.” Joe Nardone Jr., VP/buyer for retail chain Gallery of Sound, says of Lohan: “She has got staying power as an entertainer.”

**CANDACE MANDRACIA**
*Talent buyer*
*House of Blues Concerts*
*San Diego*

**Birthdate:** Jan. 7, 1977

**Why we’re watching:** In a very competitive market, Candace Mandracia has become a well-respected talent buyer. Mandracia, 27, started out as a researcher in 1998 in San Diego promoter Bill Silva’s office. When House of Blues Concerts acquired Bill Silva Presents, she moved to Los Angeles to work for HBO. In 2000, Mandracia returned to San Diego, where HBO is the exclusive promoter for such venues as Cox Arena and The Open Air Theatre at San Diego State University. It is also owner/operator of the Coors Amphitheatre in nearby Chula Vista, Calif. Other venues in the market where HBO and Mandracia book talent include Symphony Hall, Canes Ballroom, Epicenter and the Del Mar (Cali) Fair. Mandracia is optimistic about 2005. “We’re starting our Coors season earlier than ever, and that’s a good sign,” she says. “We have a lot of bookings and a lot of avails, so hopefully they will all come to fruition.” Mandracia says her long-term goal is to “stay in the business and broaden my range of talent buying—not just booking concerts, but casinos and some big tours in the future.” HBO executive VP Alex Hodges says, “Candace Mandracia has been expanding her role even before I knew it; she has done the work of two people for about four or more years. She has great music ears and instincts and knows how to promote.”

**JULIET**
*Artist*
*Virgin Records*
*Los Angeles*

**Birthdate:** Aug. 10, 1979

**Why we’re watching:** Former 1 Plus 1 member Juliet, 25, is gearing up for the release of her solo debut this summer. As a member of the Elektra Records synth-pop group, Juliet experienced some success in 2000 with “If I Want” and a cover of the Runaways’ “Cherry Bomb.” Recently, she reconnected with Josh Deutsch, who signed 1 Plus 1 to Elektra and is now senior VP of A&R at Virgin. Juliet’s solo debut, “Random Order,” arrives this summer. The electronic dance-pop album finds her working with Stuart Price (aka Grammy Award nominee Jacques Lu Cont), Guy Sigsworth and Mark “Spice” Stent. Club DJs are feasting on setup track “Avalon,” which EMI imprint Astralwerks is helping to promote. According to Big Management president Gary Salzman, “She has what it takes to push electronic music forward in a big way.”

**JUSTIN KALIFOWITZ**
*Senior director of A&R*
*Music Group*
*New York*

**Birthdate:** Sept. 18, 1981

**Why we’re watching:** Justin Kalifowitz, 23, tackled the challenge of moving pubbery Shifting Spirit from a focus on classic catalog to contemporary hits. In his four years at Spirit Music Group, Kalifowitz has signed such hot songwriter/producers as DJ Clark Kent, DIP Period and 215 Productions and added songs covered by such artists as Jay-Z, Usher and Jessica Simpson to the Spirit catalog.

Kalifowitz was so young when he first worked at Spirit that he had to stand outside clubs to hear the music. But he brought bicoastal industry experience to his first full-time music business gig. He soon took on Spirit’s shift from catalog by such varied ’90s and ’70s writers and acts as Lou Christie and Foghat to a house full of new music by buzzing writers/acts like Scissor Sisters and the Mooney Suzuki. “Justin was well-prepared to supervise our songwriters and writer/artists,” Spirit founder and president Mark Fried says. “He has consistently refused to be boxed in by notions of what publishers can and cannot do, and his instincts have been near infallible.”

**MAKING THE MEDIA**:...and the future.

**MIKE MCCLOSKEY**
*Manager of sales and distribution*
*Rocketown Records*
*Franklin, Tenn.*

**Birthdate:** Aug. 5, 1980

**Why we’re watching:** One of the rising young executives in the contemporary Christian music scene, Mike McCloskey is known for his ability to get things done. And while major labels have been knocking at his door, he has chosen to remain one of the community’s top indie labels. Not everyone gets the opportunity to begin their career working for one of their musical heroes, but that’s what happened when 24-year-old McCloskey went to work for Rocketown Records. The label is owned by Christian pop legend Michael W. Smith, and over the past eight years has introduced such successful artists as Chris Rice, Ginny Owens and Shawn Groves.

A graduate of Nashville’s Belmont University, McCloskey interned for two years at Rocketown and has been with the label full time for three years, currently serving as manager of sales and distribution. His motto: “Serve everybody else better than anybody else can—whether it’s my co-workers, artists or retailers. If I can serve everybody, then I’m doing my job well.”

**JASON OWEN**
*Senior VP of media and artist relations and creative services*
*Universal Music Group Nashville*
*Nashville*

**Birthdate:** July 23, 1976

**Why we’re watching:** Jason Owen is the highest-ranking label executive in Nashville who is younger than 30. Prior to moving to Nashville in 2002, Owen had never worked in the music business. However, he came armed with an impressive résumé of jobs in the film and TV world. Although he was accustomed to dealing with actors, Owen, 28, quickly gained much respect for the musicians he worked with at Universal Music Group Nashville. “Actors can just have a pretty face, say a sentence or two and be a superstar,” he says. “It’s not the same for musicians; I don’t think you can fake it.”

In 2001 Owen supervised the sale of 10 at the MCA Nashville, Mercury and DreamWorks imprints. It is also a key figure in the company’s hit-making machinery—artists are often sent to him before being signed so he can determine whether they have star potential. “You know immediately,” Owen says, “of that quality. ‘It sounds corny, but you can see it in their eyes.’ Jules Wortman, senior VP of publicity at Warner Bros. Records, says, “Jason is strong. He has a vision and a drive, and he stops at nothing to spread the word about his projects. I am glad to see a young, energetic go-getter like him land in Nashville. It benefits us all.”

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RAPHY PINA
President
Pina Records
Río Piedras, Puerto Rico
Birthdate: July 4, 1978

Why we’re watching: One of the first executives to realize the potential of reggaeton, Raphy Pina has garnered major sales, thanks to a major distribution deal and an expansion of his roster.

When Pina was a 15-year-old kid working in a barbershop, he convinced his father, Rafael Pina Sr., to sign reggaeton acts to his indie label, Pina Music. After inheriting Pina Music after his father’s death in 2000, Pina, 26, rechristened the label Pina Records and expanded the reggaeton base he pioneered.

He has also kept tropical artists like Jose Alberto “El Canario” on his roster. Because of a distribution deal inked with Universal Music & Video Distribution in 2003, Pina artists including Lito & Polaco and Nicky Jam are now regulars on the Billboard charts.

Pina, who now has offices in New York and Puerto Rico, has plans to further his acts’ international careers. Priorities include distribution of Nicky Jam in Spain and releasing a live album by Lito & Polaco.

LEILA COBO
CHINK SANTANA
Producer, artist, label executive
A new A&M/Interscope imprint that launches this year
Los Angeles
Birthdate: Sept. 2, 1978

Why we’re watching: Having already produced several platinum albums, Chink Santana is gearing up to launch his own label.

Hard work is paying off for Santana, who at 26 is on the cusp of superstar producer status.

His first major project, “What’s Love” by Fat Joe featuring Ashanti, reached No. 2 on The Billboard Hot 100 and No. 3 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart. Subsequent projects have been similarly successful, including the triple-platinum “Ashanti”, Ja Rule’s platinum “The Last Testament” and IVY Gotti’s Presents: The Inc.

The first release on Santana’s yet-to-be-named A&M/Interscope imprint will drop in mid-2005.

“Chink Santana is not just a hip-hop beatmaker,” A&M Records president Ron Fair says. “His enormous songwriting talent, rhyming skills and intense personal charisma make him a future superstar who will take his place next to the Neptunes, Dr. Dre and Kanye West in the coming year.

CHRISTOPHER WALSH
BRIAN SCHECHTER
Artist manager
Riot Squad
Jersey City, N.J.
Birthdate: Sept. 9, 1977

Why we’re watching: As manager of My Chemical Romance, Brian Schechter oversaw a campaign that resulted in the Reprise/Warner Bros. act reaching No. 1 on The Billboard Top Heatseekers chart.

The ability of Schechter, 27, to guide the full scope of his clients’ careers to their advantage has earned him the admiration of record company peers.

“Brian totally gets how to build the entire culture of his artist, from record sales to their merchandising and ticket sales,” says Craig Aaron, senior VP of A&R for Reprise/Warner Bros. “I have felt since early in our relationship that Brian is a future star.”

For 2005, Schechter’s plate is already full: My Chemical Romance will tour internationally behind “Three Cheers for Sweet Revenge” before starring on the inaugural Taste of Chaos multistar outing in February. This summer, the band will headline the Vans Warped tour. Additionally, Schechter will continue to develop a new client, Orange County, Calif.-based I Hate Kate, and rock band Drive By, which is recording a new album this year.

MELINDA NEWMAN
KERRIE “KIKI” SHEARD
Artist
EMI Gospel
Brentwood, Tenn.
Birthdate: June 20, 1987

Why we’re watching: With a hit reborn as a theme under her belt, Kiki “Kiki” Sheard is stepping up from the shadow of her famous musical family to become a star in her own right.

Gospel music is in Sheard’s blood. As the daughter of gospel chanteuse Karen Clark-Sheard and granddaughter of the late Mattie Moss Clark, 17-year-old Sheard is a third-generation gospel powerhouse.

In September, Sheard began writing her own chapter in the Clark family legacy when her EMI Gospel debut, “I Owe You,” became the first new artist to debut at No. 1 on The Billboard Top Gospel Albums and Top Heatseekers charts.

In 2005, the high school senior will combine the music business with her studies as she begins working on her sophomore album, due late this year. In the meantime, EMI Gospel execs are in discussion with sister label Virgin about taking Sheard to a mainstream audience.

CHRIS SWANSON
Independent distributor
Secretly Canadian
Bloomington, Ind.
Birthdate: June 2, 1975

Why we’re watching: Chris Swanson helped build Secretly Canadian as a successful indie distributor.

Like hundreds of college students before him, Swanson, 29, dreamed of starting a record label. But no one bought the records he and his friends released. So he fell into distribution as a means of survival.

“We saw a number of labels in the same position, so we formed a coop to look bigger,” Swanson says. Today, Secretly Canadian has exclusives with 16 labels, including K Records—home to the coveted Modest Mouse catalog—and Asthmatic Kitty, where rising singer/songwriter Sufjan Stevens records.

“We watched Secretly Canadian grow from a small indie label group offering obscure and experimental records into a full-service distributor,” says Matt Wishnow, founder of retailer insound.com.

Last year, Secretly Canadian topped 20,000 shipments for the first time, having success with albums from Steven and Explosions in the Sky.

TODD MARTENS
JONATHAN TUELLER
Co-owner/VP of marketing
Gray whale Entertainment Exchange
Salt Lake City
Birthdate: March 6, 1975

Why we’re watching: Jonathan Tueller, 29, is one of the youngest co-owners of an independent U.S. retail chain.

Instead of going for his MBA when he graduated from Utah State University with a marketing degree, Tueller, at the age of 21, saw a store manager, chose to invest in the seven-unit, nearly 20-year-old Gray whale Trade Exchange.

During the past year, the chain, a member of the Music Monitor Network, has rebranded itself and doubled the size of its stores. This will allow it to continue offering a deep selection of independent and alternative rock music and making debut albums for videogames, DVDs and trend merchandise.

Gray whale is hoping to widen the demographics of its customer base while retaining its core shopper: indie kids who come to the store regularly to hunt for the unknown, latest and greatest bands,” Tueller says, adding, “Gray whale will continue to adapt—10 years from today we will be completely different from what we are now.”

ED CHRISTMAN
Kanye West
Artist
Getting Out Our Dreams/Sony Music
Santa Monica, Calif.
Birthdate: June 8, 1977

Why we’re watching: Kanye West is one of the hottest producer/artists on the rap/hip-hop scene.

He has become an in-demand producer, collaborating with everyone from Jay-Z to John Mayer. His rap debut, “The College Dropout,” topped a host of critics’ year-end lists. Now, 10-time Grammy Award nominee West, 27, is parlaying that success into his own label. Getting Out Our Dreams, “Get Lifted,” has broken onto The Billboard 200. In the coming months, look for projects from Good’s other acts, including GLC, Consequence and Fonzworth Bentley.

GAIL MITCHELL
MIGUEL ZENÓN
Artist
Marsalis Music/Rounder Records
Cambridge, Mass.
Birthdate: Dec. 30, 1976

Why we’re watching: Saxophonist Miguel Zenón has not only become an important solo recording artist, but he is also an integral member of SFJAZZ Collective in its inaugural season.

2004 was a coming-of-age year for Zenón. The 28-year-old alto saxophonist/composer seemed to be everywhere.

In July, Zenón traveled throughout Europe with Haden’s New Liberation Music Orchestra, and in August he was featured on Sánchez’s Jazz/Latino symphonic album, “Coro” (Columbia).

"I first heard Miguel when he was in his early 20s and playing with David," SFJAZZ executive director Randall Kline says. “It was clear he was going to be a star.

Zenón is currently working on his next album, a suite of Puerto Rican ethnic folk music fused with jazz, and will rejoin SFJAZZ Collective this spring.

DAN OUELLETTE
Intix Folks Focus On Web-Based Services

BY JILL KUPNIS

LOS ANGELES—What a difference five years make.

While few venues were using Web-based ticketing services at the start of the millennium, the Internet and digital delivery were the hot topics at the International Ticketing Assn.'s (Intix) 26th annual conference and exhibition, which took place Jan. 10-14 at the Hollywood Renaissance Hotel here.

The digital realm is "the biggest breakthrough in ticketing in recent years," said Larry Chu, VP of ticket operations for AEG Facilities. "Technology has been serving us well."

With most venues now reporting that at least half and up to 70% of their ticket sales stem from Internet transactions, many ticketing directors are exploring other ways to use the Internet.

While the applications now apply primarily to sports teams and their season ticket holders, venues are looking to ways to expand the resale market to one-off music events. Among the most-talked-about programs are ticket reselling, automated will-call opportunities and the sale of expanded ticket packages.

Many report that these programs are steadily saving them money and simultaneously increasing customer satisfaction.

SECONDARY-MARKET SALES

One of the largest new areas of growth is in the ticket reselling market.

Veronica Lawlor, director of ticket sales and service for the Los Angeles Lakers, said the organization debuted its Team Exchange program last year for its 16,000 season ticket holders as a way to provide additional customer service.

"With Team Exchange, [season ticket holders] can post tickets on sale for any price they choose. The money they make gets credited to their season ticket account," she said. "Customers love it, and our no-show rate went down 12% last year."

Each season ticket holder can sell tickets for only 15 games per year. Team Exchange is powered by Ticketmaster.

Lawlor said such a program only makes sense for teams that consistently sell out games. She also handles ticketing for Los Angeles' WNBA team the Sparks, but does not offer the Team Exchange option for those games because other seating options are usually available.

Though some say the Lakers' reselling system mimics scalping, Lawlor said Team Exchange is "a way to expand the secondary market. We get a small percentage of the resale of the tickets. Last year, in its first year, we made $1.5 million."

PLAY BALL

For the lengthy baseball season, setting up a reselling system also makes sense as a potential money maker and customer service tool. Lucas Handelman, assistant director/business systems analyst for the San Diego Padres, said Padres Ticket Marketplace launched with the opening of the new Petco Park last year through Paciolan.

"We control when games are available for sale and set the minimum price at which they can be sold," he said. "Our season ticket renewal rate is up by 11%."

Handelman said that once a ticket is resold, the original barcode is deactivated and a new one is created. Sellers earn credit for next year's season ticket package. Buyers can print out the tickets at home, pick them up at will call or have them delivered through the mail.

Additionally, Handelman noted that Petco Park has the first auto-renewed-will-call system.

Customers who select this delivery option when purchasing tickets online go straight to the turnstile. The credit card they used to purchase the tickets is swiped at the turnstile and tickets are printed right there.

"Customers only need to wait in one line," Handelman said. "This incredibly completely eliminates will-call lines and gets fans into the park earlier."

New online programs are also offering consumers the option to prepurchase amenities or use their tickets like a debit card at events.

Season ticket holders for the Philadelphia Phillies, whose games take place at the new Citizens Bank Park, can use their barcoded ticket to buy food and merchandise. A set amount of credit is built into each season ticket.

Christopher Pohl, manager of ticket technology and development for the Phillies, said that a range of pre-pay options is available. The $90 Diamond Club ticket behind home plate, for example, includes a $30 credit.

"Customers get a real-time balance with every scan," Pohl said. "Right now, the credit doesn't carry over to another game."

CONCERTS ON THE HORIZON

Participants at Intix discussed whether such Internet programs could be applied to concerts.

John Walker, VP of business development for America West Arena, said he is considering whether a ticket-reselling tool makes sense for live shows. The venue utilizes the Ticket Exchange program for its Phoenix Suns season ticket holders.

"Reselling is going on in the concert industry too, so we might as well get into the game," he said.

The resale service StubHub already offers select concert tickets on its Web site (stubhub.com), though it has primarily focused on sports during its first four years of business. Tickets to see such acts as Duran Duran, Snoop Dogg and Josh Groban are on sale, for example.

Its typical service fee is 15% from the seller and 10% from the buyer. Tickets are sent via FedEx.

"People are getting more comfortable with it," StubHub director of sales Cristopher Miller says of the reselling and purchasing of concert tickets. "This year, the brand is our big focus. We will do advertising in print, FM radio and TV. We offer a 100% guarantee, and we will buy the person extra tickets if there is a problem."

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Keys Ready For New Entries In Tour Diary

BY RAY WADDELL

Alicia Keys will find some fresh markets waiting for her when she embarks on her upcoming Diary tour.

Many of the markets on the route have not seen Keys’ headlining set since 2002, when her first major tour grossed nearly $15 million from 89 shows, according to Billboard Boxscore.

The tour begins Feb. 25 at the Knight Center in Miami, Columbia artist John Legend will open all dates, and another support act will be announced.

Keys’ management company, MBR Entertainment, is presenting the tour, along with Atlantic Worldwide Touring and the William Morris Agency.

Keys’ team includes Atlanta Worldwide’s Jeff Sharp, along with WMA agents Keith Sarkesian and Sam Kirby in Los Angeles and Cara Lewis in New York.

The tour is in support of Keys’ triple-platinum, Grammy Award-nominated 2004 J Records release “The Diary of Alicia Keys,” her second album.

Keys says the tour will be “conceptual” and “thematic” in nature, with rehearsals to begin later this month. “I’m rearranging songs to go with it,” she tells Billboard. “This one’s going to be pretty exciting.”

The Diary tour will play 36 shows in major markets across the United States, including New York; Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, Las Vegas and Washington, D.C. The tour booked seven doubles in Keys’ top markets, but tight routing will likely prohibit any additional dates being added.

Keys last toured the States as part of the Ladies First tour with Missy Elliot and Beyoncé in 2004, the trek grossed more than $20 million and drew nearly 300,000 to 28 shows.

AN INTIMATE EVENING

The Diary tour will offer longer sets by Keys, tailored production and a chance for Keys to connect with fans in more markets, she says.

“The whole point is an intimate evening with Alicia,” Kirby says. “That’s why we booked her in beautiful, intimate venues.”

Sarkesian adds, “For that reason we purposely chose theaters instead of cut-down arenas.”

Ticket on-sales begin Jan. 21. A VIP presale at Keys’ Web site,icketskey.com, begins prior to the public on-sale. A select number of fans, no more than 20 in each market, will be offered exclusive onstage seating.

“The production will have a ‘Cotton Club’ vibe, and fans seated onstage will be expected to dress the part,” Kirby says.

Keys will be on the road for two months. She says she resisted the temptation to stay out for much more than that. “I’ve learned to take care of my voice, so I can be around forever,” she says. She adds, however, that touring does not stifle her creative process.

“I have found that when the spirit is saying it’s time to work, it’s time to work, no matter where I am,” Keys says.

When it comes to touring vs. recording, Keys says, “I love both. I find that after I’ve finished with a tour, I’m ready to go into the studio, which provides a more private and personal record of my thoughts and self. Then, after recording, I’m ready to get on the road, where there’s that energy you can feed off. I try to keep the show very spontaneous.”

Keys will play her hometown of New York April 22-23 at Radio City Music Hall. She will also play the Kodak Theatre in Los Angeles March 16-17 and the Fox Theatre in Atlanta April 6-7. The tour concludes April 24 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark.
Red Hot Tours Burn Off Winter Blues

Who says winter is a good time to back off from touring? On the surface, it might not have appeared that the world was clamoring for a Motley Crue reunion tour, but by going on sale at a time when no other major tours were vying for consumer dollars, the Crie came out of the gate strong. Before that, the Eagles went on sale in several markets for shows scheduled for 2005 and also did very well. Several in the industry, including Crue agent Artists Group International president Dennis Arfa, have wondered why more tours do not take advantage of the relatively sparse winter schedule.

Last year’s early business was strong before all the summer tours went up at once, but then the bottom fell out once the market became crowded. In April, many major markets see three to five tours go on sale every Saturday morning. As tough as business is these days, why look for competition? Soon consumers will be spending their money on 800-pound-gorilla tours like U2, and an opportunity has been missed.

Nashville’s Dancin’ in the District.

ROWDY: Montgomery Gentry and Trace Adkins will hit the road together on their Turn It Up & Bring It On tour, with Cledus T.

Judd as master of ceremonies for most dates. The co-headlining dates begin Feb. 3 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, Wis. In an unusual twist for a country outing, the tour will feature a general-admission floor on many stops. The tour will play about 20 dates, wrapping April 23 at the Hara Arena in Dayton, Ohio. Adkins is booked by the William Morris Agency, and Judd and Montgomery Gentry are booked by Monticello Peninsula Artists. The tour will work with various promoters, including Outback Concerts, Rich Michell Productions, G.A.M.E. and Police Productions.

Later in the year, Montgomery Gentry, who are managed by Johnny Norris at Hallmark Direction, will play a significant number of fairs and festivals and may add a limited shed run to the mix. Come fall, there is a chance the duo may reprise its run with Adkins, who is managed by John Dennis at Vector Management.

ROWDY, PART II: CMT will air a live music special featuring Lynyrd Skynyrd, Los Lonely Boys and Jo Dee Messina from the Jacksonville (Fla.) Veterans Memorial Arena the night before Super Bowl XXXIX (billboard.biz, Jan. 12).

The Feb. 5 program, “Lynyrd Skynyrd Super Bowl Saturday Night Special,” will air at 9 p.m. ET. Jacksonville is Skynyrd’s hometown, and the band is hugely popular there. The show is invitation-only, and it is likely that the only wardrobe malfunctions will be in the audience.
More Breakthrough Acts For 2005

By Gail Mitchell

Before the new year shifts into full gear, here is part two of our feature on independent acts whose promising 2004 debuts warrant another look in 2005. Part one ran in the Jan. 15 issue.

ABENAA

The name of Abenaa’s record label, Nkonin, means “doing things in an honorable way” in the Ashanti dialect of the Twi language. And that’s how the singer/songwriter approaches her craft.

Defying categorisation, Abenaa fuses pop, rock, soul, R&B and world music on her R&B-distributed first album, “Tuesday’s Child.” The result can best be described as urban folk. But for the Brooklyn, N.Y.-based artist (who co-wrote and composed “Vanessa”), Grammy Award-nominated “(The Way That You Love) It’s simply heartfelt music.

After seven years of honing their sound, Slick & Rose converse lyrically on everything from spirituality to struggling working mothers, laying jazz and soul over sumptuous beats. Repeat: Slick’s voice includes “Space” and “Milk & Honey.”

“Our foundation is basically hip-hop,” Slick explains. “Then we have live music played over the tracks. Our lyrics and the way we sing songs is also in a hip-hop style.

Van Hunt followed, and Slick & Rose released “Objects” in the United States last March on their own Soul Hippie Music Group label.

Since then, the pair’s brand of hip-hop soul has picked up positive reviews, a new marketing and promotion partner (Blue Maza Entertainment) and new management (Rasta Root).

That’s about to change. Shauntu is readying a mix tape, “The Diamond Lane,” and is working with producers Focus, Rockwilder, Mahogany and Jolly Roll on her own album, slated for a second-quarter release.

“I’m more into the fun part of Cali versus the gangsta side,” Shauntu says of her style. “The West Coast has been saturated with so much gangsta and negativity that I’d like to bring a positive side to it.”

As for the lack of well-known female rappers, Shauntu says the cause is in lack of talent. “The public is ready to embrace a lot of female rappers, but we’re still trying to find our way in. A lot of men don’t want the WBNA to be at the NBA level. Until they respect our game, we’re not going to get any props.”

Shauntu (last name: Montgomery) has signed with Los Angeles-based Shadowoul Management Group. The company is headed by Julian Edwards, who will oversee the promotion of the operations. He is currently negotiating a distribution deal for the label.


Billy Miles

Billy Miles’ distinctive voice strikes you immediately. You hear shades of Macy Gray, not to mention Sade, Billie Holiday and Nelly Furtado. Yet the Los Angeles-based artist never loses her originality on the self-titled album that bowed in September through Aera/EMI. Among the noteworthy tracks are first single “Sunshine,” “Disrespected” and “A Friend Like You.”

Miles first flirted with the industry at 16. She was part of a duo that signed with A&M, but an album was never released. Instead of pursuing another deal, Miles concentrated on developing her writing and vocal skills. That hard work jelled into a style weaving elements of jazz, electronica, R&B, rock, pop and trip-hop.

“Dealing with the majors was a learning experience,” says Miles, who has opened for Van Hunt. “It was an entirely different ball of wax—the label is so hands-on. [You don’t get] much creative freedom, especially on a first album.

“But with an indie, the music is your thing. So that’s so important to me as an artist, to put out who you are.”

Anthony David

Invoking such influences as Johnny “Guitar” Watson, Bill Withers and Black Thought, Anthony David is at road a storyteller.

“I like simple songs,” says the Atlanta-based singer/guitarist, who has written for India.Arie. “It’s about good melodies and cool words. I’m just trying to get back the same feeling I get with a song like .”


R&B/Hi-Pop Music

IDJ Renewing Tha Peace

Rhythm & Blues

IDJ Renewing Tha Peace

By Gail Mitchell

Atlanta fave Ludacris inks a new long-term contract with Island Def Jam Music Group for his Disturbing Tha Peace Records. Under terms of the joint-venture agreement, Island Def Jam will continue its marketing, publicity, promotion and sales support of the label’s releases.

R&B singer Bobby Valenitno’s debut album, “Give Me a Chance,” will be the first release under the new agreement. The set is due in April; lead single is “Slow Down.”

Disturbing Tha Peace initially surfaced in 1998 as an independent production company. Among the acts it signed to major labels are Shawty (IDJ), Chingy, and I-20 (Capitol) and Playa Circle (Universal). In addition to Ludacris, the label’s principals include Jeff Dixon and Chaka Zhuu.

Ludacris signed an exclusive publishing deal with Universal Music Publishing Group last month.

Shauntu’s Victory: Snoop Dogg, Xzibit, Guuilla Black. The Game. Kurupt. Add another name to the bustling rap activity on the West Coast: Shauntu.

The female rapper is exiting the Aftermath camp to launch her own Los Angeles-based label, Victory Entertainment, dubbed “the Vic.” The roster lists Shauntu and new local rap duo the Gentz.

Shauntu is best known for guest stints on Montell Jordan’s “Get It On,” Tontie and Timbaland & Magoo’s “Luv 2 Luv U.” She also appears on the soundtracks to “The Wash” and “8 Mile.” Before her 2½ years at Aftermath, Shauntu was signed to Atlantic Records, though she never released an album.
D.O.D. Finds Album Guests At Home

This week's column was written by Rhonda Baraka in Atlanta.

The Legion Records, new home of veteran rap set Do or Die, has secured U.S. distribution through WEA. The multiyear agreement also gives the Chicago-based label access to marketing and promotional support from Atlantic.

Now known as D.O.D. (www.dod.biz, June 18, 2004), the group is preparing for the Feb. 1 release of its self-titled album on the Legion. Although the trio's name has changed a bit, its members—Belo, A.K. and N.A.R.D.—have not ventured too far from their artistic roots.

First single "Magic Chick" features fellow Chicagoans R. Kelly, Another local favorite, Twista, also checks in.

The set features production by homeboy Kanye West (Twista, Jay-Z, Alicia Keys), DJ Quik (Pac, Talib Kweli), Scott Storch (Eyvonce, Dr. Dre, the Roots), N.O. Joe (Scarface, the Geto Boys) and the Legendary Traxster (Twista, Mystikal).

A.K. says D.O.D. selected artists and producers who were hot and who represent their hometown.

"We knew that both Kanye and Twista were burning up. It was Chicago's time, so we wanted to keep the Chicago buzz going."

The music on the album is at once vintage and current. "We did something that puts it on a whole new level," A.K. says. "But you still can hear Do or Die. We give you the unexpected. You wouldn't expect to hear us on a song with R. Kelly. You wouldn't expect to hear us with DJ Quik."

A.K. adds that the album's variety gives it a broad appeal. "With the R. Kelly song, you get the club heads. We hit all ages—young girls, older ladies, your boys, older men. Whatever category of music that you love, they hit it all."
India Takes Indie Turn

BY LEILA COBO

The recent signing of salsa artist India to SGZ Records is the latest in a growing list of top-line stars going from major label to small indie.

It provides further indication that, despite having fewer resources, indies can be appealing to established acts, especially in today's climate.

For India, who was last signed to Sony and was reportedly courted by other labels, the SGZ deal came down to a few key elements.

First, there was what SGZ president George Zamora calls a "creative deal." Second, there were the artistic considerations.

Although signed to SGZ, India will have her own, as-yet-unnamed label. Artistically, she'll get to work with SGZ partner/producer Sergio George, who last collaborated with the singer on her 1994 hit album, "Dicen Que Soy" (RMM).

"Right now a major can't give me what I want," India says. "Now times are hard in terms of money. No one is getting the money they used to get. So, right now, it's about the music."

Musically, India says, Zamora and George "understood where I was coming from. The numbers are fine. But let's talk about the music. The freedom to make and create hits. That's what Sergio is about. I love that. I love that energy."

India emerged in the 1990s and, like her friend and former labelmate Marc Anthony, began her career on the dance circuit, singing in English. Like Anthony, she was picked up by RMM, the independent label that was then a tropical music powerhouse, and quickly gained recognition and sales for her vocal prowess.

India later migrated to Sony, as did Anthony, and remained there until her contract expired last year.

Zamora and George, who launched SGZ in 2004, saw India as a good fit for a young label that brings together established and up-and-coming acts under one small roof.

But SGZ has the managerial experience of Zamora, who ran Warner Music Latina and Sony Discos, coupled with the production and musical appeal of George, a multiple Grammy Award-winning producer. SGZ also has a strong radio promotion arm.

The label's marquee artist is Tito Nieves, who hit No. 1 on the Billboard Latin Tropical Airplay chart last year with his single "Fabricando Fantasias." India is featured on a current Nieves track, "Ya No Queda Nada."

Other SGZ signings include younger salseros FrankieNegron and Charlie Cruz, who were previously on Warner, as well as newly signed artist Cíclo Bananero.

PERSONAL ATTENTION

The overall operation is small—smaller even than RMM was—and that's a plus for an artist like India, who, admittedly, needs attention.

"We take care of our artists," Zamora says. "We can cater to them on a one-on-one basis and be on top of their promotion 100%.

Other labels, they have so many priorities, it dilutes the effort."

India's first SGZ album will probably come in early summer. It is described as an urban tropical album with a variety of influences, from dance to reggaeton.

"She's going to have a lot of creative input," George says. "More, probably, than she has had in the past. We gave her creative control, and a business deal that's different from what artists are used to. Back in the day, artists felt like they were employees of labels. I don't think she feels that way this time."

Other major artists who have signed with young independents include Charlie Zaa and Elvis Crespo, who went to Ole Records, and Luis Enrique, who recently signed to Respek Records.

Uni Deal Is Change For Dinero

Miami-based rapper Don Dinero has run the gamut of deal possibilities.

Three years ago, when he initially captured public attention, he was recording on Cuban Connection, an indie label that he launched with his brother, Oscar Guaitán. Reyes Records, a Miami-based one-stop, picked up the album "Qué Bola" for distribution and did surprisingly well, boosted by local airplay of the single "Pana Pana."

This led Universal Music Latino to offer a distribution deal and reissue the album, a gratifying offer for Dinero, who previously had been shunned by major labels.

Now, Universal has upped the ante through a three-album joint venture that allows Dinero to record for his own label, Mr. Money Music.

"We wanted Dinero as our own artist," says John Echevarría, president of Universal Music Latino. He says the label is active going after the urban market. "We're not talking about some- one who hasn't sold anything. He's one of the few Latin hip-hop acts who has truly grasped the Latin community."

Dinero's new venture is not to be confused with Guaitán Brothers, another Universal Music Latino joint venture, this one with Guaitán. However, Echevarría says, Guaitán will advise Mr. Money Music, so the company's logo will appear on Dinero's recordings.

The first album under Mr. Money Music, "Ahora Que Si," is slated to street in May or June.

"CSI' RUNS WITH CORRIDOS: Fans of CBS drama "CSI" got a lesson in Mexican narcocorridos during the episode that aired the week of Jan. 13, titled "Snakes."

In it, investigators find the severed head of a woman, stuffed with a snake, in a newspaper vending machine—in other words, your typical "CSI" story line.

But here's the twist: An identical murder is described in the lyrics of a narcocorrido performed by a local group in the episode. Corridos are the Mexican stories set to song that originally told tales of real heroes and anti-heroes. Narcocorridos, greatly popularized by such groups as Tucanes de Tijuana and Los Tigres del Norte, talk about drug deals and drug dealers.

Turns out "CSI" writer Dustin Abraham went as far as penning the song, hiring a band to perform it (Los Angeles-based group Extreme) and getting actor Yancey Arias (formerly featured in the series "Kingpin") to sing it in Spanish.

"No, we didn't think people would be familiar with the topic," Abraham says, when asked if he thought "CSI" viewers would know what a corrido was. "But I was put on staff to think outside the box and think of new worlds.

Abraham, who doesn't speak Spanish (Extremo translated the lyrics) and didn't know a corrido from a bachata, was introduced to the genre by a friend who works for Las Vegas Spanish-language newspaper Hoy.

"He was telling me they were the equivalent of hardcore raps and that they were based on real events," says Abraham. Abraham says that thinking an established group would be hard to pin down, Abraham went for a younger band and settled on Extremo, which plays at the Los Angeles club Hacienda Corona. The group recorded two songs with Arias specifically for the episode and is seen performing them at the club.

As for the episode's conclusion, the murdered woman, a writer for Hoy who was investigating the negative influence of narcocorridos, was killed because she was considered a traitor."

Not truly uplifting, but we applaud the risk-taking, the effort at authenticity and the willingness to introduce something unfamiliar (language and culture) to prime-time audiences.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for "CSI Miami," which somehow manages to virtually avoid Hispanics (OK, one cast member is half Hispanic) in a city where they make up two-thirds of the population.

IN BRIEF: Mexican supergroup Los Temerarios have announced their 2005 U.S. tour schedule. The band will play 40 dates, beginning April 1 at Disco Rodeo in Dalton, Ga., and ending Nov. 13 at the St. Paul Armory in St. Paul, Minn.

Mere months after peaking at No. 10 on the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart, reggaetón duo Baby Rasta & Gringo have decided to part ways. The split comes after nearly a decade together.

This isn't the only reggaetón act to split up in the wake of success, in search of greener solo pastures. Héctor & Tito also have called it quits.
| ARTIST | IMPRINT & DISTRIBUTING LABEL | WEEKS ON | WEEKS AGO | PEAK POSITION | WEEK 29 | WEEK 28 | WEEK 27 | WEEK 26 | WEEK 25 | WEEK 24 | WEEK 23 | WEEK 22 | WEEK 21 | WEEK 20 | WEEK 19 | WEEK 18 | WEEK 17 | WEEK 16 | WEEK 15 | WEEK 14 | WEEK 13 | WEEK 12 | WEEK 11 | WEEK 10 | WEEK 9 | WEEK 8 | WEEK 7 | WEEK 6 | WEEK 5 | WEEK 4 | WEEK 3 | WEEK 2 | WEEK 1 | TOP LATIN ALBUMS |
|--------|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| RICARDO ARJONA | SONY DISCOS | 366 | 365 | 1 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 |
Drexler Seeks U.S. Break

BY ENRIQUE LOPETEGUI

Few artists are as artistically recognized and yet as little-known commercially, as Jorge Drexler.

Although he has not had any albums in the United States, the Uruguayan singer/songwriter has garnered critical acclaim.

Now, Drexler hopes his participation in the soundtrack to the film “The Motorcycle Diaries” and an upcoming tour of Spain and Latin America will pave his entry into the U.S. market.

“I guess I will have to crack Mexico first,” says Drexler, who is based in Spain and signed to Warner imprint Oro Este. “The problem is that the relationship between American and Spanish labels is less direct than the one between Spain and Latin America. It’s hard to find a space for works like mine, which aren’t massively popular. It will depend on niche marketing.”

Drexler is promoting his album “Eco,” released late last year in Spain. It was released in Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Mexico and Colombia, with an Italian edition coming soon.

The first of five albums for Oro Este, “Eco” was produced by Juan Campos-Podocén and Carlos Casaburceta, who are former members of Uruguayan hardcore rap group Peo-te-Assino. Both have previously worked with Drexler.

Like his previous albums, “Eco” is a mix of Uruguayan rhythms—milonga, compadre and murga—but it has a more universal sound, boosted by touches of reggae, pop and electronica.

Unlike the music of fellow Uruguayan Juanjo Roos, which can be subtle but also has explosive peaks, Drexler’s always has a chillout feel, even at its most exhilarating.

“I love what he does,” Spanish superstar Alejandro Sanz says. “That ‘complex simplicity’ he utilizes appeals to me. He’s a songwriter but he’s completely different than, say, [Ricardo] Arjona. There was a time when ‘singer/songwriter’ was a very narrow term associated with the political song. But Drexler can change the cover.

In Panama: The second annual Panama Jazz Festival, set for Jan. 20-22 in Panama City, will include performances by pianist Danilo Pérez’s trio, the Joe Lovano Quartet, the Charlie Hunter Trio and the Janis Siegel Group, among others. The festival, founded by Panama native Pérez, will be dedicated to the memory of another Panamanian pianist, Victor Boa, who died Dec. 6 at 79. Boa created the style known as “Tambo jazz.”

Boa had been announced as this year’s special honoree, with the festival dedicated to his musical contributions. Additional support is provided by Ruben Blades, the new cultural minister of Panama.

LEILA COBO

DREXLER: HIGH HOPES FOR UPCOMING TOUR

The track is included on the soundtrack’s most popular song, and for good reason. It is Drexler’s most popular song to date. The album’s most popular song, “Eco,” was released last year in its homeland, with soft releases in Canada, South Korea, Japan and South America.

For the uninitiated, Infusion’s electronic landscape sounds incredibly at home when played alongside the more traditional. New Order and David Bowie, indeed, it’s electric, it’s dance, and it’s rock. It very much represents the here and now.

Because Infusion’s brand of BMG Australia excludes vinyl rights, the band set up its own label, Polaroid Recordings, which is distributed by 3 Beat/Amato in the United Kingdom.

The label debuted last year with “Better World,” which featured remixes by Josh Wink and Adam Freeland.

Also in 2004, the band’s “Girls Can Be Cruel” took home an Australian Record Industry Award for best dance release. Both “Better World” and “Girls Can Be Cruel” appear on “Six Feet Above Yesterday.”

In an interesting twist, much-missed British imprint Defconstructions once home to M People, Kylie Minogue, Robert Miles and others is relaunching this year with “Six Feet Above Yesterday.”

All that’s missing from the scenario is a U.S. label for Infusion to call home. But we’re confident that a BMG affiliate here will rectify the situation. If not, we know of a few independent labels that would be more than happy to add Infusion to their artist rosters. Stay tuned.

Curtis goes clubbing: Sure, Curtis Mayfield’s music has always

been championed by club DJs. But expect this to only increase with the Feb. 15 Rhino release of Mayfield: Remixed —The Curtis Mayfield Collection.

Highlights of the 10-track collection include “Pusherman” (remixed by Mix Master Mike), “Move On Up” (Eric Kupper) and “Superfly” (“Little” Louie Vega). Also included are two tracks by

the trio’s second album, which was released last year in its homeland, with soft releases in Canada, South Korea, Japan and South America.

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Curtis goes clubbing: Sure, Curtis Mayfield’s music has always
Q4 Slumped Despite Hits

The story line is familiar by now: Following a 12-month growth spurt for album sales that began in September 2003, the fourth quarter turned out to be a nail biter for music stores and record companies. Halfway through September 2004, momentum reversed direction, as music sales fell behind the marks of the prior year for 13 straight weeks.

Some music merchants complained that an absence of hit product caused the slide. Yet, like every fourth quarter before it, the last three months of 2004 brought a parade of superstar acts, including eagerly anticipated sets from Eminem and U2.

While the release slates of September and October 2004 did feel light next to what those months delivered in 2003, The Billboard 200 actually saw more albums debut within the top 20 during the last four months of the year that just closed than did in the prior one. There were 88 bows inside the top 20, accounting for almost 64.1 million album units during this most recent dance, while the last trimester of 2003 owned 82 such starts, with those titles accounting for almost 61 million copies.

While it is true that the per-title yield for the top 20 class of 2004 was lighter, with an average of 728,906 compared to 743,693 in 2003, this year's crop brought more bulk.

Further, the very best sellers of fourth-quarter 2004 reached larger numbers than the cream of holiday-stretch releases in 2003. Eminem's "Encore" needed only eight weeks from the time of its rushed release in November through year's end to post 3.5 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That was enough to make it not only the top seller of the quarter that just ended but also the third best seller of the year (see list, page 36).

Eminem's numbers beat the 2.6 million copies that made OutKast's "Speakerboxx/The Love Below" the top dog during fourth-quarter 2003, as well as the 2.3 million that Toby Keith's "Shock 'n Y'all" raked when it emerged as the best seller of that year's last two months.

Narrow the field to the time that transpired between Thanksgiving week and the Christmas frame, and the best seller of the '04 holiday season was U2's "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb," with 2.06 million. Again, that beats the holiday-weeks champ of '03, Alicia Keys, whose "The Diary of Alicia Keys" rang 1.7 million in that same frame of the prior year. In fact, her total then even trails the 1.73 million that Eminem's "Encore" did from Thanksgiving week through Christmas in 2004.

(Continued on page 52)

Another Chart King

Through the years, some larger-than-life figures have appeared on the Billboard charts. In 1963 alone, Pope John XXIII, Cassius Clay, President John F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. made their debuts.

King first appeared on The Billboard 200 the week of Oct. 26, 1963, with an album on Berry Gordy's namesake label, "The Great March to Freedom," which peaked at No. 141.

Three albums (of spoken-word material and speeches) by King charted in 1963, and four more did so in 1968 in the weeks after his assassination. The first to enter the chart after his death was "I Have a Dream," a recording of his famous speech given Aug. 28, 1963, in Washington, D.C.

This issue, "I Have a Dream" returns to a Billboard chart, albeit in a different form. Gospel singer BeBe Winans debuts at No. 72 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks with a song titled "I Have a Dream" (Still Waters/Hidden Beach), which incorporates text from King's speech. That means King receives a songwriting credit, his first on the R&B singles chart.

For Winans, "I Have a Dream" marks his first appearance on the chart in almost five years. His most recent entry was "Coming Back Home," No. 61 in 2000.

GETTING ANOTHER TOP 10: Reba McEntire's "He Gets That From Me" (MCA) rises 12-10 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks, giving McEntire her 54th top 10 title. This year marks a quarter-century since she scored her first top 10 hit with "You Lost Me Up to Heaven," which rose to No. 9 the week of Aug. 16, 1980. "Heaven" peaked at No. 8 in the issue dated Aug. 23, 1980. McEntire's top 10 chart span is the longest on this week's chart if you count only solo singles. However, Emmylou Harris appears as a collaborator on Reni Thomas' "Not Me" (also featuring Vince Gill), which rises 69-54. Harris landed her first top hit 30 years ago, when her cover of the Louvin Brothers' "If I Could Only Win Your Love" cracked that part of the chart in the Sept. 6, 1975, issue and peaked at No. 4 three weeks later.

EIGHT DAYS A WEEK: Not counting current hits, there have been a total of four songs in the history of The Billboard Hot 100 that have a title where the first two words are "Sunday Morning." There has never been a chart entry that starts with the words "Monday Morning." In that context, it's really defying the odds to find Maroon 5's "Sunday Morning" (Octone/J) at No. 58 on the Hot 100, while Alan Jackson's "Monday Morning Church" (Arista Nashville) takes an adjoining berth at No. 57.

THIS AND THAT: Mariah Carey has her highest-debuting song in almost five years on The Billboard Hot 100. "It's Like That" (Island) is new at No. 53. That's Carey's highest entry since "Crybabies" started at No. 28 the week of June 24, 2000.

As a solo artist, Carey was last on the Hot 100 with "Through the Rain," which peaked at No. 81 the week of Jan. 18, 2003.
**Anonymous**

**The Billboard 200 A-Z (Listed by ARTISTS)**

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<th>ARTIST</th>
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**Additional Analysis by Keith Caulfield in Los Angeles.**

**Eminem** has an 15% decline, as "Encore" slips to 84,000 copies. The chart's Hot Shot Debut comes from the silver screen while TV delivered its Greatest Gainer. The hip-hop-flavored soundtrack to Samuel L. Jackson's "Coach Carter" dents the albums list at No. 1 (312,000) as the film cast as No. 1 at the box office, ranking in $29 million during its opening weekend, including tickets sold during the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

Over The Counter

*Continued from page 49*

**FINER POINTS:** If you concentrate on albums that bowed inside the top 10, the race between the final quarters of 2003 and 2004 cuts even closer. The last four months of 2004 saw 54 albums lose chart lives within the top 10, compared with 52 during the same span of 2003.

**Week shorter than the year that would follow. Total up the 2004 batch through that same week, and the sum, 50,1 million, trails the top 10s of the prior year.**

**Remember, though, that 2003 ended with Christmas week, one week shorter than the year that would follow. Total up the 2004 batch through that same week, and the sum, 50,1 million, trails the top 10s of the prior year.**

**In the assertion that labels and artists caused a late Christmas by pushing too many key releases into the last two months—a view that you just might have read in this very column—crumbles on further analysis.**

**Of the 54 albums that started in the top 10 from September 2004 on, 32 were released before September 10. In 2003, 34 of the 52 top 10 starts during that span did so in September and October, a mere difference of two titles.**

**Going beyond the hits, taking in not only the lower ranks of The Billboard 200 but also catalog titles, and the contrast between the closing quarters of the last two years becomes more distinct.**

**From the first full week of October through Christmas week of 2004, Nielsen SoundScan has U.S. album sales at 191.5 million, compared with 207.2 million for the same span of the prior year.**

**In that view, it does not appear that hits were the headline of 2004, because Eminem and U2 did their jobs. Instead, the culprit appears to be a tidal movement on which the myriad of stores and labels once relied: the ancillary purchase, that second or third album that a consumer would buy when he or she came in to purchase the hit they craved.**

**With music stores expanding their scope of products during the past couple of decades, a second or third purchase might be a downloading.**

**With an increasing number of album purchases made in electronics stores and mass merchants—SoundScan had the latter up by more than 9% in 2004—that ancillary purchase spills to a broader array of products that could include batteries, candy, washcloths, what have you.**

**GREENER, STILL: Green Day retains the No. 1 slot, even widening its lead.**

**The band’s "American Idol" does clip a tiny increase of less than 300 units, but is still one of only 16 titles from last issue’s Billboard 200 to manage a gain, and, at 100,500 copies, is the only album on the chart to log six figures for the week. Runner-up**

![Link to article](www.americanradiohistory.com)
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<td>Stevie Wonder</td>
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<td>Elton John</td>
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<td>Journey</td>
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<td>Rod Stewart</td>
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<td>John Mayer</td>
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<td>April Lavigne</td>
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<td>Alison Krauss &amp; Union Station</td>
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<td>Modest Mouse</td>
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<td>Kid Rock</td>
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<td>Eminem</td>
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<td>Phil Collins</td>
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**Greatest Singles**

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<td>Babylon</td>
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<td>Pensando En Ti</td>
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<td>Handel &amp; The Academy Of Ancient Music</td>
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<td>J Moss</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dace Cook</td>
<td>Harmful If Swallowed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jem</td>
<td>Finally Woken</td>
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**Hot Shot Debut**

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**Greatest Albums**

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**Greatest Independent Albums**

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<td>The Best Of Bob Marley</td>
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<td><strong>GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE SAINTS</strong></td>
<td>Unified Voices / We Must Be Strong</td>
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Solo Country Females Regain Ground

During the more than 27 months between early November 2001 and late February 2004, only two solo females shared space in the Top 10 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks in the same week. But with the conspicuous 2004 arrival of Gretchen Wilson and a revitalized radio presence by chart veterans Reba McEntire and LeAnn Rimes, the form’s females are regaining some of the ground they conceded to their male competitors in the earliest years of the new millennium.

McEntire’s 54th career top 10 (see Chart Beat, page 49), “He Gets That From Me,” rises 10-10, placing three songs by solo females in the top 10 for the third time in four weeks and the aforementioned dry spell ended in the Feb. 21, 2004, issue. McEntire keeps top 10 company this issue with Wilson’s “When I Think About Cheatin’” at No. 5 and Rimes’ “Nothin’ Butt Love Makes Sense” at No. 8.

ANOTHER THRESOME: It is the men who are making a comeback on the Top 40 Mainstream chart, as Mario’s “Let Me Love You” becomes the third consecutive No. 1 on the list by a male artist, the first such streak in the 13-year history of the chart. “Love” succeeds Gavin DeGraw’s “I Don’t Want to Be,” which was preceded at No. 1 by “Over and Over” from Nelly featuring Tim McGraw.

Since the beginning of 2003, male soloists have been scarce at No. 1, as groups have taken the pole position 13 times, with solo females ringing the bell on 11 occasions. Even with this recent surge, there have been just seven No. 1 songs on the Top 40 Mainstream list by male solo artists during this time frame.

Females do have something to crow about on the chart, however, as Kelly Clarkson’s “Since U Been Gone” rises 11-6 to join her “Breakaway” (No. 10) in the Top 10. Clarkson is the first female since Beyoncé in October 2003 to place two songs within the top 10 and the first non-R&B artist to do so since Avril Lavigne in October 2002.

NOW AND THEN: As Green Day maintains its spot atop The Billboard 200 and Hot Digital Songs with “American Idiot” and “Boulevard of Broken Dreams,” respectively, it is interesting and encouraging to note that the same act can hold the No. 1 slot simultaneously with an album and a digital track.

When the singles market was still relatively healthy in the mid-2000s, the record industry contended that retail singles cannibalized the sales of full-length albums. Slowly, fewer singles hit the market, and now we’re at an absolute low point in the history of the singles format. While the labels’ position was never fully substantiated, it is heartening to see that the digital song market can coexist with the album format. Looking beyond Green Day, which seems to be at its zenith of popularity with the critical acclaim for “21st Century Breakdown,” its sales are doing well in both digital download and album formats. Ciara’s track at No. 2 on Hot Digital Songs, “1,2 Step,” has not slowed sales of her album.

After entering and peaking at No. 3 in October, the album has shown staying power and has spent the past three weeks within The Billboard 200 Top 20, enjoying a 20-17 jump this issue. “Goodies” has sold slightly more than a million copies, while “1,2 Step” has exceeded 200,000 paid downloads.

If anything positive has come out of illegal file sharing, it is that labels have been forced to find or develop legitimate download services that cater to consumers who want to purchase individual songs, as well as albums. Let’s hope the music industry will see the benefit of this newly shaped landscape, where album sales remain healthy even as digital distribution grows, for a very long time.

SWEET DREAMS: After a notable hiatus from Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks, BeBe Winans bows at No. 72 with “I Have a Dream.” The track contains Winans’ musical rendition of words from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous speech, interspersed with snippets of King’s original delivery.

Adult R&B signals jumped on the single from Winans’ upcoming release, “Dream” (Feb. 22), in celebration of the King holiday. Winans’ last appearance on R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks was in 2009 with “Coming Back Home,” featuring Brian McKnight and Joe. McKnight also debuts this issue with “Everytime You Go Away” at No. 71.

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to cease unauthorized file sharing.

Several lawsuits in Austria, Denmark, and Germany were settled with financial compensation, including a penalty of 13,000 euros ($16,500) paid by one individual.

The industry is awaiting the results of court cases against peer-to-peer services

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GREMLIN

Continued from page 5

dd to name it to include its technol-

ogy in upcoming WiFi-connected devices. These devices, whose primary function would be to provide MusicGremlin,

will come preloaded with track information available via the online store and feature a direct connection to the service.

Customers can buy music either by the track or purchase a subscription. Subscribers may set their devices to download genre-based playlists on a regular basis to refresh the music stored on the device. Users may also broadcast stored titles for other MusicGremlin customers to see, sample and purchase through the online store. A pricing structure has not been set.

The service “changes the device from a [storage unit] to a point-of-sale device,” says Jonathan Axelrod, who founded the company with Robert Rhedouri.

The entrepreneurs hope that labels will see MusicGremlin’s technology as a way to make digital music more of a value-added service, which in turn would increase music piracy.

“This is more a secure channel for distribution,” Axelrod says. “Piracy can be fought two ways, with the carrot or the stick. We’re trying to use the carrot.”

Hatch

Continued from page 6

responsible for drafting and debating copyright and anti-piracy legislation before full committee consideration. It was previously called the Patents, Copy-

wrights and Trademarks Subcommittee.

Sources say Specter has so much on his plate that he was delighted to let Hatch keep his finger on the pulse of IP issues.

The Judiciary Committee’s responsibilities include hearings on judicial

nominees, antitrust, immigration, technology and terrorism.

Some insiders are concerned that with such a full committee agenda, there might not be much in the way of new copyright legislation, and that bills that pass the new Hatch subcommit-

tee could end up on the back burner. Instead, a bill held over from last ses-

sion or one that has already been passed by the House stands a better chance, they add.

FRANK AND ISSA BACK

On the House side, two familiar lawmakers are rejuvenating the Judiciary Committee after taking other commit-

tee assignments in the last Congress: Reps. Barney Frank, D-Mass., and Darrell Issa, R-Calif.

During the ’90s, Frank was a strong proponent of the industry’s Digital Millennium Copyright Act and anti-

piracy measures. In 2000, he sided with artists’ groups to repeal an industry-

proposed amendment to the Copyright Act that made sound recordings works for hire. In doing so, he helped ensure that artists could exercise their sound recording termination rights.

In 2002, Issa was one of a handful of lawmakers who pushed the Depart-

ment of Justice to expand its efforts to root out online piracy.

by Napster inventor Shawn Fanning, and Mashboxx. In Britain, telecommunications giant BT and system integrator Blueprint offer the Open Royalty Gateway for commercialized file sharing.

A topic of debate will be the interoperability of the various technologies used by Internet service providers, to ensure that consumers can buy music from any online service, regardless of which digital player they use.

“As a company, we think interoper-

ability is a good thing. It will help

enhance our offering to consumers,” Wragg says. “But it isn’t anything that

we will drive the different hardware and software vendors to do, provided they meet certain concerns that we have.

For instance, they must not compro-

mise the digital rights management in the devices.”

Paul Jackson, principal analyst at Forrester Research in Amsterdam, argues that digital music’s popularity should give labels more clout to demand interoperability.

“The good thing about putting them out that is upbeat is that it paves the way for the labels to think about interoperability very seriously,” Jackson says. “Got are the days when it was only one person in the label’s dig-

ital department dealing with all these things. Labels are the power players that should be fighting for more.”

Additional reporting by Emmanuel LeGrain in London.

VETERANS

Continued from page 30

Anderson says he may put the single out via CDX, but he also hopes another artist might record it and make it a radio hit. In recent years, Anderson has had numerous cuts as a songwriter, and the success of “Whiskey Lullaby” may invite even more songwriters to knock on his door and ask for songs to record.

“I hope my new album is the best demo session I’ve ever done,” he says.

Anderson is grateful for all the alter-

native avenues available for exposing his music, because he has no plans to retire.

“Obviously you have to do it the way the major labels do it and get it in the top 10 on the charts to hit the home run and drive the Cadillac. But I’m not there’s a whole lot of Chevrolets out there on the road.

I’ve had No. 1 records, but I’ve never tried to build my career just strictly around the record,” Anderson continues. “I’ve tried to do good live performances and entertain the fans. I’m still able to work an awful lot off of that and the fact that I’ve always paid a lot of attention to my own thing.

Those are the things that have enabled me to continue to have a career without having to go in and spend a million dollars in cutting an album and getting it out on a major label.

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“One of the great privileges of working with U2 is you get to go on the road with them,” longtime manager Paul McGuinness tells Billboard. “We are, I suppose, that rarest of things: a major touring attraction that is still having No. 1 records all over the world after 25 years.”

Conservative estimates put the Vertigo tour’s gross potential at $225 million-$250 million from as many as 110 shows. Next Adventure, the Toronto-based touring division of Clear Channel Entertainment, will promote and produce the tour worldwide.

TNA president Arthur Fogel will spearhead the tour, as he did U2’s Elevated tour in 2001. That tour grossed $142 million from 113 shows worldwide, playing to more than 2.1 million fans.

“We are thrilled to be involved in what will surely be an amazing tour,” Fogel tells Billboard. “The absolute success of the Elevated tour and their brilliant new record have created tremendous anticipation around the world.”

McGuinness says that before promoter consolidation, U2 tour promotional rights were put out to bid, but McGuinness says that was not a consideration on Vertigo.

“The relationship with Arthur and Clear Channel is really a partnership, and we go into it as a joint venture with them,” McGuinness says. “We share the profits, and all the information is shared as well. We make the decisions together on a worldwide basis.”

This will be Fogel’s third run producing U2. “I really can’t imagine any other way of doing it,” McGuinness adds. “The integration of the Clear Channel organization and TNA in Toronto is superb.”

The first U.S. leg will wrap in Boston in late May. The tour is routed to accommodate multiple shows in many markets, though Fogel’s approach is typically conservative. Even so, history suggests quick sellouts.

In 2001, U2 rang up six sellouts at Chicago’s United Center that grossed a combined $90.6 million. We would love to have them back for six more.” United Center senior VP of operations Terry Savarise says.

The band also notched four sellouts in 2001 at Boston’s FleetCenter ($5.6 million) and at Earl Court in London ($4.5 million). McGuinness adds that Dublin’s Slane Castle drew 157,418 and took in $6.7 million.

Following two months of U.S. shows, the Vertigo tour will hit some 30 European stadiums, beginning June 10 in Brussels. The band will stay in Europe through mid-August, then return to North America for another run of 30 arena dates.

STADIUMS VS. ARENAS

Fogel says stadium dates were not considered in the United States, partly because of higher U.S. ticket prices. Similarly, and analogous to Springsteen’s Springsteen to Bon Jovi have played European stadiums and North American arenas on recent tours.

“T is a combination of a bunch of factors — economics, ticket prices, logistics, and in this case it’s about mixing up the vibe of the tour, so it doesn’t run the same for the whole tour,” McGuinness says another factor is the lack of state-of-the-art arenas in Europe. “The arenas in America are just absolutely ideal for rock ‘n’ roll,” he says, “there was one there in every city in the U.K."

On-sells for North American shows will begin Jan. 29 and a day earlier in Europe. Rather than putting all dates up at once, on-sells will be rolled out over a three-week period. Fogel says.

Local CCE offices will implement the tour’s “master plan” in each market. Ticket prices will average $90, with $49.50 at the low end and $165 at the high end. Last time out, the range was $45-$135.

As on the Elevated tour, the arena floor will be general admission for about 1,700 seats, depending on the building. And, again like Elevated, this tour will feature unique production elements.

“This tour will not be like the last production, in that the lowest-priced tickets will be on the floor,” McGuinness says. “The best seats are the cheapest, and we want people to get excited.”

He adds that details on distribution of floor tickets will be forthcoming. “Some will be on sale, some will be radio contest winners. 

Fogel says, “For safety concerns related to general admission, McGuinness says, “The last tour was preceded by dire predictions of calamity about going GA floor in arenas, and not a single person was hurt. It worked perfectly, and the arena managers across America were all very happy with the safety arrangements we made.”

The veteran U2 road team includes production manager Jake Berry and longtime tour manager Dennis Sheehan. Willie Williams and Mark Fisher are designing the show; Williams is the lighting director. The production managers are Joe O’Herlihy and Clair Brothers.

“"In a way, we were lucky to find the best people to work with a long time ago, and we’ve stayed with them”

TV T

Green describes TVT as “the best of both worlds—the proud indie spirit with the clout of a major where needed.”

He says the U.K. office will operate with a two-pronged approach, focusing on introducing the TVT acts that have already found success in the States and elsewere, and developing new British acts that will “work globally—perfectly.”

Of key importance is the British expansion of the crusty sound, already wildly successful across the pond. “It has been very under-ground, we’re taking it above-ground,” Green says.

That mission will get under way Feb. 14, with the U.K. release of Jon’s “Crunk Juice.” He has spent 10 weeks atop the Billboard Top Independent charts and reached No. 3 on The Billboard 200, where it is No. 26.

Additionally, TVT U.K. has signed its first British act, Manchester punk band Towers of London, which will issue its debut single in February. Also in March, the band will tour as the first U.K. single from New York rock act Ambulance LTD. “Stay Where You Are,” coinciding with its British tour supporting the Dears. Green says, “You can’t get your hands on a TVT/LTD deal as well received in Britain when it opened recent shows for the Killers.

Other near-term U.K. releases include albums already out in the States by cranky acts Ying Yang Twins and Pittbull, hip-hop supergroup 21st and R&B songstress Teedra Moses.

TVT U.K. will be “a great conduit for U.K. product into the U.K. and a great platform for U.K. product into the U.S.”

Green has hired Martin Moulton, who previously served seven years at BMG, as chief executive, an interpretation of the new Meikle, formerly of Pinnacle and 3MV, as rock/alternative manager.

TVT’s continental operations are overseen by Christie Hack, managing director for Europe. He is based at the label’s offices in Berlin; it also has staffers in France and Scandinavia. Gottlieb says a priority now is the development of rock acts Blue Van, which has toured in the United States and plays dates in Denmark, France and Germany through February.

“One thing we do the majors can’t do is really bring acts into foreign countries, even from having strong international setup now, we will be developing artists in multiple territories at the same time,” Gottlieb says. “We see a huge opportunity as the majors continue to retreat from the marketplace in terms of artist development. We see huge opportunities not just in America, but in Europe as well. So our plan is to engage artist aggressively with hirings and signings.”
HOB

Continued from page 1

But HOB CEO Greg Trojan insists the process was initiated by “several” outside sources, which approached HOB rather than vice versa.

“People approached us and expressed real interest in the business,” Trojan tells Billboard in an exclusive interview, his first since the announcement. “It reached such a critical mass that we have [a] fiduciary duty as a board to look at those opportunities.”

Why make an announcement? “It was my feeling that going through conversations like this on a confidential basis was not a realistic expectation,” Trojan says. “And, given that, I didn’t want our people, internally first and foremost, to find out through the grapevine that these conversations were happening. It’s my feeling and my management style that we’re very direct and tell people what’s going on, better or worse. Obviously, if we’re going to do that internally, we needed to do it externally.

If a deal to buy HOB does go down, Trojan predicts it would be sooner rather than later. “We’re going through a very quick evaluation process—and I define that as, not months, but you need to understand if there’s a transaction we would be interested in that would benefit our shareholders,” he says. “There’s nothing more complicated than that going on.”

And if no sale occurs, Trojan asserts HOB will happily continue as a club and a large-venue operator/promoter. “We would be 100% focused on staying the course and maintaining our dual growth strategy,” he says. “Having amphitheaters and clubs and mixed-use venues makes a lot of sense and gives us a lot of advatage.”

HOB will sell its concert division only if it means “a quicker growth strategy than the one we’re pursuing today,” Trojan adds.

Asked if the announcement was a reaction to a slumping concert business, Trojan says, “Absolutely not. People looking at Q4 as an opportunity to approach us at a point in time they think will take advantage of that we’re badly disappointed, because that is our perspective on the business.”

Rather, Trojan says he is bullish on the concert industry. “The fundamentals of the business were not the issue of Q4,” he says. “I think there are signs of good momentum … that will benefit all constituencies in the long term. Because fundamentally, when you look at gross dollar and ticket sales, people still want to go shows.

While some promoters lost millions in 2004, “we finished the calendar year not down on a profitability basis,” Trojan says. “We went do almost break even, so we think that’s a tremendous victory, given what happened last summer.”

HOB reported gross totals $250 million in 2004, up $30 million from the prior year, while promoting nearly 100 fewer shows at 2.808 (Billboard, Dec. 25, 2004). HOB was the only national promoter that grossed more from fewer shows.

“We have done that by stressing overall profitability and things that made sense versus going after market share in this business,” Trojan says.

BACK ON THE BLOCK

This is not the first time HOB Concerts has been on the block. Though never officially announced, the division was for sale for most of 2001 before being unofficially taken off the market in fall 2002. Among those making a run at the company during that period were Anschutz Entertainment Group and Clear Channel Entertainment, but a deal was never struck.

This time around, AEG and CCE wouldn’t be expected to be in the mix, possibly along with Dave Lucas’ fledgling Lucas Entertainment Group.

“I can tell you there are people in the process that go beyond the expected names,” Trojan says. “There are always people out there that think this is an intriguing business that fits with other elements of that they’re involved in.”

HOB owns, operates or exclusively books 20 venues and amphitheaters in North America. Concert assets would include the amphitheaters, the company’s booking agreements and the outside promotion business in HOB markets, or “anything not part of the club business,” Trojan says.

Meanwhile, Trojan says it is business as usual for HOB’s concert division, and amphitheater bookings are ongoing. “I’m assuming we’re not selling that business from an operating perspective, that’s for sure,” he says.

HOB acquired a V辰ersal division for $190 million in 1999 from Sea-


gram, which operated the unit as Universal Concerts.

My View

Continued from page 10

not wireless operator[s] will become extremely active in the marketing, merchandising and sale of mobile content. The mobile wireless carrier will be everyone from radio stations to television networks to print publications to online portals.

Caraffa says that while wireless carriers currently dominate U.S. mobile content sales, the market will ultimately mirror its counterparts in Europe and Asia, where almost half of all mobile content is sold online through third parties.

“The future growth of the mobile market will be very much dependent on the creative merchandising and effective presentation of content,” Caraffa adds.

UMM, he says, will be looking to do new product deals with ringtones and ringback tones by pushing into video ringers, voiceclips, wallpaper and news and entertainment services. Early initiatives by UMM will focus on development of the ringback market through partners like T-Mobile. “The division will also seek to diversify its offerings beyond ring and ringback,” Caraffa says. “There are other categories that can be better exploited.”

Caraffa says, “You just don’t have an easy way to buy or get that content right now.”

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LOS ANGELES—David “Beno” Benveniste has his finger on the pulse of today’s youth: 60,000 pulses, to be exact.

His youth marketing company, StreetWise Concepts & Culture, has access to 60,000 kids who give him instant feedback on anything they want to know: Which track should System of a Down release as a first single? What tag line should Jack in the Box use for a late-night campaign? How can videogame retailer EB Games best get out the word that it gives credit for trade-ins?

Benveniste also helms Velvet Hammer Music & Management Group, through which he manages such acts as System of a Down, Taproot, Deftones and Rise Against, and consults for Mudvayne.

Velvet Hammer Music also operates a label that recently switched distribution from Atlantic to Columbia (Billboard, Dec. 18, 2003).

“Beno’s one of the best,” says Don Jenner, president/CEO of Sony Music Label Group U.S. “His passionate dedication to the artists he works with and his comprehensive understanding of how the business works have earned him a well-deserved reputation as one of the most effective managers in the business. He’s also a good friend and a great guy.”

The combined staff of more than 30 Velvet Hammer and StreetWise employees operate out of an industrial but warm space in the Century City section of Los Angeles. Dogs dodge in and out of offices and greet visitors at the door.

Q: Many smaller management companies are getting snatched up by bigger firms. Are you going to stay independent or partner with a larger company?

A: It would be a very, very, very small chance that I would go with another company. One of the things about my companies that I hold so close to my heart is the philosophy and the organic growth and making decisions based on strictly and only what’s right for each individual band. For instance, I would never put another band [from] the roster on a tour just because they’re on the same roster and it helps the company. I pride this company on its individuality, and I love it. I’m open and I’m diligent, but my nose is to the grindstone for Velvet Hammer.

Q: When you started working with System of a Down almost a decade ago, you sent out free cassettes of the band’s music to fans. What did that teach you about converting fans one by one?

A: I still do that. I have a track from System of a Down called “Cigar.” It’s our street track. It’s going to be on one of the [two upcoming System] records, but I will have Streetwise give that away. I’m going to give those first 500,000-600,000 fervent System fans that track. They deserve it; they’ve been there from day one. I’m not going to send the whole record out—the record, they’re going to buy. It’s a marketing tool, and it’s also a way for System of a Down to say, “Hey, guys, before radio, retail, video—before anyone sees, hears or knows anything about this record—you who came and bought our tickets and our records, this is for you.”

Q: What do you look for when signing a band?

A: I look at star power, songs and/or song potential, attitude. I go after very few bands, but when I do, I usually have some kind of epiphany while I’m watching them: I’ll sort of fade out and I’ll see what they look like on a big stage. And if I see that, that vision, then I’ll go after them.

There have been bands that have approached me that have gone on to be big radio bands, but I’m not interested in just a big radio band; I’m interested in a career act. I want to sell tickets as much as I want to sell records.

Q: Some members of System of a Down are very political. Are there times, as their manager, when you wish they would shut their mouths and just sing?

A: There are times when I feel, “Ooh . . . I have a sigh or I have a little prick [when they say something]. But here’s a band who, quite frankly, politically is so educated—that doesn’t necessarily mean they should be so outspoken, but there is a fine balance. If they weren’t so artistically, socially and emotionally outspoken and educated [as well], then I’d be a little more upset if it were a one-trick pony, but they are so balanced in everything they do.

At the end of the day, they’re my manager and I have a say always. But this band is where it is because they are so outspoken, and I respect that tremendously. And these guys are as smart a group of guys as I am a manager, and I think I’m a great manager.

Q: Can you overmarket a band?

A: Absolutely. And when a band’s overexposed, what happens? The marketplace gets sick of them after a while. So it’s my job as manager and a smart band’s job as an artist to know when that is, because overexposure leads to a shorter career. You and I could name 10 bands and ask, “Where are they now?” and that’s over the past five or six years.

System is exposed through its live show, their new record and what they have to say in terms of what’s going on in this world. You are never going to see System of a Down on “MTV Cribs.” Ever. For a different pop act, it works.

Q: Would you consider starting your own branded tour?

A: Absolutely. I’m going to be developing a big, huge, two-day event for 2006 with System of a Down. I also want to do not just a tour that puts hands together, but a tour that has acts in it, and it has meaning, and it has a commercial brand that runs through the tour itself—a new hook, a new purpose—that is a new draw to the kids. I think the kids are smarter than they were 10 years ago. They have access to information that is readily available to them at a quick pace. And I think they need to be stimulated in never ways. I want to do something that’s dramatic, that’s theatrical.

Q: You’re tapped into the opinions of tens of thousands of kids through Streetwise Concepts & Culture. What’s the biggest thing you’ve learned from these kids?

A: That they want to be heard, to be important, to be asked, to help market rather than to be just marketed to.

The philosophy is “What do you think? Is it good? Do you love it?” We put a Mudvayne track online and we dropped off an 800-page, 1,500-page document to the band up in Santa Cruz last week just off that one song. The kids are so active, they just want to be heard.

Q: Let’s say 1,200 said they hate the song. Should the band change it?

A: That’s up to them. I can say, “Guess what? That’s not the song to go with. This is not the right thing.” One of the things I’ll do at Columbia, in my new deal—it’s one of the big deals I did for Atlantic—if you want to sign a band and there’s a big bidding war, don’t get emotionally attached to the bidding war. Give [the music] to me; I’ll get five or 10 kids to break it down.

Q: What can’t you learn from the research?

A: Research can research what’s now. It’s not a predictor of the future. I can find out who kids are voting for, I can find out what mountain they want to ski in September and tell you where most kids are going in February. For a product, I can tell you if kids like it, and I can tell you if it’s going to win when you put it out. But is it going to last? That depends on management at the top of Paramount Pictures, at Jack in the Box at the top of Columbia. The information will be given to you, and you need to decide what to do with it.

Q: What musical trends do you see emerging?

A: Music is absolutely going back toward the real deep lyrical and song content. I think the fade, the little emo here, the hardcore here, it’s all trend itself. I think those little factions have been one of the stagnation of music lately. It’s up to important acts. And I’d say Green Day, by instance—they cleared it out. That’s the most real thing right now. They’re selling tickets, radio, records, all across the board. That’s what’s going to happen—it has to be real.
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<td>JONATHAN PETERS PRESENTS: SHERRY LOGAN SHAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME AGAINST THE MUSIC</td>
<td>BRITNEY SPEARS FEATURING MADONNA</td>
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<tr>
<td>SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL [REMIX]</td>
<td>THE ROLLING STONES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE HERE</td>
<td>MICHAEL BIBBEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW WOULD U FEEL</td>
<td>DAVID MELVIN FEATURING LIL-LO</td>
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### HOT SHOT DEBUT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>I BELOCHE</td>
<td>DROWNE REMIX</td>
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<tr>
<td>I BELIEVE IN YOU</td>
<td>CAPTAIN PIERRO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LAST SHOT</td>
<td>THE FUNKY FINGERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESTORE MY NAME</td>
<td>EMILY HILLS</td>
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<tr>
<td>MY LOVE</td>
<td>DESTINY'S CHILD</td>
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<tr>
<td>BACK TO LOVE</td>
<td>REBECCA PANTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIMPLE RHYTHM</td>
<td>THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS FEATURING D-TIP</td>
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### HOT DANCE RADIO AIRPLAY

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<th>TITLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TUPPED TO TOUCH [REMIXES]</td>
<td>REUPE</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 WEEKS AT NUMBER 1</td>
<td>DESTINY’S CHILD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIN'T NO BLOOD WITHOUT A FIGHT</td>
<td>Nelly Feat. T-Pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH</td>
<td>AREtha FRANKLIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'M FLYING [I'm A WOMAN]</td>
<td>K'NAAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREEDOM [+DUBS]</td>
<td>EDEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOMEBODY TOLD ME</td>
<td>THE KILLERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT'S YOU</td>
<td>SIMPLE MINDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOU NEVER KNOW</td>
<td>MARLY</td>
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<tr>
<td>I BELIEVE IN YOU</td>
<td>KYLE MINOGUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIKE IT</td>
<td>NARCOTIC THREAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW DO YOU KNOW?</td>
<td>MYTH FEATURING KIM SAZI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REACH UP FOR THE SUNRISE</td>
<td>DARREN DURAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL ON ME</td>
<td>ERIC PRYDE</td>
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<td>ALL THIS TIME</td>
<td>JONATHAN PETERS PRESENTS: SYLVIA LOGAN SHAR</td>
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<tr>
<td>I WANT TO KNOW WHAT LOVE IS</td>
<td>WHITNEY HOUSTON</td>
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<td>THE WEEKEND</td>
<td>MICHAEL GRAY</td>
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<td>WHICH WAY ARE YOU GOING</td>
<td>RIBBO RIVERA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUIE'S THEME</td>
<td>SHAPE</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**Music Country**

**Stymied By Radio, Veteran Acts Try New Outlets**

**BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE**

NASHVILLE—When a veteran country act releases a new record, expecta-
tions about radio airplay—or the lack of it—are usually realistic.

But creativity knows no shell life, so artists who want to continue making
music have to find more inventive ways of reaching the consumer. And their
labels have to find ways to sell records without major-market radio exposure.

Bill Anderson, John Conlee, David Frizzell and Con Hunley are among
the veteran artists who are proving there’s life beyond the airplay charts.

Anderson is reading a new country album and enjoying success as a song-
writer. Frizzell has a hits package out and a new album coming this month.
Hunley returned to recording after a lengthy hiatus to find himself still in
some demand. And both Anderson and Conlee issued gospel albums last year.

So is there life beyond the top 10? “Absolutely,” says Dave Roy, VP of
product development at Madacy Entertainment, which will distribute
Frizzell’s new album. “Our biggest suc-
cesses in the past couple of years have
been [with] classic artists, all of whom have enjoyed a lot of hits and a lot of
time at the top of the charts, whether it [was] in the ’80s, ’70s or ’80s.

“There’s a need out there and a
thirst that sometimes is not satisfied
because the consumer can’t find what
they are looking for with the onslaught
of all the new product that kind of gets
in the way.”

Hunley agrees. “There’s an audience
out there that’s not being sung to or
played to,” he says. “Maybe I can touch
those people. I’m just going to keep
doing what I do, and hopefully they’ll
hear it, like it and buy it.”

Virtual shut out by monitored
country radio stations, these artists
and their labels are finding other avenues of exposure in secondary radio
markets, the Internet, in-store retail
appearances, the Great American
Country cable channel and satellite
radio operators Sirius and XM. All have
been helpful in letting consumers
know some of their favorite classic
country acts have new music available.

Lisa Starbuck, president of Knox-
ville, Tenn.-based [IMI] Records, says
garage-promotion is key in exposing
classic country acts. Particularly
successful in promoting new works by
these acts have been in-store per-
formances at big-box retailers.

“Every town has a Wal-Mart, and we’ve been fortunate to be working
with Wal-Mart to do some garage-promotion,” Starbuck says.

Roy agrees that pinpoint local
promotion is essential for these artists.

“Don’t think they’ve altogether
put the lid on their music, though,” Frizzell
says. “The artists appreciate this new phase of their careers
as the ability to chart their own course. Both Anderson and Frizzell
have their own labels. Anderson has TWI Records, which has become
active only recently. Frizzell has his Nashville America
Records label since 1986.”

Hunley first rose to prominence as
Shelly West’s duet partner in the early 1980s, then went on to have such
duo hits as “I’m Gonna Hire a Wino to Decorate Our Home.” When the hits
slowly dried up, he bought a farm in Cross Plains, Tenn., and opened a venue
where he performed and booked other artists.

But the recording bug never left him. He reactivated the label in 2001 and
released an album, which has a following independent.

“We have promoters working with
have distributors working with us. We
are as good as any record label here,
and this way I can make the judgment calls
and can do it without sitting in front of a
board of directors.”

“Calling the shots is a departure for
Frizzell. “I’ve been with quite a few
labels in the past, and once I would get
my part of the record done, I had nothing
to do with it anymore,” he

Bennett Brings Fresh Eye To Warner Country

The industry will be keeping a
close eye on Warner Bros. Records’
Nashville operation this year. Long
an also-ran in the country game, the
label is being revitalized thanks to
ew executive VP Bill Bennett and
the success of Big & Rich.

Last fall, former Geffen and Mav-
erick Records president Bennett
took the helm at Warner Bros., suc-
ceeding the label’s longtime leader,
Jim Ed Norman.

Bennett came at a good time. The
label had long been known for ha-
ving only one superstar, Faith Hill.

Bennett plans to capitalize on
that momentum at Warner Bros.
and to build a boutique label, Ray-
bow Records, for members of the
Muzik Mafia coalition of musicians
that includes Big & Rich (Billboard, Dec. 25, 2004). He will also devote
resources to comedy imprint WBR/
Jack Records, which was launched
late last year.

Having spent most of his career
in Los Angeles, Bennett says what
he immediately noticed about the
Nashville music community is that
“the level of musicianship is
incredibly better. . . than in Los Angeles.” Beyond that, he says, on
Music Row “people are pretty
much upbeet. Business-wise, it’s probably
even a little more conserva-
tive than I found it in Los Angeles, but
[people on the Row are] so friendly and open to new
ideas.”

Another plus for Nashville is
“how accessible the talent is. The
artists just walk into your office
no entourage, no special parking
place, no clearing out the
room. It’s refreshing.”

He also likes the experience of
going out to see talent in local
clubs. “There’s no velvet rope, no
courtesy parking, and beer is $3.”

One highlight of his new job has
been working with Big & Rich. Ben-
nett says John Rich and Big Kenny
Alphin are “exciting just to be
around, and they put a lot of the
spirit in this business.”

Asked how he plans to make his
mark on Nashville, Bennett
directs, “We plan on being a suc-
cessful business and a place artists
want to be. We’re going to be adven-
turous and embrace new technology.
And we’re going to sign some acts
that may or may not fit into the tra-
ditional Nashville mold.”

**SIGNINGS:** Columbia Records has
signed Van Zant of Zan act to its roster.
The duo consists of brothers Johnny Van
Zant of Lynyrd Skynyrd and Donnie
Van Zant of 38 Special.

Van Zant recorded two albums for
CMT International in 1998 and
2001. Its major-label debut is being
produced by Joe Scaife and Sony
Music Nashville executive VP of A&R
Mark Wright. The duo is managed by
Ken Levan and Ross Schilling at
Vector Management in Nashville.

**AN EXPENSIVE DEMO**

Anderson, whose last top 10 hit as
an artist came in 1978, is extremely
high profile these days. Among
his recent hits, the Grand Ole Opry star
wrote the Brad Paisley/Alison Krauss
hit “Whiskey Lullaby” with Jon Ran-
dall. The song peaked at No. 3 on the
Billboard Hot Country Singles &
Tracks chart last year and won two Country Music Awards.

Anderson plans to release a new
country album later this month
that will include his version of “Whiskey Lullaby,” performed with Kenzie Wetz,
The fiddle player in his band.

“It’s all original stuff. I wrote or co-
 wrote everything on there,” Anderson
says of the new record, which he plans
to sell via his Web site. (Previous
Anderson albums started on his Web
site then were picked up by Varese
Arabah, Curb and Madacy.)

“Softly and Tenderly,” Anderson’s
gospel collection, was initially released
on his label and then picked up for dis-
tribution by Madacy and Curb.

While largely overlooked by terres-
trial radio, “Him and Me,” a song from
Anderson’s new country project,
has been getting airplay on XM (for several
months and Anderson says it has gen-
terated a big response from listeners.
(Anderson hosts a show on XM.)

(Continued on page 59)
### Top Country Albums

**January 29, 2005**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist/McBride</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALAN JACKSON</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Volume II</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRACE ADKINS</td>
<td>Top Of The World Tour Live</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trace Evans</td>
<td>Be Here</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOBY KEITH</td>
<td>The Greatest Hits Collection II</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SARA EVANS</td>
<td>Restless</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUCK OWENS</td>
<td>GREATEST HITS</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BILLY CRAWFORD</td>
<td>Y'ALL</td>
<td>Decca</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JULIE ROBERTS</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GARY ALLAN</td>
<td>See If I Care</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MELLE HAGGARD</td>
<td>GREATEST HITS</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOSH TURNER</td>
<td>Greatest Hits '95-'04</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDY GRIGGS</td>
<td>This Is Gonna Hurt You</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LONESTAR</td>
<td>Penny Arcade</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>KENNY ROGERS</td>
<td>42 Ultimate Hits</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loretta Lynn</td>
<td>Van Lear Rose</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUCK OWENS</td>
<td>GREATEST HITS</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSH TURNER</td>
<td>GREATEST HITS 1995-'04</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>RANDY TRAVIS</td>
<td>Christmas Here's To New Year</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRANDON FLATTS</td>
<td>The Best Time</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<td>ROY BONNER</td>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>Word-Curb</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>PATTI CLINE</td>
<td>The Essential Patti Cline</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAVID CARRADINE</td>
<td>Lonesome Road</td>
<td>Decca</td>
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<td>PATSY CLINE</td>
<td>Classic Duets</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<tr>
<td>HANK WILLIAMS, SR.</td>
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**Greatest Hits Volume I**

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<td>KENNY ROGERS</td>
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<td>JEANIE B. JOHNSON</td>
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<td>Epic</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOBY KEITH</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTT B. JOHNSON</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUCK OWENS</td>
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<td>RCA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BILLY CRAWFORD</td>
<td>Y'ALL</td>
<td>Decca</td>
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<td>JULIE ROBERTS</td>
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<td>Capitol</td>
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<td>MELLE HAGGARD</td>
<td>GREATEST HITS</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSH TURNER</td>
<td>Greatest Hits '95-'04</td>
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<td>This Is Gonna Hurt You</td>
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<td>RCA</td>
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<td>Christmas Here's To New Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>HANK WILLIAMS, SR.</td>
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<td>23</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
January 29, 2005

Billboard HOT COUNTRY SINGLES & TRACKS

| TITLE | ARTIST | NUMBER | POSITION
|-------|--------|--------|----------
| AWFUL, BEAUTIFUL LIFE | Darryl Worley | 1 | 1
| YOU’RE MY BETTER HALF | Keith Urban | 2 | 2
| MUD ON THE TOWERS | Brad Paisley | 3 | 3
| BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD | Rascal Flatts | 4 | 4
| WHEN I THINK ABOUT CHEATIN’ | Gretchen Wilson | 5 | 5
| SOME BEACH | Blake Shelton | 6 | 6
| BACK WHEN | Tim McGraw | 7 | 7
| NOBODY’S IN LOVE ANYMORE | LeAnn Rimes | 8 | 8
| MONDAY MORNING CHURCH | Alan Jackson | 9 | 9
| GET THAT FROM ME | Reba McEntire | 10 | 10
| NOTHIN’ TO LOSE | Josh Gracin | 11 | 11
| NOTHING ON BUT THE RADIO | Gary Allan | 12 | 12
| MR. MOM | Leon Russell | 13 | 13
| I MAY HATE MYSELF IN THE MORNING | Lee Ann Womack | 14 | 14
| HOLY WATER | Big & Rich | 15 | 15
| LET THEM BE LITTLE | Billy Dean | 16 | 16
| BABY GIRL | Sugarland | 17 | 17
| THAT’S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT SUNDAY | Craig Morgan | 18 | 18
| GONE | Montgomery Gentry | 19 | 19
| IT’S GETTING BETTER ALL THE TIME | Brooks & Dunn | 20 | 20
| PARTY FOR TWO | Shania Twain | 21 | 21
| DON’T BREAK MY HEART AGAIN | Pat Green | 22 | 22
| TRYING TO FIND ATLANTIS | Jamie O’Neal | 23 | 23
| ANYTHING BUT MINE | Kenny Chesney | 24 | 24
| WHAT’S A’GONNA DO | Joe Nichols | 25 | 25
| MY GIVE A DAMN’S BUSTED | Jo Dee Messina | 26 | 26
| GOD’S WILL | Martina McBride | 27 | 27
| MOCKINGBIRD | Toby Keith | 28 | 28
| HOW DO YOU GET THAT LONELY | Blaine Larsen | 29 | 29

January 29, 2005

Billboard HOT COUNTRY SINGLES SALES

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|-------|--------|--------|----------
| AWFUL, BEAUTIFUL LIFE | Darryl Worley | 1 | 1
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| GOD’S WILL | Martina McBride | 27 | 27
| MOCKINGBIRD | Toby Keith | 28 | 28
| HOW DO YOU GET THAT LONELY | Blaine Larsen | 29 | 29
INARA GEORGE
All Rise
PRODUCER: Michael Andrews
EVERLOVING EVOIUD
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
“Will you take me as your mistress/Long and dark hair/Will you cut it off when it grows/Into the possession of my hair/Inara George’s gorgeous opener “Mistress” on her debut “All Rise” reads and sounds like Sylvia Plath if she ever took up guitar: like much of the album, it’s sparse and otherworldly, a dark but dear stab at love. Akin to Frizz’s “The Trojan Horse” and Colin Meloy of the Decemberists, George’s panpipe voice is smooth and her syllables pronounced. “All Rise” benefits most from producer and co-conspirator Michael Andrews (who composed the score to “Diane Kurkoski”) and keyboardist Greg Kurstin, who fill out the pauses and sighs. Every track is deliberate, wholly palatable and never hurried. The strengths of “All Rise” are understated, gentle—while George may not shock you, it’s because she never meant to.—KH

STEAFNO DI BATTISTI
Parker’s Mood
PRODUCER: Yves Chamberland
Blue Note 7243 6 66740
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
Alto sax man Stefano Di Battista may have grown up in Rome, but like many alto players, his heart is fixed on Charlie “Bird” Parker, a virtual Midas touch of the instrument’s Parker’s Mood is to a bird, and a beautifully performed one at that. Di Battista—quiet here with the estimable Kenny Barron (piano), Herlin Riley (drums), Rosario Bonaccorso (bass) and guest Flavio Boltro (trumpet on four tunes)—takes on Bird originals and material he made memorable. The band, occasionally augmented by “Night in Tunisia,” “Thelonious Monk’s “Round Midnight” and “Embassy of You.” Di Battista is too hip to mimic Bird, but what he does with admirable grace is slip into the feel of the grooves that Bird laid down with these songs in his day. It’s great to hear this material again, especially when a player of Di Battista’s agility and sensibility steps up and offers his musical praise of the master. “Parker’s Mood” is a genuine pleasure.—PV

EMMA FREE
Free
PRODUCER: various
19 Recordings/Universal 1901002
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
Pop-starved fans are about to get a healing help from cricket topped with a cherry. Emma Bunton, arguably the most talented of the Spice Girls, crosses the seas with her second international solo album—her first released in the United States. “Free Me” is a carefree uptempo romp tailor-made for singing along, sipping Cosmo and sashaying down your imaginary runway. There’s nary a miss among the dozen tracks here, thanks to grand, eye-winning production and R&B-inspired arrangements. Think Petula Clark in her “Downtown” days or a newborn Millennium Girl from Ipanema. The only downside: “Free Me” is likely to remain a private pleasure, until top 40 radio realizes there’s more to life than hip hop and rock. Fortunately, club action has already alerted some to this prize project, truly one of the guilty indulgences of the new year. Key tracks: the title cut, “May,” “Tell Me,” “Tomorrow” and, ah, hell, all the rest.—CT

R&B/HIP-HOP
MIKE LADD
Negroed—The Album
PRODUCERS: Mike Ladd, Guillermo Brown
Vijay Iyer, Marguerite Ladd
Thirsty Ear TH 51756
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
One of two Bright Eyes albums to hit stores Jan. 25, “I’m Wide Awake, It’s Morning” is the more gripping of the two (the other being “Digital Ash in a Digital Urn.”). The set finds singer/songwriter Connor Oberst (a.k.a. Bright Eyes) captivated by a certain song about a girl he and his band “Bring Me to Life” led the “Daredevil” soundtrack.—CLT

SOUNDTRACK Elektra: The Album
PRODUCERS: various
Wind-up 01050-13107
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
Talent from the Wind-up roster dominates the “Elektra” soundtrack, giving it a modern/hardcore rock bent appropriate for the action movie. The few songs that do not fit well can be attributed to an attempt to place retro rock like Led Zeppelin’s “Hey Kid’s” alongside more ‘80s fare like Strata’s “Never There” (She Stabbed). Switchfoot (“Sooner or Later”), Finger Eleven (“Thousands Million Miles”), The Donnas (“Everybody’s Wrong”). 12 Stones (“Photograph”), the Dreaming (“Beautiful”) and Alter Bridge (“Us and Them”) provide choice cuts. The collection could be the jumpoff for Megan McCauley’s Wonder and Submersed’s Hollow, two acts to keep an eye out for. Evanescence contributes the quiet ballad “Breathe No More,” which could become the album’s flag ship single on the same way the band’s “Bring Me To Life” led the “Daredevil” soundtrack.—CLT

DANCE/ELECTRONIC
KELLI ALI
Psychic Cat
PRODUCERS: Dave McCracken, Kelli Ali
One Little Indian 335
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
Critics have called Kelli Ali’s best-known as the former Sneaker Pimp. She helped the group score hits with the multiformat radio single “6 Underground” and

“Spin Spin Sugar,” which peaked at No. 2 on the Billboard Hot Dance Club Play chart. Since departing the group, Ali has released two international solo albums and this, her latest, marks her North American debut. The dance-rock-leaning set percolates with bleeps and broods and catchy pop hooks—it sounds like the love child of Gwen Stefani and Garbage. Ali’s vocals are stylish and ooz personality—the perfect front for tracks that effortlessly switch from snappy rock (“Hot Lips”) to bass-heavy dance (“Home Honey I’m High”) to rollicking new-wave pop (“Graffiti Boy”). The wildly varied album could work at an array of radio formats and most certainly in the clubs.—KC

COUNTRY
BLAINE LARSEN
Off to Join the World
PRODUCER: Rory Lee Feek, Tim Johnson
BNA 66012
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
Given her’s all a teenager himself, when singer/songwriter Blaine Larsen sings of high school, he has an insider’s perspective. But don’t think for one second that this is teen pop country; this is truly country gold. Larsen has a sturdy baritone that evokes classic singers like George Strait on such strong cuts as “The Best Man” and the romantic ballad “Teaching Me How to Love You.” And his view of youth’s candy-sweet on the latest, “I’ve Been to High School” is disarmingly insightful. Larsen conjures a laid-back, confident persona on “I’ve Been in Mexico” and flips the script on the bluesy “The Man He’ll Never Be.” No one-trick pony, “Yessireebob” is a spritely Texas shuffle, and Shawna Carpenter’s kickin’ title track finally finds the home it deserves here. But the stopper, leadoff single “How Do You Get That Lonely,” is a keenly observant take on teen suicide that asks all the right questions. Say hello to a serious talent.—RW

LATIN
ERIKA ENDER
Abrema la Puerta
PRODUCERS: various
Kanye West/EMI 57243 6 6015524
RELEASE DATE: Dec. 14
Songwriter Erika Ender has made a name for herself by penning hits for others. On this, her solo debut, she hooks up with fellow producers and musicians for an album that sounds like a gathering of friends. A “From La Puerta” touches on cumbia and vallenato (“Conmigo”), Brazilian samba (“Con Tal De Que No Te Vayas”) and pop (“Luna Nueva”). Ender is not the first established songwriter to search for her own voice, and like others before her, her material is, and sounds, intimate. It also has personality and cleverly blends Brazilian and Panamanian roots. But it is most definitely commercial, for Ender knows how to pen the right hooks and choruses. The question is: Will radio take to something organically beautiful and overlooked? Our fingers are crossed.—LC

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Guitabuta—The Kings of New York, Vol. 2
PRODUCERS: various
Guitabuta/EMI 57243 6 6015524
RELEASE DATE: Dec. 14
Just how far does reggaeton go? The compilation “Guitabuta—The Kings of New York, Vol. 2” contains original material and new versions of familiar songs showcasing different styles and voices and, one would expect, a wide range of expression. Unfortunately, that’s the case, in part because the monotonous reggaeton beat is such a repetitive constant that it obliterates most of the music—though it does get you dancing. But there are glimmers of uniqueness in the more lyrical “Hectare Mi” featuringaddComponenta and the riveting “Experiencia Callejera.” Bonus track “Mataron Un Inocente,” by Tito & Hector, has lyrical promise but lacks enough hooks to fully hit the spot. The high photos are two Vico C songs: “Para Mi Barrio,” with its tumbuah beat and driving spoken intro, and “El Bueno, El Malo Y El Feo,” which features Teo Calderón and Eddie Dee.—LC

(Continued on page 34)
**SINGLES**

**POP**

**NEW YORKER**

- **ALPHA BLOODY**
  - *Elohim*
  - PRODUCER: Clive Hunt
  - Shanachie 45061
  - RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25
  - “Côte d’Ivoire native Alpha Bloody (Sudou Kone) contributed a great song — “Lalogho” — to last year’s “World Reggae” compilation on Putumayo. Now he’s back under his own flag with a 13-song album that will surely measure up as one of the reggae releases of the year. Alpha Bloody wrote 12 of the tunes on “Elohim,” which showcases some of the best traditions of the genre, he’s more than willing to offer trenchant political and social commentary on the unrest in his country and elsewhere. “Take No Prisoner” (Canalbats), for instance, addresses the genocidal war in Sudan, submitting the sobering observation: “We take no prisoners, we eat the wounded.” On “Journalistes en Danger” (Democratie), he points to the imprisonment and assassination of journalists as a threat to liberty in Africa. Alpha Bloody rocks while imparting these messages, as he also does when working less politically charged material like “Waaikos Rock” and “Djeneba.” Every aspect of “Elohim” — its musicanship, lyrics, production — is splendid. — **PVV**

**JAZZ**

- **CORKY SIEGEL’S TRAVELING CHAMBER**
  - *Blues Show*
  - *Corky Siegel’s Chamber Blues* by Corky Siegel, Holly Tucker Siegel, Ken Goerres
  - Alligator ALC 4901
  - RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11
  - “Blues? Classical? Well, it’s an inventive blend of both on the third album from Siegel-Schwall Band blues harmonica/piano man Corky Siegel’s hybrid group, his namesake Traveling Chamber Blues Show. It also consists of four classical string players and a tabla/percussionist. Siegel’s live outing is as playful as it is technically complex, with the strings complementing and supplementing Siegel’s eclectic blues harp. Of special note are two vocal songs: the lovelorn “Manhattan Island” and “Train,” a jaigged Chicago jailhouse blues written and performed by fellow Siegel-Schwall bassist Rollo Radford. — **JB**

**ESSENTIAL REVIEWS**

**Tina Turner**

- **New Album**
  - *Open Arms* (4:03)
  - PRODUCER: Jimmy Hogarth
  - WRITERS: B. Barsen, M. Branner, C. Van Sant
  - PUBLISHERS: EMI Music Publishing
  - Universal Music Publishing
  - CAPITOL 63536 (CD promo)
  - For Tina Turner’s latest greatest-hits compilation, “All The Best” (due Feb. 1), the pop/R&B legend recorded three new songs, including first single “Open Arms.” No, it’s not a cover of the Journey hit, but it is a by-the-numbers midtempo track that aims to uplift with its “your friend is here, right by your side” message. It’s too bad the song is saddled with clichéd lyrics like “Ask me no questions/‘Il tell you no lies” and “Then the tables turned/A Lesson I’ve had to learn.” Still, Turner’s voice is always a treat to hear. Though she remains in solid form, the song itself is just so-so. We’re far more interested in another new tune from “All The Best”: the engrossing, haunting rock track “Complicated Disaster.” In other words, when it comes to the second single, make this one it. — **AC**

**Modern Rock**

- **Breaking Benjamin**
  - *Sooner or Later* (3:19)
  - PRODUCER: David Bendeth
  - WRITERS: B. Butler, Breaking Benjamin
  - PUBLISHERS: Seven Peaks Music c/o b/o 1501 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028
  - Universal Music Publishing Group
  - Hollywood PRCD-17006 (CD promo)
  - Pennsylvania’s Breaking Benjamin mined gold with “So Cold,” the first single from their album “We Are Not Alone.” That song has had a remarkable run at active and modern rock, remaining in the top 10 after eight months. “Sooner or Later” is poised to join its predecessor at the top of the charts much sooner than later, given its presence at both formats. While not as instantly catchy, “Sooner or Later” is nonetheless a commercial blast of hard rock that will continue to bolster the band’s high profile well into its headlining tour, which begins in March. — **BT**

**Black Label Society**

- **Suicide Messiah** (3:47)
  - PRODUCER: Zakky Wylde
  - WRITER: Z. Wylde
  - PUBLISHER: Belfreethom & Beer Music (BMI)
  - Artesian ART-264 (CD promo)
  - Black Label Society, the project that keeps Zakky Wylde occupied when he’s not playing guitar with Ozzy Osbourne, pays brief homage to Black Sabbath in the opening chords of “Suicide Messiah.” The first grows recall Sabbath classics “Iron Man” and “Paranoid,” but then Wylde gets down to business, producing a thick, menacing dirge as he saws away on his axe. With its buzzing bassline and crashing drums, this is a song for those who want their metal served rough, preferably drenched in Lee Jackson-like. Although the words are sometimes muffled, the chorus is clear: “Bow down, you chose your maker and you’ll never see light/Shut your eyes/’Cause you’re feeling fine,” and the point is made. The album version offers more riffs to sink your teeth into, exemplifying the havoc a suicide messiah tends to wreak. — **CLT**

**Country**

- **Rebecca Lynn Howard**
  - *That Which I Hate Pontiacs* (3:51)
  - PRODUCER: Buddy Cannon
  - WRITERS: B. Clark, M. Narmore, L. Rose
  - PUBLISHERS: various
  - Arista 82876-66997 (CD promo)
  - Rebecca Lynn Howard is an artist who has tasted success in the country format, most notably with the hit “Forgive.” But she has yet to achieve the amount of recognition she truly deserves. This new single should remedy that. Though the title might suggest a playful lyric, in reality, this is a vividly drawn portrait of heartache. Songwriters Brandy Clark, Mark Narmore and Liz Rose have penned a lyric rich in visual and emotional imagery—from the western trousers and black vinyl seats to the moments that get ‘tattooed on your soul.’ Howard’s big, expressive voice captures the pain of a young love that evaporates, leaving nothing but memories so easily triggered by the sight of a State line car. Instead of simply shouting off her powerful voice, she has the skill to turn in a carefully nuanced performance that brings the best out in the song. This is her first single since her debut, and a fine glimpse into her new album, “Alive and Well.” — **DEEP**
All They Want For Xmas Is The iPod

Industry Names Music Player
The Season's Top Audio Product

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NEW YORK—As hardware retailers tally their holiday sales, they say most new technologies performed well—be they MP3 players, satellite and digital radios or DVD recorders. The CD player was still a popular dran, though new high-end players have yet to take hold.

Apple Computer’s iPod, though hardly the first product in the portable digital audio player category, remained the overwhelming favorite throughout the holiday season, besting an army of mostly less expensive players.

Without exception, retailers and analysts surveyed by Billboard cite Apple’s player—available in models ranging from the 4GB iPod mini to the 60GB iPod Photo—as the top audio product of the 2004 holiday season.

According to New York-based market research firm NPD Group, MP3 player sales in the five-week 2004 holiday season were up 147.5% from the same period of 2003, and revenue for the period exceeded $270 million.

“A vast majority of that is related to iPods or the carry-on effect of them for the whole category,” NPD Group director of industry analysis Steven Baker says. “If you’re going to talk audio, that’s really the only thing out there, and truthfully, you can make a pretty good argument that it’s changing the whole category.”

SIMPLY A GREAT PRODUCT

The reason for iPod’s success—Apple claims shipments of 4.58 million units for the quarter ending Dec. 25—is simple, Baker says. “It’s a great product. People are going to pay for stuff that satisfies what they want and—within electronics (Continued on page 36)

Scofield Replaces Rose As NAIL Head

After seeing the Northwest Alliance of Independent Labels through its most successful year ever, president Alicia J. Rose, got 2005 by stepping down. The Portland, Ore.-based company’s former head of distribution, Chris Scofield, took over Jan. 1.

“I’ve been with the company since 1995, and it started basically when I was a kid,” Rose says. “I helped build this company to a pretty awesome player in the indie distribution field. That’s saying a lot, because it’s kind of a fucked-up business.”

Rose says she decided late last summer to step down, simply because she wanted a change. She now books Portland rock club Doug Fir Lounge and works as a label manager for Pink Martini’s Heinz Records.

NAIL, which is the underground rock division of Allegro Music, more than doubled its sales during 2004, according to Scofield.

He points to successes by distributed acts Pink Martini, Suwan Stevens and the Presidents of the United States of America.

Rose says the leadership transition took about three months. She has no regrets about leaving NAIL at its height. “I’d rather leave something I built in the hands of someone who can take it to the next level,” she says.

“I had to make sure the labels were all happy, and Chris brings a lot of new energy to the table. He’s the only person I could imagine taking over.”

Scofield—who also runs indie label Strange Attractors Audio House (which counts Kinski and Ciel de Sac among its roster)—says he has been pursuing new label deals in his first two weeks heading NAIL. He recently inked a deal with London-based Digital Hardcore, home to Aesop Empire and Atari Teenage Riot, that takes effect in March. Caroline previously distributed Digital Hardcore.

“We always had people getting in touch, but it has always been on the lower-level, more developing label situation,” Scofield says. “People are seeing some of the things that we have and are realizing that we can provide everything that a major-affiliated indie can do. Digital Hardcore is an example of that.”

One of Scofield’s goals for 2005 is to increase NAIL’s marketing efforts. Right now, he says, Allegro’s marketing department dedicates two full-time staffers to NAIL, and he intends on doing some hiring.

“We’ve done some heavily consumer ads in magazines, and I think we’re going to increase that,” he says. “We’re also going to make our presence at South by Southwest felt [more strongly]. I think our presence at retail has been felt big time over the past year, and it has been slowly coming into the public sphere. Yet as NAIL grows, so do its challenges. Seattle-based Sonic Boom Recordings, home to electronic buzz act I.Q., recently shifted distribution from NAIL to MRI, Ryko Distribution’s experimental/underground label group. Additionally, NAIL’s deal with Bloomington, Ind.-based Secretly Canadian, a successful boutique distributor/label group that handles the likes of K Records and Jagajuguwar, is up for renewal this spring. The latter is one of NAIL’s largest accounts.

TRADE AGREEMENT: New York-based Ryko Distribution has reached a distribution agreement with London-based indie Rough Trade Records, sources say. Rough Trade, which operates at the joint venture with Sanctuary Records, was previously handled by BMG.

The first releases under the deal will arrive next month. Keith Wood, who heads Rough Trade’s U.S. office, says the label will issue new albums by the Fiery Furnaces and British Sea Power, among others, in 2005.

This month, Ryko will assume control of Rough Trade’s catalog, which includes releases from The Libertines, the Fiery Furnaces, Belle & Sebastian, the Hidden Cameras, British Sea Power and the Kills. Rough Trade/RCA will release a new album from the Kills Feb. 22.

“We had an absolutely great agreement with BMG,” Wood says. “At this point in the development of the label, we simply thought Ryko would suit us better.”
8.1% between the 2003 and 2004 holiday seasons.

**CD STILL STRONG**

Yet sales of CD players were more than double those of portable MP3 players during 2004's holiday season, according to NPD Group. Baker predicts that the market will continue to grow. "In spite of all the things we say about the [potential of the] MP3 player market, we still track more personal CD player sales than MP3 player sales," he notes.

Apart from the iPod, satellite radio receivers were the season's other markedly successful audio hardware category. Holiday 2004 sales of such receivers grew 151.1% from the same period in 2003, according to NPD Group. Like portable digital audio, McCollough noted, satellite radio receivers registered triple-digit gains this past season.

The dramatic growth was underscored by XM Satellite Radio's Jan. 5 announcement that it had gained more than 700,000 new subscribers in the fourth quarter, with more than 50,000 signing up on Christmas Day alone. XM claims a year-end total of 3.2 million subscribers: competitor Sirius Satellite Radio claims more than 1.1 million.

"Satellite radio has been getting traction recently," says Susan Baker (Continued on page 37)
Best Buy To Rely On Vendor-Managed Pipeline

Best Buy is moving closer to a restructuring of its supply chain. The Minneapolis-based consumer electronics giant is expected to switch to vendor-managed inventory and to have products shipped directly to stores instead of to its Franklin, Ind., music and video distribution center. To accommodate this change, vendors must provide shelf-ready product — i.e., they must apply Best Buy stickers, coding and pricing.

Of the majors, only Universal Music & Video Distribution, Sony Music Distribution and WEA have that capability. BMG

iPod

Continued from page 36

Kevorkian, senior research analyst for market intelligence firm IDC, says, “There are more and more [devices] that you can buy to get satellite radio transmissions.”

Essential to the sector’s growth are portable satellite devices, which not only allow users to listen independently of a power supply, but can be docked with a home or car system. Kevorkian notes, “That’s a way for [satellite radio] providers to get around the limitations of the subscription being tied to the hardware and not to a user ID,” she adds.

Digital terrestrial radio is also in the early-adopter phase. Kevorkian says, “Hardware manufacturers are getting onboard with a whole variety of devices.”

DVD RECORDERS GROWING

After several years as a top-selling category, home-theater-in-a-box products have declined as DVD players have become ubiquitous. Even though some DVD players sell for as little as $40, it was DVD recorders — some featuring a large internal hard drive — that experienced triple-digit growth during the holiday season. Still, they represent a small fraction of DVD hardware sales.

Here too, the CD leads the media pack. Baker says, “Lots of PCs have DVD burners, but when you look at sales of those products versus CD burners and the sales of DVD media versus CD media, we just don’t see the same level of uptake.”

The one area of new technology that is bucking the growth trend is high-resolution, multichannel-capable DVD-Audio and Super Audio CD playback hardware.

In this case, quantity trumps quality. Consumers apparently are not drawn to whatever SACD and DVD-A titles are out there. And the growth in MP3 player numbers indicates that they are more interested in being able to bring large chunks of their music with them in compact form than they are in hearing the highest-quality versions of those songs.

Multiplatinum Numbers Showed Strength In 2004

The chart on the facing page further documents Nielsen SoundScan’s year-end sales picture (Billboard, Jan. 15). Here’s a recap:

In addition to album sales being up 3.8% in 2004 compared with 2003’s total, the top-selling albums showed signs of renewed vigor. For the year, 70 albums topped the million mark, according to Nielsen SoundScan. While that is only one more than in 2003, the U.S. industry had the luxury of 20 albums hitting the multiplatinum mark last year, versus 14 in 2003.

Usher’s “Confessions” was the top-selling album of the year with nearly 8 million units, the best industry-leading total since 2000, when ‘N Sync topped the list with 9.9 million units.

Of the 70 albums that hit the million mark, Universal Music & Video Distribution handled 30. Sony BMG sales were credited with 23 and EMI Music Marketing and WEA each came in with eight. TVT was the lone indie label with a title snaring sales of more than 1 million units, with “Crunk Juice” from Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz.
Apple Shuffles In To Expand Player Market

BY ANTONY BRUNO

Apple Computer’s new low-cost, entry-level digital music player, the iPod shuffle, will do more than expand the iPod user base. It is expected to benefit the portable music player market at large.

Apple hopes the newest member of the iPod family will have much the same effect the iPod mini did when it was introduced early last year to target the higher-end flash-player space, in the 12 months that followed, Apple’s share of the digital music player market has jumped from 31% to 65%. The iPod shuffle targets the remaining “mainstream” flash-player market.

“We’ve taken a look at this market, and it’s a zoo,” Apple CEO Steve Jobs said during his keynote address at MacWorld Expo 2005 in San Francisco, where the iPod shuffle was introduced. “There are a zillion devices out there. The market is incredibly fragmented. Nobody has very much market share, and nobody is investing in marketing and growing the market. The products are all pretty much the same.”

But the iPod shuffle may in fact be the catalyst to change this. The media attention and ongoing marketing surrounding the device are expected to raise awareness of the entry-level digital media player category and bring new consumers into the market.

COMPETITION MOUNTING

Key to this is iPod shuffle’s price point, which at less than $100 falls neatly into what analysts believe is the sweet spot for entry-level music players. Apple VP of hardware marketing product Mike Joswiak calls the “aggressive” pricing that “wanted to flex [Apple’s] leadership muscle.”

The ripple effects of Apple’s marketing muscle come at a time when others are introducing their own more sophisticated second-generation devices. While none yet have the combination of style, functionality and buzz to mount a significant challenge to the iPod, Apple’s leadership is just a matter of time before the playing field evens out.

“We think the portable music market is in its initial growth stage, and while competition may increase, all participants are likely to benefit from its rapid growth characteristics,” Bear Stearns analyst Andrew Neff wrote in a recent research note.

“The company, like Creative and iRiver, is coming up with devices that have the performance and aesthetic features that make them interesting,” says Ted Cohen, senior VP of digital development and distribution at EMI Music. “They don’t look like they were built by the military anymore.”

Case in point is Creative Labs’ Zen Micro portable player, which generated significant attention at the recent International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, thanks to a new product design and sizable marketing budget. The company beat expectations last quarter, with more than 2 million MP3 devices shipped. While that is less than half the number of iPods Apple sold in the same period (4.5 million), Creative’s figures illustrate the expanding market in Apple’s wake.

Creative chairman/CEO Sim Wong Hoo notes that the company’s recent quarterly sales figure will come as a surprise to many who underestimated our marketing capability and didn’t believe that we could be such a strong contender to the Apple iPod.

But developing more sophisticated devices is just part of the game. Central to Apple’s success is the tight integration of the iPod and the iTunes service. Apple executives view the new Autologi feature—which automatically builds a playlist of the appropriate size—as an important differentiator between the iPod shuffle and the rest of the flash-player market. Up to now, users of flash-based digital music players have been required to manually manage the music residing on the device.

“The company has the same software and user interface as Apple,” says Stephen Baker, director of industry analysis at NPD Group. “We talk a lot about hardware, but in many ways it’s the software that makes the product so compelling. At the end of the day, it’s the integration.”

Yet too much change soon. Virgin has its hands in a digital music store and device development, and other major brands like Sony are expected to join.

“Not only is this the first inning of a nine-inning game, Sony Electronics president/CEO Dick Komiyama said at CES. “Expect more from us in this category later this year.”

Looking to capitalize on the growing interest in extending digital music content beyond the computer and onto other home electronic devices, Palm Alto, Calif.-based Roku is developing a version of its wireless digital music receiver that can be embedded into stereo receivers, TVs and radios.

Consumers interested in accessing their desktop-based music must purchase an additional device, such as Roku’s SoundBridge line of network music players. The device comes in a large-screen display ($250), a smaller-screen display ($250) and an LCD display ($200). All three use either an Ethernet or WiFi connection to stream digital music from a computer to a home stereo system. Users may access their playlists via the Roku interface and remote control and listen to music through a stereo system or PC.

The philosophy behind the Embedded SoundBridge Network Music Modul is to integrate SoundBridge’s technology directly into home entertainment products, eliminating the need for an additional device.

The Roku technology supports such digital formats as WMA, AAC, MP3 and WAV. As a participant in Microsoft’s PlaysForSure program, Roku supports protected WMA content from such music services as Napster, MySpace Music, Wal-Mart and RealNetworks’ Rhapsody.

NO: 3: Green Day’s resurgence lends “American Idiot” atop Billboard 200, while “Boulevard of Broken Dreams” claims AOL’s list of video and audio streams.

Digital Entertainment

Apple’s iPod shuffle is expected to broaden awareness of the entry-level MP3 player market.

NO: 1: Paisley Usher and Ludacris help Lil Jon & the East Side Boys screen their way to the top with the lead single from ‘Crunk Juice.’

AOL Gets Demand-ing

AOL has launched in My Music Channel digital service, renaming it AOL Music On Demand and opening access to non-AOL members via an expanded distribution agreement with Time Warner Cable. The strategy aims to deliver branded content to a broader audience as a way of promoting AOL and driving traffic to its online services.

AOL on Demand now offers customers in 30 Time Warner markets anytime access to music videos from such artists as Christina Aguilera, exclusively in studio recordings from AOL Music Sessions by the likes of Gwen Stefani and the “AOL Music” weekly concert series, most recently featuring Josh Groban. Content is updated weekly.

Tuned Up ‘Vice

Universal Studios’ Home Entertainment brings the first season of the groundbreaking ‘90s TV series “Miami Vice” to DVD. The three-disc set includes a bonus disc, “The Music of Vice,” which looks at how the series elevated the use of music in TV storytelling and attracted the participation of top acts. It includes music by Phil Collins, U2, Peter Gabriel, Tina Turner, Glenn Frey and, of course, theme-song composer Ian Hammer, all remixed in 5.1 surround sound.

“Miami Vice: Season One” will be available Feb. 8 (suggested retail price: $59.98).

Kwell’s Game Face

Hip-hop vocalist and former graffiti artist Salo Kwell will provide the voice of the lead character in Atari’s upcoming videogame “Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure.” The game is an homage to graffiti and hip-hop culture that follows the adventures of Trane, who becomes the leader of an urban revolution. It features an extensive hip-hop sound track. Fashion entrepreneur Marc Ecko created the story and characters, and the Collective handled game development and design. “Getting Up” is scheduled for release in September for PlayStation 2.

NEWTECH

No. 1: Paisley Usher and Ludacris help Lil Jon & the East Side Boys screen their way to the top with the lead single from ‘Crunk Juice.’

No. 2: Jennifer Lopez

No. 3: Green Day’s resurgence lends “American Idiot” atop Billboard 200, while “Boulevard of Broken Dreams” claims AOL’s list of video and audio streams.
**Joint Venture Taps Vast Chinese Catalog**

**BY JIM BESMAN**

China’s admission into the World Trade Organization in 2001 caused the state-controlled China Record Corp. to seek profit-driven international trade. Now, a joint venture between CRC and Los Angeles-based holding company Aim Group is poised to exploit worldwide the publishing and mechanical rights to the mainland’s vast music catalog.

Equally significant, the new company, CRC Jianian Cultural Development, is charged with managing the use of Western copyrights in mainland China.

CRC executive VP Li Xiaoping says the company has made it a priority to reach out to the West through CRC Jianian. “We have a broad-based desire to serve as a pipeline for Western product into China as well as a mandate to promote and market Chinese product to the West.”

Entertainment attorney Frank Mayer, a partner on the Aim Group side of CRC Jianian with publishing veteran Peter Jansson, says, “The revenue streams from mainland China for representation of catalog are limitless. We’re talking billions of dollars. To this point no one has been able to effectively collect royalties for Western product in mainland China. And it’s a remarkable opportunity for their music worldwide, because the legal framework has never been collected upon anywhere in the world.”

**4,000-YEAR-OLD CATLOG**

Jansson says the CRC catalog holds some 65,000 albums and 757,000 individual compositions and is “growing by the day.” It includes, for example, the music to the Academy Award-nominated 2000 film “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,” royalties for which have never been collected in any territory.

“The catalog spans 4,000 years of Chinese musical history, encompassing everything from traditional Chinese opera and folk songs to national orchestras to current-day rock and pop material—and everything in between,” Jansson says. “It’s the largest single catalog of copyrights in the world. Look at Warner/Chappell and EMI and they have more, total, but they’re made up of many individual catalogs.”

CRC’s holdings, Mayer says, have never been made available outside the mainland, “so there’s enormous interest, not only from film and TV but major universities like Harvard, UCLA, Oxford and the Sorbonne, for their Asian studies programs. There’s a huge market of libraries and educational institutions that never had access to this material for their complete historical point of view.”

Jansson says that as the only publisher of the Chinese performing and mechanical rights society, Music Copyright Society of China, “we have the opportunity to get in on the ground floor in mainland China and shape the landscape of its music industry from the ground up—as we in the West want to see it.”

The CRC Jianian (the Chinese word connotes “good” and “fortunate,” according to Mayer) joint venture was signed in July 2004.

“We concluded an agreement with BMI in September for representation of the entire catalog with BMI, which is the first time any of these songs have been registered with any performing rights society in the world,” Jansson says. He credits former BMI president/CEO Frances Preston’s understanding of the historical and cultural “ramifications” of the catalog, resulting from her extensive travel to China.

“We’re extremely pleased that BMI was chosen to represent the performing rights in the copyrights of the [CRC] in the United States,” Preston’s successor, Del Bryant, says. “The exploration of interest in Chinese music and culture in our country is self-evident and presents enormous possibilities for dynamic growth in the exploitation of works by Chinese composers here in the U.S. “At the same time,” Bryant continues, “our collaboration presents the opportunity to highlight our experience in copyright administration and our standards for protection of the works of composers and copyright owners. We hope that this will also foster an understanding that the rights of American composers should be appropriately protected in China, and we look forward to working with our new partners to fully develop these new business traditions.”

The CRC Jianian principals are now heading to MIDEV, along with their representative, Marc Jacobson of law firm Greenberg Traurig.

“We’re looking to partner with another music organization—probably a combination publisher/recording company, because we represent the masters as well as the publishing,” says Jansson, who expects initial U.S. product releases by the end of spring.

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles-based company has opened an office in Beijing, where special emphasis will be placed on ringtones. “Right now there are 350 million cell phone users in China, and that’s projected to double in the next two years,” Mayer says. He notes that considerable potential is also seen in film and TV income from the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

“We are also working closely with the Beijing Olympic Committee to bring a worldwide feel to cultural and musical offerings presented during the games,” Li adds. “The joint venture will be our vehicle for moving forward on many avenues in the years to come.”

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**Battle Lines Drawn Over Compulsory License**

This is a new biweekly column on the business of music publishing.

What does copyright protection mean to copyright owners? It means the right to say no.

This right is the bargaining chip that turns songs into assets and music publishing into a multibillion-dollar business worldwide.

With the advent of ringtones, however, do music publishers always have the right to say no? There is no clear-cut answer yet.

Many ringtone producers, aggregators and labels are taking the position that a compulsory mechanical license is necessary to allow mobile music to flourish—especially when it comes to master ringtones. In fact, they claim publishers often hold up master ringtone deals by objecting to such use or requiring an additional royalty.

Under the compulsory provision of U.S. copyright law, after the first authorized release of a recorded composition in the United States, publishers must permit any person to record and distribute “phonorecord” and “digital phonorecord deliveries” (DPhs) embodying the composition—as long as the person complies with certain notice, accounting and payment terms.

Most publishers contend that a ringtone is not a phonorecord or DPh, so labels and aggregators cannot merely seek compulsory mechanical licenses.

Under U.S. law, “phonorecords” are any material objects in which sounds are fixed and from which the sounds can be perceived, reproduced or otherwise communicated.

A DPh is a delivery of a phonorecord by digital transmission of a sound recording which results in a specifically identifiable reproduction.

In addition, publishers say that by shortening the composition to a number of seconds, the “fundamental character” of the song has been changed. The compulsory license provisions do not permit any change to the basic melody or fundamental character of the work.

Therefore, publishers claim they are not required to grant a license for a master ringtone. If they agree to license the song, there is no set—or statutory—rate or fee. It’s all negotiable.

The opposing arguments from labels and aggregators are twofold.

First, they say using a “snip” of a previously recorded song does not alter the composition as recorded. Therefore, they claim a ringtone is a DPh. Therefore, publishers must grant a compulsory license for a master ringtone. This means the mechanical royalty rate is not negotiable; it’s the DPh rate set by law (the statutory rate).

At this point there seems to be no quick road to a resolution in this dispute. For now, mechanical licenses appear to be issued on a case-by-case basis.

Another issue involves monophonic and polyphonic ringtones—which are new simulations of original compositions.

An argument is emerging at some labels that the technology embodied on a cell phone falls under the legal definition of “phonorecord.” After a publisher authorizes a composition to be used as a ringtone and it is made available to the public, even if it is never released on an album—the song then becomes subject to compulsory license provisions, allowing others to produce a ringtone using the song for a statutory license.

Publishers counter this position in a few ways.

First, they say a publisher’s decision to authorize one company to change the fundamental character of a song doesn’t permit others to do so.

Second, they note that compulsory licenses apply only to those who want to record and distribute the compositions for private use. Many companies license ringtones for commercial purposes, they explain, by offering ringtones loaded as an incentive for consumers to buy cell phones.

Third, they claim that creating a derivative work—an adaptation—that incurs specific permission by the publisher. It’s not clear yet how this issue will be resolved. A German court recently granted EMI Music Publishing Germany’s request for a preliminary injunction against Universal Entertainment Germany. The case, which invokes Universal Mobile’s production of ringtones using EMI’s repertoire (Billboard, Jan. 15), is still pending.

Although German law—unlike American law—recognizes an author’s “moral right” to maintain the integrity of his or her work, the case is sure to draw the attention of the ringtone and music industries alike.

**FOR THE RECORD**

The photograph of Rosanne Cash and Marshall Crenshaw that appears in the Jan. 15 issue should have been credited to Janet Mayer.
Canada Goes Universal

BY LARRY LeBLANC

TORONTO—A raft of successful artists and new distribution deals helped Universal Music Canada achieve a bigger share of the market here in 2004.

Universal Music Canada president/CEO Randy Lennox, who reports to Universal Music Group president/COO Zach Horowitz, is widely lauded for the entrepreneurial vision of his company, which rolled up a 34% share of Canadian music sales in 2004, according to Nielsen SoundScan. This compares with its 29.3% share in 2003.

In contrast to other territories, the merged Sony and BMG are unlikely to rival Universal in Canada: Their combined Canadian market share in 2004 was 22.6%.

"Randy's strength is his ideas," says Vancouver-based manager Bruce Allen, who handles Bryan Adams. "People say he's a great sales guy, but he's more than that. He's a strategist." A 20-year company veteran, Lennox was promoted to president/CEO in 2001. He began his career in 1978 with MCA Records as a customer-service representative. He was appointed president of Universal Music Canada in 1998, following the Universal/PolysGram merger.

The rise in Universal Canada's market share—it has jumped to its current level from 29.5% in 2001, following Vivendi's acquisition of Seagram—can be attributed to several factors.

The company has been bolstered by the success of such international acts as U2, Shania Twain, Eminem. (Continued on page 44)

Belgian Indie Distributors Combine

BY MARC MAES and EMMANUEL LEGRAND

ANTWERP, Belgium—The new year started with a bang for the independent sector in the Benelux countries (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg).

A newly expanded, Brussels-based indie distributor, Bang Distribution, emerged in January. The company combines the operations of the former Bang Distribution and Distrisound.

The two have integrated their repertoire and distributed labels, as well as their distribution centers and back-office functions.

"We've combined the strength of Distrisound—its logistics, sales team and strong presence in department stores and shopping malls—with Bang's forte, which is artist development," says former Bang managing director Damien Waelle, who holds the same title in the new structure.

Swedes Loyal To Local Acts
Sales Slide Despite Home-Grown Hits

BY JEFFREY DE HART

STOCKHOLM—A strong performance by domestic repertoire failed to halt the slide in record sales in Sweden during 2004.

Sweden has long been acknowledged as the A&R powerhouse of Scandinavia, and a string of releases by major local acts meant that domestic repertoire accounted for a record 40% share of all units shipped here last year, according to new figures from the local affiliate of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry.

"It is very interesting that local artists are doing so well," says Thomas Stenmo, legal adviser/statistics officer of IFPI Sweden.

Stenmo suggests that the loss of ground by international repertoire could be because of "loyalty to local artists. People buy their albums instead of those by international acts, and there are concerts and more opportunities for local artists to interface with consumers."

Despite the strong domestic showing, the Swedish market continued to contract in 2004. The total value of shipments fell 17.4% from 2003 levels to 1.1 billion kronor ($162.2 million). The market has dropped 33.6% in value since 2001, according to IFPI Sweden.

Singles showed the biggest decline, falling 37.3% to 18.8 million kronor ($2.8 million), with volume down 37.6% to 1.3 million units. Album sales slipped 17% in value and volume, to 1.19 billion kronor ($164.1 million) and 17.9 million units. Even music DVD shipments, which have been on the rise in most territories, dropped 14% in value to 61.6 million kronor ($9 million) and 9.9% in volume to 716,000 units.

VETERAN PERFORMERS

Domestic acts that had strong showings in 2004 included Roxette members Per Gessle and Marie Fredriksson and ABBA founders Agnetha Faltskog and Benny Andersson.

Gessle reunited with his pre-Roxette band Gyllene Tider for an album and summer tour. The band's triple platinum EMI album, "Finn 50," was the country's best seller for the year, according to IFPI Sweden.

Only two international acts reached the top 10 of the year-end albums and singles charts. U2 and Norah Jones had top 10 albums, and Haddix and Britney Spears hit singles.

"It's really remarkable," Universal Music managing director Martin Almgvist says. "The performance is partly because Swedes have a stronger relationship with the domestic market and are not apt to download local artists at the same rate as international artists."

(Continued on page 44)
### JANUARY 29, 2005

#### Hits of the World

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
<th>France</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>KILLING ME</td>
<td>ONE NIGHT TO GET STUNG</td>
<td>CALL ME</td>
<td>NEW SINGLES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CALL ME</td>
<td>CALL ME</td>
<td>CALL ME</td>
<td>CALL ME</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>SHIWAJAEVOSAMURAYASAKURAYASHIK》R.J.E</td>
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<td>SOMEONE TOLD ME</td>
<td>SOMEONE TOLD ME</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>VINNIBESS-DREAM A LITTLE DREAM</td>
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<td>ANNIVERSARY</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>TO ALL THA DREAMERS</td>
<td>TO ALL THA DREAMERS</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>ABAKESINGO/DAYRURYUGO (LTD EDITION)</td>
<td>ABAKESINGO/DAYRURYUGO (LTD EDITION)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **CANADA** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** |
| 1 | MY BOO | NO DESE O SER | NO DESE O SER | NO DESE O SER |
| 2 | PARTY FOR TWO | I WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU | I WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU | I WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU |
| 3 | AWAKE IN A DREAM | AWAKE IN A DREAM | AWAKE IN A DREAM | AWAKE IN A DREAM |
| 4 | YEAH! | YEAH! | YEAH! | YEAH! |
| 5 | GINNAM BOYZ | CURTAIN FALLS | CURTAIN FALLS | CURTAIN FALLS |
| 6 | VERTIGO (3 TRACK SINGLE) | VERTIGO (3 TRACK SINGLE) | VERTIGO (3 TRACK SINGLE) | VERTIGO (3 TRACK SINGLE) |
| 7 | LET'S GET IT STARTED | LET'S GET IT STARTED | LET'S GET IT STARTED | LET'S GET IT STARTED |
| 8 | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? |
| 9 | I BELIEVE | I BELIEVE | I BELIEVE | I BELIEVE |
| 10 | AMERICAN IDIOT | AMERICAN IDIOT | AMERICAN IDIOT | AMERICAN IDIOT |

| **ITALY** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** |
| 1 | RESTA IN ASCOLTO | RESTA IN ASCOLTO | RESTA IN ASCOLTO | RESTA IN ASCOLTO |
| 2 | THE KILLERS | THE KILLERS | THE KILLERS | THE KILLERS |
| 3 | JAMIE CULLUM | JAMIE CULLUM | JAMIE CULLUM | JAMIE CULLUM |
| 4 | U2 | U2 | U2 | U2 |
| 5 | NELLY FT KISSY | NELLY FT KISSY | NELLY FT KISSY | NELLY FT KISSY |

| **SPAIN** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** |
| 1 | THE PRAYER | THE PRAYER | THE PRAYER | THE PRAYER |
| 2 | WHAT YOU WAITING FOR? | WHAT YOU WAITING FOR? | WHAT YOU WAITING FOR? | WHAT YOU WAITING FOR? |
| 3 | NUNI/ENCORE | NUNI/ENCORE | NUNI/ENCORE | NUNI/ENCORE |
| 4 | COME ON AUSSIE, COME ON | COME ON AUSSIE, COME ON | COME ON AUSSIE, COME ON | COME ON AUSSIE, COME ON |
| 5 | BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS | BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS | BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS | BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS |
| 6 | WONDERFUL | WONDERFUL | WONDERFUL | WONDERFUL |
| 7 | TILT YA HEAD BACK | TILT YA HEAD BACK | TILT YA HEAD BACK | TILT YA HEAD BACK |
| 8 |年度が恋する |年度が恋する |年度が恋する |年度が恋する |
| 10 | MISRAUM | MISRAUM | MISRAUM | MISRAUM |

| **AUSTRALIA** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** |
| 1 | AMERICAN IDIOT | AMERICAN IDIOT | AMERICAN IDIOT | AMERICAN IDIOT |
| 2 | HOMER & BETSY | HOMER & BETSY | HOMER & BETSY | HOMER & BETSY |
| 3 | ROBBIE WILLIAMS | ROBBIE WILLIAMS | ROBBIE WILLIAMS | ROBBIE WILLIAMS |
| 4 | PEARL JAM | PEARL JAM | PEARL JAM | PEARL JAM |

| **THE NETHERLANDS** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** |
| 1 | COMING TRUE | COMING TRUE | COMING TRUE | COMING TRUE |
| 2 | BABY STAND UP | BABY STAND UP | BABY STAND UP | BABY STAND UP |
| 3 | CALL ON ME | CALL ON ME | CALL ON ME | CALL ON ME |
| 4 | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? |
| 5 | NELLY FT KISSY | NELLY FT KISSY | NELLY FT KISSY | NELLY FT KISSY |

| **SWEDEN** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** |
| 1 | ALL A LOVE SONGS | ALL A LOVE SONGS | ALL A LOVE SONGS | ALL A LOVE SONGS |
| 2 |闘不过 |闘不过 |闘不过 |闘不过 |
| 3 | BIGGER THAN THAT | BIGGER THAN THAT | BIGGER THAN THAT | BIGGER THAN THAT |
| 4 | 1001 ARABIAN NIGHTS | 1001 ARABIAN NIGHTS | 1001 ARABIAN NIGHTS | 1001 ARABIAN NIGHTS |

| **SWITZERLAND** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** | **SINGLES** |
| 1 | COMING TRUE | COMING TRUE | COMING TRUE | COMING TRUE |
| 2 | BABY STAND UP | BABY STAND UP | BABY STAND UP | BABY STAND UP |
| 3 | CALL ON ME | CALL ON ME | CALL ON ME | CALL ON ME |
| 4 | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? | DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS? |

**Notes:**
- JANUARY 29, 2005
- Hits of the World is compiled at Billboard/London.
- NEW = New Entry
- RE = Re-Entry

**Website:**
www.billboard.com • www.billboard.biz

**Billboard January 29, 2005**
**Austrian Chart (Austria)**

<table>
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**Belgian Chart (Belgium)**

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**Eurochart (Europe)**

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**Common Currency**

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>EUR</th>
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**New Zealand Chart (New Zealand)**

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**Spanish Chart (Spain)**

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**Global Chart (Global)**

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**Aussie Star Aims To Help New Acts**

John Butler was a triple winner at the Australian Record Industry Awards in October, and the roots artist is using his success to boost a new generation of local acts.

Sun Diego-born Butler—who says his four albums have shipped more than 400,000 copies on his Jarrah Records label—has set up a grant program using his own money.

Butler’s “Fit the Seed” initiative will assist indigenous and migrant Australian musicians, plus songwriters whose work focuses on human-rights and environmental issues.

“We received a few grants in the formative years of my career,” he says. “I appreciate how significant this type of funding can be.”

Lava Atlantic will release the current John Butler Trio album, “Sunrise Over Sea,” in the United States in November.

**Global Music News**

**Wright Stuff**

French multi-instrumentalist Yann Tiersen’s collaboration with Jacksonville, Fla.-born singer-songwriter Shannon Wright is receiving an international release.

Tiersen made his mark globally with his sixth album, “13 Absente,” in 2001. Parts of the set were used for the soundtrack to the 2000 French movie “Le Fabuleux Destin d’Amelie Poulain” (released in the United States as “Amélie”). Virgin France says “L’Absente” has shipped more than 250,000 units worldwide.

Wright’s first studio project since then is “Yann Tiersen & Shannon Wright” on his own Ici d’Alleurs label.

The set—which merges Tiersen’s striking, classically influenced melodies with Wright’s powerful vocals—resulted from a meeting last year in Paris. Wright is signed in the United States to Chicago indie Quarterstick.

The album was released in October in France through Paris-based distributor Discograph, which handles international licensing. A Jan. 27 release is set for most European territories, with Germany, Japan, Canada and the United States following in February and March.
Danes Band Play, China Buys

DANISH BAND MICHAEL LEARNS TO ROCK SELLS MILLIONS IN ASIA

BY CHARLES FERRO
and STEVE McCLELLAN

Danish pop-rock act Michael Learns to Rock is looking to maintain its enviable sales record across Asia following a successful 2004 in mainland China. The EMI Denmark act has been a major force in Asia since 1992. The region accounts for the lion’s share of the nearly 9 million albums the band has shipped during its career, according to the label.

MLTR capped a successful year in mainland China by playing the CCTV New Year’s Eve Countdown Show at Xian Tian He Stadium in the southern city of Guangzhou. The regionally televised multiartist concert is organized each year by state broadcaster CCTV.

In the wake of the Dec. 26 tsunami, the band is returning to Asia to play shows in Indonesia, where the country’s tsunami victims. The band could soon be on the road again in Asia. “We are in discussions about bringing the band back this way in June for more dates in China, India, Thailand and possibly Philippines and Korea,” Hosking says.

MLTR has followed a string of shows MLTR played in October 2004 in Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand and South Africa.

BREAKING CHINA

According to Hong Kong-based EMI Southeast Asia, MLTR was mainland China’s best-selling international act last year. The company says it has shipped more than 2.0 million units of the band’s sixth studio album, “Take Me to Your Heart” (issued in Europe as “Michael Learns to Rock”). In China since its summer 2004 release.

“China has been an ongoing process,” MLTR drummer Kåre Wanscher says. The band played its first Chinese date in Beijing as part of a 1997 Asian tour. “We’ve been to China several times since for various appearances,” Wanscher adds, “and always tried to stay visible” there.

MLTR performed the title track of “Take Me to Your Heart” as a duet with EMI/Pacific China’s Chinese artist Anson Hu at the CCTV event.

EMI Denmark director of international exploitation Ole Mortensen recalls that the song came about after EMI South Denmark executive director Hans Ebert recommended that the band perform an English-language version of Jackie Cheung’s Mandarin hit “Kiss Me Goodbye.”

MLTR frontman Jesper Richter wrote new lyrics to Cheung’s 1993 melody, which became “Take Me to Your Heart.” EMI is working on a Korean version of the song, EMI Southeast Asia regional marketing director Caroline Qwek says, “Shin Hee Gung—lead singer of Good Entertainment/EMI vocal group Shinbw—has expressed interest in doing a Korean version of it with MLTR for his upcoming album.”

GOING LIVE

The proposed June dates would tie in with a new MLTR compilation EMI Southeast Asia is planning for various Asian territories.

Wanscher describes playing for Asian audiences as “different” and “more exciting” than playing to European crowds.

“European audiences are used to rock ’n’ roll concerts,” he explains, “but [in] Asia they have the karaoke tradition for singing along with the band. In Europe it’s ‘play as loud and fast as possible.’

“Asians love music, especially ballads that have simple lyrics, a catchy chorus and great melodies,” Qwek adds. “Music lovers in Asia also love karaoke. MLTR understands and embraces these facts and has managed to deliver exceptionally well.”

Wanscher, Richter, guitarist Mikkel Lentz and bassist Soren Madsen formed MLTR in the late ’80s. The quartet became a major name in Denmark and other Scandinavian territories with its self-titled 1991 debut. When the set was released in Asia the following year, the track “The Actor” unexpectedly became a radio hit. The album was a subsequent sales success in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.

By 1995, MLTR was established as a major name in 11 Asian territories and had a substantial following in Brazil, South Africa and certain European markets.

The band’s biggest seller to date, according to EMI, is the 1996 compilation “Paint My Love.” Released only in Southeast Asia, the United Arab Emirates, South Africa and Japan, the set has shipped more than 3.4 million units. EMI issued MLTR’s European “Greatest Hits” album in 1999 while the band was on sabbatical.

Madsen opted for a solo career in spring 2000, so MLTR became a trio before the release of fifth album “Blue Night” in 2001.

Universal

Continued from page 41

Diana Krall and Black Eyed Peas. It has also been aggressive in seeking distribution of key domestic labels and acquiring domestic distribution of such U.S. imprints as TVT, Roadrunner, Rounder, Walt Disney Records, Hollywood, Navarre, Cord/Fantasy and ABRCO.

“We have seen a tremendous pickup in our business since coming here,” says Peter Piascik, managing director of Navarre Canada, which switched distribution to Universal from EMI Music Canada in June 2004. “For sales, Universal is the best in the business.”

Jim Earl, manager of HMV Canada in downtown Toronto, notes, “Universal [staff] continues to come in stores. They still have staff specializing in classical and the offbeat stuff.”

“It’s amazing the job Universal does at working top-level acts, as well as specialized repertoire and deep catalogs,” adds Dominique Zgarka, president of Koch Entertainment Canada.

Lennox is bullish about the first quarter. “We are excited about product from the Game, 50 Cent, Beck and Black Eyed Peas,” he says. “Domestically, we’re preparing albums by Dido, Antony and the Johnsons, and Jann Arden.”

In addition to developing a domestic roster that includes Sarah McLachlan, Matthew Good and Hawksley Workman, Universal has become the leading player in distributing Canadian indie labels. Among them are Anberlin, Alert Music and Somerset Entertainment (all in Toronto); 604 Records and Maximum Music (Vancouver); and the artist-run imprint of Loreena McKennitt, Sarah Harmer and Kevan Parent.

In 2002, Universal acquired a minority share in Toronto-based MapleCore, which operates alternative rock-oriented MapleMusic Recordings and country imprint Open Road Recordings.

In the past year, Universal has picked up Canadian indie labels at a dizzying pace. These include Black Smith Entertainment, the Orange Record Label, Paperbag Records, Alfa Records, Last Gang/Disquiet Entertainment (all in Toronto); and DEP Distribution and Curve Records (Montreal). Also, Toronto-based Linus Entertainment has moved its distribution to Universal from Warner Music Canada.

Bernie Finkelstein, president of Universal-distributed True North Records in Toronto, agrees. “Universal is huge, but they are still very easy to access and deal with.”

Benelux

Continued from page 41

Wagram owns 49% of the new company; Bang Distribution’s management holds the remaining shares. billboard understands that the transaction did not involve cash but was accomplished through share swaps.

“Wagram is France’s premier independent (distribution) company, and this association with Bang is very important,” Wassele says. “The fusion of both companies will allow us to make our artists more visible in major shopping areas.”

Michel Labot, co-chief executive of leading Brussels-based indie distributor PIAS, says he recognizes the rationale behind merging Bang and Distri斡ans and is looking forward to the competition.

“I have a lot of respect for the people at Bang,” Labot says. “In just a few years, they built a success story out of nothing. Distri斡ans was more focused on mainstream French pop. We’re going to monitor carefully what they do, but in any case, this is good for indie distribution.”

Labot suggests, however, that a weakness of the new company is the Dutch-speaking territories. “They are strong in Belgium, French-speaking region Wallonia, but to exist in the region you need a real strategy for the Dutch-speaking market,” he says.

Bourdieu says Bang will step up its focus in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium—and the Netherlands. “There is obviously potential for growth in that part of the region,” he says. Distri斡ans, founded in the early 1980s, specialized in the distribution of French indie labels, as well as such Belgian labels as Soundstation and Anorak Supermost.

Bang was founded in 1992 as a label and a distributor. It quickly established itself as a major force in Belgium, discovering successful local bands like dEUS and, more recently, Girls in Hawaii. It also handled local distribution for several labels, including France’s Nao, home to Carla Bruni and Marianne Faithful.

Bang will be Wagram’s sole representative in Benelux. The new company’s Belgian repertoire will go through Wagram in France.

Wagram’s key artist is R&B singer Cornwall; the company says his debut album, “Parc Qu’on Vient de Loin,” is certified gold in Belgium for shipments of 25,000 units.
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big screen

Continued from page 5

a type of sensibility about them that isn't typical film-score language.”

Former Nine Inch Nails keyboardist Charlie Clouser, who directed the score for 2004 hit horror movie “Saw,” says, “There's a whole new generation of movie power players who grew up with rock, hip-hop and music videos, so they are going to be more receptive to working with [nontraditional] composers.”

RAPIDLY GROWING TREND

Recording stars becoming film composers is not a new phenomenon. Those who crossed over to film composing in the past include Randy Newman, former Oingo Boingo leader Danny Elfman, Devo co-founder Mark Mothersbaugh, jazz musician Terence Blanchard and former Police drummer Stewart Copeland.

But what is relatively new is how rapidly this trend has grown in the past few years. And unlike most of their predecessor composers who have generally had pop-star days behind and devoted themselves full-time to composing, many of these newer film-score composers are keeping their feet firmly planted in the music industry as performing artists who regularly make and/or produce records in addition to touring.

Jagger composed his first score for Paramount Pictures' 2004 remake of “Alfie.” He wrote it with Eurythmics co-founder Dave Stewart and renowned film-music composer John Powell. RZA wrote the scores for “Kill Bill: Vol. 1” and “Blade: Trinity.” BT's credits include “The Fast and the Furious,” “Go,” “Monster,” “Stuart Little” and “The Underclassman.”

Other recording artists who have written film-music scores in the past few years include Phil Collins (“Brother Bear”), Korn frontman Jonathan Davis (“Queen of the Damned”), former Smashing Pumpkins leader Billy Corgan (“Spin”), Duncan Sheik (“A Home at the End of the World”), Radiohead lead guitarist Jonny Greenwood (“Bodysong”) and Aerosmith lead guitarist Joe Perry (“This Thing of Ours”).

Heart co-founder Nancy Wilson writes the scores for the films written and directed by her husband, Cameron Crowe. Her credits include “Almost Famous,” “Vanilla Sky” and “Elizabethtown.”

But working with a major studio may not always be creatively restrictive for the composer, especially if he or she is also a legendary artist. Jagger told Billboard in an interview last year about his experiences working on “Alfie” - “The whole team was very supportive. I'm sure there are occasions when the filmmakers and studio can be a pain in the ass, but it wasn't like that for me.”

“When we wrote the music very quickly, but as they kept changing and re-editing the movie we had to slightly change some things. We did different versions to make the scenes work.”

RZA adds of his “Kill Bill” experience, “Quentin said he already had a lot of the movie shot in his head before he wrote the script. It helps to have a composer who knows ahead of time what kind of music he wants.”

ART VS. COMMERCE

Creative fulfillment can be an important goal of the artist, but crossover composers and the people who work with them say that the composers must not lose sight of the fact that their work is supposed to help sell a movie.

Hugh, says, “Sometimes it's difficult for recording artists to grasp that a composer is supposed to underscore emotions. The movie is the master and they're just the people working to help it along, whereas when they're doing music for their own records, the songs stand alone and aren't commenting on images in a real way.”

RZA agrees. He says composers should approach the movie industry with a healthy dose of realism about the business. “Filmmakers want a packaged piece of product that's timeless, not just the latest songs you've got to know about a job unless the job is done, sealed and the check is in your pocket.”

“Sometimes you also face the risk of being typecast into doing only certain types of movies. Clouser offers this advice to recording artists who want to break into film composing: "Widen your musical vocabulary as much as possible. There's a lot of sources of additional revenue beyond the movie.”

High says the composers should also have the right people on their support team. RZA, who worked with composer Ramin Djawadi for the score to “Blade: Trinity,” adds: “I learned that if you've got people who love you, they will work for you for any amount of time, you've got to stay connected with the talented people.”

New Line, which released “Blade: Trinity” and soundtrack, hit film “300,” to which Hetherwick contributed, also had a high degree of sensitivity to what the soundtrack would sound like,” Hugh's New Line says.

A composer's name recognition with music buyers and coordinated marketing efforts with the movie studio are key elements in selling the soundtrack, notes Tom Briggs, senior director of marketing at Koch Records, which released the “Saw” soundtrack.

Briggs says of recording artists who cross over to film composing, “It's a reflection of the times. Everything is more integrated. This is a chance for them to remake the industry.”

Linn concludes, "In the same way that actors don't want to be pigeon-holed, the most talented are the ones who can transcend genres.”

in the spirit

Continued from page 14

to honor women in ministry.

NEWS NOTES: “Celebration of Gospel” is returning to Los Angeles’ Orpheum Theatre with a live taping Jan. 22. Ruben Studdard, Fantasia, Pastor Donnie McClurkin, Yolanda Adams, BeBe Winans, Smokie Norful, Kirk Franklin, Kirk Whalum, Fred Hammond, Pastor Shirley Caesar, J. Moss. BET's Dr. Bobby Jones, the Clark Sisters and KiKi Sheard are slated for the show, which will air Feb. 24 on BET.

Grant Jenkins has departed from his post at EMI Christian Music Group, relocating to Dallas to join Kirk Franklin's Fo Yo Soul Enter- tainment Group artists. During his tenure at EMI CMG, he served as manager of interactive marketing, where he worked EMI Gospel and EMI CMG Label Group artists.

Adult R&B/Blues New York began airing BeBe Winans' syndicated radio show Jan. 9. The show has now been cleared in 48 of the top 50 markets. The syndicated radio show, which is the exclusive, the Feb. 26 program will feature Winans' interview with Oprah Winfrey.

The BeBe Winans Radio Show is also available online with Prog- rations in partnership with Winans. Look for his new album, “Dream,” to street Feb. 22.

Classical Score

Continued from page 14

than half our time is spent doing educational activities.” The group has developed a whole roster of programs, originating from the various groups, starting with introductory sessions for children as young as 1 or 2 through master classes and coaching for high school and college students.

Scott says that while Imari Wins certainly has a hook, its reputation isn't being built as a novelty. “We're not being hired—and especially hired repeatedly by the same presenters—only because we're a young, good-looking, African-American quartet,” he stresses. “People just want to hear good musicians with a lot of energy who can give it all they look like the kind of people who have been on stages playing the same music for the past 75 years.”

Hetherwick Gets the nod: The speculative saga of who will head up Sony BMG's classical operations has finally been laid to rest nearly six months after the company cleared its post-merger head. Earlier this month, Gilbert Hetherwick, VP/GM of BMG Classics since 2003, was named the newly combined division's president (Billboard, Jan. 22).

While there has been much talk about the power of Sony and BMG's current artist lineup (particularly So the famous cast of characters that are a pressing concern may be the division of genre responsibilities. While under the leadership of former president Peter Gelb, Sony Classical famously turned its back on most classical releases to focus on crossover and overtly non-classical releases.

BMG, meanwhile, parted out classical crossovers, jazz, Broadway, film music, new age and world music into a separate label group, the RCA Victor Group, leaving a relatively small roster of current artists on BMG Classics, although the famous cast of characters remains.

However, the much-anticipated debut album from the young piano-playing sibling the 5 Browns rests with BMG Classics’ RCA Red Seal imprint. The album features a repertoire of classical music, but a core classical even though the group is being marketed in a pop-friendly way.

It remains to be seen how the new company will handle these philosophical ideations.
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES: RCA Label Group in Nashville promotes Jim Catino to senior director of A&R. He was director of A&R.

EMI Music Marketing in Los Angeles names Jesse Flores director of urban sales and marketing, and promotes Linda Kalkin to label director and Janine Popoli to manager of national marketing and merchandising. Flores was sales representative at Universal Music Group, Kalkin was national field marketing and merchandising manager, and Popoli was telesales representative, Western region.

Octone Records in New York names Rome Thomas head of sales and artist development. He was senior director of online sales at Sony Music Label Sales.

RCA Records Nashville appoints Ted Wagner director of promotion, mid-Atlantic region. He was national director of promotion, Southwest region at Equity Music Group.

PUBLISHING: BMG Music Publishing in New York names Jason Boyarski to senior director of legal and business affairs and Sean Melia to director of legal and business affairs. Boyarski was director of legal and business affairs and Melia was associate director of legal and business affairs.

RADIO: Infinity Broadcasting in Charlotte, N.C., promotes Keith Cornwell to VP/FM of mainstream top 40 WNKX and AC WQRC. He remains director of sales for Infinity's seven Charlotte radio stations.

Classic rock WCSX Detroit names Steve Richards assistant PD/music director. He was operations director at mainstream top 40 KKHT Memphis.

Adult top 40 WMBZ Memphis appoints Brad Carson PD/morning co-host. He held the same titles at adult top 40 WIXM Atlantic City, N.J.

Adult top 40 KXVM Portland, Ore., appoints Dave Numme PD. He remains PD at active rock KUPO Portland.

MUSIC VIDEO: Great American Country in Englewood, Colo., names Scott Durand VP of operations, Nashville-based Sarah Trahern VP of programming and Nashville-based Greg Neal VP of creative services. Durand was VP of marketing at GAC, Trahern was VP of programming and on-air strategy at GAC sister network Shop at Home, and Neal remains VP of creative services at Shop at Home.

PRO AUDIO: Universal Mastering Studios promotes North Hollywood, Calif., audio engineer Nick Dofflemeyer to senior director of West Coast operations and New York-based Kevin Reeves to director of East Coast operations. Dofflemeyer was director of West Coast operations, and Reeves was senior mastering engineer.

DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT: Snopac in San Francisco appoints Christian Castle senior VP of legal affairs/general counsel. He was an attorney in private practice.

MTV Digital in New York names Alex Porter senior editor. He was a freelance writer.

Digital Musicworks International in Chicago appoints Jennifer Dedes Midwest director of marketing and promotion. She was Midwest marketing and promotion coordinator at Elektra Entertainment.

HOME VIDEO: Koch Vision in Port Washington, N.Y., names Walter Schmidt director of marketing. He was director of marketing, home video at Wellspring.

RELATED FIELDS: Promotion/marketing firm AristoMedia Group in Nashville ups Craig Bann to senior VP of marketing and publicity and Rick Kelly to VP of radio marketing. Bann was VP of promotion and marketing, and Kelly was director of promotion.

AristoMedia also names Danny Combs publicist and Liz Hartzog radio marketing assistant. Combs was artist management assistant at TBA/Mike Atkins Entertainment, and Hartzog was manager at retailer Plato's Closet.

By Popular Demand
Sherry Crow, left, was among the winners at the 31st annual People's Choice Awards, held Jan. 9 at the Pasadena (Calif.) Civic Auditorium. Crow won the favorite remake award for her cover of Cat Stevens' "The First Cut Is the Deepest." For the first time, this year's winners were chosen by online voting. Other winners included U2 for favorite group, Usher for favorite male singer and favorite "combined forces" for his collaboration with Lil Jon and Ludacris on "Yeah!" Alicia Keys was voted favorite female singer, Brooks & Dunn favorite country group, Tim McGraw favorite country male singer and Shania Twain favorite country female singer. "American Idol" won the award for favorite reality show competition, while Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey's "Newlyweds" series won for favorite reality show, 24/7. (Photo: Kevin Mazur/WireImage)

Nothing But No. 1

Now, Hear This...
JULIO VOLITO
Artists to Watch
Latin music followers may be surprised to find a new name at the high end of the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart. Julio Volito’s "Vollage/AC," on Sony Discos, has landed in the top 25 just weeks after its Dec. 14 release. Such a quick climb on this chart is remarkable for a new artist. Fueled by the buzz is single "Julito Maraña," which has been a top 10 hit on the Billboard Latin Tropical Airplay chart. A street tale of a ner-do-well reminiscent of Hector Lavoe’s "Juaquín Aleman," the song has a cinematic video that has been shown at film festivals. Featuring reggaeton star Tego Calderón and rapper Fat Joe, the video has boosted interest in Volito as a reggaetón artist with something to say. The Puerto Rican native is already known to reggaetón connoisseurs thanks to longstanding associations and guest spots with many of the island’s top names in the genre. Most recently, the 28-year-old—whose real name is Julio J. Ramos—guested on the Jerry Rivera track "Mi Libertad" and on Calderón’s "Wasa Wasa." Calderón, a big Volito supporter, signed him to Puerto Rican independent label White Lion Records, which houses Calderón’s own Jiggli imprint. Sony Discos is actively pushing "Vollage/AC" and is planning to launch a national promotion campaign later this month. LEILA COBO

Hot Fashion ... PHARRELL WILLIAMS & NIGO
Pharrell Williams, left, hosted the launch party Jan. 11 for A Bathing Ape store in New York, owned by fashion designer/musician Nigo, right. Other celebrities at the event included Kanye West and Mos Def. Williams and Nigo collaborated on the Reebok-distributed Billionaire Boys Club fashion line, which was at the center of a $4 million breach-of-contract lawsuit that Williams filed last month against Reebok. Williams has since dropped the lawsuit, and he and Reebok have mutually agreed to end their business relationship. Reebok will continue selling Williams’ "Ice Cream" footwear until June 30. In other music-meets-fashion news, BET is launching a new fashion series, “Rip the Runway,” which will premiere March 24. The program will feature runway shows with live musical performances. Kelly Osbourne has started a fashion line, Stilettos Killers, which has T-shirts and sweat clothing with such slogans as "Gotta Fee," "I Hate U" and "F**K Off," and Snoop Dogg has linked with a new international to launch the Snoop Dogg Doggy Biscuit footwear collection under the brand names Snoopdaoo, Snoopafly and Snoopaloous. The entire collection will be available at retail in March.

Edited by Caria Hay
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