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ON THE COVER:
Clear Channel Entertainment: Michael Rapino reshapes the business of live entertainment.

Photo by Sebastian Artz

AT RIGHT:
Fat Joe beefs up his image.
See page 12.
April
Tim McGraw and
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While no one was looking,
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So what’s up? After years of stagnat-
ating album sales and declining ratings,
country music is surging in popularity
once again.
Other indications are all around us.
Mercury music artist Julie Roberts is the
voice of the “New Good Morning America”
promo. Not to be out-“country’d,” the “To-
day” show enlisted Phil Vassar to co-
write a theme song for an upcoming
segment.
One of the indications of a format’s mass-
appeal strength is its ability to cross artists
to other formats, and that is happen-
ing with country as well. Martina McBride,
Tim McGraw and Keith Urban have all had
recent success at AC radio (Billboard, March
12). McGraw even saw major airplay at pop
radio for his duet with Nelly.
Other examples include the recent
top 10 hits on The Billboard 200 by McGraw,
Toby Keith, Kenny Chesney, George Strait,
Urban, Brad Paisley, McBride, Shania Twain,
Big & Rich, Gretchen Wilson, Rascal Flatts,
Brooks and Dunn, Montgomery Gentry and LeAnn Rimes.
Country has not seen this much sales
ersuasion in a long time.
All of these things are bearing fruit for
music-oriented media. CMT is closing
in on 80 million homes with the best rat-
ings in its history, and country radio is
clearly on the rise. After falling to a low
point in fall 2002 with a national 12-plus
 Arbitron share of 8.2, the format has con-
sistently trended upward on the way to
its current level, very healthy 8.8 share. It
is quite possible that country could soon
hit a 9 share, a level the format hasn’t ac-
This is one of a series of columns
by Jeff Pollack, chairman/CEO of Pollack
Media Group, a Los Angeles-based radio,
TV and music consulting company whose
dlients include CMT.

With a New Crop Of Hot Acts, Country Is Cool Again

While no one was looking, country music
shook up and caught us by surprise.
Sure, we all noticed the ratings and at-
tention that CMT was receiving, and every
one in a while we’d see that a country
album hit No. 1 on The Billboard 200, but
few people put all the pieces together
to detect what has become a clear trend:
country music is back.
You need to look no further than the
NBA All-Star Game for confirmation.
When that bastion of hip-hop culture fea-
tures a halftime show with Big & Rich
singing “Save a Horse, Ride a Cowboy,”
you know something is up.
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Country has not seen this much sales
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Perhaps the most encouraging aspect
from the radio side is that this increase
is driven mostly by 18-34 listeners. In
that segment, the format is up more than
a full share from where it was in fall 2001.
While other contemporary formats have
been struggling, country is enjoying ris-
ing fortunes with new music fans.
There are a number of reasons for
country’s resurgence. Perhaps the biggest
is that the format is looking at possibly its
best crop of new talent since the class
of ’89 (Guth Bivens, Al Alan Jackson, Travis
Tritt, Clint Black, etc.), with great songs
and a real presence.

There is also the fact that country has
always been a vibrant scene with real star
and real artists—people with whom the
listener can identify. As other formats
struggle to find a name to attach to their
most popular music, there is no such
problem in country, where the fans know
not only the lyrics to their favorite songs,
but also the name of the artist who sings
them.
And as the NBA All-Star halftime show
illustrated, country also features artists
who put on compelling live performances
and dynamic stage shows. Acts like
McGraw, Chesney, Brooks & Dunn and Big &
Rich are known to entertain not just on
record but onstage as well.

So, in the face of a lack of emotion from
many quarters, country’s fervor has
struck a nerve. With songs about really
appreciating life (McGraw and Keith),
supporting the country in a
time of war (Keith, Darryl Worley)
and such issues as child abuse (McBride),
homelessness (Craig Morgan) and
domestic violence (McBride, Dixie Chicks),
country is once again the format that is
telling the story of our lives.
Country is in a good place right now.
The format has strong artists with recog-
nizable faces and names, compelling live
performers, mass-media outlets that want
their participation and an overall vibra-
tion that is in tune with the spirit of the times.

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Billboard

Jeff Pollack
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PARTY LIKE A ROCK STAR

BACARDI® CONGRATULATES THE WINNERS OF THE BILLBOARD LATIN MUSIC AWARDS
LATIN BY ENRIQUE LOPETEGUI

LATIN CONFAB MINES REGGAETÓN CRAZE

MIA M—Reggaetón was the center of attention at the 16th annual Billboard Latin Music Conference, the first since the explosion of the "new" Puerto Rican craze.

The increasingly popular Latin subgenre dominated many of the panels that took place April 25 & 28 at the Hotel InterContinental, including the teen, mobile and digital discussions. Luny (one half of Luny Tunes, the production team responsible for reggaeton's biggest hits) and rappers Wisin & Yandel proved to be a bundle of energy enjoying success. During a Q&A and open-mike session, Luny laughed about their ability to reach the No. 1 spot on the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart using $100 software. Later, he introduced a 15-year-old producer named Tiny as "the future of reggaetón." Luny and others seemed confident that the traditional solidarity of the top reggaetón artists will continue as the genre grows and copyright protection and major-label deals develop.

"We all play in each other's albums," said Wisin, who mentioned that he is in conversations with several major labels. "If other genres like salsa and merengue had done it that way (without thinking in terms of competition), they'd all be better off."

Similar sentiments were echoed at the "Worlds Apart — East Meets West" panel, which brought together many of the biggest names in reggaeton continues on >>p8

LATIN BY LEILA CÓBIDO

In The Stars

Los Horoscopos, Rubio Win Three Billboard Latin Awards

MIAMI—Winners of this year's Billboard Latin Music Awards reflected the changing sound of Latin music and the public's reception of it.

Paulina Rubio, who took home three awards, described the music on her album "Pau-Latina" (Universal) as a multicultural fusion. Rubio took home hot Latin tracks artist of the year, female, and Latin female pop album of the year.

Juanes won hot Latin track of the year for "Nada Valgo Sin Tu Amor" and Latin pop album of the year, male, for "Mi Sangre" (Surco/Universal). His brand of pop/rock has found acceptance on pop and tropical radio.

Música duranguense group Los Horoscopos de Durango belongs to the new crop of acts that keep the duranguense craze alive and well, more than a year after it exploded in the charts. Los Horoscopos, one of the few duranguense groups whose singers are women, got the regional Mexican album of the year, female group, for "Locos de Amor" (Disa), as well as two other awards. Even Los Temerarios, known for their romantic grupo sound, broke the mold with their 2004 studio album, "Veintisiete," a collection of rancheras arranged to fit Los Temerarios' romantic sensibility. The group was the biggest-selling Latin act of the year and won the top Latin albums artist of the year award thanks to a succession of recordings that made the top echelons of the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart.

The Billboard Latin Music Awards, now in continues on >>p8
months ended March 31. Results for the joint venture include $92 million in restructuring charges before taxes. Sony claimed an equity net loss of $1.1 billion yen ($29 million) from the joint venture for the quarter. Between the start of the venture on April 1, 2004, and the end of Sony’s fiscal year, Sony BMG posted a net loss of $66 million on sales of $3.3 billion, including pre-tax restructuring charges of $290 million. For the fiscal year, Sony recorded an equity net loss of 3.4 billion yen ($32 million) from the joint venture.

—Brian Garrity

**>>PODCASTING TO INFINITY**

Infinity is jumping on the podcasting bandwagon, with plans to offer podcasts submitted by listeners on the air and via a new Internet radio station. Kyouradio.com will exclusively stream podcasts submitted by listeners. Programming can include all-talk shows and music selections. Infinity will only stream the podcasts; it will not make them available for downloading. The online station will go live May 16. Infinity also will air the podcasts on KYCY-AM San Francisco. According to Infinity, the podcasts selected for broadcast will be determined by listener interest and feedback.

—Antony Bruno

**>>RIAA SETS SPECS FOR DUALDISC Logo**

The Recording Industry Association of America is launching a new program for licensing the DualDisc logo for use on hybrid CD/DVD releases. The initiative sets physical and content specifications for official DualDisc releases and makes the logo available to any record label—indie or major—on a royalty-free basis.

The DualDisc logo is designed to let consumers know that a disc will contain both audio and video content. The logo is a circle with a stylized “D,” representing both the CD and DVD content. The logo will be available in two forms: one for discs with audio content only and one for discs with audio and video content.

The initiative is open to any record label, and the program is expected to be in place by the end of the year. The program will provide a royalty-free license to any label that agrees to the terms and conditions of the program.

—Tom Schaefer

**LATIN CONFAB (cont.)**

from >>77

(Daddy Yankee, Hector “El Bambino” and Ivy Queen, urban regional (Alwid, Crooked Stilo) and rap (Pribul and Orishia’s Yourel). When Alwid’s Sergio Gómez sued the label for misusing a verse versus the passing nature of fame and commercial success. Héctor “El Bambino” noted that “it already happened to salsa and merengue.”

Reggaeton made further inroads at the “Digital Days” and “Going Mobile” panels, where a common topic was the complexity of working within copyright law to exploit the reggaeton craze. “Labels often don’t know who the author of the songs is,” EMI Music Publishing Latin America regional managing director Nestor Casonu said. “The artists have talent, but some have no clue as to what copyright means.”

“Try to understand,” Lundy said at his panel, “all this came to us as a big surprise. But we’re getting prepared and learning as we go on.”

The growing importance of reggaeton was cinched in the Billboard Chart Workshop, where Billboard chart director Geoff Mayfield announced the forthcoming launch of the Latin Rhythms chart, which will include reggaeton, banda rap, Latin dance and urban regional music.

As if bolstering the chart’s purpose, many of the 13 Miami teenagers participating in the teen panel listed reggaeton among their musical preferences. Reggaeton’s hipness, however, did not eclipse other topics.

In the “Deal Game” panel, organized by ASCAP, seasoned industry executives engaged in an open comedic mock deal-making session to illustrate the process. Participants included Universal Music Latin president John Bianco,промовладитеел the party of a former idol trying to stage a comeback,” lawyer Marc Stollman (Stollman & Grubman), manager Jerry Blair (Fuerza Group) and publishing reps Ramon Arias (Peregrina) and Alex Louiott (ASCAP).

A gentle and more optimistic side of the music industry was displayed in interviews with pop stars Chayanne and filmmaker/music producer Fernando Trueba by Billboard Latin bureau chief Leila Golo.

“I always try to find something new to offer and to improve upon what I did before,” Chayanne said. “That renewable enthusiasm, coupled with what he called ‘an art’s work—building little by little,’” is the secret behind his two decades of success.

Trueba, a Grammy Award-winning producer who won the best foreign film Academy Award in 1992 for “Belle Epoque,” took that enthusiasm a step further in describing his latest movie, “El Milagro de Candelaria.”

The documentary examines the life of percussionist/composer/producer Carlinhos Brown, who teaches music in the poor neighborhood where he grew up in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. “Thanks [to Carlinhos Brown], that neighborhood has no problems,” Trueba said. “It shows music can go beyond music and be a tool for transformation.”

**IN THE STARS (cont.)**

from >>77

their 16th year, aired live nationwide April 28 on the Tele- 
vision Microphone and in several Latin markets.

This year marked the debut of the new reggaeton album of the year category, won by Daddy Yankee’s “Barmo Fino” (Baretto/Universal/EMI), the first long-top selling Latin album so far this year.

The hot Latin tracks label of the year was Sony Discos, dominating the tropical and Latin pop airplay charts while Univision Music Group took home top Latin albums label honors.

Warner/Chappell was the publishing corporation of the year, while WB (ASCAP) won publisher of the year.

The Billboard Latin Music Awards honored most popular albums, songs and performers in Latin music, as determined by the sales and radio airplay data that informed the weekly Billboard charts during the year. The awards took place on the Feb. 14, 2004, issue through this year’s Feb. 5 issue.

In addition to the Billboard awards, Telemundo gave its own Latin Music Excellence Awards, including its Viewers’ Choice award to David Bisbal. For a complete list of winners, go to billboard.com/awards.

**NEW YORK—**The first of recent radio station conversions to the “we play anything” format may be liberating for programmers and refreshing for listeners, but it is anything but music to the ears of many record company promotion reps.

“Deeply disappointing,” is how one label exec characterizes some of the flips. The hardest-hit format has been adult top 40.

According to Infinity, the trend of recent radio station conversions to the “we play anything” format may be liberating for programmers and refreshing for listeners, but it is anything but music to the ears of many record company promotion reps.

“Deeply disappointing,” is how one label exec characterizes some of the flips. The hardest-hit format has been adult top 40, which, while hardly a bastion of cutting-edge music, plays an important role in label marketing plans.

In less than a month, four major-market adult top 40 vanished. WRQX (107.3) Washington, D.C., WMWX (M-95.7) Philadelphia, KFMB (Star 100.7) San Diego, and WENS (Real 97.1) Indianapolis. Mainstream top 40 (WRQX Detroit and rhythmic top 40 WQXK (Star 93.7) Boston also vaporized, re-emerging as Jack and Mike, respectively.

Meanwhile, current-based rock radio has its own crisis. Within the past three months, it lost pivotal new-music outlets WPLY (100 Philadelphia), WFHS Washington, D.C., and WZTA (Zeta Miami). And a radical transformation racketed WWXX (K-Rock New York), leaving its playlist with a fraction of the current titles it had previously.

Despite an expanding menu of new-media outlets, the record industry still views radio as the main medium for exposing new music. And some promo execs are worried about dwindling air time.

“Anytime a radio station replaces current music with recurrent or gold music, it obviously takes up a slot to break a new artist,” Island Def Jam Music Group senior VP of promotion Ken Lane tells Billboard. “The key to everyone’s future is to build superstars, break new artists and give the audience the opportunity today new music.”

Lane says I/O MG and other record companies build their marketing plans around the amount of new music that stations can play. “Radio has proven itself time and time again to be the biggest vehicle to expose new music,” he adds.

**NEW ACTS SUFFER**

Multiple stations flipping from current-to gold-based formats will ultimately harm new artists, says Joel Klaiman, executive VP of promotion at Epic Records. “It hurts the marketing plan, and it hurts the artist anytime you lose significant new-music exposure.”

K-Rock’s Klaiman says, played a major role in helping Epic break Franz Ferdinand and Modest Mouse. Former adult top 40 WMFX, KFMB and WRQX were instrumental in the success of Epic’s Howie Day.

“We’ll have to get more creative and augment our radio efforts with heightened exposure in other places,” Klaiman says. Indeed, curiosities audiences for rock and adult top 40 are smaller. “Now we have to get creative,” says EPIC senior VP of promotion Tom “Grover” Biery. But they could.

“Generally speaking, there are still plenty of stations playing current-to-gold artists,” Biery says. “But just because six or eight stations flipped, there’s still thousands of stations and millions and millions in audience. If you continue to see more and more changes, we’ll have to do, as we always do, figure out new ways to get our music exposed.”

Biery says he is monitoring the situation closely. “If a sudden wave starts selling fewer records in Detroit or San Diego, then I’ll be worried about it,” he says.

Laine believes sales will absolutely be affected in markets that have lost a current-music outlet.

Klaiman sees a ripple effect on competing stations—one that doesn’t play in the labels’ favor. Some competitors are playing less new music, he says, or moving new-music categories to the midnight-3:00 a.m. daypart.

“These format changes to Jack and Ben have made other stations around the country tighten,” Klaiman says.

“Laine expects ‘more changes to come. Radio always try- ing to reinvent itself. With new outlets, such as satellite radio and the growth of iPods, radio needs to maintain its specialty. And with the new Jack and Dave formats, they’re hoping that this is what is needed.”

Yet even with more stations hopping on the oldies band-wagon every week, Biery believes the consumer’s appetite for new music has never been stronger. “There is more of a desire for new music and discovering new bands than I can ever remember,” he says. “It’s not the business of radio stations—they’re looking to do all they can to get an audience and build revenue. It’s our business.”

Like other promotion execs, Biery remains bullish on radio. “Nothing else attracts [retail sales] the way terrestrial radio does. But there’s still a move-ment going on where you have a kazillion other places to start the buzz.”

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BIG & RICH
BROOKS & DUNN

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BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD
RASCAL FLATTS
REDNECK WOMAN
JOHN RICH
WHISKEY LULLABY
BRAD PAISLEY

Song of the Year
BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD
RASCAL FLATTS
JEFF HANNA
WHISKEY LULLABY
BRAD PAISLEY
JON RANDALL

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HERE FOR THE PARTY
JOHN RICH
RESTLESS
SARA EVANS

Vocal Event of the Year
HEY GOOD LOOKIN'
CLINT BLACK *
PARTY FOR TWO
BILLY CERRINGTON *
WHISKEY LULLABY
BRAD PAISLEY

Video of the Year
GIRLS LIE TOO
TERRI CLARK
SAVE A HORSE (RIDE A COWBOY)
BIG & RICH
WHISKEY LULLABY
BRAD PAISLEY

Home Depot Humanitarian Award
DIAMOND RIO
BRAD PAISLEY

* Shared nomination
What Price Rhapsody? It Starts At $0

RealNetworks is hoping to attract new users to its Rhapsody subscription service by offering them the same thing that has made peer-to-peer sites such a raging success—free music.

In a first for subscription music services, Rhapsody will allow users to listen and share 25 full tracks a month at no cost. Previously, nonpaying customers could only access 30-second clips of a track, with full songs reserved for paying subscribers.

In addition, the company has launched its Rhapsody to Go service, which for $15 a month allows subscribers to store their downloaded music on supporting portable audio players.

The two new services join Rhapsody’s $10-a-month unlimited plan, which allows subscribers to listen to any music in the system’s database, as well as buy songs for $0.99 each and albums for $8.99.

According to RealNetworks VP of music services Robert Acker, Rhapsody’s free-track offers mimics online music users’ expectation that music should be free. By matching it to existing P2P services, RealNetworks hopes to attract new users and offer a path to higher-tier services.

“Our continual focus has been on building a community, and that’s what Rhapsody 25 is all about,” Acker says. “Users will get a large number of users, some of whom have never paid for any kind of music online.”

While the tracks will be free to consumers, RealNetworks will pay the music industry fees for each song. Revenue is expected from deals with national brands.

Rhapsody also upgraded its Harmony service, which allows purchased tracks to now play on Apple Computer’s iPod Photo.

The announcement is just the latest in a rash of activity from digital music providers like RealNetworks and Napster that are targeting Apple’s dominance. But while Napster’s strategy hinges on its Napster to Go portable music service, RealNetworks is downplaying the portable element of its service.

Acker says he does not expect portable devices that support subscription services to have an impact until 2007.

Instead, Real’s focus is on building Rhapsody’s user base by converting P2P users into subscribers.

“It takes our community to a much broader base by lowering the barrier to get involved,” Acker says.

To date, subscription efforts have proved a hard sell. A recent Parks Associates survey found consumers still vastly favor a la carte downloads.

ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS

Two Indies Sue Uni Label Group

Two independent radio promoters are taking Universal Music Group, charging the label group, Universal Records and two promotion executives with racketeering, fraud and breach of contract.

In a lawsuit filed April 15 in Los Angeles County Superior Court, promoters Joseph Grossman and Lisa Welf claim that Universal Records, its VP of promotion Greg Marella and promotion executive Chuck Field refused to pay for the promoters’ services unless they prepared “fraudulent” invoices.

Grossman’s Tarzana, Calif.-based National Music Marketing and Average also filed an oral contract with UMG in 1995 to provide promotional services for Universal’s artists.

During the summer of 2002, Universal owed the company “thousands of dollars” for work on such acts as Mr. Cheeks, Lil Romeo, Master P and Big Tymers, whose promotion budgets had been exhausted.

National claims that Marella refused to pay unless Grossman changed those invoices to reflect services for artists with large promotional budgets, including Nelly, Raphael Saadiq and Paula Rubio, even though he did not perform work for them.

Grossman alleges that he agreed to do this in response to Marella’s threat to put him out of business. The complaint says the same demand to change invoices occurred in 2003, resulting in false charges to Baby Bash, Lil Wayne and Sheek Louch.

Although Grossman compiled, he alleges, Field “instructed representatives of the two companies prematurely terminate their exclusive relationships with National if they wanted the cooperation of UMG and Universal (i.e., the radio stations’ lifeblood).” National claims that these activities ultimately led to its “downfall.”

OTHER BILLING CLAIMS

Moot, who is based in Atlanta, alleges that Field instructed her to create a fictitious T-shirt company and to “invoicing UMG primarily under that nonexistent entity” rather than her Majestic Promotions, which was performing the services. The complaint says she “succeeded,” yet invoices in May 2004 went unpaid. Welf claims she was then asked to prepare false invoices but refused.

The complaint alleges that UMG initiated false rumors that Majestic “double-billed” the company and then terminated Welf’s services.

The promoters have also brought into the suit Archway Broadcasting Group, which operates radio stations in the Southeast. National claims copyright infringement.

B

Global

Moot To Helm EMI Publishing U.K.

Reichardt Relinquishes Post After 16 Years

LONDON—When Peter Reichardt steps down at the end of May as chairman/CEO of EMI Music Publishing U.K., company veteran Guy Moot will be elevated to fill the void, reporting to Roger Faxon, president/COO of EMI Music Publishing Worldwide.

Reichardt has been at the helm of the London-based affiliate of the publishing giant since 1989. “Peter leaves the company that he helped shape into the leading music publisher in the U.K.,” says York-based EMI Music Publishing Worldwide chairman/CEO Martin Bandier said in a statement.

Moot is currently executive VP of A&R for the United Kingdom and Europe, Moot has more than 20 years’ experience in music publishing. He joined EMI in 1987 as A&R manager after holding various A&R roles at ATV Music and Chrysalis Records. Two years later, EMI purchased SBK.

Moot has been involved in several radio stations, including Radio 1, 2, 4.3, and 4.7. He is also the publisher of “The Office” and has worked with acts such as Radiohead, Blur, The Stone Roses, Scissor Sisters, Scouting for Girls, and Scouting for Girls.

Reichardt will have a break before taking on another role in the industry, most likely as a music consultant.

Britain’s Music Publishers’ Assn. says its membership—
Salvador “Tutti” Camarata
1913-2005
Miyet To Head GESAC
New President Will Target Dialogue With EU Policy-Makers

LONDON—The new president of European authors’ rights societies body GESAC will have the daunting task of protecting the interests of its members at a time when collecting societies face the scrutiny of Europe’s policy makers.

Bernard Miyet, chairman of the executive board of French authors’ society SACEM, was elected April 21 to a two-year term as president of GESAC.

Miyet takes over from Reinhold Kreile, CEO of German collecting society GEMA, who has been GESAC president for the past four years. Kreile succeeded Jean-Loup Tournier, the founding president of SACEM and Miyet’s predecessor at SACEM. GESAC bowed in 1991.

Insiders say Miyet’s diplomatic clout and his experience dealing with top politicians will be crucial in his task of representing rights societies. Miyet was United Nations undersecretary general in charge of peacekeeping operations before joining SACEM four years ago.

“Bernard Miyet has proven political and diplomatic skills,” says Bruno Lion, VP of French music publishers association CSDEM and managing director of Peermusic France. “He can identify and outline the key issues and be very efficient in the delivery, and all this in a very different manner than Tournier’s or Kreile’s.”

Miyet says he plans to focus on two areas—the protection of intellectual property and the notion of cultural diversity.

IP, he says, is under threat from forces that are far more powerful than individual creators. “I will constantly stress the importance of putting authors and creators at the center of our concern,” Miyet says.

He adds that collecting societies remain the best way for individuals to achieve those goals, as 60% of the world’s royalties are generated by EU authors societies.

“We are faced with multinationals in the media and entertainment field—the Murdochs, the Viacoms, the Bertelsmann—that are becoming more and more powerful,” he says. “The only way to ensure proper representation for creators is through collecting societies.”

The change of leadership at GESAC takes place as European collecting societies are under the microscope of the European Commission, which is seeking new rules on collective licensing of music for use in "Majestic claims of CSDEM says years ago."

In April 2004, the EC—Europe’s executive body—warned 16 European authors’ rights societies that they were "potentially in breach of European Union competition rules" for the way they cross-license repertoire.

Miyet says he has not been informed of any conclusions the EC might have drawn from its investigation.

The EC published a statement of objections in May 2004 that formally launched the inquiry, then held hearings in November. “We are continuing our inquiries,” an EC representative says, adding that there is no set deadline.

Miyet says GESAC’s secretariat in Brussels, headed by Veronique Desbrosses, will remain the central point for the body’s activities. He has plans to see the various EC departments dealing with IP issues: interior market, culture, information society and competition. “My task will be to put forward our points to policy-makers,” he says.

Miyet admits that collecting societies have had a communications gap with policy-makers, and he intends to address this issue.

“In a more diversified economy and where concentration is stronger,” he says, “collective copyright management still has a major role to play.”

Fat Joe Wants His ‘N’ TV

Sean "P. Diddy" Combs and Ciara have done it. So, too, have Sky Sweetnam, Nas and Kelly Osbourne. All five have partnered, in one way or another, with the N. MTV Networks’ nighttime network for teens.

These five will soon be joined by a sixth. Terror Squad/Atlantic Records hip-hop star Fat Joe is at the center of the company’s latest promotion campaign, which features collaborations with Nelly (second single “Get It Poppin’”), Timbaland, R. Kelly and others.

Leaney brokered the deal with Doug Cohn, senior VP of video promotion and production for Atlantic and Lava. The artist’s managers, Flex and Macho of Terror Squad Management, were also involved in the process.

While nobody will talk dollars, Leaney says that a deal was made in 30 minutes. “We’ll get great publicity out of this,” she notes. “And publicity does not need to come at a cost.”

PRICKLY ROCKERS: Like Pink Floyd before it, British rock act Porcupine Tree revels in all things technological. For its upcoming North American trek, which commences May 13 at the 9:30 Club in Washington, D.C., the quartet has partnered with Panasonic. For the tour—in support of the group’s new Lava Records album “Deadwing”—Panasonic is providing state-of-the-art audio and video technology, says Porcupine Tree manager Andy Jeff of Acme Music.

Porcupine Tree has also teamed with Digital Theater Systems Entertainment. On May 10, the digital technology company will release a five-channel surround version DVD Audio of “Deadwing,” replete with bonus features.

The original version of “Deadwing” was produced and mixed by lead singer/guitarist Steve Wilson, while the surround version was mixed by multiple Grammy Award-winning engineer Elliott Scheiner.

LABEL SUIT (cont.)

that Universal “bullied” Archway into terminating its agreement with the promoter. Majestic claims that Archway breached its written agreement a few days after New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer began serving subpoenas to record companies concerning promotion activities.

Although Grossman and Welf make separate claims in the suit, the two are listed as business partners of Sideshow Marketing on that company’s Web site.

“These allegations are baseless, and we will vigorously defend ourselves against them,” a UMG spokesman tells Billboard. Archway could not be reached for comment.

In 2002 and 2003, many broadcasters including Cox and Clear Channel began terminating relationships with indie promoters. As a result, major labels did not need the services of indices for those stations. Grossman, Welf and their companies seek more than $1.5 million in “excessive damages.”

For Pal, the timing could not be better. His new album, “All or Nothing,” arrives June 14. In addition to production work by Cool & Dre (lead single “So Much More”), the set features collaborations with Nelly (second single “Get It Poppin’”), Timbaland, R. Kelly and others.
Spanish Biz Split Over Awards

Industry Bodies Debate The Need For Multiple Awards Shows

The Premios de la Música event puts the emphasis on musical diversity and honors only Spanish and Latin artists. This year's key Premios de la Música winners, with four awards each, were Universal's veteran flamenco guitarist Paco de Lucia and Virgin/EMI singer Bebe.

Last fall, when Promusicae again decided not to hold an Amigo gala, it approached AAMC to suggest staging a joint event. EMI Spain president Mario Diaz recalls, "SGAE agreed it was a good idea," he says, "but they said it was too late for this year."

Diaz is a Promusicae committee member. Between 2002 and 2004 he had a key role in organizing the Latin Grammy Awards as president of the Latin Recording Academy.

"The ceremony must be a spectacle for the TV audience, and that means having international artists," Diaz says. He says the experience of staging the Latin Grammys taught him that the TV broadcast must be shaped by producers from the TV field and "not from Promusicae or SGAE, for example."

Universal Spain president Marcello Castello Branco says the two sides "must work on a joint gala next year. The Spanish music industry deserves it, and it will annoy me if we are not capable of organizing it."

The concept has support at retail, affirms Javier López, music sales director at Madrid's biggest music retailer. "This year's Premios will not boost sales," he says, "but they never do, whatever the TV ratings. A new music gala format is needed to increase viewer ratings."

López adds that a single music gala "must defend music as part of culture, and also respect commercial needs. If the concept is just to sell, it loses credibility among the public. A TV gala [also] needs a couple of international artists."
Oz Label Revisits The Past

MELBOURNE, Australia—“Back to the future” could be the new mantra at Australian independent label Liberation Music. Liberation’s Blue Acoustic series features Australasian acts from the 1970s and 1980s reworking their catalog in acoustic style. The acts have licensed the new versions in one-off deals with Liberation.

Encouraged by the response to the first eight releases in the series, Liberation has doubled the number of Blue Acoustic titles scheduled for release, with eight albums now on tap. These include July releases from Mental As Anything, Chris Bourke of the Saints and Sean Kelly of the Models. Michael Gudinski, chairman of the Melbourne-based label, says the series has drawn “huge interest” from media and from “other artists wanting to be part of it.” Liberation has shipped 50,000 copies across the eight titles, he adds.

“The series is a stroke of brilliance,” says David Smith, PD of the Melbourne outlet of modern rock network Triple M. “The artists are well-known and are still out there playing live, and they’ve really come out of the Australian psyche. Our listeners who might have reached burnout with the originals certainly see the fresh new versions.” Liberation initially expected airplay to be focused on oldies stations. But Smith says six of the albums have been played on Triple M, which rarely airs recent material from the Blue Acoustic acts.

In addition, the network has featured several of the acts in career-retrospective live sessions. Youth-oriented R&B/rock network Nova is also spanning some of the tracks, Gudinski says.

To date, three albums from the series have reached the lower rungs of the Australian Record Industry Assn. sales chart: “Singles Out” by Diesel, “And the Horse You Ride In On” by singer/songwriter James Reyne (formerly of Australian Crawl) and “Daytime and the Dark” by former Hunters & Collectors inpinch Mark Seymour.

Liberation launched the series in August 2004 with the Diesel album, plus efforts by former Sports frontman Stephen Cummings, former Black Sorrows leader Joe Camilleri and former Weddings Parties Anything singer songwriter Mick Thomas. Each of these acts releases its new material through self-owned indie labels.

None of the Blue Acoustic acts are signed directly to Liberation. However, most recorded for Mushroom Records, which Gudinski sold in 1998 to News Corp. The majority of the albums are available for international licensing.

In December 2004, Gudinski’s Frontier Touring placed the first four Blue Acoustic acts on a bill with Elvis Costello for a number of club stops. A joint tour by Reyne and Seymour whose albums were released in March is running from April to June. Its 24 dates have achieved close to sellout sales, says Michael Roberts, managing director of Loud’n’Clear, the Melbourne-based firm that manages both acts.

“They’ve always done good business live, because they continue to write excellent songs,” he adds.

Touring is a key part of Liberation’s promotion strategy, managing director Warren Costello says. “We use the fact that [these artists] already have live followings to get the word around.”

Gudinski is contemplating a DVD release of an April 12 Melbourne concert by Blue Acoustic acts that will air May 14 in Australia on cable music channel MAX. He is also considering a national package tour of Blue Acoustic acts, possibly traveling by train.

Costello says the target audience for the acts is more likely to read newspapers than listen to the radio, so Liberation’s media campaign has concentrated on print interviews.

At retail, the label gave away a CD sampler with each Blue Acoustic sale in March. In addition to the albums by Reyne and Seymour, the series’ second batch includes Nick Barker’s “C Sides” and the Church’s “El Momento Descuidado.”

Part of the appeal of the recordings is that they contain material the acts rarely play. The Church, for example, had not performed its first Australian hit, “The Un-guarded Moment,” for 15 years. It opens the Blue Acoustic album, however, and in a Spanish translation, provides the album’s title.

Cummings says he stopped doing Sports material after the band broke up in 1984. “I left those songs behind because I had new things to say,” he explains. “But after 15 solo albums, it felt time to bring them back into my life.”

U.K. Company Can ‘Rok’ Your Phone

LONDON—A mobile content developer in the United Kingdom has unveiled what it claims is the world’s first music and multimedia memory card for mobile phones.


A mobile phone user can listen to the album via headphones and/or watch videos of the album tracks on the phone screen once the Rok memory card is inserted into a multimedia-capable cell phone.

The MOIS compilation is the first of 20 mobile phone albums Rok says it will release in the coming months on the postage-stamp-sized cards, with content licensed from various providers.

“Big Tun-es” does not exist in any other format. It features tracks licensed from MOS plus their corresponding music videos, including recent club hits “Call On Me” by Eric Prydz and “Somebody to Love” by Boogie Pimps.

Rok group marketing director Bruce Renny says the MOS title is “the world’s first full-length video compilation [in this format], which requires no downloads or streaming. Rather than just listening to the music, you can watch the videos as well.”

The cards use Rok’s proprietary RokPlayer software, with licensed content protected by its own digital rights management system.

“At Ministry of Sound, we always want to innovate,” MOS head of digital market-

Spain Steps Up Piracy Fight

MADRID—The Spanish government is launching an unprecedented crackdown on music piracy that will include aggressive legislation and specialized training for police and judicial units.

Spain’s cabinet, the Council of Ministers, has approved the action, which will target physical CD piracy and illegal downloading.

The five-point plan aims to disrupt the organized crime networks behind physical piracy and to beef up existing Internet piracy laws, which have proved largely ineffective.

Antonio Guisasola, president of record company trade association Promusicae, calls the government’s action “a valuable step toward the protection of intellectual property in Spain.”

Culture Minister Carmen Calvo drew up the plan and presented an outline to January to the Spanish music industry for its comments (Billboard, Jan. 22). Calvo confirms the plan has been adopted as police and will now deal with “as a matter of urgency.”

Although a detailed timetable for action is not yet set, an anti-piracy commission is forming to discuss specific measures. According to a 57-page document detailing the plan, measures will include a TV, radio and print campaign to raise public awareness of the piracy issue. A working group will also be set up to combat Internet piracy.

The initiative involves the cooperation of 11 ministries, including the Interior Ministry, which will create specific police groups to tackle piracy.

Promusicae and Spanish authors’ and publishers’ society SGAE are praising the government initiative.

“The plan’s scope and size indicate that the government is serious about tackling piracy,” Guisasola says.

Promusicae says the piracy rate in Spain is 25 percent. According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, Spain is the world’s ninth-largest recorded-music market, with a 2004 retail value of 573 million.

SGAE anti-piracy director Pedro Párré says the plan places Spain in the forefront of the fight in Europe against one of the greatest and most prolonged aggressions that the world of culture has suffered.”

GLOBAL BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

GLOBAL BY JULIANA KORANTENG

GLOBAL BY HOWELL LLEWELLYN

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**Clause And Effect**

**Will Labels Ever Back Off On Reduced Mechanical Rates?**

“Dear recording artist,” the letter would begin. “Although we have required artists to accept a reduced mechanical royalty rate for compositions they control, we are now going to strike that clause from our recording contracts. In the future, we will pay all writers and publishers the full mechanical royalty set by copyright law for every album track.”

Will artists ever receive this letter from a label abandoning the so-called controlled composition clause? Although it has been one of the most heavily negotiated sections of recording contracts for nearly 50 years, the provision still remains.

The arguments are heating up, however, thanks to new formats and new methods of distribution.

The issue has become so sensitive that most executives would only speak under condition of anonymity.

Some labels claim that certain provisions in the clause control rights and rates for digital downloads. DualDisc ring tones and other new uses.

This summer offers an opportunity to address such developments. The recent Copyright Royalty Distribution Reform Act will take the first step in allowing the industry to either sit down together after June 1 and negotiate mechanical royalty rates for physical goods without violating antitrust laws.

Prior legislation allows such negotiations for digital rates. It is not known whether controlled compositions will be a subject of such talks, but as the industry re-examines its traditional ways of doing business, the issue is sure to remain top-of-mind for many.

**IN THE BEGINNING**

To better understand the parties’ positions and the potential for future change, it may help to review the past.

In 1909, Copyright Act created compulsory mechanical licenses and set the royalty rate—the amount that anyone who wants to record a composition previously recorded and released in the United States must pay to the publisher. It was 2 cents for each record manufactured.

Even back then the record companies tried to “get a rate” by negotiating on one-on-one with individual publishers, says Nicholas Firth, BMI Music Publishing chairman/CEO. But this negotiated amount of 50% or 75% of the compulsory rate, which is based on the record company’s cost, was not written into contracts.

One reason is that earlier record deals did not include any kind of royalty. Until the 1950s, artists simply received union session fees to record music, a label executive says.

When artists began negotiating for royalties as compensation, they only received a penny amount per sale rather than a percentage of a sales price as they do today.

**NEW RATE STRUCTURE**

The new copy right law in 1978 increased the statutory mechanical to the greater of 2.75 cents per song or 0.5 cents per minute. Shortly after that rate was established, the controlled composition clause began to appear in contracts.

The law also changed the royalty from an amount due for every record manufactured to one for every record manufactured and distributed, net of returns, a publishing executive notes. In effect, this meant that mechanical royalties were no longer due for records sitting in a company’s inventory. Yet while the statutory rate has continued to increase—with the current amount equal to the greater of 8.75 cents per song or 1.65 cents per minute—the rate is not the only issue.

“There’s a big misunderstanding about what controlled composition clauses mean,” Firth says. “In simplistic terms, it’s a reduced rate. But it’s much more than that. Normally it’s a reduced rate with a cap, and the cap could be 10, 15 or 12 songs on the entire album.”

This means that there are at least four items to consider when calculating the mechanical royalty in typical recording contracts: the percentage that reduces the rate, which may be 75% or 85%; whether the percentage is based on the “minimum” statutory rate—the song rate rather than the per-minute rate for a longer song; whether it is based on the statutory rate in effect when the record is manufactured or when it is later distributed, and by how much the final amount is capped.

For example, an artist who writes 14 songs on a CD with a 75% reduced rate capped at 11 songs will receive about 70 cents per album (8.5 cents x 11) rather than $1.19 per album (8.5 cents x 14).

The cap becomes particularly important when artists do not control rights in some compositions that they record. In such situations, the label may be paying the full statutory rate to other publishers, exceeding the cap and recouping the excess from the artist.

The impact is huge in hip-hop, says David Renier, chairman/CEO of Universal Music Publishing Group. Licensing samples at the full rate—plus divvying up the pot for producers who insist they are not subject to the artist’s agreement—even if the artist has co-written every song on an album. If the co-writers and producers agree to the artist’s reduced rate, a publisher adds, it becomes especially unfair to them since they do not share in other revenue the artists enjoy from tours and merchandise.

Why do labels insist on keeping the controlled composition clause?

**“You have to fight to get the rate above 75.”**

—JAY COOPER

“‘It’s one piece of a much more complicated agreement to determine what the economic arrangement will be and what kind of an investment a company can make in an artist as we view the return they can get,” an industry attorney explains.

Paying mechanical royalties at 75% of the statutory rate is one of many calculations intended to spread the risk of unsuccessful albums, a finance executive says.

While mechanical royalties at 75% of the statutory rate is one of many calculations intended to spread the risk of unsuccessful albums, a finance executive says.

“I’m not going to call them bad guys because they thought of a way to control their costs,” a publisher says. “My point of view is that the controlled composition clause takes unfair advantage of the artist who writes his or her own songs.”

For many artists, the percentages and caps are negotiable. “But you have to fight to get it above 75%,” says Jay Cooper, a partner with Greenberg Traurig in Los Angeles.

The deals can range from a label paying 75% of the statutory rate to the full 100% rate, based on album sales exceeding minimum units, or in return for other accommodations.

“As an industry, we don’t do cookie-cutter deals,” a label executive explains. “There are a number of points artists can negotiate, and this is one of them.”

**WHY CAPS MATTER**

The cap on the total amount of royalties that will be paid is a more effective control over costs than reducing the statutory rate, a publisher adds.

Without the cap, mechanical royalty obligations could make an entire recording project a financial bust. For example, an artist who wants to include 22 tracks on an album could cost a label nearly $2 in mechanical royalties for every record.

When an artist records a medley of five previously released songs, outside publishers could legally insist on full statutory rates for their five songs, making one track cost 45 cents per album. A hip-hop song written by four writers that includes samples could become cost-prohibitive.

The artist must control what songs go on the album and think about the splits between the participants, label executives say. Any costs above the cap must be the responsibility of the artist.

Is it time to rethink the scope of the controlled composition clause?

“It’s not a relic,” a label executive says. In fact, the executive says, controlled composition clauses interpreted by most labels make it possible to develop new music platforms without the im-

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**“There’s a misunderstanding about what controlled composition clauses mean.”**

—NICHOLAS FIRTH
LOS ANGELES—Instead of flowers for mom or a tie for dad, how about a DVD? As Mother’s Day (May 8) and Father’s Day (June 19) approach, home video companies are putting together major DVD marketing campaigns aimed at holiday shoppers. “Mother’s Day/Father’s Day is consistently one of the top gift-giving seasons during the year,” says Mike Radloff, VP of theatrical catalog marketing for Warner Home Video. Studios can reap massive sales with their holiday promotions.

TOP STORY

DVDs For Mom & Dad
Home Video Companies Prep Releases For Parental Holidays

Lori MacPherson, VP of brand marketing for Buena Vista Home Entertainment, says catalog titles experienced “more than a 100% lift in sales” during last year’s Mother’s Day-themed promotion. She also cites Buena Vista research that shows Father’s Day to be an $8 billion revenue generator for the DVD industry.

virtually all of the major studios are releasing a combination of new titles and special-edition rereleases backed by major print and TV advertising as well as in-store retail programs.

WHV’s Mother’s Day plans, for example, include backing its release of the eight-disc “Doris Day Collection” ($88.92) with extensive consumer advertising, and its “Lifetime Passions Collection” (featuring three Lifetime Original Movies titles for $35.92) with a special sweepstakes of women-oriented Web sites.

Other Mother’s Day promotions are expected for the BBC Classics Line titles “Jane Eyre” and “Middlemarch” ($14.98 each).

For Father’s Day, separate promotions surround WHV’s six-disc “Essential Steve McQueen Collection” ($68.92, May 31), the three-disc “Complete James Dean Collection” ($68.92, May 31), and the five-disc “John Wayne Legendary Heroes Collection” ($49.92, May 3). Radloff says that for all titles, working with retail on placement will be key. The Dean and McQueen sets will be backed by major TV advertising, and the Dean film “East of Eden” — part of the DVD collection — will also have a limited theatrical release. Fox is offering three souped-up releases: “The Day After Tomorrow,” “The Robot” and “Man on Fire.” Each will be released May 24 for $26.98.

An integrated TV spot will promote the trio and will focus on the titles’ extra features. Also on May 24, Fox has three new Frank Sinatra titles — “The Detective,” “The Lady in Cement” and “Tony Rome” ($14.98 each) — and a group of nine western and war flicks (also $14.98) such as “The Bravados” starring Gregory Peck, “Drums Along the Mohawk” with Henry Fonda and “A Farewell to Arms” fea-

TODD MARTENS
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B&N Boosts Composer
Retailer Plans Big Push For Orchestral Album

When J. Ralph decided to look beyond the conventional record-label model to bring his album of orchestral music to consumers, he found a willing and formidable partner in Barnes & Noble.

The 820-unit New York-based chain will not only carry the record exclusively for a three-month period in its 433 stores with full-line music departments, it will promote the album in a way that a label never could, according to Ralph.

“The Illusory Movement of Geraldine and Nazu” collects orchestral tracks Ralph composed and recorded during the last five years, including several that began life as music for TV commercials. For example, the song “One Million Miles Away” was the soundtrack to a Volkswagen commercial known as “the wedding spot” that premiered during the 2001 Super Bowl. That commercial ran for three years, so the song became familiar to TV viewers even though it was unreleased.

Similarly, “M,” the album’s second track, was used in a Volvo commercial, and the album’s bonus track, “When She Dances,” can be heard in a current Honda spot.

Ralph previously had an alternative pop band called Spy, which released an album on Lava/Atlantic in 1999. “Music to Mauzer By” scanned 7,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Then Ralph became interested in orchestral music and started recording his compositions using the funds he made from commercials.

But when he finished an album of such material two years ago, Ralph says, labels “didn’t see any conventional ways to bring it out . . . It always came back to: How are they going to market it? No one knows how to deal with [orchestral music] anymore. It’s like a dying art form.” Ralph says it became apparent that “only a retailer had the power” to promote such an album. “They have the shelf space and the pulpits to allow a different perspective to be heard. And they are more interested in doing something innovative and unique than are labels. I really cite Barnes & Noble for having the foresight to have a real pioneering spirit in an area where record labels are afraid.”

Why did Barnes & Noble come onboard? “Frankly, we like the record,” VP of music Chuck Gorman says. “Ultimately, we think this is a fun project and a cool record.”
Barnes & Noble has also stepped out and supported Michael Bublé, Rachel Fuller, Carla Bruni and Norah Jones. One major-label sales head says he likes working with the retailer because "you can't go to them with an artist, they have to come to you."

Still, Ralph had help in bringing Barnes & Noble to the table. When he couldn't find a way to get the album out, he turned to B Major Entertainment, a company formed by record-industry veterans Daniel Savage and Terry Lippman to handle strategic marketing, business development and management for artists.

Ralph was one of B Major's first clients, Savage says. "His initial challenge to us was 'Help me get this record out.'"

Barnes & Noble immediately came to mind, Savage says, because of its past support for developing artists. In addition, the retailer's typical customers are the perfect target audience for Ralph's record. They spend an average of 45 minutes shopping the chain's stores, Savage says, and tend to be a "bit older and a bit more savvy" about music.

Indeed, Lumberjack Mor- dom did lose a few labels to competitors, according to Hemsath. Driftmap Records went to RedEye (Billboard, Feb. 19). Carpark Records and Load Records moved to Caroline, and Uprising Records went to Militia Group/RED.

However, Hemsath says Lumberjack has signed some new distribution agreements to compensate. Among the labels it has picked up are Beer City Records, Team AV and Meteor City.

**BIRDMAN CALLING:** Birdband Records, home to an eclectic, psychedelic-heavy roster, has launched an online-only series dubbed Birdband-a-Phone. The label, which has offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles, will issue monthly EPs to various fee-based Web sites through a distribution agreement with the Independent Online Distribution Alliance. 

The first Birdband-a-Phone release, a collection of old-country-blues cuts, is out now. Next up will be EPs from experimental act PFFR (the mastersminds behind MTVa's "Wonder Showzen"), the final recordings from bluesman Napoleon Strickland and a live EP from psychedelic instrumentalists Midnite Snake. A live release from Gris Gris is also in the works.

"The purpose is to just get it out there," label head David Katzenelson says. "It takes time to put a record out in the physical world, and this is a nice, organic way of putting out stuff that we have that has been sitting around here."

**RED ALERT:** New York-based RED Distribution has announced its distribution agreement with Megaforce Records, which includes the MB1 label group and rock imprint Transdreamer Records (Billboard, March 26).

Rykodisc Distribution has been handling Megaforce. Among the first releases to go through RED will be albums from String Cheese Incident, Michelle Shocked, Dressy Bessy, Burning Spear and the Black Keys.

Ralph adds, "Barnes & Noble has a very loyal customer, while record labels don't have loyal customers."

The retailer is promoting the album with in-store play and signage, as well as featuring it in listening stations, endcaps and counter displays. The album will also appear in print ads and Internet promotions.

To supplement the Barnes & Noble effort, B Major is orchestrating other marketing functions for Ralph's label, Rumor Mill Records. It hired New York-based publicity firm Sacks & Co. and lifestyle marketing company Passionate.

"In addition to the retailers, there is a lot of radio exposure," Savage says. "It's a new way of doing things."
New Lucas Firm Goes Live

Dave Lucas, former president/co-CEO of Clear Channel Entertainment, will debut Live 360, his Indianapolis-based concert promotion company, May 8 with a Good Charlotte/Simple Plan show at the Pepsi Coliseum in Indianapolis, as tipped on billboard biz (April 25).

Live 360 is the concert arm of what Lucas says will eventually be a multifaceted live-entertainment company, Lucas Entertainment Group. Live 360 will also promote the July 10 visit of String Cheese Incident’s Big Summer Classic festival tour at Military Park in Indianapolis. Lucas says other shows will be forthcoming.

“We are very actively pursuing events for Consoke Fieldhouse for 2005 and 2006,” Lucas tells Billboard.

Jeffrey Bowen, VP of scheduling and event services for Crocres Sports & Entertainment, which operates Consoke Fieldhouse, says, “Whenever there is increased promoter activity in the Indianapolis marketplace, it can only mean more, and possibly better, opportunities for the company and Consoke Fieldhouse.”

By December, Lucas says, he will launch Bio Creative, a live events marketing firm. And in the coming months, he says, his company will roll out a new business model for arenas. That model, Lucas says, will include content creation and a booking/consultancy relationship between arenas and local promoters. New revenue streams will allow arenas to be more competitive in what to tell, facilitate, and deliver.

We’ve just taken some of those tracks and we’re sending them to radio as a way for the Crocres to thank radio for their support for the last 15 years,” Prendergast says. “They’re only the current recordings of this band that are out.”

Artists can choose from rough or more hi-fi versions of their concert discs. “We’re more of a mastering facility than a mixing facility,” Prendergast says.

The client generally owns the master rights."We are just there to help facilitate, curate and deliver of it,” he says. “And we can deliver it after the show, online by download, through web retail, and by traditional music retail through Newbury Comics. We’re in the process of finalizing our deal with Music Today, who will do our fulfillment.”

Additionally, CCE has just finalized a deal with Verizon for a new venture called Encore, whereby people can leave the venue with three video clips on their cell phones from the show they’ve just seen. “We’re going to see more and more options on how you receive your music over the next three to five years,” Prendergast says.

“We expect this to be the summer where we turn the corner, and people realize just how much money they can make.”

TOURING

BY RAY WADDELL

New Chief, New Approach For CCE’s Instant Live

Stephen Prendergast, the new COO of Instant Live, Clear Channel Entertainment’s live-CD division, says his goal of business is to put a “happier, friendlier face” on Instant Live.

“We’ve had to slightly revise our business model, and we’re really moving toward a service approach,” he says. “We are here to service artists, our customers, labels, music publishers and the venues.”

Prendergast says the previous Instant Live approach was more like that of content owner. “Primarily, we need to be looking at how we can add value to what other divisions do here at CCE and make this idea actually become a functioning business.”

Prendergast comes to CCE from rival concert-CD firm DiscLive/Immediates. He says the on-site concert-CD duplication business has been in the R&D phase for the past two years. He thinks that, beyond being another merchandise revenue stream for acts, Instant Live can be a marketing tool for the labels. “We’ve just done a deal with InterScope and [band] ... And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead, and we’re seeing sell-through of 75%-85% a night penetration,” Prendergast says. “Here are people who have already bought the [studio] album, and have nothing else to buy.”

Prendergast says data indicate that concert CDs don’t cannibalize other merch sales but can actually boost them, as customers wait up to 20 minutes after the show to collect CDs. And, beginning this year, fans will be able to purchase CDs in advance of the concert. The business model calls for limited editions, usually 1,000 units, which keeps the price point at $25 for a double disc.

Many bands, including the Black Crowes, have been known for allowing their fans to tape shows. “The artists are taking control of an established, familiar aspect of the business we haven’t tapped in the past,” Prendergast says. “The Crowes are saying to their fans, ‘You can buy a great recording here, please look at that.’”

Instant Live recorded two Crowes comeback shows this spring at Hammerstein Ballroom in New York. “We’ve just taken some of those tracks and we’re sending them to radio as a way for the Crowes to thank radio for their support for the last 15 years,” Prendergast says. “They’re only the current recordings of this band that are out.”

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L&M Are Together Again

Loggins & Messina Reunite For First Tour In 30 Years

The tour of the upcoming Loggins & Messina Sittin’ In Again tour believe they’ve got a winner on their hands in the reunion of the 1970s multi-platinum act. And, perhaps more important, Kenny Loggins and Jim Messina are having a great time doing it as a duo.

“We’re in the second day of rehearsals, and nobody has shot anyone yet,” Messina tells Billboard.

“Or shot us,” Loggins adds. The Sittin’ In Again tour will be the first time Loggins and Messina have toured together in nearly 30 years.

Reunion tours are usually regarded as a hit-or-miss proposition, but this duo’s untapped popularity has those involved optimistic.

“Anytime a group that has sold millions of records reunites after a long time with the original people, it has always been gold,” says Larry Vallon, senior VP of AEG Live, which is producing the tour under the Concerts West banner.

The trek will benefit not only from the promotion of a best of project due May 24 on Columbia/Legacy, but also from a burst of media exposure and dynamic promotional materials the promoters have put together.

As tipped on billboard.biz April 22, the tour begins June 24 at the Idaho Center in Boise and will include up to 40 dates this year.

“They’re really having a good time playing together. A couple of years ago, this wasn’t even in the cards.”

—STEVE JENSEN OF DIRECT MANAGEMENT

“Sittin’ in” again: Loggins and Messina

“Sittin’ in” the audience is as big a hit as the “sittin’ in” section of the show. The duo joined Loggins, left, and Messina, right, on this year’s tour. (Les Miller photo)

“Their music has that ability to make you inhale and exhale,” says Ken Fermaglich, 3 Doors Down’s booking agent at the Agency Group.

Fermaglich notes that all lawn seats for the summer tour will be about $20, and gives estimates for upper bowl seats ($30), lower bowl seats ($45) and golden-circle tickets ($50).

“We are pricing the tour for volume,” he says. “And people can expect a big rock show with lasers, pyro and video.”

This work ethic is paying dividends, Fermaglich says, because now 3 Doors Down has the “ability to play bigger buildings.” And playing those bigger buildings comes with attractive ticket prices for concertgoers.

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Nothing will do it but playing more and more.”

Los Angeles—Republic/Universal act 3 Doors Down will definitely be next door soon.

The foursome is launching a 44-date tour with Staind and Breaking Benjamin June 30 that will hit amphitheaters, arenas, fairs and festivals.

The outing will follow 3 Doors Down’s Southbound tour of 8,000- to 10,000-seat venues (April 20-May 28) and a European tour focusing on Germany (June 4-19).

That’s not to mention the band’s two-week West Coast tour in February (of 1,800- to 3,000-seat venues), followed by a European promo tour and dates in Australia, all in support of the Feb. 8 release of “Seventeen Days.” The project earned the group its highest chart position and best sales week, it debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 and sold 231,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It has sold 700,000 to date.

All in all, the act—lead singer Brad Arnold, guitarists Matt Roberts and Chris Henderson and bassist Todd Harrell—is averaging 125-150 North American shows per year. Another U.S. leg launches in September.

“They’ve built a real fan base through nonstop touring,” says Ken Fermaglich, 3 Doors Down’s booking agent at the Agency Group.

Arnold notes that continual touring is an opportunity to grow as an artist. “I’ll always be the biggest critic of myself,” he says. “I don’t think I’ll ever be satisfied, and I want to be a better performer. Nothing will do it but playing more and more.”

3 Doors Down Outing Keeps Prices Competitive

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Confab Asks, ‘What’s Your Platform?’

NEW YORK—Genre preferences are playing a role in whether consumers purchase digital music for a PC or for a mobile phone. So said label new-media executives at Billboard-sponsored session on Internet music marketing at the recent Digital Marketing Conference & Expo here. But regardless of the platform, they added, digital entertainment is creating additional opportunities for majors and indies to break new acts.

Industry vets from J Records, Virgin Records and Beggars Group said the decision between downloads or ringtones often hinges on the consumer’s favorite music genre. Rock and pop are proving to be more PC-centric, while R&B and hip-hop are dominating mobile.

“We feel strongly that the urban consumer is really on the move and not necessarily at home on a PC downloading and consuming media that way,” J Records director of new media Laura Fowler said.

Fowler pointed out that a hot urban act can sell upwards of 100,000 ringtones a week. Contrast, sales of 10,000-15,000 ringtones a week constitute solid business for most pop and rock acts.

In contrast, she said, pop and rock artists are more likely to do a higher volume of download sales through online retailers like Apple Computer’s iTunes Music Store and Napster. She points to the success of downloads for acts like J’s Maroon 5 and Sub Pop’s the Postal Service.

Beggars Group North American CEO Lesley Bleakley confirmed that the download-to-ringtone ratio for Interpol—one of her company’s top-selling rock acts—skews much more in favor of the former. She said that 6,000-8,000 ringtones were redeemed in an Interpol ringtone giveaway a month later with Virgin Mobile.

The release of the band’s latest album, “Antics,” Downloads of the band’s singles and albums have moved more strongly, she said.

The good news for labels is that the two platforms are teaming to create new channels of exposure for artists who may not be receiving lots of support through traditional radio and video outlets.

“The digital landscape has really leveled the playing field,” Bleakley said.

Fowler cited Dido as an artist with a huge worldwide following but a small U.S. market presence. “From a digital standpoint, we’ve had a tremendous amount of success with her for single sales and album sales via digital retailers like iTunes, Napster. In a sense, we broke her record through those outlets.

In the case of Virgin’s new pop artist Brooke Valentine, the label has been able to drive sales and exposure thanks to support from AOL’s Breakers program, which promotes music from new artists.

“So any given night there are more people logged on to AOL than watching cable television,” Virgin Records VP of interactive marketing Syd Schwartz said. “That’s a really staggering number. If you can receive a position on the welcome screen, you have an awful lot of exposure.”

Fowler said some of the most dramatic results in breaking new artists are in the urban genre with mobile phones. She credited pre-ringtone leases from Mario for helping sell more than 1.3 million CDs. Meanwhile, Cassidy is generating sales of 80,000 ringtones a week two months ahead of street date.

With urban artists, we are having a lot of success breaking these artists in the digital space way before we reach those goals at radio. A lot of times for mobile it doesn’t reflect what’s going on at radio,” she said. “If it’s a major song that’s hot enough and works on a hand set, people are going to buy it.”

The Digital Marketing Conference & Expo was presented April 19-20 by Billboard sister company VNU Expositions in association with Brandweek, Adweek, Mediaweek and Nielsen/NetRatings.

POLK PACKS IN THE FEATURES WITH I-SONIC
Polk Audio’s new I-Sonic entertainment system combines the features of a traditional AM/FM stereo receiver with high-definition radio and XM Satellite Radio, as well as a built-in CD/DVD player.

HD radio transmits not only CD-quality sound, but also text-based information about the song being played, such as artist, track and album names. Other data streaming services include scrolling traffic alerts and school closings. The I-Sonic is one of the first multimedia entertainment devices to support the new format.

The I-Sonic system also acts as a receiver for XM Satellite Radio subscribers who purchase a separate $49 antenna. A car-mounted receiver, the I-Sonic can access all XM programming and music information.

The unit measures 15.5 inches by 9.5 inches, and has four attached speakers capable of 360-degree stereo sound, allowing it to be used as a stand-alone device or as the primary component in a home entertainment center. Users also can connect it to a TV or another monitor to use the DVD player, which also supports music CDs and video and picture CD-ROMs.

Polk Audio says the I-Sonic system will be available in September for $599. —Antony Bruno

POLK PACKS IN THE FEATURES WITH I-SONIC

POLK PACKS IN THE FEATURES WITH I-SONIC

BITS & BRIEFS

A RIVER OF HIP-HOP

Internet radio service AudioFeast has teamed with iRiver to produce a series of commercial-free, hip-hop-oriented radio shows that can be transferred to supporting iRiver digital media players. Dubbed “The Service,” the custom programming is available via iriveramerica.com, with a unique focus for each show. The Foundation features old-school acts like Grandmaster Flash, the Mix plays remixed tracks from 50 Cent and Snoop Dogg, the Hot Spot focuses on mainstream music from the likes of Eminem, and the Bassment shines a light on underground cuts from acts such as Common. An additional channel will be programmed by iRiver, showcasing independent artists.

NAPSTER PLAYS TRIBUTE

Napster has introduced a new monthly video interview feature called Tributes, and has ramped up its exclusive music offerings with new music from Steve Wonder and the Ying Yang Twins. The Tribute section features original video interviews with such top acts as Al Green, Kaiser Chiefs, Faith Evans, Clare and Jack Johnson.

The latest video from the Ying Yang Twins earns top tier status on the Launch chart after debuting online on Yahoo Music.

WHO’S YOUR DADDY’S RINGtone?

UrbanWorld Wireless, a marketing services and content provider specializing in the urban youth community, has expanded its celebrity ringtone catalog with new content from hip-hop pioneer Big Daddy Kane, as well as newcomers Kid Capri, DJ Clue, Truth Hurts, Money Mike, E-40, Bone Crusher, Drag On and comedian Alex Thomas. The company also has launched a wire- less marketing campaign to promote the new Anthony Anderson movie “Kings Ransom” for New Line Cinema.

Rob Thomas, who was Yahoo’s April artist of the month, tops the Billboard 200 with his solo debut.

POLK PACKS IN THE FEATURES WITH I-SONIC

The service also nabs exclusive rights to the Global Soul remix of Steve Wonder’s new song “So What the Fuss” as well as the Ying Yang Twins’ “Wait (The Whisper Song).”
ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons Induced Muddy Waters into Hollywood's RockWalk April 4 by unveiling a bust of the legendary blues artist outside the Guitar Center on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles.

G.O.O.D. Sony Urban, Columbia artist John Legend was inducted into the RockWalk for platinum sales of his debut album, "Get Lifted," during a Recording Industry Assn. of America, Sony BMG event in Washington, D.C. Pictured from left are the RIAA's Hugh Bedient, Legend and Sony UrbanMusic's Lisa Ellis.

Maroon5 performed April 6-9 at Radio City Music Hall in New York as part of its Honda Civic tour supporting debut CD "Songs About Jane." D.L.John, left, from Octone Records; David Bowdery, and James Diener from BMG's Charles Goldstuck, Maroon5 members Mickey Madden, Jesse Carmichael, Adam Levine and James Valentine, BMG's Blue Davis, Maroon5's Ryan Dusick, Octone's Ben Berkman, and J Records Matt S-h.

Creedence Clearwater Revival's Mike Campbell, left, and Joel Osteen, right, stopped by "Jann Y's Jukebox" on KDLD-KDLE radio 103.3 Los Angeles, while promoting new album "Bad Influence." The duo spent two hours at the station doing interviews and jamming with the show's host, former Sea表是表的琴手 Steve Jones, guitar of Steve Jones.

Hall & Oates' Daryl Hall, left, and John Oates, right, stopped by "Jann Y's Jukebox" on KOOL/KOLA radio 103.3 Los Angeles, while promoting new album "Our Kind of Soul." The duo spent two hours at the station doing interviews and jamming with the show's host, former Sex Pistols guitarist Steve Jones.
Ask John Grady for an interview, and he will chuckle and suggest it had better happen fast while he's still "hot." Grady knows that success in the record business ebbs and flows. But his track record in his first two years at the helm of Sony Music Nashville suggests he is not about to go "cold" anytime soon.

In that time, three artists he introduced have debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Top Country Albums chart: Buddy Jewell, Miranda Lambert and, most notably, Gretchen Wilson, who has sold 4 million copies of her debut album in less than a year. Sony is the only country label in the Nielsen SoundScan era to have three new artist albums debut at No. 1. Capitol Records Nashville president/CEO Mike Dungan is a longtime friend and colleague of Grady's. For a time, as Midwest promo reps, they even shared an office that Dungan says more closely resembled "Animal House" than a place of business. "From the minute I met him, it was evident that he was great at the job," Dungan says of Grady. "We quickly discovered that our styles were similar, and ... for several years we pushed each other in work and in wilderness. "I have no doubt that the fact that both of us run successful record labels in Nashville would come as quite a shock to those who knew us in those days."

Q: When you first joined Sony, you told Billboard, "If I had a goal, it would be to restore Sony Music Nashville to its rightful place as a dominant player in country music." How's that going?
A: Musically, we are right on the road to do that. The one thing I know can change is the music. I can't control business conditions, but we are responsible for what we sign and the records we make.

Q: Were you sure when you signed Gretchen Wilson that you had something special?
A: I was sure that that's what we wanted to do. [But] we're never sure if it's going to work. I'm never sure how people are going to react. Every time I'm dead, solid sure, it happens the other way.

We believed in it a great deal and we did a lot of things that were not the normal, run-of-the-day business. We didn't test it or ask anybody about it, we just put it out there to try and not get it mired in the dominant business model of the time. It was about reaction and impulse and talent, and it worked this time.

Q: What kind of leverage does your success with Wilson give you in the industry and with Sony BMG in New York?
A: Success breeds a lot of things. It brings profitability, and it also brings pressure, as in "Are you going to do it again?" and "Why don't you do this every time?" Questions like that.

You have to go out confidently. You have to believe in it and be just one foot shy of cocky. And then if it comes true, what it brings is confidence back in us that we know what we're doing, and it allows us to explore more creatively.

Gretchen was the first artist signed here [by me]. We put it out and had enormous success, and it worked like we said it was going to work.

It was very similar [with] Miranda ... I basically entrusted a couple of million-dollar projects into the creative hands of—in Lambert's case—a 19-year-old woman.

Q: This year you plan to introduce eight or nine artists. That's more than three times as many as country labels typically do in a year. What's behind this strategy?
A: Eighty percent of my roster is new acts. The thinking behind it is ... I work for a company that wants me to take more chances.

I would love to have a big company full of established, successful acts. [But] the answer to the music business has always been about new acts.

Q: Why did you decide not to renew with USA Network's "Nashville Star" talent series after two seasons of awarding a record contract to the winner?
A: It was somebody else's turn. It's a lot of work for everybody in this company to [partner with] a television show like that, get an artist picked, put the records out. I can't imagine doing that show and having the release schedule that we have now. And there's only, honestly, so much of my roster that I want people to look at and say, "Well, they got that off a television show."

Q: You've talked about a desire to put your artists "on a world stage," and you've done that very well with Wilson, who has made a couple of trips to Australia and Europe. How important is developing that international base, and why is it so often ignored?
A: It is important as long as that's what the artist wants to do. If the artist wishes for their music to travel worldwide, then it's up to the record company and the artist to make that happen. It's a lot of work, not instantly profitable. And you can't be successful with country music—or any music—in market's outside the United States, including Canada, unless you go there.

Q: How do you see the Sony-BMG merger playing out in Nashville?
A: There's a lot of good things about the merger if you work it correctly. It's a very big, powerful company with a lot of arms and attributes that you can use. Going international with Gretchen Wilson is a testament to that.

Q: Are the synergies between RCA Label Group and Sony Music Nashville still to be realized? For instance, Columbia and RCA are each working different singles called "Tiny Towns" right now—the kind of thing that could be avoided with communication.
A: We don't match wits creatively. We're competing in the same arena. Synergistic competition is good.

The company line is the company line. It just doesn't apply creatively.

Q: What became of your plan to be the first label group in Nashville to send only digital singles to radio?
A: We're on schedule to do that. At some point the entire industry and the entire world will go digital. Almost everybody delivers singles digitally right now. We do it every day with every single.
Michael Rapino is obsessed with creating a new concert business. • And one way or another, the future of live entertainment will be shaped by Rapino's success or failure. • At 36, Rapino, global president of Clear Channel Entertainment's music division, heads the most powerful and expansive live music entity that has ever existed. Ideas are Rapino's stock in trade. • "We're going to be successful when we forget everything we know about the business and how it used to be," Rapino says. "That is my obsession, making sure we truly are the innovators in the fan experience, from the second the band is thinking about going on tour until well after the tour, and all the touchpoints with the fan in between." • Since taking the helm of CCE Music last summer, Rapino has set about revamping the biggest player in a business that took its lumps in 2004. As such, he is under a microscope. • "[Rapino] understands the tough issues that are facing the concert industry better than anybody," Sanctuary Group CEO Merck Mercuriadis says. "The evidence is already there that he is tackling them head-on in a way that works for both the artist and the consumer." • The issues are tough, indeed. A minuscule increase in gross touring dollars in 2004 belied the beating promoters took...
in a $3 billion-plus business.

The sheer volume of CCIE's business raises the stakes. CCIE reported more than $1.1 billion in grosses from involvement in 7,009 shows worldwide in 2004. It was involved in nearly half of the shows, according to Billboard Boxscore last year.

With such a huge chunk of the market, CCIE received no small share of the hit—and the blame—for the concert industry's troubles.

Rapino was dropped into a firestorm. He became the fifth head of CCIE's music division since 2000, when parent Clear Channel Communications bought the freshly consolidated promoter business known as SFX for $4.5 billion from Robert F.X. Sillerman.

"I think the wounds have mended now," Rapino says. "Don Law has proved to be an incredibly great gentleman and support in the process."

THE ROAD TO LOS ANGELES

Canadian-born Rapino began his career in 1988 at Labatt Breweries in Toronto as director of marketing and entertainment. Through Labatt, Rapino working closely with Michael Cohl's Concert Productions International, the largest concert promoter in Canada. Cohl is best known for working the Rolling Stones' promotional rights from the steely grip of Bill Graham in the 1980s. Rapino watched Cohl pioneer a global touring model like the business had never seen. "What I took away from that experience is that content is king," Rapino says. "Michael Cohl would say he is a businessman first and a promoter second. And like any business, you will find success when you figure out how to define and create a new business model, not just keep executing the same one."

Upon leaving Labatt, Rapino co-founded Core Audience Entertainment, a leading concert promoter in Canada. CAE was acquired by CIE (then SFX in 1999, creating SFX/Rapino), and opening the door to a bigger stage for Rapino. After running CIE's Canadian operation, Rapino ascended to the head of its European operation in 2001.

When named global music president, Rapino was a relative unknown suddenly placed in an enviable position. "But my situation had also faced as head of CIE Europe. Some say the consolidated European promoters were an even more splintered and volatile group than their U.S. counterparts but became cohesive under Rapino's direction.

That said, his climb, Rapino's low profile seemed to serve him well. "Like Europe, in America I had the advantage of not being a local promoter that was a part of that social fabric," Rapino observes. "When I stepped in, I could see three heads that were receptive more to somebody that wasn't part of that U.S. system. I did not come with any long history, battles, prejudices or alliances. I came in on the platform ‘We've got a business, we've got to fix it.’"

The competition seemed receptive to new leadership at CIE, including powerful sports, venue and promotion firm Anschutz Entertainment Group.

On a panel at Billboard's annual touring conference last November, Randy Phillips, CEO of ACM Live, and Todd Lesher, president of Live Nation (CIE's closest rival in the national touring game, said of Rapino: "I hate it when you like your competition.

Internally, even veteran CCIE execs appear to be on board with Rapino's vision. Philadelphia promoter Larry Magid, founder and president of Electric Factory Concerts, once considered a lock to exit the company when his contract expired, re-upped with CIE, he says largely because of Rapino. "He's put a lot of local business, and I can't think of any other person in that position for the past three or four years," Magid told Billboard on Thursday.

Rapino quickly settled into his new post in Los Angeles. After some initial—and admittedly painful—layoffs, he has strengthened the foundation by dusting off historic promoter names retired in 2001. At the same time, he restored much of the autonomy to such divisions as Bill Graham Presents, PACE Concerts, Cellar Door and Eventing Stars. "It feels a lot more whole natural," Evening Star founder Danny Zelisko says of operating under the Phoenix promoter's traditional name. "The politics of running sometimes got in the way in the past. I know who I work for. I know who owns me.

The entire music division was restructured, including splitting the talent buying/promotion and venue operations into separate units.

Rapino says, "Our first order was to get a new structure built [that is] more reflective of the consumer base, with two very focused business units, one for the live shows, the other for the fan experiences. We've programmed the artists and marketing experience.

Next Rapino addressed a damaged relationship with concertgoers where many feel it lives: the amphitheater level. He sacrificed millions of dollars in revenue by removing some of the hated facility fees, threw millions into sped improvements and took a hard look at lowering ticket prices.

The shed moves amount to a multimillion-dollar retof the dicer for CIE, a risk Rapino is willing to take.

"Instead of just the usual pitch every year of ‘the artist guarantee is too expensive, wow is me, let's raise [ticket prices] by a dollar,’ we took the opposite approach. We made the consumer first and said, ‘We're going to put it on the line in a multimillion-dollar investment.’"

A NEW DEAL

Finally, Rapino tackled the thorny issue of artist guarantees. In the past, CIE was criticized by competitors for supposedly overpaying for acts in order to maintain market share and keep sheds programmed. Rapino unveiled a deal structure that takes the focus off guarantees and instead requires the artist to guarantee the artist after expenses. "We're buying and paying artists that fit right for our risk threshold."

Peter Greenlight, worldwide head of music for the William Morris Agency, says Rapino "has tremendous, highly disciplined level of the industry. We're buying and paying artists that fit right for our risk threshold."

"Being selective on our relationship with our client is important to us," says Rapino. "If we don't do what is necessary, we're losing artists. If we do, we retain a 50% to 70% of the artist's revenue streams, the demand for maximizing it has become intense.

But such pressure comes at a time when promoters are pulled in many directions. "If we don't look at the pricing of our product in comparison to other product options, we will be hurt by that," Rapino notes.

The industry is tuned in to what Rapino is doing, and many seem to like what they see. "He is trying to get people to focus on what matters," manager Allen Kovac says. "At least he's trying to make a model, as opposed to being entrenched in what was done before."

So how will Rapino gauge his success? He says a much improved customer experience, as measured by ongoing research, and more tickets sold will be his indicators: "If we can grow [both] tickets sales and fan appreciation by 25% over 2004, then we believe we are making strides toward bringing [fans] back and making them happier."

Of course, ticket sales do not always equal profits, as proved last year. "But," Rapino says, "we know that if we buy smarter and sell more tickets, that equation will mathematically work out for us."

Much of the industry is betting on Rapino's math. "To know what he is fully capable of," Mercurialis says, "you must look at his tremendous achievements in Europe, where he has built the premier league of promoters who really do work together as a team and have the ultimate respect of artists, managers and the industry. I would bet on him to do the same in the U.S."

I CAME IN ON THE PLATFORM

WE'VE GOT A BUSINESS, WE'VE GOT TO FIX IT...
If someone had told Joe Perry 20 years ago that his band’s classic song “Dream On” would be used to sell Buicks, he probably would have kicked more than their tires.

Now the Aerosmith guitarist is happy to come along for the ride. “It’s a different day. It’s important to explore new avenues,” Perry says.

Though the list of classic rock bands whose songs are tied to automotive brands includes Led Zeppelin (Cadillac), the Clash (Pontiac) and the Who (Saab).

The corporate partner for all of these acts is General Motors, once America’s dominant automaker, now its most troubled.

Media coverage of GM’s decreased sales, tumbling profits and widespread recalls has battered the company in recent months. Its stock has fallen to a 12-year low, and its market share has dwindled.

Observers place at least some of the blame for GM’s plight on its overabundance of brands—and its inability to differentiate among them.

There are eight brands under the GM umbrella: Cadillac, Buick, Pontiac, Chevrolet, GMC, Hummer, Saab and Saturn.

It’s no surprise that GM would turn to music to help improve the image of its cars and rev up sales.

"Music is a key communicator—it speaks directly to people," says Chris Stephenson, CEO of Amneda, a Los Angeles company that specializes in brand strategy and music placement. "So companies use it to draw additional attention to their ads."

To that end, Buick is using “Dream On” as the theme for its new LaCrosse model. Meanwhile, a spot for Saab uses the familiar guitar riff from “Pinball Wizard” by the Who.

Another vintage Who song, “Happy Jack,” figured into a Hummer H3 campaign a couple of years ago. This was around the same time Cadillac began using Led Zeppelin’s “Rock and Roll” to help bring attention to its radical new designs.

For a long time, Bob Seger’s “Like a Rock” was the rallying cry for Chevy trucks. More recently, Chevrolet has used the Yardbirds (“Over Under Sideways Down”) and the Rolling Stones (“Jumpin’ Jack Flash”) in spots for the Cobalt and Corvette, respectively.

While the choices of repertoire are musically astute, they raise questions about GM’s strategy. One of GM’s presumed goals is to increase its appeal to younger consumers. The New York Times recently reported that the average age of a Buick sedan buyer is 63.

“You must target your demographic," Stephenson says. "If you want to connect with a younger consumer, you need to give them something they can relate to."

But Buick marketing communications manager John Wray believes the LaCrosse/Aerosmith spots hit the bull’s-eye. "We wanted to show the new Buick models—a new side of Buick—without alienating our core audience," he says. "Aerosmith reaches baby boomers down to kids, as well as our traditional audience."

Though GM does not have a general directive—a musical philosophy—when it comes to licensing music for its ads, it does have smart marketers, says Sony Bmg Music Entertainment senior VP of strategic marketing Chris Hamer, formerly the director of advertising at Cadillac.

“They believe in great advertising," Hamer says. "So, while there is not an internal directive to use classic rock, GM has a number of classic automotive brands that, with the right creative—the right classic music—[it] helps accelerate the brand message."

Lately, however, some GM brands have been licensing newer sounds for their campaigns.

Recent ads for the Hummer H3 featured music by under-the-radar acts Ratatat (“Seventeen Years”), Mojave 3 (“Bluebird of Happiness”) and Filter (“The Only Way [Is the Wrong Way]”). Ditto for a Saab spot that used Franz Ferdinand’s “Better on Holiday” and one for Saturn that featured "We’ve Been Had" by the Walkmen.

In addition, GM unveiled two Hummer models at an invite-only event last year at the Anaheim Convention Center Arena in California that featured a performance by pop/hip-hop act the Black Eyed Peas.

And Cadillac has co-sponsored several fashion shows for Rock & Republic, the denim brand that intertwines music and clothing.

PONTIAC CALLING

Pontiac—long a youth-oriented brand—has been particularly aggressive. Launching its campaign for the new G6 model late last year, Pontiac played it somewhat edgy with the Clash’s “Should I Stay or Should I Go.”

“We wanted to move Pontiac as a brand into a more progressive space,” says Pontiac director of marketing Mark-Hans Richter, the man behind recent promotions for the brand on “The Oprah Winfrey Show” and “The Apprentice.”
According to Richer, “Should I Stay or Should I Go” is the bridge between the re-launch of more historic Pontiac brands (GTO and Grand Prix) and new models (G6 and Solstice). In fact, he says the song selection was geared to the two-seater Solstice, which is a good indicator of how the brand is evolving stylewise.

“The character of the music had to get in a more modern space, while keeping it progressive,” Richer adds. “The brand is, and should be, progressive. The next step is to modernize the progressive style of music, going from a classic progressive to a modern-progressive sound.”

To accomplish this, Pontiac connected with Virgin Digital and the Chemistrri ad agency last year. Together, they are hoping to reinvigorate Pontiac’s sagging market share with a trio of 30- and 60-second spots for the G6 sedan, G6 coupe and Solstice. The ads feature the cutting-edge sounds of Kasabian (“Club Foot”) and Citizen Cope (“Son’s Gonna Rise”).

A forthcoming third ad uses the music of Alias (“Unseen Sights”).

“Club Foot” is culled from Kasabian’s recently released self-titled debut album on RCA. “Son’s Gonna Rise” is the next single from Citizen Cope’s RCA album, “The Clarence Greenwood Recordings.”

“With these ads, Pontiac is deepening its music strategy,” Virgin Digital head of artist and label relations Aaron Grosky says. “Fortunately, we’re at a time of great musical discovery. Radio may be constraining its own ability to play new music, but we have the ability to find—and champion—developing acts.”

The Pontiac-Virgin Digital partnership includes the Virgin College Mega Tour (with Cake, Gomez and Robbers on High Street) and initiatives at all Virgin Megastores. Additionally, pontiac.com—where two of the ads are on view—has links to virgindigital.com, where the featured tracks can be purchased.

According to Grosky, the Virgin Digital site is experiencing an uptake in visitors entering through the Pontiac site.

“They are wanting to learn more about these artists,” he says. “These ads are drawing more attention to the artists, which is exactly what we want. Our artists, their managers and labels want.”

RCA Music Group VP of soundtracks, film and TV music licensing Karen Lamberton—who assisted in brokering the Kasabian and Citizen Cope deals—could not agree more.

“Exposure like this is great—particularly for developing acts,” Lamberton says. “This is high exposure that they might not otherwise get.” And as for the ads, they have an edgy, cool graphics, the acts maintain their hipster sensibility.

Lamberton says both artists and their management teams were receptive to licensing their music for the ads. “You must make sure the band’s artistic vision is taken care of,” she adds. “While they appreciate the mass exposure such ads can bring, developing artists also want to hold on to their indie credibility.”

The new Pontiac ads are created to do just that. In fact, they are very design-oriented, with the music helping to increase the hip factor of the brand, Chemistrri executive creative director Tor Myhren notes. “Pontiac has to reassert where it’s at. Consumers must think of the brand in a different way.”

Mitsubishi accomplished this in 2002 with ads for its Eclipse sports coupe featuring new music from Dirty Vegas (“Days Go By”) and Télépopmusik (“Breathe”).

Dirty Vegas, in particular, benefited from the campaign. The U.K. trio’s 2002 self-titled debut album opened at No. 7 on The Billboard 200. “Days Go By” went top 15 on The Billboard Hot 100 and reached the summit of the Hot Dance Club Play chart.

“Dirty Vegas’ music hit the advertising market early in the year and was well received,” Lamberton says. “Even though they are a three-piece act, their music is incredibly catchy and their image is edgy.”

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That Dirty Vegas spot brought lots of attention to the brand, Antenna’s Stephenson says. “It sold lots of records—and lots of cars on the back end.”

Not as powerful was the TV spot for Chrysler’s crossover vehicle Pacifica, which had Celine Dion singing “I Drive All Night.” In that case, the music and artist association failed to propel the product.

“The execution wasn’t very good,” Sony BMG’s Hamer notes. “You can’t expect the job to be over just because you get perfect music and a great artist. That’s when the job begins. The featured music and artist must be able to explain and propel the product.”

Lamberton and others point to the Dirty Vegas ad—as well as the Jaguar spot that featured Sting and his song “Desert Rose”—as a “role model” for the music industry’s maturing dance with the automobile business.

Even hardened music veterans are open to such associations. “There are all these other places where music springs up,” Aerosmith’s Perry says. “It’s important to not discount any of this stuff. It’s all valid.”

**GM HOPE TO REV UP BRANDS WITH HIP MUSIC CHOICES BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA**

By Melinda Newman in Los Angeles

May 7, 2005 | <www.billboard.biz> | 27

**GEARING UP**

Automobile companies are becoming more daring, too. The typically conservative Volvo brand partnered with Apple Computer’s iTunes Music Store in March to launch “nu: the sounds of new Scandinavia” (iTunes.biz, March 17). The micro-site within iTunes promotes developing Nordic acts like the Drowners, Sahara Hotnights, the Ark and Vega.

In the process, according to Stephenson—who counts Volvo (and parent company Ford) as an Antenna client—acts like the Drowners and Vega are being signed to digital distribution deals. Also, the music is being heard in Volvo TV ads and direct-mail DVDs, which are tagged with music IDs.

Another Ford brand, Jaguar, has released its second annual compilation CD. The four-disc boxed set, which features such electronic acts as Mylo and Zoo! Woman, is available to potential Jaguar customers who sign up for a test drive at jaguar.com. In many cases, automakers are putting music on the test track, seeking ways to maximize the power of such connections for their brands.

“Once that happens, you know you’re building real equity in your music identity,” says Paul Anthony, CEO of Rumblefish, a one-stop music licensing company in Portland, Ore. “And while GM has yet to do that, there’s big potential there.”

This is not lost on Pontiac’s Richer, who believes that, as the new models roll out, consumers will realize that the brand is back—in a big way.

“Pontiac has always been an edgier brand—one that took risks with style and performance,” he says. “But I must be honest: We haven’t always (done) that. We’ve sometimes violated our own brand truth. Our recent work is a great way to get back to the brand truth. And music is a big part of that.”

**Additional reporting by Melinda Newman in Los Angeles.**
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www.americanradiohistory.com
This third report in the *Billboard* Power Players series focuses on independent record companies.

The companies profiled in this report topped a recent recap of the *Billboard* charts in their respective genres. For the first time, *Billboard* determined which are the top independent record companies in multiple genres, based on a 12-month recap period.

That recap was published in the issue of March 19, coinciding with the South by Southwest Music & Media Conference. Details of the recaps are available online at billboard.biz/independent recaps.

The recaps are limited to titles not sold by a major distributor. Ownership ties to a major do not disqualify a title from consideration, nor do pick-and-pack arrangements. The only criterion for inclusion is whether the title is sold by independent labels or distributors, as opposed to one of the four major distribution companies.

The chart recaps published in the Billboard Underground report in the March 19 issue, in turn, determined the 18 companies profiled in this report.

We identified two additional top independent European companies through 12-month recaps of the *Billboard* Top European Albums and Eurochart Hot 100 Singles charts.

The *Billboard* charts department determined the ranking shown for each of the U.S. indies. The rankings are based, in part, on the market share of the chart genre dominated by each label.

But while chart performance determined who made the cut for this Power Players report, the numbers do not tell the full story. Instead, listen to the energy and creativity evident in the voices of these leaders on the independent music scene.

That commitment makes them Power Players at a time when the role of independent companies in the music business is more important than ever.

We welcome your feedback on this Power Players report. E-mail us at billboardspecials@billboard.com.

—THOM DUFFY »

MAY 7, 2005 | www.billboard.biz | 29
TVT Records, New York

STEVE GOTTLIEB, PRESIDENT
Web site: tvtrecords.com

Distributor: Self-distributed

Indie recap it tops: Top Independent Labels, Hot 100 Labels, Top R&B/Hip-Hop Album Labels, Top R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks Labels, Hot Rap Labels

TVT was Billboard's No. 1 indie record label in 2004, thanks largely to the runaway success of Lil Jon and the crunk movement. In the chart recap for this report, TVT ranked once again as the No. 1 company on the Top Independent Labels chart, as well as the No. 1 independent label in the recaps for Hot 100 Labels, R&B/Hip-Hop Albums, R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks and Hot Rap Labels.

When last year's "Crunk Juice" debuted at No. 3 on The Billboard 200, TVT not only proved that Lil Jon's party rap was more than just a fad, it showed that an independent label could repeatedly achieve what was traditionally a major-label level success.

The success of the 20-year-old label—which has released albums from such acts as Nine Inch Nails and J.A. Rule—goes far deeper than Lil Jon and his protégés the Ying Yang Twins. TVT has also succeeded with Latin rapper Pitbull and hip-hop supergroup 21st, featuring Snoopy Dogg, Warren G and Nate D.

"We're a throwback label," TVT VP of A&R Bryan Leach says. "We're a throwback to the days when you had majors, independents and mini-majors. We're probably the only label of our kind, and we give our artists the attention of an indie with the resources of a major. We stay focused with what's important to us, which is developing and creating stars."

On tap is a new album from the Ying Yang Twins, a rock'n'crunk album from Lil Jon featuring Motley Crue and Good Charlotte, among others; and '60s-influenced rockers the Blue Van.

TVT is also home to a thriving soundtrack division, having recently issued companions to "Be Cool" and "Open Water."—TODD MARTENS

2. American Gramaphone, Omaha, Neb.

CHIP DAVIS, FOUNDER
Web site: americangramaphone.com

Distributor: Various

Indie recap it tops: Top Pop Catalog Labels, Top New Age Labels

The new-age classical music of Mannheim Steamroller, the brainchild of American Gramaphone founder Chip Davis, is one of the top-selling products of the Christmas season year after year. In the chart recap for this report, American Gramaphone was No. 1 on the Top Pop Catalog Labels and Top New Age Labels charts.

Yet American Gramaphone, which Davis founded in 1984, is no longer content to sell records for just one holiday. In recent years the Midwestern label has released albums with themes related to Halloween, the Fourth of July and Valentine's Day.

"We like to joke that it took Chip 20 years to figure out there's another holiday besides Christmas," COO Brian Ackley says. "We realized there were seasonal opportunities above and beyond Christmas."

Indeed, five of the top 10 releases on Billboard's year-end Top New Age Albums tally belonged to American Gramaphone, and only one was a Christmas-centered release. The label, which Ackley says is "taking a good look at DualDisc and [Super Audio CD] options," has also been extremely adept at establishing the Mannheim Steamroller brand. Via its Web site and direct-mail catalogs, the label sells a number of Mannheim Steamroller-branded food products, including barbecue sauces, dried fruit and the popular cinnamon hot chocolate.

The label sells direct to a number of its largest retail accounts, and Ackley says the company's size and leadership are built to adapt to a constantly changing marketplace. "The fact that we're artist-owned, that gives us a tremendous latitude to move quickly and respond to changes in the marketplace," Ackley says. "We're able to concentrate on artists, and because the decision path is pretty small, when an idea presents itself, we move on it quickly and decisively."—TM

3. Red Ink, New York

KEN ANTONELLI, PRESIDENT
Web site: redinkmusic.com/redink

Distributor: RED Distribution

Indie recap it tops: Hot AC Labels

Established to provide marketing services to small labels within the RED Distribution system, Red Ink also has enjoyed chart success all its own. "We'll find a young entrepreneurial executive who we feel has an A&R vision that works within our system," Red Ink senior VP/GM Howie Gabriel says. "Instead of them having a staff, we'll be the staff."

In the indie chart recap for this report, Red Ink ranks No. 1 on the Hot AC Labels list, thanks to the success of Simply Red's "Home," released on the act's own label.

"That was a great example of a virtual record company," Gabriel says. "We coordinated all of the radio airplay, hired the staff and did all the coordination for radio."

Red Ink has much more than Simply Red, however, as its labels range from hard-rock-orientied Trunked to Steve Val'savored Nations.

Additionally, Red Ink is not shy about helping out parent Sony BMG and is currently working adult pop act Aqualung. Gabriel says Red Ink will provide services to albums from RCA and live in the near future.

"It's my job to take these young labels and these young bands and develop them," Gabriel says. "That's why we're here. At RED Distribution, we've always thought of ourselves as a marketing company. We need to be able to put the records into the store and get the records out of the store."—TM


BOB FRANK, PRESIDENT
Web site: kochentertainment.com

Distributor: Koch Entertainment

Indie recap it tops: Hot Digital Labels, Top Kid Audio Labels

Koch Records president Bob Frank is not embarrassed about tapping the Billboard Hot Digital Tracks chart with novelty artist William Hung.

"If you take yourself too seriously," Frank says, "you may as well be working for an insurance company."

In the indie chart recap for this report, Koch ranks No. 1 on the Hot Digital Labels and Top Kid Audio Labels charts.

Frank says online and ringtone sales com-

prise almost 5% of the label's revenue. As for the other 95%, Koch has a diverse crop of acts, from rapper C-Murder (now known as C-Miller) to kid-music sensation the Wiggles—who scored the No. 1 album on the Top Kid Audio chart.

While Koch has a strong hip-hop roster, including such acts as the Diplomats and the Alchemist, the label is expanding its rock offerings, having recently picked up ex-Stone Roses frontman Ian Brown and funk-inspired Southern California act (bed) P.E.

"We've dabbled with rock in the past, but we don't want to bite off more than we can chew," Frank says. "We can't look to a parent company to fund us if we lose $10 million."

So far, Frank says, 2005 sales are besting those of 2004 by 100%, and releases from Scarface, Master P and the Wiggles are on the way.

"We feel a niche that very few companies fill," Frank says. "There's not many companies our size that are independent. We're not a small little indie that can bring a record home, and we're not a big monolithic corporation. We fill that mid-zone."—TM

5. Equity Music Group, Nashville

MIKE KRASKI, PRESIDENT
Web site: equi musicgroup.com

Distributor: Navarre

Indie recap it tops: Top Country Album Labels

Equity Music Group launched in 2003 with an artist-friendly business model, promising acts that reached a predetermined sales level an equity stake in the company. Its principals are president Mike Kraski; flagship artist and founding partner Clint Black; Black's manager, Jim Morey; and business manager Charles Sussman. The company employs a staff of 11.

In the indie chart recap for this report, Equity ranked No. 1 on the Top Country Album Labels list.

"In relation to the majors, we are unique in our relationship with our artists," Kraski says. "We allow the artists to be true to their creative vision instead of creating one for them. Our business model is part-

"We give our artists the attention of an indie with the resources of a major. We stay focused on developing and creating stars."—BRYAN LEACH, TVT

continues on >>p32
NEED A LIFT TO THE TOP?

#1 TOP INDEPENDENT LABEL
#1 HOT 100 LABEL
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continues from >>p30
tnership-based, with artists owning their own masters, receiving income from the first and all subsequent [Nielsen] SoundScan sales, receiving a split on digital sales instead of a royalty and with very little in the way of recoupable items."

Equity has released this year for bands Carolina Rain and Little Big Town and may issue a live DVD from Black later in the year. Its roster also includes Kevin Fowler and Shannon Lawson.

During the period covered by this report, Equity scored three titles on the Top Country Albums chart, led by Black’s “Spend My Time.”—PHILLIS STARK

6. Broken Bow Records, Nashville

BENNY BROWN, PRESIDENT/CEO
Web site: brokenbowrecords.com
Distributor: RED Distribution

Indie recaps it tops: Hot Country Tracks Labels

Launched in 1997, Broken Bow Records ranked No. 1 on the indie recap for this report of the Hot Country Tracks Labels chart. The company is currently enjoying its biggest success with a hit album and single from Craig Morgan.

Morgan recently described BBR as “the little label with the big staff.” And indeed, for an indie, BBR’s payroll of 18 people is sizable.

Asked about the label’s unique strengths, GM Brad Howell says, “If you consider passion and belief in what a small label can accomplish a unique strength, then that is BBR’s position in the country music marketplace. Benny Brown has built BBR from a group of people—artists and label staff—that love what they do and want to prove that there’s a place for great music, independent or otherwise.

“Most of the BBR staff has major-label experience, and our expectation is to compete—at radio and retail—against all labels,” Howell adds.

BBR achieved its No. 1 standing in the recap of the Hot Country Singles & Tracks Labels chart on the strength of nine charting titles during the recap period, including Joe Diffie’s “Tougher Than Nails” and two Morgan hits, “Look At Us” and “That’s What I Love About Sunday.”

The label recently introduced Jason Aldean to radio with his debut single, “Hicktown.” His album is due this summer. BBR also plans a summer single from Lila McCann and will launch Megan Mullins later this year. The label’s roster also includes Chad Austin, Fidel Hernandez and Robert Lee. —PS

7. Martha Munizzi Music, Orlando, Fl.

DAN MUNIZZI, PRESIDENT/CEO
Web site: marthamunizzi.com

Distributor: Nonexclusive deals with Central South, New Day Christian Distributors, worshipmusic.com and Christian Book Distributors

Indie recaps it tops: Top Christian Labels

In recent years, praise and worship artist Martha Munizzi’s career has taken her to the top of the gospel albums chart, netting her the new artist of the year award at the Stellar Awards. As the momentum grew, she and her husband, Dan, fielded offers from numerous labels. But they have chosen to remain independent, operating the label they launched in 2003 with Munizzi’s album “The Best Is Yet to Come.”

In the indie recaps for this report, Martha Munizzi Music ranks No. 1 on the Top Christian Labels chart.

“There is this mindset that you have to have—to know that I can do it. It is in me,” Martha says of running an indie venture. “It’s not an ‘I don’t need anybody’ mentality. It’s just that I’m not waiting on anybody else to make it happen. We’ve just been doing what made sense to us, and God has taken it and blessed it.”

Dan says two factors that have helped the label grow are effective distribution and word-of-mouth.

“There’s a really strong grass-roots thing with Martha, because she does so many churches,” he says. “The church has played a large part in getting the message of Martha Munizzi out there, and that’s helped propel the label.”

Though Martha has been the only artist on the roster, the Munizzis are planning to change the name of the label and sign additional acts by the end of the year. Until then, she is working on a new record, “No Limits,” which will be released this fall. “It all goes back to the music and the message,” Dan says. “The industry is looking for something real.”

—DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

8. Malaco Records, Jackson, Miss.

TOMMY COUCH SR., FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT
Web site: malaco.com

Distributor: Select-O-Hits Distributors

Indie recaps it tops: Top Gospel Labels

Malaco Records, under the leadership of founder Tom Couch, has grown to be one of America’s leading independent gospel labels. The label’s roster includes numerous gospel artists, including Maranda Curtis, Debra Peters, and Benjie Pinkston.

Recently, Malaco Records released the new album “Most Were Established When We Began Dealing with Them, and When They Get Here, They Stay Here.”

Malaco’s most recent success is Mississippi Mass Choir’s “Not by Might, Nor by Power.” In May, it plans to issue a solo album from the choir’s Rosie Burke. Other upcoming releases include the Rev. Benjamin Cone this summer and the Georgia Mass Choir in the fall. —DEP

9. Balboa Records, Los Angeles

VALENTIN VELASCO, PRESIDENT
Web site: balboarecords.com
Distributor: Self-distributed

Indie recaps it tops: Hot Latin Tracks Labels, Top Latin Albums Labels

Balboa Records is truly the little label that could. With a small but succinct roster of regional Mexican acts, coupled with a savvy sales strategy and management, Balboa has managed to collect critical acclaim and strong numbers. Its market share has exploded in the past two years, reaching 4.9% of the Latin market by year’s end, according to Nielsen SoundScan. (By comparison, BMG’s was 5.57%.) In the indie chart recap for this report, Balboa ranked No. 1 on the Hot Latin Tracks Labels chart and the Top Latin Albums chart.

“Passion and belief in what a small label can accomplish... That is our unique position in the country music market.”

—BRAD HOWELL, BROKEN BOW RECORDS

Originally created as a distribution arm of Mexico’s Discos Musart, Balboa became a full-fledged label in 1984. For a long time, marquee acts like Joan Sebastian, Banda Cuisol and Paquita La Del Barrio have made Balboa a must-stock.

Balboa saw sales explode thanks to its discount offerings and entry into mass-merchant accounts. In 2004, for example, the album “Za Za Za (Mesa Que Más Aplauda)” by Mexico’s Grupo Climax was the top-selling Latin album of the year, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It retailed for less than $8.

But president Valentin Velasco says his label’s success runs deeper than pricing.

“First it’s having the Discos Musart catalog. Then acquiring new artists, handling and caring for that catalog and having a steady roster of executives.” Chief among them is Frank White. Balboa’s national director of promotion. Priorities for 2005 include new albums by Joan Sebastian and Grupo Climax. —LEILA COBO

10. Sub Pop, Seattle

JONATHAN PONEMAN, PRESIDENT/CEO
Web site: subpop.com
Distributor: Alternative Distribution Alliance

Indie recaps it tops: Hot Dance Singles, Sales Labels, Top Electronic Labels

Sub Pop released Nirvana’s debut album, “Bleez,” in 1989. In the ensuing years, this independent’s independent has issued albums by numerous noteworthy acts, including Hot Hot Heat, Iron & Wine, Soundgarden, Saint Etienne and Mudhoney.

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In 2003, Sub Pop released an electronic album by the Postal Service (aka Jimmy Tamborello and Death Cab for Cutie’s Ben Gibbard). The album, “Give Up,” spent more than 90 weeks at No. 1 on the Top Electronic Albums chart; it has sold more than 500,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, making it the label’s second-best-selling release after “Blanch.”

In the indie chart recaps for this report, Sub Pop ranked No. 1 on two charts. Hot Dance Singles Sales Labels and Top Electronic Labels. Not bad for a label that gave birth to grunge in the late ’80s.

But this stylistic shift does not surprise label president/CEO Jonathan Poneman.

“Our unique strength is our sense of community—in the office, in our hometown and, of course, musically,” he explains. “The intimacy and candor that prevails at Sub Pop has been hard won, but it makes all the difference in the world. It inspires trust and creativity. Plus, we work with the greatest artists in the world.”

Upcoming albums include “The Woods” from Sleater-Kinney, due in late May, and “Alpine Static” from Kinski and “Spelled in Bones” from Fruit Bats, both in July. —MICHAEL PAOLETTA


GLEN BARROS, PRESIDENT/CEO

Web site: concordrecords.com

Distributor: Universal; Innovative Distribution Network (during recap period)

Indie recaps it tops: Top Jazz Labels

The success of the album “Genius Loves Company” from the late Ray Charles was a highlight of the past several months for the Concord Music Group. But that album arrived following Concord’s move to major distribution through Universal. Before that deal closed, Concord already had charted seven titles during the recap period for this report through the independent Innovative Distribution Network, including such top sellers as vocalist/pianist Peter Cincotti’s self-titled debut, Henry and Monica Mancini’s “Ultimate Mancini” and vocalist Karriin Allday’s “Wild for You.”

That performance earns Concord the No. 1 indie ranking on the Top Jazz Labels chart in this report.

The label’s future is bright, as it recently purchased the coveted Fantasy Records catalog. In the indie recaps for this report, the label ranked No. 1 on the Top Jazz Labels chart.

Founded in 1984 by car salesman Carl Jefferson in Concord, Calif., the label became home to many mainstream jazz artists who were abandoned by majors in that rock-dominated era. Concord’s first release was a duo album by guitarists Herb Ellis and Joe Pass. It grew thanks in large part to bassist Ray Brown, who recorded for the label and “became an A&R source,” according to Glen Barros, Concord’s president/CEO for the last 10 years.

Under Barros, the label has grown to include titles beyond jazz that “serve the adult consumer,” he says. “Concord has the best of both worlds. It has scale similar to the size of a major, now with the acquisition of Fantasy, yet it still has the feel and flexibility of an independent.”

Key upcoming releases include a live Sonny Rollins album recorded four days after Sept. 11, 2001, and a Nnenna Freelon tribute to Billie Holiday.—DAN OUELLETTE

13. Shanachie Entertainment, Newton, N.J.

RICHARD NEVINS, PRESIDENT

Web site: shanachie.com

Distributor: Koch International

Indie recaps it tops: Top Contemporary Jazz Labels

For a company that for years was best-known for its world music releases, Shanachie has branched off into several genres, including smooth jazz. On the indie recaps for this report, Shanachie ranks No. 1 on the Top Contemporary Jazz Labels chart. During the recap period, it is this year’s No. 1 contemporary jazz independent label. It charted seven titles, including the hit “In the Name of Love” by Kim Waters. Shanachie was founded in 1977 in the Bronx, N.Y., by Daniel Collins and Richard Nevins as a traditional Irish music label. In the early ’80s, it grew to include reggae and African music, including Ladysmith Black Mambazo’s U.S. debut. In the ’90s, Shanachie added contemporary jazz and immediately “became a force,” GM Randall Grass says. “The label became one of the top three most-played on smooth jazz radio, and it’s had a number of adult urban hits.

“Unlike many indie, we’re not identified with just one niche,” Grass says. “For 27 years we’ve learned how to do what makes sense with our going crazy with hype. We’re a good size: small enough to survive in the difficult environment of the recording industry, but big enough to make a difference.” —RANDBALL GRASS, SHANACHIE ENTERTAINMENT

Ultras has come a long way since opening its doors in 1996. What began as an independent label specializing in dance/electronic music has blossomed into a boutique-style operation with a major-label approach to marketing, promotion and sales.

Along the way, Ultras has smartly branded its name via several successful compilation series, including “Ultra Chilled,” “Ultra Dance” and “Ultra Trance.” It has also expanded its repertoire to include urban/reggae and world music with the formation of two imprints, Sequence and Escondida, respectively.

In the indie chart recaps for this report, Ultra Records ranked No. 1 on the Hot Dance Airplay Labels chart.

In the past 12 months, the label has remained a mainstay in clubs and on dance radio with such tracks as Motorcycle’s “As the Rush Comes,” Shape UK’s “Lola’s Theme” and Eric Prydz’s “Call on Me.” In this Power Players issue, with six songs on the Hot Dance Airplay chart (including the top spot), Ultra is No. 1 on the Hot Dance Airplay Labels tally.

Label president Patrick Mokey credits the label’s success to its major-label-like structure—from radio and Internet promotion to product management and A&R. “This helps us maximize the opportunities for our artists and producers,” he says. This extends to Ultra’s distribution network in Canada, the United Kingdom and Europe, where it works with a network of companies, including EMI, Vital and Play It Again Sam.

In July, Ultra—together with Razor & Tie and Robbins Entertainment—will release an as-yet-untitled dance compilation that will be marketed through TV advertising. —MP
As Alter observes, “Our leading market position results from our continued ability to understand today’s lifestyles and our ability to create and market a comprehensive range of value-based products that appeal to consumers.”—ANASTASIA TSIOULCAS

15. Alligator Records, Chicago
   **BRUCE IGLAUER, FOUNDER AND OWNER**
   Web site: alligator.com
   Distributor: Ryko Distribution
   **Indie recaps it tops:** Top Blues Labels

A blues staple in Chicago, Alligator Records turned to one of the Windy City’s very own to drive its sales during the past year. Mavis Staples, returning to the gospel/blues sound that marked the career of the Staples Sisters, released her first album of original material in more than a decade with the critically acclaimed “Have a Little Faith.”

During the indie recap period for this report, the album is one of eight charting titles that earn Alligator the No. 1 ranking on the Top Blues Labels chart. In addition to Staples, Alligator’s performance was helped by new releases from veterans the Holmes Brothers and the acoustic blues of Carey & Lurrie Bell.

Founder and owner Bruce Iglauer says the label’s 34-year history and its catalog with more than 253 titles—including releases from the likes of Albert Collins, Koko Taylor and Roy Buchanan—give Alligator an edge over the competition. He adds that artists come to Alligator prepared to work: Much of the label’s current roster performs between 50 and 150 concerts per year.

“These live performances are the best sales tool we have,” Iglauer says.

The current year sees Alligator with new releases from Maricia Ball, Timmy Ellis and shelves Copeland, who Iglauer says is one of the label’s top-selling artists.—TM

16. Sugar Hill Records, Durham, N.C.
   **BEV PAUL, GM**
   Web site: sugarhillrecords.com
   Distributor: WEA
   **Indie recaps it tops:** Top Bluegrass Labels

Sugar Hill is Billboard’s top bluegrass label in the special chart recap covering the 12-month period from the Feb. 7, 2004, issue through the Jan. 29, 2005, issue. The label scored five titles on the Top Bluegrass Albums chart during this time.

Sugar Hill was founded in 1978 and acquired by the WEA Music Group in 1998 to complete WEA’s other label, Vanguard Records. Specializing in contemporary music with traditional roots—be it from bluegrass, blues or singer/songwriter-type acts—Sugar Hill’s roster includes Dolly Parton, Allison Moorer, Nickel Creek, the Dubs, Guy Clark, Reckless Kelly, Sonny Landreth and Sam Bush.

GM Bev Paul says one of the label’s strengths is its “long history of releasing quality music and sticking to our niche. That really helps when you are working new releases to radio, print and to some extent to the consumer as well.”

The label has a full slate of releases planned for the rest of the year, including Nickel Creek’s “Why Should the Fire Die,” due in August, and projects from Greg Trooper, Jim Mills, Seldom Scene, the Gibson Brothers, Brian Sutton, Grey DeLisle and Tim O’Brien.

In addition, label founder Barry Pos is producing a boxed set retrospective of the label’s first 25-plus years. It will include a DVD with artist interviews and memorabilia from the label’s early days and is expected to be ready for the fall holiday shopping season.—PS

17. VP Records, Queens, N.Y.
   **PATRICIA CHIN, CO-FOUNDER**
   Web site: vprecords.com
   Distributor: Self-distributed, Navarre, WEA
   **Indie recaps it tops:** Top Reggae Labels

VP Records celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2004, growing from a retail store in the Jamaica neighborhood of Queens, N.Y., that opened in 1979. The label finished its anniversary year much like its other years: at the top of Billboard’s reggae charts.

While such marquee VP artists as Sean Paul now have major distribution through WEA, during the recap period for this report, the label charted 10 titles with independent distribution. That makes VP the No. 1 label on the Top Reggae Labels chart.

Having introduced the world to such crossover artists as Paul, Beenie Man and Elephant Man, VP was solid in 2004 with a number of compilations and newcomer Tanya Stephens. The label is prepping a big release schedule for summer 2005, as the summer months are typically the best time of the year for reggae releases. In addition to the latest installment in its successful “Reggae Gold” series, VP has new albums in the works from Paul, Elephant Man and I-Wayne, among others.

“We are Jamaicans,” VP Randy Chin says, “so we know how to interact with the artists and fans and have an intimate knowledge of our culture.”—TM

18. DBTV Media, Detroit
   **DIANE BLISS, VP OF FUND-RAISING PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**
   Web site: wtv.org
   Distributor: Koch Entertainment
   **Indie recaps it tops:** Top World Music Labels

Detroit’s PBS affiliate wasn’t exactly planning on launching a record label, but then Diane Bliss, VP of fund-raising program development, saw Daniel O’Donnell. The Irish-born vocalist impressed her, but not as much as the “sweet little ladies” that constituted his elderly fan base.

“You know that passion on the way they were,” Bliss says, “and how these senior citizens stayed for 24 hours just to meet him. I said, ‘My gosh, this man has truly transformed these people, and he belongs on public television’."

Six O’Donnell albums landed on Billboard’s year-end world music chart. And for the recap period for this report, DBTV Media ranks No. 1 on the Top World Music Labels chart.

Bliss has high hopes for the April 12 release of a two-disc set, which is a separate live CD, culled from O’Donnell’s November performance in Brandon, Mo. But getting PBS to take a chance on O’Donnell wasn’t easy. Bliss was rejected by her superiors in Washington, D.C., twice before winning support for a national PBS special in 2002. The DBTV Media label launched in January 2003. O’Donnell’s TV specials have proved to be prime fund-raising vehicles for PBS, and evidence that the network taps a CD-buying audience. “There’s a direct relationship between PBS exposure and retail success,” Bliss says. —TM

19. Dramatico, London
   **MIKE BATT, FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN**
   Web site: mikebatt.com
   Distributor: Pinnacle
   **Indie recaps it tops:** European Top 100 Albums

It has been an exhilarating two years for British songwriter/composer Mike Batt. He discovered and directed the career of a young jazzy singer from the former Soviet republic of Georgia and took her to the world.

An unknown in 2003, 20-year-old Katie Melua began 2004 with a No. 1 album on the U.K. charts. She has since shifted some 3 million units worldwide—$8 million in the United Kingdom alone—of her debut “Call Off the Search” and won countless awards.

“Call Off the Search” ranked as the No. 1 independently distributed title on the Billboard year-end European Top 100 Albums list, giving Dramatico a spot at the Power Players table.

Pinnacle distributes the album in the United Kingdom. Batt also went for independent sales and distribution in Europe. In the United States, Universal Records picked up the album.

“We did it the indie way,” Batt says, “doing straight distribution deals and finding local promotion and marketing teams to work the album.”

Although other acts are signed, such as classically trained singer Robert Meadowmore, whose album “After the Dream” came out in February—Melua’s success has kept Batt busy during the past two years.

“We’ll have six more months to go with this album,” he says. “Then we’ll switch to [focus on] the new album scheduled for October.” He adds: “I am lucky I found such a talent.”—EMMANUEL LEGRAND

20. Media Services, Bucharest, Romania
   **DAN POPI, MANAGING DIRECTOR**
   HEAD OF A&R Web site: media-services.ro
   Distributor: various
   **Indie recaps it tops:** Eurochart Hot 100 Singles

O-Zone’s “Dragostea Din Tei” is the first Romanian track to top the Billboard Eurochart Hot 100 Singles. The song spent 12 weeks in the chart’s top slot from June to September 2004 and subsequently topped Billboard’s European year-end singles recap.

That performance gives O-Zone’s label Media Services the No. 1 ranking for this report on the Eurochart Hot 100 Singles recap.

The Bucharest, Romania-based company was created in 1991 and started signing local acts in 1996. It has four labels: Cat Music for pop, Inn Music for dance, Top All for contemporary folk and Rapsodica for traditional folk acts like Gheorghe Zamfis.

Managing director/head of A&R Dan Popi says Media Services is now the main source of local repertoire in Romania. It is also the Romanian licensee for Sony Music.

Pipi licensed O-Zone’s album “Disc Ozone” to Italian independent dance label Time for the world. In turn, Time licensed to such labels as Happy Music in France, Jive in the United Kingdom, Island in Germany and Ultra in the United States. Popi says that a major company turned “Dragostea” down three times.

Key projects for 2005 include the release of an album in Romanian and in English by rock act Voltage. A global licensing agreement is currently being discussed with a major.—EL
“When you’re spending $20 million, it’s really not about the mortgage.”

—PAMELA LIEBMAN of the CORCORAN GROUP

Pamela Liebman, President/CEO of New York-based real estate firm the Corcoran Group, says she’s seen a surge in people buying higher-end homes in Los Angeles. She says, “People are buying homes for reasons beyond the purely financial. They’re looking for a place to call home, a place to raise their families, a place to entertain.”

For those who want to finance all or a portion of the purchase, there are a number of options that can make sense, including the bridge loan. The bridge loan is a short-term loan that allows you to purchase a property while you are refinancing it. It also allows you to finance a portion of the purchase with a lower interest rate than you would have to pay on a conventional mortgage.

“The bridge loan is a great option for people who want to buy a home, but don’t have the cash available to pay for it outright,” Liebman says. “It allows you to finance a portion of the purchase with a lower interest rate than you would have to pay on a conventional mortgage.”

For people who want to finance the entire purchase, there are other options available, including the conventional mortgage, the FHA mortgage, and the VA mortgage. The conventional mortgage is the most common type of mortgage, and it allows you to borrow up to 95% of the purchase price of the home. The FHA mortgage is a government-backed mortgage that allows you to borrow up to 97.5% of the purchase price of the home. The VA mortgage is a government-backed mortgage that allows you to borrow up to 100% of the purchase price of the home.

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Here is a look at the market for top-end real estate in major U.S. entertainment capitals:

NEW YORK
Wealth continues to seek into Manhattan, and outlying havens like the Hamptons, where a record-setting $45 million home sold last summer. Hedge-fund beneficiaries, foreign investors taking advantage of the euro’s strength, and others continue to seek a slice of the Big Apple.

“I can honestly say I have never, in 20 years in this business, seen the super luxury market acting this way,” Liebman says. “It used to be the $15 million on properties were reserved for the Upper East Side. But now, with properties like Time Warner Center at the southwest corner of Central Park and One Beacon Court on East 58th Street, they’re sprouting up in other parts of the city.”

With such high demand and supply, Liebman says, there is a lot of money chasing the same properties. “There are a number of investors who want to buy a house in the Hamptons, and we cannot find them anything to buy. The only thing standing in the way of more of their sales is lack of available property.”

LOS ANGELES
Super-lux property in Los Angeles—where an acre of land in desirable Bel Air and Beverly Hills runs up at $2 million to $5 million, with homes costing $485 per square foot—remains strong but is beginning to show signs of leveling off.

“There are definitely a number of super-lux properties in the market, and they are selling quickly,” Liebman says. “But there is a limit to what people are willing to pay.”

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This week, the market for sultry beaches and sterling Latin style. Miami is making inroads in the cultural arts department, including the current construction of the Miami Performing Arts Center, one of the largest facilities of its kind in the country.

As a result, the city is attracting an even broader spectrum of home buyers to its luxury properties, which remain at a premium.

“Twill million dollar properties come on the market and sell in a day,” says Brigitte de Langeron, an associate at Fortune International Realty. “People used to say, ‘Miami is a wonderful place, but it doesn’t have much to offer as far as culture. Now all that has changed.’

Indeed, construction in downtown Miami continues to spiral upward. Such new developments as the Met, a multistory complex of condominiums and businesses, are selling out before they are even completed.

“A lot of people are now coming from places like New York and California, buying second and third homes here. We are no longer depending as much on the South American market,” de Langeron says.

NASHVILLE
“The market here is hot, hot, hot,” says Donna Tisdale, a broker at Worth Properties, which recently represented the homes of RCA Label Group chairman Joe Galante and singer Donna Summer. “We slowed down a bit Christmas week, but other than that we didn’t have a winter market at all this year.”

So robust is Music City real estate that the Greater Nashville Assn. of Realtors recently reported there are substantially fewer homes available on the market than during this time period last year. Despite talk of the contrary, “there’s definitely no bubble bursting here,” Tisdale says.

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As seen on ABC's The View 2005 5 Most Beautiful Homes in the World

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AMERIE REACHES WITH ‘TOUCH’

Last December, Amerie and co-manager Lenny Nicholson decided to leak her new song “I Thing.” Some four months later, the pair’s gamble is paying off.

“I Thing” percolated to the top of the Hot R&B/Pop Songs chart (Billboard, April 30), supplanting “Hate It or Love It” by the Game Featuring 50 Cent. Heard on the soundtrack to the Will Smith box-office hit “Hitch,” “I Thing”—referring to the one thing that attracts one person to another—also claimed No. 8 on The Billboard Hot 100.


“(The label) had had the record since last spring,” recalls Amerie (whose last name is Rogers). “But they didn’t want to put it out. Lenny and I thought about it a lot and decided it’s do or die.”

The dance track’s sound can be traced to Amerie’s roots in Washington, D.C., home of the percussion-driven musical style known as go-go.

The funk subgenre appears to be undergoing a resurgence: Go-go pioneer Chuck Brown debuted at No. 46 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums last issue with “The Best of Chuck Brown.” (In 1978, Brown & the Soul Searchers topped the R&B chart with the go-go anthem “Bustin’ Loose, Part 1.”)

Recently, such contemporary acts as Jennifer Lopez (with “Get Right”) and D.C.-based go-go band Rare Essence (reworking Ashlee Simpson’s “Pieces of Me”) have mined the same vein.

“The roots of go-go music are very drumbeat-driven and soulful, a grass-roots sound,” says Traci Lavelle, music director of adult R&B WHUR Washington, D.C. “That’s what makes the Amerie track hot. It uses a lot of per-

FACT FILE

Label: Rise/Columbia/Sony Urban Music
Management: Lenny Nicholson, Feenix Entertainment; James Lassiter, Overbrook Entertainment
Booking: Dennis Ashley, Creative Artists Agency
Publishing: Miso/Universal Music Publishing (ASCAP)
Top-selling album: “All I Have” (2002), 621,000

>>TWINS SIGN DEAL
Songwriting/producing twins Omar and Adolfo Valenzuela’s Twiins House of Music has signed a worldwide administration deal with Peermusic that covers past and future works. The Valenzuelas have written for Thalía, Paulina Rubio, Rogelio Martínez, Banda El Recodo, Yolanda Perez and others.

—Leila Cobo

>>CHICKS WITH RICK
The Dixie Chicks are recording a new album in Los Angeles with producer Rick Rubin. Although no release date has been set, Sony Music Nashville president John Grady says he expects the Nashville division to be more involved than it was on 2002’s “Home,” which has sold 5.8 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and was released on Columbia via the group’s Open Wide imprint. “The business of the Dixie Chicks had transferred to New York before I got here and I believe the Chicks will use all arms of the company [this time],” he says.

—Phyllis Stark

>>A NEW ‘STAR’
High-school senior Erika Jo Herges was named the winner of USA Network’s talent series “Nashville Star” on April 26. Her Universal South Records debut streets June 14. First single “I Break Things” was digitally delivered to country radio immediately after the show wrapped.

—Phyllis Stark
“I’m more confident now about what I want, the 25-
year-old says. “And while wanting to diversify my sound, I also wanted one constant to remain—making sure I stay true to myself as an artist.” —AMERIE

New Order’s New Album A Reminder Of Act’s Electro/Rock Relevance

On March 28, New Order released their 10th studio album, "Lost Sirens," an electro/rock album that pays homage to their earlier work. The album features collaborations with artists like Fatboy Slim and LCD Soundsystem, and is the first release from the band since their reunion in 2006.

The album features a mixture of electronic and organic instruments, with influences from the 80s and 90s. The opening track, "Waiting for the Sirens Call," is a powerful anthem that sets the tone for the rest of the album.

The band members, who are all over 40 years old, have said that they wanted to create an album that was both modern and true to their roots. They have also been promoting the album with live shows around the world, including a sold-out show in London last month.

New Order has been a staple of the electronic music scene for over three decades, and their new album is sure to be a hit with fans and critics alike.

The album is available now on vinyl, CD, and digital formats, and can be purchased on all major music streaming services.
PHYLIS STARK pstark@billboard.com

Nashville Scene

No Habla Español
Is There An Audience For Hispanic Country?

With the growing Hispanic population in the United States, and the appeal of country music to many Hispanics, why has there never been a Hispanic country superstar?

In the ’70s, Freddy Fender had a string of hits, as did his contemporary, Johnny Rodriguez, whose hit streak continued into the early ’80s. Rosie Flores scored three country hits in the late ’80s.

In the ’90s, Rick Trevino was a consistent hitmaker. Emilio had a handful of hits, and the Mavericks—led by Cuban-American Raul Malo—launched a few top 40 singles.

More recently, country labels have unsuccessfully tried to break such artists as Victor Sanz, Sisters Morales and “Nashville Star” finalist John Arthur. No Hispanic artist has ever achieved the country radio mega-star status of a Kenny Chesney or a Toby Keith.

“The issue has been strength of material, not skin color,” says KZLA Los Angeles OM R.J. Curtis.

KYYS Dallas PD Crash Po- teet says the lack of Hispanic stars in the format “could have something to do with smaller numbers of Hispanic artists and bands that actually play commercial country music.”

Smokyo Rivers, assistant PD at KPLX (the Wolf) Dallas, blames Music Row for the lack of a Hispanic country superstar. “Nashville insists that music is only successful if it’s appealing to everyone from Seattle to Sarasota. [N.J.],” he says. “So the time, money and tools aren’t being invested in developing someone who would have a large Hispanic or Southwest appeal.”

“Considering that 15% of the Wolf’s audience is Hispanic, I would love to have an artist speak to them,” Rivers adds.

But Jo-Jo Cerdá, PD at KTEX McAllen, Texas, doesn’t think the labels “should approach pushing a new artist any different whether they are white, brown, green or pink.” The criteria should include: Can they have an impact on our business? KBKO Bakersfield, Calif. PD Lee Logan notes that “The growth and success of all forms of entertainment on Hispanic radio and television have created a lot of opportunities for Hispanic superstars without having to . . . break through cross-culturally.”

Bob Barnett, PD of WKIS Miami, thinks the opportunity exists to “find some great country singers that just happen to be Latino . . . and bring them into the format singing country music . . . Country listeners may be more willing to accept a Hernandez or Rodriguez singing a legitimate country song—done well—rather than one sung with Latin-influenced lyrics or instrumentation,” he says.

Jewell Took His Time
With Second Set

NASHVILLE—Artists often say they have their whole life to record their debut album, and only a matter of months to create the follow-up. Buddy Jewell had the opposite experience with his sophomore Columbia set, “Times Like These,” which stretched April 6.

As the first-season winner of USA Network’s country talent competition “Nashville Star,” Jewell’s debut album was produced by Clint Black and rushed into production to take advantage of his newly acquired fan base. The result was a self-titled set that debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Top Country Albums chart in July 2003 and spawned two top five singles, “Help Pour Out the Rain (Lacey’s Song)” and “Sweet Southern Comfort.”

“I’ve been talking about singing together, and it feels like the right timing,” said Jewell.

With or without accolades such as her recent Dove win, Randie would approach her career the same. “If I never got a Dove, I would still be doing what I’m doing, because I’m supposed to be doing it,” the Kansas City, Mo., resident says. “I want this to be such a testimony for [artists] who have been out here forever. It may seem to them that nobody cares, that there’s nobody watching or paying attention, but God has his eye on you, and he cares.”

If She Were Any Other Woman, an album that topped the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart. With his first album debuting at No. 1, Jewell is aware that expectations are high for the new set and is cautiously optimistic that his fan base will respond enthusiastically. And unlike some artists whose careers were launched by the reality TV phenomenon, Jewell isn’t trying to distance himself from the experience.

“It’s kind of like asking people to look at Don Knotts and not see Barney Fife,” he says. “I don’t know if I’ll ever get away totally from being the first winner of ‘Nashville Star,’ and I really don’t have a problem with it. As long as [people] respect me and treat me like they would other artists. I don’t care if they remember me as the ‘Nashville Star’ or not. I’m proud to have won it.”

The label appreciates that fan support. “We certainly have never discounted the buying power that that creates,” Sony Music Nashville senior VP of sales and marketing Dale Libby says. He adds that Jewell recently performed on an episode of the latest “Nashville Star” season during which the label ran a spot promoting his new record. “We’ve become pretty adept at engaging the ‘Nashville Star’ audience and invoking a call to action to buy our records.”

Prior to street date, Jewell promoted the album on the Shop at Home Network, the first artist to do so. He hosted a one-hour segment April 24, performed and took phone calls from fans. During the appearance, the network pre-sold copies of “Times Like These” as well as specially designed “Buddy Boxes,” containing his debut set, the new album and a T-shirt.

Columbia purchased the April artist of the month slot on Great American Country, and Jewell has taped an exclusive concert for the channel. Jewell is also part of the in-city Cisco Presents the Road to CMA Music Festival. During street week, he was scheduled to participate in events in Tampa, Fla., and Orlando, Fla.

In The Spirit
DEBORAH EVANS PRICE dprice@billboard.com

Randle’s On Her Way

When Lynda Randle accepted the traditional gospel album honor for “A Tribute to Mahalia Jackson!” at the 56th annual GMA Dove Awards, some may have viewed the first-time Dove Award winner as a newcomer. In reality, the moment celebrated a 25-year career in music ministry that began when Randle was in her teens.

“I was in a state of shock,” she says of the win. “It was just really neat to get that little Dove. It was such a blessing.”

Randle attributes her increased profile in the industry to her exposure on Bill Gaither’s “Homecoming” concerts and videos, which she has participated in since Gaither recruited her in 1990. “I feel like I have a special call to be a bridge builder,” she says, connecting different communities. “God allows me to sing in white circles, in black circles and in mixed circles.”

Randle has a new project on the Gaither Music label, “God on the Mountain,” which streeted April 26. The first single, “On My Way, On My Own,” is garnering play on gospel stations, and the label plans to work singles to the Southern gospel and inspirational formats as well.

The album will be accompanied by “God on the Mountain Prayer Journal.” Her husband wrote much of the book.

An upcoming project Randie is particularly excited about is her upcoming Christmas album she plans to record for Gaither Music with her brother, Michael Tait, the dTalk member currently fronting his own band, Tait. He is a rocker, while Randle walks in the gospel/Southern gospel/inspirational fields, but on a Christmas album she found common musical ground.

“It will be a kind of Nat ‘King’ Cole meets Mahalia Jackson,” she says of the project, which will include solos from each sibling as well as duets.
Beats & Rhymes

IVORY JONES ijones@billboard.com

Getting Dunk With Trick Daddy

Trick Daddy reaches into his bag and pulls out yet another trick. The rapper is hosting “Dunk Rider Radio With Trick Daddy” on XM Satellite Radio. The one-hour program premiered April 15. It mixes music, live performances and interviews, with Trick Daddy broadcasting from his Miami home studio.

XM’s uncult hip-hop station, RAW (channel 66), airs the show Fridays at 9 p.m. ET with encore Sundays at 2 p.m. and Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Trick Daddy is proving to be a jack-of-all-trades. In November, he taped a pilot for MTV showcasing his cooking skills. His current single, “Sugar” (Gimme Some),” featuring Ludacris, Lil’ Kim and Cee-Lo, is in its 19th week on the Billboard Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, where it peaked at No. 36. His album “Thug Matrimony: Married to the Streets,” on Slip-N-Slide/Atlantic, reached No. 1 on the Top R&B/HiP-Hop Albums and Top Rap Albums charts.

FREESTYLE HISTORY: Fans of the art of freestyling can now watch some of the best battles in the comfort of their own homes. “Freestyle: The Art of Rhyme” is due May 24 on DVD from Palm Pictures/Organic Films.

Directed by Kevin Fitzgerald (aka DJ Organic), co-founder of the Center for Hip-Hop Education, the documentary delves into the world of freestyling, from its infancy to the cipher circle as we know it today. It features appearances by Black Thought and Questlove of the Roots, Mos Def, Supernatural, Madusa and the Last Poets, among others.

Fitzgerald shot “Freestyle” during a seven-year period. The winner of several film festival awards, it captures the passion and intensity that drives many aspiring MCs to battle. It also highlights the striking similarities between freestyling and poetry, as well as those between today’s MCs and the griots of West Africa.

DETROIT SOUL: Another newsworthy release is Platinum Pied Pipers’ debut album, “Triple P,” due May 10 on Ubiquity Records.

The duo of Detroit-born producers Wajeed (a founding member of Slum Village) and Saadid provides its own brand of hip-hop and soul. Lead single “Your Day Is Done,” featuring vocalist Tiombe Lockhart, is a hit in Europe. “Triple P” includes appearances by Jay-Z, London’s Spacek and SA-RA Creative Partners.

Already a hit in Europe, the pair hopes to find success on the home front with its debut 12-inch, “Your Day Is Done,” featuring vocalist Georgina, and “I Got You” featuring Lockhart on the B-side. The latter has already been nominated for song of the year by the BBC Radio 1 show “Worldwide.”

SCOTLAND YARD GOSPEL CHOIR

With a name like Scotland Yard Gospel Choir, this Chicago trio isn’t concerned about hiding its U.K. fixation. Self-released debut album “I Bet You Say That To All the Boys” is a delightfully melodic collection of studious observations and expansive orchestral pop that has earned the act favorable comparisons to Belle & Sebastian. The band’s claim album sales of more than 3,000 copies. Utilizing a rotating cast of musicians, from trombonists to cellists to the Mekons’ Sally Timms, the act is completing its sophomore effort.

“We’ve become extremely self-sufficient,” guitarist/vocalist Elii Einhorn says. “If a label is a small label, even if they’re going to dedicate a lot of their time to us, it’s just not worth it. We’ve already toured with Arcade Fire, and we’ve gotten our record national distribution (via Carrot Top). We’re looking for someone who can do more than we can.”

Contact: Neptali Figueroa, Run With It Management, neptali@syyc.com — Todd Martens

Rhythm & Blues

GAIL MITCHELL gmitchell@billboard.com

Johnson Seeks New Buzz

Veteran Singer’s Sought After Label Finds ‘The Smoother End’ Of R&B

Sought After Entertainment is signing the R&B labels that Fontana, the indie arm of Universal Music & Video Distribution, is betting on (Billboard, March 12).

The Scottsdale, Ariz.-based label is earning adult R&B buzz with its first single, “It’s You,” from Troy Johnson’s self-titled album.


A hiatus in the late ’90s, Johnson was lured back by the opportunity to do what he wanted on “the smoother end” of R&B.

“I wasn’t looking to do a full-on record company,” Johnson says. “That took me by surprise. But what we’ve done is create another avenue for artists to express themselves. Our thing is to present powerful music with a positive message.”

Though Sought After does not yet have a full roster, Johnson says he and his partners are putting not only adult R&B talent but also pop, rock and inspirational music acts. The label also signed Chica, a top-40-leaning Latina trio that writes its own material. A release is penciled in for late June or July.

MUSICAL NOTES: Add Sunshine Anderson and the late Rick James to Sanctuary Urban Records Group’s upcoming slate. James album—to be issued Aug. 2 in tandem with his estate—will include a duet with his daughter Ty Anderson, whose 2001 Soulive/Atlantic debut netted the No. 5 R&B hit “Heard It All Before,” is set to bow this summer. Also on SURG’s summer calendar are Ray J (Raydation, June 28), Papa Rey (“Life & Music,” June 28), Keith Sweat (“Grown & Sexy,” July 26) and a Fox Films soundtrack (“Roll Bounce,” Aug. 23).

Jump for joy: For the first time in eight years, Ann Nesby sings with Sounds of Blackness. The momentous pairing occurs on the group’s “Unity,” due July 12 through SLR Records/Lightyear Entertainment.

LaSalle Gabriel, who headlines Minneapolis-based SLR, recently teamed with an investment group to acquire Flyte Time studios from Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis for $7 million. SOB returned to Flyte Time, the site of its earlier successes, to record “Unity.”

Smokey Robinson’s R&B/pop legacy is spotlighted on “My World: Definitive Collection” (May 3). The Motown/Universal Music Enterprises compilation includes all nine of Robinson’s top 10 hits—solo and with the Miracles. Two new songs (“My World,” “Fallin’”) produced with fellow Motown legend Mickey Stevenson round out the package.

Robinson will receive the Johnny Mercer Award at the 2005 Songwriters Hall of Fame ceremony June 19 at New York’s Marriott Marquis hotel.”

FILM SCHOOL

Film School began as the solo project of San Francisco-based graphic designer/musician Greg Burton, and has evolved into a quintet that melds power-pop hooks with walls of psychedelic guitars that recall My Bloody Valentine. A debut EP, released in 2003 on Amazing Grease—the label run by ex-Pavement guitarist Scott Kannberg—doesn’t capture Film School’s current, more amped-up sound. Live, the band fits alongside such contemporaries as the Secret Machines and Longwave.

“Our EP is a little softer, a little more dreamy, than our [upcoming] album,” Burton says. Now with a completed full-length in hand, a number of labels are courting Film School, but no deal is immediately pending. However, manager Larry Little says Film School was close to landing one with a U.K. label. “A couple of the guys in the band have day jobs, but hopefully they won’t have to keep them for too long,” Burton says.

Contact: Larry Little, From the Future, larry@fromthefuture.org

Music

NOW HEAR THIS

> SCOTLAND YARD GOSPEL CHOIR

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TROY JOHNSON

TRICK DADDY

www.americanradiohistory.com
NINE INCH NAILS
With Teeth
Producer: Trent Reznor
Interscope
Release Date: May 3
It has been 15 years since Nine Inch Nails descended upon the Billboard charts with "Pretty Hate Machine" and nearly six since the release of its last full-length studio album, 1999’s somewhat indulgent "The Fragile." The new album is stripped down and direct, but remnants of the overly dramatic, mismatched late-'90s sound still surface ("All the Love in the World"). That said, there are far more hits than misses, and die-hard fans will be elated. Highlights include high-energy, aggressive tracks like "You Know Who You Are?" and "Getting Smaller," lead single "The Hand That Feeds" and "Only," which wins points for most retro. As a bonus, Foo Fighters leader Dave Grohl drops in for drums on a number of songs.—K

KEITH JARRETT
Radiance
Producer: Manfred Eicher
ECM
Release Date: May 3
For the first time in eight years, pianist Keith Jarrett returns here to the live improvisational setting that has spawned some of his greatest work. After backing away from solo performances in the wake of health problems in the late '90s, Jarrett played two shows in Japan in 1999 but was not satisfied with the results. "Radiance" showcases him giving the format another try in 2002, this time building one piece out of the next, as opposed to the long-form improvisations that marked such iconic releases as 1975's "The Koln Concert." Throughout, Jarrett touches on all his trademarks: the contrast between explosive intervals ("Part 8," "Part 13"), foot-stomping rhythmic workouts ("Part 12," "Part 17") and darker thematic detours ("Part 2"), plus his love/hate-hate love drumming and singalongs. Not always the easiest path to follow, but as ever, a rewarding musical journey.—JC

AIMEE MANN
The Forgotten Arm
Producer: Joe Henry
SuperEgo Records
Release Date: May 3
Three appealing Aimee Mann soundtracks voice, her knack for writing indelible pop tunes delivered with passionate allure and her independence to record whatever she fancies. Produced by Joe Henry, for Mann's SuperEgo imprint, this improbable project is a collection of lyrical short stories, told from the points of view of two flawed characters who love, self-doubt, co-depend, and fall in and out of love with each other. Hardly themes for mass consumption. But Mann pulls the concept off in smart pop-rock style, emotionally investing in the problematic lives ofdrug-addled John and brokenhearted Caroline, his "favorite faith healer." From their carnival midway meeting ("Dear John") to uneasy reunion ("Beautiful"), Mann taps into universal truths.—DO

MIKE DOUGHTY
(2)
Hymns for the Independent
Producer: Dan Wilson
ATO Records
Release Date: May 3
Mike Doughty is best-known as the voice behind the now-defunct Soul Coughing. Five years postmortem and after several self-released efforts, Doughty has resurfaced with "Haughty Melodic," an amalgam of reworked oldies and such new cuts as "Tremendous Brunettes," which features Dave Matthews. Doughty's strengths still lie in his witty lyricism, timing and his gravel-road vocal idiosyncrasies. But "Haughty Melodic" is driven by his midtempo pop sensibilities. It is the propulsive rock choruses and contained arrangements: Nothing is over the top, and no good bridge is beaten to death. Doughty has an ear for a meaty chorus, and while "Haughty Melodic" lacks the organic charm of his independent releases, it is straightforward and, well, melodic. Just don't expect Soul Coughing.—KH

ROCK
THE RAVEONETTES
(1)
Pretty in Black
Producers: Sune Rose Wagner, Richard Gottehrer
Columbia
Release Date: May 3
Two Danes with a Motown fetish doesn't sound like a recipe for success, but Raveonettes principals Sune Rose Wagner and Sharin Foo effectively channel the sweet spice of American radio circa 1963 on their third album. Oddly, the cover of "My Boyfriend's Back," one of the least interesting cuts here. Much preferred is the single first love song in a flash," and the breathtaking "Sleepwalking," where Wagner and Foo work vocal magic that is all their own. Here "Comes Mary" imagines Yo La Tengo covering the Everly Brothers' "All I Have to Do Is Dream," while "Somewhere in Texas" offers up a little twang. In all, this is the perfect soundtrack for a modern slow dance.—JC

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GIZMACHI
The Imbuing
Producer: M. Shawn Crahan
Big Orange Clown/Sanctuary
Release Date: May 3
Singer Sean Kane describes Gizmachi’s music like this: “Whatever you call it, this is the song is the answer.” He is referring to "The Answer," from the band’s upcoming album. It indeed defines Gizmachi: orchestrated cacophonies of brutal, melodic and progressive sounds that count nu-metal and classic Metallica among their fathers. Skipnot drummer M. Shawn Crahan produced this set, the first release from his Big Orange Clown imprint. Gizmachi will make listeners get their scream on with "Burn" and "Wandering Eyes." But the songs aren’t hateful, as "Voice of Sanity" demonstrates with such lyrics as "Show you how to take the stars in the sky, you’re alive now."—CLT

S & B
The Synthesizer Social Producer: Various
Psyko
Release Date: April 5
Looking for avant-garde, lyrically compelling R&B music? S & B, whose backing credits include Gap Band and Whitney Houston, debuts with this aural pleasure. The multi-group goes to town on such tracks as "Part of the Night." "Running," "Brush," "Safe," "Sho." inspired by a melding of influences from R&B, hip-hop, go-go and funk to jazz, gospel and classical. Nothing is over the top, and no good bridge is beaten to death. Doughty has an ear for a meaty chorus, and while "Haughty Melodic" lacks the organic charm of his independent releases, it is straightforward and, well, melodic. Just don't expect Soul Coughing.—KH

COUNTRY
BUDDY JEWELL
(3)
Times Like These
Producer: Garth Fundis
Columbia
Release Date: April 26
With his second Columbia release, singer/songwriter Buddy Jewell makes the transition from "Nashville Star" novelty to premier country artist. Jewell owns an authoritative vocal style with just the right touch of soul, well demonstrated on the simmering, soaring "So Gone" and the Waylon-esque "Ida Run." He also has a way with a big ballad like the bluesy "If She Were Any Other Woman" and the swinging "Back to You," and he swings for the fences on "Run Away Home." As a singer Jewell has style and range to burn, and single potential is abundant with cuts like "You Ain't Doin' It Right," and the atmospheric "Addicted to the Rain." If there is a weakness, it's a lack of edge and roadhouse bite, though we know Jewell is capable of kicking out the honky-tonk jams when he wants to. Next time, why not crank it up a couple of notches?—RW

DANCE/ELECTRONIC
CARIBOU
The Milk of Human Kindness
Producer: Dan Snaithe
Domino
Release Date: May 3
The name may have changed, but Dan Snaithe continues to churn out the kind of quality cut-and-paste electronica that stimulates the same pleasure response as labelmate Four Tet and DJ Shadow. Snaithe used to record as Manitoba, but he followed on Caribou after Handsome Dick Manitoba sued him for trademark infringement. There's no angry retort
here, just 11 rich tracks that blend live instrumentation with trippy loops and the occasional Snatch vocal. The eerie melody of “Pelican Narrows” worship a bit too closely at the altar of David Axelrod. But Snatch strikes gold on “Barnowli,” which massages the same riff for nearly six minutes of sonic smiles, and the groovy “Bees,” which conjures images of two bobbies cruising down the highway with the top down.—JC

NOUVELLE VAGUE
Nouvelle Vague
Producer: Nouvelle Vague
Luka Bopy/VP
Release Date: May 3
Mastermind by the Paris-based producers Marc Collin and Olivier Libaux, “Nouvelle Vague” collection of punk and new wave covers. But these aren’t your mama’s covers (though she may appreciate them). Collin and Libaux, along with a handful of female singers (one Brazilian, one American and six French), have cleverly concocted a musical mash-up that owes much to the band’s naming. It means “new wave” and “bossa nova” in English and Portuguese, respectively. In their hands, it’s called “Love Will Tear Us Apart.” Dépeche Mode’s “Just Can’t Get Enough.” Modern English’s “Melt With You” and Public Image Ltd.’s “This Is Not a Love Song” become postcard-perfect confessions for the Brazilian beaches of Ipanema and the trendy bars of New York.—MP

BLUES
LITTLE CHARLIE & THE NIGHTCATS
Nineteenth Avenue
Producers: Charlie Baty, Rick Estrin
Alligator
Release Date: April 26
This is Little Charlie & the Nightcats’ ninth album for Alligator, and the Sacramento, Calif.-based quartet is obviously determined not to mess with a good thing. Known as masters of the jump blues, these cats have always delivered beyond that in terms of their stylistic choices. This latest disc banks on Rick Estrin’s distinct songwriting and harmonica virtuosity, plus Charlie Baty’s versatile guitar. The overall musicianship is impeccable, and that’s really the base-line measure. Founding members Estrin and Baty have been honing their blues groove since the ’70s, and the payoff comes with albums as finely tuned as “Nine Lives.”—PJV

GOSPEL
THE CRABB FAMILY
Live at Brooklyn Tabernacle
Producers: various
Daywind Records
Release Date: May 3
Live albums can make you feel like you’re eavesdropping on someone else’s good time. That is not the case with this set, recorded at Brooklyn Tabernacle with the church’s famed choir. Jason Crabb, his siblings Adam, Aaron and Kelly and patriarch Gerald not only sing, they share testimonies and thoroughly engage the listener on all fronts. “Holy Ground,” the Geron Davis song previously recorded byaji LaBrenda, is beautifully rendered as Jason enlists the audience’s participation. While each gifted vocalist, Jason is a soulful powerhouse “Through the Fire” and “The Reason I’m Standing” with Gerald are among the many highlights. There’s a reason the Crabb family’s—recently won four Gospel Music Assn. Awards: They have great songs, amazing voices and the ability to attract fans beyond their Southern gospel base.—DEP

CLASSICAL
LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (Orlando) Soundtrack/ Star Wars: Episode III/ Revenge of the Sith
Producer: John Williams
Sony
Release Date: May 3
From the opening track and throughout the entire album, the Star Wars score reinforces Williams’ position as an integral force in the masterfully crafted saga. As always, Williams is a stylish scene setter who knows how just to create a mood, from the deliciously ominous, skilling sibblings “Battle of the Heroes” to the ethereal vocals of “Padme’s Ruminations.” Along with the high musical performances, collectors will be thrilled by the bonus DVD, which includes 16 new music videos.—AT

LEGEND & CREDITS
EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS), CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)
CRITICS’ CHOICE
1: A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.
2: A.recommended release, regardless of chart potential, recommended for musical merit.
3: A released album, highly recommended for musical merit.

JENN CUNETTA
Come Rain Come Shine (3:50)
Producers: not listed
Writers: P. McCartney, F. Lamboy, A. Wedeen, L. McCartney
Uni (CD promo)
This first thing you notice about Jenn Cunetta’s buoyant “Come Rain Come Shine” is that it heavily borrows from Wings’ “Silly Love Songs.” It is a rare Paul McCartney-authorized sample, and the track takes full advantage of the song’s springy disco-lite baseline and its unmistakable horn section. The bubbly “Come Rain Come Shine” is already a top 10 hit on the Hot Dance Radio Airplay chart and deserves to cross over to mainstream top 40 outlets looking for a sunny pop single.—KC

R. KELLY
Trapped in the Closet (Chapter 1 of 5)
(3:31)
Producer: R. Kelly
Writer: R. Kelly
Jive (CD promo)
Throughout his career, R. Kelly has shown plenty of versatility, as predictably provides gangsta, tender lover and pop aficionado. But “Trapped in the Closet” is in a category by itself. It is one of musical “chapters,” to be released one by one, radio, telling the story of romance, danger and intrigue in soap-opera style: each ends in a cliff-hanger. Chapter one has Kelly hiding in the closet as his lover’s husband shows up unexpectedly. Will he find Kelly? We won’t know until chapter two. (Note the striking similarity to the sexually charged premise laid out in 2001’s Kelly-produced “Contagious,” featuring Ronald Isley and Chante Moore.) This record has no chorus, no repeated lines and it is not particularly singable. But it is riveting as it builds to a near-climax conclusion, leaving the listener plenty intrigued about what comes next. Whether the track will bear repeated listening is the wild card here, but it certainly is a fun, novel, well-executed toy for radio to play with in the coming months. All five chapters will appear on Kelly’s next full-length album in late June.—CT

SEETHER
Remedy (3:28)
Producer: Bob Marlette
Writers: S. Morgan, Seether
Wind-up (CD promo)
South African band Seether has gotten off to the fast start of its career with “Remedy,” the first single from sophomore album “ Karma and Effect.” That may speak for Wind-up’s job of artist development—but perhaps increased recognition thanks to Evanescence leader Amy Lee’s contribution to the group’s last single, “Broken.” The result is a song that’s building into a huge story at active rock and modern rock radio, and it’s easy to see why. “Remedy” is a solid, meat-and-potatoes rock ’n’ roll tune. Uptempo and guitar-driven, it is anchored by Shaun Morgan’s melodic vocals, which keep the song from getting too heavy and prevent it from sounding too derivative. Seether will be a handful of radio shows in the States this summer.—CT

NATALIE GRANT
Held (4:20)
Producer: Shaun Shanelk
Writer: C. Wells
Curb Records (CD promo)
Natalie Grant is already an established and highly regarded presence at contemporary Christian radio, and she remains an artist who gains intensity with every successive release. “Held,” the first single from “Awaken,” the Greatest Gainer on last issue’s Heatseekers chart, is the songbird’s most affecting offering yet, a startlingly literal tale of deep loss and grief, and the comfort offered by trusting in a higher power. Grant has always had a flair for the dramatic, but here, she channels the lyric’s heartbreak with such raw intensity that the song’s beautiful melody and ace production become secondary. Curb is wise to take the time to take this prized singer—and this universal song about coping with life’s blows—to a broader set of masses. It is a remarkable musical experience on all fronts.—CT
Warner Plunks Down Buck 65
Label Looks To Expand Canadian Artist’s Audience

TORONTO—Canada’s Buck 65 (aka Richard Terfry) embraces traditional American storytelling against a backdrop of folk, rock, hip-hop and country.

Now Warner Music is eager to see if his latest offering can expand the audience he attracted with 2003’s “Talkin’ Honky Blues.” That album earned him a Juno Award for top new artist in 2004.

Warner Music will launch “Secret House Against the World” June 14 in Europe and June 28 in Canada. A further rollout of the album outside North America by Warner will come in the fall.

The album will also see an autumn release in the United States via V2. That follows “This Right Here Is Buck 65,” a compilation that V2 issued in January.

Warner Music Canada signed Terfry in 2002. He had built his reputation on North America’s underground hip-hop circuit over the past decade and through a half-dozen releases on his own Metamorphica label and through his work with the unconventional anticon traditional collective in Oakland, Calif., and with fellow Canadian rapper Sixtoo.

In 2002 Warner Music Canada released “Square,” which contained four 15-minute songs: “Square One,” “Square Two,” “Square Three” and “Square Four.” It was followed by “Talkin’ Honky Blues” for which Terfry jetti-soned his four-track bedroom setup to work in a Paris studio. The result was an imaginative coming-of-age album issued by Warner in 18 countries.

While Warner Music Canada president/CEO Steve Kane lauds “Secret House Against the World,” he cautions, “Buck is not an artist we will depend on for singles. He’s an artist who will build a loyal fan base willing to take a musical ride with him.”

Terfry grew up in Mount Uniacke, Nova Scotia, a town of 3,500. His culturally isolated background, he says, explains his diverse influences.

“As a kid, I had Charlie Daniels coming at me from one direction and Elvis Pres- ley and Creedence Clearwa- ter Revival from another di- rection,” he recalls. “Then my cousin would bring over his Black Sabbath records.”

During the past two years, Terfry has played more than 300 shows in Europe, Aus- tralia, New Zealand and Asia. This year he has concentrated on the United States in sup- port of the V2 album. He is on tour with Moby until late May, to be followed by dates in Ire- land and Europe.

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Platinum Beckons
New Zealand Trio Evermore

(*New Zealand rock act Evermore, based at home and in neighborhood, is chasing label interest in North Amer- ica and Europe. The sibling trio’s Warner Music Australasia album debut, “Dreams,” is approaching platinum status

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CLASSICAL SCORER

ANASTASIA TSIOLUCAS atsioulcas@billboard.com

RIEU WALTZES WITH PBS

ollard-born crossover violin- ists Anne Rieu, affectionately dubbed the “waltz king” by fans, has long been a staple during PBS pledge drives. His success with PBS, however, no longer begins and ends with TV specials.

In a savvy move, Rieu’s American tour in May is being sponsored by a number of PBS affiliates. The violinist was the first artist to create such a relationship, which began with his last United States tour. His PBS partners include stations in such key markets as Chicago, Atlanta, Detroit and St. Louis.

“Chicago was an early acolyte of this approach,” notes Steve Vining, the president of Savoy Label Group, which in- cludes Denon. Rieu’s label home. He adds that in the months ahead, more prominent stations, including New York’s WNET and WBCH in Boston, are planning to sign on for Rieu’s touring next year.

Rieu’s next PBS special, as yet unnamed, will be ready in time for the August pledge drive. Shot in a soccer stadium in the violinist’s hometown of Maastricht, the hourlong pro- gram features Rieu playing his signature Strauss and waltz repertoire for more than 25,000 cheering fans.

Denon’s companion CD and the DVD of the concert, which include footage not seen on PBS, are slated for release in late September. Rieu’s last two albums, “Tuscany” and “At the Movies,” continue to sell at a record pace.

(Tsioulcas’ husband Joshua Sheteron is senior director of A&R/marketing for Savoy Label Group, but has no involvement with Rieu.)

SOUNDS OF NEW YORK:
The name Chesky doesn’t be- long just to an acclaimed au- diophile label; it is also the name of one of the label’s com- posers. Label co-founder David Chesky shows off his talents on a new album featuring three of his recent works: his Violin Concerto, featuring soloist Tom Chiu, the song “The Girl From Guatemala,” with a text taken from aJose Marti poem, featuring soprano Wonjung Kim; and his Flute Concerto, with soloist Jeffrey Khaner. All these pieces were played by the recently founded new music group, which was conducted by Anthony Aulie.

Chesky says that all three pieces were influenced by the sounds of New York, from Latin music to African rhythms to jazz. “I’m trying to use the orchestra as a rhythm section,” says Chesky, who feels that jazz, in particular, should be an integral idiom in classical music written today. “The question to contemporary American composers shouldn’t be, ‘Why is there jazz in your music?’ he notes. “It should be, ‘Why isn’t there jazz in your music?’”

Rieu

NOTES FROM ALL OVER:
New York-based management company Worldwide Enter- tainment Group has signed Colombian pianist Roberto McClure and Diappe. WEG’s first classical crossover deal came last year, when it signed Irish tenor sensation Ronan Tynan... Cello maverick Matt Haimovitz is launching a new live performance imprint, Oxingle Exposed. OEF’s first release will include the world premiere of Scherzo Gossa, a new concerto for cello and big band written by David Sanford, featuring Haimovitz and the Pittsburgh Collective. It will be recorded May 29 at New York’s Knitting Factory.

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**Over the Counter**

**GEOFF MAYFIELD** gmayfield@billboard.com

**Thomas Lights Fire Without Matchbox**

Rob Thomas' latest album bows at No. 1 on The Billboard 200, an event that broadens the perspective of a singer who has experienced much success in a relatively brief discography.

In 1997, Matchbox Twenty's first Lava/Atlantic album became a developing-artist success story, graduating from Top Heatseekers and climbing to No. 5 on the big chart as it reached 21-times-platinum status. The band's other two albums, released in 2000 and 2002, also reached the top 10 and multiplatinum certifications.

In 1999, Thomas contributed to one of the strongest comebacks in rock history, lending vocals to "Smooth," the biggest single from what soon became the biggest album in Santana's long career. "Supernatural" spent 12 weeks at No. 1 and, according to Nielsen SoundScan, has moved 11.4 million copies.

Thomas' "...Something to Be" scores first-week sales of 352,000, less than Matchbox Twenty has seen, although the band has yet to reach No. 1. Its sophomore album, "Mad Season," began with 365,000 when it entered at No. 3. Thomas' set is the first DualDisc original album to reach No. 1.

**LESS BY LESS:** Although the top 10 albums, including four new entries, sell 28.2% more than the top 10 from the same week last year, overall album sales are down 1.2% from that comparable frame.

That small dip looks less alarming than the same-week album sales of 25.5% seen last week, where the physical album living was thinned to the point that it was the year's best-selling album, while 50 Cent was tops in 2003. Its success, and that of Ashlee Simpson, Hilary Duff and Eminem, suggest young consumers still visit stores, even if they don't buy as many albums as kids once did.

Through last week's charts, the average sum for the No. 1 album on The Billboard 200 stood at $5,400, compared with $2,581 for the No. 1 ringtone. But teen and hip-hop combined to sell 785 million units of album sales, the fattest year since Nielsen SoundScan opened its doors in 1999.

Even in these new-fangled times, the physical album is still the workhorse that pulls the music industry's plow. The mobile phone represents new revenue in an era when the album has lost some sheen, but the best estimate is that U.S. ringtone sales have topped $400 million in 2004. That same year, SoundScan placed digital album sales at 5.4 million—less than 1% of overall album volume—and digital tracks at 142 million, most probably sold at 99 cents.

By comparison, the CD moved 651.4 million units last year, and that activity wasn't confined to teenage consumers seeking Nokas Jones, Josh Groban or country artists. Upper had last year's best-selling album, while 50 Cent was tops in 2003. Their success, and that of Ashlee Simpson, Hilary Duff and Eminem, suggest young consumers still visit stores, even if they don't buy as many albums as kids once did.

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<th>Distributor</th>
<th>Label/Company</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>RAY CHARLES (70 VOLKSWAGEN: LOVE STORY)</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>GENESIS (30 THE BANGLES: Buttcrack)</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>THE RAMONES (23 THE BANGLES: Buttcrack)</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<td>BMG</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<td>BUDDHA (12 FRANK &amp; DANNY DANSION: The Treasure)</td>
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<td>THE BEACH BOYS (11 THE BANGLES: Buttcrack)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>THE WHO (10 THE BANGLES: Buttcrack)</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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**Sales Data: 1980.01.02**

Top 100 artists of 1980.01.02, with their respective albums and sales figures.

**Billboard 200 Chart (January 2, 1980)**

- Ray Charles - "Love Story" (RCA)
- Genesis - "Buttcrack" (RCA)
- The Ramones - "Buttcrack" (RCA)
- Tunes of Phantasy - "Before The Storm" (RCA)
- The Rolling Stones - "Buttcrack" (RCA)
- The Beatles - "Buttcrack" (RCA)
- Buddha - "The Treasure" (RCA)
- The Beach Boys - "Buttcrack" (RCA)
- The Who - "Buttcrack" (RCA)

**Artist Index**

- Ray Charles
- Genesis
- The Ramones
- Tunes of Phantasy
- The Rolling Stones
- The Beatles
- Buddha
- The Beach Boys
- The Who

**Artists of 1980.01.02**

- Genesis
- The Ramones
- Tunes of Phantasy
- The Rolling Stones
- The Beatles
- Buddha
- The Beach Boys
- The Who

**Albums of 1980.01.02**

- "Love Story" by Ray Charles
- "Buttcrack" by Genesis
- "Buttcrack" by The Ramones
- "Before The Storm" by Tunes of Phantasy
- "Buttcrack" by The Rolling Stones
- "Buttcrack" by The Beatles
- "The Treasure" by Buddha
- "Buttcrack" by The Beach Boys
- "Buttcrack" by The Who

**Data Sources**

- Billboard 200 Chart
- Artistic Index
- Sales Data

**For more information, visit [www.americanradiohistory.com](http://www.americanradiohistory.com)**

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The Billboard 200 chart is a weekly music chart that ranks the top 200 songs in the United States, based on sales and radio airplay. The chart is published by The Billboard magazine and is a key metric for the music industry.
BETWEEN THE BULLETS

STEFANI STEPS TO THE TOP

With a 2-1 move on the Top 100 and a 3-1 surge on The Billboard Hot 100, Gwen Stefani’s “Hollaback Girl” becomes the first track to top both charts since the Pop 100’s inception three months ago. Discounting “American Idol” sales-driven No. 1 by finalists Kelly Clarkson, Clay Aiken and Fantasia, “Hollaback” is the first song to top the Hot 100 without a large base of R&B/hip-hop airplay since Nickleback’s “How You Remind Me” in December 2001.

With a record $58,000 paid downloads, 65% of the track’s Hot 100 points are derived from digital sales.

—Silver Peters

www.americanradiohistory.com
### HOT R&B/hip-hop Airplay (May 7, 2005)

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<td>23/22 CANDY SHOP</td>
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<td>HOW YOU DO</td>
<td>DISCO INFERNOR</td>
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<td>GIVE ME THAT</td>
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<td>CANDY SHOP</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>YOU COME TO ME</td>
<td>TRAPPED IN THE CLOSE(1 OF 5) PULL UP AND TAKE THE MONEY</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>WHY YOU DO</td>
<td>DISCO INFERNOR</td>
<td>ZOMBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>GIVE ME THAT</td>
<td>DANNY FLYNN/BOB SINCLAIR/ROSE REYES/TVRS</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>I CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU</td>
<td>CIARA</td>
<td>GRAND HUSTLE/ATLANTIC</td>
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### R&B/hip-hop Single Sales

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<td>ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>DISCO INFERNOR</td>
<td>ZOMBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>GIVE ME THAT</td>
<td>DANNY FLYNN/BOB SINCLAIR/ROSE REYES/TVRS</td>
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<td>CIARA</td>
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<td>ME WANT YOU (1 OF 2)</td>
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<td>ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM</td>
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### Adult R&B

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<td>HOLLABACK GIRL</td>
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<td>HOW YOU DO</td>
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<td>ZOMBA</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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### Rhythmic

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<td>U Don't Know Me</td>
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### Rhythmic Airplay

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<td>CANDY SHOP</td>
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<td>I'M A MUSTA</td>
<td>CANDY SHOP</td>
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<td>YOU COME TO ME</td>
<td>TRAPPED IN THE CLOSE(1 OF 5) PULL UP AND TAKE THE MONEY</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>WHY YOU DO</td>
<td>DISCO INFERNOR</td>
<td>ZOMBA</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>GIVE ME THAT</td>
<td>DANNY FLYNN/BOB SINCLAIR/ROSE REYES/TVRS</td>
<td>ROCA-PR/ATLANTIC</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>I CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU</td>
<td>CIARA</td>
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<td>6</td>
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## Top Country Albums

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>The Right To Bare Arms</td>
<td>Larry the Cable Guy</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Feels Like Today</td>
<td>Darryl Worley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Here For The Party</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>GREATEST HITS Vol 1</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Be As You Are: The Very Best Of</td>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Very Best Of</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Songs About You</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Collection Vol II</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>There's More Where That Came From</td>
<td>Lee Ann Womack</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>My Kind Of Livin'</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Collection Vol I</td>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Songs About You COUNTRY'S FINEST</td>
<td>Josh Gracin</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Rainbow Man</td>
<td>Jeff Bates</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Off To The World</td>
<td>Blaine Larsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Loneliness Runs Both Ways</td>
<td>Alison Krauss + Union Station</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Dwight Yoakam</td>
<td>Dwight Yoakam</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Songs Of Our Opry</td>
<td>Willie Nelson</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>This Woman</td>
<td>LeAnn Rimes</td>
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<td>Van Lear Rose</td>
<td>Merle Haggard &amp; Emmylou Harris</td>
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<td>Let Them Be Little</td>
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<td>Greatest Hits 1994-2004</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>The Very Best Of Randy Travis</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>This I Gotta See</td>
<td>Andy Griggs</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Volume II</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
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<td>Put The O Back In Country</td>
<td>Shooter Jennings</td>
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<td>License To Chill</td>
<td>Jimmy Buffett</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Julie Roberts</td>
<td>Willie Nelson &amp; Family</td>
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<td>Shaken Not Stirred</td>
<td>Phil Vassar</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td>LeAnn Rimes</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>Jamie O'Neal</td>
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<td>32</td>
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<td>Toby Keith</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Lee Ann Womack</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Top Of The World Tour Live</td>
<td>Dixie Chicks</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Collection, Volume 1</td>
<td>Jo Dee Messina</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>What I Do</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Restless</td>
<td>Sara Evans</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Comin' On Strong</td>
<td>Trace Adkins</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Let's Be Us Again</td>
<td>Lonestar</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Sweet Right Here</td>
<td>Sheryl Crow</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>All Of Me</td>
<td>Anne Murray</td>
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## Top Bluegrass Albums

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<td>Lonely Runs Both Ways</td>
<td>Alison Krauss + Union Station</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ragin' Live</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bill Monroe and His Bluest Grass Boys</td>
<td>Old Crow Medicine Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Definitive Collection</td>
<td>Steve Ivey</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20 Best Of Bluegrass</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pickin' On Vince Gill: A Bluegrass Tribute</td>
<td>Steve Ivey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Best Of Bluegrass</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Bill Gilotti Presents: A Bluegrass Homecoming, Volume Two</td>
<td>The Grascals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>You Gotta Dig A Little Deeper</td>
<td>Doyle Lawson &amp; Quicksilver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mountain Tracks: Volume 3</td>
<td>Chatham County Line</td>
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## Between The Bullets

**BLOOM STILL NOT OFF OF LYNNS ‘ROSE’**

In an otherwise soft week for country album sales, two veteran acts carry the freight this week. Repeat broadcasts of the April in CMW Music Awards push Country Music Hall of Fame legend Loretta Lynn's "Van Lear Rose" up to 1,000 units for a weekly total of approximately 3,000. Lynn's 24% increase is the largest on the chart, and follows last week's increase of 76%. During the CMW awards show, Lynn received the Johnny Cash Visionary Award, presented by Martina McBride and Gretchen Wilson. The cable network also accounts for the only other double-digit percentage increase, a 16% uptick for Alabama's "Ultimate Alabama: 20 #1 Hits" (66-59 following a "Inside Fane" segment April 21. The venerable group takes the Pacesetter trophy, and its 1988 "Alabama Live" set reenters Top Country Catalog.

— Wade Jason
Airpower awarded to songs
Promosquad and HitPredictor
and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All
monitored by

Don't
CD

10
9
8
7
6
5
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2
1

CD

THE KID ROCK FEATURING ALLISON MOORER
THE BLAME GAME
THE HURT
CHELY WOMACK

JENKINS (CAPITOL)
THE ORASCALS WITH SPECIAL GUEST DOLLY PARTON

MAY
I'LL BE
YOU'LL
R.GALLIMORE, T.MCGRAW, D.SMITH ) B.JAMES, A. MAYO, T. VEREES, C.LINDSEY)

17
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I'LL BE
YOU'LL
R.GALLIMORE, T.MCGRAW, D.SMITH ) B.JAMES, A. MAYO, T. VEREES, C.LINDSEY)

17
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I'LL BE
YOU'LL
R.GALLIMORE, T.MCGRAW, D.SMITH ) B.JAMES, A. MAYO, T. VEREES, C.LINDSEY)

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I'LL BE
YOU'LL
R.GALLIMORE, T.MCGRAW, D.SMITH ) B.JAMES, A. MAYO, T. VEREES, C.LINDSEY)

17
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1

I'LL BE
YOU'LL
R.GALLIMORE, T.MCGRAW, D.SMITH ) B.JAMES, A. MAYO, T. VEREES, C.LINDSEY)
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<th>Airplay Data</th>
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<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>La camisa negra</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sony Discos</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
<td>Top 5</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vicente Fernandez</td>
<td>Hasta el fin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sony Discos</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
<td>Top 5</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luis Fonsi</td>
<td>Despacito (feat. Daddy Yankee)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sony Discos</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
<td>Top 5</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luis Fonsi</td>
<td>Me vale que me ames</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sony Discos</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
<td>Top 5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis Fonsi</td>
<td>Nuestro momento</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sony Discos</td>
<td>Top 10</td>
<td>Top 5</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Mexican ballad won regional Mexican airplay track of the week, out, of the Billboard Latin charts.

**ALL LATIN SONGS:**
- *HOT LATIN SONGS:*
  - *La camisa negra*
  - *Hasta el fin*
  - *Despacito (feat. Daddy Yankee)*
  - *Me vale que me ames*
  - *Nuestro momento*

**TOP LATIN ALBUMS:**
- *El guero con golpes*
- *Me encanta tu cuerpo*
- *El tiempo*
- *Loca loca*
- *Señora*

**Charts Legend for rules and explanations:**
- Top 10
- Top 5
- Top 2
- Top 1
- New
- Re-Entrant
- Top 20
- Top 30
- Top 50

Data for week of May 7, 2005.
### Latin Airplay

**Pop**

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<th>Chart Position</th>
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<td>Amor Perfecto</td>
<td>Christian Castro</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otro Vuelo</td>
<td>Frankie J</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Defensa Propia</td>
<td>Jimmy &amp; Vicente</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tan Cruel</td>
<td>Laura Pausini</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday's Girl</td>
<td>Selena Gomez</td>
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**Regional Mexican**

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<td>Ni Me Queda Mas</td>
<td>Estefany</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deja De Llorar</td>
<td>Ana Barbara &amp; Jennifer Peña</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En El Silencio</td>
<td>Lila Downs</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Te Puedo Olvidar</td>
<td>Patrizio Buanne</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy Tu</td>
<td>Alejandra Guzmán</td>
<td>#5</td>
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</table>

### Latin Albums

**Pop**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La Vaquita</td>
<td>Gloria Trevi</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Película</td>
<td>Natalia Jiménez</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Infierno</td>
<td>Thalía</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Beso</td>
<td>Ana Gabriel</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Llorona</td>
<td>Juanes</td>
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**Regional Mexican**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Cielo</td>
<td>Quetzaljax</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Flor</td>
<td>Natalia Jiménez</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Alacran</td>
<td>Lesboz</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Flor</td>
<td>Natalia Jiménez</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Alacran</td>
<td>Lesboz</td>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
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### Tropical

**Pop**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Juego Del Amor</td>
<td>Paloma</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy Tu</td>
<td>Lesboz</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Juego Del Amor</td>
<td>Paloma</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy Tu</td>
<td>Lesboz</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Juego Del Amor</td>
<td>Paloma</td>
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</table>

**Regional Mexican**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La Cumbiela</td>
<td>Quetzaljax</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Cumbiela</td>
<td>Quetzaljax</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Cumbiela</td>
<td>Quetzaljax</td>
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</tr>
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<td>La Cumbiela</td>
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<td>#4</td>
</tr>
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### Latin Dance Club Play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Heat</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Heat</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Vida Loca</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Vida Loca</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Vida Loca</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Latin Dance Singles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Chart Position</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vida Loca</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vida Loca</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vida Loca</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vida Loca</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vida Loca</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
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### Regional Mexican

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ni Me Queda Mas</td>
<td>Estefany</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deja De Llorar</td>
<td>Ana Barbara &amp; Jennifer Peña</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En El Silencio</td>
<td>Lila Downs</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy Tu</td>
<td>Alejandra Guzmán</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy Tu</td>
<td>Alejandra Guzmán</td>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Japan

**Singles**

1. *Step You Is This Love?* (CD + DVD) (Sony Music)
2. *Sakura* (Sony Music)
3. *Zephyroukyusouhen (Ltd Edition)* (Sony Music)
4. *Hari No Uta* (Sony Music)
5. *Hoshimakagiyakotu* (Sony Music)
6. *Go A* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Escuela De Musica* (Sony Music)
2. *Il Divo* (Sony Music)
3. *Keane* (Sony Music)
4. *Adriana Calcanhotto* (Sony Music)
5. *Roberto Carlos* (Sony Music)
6. *Martinho Da Vila* (Sony Music)
7. *Huanus* (Sony Music)
8. *Tony Carrera* (Sony Music)

### United Kingdom

**Singles**

1. *Everything She Wants* (The Official (UK Charts)) (EMI)
2. *The Pink Floyd Years* (Polydor)
3. *Switch* (Warner Bros)
4. *Elbow* (Reprise/Warner Bros)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)
4. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)

### France

**Singles**

1. *C'est La Vie* (Universal)
2. *Elsie* (Universal)
3. *Daniel Onega* (Universal)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)

### Germany

**Singles**

1. *Candy Shop* (Sony Music)
2. *ZDF* (Sony Music)
3. *Lieber ist* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Madrugada* (EMI)
2. *Die Firma* (EMI)
3. *UWE* (EMI)

### Canada

**Singles**

1. *Activists* (Sony Music)
2. *Switch* (Sony Music)
3. *Party For Two* (Sony Music)
4. *American Idiot* (Sony Music)
5. *Vertigo (2 Track Single)* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *How Do I Love Thee* (Sony Music)
2. *Sweetheart* (Sony Music)
3. *Cee Lo Green (Feat. Young Jeezy)* (Sony Music)

### Italy

**Singles**

1. *I Bambini Fanno Oh* (Sony Music)
2. *Angelo* (Sony Music)
3. *Gasolina* (Sony Music)
4. *L'Amore Che Non Ce* (Sony Music)
5. *Mongrel* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Escolina De Musica* (Sony Music)
2. *Roberto Carlos* (Sony Music)
3. *Martinho Da Vila* (Sony Music)
4. *Humanos* (Sony Music)
5. *Tony Carrera* (Sony Music)

### Spain

**Singles**

1. *El Monde* (Sony Music)
2. *Let Me Love You* (Sony Music)
3. *Get Right* (Sony Music)
4. *WIR SIND HELDEN* (Sony Music)
5. *CHRISTINA* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)

### Australia

**Singles**

1. *Beautiful Soul* (Sony Music)
2. *Switch* (Sony Music)
3. *Almost Home* (Sony Music)
4. *Let Me Love You* (Sony Music)
5. *Seeing You* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)

### Sweden

**Singles**

1. *What's In It For Me* (Sony Music)
2. *Hall Of Mirrors* (Sony Music)
3. *To Win My Love* (Sony Music)
4. *Das Kleine Krokodil Schnappi* (Sony Music)
5. *Rich Girl* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Escuela De Musica* (Sony Music)
2. *Il Divo* (Sony Music)
3. *Keane* (Sony Music)
4. *Adriana Calcanhotto* (Sony Music)
5. *Roberto Carlos* (Sony Music)

### Austria

**Singles**

1. *Emeliane* (Sony Music)
2. *Candy Shop* (Sony Music)
3. *From Zero To Hero* (Sony Music)
4. *LIEBE IST* (Sony Music)
5. *CHRISTINA* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)

### Norway

**Singles**

1. *Age Alexander* (Sony Music)
2. *KONG* (Sony Music)
3. *To Win My Love* (Sony Music)
4. *Get Right* (Sony Music)
5. *WIR SIND HELDEN* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)

### Wallonia

**Singles**

1. *Un Monde Parfait* (Sony Music)
2. *Tout Le Bonheur Du Monde* (Sony Music)
3. *Elsie* (Sony Music)
4. *Daniel Onega* (Sony Music)
5. *Get Right* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)

### Portugal

**Singles**

1. *Juliana De Moura* (Sony Music)
2. *Il Divo* (Sony Music)
3. *Keane* (Sony Music)
4. *Adriana Calcanhotto* (Sony Music)
5. *Roberto Carlos* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Escuela De Musica* (Sony Music)
2. *Il Divo* (Sony Music)
3. *Keane* (Sony Music)
4. *Adriana Calcanhotto* (Sony Music)
5. *Roberto Carlos* (Sony Music)

### Argentina

**Singles**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)
4. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)

### Czech Republic

**Singles**

1. *Amata Langerova* (Sony Music)
2. *Raduza* (Sony Music)
3. *ARRASH* (Sony Music)
4. *Raydrops* (Sony Music)
5. *Michal David* (Sony Music)

**Albums**

1. *Floricienta Y Su Banda* (EMI)
2. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* (EMI)
3. *Tony Carrera* (EMI)

---

Data for week of MAY 7, 2005 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 64
### EUROCHARTS

**SINGLE SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week of Chart</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MICHAEL BUBLE</td>
<td>THE RNA</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BOB MARLEY &amp; THE WAILERS</td>
<td>NO WOMAN NO CRY</td>
<td>DEL REI</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
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### ALBUMS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week of Chart</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DONELLE MACLEAN</td>
<td>DONELLE MACLEAN</td>
<td>ガンマレコード</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>KATY PERRY</td>
<td>LOVER</td>
<td>CAPITOL</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>240,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>2</td>
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### RADIO AIRPLAY

<table>
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<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week of Chart</th>
<th>Airplay</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
<td>MEAN</td>
<td>WMG</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BRUNO MAZZONCINI</td>
<td>SHINE</td>
<td>POLYDOR</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>1,100,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>2</td>
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### CHARTS

**TOP 50 CHRISTIAN ARTISTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week of Chart</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>JOSH MOSS</td>
<td>THE BEST OF JOSH MOSS</td>
<td>INTEGRITY</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>JASON ALDEAN</td>
<td>I DON'T KNOW</td>
<td>WMG</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>2</td>
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**TOP 50 GOSPEL ARTISTS**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week of Chart</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>AARON TIPPIN</td>
<td>ONE OF THE NATIONS</td>
<td>WMG</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DARYL HANSON</td>
<td>MIRACLE</td>
<td>WMG</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

**TOP 50 ROCK ARTISTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week of Chart</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Chart Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LINCOLN CANYON</td>
<td>BREATHE</td>
<td>WMG</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DAVID DAVIES</td>
<td>LOVE</td>
<td>WMG</td>
<td>APRIL 27, 2005</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>DIGITAL</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data for week of May 7, 2005. For chart reprints call 646.654.4633. Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.*
SINGLES CHARTS

Compiled from a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are ranked by number of gross audience impressions, computed by cross-referencing exact times of airing with Arbitron listenership data. The selections are the Top 40 for Pop 40, Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are rated by total detections.

SONGS SHOWING AN INCREASE IN AUDIENCE (or detections)

MIMI

DVD

500,000

500,000

100,000

200,000

format based on the chart's largest unit increase.

RECURRENT RULES

Songs are removed from the Hot 100 and Hot 100 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Hot 100 for more than 20 weeks and rank below 50. Songs are removed from the Hot RB/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks and Hot RB/Hip-Hop Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Hot RB/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks for more than 20 weeks and rank below 50. Songs are returned to the Pop 100 and Pop 100 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Pop 100 for more than 30 weeks and rank below 35. Songs are removed from Hot Country Singles & Tracks if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 50, provided that they are not still gaining enough points to buke. Songs are removed from the Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Adult R&B, and Hot R&B/R&B Airplay charts if they have been on the chart for more than 26 weeks and rank below 15 (20 for Modern Rock).

SINGLES SALES CHARTS

The top selling singles compiled from a national sample of retail sales, mass merchandisers, and internet sales reports compiled, and provided by Nielsen SoundScan. For RB/Hip-Hop Singles Sales, sales data is compiled from national retail point of sale for RB/Hip-Hop stores by Nielsen SoundScan.

SONGS WITH THE GREATEST RETAIL SALES GAINS

COMMENTS: CD single available. Digital Download available. DVD single available. DVD music video available. Comments are not included on all singles charts.

HITPREDICT

Indicates that the number of detections of the charted song is at least 10% higher than the previous week.

SALES DATA COMPiled BY

Nielsen SoundScan

www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

www.americanradiohistory.com
### Top DVD Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Principal Performers</th>
<th>Studio</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ocean's Twelve</td>
<td>George Clooney/Brad Pitt</td>
<td>Screen Gems</td>
<td>$29.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Incredibles (Widescreen)</td>
<td>Angelina Jolie/Hugh Jackman</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Entertainment</td>
<td>$19.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Shrek</td>
<td>Mike Myers/Geoffrey Rush</td>
<td>DreamWorks Home Entertainment</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sideways</td>
<td>Paul Giamatti/Tom Hanks</td>
<td>Fox Searchlight Pictures</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Spanish Party</td>
<td>Adam Sandler/Tea Leoni</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Incredibles (Pan &amp; Scan)</td>
<td>Jennifer Garner/Goran Visnjic</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Entertainment</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Elektra (Widescreen)</td>
<td>Jennifer Garner/Goran Visnjic</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Entertainment</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Elektra (Pan &amp; Scan)</td>
<td>Jennifer Garner/Goran Visnjic</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Entertainment</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ocean's 11 (Widescreen)</td>
<td>George Clooney/Brad Pitt</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Finding Neverland (Widescreen)</td>
<td>Jennifer Garner/Goran Visnjic</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Entertainment</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top Music Videos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baby Einstein</td>
<td>Baby Einstein: Playtime Music</td>
<td>Disney</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Arcade Fire</td>
<td>The Arcade Fire</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flogging Molly</td>
<td>Drunken Lullabies</td>
<td>Fat Wreck Chords</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Johnson</td>
<td>In Between Dreams</td>
<td>Geffen</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beck</td>
<td>Sea Change</td>
<td>Geffen</td>
<td>$9.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Weekly Nielsen SoundScan Sales Charts

- **SALES DATA COMPILED BY:** Nielsen SoundScan
- **LAUNCH PAD:** May 7, 2005
- **TOP HEATSEEKERS**
  - **GREATEST HITS 1978-1987**
  - **NEVERMIND**
  - **COMIN WHERE I'M FROM: LIVE & MORE**
  - **LIVE AT MONTREUX 1994**
  - **JOSH GROBAN**
  - **JIMMY PAGE**
  - **MUSIC BOX ORCHESTRA**
  - **THE BABY EINSTEIN MUSIC BOX ORCHESTRA**

The best-selling albums by new and developing artists, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 100 of The Billboard 200 or whose TLC Quartets title reached that level. And the first studio albums by newcomers are immediately negotiable to the Heatseekers chart. See Chart Legend for rules and explanations © 2005, VNU Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.
## SINGLES & TRACKS

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**MAY 7, 2005**

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**Chart Codes:** CS (Hot Country Songs); H160 (Hot 100 Songs); LT (Hot Latin Songs); POP (Pop 100 Songs); RBH (Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs); TITLE (Publisher - Licensing Org.) Sheet Music Dist. - Chart ridicule.

**Data for week of MAY 7, 2005**

**CHARTS LEGEND**

- **#1** - Single/Track at #1
- **#2** - Single/Track at #2
- **#3** - Single/Track at #3
- **#4** - Single/Track at #4
- **#5** - Single/Track at #5
- **#6** - Single/Track at #6
- **#7** - Single/Track at #7
- **#8** - Single/Track at #8
- **#9** - Single/Track at #9
- **#10** - Single/Track at #10

**All songs charted are listed in the order of their release date.**

**Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.**

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Juan Pablo Torres Dead

Juan Pablo Torres, a member of the group Cuban Masters who played alongside such legends as Israel “Cachao” Lopez and Carlos “Patato” Valdez, died April 27 in Miami. He was 59.

Torres had an inoperable brain tumor and died after several days in a coma. Considered one of Cuba’s leading trombonists, Torres recorded with greats like Belo Valdes, Tito Puente, Paquito D’Rivera and Arturo Sandoval. He made more than a dozen albums, both as a soloist and with other artists.

In 2001, Torres joined the project Cuban Masters, a big band comprising Lopez, Valdez and Alfredo “Chocolate” Armenteros. Their album “Cuban Masters: Lost Originals” was nominated for several Latin Grammy Awards. Torres is survived by his wife and six children.

—Leila Cobo
BREASTFED 'ROCK & ROLL'

Scottish DJ/producer Mylo is responsible for one of last year’s most essential albums, “Destroy Rock & Roll.” The rock/dance/electronica hybrid was originally released on Breastfed Recordings, the U.K. independent helmed by producers Myles MacInnes (aka Mylo), Duncan Reid (Linus Loves) and Glasgow Underground Records managing director Kevin McKay. Earlier this year, after replacing some samples with replayed bits, Breastfed entered a joint venture in the United Kingdom for “Destroy Rock & Roll” with Sony BMG, which has reissued the album. Now, with a new single in the United Kingdom—the Kim Carnes-kissed “In My Arms”—Inside Track hears that “Destroy Rock & Roll” is close to partnering with one of Sony BMG’s labels in the United States. Whichever U.S. label is lucky enough to secure this album will surely find it on many critics’ year-end top 10 lists.

—Michael Paolotta

BREASTFED RECORDINGS

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Denver, CO 80214

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ALSO, IN THE PUBLICATION: ASCAP in New York promotes Ellen Melzer-Dailey to VP of business affairs. She was assistant VP of business affairs at BMI in Los Angeles names Aamina Gant associate director of writer/publisher relations. She was an assistant in the department. BMI Music Publishing in New York promotes Kevin Hershon to VP of talent, acquisitions and marketing for the East Coast. He was senior director.

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RECORD COMPANIES: Universal Motown Records Group names Mark Zarrow VP of alternative promotion. He was VP of modern rock promotion at Active Industry Research.

DURAN DURAN PUBLISHING GOES DUTCH

Duran Duran just announced a publishing administration deal with Netherlands-based financial services firm Fintage Music. Now Inside Track has learned that another major British act from the ’80s is understood to be looking for a representation deal as well with an independent European music publisher.

—Emmanuel Legrand

WHOA, NELLIE

Singer/songwriter Nellie McKay is making progress on her untitled sophomore album for Columbia. According to the artist, she is eying a September release for the set, which will feature a duet with Cyndi Lauper on the track “Bee Charmer.” The new album is the follow-up to McKay’s 2004 critically acclaimed double-disc debut, “Get Away From Me.”

In other McKay news, she is confirmed to appear in her first feature film, “Safety Glass.” Currently in production, the film also stars Mandy Moore, Amanda Peet and Michelle Williams.

—Jonathan Cohen

GERSHON ON THE MOVE

Veteran Nashville music executive Tracy Gershon is leaving Sony Music Nashville, where she serves as senior director of A&R and artist development, to join Warner Bros. Nashville division as VP of A&R. She reports directly to Warner Music Group chairman/CEO Tom Whaley. Gershon is expected to start May 16 at Warner Bros. While at Sony, Gershon signed Buddy Jewell, Miranda Lambert and Jace Everett. She also served as a judge on the first season (2005) of USA Network series “Nashville Star.”

—Phyllis Stark

CANADIAN APPLE

George Maniatis has joined Apple Computer’s iTunes Music Store in Canada as a music programmer. He will work with various labels and artist managers to ensure that music content is available on the Canadian site. Maniatis was previously senior VP of A&R at Nettwerk Productions in Vancouver (billboard.biz, March 18). In his 14 years at Nettwerk, he worked with numerous acts, including Sarah McLachlan, BT, Delerium and Tiësto.

—Michael Paolotta

BURGESS LEAVING APA

Nat Burgess, partner/executive VP at Agency for the Performing Arts, is leaving his post May 1. Burgess runs APA’s concert division; he started in the mailroom at William Morris Agency and moved to APA in 1983. Among the acts Burgess has worked with at APA are Harry Connick Jr., Fleetwood Mac, Judas Priest and Boston. No word on if his position will be filled.

—Melinda Neuman

RELATED LINKS: Endless Noise in Santa Monica, Calif. (aka Shari Christensen) as executive producer. She was a freelance executive music producer.

Gospel Music Channel in Atlanta promotes Alvin Williams to director of music industry development. He was director of promotion and affiliation marketing.

5.1 Production Services in West Los Angeles promotes Sandi Taylor to VP of production. She was director of sales and marketing.

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