Rob Reveals His Solo Side
New Set Reflects Eclectic Tastes

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

LOS ANGELES—Rob Thomas jokes that his label, Melisma/Atlantic, is seeing a different side of him as it prepares for the launch of his solo debut, “...Something to Be.” In the multiplatinum group Matchbox Twenty, drummer Paul Doucette was the “bad cop. I was good cop,” Thomas says. (Continued on page 73)

Gwen Goes Indie Route
Stefani Inks With U.K. Publisher

BY LARS BRANDLE

LONDON—What is Gwen Stefani waiting for? The best possible deal, perhaps. In a sign of the changing times, major-label artist Stefani has signed on with an independent British company to administer her publishing rights on a global basis. The No Doubt frontwoman has reached an exclusive agreement with London-based Kobalt Music to (Continued on page 71)

This Time, Starbucks Gains Praise

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

LOS ANGELES—Some traditional retailers that previously castigated labels for giving Starbucks music exclusives are more sanguine about the launch of the coffee retailer’s “Hear Music Debut” CD series, designed to help break new artists. Lava Records’ Antigone Rising is the first act to take part. Starbucks will sell a 14-track, live, acoustic album by the female quintet starting May 11. The CD, recorded specifically for the retailer, will be available for $12.95 exclusively through 4,400 Starbucks outlets in the United States. Starbucks raised the ire of traditional retailers through its deal with Maverick records and Alanis Morissette: It will sell the acoustic version of “Jagged Little Pill” for six weeks, starting in June, before the album goes to other retailers (Billboard, March 12). Starbucks also came under fire when a handful of its stores jumped street date with Beck’s Geffen album “Guero” (Billboard, April 9). (Continued on page 57)
Compositor Del Año
Rudy Pérez

TROPICAL
CANCIONES DEL AÑO
"Creo En El Amor"
Compositores: Naúl Del Sol
Jorge Luis Piloto
Editoras: Piloto Music Publisher
Universal Music Publishing
WB Music Corp.

"Tengo Ganas"
Compositor: Victor Manuelle
Editora: VMR Publishing

REGIONAL MEXICANO
CANCION DEL AÑO
"Te Quise Olvidar"
Compositor: Juan Gabriel
Editora: BMG Songs

URBANO
CANCIONES GANADORAS
"Oye Mi Canto"
Compositores: Víctor Feliz
Eduardo Carrizo
Pedro Azael
Pablo Lando
Alvaro Fuentes Ibáñez
Héctor García Fernández
Amaya Montero Saldiva
Alexí Velázquez
Xavier Salinas

ROCK
CANCIONES GANADORAS
"Andar Conmigo"
Compositor: Carlos Vives

GRUPO INDEPENDIENTE DE ROCK
Del Castillo

TELEVISIÓN
CANCIONES GANADORAS
"Amor Real"
Compositores: Leonel García
Nahuel Schalper
Editora: SonyATV Discos Music Publishing
Programa: Televisión "Amor Real"

"Don Francisco Presenta"
Compositor: Gerardo Flores
Editora: Música RTV Music
Programa: "Don Francisco Presenta"
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2 Alyson Kraus + Union Station "Leaves Fans Both Ways"
3 The 5 Browns "Classical Crossroads"
4 Josh Groban "Closer"
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6 Nelly "Hostile"
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9 Kidz Bop Kids "Kidz Bop 7"
10 Dady Yankee "Barrio Fino"
11 Secret Garden "Earth Songs"
12 Ray Charles "The Very Best Of Ray Charles"
13 Beanie Sigel "The B. Coming"

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50 Cent Featuring Olivia "Candy Shop"
Green Day "Boulevard Of Broken Dreams"
Kelly Clarkson "Breakaway"
Craig Morgan "That’s What I Love About Sunday"
Jennifer Lopez "Get Right"
Kelly Clarkson "Since U Been Gone"
The Postal Service "We Will Become Silhouettes"
Will Smith "Switch"
Intocable "Aire"
Audioslave "Be Yourself"
Kelly Clarkson "Since U Been Gone"
The Game Feat. 50 Cent "Hate It Or Love It"
50 Cent Featuring Olivia "Candy Shop"
50 Cent Featuring Olivia "Candy Shop"

COMPASS RECORDS Billboard Stars Report

QUOTE OF THE WEEK
"Because we were on the verge of losing it all, we made the album of our career. We feel completely rejuvenated."

GARRETT'S BUSH VIE ON THE SESSIONS FOR ITS NEW CD

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Billboard Dance Music Summit Sept. 19-21 at the Union Square Ballroom, New York
Information: 646-654-4660

Billboard Touring Conference & Awards: Roadwork ’05 Oct. 25-26 at the Roosevelt Hotel, New York
Information: 646-654-4660
John Finds Sanctuary For Management

BY EMMANUEL LERAND and PAUL SEXTON

LONDON—The man who used to sing “Take Me to the Pilot” has put Sanctuary in the pilot’s seat.

Elton John and his business partners Frank Presland and Keith Bradley have sold London-based management company Twenty-First Artists to Sanctuary Group for £16 million ($30.1 million).

“At the core of this deal, there is a creative partnership between Elton John and myself,” says Mercuriadis, New York-based CEO of Sanctuary Group. “This is not about a trophy. Elton is one of the greatest artists of all time who is still at the height of his game creatively. We believe we have the skills and the experience to take his creativity to higher heights.”

Mercuriadis says the deal has been in discussion “for quite a long time. We took time to know each other and understand what both parties could offer.”

Earlier this year, John parted ways with Twenty-First creative director Derek MacKillop. Within Twenty-First, Presland runs the business side of John’s career, and Bradley handles the performing side.

“The key to it was the opportunity for better creative management for Elton,” Presland says. “Derek MacKillop had done very well over a number of years, but these are always difficult circumstances, and a change was always very likely. We saw all sorts of different people who might take on that role, but it was crucial that Elton got on so well with Merck and felt he would be the right guide he might need in the modern music world, allied to the fact that with Sanctuary, you have the advantage of offices in New York, L.A., (Continued on page 72).

Springsteen To Shake Some ‘Dust’ Plans Intimate Solo Tour Of U.S., Europe

BY RAY WADDELL

Bruce Springsteen will get intimate on a solo acoustic tour in support of his new Columbia release, “Devils & Dust.”

The tour of theaters and arenas scaled down to theater configurations begins April 25 at the Fox in Detroit (www.billboard.biz, April 6). Springsteen will play 14 shows in America through May 20 before beginning a European run May 24 at the Point in Dublin.

The Boss finishes in Europe June 26, with more U.S. dates likely. “Our hope is that sometime by the fall we will be back to the U.S. and make some additional appearances in our biggest Bruce markets,” longtime Springsteen manager Jon Landau tells Billboard.

The plan is to quickly showcase the music of “Devils & Dust,” Landau says. “Bruce has a beautiful new CD that we’re very excited about and we want to get out and show the colors right off, touch base with as many cities as we can conveniently do,” he says. The album streets April 26.

Springsteen agent Barry Bell booked the tour in conjunction with Creative Artists Agency. Various promoters will present the show.

“Basically, we continue to primarily work with people who have been with (Continued on page 58).

No Joke! America Loves Cable Guy’s New Album

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Larry the Cable Guy, who has lived up to his catchphrase, “Git-r-done,” with his new Jack Records/Warner Bros. set, “The Right to Bare Arms."

The set bows at No. 7 on The Billboard 200 this issue, making it the highest-debuting comedy album ever and the only one to debut in the top 10. The title is also the first comedy record to hit the summit of the Top Country Albums chart.

In addition, with a start of 92,000 units, it sets a record for first-week sales for a comedy album, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

“When you get a funny record, a (Continued on page 72)
Kazaa Case Nears End
Court Expected To Take Six Weeks To Decide Liability

BY SUSAN BUTLER

For the first time anywhere in the world, a lawsuit filed by record labels against tech companies unauthorised peer-to-peer file sharing has proceeded through trial.

Australian barristers completed their closing arguments March 23 in the Federal Court in Sydney, focusing on whether parties affiliated with a bundle of software known as Kazaa Media Desktop (KMD) should be liable to the major labels and 25 other record companies.

The liability phase of the trial began Nov. 29, with most of the evidence in written form—contracts, corporate records, e-mails and testimony offered through sworn affidavits, including marketing materials stating that between 60 million and 100 million Kazaa fans share more than 1 billion free files every month (Billboard, Dec. 4, 2004).

Demonstrating the clear meaning of a “paper chase,” the parties’ final written “submissions”—provided to Justice Murray Wilcox, who will decide the case—included more than 500 pages of briefs arguing the evidence presented in more than 2,000 documents selected from more than 200,000 documents gathered in the case.

Australian legal experts explain that the applicable standard for copyright-infringement liability is whether a party “authorized” infringing acts. The U.S. standard, which focuses on a party’s knowledge of infringement and whether a technology is capable of substantial non-infringing uses, is currently being reconsidered by the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc., et al v. Grokster Ltd., et al (Billboard, April 2).

In their submissions, the “respondent” labels argued that KMD was designed for unauthorized online trading of sound recordings. According to the labels, the “respondent” parties built a thriving business by exploiting the network and encouraging users to pirate and swap the recordings. By developing, supplying and maintaining KMD, the respondents are liable for authorizing copyright infringement, the labels argued.

Respondents Sharman License Holdings, Sharrman Networks, LEP Interactive Pty. and Nicola Hemmings acknowledged in their submissions that KMD includes a graphical user interface, permitting access to the P2P network FastTrack. This enables users to search for, and download, digital files from other P2P Track users.

They pointed out that this technology is also being used to share authorized files. These respondents said they do not—and are unable to—control the files or the content that users download.

Citing a May 2002 study, the respondents noted that infringement occurred predominantly in the United States and Canada (83% in the States and 5.1% in Canada, compared with 0.51% in Australia). They argued that the Australian Federal Court should comply with the judgments of other courts that there is infringement in the United States and Canada, and that the judgment should be allowed to stand.

Respondents Alnet, Brilliant Digital Entertainment, Brilliant Digital Entertainment Pty. (BDE) and Kevin Bermeister acknowledged in their submissions that their revenue is predominantly derived from other websites, and that the labels’ content is available only to KMD users.

At a technical level, they said, there is a “liaison” between the programmers at Sharman and BDE. The software—KMD—is designed to be distributed with Alnet technology. However, they argued, this does not mean that the “distinct corporate personalities are a sham,” or that they operated as a joint enterprise, conducting business as a single unit.

This is the crux of the labels’ conspiracy claim against the respondents. By holding the labels liable for authorizing infringement and other unlawful activities, (Continued on page 71)

Mobile

DRM Fee
Debated

Some Parties Claim
$1 Too Much To Pay

BY ANTONY BRUNO

The pending technical specification for digital-rights-management protection in mobile phones, poised to become the standard for the industry, may be doomed to fail before it is ever implemented because of disagreements about the cost of licensing the technology.

The mobile industry has been working to define a common standard for DRM in handsets through its de facto standards-setting body, the Open Mobile Alliance. Although wireless carriers and handset manufacturers participating have agreed on the technical details of a DRM solution, they are balking at the fees (Continued on page 72)
SELL OUT BIG TIME.

Your summer concerts and events are sure to be a sell-out when more than 100 million* AOL consumers across North America can buy tickets to your events. That's the power of AOL Tickets. We aggregate the ticketing inventory of the top ticketing services, including premiere partner Ticketmaster, in one, easy-to-use online marketplace—AOLTICKETS.COM. We're working to make this summer concert season a big success and we want you to be a part of it. Contact us at AOLSellsTickets@aol.com

*comScore MediaMetrix, October 2004, Digital Calculator. AOL is a registered trademark of America Online, Inc.
Content Rules At New MILIA
Interactive Forum Merged With MIPTV; Event To Focus On Delivery Platforms

BY JULIANA KORANTENG
LONDON—The rising flow of digital content through multiple platforms—cell phones, interactive TV, broadband Internet, satellite radio, and more—will be the focus of MILIA, which takes place April 11-15 in Cannes.

Billed as the world’s interactive content conference, MILIA has been combined this year by organizers Reed MIDEM, with MIPTV, the TV programming trade show.

The shows are designed to attract content creators, multimedia entertainers, and the digital-service providers that will distribute the content.

Last year, some 34% of MILIA attendees represented content providers or developers, and 15% represented TV broadcasters or producers. Some 60% of the attendees registered for MILIA in 2004 came from Europe, 17% were from North America, and 15% were from the Asia Pacific region.

MILIA this year will present "one of our most ambitious programs, as we anticipate the needs of our audience," says Ted Barocs, director of MILIA for Reed MIDEM, explaining the company’s decision to merge MIPTV and MILIA. "Five years ago, we were talking about broadband Internet, and no one had broadband. Now, we’re reaching large proportions of the population."

Forrester Research calculates that high-speed broadband Internet service will be in 41% of European homes in 2010, according to 67% of Internet subscribers. The broadband pictures are rosier in Asia, where penetration in South Korea alone is 84%.

International research company Strategy Analytics predicts the global mobile-content business will generate $70 billion in 2008, with music video and other video material accounting for $5.7 billion. The number of video-enabled mobile handsets is forecast to jump to 712 million units worldwide.

(Continued on page 58)

Fats Waller, Nirvana Added To Registry

BY BILL HOLLAND
WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Library of Congress is going to give a new set of 50 U.S. sound recordings long-term preservation to make them available to future generations.

The National Recording Registry houses sound recordings considered to be culturally, historically or aesthetically significant. The third annual selection of 50 recordings was announced April 5.

The recordings are chosen because they have become evergreens or helped forge a seminal style, or are musical selections like astronaut Neil Armstrong’s broadcast from the moon also made the list.

The earliest pick is "Gypsy Love Song" by Eugene Cowles from 1908. Among the other selections are Fats Waller singing and playing his own "Ain’t Misbehavin’" (1929); Glenn Miller’s "In the Mood" (1939); Hank Williams’ "Lovesick Blues" (1949); the Penguins’ doo-wop classic "Earth Angel" (1955); John Coltrane’s groundbreaking "Giant Steps" (1959); "The Girl From Ipanema," with Stan Getz, João Gilberto, Antonio Carlos Jobim and Astrud Gilberto (1963); and James Brown’s "Live at the Apollo" (1965).

More recent recordings include the Allman Brothers Band’s "At Fillmore East," from 1971; the Star Wars" soundtrack by John Williams, from 1977; and Public Enemy’s "Fear of a Black Planet," from 1989.

The registry tagged only one recording from the ’90s: Nirvana’s "Nevermind" (1991).

Recordings must be 10 years old to qualify. The public and registry panelists make the initial nominations.

(Continued on page 71)

Don Browne Takes Helm At Telemundo Network

BY LEILA COBO
Don Browne has been named president of Spanish-language TV network Telemundo, effective April 8. Browne, who was most recently COO for Telemundo, was promoted following the departure of Telemundo president/CEO Jim McNamara.

McNamara, whose contract is expiring, held his post for six years. He is leaving to pursue outside production opportunities.

Browne will report to Randy Falco, president of NBC Universal Television Networks Group. In his new post, Browne will be in charge of day-to-day operations of the entire Telemundo network, which includes its newer, music-based network, Mix.

Prior to joining Telemundo, Browne was president/GM of WTVJ-Channel 6 Miami, an NBC owned and operated station. As part of NBC, where he also worked as executive VP of news, Browne helped provide the feed that launched Telemundo Network News, before NBC owned Telemundo.

"Having witnessed firsthand the birth and growth of Telemundo, it is a great privilege and honor to have the opportunity to lead such a talented team, with a clear strategy, at such an exciting time in Spanish-language television," Browne said in a statement.

Among other things, he added, he will "relentlessly focus on implementing an integrated plan and management strategy, catering to the needs of our Hispanic community and our clients."

Telemundo reaches 82% of U.S. Hispanic viewers in 118 markets through 51 owned and operated stations, 36 broadcast affiliates and nearly 700 cable affiliates. It is wholly owned by NBC.
BOBBY VINTON
THANKS AKON

For Making His Song And Record
"Mr. Lonely" - "Lonely" A Smash Hit Again!

WWW.BOBBYVINTON.COM
www.americanradiohistory.com
Don’t Muffle Indie Retail

T

he past, when independent retailers individually or collectively expressed strong opinions, they were often dismissed as whiners. Indeed, they often still are, in fact, worse descriptions are sometimes applied. When the indie retail coalitions collectively voiced disapproval of Apple’s Music Store, for example, Best Buy acquired an exclusive on the band’s single, the manager dismissed the merchants as “idiots.” More recently, Don VanCleave, president of the Coalition of Independent Music Stores, explained why Starbucks’ Alavis Morissette exclusive has come under attack and urged the coffee merchant to become a force for good in the music industry. VanCleave was greeted with some responses advising him that indies are “whiners, so just shut up.” If indie merchants are perceived as whiners, it is likely because they have come to serve as the industry’s conscience. When a label or distribution executive applies the “whiner” tag, it is often shorthand for “you’re right, but we don’t want to hear it.” Indie stores have long been the strongest retail advocates of artist development — and labels love them for that. But sometimes labels forget that in addition to increasing the sales of baby acts — to the benefit of all indie merchants need certain hit artists and the easy sales they deliver to help keep the doors open and the lights on.

In a challenged industry, the growth of groups like CMRS, Music Monitor Network, and the Alliance of Independent Media Stores — as well as the urban coalitions that can be found in most major cities — is more important than ever before. Their opinions need to be heard.

—Ed Christian

Making The Case For Digital Subscription Services

To Own Or Not To Own?

D
gital music: to own or to rent? Will consumers prefer to own their digital music files — like owning a CD or vinyl LP? Or is it more likely they will want to rent music like they rent DVDs at Blockbuster or Netflix?

Which is more valuable and essential to the consumer: actual ownership (digital or physical) or unlimited access through a subscription service?

Through the years, people have purchased music in myriad physical formats, from LPs to 8-tracks to cassettes to CDs. And now the musical upgrade cycle is this: Is this good for the consumer? Is it the best path for the industry to pursue in the digital era?

The fact is that buying music on a per-track basis on iTunes or any of the a la carte digital music services is not the same as owning music. The iTunes store uses Apple’s FairPlay technology (a DRM-based technology that makes sure or rather, wants to make sure) that users can only do limited things with the music they buy from iTunes. There are DRM-stipulated usage rules that limit the number of burns, the number of listeners per day for shared music (MyTunes) and the number of computers a file will work on at a given time.

Admittedly, thanks to Apple’s clever marketing and outstanding product design, it feels to the user like they own the music purchased on iTunes. But the fact is, they do not own it like they own a CD or even an MP3 file. In essence, they are renting it, because as a user they are ultimately not in control of what they can do with the music.

So much for the myth of owning your music if you download a DRM-protected track from any of the music services.

Next-generation services like Napster and Go provide unlimited access to something like 1 million songs for a flat monthly subscription fee—an all-you-can-eat musical buffet, available anytime, anywhere, at the user’s leisure. Users can download and listen to anything they wish, and those songs can be stored on a PC or a portable (and much cheaper) MP3 player for repeated listening, for as long as the user subscribes to the service.

The catch? If the user stops subscribing, the songs stop playing. In this scenario, access becomes the new value proposition, as opposed to ownership.

Think of the Xerox copying machine, the fax, e-mail, the VCR, TiVo, the cell phone and our precious Blackberries. Technologies shape us just as we have shaped them.

Folks that the global availability of low-cost, all-in, no-frills music subscription services will blow away our reservations about paying for music files as intangible, rented goods. Our habits will change when the service and the price is right. It’s as simple as that.

Once prices drop, the music licensing issues are resolved, the catalog is filled with millions of tracks and dozens of inexpensive compatible and interoperable playback devices flood the market, you will be hard-pressed to find someone who does not subscribe to a music service. Just think about how few people you know who do not have a cell phone.

Subscription services allow for an audience of new artists. They are the next-generation radio, and therefore are a perfect way to break new songs and artists. Happy subscribers will always buy more stuff from their trusted vendors: A great basic service at a low price opens the market up for special releases, previews, package deals, tickets, merchandise, videos, books and much more.

Subscriptions can and will be packaged into other offerings: Think Internet access, magazine subscriptions, college tuition, cell phone services, Starbucks coffee cards, frequent-flier programs and so on.

Call it renting, listening or downloading. The bottom line is that customers today demand even more value for an ever lower price, and that is what they are getting to eventually get.

Gerd Leonhard and Dave Kusek are co-authors of "The Future of Music: Manifesto for the Digital Music Revolution." For information, go to futur eofmusicbook.com.

Don’t Muffle Indie Retail
Navarro, Urie Join Musexpo Lineup

The lineup for the inaugural international music and media forum Musexpo 2005 is firming up. The conference, set for May 1-4 in Los Angeles, has just added Dave Navarro and Universal Music & Video Distribution president Jim Urie to a keynote panel discussion to be helmed by Larry King May 2. Other speakers include Sony Music executive VP of A&R David Massey, Clear Channel Entertainment chairman/CEO Brian Becker, NPR outlet KCRW Los Angeles, and Amy Grant.

By Melinda Newman
mnewman@billboard.com

for The Love of Garbage

After a Long Hiatus, Band Reunites For Fourth Album

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

Cal it the eight-year itch. After recording and touring together since 1995, the four members of Garbage nearly called it quits two years ago.

“We were on the verge of collapse,” Garbage drummer and noted producer Butch Vig says. “We lost our personal lives.” Vig notes. “We also lost any sense of a common ground. We were burned out on each other. So, each one of us looked in the mirror to see what we needed to do. And thoughts of losing the band made us realize that we loved it too much.”

Fast-forward to March 2004. Vig and his bandmates—Shirley Manson, Steve Marker and Duke Erikson—returned to the studio. “We felt a desperation. So we played fast and...

(Continued on page 14)
A 'Goodnight' Indeed

Hot Hot Heat's Power-Pop Turn Yields a Modern Rock Hit

BY TODD MARTENS

Don't tell Hot Hot Heat keyboardist/vocalist Steve Bays that press doesn't matter. The reviews for "Make Up the Breakdown," the band's 2003 effort for Seattle-based Sub Pop Records, had a direct influence on the act's major-label debut.

"People said it sounded like Dexys Midnight Runners, so I went out and bought a Dexys Midnight Runners album," Bays says.

What he heard resulted in current single "Goodnight Goodnight." The song, which Bays describes as a cross between OutKast's André 3000 and early Beatles, takes a keyboard-laced dancelhall groove into a chorus that downshifts the song. The switch brings the breakup anthem to a gripping halt; it is a move that keeps Hot Hot Heat just to the left of its peers on the radio.

"In one of the Dexys songs, I noticed they changed keys leading into the chorus, and that's unheard-of," Bays says. "It's such a music nerd thing, but I like it because it meant the chorus would open up."

So far, modern rock radio seems to be responding. The song received nearly 600 spins in the United States for the week ending March 30, including almost 20 on WFNX Boston.

"The band is connecting with that underground scene that's into the Killers and Franz Ferdinand," assistant PD Keith Dakin says. "They delivered a fun, catchy, danceable song, which is exactly what they had to do."

Bays is aware that Hot Hot Heat is identified with other retro-leaning rock acts. With "Elevator," the band's debut for Sire/Reprise, which was released April 5, Bays says the band wanted to distance itself from that scene.

"We really wanted more emphasis on the songwriting rather than a style," he says. "We paid a lot of attention to aesthetics on that last record, and it had that whole '80s new wave retro feel."

"Elevator" completes Hot Hot Heat's transformation from a guitarless art-rock band in Vancouver to a power-pop quartet. Its Sub Pop album first heralded the group's more accessible sound, and it has sold 246,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Bays says the group decided to jump to Sire/Reprise after the last album earned some radio play. "Sub Pop is awesome, but they only have 20-30 people working there," Bays says. "The record started to take off on its own, and it seemed like one that needed more manpower."

To promote the album, Hot Hot Heat will perform acoustic in-stores at a number of retailers, including Newbury Comics in Boston and Amoeba Records in Los Angeles. Additionally, the group appeared on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" on the day of release, and will tour its native Canada throughout April.

Anthony Lyons, a pop/rock specialist at Tower Records in Chicago's Clark Street, says, "We have had several phone calls asking if it's out, actually. They just played a sold-out show here, so that's a good sign."

Indeed, Bays is counting on "Elevator" to reach a wider audience. "We didn't want a record that only hipsters would buy," he says.

Hot Hot Heat is managed by Jim Guerinot at Rebel Waltz and is booked by Don Muller at Creative Artists Agency. The band's publishing is through Bend an Ear Music (SOCAN), administered by Wixen Music.
Basketball courts were not the only venues where competition took place before an avid audience during March Madness. In a Chicago courtroom, businesses that competed for the American Motorcycle Assn., supercross events were claiming "foul" before a jury of their peers.

JamSports and Entertainment laid out its case against Paradama Productions (which was doing business as AMA Pro) and Clear Channel Entertainment, showing a game plan that it claimed CCE used to get back production rights for the events.

For years, CCE's motosports division produced the supercross. In 2001, however, AMA Pro signed a letter of intent with JamSports for a long-term production deal. JamSports contended that CCE used its leverage as the world's largest live entertainment producer to intimidate venue managers and others, threatening to pull CCE events and other business if they went with JamSports on supercross. The production deal ended up back with CCE.

On March 21, a federal jury in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois found that CCE was out of bounds, having interfered with JamSports' contract with AMA Pro and with JamSports' "prospective economic advantage." "In the field of torts — laws that cover wrongful acts that injure people or property interests — it is unlawful to intentionally interfere with other parties' contractual relationships. In some states, it is also unlawful to interfere with another company's prospective economic advantage. Although specific laws in each state vary, in general someone may be unlawfully interfering in the relationship when all of the following facts line up:

First, there is a contractual relationship or some other prospective economic relationship — which means one of the parties will benefit economically in the future from that existing relationship — and a third party (such as CCE) knows about their relationship.

Second, the third party does something intentionally or, in some states negligently, to disrupt the relationship.

Third, the relationship is actually disrupted.

Finally, the disruption by the third party causes economic harm, such as business losses, to a party in the contractual or like relationship.

When does a company that nudges a competitor out of the way cross the line between fair competition and unlawful interference? It depends on the acts taken by the third party. Usually the company is risking liability if the act itself is unlawful (such as slander), if it is anti-competitive behavior

prohibited by law or if it is lawful but motivated by malice. In some cases, merely knowing that the detrimental consequence is substantially certain to result will be enough to make it unlawful.

When the claim involves a prospective economic advantage rather than a contract, the boundary lines get blurry.

During the trial but prior to the verdict, CCE filed a motion challenging the claim for interference with prospective economic advantage under Illinois law.

It argued that when a company such as JamSports may not have a business expectancy with such third parties as stadiums, original equipment manufacturers and so on, there can be no tortious interference. The claim could only be based on actions directed atama pro, with which JamSports had a business expectancy, and not on CCE's activities directed toward other entities.

The court disagreed, and relied on legal theory presented in a well-respected legal treatise to provide the following example:

Company A has a contract to supply goods to company B. Company C induces A to sell all the goods to C so that A cannot perform its contract with B. B may recover damages from C for interfering with the contract.

If C's activities also result in B being unable to supply goods to D and E, may B also claim that C interfered with the prospective economic advantage that B expected to receive from D and E? Generally no, the court said. C's direct activities involved B and A. The relationship with D and E is too remote.

However, the court added, that could change if it was C's primary purpose to interfere with B's obligation to D and E or if C's conduct was "inherently unlawful or independently tortious."

The court held that there was evidence from which a jury could find that CCE's purpose in its actions toward companies other than AMA Pro — with venue managers, etc. — was to interfere with the prospective relationship between AMA Pro and JamSports. As a result, the court rejected CCE's motion so the jury could decide this claim. It did, to the tune of more than $17 million in compensatory damages plus $73 million in punitive damages.

Jeffrey Singer with Segal, MacCambridge, Singer & Mahoney in Chicago tried the case for JamSports. CCE says it intends to appeal the verdict.

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**Legal Matters**

By Susan Butler

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**Are you in the business of delivering music online?**

The British Broadcasting Corporation is the United Kingdom's publicly-funded national broadcaster. It broadcasts 300,000 items of music per month in its TV and radio programmes.

In line with developments in the Corporation and the music industry, the BBC wishes to explore the possibility of providing an online self-service music resource for its programme makers.

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to:

- provide a wide range of commercial music.
- provide formats that range from browser to broadcast quality.
- provide metadata that meets BBC search and reporting requirements.

Further information and reply documents are available at http://bbc.co.uk/supplying/tenders/music_library.shtml

The deadline for replies is 16th May 2005.
Music

Grant, Millard Get Ready For Their Close-Ups

Christian music stars Amy Grant and Bart Millard are each working on their own TV shows. Grant has been tapped to host “Three Wishes,” an ABC pilot special. And MercyMe frontman Millard has landed a pilot for the Gospel Music Channel.

Grant and her show’s team of expert performers will make a variety of wishes come true for participants. Among them are aiding a family with a member’s life-threatening medical crisis, helping to save a teacher’s job and giving someone a chance to live out a sports fantasy.

Grant says she is not a big TV watcher and doesn’t indulge in reality TV programming, but she really liked the concept for “Three Wishes.” “I met with the producers and was captivated by the stories, which I’m not supposed to talk about because it’s like telling what the end of the book is,” she says. “Everything this show is about are things that are important to me that I invest my personal time and energy in.”

Andrew Glassman and Jason Raff, a duo whose credits include NBC’s “Average Joe,” are the executive producers of “Three Wishes.” Glassman says, “While our team is there to help, ultimately, this show will be about people helping people make their wishes and dreams come true.”

Production on the pilot began the first week of April. “I told them I don’t have any talent in this area, but I was really moved by this,” Grant says of the opportunity to do the show.


Millard’s show is also in production. The program centers on Christian artists performing and discussing their music. “I just received the first edited version of it,” he says. “Right now we are in the middle of making tweaks. As far as I know, [the Gospel Music Channel will air the show, and as soon as we get a ‘yes’ from them, we are going to start filming more shows with different artists.”

The show was originally going to be called “The Living Room Sessions.” But, Millard explains, “we’re not in a living room. We are set up in a raw kind of studio vibe, so we are trying to come up with a different name right now.”

MercyMe is the first act featured. “It was the easiest one to get,” Millard quips. “We did it in a studio in Franklin [Tenn.], and brought in about 50 college students to fill the room and did acoustic versions to a lot of our songs. It was a really cool night, and so far what I’ve seen on video looks really great.”

The show will be similar to MTV’s “Unplugged” or VH1’s “Storytellers” in that Millard says it is an opportunity that’s not out there right now for people to get to know artists in Christian music more by having them tell the stories about the songs and do different versions of the songs. “It’s not reinventing the wheel by any means, it’s just something that hasn’t been done in the Christian market in a long time.”

NEWS NOTES: The Newsboys have left Sparrow Records to join the InPop roster and plan to release a double-disc package of new studio material this fall. One disc will be rock music; the other will feature worship material.

Newsboys frontman Peter Furler co-founded InPop with manager Wes Campbell several years ago. It has grown into a successful venture with a roster that includes Superchick, Tree63, Shane & Shane, Mat Kearney and Paul Colman.

Fervent Records act By The Tree hits the road this spring with Salvador on the So Natural tour. The outing launched April 1 in Miami. Newcomer Ricardo is handling the opening slot.

GMA TIME: The annual Gospel Music Week is upon us (April 9-13), and several companies have partnered to make the event accessible to Nashville and New York. The Gospel Music Assn. has teamed with Gibson Guitar, Baldwin Pianos, Yamaha, Roland, Korg, Christian Musician and Worship Musician to offer a free GMA Week musician’s pass.

Local musicians can attend music exhibits and clinics during the convention. Artists can participate in product demonstrations and clinics conducted by instrument manufacturers. Each of the companies sponsoring the musician’s pass will have an exhibit booth and offer daily giveaways.

Applications for the musician’s pass are available on the GMA Web site at gospelmusic.org or can be found during GMA week on site at the Nashville Convention Center.

IT’S OVER: For the past several months, rumors have been swirling about a merger between the Christian music community’s two most powerful management companies, Blanton Harrell Coke & Corzine and Creative Trust. (Both of which also operate indie record labels.) Well, it’s officially off. “Our letter of intent expired and we were unable to reach agreeable terms,” Creative Trust CEO David Huffman says. The two companies had been negotiating since last October.

RUMOR MILL: Sources say Word Records is going to purchase Fervent Records. Word Records chairman Susan Riley. Fervent’s roster includes BarlowGirl, By the Tree, Big Daddy Weave and Jill Phillips.

Garbage

Continued from page 11

furious—as if our lives depended on it,” Vig recalls.

And in a way, they did.

Fans will get to experience the end result April 12 (one day earlier internationally) when Geffen issues Garbage’s fourth studio album, “Bleed Like Me,” an enhanced CD.

Garbage enthusiasts have already rallied around the album’s lead single, “Why Do You Love Me,” which recently went top 10 on the Modern Rock Tracks chart.

Written and produced by the band—whose songs are published by Deadmau5 Music/Auto Music (ASCAP) and VibeCrusher Music/Iving Music (BMI), administered by Rondor Music—the album eschews much of the electronic-leaning production of “beautifullgarge” and “Version 2.0” for more cut-and-dried rock.

Infused with the fierce energy of the band’s live shows, “Bleed Like Me” recalls Garbage’s 10-year-old self-titled debut. (Dave Grohl guests on opening track “Bad Boyfriend.”)

“We’ve almost gone backward with this album,” Vig offers. “It’s us getting back to more primal sound—guitars, drums, bass and Shirley’s voice.”

But before deciding on this approach, Vig attempted to come up with something completely new and fresh for the project. “I was beating myself up trying to figure out a new sound for the album,” he says. “And then I simply went back to getting great sounds from guitars.”

In the process, the band recorded its most spontaneous album, Vig notes. “There is more first-take singing from Shirley. And there was a conscious decision to not turn up room mics on drums so that everything was not perfectly balanced—and not so electronic.”

RETAIL IS READY

With “Why Do You Love Me” championed by numerous modern rock stations—WKXR New York, WQXO Chicago, KNDD Seattle, XTRA San Diego and WOCL Orlando, Fla., among others—and a second single (the title track) on the way, retailers have high hopes for “Bleed Like Me.”

Great news indeed, particularly with the lackluster sales of “beautifullgarge.” According to Nielsen SoundScan, the 4-year-old album has sold 384,000 copies—compared with 1.7 million and 2.3 million for “Version 2.0” (1998) and “Garbage,” respectively.

“There is a definite buzz surrounding this album,” says David Shebino, owner of specialty retail shop Rebel in New York. “People, especially the group’s hardcore fans, are really anticipating its release.”

Part of this is due to the album’s guitar-enhanced sound. “With other rock bands currently looking to electronic beats and studio technology for inspiration, Garbage appears to have done the opposite,” Shebino explains. “It’s like, ‘Been there, done that, let’s make a rock record again.’”

From a label viewpoint, anticipation for this album could not be better. Jock Elliott, the product manager for this project, is optimistic. “You hope a band can sustain itself in its downturn—especially when not coming off a hit album. And Garbage does this.”

He points this all goes to the band’s Web site (garbage.com), which is updated regularly with daily postings and logs from band members.

“Garbage fans form an incredibly active community,” Shebino notes. “They want to know what the band is up to. People have been inquiring about this album for more than a year. And now that we’re talking about the band’s recent live shows in Europe.”

On March 19, Garbage—which is booked by Jenna Adler at Creative Artists Agency—embarked on a three-week tour of Europe, which included shows in Paris and London. After its European visit, Garbage commences a brief North American tour April 8 at the Paramount Theatre in Seattle. It wraps up May 10 at the Agora in Cleveland. Then, it’s back to Europe for the band, whose current tour is managed by Gayle Fine of Q Prime.

In addition to Garbage’s own Web site, Geffen has partnered with several other sites—including MSN, MTV, VH1 and AOL—for a variety of online initiatives. Radio Free Virgin has created a Garbage radio station that also plays in Virgin Megastores.

Offline, the label has hired Filter and Fly Life to assist with listening parties and lifestyle marketing, respectively.

Sophie Mueller, who directed the video for “Why Do You Love Me,” is scheduled to shoot the video for “Bleed Like Me” April 12 in Los Angeles.

In addition to running in more than 3,000 movie theaters, the “Why Do You Love Me” video is playing on TV walls in such stores as Macy’s, Steve Madden and JCPenney.

The track is also included on the Victoria’s Secret CD sampler “Pink.” A gift with purchase, “Pink” is played in all Victoria’s Secret stores.

“After the past couple of years, to see it all come together like this feels good,” Elliott says. “And the band is really behind everything that’s going on.”

Vig adds his own take: “Because we were on the verge of losing it all, we made the album of our career. We feel completely rejuvenated.”

The Beat

Continued from page 11

debüt ... Savvy Label Group’s 429 imprint has signed Irish and American outfits and has lined up singer/songwriter Steve Reynolds. Both acts are now based in Los Angeles. Hollywood Records has inked new long-term contracts with senior VP/GM Abbey Novoselic and senior VP of promotion Justin Fontaine.

OVER THE RAINBOW: Longtime industry veterans Jerry and Bob Greenblatt are expanding their Bravo show, Las Vegas. The brothers, both of whom worked at Atlantic Records before Jerry ran Michael Jackson’s MJR Records and WTG Records, are opening the Rainbow Bar & Grill in Sin City over Memorial Day weekend.

The pair licensed the name from Mario Maglieri, who continues to run the original Rainbow Bar & Grill on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles. Jerry tells Billboard that the venue, which will be across the street from the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, may feature performances, but that he and his brother primarily see it as a place for national artists to hang out after they’ve played shows in Vegas.
BY JIM BESSMAN

Ten years ago, Alison Brown was still best-known as the former banjo player with Alison Krauss + Union Station, after playing with the Grammy Award-winning act from 1989 to 1991. Bassist Garry West had just left Delbert McClinton's band. A decade later, Brown is a Grammy winner in her own right, while West produces her albums and plays in her boundary-breaking acoustic quartet.

But the duo is also celebrating the 10th anniversary of Compass Records, the label they founded in 1995 to release the varied music they made or discovered, in the realms of folk, jazz, new acoustic and world music.

NO GRAND BUSINESS PLAN

Averaging 20 releases per year, Compass today is an esteemed indie label. But no grand business plan dictated its birth and growth. It is a company that evolved naturally from the start.

In 1992, Brown and West were on tour with Michelle Shocked. At the time, Brown, who has degrees from Harvard University and UCLA, was considering going to law school—"as her parents wished—or returning to the business world. (She had worked as an investment banker at Smith Barney prior to joining Union Station.) West wanted to license recordings from around the world and produce music independently.

That year with Shocked brought them into contact with other great artists like Taj Mahal, Bob Weir and, most notably, Bruce Cockburn. Cockburn's manager, Bernie Finkelstein, ran his own label, True North Records, and became a role model.

"We started thinking that when the tour was done we'd start a label," West recalls. "Near the end we were in Australia, and I bought a didgeridoo record. I made a call to the label, Natural Syphonies, just as a consumer, to see what else they were doing. I met with them, and we became friends. When they found out our plans they asked us to distribute them in the States. This was blind faith if I ever heard of it."

In 1993, Brown and West launched Small World Music and Video in Nashville. The following year the fledgling label began signing and producing artists and recording albums. In 1995, the first albums arrived from the newly named Compass Records.

The first release, Kate Campbell's "Songs From the Levee," immediately made Compass' A&R direction clear, with an initial emphasis on singer/songwriters.

The signing of English folk-rocker Clive Gregson and the release of his album "People and Places" bolstered the young label's credibility.

Compass struck licensing deals to release the albums from Campbell and Gregson. The label's first original production was Leslie Tucker's "In This Room," released in 1995.

"We felt Compass could act as a filter in putting out music, because we tapped into what our audience would like based on meeting them and selling them our records after shows," Brown says.

Nashville electric bassist Victor Wooten's 1996 solo set, "A Show of Hands"—Compass' seventh album release—was the label's biggest seller at that point and a major milestone in terms of its philosophy.

"Victor had said that we took a leap of faith on a solo bass record when other labels were saying, 'Hey, man, it's just a solo bass record,' " Brown says. "But we were fans of Victor and were proud to get behind it and fight the fight."

Recent releases from Compass Records include albums recorded by, clockwise from left, Kieran Kane & Kevin Welch, Beth Nielsen Chapman and Kate Rusby.

Another landmark album West cites, not surprisingly, was Brown's own 1998 Compass debut, "Out of the Blue," which was its 25th release. Her next one, "Fair Weather," won a Grammy in 2000 for best country instrumental performance.

Significantly, Compass' founders continued to perform and tour as their label matured.

"We're really lucky to be out at the festivals—both in the U.S. and U.K.—and getting to do double duty when we're out on the road," West says.

Brown adds, "A lot of our festival performances are interspersed with A&R meetings with our artists. It's wonderful."

CELTIC DIRECTION

Looking back at his seven years at the company, Compass VP of sales Thad Keim cites the label's journey into Celtic music as a personal highlight.

"A lot of people are of the opinion that the market for Celtic music peaked a few years ago," Keim notes. "While I wouldn't argue, there are still a lot of opportunities and a large audience. It's just a matter of reaching it with the right type of artist, which we're very fortunate to attract."

British traditional singer Kate Rusby's 1998 Compass debut, "Hourglass," was a turning point for the label in the genre. A year-and-a-half earlier, West had approached Rusby's father, who ran her U.K. label, but he thought it was too soon to release her recordings in the United States.

"We were on our way to Scotland for our yearly festival jaunt and contacted him again," West says. "He said that he'd since talked to a lot of people about us and liked what he'd heard, so we sat down to talk about the mechanics of marketing her new record."

The initial marketing was "difficult at first," Keim notes, (Continued on page 18)
Compass Is By Musicians, For Musicians

Roots Music Label Is ‘All Over The Map Under One Umbrella’

BY JIM BESSMAN

As Compass Records celebrates its 10th anniversary, the company’s co-founders, Alison Brown and Garry West, share their perspective on the roots, growth and future of the label.

What made you both decide to start Compass?

Garry West: We were on a yearlong tour with Michelle Shocked in 1992, and about two months into it we realized there were a lot of things we wanted to do. We were in Swe-
den, sitting around over strong coffee and pastries, wondering how we could encompass our version of the good life: an outlet for our work, other recordings, publishing, management, all those things.

Then in the beginning of 1993 we started Small World Music and Video after picking up some world music titles in Australia. In ’94, we started producing projects, signing some artists and getting some records ready. But we actually launched Compass in ’95.

Did you sense a market for the kind of roots music and albums for adult fans for which Compass has since become known?

Alison Brown: We felt tapped into a demo through selling records to people after our shows. We defined our audience as the NPR, 25- to 65-year-old music fan who wanted something more than what was being shoved at them by commercial radio.

Why did you name it Compass?

Brown: It represented the diversity of our musical tastes. We’re all over the map—but under one umbrella. The roots music moniker serves us very well.

Alison, why didn’t you record for Compass in the beginning?

Brown: I didn’t want it to be perceived as a vanity label, and I was signed to Vanguard at the time and had two more albums due for them.

We thought the label should be an outlet for other artists’ music more than our own. We were hearing so many great players out there on tour and thought it would be cool to create an outlet for the music we heard, and how cool it would be for musicians to run a label.

West: We naïvely felt, who better to run a label than musicians? But we had to do this—we couldn’t trust anyone else to do it.

At the time, there was little accountability in terms of indie labels in the roots music business when it came to getting your mechanical royalties paid, that kind of stuff. We felt that as artists, we certainly needed to be accountable. It would be hard to sleep at night if we weren’t.

Doing a good job at a label from an artist perspective was the whole reason for doing Compass—and still is.

Did you have to make any compromises once you actually became label heads?

West: We had to temper some of our enthusiasm! We’re still as big artist advocates as we’ve ever been, but the realities of selling records made us adjust how we go about it. But the original ideal remains: We can’t put great music at risk by letting other labels put it out.

What were some of the adjustments?

West: In the beginning we didn’t cross-collateralize contracts, for example. The biggest thing we had to face is that the way the business is structured, you can’t give [in to] everything an artist wants and stay competitive. But accountability is key for us.

We have to put money on the table that’s fair, get a record out in a quality way, market it proactively and at the end of the day be accountable to the artist. That’s what drives our moral code. But we’re forced to compete with labels that aren’t accountable, that never pay mechanicals. That’s been our biggest challenge as an artist-advocate label.

Brown: We also had to learn how to separate our desires as fans from business realities. In other words, we’ve learned that unless an artist is out there aggressively promoting their work, we won’t be successful. A label can’t lead the charge. It would be almost impossible to single-handedly promote that artist’s work.

Why did you create a label called Compass?

West: We started Compass as an umbrella to our other projects. Compass was also the studio where John Hartford recorded, and an angel investment in the studio by Allison and I also opened a new office.

West: Last May we bought the former Zomba publishing office on Music Row. It contains the former Battery Studio and, more importantly to us, is the original home of the Glaser Brothers production company, affectionately known at the time as Hillbilly Central. So we own the studio where John Hartford recorded “Aero-Plain”—certainly a very important record in acoustic and bluegrass music.

Alison and I are huge Hartford fans, and we’re currently doing a tribute album to him, so it means a lot to us to be

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"but it started to click three or four months into it, specifically with noncommercial radio. Reaction followed at retail with Borders, Barnes & Noble and Tower Records. We released a catalog record of hers with a lot of success and started attracting other Scottish-Irish-English folk artists.

"Now we've released two albums from Irish supergroup Lunasa," Keim continues, "and as of the end of March we'll have the entire Sharon Shannon catalog. The fact that we now have the majority of Paul Brady's catalog and are entering into a worldwide arrangement for it and new output is just thrilling. It allows us to better utilize our foreign partners."

AUSTRALIAN BREAKTHROUGH

Compass' successful expansions into Celtic and U.K. folk music are not new. Its achievement with Australia's roots rock group the Waifs is another.

"They were top 20 at triple-A [with 2003 album "Up All Night"], and then we charted the single 'London Still' on the commercial side," promotion VP David Haley says. "That was a breakthrough, because we weren't always present at commercial triple-A as we'd like to have been.

"Then Kevin Welch and Kieran Kane spent two weeks at No. 1 at Americana [with last year's] "You Can't Save Everybody," and Béla Fleck & the Flecktones saxophonist Jeff Coffin made triple-A's "Bloom" just did two weeks [in the] top 10 on the jazz chart," Haley adds. "That's another breakthrough. We also think there's a real opportunity for Beth Nielsen Chapman at AC radio and making a lasting impact at that format."

Haley echoes Keim in recognizing Compass' increasing international outreach. He notes that the label hopes to get Lunasa airplay in Holland and looks to do the same for Glenn Tilbrook in Australia. "I don't think anybody's working globally like we are," he says. "It comes from Garry and Alison thinking globally."

"But, according to Keim, it is still a business of "selling niche music record by record."

By his tally, Compass is now working on its 160th release; when he joined the company seven years ago the total was in the 20s.

Brown and West see their company's growth in other ways. They recently launched Compass Artists Management and are expanding their Camel Vision Music publishing interests.

Last year they moved into Zomba's former publishing office on Music Row, also the former home of the famed Battery Studio, better-known as Hillbilly Central.

"If we'd have known that John Hartford recorded 'Aereo-Plain' here we would have opened our bank account to the sellers," West says, since he and Brown are huge Hartford fans.

He reflects on the recent "traffic" in the new Compass Records digs.

"Del McCoury was in last year recording on [Leftover Salmon frontman] Drew Emmitt's second record for us," he says. "Paul Barrere from Little Feat, John Cowan and Sam Bush came in to play on it. So that's a huge part of what we're doing—if you build it and do a good job, they will come."

World

Continued from page 15

in this building. It's one of those things where the cosmic path just led us to this, like everything else. It comes from working with great people every day and trying to do the right thing artistically and in business.

Brown: "Missionary zeal" is the wrong way of putting it—but it's true, especially for me, because I could be structuring tax-exempt bond deals for Smith Barney or be a lawyer in my parents' law firm.

But in July 2002 we had a daughter, and now she [plays in] Waylon Jennings' old office!

West: We've managed—touch wood—to build this thing, work in this space and have our family life be part of every day, all day. It's so great that it scares me to acknowledge how great it is.

Musicians

Continued from page 16
A Compass Key: Building Strong Relationships

An ‘Organic Environment’ And ‘Eclectic Artist Roster’ Are Factors In Developing Partners

BY JIM BESSMAN

Compass Records works unusually well with its business partners, and the primary reason is readily apparent: co-founders Alison Brown and Garry West are artists themselves. "They may come from the business side because of their education, but they can appreciate and understand what it’s like putting a record out as an artist," Beth Nielsen Chapman says.

Chapman had been with Warner Bros. for 10 years prior to signing with Compass. Her new album, "Look," was released April 5.

"Because of the structure of major-label deals at the time, it was virtually impossible for an artist to make a living without touring," she recalls. "Part of the beauty of Compass is that the deal can be structured for you to continue to participate as the owner of your masters. It’s been an amazing educational experience in finding out how the business can work in the ‘Wild, Wild West’—as [the music industry] now is."

Such artist-friendly, progressive music business practices have allowed Compass to attract "some pretty amazing artists," Chapman adds.

Kevin Welch surely qualifies as one of them. He and Kieran Kane had an Americana hit with their 2004 release "You Can’t Save Everybody" after bringing their own artist-owned label Dead Reckoning to Compass.

"I remember when they started up," Welch says, "and we just kept our eyes on them over the years. Garry was a more aggressive businessman than we were, and the next thing we knew they were handling tons of music all over the world with a lot of class and dignity."

After bumping into each other at a music festival in Australia, Welch reconnected with West and Brown in Nashville.

"I ran into them at Home Depot—the PVC aisle, I think," he says. "I mentioned that we were trying to find something to do with our new record, and Garry said, ‘I’ll do some thinking; I might have some ideas.’ A few minutes later we were in the Skil Saw aisle and by then he had the whole thing figured out."

Shari Lacy is the former head of publicity for Compass and continues to admire the company as marketing and public relations director for the International Bluegrass Music Assn.

"Whatever Compass is releasing Celtic, bluegrass, British folk, pop or any number of other genres, it all has a stamp of quality to it that comes directly from Alison and Garry’s tastes as musicians and music lovers," she says.

"Having watched them, firsthand, for years, I know that they truly believe in and have a passion for the music that they put out in the marketplace, and in turn the entire team at Compass is able to make a convincing sell with the music because it speaks for itself. They’ve remained ‘fans’ of the music, and I think that shows," Lacy says.

Legendary Irish singer/songwriter Paul Brady, whose latest album, "Say What You Feel," is on Compass, also feels the label distinguishes itself from the majors’ mentality.

"It sounds simple, but their prime motivation is signing artists they actually admire and whose music they like, and by extension they hope the public will like," Brady says. "Majors look at artists first and foremost for what they think will sell a lot, irrespective of the kind of music they make. [Compass] is a throwback to Atlantic Records, where Ahmet Ertegun started a label to release music he liked. That’s what attracted me, that kind of organic environment and eclectic artist roster."

Brady also salutes Compass’ methodology: "Rather than just throw money at the wall and see what sticks, they employ the old-fashioned tactics of good relationships with people and delivering on what they say," he says.

Indeed, Ryko Distribution president Jim Cuomo, who lauds Brady for making "a very, very wise decision" in tak-

(Continued on page 20)

TO ALISON, GARRY, THAD AND EVERYONE AT COMPASS RECORDS

CONGRATULATIONS!

ON 10 YEARS OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MUSICAL JOURNEY
AND HERE’S TO TRAVELING THE NEXT 10 YEARS AND BEYOND TOGETHER

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT RYKO DISTRIBUTION
Partners
Continued from page 19

ing his “career record” to Compass, calls the label “an absolute joy to work with” and speaks of “pure destiny” in their year-old relationship.

“Ryko being Ryko—notoriously independent people—we looked at Compass as being a perfect fit,” says Cuomo, who adds that he missed a “golden opportunity” to land the label four years ago. “I [have] regretted it ever since, so when the opportunity rose again I made sure everything fell into place.”

Like Compass’ owners, Cuomo is a musician himself. “So I’m in a unique position where I can be sensitive to the artists’ side, but can also shake my finger at them,” he says. “Not only does Compass have terrific musical instincts in terms of what they sign, but they have very highly skilled and multidimensional business chops.”

The combination enabled Ryko to meet its first-year projected financial goals for Compass only six months after picking up the label’s distribution, according to Cuomo.

Stuart Ongley, manager of traditional Irish band Lunasa, feels a similar kinship with Compass.

“They have the benefit of people like me being aware of the realities of the business climate,” says Ongley, who had licensed an earlier Lunasa album to Compass before signing a worldwide deal with the label for its current release, “The Kinnitty Sessions.”

“They strike me as a real 21st-century record label,” Ongley adds. “Besides being artist-oriented—through Garry and Alison being artists—they employ highly motivated, good, decent people. This isn’t a business where we want to be nicey-nicey to each other all day long, but we’re all in it together and it’s wonderful to work with good people on a straightforward, honest, trusting level. That’s why they’re attracting so much business: They really are a home to the artist.”

Compass Records co-founders Alison Brown and Garry West were asked to single out turning points or milestones in the history of their 10-year-old label.

Garry West: Clive Gregson signed on when the label was brand-new, and that lent us a bit of credibility and solidified our distribution with DNA.

Having national distribution made the company into a viable label for Victor Wooten to consider, and he gave us a press-worthy and historical sales album to beef up our profile. Each artist that came in after continued our growth and brought new marketing strengths and opportunities.

‘Each artist brought new strengths and opportunities’

Alison Brown: Signing Paul Brady and his catalog—first for North America and then for the world—added to our profile in the U.K.

Glenn Tilbrook of Squeeze and Colin Hay of Men at Work—these are also well-loved artists with international profiles who are part of our growth. Beth Nielsen Chapman is another great example of an artist with a great sales history in the U.S.

West: Another key artist, I would have to say, is Alison Brown. Her first Compass release was our 25th record—certainly a milestone! And her next one, “Fair Weather,” won a Grammy for best country instrumental.

Kate Rusby, the greatest and one of the most successful female singers in English folk music today, had her first Compass record in 1998, the same year as Alison’s first one with us.

Brown: Pierce Pettis came to us from Windham Hill/High Street and was one of our early releases. He is another example of someone who gave us a vote of confidence early on.

More recently, Fairport Convention, with their legends, and Eddi Reader, with her major-label history, are other artists we love working with. Now we have Darrol Anger, who was a musical inspiration to me. And Andrea Zen is another example. To be able to create an outlet for her music is fantastic.

West: We have Sharon Shannon’s catalog and new releases now, and we’re doing Lunasa—the greatest instrumental band in Irish music today—worldwide.

We’re also working with Thea Gilmore, one of the most talked-about singer/songwriters in the U.K., and the Waifs from Australia, who did a lot of dates with Bob Dylan.

Kevin Welch and Kieran Kane are now taking their artist-owned Dead Reckoning label through Compass. This all means more great records and artist relationships.

JIM BESSMAN

To Garry, Alison and all the folks at Compass Records

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Ledisi, Goodwin’s Big Phat Band Lift Spirits

The 27th edition of the Playboy Jazz Festival, set for June 11-12 at the Hollywood Bowl, boasts another rounded package of headliners. Among them are: Joshua Redman’s Elastic Band, George Benson, Boney James and the Saxophone Summit featuring Michael Brecker, Joe Lovano and Dave Liebman. Additionally, Dee Dee Bridgewater and B-3 bomber Joey DeFrancesco will pay homage to, respectively, the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra and the late Jimmy Smith.

But the most explosive and dynamic performances of the weekend could very well come from two relatively unknown acts: Gordon Goodwin’s zany Phat Band and spark plug R&B/jazz vocalist Ledisi, both of whom will take the stage on Sunday.

Ledisi’s Minnie Ripperton meets Sarah Vaughan vocals captivated New York’s Le Jazz Au Bar during her two-week showcase in late March. She was backed by a trio including Robert Glasper on piano and Wurlitzer. A crowd-pleasing live wire who scats with gusto and belts from the gut with glass-breaking highs and honey-dripping soul, Ledisi showed she will have no problem transitioning from club to the Bowl's big stage.

Goodwin and his band will close the festival with a big band bang as the ebullient 18-member group delivers its increasingly popular jazz blend of hard swing, stomp, soul, Latin, funk and rock.

“We lift spirits,” says Gordon, a pianist/composer and film/TV composer/arranger/conductor who worked on last year’s film “The Incredibles.” “There’s plenty of music that reflects the tough times. Audiences love to see bands having fun and putting on a big party.”

Goodwin’s horn-heavy group has recorded two Silverline DualDiscs, “Swinging for the Fences” and “XXL.” The latter, which features guest performances by Eddie Daniels, Michael Brecker, Brian McIntry, Take 6 and Johnny Mathis, streets April 12. The DVD side of the disc offers video footage, composer commentary and surround sound mixes.

The band has scored with young people, says Goodwin, who was smitten by big band music when he was a kid. “I heard Count Basie music in middle school, and that was it,” he says. “It’s gratifying to see kids dial us in. There’s still hope. Not all of them like Ashlee Simpson. But that’s our goal: to show that big band jazz isn’t museum music, but can be contemporary, vibrant and alive.”


SIX-STRING SALUTE: In first-quarter 2005, several guitarists released fine, under-the-radar CDs. The legendary Jim Hall went the ArtistShare route to release his fine trio album, “Magic Meeting.” Available only at jimhallmusic.com, the CD was recorded live at the Village Vanguard with bassist Scott Colley and drummer Lewis Nash.

Brandon Ross, six-string master and musical director of Cassandra Wilson’s band, issued his brilliant, eclectic CD “Costume” on Japan’s Intoxicate Records.

San Francisco-based Will Bernard released his latest trio album, “Directions to My House” on Dreck to Disk Records at willbernard.com. Bernard was a member of the defunct T.J. Kirk guitar group led by Charlie Hunter and is one of the best-kept jazz-guitar secrets on the planet.

In February, smooth guitarist Chuck Loeb released his 14th CD, “When I’m With You” (Shanachie Records), a funky, soft-toned, lyrical disc. On March 8, veteran blues-rocker Jay Geils delivered “Jay Geils Plays Jazz,” remarkably his first solo outing, on Stony Plain. It brims with bluesy, swinging bris as he covers Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman and takes a hip Western swing through “I Hear You Talkin’ to Me.” “Knowing You” (Telarc, March 22) captures guitarist/vocalist John Pizzarelli crooning off-the-beaten-track standards.


LADY’S DAY: On April 5, two days before what would have been Billie Holiday’s 90th birthday, Hip-O-Verve/UME released “Billie Holiday: The Ultimate Collection,” an impressive two-CD set of 42 songs and a DVD featuring film/TV performances. While Holiday’s songs have been reissued to death, seeing her sing on camera is magic.
Sheds Ready For Summer
Biz Amps Up With Lessons Learned From 2004's Amphitheater Meltdown

BY RAY WADDELL

As the touring industry looks ahead to the summer concert season, amphitheater operators are crossing their fingers that the brutal business results of 2004 are not a sign of things to come.

Overall, the concert business was virtually flat last year, with the bulk of successful business done in the first and fourth quarters.

"The last year in live touring was not an amphitheater issue," insists Alex Hodges, executive VP at House of Blues Concerts. "It was a price-for-value issue in the coastline of arena shows and also on the lawn or second-tiered prices everywhere. Some prices of some tickets were just too high."

Even so, in North America amphitheaters bore the brunt of a long, hard summer. According to Billboard Boxscore, shed business between April 1 and Sept. 30 topped out at slightly less than $400 million, down 8% from the previous year.

Worse, attendance at sheds had declined during the summer by nearly 13% from 2003. That decline represents 2 million people, which in a sector of the venue business that thrives on volume and ancillary revenue—resulted in a loss of millions of dollars.

As it became clear the shed business was hemorrhaging, deep discounts, "fire sales" and "papering" of houses became the order of the day. Without the boost such initiatives provided, it is logical to assume attendance would have been even more reduced at amphitheaters.

In short, promoters of amphitheater shows took a beating last year. In HOB's case, "we cut way back on papering and comp tickets, but we did so in many cases by offering discounts that were too deep on a per-ticket basis," Hodges says. "And that hurt the gross, and thus the bottom line suffered in some cases."

IS THE SHED DEAD?
So what happened at the sheds last summer?
"I think it was a combination of the amphitheater experience, the acts that were touring and the congestion of touring traffic in that time period," says Dennis Arfa, president of Artist Group International, agency for such acts as Billy Joel, Metallica and Linkin Park.

"In fact," he adds, "I'm surprised the traffic issue didn't catch up to us some time ago."

Arfa is one of many who believe a major problem with the shed model is simply too much touring activity.

(Continued on page 2b)

In a difficult year for amphitheaters and the touring business, Dave Matthews in 2004 was the top-grossing artist at the Tweeter Performing Arts Center in Mansfield, Mass., which ranked as the top-grossing amphitheater of the year, according to Billboard Boxscore.
Spare A Gallon Of Gas, Buddy?
No Surprise: Transportation, Labor And Regulatory Costs Are Up For New Season

BY RAY WADDELL

With all costs up and many revenues down, the touring business endured a dicey year in 2004. As planning began for this year's tours, producers were watching every dime. Tighter federal transportation regulations and higher gas prices and labor expenses are forcing tour managers to respond.

"A tightening of regulations and an increase in fuel prices have a profound effect on the cost of touring, as well as everything we consume," veteran tour manager Paco Zimmer says. "Have you purchased a gallon of milk lately?"

Expenses and regulations will definitely affect touring productions this year, according to Zimmer. "Most tours will have to rethink their production design in order to maintain profitability," he says. "In addition, agents will have to pay special attention to routines to try and avoid multiple driver requirements for trucks and buses for distances over 450 miles."

Beyond cost-saving measures, Zimmer says, he sees no specific trends in production and transportation.

"The production varies based on the artists' perception of what their show should be," he says. "The size of the production is a direct result of design. Some tours require more bells and whistles to make up for the lack of performance and repertoire."

BIGGER IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER

Zimmer is of the school of thought that bigger is not necessarily better. "A good designer can make a show look bigger with a creative design and less equipment," he points out. "If there is any trend, I see a more creative use of video rather than the massive amounts of lighting that we have seen in the past on the larger shows."

Tour managers and production managers have always sought to minimize truck space and local labor, and technological developments in the sound industry have helped achieve those goals.

"The line array PA and the acceptance of digital consoles that take less space are the answer to many a manager's hopes and wishes," says Greg Hall, executive VP of sales for Clair Brothers Audio.

According to Hall, the line array PA—which he says is powerful but smaller, more efficient, faster to deploy and easier to handle—is here to stay.

"Digital consoles are coming into the mainstream at every level of touring," he says. "More options are now available at different price-points, and reliability has improved."

In the staging world, one trend sees acts alternating among amphitheater, stadium and arena productions from one year to the next, according to Jeremy Shand, project manager for Stageco.

"This trend allows everyone to regroup between the large and small performances," Shand notes. "Another trend I see is the diversification of staging companies. These companies are now moving into other fields of business, including rigging, grandstands and pursuing corporate markets."

Such diversification can help companies ride out the ebbs and flows of the touring industry, Shand says. "However, it can cause conflict as they find themselves in competition with those that they once worked with hand-in-hand," he adds.

If more tours are relying on video displays, that's good news for Paul Becher, partner in San Francisco-based Nocturne Productions.

"It seems video is becoming more ubiquitous in a tour's production," Becher says. "From acts playing theaters to arenas, artists have found that video is a blank canvas and another outlet for creative expression."

For many acts, killer video is a way of offering more bang for the buck. "With higher ticket prices, it is important to maintain production value, and having some sort of video display is the way to do it," Becher says.

"And bodes well for the production business. "As record sales dwindle, touring is more important as a revenue source to many recording artists," Becher notes. "We've had an unusually strong start to the year, and 2005 looks like it will continue to stay busy."

Becher adds that the flat touring in 2004 did not affect his business. "If there was a slump, we didn't experience it," he says. "There were many tours out last year, but only a few of them made money. We had five clients out of the top 10 grossing tours."

LIGHT MY FUSE

When it comes to pyrotechnics at rock shows, 'bands are asking us for something nobody has ever seen," says Doug Adams, president and designer/developer for Pyrotech Special Effects.

In many cases, that means custom gas effects, which also can be more efficient on the road than traditional pyro. "Gas effects are less of a consumable charge and can be used multiple times without reloading," Adams says, "unlike a flashpot."

(Continued on page 30)
in a limited time period. Industry estimates have long held that some 70% of touring takes place between April and September. If that's the case, Billboard Boxscore doesn't reflect that reality. About 54% of all the numbers reported to Boxscore the last two years fell between April and September.

It is worth noting that less successful shows are seldom reported, and there were plenty of those in 2004. Arfa believes unreported shows—including fairs, festivals, casinos and many club dates—push the volume of business much higher than reported.

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IMPROVEMENTS

Rapino believes amphitheater business was down in proportion to overall
touring last year.
"My point is, amphitheaters didn't take any harder hit than the industry in general in 2004," he says. "It's a misconception." Rapino doesn't believe there is a lack of quality acts to program amphitheaters. "There is a lot of great inventory to develop a strong summer series," he says. "The issue to date has not been inventory, but rather what we have paid for the inventory and what the fan was being charged.

You know the saying—no bad bands, just bad deals," he adds. "With our increased focus on ticket pricing, we will find the right com-

bination of show counts, proper pric-
ing and experience improvement.
And Rapino says CCE is sinking millions into improving the amphitheater experience.
"We are investing in all areas of our venue business," he says. "We have done an extensive internal study on all artist and fan touch points that need to be addressed in each venue. Some buildings are new and require less [cash] infusion, and some older buildings require more investment, which they will get. Our list of improvements covers all areas, from parking lots and con-
cession stands to dressing rooms."

TURNING HEADS
Rapino turned industry heads last fall when he announced that CCE would eliminate many facility fees, including those for lawn seats.
"We have received great support and appreciation from the indus-
try," he says of the move. "The industry has acknowledged our commitment to improve the fan experience and is working with us closely to put great shows in the amphitheaters this summer.

Another Rapino move was restoring autonomy and historic names to CCE regional offices. Conceivably, this will allow local promoters to turn down shows that might not work for their respective market, or to create their own content.
"We operate a very local and decen-
tralized business model," Rapino says. "The 12 presidents who run their markets have full autonomy to make

improve upon," Arfa says. "The best thing you can do is improve the price." While conceding that certain acts, Dave Matthews Band and Jimmy Buffett among them, work quite well at sheds, Arfa says, "they are the exception, not the rule.

Grosslight is another who believes good deals make good shows.
"The overall economics will be determined ultimately by the prices paid by the promoters and the number of tickets sold," Grosslight asserts. "The rest is details."

Hodges tends to agree. "The House of Blues amphitheaters had an increase in average paid attendance for the summer, but the finan-

(Continued on page 28)
They're Ready For The Rollout
Profiles Of Some Of The Players In Transportation And Production

BY RAY WADDELL

Here are capsule profiles of selected companies within the touring transportation and production field.

HEMPHILL BROS. COACH
Nashville
Troy and Joel Hemphill, partners
Founded in 1980 with two 1965 Silver Eagles, Hemphill Brothers Coach is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

Co-founders and brothers Troy and Joel Hemphill entered the business via the family gospel group the Hemphills. Today, Hemphill Bros. services the elite of the touring industry, specializing in constructing star coaches to the exacting specifications of touring superstars.

The company's current pop and rock clients include Alicia Keys, Hilary Duff, Ryan Cabrera, Ashlee Simpson, Josh Groban, Cher, Lenny Kravitz and Nine Inch Nails.

On the country side, Hemphill is leasing buses to Kenny Chesney, Lonestar, Brooks & Dunn, Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, and George Strait.

CLAIR BROS. AUDIO/SHOWCO
Littitz, Pa.
Troy Clair, GM
Founded in the mid-1960s by brothers Roy and Gene Clair, Clair Bros. began by rigging sound for live events at a local college. The company became incorporated in 1970, and it has been a pioneer in making quality sound portable for touring artists.

Clair Bros. merged with Dallas-based touring audio firm ShowCo in late 2000. Troy Clair, Gene's son, is now GM, and Roy remains president.

Gene Hall is executive VP of sales.

Clair Bros. uses proprietary designs on most of its components and is known for offering worldwide consistency on its service and gear. The company has offices in Europe, Japan and Australia, as well as in Nashville, Los Angeles and Littitz, Pa.

Recent and current clients include U2, Sting, Elton John, Queen, Alicia Keys, Cher, John Mellencamp, Anastacia, Ozzfest, Motley Crue, Destiny's Child, James Taylor, Tim McGraw, Keith Urban and Velvet Revolver.

STAGECO STAGING
Tildonk, Belgium
Hedwig DeMeyer, principal owner
Stageco Staging is an international staging company that originated in 1984 at the renowned Rock Werchter Festival in Belgium. Hedwig DeMeyer started the company with a partner, and Stageco designed a patented "steel tower" system that revolutionized the

(Continued on page 29)
chiral model didn’t work due to overpaying for many shows,” he explains.

Programming didn’t help. “Some of the festival concepts didn’t work on weekdays; some of the festival shows didn’t work at all,” Hodges adds. “When one promoter overpays for a show, the other promoters follow, like jumping off a cliff. Fortunately at HOB we dodged some bullets and did fewer shows than in prior years.”

Hodges expects to see fewer fire sales in 2005. “Discounting to regular fans proved counter-productive in many cases but seemed to jump-start interest in some shows,” he says. “Last summer the discounting was too frequent, even predictable, and this hurt.”

But Rapino isn’t ruling out price promotions for 2005, though it seems they will be more well-conceived than last year. “We will not discount our artist’s tickets unless the artist believes that is the right strategy,” he says. “We will launch very aggressive promotion offers this summer in an effort to add more value to the fans.”

So while the discounting may have brought people through the gates, it did not overcome ill-conceived deals. “The financial model didn’t allow for the broad discounting, the degree or frequency of discounting nor the depth of the price cut,” Hodges says. “At HOB we want to sell tickets at the stated and original price.”

Many are predicting better times this summer.

“There should be an improvement in all shows this summer and especially at amphitheaters, as we are holding back on the last price or the lawn price as much as possible,” Hodges says. “Improvement starts with our artist fees and extends to marketing. There’s a great audience out there, and they are coming to concerts of all genres: hip-hop, country, rock, pop. It feels good right now.”

Rapino, too, is bullish on the summer’s prospects. “From what the initial concert inventory looks like, the industry will have a strong 2005,” he says. “We also believe our sell-through rate will increase with our value-added offerings and improved experience. We expect attendance to increase by 20% this summer.”

### Industry Sees Strong Start To 2005 Season

**BY RAY WADDELL**

From the perspective of those behind the scenes at production and transportation companies, the touring business this year appears to be off to a strong start.

“The touring season for our clients started early this year,” says Trent Hemphill, who runs touring bus firm Hemphill Bros. with his partner and brother Joel. “We traditionally have our annual driver meeting mid-to late January, and this year we had to move the meeting to the first week of January due to so many of our drivers leaving on tour earlier than usual.”

Given the huge number of concerts traditionally going on sale beginning in April, “there are a lot of people wanting to get on the road earlier this year,” Hemphill notes.

Greg Hall, executive VP of sales for Clair Bros. Audio, points out that there were plenty of successes on the road in 2004.

“But the major problem was that not enough tours were doing adequate business, for many reasons,” he says. “High ticket prices and creative packaging seem to take most of the blame in hindsight, but the industry will have a strong 2005.”

### ‘People want to get on the road early this year.’

—TRENT HEMPHILL, HEMPHILL BROS. COACH

industry seems to be working very hard this year to right itself and get back on track again. According to Jeremy Shand, project manager for international staging company Stageco, last year’s slump will affect the deals that are struck in 2005.

“Companies will be running lean and will scrutinize every quote they put out in an effort to recoup last season’s misfortunes,” he says. “It will create a very competitive market, and more companies will bid on every job that comes along. This could benefit production managers and promoters with the number of options they have available to them.”

Veteran tour manager Paco Zimmer feels the touring industry will rebound nicely this year.

“It is early yet, but the cream will rise to the top and their earning potential will not be affected by last year’s slump,” he predicts. “The middle acts and packaged tours will have to be creative and price-sensitive in order to be successful.”

Offering value is the key, Zimmer says. “We have to give the consumer a better concert experience,” he adds. “If I had to buy a ticket like a normal consumer, knowing that on a great show I do not have a chance to buy a great seat because of artist and ticket club holds, and he subjected to the gouging for parking and a beer, not to mention a $40 T-shirt, I would opt to take my wife to a movie and save $200 or $300.”

Hall adds, “For everyone in this business, the music fan pays all of our wages and our bills. We can’t lose sight of that simple fact. The fan has to leave the venue satisfied about every level of the performance and production that evening, and it is our responsibility in each of our respective areas to make that happen to the best of our ability,” he continues. “Fortunately for all of us, there is still nothing out there quite like or equal to the live concert experience.”

Doug Masterson, VP of business development for freight-forwarding company Rock-It Cargo, says he is somewhat surprised at robust early business on the concert scene in 2005.

“We were tentative about hailing this year as strong for us as last year due last year’s ticket numbers, but as yet, we haven’t seen any cutbacks,” he says. “If the first few months are any indication, this year looks phenomenal. We were worried about the low value of the dollar worldwide having an influence over the cost of touring internationally, but we were clearly wrong.”

Gauging touring business activity is tricky, Masterson adds. “It is extremely hard to project this business,” he says. “Boners always fly, and we do our little rain dance to bring hope that a tour might happen, but honestly we never really know. The outlook looks very good.”
Rollout
Continued from page 27

staging business worldwide.

Today DeMeyer is the principal owner of the company. Stageco has built an international and worldwide network headquartered in Belgium, with offices in Berlin and Augsburg, Germany; Lisle sur al Sorgues, France; Adlochem, the Netherlands; and Colorado Springs, Colo., and will soon open one in Baltimore.

Stageco clients include the Rolling Stones, Metallica, Dave Matthews Band, Jimmy Buffett, Clear Channel Entertainment, Janus Jazz Aspen, the NFL, TNT Sports, NBC, the Olympic Games, Ozzfest, MTV and the Rolling Rock Town Fair.

NOCTURNE PRODUCTIONS
San Francisco
Paul Becher and Bob Brigham, partners and co-CEOs.

Nocturne Productions was established in 1981 as the video touring company for the rock band Journey, the first to use video on a major tour. The company grew by nailing down such tours as the Who, the Police, David Bowie, Michael Jackson, U2 and Tina Turner.

The focus in the early days was on large-scale video projection. In 2001 Bob Brigham and Paul Becher took over as co-CEOs and changed the direction of the company. With the advent of digital and LED technology, Nocturne became an innovator on how video is used in production.

This year Nocturne is moving to a larger, more modern facility. Key clients in 2005 include Paul McCartney, Elton John, The Eagles, Cher, Nine Inch Nails, Prince, Avril Lavigne, Velvet Revolver, Sarah McLachlan, Slipknot and Anastacia.

PYROTEK SPECIAL EFFECTS
Las Vegas
Doug Adams, president/designer.

Now in its 25th year, Pyrotek Special Effects has developed a reputation as a dependable and creative pyrotechnics firm for the touring industry.

Among the innovative products Pyrotek takes on the road is the Dragon, a custom flame-throwing gas effect first pioneered for Kiss and later used by Metallica, Britney Spears, Kid Rock and others.

Other recent Pyrotek clients include the Trans Siberian Orchestra, Justin Timberlake, Shania Twain, Green Day and Paul McCartney.

Pyrotek also oversaw the pyrotechnics display during the Super Bowl XXXIX halftime performance by McCartney, with president/designer Doug Adams himself detonating the charge during McCartney's "Live and Let Die."
GAS
Continued from page 24

When bands use flame-throwing gas effects, crews typically travel with the equipment, then purchase gas locally through advance arrangements with the area promoter. With traditional pyrotechnics, devices are custom-made for the tour and shipped to each city.

"It's great, but you can only see so many flame effects," Adams notes. "Now we're getting into coloring the flame effects, beginning this year, probably with Paul McCartney's fall tour."

Of course, many bands use gas and traditional pyro, "It's nice to interact the two," Adams says.

Economic issues affecting the pyro and effects business include shipping and insurance costs, along with local logistical issues. And, of course, the 2003 tragedy in Rhode Island at a Great White club sharpened awareness of safety issues.

"That tragedy created a wave of protocols that scare a lot of people from using pyro," Adams says. "A lot of venues immediately shut down. Insurance has gone up dratically, and officials have taken out their magnifying glasses and weeded out a lot of the cowboys."

GET ON THE BUS

Trent Hemphill, partner with brother Joel in tour bus firm Hemphill Brothers, says there are several trends in the tour bus business, many driven by technology and economic concerns.

"There are more requests for wireless Internet," Hemphill says. "And we see more pyro-crews take a bus with double drivers and running coast to coast instead of flying."

Today, million-dollar tour buses are better-appointed than many hot rods. "With the quality of the bus interiors and all the amenities on our star buses, we see more clients opting to stay on the bus instead of going into a hotel room when they are able to stay in a secure area such as the venue," Hemphill says.

Tightener Department of Transporation regulations, as well as high gas prices, continue to affect moving tours up and down the road. "Obviously, higher gasoline prices make the cost of doing business more expensive for everyone, and [that] cuts into the bottom line," Becker says. "But we have not seen higher fuel costs affect the amount of equipment or trucks needed. Tour managers are always looking to save money and will sometimes take a hit based on price alone. The more experienced ones know that video is more than a line item and the execution of a design is key."

Shadel believes the DOT regulations and gas price hikes have had an enormous impact on the industry. "It has caused many events' transportation cost to be 40%-50% of the total," he says. "This has made companies look very closely at their material and how to make it more compact while maintaining its integrity."

Doug Masterson, VP of business development for freight-forwarding business Rock It Cargo, says his company has seen a "recent proclivity to add trucks for easier and more rapid load-outs."

He believes revised DOT regulations clearly will affect the tour freight business. The new regulations, he says, "aren't having a very positive effect on high-mileage tours, as the weekly run is the same, but there is a modest gain in economic conditions."

"There are more requests for wireless Internet," Hemphill says. "And we see more pyro-crews take a bus with double drivers and running coast to coast instead of flying."

Today, million-dollar tour buses are better-appointed than many hot rods. "With the quality of the bus interiors and all the amenities on our star buses, we see more

To our readers: On The Road will return next week.
Cartoons Entertain, Teach With Hip-Hop

BY GAIL MITCHELL

LOS ANGELES—Music targeting the 5- to 12-year-olds is nothing new. More than 30 years ago, songs from the “Schoolhouse Rock” educational TV series were all the rage among kids. Peruse The Billboard 200 and you will find several children’s CDs holding their own: “Disney Mania,” “Radio Disney Jam,” “Nickelodeon Kids” and “Kidz Hop.”

Now, prepare for a new batch.

Coming May 24 from4Koch Kids is “Too Hot to Handle” by the Hootz. It is spearheaded by Scott Hunter Smith, founder of the Heineken Music Initiative, and his sister Cheryl Smith, under their S&J6Vision banners. “Too Hot to Handle” features a hip-hop “band” of cartoon owls performing kid-friendly original songs and covers like “Razy Bitzy Spider.” Adding to the music’s authenticity is production by Eddie F (Angie Stone) and Darren Lighty (Queen Latifah).

Another hip-hop-themed project targeting the pre- and early-teen crowd carries a more ambitious agenda. “Da Jammies” is an animated made-for-DVD series featuring the voices of established and up-and-coming entertainers. Mirroring “grown-up” hip-hop, the series will spin off such merchandise as shoes and clothing. “Da Jammies” was created by Aubuduro “Novel-ist” Hamilton and William “Dolla” Chapman II, whose company is called Toon Farm. They were inspired by their work in music—both are performers and producers—and by their personal lives; each has two children between the ages of 8 and 14.

Their motivation for creating the series boils down to this sentiment from Chapman: “I shouldn’t have to put on an old ‘Fat Albert’ cartoon for my kids to then feel safe enough to leave the room.”

Four years in the making, “Da Jammies” tells the story of two adolescent, multicultural cousins. Da Battle Brats hail from well-to-do families in the suburbs, while Da Jammies come from blue-collar families in the city. Attending the same performing arts school, both groups vie to make their mark as singers and rappers. Along the way, they learn about peer pressure and other real-life issues. These lessons are recapitated at the end of each episode in a live action, round-table segment. A highlight will be an appearance by a special guest from the music or film/TV arena who will also provide the voice for his animated counterpart on the episode.

Duke and Chapman double as co-executive producers, co-writers and co-stars of the series. They play the leaders of Da Jammies, Alex “Novelist” Manguil, who is Puerto Rican and black, and Billy “Dolla” Chapman, who is Indian-American and black.

Representing various ethnic backgrounds, the additional crew members are voiced by MTVs La La and DJ Choo, songwriter/musician Pittsbox, MC Lyte, Hidden Beach Recordings artist Lira and others. Among the show’s special guest stars are Mario and Ginuwine. The character Seven, who has asthma, helps deliver another lesson Hamilton and Chapman want to teach. “Who says if you have a handicap, you can’t excel in life?” Hamilton asks. “You can still get past that and realize your dreams.”

In addition to their work on the series, Hamilton and Pittsbox comprise the duo KansasCali, specializing in alternative rock/R&B/rap. (The group was showcased by Billboard as a hot act to watch at the Digital Entertainment Conference & Awards last November.) The Superb/Koch/Universal Records act will release a new album, “Hello World,” next month. The title song is featured on the “Jammies” DVD and its accompanying soundtrack.

“Thesoundtrack is about positive hip-hop, not about half-naked women,” Chapman says. “It’s the same kind of music—not watered down—but the content fits kids.”

“We don’t want to stunt kids’ growth,” Hamilton adds with a laugh. “We’re talking, like, a Snoopy taking off on a Dr. Dre beat. But we take the negative out and put a positive spin on it.”

Las Vegas-based KansasCali—which worked on the soundtracks to “Into the Blue,” starring Jessica Alba, and “Hostage,” starring Bruce Willis—will perform “Hello World” on “Jimmy Kimmel Live” and “Late Night With Conan O’Brien” next month.

The first “Da Jammies” DVD, comprising two episodes, bonus material and the soundtrack CD, is set for July release at $19.95.

“Too Hot to Handle” is airing in the series in conjunction with Headstart Entertainment, headed by Dwanye Corbitt and Doug Warn. Negotiations for a broadcast deal are under way.

Corbitt is also CEO of Artist Only International (Billboard, June 24, 2004). Overseeing the animation—or “hipimation,” as Hamilton and Chapman call it—is Wetsand Animation, based in Nova Scotia, Canada.

Rounding out the “Jammies” creative vision are hats, T-shirts and a line of sneakers that include a limited-edition version from Reebok. Also on Hamilton and Chapman’s drawing board is the “RHYME & Read” book series and “Toon Stars” talent search.

“When I was growing up, television shows like ‘Schoolhouse Rock’ conveyed values and lessons,” Chapman says. “But there doesn’t seem to be much lesson-learning now. We want ‘Da Jammies’ to be the new ‘Schoolhouse Rock.’”

Plans For Ray Charles Museum Take Shape

Longtime Ray Charles manager Joe Adams has unveiled plans and artist renderings for the previously announced Ray Charles Museum. Encompassing Charles’ existing RPM studio site, the three-story, 18,000-square-foot museum is slated to open in late 2007 under the auspices of the Ray Charles Museum Foundation.

Duke does MV: “I’m not 16, and I certainly don’t look like Usher.”

George Duke recalls that was his first thought when he was approached by MTV India to be part of a cultural and music exchange that also involved the State Department and BET Jazz.

Nevertheless, he, Al Jarreau, Earl Klugh and Ravi Coltrane participated in several dates, played with Indian musicians and visited AIDS shelters during a week in late January/early February. MTV India plans to air concert footage from that visit; BET Jazz will broadcast it statewide.

“Musically, they’re more open in India,” Duke says. “We met a lot of young people; I love that connection between my generation and theirs.”

Back from playing a three-day music festival in India, Duke is promoting his 30th album, “Duke (Big Piano Music/Navare).” The March 29 release draws from Duke’s R&B, jazz and Latin influences. It encompasses new songs as well as previously unfinished and revamped material. Among the album’s selections is “No One,” penned by Rachelle Ferrell and party jam “T-Jam. The album also features Eric Benet, who performed with Duke in Indonesia along with James Brown and Angie Stone.

Next on Duke’s plate: writing the music for Ernest Dickerson’s new movie. Duke’s latest film nod was Dickerson’s “Never Die Alone” with DMX.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? As noted in Don Duellece’s Jazz Notes (see page 22), underrated singer/songwriter Ledisi stands poised to win more fans during her and partner Sandra Manning’s debut at the 15th annual Playboy Jazz Festival, set for June 11-12 at the Hollywood (Calif.) Bowl. Since releasing two critically acclaimed independent albums, “Soulbanger” and “Feeling Orange But Sometimes Blue,” the R&B/jazz artist has been racking up kudos for her stint with Boney James on “My Sensitivity” from the Luther Vandross tribute album, “Forever, for Always.”

Ledisi is back in the studio with “For Luther” helmer Rex Rideout. Manning and other producers recording another R&B album and deciding whether to stay indie or go major.

“I wouldn’t change the ride,” Ledisi says of going the independent route and later doing a one-off distribution deal with Tommy Boy. “I don’t know where this new project is headed yet, but it will be your bigger introduction of who Ledisi is.”

Having finished a cameo on Brian Culbertson’s new album, Ledisi is also writing a book of poetry and teaching classes, at the Jazz School in Berkeley, Calif.

ON HIS OWN: During his seven years as a Motown writerproducer, he penned songs for such acts as Smokey Robinson (“There Will Come a Day”) and the Originals (“Down to Love Town”). Now Michael B. Sutton has become a “Hopeless Romantic” on his first outing as a solo artist. The Little Djizz release through City Hall Records is generating radio buzz with first single “Nobody.” It is No. 38 on Billboard Radio Monitor’s Adult R&B chart.

A remix of the single featuring Coco Brown of the Phat Cat Players is available. Other sensual treats on
Rhythm & Blues

Continued from page 31

public places. Through therapy, the condition has improved to the point where he is planning some limited engagements and station visits. "I could barely go out the front door," Sutton says. "But I want people to feel this vibe. We need some good music."


SHOW TUNES: Usher will receive a 2005 Atlanta Heroes Award when the Atlanta chapter of the Recording Academy presents the annual honor April 21. Staged at the Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel, the fourth annual ceremony will honor Coretta Scott King, among others. Mary J. Blige, Kanye West, Ludacris, T.I., Faith Evans, John Legend and Keyshia Cole are the initial slate of artists set to perform at the inaugural Vibe Music Fest, which takes place June 14-16 in Atlanta.

ASCAP's 18th annual Rhythm and Soul Music Awards is set for June 27. As announced earlier, Jermaine Dupri will replace the organization's Golden Note Award during the 22nd annual Pop Music Awards on May 16. Both events take place at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Additional reporting by Raegan Johnson in New York.
Martínez Gets Famous

After a lifetime of working his publishing independently, songwriter/producer Cruz Martínez has signed an exclusive global administration agreement with Famous Music.

The deal between Famous and Martínez's publishing company, CKJointz Music, covers Cruz's formidable back catalog as well as future projects.

As one of the founders of the Kumbia Kings—whom he created with A.B. Quintanilla—Martínez has had a succession of hit tracks on the radio since the group formed in 1997. They include 2002’s “Shhh” and 2003’s “Fuiste Mala,” both of which have won BMI Awards for most-performed tracks of the year.

In the past two years, Martinez has also expanded his reach beyond the realm of his group’s pop/R&B/cumbia fusion.

High-profile projects include tracks written and produced for his wife, Grammy Award-winning singer Alicia Villarreal, teen star Belinda’s upcoming album and for a new, as-yet-unnamed Mexican band signed to Sony BMG.

This desire to expand into other areas, Martinez says, is what prompted him to look for a publishing deal.

“Famous has so many contacts with the Anglo market,” he says. “And I felt at home with them. They really believed in my vision, and they just give me a lot of work.”

Martinez says that prior to this deal, he was in no rush to share his publishing revenue. “I had offers before, but I just wasn’t feeling it.”

Claribel Cuevas-Brasilero, senior creative director of Latin music for Famous, said in a statement, “Cruz is definitely on the cutting edge. His music represents today’s generation of Latinos who are born and raised in the U.S. but still maintain their cultural heritage.”

Martinez recently spent time in Mexico with the Kumbia Kings filming an episode of the soap opera “Rebelde,” where the group members play themselves. Their appearance made sense, given the plot centers on a teen band and that Kumbia Kings’ single “Na Na Na (Dulce Niña)” is being used on the show.

This marks the first time the Kumbia Kings have participated in a soap or had one of their songs used as a theme.

Aside from his musical work, Martínez is founder and CEO of Fury Street Entertainment, a management and booking agency whose roster includes the Kumbia Kings.

CLOSER QUARTERS: Lideres Entertainment has finished acquiring a majority stake in Ole Music, the label founded by Oscar Llodo.

Ole was originally created in 2003 as a partnership with Lideres, an entertainment company owned by Cisneros Group, which in turn is a stockholder in Univision.

Now, Lideres’ majority ownership of Ole will allow the label’s artists to benefit from TV advertising on the Univision, Galavision and Telefutura networks.

Ole is already distributed by Universal Music Video & Distribution, through an agreement with Lideres. But Lideres’ higher stake in the company will enable the labels to work closer together. Although Ole will continue to function independently, Llodo will be president, and the label will host its headquarters in Lideres’ offices in Miami and will share administrative, marketing and promotion resources.

Lideres, in turn, is headed by chairman Rodolfo Rodriguez Miranda. A key factor in the acquisition of Ole, Llodo says, was the growth of the label’s roster.

“Sales have increased considerably,” Llodo says. “We’re actually a little bit ahead of where we thought we would be. Our development has happened about six times faster than we thought.”

Ole’s talent roster includes youth-driven pop bands MDO and Tic ToC, tropical artists Elvis Crespo and Charlie Zaa, pop/rock artist Tommy Torres and, most recently, adult contemporary artists Alvaro Torres (no relation) and Angelica Maria.

The missing element, Llodo says, is regional Mexican music, which he hopes to incorporate in the coming months through associations with other labels.

Aside from the label, Ole will maintain its other operations, including its management arm and video production facilities.

Peréz, Blades Honored At El Premio

BY LEILA COBO

NEW YORK—Rudy Pérez prevailed as songwriter of the year at the 13th annual El Premio ASCAP Awards.

Pérez received the honor at the April 5 ceremony at the Hammerstein Ballroom in New York. Since 1997, he has written and produced much of his band’s material and is a noted performer in the genre of cumbia. The Kumbia Kings released their latest album, Kumbia Kings Presents Charity Kings, in 2007.

Pérez told Billboard that the ability to write for many artists, coupled with strong melodies, is at the core of his success. This marks his record fourth ASCAP songwriter award.

“I always like to make sure that the songs have some worthiness to be on a record,” Perez said. “I sit down with an artist and if they love the song and I don’t see it, I ask their opinion. If the song doesn’t do something for me in the first 30 seconds, it isn’t happening.

“Don’t wait for the chorus. Everything has to be the chorus. The pre-chorus has to be a chorus; a storyline that people understand in the street. And then again, you have to have some kind of surprise.”

Pérez is signed to Universal Music Publishing, which tied with Sony/ATV Music Publishing for publisher of the year. Each had 30 winning songs.

Although Sony has several hit singles during the year, the secret of its success lies in its collaborations, according to Eddie Fernandez, VP of Sony/ATV, Norte and Latin American Region.

“It’s all about team effort,” Fernandez said. “We have great affiliates and it reflects in the repertoire from Spain and Mexico.” Sony also won the publisher of the year award in 2004.

ASCAP’s Founder’s Award was presented to singer/songwriter/actor/politician Ruben Blades.

Sony/ATV songwriter Blades was feted with a performance by Obie Bermudez, whom he mentored, and later sang with the Spanish Harlem Orchestra.

“I’m standing here because I wrote for the future,” said Blades, who shared stories of his early days in music.

Referring to his post as Panama’s minister of tourism, Blades said, “People ask me, ‘You no longer have time for music?’ I didn’t say no to music. I said yes to my country.”

ASCAP presents the award to songwriters who “have made pioneering contributions to music by inspiring and influencing their fellow music creators.” Past recipients include Stevie Wonder.
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**Latin Pop Albums**

1. Daddy Yankee
2. A.R. Quintanilla III Presents Kumbia Kings
3. Los Tigres Del Norte
4. Various Artists
5. Vicente Fernandez

**Regional Mexican Albums**

1. Chayanne
2. Los Tigres Del Norte
3. A.R. Quintanilla III Presents Kumbia Kings
4. Various Artists
5. Vicente Fernandez
### Latin Pop Airplay

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### Tropical Airplay

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<th>Format</th>
<th>Airplay</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
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<td>MI MEJOR   /Application</td>
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### Regional Mexican Airplay

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<td>Los Huracanes Del Norte</td>
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**Notes:**
- The chart data is as of April 16, 2005.
- The table includes titles, artists, labels, format, airplay, and chart position.
- The data is compiled from Billboard's Hot Latin Tracks, Tropical Airplay, and Regional Mexican Airplay charts.
- Entries are listed in descending order of airplay.
Miami's 24-Hour Party People

Thousands of dance/electronic enthusiasts descended on Miami Beach March 21-26 for the Winter Music Conference and M3 Summit, and Billboard was there.

Adidas, 5 Points Records and Grand Hospitality hosted the March 25 Revolver party at the Pawn Shop. Artists and DJs showcased included LCD Soundsystem, 2 Many D's, Tiga, Ellen Allien and Radio 4. Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, left, performed his Felix Da Housecat-produced club track, "Jack U," while DJ Hell, right, cued the next record. (Photo: Tina Barros)

The March 25 full-moon party atop the Bank of America building in downtown Miami spotlighted DJ Rap, above. (Photo: Tina Paul)

It was smiles all around at the Recording Academy meet-and-greet at the Wyndham Beach Resort. Pictured, from left, are Recording Academy Florida Chapter executive director Neil Cricly, Billboard senior writer/reviews editor Michael Paoletta, Nassar Music Business Solutions founder Kourosh Nassari, Recording Academy Florida Chapter project coordinator Robyn Bolshевer, artist manager Pam Film-Kennedy and recording artist/DJ Paul Van Dyk. (Photo: Jill Kahn)

S&D, LCD Cure Post-Miami Blues

A few weeks have passed since the Winter Music Conference and M3 Summit in Miami Beach, and people are asking if we're still recovering. Please. We were back on track that first day back in the office. Weekly deadlines have that effect.

And while some dance/electronic fans in New York were laying low during the April 1 weekend—still recovering, perhaps—we couldn't resist experiencing Sasha & Digweed (together again) at Crobar and LCD Soundsystem at Bowery Ballroom.

S&D delivered a most epic tag-team DJ set that, with each passing hour, became deeper and darker. In the course of a nearly seven-hour set, the duo—playing to more than 5,000 clubgoers—cleverly layered beats and rhythms to create brand-new textures and on-the-spot remixes (the Killers’ "Mr. Brightside").

Equally intoxicating was LCD’s sold-out live performance, which, intentionally or not, paid homage to New York’s feisty club scene in the early ‘80s (specifically the funkied-up disco-punk sensibility of Danceteria).

Fronted by non-pop-star pop star James Murphy, the Soundsystem delivered a light set that was equal parts Talking Heads, Public Image Ltd. and Liquid Liquid. Murphy’s wailings on “Daft Punk Is Playing at My House,” “Too Much Love,” “Tribulations” and “Yeah” remain embedded in the brain.

KELLY DOES SOUTH BEACH: Kelly Osbourne is promoting her new album, “Sleeping in the Nothing” (Sanctuary), which arrives June 7. Primed for dancefloors, the disc is previewed by lead single “One Word.”

In this issue, the new-wave-hued track ascends 12 positions on the Hot Dance Club Play chart to No. 13. And judging from the number of clu DJs championing the incredibly infectious jam, we predict that it soon find its way onto the Hot Dance Club Play chart.

Such news explains why the daughter of Ozzy and Sharon was omnipresent in Miami Beach during the Winter Music Conference and M3 Summit. Presenting an award at the WMC’s International Dance Music Awards® Check Working the crowd at the BBC Radio 1 live broadcast at Nikki Beach? You bet (see photo, this page). How about showing up at the Revolver party at the Pawn Shop? Absolutely.

“I’m here because I’ve decided to change direction in my music,” Osbourne told Billboard backstage at the awards ceremony. “I came to Miami to find out everything I didn’t already know about dance music.”

We wondered what prompted the change in direction.

Without missing a beat, the ever-real Osbourne laid it on the line. “Take a really good look at what girls my age are doing musically,” she said. “They’re all doing the same shit. I hate being the same. So, I had to do something different—something that I was passionate about.”

Though she has turned to dance music, Osbourne noted that “it’s still very much me—the album has an edge. And I’m excited.”

LAUNCHED IN MIAMI: Mobile content provider Red Fish Media launched its dance/electronic ringtones library at the Winter Music Conference. The myredfish.com site features new and not-yet-released tracks from emerging and internationally recognized DJs and producers, including Matt & Love, Nigel Richards and Justin Johnson.

The company offers electronic enthusiasts two payment options: a $7.96 monthly membership (which includes five ringtones) and a pay-as-you-go plan ($1.99 per ringtone).
Adkins Has Plenty To Sing About

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Life is good for Trace Adkins. Like the blue-collar fans who make up a large segment of his audience, the Louisiana native has worked hard to build a solid career, and he is seeing the payoff.

He might not be picking up trophies at every industry awards show, but without hype or fanfare, Adkins keeps churning out gold and platinum albums and maintaining a busy road schedule.

His newest offering, “Songs About Me,” debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Top Country Albums chart and at No. 11 on The Billboard 200 in the April 9 issue. It sold nearly 63,000 units in its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Record sales have fueled the album’s title song, which is No. 16 on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. KRKO Bakersfield, Calif., PD Lee Logan calls the single “a great promo for what this format is all about.”

Adkins stands to get sustained exposure beyond the usual street-week flurry. He has deals with Waffle House restaurants (Nashville Scene, Billboard, April 9) and Pilot gas stations that will keep his image in front of a multitude of consumers.

“I have a lot of things that I use and a product that I can support because I like it,” says Adkins, who is booked by the William Morris Agency. “With what I do for a living, we are always stopping and buying hundreds of dollars’ worth of diesel, and more times than not, it’s at a Pilot. And I’ve always liked eating at Waffle House. I’ve had business meetings at Waffle House.”

According to Capitol Records Nashville, Adkins has been featured in nearly 300 Pilot stations via signage in the stores, on the gas pumps and on a display inside, with the current CD and some previous Adkins titles will be sold.

“It takes it out of the traditional brick-and-mortar retail space,” Foster says of the promotion, which will last through March.

Fletcher says the Waffle House campaign will run through the end of the year.

Adkins says he is happy to form partnerships with corporate America because it creates awareness. “As far as unconventional ways to promote stuff, you have to do that now,” he says. “People’s attention spans have gotten so short these days … We are trying to do every avenue that is open to us.”

STRONG SONGS ABOUT HIM

On the creative front, Adkins has delivered a solid album buoyed by strong songs and personality-packed performances.

“They’ve all been autobiographical,” Adkins says of his body of work, including six previous albums, which have earned two platinum and three gold certifications. “From the first one until this one, you have a real good sense of who I am and what I’m about.”

On “Songs About Me,” which was produced by Scott Hendricks and Dann Huff, Adkins says the cut “Metropolis” reminds him of his hometown, Sarepta, La. Tunes such as “My Heaven,” “Baby I’m Home,” “Bring It On” and “I Learned How to Love From You” are also like pages from his life.

“I try to record stuff that I can sing because I believe in it. I’ve either experienced it or lived through it or just feel that way,” says Adkins, an ASCAP writer who has his own publishing, Songs’ company Music.

Adkins even brings to life those songs that aren’t autobiographical. Case in point: “Arlington,” a poignant ballad about the national cemetery, which will likely be the next single.

Adkins is slated to perform it on the White House lawn with a 110-piece orchestra May 29 for a PBS special. “Trace has such energy and power in his voice,” says Logan. “Whether he sings a ballad or uptempo song like his latest, his voice breaks through on the radio.”

BACK ON TRACK

Since he debuted in 1996, Adkins has placed 19 titles on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart, among them such top five hits as “Every Light in the House,” “The Rest of Mine” and “Hot Mama” and the No. 1 (“This Ain’t) No Thinkin’ Thing.”

Each of his seven albums has debuted in the Top 10, but prior to the most recent leadership change at Capitol, he seemed to be losing momentum. Now things are once again on an upward trajectory.

“When I got hooked up with Vector Management, that brought some fresh blood in and people with some renewed excitement about what I do,” says Adkins. “Then when [president/CEO] Mike Dungan came in over at Capitol, it was like the messiah coming, and things have been great for the last two or three years. I feel like we’ve got some momentum back again.”

Adkins says he has a strong, growing fan base and that buyers and promoters have a lot of confidence in him, but “for whatever reason we just never really garnered that respect from our peers, from the powers-that-be in the industry. We just got overlooked when it came time to vote for awards.”

Logan thinks Adkins’ stature has “grown consistently over the last few years, a credit to his participation in the different facets of the country music business … He is on the Country Music Association panel, you do them at industry events and functions and he continues to aggressively interact with radio and his fans. His work ethic serves him well.”

But some in the industry still don’t realize Adkins is a platinum artist.

“It’s a perception that kind of becomes a reality if you don’t watch it,” Foster says. “His first album was platinum, and his second album was gold.”

Adkins’ third album, 1999’s “More,” was his only album not to go gold.

Foster says it fell through the cracks during a regime change at Capitol. “He just got caught up in a lot of that. But when Mike and I came over here, we knew he could sell records, and we wanted to bring him back.”

His renewed sales vigor has “greatly affected his touring,” Foster says of Adkins, who is currently co-headlining with Montgomery Gentry. “When you can get out there and have radio look at him differently, and then the consumer looks at him differently, then the touring market looks at him differently—hopefully one and one and one will make four or five.”

For much of the last year, independent label Equity Music Group has been the subject of persistent rumors on Music Row. Those rumors, which focused on alleged financial difficulties, ranged from stories that the regional promotion staff was not being reimbursed for T&E expenses to predictions of the label’s imminent demise.

Through it all, EMG responded to press inquiries by maintaining that all was well. But in a surprisingly candid revelation to Billboard, EMG president Mike Kraus says that was not always the case, though he has tens to add that the label’s financial troubles are nearly behind it.

“The bottom line is that the rumors were true but no longer are,” Kraus says of the label, which was launched in 2003. “If there is anything I’ve learned in the last two years, it is that shit happens. We did run into financial problems that could not have been anticipated.”

“We have been diligent over the past six months in eliminating debt and stabilizing the company’s financial situation,” Kraus continues. “We will have a complete, long-term resolution in a matter of weeks.

“We’re not the first startup to run into problems, but [make] no mistake that we are committed to this label and our artists for the long run.”

The roster includes founding partner Clint Black as well as Carolina Rain, Kevin Fowler, Shannon Lawson and Little Big Town.

Kraus adds an appreciative nod to the label’s supporters during the tough times. “I would like to mention how gratifying it has been that so many people in this town stuck with us because they believe in us and in what we’re trying to do,” he says. “To them I say, Thank you.”

SIGNINGS: Bluegrass act The Grasscaps is now being managed by Karen Byrd, owner of Nashville-based Karen Byrd Public Relations. It is Byrd’s first foray into management. She will continue to handle publicity for the group and her other PR clients. The Grasscaps recently released their debut album for Rounder Records.

Koch Records Nashville has signed bluegrass act 3 Fox Drive, formerly known as the Fox Family. The group’s first album for Koch is due this summer.

NEW & NOTEWORTHY: J.T. Gray, owner of venerable Nashville nightclub the Station Inn, has released his first CD, “It’s About Time,” on his own Station Inn Records. The album features Gray and his band performing bluegrass and country classics. Gray’s label will focus on bluegrass and roots music projects. Bob Smiley, head of TransAid, is serving as a consultant.

GLOBAL GLOW: Paul Brandt is this year’s winner of the Country Music Association’s global country artist award. The award recognizes an act that has advanced country music’s popularity and brought attention to the format outside the United States.

Brantl is the first Canadian to receive the honor. Previous winners have been Australians Casey Chambers, Lee Kernaghan and the late Slim Dusty. Candidates are chosen by the CMA board of directors from nominations by the organization’s international membership. Brandt will receive his trophy June 12 during his performance at the 2005 CMA Music Festival in Nashville.

ON THE ROW: Angela Lange segues from West Coast regional promoter to Southeast regional at Capitol Records Nashville. She replaces Steve Hodges, who was recently upped to senior director of national promotion.

OPRY WORLD: The Grand Ole Opry has partnered with the Department of Defense to broadcast “Grand Ole Opry Live” to U.S. troops around the world via American Forces Radio and Television Service. The program can be seen in the United States on the Great American Country network.
### Billboard Top Country Albums

#### April 16, 2005

**ARTIST** | **IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL** | **Title** | **TOTAL WEEKS ON CHART** | **PEAK RANK**
---|---|---|---|---
1. | LARRY THE CABLE GUY | Capitol/EMI Nashville | The Right To Be Here | 1
2. | RASCAL FLATTS | Curb/Capitol | 1 Week At Number 1 | 2
3. | GRETCHEN WILSON | Capitol/EMI Nashville | Here For The Party | 3
4. | TRACE ADKINS | Epic/SONY BMG | Songs About Me | 4
5. | KENNY CHESNEY | Warner Bros. | Be As You Are: Songs From An Old Blue Chair | 5
6. | SHANIA TWAIN | Warner Bros. | Greatest Hits II | 6
7. | THREE VARIOUS ARTISTS | Capitol/EMI Nashville | Totally Country, Vol. 4 | 7
8. | BILL DEAN | Epic/SONY BMG | Let There Be Little | 8
9. | KENNY CHESNEY | Warner Bros. | When The Sun Goes Down | 9
10. | TIM McGRAW | Curb/Capitol | Live Like You Were Dying | 10
11. | GEORGE STRAIT | MCA Nashville | 50 Numbers One | 11
12. | SUGARLAND | Epic/SONY BMG | Twice The Speed Of Life | 12
13. | KEITH URBAN | Epic/SONY BMG | Be Here | 13
14. | TOBY KEITH | GRAMMY POLYGRAM | Greatest Hits Vol. 2 | 14
15. | MIRANDA LAMBERT | Epic/SONY BMG | Kerosene | 15
16. | BIG & RICH | MCA Nashville | Horse Of A Different Color | 16
17. | BRAD PAISLEY | Reprise/Warner Bros. | Mud On The Tires | 17
18. | MARTINA MCBRIDE | Warner Bros. | Martina | 18
19. | CRAIG MORGAN | Epic/SONY BMG | My Kind Of Love | 19
20. | MONTGOMERY GENTRY | Mercury/Mercury | Yee Haw | 20
21. | BLAKE SHELTON | Warner Bros. | Blake Shelton's Barn & Grill | 21
22. | JOSH GRACIN | Atlantic Records | Josh Gracin | 22
23. | ALISON Krauss & Union Station | Bluebird | Lonely Runs Both Ways | 23
24. | BLAINE LARSEN | Epic/SONY BMG | Off To Join The World | 24
25. | LEANN RIMES | Mercury/Mercury | This Woman | 25
26. | JEFF BATES | Vanguard | Reducer Man | 26
27. | WILLIE NELSON | Legacy | Songs | 27
28. | TERRY CLARK | Arista | Greatest Hits 1994-2004 | 28
29. | JIMMY BUFFETT | Capitol/EMI Nashville | License To Chill | 29
30. | JIM O'NEAL | Curb/Capitol | Brave | 30
31. | ALAN JACKSON | Reprise/Warner Bros. | Greatest Hits Volume II | 31
32. | DWIGHT YOCAM | Reprise/Warner Bros. | The Very Best Of Dwight Yoakam | 32
33. | SHOOTER JENNINGS | Vanguard | Put The Bible Back In Society | 33
34. | ANDY RIGGS | Vanguard | The River Runs Red | 34
35. | ANN MURRAY | Vanguard | All Of Me | 35
36. | ANDY GRiggs | Vanguard | This I Got To See | 36
37. | JERRY BRADSHAW | Vanguard | Don't Stop The Music | 37
38. | JACOBY SHADDIX | Vanguard | Gone Today | 38
39. | CALEB GORDON | Vanguard | Christmas | 39
40. | LINDA ELROD | Vanguard | Christmas | 40
41. | DONELLE MULLER | Vanguard | Christmas | 41
42. | CHRISTINA WILLIAMS | Vanguard | Christmas | 42
43. | LORI MANN | Vanguard | Christmas | 43
44. | ROBBIE CREWE | Vanguard | Christmas | 44
45. | DARYL ROMERO | Vanguard | Christmas | 45
46. | JIMMY KERR | Vanguard | Christmas | 46
47. | BOZ SCAGGS | Vanguard | Christmas | 47
48. | BUCK OWENS | Vanguard | Christmas | 48
49. | BARBRA STREISAND | Vanguard | Christmas | 49
50. | ROY ORBISON | Vanguard | Christmas | 50
51. | MAVIS STAPLES | Vanguard | Christmas | 51
52. | CHUCK BERRY | Vanguard | Christmas | 52
53. | PEARL JAM | Vanguard | Christmas | 53
54. | LOU REED | Vanguard | Christmas | 54
55. | BOB DYLAN | Vanguard | Christmas | 55
56. | JUDEA MIDHILL | Vanguard | Christmas | 56
57. | STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN | Vanguard | Christmas | 57
58. | KENNY ROGERS | Vanguard | Christmas | 58
59. | MARTINA MCBRIDE | Vanguard | Christmas | 59
60. | TIM McGRAW | Vanguard | Christmas | 60

**Greatest Gainer**

**ARTIST** | **IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL** | **Title** | **Position**
---|---|---|---
RANDY TRAVIS | EMI Nashville | The Very Best Of Randy Travis | 10
JULIE ROBERTS | Apathy | Julie Roberts | 9
SARA EVANS | RCA/Columbia | Restless | 3
PHIL VASSAR | Epic | Shaken Not Stunned | 10
LEANN RIMES | Epic | Greatest Hits | 3
TRACE ADKINS | Epic | Comin' On Strong | 3
ALAN JACKSON | Epic | What I Do | 1
DIXIE CHICKS | Epic | Top Of The World Tour Live | 1
LEE ANN WOMACK | MCA Nashville | Greatest Hits | 2
REBA McENTIRE | Warner Bros. | Room To Breathe | 1
JONNY CASH | Columbia | From Here To There | 1
LONESTAR | Warner Bros. | Let's Be Us Again | 2
LORETTA LYNN | Warner Bros. | Van Lear Rose | 2

**Note:**

- **NUMBER 1 / HOT SHOT DEbut** indicates albums that debuted at number one.
- **GREATEST GAINER** highlights the album with the greatest gains in placement this week.
- **TOP COUNTRY CATALOG ALBUMS** list includes older albums that have been in the charts for a longer period.

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**Billboard** April 16, 2005

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**THE BRAVERY**

*The Brave*  
**PRODUCER:** Sam Endicott  
**Island**  
**RELEASE DATE:** March 29

If you’re a fan of the adage “everything old is new again,” then The Bravery is for you. Its self-titled, full-length debut takes its place alongside the new wave of notable heavyweights like the Killers, Franz Ferdinand and Interpol. Like those bands, the Bravery is a throwback to the ’80s, often sounding as if it has unearthed mis-placed songs by the Cure (“Tyrant,” “Give In”). At times, the Bravery also embraces the sarcastic melancholia of the ’90s and punk spirit of the Clash. And it’s all neatly wrapped with a synth-pop bow. Standout tracks include the danceable lead single, “An Honest Mistake,” and the quirky “Fearless” and “Public Service Announcement.” Not quite old, not new, the Bravery has created a buzz that will certainly live up to—<i>KL</i>

**MARIAH CAREY**

*The Emancipation of Mimi*  
**PRODUCERS:** various  
**Island**  
**RELEASE DATE:** April 12

“The Emancipation of Mimi” is Mariah Carey’s most satisfying album since her 1997 collection, “Butterfly.” The latter disc spawned multiple hits and has sold 3.7 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. “Mimi” has already notched a hit with “It’s Like That,” and a second single—the mid-tempo ballad “Knock Together”—is ascending the charts. Carey’s emancipation is drenched in hip-hop and old-school R&B ballads, and it partly focuses on her strengths. While her voice has lost some of its power through the years, “Mimi” deftly showcases her still considerable pipes with strong lyrics and slick production. In addition to the aforementioned singles, huge bumpers include the Snoop Dogg-spiced “Say Somethin’,” the gorgeous ballads “Mine Again” and “Circles,” the bouncy silliness of “Get Your Number” and gospel closer “Fly Like a Bird.”—<i>RC</i>

**GARBAGE**

*Bleed Like Me*  
**PRODUCERS:** Garbage, John King  
**B0003943**  
**RELEASE DATE:** April 12

Garbage returns with the very rocking “Bleed Like Me,” its first album since 2001’s “beautifulgarbage.” The new CD is already off to a promising start: Lead single “Why Do You Love Me” was on top 10 on the Main Rock Tracks chart. The set contains a number of other radio-ready cuts, including the straightforward rock crunch of “Run Baby Run” and the anthemizing anthem “Right Between the Eyes.” Also of note are the hard-driving “Bad Boyfriend” (featuring Dave Grohl on drums) and the blistering “Why Don’t You Come Over,” which lyrically references both things. For “Forever’s Hot Blooded” and Salt-N-Pepa’s “Push It,” respectively. On “Bad Boyfriend,” frontwoman Shirley Manson coos about how she wants a “bad boyfriend” that’s so hot she has to “keep him on ice.” Sales of “Bleed” are poised to exceed those of Garbage’s “<i>beautifulgarbage</i>,” which has yet to sell half a million copies.—<i>RC</i>

**POP/ROCK**

**NEW & NOTEWORTHY**

**CORROSION OF CONFORMITY**

*In the Arms of God*  
**PRODUCERS:** John Caster, Corrosion of Conformity  
**SPV**  
**RELEASE DATE:** April 5

It has been five years since Corrosion of Conformity’s last release—an eternity in hard rock. With that much time, it would be expected that the band deliver a solid album, but COC has gone above and beyond. “In the Arms of God” is a riffs-drenched set that ranks with its best work. COC has been through many incarnations, fronted by its baritone/bruising to a Southern rock-influenced sound. This album feels like a culmination of these disparate genres, with bluesy, Sabbath-influenced moments (“It Is That Way,” “World On Fire”) and thrashy rockers (“Paranoid Opid,” the title track). A few songs don’t pick up the initial climax of their first riffs, and the dual guitar harmonies that had been COC’s calling card are few and far between. Still, “In the Arms of God” is likely to wind up on many headbanger’s year-end top 10 lists.—<i>BT</i>

**BRITISH SEA POWER**

*Open Season*  
**PRODUCERS:** Mads Bierke, Graham Sutton  
**Rough Trade**  
**RTA**  
**RELEASE DATE:** April 5

Add the brainy bunch from Brighton, England, to the list of U.K. acts destined to make an impact in the United States. “Open Season” is more disciplined and structured than the act’s sprawling, magnetic 2003 debut, “The Decline of British Sea Power.” The longest track, “True Adventures,” is “only” about eight minutes long, and both the words and emotions of such tunes as “North Hanging Rock” and “Be Gone” are less cryptic than those on “Decline.” No songs like “Apologies to Insect Life” here. Significant power derives from the contrasts between the carrier of layered guitars and the intimate whisper of the singer known as Yan. The free-associator will hear everything from early-’90s US and late-70s Bowie to shadows of Lloyd Cole and the Kinks. Alternately literate and visceral, exuberant and melancholy and undeniably of the British Isles, BSP’s finest moment here is “Please Stand Up,” a natural shoe-shoe starter that may be alternative/modern rock radio’s first of many excellent choices.—<i>WR</i>

**THE NATIONAL**

*Alligator*  
**PRODUCERS:** The National, Peter Katis  
**Beggars Banquet**  
**RELEASE DATE:** April 12

The National’s music is centered on Matt Berninger’s baritone and emotionally charged narratives. With his situation-specific imagery of apologizes, forgiveness and flashes of fierce confidence, he draws the whole outfit into the scenario of “Alligator.” The group’s tempestuous songwriting translates into finger-picking and moments of breathtaking crescendo, with pure rock’n’roll emerging from elaborate lyrics. Spontaneous at times and calculated at others, not a single moment is wasted on needless repetition or contrived force. Sarcasm is given to the gullible ones; the murkiest tracks react in manic fashion. Piano, strings and vocal harmonies tastefully dart about, manipulating even coarse melodies into tight, fully realized verses. “Alligator” is easily the National’s best effort and quite possibly one of this year’s finest records.—<i>KL</i>

**OSLO**

*Oslo*  
**PRODUCER:** Oslo  
**Majestic Recordings/FKE**  
**MRE**  
**RELEASE DATE:** March 29

Los Angeles act Oslo could easily be mistaken for an English import. The trio’s atmospheric alterna-pop is drawing comparisons to Brit bands from Coldplay to Oasis, especially in the way guitarist/vocalist Mattia Borrani croons like a gentler Liam Gallagher with a Mick Jagger drawl. For all its influences, Oslo has its own disposition: a beautifully sad lover who nevertheless will attract lots of admiring friends. Borrani, guitarist/backing vocalist Gabriel McNair and bassist Perry Wayne
COUNTRY

**DOYLE LAWSON & QUICKSILVER**

*You Gotta Dig a Little Deepker*

**PRODUCER:** Doyle Lawson

**Rounder 11601****

**RELEASE DATE:** March 29

Veteran bluegrass titans Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver follow up 2004 gospel set “Thank God for Creation,” a collection of standards, originals and instrumental numbers that again showcases this group’s stuff. It’s all about, well, bluegrass harmony and breakneck virtuosity here. Propelled by Lawson’s keen tenor and top-shelf mandolin work, Quicksilver boasts original member Terry Baucom on banjo, along with guitarist Dale Ayer, bassist Barry Scott and fiddler Jesse Scott. The versatile band shifts effortlessly from the hard-charging “Heartbreak Number Nine” to the country waltz “Four Walls,” then into rousing instrumental numbers (named for Bill Monroe’s hometown). The plucky title cut features a killer Lawson vocal and mandolin; other highlights include the impressively arranged “Love Me As You Love the Rain” and the tender, said “Saving Grace,” the latter an evocative Glen Duncan fiddle turn. —**MP**

**LAW**

**ORISHAS**

**ALBUM:** El Cubano Machete

**PRODUCERS:** Andres Levin, Niki Noci

**Surge/Universal Music Latino: Universal B0004340****

**RELEASE DATE:** March 29

Produced by broad-sounding Cuban artists Orishas are purveyors of a brand of urban Latin music far removed from the repetitive beats of the current reggaeton trend. Instead, they have channeled traditional Cuban rhythms with highly lyrical material to create what is best described as “Cuban rap.” The sound ranges from danceable material (the opening “Naci Orishas” and the cumbia-ish “Bombo”) to more introspective fare (the electronic-tinged title track) and complex rhythms (“Que Se Bocas” that underscores the driving conga beat). The underlying factors are the Cuban beats—although these vary from track to track—and deeply integrated melody, together with lyrics that are more social than sexual. Somehow, this all comes together in a highly enjoyable, satisfying album. —**LC**

**Gospel**

**ANNOUNCED:** Now and Then

**PRODUCERS:** various

**Columbia/Sony Urban Gospel: 90929**

**RELEASE DATE:** April 5

Third album of songs and six albums, Anointed has evolved from a foursome to two Crawford siblings, the group’s creative core now all four. Gospel and contemporary Christian church-chort-toppers since the mid ’90s, the prodigiously gifted duo shifts to both a new label and the most confident, convincing urban/R&B gospel posture of its career. Longtime fans will instantly lock on to powerful ballads (“Now Is the Time,” “The Great I Am,” “Eternal Life”), with brother and sister both in stunning voice. But funny, inventive power pop (“Trust in You”) and the bouncy, soulful jam “Gonna Lift Your Name” (along with an utterly head-spinning dance remix of the latter) are among the terrific surprises here, and are more than a match for any non-R&B pop album and artist of the year for her double platinum “Under My Skin.” This latest single, “Fall to Preach,” is perfectly amiable; it is catchy and has plenty of vocal and instrumental hooks. But it is also more of the same that just듬다-too many of those sounds so much like previous hits that they are beginning to become interchangeable. This might have been the time to take a more aggressive, pounding track to cruise with down the summer highway. Instead, this one is better-suited to a nap in the hammock.—**CT**

**DANCE/ELECTRONIC**

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

**VERVE REMIXED 3**

**PRODUCERS:** various

**VERVE 11666**

**RELEASE DATE:** April 5

“Verve Remixed” is one of the most successful brands in dance/electronic music. On this third volume, it will truly thrive. This time out, the revered jazz label mined its vaults for vocal tracks from the vault to be simply titched to be reconstructed by some of today’s savior-est beatmakers. The results are as smooth as they are jiggled. The Postal Service remixed Nina Simone’s “Little Girl Blue?” While it may not sound like the best of ideas, it works only too well. Also potent are Adam Freeland’s re-rub of Sarah Vaughan’s “Fever” and Junior Boys’ slo-mo mix of Billie Holiday’s “Yesterday.” Also on board are RJD2/ DJ Hologram vs. Tricky, Nujabes/Mamakka, Danger Mouse/Dinah Washington and others. But standing head and shoulders above the pack are the Brazilian Girls’ electric-squelched recon-figuring of Blossom Dearie’s “Just One of Those Things” and Bent’s Latin-infused remix of Holiday’s “Speak Low.” Expect this collection to become the soundtrack to many a cocktail party this spring and summer.—**MP**

**Latin**

**ORISHAS**

**ALBUM:** El Cubano Machete

**PRODUCERS:** Andres Levin, Niki Noci

**Surge/Universal Music Latino: Universal B0004340**

**RELEASE DATE:** March 29

Produced by broad-sounding Cuban artists Orishas are purveyors of a brand of urban Latin music far removed from the repetitive beats of the current reggaeton trend. Instead, they have channeled traditional Cuban rhythms with highly lyrical material to create what is best described as “Cuban rap.” The sound ranges from danceable material (the opening “Naci Orishas” and the cumbia-ish “Bombo”) to more introspective fare (the electronic-tinged title track) and complex rhythms (“Que Se Bocas” that underscores the driving conga beat). The underlying factors are the Cuban beats—although these vary from track to track—and deeply integrated melody, together with lyrics that are more social than sexual. Somehow, this all comes together in a highly enjoyable, satisfying album. —**LC**

**SINGLES**

Edited by Michael Paolletta

**COUNTRY**

**JAMEL & O’NEAL: Somebody’s Hero (3:40)**

**PRODUCER:** Keith Stepall

**WRITERS:** J. O’Neal, S. Smith, E. Hill

**PUBLISHERS:** various

**Capitol 7087-6-19083 (CD promo)**

The second single from Jame & O’Neal’s terrific new album, “Brave,” is a poignant portrait of the love, sacrifice and commitment that bind families. O’Neal, Shae Smith and Ed Hill wrote “Somebody’s Hero,” a tender tale of a mother’s love and how it moves from generation to generation. The first verse speaks of a mother who has never rocked Central Park or pulled anybody from a burning building, but she is a constant presence in her child’s life. The lyric follows that relationship from childhood to her daughter’s wedding day to the mother’s days in a nursing home. This is a very emotional song, with a light-hearted and ear-catching melody. O’Neal’s strong, supple voice brings out the best in the song, focusing every emotional nuance without becoming mushy or treacly. Even without Mother’s Day coming up, this song would have been a huge hit, but the timing couldn’t be better.—**DEP**

**POP/ROCK**

**THE WALLFLOWERS: The Beautiful Slow**

**PRODUCER:** Brendan O’Brien

**WRITERS:** Scott Ashworth

**PUBLISHERS:** various

**EMI America Promotional (ASCAP)**

**Unicorn 11397 (CD promo)**

The Wallflowers have a new album on the way, “Rebel, Sweetheart,” due May 24. The lead single is signature Wallflowers, with band leader Jakob Dylan’s melodic vocalizing andslide guitar that will sound out of place on any of the group’s 90s output. While the song is pleasant enough, it’s a typical band rock and top 40 radio, which championed the band last decade, will continue to play its new music. Given the fact that an acoustic version is included, the song should find a place at Triple- A and AC stations.—**BT**

**AVRIL LAVIGNE: Fall to Pieces (3:28)**

**PRODUCER:** Raine Maida

**WRITERS:** A. Lavigne, R. Maida

**PUBLISHERS:** Various

**Avril Lavigne/Underneath (SOCAN)**

**RCA 82876 (CD promo)**

Avril Lavigne just cleaned up at Clive Davis’ pre-Grammy party this week with her new pop album and artist of the year for her double platinum “Under My Skin.” This latest single, “Fall to Preach,” is perfectly amiable; it is catchy and has plenty of vocal and instrumental hooks. But it is also more of the same that just듬다-too many of those sounds so much like previous hits that they are beginning to become interchangeable. This might have been the time to take a more aggressive, pounding track to cruise with down the summer highway. Instead, this one is better-suited to a nap in the hammock.—**CT**

**BETLEPPAR: No Matter What (2:54)**

**PRODUCERS:** Def Leppard, Ronan McHugh

**WRITERS:** P. Ham

**PUBLISHERS:** various

**Island/UMI 05161 (CD promo)**

Def Leppard’s new single, “No Matter What,” is culled from “Rock of Ages: The Definitive Collection,” due May 17. It is a faithful cover of Badfinger’s 1970 top 10 Billboard Hot 100 hit, with sunny, jangly pop-rock flourishes. Adult Top 40 and modern AC radio are the most obvious homes for “No Matter What,” which will also get the expected play from heritage rock. This is the lone track recorded for the two-disc “Definitive” set, which will likely do solid business thanks to the band’s summer tour with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Keith Urban and many more. The remakes expand upon the band’s 1995 hits album “Vault,” which has sold 4 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.—**KC**

**R&B/HIP-HOP**

**ASHANTI: Don’t Let Them (4:22)**

**PRODUCERS:** Midi-Doc, Ivy Gotti

**WRITERS:** various

**PUBLISHERS:** various

**Island 16242 (CD promo)**

Single for its Jet “Hopes & Fears” album, Ashanti has consistently proved that she has more style than substance. But because many of her sample-heavy novelty songs have become smash hits, the R&B siren has now found the courage to attempt singing without so many gimmicks and instruments engulfing her voice. This was not an informed decision. Ashanti’s vocals are as melodic as a 40-car pileup and about as emotional as a fence post. “Don’t Let Them” is perhaps the emptiest offering yet from an artist whose popularity remains inexplicable.—**CT**
Love Songs From Dads

Second Koz-Helmed Collection Celebrates Fatherhood

BY MARGO WHITMIRE

A touch of serenity accompanies the April 26 release of "Golden Slumbers: A Father's Love," a collection of songs by such artists as Dave Matthews, Michael McDonald, Phil Collins and Smokey Robinson.

"Things happened along the way that showed me that we were on the right track with this album," says executive producer Dave Koz, who contributes saxophone to four tracks.

When Koz asked Kirk Whalum to contribute to the compilation of love songs from fathers to their children, Whalum told him of a song called "My Little Man" that he had written the day he buried his son. He put the song away in a drawer 20 years ago. "He said it had just been waiting for this project," Koz says.

This and other original tracks like McDonald's "When Scarlett Smiles"—written for his daughter—join classic love songs like "You Are So Beautiful" and "I'll Be in My Heart" on the Rendezvous Entertainment/HUM Recordings compilation.

A portion of the CD sales will benefit the National Fatherhood Initiative, which aims to improve the well-being of children through programs that encourage responsible fathers.

"It's a very symbiotic relationship, because having their logo on our CDs spreads the word about them, and for us, the partnership gives our album a sense of purpose," Koz says.

The release date is timed around NFP's third annual "National Golden Dads" campaign, in which volunteers scout malls, parks, zoos and other recreational areas on Father's Day weekend to recognize dads for spending quality time with their children.

Winning dads receive a "Golden Slumbers" sampler and prizes like baseball tickets and gift certificates.

The new album, the follow-up to 2002's Grammy Award-nominated instrumental set "Golden Slumbers: A Father's Lullaby," marks the first vocal release for Rendezvous.

"We wanted something distinctive from the first project," says Rendezvous president/VP of marketing Hyrum Katz, who believes the vocals will attract a larger audience. "It wasn't that we were trying to reach a different demographic, but by its very nature, it definitely has a broader appeal."

With the exception of Matthews' "Baby" and Collins' "You Touch My Heart," each cut was produced specially for the compilation.

The set also includes less mainstream artists like Solomon Burke, who contributes "Life Is Just a Matter of Time." "He was someone that we felt was an awesome force," Katz says, "and bringing him to a wider audience is something we're very proud of."

Kicking off the retail marketing campaign are clip-strip displays at mass merchants and a bookmark promotion. The CD will be featured in several retailers' sales, on counters and in Father's Day gift sections.

"I'm seeing this as a very mainstream project with a mass appeal, so I think traditional retail is great for reaching the audience," Katz says. The label also launched a two-month campaign with MovieTunes on April 1. A music video featuring footage from the album's recording sessions is screening before movie trailers in top markets, and a medley of

(Continued on page 47)

Signs Of Success For Music DVDs

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—There are a lot of "ifs" in the music DVD sector. If retailers find a more uniform method of displaying music DVDs and if prices don't erode too quickly, the category will continue its sales climb, participants said at the Music DVD Conference, held March 29 at the Westin Century Plaza hotel here.

Perhaps the biggest "if" centered on labels' marketing investments. "If record labels give the category the attention it is getting now, the category will remain niche," said John Murmur, president of retailer Hastings Entertainment.

Attendees also discussed the merits of the new DualDisc format versus separate audio and DVD projects and the potential reaction to the upcoming high-definition format.

All these issues are coming to the forefront because music video sales have shown impressive growth in the last decade. According to Tom Adams, president of Adams Media Research, music on home video accounted for 2% of the music market in unit terms 10 years ago. Today it accounts for 5%.

Adams also reported that between 1997 and 2004, the category's sell-through revenue jumped from $6.2 billion to $16.6 billion. He projects that figure will increase to $23.4 billion in 2009.

"The category has dramatic potential. Music has a very broad spectrum of fans," Adams said.

(Continued on page 47)
While gangsta rap has made millions aware of the street names of South Central Los Angeles, some of the city’s most vibrant hip-hop thrives under the radar. At Aum Fidelity Records, rapper Aesop Rock has led a weekly open-mic night for a decade. From his fellow Freestyle Fellowship members to Jurassic 5, nearly everyone who defines underground hip-hop in Los Angeles has passed through Project Blowed.

The Thursday-night event is immortalized in the CD/DVD “Project Blowed: 10th Year Anniversary,” released April 5 via Aesop Rock’s Project Blowed label and New York marketing firm Decem Media. In addition to Aesop Rock, the 21-track CD features Bushdriver, Customer Service, L.A. Symphony’s Pigeon John and Freestyle Fellowship’s Milkah 9, among others.

“If you go down to Leimert Park, there’s hundreds of people outside, and they’re battling, rapping, doing poetry, spoken word, etc.,” Decon co-founder Peter Bittenbender says. “It’s a really community-based organization.”

Project Blowed sprang from the hip-hop scene at a health food cafe called the Good Life. When the crowd became too large for the cafe, Aesop Rock opened the Project Blowed venue at Leimert Boulevard, a street with a rich jazz history.

The “Project Blowed: 10th Year Anniversary” companion DVD includes a concert and a short documentary about the open-mic night.

Bushriver, whose recent Mush Records release “Fear of a Black Tango” is getting national attention, served as co-musical supervisor for the project. “I wanted to preserve the integrity that Project Blowed has already established and introduce the new members so it seems seamless,” he says. “I wanted the lineage to seem cohesive.”

New York-based Caroline Distribution is handling the CD/DVD, which retails for $15.98. It is Caroline’s first Project Blowed/Decon release (previous albums went through RED Distribution).

“All of these artists tour widely, but their sales are heavily concentrated in California, so we’ll be focusing in that region and looking to spread it gradually from there,” Caroline VP of label relations Michael Bull says.

Though the project likely has a limited audience, it is out at a time when underground hip-hop is receiving more mainstream attention. Aesop Rock’s last album, “Love & Hate,” sold 22,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and his next is sure to improve upon that number, as his producer is in-demand Definitive Jux maestro RJ2.

“Aesop Rock was bouncing from deal to deal and was never building toward anything,” Bittenbender says. “With us, he has put out four records, and he’s only getting to bigger and bigger.”

CAROLINE TAKES OVER: New York-based Caroline Distribution has signed an exclusive U.S. distribution agreement with Takeover Records, the label run by Ben Harper, guitarist for major-label pop-punk act Yellowcard.

The band formed Takeover in the late 90s in Jacksonville, Fl., to release its own albums. The label, now based in Santa Monica, Calif., recently began signing other artists.

Next up is a reissue of Yellowcard’s debut album, “Midget Tossing,” and a split release from Epitaph act the Matches and newcomers Near Miss and Reeve Oliver. Both projects are due in June.

STILL SAILING: Brooklyn, N.Y.-based Aum Fidelity Records continues to reissue the catalog of Chicago band Shrimp Boat, whose members included Sam Prekop and Eric Claridge of the Sea & Cake. Due April 19 is the act’s long-out-of-print 1988 debut full-length, “Speckly.”

Last summer, the label released the three-CD set “Something Grand,” which collected more than three hours of previously unreleased Shrimp Boat material.

Originally issued on the band’s own Specimen Products label, “Speckly” was engineered by Brad Wood (Liz Phair) and Brian Deck (Califone). The group’s mix of folk and jazzy improvisation is credited as a major influence on mid-90s post-rock heroes Tortoise.

Aum Fidelity, which is operated by Steven Jorg, is distributed by NAIL, Revolver, Forced Exposure and Carrot Top.

COMINGS & GOINGS: Arthur Nails has been named East Coast sales manager for Caroline Distribution. He replaces Sean Gibbons, who left last month (The Indies, Billboard, March 19).

Nails is leaving Malden, Mass.-based boutique distributor Forced Exposure, where David Day will succeed him as label manager/marketing director. Day has been with the company for three years and most recently developed its in-house publicity services. Taking over in publicity is Eric Benuitt, who has been with the company for four years and was most recently receiving manager.
In the continuing market-share war among wholesalers, Alliance Entertainment Corp.—now owned by magazine wholesaler Source Interlink—scored a big hit when it landed 400 Kmart stores.

Kmart Stores Inc. has exclusively racked Kmart for decades, but somewhere along the way, chunks appeared in its seemingly impregnable hold. The retailer made inquiries among the majors early last year about the possibility of buying direct, then word leaked out at the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers convention in August that it was doing a test with AEC stocking 38 stores.

This was only Kmart’s third test of another supplier in more than four decades. The first was in the late 1970s with now-defunct Lieberman Enterprises; in the early 1990s, there was a five-store test with Trans World Entertainment. Han- delman always retained a stranglehold on the account—until now. It is unclear why Kmart decided to rethink the Handelman connection, and the retailer did not return a call for comment.

Tension first surfaced between the companies—both based in Troy, Mich.—when Kmart was operating under Chapter 11 protection. Handelman was designated a critical supplier and was paid $64 million in pre-petition debt. But other cred-i-tors challenged that payment, and the new Kmart management team decided not to defend the initial designation but to chase repayment.

Handelman and Kmart have since reached a settlement in the matter but did not disclose the amount; we will probably have to wait until the rackjobber files its 10-K report with the Securities and Exchange Commission in July.

Back in 2000, Kmart represented one-third, or about $450 million, of Handelman’s revenue base, but since the retailer’s bankruptcy in 2002 and subsequent reorganization, it has closed or sold nearly 1,000 stores, reducing its music revenue to about $200 million last year, sources say.

It is hard to blame Handelman for the drop, given Kmart’s troubles. On the other hand, Kmart’s music losses occurred while Target was becoming the most aggressive and visible big-box store by pursuing music sales. Despite Target’s moves, Wal-Mart still reigns supreme in music market share, leaving Kmart not only a distant third, but on a downward curve.

The 400 stores AEC is picking up represent about $50 million in business, AEC said in announcing the move. The press release also stated that parent Source Interlink has a “longstanding relationship with Kmart.”

Kmart recently merged with Sears, giving the combined operation 1,100 specialty stores and 2,350 big-box outlets. Kmart is the only one of these carrying music, and while some of its stores are being converted to Sears, and vice versa, and most of the big-box stores are being remarshaled, it is unclear if music will be added to the remaining Sears outlets.

MAKING TRACKS: DeVaugn Sear- son, the Tower Records CFO who was instrumental in the chain’s three-year restructuring, retired March 31. His replacement is Rebecca Roedell, who previously worked at Tower’s bank. She has been with the chain for a number of months in anticipation of the change.

CHECK OUT DANN: For the third time in a row, entertainment data provider Muze will stream an entire Aimee Mann album ahead of its release. Fans of Mann’s music will be able to preview “The For-gotten Arm,” due May 3 from Super Ego, at any Web site that uses Muze devices. The tracks will be streamed at no charge for one month before street date.

In addition to such accounts as Best Buy, C.D. Universe, Hastings, Tower Records and Virgin Entertain- ment Group North America. New York-based Muze provides data to some 100 Web sites.

Muze offered a preview of Mann’s previous studio set, “Lost in Space,” which sold about 31,000 units in its fifth week, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That figure beats first-week sales for other Mann releases, according to Muze president Paul Zullo. It has been with the chain for a number of months in anticipation of the change.

Zullo says his company plans to approach other artists, managers and labels and “essentially create a distribution arm for previews.”

While the typical 30-second song sample may have some value for online consumers, he believes that full tracks make for more compelling marketing tool.

“I read a review of Moby’s ’Hotel’ album at the New York Times online, which trashed, or should I say, raped the album. Zullo says. “In this story, there was a clause that ’I’m sorry I trashed the album. But how unfair is that to the artists? Why not put the whole song there—and let the listener hear if the song goes somewhere—rather than a disem-bodied piece of the song?”

Getting back to Mann and why Muze is previewing her album, Zullo says, “We are friends of the industry and fans of the music, and this is the kind of stuff we want to facilitate.”

NUMBERS GAME: Hastings Entertain- ment’s performance for its fiscal first quarter and full year was off from the previous year’s numbers.

For the three months ended Jan. 31, the Amatrillo, Texas-based mer- chant posted net income of $4.8 million, or 40 cents per diluted share, on sales of $173.1 million. Net income for the corresponding quarter of the previous year was $11.9 million, or $1.06 per diluted share, on revenue of $163.2 million.

For the year ended Jan. 31, Hastings reported net income of $5.8 million, or $1 per share, on revenue of $440.6 million, compared with $8.3 million, or 72 cents per diluted share, for the prior year, when revenue was $508.3 million.

Hastings management said that while revenue was up, so were expenses as it integrated a new warehouse management system. It said profit was also affected by higher shrinkage, a retail “fees” vendor and higher shipping and smaller profits from its rental business.

For the full year, the company posted a 5% increase in comparable-store sales. Within that, music was up 1.8%, books were up 1.5%, movies were up 15.4%, videogames were up 29.9%, and other product lines rose 9.5%.

IN PASSING: Bravado, Sanctuary Group’s merchandising company, acquired Blue Grape, Roadrunner’s merchandising company, back in December. Billboard estimates that Blue Grape generated annual revenue of $15 million, while Bravado’s is thought to be about $60 million. That means the company’s total yearly revenue is now about $75 million.

Executives at both companies confirm the acquisition but decline to provide further details.

**Koz**

Continued from page 45

songs from the project can be heard through MovieTunes’ in-house radio.

Because the first “Golden Slumbers” set was a top seller for amazon.com, the label has partnered with the online retailer for exclusive track downloads and the “featured album” spot around the release date.

Given the longevity of the first “Golden Slumbers,” Rendezvous is optimistic that its follow-up will also outlast Father’s Day.

“It’s a real challenge to give the message to retailers that this is just the beginning,” Katz says. “But we de- finitely see a project that can be enjoyed for years to come and will be a great gift year-round.”

## DVDs

*Continued from page 45*

Ted Cohen, senior VP of digital development and distribution for EMI, agreed. He said if EMI had known that Joss Stone would be named the spokeswoman for the Gap in March, it might have held her DVD “Mind, Body & Soul Sessions” beyond its December street date.

Video execs also suggested that retailers keep a breadth of music DVDs in stock, rather than just the high-profile titles.

“Retail is saying if it isn’t scanning rapidly, it won’t stay on shelves,” Koch Entertainment VP Dan Gurlitz said. “That’s hard for independents, because they aren’t attached to the artists like the [major] labels are.”

Though retail chains report that the category has become an increasingly solid revenue generator, each one deals with music DVDs differently.

Best Buy carries 650 DVD SRUs in its music sections, according to senior VP Gary Arnold. The category is a “single-digit contributor to revenue,” he said.

Hastings’ music DVD business doubled between 2003 and 2004, Marmaduke said. The chain has added a music lane and its rental section and moved titles toward the front of the store.

Tower Records carries about 4,000 music DVD titles per store and cross-merchandises with side-by-side audio and video displays, executive VP of sales and operations Kevin Cassidy said. The chain sold $1.2 million in music DVDs last year.

“Getting the titles face-front is important,” Cassidy noted. “We also have preview stations in some stores. The lift on titles that get viewed is substantial. Aggressive pricing is driving a lot of the busi- ness.”

The right price is still a big ques- tion mark, executives said. The aver- age music DVD title had a suggested retail price of less than $19 last year, while in 2000, it was closer to $23, according to the DVD Release Report. “There’s pressure to bring prices down,” MX Entertainment co-founder and president Zane Vella said. “That can do wonders for younger audiences. Price points mat- ter to kids.”

Marmaduke said a $24.99 price is definitely a sales deterrent.

**BEYOND STANDARD DVD**

Even as the CD-DVD hybrid DualDisc is being tested at retail, video execs are looking ahead to the HD format.

“There’s not a lot of money being spent on DualDisc,” Best Buy’s Arnold said. “It takes money to get noticed by customers.”

If the HD format receives adequate marketing support, retailers and labels agree that the music category in particular will benefit.

“The music industry needs a growth engine,” Marmaduke said. “Music DVD could be 15%-20% of the business.”

Barry Gordon, senior VP of acqui- sitions for Image Entertainment, pre- dicted that “live music shows will explode on HD.”

The Music DVD Conference was presented by Home Media Retail- ing in conjunction with the Digital Entertainment Group, the Video Software Dealers Assn., and Billboard sister publication The Hollywood Reporter.
### Billboard Top DVD Sales

**Week Ending April 16, 2005**

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<th>Title</th>
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*Note: Retail price for the sales charts.*
Digital Replicators Fill A Temporary Void

BY ANTONY BRUNO

This past holiday season saw a major uptick in digital music player sales, as friends and family bought iPods and related items as gifts. But the digital distribution crowd has since come to realize that an MP3 device sale does not a digital market make.

Comparisons of digital device sales and track purchases show that the uptake in MP3 players has not yet resulted in a similar surge in downloads. The assumption has been that users are transferring their existing physical libraries to their digital players instead.

But according to a recent Parks Associates survey, more than half of Internet-enabled households that own a portable MP3 player have ripped less than an hour of music.

“Rippers are a large chunk of people out there that just don’t synch it up,” says John Barrett, director of research at Parks Associates.

This bolsters the assumption by many that most digital music players remain empty or filled to a fraction of their capacity, because users are either unable or unwilling to go through the process of transferring their CD collections.

The result is a burgeoning cottage industry dedicated to converting physical music collections into digital format, ranging from individuals working out of their bedroom to sophisticated computing systems. Companies like ripdigital.com, Riptopia and ShiftMusic are among those offering such conversion services.

For about $3 per CD, customers mail their music collections to one of these companies, which use an automated ripping process to fulfill a typical order in two to seven days. The digital files are returned on either hard-discs or a customer-provided external hard drive. Some, like Riptopia, load the files directly onto customers’ portable players, and even resell iPods and other devices to offer an end-to-end service.

According to Riptopia president and founder Kurt Beyer, a typical order is about 300 CDs, but he has received some as long as 2,000. He started the company in January 2003; it has since grown to 14 staffers and reports that orders have either doubled or tripled in recent months.

Virgin's digital president Zack Zalon says CD conversion companies will have a limited life span as music consumers learn how to create their own digital files.

Record labels have questioned whether these companies are keeping copies of the music they rip and simply providing the same file to numerous customers who have the same album, instead of ripping each new CD. Riptopia and others stress that this is not the case, and all have intellectual property lawyers on staff to address these issues.

But of greater concern is privacy, as Riptopia and other services look to eventually monetize the information they gain about their customer's collections.

“We have a lot of knowledge of people’s music collections,” Beyer says. “We’re asking ourselves what’s the most effective way to mine that data. I can really track and get a sense of direction of your music tastes.”

Riptopia and other conversion companies are considering such next steps because the market for their services has an early sunset.

Virgin Digital president Zack Zalon tells Billboard that the mere act of transferring a physical CD into digital form is just a small, and eventually short-lived, element of broadening the digital music market. The company in February acquired Shift, which in addition to converting CDs educates customers about the digital music sales process.

“Our goal is to hold [customers'] hands and teach them how to do it themselves. There’s a limited life span for a company who only does it for you,” Zalon says. “Ultimately, it won’t be part of the process.”

He explains that the primary motivation behind the Shift acquisition was the company's consulting business.

Virgin’s ultimate goal, he says, is to convert music fans into digital music customers. The first step toward accomplishing this is to convert their existing CDs and get them interacting with their music digitally. But he says the industry must do more to guide music customers through the meaning of a confusing and intimidating digital process if the market is to grow.

“Consumers don’t always get it,” he says. “The key to the Virgin Digital store was to mimic the customer experience of the physical store... We need to take offline customer service into the online experience.”

NEWTECH

Toshiba America’s consumer products division is getting in line with the others looking to take a whack at the iPods’ virtual market share. The Peachtree City, Ga.-based company is expected to release their Gigabeat S series of digital audio devices this spring.

The devices also come with a music management program called the Room, which allows users to select their preferred music management system, such as MusicMatch. The Rep Rec program manages the process of ripping music from a CD. Prices are $278 for the 10GB, $329 for the 20GB, $419 for the 40GB and $489 for the 60GB models.

The full line of Gigabyte devices also includes hard-drive-based camcorders, DVD recorders and still-shot cameras, expected to ship this fall.

DIY Ringtones

Mobile content distributor Xingtone is teaming with Sonic Solutions’ Roxio division to sell and market the Xingtone Ringtone Creator software at retail stores. The software, compatible with Macs and PCs and now available at xingtone.com, allows mobile phone users to create master ringtones from music they have already and transfer the files to their phones. CD, MP3, WAV and other formats are supported. The software comes with a single-user license for unlimited federal, ringtone agreement. The deal with Roxio, the CD-burning software arm Napster recently sold to Sonic Solutions, is Xingtone’s first brick-and-mortar retail distribution agreement. Rollout in the United States will be later this spring.

Stone Age Spec Ops

Josh Homme and Alain Johannes of Queens of the Stone Age are writing an original soundtrack for the upcoming videogame “Spec Ops.” Homme says the music will feature short clips spanning a variety of genres. The game is being published by Rockstar Games, of “Grand Theft Auto” fame. No date is set for the “Spec Ops” release, but it is expected to be available before the end of the year.

Gospel Goes Online

Ben Harper and the Blind Boys of Alabama have released the concert video of their “Live at the Apollo” performance simultaneously online and on DVD. The download is available in standard and high-definition formats via CinemaNow’s watchmusic.com, which also has versions for portable devices using Microsoft’s Windows Mobile software.
Shapiro Bernstein Dreams Of Fields

BY JIM BESSMAN

Commemorating what would have been the 100th birthday of Songwriters Hall of Fame inductee Dorothy Fields, Shapiro Bernstein & Co. has compiled “Dorothy Fields Centennial, Vol. I.”

The promotional CD highlights nine of Fields’ co-written standards, including “The Way You Look Tonight,” “I Can’t Give You Anything but Love, Baby” and “On the Sunny Side of the Street,” performed by the likes of Frank Sinatra, Fred Astaire and Peggy Lee.

The disc is the first of a projected series honoring Fields, who was born July 15, 1905, in Allenhurst, N.J. (Her father was famed vaudevillian Lew Fields.) She died March 28, 1974, in New York.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to bring her catalog to light again,” Shapiro Bernstein VP Debbie Rose says. “People are familiar with Dorothy Fields’ songs, but they’ve never been put into the perspective of a whole body of work and its contribution to the American songbook.”

Fields’ collaborations with luminaries as Cy Coleman, Jerome Kern, Jimmy McHugh, Sigmund Romberg and Arthur Schwartz make her “one of the most important American songwriters, period,” Jennifer O’Sullivan says. O’Sullivan is coordinating the Fields catalog exploitation and licensing efforts at Shapiro Bernstein, along with David Hoffman and Suzanne Metrick.

O’Sullivan is a former Cherry Lane Music Publishing VP who recently left her post as air personality for Cambod- dia’s English-language radio station Love FM to join Shapiro Bernstein. She notes that Fields’ 400-plus songs also include the classic Coleman collaborations “Hey, Big Spender” and “If They Could See Me Now” from the 1966 Broadway hit “Sweet Charity.”

“A much anticipated revival of the show, which was briefly postponed following an injury to lead actress Christina Applegate, is back on again and opens on Broadway May 4 at the Al Hirschfeld Theater.

“Fields’ continuing to be relevant to this day,” O’Sullivan says, naming Michael Bublé, Rod Stewart, Diana Krall and Westlife among the acts that have recently covered Fields’ songs, that were recorded by big-name artists and sold a lot of sheet music,” says David Lamm, Fields’ son. He is a jazz pianist who performs his mother’s songs in a cabaret act with his wife, Judy Kreston.

“There’s certainly no song in English more beloved than ‘I Can’t Give You Anything but Love, Baby,’” he adds, which was originally a hit for the Blackbirds in 1928 and immortalized by Cary Grant and Katherine Hepburn in the 1938 Howard Hawks classic screwball comedy film “Bring- ing Up Baby.”

“She knew all the techniques of rhyming and how to tell a story, but more than that she understood what the human heart longs for—and put it into relatively lighthearted but still very moving lyrics,” Lamm continues.

“Her lyrics weren’t fancy: No twist and turns of Ira Gershwin or Loren Hart or Cole Porter or Noel Coward, but just a lot more like Irving Berlin in their straightforward, declarative way of speaking.”

Lamm further notes that Fields worked quickly and could adapt to many different collaborators.

“Maybe she wasn’t better-known because she never settled down with one particular guy, but probably 13 or 14 different writers—but they did write a lot with McHugh, Coleman and Schwartz,” he says. “And unlike a lot of them, she didn’t experience any career decline.”

He points to Fields being 58 when she was honored with “Sweet Charity.” Ten years later, at the time of her death, her legacy was still going strong with the new show “See-Saw” on Broadway.

Shapiro Bernstein president Michael Brettier feels the promo disc features some of the definitive versions of songs, including Lee’s “Can’t Give You Anything but Love, Baby” and Sinatra’s “The Way You Look Tonight.” He says much of it was a blast.

“She was always a Shapiro Bernstein writer,” he adds, noting that Fields origi- nally wrote for multiple publishers. “The U.S.A. rights reverted to the heirs’ publishing company, AID Music, so we concluded a deal with AID for the songs we didn’t formerly represent—primarily for synch.”

The Shapiro Bernstein/AI deal took affect the first of this year, Brettier says.

Smith Is Ready To Party Like It’s 1958

My kind of town, Las Vegas, is cel- ebrating its 100th birthday this year, just as one of its greatest performers, Keely Smith, returns to the songs that helped make it the live enter- tainment capital.

Her April 12 Concord release “Vegas '58—Today” features songs she and her late husband, legendary bandleader Louis Prima, made famous in the city’s lounges. It was recorded last year during her annual stint at Feinstein’s at the Regency in New York, where she is back for a three-week run this month.

“IT’S got that same shuffle rhythm that people love—that just makes people happy,” says Smith, who employed a nine-piece swing band on such signature tunes as “I Wish You Love” and “Jump, Jive and Wail!” (Prima wrote the latter for her), as

Words & Music

BY Jim Bessman

FELDS: A SWEET NEW YORK BABE

real songs surviving original member of the Ramones.

Back then he was the Ramones’ drummer. Now with guitarist/bassist Claudia Tieman, Ramone, who had a hand in writing such early Ramones classics as “Blitzkrieg Bop” and “I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend,” plays mandolin, banjo, guitar and dobro in the alternative country/punk/bluegrass duo Uncle Monk.

There are a lot of similarities between punk and old-time music,” Ramone says. “Both are home-brewed music as opposed to school, and both have an earthy energy. And anybody can pick up an instrument and start playing,” Uncle Monk’s songs include “Urban Renewal,” “Home Sweet Reality” and “Need a Life.” Varied themes, Ramone says, involve the struggle to make it in a big city, urban gentrification, interpersonal relationships, spiritual longings and how one goes about satisfying emotional needs.

The ASCAP writer “uses the vocabulary of country and bluegrass combined with the aesthetics of punk and alternative music.” He will be shopping Uncle Monk’s first album when it is finished in a few months.


Like the first volume, “The Real Book, Volume Two” retains the book and feel of the illegal 400-song col- lections, minus the notorious mis- takes. More jazz standards have been added to the second volume, which first appeared in the 1930s—again with complete disregard for copyright and royalties to writers.

“Volume Two” has always been extremely popular, containing many more choice jazz standards and clas- sics,” Hal Leonard VP of pop and standard publications Jeff Schroedl says. “Most freelance jazz musicians bring volumes one and two along to gigs, and the B flat and E flat versions of volume one will let more instrumentalists play from this revered fake book.”

Our reviews are now priced at $25, less than the illegal versions. Additional voicings of both volumes and “The Real Book, Volume Three” are in production and will follow later in the year.


“Annebop Hop,” the children’s book based on the song by Christine Lavin and illustrated by Betsy Franco, has just netted the American Asin, for the Advancement of Sci- ence’s award for best book.
**U.K. Act Servant Masters European Markets**

**BY OLAF FLURNESS**

LONDON—British four-piece the Servant is primed for a Pan-European launch after its edgy guitar pop-rock sound found favor in France and Italy.

The London-based group is gaining global exposure thanks to the use of an instrumental version of its song “Cells” in trailers for the Miramax movie “Sin City.” The film opened April 1 in the United States and is due in theaters across Europe in late May.

“Cells” was hand-picked by “Sin City” co-director Robert Rodriguez, according to Gavin Prunas, co-founder and manager of the Servant’s U.K. label, Prolifica, which is distributed by Universal. Since the trailers appeared, Prunas says, “I’ve had hundreds of e-mails asking about the track and the band.”

Though the Servant’s self-titled debut arrived in the United Kingdom in January 2004, it has yet to have much impact there. But the story is different in France and Italy.

The Servant is signed for France to Recall Records (distributed by Sony BMG), which also released the album in January 2004. In Italy, “The Servant” was initially licensed to NUN Entertainment; German indie group Edel acquired NUN in April 2004, and Edel Italy released the album the following month.

Recall has shipped 65,000 units in France, and Edel Italy has shipped almost 40,000, Prunas says.

Prolifica has licensed the album to Edel for the rest of Europe, with a release scheduled for early June.

“Our objective now is to spread the success of France and Italy across the rest of Europe,” says the band’s London-based manager, Mark Vernon of Firebrand Management.

“Cells” will be issued as a commercial single in mid-May in certain European territories. Album tracks “Orchestra” and “Liquety” will be singles in other markets.

The “Cells” exposure has led Edel to negotiations with “Sin City” distributor Buena Vista on cross-promotion initiatives. Vernon hopes the movie might lead to a U.S. recording deal. “People in the U.S. have bombarded the Servant Web site (theservant.co.uk), asking when the song is going to be released,” he says.

The album is currently available to U.S. consumers as an import through CD Baby (cdbaby.com). “We’re selling around 200 copies a month,” Prunas says.

**SLOW BUILD**

Recall managing director Leslie Dubest says he first heard the Servant in 1999, when an Atlantic Records A&R exec played him a demo. “She said, ‘I want you to sign this for the U.S.,”’ but said her boss wouldn’t let her,” he recalls.

The band subsequently signed to Recall, which issued two EPs in France, “Mathematics” (2000) and “With the Invisible” (2001). Both received limited indie release in the United Kingdom.

In 2002, the Servant signed with Prolifica. At the time, the label was a joint venture with EMI; the subsequent split from the major delayed any releases until the “Orchestra” single came out in late 2003. (Continued on page 54)

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**Japan: Labels May See Court Defy Gov’t On Master Ringtones**

**BY STEVE McCLURE**

TOKYO—Four Japanese labels are disputing a government body’s ruling that they colluded to monopolize distribution of master ringtones.

Japan’s Fair Trade Commission ruled March 24 that five labels here—Music Japan, Japan, and Victor Entertainment—had violated the unfair-trading-practices section of the Anti-Monopoly Law by conspiring the provision of master ringtones exclusively to Mobile K.K., a Tokyo-based company they jointly own.

Four of the companies—Sony Music Entertainment (Japan), Avex, Universal Music Japan, and Victor Entertainment—refused to meet an April 4 FTC deadline to take steps to allow other ringtones providers access to their master recordings.

The FTC made the following recommendations to the labels: that they grant permission to other ringtones vendors to use their masters, state publicly that they will not continue to rely on their masters to other companies and make independent decisions concerning the licensing of their masters.

Instead, the four labels will present their case to the FTC at formal hearings that precede lawsuits under Japanese law. If the two sides do not reach an agreement during the hearing—for which no schedule has been set—the courts could deal with the matter under the provisions of the Anti-Monopoly Law.

The fifth company, Toshiba-EMI, has asked for more time to make a formal response to the FTC. The commission has given Toshiba-EMI until April 18 to indicate whether or not it will comply.

Executives at the four other labels declined to comment directly on the case, as did Label Mobile. However, each offered official statements.

Avex said its views on the case “differ greatly from the FTC’s perception of the facts.” Rather than comply with the FTC’s warning, the company says, “we will seek fair certification of the facts and application of the law through a hearing.”

The Universal Music Japan statement said, “Regrettably, Universal Music Japan cannot agree with the FTC’s conclusions in this matter. They are without foundation. The company complies with all applicable antitrust laws and regulations, and will continue to do so.”

Victor Entertainment, claiming that it has cooperated fully with the FTC investigation into the master ringtones business, takes a similar uncompromising stance.

“All the points mentioned in the FTC recommendation concerning our (master ringtones) business are contrary to the truth, and there is no way that we can accept this recommendation,” a representative says. “We have decided to reject the recommendation and work to have the facts come to light in a formal hearing.”

SMEJ is also denying the FTC’s claim that the four labels colluded to control access to their master recordings. “We have notified the FTC that we are unwilling to accept their recommendation,” SMEJ said in a statement issued April 4.

**LEGAL STATUS**

“Theoretically speaking,” Tokyo-based entertainment lawyer Atsushi Naito says, “it is perfectly lawful for a record company to refuse entry permission to use a recording for master ringtones if it is owned by that company.” But it is arguably unlawful for a group of record companies to collectively refuse permission.

Naito adds that, given the five companies’ collective 60% share of Japan’s 2004 recorded-music market (according to Soundscan Japan), it would be difficult for them to legally justify (Continued on page 54)
# Hits of the World

## Japan

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Hits of the World is compiled by Billboard/London.
## COMMON CURRENCY

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

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**Billboard EUROCHARTS**

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**Global Pulse**

**India Falls Under Spell Of TV ‘Idol’**

India is the latest territory hit by the “Idol” TV phenomenon. Sony BMG India reports shipments in excess of 175,000 copies for its Feb. 15 release “Indian Idol,” an album featuring 10 finalists from the show of that name. The Mumbai-based company released winner Abhijeet Sawant’s debut album, “Apka Abhijeet,” April 7. “Indian Idol” debuted in October 2004 on Hindi-language cable and satellite network Sony Entertainment Television. The network says the March 5 finale attracted 15.4 million viewers. Sony BMG India managing director Shridhar Subramaniam says the success of the album and TV show illustrate the effect of “the emotional roller coaster that the contestants and the entire nation has gone through” with the series.

**SHARING SOLACE: Shipments in Australia of “Solace,” the major-label debut by roots performer, surfer and environmentalist Xavier Rudd, have passed the platinum mark (70,000 units). Universal Music Australia released the album in March 2004. Managing director George Ash describes the multi-instrumentalist as “a phenomenon” who “keeps under the radar but sells out 2,000-capacity clubs.”

“Solace” follows three independent sets by Rudd. Universal will release the album June 6 in North America and June 9 in Europe.

The American version of the album will include two bonus video tracks. “It’s important that people appreciate it one person playing these instruments,” Rudd’s manager, Frank Weipert of Teamworks in Vancouver, says. “Being solo provides the challenge to keep it all together myself,” says Rudd, who reserves days off for surfing tours to meditate in forests or up in the mountains.

**NEW GROWTH:** Highly touted Icelandic alternative rock quintet the Leaves return in May after a two-year absence.

The band’s debut album, “Breath,” appeared in the United Kingdom in August 2002 on B-Unique and in the United States in September 2003 through a licensing deal with DreamWorks. Enthusiastic reviews compared the band to Radiohead and Coldplay.

The Leaves parted company with B-Unique after Warner acquired it in 2003. “We got lost in the shuffle of major business politics,” singer Omar Gudjonsson says. “But it gave us the space to focus.”

The original three-piece added a drummer and keyboardist and signed to Island Records U.K. It recorded the widescreen rock of sophomore album “The Angel’s Test” in Reykjavik.

The album is due May 30 in the United Kingdom. Plans for other territories are being finalized.

**NIGEL WILLIAMSON**

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Korea’s Mobile Music Boom
Exploding Mobile Music Market Offers New Opportunities

BY MARK RUSSELL

SEOUL, South Korea—The March 28 announcement by the South Korean government that it has granted six terrestrial licenses for the next generation in mobile-phone technology—digital multimedia broadcasting—indicates that the union of music and mobiles is set to grow even stronger here.

DMB allows for high-quality video and CD-quality audio to be broadcast to phones and vehicles. The six terrestrial broadcasters will roll out services in May.

The exploitation of “mobile music” continues at a heady pace in South Korea, where three-quarters of the population of 48 million are mobile-phone users.

“We believe the Korean market is clearly capable of this phenomenon to develop,” says MelOn, which launched its service to make new music available to its 1.2 million subscribers.

CHANGING TASTES
Laurent Verrier, VP of digital media at MTV Networks Asia, describes mobile-phone services in Korea as “a very positive development and a promotional tool and a revenue source.”

MTV’s long-term plan has already been involved in one of the local telecoms in a promotion branded “Music Code,” which took place last December. In conjunction with SKT, MTV Korea displayed a five-digit number on screen during certain music videos. Viewers could ring them to download ringtones or backrings.

Nikki Han, director of international business at Sony BMG Music Entertainment, explains that the Telecoms in South Korea are using the mobile-phone market to change the tastes of Korean consumers.

“All told, about 30% of the 18 million mobile phones sold in South Korea in 2004 were MP3-capable, according to the Ministry of Information and Communication. The ministry expects the figure to climb to 30 million in 2005.”

The problem, however, is that pricing advantage is the only thing to sell.

“However, if we had chosen to accept the recommendation, the recommendation itself would have become legally binding, and they would have waived their right to challenge the recommendation in court.”

As of October 2004, sales of master ringtones from Label Mobile accounted for roughly half of the entire domestic market. According to the FTC, that market, which has grown rapidly in the last couple of years, is estimated to be worth 12 billion yen ($113 million) annually.

The commission conducted a series of raids on 20 record company offices last August aimed at uncovering information about their dealings with Label Mobile.

The FTC claims that in May 2002, the five labels conspired to maintain their pricing advantage by convincing the provision of master ringtones exclusively to Label Mobile.

In its ruling, the FTC says, “The five companies have turned down all requests from other [master ringtones] providers for permission to use their master rights.”

Influential Paris alternative rock star Oui FM immediately picked up on “Orchestra,” giving the band its initial radio exposure in France.

“It sounded like a huge hit,” recalls the station’s head of music, Jean Patrick Laurent, who added the song to his playlist and brought the band in for several live sets.

The band then embarked on a series of in-store appearances in France. The breakthrough was slow, however. It was only in mid-2004, after the band had played some 40 in-stores, that leading national top 40 network NRJ added “Orchestra.”

Boosted by that airplay, the single hit the French National Sales chart in October 2004, peaking at No. 20 more than 10 months after its release.

Recall says “Orchestra” has shipped more than 100,000 copies in France.

FUNK SILENCE
In Italy, “Orchestra” peaked at No. 17 on the Italian singles chart in August 2004. Servant songwriter/frontman Dan Black had already made an impact in the territory as a featured vocalist with hit Anglo-Italian dance collective Planet Funk on its 2002 album “Non Zero Sumness” (Virgin).

Appearance on Italian TV in 2003 with Planet Funk helped raise the Servant’s profile as its recording career was in stasis after the Prolifica-EMI deal dissolved.

Edel Italy managing director Paolo Franchini says Black’s public image was an asset when promoting the Servant. “It is enough to get him on TV, in order to show his charisma and stage presence,” he says. He adds that “the Servant” is an “incredible album for our market.”

The band has also been a strong supporter of the act.

Black is happy with his band’s achievements to date and says success at home would be a bonus.

Several local festivals don’t begin and end in NW1,” he jokes, referring to the postal code for London’s hip Camden Town district. “I lead a great life; there is a difference between driving from Florence to Milan compared to driving between Sheffield and Middlesbrough.”

The band completed an Italian tour of 1,500-capacity venues last month, followed by 14 French dates that included an April 11 show at the 2,600-capacity Paris Olympia. It has lined up European festival appearances for the summer and club shows in the fall.

The Tour is booked by Andy Wooliscroft at Primary Talent International in London. Black is published by Famous Music.

Vernon hopes to have a new album by the band ready for release this year.

“I’ve heard two new tracks, and they are brilliant,” Dubest says. The band “always retain that edgy attitude and vibe and at the same time write hit songs.”

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London.

Japan
Continued from page 51

The procedure is similar to an open-court trial,” she continues, “and whatever decisions the FTC reaches at the end of the hearings will be binding as a verdict handed out in a regular court.

“In May 2002, the five labels conspired to maintain their pricing advantage by convincing the provision of master ringtones exclusively to Label Mobile.

In its ruling, the FTC says, “The five companies have turned down all requests from other [master ringtones] providers for permission to use their master rights.”

Japan
Continued from page 51

refusing access to masters if they are found to have colluded in the way the FTC alleges.

An FTC representative notes that the commission’s recommendations are not legally binding, adding that if the labels are dissatisfied with the results of the hearings, they can appeal.

The FTC, as an independent administrative organ, has quasi-judicial powers, a Japanese legal source explains.

By Janice Grady
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES:
Artemis Records in New York appoints Lisette Rioux VP of marketing and artist development. She was director of artist development at Island Def Jam Music Group.
RCA Music Group in New York promotes Peter Gray to West Coast VP of national pop promotion. He was director of national promotion.
Arista/J Records in New York appoints Theola Borden VP of urban publicity. She was senior director of media and artist relations at Elektra and Atlantic Records.

HOME VIDEO: DreamWorks Home Entertainment in Glendale, Calif., appoints Olivier Tena head of worldwide home entertainment. He was VP of international business for Neutrogena.

Platinum Crüe

Motley Crüe was honored March 23 with the Recording Industry Assn. of America's platinum plaque, presented by Universal Music Enterprises president Bruce Resnikoff. The band's Hip-O double album, "Red, White and Crüe," earned platinum status by shipping 500,000 units, the standard for double albums. The presentation took place during the band's show at the Forum in Los Angeles. Pictured, from left, are Crüe members Vince Neil, Nikki Sixx and Nick Mars, Resnikoff and the Crüe's Tommy Lee.

The King Gets Palace Run


(Courtesy of www.americanradiohistory.com)

Now, Hear This: CHRONIC FUTURE

Artists to Watch

Adding a fresh edge to sounds reminiscent of old favorites, Chronic Future fuses old and new the right way. Just seconds into the band's major-label debut, "Lines in My Face," it becomes clear that these four guys could be the pop progeny of '80s punk rockers Circle Jerks and rap rockers Faith No More. Producer/engineer Sean Beavan, whose credits include Nine Inch Nails, Marilyn Manson and No Doubt, found the perfect mix for the record, bringing energy, excitement and a big sound to the band's music without losing its raw feel. Friends since the age of 13, vocalist Mike Busse, bassist/vocalist Brandon Lee and brothers Barry and Ben Collins (drums and guitar/vocals, respectively), built a strong underground following in and around their Arizona home base. After some indie releases, Interscope Records and Universal Music Publishing jumped onboard. Since the album's release last August, the track "Time and Time Again" has been used in two Electronic Arts videosgames, "Burnout 3: Takedown" and "MVP Baseball 2004." The song and other tracks have also been heard on TV shows such as "CSI: Miami." Last summer the band performed on part of the Warped tour then closed out the year supporting Papa Roach in Europe.

SUSAN BUTLER

Seeking Support

Music industry representatives and acts including the Commodores, Take 6 and Justin Guarini of "American Idol" visited Capitol Hill March 9 to attend a congressional reception in support of music education. The artists performed and delivered a petition signed by more than 33,000 teens across the United States who want music in their schools. Pictured, from left, are the Commodores’ Walter “Clyde” Orange and William “Wak” King, Rep. Jim Cooper, D-Tenn., and the Commodores’ JD Nicholas.

BILLY HALE
Sponsorship Sales Executive Wanted

VNU Business Media publishes over 50 business publications, stages more than 50 trade shows and conferences and operates approximately 200 business-to-business electronic products. We operate around the globe, covering some of the most powerful industries in the world including entertainment, retail, media, travel and design. We have an immediate opening at Billboard in our New York office, for a Sponsorship Sales Executive. We are seeking a driven sales professional to generate revenue for a variety of conferences. This position will sell sponsorship of events to industry and brand marketers, develop integrated sponsorship packages that support event-programming elements and customize innovative packages. Must be able to develop sponsorship proposals and conduct presentations to client decision-makers. Responsibilities will also include managing and coordinating sales efforts across brands, and working with other external partnerships sales departments on sponsorship packages.

Qualified candidate will have 5-10 years industry related experience (non-endemic, corporate accounts, entertainment/music industry), and excellent written and verbal communication skills. Must have prior sponsorship sales experience and familiarity with event execution. Knowledge of PowerPoint, Excel, Quark, and Microsoft Word required. A Bachelor's degree in a relevant area of study required. Please send resume and a cover letter including salary requirements to: att: HR Dept. -tg. Email: entertainmentrecruit@vnubuspubs.com. Visit our website: www.vnubusinessmedia.com.

Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted. No phone calls or agencies please. VNU Business Media offers a competitive salary with excellent benefits. VNU is an equal opportunity employer.

ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

Vice President of Development

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum is a living, breathing monument to the energy, power and influence of rock and roll. Since opening its doors in 1995 to permanently honor rock and roll’s innovators and legends, the Museum’s collections and exhibits represent every era in the ongoing evolution of rock and roll, from Les Paul to Paul McCartney, from Bob Dylan to Bob Marley, from Mahalia Jackson to the Jackson 5.

To propel this already successful museum to the next level of excellence, the Museum seeks to substantially increase its philanthropic funding efforts and ultimately launch a comprehensive campaign (annual, capital and endowment). Reporting to the Museum’s President and CEO and directing a staff of six professionals, the Vice President will further design, develop and implement a comprehensive fundraising program. Major individual gifts, planned giving, corporate and foundation gifts, annual fund and membership.

Qualifications:
A love of music and an enthusiasm for the Museum’s mission is essential. The Museum seeks a seasoned, talented, creative fundraising professional to further build the capabilities of the Development Department in order to generate a substantial increase in funding. The successful candidate will likely come from a not-for-profit organization; however, appropriate candidates from the corporate sector also will be given consideration. Experience cultivating and soliciting major individual gifts is required, and campaign experience is highly desired. Demonstrated management skills and sound judgment is essential. Familiarity with the music and entertainment industry is a plus, as is familiarity with the Cleveland community. A national perspective on fundraising is ideal.

Please respond with cover letter, resume and current compensation information via the mail to: Ann P. Kern, Managing Director or Josie Sandler, Sr. Associate, Korn/Ferry International, 200 Park Ave., 37th Fl., New York, NY 10166 or via email: angelique.black@kornferry.com. An Equal Opportunity Employer MP/D/V
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Starbucks
Continued from page 1
But this time, Don VanCleave, who heads the Coalition of Independent Music Stores, is praising Star
bucks’ efforts. “We clearly see a link between breaking street date on a major release and giving a totally unknown band the biggest break they could ever hope to get,” VanCleave wrote in his weekly letter to the retail sales community.

FIELD STILL NOT LEVEL
Others are not so charitable. “It all comes down to a sin is a sin,” says Terry Currier, owner of Music Mill
ennium in Portland, Ore. “If Star
bucks wanted to do something like this and really support it, the least the label could do is do a soft sell to all accounts. I’m all for someone com
ing up with a good idea for helping new artists, but there still has to be some kind of level playing field.”

Starbucks Entertainment president Ken Lombard tells Billboard, “All we’re attempting to do is bring a unique set of assets to the industry and the artist and provide a solution for reaching the cherished adult customer. This is not the first time a retailer has been provided with an exclusive.”

As with its Concord Records deal for Ray Charles’ “Genius Loves Company,” Starbucks is an equity partner with Lava in the Antigone Rising CD and will benefit financially from any album sales outside of Starbucks. The exclusivity period is indefinite.

Lombard says Starbucks is talking with labels about future particip
ants. “There is no set schedule, but we want to do as many of these as we can.”

In addition to in-store placement and play, Starbucks will push the title through its XM Satellite Radio sta
tion, as well as through partnerships with United Airlines and T-Mobile’s Wi-Fi network, Lombard says.

The Firm’s Simon Renshaw, who manages Antigone Rising with Gayle Boulware, says Starbucks will play a vital role in the group’s develop
ment. “At this point in time, one is always trying to find a new way to expose talent,” he says. “Here, we’re going to be able to put the girls’ music front and center out of the box. It was an opportunity that we couldn’t overlook.”

Lava will follow with a studio album by the band in August that will go through traditional retail.

Law executives could not comment on the deal because parent Warner Music Group has an IPO pending.
Springsteen

Continued from page 5

us through the decades, as long as they continue to do right by us, and they do," Landau says.

Ticket prices are still being finalized, but Landau says they will be in the $85 range for premium seats and will not exceed $100 in any markets.

All of the shows will be intimate, Landau says, even in the arenas. “A number of arenas, like our friends at the Meidowlands [in East Rutherford, N.J.], have perfected a sort of theater look that allows us to play to a slightly larger audience than a typically sized theater without giving up the overall feeling of intimacy,” Landau says. “We'll be playing in that theater-in-the-arena setting in Phoenix, St. Paul [Minn.], Cleveland and New Jersey, as well as in most of Europe.”

The production will use “appropriately sized” video screens all at venues, Landau adds.

Springsteen last toured solo in support of his “Ghost of Tom Joad” release in 1995. Then, he played only acoustic guitar. This time, he will also play piano.

“Bruce is rehashing the show right now, creating a very specific perspective for it,” Landau says. “As always the core with Bruce, the set will evolve right up until the test shows.”

A solo performance is the best way to go with the new material, Landau believes. “Devils & Dusts has a combination of rock music and acoustic music, but as a body of work we thought that the intimacy of the solo show wound up being powerful on its own,” he explains. “The full rock version of some of the new songs is sure to be part of the next E Street Band tour.”

On Springsteen’s last solo tour, he played more than 200 North American dates. The 48 shows reported to Billboard Boxscore grossed about $55 million and drew roughly 150,000 people.

Landau says this run will not be nearly as extensive because “Bruce is also working on some music. This tour won’t turn into one of our typically super-extended run of shows.”

MILIA

Continued from page 8

from 65 million.

The reach of third-generation mobile phones, which can transmit large files of content at high speeds, is growing internationally. Carphone War-

operator Vodafone, a MILIA sponsor, estimates it will have 10 million 3G subscribers by 2006.

With this backdrop, entertain-

ment companies are reassessing content creation for these new distribution platforms.

EMI Music Group is aggressively investing in digital distribution and the multimedia-content business with full-track downloads, master ringtones and music videos on mobile platforms. Chairman Alan Levy told investors last year that 25% of EMI's business could be "non-

physical" music in five years.

An astonishing 99% of the company’s digital revenue from Asia is from mobile products, says Ted Cohen, EMI senior VP of digital development and distribution.

"We're moving beyond where we were five years ago," Cohen declares. "We're helping service providers flesh out their business models, and what both sides have become better at is understanding the needs of those sitting across the negotiating table. We're also looking at what the next generation is offering."

Finnland-based global handset

maker Nokia is an "MIPV featuring MILIA sponsor aiming to encourage distributors to invest more in multimedia content.

MILIA keynote speaker Anssi Vainik, executive VP/GM of multi-

media at Nokia, tells Billboard that mobile phones are becoming mini-

computers and broadcast terminals for entertainment, information and communication. Nokia will present its Visual Radio, which enables radio stations to offer listeners and advertisers an audiovisual outlet. For example, with one click, listeners can use Visual Radio phones to read details of a song being commercial played on a station, or take part in a contest or consumer survey via the device's screen.

He also forecast that any personal mobile device not connected to a wireless network will die," Vainik says. "These days, if you use different media formats, such as books, music players, magazines, you can be physically tied to one place. But with your mobile handset, you're tied to only your imagination. That's a very strong proposition for content owners."
"Ask anyone, Billboard is "the" authority when it comes to the music business. When I first learned about Billboard five years ago, the charts were the ONLY index of a song's popularity that mattered. Now, the Billboard charts include digital music sales and there are lots of deals in the digital space to cover. Things have come a long way and Billboard is right there."

SHAWN FANNING
Chief Strategy Officer, SNOCAP

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**Usher's Echo Widens Gap**

Even beyond the obvious shift from Easter-fueled sales to the traffic of a non-holiday week, you had to know this would be an ugly time to examine year-to-date album numbers.

The momentary widening of the gap from 2004 sales that we saw last issue with the earlier arrival of this year's Easter frame is now largely depleted as we factor in the arrival of last year's top-selling album.

The sales week in this issue's Market Watch corresponds with the 2004 stanza when Usher opened at 1.1 million copies, the biggest Nielsen SoundScan week for any album on the Arista label.

Last issue, the matchup of Easter's sales with a non-holiday week from '04 cut the year-to-date deficit from 8.6% to 7.3%. This week, though, with sales of 15.5% from the same frame of 2004, the gap widens to 8.1%. The hole will get deeper two weeks from now, when the comparison takes in last year's Easter sales frame of 12.3 million album units.

The slide this week—obviously—starts at No. 1, but it does not end there. At the top of The Billboard 200, 50 Cent leads with 211,000, down 36% from the prior week, but more significantly, down 80.8% next to the opening frame a year ago by Usher's "Confessions."

**Over the Counter**

By Geoff Mayfield

So, even with career-best weeks from Beck and Larry the Cable Guy near the top of the list, the rest of this week's top 10 looks familiar. Each of the next nine titles sold less than the album of the same rank in last year's corresponding sales week.

At No. 2, Beck is almost 53% lighter than the 343,500 that "Now 15" sold at the same rank in the 13th week of 2004, and volume for the whole top 10 is down by 52.6%.

**BECK TO THE FUTURE:** Consider the eclectic appeal of modern rock pillar Beck. He is still hip enough that the young-skewing Fox series "The O.C." enlisted five tracks from his new album for one of its episodes, yet he is enough of a veteran that Starbucks stocked his "Guero" alongside the jazz, world music and Ray Charles CDs that the ubiquitous coffee chain offers.

Starbucks' interest in Beck surprised me until a colleague pointed out that 25-year-old fans who fell in love with "Loser" in 1994 would now be in their mid-30s, an age bracket that nicely fits within the chain's consumer base.

When Charles' "Genius Loves Company" opened with 202,000 copies in August, sources said that Starbucks sold about 40,000 of them.

Nielsen SoundScan credits close to 27,000 of Beck's 162,000-unit opener to the nontraditional sector, which includes direct-to- 

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**Market Watch**

A Weekly National Music Sales Report

**WEEKLY ALBUM SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Albums</th>
<th>Store Singles</th>
<th>Digital Tracks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>10,579,000</td>
<td>2,103,000</td>
<td>1,096,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>15,218,000</td>
<td>2,537,000</td>
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**YEAR-TO-DATE ALBUM SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>185,143,000</td>
<td>222,463,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
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**YEAR-TO-DATE OVERALL UNIT SALES**

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>185,143,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**DISTRIBUTORS' MARKET SHARE 02/22/2005-04/03/2005**

**TOTAL ALBUMS (%)**

- UMD | 32.9%
- SONY BMG | 25.3%
- INDIES | 16.8%
- WEA | 15.2%

**CURRENT ALBUMS (%)**

- UMD | 38.7%
- SONY BMG | 25.4%
- INDIES | 17.8%
- WEA | 10.9%

---

**No. 1 Wilson Drives A 4X4**

It has been only 13 months since Gretchen Wilson debuted on Hot Country Singles & Tracks. In that short time, her first four singles have all reached the top 10. That makes her the first female artist to pull off this accomplishment since Duane Carter began her career with four top 10 hits in a row eight years ago.

Wilson's fourth single, "Home wrecker" (Epic), moves 11-9 this issue. The Illinois native made her debut in March 2004 with "Redneck Woman," which spent five weeks at No. 1. The follow-up, "Here for the Party," peaked at No. 3 in October.

"When I Think About Cheatin'" went to No. 4 in January. Counting Wilson's hits, the last act to begin its career with four top 10 singles was Rascal Flatts. The group debuted with "Prayin' for Daylight," which hit No. 3 in 2000. Then came "This Everyday Love" (No. 9 in 2001), "While You Loved Me" (No. 7 in 2001) and "I'm Movin' On" (No. 4 in 2002).

Rascal Flatts' top 10 streak continues with six more hits.

**90210:** Last issue, Nine Inch Nails had the second-highest debuting single of 2005 on The Billboard Hot 100, but that record only held for one week.

**Weezer** has appeared on the pop singles chart only once before. "Undone—The Sweater Song" reached No. 57 in October 1994. The band now earns Hot Shot Debut honors with "Beverly Hills" (Geffen). By bowing at No. 25, "Beverly Hills" is runner-up only to the multi-artist tsunami relief charity single "Across the Universe," which debuted six weeks ago at No. 22.

Not counting singles by "American Idol" finalists, "Beverly Hills" is the third-highest new entry of the last two years. "Universe" is in second place, behind Eminem's "Just Lose It," which started at No. 17 in October 2004.

**DUST UP:** "Devils & Dust" (Columbia) is only the second Bruce Springsteen single to appear on The Billboard Hot 100 this millennium.

Bowing at No. 72, the song is the second-highest debut this issue. It is the first Springsteen track to chart since "The Rising" rose to No. 52 in August 2002. The most recent Springsteen single to chart before "The Rising" was "Secret Garden," which went to No. 19 in May 1997.

**LONELY BOY:** Bobby Vinton is back in the top five of The Billboard Hot 100 for the first time in almost 34 years. He gets songwriting credit on Akon's "Lonely" (SRC/Universal), based on Vinton's 1964 chart-topper "Mr. Lonely." Vinton was last in the top five as an artist (and a songwriter) when "My Melody of Love" went to No. 3 in 1974.

**CANDY MAN:** 50 Cent spends the 20th week of his career at No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100, as "Candy Shop" (Shady/Aftermath) refuses to budge from pole position. This is the seventh week on top for "Candy Shop," which is now 50 Cent's second-biggest hit. "In Da Club" spent nine weeks at No. 1 in spring 2003. The follow-up, "21 Questions," reigned for four weeks.
This week's Top 100 Albums: 

1. *Under My Skin* - Avril Lavigne - 162,710
2. *Grammy Nominees 2005* - Various Artists - 150,890
3. *Redemption Songs* - The Beekeeper - 140,130
5. *The Bookkeeper* - Jars of Clay - 126,570
6. *Devil's Playground* - Billy Idol - 126,460
7. *Ice Princess* - Various Artists - 126,150
8. *Gemini* - Brian McKnight - 120,310
10. *Live From Earl's Court* - Creed - 118,320

New albums this week include *Prince Of Darkness* by Ozzy Osbourne and *The Whole Story* by Josh Gracin.

*The Greatest Hits* by Blake Shelton has been certified Platinum by the RIAA, selling over 1 million units.

**Top-selling albums (Platinum)**: 
- *The American Way* by Rascal Flatts - 152,000
- *Country Strong* by Tim McGraw - 140,000
- *The Long Road* by LeeAnne Rimes - 132,000
- *The Hits* by Alan Jackson - 128,000
- *The Collection* by Various Artists - 124,000

**Top-selling albums (Gold)**: 
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 118,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 116,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 114,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 112,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 110,000

**Top-selling albums (Platinum)**: 
- *Brothers* by Steel Panther - 150,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 148,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 146,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 144,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 142,000

**Top-selling albums (Gold)**: 
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 140,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 138,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 136,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 134,000
- *The Ultimate Collection* by Various Artists - 132,000
Over The Counter

Continued from page 61

counter sales, Internet orders (physical albums and albums downloads) and Startracks. This time, the coffee merchant's yield is smaller than it was for Charles, accounting for about 11,000, which represents almost 7% of the first week for "Guero," compared with the 20% share that Startracks poured into the start of "Company."

More eye-opening are the numbers of albums downloads sold through iTunes, said to be in the range of 15,000-15,000. Combined with 5,000 physical albums sold via Internet merchants (No. 1 on Top Internet Album Sales with a lead of 2,000 copies), the digital world owns at least 11% of Beck's start.

Meanwhile, about 70% of sales for "Guero" came from chain and independent music retailers. In fact, indie stores' first week total, 20,000 copies, was less than 300 shy of what mass merchants sold during this title's launch.

Finally, this establishes not only Beck's biggest sales week, but his highest Billboard 200 rank. Both markets were previously held by his last album, "Sea Change," which sold 90,000 in 2002 during the week that it entered the big chart at No. 8.

EN FUEGO: Los Tigres del Norte post their second-best sales week and their best Billboard 200 peak, entering at the No. 48 before bowing at No. 2 on Top Latin Albums.

A Unvision ad campaign and $9.99 sales price at Circuit City helped the group move 19,000 copies. Los Tigres have now placed 10 albums on the big chart. Two other Latin albums also make chart news. Dandy Yankee scores

The Billboard 200's Pacsometer with a 12.8% hike. For impetus for his album's romp was an appearance on Unvision's popular talk show "Cristina." That chart's Greatest Gainer trophy goes to the multi-artist "Chosen Few: El Documental" (19,-000, up 89%). Participating reggaeton acts Boy Wonder and LDA were among those who joined a promotional store tour of 15 cities that began March 28 at the Virgin Megastore in Times Square in New York.

HONOR ROLL: Aside from being the first comedy album to bow inside the Billboard 200's top te see page, 51, Larry the Cable Guy's "The Right to Bare Arms" commands the largest opening week of any comedy album since Nielsen SoundScan launched in 1993 (No. 7, 9,000). Album Sounder held the previous mark for a comedian's first week. He sold 1,000,000 when "Starr and Judy's Kid" hit Billboard 200 at No. 16.

As one would expect, department stores led the way for Larr, as mass merchants account for 789% of his first-week sales. Three other acts join him and Beck with starts in the top 10. Beanie Sigel earns the dubious distinction of being the third rapper in the last nine months to enter the top 30 of The Billboard 200 while serving time in prison. He leaps 83-1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums after street-date woes caused an early start, and is No. 3 on the big chart. Both ranks are career peaks, although his owner of 131,000 is less than either of his two albums sold in his last two weeks.

C-Murder (now called C-Miller), also behind bars, entered The Billboard 200's last chart before his No. 41 was still his best of his career. Meanwhile, 112 (No. 4, 117,000 copies) and Will Smith (No. 6, 98,000) start near the top of the page, each with bigger digital sales than either act saw the last time around.
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These are the top 10 Contemporary Jazz albums according to Billboard.
Hot Gospel Tracks Chart Makes Its Bow

In conjunction with our partners at Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems and timed to coincide with the annual Gospel Music Week convention in Nashville, Billboard is pleased to announce an important addition to our suite of radio charts: Hot Gospel Tracks. Beginning this week, the chart will appear electronically on billboard.com and billboard.biz, as well as in our sister publication Billboard Radio Monitor and on its site, billboardradion.com.

The 40-position chart is tabulated weekly and is based on airplay data from 38 gospel stations, with titles ranked by gross audience impressions. As with our other audience-based charts, exact times of detections at each station are confidentially referenced with Arbitron listener data. The stations are selected for chart tabulation range in Arbitron markets from No. 1 (New York) to No. 158 (Savannah, Ga.).

The introduction of Hot Gospel Tracks fortifies our commitment to covering the religious music radio sector and is the genre’s first monitored airplay chart. Billboard and Nielsen BDS partnered a year ago on airplay charts for religious music with the introduction of our Hot Christian Adult Contemporary and Hot Christian Singles & Tracks charts.

On the inaugural edition of the gospel list, format veteran Donnie McClurkin rises 2-1 with "I Call You Faithful." With more than 2.7 million audience impressions, his single replaces crossover star Smokie Norful’s "I Understand," which dominated the prior period with 2.6 million impressions.

Top audience penetration for McClurkin’s single occurs at WHB Memphis (466,000 listener impressions) and WPZE Atlanta (365,000).

Daily management of Hot Gospel Tracks is handled by our New York-based R&B/hop-hop charts manager, Minal Patel.

Nashville-based Wade Jessen, who oversees the Billboard Top Christian and country charts, helped orchestrate the new list’s launch.

WILL POWER: “Switch” by Will Smith moves to the top of Hot Digital Songs with a 27% gain to 40,000 paid downloads. The track moves 15-11 on the Pop 100 while climbing 19-14 on the Billboard Hot 100. "Switch" is Smith’s biggest Hot 100 hit since “Wild Wild West” topped the chart in the July 24, 1999, issue.

The biggest mover on the Digital chart is Alonzo’s "Lonely," which sells 37,000 downloads, an improvement of 13,500 from last week’s tally. With that spike, "Lonely" leaps into the top 10 at No. 9 and Pop 100 (11-6). Elsewhere on Hot Digital Songs, Weezer’s "Beverly Hills" debuts at No. 5 with 29,500 downloads. The track enters the Hot 100 and Pop 100 at No. 25 and moves 13-6 on the Modern Rock Tracks chart in only its second week on the list.

On the Pop 100 Airplay chart, 50 Cent’s "Candy Shop" holds at No. 5 for a second week, giving him his first top five track at mainstream top 40 radio since his debut single, "In Da Club," peaked at No. 1 with its "Disco Inferno" still balled at No. 6 on the Pop Airplay chart and his two songs with the Game still on the list, 50’s ubiquitous presence seems to be hampering any of its songs from realizing its full chart potential at that format.

That is similar to what Eminem experienced this year, as his four songs to chart from "The Eminem Show" debuted in less than four months’ time, with the last three entering the Pop 100 Airplay chart during a nine-week window. With airplay spread over so many tracks, Eminem failed to hit the top five with a single song, topping out at No. 6 with "Just Lose It."
Stefani
Continued from page 1

Continued from page 6

Kazaa
Continued from page 6

K.D. LANG PERFORMS NEIL YOUNG’S HELPLESS AT THE JUNO AWARDS

Despite lacking such Canadian star power as Lavinia, Celine Dion, Diana Krall, Bryan Adams, Michael Bublé and Our Lady Peace, the April 3 CTV telecast from the MTS Centre provided a significant national platform for such up-and-coming performers as Feist, K-Os, Alexisonfire and Billy Talent.

Host Daniel0n Canadian TV star Brent Butt, the show also featured performances by k.d. lang and Guess Who members Randy Bachman and Burton Cummings. “I remember when the Junes were in one small room in Toronto,” Winnipeg native Cummings told Billboard. “This is great for Winnipeg.”

Bottle awards were presented during the televised show. Some 31 awards were given out April 2 at a dinner attended by 1,300 music industry figures.

A brain-veink kept Winnipeg-raised rocker Neil Young from appearing in his former hometown.

It would have been his first appearance at the Junos since the early ’80s. After being treated at a hospital in New York earlier in the week, he was advised by doctors not to travel for several days. He did, however, watch the Junos at Canadian Consul General Pamela Wallin’s official residence in New York.

Young’s illness provided the show with its defining moment—and one of the great Juno highlights of all time.—k.d. lang’s remarkable performance of “Helpless,” Young’s ode to his Canadian roots. Lang had not performed at the event in more than a decade but was enthusiastically cheered by the crowd.

“It’s great to be back performing at the Junos,” she told Billboard afterward. “It was fantastic.”

For a complete list of winners, go to juno-awards.ca.

FOR THE RECORD

In the article “A Change of Heart” (Billboard, April 9), Peters Management Syndicate should have been listed as Heart’s management.
Kenner. He has been in front of a lot of eyes in the past couple of years," Stickland says, adding that radio has also been a big factor. "He has a very strong radio base with country radio and classic rock radio. He used to do commentary on classic rock stations years ago. He has really built a strong fan base by hitting middle America, and our marketing focus was on middle America. He was on a couple hundred radio stations leading up to the release doing interviews. They just love him doing morning shows.

Lary says the credit goes to the fans and good timing. "We've just kind of hit it at a time when the country needed a little humor," he says of his "Blue Collar" buddies. "When we're onstage, we just portray ourselves as regular guys. That's what we are.

Cable Guy

Continued from page 5

The Right to Bare Arms" was recorded live in Houston, and is the fourth release on Jack Records, which bowed last fall. Jack is a joint venture between Warner Bros. and Williams. In addition to participating in "Blue Collar Comedy" projects, Larry (whose real name is Dan Lawrence Whitney) has released two solo albums—2001's "Lord, I Apologize" (Hollywood), and "Larry Christmas" (Jack). The two have 704,000, and 151,000 copies, respectively.

Tim Peterson, country music buyer for Trans World Entertainment, attributes the comedy's success to the fact that he is "so accessible. The humor is just so real, and he's down to earth. We've done well consistently with his records. We just knew this would be a great record out of the box."

"Peachtree" debuted and peaked at No. 21 in the United Kingdom last November, compared with the No. 2 peak for "Songs From the West Coast" in 2001.

In the United States, "Peachtree" peaked at No. 17 on The Billboard 200 in November. It has scanned 294,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. "Some from the West Coast" has sold more than 500,000 units.

The deal is "not a knee-jerk reaction to record sales or anything of that sort. This is a longer-term idea," Presland says. That John noticed what Sanctuary did to relaunch the career of former Smiths frontman Morrissey, which "wasn't a home run at all."

Mercuriadis says the new partnership will focus on John's music and creative output. The first step is to relaunch "Peachtree Road."

A repackaged version of the album will include tracks John composed for the stage adaptation of "Billy Elliott." It will be released May 21 in the United Kingdom to coincide with the debut of the musical.

The next U.K. single, "Electricity," is one of the added tracks from "Billy Elliott." Meanwhile, in the States, the next single is country-tinged "Turn the Lights Out When You Leave" from the original version of "Peachtree."

"We hope it will have a single on country radio stations," Mercuriadis says.

John's schedule for the year includes shows in Las Vegas, where he joined England's "The Magic of Sammy Davis Jr." for six weeks, and a "Live" TV special that is slated to air around Thanksgiving. Arena and stadium concerts are also planned.

John wrote a musical, "The Vampire Lestat," with longtime collaborator Bernie Taupin that is set to open in San Francisco later this year. John plans to enter the studio early next year to record a new album.

Mercuriadis says John's schedule will keep him busy until 2007, when he will celebrate his 60th birthday.

VI Music

Continued from page 6

Signing acts and producing albums, "Starting a label is a difficult thing," says Machete president Gustavo López, who launched the label in March (Billboard, March 5). "We wanted to make acquisitions that gave us market penetration immediately."

VI releases will now be labeled as "Machete/VI Music." Distribution will remain with Universal Music & Video Distribution, which has handled VI since 2002. That deal was created as a joint venture by Latinum, the head of UYDM's Latin operations at the time.

VI has five titles in the top 50 of the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart, including sets by Daddy Yankee, whose label, El Cartel, has a distribution deal with VI Music.

In addition to increased market share, an immediate result of the acquisition is that Machete will launch the VI catalog to digital networks in the next three weeks, according to López. He also says Machete plans to announce new signings in all realms of urban Latin music in the next couple of months. Already onboard as a Machete act is Sergio Mendes & Brazil Super group.

The Machete/VI alliance is the latest in a series of deals between majors and independent Latin labels. Universal Music Latino, Sony Music Latin, and Sony's independent Latin group have joint ventures in place to develop urban music with Don Dinero Music and Guitarra Brothers. And Warner Music Latino recently struck a deal to distribute and market releases from Dope House Records.

DRM

Continued from page 6

The Mobile Entertainment Forum has announced that the plan is "The MEF membership is concerned that the fee level proposed will inhibit mobile entertainment industry growth," MEF chairman Patrick Presland says.

The wireless and entertainment industries consider a common DRM standard essential to the success of mobile content distribution. The wireless industry is eager to get the fragmented DRM environment typified in the Internet space by incompatible proprietary DRM solutions from the likes of Apple Computer, Microsoft and Real Networks.

Industry analysts say a $1 per-handset fee creates difficulty for an industry looking to keep down costs on multimedia-capable handsets.

"The pressure is on to make these mainstream devices, so adding $1 to even entry-level phones is a lot when you consider that carriers are going to keep that cost low," says Neil Strother, senior mobile devices analyst at In-Stat.

Carriers subsidize the costs of handsets and recoup their losses in airtime fees and content services. High DRM costs mean more expensive content, and thinner margins for all.

Yet many believe this is just the beginning of a negotiation period, and that MPEGLA eventually will reduce the licensing fees.

"Overall, we are optimistic that this dispute will be settled and the OMA's DRM implementation will continue as planned," says Harry Wang, research analyst at Parks Associates. "Unlike the personal computing world, other media and entertainment spaces, the mobile phone industry has been able to develop interoperable DRM solutions from the ground up, which is a real advantage for providers seeking to Multimedia content to their services."

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w w w . a m e r i c a n r a d i o h i s t o r y . c o m
Thomas

Continued from page 1

“Now I’m good cop and bad cop. A lot of people who thought I was easy-going, pot-smoking Rob don’t think that anymore. Now they see I’m not so easy.”

Fans of Matchbox Twenty will also hear a different side of Thomas on the eclectic album, which hits U.S. stores April 19.

“...Something To Be” veers from familiar Matchbox Twenty sounds (“Every The Same”) and dance-oriented pop first single “Lonely No More” to elegant, sweeping prog-drama (“All That I Am”) and propulsive rock (“This Is How A Heart Breaks”).

“...To state the obvious, this is not Matchbox Twenty music,” Atlantic Records Group co-chairman/CEO Jason Flom says. “The common thread is that Rob has one of the most recognizable voices in music and that’s not changing, but we know he has a different side already from the success with Santana [on the hit “Smooth”]. His own tastes are very broad, so I think it’s inevitable that he’s pushing the boundaries.”

The frontman行驶ould have propelled Thomas’ desire to record a solo album, although he stresses that there will be more Matchbox Twenty projects.

“There are a lot of things I wanted to say that I couldn’t say in Matchbox Twenty,” Thomas explains. “The guys didn’t like the song, or I couldn’t finish the song. These were songs I wanted to see out.”

The first track of the album with longtime Matchbox Twenty producer Matt Serletic. The Virgilia Recordings chairman was also at the helm for the solo project.

For material, Thomas turned to what he affectionately refers to as the “scrap yard.”

“When it comes time for a project, I look at the scrap yard and find what’s good or bad. There could be a great verse you love so much, and you go to the scrap yard and find a chorus you love.”

The “scrap yard” resides in two digital archives. As a kid of rock, he explains, Thomas has accumulated hundreds of songs that he could use.

In addition to Thomas’ readily identifiable vocals, the solo tunes share a bond with Matchbox Twenty songs: most deal with love gone wrong. “I have the hardest time writing about being happy,” Thomas says. “I love that.”

“Me, that’s not interesting. That’s why I try to spend so much time writing with other people.”

TARGETING THE WORLD

“...Something To Be” will be available only as a Digital, priced at the regular CD price of $17.98. The disc will feature the new recording in 5.1 surround sound, as well as a 20-minute excerpt of a documentary about the recording of the album by filmmaker Gillian Grisman. Thomas 2004 holiday tune “Christmas in New York,” information about his charity Sidewalk Angels and a photo gallery.

The project has staggered release dates for the rest of the world.

While the members of Matchbox Twenty have never shown their faces on their album covers, Atlantic hopes to have Thomas’ mug everywhere.

“Matchbox Twenty is such a ubiquitous brand, they’re everywhere in terms of radio,” says Livia Tortella, senior VP of marketing and artist development at Atlantic. “But in terms of image, it’s been a bit more challenge. In essence, that’s the opportunity with this record.”

As part of an imaging campaign, Thomas will appear in a stylized black-and-white Target TV commercial performing “Lonely No More.” The approach is similar to the performance spot Lenny Kravitz did for Target last year.

Atlantic believes Target’s multi-million-dollar ad buy for the CD will help sales at all outposts. "People will notice the uplift everywhere, all retailers, not just Target," Tortella predicts. In return for the ad support, Target gets an exclusive EP of Thomas tunes.

The deal marks the first time Thomas has tied in with any company for a national campaign. As Tortella stresses, all such decisions are made with Thomas and his manager, Michael Lippman. "Rob has to feel it’s a good idea, he has to respect it creatively, and it has to make sense for him," Tortella says.

Thomas admits he wrestled with the Target arrangement.

"Really, a lot of it is borne out of the fact that record companies have made a lot of bad decisions that the artists have to pay for," he says. "Now labels are coming to you and saying, ‘Because of [illegal] downloading, we can’t afford this,’ etc. Here I get the free advertising, and Target gets the EP.”

He stresses that he sees the Target deal as pushing his music, not shilling for the retailer.

"I didn’t get paid to do this," Thomas says. "But I really did stay awake at night, and at the end of the day, Target is using its resources to help artists. The record company isn’t going to spend [that money]. This is advertising the record and where people can go to buy it."

Thomas remains firm in his resolve not to allow his music to be used to sell products.

"I still turn down all the credit card and Gap ads," he says. "My publishing guy [Evan Lambregt at EMI Music Publishing] is not happy that I turn down all this money, but at the end of the day, I’m doing fine with my day job.”

Other retail plans include listening posts at Barnes & Noble and placement in circulars for Wal-Mart and Best Buy.

THE MEDIA MIX

Thomas is also paying heed to Internet opportunities. He is recording an AOL Sessions episode and is Yahoo Launch’s April artist of the month. VH.com will stream the album one week before its release, and Thomas is also performing for a show to be webcast on vh.com.

The plan also includes a wide-ranging mobile campaign. An exclusive video for the second single will go to Verizon video-phone users. Thomas is Sprint’s April artist of the month; that designation includes the loading of the “Lonely No More” clip into all video phones sold during the month. As Cirugular’s April artist of the month, Thomas and the album are highlighted on the phone menu.

Thomas is tapping VH1’s Save The Music benefit concert April 11 alongside such artists as Rod Stewart, Mariah Carey, Alicia Keys and Joss Stone. The show will air April 17. He will appear on “The Tonight Show With Jay Leno” (April 19-20), “The Ellen DeGeneres Show” (April 21) and “Today” (May 20). Potential second single “This Is How A Heart Breaks” will be featured in commercials for the NBA playoffs, which start in June.

“Lonely No More” has taken off like a rocket at AC and top 40 radio. This issue it stands at No. 13 on The Billboard Hot 100 and at No. 2 on the Adult Top 40 chart.

“This song is great,” says Justin Chase, assistant PD/music director for top 40 KXMB Las Vegas. “He’s a core artist for us. Whenever he comes out with a single, we’re quick to put it on.”

Leslie Lois, assistant PD/music director for adult top 40 KZPT Tucson, believes the song’s reach extends beyond Matchbox Twenty fans: “It’s just a wider appeal to the song because it isn’t that staple Matchbox Twenty song. It’s more poppy.”

Also on the radio front, at least 22 infinity-owned stations will air a syndicated promotion during the day of release that features the album in its entirety and an interview.

Thomas, who is booked by Creative Artists Agency, kicks off an 11-date tour April 15 in San Francisco. The club tour, which will be followed by a larger venue outing later this year, marks the first time Thomas has played clubs in more than eight years.

“Everyone of the big slots, for Thomas, victory is already assured. The album not doing well wasn’t my fear; I was scared I would get so far into recording and it wouldn’t be what I wanted. But that wasn’t the case. I’m so proud. Ten years after making music, I’ve made a different noise.”

Additional reporting by Ashley Christensen in Los Angeles.
‘Artists’ Concerns Often Differ From Those Of The Labels And RIAA’

BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Ann Chaitovitz is at the forefront of a new generation of artist advocates. These energetic champions of artists’ rights have staked out their main base of operations in the nation’s capital, where most of the public policy debates over copyright protection and digital rights and remuneration take place.

As national director of sound recordings for the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists since 2001, Chaitovitz represents the interests of featured recording artists and background singers. In this role, she has also traveled the country to work on such issues as health insurance and retirement benefits for artists and recording contract reform. She also is a strong advocate of an expanded public performance right.

“Besides having a meticulous legal mind, Ann possesses a unique ability to build coalitions and keep everyone in synch,” says Daryl Friedman, the Washington, D.C.-based VP of advocacy and government relations for the Recording Academy. “She’s both one of the nicest and one of the toughest people in town, and all of us who represent the music community are glad she’s on our side.”

Q: Could you explain how and why AFTRA came to represent featured recording artists?

A: Under our country’s labor law, the National Labor Relations Act, AFTRA is the collective bargaining representative of all “actors, announcers, narrators, sound-effects artists and singers” on recordings produced in the U.S. by labels that have signed our Collective Bargaining Agreement, or CBA.

So, the record companies are required to sit down with us and negotiate in good faith for the minimum terms and conditions for the engagement of the covered artists.

Q: Under the CBA, you negotiate recording artists’ health insurance and pension benefits, right?

A: Yes, and we just made a breakthrough in our last negotiations. We were successful in getting the labels to make a contribution to the AFTRA Health and Retirement Funds so that featured artists will be eligible for individual health coverage every year they are under contract—regardless of earnings.

Health coverage, or lack of it, has become a crisis in the U.S., and the labels stepped up and did the right thing.

Q: To quote the old Gershwin song title: How long has this been going on?

A: We entered our first agreement with the major record companies in 1951. Today, more than 1,200 labels have signed our CBA, including all of the majors.

Q: Do the recording artists have to be AFTRA members to be represented?

A: All featured artists and background singers who record for record companies that have signed our CBA receive all its benefits and protections, regardless of membership.

Of course, our judicial and legislative work on behalf of artists benefits everyone, whether they work for a signatory company or not.

Q: Is that why you are based in D.C.?

A: Absolutely. The representation of recording artists necessarily includes copyright, public policy and government relations. We also have offices and are active across the country, especially in Nashville, New York and Los Angeles.

Q: Just six years ago, there was almost no representation of artists on Capitol Hill. Now, there is always a seat at the table for artists in D.C. when rights are at stake. How do you explain the change?

A: It actually all started in 1998, when AFTRA found and removed a provision in that year’s pending bankruptcy reform bill that was added in the middle of the night and [would have been] very harmful to recording artists.

The next year, the Recording Industry Assn. of America was able to get a change in the definition of work-for-hire into a bill that changed the Copyright Act. That meant artists could never reclaim their work. When we found out, we went crazy. Artists were galvanized.

Q: A lot of artists and managers came to Capitol Hill for the first time and talked to members of Congress about work-for-hire. They testified at a congressional hearing. How important was their participation?

A: Amazing. As you know, as a result, that change in the law was reversed. Now, AFTRA and the American Federation of Musicians have been representing artists’ rights in D.C. previously. But when these new groups joined in the fight, The Recording Artists’ Coalition, or RAC, was formed. The Recording Academy became active in policy issues. The Music Managers’ Forum. They all showed up.

Soon afterward, the Future of Music Coalition came into being, and every government relations for the Recording Academy.

Now, all of us work together to represent artists. Because of all the attention to the work-for-hire issue, Congress is now aware that artists’ concerns often differ from those of the labels and RIAA. Now, lawmakers and staffers routinely reach out to us to get our view.

Q: What are some of the more recent issues affecting artists for which AFTRA has been an advocate? What are some of the successes?

A: I think the issue that will probably prove to be the biggest success in the future actually goes back to 1995—the Digital Performance Right in Sound Recordings Act. It could prove to be a major source of revenue for artists in the future.

AFTRA and the AFM worked very hard to ensure that [the] law requires that artists receive 50% of the statutory license fees. Subsequently, the RIAA started SoundExchange to collect and distribute these license fees. The artists groups then worked together—it took three years—to ensure that SoundExchange would be an independent organization jointly controlled by artists and labels—and that the artists’ money would be paid directly to the artists rather than through the record labels.

Q: How is work going on expanding the public performance right?

A: With the emerging technology, public performance revenue [is] just going to increase with time. So one of the most important future issues for artists is to ensure that this performance right is expanded to cover over-the-air radio.

Right now, if you hear “Papa Was a Rollin’ Stone” played on the radio, songwriters Barrett Strong and Norman Whitfield and their publisher get paid. But the Temptations and Motown don’t. How do we fix that?

Here’s a hint: If you hear the tune on XM Satellite Radio, the songwriters, the publisher, the Temptations and Motown all get paid. That is how it should be on [traditional] radio, too.

This has an impact internationally, too. See, most of the world has this type of performance right, and since we do not, U.S. performers lose hundreds of millions of dollars each year that are collected when their recordings are broadcast overseas.

In the future, especially as we become wireless, many music fans may never “buy” product, but rather will rely on broadcast/transmission services to hear all the music they desire.

Ann Chaitovitz: Career Highlights

1987: Earns degree from New York University School of Law
1989: Joins ASCAP as a staff litigation attorney
1995: Moves to the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists as national representative/staff counsel
2001: Named national director of sound recordings for AFTRA

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