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Above: Dierks Bentley makes the road his home. See page 42.
On the Cover: System of a Down will offer its political passions across two CDs this year. Photo by Ian Jennings
Our Recorded Heritage Deserves To Be Heard

Record companies have long treated catalog product—whether created by them or inherited from companies they acquire—as an asset they could exploit or ignore. Most have ignored it. What we’ve ignored is the social harm this can do. In researching a book about the earliest African-American recording artists, I was able to identify about 400 commercial recordings black artists made before 1920. Since a rights holder still owns today, those 400 artists’ rights owners have reissued exactly two—one half of 1%! During the entire CD era. This is a scandalous suppression of our history in the name of “rights.”

Another study indicates that of the Union lengthens its copyright term for recordings beyond the current 70 years (which is uncertain), it will not make it retroactive. Pre-1955 material is lost there. The way I see it, one of three things will happen:

1. The status quo continues. U.S. companies refuse to reissue older material or allow others to do so on reasonable terms (reasonable, that is, to the owners). Exploitation of this material moves overseas. Small operators and Web sites in Europe and Canada are very happy. U.S. companies get nothing.

2. Under pressure from archivists and others, the United States enacts a “use it or lose it” law that strips companies of material they don’t reuse. Don’t think it can’t happen.

3. The United States enacts compulsory licensing for older (and perhaps also for more recent) recordings that are out of print. Anyone would be able to reuse them on payment of a set fee.

The last option could be surprisingly beneficial to U.S. rights holders. They would not have to spend millions trying to push through more and more legal restrictions in every corner of the world. (This only makes the lawyers rich and does little to stem the digital tide.) They would not incur the considerable cost of marketing low-volume back catalog, but they would get a steady stream of revenue from small U.S. operators, including institutions, that have the passion and small scale necessary to make such distribution work. Plus, a lot of Americans would learn to appreciate our recorded heritage, which can only be good for the business.

Record companies should embrace a system that produces maximum profit for minimum investment on assets they don’t even use.

For once, shouldn’t the U.S. recording industry get ahead of change, rather than letting the lawyers and lobbyists lead it into another Little Big Horn?

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Changing Stations
Modern Rock Acts Promote Music Outside Radio

Seko, promotion finds itself at a crossroads as a growing number of terrestrial radio broadcasters tune out the ratings-challenged format (Billboard, May 7).

Several companies are attempting to adapt to modern rock's recent marginalization on the airwaves by entering markets like Philadelphia, Miami, New York and Washington, D.C. by emphasizing online media for building buzz.

In lieu of airplay, touring, blogs, ringtones, downloads, Internet and satellite radio, video game tie-ins, alliances with brand marketers, film and TV exposure, sponsorships and placements in commercials all are growing in value.

The marketing strategies for a number of big-name rock artists with current or upcoming releases show that labels are reaching out to consumers through a variety of new channels:

- In nod to the growing importance of Web communities, Geffen Records' Weezer has become the latest rock act to debut a new album on social networking site myspace.com. The band's "Make Believe," due May 10, is available on the site as a free on-demand stream through release date. Since launching in 2003, myspace.com has gained more than 14 million users, and in February it was the No. 7 Internet site in page views, according to Media Metrix. More than 200,000 bands have their own pages on the site, including major-label acts like Queens of the Stone Age and Oasis.
- Capitol Records debuted the Coldplay single "Speed of Sound" as a ringtone through Circular Wireless.
- V2 Records rushed "Blue Orchid," the first single from the White Stripes' "Get Behind Me Satan," to iTunes April 18—just two weeks after the duo completed the album.
- "It's not too different from what already constitutes successful setup," says Larry Medel, COO/GM of Virgin Records, which is setting up a release from priority act Gorillaz. "But now it's really important to..."

EMI U.K. Bows Pop/Standards Unit

LONDON—While many record companies are consolidating or eliminating labels, EMI Music U.K. is doing the opposite.

The British company—one of the main suppliers of talent for EMI's global network of operations—is adding another source of repertoire alongside the Capitol and Virgin label groups.

The mandate of the still-unnamed label group is to develop pop, mainstream, adult standard and crossover classical acts.

Mark Collen reports to EMI Music U.K. chairman/CEO Tony Wadsworth. The appointment became effective May 1.

"The idea is to add different areas in music that do not usually get as much focus as rock, for example," Wadsworth says. "We want to make sure we are the best in all areas."
Brooks & Dunn, Kenny Chesney, Merle Haggard, Alan Jackson, Barbara Mandrell, Reba McEntire, Montgomery Gentry, Rascal Flatts, George Strait and Trisha Yearwood. More artists will be announced later.

—Phyllis Stark

>>DAVE MATTHEWS BAND SETTLES SUIT

A agreement was reached between the Illinois attorney general and the Dave Matthews Band over an August 2004 lawsuit. The lawsuit claimed the band’s tour bus operator dumped its septic tank from a bridge into the Chicago River and onto tour bus passengers. As part of the settlement, announced April 29, the band will pay $200,000 and keep a log for the next five years of each vehicle it takes on tour and how its buses dispose of human waste.

—Susan Butler

>>>AOL GRABS CHEVY SPONSORSHIP

America Online has signed Chevrolet as the exclusive sponsor of its in-studio performance program, AOL Music Sessions, through 2005. Financial details were not disclosed with the May 2 announcement, but the pact is reportedly worth $5 million. AOL and Chevy also will introduce a co-branded feature called “Chevy Backstage Pass” that contains photos, interviews and performance clips from AOL’s entertainment properties. Chevy will run a series of contests from May until December offering the chance to attend a taping of AOL Music Sessions. The deal is part of a strategic shift by AOL to move its original music content onto the Web as it evolves from a subscriber-driven Internet service provider to a sponsorship-driven portal.

—Brian Garrity

>>>SONY BMG FORMS SINGLE CLASSICAL UNIT

Sony BMG Music Entertainment has created a new classical music division, Sony BMG Masterworks. The new division will continue on page 10.

EMI (cont.)

from page 1

“I’m not building a whole new entity, in terms of a brand,” Colen says. “We’ve already got very strong existing brands, which I’m hoping to strengthen and add to, and use the skills within those to cross-promote [projects]. My focus at the moment is to really build on those existing brands.”

Colen had been New York-based senior VP of global marketing at Capitol for the past three years, Now based in London, he has returned to a division where he worked for 12 years, most recently as managing director of EMI’s Chrysalis, now known as EMI Records. “It’s good to have Mark back,” Wadsworth says. “He’s going to bring a wealth of experience to the company and make an impact not only in the U.K. but also outside with his artists.”

Colen’s new group will integrate two EMI U.K. sub-labels: Innocent, which was attached to Virgin and developed such acts as boy band Blue and female pop group Atomic Kitten, and EMI Liberty, home to EMI’s adult standards projects. Current innocent projects include former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell and solo efforts from members of Blue.

Part of Colen’s mission is to take acts with mainstream appeal—like Australian-born country artist Keith Urban, who is signed to Capitol Nashville—to wider audiences. Urban will be released in the United Kingdom through Capitol, but Ino- ncent execs will handle his marketing and strategic assistance will come from Liberty.

Wadsworth says there is a logic to combining efforts for projects targeting teens and adults. “In terms of marketing, these are quite similar targets,” he says. “Radio is less important, whereas TV is more crucial. And there’s a crossover demographic for both of those projects. For example, Blue can appeal to young teenagers as well as to older female consumers.”

In addition, Colen will assume responsibility for EMI Classics U.K., following managing director Barry McCann’s retirement in July after 30 years with the company. McCann plans to become an A&R consultant.

Meanwhile, Matthew Lauriott-Prestov was promoted to senior VP of global marketing, with responsibility for EMI Music repertoire. He was senior VP of global marketing for Virgin Music. He adds to his responsibilities Capitol Music’s repertoire stream, which Colen previously handled. Lauriott-Prestov continues to report to EMI Music vice chairman David Munns.

AOL (cont.)

from page 2

build up as much around the band as possible—both in imag- ing and from a fan perspective.” At stake for labels is a three-year uprising in modern rock sales. Despite the genre’s radio woes, Nielsen SoundScan reports that modern rock album sales totaled 132.1 million units last year—a 5% boost from 2003. That volume represents 19.5% of U.S. album sales, the genre’s largest market share in six years. But with modern outlets WPLY (Y100) Philadelphia and WRHS Washington, D.C., and active rock WZTA (Zeta) Miami dropping the rock format and WRR (K-Rock) New York radically reducing the number of current titles it spins, many in the industry are wondering if modern rock sales can sustain that momentum.

“It’s changing the artist development process in a big way,” says Marc Geiger, a head of contemporary music for the William Morris Agency and co-founder of the Lollapalooza tour. The audience for No. 1 modern rock songs, as tracked by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, is already shrinking. April 22 marked a new low for the format, as Audioslave’s “Be Yourself” fell the pack with just 11.8 million weekly impressions. Compare that with the format’s high of 25.9 million impressions for the Red Hot Chili Peppers’ “By the Way” in the week of July 19, 2002.

“Good records will find their audience and find their ways to be exposed, but the dynamic of how much records are going to sell is going to change a lot,” Ger- nstone Promotion CEO Jon Cohen predicts. “It’s going to be harder to sell mass numbers.

“Director of marketing Dan Golon (no relation) says shifts in consumer taste complicate the situation. “Everything’s in flux because the lines have been blurred between active rock and alternative rock.”

Still, labels are not giving up on radio play for modern acts, even if they are doing their best to get by without it.

Virgin executive VP of promotion Hilary Shave says labels just need to be more patient.

“A lot of acts can’t be the starting gun,” she says. “It has to be timed along with other things or after other things.”

To that end, the industry is trying to use alternative exposure to build a “story” that can ultimately lead to win over radio. Such efforts are upping the value of support from digital programming like Yahoo, MSN, Music Choice, Fuse, XM, Sirius and AOL.

“We have a much deeper playbook,” AOL senior VP of pro- gramming Bill Watson says. As stations exit the modern rock for- mat, “it’s a huge opportunity that we are taking advantage of.”

Acts like Interscope’s Au- dioslave are using the Web to demonstrate demand to radio. The band teamed with radio sta- tion Web sites on a download giveaway of second single “Your Time Has Come.” Fans could not receive the track until 1 mil- lion consumers requested it.

Steve Berman, head of sales and marketing for Interscope Geffen A&M, says, “When you look at the amount of music that’s moving around the Internet, you know that people are out there.”

Injettisoning its struggling concert business, but the pact is an uphill battle in the short term, industry analysts say.

Investor embrace of the un- bundling strategy figures to be challenged for much of the next year by CC’s ambitious plan to reduce advertising and promotion clutter on its airwaves by shifting sponsors into fewer, smaller commercials.

Meanwhile the company continues to face myriad ques- tion marks on everything from the uncertain fate of the live entertainment arm (see story, page 20) to mounting compe- tition from satellite radio and online music programming.

“Investors will wait for a turnaround in both the enter- tainment and radio divisions before giving the company full credit for this restructuring,” says Maurice McKenzie, a radio analyst with Friedman Billings Ramsey.

The radio division posted a 7% decline in revenue in first-quarter results.

The biggest drag on the radio division’s performance this year looks to be its “Less Is More” initiative, which is attempting to push marketers into buying 30-second spots rather than the dominant 60-second ad buy.

Laraine Mancini, a radio ana- list with Merrill Lynch, cau- tioned investors in a May 2 research note that the program, while ultimately com-
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**Viralg Touts P2P Solution**

Hoping to capitalize on the music industry's battle against online piracy, software developers have offered a number of technologies touted as capable of quelling unauthorized file trading.

Attracting the most attention of late is Finnish firm Viralg, which has boldly claimed that its technology spells the end of peer-to-peer file sharing. The company’s software is designed to take advantage of the file identification system used by such P2P services as Kazaa and eDonkey to flood the networks with bogus music files so that users unwittingly download garbled tracks.

P2P services give each file distributed in their systems a unique identifier, known as a “hash,” which the service provider randomly generates and automatically assigns. This identifier is used to group similar files into bundles so users can download different parts of the same file from several users simultaneously, thereby saving time and bandwidth.

Viralg claims it can foil P2P systems by mimicking the hash characteristics of “good” files, thereby polluting the entire pool. This is similar to the “spoofing” technique used by companies such as OverPeer—which Loudeye recently acquired—that claims to spoof up to 200 million files per month.

Viralg boasts that its technology is 99% effective but does little to back up this claim. The company received legal challenges from a virtual algorithm it developed in its product specification. Some even believe the whole concept may be a scam, preying on content providers’ paranoia over piracy. However, the company claims BMG Finland as a customer and recently won an award for business plan of the year in Finland’s Venture Cup competition.

Regardless, a group of Finnish musicians has requested an investigation into the company, saying its technology essentially is a virus and thus violates a Finnish law prohibiting telecom interference.

**Linkin Park’s IPO Woes**

Linkin Park’s demand to be released from its Warner Music Group contract on the eve of the major label’s planned $750 million initial public offering is drawing mixed responses from the artist management community.

The band, which is managed by Rob McDermott of the Firm, cites a crisis of confidence over WMG’s use of IPO proceeds and its ability to compete on the global stage in the wake of the deal as the reasons it wants out.

However, Linkin Park’s decision to take its case public also comes as it has hit an impasse in contract renegotiations with its label, Warner Bros. Records.

Artist managers interviewed by Billboard say that while the band’s stated concerns may have merit, the move is as much a contract bargaining chip as anything.

Linkin Park is said to be seeking a new contract with an advance of $60 million; Warner Bros. is offering $15 million in advance for a five-album deal, sources say. Linkin Park previously renegotiated its deal with Warner in 2000.

“It’s ‘Show me the money,’” one manager speaking on condition of anonymity says of the band’s position. “There could be validity to Linkin Park’s claims,” the manager adds, “but none of us really know. Have all labels gone from trimming fat to trimming muscle? Yes. Have they all cut so deeply that they can’t do the job anymore? Probably yes.”

Entertainment attorney Gary Stiffelman, who represents Warner acts like the Doors, Fleetwood Mac, John Fogerty and Stevie Nicks, says a significant pool of shares should be set aside for the artists as a reward, just as any key executive typically is rewarded in similar circumstances.

“A significant component of the purchase price often reflects the anticipated value of the product these artists remain committed to deliver,” he says.

A public contract feud with one of its biggest acts just days ahead of an IPO is the last thing WMG wants. The deal is tentatively expected to proceed May 10 with an estimated price of $22-$24, sources say.

The company finished third among the major labels in total and current market share last year with 14.7% and 13%, respectively. It saw its U.S. market share slip to 14.9% in the first quarter, compared with 15.4% in first-quarter 2004, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Meanwhile, Linkin Park has sold more than 35 million records worldwide in five years. It owes four albums on its existing contract.

Whether the spat affects the WMG IPO or its pricing remains to be seen. Sources familiar with the situation point out that the announcement hit just before a key WMG roadshow meeting with investors in New York.

Further complicating the situation is the firm’s connection to WMG’s lead investors, Thomas H. Lee and Bain Capital. Firm founder Jeff Kwatinetz was an adviser to Thomas H. Lee and Scott Sperling ahead of the WMG purchase, and late last year the two private-equity powers acquired a minority stake in the firm.

Those same investors were identified in Linkin Park’s May 2 case requesting its release from WMG.

"The new owners of the Warner Music Group will be reaping a windfall of $1.4 billion from their $2.6 billion purchase a mere 18 months ago if their planned IPO moves forward," Linkin Park, their biggest act, will get nothing," the press release stated. "Of the planned $750 million raised by an IPO, only about $7 million will be put toward the company’s own operations, with no money going to WMG artists."

Warner Bros. said in a statement: "While Linkin Park’s talent is without question, the band’s management is using fictitious numbers and making baseless charges and inflammatory threats in what is clearly a negotiating tactic."

The Firm maintains that its relationship with Thomas H. Lee and Bain Capital has nothing to do with Linkin Park’s issue with WMG.
Universal Leads Euro Chart Share
UMI’s Slice Of The Pie Increases Dramatically Over First-Quarter 2004

LONDON—Universal Music International’s traditional dominance of the European charts remains unchallenged despite the Sony-BMG merger. The German-based company scored record chart shares during the January-March period in singles and albums, according to statistics compiled by billboard.com.

UMI’s European chart share in albums reached 35.5% during the first quarter, a dramatic improvement over the same period of 2004, when it scored a 16.9% share. In singles, UMI posted a 39.1% share (34.3% in 2004).

Universal owes its performance to strong showings from albums released in 2004 including U2’s “How To Dismantle An Atomic Bomb” (Island) and Eminem’s “Encore” (Interscope). Other acts contributing to Universal’s fortune are Keane, Scissor Sisters, Gwen Stefani, Ronan Keating, the Game and Snowy Dogg.

UMI’s domestic repertoire also fared well, especially in Germany (Juli, Rammstein, Sohnne Mannheims) and France (Caliporto, Chimene Badi, Florent Pagny, Michel Sardou).

UMI executive VP of marketing and A&R Max Hole says this quarter reflects the company’s strong flow of releases at the end of 2003. “Last year, we had virtually no new releases during the first half of the year,” Hole says, “and it was very difficult. This year, we benefit from albums released in 2004 and new releases too.”

Hole says UMI has continued to perform similarly during the rest of the year thanks to a continuous flow of new releases. The second quarter already includes new releases from 50 Cent, Queens of the Stone Age, Beck and Mariah Carey, and new material from Audioslave, among others.

“The great thing is that we are following through on new acts,” Hole adds, naming Jack Johnson, Madeleine Peyroux, Patrizio Buanne, Akon, Kaiser Chiefs, the Bravery and Lucie Silvas. “Our first half should be excellent,” he forecasts.

Second in album chart share during the quarter is EMI with 24.9%, up from last year’s 18.4%. The British company benefited from the strong continental and U.K. sales of greatest Virgin, respectively.

Along with significant development stories with KT Tunstall, Willie Mason and LCD Soundsystem, this bodes well for a strong new music for EMI,” he says.

Sony BMG came in third in album chart share with 16.6%, chart share, followed by Sony BMG at 26%, EMI at 14.4% and Warner at 10.7%.

Overall, UMI’s Hole has also noticed that record conditions seem to have improved in some territories. “In Germany we now have the feeling that things are improving, es-

Singles: The reigning European chart tablets are charting at the top of the charts, including U2’s “How To Dismantle An Atomic Bomb” and Eminem’s “Encore.” The chart is also showing a strong flow of new releases, with acts such as Scissor Sisters, Keane, Scissor Sisters, Noize, and Mantelmanns Universal.

Top 10 European Albums In Q1 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>How To Dismantle An Atomic Bomb</th>
<th>Island</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>U2</td>
<td>U2</td>
<td>How To Dismantle An Atomic Bomb</td>
<td>Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Robbie Williams</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
<td>Chrysalis</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Green Day</td>
<td>American Idiot</td>
<td>Reprise</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Eminem</td>
<td>Eminem</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Maroon 5</td>
<td>Songs About Jane</td>
<td>J Records</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Jay-Z/Linkin Park</td>
<td>Collision Course</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Keane</td>
<td>Keane</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Simon Mantelmanns Noize</td>
<td>Soho Mantelmanns Noize</td>
<td>Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Scissor Sisters</td>
<td>Scissor Sisters</td>
<td>Polydor</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Innovative Virgin</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For first-quarter 2004, a combined Sony BMG would have reached a much higher 40% share. Sources at Sony BMG say that the release schedule of the newly merged company was more geared toward the second quarter, with releases from Natalie Imbruglia, Erasure Springsteen, System of a Down, Oasis, Shania, Backstreet Boys, Foo Fighters, Santana, Jamiroquai and the Offspring coming in May and June.

Warner album chart share remains stable at 18%, thanks mostly to Green Day’s “American Idiot” and the Jay-Z/Linkin Park collaboration “Collision Course.” Other strong Warner sellers during the quarter were the soundtrack to the French movie “Les Choristes,” Selia’s “Best Of 1991-2004,” the soundtrack to “Ray” and Michael Buble’s “It’s Time.” Universal dominated the singles listing, with a 39.2% share, followed by Sony BMG at 26%, EMI at 14.4% and Warner at 10.7%.

Overall, UMI’s Hole has also noticed that record conditions seem to have improved in some territories. “In Germany we now have the feeling that things are improving, es-

Hill To Take Look At Licensing

Lawmakers will soon introduce a bill dealing with streamlined digital music licensing for subscription services. A House panel has nailed down June 23 and June 30 as dates for debate on the prospective legislation.

Talks on the Hill continue as the interested parties—music publishers, record labels and online music services—try to provide lawmakers with input on a fair marketplace apparatus to deal with music licensing for digital subscription services.

There are longstanding complaints from music users that the current compulsory mechanical license provision in the Copyright Act’s Section 115 is antiquated.

Even the Copyright Office agrees. MaryBeth Peters, the Register of Copyright, has told lawmakers her office supports an attempt to simplify the requirements for obtaining the compulsory license and create a seamless licensing regime.

Labels have complained that the creaky structure of the current law, requiring the licensing of one song at a time, one publisher at a time, is frustrating the introduction of new products.

Online music services want greater clarity regarding so-called “ephemeral” copies in streams—as they oppose publishers’ claims of a mechanical and performance right.

David Israelite, the newly appointed president/CEO of the National Music Publishers Assn., has said his group would consider a blanket license for subscription services. “We’re willing to consider everything between the goalposts . . . anything between pure radio and pure sale,” he says.

Bill Lamar Smith, R-Texas, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Courts, the Internet and Intellectual Property, has held several oversight hearings on the issue.

Smith has also called a hearing for May 12 that is raising some eyebrows here—an oversight hearing to look at the business practices of the performance right organizations.

ASCAP and BMI operate under consent decrees and have nonexclusive rights. SESAC does not operate under a consent decree and has exclusive rights to their members’ songs and catalogs. Sources say the subcommittee has received complaints about SESAC from broadcasters.

Congress has not put the PROS on the hot seat for nearly a decade. In the mid-'90s, Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. responded to complaints from bar owners and retailers about heavy-handed licensing tactics in the field, introducing his Fairness in Music Licensing Act.

That bill, now law, created a license fee exemption for such businesses. It has significantly cut into revenue from background music licenses. Its repercussions overseas also caused complaints from foreign PROS resulting in the United States being slapped with trade penalties.

Smith has also announced an oversight hearing on international trade and intellectual property for May 17, a patent reform bill hearing on May 24 and a review of the Supreme Court’s Grokster decision in July before the summer recess.

On the Senate side, Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, chairs a reconstructed Intellectual Property Subcommittee within the Judiciary Committee. Insiders expect he and ranking member Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., to forge a bill dealing with peer-to-peer “bad players” once the Supreme Court hands down its decision on the liability of P2P services in the Grokster case.
Automotive giant Ford is putting some teeth into promoting its upscale Jaguar brand through some strong musical relationships.

Ford is readying a four-CD boxed set titled “Jaguar 2005, Volume 1, 2, 3 and 4.” The dance/electronic collection (with dollops of rock) is available as a giveaway to potential Jag buyers who sign up for a test drive at jaguar2005.com.

The boxed set—5,000 were produced—was given away at a couple of Jaguar/DKny-jeans-sponsored events at Lago Sol in Rancho Mirage, Calif., coinciding with the just-completed Coachella music festival.

“We want to connect with a younger audience,” says James Thomas, communications director of Jaguar Cars North America, which has used the music of Sting, Eta James and Moby in its TV ads.

Thomas says the plan is to reach the desired demographic “in a language they understand—where music and lifestyle meet.”

General Motors and other automakers also are attempting to reposition their brands to attract a more youthful audience by incorporating cutting-edge music into their marketing.

To reach the coveted, tastemaking and trendsetting youth market that has plenty of disposable income, GM’s Pontiac division has partnered with under-the-radar acts Kasabian and Citizen Cope. Both have music featured in current TV spots for Pontiac’s new G6 model (Billboard, April 30).

At Ford, the boxed set is part of Jaguar’s 2005 lifestyle marketing program for all of its models, it follows in the footsteps of last year’s campaign, which also featured a four-disc set. The campaign concentrated on Jaguar’s premium X-Type sedan.

Unlike its predecessor, which spotlighted the turntable skills of four DJs, the 2005 boxed set focuses on music supervisor/DJ Jason Bentley, who compiled and mixed the discs. Bentley was hired for the job by Chris Stephenson, CEO of Antenna, a Los Angeles company specializing in brand strategy and music placement.

Antenna counts Ford among its many high-profile clients.

Stephenson is a fan of Bentley’s rhythmically savvy daily radio show “Metropolis” on KCRW, the Santa Monica, Calif./Los Angeles, in fact, many of the artists featured on “Jaguar 2005” are often heard on “Metropolis.”

For the most part, Bentley says he had complete musical freedom, but Jaguar did have one stipulation: “They didn’t want me to use music from major labels.”

So, Bentley went with unsigned artists and those signed to independent labels. “I’m more than happy to hook up these artists in this way,” Bentley says. “I’m helping to connect the dots between the artists and music fans.”


While music fees were not revealed, sources involved in similar projects say tracks go for $300-$1,500 for such uses.

“It’s a one-time flat fee,” Bentley notes, “and I do impress upon each artist that the association creates awareness of them with a distinctive and cool brand.”

Stephenson adds, “It is also an emotional brand, with people connecting emotionally to it—just as they do with music.”

In addition to the CD giveaway, jaguar2005.com features a streaming media player that is home to 75% of the music in the boxed set. An online campaign encourages people to visit the site.

Looking ahead, Thomas says Jaguar is changing as a brand. “With a new ad agency in town—Euro RSCG/Fuel—Jaguar will be given a new creative look in the fall, setting up the debut of a new sports car that ships next year. It defines a new look for Jaguar—more masculine,” Thomas adds. “It will be the future of the brand. And yes, he says, music will play a major role.

Clear Channel Entertainment will be living it up in Las Vegas with the formation of a new division called Clear Channel Entertainment Productions.

CCEP, which will be headed by Scott Zeiger, the former CEO of Clear Channel Entertainment’s theatrical division, will develop new content with a focus on fixed-based attractions and touring entertainment events.

For example, the division will develop a new version of Andrew Lloyd Webber’s “The Phantom of the Opera,” which will open later this spring as a permanent show at the Venetian Resort Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Additionally, CCEP will develop programming and operate showrooms and theaters at the new Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino.

Zeiger will also further the company’s relationship with Cirque du Soleil by helping launch the first arena concert tour of the performing arts group in January 2006.

Other CCEP projects will include involvement with Blue Man Group’s permanent show opening at Toronto’s new Panasonic Theatre next month.

The division will also explore ancillary opportunities in the areas of film, TV and DVD.

Zeiger, whose official new title is chairman/CEO of CCEP, has produced more than 50 Broadway shows as head of CCE’s Theatrical and oversaw CCE’s 20 owned and operated theaters. The division will be located in CCE’s offices in New York.

Clear Channel Entertainment is a growing number of brand marketers are looking to add digital music components to their campaigns. It’s an attractive added value for almost any Web site to offer music,” 24/7 CEO Frank Taubert says.

UMG’s effort is designed to offer sponsors direct relationships with labels. Until now, download retailers like iTunes, Napster, Amazon and RealNetworks have been the primary partners for corporate America in such deals. UMG, which is looking to be a sponsor for all downloads regarding

“IT’S AN ADDED VALUE FOR ALMOST ANY WEB SITE TO OFFER MUSIC.”

—FRANK TAUBERT OF 24/7 MUSICSHOP

NEW YORK—Universal Music Group is launching a white-label download store that it will make available to corporate sponsors for its marketing campaigns and promotions featuring giveaways of music from UMG acts.

Bottled-water company Nestlé Waters North America has signed on as the first user of the system, which UMG developed with digital media services company 24/7 MusicShop.

Labels of Nestlé Waters products will feature promotional codes that can be used to redeem downloads at a branded online store featuring UMG’s digital catalog of more than 100,000 tracks.

Universal Music & Video Distribution, which has its own corporate partnerships group, is overseeing the effort.

MORE STORES COMING

Susan Roberts, senior VP of new media at UMVD, says it expects to roll out digital music offerings with dozens of corporate partners before the end of the year. She says UMG will offer a mix of broadband-based, genre-based and artist-specific stores, depending on the needs of the sponsor.

The company also expects to use the service in the context of independent retail and online communities.

“It’s a template-based system that allows us to work with many different partners at once and manipulate our digital catalog for a variety of specific marketing and commercial purposes,” Roberts explains.

24/7 created the template and is hosting content for UMG; UMVD will tailor and operate the site on behalf of its corporate partners.

In the wake of corporate-sponsored download giveaways like the Pepsi-iTunes deemed, considers the service to be a promising new revenue stream. Direct deals offer higher return to a label than a retail-driven promotion, which splits download profits between the label and the merchant.

The UMG-Nestlé Waters deal is an outgrowth of the latter company’s 10-year distribution alliance with Universal Studios Theme Parks, now in its third year. The UMG service will be part of a larger entertainment promotion by Nestlé Waters called “Choose Your Adventure,” which draws on the theme park and movie elements.

Codes on bottle labels can be used to enter a sweeps package that includes daily download giveaways. Nestlé Waters—which counts Perrier, Poland Spring, Deer Park, Arrowhead and S. Pellegrino among its brands—will give away more than 30 downloads per day.

Larissa Habec, senior marketing manager for national consumer promotions at Nestlé Waters, says, “As a company, we are looking to target a younger audience—the 18-24 set—get a younger with our brands. The music download offer is something very attractive to that audience.”
Black Music Month Is Coming to the jazz channel.

BET Jazz dedicates its June programming to the ground-breaking work of African-American Jazz musicians, vocalists and composers. Through the years, these visionaries have made immeasurable contributions to the cultural heritage of America and the world. So stay tuned to BET Jazz for a month of special programming exploring the music and stories of the African-American Jazz legends.

JUNE IS BLACK MUSIC MONTH

Ask your local cable operator for BET Jazz: The only 24 hour Jazz Channel or log on to betjazz.com for more information.
BandMerch Surfs The Web
Merchandising Company Boosts Business With Online Promotions

Jen Delson’s goal is to “think outside the T-shirt.” Delson, the founder and president of 5-year-old music and entertainment merchandising company BandMerch, believes the business has unlimited sales potential. “We take the approach that the revenue pie is infinite,” he says. “You make the pie bigger by being proactive.”

BandMerch offers interactive promotions driven by online business. Its products can be ordered directly through its Web site (www.bandmerch.com) or through links on an artist’s home page.

Delson points to a promotion the company spearheaded last spring for its original client, Linkin Park, as a prime example. BandMerch produced a pre-tour T-shirt available only through its online store. With each shirt, the purchaser received a coupon redeemable at merchandise booths on the tour for a free, exclusive embroidered patch.

The total Linkin Park merchandise pie increased, Delson says, because many coupon-bearers bought additional merchandise at the shows.

Another interactive promotion surrounded Megadeth’s winter tour. Fans who purchased a special CD/T-shirt bundle through the BandMerch-run band site could submit a demo for evaluation by Dave Mustaine. The Megadeth frontman chose three winners, who received a personal critique and a guitar package worth more than $3,000.

Such promotions increase BandMerch’s business while boosting an act’s brand, Delson says, and will serve as a major part of most upcoming relationships. “We see ourselves as a marketing merchandising company that builds brands for the artist,” he explains.

Agora Hills, Calif.-based BandMerch has about 50 employees and generated $20 million in revenue in 2004. It works with 50-60 acts, designating a staff product manager for each act. Last year, the company opened an office in New York’s SoHo neighborhood.

BandMerch offers four merchandising services: touring, licensing, retail and online stores. Touring and retail are its largest revenue generators, according to Delson.

In the touring merchandising area, BandMerch differs from such large competitors as Signature Networks (which works with more than 125 acts) in that it does not offer advances.

“We’ll do a lot of 80/20 net splits, where the artist and us share in the revenues after expenses are deducted,” Delson explains. (The artist gets the bigger share.)

Zig Zag Communications’ Drake Sutton-Shearer, who manages rock act Trapt, notes that the band’s “per heads” have increased since it worked with BandMerch on its last tour.

The company has created custom road cases that contain special lighting and signage for tour setup. Additionally, it uses satellite-driven credit-card machines on tour, which Delson says can increase sales by 10%-15%.

“Our experience is that [BandMerch employees] are great salespeople, and they look for opportunities to increase their business and ours,” Sutton-Shearer says. “We’ll use them online for our next album cycle.”

Delson says this year the company is pursuing co-branded deals that cross-pollinate the Web and touring.

The Indies
TODD MARTENS tmartens@billboard.com

MDM Musicrama Signs Deal With Koch

It has been a busy few weeks for distributor MDM Musicrama, which is owned by Sheridan Square Entertainment. Last month, the company left its New York offices for a move back into its Long Island City, N.Y. warehouse, and Musicrama recently completed a pick, pack and ship agreement with Port Washington, N.Y.-based Koch Entertainment Distribution.

Beginning May 2, Koch started distributing much of the Musicrama roster, which includes Artemis Records (also owned by Sheridan Square). The Musicrama warehouse will handle some special marketing and Latin projects.

Koch Entertainment Distribution president Michael Rosenberg says Musicrama will be bailed based on volume, and the service includes a limit—believed to be about $5,000—on the number of titles Koch will ship. Rosenberg says it is a “relatively short-term deal.”

Additionally, sources say the company has essentially abandoned its MDM division (short for Musicrama Distribution and Marketing), which was primarily dedicated to expanding the distributor’s offerings into rock and hip-hop via third-party deals. Sources say the company will still seek third-party distribution agreements, but label and marketing director Mike Worthington and Southwest sales manager Curtis Harris have been let go.

Sheridan Square has also been busy, recently signing a letter of intent to merge with Hirsch International (Billboard, April 30) and last year acquiring Compendia Music Group. A handful of layoffs followed the latter acquisition, but sources stress Musicrama is not in a downsizing mode. In fact, those contacted said the company would soon be hiring additional sales staff, and Duncan Hutchinson, who led MDM, will remain.

CHART VICTORY: Every album in the top 50 of the Billboard Top Independent Albums chart from Chicago-based rock label Victory Records took a leap for the week ending May 7.

Newcomer Sinai Beach entered the tally at No. 15 after selling 4,600 first-week copies, while six other Victory acts experienced at least a 10% sales increase. “The Silence in Black and White” from Hawthorne Heights shot 12-5 on a 25% sales burst, and Comeback Kid’s “Wake the Dead” re-entered the chart at No. 40 on a 33% sales hike.

Partly fueling the sales is a massive campaign Victory launched with Best Buy. An ad in Best Buy’s Sunday circular for April 24 highlighted six Victory CDs on sale for $9.99, and a Los Angeles store dedicated two endcaps to the hot label.

A clerk at the Los Angeles outlet says the endcap will be up until late May. Those who buy a Victory album receive a free 17-track sampler. The samplers are on display and are not shrink-wrapped, with the clerk noting that the samplers are disappearing at an even greater rate than the CDs.

“They’re just sitting out here,” he says. “We try to stop people if we see them take it, but we don’t lose any money if they make off with one.”

Additionally, Victory street teams have been passing out thousands of $9.99 coupons for the big-box retailer. Dubbed “The Music Pass,” the coupon is valid until July 31, allowing fans to receive the discounted price on a dozen Victory titles after the endcap is taken down.

EAGLE EYES LABEL: Eagle Rock Entertainment is revising its Spitfire Records imprint. The hard rock and heavy metal label was first launched in 1999, and has been somewhat dormant of late. Eagle Rock has begun signing artists to the label again, and will issue albums from the Duke and Nashville Pussy later this year.

Additionally, the company announced that most Spitfire Records releases will be lowered from $14.98-$17.98 to $13.98. Double-disc catalog items will be lowered from $18.98-$24.98 to $15.98. Spitfire has released titles from Alice Cooper, Zak Wylde and Cradle of Filth, among others. The company is set to launch a large marketing campaign in support of the new pricing initiative. Advertisements are plotted for Revolver and Metal Edge, and the label is in the process of building its first page on myspace.com.

Eagle Rock is based in London and is distributed by New York’s RED Distribution.
Brewing Up Business
A Former Starbucks Exec Has Some Advice For Music Retailers

When the 100-pound gorilla was behaving like an 800-pound gorilla, it was always wise to listen and take notice.

Starbucks has been involved in music since 1995, when it began putting together and selling compilations as a means of building and maintaining a retail operation. Starbucks didn’t get where it is today by opening stores, rather, it was by being very sensitive about what it played in our stores, because that is part of the Starbucks environment and experience. In addition, it cites the “excellent” musical taste of Starbucks visionary Howard Schultz: “He drove the in-store play and had a point of view on music.”

Like most merchants, Starbucks was aware that “without the careful control, the employees rig the music to what they want to play,” Rubinfeld says.

In “Built for Growth,” Rubinfeld writes that going forward there will be three types of successful retailers: the ones that offer exclusive merchandise, the ones that target lifestyle and the price/value ones.

Speaking of price/value merchants, the book notes that Wal-Mart loses 46% of its $1.4 million employees every year. Someone at that company, Rubinfeld writes, “must realize that better pay and benefits would cost less than training 540,000 new employees every year.”

One chapter is particularly relevant to today’s music business. It notes that when a category collapses into a commodity, and convenience and price are the only drivers, it is time to find a niche. But the book also points out that sometimes you can reposition an old commodity or concept, as Starbucks—and McDonald’s and Howard Johnson before it—has done.

In little more than a decade, Starbucks has evolved from a roaster and seller of coffee beans (under its original owner) to a provider of specialty coffee and music (under Schultz’s leadership) to a community hangout. And now it’s a music retailer too.
Asian Companies In Race For iPod-Buster

The picture shows a model taking a bite out of an apple. It is part of an advertising campaign to promote the latest iRiver-brand digital music player, the H10, by South Korean audio company ReignCom. The tag line is “Sweeter one.”

This ad illustrates the tough fight Apple Computer faces in Southeast Asia’s digital portable audio market.

Japanese and South Korean electronics companies are meeting the challenge posed by the extraordinary popularity of Apple’s iPod—in their home markets and elsewhere—with a new generation of portable players.

A generation ago, Japanese electronics giant Sony pioneered portable audio with the Walkman. Apple has claimed a 50% share of Japan’s portable-digital music-player market since it launched the iPod mini there in July 2004.

Apple says it is aiming for an 80% share following the introduction in January of the iPod shuffle, which sells for about 10,000 yen ($33).

In South Korea, the products of flash-memory digital music players made it one of the few territories in the world where the iPod did not dominate, until this year. At its peak, in 2003, ReignCom claimed to have more than 50% of the South Korean portable-music-player market.

But like other South Korean electronics firms, ReignCom saw its market share slide when the low-priced iPod shuffle arrived.

Now these firms are slashing prices and adding features to their portable players to win back consumers.

ReignCom went so far as to run high-profile ads in local newspapers March 1—Korean Independence Day—calling for a “patriotic war” against the iPod.

“Our overall branding strategy is based on product innovation,” iRiver director of brand marketing Hanna Young says. The H10 is still about $10 more expensive than the iPod mini, but it has a built-in FM tuner, color screen, voice recorder and digital-photo slide-show capability.

Joining the fray is South Korean heavyweight Samsung Electronics, which has declared its ambition to be the world’s top seller of portable music players by 2007. Samsung sold 1.7 million MP3 players worldwide in 2004 and is aiming for 5 million this year.

It is not just about the players: It is about the company’s image. Music can drive sales and hipness. Ahn Tae-ho, CEO of the audio division of Samsung, says the portable digital players can be seen as “nurturing Samsung’s brand power and enhancing consumers’ views of our products.”

Not to be left out, South Korean-based LG Electronics introduced its 35 GB hard-drive music player in March. LG has worked especially hard to integrate its Xfen music players with its own download service (lgfree.co.kr).

In Japan, Sony hopes to steal some of Apple’s thunder with the SW-HD5 Network Walkman, launched on April 21. Featuring 40-hour battery life and a 20 GB hard disk, the unit can play MP3 files as well as Sony’s ATRAC 3 format. It will be priced at around 35,000 yen ($335).

Japanese company Sharp responded to the iPod challenge with the April 15 launch of two portable players geared to help it meet its target 15% share of Japan’s portable audio-player market in a year.

Sharp representative Miyuki Nakayama says the MP-A100 and MP-A200 players can download WMA files from the Web, as well as copy music digitally from CDs and make analog copies from CDs, MiniDiscs and FM radio.

Japanese electronics giant Toshiba is emphasizing visual aids with the F Series of Gigabeat portable playback devices, launched between November 2004 and April 2005.

Toshiba says the players can be used to download music directly from 10 Japanese sites, including MSN Music, Excite Music Store, Oricon Music Town and Ongeg Music Server.

Another major Japanese electronics firm, Matsushita, is also getting in the game, with four models of Panasonic D-Snap Audio portable players, introduced April 8 in Japan. Their price range is $18,000-28,000 yen ($167-$260). Matsushita seeks a 20% share of Japan’s portable music-player market.

Apple declined to comment on its competitors’ plans. The launch of its iTunes Music Store in Japan, expected by the end of the year, could boost iPod sales.

But given the rapid growth of Japan’s mobile-download market (Billboard, March 26), Asian electronics makers are looking ahead to when mobile phones will come into their own as portable music storage and playback devices.

Nakayama adds, “The market and demand for both digital audio players and mobile phones will expand simultaneously.”

Florida Court Clarifies Law On Publicity Rights

Litigators for the entertainment industry were caught up in legal storms throughout the Southeast last month.

Warner Bros. Pictures emerged from “The Perfect Storm” in Florida with a sense of clarity. The state’s highest court on April 21 interpreted a misappropriation statute, defining “commercial purpose” in a way that effectively permits producers to use an individual’s name and likeness in a motion picture without consent.

Many states have laws prohibiting commercial use of a person’s name or identity without permission (Billboard, March 5). Under a Florida statute, no one may “publish, print, display or otherwise make known the name or likeness of a person’s name or likeness without consent.”

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A former crewman and relativatives of captain Frank William “Billy” Tyne Jr. and crewman Dale Murphy Jr. sued Time Warner Entertainment d/b/a Warner Bros. Pictures, Baltimore/Spring Creek Pictures and Radiant Productions in U.S. District Court in Orlando, Fla. They sought damages under the state’s commercial misappropriation law.

The court held that as used in the statute, “commercial purpose” does not apply to publications, including motion pictures, that do not directly promote a product or service. The law was not intended to prevent a publication from including names or likenesses, the court wrote, but from associating the name or personality with something else.

Agreeing with earlier case opinions, the court stated that releasing a publication to make money through sales of copies—making it “commercial” in this sense—is not the kind of commercial exploitation prohibited by the statute.

“Commercial” in the misappropriation and right-of-publicity context is limited to the promotion of a product or service—not as used in an expressive work.

For example, in 1983 the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals held that Bob Dylan and Jacques Levy did not violate the statute when they wrote a song that depicted the murder trial of prizefighter Rubin “Hurricane” Carter. The names used in the ballad were not used to directly promote a product or service.

“This decision effectively ends the case, because it holds that the plaintiffs do not have a claim for commercial misappropriation under Florida law,” says Gregg Thomas with Holland & Knight in Tampa, Fla., who represented the production companies. “All that is left for the 11th Circuit to do is affirm the trial court’s decision in favor of Warner Bros.”

IDENTITY CRISIS: Up the coast in North Carolina, two Internet users prevailed April 14 in the U.S. District Court in Winston-Salem after the Recording Industry Assn. of America in 2003 sought their identities from two universities without filing lawsuits.

The court held that the universities provided only “transitory communication” and were not required to reveal the identities.

The RIAA says it no longer uses this subpoena process.

Legal Matters

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Nokia Antes Up New Wireless Player, Raising The Stakes For iPod Rivals

Nokia, the world’s leading mobile phone manufacturer, has introduced a new product that is the talk of the town. The device is a high-speed Internet connection that allows users to remotely access their digital media content via any device with an Internet connection. The Sprint Personal MediaLink service works only with computers running Windows XP or Windows Media Center Edition XP. With it, users can access music, live TV, videos, photos and other content from their home PC on any remotely connected PC, PDA or cell phone. The service will become a standard feature for new Sprint Internet subscribers, and is a free service upgrade to existing customers.

UNIQUE FEATURES
Perhaps the most striking feature of the Nokia N91 is its 4GB internal hard drive, which can hold 3,000 songs. The device has an advanced compilation of wireless and MP3 player, upping the ante for devices hoping to compete against Apple’s iPod. Digital audio devices from Creative Labs, iRiver and Dell and even consumer-electronics powerhouse Samsung and Sony have not been among the excitement surrounding each revamp of the iPod, and consumers have greeted them with a collective shrug. But the Nokia device, due this fall, and a pending Motorola iME version, have shown that music-optimized wireless devices can generate significant buzz alongside the iPod.

“...and get aligned with the carriers’ key objectives.”
— BOB SHALLOW OF NOKIA

Increased sales for the past quarter. But hitting those numbers required deep price cuts and heavy marketing expenditures, resulting in large operating losses. While this is a typical strategy to gain market share, some observers question whether Creative Labs and iRiver can remain in business long enough to see that increase.

LOGITECH MEDIAPLAY CORDLESS MOUSE
As music fans increasingly use home computers as digital music jukeboxes, Logitech has created a remote control allowing users to interact with their media files in a whole new way. The Logitech MediaPlay Cordless Mouse doubles as a basic scroll-wheel mouse and a media controller. The device features 10 such integrated, backlit media buttons as play, pause, forward, rewind and volume control. Users also can pick up the mouse and, holding it from below, operate it as a remote control from up to 10 feet away. A button launches Logitech’s MediaLife software, an application that aggregates the user’s PC-based music, photo and video files into a common user interface. It also provides access to MusicMatch’s Internet Radio service as a default, but can be programmed to launch other media player applications as Windows Media Player or RealPlayer.

“The MediaPlay mouse comes in silver, blue, black and red. It retails for $49.95.”
—Antony Bruno
CIRPA Looks To The Future
With President’s Term Ending, Challenges Await For Canada’s Indie Music Biz Body

TORONTO—The next president of the Canadian Independent Record Production Assn. will face daunting domestic issues as well as the challenge of sharing expertise and experiences with peer industry associations around the globe. Current president Brian Chater is due to conclude his term at the association’s meeting June 17 in Barcelona.

CIRPA is a key member of a worldwide loose coalition of independent music companies. The coalition includes such industry associations as the Assn. of Independent Music in the United Kingdom, the Assn. of Independent Record Labels in Australia, IMNZ (New Zealand), ABMI (Brazil), UFI (Spain) and Impala (Europe).

CIRPA, founded in 1975 and based in Toronto, represents the interests of the English-speaking independent music sector in Canada. Its 200 members include Canadian-owned labels, recording studios, audio and video producers and music publishers.

Chater, president of CIRPA since 1987, has forged strong relationships with other independent association heads, particularly with Alison Wemyss, chairman and chief executive at AIM, and two Impala executives, VP Patrick Zelnik and deputy secretary general Helen Smith.

“I have tremendous relationships with people all over the world,” he notes. “We meet several times a year and discuss how we handle different issues. These days we’re not just dealing in our own worlds but in a worldwide context.”

Chater leads the coming of the Assn. of American Independent Music, which is expected to launch within a month in the United States.

“As far as we’re concerned, the sooner they are operating the better,” he says. “Obviously, the U.S. is the biggest market and it will be helpful to have an independent association there to cooperate with.”

Chater’s departure comes at a contentious time for Canadian independents. The federal government is expected to announce significant revisions to the Canadian Copyright Act. And the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission is slated to announce a review of its commercial radio policy.

Furthermore, funding for Canada’s independent sector could be in jeopardy after federal government funding for its flagship program to operate an artist development program expired March 31, 2006.

The music industry here also is awaiting the results of a Canadian Recording Industry Assn. appeal last month of a 2004 federal court decision that stated the online transfer of unauthorized music files does not constitute copyright infringement under current Canadian law.

However, Chater cautions, “The core issues facing our industry haven’t changed.”

Prior to coming to Canada from England in 1966, Chater was copyright manager of publisher Mills Music in London. In Canada, he has headed such publishing houses as Burlingt-
on Music, Summerlea Music and Almo-Imming Music. He continues to operate his own publishing company, Avenue Road Music Group.

Chater is also a founding and current director of the Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent on Records (FACTOR) and the Neighboring Rights Collective of Canada. He serves as secretary treasurer to the Canadian Private Copying Collective and as director of the Canadian Musical Reproduction Rights Agency.

Chater’s impending departure from CIRPA hardly comes as a surprise. He was diagnosed with thyroid cancer in 2002. Though the cancer is now in remission, and he has been working full time for the past year, it has been clear for some time he would soon pass the torch. He will, however, stay on as an consultant to CIRPA for an indefinite period and continue to work with other associations.

FACTOR president Heather Oster tag says, “Brian has been a pit bull for the independent industry in Canada. With very little money, he has produced extraordinary results.”

Jim West, who runs Distribution Fusion III in Montreal, and also is chairman of FACTOR and CIRPA, says, “I don’t think there would be a CIRPA without Brian.”

CIRPA may well be regarded as a model for other international associations in how an organization can influence a national music business.

The association—along with its French-language, Montreal-based equivalent, ADISQ—provides the organizational, commercial and political tools enabling Canada’s independent sector to compete nationally and internationally.

CIRPA acts as a lobbyist on behalf of independent interests with federal and provincial governments.

It lobbied for the formation of FACTOR in 1982 and administered the funding program from 1982 to 1986, pushed for the federal government’s Sound Recording Development Program in 1986 and vigorously lobbied for several current funding programs under the Department of Canadian Heritage.

“Canada has the best support system for independent labels in the world,” claims Earl Rosen, president of Marquis Records Toronto. “CIRPA’s ability to represent the independents to the government for both financial and non-financial issues, including copyright, and Canadian content quotas for radio, is really important.”

Bernie Finkelson, president of True North Records in Toronto, recalls that at an international independents labels summit during MIDEM in January that “people wanted to hear what we had to say because of the accomplishments we’ve made in Canada.”

ITALIAN INDIES QUIT FIMI

MILAN—The Italian record industry’s second major schism in recent years has seen 73 of 85 members of trade group FIMI quit the association.

The departing members include leading independents Sugar (the label home of Andrea Bocelli, Elisa and Negramaro), Edel Italy, V2, Alabianca, the Canadian NAR International and New Music International. All resigned after meetings April 26-27 in Milan and Rome. They will form a separate organization.

The major label members included Sugar (the label home of Andrea Bocelli, Elisa and Negramaro), Edel Italy, V2, Alabianca, the Canadian NAR International and New Music International. All resigned after meetings April 26-27 in Milan and Rome. They will form a separate organization.

The majors’ representatives are Sony BMG Italy president/CEO Franco Cabrini (with two votes on the council), EMI Italy managing director Franzo Gisondi and Warner Music Italy president/CEO Massimo Giuliuni and Universal Music Italy president/CEO Piero La Falce.

The five indies were Limogelli, Edel Italy president Paolo Franchini, New Music International president Pippo Landro, Sugar Music president Filippo Sugar and Alabianca president Toni Verona.

The majors had sought their own representative body within FIMI, with its own board and a president who would double as FIMI VP.

“The request for our own assembly was intended to make FIMI more dynamic,” Franchini claims.

Other proposals included a reduction of the indies’ financial contributions to FIMI. According to Mazza, FIMI received 1.5 million euros ($1.9 million) from the major members in 2004, representing 89.5% of its funding. Indie members contributed 176,000 euros ($226,400), or 10.5%.

The proposals were voted down at an April 4 council meeting in Milan. “The majors seemed to be fairly flexible in dealing with our requests,” Franchini claims, “but on the point of representation they simply wouldn’t budge.”

The major-label representatives on the FIMI council were not available for comment. In a statement, Pojaghi said: “We are naturally sorry that these companies have decided to leave.” However, he added that the level of representation within FIMI had to reflect individual members’ financial contributions.

“I personally had no intention of leaving FIMI until they turned down our requests,” Sugar says. “In many respects it was a sad decision. [But] I had the distinct impression that they took it an opportunity to get rid of us.”

Claudio Ferrante, managing director of the Carosello label, suggests the move...
GLOBAL NEWSLINE

LOCAL TALENT DRIVES SMEJ SALES
Japan’s biggest record company, Sony Music Entertainment (Japan), has reported increased sales for the year ended March 31, 2005. Revenue for SMEJ and its 30 subsidiaries totaled ¥15.4 billion yen ($1.5 billion), up 6.6% from 2004/2004. Of that amount, ¥8.1 billion yen ($804 million) came from sales and distribution of recorded music, an 8.1% increase. The remaining ¥69.1 billion yen ($652.5 million) consisted of revenue from music publishing, artist management and other SMEJ subsidiaries, up 4.7%.

SMEJ does not release profit figures.

The company says the rise resulted from strong sales of albums by domestic artists. Domestic product accounted for 79.2% of sales, up from 78.9% in the previous year.

The SMEJ and BMG Funhouse labels maintain separate operations in Japan despite the Sony-BMG merger in the rest of the world.  
—Steve McClure

U.K. DIGITAL ROLE FOR HMV’S TAYLOR

U.K. music-retail market leader HMV has named marketing director John Taylor to oversee its online activities ahead of the launch of its MusicNet-powered download service later this year.

Taylor takes over from Stuart Rowe as HMV U.K. & Ireland e-commerce director. Rowe recently resigned to “pursue other career interests.” HMV said in a statement.

Taylor reports to HMV Europe managing director Steve Knott. An announcement on Taylor’s successor as marketing director will be made shortly. Until then, HMV head of retail marketing Ged Hopkins will manage the marketing department.

LAMPCOV EXITS KOBALT

Record producer Bruce Lempcov has resigned as managerial director of Kobalt Music Services, the administrative division of London-based music publisher Kobalt Music Group.

Detroit-born Lempcov, joined Kobalt in July 2001. He had been VP of international business at Los Angeles-based ArtistDirect, in a statement, Kobalt Music Group said Lempcov “exited the company to pursue personal interests.”

The company said locally based full-time staff and consultants in New York and Los Angeles will be hired to carry out Lempcov’s primary role of U.S. business development. They will report directly to Kobalt Music Group founder and CEO Willard Ahdritz.

LINDEN

SUGAR

EMI Ends Link With India’s Saregama

NEW DELHI: India—EMI Group has sold its final minority stake in Kolkata, India-based media company Saregama, formerly its Indian subsidiary. The move ends a century-old relationship between the two companies.

On April 15 and 16 EMI sold its 720,000 shares, representing a 7.71% stake in Saregama, to Mumbai-based investment company Reliance Energy in transactions on the Mumbai Stock Exchange. Saregama traces its origins to 1901, when EMI—then known as the Gramophone Co.—established the Gramophone Co. of India. GCI changed its name to Saregama after EMI established Mumbai-based Virgin Records India in 1998.

EMI had reduced its direct holding in GCI to 14% in 1987, and it fell to 7.7% by 1998.

An EMI spokesman says, “Now that Virgin Records India is well established, we can minimize our [authorized] stake in a competitor is no longer a strategic investment. As such, we have now disposed of our holding in Saregama.”

Saregama managing director Dilip Mehta says the company is raising funds through a rights issue. “We plan to raise about 240 million rupees [$3.7 million],” he says, “which will go to pay off past debts and fund the company’s various expansion plans.”

STOCKHOLM—An out-of-court settlement has ended copyright-infringement proceedings initiated by Swedish entertainment-industry trade groups against one of the country’s leading Internet service providers.

The Swedish affiliate of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry and local film/video and software industry anti-piracy body Antipiratbyrån on March 9 filed a complaint in Stockholm District Court, alleging copyright infringement by ISP Bahnhof.

“The two options [here] to stop copyright infringement are to file a police report for an investigation or petition the district court to enter the premises and seize anything illegal,” IFPI Sweden legal counsel Magnus Mårtensson explains.

As a result of the complaint, Swedish National Tax Board agents raided Bahnhof’s Stockholm offices March 10 and seized four servers containing 450,000 allegedly illegally copied sound files.

Antipiratbyrån legal counsel Henrik Pontén says the servers also held 5,500 illegal copies of computer software and games and 8,800 movies, much of which had not yet been released to the video market.

Bahnhof management de- nies involvement in piracy activity, and after an internal investigation, suspended two employees. Pontén says both were nonmanagerial staff responsible for administering host sites. They face criminal charges, he adds.

Mårtensson and Pontén confirm that the settlement ab- sules Bahnhof and its senior management.

“Bahnhof [are] not uploading the files themselves, but they made the crime possible,” Pontén says. He adds that in an internal Bahnhof report, one of the employees admitted uploading material.

The company declines to comment.

“We can’t talk about the set- tlement,” Pontén says, “but we are very satisfied with it.” He claims that the Bahnhof servers hosted the two most-used Web sites in Sweden offering illegal downloads and that both have ceased operating.

Pontén says since the Bahnh- of raid, other ISPs hosting suspected illegal file-sharing sites have been swift to remove them when contacted by Antipiratbyrån.

If the Bahnhof case had gone to court, it would have been the first time in Sweden involving copy- right owners acting against an ISP for hosting illegal music and video file sharing.

Sweden’s Minister of Justice Thomas Bodström confirms that a settlement has been reached.

“His means,” he adds, “that this case will not result in a final [court] decision, which could serve as a precedent.”

Mårtensson notes that under current legislation, “if one infringes copyright law, there are sanctions, fines or jail sentences of a maximum of two years. Fines are low compared to other countries, but copyright owners can claim damages after conviction.”

Antipiratbyrån and IFPI Sweden say they will seek damages in the event of successful convictions.

NO IMPACT ON ACT

The high-profile case has drawn attention to proposed changes in Sweden’s copyright law, long criticized by indus- try insiders for ambiguities that they say encourage file- sharing. Pontén estimates that 10% of Sweden’s illegally down- loaded copyrighted material.

“The action has increased the debate on copyright issues related to the Internet,” Bod- ström says. However, he claims it will have “no immediate impact” on the latest proposed amendments to the 1960 Copyright Act.

The amendments are inten- ded to broaden Swedish law in line with the European Union’s 2001 Copyright Directive. Sweden’s parlia- ment, the Riksdag, will debate the amendments May 25.

“The important thing is it will criminalize [unauthorized] downloading,” Mårtensson says. “It will be clear to every Internet user in Sweden what one can and cannot download.”

The amendment faces parlia- mentary opposition from the Center and Green parties.

Member of Parliament Johan Linander (Center Party) says the legislation leaves no room for technological advances and that thousands of young Swedes would be subject to criminal prosecution if it becomes law.

“The [amendment] makes every man or woman who downloads into a criminal,” he says.

“[Bodström has] said that the police won’t hunt young people, but it’s strange for a minister to say we need new legislation yet police shouldn’t use it.”

Pontén also criticizes the proposed changes, noting that Swedish law council Lagråde, an independent body of lawyers that reviews legislative proposals, suggests it does not go far enough. “It will be forbidden to download, but it’s already forbidden to upload,” he says. “It doesn’t give us any new tools to work with.”

The solution would be “to go after the Internet provid- ers,” he adds. “They are earning money on file-sharing. [But] the government is inter- ested in having a strong broadband industry in Sweden, and they don’t want to make problems for it.”

Linander agrees that legisla- tion should be used to penalize those who profit from illegal downloading and file-sharing. “We are proposing that the government come back to Riksdag with a sugges- tion that’s easier to understand and that Lagråde can accept,” he says.

The Riksdag is expected to vote in favor of the amend- ments, which would become law July 1.

GLOBAL

BY NAYA BHUSHAN
LOS ANGELES—How do you come back from a comeback? Alt-rockers the Pixies are doing it by mixing it up.

The influential quartet, which reunited last year for its first tour since 1992, will be back on the road beginning in late spring. The band will play festivals, one-night-stands and, in some markets, two shows per night.

"It's a radical difference from last year, because there was no way you can top (a reunion tour)," says Marc Geiger, the band's booking agent at the William Morris Agency.

"There can only be one great reunion tour."

The 2004 trek grossed $6.5 million and drew more than 185,000 people, according to Billboard Boxscore. The 50-plus-date tour concluded with a sold-out (24,000 tickets), eight-night run at New York's Hammerstein Ballroom.

Geiger says his first instinct for the Pixies—vocalist/guitarist Frank Black, vocalist/bassist Kim Deal, guitarist Joey Santiago and drummer David Lovering—was to book a nine-week tour stopping in small halls in many markets.

"A cool, underground thing to do would be to do two shows a night," he adds. "B-sides and rarities in show A and hits in show B."

Because of band members' other commitments—including a new Breeders project for Deal—the tour's time frame got compressed, Geiger says. But the two-show-a-night concept was still possible in some markets.

The 21-date tour will begin May 26 with two nights at the Roseland Theater in Portland, Ore., and end June 15 at the Agganis Arena in Boston. In addition, the Pixies will headline Lollapalooza July 23 at Grant Park in Chicago.

Originally, Geiger expected to book two shows a night in at least 15 markets. Instead, there are four: Portland (the tour's opening dates), San Francisco (May 30 at the Warfield), Los Angeles (June 2 at the Wiltern Theatre) and Cleveland (June 8 at the CMJ Rock Hall Music Festival and later at the Scene Pavilion). These double-doses are geared to the "super fan" who wants to enjoy two full sets, Geiger says. Combination tickets cost $60-$75, and tickets to individual shows are $35-$40.

For the nights with single shows—which will focus on hits and are also selling for $35-$40 per ticket—Geiger reconsidered the target markets. Because last year's reunion tour ran for multiple nights in major markets, the Pixies did not play at least 25 big cities, including Indianapolis and Raleigh, N.C.

For the upcoming tour, Geiger also wanted to stop on the outskirts of major cities. For example, the Pixies will not play New York but will be at the Jones Beach Amphitheater in Long Island June 14. As with the reunion trek, most dates are at medium-sized venues that seat between 2,000 and 7,000.

"It's a way to return to a market after people were turned away last year," Geiger says. "But it's also a way to underplay. We know there are a lot of legs left to play in the future."

Expectations for the dates are high. Geiger notes that the Portland, San Francisco and Los Angeles double-shows have sold out, and more dates will be added. Tickets for most stops will be on sale by May 7. No promoters or venues could be reached by press time.
Clear Channel To Spin Off Concert Biz
Live-Show Division Will Exist As Separate, Publicly Traded Company

Clear Channel Entertainment stand on its own two feet. The touring industry will soon find out, now that Clear Channel Communications has announced that it will spin off CCE, the live-concert division the radio giant purchased in 2000 for $4.5 billion from SFX (billboard.biz, April 29).

After the spinoff, targeted for completion by year’s end, CCE will be a separate, publicly traded company.

The move sent shockwaves through the concert industry. “Based on what they paid, everyone knew that [CCE] bought the Brooklyn Bridge and it was just a matter of time before they figured it out,” observes independent promoter Seth Hurwitz of I.M.P. in Washington, D.C.

CCE absorbed much of the hit for purchasing the apparently overvalued SFX with a stock value written down in 2003. In the end, it appears the slim profit margin and dicey nature of the concert business did not sit well with CCE shareholders accustomed to higher profit margins in the broadcast and outdoor advertising industries.

As part of the spinoff, CCE CEO Brian Becker has stepped down. Plans call for Becker and CCE to form a “joint venture company” to pursue entertainment content opportunities through acquisition and development,” according to a statement.

“We have tremendous admiration, respect and friendship for Lowry, Mark and Randall Mays and the entire Clear Channel family, and am very excited about the next phase of our relationship with them,” Becker tells Billboard. Randall Mays is serving as interim CEO during CCE’s transition to an independent company, and has been meeting with CCE division heads since the announcement.

Michael Rapino retains his title of president/CEO of global music, overseeing CCE’s global concert, touring and amphitheater operations. The industry has warned to Rapino, but doubts still remain about the CCE model. “Michael Rapino clearly ‘gets it,’ but whether he can control such an unwieldy beast remains to be seen,” Hurwitz says.

Insiders at CCE say it will be business as usual heading into the summer concert season. The status of such high-ranking execs as CCE chairman/Tea Party president Don Law in Boston, COO Miles Wilkin in Houston and CCE executive VP of corporate operations Mike McGee remains unclear, but sources say all were still with CCE at press time.

The future of Arthur Fogel, president of TNA International, CCE’s touring division currently overseeing U2’s Vertigo tour, would appear secure, considering he runs CCE’s most profitable tours.

GOING FORWARD
CCE says it will “appropriately capitalize” CCE, tapping capital markets “if necessary,” and much existing debt will remain at CCE. In basic terms, the way the deal will be executed is CCE sharehold- ers will be issued a like number of shares of CCE to either sell or retain. There will not be an initial public offering; banks are working on placing a value on the new CCE stock, based on some multiple of earnings.

The company says it plans to pay a one-time dividend of $1 per share when the restructuring is complete, and will increase its annual dividend by 50% to 75% a share from 50 cents a share.

Then, CCE will sink or swim on its own, and will no longer be propped up by the corporate giant CCC. CCE will run off its own revenue and, if necessary, tap capital markets on its own. The Mays family will remain major shareholders in CCE. CCE, far and away the largest concert promoter, amphitheater operator and live entertainment producer in the world, will consist of entertainment operations throughout North America, Europe, South America, Asia and Australia that raked in sales of approximately $2.75 billion in 2004. Last year, CCE reported more than $1 billion in grosses from in- volvement in 7,009 shows worldwide. It was involved in nearly half of all shows reported to Billboard Boxscore in 2004.

CCE’s revenue decreased 17%, to $4.54 million, during first-quarter 2005 from the same period last year, coupled with a 19% decrease the previous quarter. The company maintains that the decreases are primarily a result of a decline in ticket revenue. “What this spinoff says to me is their business model isn’t working,” says Jerry Mickelson, co-president of Chicago-based independent promoter Jam Pro- ductions, which recently won a $30 million judgment against CCE’s motorsports division for unfair business practices, now under appeal (Billboard, April 23). “You learn in economics 101 that when you increase prices you decrease attendance.”

Before Robert F.X. Sillerman spent more than $2 billion consolidating the live entertainment business into SFX, these independent promoters thrived in their respective markets. “But they ran their businesses back when the king was around,” Hurwitz points out. “That king was dethroned a long time ago. If CCE is going to survive independently, they are going to have to stop throwing money around the way they used to.”

From the concerts perspective, it now seems the hoped-for promotional synergies between the radio and concert divisions never really came to bear. In fact, insiders say that the two divisions were on separate tracks, rarely communicated with each other and were each focused on their own bottom lines at the local level.

The market is not exactly primed...continued on >>p22

Austin Fest Expands Its Boundaries

In just three years, the Austin City Limits Music Festival has become an institution in the Texas capital and an elite event among major U.S. music fests. This year’s ACL Festival is set for Sept. 23-25 in Austin’s Zilker Park. The lineup is arguably the most diverse of any festival announced this year, including Bonnaroo and Coachella.

Among the more than 150 bands confirmed for the festival’s eight stages are Coldplay, Widespread Panic, Oasis, the Black Crowes, the Allman Brothers Band, Wilco, Lyle Lovett, Lucinda Williams, John Prine, the Arcade Fire, Robert Randolph & the Family Band, Jimmy Cliff, Buddy Guy, Jim Deters Bentley, Death Cab for Cutie, Franz Ferdinand, Gov’t Mule, Sleater-Kinney, Kasabian, Robert Earl Keen, Keane, the Doves, the Black Keys, Dave Alvin, Calexico, the Wheel and the Braybon. Produced by Capitol Sports & Entertainment, the ACL festi-

val is named for the PBS mainstay “Austin City Limits,” which is billed as the longest-running music show in the United States. The TV series is known for showcasing a wide range of talent and has earned credibility with artists and music fans.

With a talent lineup assembled by Austin independent promoter Charles Attal, that credibility was quickly absorbed by the series’ namesake festival. The first ACL fest in 2003 drew about 75,000 during its two days and grossed about $1.2 million against a $1 million budget. The initial lineup included Wilco, Emery, Harris Ryan Adams, James McMurtry, the Jayhawks, Griffin and G. Love.

Attendance grew to more than 70,000 per day in 2004, and in response, producers announced this year they would reduce capacity by about 50% daily to make for a better fan experience.

“To us it was simple. Our original model was to provide a good experience to bands and the customer, and to create an event that would be around for the city of Austin for many years to come,” says Charlie Jones, a principal in CSE.

“When any event or festival, when it gets too crowded, it’s an unpleasant experience,” Jones continues. “Our customers told us last year it was too crowded and we heard them.”

The capacity reduction will affect ticket prices, but three-day passes will still top out at slightly more than $100.

“Our ticket sales are ahead of schedule,” Jones says. “Before we released band one, we sold 12,000-13,000 three-day passes. I expect when the bands get released, this sucker will sell out within a week.”

The talent for the ACL fest has been booked since Feb-ruary, and the “stars aligned perfectly,” Attal says. “The great thing about Austin is the city supports a little bit of everything.”

Attal says the talent budget was not much more than last year. “We have stayed within our model we’ve used the last three years. A lot of bands work for their normal going rate on tour, which really helps us out.”

The top 25% of the bands take about 60% of the talent budget, contrary to some festivals where the ratio is as much as 10% of the top acts taking 90% of the budget. “We never want to top-heavy,” Attal says. “And we never want to be chasing a one-hit wonder who wants to charge us a ton of money.”

Three successful events into its history, the booking has become easier. “Everybody knows we work hard this in late November, and my phone lights up between November and mid-December,” Attal says. “This is a great festival, fairly priced, with a great Austin vibe and a nice open green space downtown. It’s hard to beat.”

Official ACL fest sponsors include SBC, Cingular, Heineken, Austin Ventures, Capital Metro, BM! and H-E-B. “We do a ‘sponsor summit’ where all the sponsors and our marketing and promotion team get together, spend a couple days, and basically cross-pollinate,” Jones says.

Last year, highlights from the 2005 festival were released on New West Records, and a Warner Bros. release from the 2004 fest is set for this summer.

“We give people a good experience and have rewarded Austin City Limits’ with secure funding for years to come,” Jones says.

Attal and Jones hope they can bring the ACL festival model to Chicago, where they will produce the two-day Lol-lapalooza music fest, set for July 23-24 at Grant Park (Billboard, April 30).
Philadelphia-based venue management firm SMG has launched a new proprietary Web-based booking system, smgbooking.com.

SMG facility managers now can manage their booking schedules online, at the same time allowing their Sports & Entertainment Division and entertainment promoters an unprecedented level of access to real-time booking availability for SMG-managed arenas and theaters.

Smgbooking.com, which was developed by events-booking.com and SMG, was completed May 1.

Mike Evans, SMG's senior VP of Sports & Entertainment, tells On The Road that more than 70 venues are online, and many of the 32 SMG-managed theaters will be added soon. A key element of the system is easy access for entertainment clients to see what is available at the SMG-managed venues. "I recently had an agent looking to book an act on an East Coast run, and I was able to e-mail him avail in 17 buildings in five minutes," Evans says. The relative "firmness" of holds in place will be coded, and agents will not be able to book holds online, which should help eliminate confusion. "We don't want to lose a date when an avail can be moved," Evans explains. "A lot of our guys have a hockey date, for example, that can be shifted."

Smgbooking.com has been successfully piloted and beta-tested for the past few months at the Jacksonville (Fla.) Veterans Arena, Oakland (Calif.) Arena and the Wachovia Arena at Casey Plaza in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Industry reaction has been very positive, Evans says, and SMG regional booking reps will visit agents in New York and Los Angeles to explain to agents how they can interact with smgbooking.com.

TRAMP OFF YOUR STREET: Veteran road dog and skilled multi-instrumentalist Tramp has been on the road for more than 20 years as a key member of the Kendalls, Walk the West, the Cactus Brothers and, most recently, Bonepocket. New Tramp is off the road, and many people are hearing his real name for the first time. It's Mike Lawing, and he is the new marketing director for the International Bluegrass Music Museum in Owensboro, Ky.

"Now I'm using my real name, which feels strange after being Tramp for 23 years," Lawing says. "I wear nice clothes. It's quite a change, but some things are exactly the same. Like trying to get publicity, airplay, advancing the show, routing, street teams, production, stage plots and other things that I was already familiar with."

As part of his new gig, Tramp (we'll always call him that) will help produce the second annual River of Music Party June 23-25 in Owensboro. Hosted by the IBMM, ROMP will feature Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder, Larry Coryell & Lonesome Standard Time. Tim O'Brien, Mountain Heart, the Grasscals, Rhonda Vincent, Jimmy Martin and others. Tickets are $35 for a three-day pass, including admission to the Bluegrass Masters Film Festival. Last year, the initial ROMP drew more than 6,000.

Laying digs the new gig. "I love bluegrass, and I get to use street skills honed in the trenches, I have a cause, and get to go home to my family every night," he says. "I have every intention of promoting this festival, this museum and this region tirelessly. This area is the home of bluegrass just as New Orleans is the home of jazz, and I want people to make that identification."

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CLEAR CHANNEL (cont.)

for corporate concert promotion companies. House of Blues Entertainment recently announced that it was taking its concert division off the block because the asking price (which sources say was around $110 million) could not be reached (Billboard, April 23). Now, CHC may eventually be sold, all or in part, and potential suitors could include HOB or former CHC co-CEO Dave Lucas' Laszlo Entertainment Group. In addition to its motorsports and concert divisions, CHC has a successful Broadway division and owns, operates or exclusively books scores of concert venues, including amphitheaters in some 40 markets. Lucas declined comment, but HOB CEO Greg Trojan tells Billboard, "We'd definitely be interested. We have made a commitment to this space and additions to those assets would be very appealing."

Sources indicate that at least two separate private equity firms are trying to put together packages to make an offer for CHC once the spinoff is completed.

Ironically, Mickelson says he may even be interested in purchasing all or part of CCE. "I'm talking to bankers," he says. "We believe its value is in Clear Channel Entertainment, as long as it's properly run. You don't have to compete unfairly to make money."
A 20-year career and 12 studio albums, Puerto Rican singer Chayanne is one of the undisputed icons of Latin pop. Often referred to as a heartthrob, Chayanne is much more.

He is a relentless performer whose last world tour spanned more than a year with 110 dates in 26 countries. He is a success at retail and radio, scoring eight No. 1 hits on the Billboard Hot Latin Songs chart.

He is also a successful actor who has appeared in film and TV with the likes of Calista Flockhart and Vanessa Williams. And he has been featured in countless advertising campaigns for such products as Pepsi and Dentyne.

“Chayanne genuinely represents the best of Latin entertainment,” Frank Welzer, chairman/CEO for the Latin region at Sony BMG, told Billboard last year. “He is the ultimate performer who can sing, dance and act equally well, and he’s one of the best-looking people on the planet. He also happens to be a joy to work with and one of the nicest people I know.”

Between working on his upcoming studio album for Sony BMG and promoting his current set, a compilation of romantic material titled “Desde Siempre,” Chayanne sat down for a live interview during the recent Billboard Latin Music Conference. Here are highlights from that session:

Q. During your “Próvocame” tour a couple years ago, you played in 12 countries. Last year, you went to 26. Did you ever think you would come so far?
A. Three weeks ago, I went to Australia for the first time. And it’s one of those countries we do little by little. When I did “Próvocame,” I went to Argentina and Spain for the first time, and now these are countries where I play 12-15 shows at a time. When I did those 12 countries, I thought, “Now what am I going to do next? What am I going to make up?” And I’m telling you, every tour, every album is about looking for new things and creating an illusion. That’s why I’m still in the business. When I stop feeling that, it’s time to take other decisions.

Q. Is that the secret? Because your career has not had major ups and downs, while most careers do.
A. My career has been like an art work. I’ve worked constantly, constantly. But we’ve also had a lot of support from people. When I say that, I mean a glance in the airport, or when they stop you in the street. Just now, getting into the hotel, they sent me in through the kitchen. They always do that. And what I find is people who ask me, “How are you? You’re taller!” They always tell me I’m taller, and I always reply, “TV makes you shorter.” Or they say, “You’re so skinny!” And I always say, “TV makes you look bigger.” But always, it’s an outpouring of support, and I’m thankful for that.

Q. Many major pop acts stop doing promotion, save for key, large outlets. That hasn’t been true in your case, has it?
A. When it’s time to release an album, you have to travel to many countries. Media is so advanced now, and whatever comes out here will come out in Japan or Spain or elsewhere. But you need to have presence. It’s very important that people know what you’re doing, what you’re feeling—that they know that what you’re doing is natural and spontaneous. When people see you enjoying yourself, that’s when people appreciate it and say, “He’s doing what he feels.”

Q. You began your career with Los Chicos, an all-boy band in Puerto Rico. How did that come about?
A. It was an accident. We’ve always had music in our home, going back to my grandparents, playing instruments, living the folklore of Puerto Rico, the traditions, where at Christmas you played guitar, saw and shakers.

We all lived that since we were very small. I played percussion, but my sister was the one who sang and danced. She was going to be in a group made up of three girls and four boys. But they were college-age, so that fell through. And because I was the one who was always with my sister—I was her chayanne—they asked me to be part of a group of boys.

I was around 10 years old. And they called it Los Chicos because we were all boys (phonics) and 12 years old. I did my first album with them when I was 10, my first movie when I was 12.

Q. Did Los Chicos serve as the basis for much of what you do today?
A. If we were rehearsing for the tour, it was at least four hours of dancing and singing. Create the steps, memorize them, repeat and repeat. That was my schooling. I now go to Los Angeles to choose my dancers—even though my hand is here (in Miami)—and to create the steps. I try to choose dancers who understand Latin rhythms along with urban and pop choreography. We rehearse at least eight hours a day. Having started with Los Chicos uniformly taught me many things. It was a game! When you’re on TV and you perform in stadiums in Costa Rica or Guatemala, you’re playing that you’re in a helicopter, and there are 30,000 people, and it’s not a soccer game but your concert.

Q. Obviously, it’s very difficult to go solo after being in a boy band. Were you very clear that you wanted to be a solo act?
A. I knew I wanted to continue in music. And I kept studying. I took vocal lessons, dance lessons, I went to the gym—I’ve been lifting weights since I was 14, even if it doesn’t show! I prepared for the opportunity. And I was lucky.

And the opportunity came nine months later in Mexico, with someone who was marvelous with me: Fernando Hernández, then president of Ariola. Ariola had huge income.

Q. How did Chayanne become your nickname?
A. They wanted to change it when I did films, because they said I would never be successful in film with that name—because it was one name. They wanted to see two names, and Chayanne Figueroa didn’t cut it. My mom gave me the name. My family lived in New York and watched a TV series called “Chayanne.” And she liked the series and the character, and when I was born, she started calling me Chayanne. My real name is different (Elmer). Actually, I’m getting to like it now.

Q. Today’s labels talk about signing singer-songwriters. You don’t write. Why not?
A. I don’t write a big percentage of my material because I’ve dedicated my time to my music and the show. I try to have my writers know me—not only through my career but also personally. And you don’t have to sing only what you write. There is so much talent, you can sing other people’s songs and identify with them and give them total heart.

Q. What should we expect from the upcoming album?
A. Right now we’re listening to new songs, working with new writers. It’s more about having them get to know me . . . Talk with me, feel what I am today, and then we’ll work together.
Los Angeles—Few acts can trot out a Peter Jennings newsreel before a concert and have a hard-rock audience of 6,000 erupt in cheers. For fans of System of a Down, however, a pre-show report on genocide is as fitting as a guitar solo.

It is a Sunday night in late April, and System of a Down is staging its third hometown concert to benefit human rights and genocide awareness organizations. The group is about to embark on a world tour, and the L.A. crowd has gathered not to see the band off or hear a glimpse of its upcoming material. Instead, the atmosphere at the Gibson Amphitheater (formerly Universal Amphitheater) is that of a family reunion, where high schoolers and adults stand and cheer a heavy metal guitar line—or an ABC news clip from 1999—all in the name of Armenian heritage.

Fans drape the Armenian flag over the balcony, and the mosh pit near the front of the stage is a blur of red, blue and orange as fans brandish flags in the crush. A fan in the back yells “Fuck Turkey”—a remark directed at the country that perpetrated the Armenian genocide of 1915—and the audience explodes in cheers that rival anything the band received at Ozzfest in 2002.

“This band didn’t start to change the world. This brand didn’t start to change your mind. This band started just to make you ask questions.”

Bringing Its Own Opinion

System of a Down’s ethnic appeal and political directness are not the typical qualities of today’s megastars, and that says nothing of the band’s music: a metal-laced mesh of off-the-wall rhythms and whipbash shifts in direction.

The American/Columbia act has sold nearly 6 million albums in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The group’s 2001 effort, “Toxicity,” is its most successful so far, scanning 3.5 million copies.

On May 17, System of a Down will release the first half of its most ambitious project, a double-album that will be issued as two separate discs nearly six months apart.

The first disc, “Mezmerize,” was introduced in March with first single “B.Y.O.B.”, a thrashy, Black Sabbath-inspired anti-war anthem. The song is highly critical of U.S. policy in the Middle East. (“And we don’t live in a fascist nation,” Malakian sings with far from subtle sarcasm.)

Loaded with four-letter words, it is not the obvious choice for a radio cut. Singer/songwriter Serj Tankian says the band chose the song with hesitation.

“It’s such a heavy and aggressive song, and we didn’t want a political song as our first single,” he says. "But it’s so powerful and so different from everything else on the radio, we thought we could get away with it, even though we don’t want to be pigeonholed as a political band.”

Yet Tankian can’t escape politics. As the co-founder of Axis of Justice, the activist Web site he runs with Audioslave’s Tom Morello, Tankian is the most politically active member of System of a Down.

Mild-mannered and articulate, Tankian chooses his words with the conscientiousness of a scholar. He shows up for an interview in a suit, while Malakian slouches next to him in jeans and a T-shirt. In the words of producer Rick Rubin, Malakian is the “darker, more aggro character, and Serj is the poet.”

“The word ‘politics’ is a funny thing,” Tankian says. “A lot of people say, ‘Hey, I’m not political,’ and they don’t realize that, in today’s world, economics, politics, class struggle and social structure, are all tied together. It affects us directly, whether we like it or not, or whether we want to pay attention to it or not. Our lives are political, and System of a Down is a band that talks about politics and has very strong points of view.”

System of a Down is also the band Columbia Records Group chairman Will Botwin describes as the company’s “flagship.” He says the label is counting on “Mezmerize,” and follow-up “Hypnotize”—which is planned for a November release—to surpass the sales of “Toxicity.”

“We sold more than 5.5 million worldwide, and our expectations are that this upcoming record is going to exceed that,” he says. “We look at what happened last time as a barometer for what our goals need to be for this record.”

Fans first got a taste of “Mezmerize” when the track “Cigaro” was leaked to the Internet. At the time, the band’s representative claimed the cut got out against the group’s will.

But that was not the case.

“It was our choice to put it out,” Tankian says. “Everyone
made it sound like it leaked. Marketing efforts get more interesting day by day."

The cut—in which Malakian turns a reference to the size of male anatomy into a statement about the egotism of the ruling class—made it onto the airwaves. Despite not being officially worked at radio, "Cigaro" peaked at No. 29 on the Billboard Modern Rock chart.

"Cigaro" tapered off the chart in about eight weeks. While it failed to rack up a 35-week run on the tally like "Chop Suey" did in 2001, Jacent Jackson, assistant PD at WKQX (Q101) Chicago, said it proved that fans were eager for more System of a Down.

"It didn't perform as a callout record for us, and the lyrical content on the song is pretty ridiculous, but the phones were phenomenal," he says. "System of a Down is probably the most important band in hard rock today. They appeal to alternative listeners, and they're strong and crunchy enough to appeal with the hard rock crowd . . . But whether the new [songs] will become another 'Chop Suey' remains to be seen."

Like all of its previous work, the act recorded the albums with Rubin, who signed the band to his American Recordings imprint in 1997. If there is a noticeable difference between "Cigaro" and past System of a Down songs, it is that the first voice you hear is that of Malakian and not Tankian.

Tankian is still the group's primary vocalist, and Malakian has always composed essentially all of the band's music—coming off as hard rock's answer to Frank Zappa. Yet "Mezmerize" and "Hypnotize" see Malakian writing more lyrics than he has before. Malakian even splits vocal duties more evenly with Tankian and sings lead on a few cuts.

Tankian and Malakian run their own record labels, but Tankian's Axis of Justice Website is becoming increasingly more visible, and in 2003 he recorded an album of largely experimental instrumental music with Armenian musician Arto Tuncboyaciyan. With Malakian taking on a more active vocal role, one gets the impression that Tankian is taking a step or two back from band.

"I'm starting to compose music for films," Tankian says, "and I don't like being committed to one thing, whether it's the singer of a band or one band in general. System of a Down is part of what I do, but it's just part of what I do. I don't define it, nor does it define me."

Malakian, however, notes that only those outside of the band's inner circle will be surprised to hear him sing more.

"I've always been vocally involved with System of a Down, not necessarily as a singer, but I've written a lot of the melody lines and the vocal patterns. When I wrote something before, I had Serj in my head, but this time I had both of us in my head."

In discussing the new albums, Malakian and Tankian always refer to them as a single project. To the band, "Mezmerize" and "Hypnotize" are one album released in two parts, with both topping off somewhere between 35 and 40 minutes.

"You don't have a bunch of kids dropping acid like they used to," Malakian says. "You can't just release double albums and expect people to sit there and devote their time to it. Our songs are tough to digest, and I would feel really uncomfortable handing someone a CD with 25 songs staring them in the face."

Rubin agrees, saying he recorded about 35 songs with the band and was unable to get it down to a number that was manageable. "Everything in today's culture is short term and disposable," Rubin says. "We're living in a time when people don't seem to even listen to one full album, so we felt the only way for it get properly heard was to spoon feed it."

Still, Columbia is trying to make a permanent impression with this project. "We've been working this record on the street for about eight months already," says Stu Bergen, Columbia Records Group executive VP of rock music.

System of a Down manager David "Ben" Benveniste says street teams have been given everything from "stickers to bags to skate decks to election posters" to hype the releases in recent weeks. "The kids eat all those things up," he says.

Additionally, for six weeks leading up to the release, Best Buy's Sunday circular has printed a weekly countdown to the album's release date. On May 17, the group will perform at the Best Buy in Burbank, Calif. Indie retailers, however, will not be left out. They will receive an "extremely limited" picture disc version of "Mezmerize." For a release of this magnitude, Botwin says the company is careful to include everyone.

"It's a balancing act," he says. "You're trying to be expansive and bring more people into their music, but it's the band's desire to address their fans directly first."

To that end, the group is in the midst of a 10-city "guerrilla tour" that began April 25. The band is playing small venues in major markets, with ticket information and show locations being announced just days before. Bergen says shows in San Francisco and Denver sold out in less than 30 minutes.

The band will make its first major national TV appearance May 7, performing two songs on "Saturday Night Live." System of a Down has generally stayed away from the late-night talk-show circuit, and the band will nix anything too commercial.

"We recently received an e-mail from a documentary filmmaker in Israel," Tankian says. "He wants to use 'Aerials' for making a film about hats. He saw these Armenian monks listening to and singing 'Aerials' in Jerusalem. He's not paying anything, but I think that's cool. That's more our cup of tea than a football commercial."

This month the group will head overseas to perform at European festivals, and then launch an arena tour of North America with the Mars Volta in late summer. It will be System of a Down's first large-scale U.S. tour since Ozzfest in 2002.

"We could have put out another record really quick and played on the fact that 'Toxicity' did really well," Malakian says. "But we were determined to make another record instead. I want to stay a fan of System of a Down. We can't become everyone's favorite band."
WASHINGTON, D.C. — In late 1946, glamorous Savannah Churchill, the Alicia Keys of her day, recorded the ballad “I Want to Be Loved (But Only by You)” for Manor Records, a New Jersey-based independent label. By May 1947, the Manor disc had soared to No. 1 on the Billboard Jukebox Race Records chart, where it stayed for eight weeks.

Other such Manor releases as Derek Watson & his Brown Dots’ reading of “(I Love You) For Sentimental Reasons”—later a hit for Nat “King” Cole and Sam Cooke—also clicked with the record-buying public.

But 58 years later, Manor Records is a mystery. Music historians say anyone who wants permission to reissue those discs will find that the paper trail to the ownership of Manor has disappeared.

The Manor discs, in other words, are “orphan works.”

The term, conjuring visions of Charles Dickens’ poor Oliver Twist, refers to copyrighted works whose owners are difficult or impossible to locate.

The scope of the problem is not lost on the Copyright Office, which has asked for public comment on orphan works, including sound recordings, films, illustrations, text and photos.

More than 700 individuals and groups have answered the call, including music industry bodies of all stripes. The comments are posted on the Copyright Office Web site (copyright.gov). After its May 9 deadline for such comments, the office will formulate a plan to submit them to Congress—if it concludes that such a plan is needed.

Those who seek to use orphan works want Uncle Sam to establish clear guidelines on how to reduce their legal risks. Content companies are OK with that, as long as there isn’t any conflict with the rights of in-the-shadows authors and rights holders who might later come forward.

Music interests want prospective users to make a good-faith effort to identify and contact copyright holders. Most want those efforts to be documented in some manner, perhaps by codified steps, including the use of new or established databases.

Some suggest users pay into an escrow fund, with unclaimed monies eventually being put into programs that conserve and restore works.

A number of the respondents point out the limits of the issue as it pertains to music.

In separate filings with the Copyright Office, ASCAP and BMI each wrote that ownership of the musical compositions they administer is generally well-documented in their respective online databases. Similarly, the Recording Industry Assn. of America says the ownership of modern-era sound recordings is well-documented.

“Federal copyright subsists in sound recordings only if they were first recorded on or after Feb. 15, 1972. The labels and packaging materials for recordings issued since 1972 almost invariably identify the owner of copyright in the phonorecord, and the same information is contained in readily accessible metadata that accompany legitimate downloads of sound recordings made available online,” the RIAA filing stated.

“Moreover, while we have not collected empirical data concerning this question, we perceive that, relative to other types of works, the copyrights in a high proportion of sound recordings are registered,” and therefore the owners can be traced.

However, a Billboard search in 2000 of U.S. copyright registrations for 100 best-selling or critically acclaimed albums released in 1997, 1998 and the first half of 1999 revealed that about one-third did not have any copyright registration (Billboard, Nov. 18, 2000).

Several sources—including Sam Brylawski, former head of the sound-recording division of the Library of Congress—say labels have since become more consistent when it comes to registering works in the face of growing online piracy and the development of online music services.

The RIAA contends that pre-1972 recordings—covered only by state common law—are outside the scope of the Copyright Office proceeding.

Other groups believe pre-’72 recordings should be included in the Copyright Office recommendation. They say that without orphan status for such works, the public might be deprived of recordings of musical, cultural or historical significance—like the music of Churchill.

Jazz reissue producer Michael Cuscuna says there are “a bunch of little labels” that likely are in the same limbo as Manor, including Urania (the jazz label), Rico and Regina.

“A person seeking permission to use an older work needs to untangle the complicated history of mergers and acquisitions,” the filing by the Library Copyright Alliance said. “And since the person is seeking to use the work for at most nominal compensation, the corporation has no incentive to invest adequate resources in locating the records concerning the work,” which are often missing or lost.

A study soon to be published by the Council on Library and Information Services looked at the copyright history of 400 heritage records released between 1897 and 1904. The study finds that the current ownership of 25% cannot be identified. Many 1910s indie labels appear to be orphans, but by the mid-’60s, few labels appear to have orphan status.

Musicologist Tim Brooks, the study’s author, says the apparent orphan works in question include blues, R&B, rock’n’roll, jazz and country.

In his filing with the Copyright Office, Brooks wrote that two reissue producers “tried hard to find ownership of Manor, but the trail went cold.” They proceeded with
Washington, D.C.—Three major artists' groups are calling for a new compulsory license that would allow artists to reissue their out-of-print recordings if the labels that control the masters do not have any such plans.

The Future of Music Coalition, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and the American Federation of Musicians propose a feasibility study for such a license in a Copyright Office filing on "orphan works."

They call the plan a "cousin" of the orphan-works issue.

"If a record label does not press and sell physical copies of a sound-recording copyright through normal retail channels in the U.S. for a period of two years (whether or not the recording has been commercially released and distributed in the past), the recording artist who created the recording would be able to apply for such a license," the groups wrote.

Under the proposal, an artist would be granted "an exclusive license to manufacture and commercially distribute the sound-recording copyright in physical and a nonexclusive license for all other rights."

Along with this license would come the responsibilities "traditionally borne by the labels"—including manufacturing, distributing and promotion.

Artists would be responsible for paying their label "a portion of the profits. They would also have to pay songwriters and union obligations for the session musicians and vocalists, if applicable.

A spokesman for the Recording Industry Assn. of America tells Billboard the group doesn't see any need for such a plan. "We think the Internet is the best answer to this issue, as it opens up new marketing opportunities for record companies."

The organizations say their licensing plan would provide "found money" for all parties and "generate new income for [both] a recording industry that has complained continually about falling income and for many artists who never were, or are no longer, superstars."

—Bill Holland

Their reissues, in one case putting money in escrow, but no claimant ever emerged.

Brooks is among numerous parties that see potential benefits of a compulsory license to resolve the issue of orphan works (see Opinion, page 4).

Brylawski tells Billboard that something should be done to help reissue producers and scholars.

"One could expend so much in the way of resources, dotting every 'i,'" he says. "The bulk of a budget to reissue an esoteric recording could be spent by doing no more than research to contact presumed owners."

"Pre-1972 recordings are protected by state laws until the year 2067," Brylawski notes. "If we're having trouble tracking down owners of 1948 companies and performers now, imagine how it will be in 50 years, a time when those recordings will still be protected by state laws."

(Not all legal experts agree that all states protect older recordings.)

"It's no wonder that aside from major-artist reissues, the bulk of publishing of historical recordings occurs overseas, where it is legal. In the U.S.," he says, "it's going to be most probably technically illegal."

Several filings argue that overly cautious administrators or lawyers often impede prospective users of orphan works.

The comments of the Clusko Samuelson Intellectual Property Law Clinic, helmed by American University copyright professor Peter Jaszi, are typical: "One of the main findings that emerged from conversations with prospective users of orphan works is that the main bottleneck to making these available lies not with individual artists or scholars, but with so-called gatekeepers.

"These risk-averse institutional actors have more to lose, in economic and reputational terms, than do individuals from a choice to use a work without explicit authorization. As a result, gatekeepers tend to embrace the cautious rule of 'just say no.'"

Members of Congress recommended the Copyright Office inquiry after hearing from such discouraged citizens—including the Library of Congress, whose bread and butter is restoring and archiving old published and unpublished materials with unknown copyright ownership.
CONCORD RECORDS ON A ROLL WITH GRAMMY WINS, FANTASY PURCHASE

By DAN OUELLETTE

As told by the label's late founder, Carl Jefferson, the Concord Records story began "accidentally." Jefferson was a Lincoln Mercury dealer in the small California town of Concord, 30 miles east of San Francisco. After founding a modest summer jazz festival there in 1969, he soon discovered that some of the straight-ahead performers he booked had been left behind by the rock and jazz-fusion boom.

When guitarists Herb Ellis and Joe Pass told him they could not score a recording deal, he replied, "Hell, how much could it cost?"

In an interview with this writer in 1993, two years before his death, Jefferson recalled, "I was making a profit at my car dealership at the time, so I said, 'Let's just do it.'"

Other musicians with similar leanings followed as one project led to the next, and quickly—even before a label was officially established—Jefferson had a 20-title catalog. Finally, he formed Concord in 1973 "to keep the record-making process going, I wasn't thinking of this as a commercial endeavor at all. I was doing it for the musicians, because jazz was so devastated at the time."

Today, Concord, based in Beverly Hills, Calif., is a significant player—not just in jazz circles (where it is the No. 1 independent jazz label, according to the Billboard charts), but also in an array of adult-oriented genres, from pop to Latin.

Concord enjoyed a banner year in 2004. In July, the label switched from independent distributor Innovative Distribution Network to Universal Music & Video Distribution. In August, Concord issued Ray Charles' "Genius Loves Company," which won eight Grammy Awards and has sold almost 2.9 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. And in November, it completed the acquisition of Fantasy Records, the Berkeley, Calif.-based gold mine of jazz, pop, rock and R&B titles, for a reported $83 million.

Prior to "Genius," Concord's biggest hits were Barry Manilow's "Here at the Mayflower" (which sold more than 180,000 copies), a self-titled CD from vocalist Peter Cincotti (167,000) and the Rippingtons' "Life is in the Tropics" (nearly 160,000).

But the success of "Genius" changed all that. The label is not only signing more acts but finding that it has more leverage in attracting premium performers. Jo Foster, head of Concord PR, says, "People are taking the label more seriously now. We've become a player."

For 2005, Concord has a full docket of jazz and beyond releases scheduled, including a Sergio Mendes collaboration with the Black Eyed Peas, Will.i.Am, an Earth, Wind & Fire-inspired project piloted by Maurice White; a live Sonny Rollins album recorded four days after Sept. 11, 2001; and a full-year 25th anniversary celebration of its Latin jazz arm, Concord Picante, with CDs by Eddie Palmieri and Poncho Sanchez.

Earlier this year, Concord merged its labels—Concord Jazz, Concord Picante, Alliance Jazz, Peak, Stretch and Playboy Jazz—with Fantasy's imprints, including Contemporary, Debuts, Milestones, Kicking Mule, Stax/Volt, Riverside, Prestige, Pablo, Specialty and Takoma. The resulting Concord Music Group boasts the world's largest independent jazz catalog and one of the largest indie archives.

Marquee performers on adult-pop-oriented Concord Records include Manilow, Cincotti, Michael Feinstein and Ozomatli. Concord Jazz features singers Karrin Allyson and Keely Smith, pianist Marian McPartland and singer/saxophonist Curtis Stigers. The Concord Picante roster includes the Caribbean Jazz Project. Stretch is home to Chick Corea, and Peak spotlights such smooth jazz acts as the Rippingtons and Paul Taylor.

The Fantasy catalog features material by such jazz legends as Miles Davis and John Coltrane as well as influential pop acts like Little Richard and Creedence Clearwater Revival.

Though still an indie, Concord is releasing music at the accelerated rate that was once a major-label hallmark. And although the Fantasy acquisition has put it on the scale of a major label, Concord continues to operate with the flexibility and independence of a smaller company.

"We're always seeking to stay a step ahead of other labels," Concord GM Gene Rumssey says. "But the majors turn like a battleship, and we can spin on a dime by just walking down the hall to do business."

Glen Barros, Concord's president/CEO of the last 10 years, says the label has veered radically from the path of most contemporary recording-industry models.

"Those old formulas no longer apply," Barros says. "Like in the wine world, the less you doctor the product, the better it is. We want our artists to create from the heart and soul. Then it's our job to take their music to the widest possible audience."

In the past, Barros says, the label was recognized for its artistic excellence while its commercial endeavors were lacking. But shortly before his death, Jefferson—who was more jazz fan and scout than astute label executive—brought Barros aboard to helm the enterprise.

"We've been working on equaling things out, to pull the marketing and sales up to the same level as the art," Barros says. "We're achieving that by coming up with creative ways to get the music to the audience."

Rumssey says the old industry model was to just release music and let potential consumers seek it out. "We subscribe to finding where the consumers are and bringing the music to them."

"We'll never turn our backs on our retail partners. We won't do anything to hurt them," Rums-
GENIUS

sey says, "But we are looking into other joint ventures like our partnership with Starbucks, where 33 million people a week are exposed to Ray's album." (While Concord continues to work with Starbucks, new collaborative retail projects have not yet been confirmed.)

Jessica Senda, the jazz buyer for Borders Books & Music for the past eight years, has noticed a big improvement in the way Concord does business on a retail level. She compares its musical diversification to Blue Note and Verve.

"Concord continues to have a dedication to jazz in addition to recording music to keep the lights on," Senda says, also applauding the label's attention to packaging and other details.

"Concord has become very good at identifying current trends," she says, noting that it has been particularly adept at finding talented vocalists like Allyson. "But most importantly, the label is also releasing all of its albums with a marketing plan that includes artists touring, radio and in-store appearances. The label is running on all cylinders." Rumsey compares Concord's marketing strategy to an orchestra where each member has time to practice all of its performance pieces. "We allow for a proper amount of lead time, something like you'd give for four months before the street date, and we don't follow a cookie-cutter approach," he says. "We get a good press story started, then coordinate closely with radio and retail."

It also helps to have major distribution. "Being with Universal has helped us grow our business tremendously. It's been amazing," says Concord VP of sales Joyce Castagnola, a former senior VP at UMG. "But Universal has a lot more people in the field, in retail and A&R. We couldn't have done the big deals without Universal."

John Burk, executive VP/senior VP of A&R, says Concord has been ramping up a slew of projects in light of the success of "Genius Loves Company." "We're not giving up on jazz, of course, but we are looking to further expand the direction of the music," he says.

Burk, who was mentored by Jefferson for six years, notes that the expansion got into full swing with Charles, who was perfect because he was a jazz artist who was also uniquely successful in so many other genres.

"At the time we started talking with him, no one was knocking on his door to work with him," he says. "In a similar vein, we're looking to work with a whole segment of disenfranchised artists who are being underserved by the current models in the record business."

That's a key reason why roots-rocking drummer/producer Jamie Oldaker decided to link up with Concord for his debut CD as a leader, "Mad Dog & Okies." The set features guest performances by Eric Clapton, Vince Gill, Willie Nelson, J.J. Cale and Taj Mahal and is scheduled for a July 12 release.

"I may not sell a million out of the chute, but I know I won't get lost in the system here," Oldaker says. "I like Concord. I like the roster, and plus I get to talk on the phone with the people who are making the decisions. With Concord branching off beyond jazz, this is a good place for this project.

While Concord's expansion will continue, jazz will still be "at the heart and soul of the label," Burros says. He says its new signings will include the "blue chips" (legendary players like Rollins who he believes are not getting the exposure they deserve) as well as up-and-coming talent like pianist Taylor Eigsti, pop-jazz singer LaToya London (a former "American Idol" contestant) and trumpeter Christian Scott.

"There's a whole new generation of extremely talented young kids who are playing jazz," Burk says. "We're thinking of new ways of marketing them, like recording singles and packaging them in tour together. We want to capture that explosion of the young."

On the Fantasy catalog front, little has been decided, though Barros notes, "We're looking very carefully at how to treat this treasure we have. We'll be dusting off the archives and putting them into a new spotlight."

Concord VP of artist and catalog development Nick Phillips, who is based in the Fantasy building in Berkeley, says, "There are lots of opportunities to make compilations and reissues that combine the Concord and Fantasy catalogs." He estimates that new reissue material will be released in the fourth quarter.

Phillips too was mentored by Jefferson, beginning in 1987. So, considering how Concord has branched out, is "Jeff," as he was fondly called, rolling in his grave?

"I think he'd be proud of where we are today," Phillips says. "Growing from an indie mom-and-pop label to purchasing the Fantasy catalog would have been to him like the minnow that swallowed the whale."

Burk agrees: "Jeff asked me on his death bed to run the label. He knew our tastes in music were different, but he said, 'I trusted you. I know you'll do the right thing. I didn't know if I was buying into the company or asking for his daughter's hand, but he handed his baby over to me."

"We've built on his foundation and kept the artistic integrity that he fostered. Maybe he would have disagreed with what Concord has released in recent years, but in the end, I believe he'd be very proud."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Concord Records GM Gene Rumsey, singer/saxman Curtis Stigers, executive VP John Burk, jazz sextet the Rippingtons, singer Karrin Allyson, the late Ray Charles, president/CEO Glen Barros, vocalist Peter Cincotti, percussionist Poncho Sanchez and singer LaToya London.
When "El Vacilón: The Movie" premieres later this year, fans of the Spanish-language radio show on which the film is loosely based will get exactly what they paid for: the kind of raunchy, racy, R-rated humor that has made "El Vacilón de la Mañana," heard on WSKQ (La Mega 97.9), one of New York's top morning drive programs in any language.

The movie chronicles the fictional misadventures of "El Vacilón" hosts Luis Jimenez and Ramon "Moonshadow" Broussard, who play themselves. Jimenez, who wrote the script, says the film is merely a big-screen version of "some of the wild stories callers tell us, with me and Moon putting ourselves in these crazy situations."

If Jimenez instead chose to document his life story—as his radio rival Howard Stern did in 1997's "Private Parts"—the resulting film may not have been as sophomorically funny, but it would likely be as entertaining, if not uplifting. Jimenez's rapid rise to radio prominence is an engrossing rags-to-riches story that begins in the Puerto Rican town of Caguas, where the teenage Jimenez never wanted to be anywhere but on the air.

**BY ROBERT DOMINGUEZ**

**LUIS JIMENEZ**

**LA MEGA 97.9 MORNING MAN TURNS MOVIE STAR**
Congratulations Luis and Moon from your family and friends at SBS
Yo vacilo

Tu vacilas

El Vacilón de la Mañana

Thanks for 12 years of getting us up and going in the morning

Advertising Age

JIMENEZ (cont.)

from >>p30

He and WSKQ PD George Mier, whose father was an engineer at a radio station in Caguas, were friends in middle school. The classmate "would walk around the track and talk about radio all the time," Mier recalls.

Jimenez’s first radio job, at 15, wasn’t really a job—he worked for free at a station that played soft ballads. "It was a Lite-FM type of station, and I’d get to read news and talk three times an hour," Jimenez says. "But I was too young for the format. The owner would call me up and say, ‘Slow down! You’re talking too fast!’

“I would forget about the easy format and just go crazy," he adds, laughing.

The experience proved invaluable, but it was Jimenez’s friendship with Mier that eventually led to the big time. After Mier’s family moved to Orlando, Fla., the school chums lost track of each other—until Jimenez’s parents also moved the family to Orlando in the late 1980s. Mier’s father was running a small station there, WONQ, and Mier offered Jimenez an on-air job.

“We hooked back up again and worked together for four years in the Orlando market,” Mier says. “He did mostly voice-overs for me.”

The gig, however, was not exactly what Jimenez envisioned when he dreamed about being a radio star. For several years he had to supplement his meager income by working as a night janitor in a factory.

Things changed after Mier became PD at WSKQ, the FM flagship station owned by media giant Spanish Broadcasting System.

"After a month there, I decided we needed a new face for the morning show, and Luis is the only guy who came to mind," Mier says.

"We had done parodies on a small scale in Orlando, and I thought it could work if we put him here. At first, management didn’t want to put him on in the morning. He went through an array of co-hosts until he hit it off with Junior Hernandez, and it eventually became the show it is now.”

"El Vacilón," which roughly translates as “the morning party,” is broadcast from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.

In its early days, the show featured Jimenez and the late Hernandez acting as ringmasters for a morning circus of zany supporting character actors, sexually charged banter, bawdy skits, song parodies, phone pranks and the occasional honestly—not to mention a listening audience eager to call in and share their naughty stories, egged on by the studio crew.

On the strength of Jimenez’s rapidly growing audience, La Mega became the city’s No. 1 station in 1998. Five years later, "El Vacilón," which had been battling Stern’s show for the hearts and ears of morning listeners for years—finally topped Stern in the Arbitron ratings.

“Our success is because the guys are like a bunch of kids,” says Mariae Alma, who is producer of the morning show and the upcoming movie, in association with Babylegs Entertainment.

“They’re like a gang, sitting in a living room, just hanging out and talking about whatever.”

It may seem effortless, but one radio analyst says Jimenez & Co. know exactly what they are doing.

"It’s clear they have a stronghold on the Spanish-speaking population," says Tom Taylor, editor of trade publication Inside Radio.

"It’s a gold-rush time in Spanish radio, and with a lot of good, original shows, they don’t go home and play golf after work. They work at it really hard, they’re really close to their audience, and they know what’s happening in the culture.”

Jimenez’s road to success has had its share of bumps, however.

WATCHING FOR WATCHDOGS

Though he claims to have toned down the show’s borderline vulgarity in recent years, "El Vacilón" continues to be targeted by such watchdog groups as the National Hispanic Media Coalition.

"I would say it’s to a lesser degree now, but it still goes on," NHMC president Marta Garcia says of the show’s in-your-face content. "In the past they were blatantly pornographic. Now they’re subtly pornographic.”

But unlike Stern, who relishes a good public fight with his critics, Jimenez insists he doesn’t enjoy controversy.

"This kind of thing affects me and gives me pressure, because I am very sensitive," he says. "We do have a clean purpose of making people laugh, even with our raunchy humor. We have no other purpose than that, and it does hurt me when people say they want us off the air and stuff like that.

"So listen to something else then!” Jimenez adds, chuckling. “Leave us alone! Leave us 3 million people alone who are listening to this show!”

One huge fan of the show is worried about its naughty nature. Darryl Brown, executive VP/GM of ABC Radio Networks, recently negotiated a deal with SBS to syndicate "El Vacilón" in several U.S. cities with heavy Latino populations.

"Luis Jimenez is the guy in the morning, and we’re extremely excited to be doing business with [SBS CEO] Raúl Alarcón Jr.,” Brown says.

Jimenez, Alarcón says, “is relentlessly innovating, evolving, morphing and progressing. The one constant is his enormous appeal and a huge and loyal following. On behalf of all of us at SBS, I want to thank Luis for his years of dedication and service.”

Though Jimenez is excited about the opportunity to reach a nationwide audience—and help promote the upcoming movie—he insists he is happy just to be working in front of a mic.

"If I wasn’t doing this, I’d probably be in Florida or Puerto Rico or whatever, but I would definitely be working on the radio,” Jimenez says. "I like this job. For any DJ, it doesn’t matter how much we have accomplished, it doesn’t matter how many years experience he has, or how much success. There’s no experience like the first time they let you go on the air, even if it’s just to say the time. It’s the biggest thrill of them all.”
"¡Ni ASÍ se controlan!"

MEGA 97.9 FM CONGRATULATES
Luis Jimenez y Moonshadow • Lunes a Viernes 6-11
When Luis Jimenez walked away from the only job he ever wanted, little did he know he would soon become one of North America’s top morning-show DJs. This may come as a shock to the legion of radio fans Jimenez has been entertaining for the past dozen years as host of “El Vacilón de la Mañana,” on WSKQ (La Mega 97.9) New York, but the notorious shock jock was once so intimidated by the prospect of manning a mic in such a massive market that he was about to turn down the job.

Luckily for the station—and its parent company, Spanish Broadcasting System—Jimenez got over his fright and stayed on for what became an unlikely success story.

The 32-year-old, Puerto Rico-born Jimenez, whose only previous experience was toiling part time at a small station in Orlando, Fla., soon turned four hours of racy jokes, skits, song parodies, hoaxes and pranks into the city’s No. 1 morning drive time program—to temporarily de-throne the King of All Media, Howard Stern, in the process.

But “El Vacilón”—“the morning party”—is no more than just a breakfast staple for much of the city’s burgeoning Latino population. In the 12 years since Jimenez has been on the air—

with original co-host Junior Hernandez (who died suddenly in 1998) and with current sidekick Ramon “Moonshadow” Broussard—the show has become a cottage industry, spawning several best-selling CDs, a series of sold-out live shows he has hosted at Madison Square Garden and an upcoming comedy film.

Not to mention complaints to the Federal Communications Commission about the program’s over-the-top, often sexually charged antics.

Yet Broussard credits the “family atmosphere” Jimenez has nurtured in the studio for the show’s success.

“What makes the show work is that first we’re friends, and I think that’s what makes the difference,” says Broussard, who joined “El Vacilón” five years ago.

“Working with Luis means just being able to be yourself and not even thinking. There’s a feeling of family, and everyone on the show feels like they’re one of the guys, too,”

Jimenez recently sat down with Billboard to talk about his career, the growth of the show and the eagerly anticipated “El Vacilón: The Movie.”

Your movie was supposed to be released in February, but now it looks like it’ll be later this year. What happened?

It was going to be a small, independent distribution deal, and then we consulted with [Luis Balaguer of Latin World Entertainment] in Miami, [who] saw the movie and said, “We can make this bigger—we can actually get a big company to lock this up with distribution.” So that’s what we’re working on right now. He hopes this should be out [later this year].

No doubt it will have the same raunchy sense of humor the show is famous for?

I think it is a raunchy movie. We believe we can’t do anything less than what we do on the radio and more is what we did. We actually went a little further with the movie. But it has a plot. Actually, one thing connects very well with the other. It’s not just sketches.

But it is you guys just being yourselves in crazy situations? It’s basically how people see Moonshadow and I, as two DJs. And what they think our lives may be off the air also.

You’re always in a neck-and-neck battle for ratings supremacy with Howard Stern. He also starred in a movie, “Private Parts,” as himself. Do you see people comparing the two?

The movies are totally different. His movie is based on his life, and our movie is not autobiographical at all. But I do believe he opened the doors for radio personalities to go beyond the radio. And I believe that probably if he hadn’t made the movie, it would have never crossed my mind to even think that two DJs could make a movie and it could be successful.

Let’s talk about your background. Is it true you were a janitor before coming to radio?

I started in radio when I was 15 years old. I got a chance to work for free at a radio station in [Puerto Rico], but then I couldn’t really find a good job on the radio. I kind of decided to move with my parents to Florida. I requested a job at a radio station over there [WONQ], because the program director at the time, George Mier—the owner’s son—told me that he had a job for me.

But when I got there his father said, “Well, I don’t have any shifts. As a matter of fact, I can only maybe give you a Sunday.” I worked as a storeroom clerk for a hotel in Orlando, and I started working during the day at the station. But at night, my main source of income was being a janitor at a factory. I did that for a few years. That’s how I paid the bills. The radio [work] was there, but I was making very little money with it.

How did you get to New York?

George Mier became the program director for WSKQ in New York. I guess he felt bad for what he did before, so he called me up for an interview with [Spanish] Broadcasting System CEO Raúl Alarcón Jr., and I was offered the midday shift, 10 to 3.

They put me on the air for one hour on a Wednesday afternoon, and I thought I’d die. I was so nervous. I was coming down to Mr. Alarcón’s office to tell him that I was too scared and that I didn’t think I was ready for New York. It’s basically how people see Moonshadow and I, as two DJs. And what they think our lives may be off the air also.

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Congratulations to Luis Jimenez and Moonshadow on making El vacilón de la mañana NY’s “¡Numéro Uno!”
CONGRATULATIONS

EL VACILÓN DE LA MAÑANA

MERCADO / CABRERA / MUSIC
ARRESTING
MOMENTS

Luis Jimenez, host of "El Vaillon de la Mañana," on WSKQ (La Mega 97.9) New York, experienced the ultimate radio prank a few years ago. As PD George Mier recalls, "Detectives came to the radio station with a sheriff and a warrant ... very legit. In the middle of the show they burst in and said, 'Are you Luis Jimenez? You're under arrest.'

"They stopped the show. They handcuffed him, took him outside the radio station, took a picture and put him in the back of a car for 45 minutes."

"Luis didn't know what was going on. It was all dead air on the radio. Forty-five minutes later they told him, 'We got you!' It was the ultimate prank! It was never done to him before, and we never found out who staged it."

Antics aside, Mier believes Jimenez has gained a loyal listenership because he is "a people person."

"It's never 'This is about me,' show," Mier says. "I think that's a significant reason why he is so successful. Luis does not disconnect from his people. The show is designed that Luis does not always have the punch line. Sometimes the listeners have the punch line. As long as he stays in sync with the market, he will always stay where he is—at the top."

—DEBBIE GALANTE BLOCK

from >p34

York. I was rehearsing how to tell him when he looks up from his chair and says, "Welcome to Sirius," before I could open my mouth. How do you tell Mr. Raúl Alarcón, "No, I'm scared?"

The next day I was going to leave, and they called me and said, "By the way, you're not doing mid-days. We lost one of the guys in the mornings, so you're going to fill in on the morning show until we get somebody." And as I always say, I'm still waiting. The guy has never shown up. The show started Monday, Aug. 9, 1993.

Describe the show in its early days. It must have been totally different from what it's like now. Oh, absolutely. I used to fight all the time with the station manager because he wouldn't let me develop the raunchy humor that I wanted to add to the show. It was very lame. We even had, like, three minutes of some guy talking politics, and there was a horoscope. If I did a joke, I would be called downstairs immediately: "How can you say 'nalgas' [rump] on the air? Are you crazy?"

After the manager left the company, I was free to do what I wanted because nobody was paying attention to this lame morning show. So I said, "Let me experiment," and that's how the show took off, with Junior Hernandez as co-host at that time.

Did you know him before that?

Yes, he was a DJ here. He was the guy who showed me New York even before I knew we were going to work together. He was like a brother. I miss him a lot. We would love each other like crazy and scream at each other and be cool five minutes later. Junior was great. He helped me take the show where it is today.

When did you know the show was finally taking off? Is there one clear moment when you said, "We've got it now, this is the direction we're going to take the show from now on?"

Yes—when I asked for a raise and Alarcón said yes. That's when I knew the show was taking off. I'm serious about this. I was very concentrated on making the show better. Everybody was giving me opinions and I wasn't really listening to anybody. I didn't want anybody to affect what I wanted to do with this show. I had too much of that before. So the show was a big success, it was in the top three [in ratings] at the moment, and I said maybe I can ask for a raise, and I did.

Are you always conscious of the ratings?

I never concentrate too much on it. I actually hate it when somebody tells me the ratings are coming out, because that gives me so much pressure. I don't like to think about it.

There must have been an immense feeling of joy when the station finally hit No. 1, though, in 1998.

Yes—and I went into the office and I cried, because that happened a few months after junior died. I cried because Junior wasn't there when it happened, and it was with him that I did it. It was a very emotional moment.

At this point, what is left to accomplish? You guys have your CDs, your live shows, the upcoming movie. Are there plans to do a TV show?

We've had offers to do that, but we don't want to because it's going to look so much like what Howard does. So we don't really want to get into that. All these things come out of the radio show, so our main goal is to have the show keep growing on the radio, to have more people listen. All these things we do are because our fans ask for it, or we wouldn't do it. We think it's fun, but our main thing is the radio. We're not going to leave radio for Hollywood [laughs].

MoonsHadoW

www.americanradiohistory.com
Congratulations
Luis, Moon and the Vacilón crew!
From your amigo Polito Vega.
Universal Music Latino y su Familia de Artistas Felicitan a Luis Jiménez y Moonshadow por los 12 Años de continuo éxito del Vaciólón de la Mañana.
The first new studio album from Dave Matthews Band in more than three years, “Stand Up” is about to be counted. The new record from the Charlottesville, Va.-based band takes DMB into new sonic territory under first-time DMB producer, Mark Batson (Eminem, 50 Cent, India.Arie). “Stand Up” drops May 10 as an RCA DualDisc, with lead single “American Baby” already gaining ground at radio.

“I’m biased because we had such a good time making it, but I have to say for the time being it’s my favorite,” Matthews tells Billboard. “I don’t think we’ve managed to have as much enjoyment in the studio as we did on this record, and I don’t think we necessarily come up with such a good rest it before.”

“Stand Up” was recorded in the band’s Haunted Hollow Studio in Charlottesville. Working in these familiar confines with Batson gave DMB a shot of creative adrenaline. “He sort of becomes a third arm to the band,” bassist Stefan Lessard says. “He’s probably the only producer I’ve ever worked with that’s able to produce at least four songs a day.”

Batson’s own chops and fast-paced studio ethic tapped into the band’s instincts. “The pace of working brought a spontaneity to the songs that I don’t think we’ve had on record before,” Matthews says. “It has a real modern sound, but also a back porch quality that really turned me on.”

“Stand Up” ranges from world beats and funk jams (“Stand Up For It”), “Louisiana Bayou,” “Smooth Rider”) to sparse piano-driven set pieces (“Steady As”).

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**TIME FOR DMB TO ‘STAND UP’**

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**COUNTRY**

**BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE**

**Van Zant Brothers Trade Southern Rock For Country**

NASHVILLE—It took two Southern-rock legends to deliver one of this year’s most-talked-about debut country records. Lynyrd Skynyrd’s Johnny Van Zant and brother Donnie of .38 Special make their official bow in the country market with the May 10 release of “Get Right With The Man” on Columbia Records.

“It wasn’t an accident,” Sony Music Nashville president John Grady says of landing the duo, which is using the moniker Van Zant.

“The album is a dream come true.”

—DONNIE VAN ZANT

Donnie Van Zant calls the project “a dream come true for us. We’ve been wanting to do this now for at least 10 years. We’ve got a brother, Ronnie, who was killed in 1977. He wanted to do a country record, so we are really getting to live out his dream too.”

Johnny Van Zant says the brothers aren’t going country, they’ve always been country. Indeed, if you poll any of today’s core country artists, nearly all will eagerly pay homage to the influence of Skynyrd and .38 Special.

“[It’s an] opportunity for radio to deliver the 35-year legacy of Skynyrd and .38 Special’s audience into a contemporary radio format known as country,” Grady says, adding that Van Zant’s base is comfortable with rock and country.

“This is the right time,” Johnny says of making a country album.

“With people like Gretchen [Wilson] and Montgomery Gentry and Big & Rich making records, that’s not far from us. We could have sung [Montgomery Gentry’s hits] ‘My Town’ or ‘Hell Yeah!’”

Donnie says it took only five minutes to decide whether Sony was the right place for them. “They told us from the very get-go, ‘Go into the studio, be natural, be yourself.’ That’s what they wanted from us and that’s what we did.”

Produced by Mark Wright and Joe Scaife, “Get Right With The Man” was originally set for a June 7.

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**FACT FILE**

- **Label:** RCA
- **Management:** Coran Capshaw, Red Light Management
- **Booking:** Monterey Peninsula Artists
- **Publishing:** Golden Grey (ASCAP)
- **Top-selling album:** “Crash” (1996), 5.4 million
- **Last studio album:** “Busted Stuff” (2002), 1.9 million

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MAY 14, 2005

[Image of Donnie Van Zant and Johnny Van Zant]
The Cream Of Coachella’s Crop

It was one of those moments that you don’t see coming. As two of my friends and I waited in the security line at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival April 30, a thought crept into my head: At what point will I feel too old to go to a multi-day, multi-act festival? The three of us then started chatting with two college boys. One of them asked how we got our VIP wristbands, and then delivered the fatal blow. “Are you parents of a band?” Seeing our crestfallen faces, he quickly added, “Or lovers?” Too late, my young friend, the damage was done. And then, quite frankly, challenging us to a dance-off only added insult to injury since my knees would have never held up. Sheesh.

But was that the sign I was looking for? As I fought with security guards over my God-given right as an American to bring a ball-point pen onto the grounds. Happily, as Coachella proved, it looks like my festival days are far from over.

Coachella was one of the best-run and most enjoyable festivals I’ve attended. Presenters of Golden Voice/AEG, who ran it, and large, on time, the grounds were surrounded, but never oppressive, and the lineup was delightfully diverse, and all acts fit into the overall festival vibe.

Highlights among acts I saw for the first time included Canadian hip-hop: B cupcakes. Playing to track and accompanied by only his turntables, the Warner Music’s artists (Vz in the United States) recalled Beck and Everlast, but he spun tales, such as one song about a door-to-door encyclopedia salesman, that are uniquely his.

Katie Mcelua, whose Dramatico album has been certified five-times platinum in the United Kingdom (and it is also Universal in the States), deserves a much bigger U.S. following, based on her jazz, country songs that are both eclectic and mainstream. The audience loved her.

Los Angeles darling Rilo Kiley (Brute/Warner Bros) showed why the band has gained new fans every day. It runs the gamut from rock to pop and alt-country, and each song has its own little endearing twist that makes it special.

Among the established acts, Wilco and Coldplay delivered muscular sets that were textbook cases of how to play a great show. Wilco could teach the youngsters a thing or two about how to pull off a jam that remains tight, instead of one that dissolves into messy cacophony.

QUICK HITS: Jennifer Lopez, who Simon Renshaw briefly handled when he was at the Firm, has come back to the company for management. Her career is now being guided by Firm founder Jeff Kwatinetz. Danielle Romeo is the new Los Angeles-based publicist for Network America. She was previously with the Mitch Schneider Organization.

VAN ZANT (cont.)

from >>39

release, but was moved up because of a heavy street buzz on the project.

First single “Help Somebody,” penned by Kip Raines and Jeffrey Steele, is No. 32 on the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart. Billy Joe Walker Jr., Rivers Rutherford, Tim Nichols and Craig Wiseman are among the songwriters who contributed songs to the album. The Van Zant brothers co-wrote seven tracks.

“We’ve always tried to write songs that move us emotionally and spiritually,” Donnie says. “We write about the truth... People relate to that.”

The brothers remain with their respective rock bands, but do plan on touring as Van Zant in the fall. “I’ve been with Lynyrd Skynyrd 18 years now and I want to be there for the last note of ‘Free Bird,’” Johnny says.

And, Special fans will be glad to hear Donnie is equally committed to his growing family. “Enjoying my 30th anniversary with 38 Special,” he notes. “I look forward to being there until the last note too.”

FACT FILE

Label: Columbia Records
Management: Ross Schilling, Vector Management
Booking: The William Morris Agency
Publishing: Shantytown Music (ASCAP)

DMB (cont.)

from >>39

We Go”), moody jazz (“Stolen Away on 55th & 9th”) and shape-shifting rock (“American Baby.” “Hunger for the Great Light.”

Barton often broke down DMB into its separate parts to formulate songs and grooves. “Our sense of songwriting, I’ve lived in this environment,” Matthews says. “Each personality had a chance to make a statement that might not be as easy to make if we did it all together sitting in a circle.”

Thematically, “Stand Up” blends spirituality, romance and biting political statement. “Love and sex, boy meets girl in an ugly world, that’s usually my inspiration,” Matthews explains. “I love women, I love my family, and I love the world. But I’m troubled by all of them.”

Hugh Surrratt, senior VP of artist development/creative at RCA, says this project was ripe for the DualDisc treatment.

“The material we have for the DualDisc really captures the personality of the band members, what went into making the record, the vibe in the studio, and how the addition of Mark Barton as co-producer of the project brought in an entirely fresh element,” he says.

Supplementing the standard “marketing and promotion 101 things,” Surrratt says, is a strong single out of the box. ‘Reaction at radio to ‘American Baby’ has frankly been stronger than any single I believe we’ve ever put out from this band,” he says. The track rises 14-12 on the Billboard Adult Top 40 chart.

A May 9 show at New York’s Roseland Ballroom will be webcast live on AOL Music. But DMB’s most valuable marketing tool is its remarkable tour base, and RCA is already taking advantage of DMB’s box-office clout.

“[Tour promoter] Clear Channel tagged the forthcoming album’s street date and used ‘American Baby’ as the music bed for most of their radio and television advertising, and also tagged the album release in the print ads,” Surrratt says. Additionally, DMB, which runs its own ticketing operation, lists info about “Stand Up” on the back of each concert ticket.

On TV, VH1 is committed to playing the “American Baby” video 40-50 times a week leading up to street date. VH1 will also feature the video in its “Heard Music First” program. Following a “Storytellers” episode that will air after the launch of the record.

This is DMB’s first studio release since the Sony BMG merger, and the first since the band restructured its deal with RCA in protracted negotiations last year.

“I’m happy,” Matthews says. “It’s a different room. You’ve got a different chemistry here and there with RCA because of the connection with Sony. So there’s a new pool of people, an eagerness around it. We’ll work with them, and hopefully they’ll work with us and it will turn all beautiful, and if it doesn’t, we’ll just take it on the road.”

As to his new deal, Matthews says, “I think we restructured it magically and very favorably for ourselves. And hopefully it has a consequence of artist-friendly deals happening more frequently, as long as our industry survives.”
**Latin Notas**
LEILA COBO lcobo@billboard.com

**Awards Heat Up TV**

Latin Music Awards Show Garners Highest Rating Ever

It was a ratings boom for the Billboard Latin Music Awards.

The show, which aired live 8 p.m.-11 p.m. April 28 on the Telemundo network, pulled an 11.6 rating (attracting 2 million viewers), according to Nielsen, up from 8.2 the year before. This year's show is the highest-rated edition since Telemundo began airing the awards in 1999.

The evening's highest point was the finale. It featured urban regional duo Crooked Stile followed in quick succession by Daddy Yankee, singing a medley of hits, and Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, who joined Daddy Yankee.

Manning a console during Daddy Yankee's performance was producer Luny (one-half of reggaeton production team Lumpy Tunes), who produced Daddy Yankee's "Gasolina." Prior to the awards show, Lumpy led a production session during the Billboard Latin Music Conference, joined by reggaeton duo Wisin y Yandel and Mr. Phillips, who are all featured on Lumpy Tunes' Universal album " Más Flow 2."

Mr. Phillips' rendition of his rap on the Lumpy Tunes remix of Yandel's "Obsession" was a highlight of the session.

That spontaneity, coupled with a spirit of adventure, are at the core of the genre's success, all involved said.

Lumpy said for the genre to develop, new rhythms and voices have to be incorporated.

Upcoming projects include collaborations with Rudy Pérez—the Billboard Latin Music Award winner for producer of the year—who hosted the reggaeton night as part of the conference. Pérez is working with Lumpy Tunes on tracks for Michelangel and model Sissi. Reggaeton was also on the minds of the 14 teenagers who took part in a panel that served as a veritable focus group for attendees, who were intent on hearing the teens' musical preferences.

The teens expressed universal reluctance to set foot inside a record store. Their favorite way of acquiring music was downloading it for free.

Not one had ever paid for a download, and yet, they have readily paid for ringtones. ("I only need one or two ringtones, but I download too many songs to buy [them]," one teen said.) Convenience was more important than price many.

What would get these teens to actually go to a store and spend money for music?

In-store appearances that provide a chance for them to see their artists, incentives (such as a T-shirt or cap with purchase) and access to CDs at concerts.

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**Global Pulse**
EDITED BY TOM FERGUSON tferguson@eu.billboard.com

**Oz Act Crosses 'Oceans'**

Go-Betweens Go For A Broader Audience

Buoyed by its best reviews since forming 27 years ago, cult Australian outfit the Go-Betweens is touring through June in support of new album "Oceans Apart." The tour includes the band's first U.S. dates since 2001.

The Go-Betweens' are singer/songwriters Robert Forster and Grant McLennan. They are published by Complete Music.

Last year, the duo signed with London-based indie Lo-Max Records for the world excluding continental Europe, North America and Australia. The label reissued three of the band's 1980s albums last September in the United Kingdom and has global rights (excluding Australia) to its five other studio albums.

"Oceans Apart" had an April 25 U.K. release on Lo-Max and arrived April 26 in Europe through Manta, Germany-based Tuition. The set bowed May 1 in Australia on EMI and May 3 in North America on Yep Roc.

Lo-Max managing director Alisson McGourty admits the Go-Betweens' commercial success has never matched their critical acclaim. "I'd like to see a much broader audience-develop for the band," she says. "They have a really strong catalog and a truly great new album to lead the way."

—STEVE ADAMS

DIVING UP: Swedish-based Norwegian singer/songwriter Ane Brun calls herself a late bloomer, but she is making up for lost time with sophomore album "A Temporary Dive" (DetErMine/V2).

"It wasn't until after I moved to Sweden in 2000 that I thought of making a living from my music," Brun admits. After two independent EPs, Brun's debut album, "Spending Time With Morgan" (DetErMine/V2), arrived in May 2003, followed that fall by a European release.

"Dive" is licensed internationally from her DetErMine label to VA and has been released in Scandinavia, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Spain, Germany and Austria. It entered Norway's Verdens gang chart Feb. 14 at No. 11, where it spent 11 weeks. It will arrive May 7 in France and June 6 in the United Kingdom. Brun plays May showcases in London and Madrid prior to a Danish tour in June and appearances at Scandinavian summer festivals. Brun has her own publisher, Ane Brun Publishing.

—NIGEL WILLIAMSON

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NASHVILLE—"Modern Day Drifter" is not just the title of Dierks Bentley's new album, it is also his lifestyle. The up-and-coming country artist is homeless, albeit by choice.

Bentley spends so many days on the road—300 last year—that he has given up his Nashville houseboat to live with his band on the tour bus he refers to as "the USS Petri Dish." When he comes to Nashville, as he did recently for a party Capitol Records threw to celebrate the platinum certification of his debut album, Bentley stays in a hotel. When he spent 30 days here recording his new album last fall, Bentley slept in the studio.

Bentley, the Academy of Country Music's reigning top new artist, thinks it is that road work that has built his fan base. Thus, he'll keep up the pace for the new album, which streets May 10.

"I feel like all the hard work of the last couple of years will get a good thing started so maybe next year we can cut back a little bit on playing every county in the country," he says.

"We sold a million records and I think I sold every one off a handshake or drinking a beer with someone after a show," Bentley says, only slightly exaggerating when he adds, "we met every person who bought a copy of that record."

The album's sales were also boosted by three hit singles, including the No. 1 "What Was I Thinkin'." Like the last album, "Modern Day Drifter" was produced by Brett Beavers. And like the last one, it features sparse production, bluegrass instrumentation and a collaboration with the Del McCoury Band. Bentley also enlisted Alison Krauss to sing on a track.

"The album's first single, "Lot of Livin' Left to Do," is No. 11 on the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart. KILT Houston assistant PD/music director Greg Frey says the track "does a great job of solidifying the Dierks sound. It's somehow traditional and innovative at the same time and infused with clever lyrics."

While Bentley's songwriting decidedly takes a guy's point of view, his fans are largely young women. "Good god, the girls love Dierks," Frey says. "When he comes to the station, that's all the ladies in the office talk about for a week after." Further exposure for the album will be generated by a CMT "Total Access" special, which premieres May 28. A Sessions@AOL performance was posted online in early April. Bentley made an appearance April 28 on NBC's "Today" and has also been interviewed for the TV Guide Channel and GAC's "Country Across America." He'll appear May 16 on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno."

Concurrent with the album release, Capitol will issue a limited-edition two-disc CD/DVD package that includes Bentley's music videos, a surround sound mix of the new album and footage of Bentley and Beavers discussing each song. In addition, Bentley is selling a fan-club-only version of the CD—featuring different artwork—on his Web site.
Erika Jo’s ‘Star’ Rising
Third-Season Talent Series Winner Has Confidence To Spare

As a child, Erika Jo liked to tell her father that Tony Brown would one day produce her music. Now, the third-season winner of the USA Network talent series “Nashville Star” is living that dream.

Signed to Universal South Records thanks to her win, Erika Jo’s debut album is not only being produced by Brown—that label’s senior partner—but by his fellow senior partner Tim DuBois as well.

Unlike Pointing being just 18 years old, Erika Jo Heriges (she has opted not to use her last name professionally) was quite familiar with the work of both men long before signing with the label. As a child, she studied the liner notes of her favorite country albums, including the Brown-produced CDs of her idol, Reba McEntire.

Only a high school senior, Erika Jo has been in the spotlight her whole life. She participated in kiddie beauty pageants until the ripe old age of 4, and has been traveling and singing with her father’s band since she was 5. While prima

rily a country group, Erika Jo says she “sang ‘everything from Stevie Nicks to ‘Lady Marmalade’” with the band.

Relishing her newfound fame, Erika Jo says her parents “have been waiting for this just as long as I have. My dad is kind of living through me.” Her father had pursued a record deal at one time but never landed one.

The teen, who hails from Mount Juliet, Tenn., is the first female to win “Nashville Star” and the youngest contestant to compete on the show. She says winning the contest was “a com-

plete shock to me as well as to a lot of other people,” particularly since her chances of even making it onto the show did not look good.

When she auditioned at Nashville’s Wildhorse Saloon, the judges were ambivalent about her performance and debated whether to send her on to the next round. “I guess you could say I had a complex about it,” she says. Complex or not, Erika Jo was the one contestant who came across as polished, poised and professional on the show each week, despite her age.

She was named the winner during a live broadcast April 26. In addition to her deal with Universal South, her prizes included a Chevy Silverado pickup truck and a May 21 appearance at the Grand Ole Opry. She has also made an appearance on NBC’s “Today.”

First single “I Break Things” was digitally delivered to country radio immediately after the show concluded. It debuts on the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart this issue at No. 53. Written by Wade Kirby and Monty Criswell, it is already familiar to “Nashville Star” viewers who saw Erika Jo perform it during the finale.

The artist, who has not yet selected a manager or booking agent, has one month to record her debut album but she’ll need a few days away from the studio to take her finals and attend graduation. The album comes out June 14.

This summer Erika Jo will embark on a national tour with three “Nashville Star” runners-up: Jason Meadows, Jody Evans and Jayson Weaver. The tour runs June 16 through Sept. 27.

LATEST BUZZ

>> YEARWOOD MOVES TO VECTOR

Trisha Yearwood has signed with Ken Levitan at Vector Management. She was previously managed by Nancy Russell at Force. Yearwood’s next album, “Jasper County,” bows Sept. 13 on MCA Nashville/CBS. . . .

—Deborah Evans Price

>> VIVES READY TO ROCK

Carlos Vives’ El Rock de Mi Pueblo tour kicks off Aug. 13 at the American Airlines Arena in Miami, and will hit 21 cities including New York, Los Angeles and Chicago. Vives will play mostly arenas and some theaters. —Leila Cobo

>> HILL NO LONGER AMISS

Faith Hill returns May 10 with her first single in more than two years. “Mississippi Girl” will appear on the Warner Bros. album “Fireflies,” which comes out later this year. In addition to playing the song over the past few weeks, a number of radio stations will offer the track as a two-week, timed-out download on their Web sites starting May 10. Adam Shoenfeld and Big & Rich’s John Rich wrote the song specifically for Hill, who hails from Magnolia State. —Melinda Newman

>> WILSON ‘JACKED’ FOR FOLLOW-UP

Gretchen Wilson, whose Epic Nashville debut “Here for the Party” has been certified quadruple-platinum, will release her follow-up album Sept. 27. The new project, “All Jacked Up,” was produced by Wilson, Mark Wright and Big & Rich’s John Rich. The album features vocals from Merle Haggard on the track “Politically Correct.”

—Melinda Newman

>> SAVOY SIGNS NASCIMENTO

Brazilian world music/jazz artist Milton Nascimento has signed with Savoy Jazz. His July 6 label debut, “Pietà,” will mark his first U.S. release since 1999’s “Crooner” on Warner Bros. —Melinda Newman

>> LITTLE DOG HUNGRY FOR MEAT

In other signing news, Former Meat Puppets singer/songwriter/guitarist Curt Kirkwood has signed with Little Dog Recordings. He is working the song with Little Dog founder Pete Anderson on his solo debut . . . Lofton Creek Records has signed Britton Jack to its artist roster. The duo is working with producer Justin Niebahn on its label debut; first single “Painful” is already at country radio. Fuel Records inked a two-album deal with singer/actress Rebecca Pidgeon. —Phyllis Stark and Melinda Newman

>> REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Victory Records’ Hawthorne Heights takes the pole position on Top Heatseekers Albums this issue. It also marks the third straight week of chart gains for the band, which has jumped 73 places the last few weeks on The Billboard 200 and this issue stands at No. 104. This week’s advance is propelled by a promotion at Best Buy that offered the album “The Silence in Black and White” in the previous two weeks’ sales can be attributed to appearances on MTV, MTV2 and Sessions@AOL. —Keith Caulfield

>> LEDEUX HONORED

Late rodeo champion and country singer/songwriter Chris LeDoux will be honored posthumously with the Academy of Country Music’s Pioneer Award May 17 during the ACM’s televised awards show on CBS. Garth Brooks will accept the award on behalf of LeDoux’s family. In 1989, Brooks mentioned LeDoux’s name in his hit “Much Too Young (To Feel This Damn Old),” which inspired a renewed interest in LeDoux’s work. LeDoux, who recorded 37 albums and sold more than 6 million records, died March 9 after a lengthy illness. —Ken Tucker

PHYLIS STARK pstark@billboard.com

Nashville Scene

Higher Ground

DEBORAH EVANS PRICE dprice@billboard.com

Brickman Says ‘Grace’

im Brickman’s talent has gar-

nished him success in multiple

formats, and an array of acts

including Point of Grace, Mar-
tina McBride and Michael W.

Smith have enjoyed success-

ful collaborations with the pi-

anist. His newest effort, “Grace,” finds Brickman fo-

cusing his musical gifts on the Christian market, as the Windham Hill release is getting a push from Provident In-

tegrity Distribution.

Brickman’s love for classic

hymns inspired the new pro-

ject. “Grace” includes “How

Great Thou Art,” “Holy, Holy, Holy” and “Crown Him With

Many Crowns.”

“I’m very passionate about faith-based music,” he says. Most of the album is instru-

mental, but Brickman enlists some of his favorite vocalists on four tracks. Curb trio Selah

sings on “Be Thou Near to Me.” Mario Frangoulis per-

forms “Ave Maria.” Michael Bolton joins him on “Hear Me (Tears Into Wine),” a new

song co-written by Brickman and Tom Douglas. Ginny

Owens lends her voice to

“Amazing Grace.”

What prompted Brickman to enlist Owens? “I simply

heard her sing. There’s an ex-

ample to me of an angel,” he says. “She’s a messenger. Her

gift is so God-given, and it’s

really stunning.”

Bolton’s cut, one of the

album’s best, has been ser-

viced to adult contemporary

radio. Brickman would like to

see the single also get a shot

at Christian radio. “I’m not

sure how that’s going to be

received, just because [Bo-

ton’s] not really core to the

format,” Brickman says.

“Grace” marks the first time

Brickman has recorded an

album mainly consisting of

covers. “I felt it was time

in my career to take my style

and show my ability to inter-

pret other work rather than

write another whole studio

album,” he says.

Brickman’s deal with BMG’s

Windham Hill is up, which has

him exploring other options.

His next project will be an

album of Disney songs, tenta-

tively titled “Imagination,”

on Disney Records.

“I’m seeing a lot more fam-

ilies at my concerts, multi-

genre,” he says. “I think

music that was watched fam-


Erika Jo

puter, family-oriented, positive,

hopeful, inspirational. The

two things that come under

that category are faith-based

songs and Disney songs.”

Brickman enjoys that his

music has found a home on

multiple formats, including

AC, Christian and country, and

he credits his background cre-

ating music for commercials

with fueling his ability to

delve into different genres.

“When you are doing com-

mercials every day, clients will

ask you for a reggae thing for

this suntan lotion, and then

the next day [they] want rock-

’n roll for a car, and the next
day it’s a country song for

an air freshener, so you become

dependent at different genres,” he

says. “Music is music. To

me, the only common thing

that all these [songs] have is

their ability to connect emo-

tionally to people’s heart

and soul. That’s the mission.”

UPCOMING: Daywind trio

Greater Vision is in the studio

with producer Lari Goss re-

cording its next release. . .

www.americanradiohistory.com
A Spoon-ful of Success

After Spoon's 2002 album "Kill the Moonlight" moved close to 84,000 copies in the United States, the Austin-based indie rockers fielded offers from majors and indies alike. But frontman Britt Daniel says the band concluded that leaving Chapel Hill, N.C.-based Merge Records would be a mistake. May 10, Merge is planning one of the largest initial shipments in its 16-year history. A representative says the label is shipping 25,000 albums, with the first 65,000 equipped with a bonus EP of demos and rarities. The album is already being streamed online and has been say, "That manic interest people feel when a record comes out only subsides if the audience feels burned."

"Gimme Fiction" sees Spoon bringing back a louder, more melodic guitar sound. Merge will make a video for lead single "I Turn My Camera On," which rides a Clash...

"We're going in the right direction, so it didn't seem smart to jump ship."

—BRITT DANIEL OF SPOON, ON STAYING WITH MERGE

Velazquez Reveals Her Inner 'Beauty'

Chalk it up to youthful naiveté or saucy determination, but Jaci Velasquez has never been one to play by the rules. She has pushed the envelope with her musical choices, sense of style and career decisions, including a film role in "Chasing Papi" that had tongues wagging in Christian music circles.

Velasquez steps out again on her new Word/Curb/Warner Bros. Records release, "Beauty Has Grace," which streets May 3. Instead of using one of the usual suspects in the Nashville production community, Velasquez traveled to England to work with Martin Terefe, whose credits include Coldplay and Ron Sexsmith. "I've been stalking Martin for about two years," says Velasquez, who finally tracked him down and calls it "the best decision I've ever made." The artist expects a few raised eyebrows. "In Nashville, whenever you go and step outside the box and do something different, you better make sure that it's pretty darn good because people love to go, 'him, see, it didn't work.' You have to...

Last year Velasquez launched her own label, A'postrophe Records, and has been a hands-on record exec, working to break Grand Prize and Michael Cook. While she looks for a new Latin deal, she is already working on a new Latin record in London with Terefe and Cuban singer/producer Alexis Puentes.

Word Records VP of marketing Ronn Tabb says the label plans to price and position the album at major Christian accounts and will provide a three-sided floor display featuring Velasquez and Amy Grant as part of a "Women of Their Word" retail promotion. The Family Christian Stores chain is offering an exclusive limited edition that features a bonus track and an autographed CD.

FACT FILE

Label: Word/Curb/Warner Bros. Records
Management: Ronn Tabb
Booking: Ronn Tabb
Top-selling album: "Gimme Fiction" (2003), 325,000
Last album: "Unspoken" (2002), 200,000

FACT FILE

Label: Merge Records
Management: Juan Carrera, Ben Dickey, Constant Artists
Booking: Ground Control
Publishing: Precious Fluids/ Bug Music (BMI)
Top-selling album: "Kill the Moonlight" (2002), 80,000
MESHELL’S NEW ‘DANCE’

Meshell Ndegeocello, the funky electric bassist who originally signed to Maverick Records in 1993, has gone jazz. She has not only appeared as a busy-bumping guest on several jazz discs by the best of the young generation—including trumpeter Roy Hargrove and saxophonist Joshua Redman (including his Elastic Band album, "Momentum," out May 24 on Nonesuch)—but she is ready to release her first all-jazz outing, the invigorating, deep-grooved "Dance of the Dead." It comes out June 21 on Shanachie.

Ndegeocello’s electric all-star jazz collective, Spirit Music Jamia, features such guests as Kenny Garrett, Jack DeJohnette, Oliver Lake, Don Byron and Soulville’s Neal Evans, as well as vocalists Cassandra Wilson, Lalah Hathaway and Sabina (of the Brazilian Girls). "I didn’t want to be a leader," Ndegeocello says. "I just wanted to play bass and highlight the band. I was writing compositions with melodic figures and chord changes that lent themselves to this kind of music. It was a natural process for me. I wrote the cells, the improvisers played on them without reharssals, and the tunes took no more than two takes."

Also appearing on the CD is saxophonist Ron Blake. His May 24 Mack Avenue Records CD, the equally vitalizing "Sonic Tonic," was produced by Ndegeocello.

"Ron kept telling me he wanted to record something that you could dance to," she says. "So I became his musical coach, [we] recorded in a studio known for hip-hop records, and [I] convinced him to use two drummers for the session."

Blake says, "It was my idea to have Meshell produce. I told her when I met her eight years ago that I wanted to play jazz with her. I’ve always liked the sound of her records. There’s a lot of bottom, and they sound current. So, I wanted her to help me record an album that sounds new. And she did just that, by allowing the music to develop organically.

"SPUTNIK BLUE: Blue Note Records’ fearless leader Bruce Lundvall has launched a satellite career, spinning discs and talking jazz on his weekly Sirius Satellite Radio show, "The Blue Note Hour." Located on Sirius’ Pure Jazz outlet (channel 72), Lundvall’s show features artists from the label’s current roster as well as updates on latest releases and new reunions. Tentatively scheduled for May are shows spotlighting pianist Jason Moran and saxophonist Joe Lovano, featuring their music as well as their favorite tunes from Blue Note’s catalog. On tap for the future is a tribute to Bud Powell. The show airs at 6 p.m. ET on Fridays, with an encore at 9 a.m. ET on Sundays.

"CITIZEN ART: Smooth jazz saxophonist Richard Eliot and trumpeter Rick Braun have formed the ARTizen Music Group label, distributed by Ryko. It launches June 28 with Eliot’s new album, "Metro Blue." The pair co-produced the album and co-wrote nine originals. To support the CD, Eliot, Braun, guitarist Peter White and vocalist/singer Jonathan Butler will launch the Jazz Attack tour May 13 at the Sunset Station Hotel & Casino in Henderson, Nev."

Eastmond Standard Time

Anita Baker’s first Christmas album is just one of the projects veteran songwriter/producer Barry Eastmond is juggling. Also on his production slate are forthcoming albums by Yolanda Adams, "American Idol" singer LaToya London and married duo Kenny Lattimore & Chanté Moore. Such a schedule flies in the face of the popular notion that old school can’t cut it in today’s market.

"I can come up with a beat," Eastmond says. "But there’s so much more to it than that. You have to write the right song and find the right arrangement. Then there’s producing the vocal, which is the best part of making a record.

"Eastmond knows a little something about that. His career dates back to 1985 and Fredric Jackson’s "You Are My Lady," a No. 1 R&B and No. 1 pop hit. Since then, Eastmond has collaborated with the likes of Billy Ocean, Whitney Houston, Barry White, Gladys Knight and Chaka Khan.

A song he penned with fellow writer/producer Gordon Chambers led to Eastmond’s assignment with contemporary gospel star Adams. Now he and Baker are preparing her Blue Note holiday album, which will be recorded in New York and Los Angeles. The duo co-wrote "I Apologize," which netted Baker a Grammy Award for best R&B female vocal in 1995. Eastmond was on board for Lattimore’s biggest hit, "For You," as well.

"The Eastmond vibe also coincides through "All Night, All Love" by R&B newcomer Wade O. Brown, due June 21 on his own Groove United label. The Detroit native and part-time Toronto resident lays down a loversgrooving on his U.S. debut album, which features additional production by Steve Estinvere (Joe, Tyrese) and Daryl Simmons (Destiny’s Child, Babyface). First single from the Bayside/33rd Street Records-distributed disc is the sensual "Where Do We Go For Love.

MUSICAL NOTES: New Birth is back. The collective behind such ’70s R&B hits as "Dream Merchant" and "I Can Understand It" has inked with GoodVibes Entertainment/Orpheus for marketing and distribution. New album "Lifelong," due May 31. First single, now on radio, is "Working on You 2.

Gladys Knight’s enduring legacy will be saluted at the 2005 BET Awards, hosted by Will and Jada Pinkett Smith. In addition, the event will honor Denzel and Pauletta Washington for their humanitarian achievements. The awards ceremony airs live June 28 from Hollywood’s Kodak Theatre.


Thanks to 50’s "Candy Shop" and Mario’s "Let Me Love You," Scott Storch’s lucky number is 18. That’s the number of consecutive weeks Storch has been No. 1 on Billboard’s Hot 100 as a producer. This feat ties him with the Inc. ’s Irv Gotti, who set the record in 2002 when he produced Jennifer Lopez’s " Ain’t It Funny" (featuring Ja Rule), Ja Rule’s "Always On Time" (with Ashanti) and Ashanti’s "Foolish."
Dave Matthews Band
Stand Up
Producer: Mark Batson
RCA
Release Date: May 10
Dave Matthews Band's past three albums have all debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200, even 2000's heavily streamlined, critically maligned "Everyday," which found everyone but Matthews and producer Glen Ballard on the sidelines of the songwriting process. In other words, even when DMB changes its well-traveled pop/rock sound, its diehard fans will still come along for the ride. "Stand Up" is like the first snow of spring: it sounds rarefied, yet here it has rarely sounded better, but the songs frequently get mired in working the same riff over and over again. Matthews has never been a profound lyricist, and here he musings on love, lust and working through the bad times seem cooked up on the spot. Just tune those out, enjoy the tasty grooves (see "Louisiana Bayou") and count the weeks until "Stand Up" goes platinum. —JC

Dierks Bentley
Modern Day Drifter
Producer: Brett Beavers
Capitol
Release Date: May 10
With his 2003 debut and its radio hit "What Was I Thinkin'," Dierks Bentley established himself as a likeable rake with a sensitive side, and after a year of relentless touring, he's ready for a sophomore stomp. "Modern Day Drifter" shows a little more depth and polish without skimping on the personality. "Lot of Leavin' Left to Do" is a catchy, midtempo number with some nifty fretwork. Bentley's considerable female fan base will eat up torchers like "Come a Little Closer" and "Good Things Happen," while rednecks will dig the hard-charging "Cab of My Truck" and beer-loser-gone-"Domestic, Light and Cool." Other highlights include the picturesque "Easy Street," the wistful, panoramic title cut; and the soulful honky-tonk workout "Good Man Like Me" with the De McCoury Band. Mighty fine, top to bottom. —RW

Spoon
Gimme Fiction
Producers: Mike McCarthy, Britt Daniel, Jim Eno
Matador
Release Date: May 10
Austin's Spoon has lingered at the intersection of critical acclaim and commercial underachievement for years. Singer/guitarist Britt Daniel and drummer Jim Eno began by revisiting angular '80s guitar rock and addressing indie-kid heartbreak. But the hooks were always there, and backed by a revolving cast, Spoon gradually embraced them. "Gimme Fiction" is the culmination of this movement, a collection of mini-epics with hefty, complex and singular choruses. The band's distinctive coiled energy remains, from piano-laced opener "The Beast and Dragon, Adderid" to the giant hiccups on "They Never Got You." As tight as "The Two Sides of Monsieur Valentine" suggest, Daniel hasn't lost his flair for metaphor, either. "Gimme Fiction" proves Spoon is ready to take the next step, and here's hoping a larger audience will follow. —JM

Lucinda Williams
Tomar Prodanovic's Lost Highway
Napavon
Release Date: May 10
This two-CD album, Lucinda Williams starts slowly and quietly, with plaintive ballads like the sober "Ventura." Then, near the end of the first disc, she lets it all hang loose with the gripping, passed-off "Changed the Locks," that kicks open a raucous door. On disc two, Williams delivers with raw, rocking intensity, all the while tearing at the listener's soul. "Beautiful Mistakes" is a no-nonsense, through-the-motions of life anthem, and "The Harlot and the Thief" is a similarly gritty, bluesy number. Overall, "Lost Highway" is a well-crafted record, filled with distinct tracks that are all Lucinda Williams. —AM

Tony Braxton
Please (3:30)
Producer: Scott Storch
Writers: S. Storch, M. Riddick, V. Herbert, K. Howard
Background/Universal (CD promo)
Toni Braxton returns with her second effort for Universal Records—and man, it's like the coming of spring in Minnesota. So few of our treasured divas (read: fine singers) have survived the millennium, but Braxton confidently walks the thin line between showcasing contemporary R&B production while her talent remains front and center. "Please" is so packed with melodic and vocal hooks that it sticks like glitter to the brain. Braxton does her part just by reminding us of that potent alto voice. Here is more evidence that the tide is turning in favor of the singer and how they add to the production, instead of the other way around. Bold and beautiful —CT

Natalia Bedingfield
These Words (3:38)
Producers: Kipper, Andrew Frampton, Wayne Wilkins
writers: N. Bedingfield, S. Kipper, A. Frampton, W. Wilkins
epic CD promo
Daniel Bedingfield had major U.S. hits in 2002 with "If You're Not the One" and "Gotta Get Through This." Sis Natalia, meanwhile, launched her own career last year in their native United Kingdom and nabbed the No. 1 spot in eight countries with "These Words," also her first single for Epic in the States. Unlike so many artists that try to cross the ocean, Bedingfield has a built-in urban vibe with a loose hip-hop tri-beat that serves as a hook the first time through. And she excels where most Americans fail. She can sing, she can rap, she can rebuke and teach us a lesson. As Ashanti and Jennifer Lopez a finger-shaking lesson. And this lady has the sex and star appeal to back it all up. —CT

Robert Earl Keen
I Really Mean It
Producer: Rick Brotherton
Koch Records Nashville
Release Date: May 10
As one of the very finest troubadours of our time, Keen remains a captivating performer. On "I Really Mean It," the heartache and songs of Williams, alive, in Philadelphia. Robert Earl Keen's road-tested band, led by guitarist/producer Rick Brotherton, keeps him on top with an array of ensemble, giving his tales a three-dimensional richness. He also delivers the most commercial acoustic song of his career. "Mr. Wolf" has a swooping, romantic sound, though it's mixed with the intelligence and integrity that have brought this much-loved cult figure to the cusp of something bigger, riper, and richer. —WR

Lucinda Williams
Tamar Prodanovic's Lost Highway
Napavon
Release Date: May 10
On this two-CD album, Lucinda Williams starts slowly and quietly, with plaintive ballads like the sober "Ventura." Then, near the end of the first disc, she lets it all hang loose with the gripping, passed-off "Changed the Locks," that kicks open a raucous door. On disc two, Williams delivers with raw, rocking intensity, all the while tearing at the listener's soul. "Beautiful Mistakes" is a no-nonsense, through-the-motions of life anthem, and "The Harlot and the Thief" is a similarly gritty, bluesy number. Overall, "Lost Highway" is a well-crafted record, filled with distinct tracks that are all Lucinda Williams. —AM

Maverick
Saxophonist Joe Lovano teams up with the 17th Blue Note album where he and his quartet left off on last year's marvelous "I'm All For You: Ballad Soup" book. Featuring the same personnel (pianist Hank Jones, bassist George Mraz, drummer Paul Motian), the set opens with a sumptuous take on the standard "Autumn in New York." The tempo quickens with Lovano's original "Bird's Eye View," presaging a pace-shifting package that's as soulful and quietly dazzling as its predecessor. Jones, a living jazz legend at 86, plays with the creative vitality of a youth. The saxophonist's new set, "Alone Together" is show-stopping, while Lovano's dark-roast tone on tenor is growing and bullying (witnes how his runs with Oliver Nelson's "Six and Four"). The album closes with a joyful skip through John Coltrane's "Crescent," in homage to Jones' younger brother and Trane bandmate, Elvin, who died last year...—DO

The Soul Seekers
The Soul Seekers
Producers: The Soul Seekers, Gospo Centro
Release Date: May 17
As some of Los Angeles' most sought-after session players, songwriters, touring musicians and producers, the Soul Seekers have played significant roles behind a mind-boggling array of hip-hop and R&B royalty, including Beyoncé, Missy, Nelly and Whitney. But with five of the eight members being sons of pastors, their deepest roots run to gospel, and their collective passions lead to a gospo/quadriga quartet music. With solid original songs, in a genre more likely to rattle the bones than spread the soul, they soar exuberantly. "Make A Way" features Seekers' forebear Harvie Watkins Jr. of the legendary Chants, "What Would You Do?" is a dramatic ballad, while "Somewhere Listening" is a Sunday set to wake the dead. Timeless and truly indigenous sacred American music...—GE
VITAL REISSUES
GANG OF FOUR (4)
Entertainment!
Producers: various
Rhino
Release Date: May 17
The roots of the angular rock sound embraced by the new breed of hot U.K. acts can be traced directly back to Gang of Four’s seminal 1979 debut. Out of print for eight years, this new-edition release contains a host of rare tracks and comes just in time for the band’s reunion tour with its four original members. Among the bonuses are a vastly different early version of “Guns Before Butter” and a previously unreleased live cover of the Velvet Underground’s “Sweet Jane.” Most exciting is the restoration of raw, herky-jerky and politically charged classic guitar lines like “Antithax,” “I Found That Essence Rare” and “Natural’s Not in It.” Which, 26 years later, still sounds fresh—BG

WORLD
TRANS-GLOBAL UNDERGROUND
Impossible Broadcasting
Producer: various
Global Underground
Triloka
Release Date: May 3
For those who enjoy the music encyclopedia, “Impossible Broadcasting” would be the ideal entry under the heading “World Fusion.” The membership of this U.K.-based collective is in constant flux, but that, if anything, keeps the vibe consistently compelling. Some of the enduring elements of TGU’s sound—reggae, trip-hop, ethnic sampling—are here, while star prodigy Sheema Mukherjee and Malian rappers Tapatou add further breadth to the groove. A fine place to begin is “Drinking in Goromarah,” a surrealistic travelogue underpinned with terrific dance beats. Move on to Tapatou’s rap on African corruption (“Cikan-ié Message”) and “Yellow and Black Taxi Cab,” both tunes built on wicked beats.—PJV

DEBASHISH BHATTACHARYA (5)
3: Calcula Slide Guitar
Producer: Debashish
Riverboat
Release Date: April 26
The marriage of Hawaiian-style slide guitar with North Indian classical music might seem at first a strange cultural conjoining. But as master guitarist Debashish Bhattacharya shows here, it is a perfect blend that actually finds antecedents to the 1920s. Expertly accompanied by his brother Subhashish on tabla, Bhattacharya plays three slide guitars of his own invention with finesse, elegance and tenderness. The crying quality of his guitars is a perfect fit for the emotional outpouring of his compositions, including the intense “Prema Chakor (Lover’s Embrace)” and the joyful, blissing “Maha Shakti.”—AT

NEW & NOTEWORTHY
ELECTREANE
Axes
Producer: none listed
Too Pure
Release Date: May 10
With its compelling mix of pop structures and esoteric instrumental chops, Electreane’s third album is an arresting, almost scholarly, study in guitarist batsman interplay. Recorded in December in Chicago, the guitars possess a wintery haze, draping the songs with claustrophobic intensity. Electreane veers between a shoegazer mentality and an angular punk drive sometimes reminiscent of Violent Fruits, it allows for an orchestra of retro keyboard sounds to either work their way through the fog or ride a rift. There are touches of French pop and even opera, demonstrating that the U.K. foursome is well on its way to mastering both the lovely and the bizarre.—TM

BLOODSIMPLE
A Cruel World
Producers: GG Garth
Bullfrog/Reprise
Release Date: March 29
Mudvayne vocalist Chad Gray introduces his Bullfrog label with bloodsimple, an act that makes its wrack quite clear on “A Cruel World.” Tim Williams, Nick Rowe, Kyle Sanders and Chris Hamilton demand to be recognized with the blistering cuts “Straight Hate” and “Path to Prevail.” Then they wallow the ball out of the park with “What If I Lost It,” an incredible anthem to the underdog where the band’s writing skills and GG Garth’s production perfectly dovetail. The group also displays a more subdued, modern-rock style on “The Leaving Song,” “Flatlined” and “Plunder,” which bring acoustic guitars to the fore. Being able to straddle both genres without sounding contrived is another skill in bloodsimple’s favor.—CLT

THE PUSSYCATS FEATURING BUSTA RHYMES
Don’t Cha (3:38)
Producer: Cee-Lo Green
Writers: C. Green, B. Rhymes, T. Calloway, T. Smith
American Records (CD promo)
With a name like the Pussy Cats, you can guess the name of the game: seven sexually charged ladies whose dance moves are as hot as their lyrical taunts. But what isn’t anticipated along for the ride is the Dolls implore on “Don’t Cha,” “Don’t you wish your girlfriend was a freak like me?”, along with other suggestive inquiries you have to discover on your own. The Dolls are as manufactured an act as they come, created by a choreographer and manager of such luster that they are as much a kick as Rick James’ Mary Jane Girls or Prince’s Vanity 6 in the 1980s. You’ll see past the early ’90s tone and realize that the intent is not only tongue-in-cheek, but more melodic than the majority of what’s on the airwaves. If this is the beginning of a revolution to diversify America’s hip-hop nation, we’re ready to sign up. Mew—CT

COURTNEY JAYE
Can’t Behave (3:09)
Producer: Peter Collins
Writers: C. Jones, J. G. Labus
Island (CD promo)
Courtney Jaye is a singer/songwriter who is refreshingly tough to categorize. Is she pop, alt-rock, country? It matters not what debut single “I Can’t Behave,” which works its way to endlessly loop inside your consciousness in less than one full listen. The effort personifies the summertime singalong, la “All I Wanna Do” from Sheryl Crow. Toss in mandolin, a cowbell, clap-alongs, a loose, carefree vocal (alongside a deceptively maudlin lyric about a cheating man); and the most irresistible melody this side of insanity. Look for the full-length, “Traveling Light,” produced by Peter Collins, June 7—CT

MISSY ELLIOTT FEATURING CIARA & FAT MAN SCOOP
Let’s Go (3:49)
Producer: Missy Elliott
Writers: W. Smith, C. Harris, I. J. Atkins, R. Davis, C. Hudson
Gold Mind/Atlantic (CD promo)
Hot off her success as a guest star and co-writer on Ciara’s “1,” Step 2, Missy Elliott returns with the new single “Let’s Go.” Casual listeners will think it sounds like an amped-up, 21st-century version of “Get Ur Freak On,” but should perk up the ears of hip-hoppers, pop fans and club heads, not to mention radio programmers. The cut is based on a wholesale hijacking of Cybotron’s classic 1983 electro-funk single “Clear.” At least Elliott has good taste in samples. Oddly, though the beat is hot, the party jam lyrics are straightforward and mostly devoid of her usual humor. “Let’s Go!” should put her back in radio’s good graces. Elliott’s sixth studio set, “The Cook Book,” is due June 28—KC

BRAD PAISLEY
Alcohol (3:58)
Producer: Frank Rogers
Writers: B. Paisley
Arista (CD promo)
With the success of last year’s “Whiskey Lullaby” still lingering on his breath, Brad Paisley hasn’t sobered up with his newest single, “Alcohol.” The title immediately invites comparison, and while this song does speak about substance abuse, it does so with a much lighter and less depressingly apologetic spin; the song has his trademark good-ole-boy humor. Paisley takes on the persona of an alcoholic and runs down a list of events and behaviors it, or he, has caused—from influencing kings and world leaders all the way to “helping white people dance.” Paisley’s effective vocal reflects his ability to sing the funniest lines with the deepest conviction. This is all backed by his masterful guitar work, a bar crowd singalong and a beat to make you sway back and forth until you fall off your barstool!—CR

ROCK
AUDIOSLAVE
Your Time Has Come (4:15)
Producer: Rick Rubin
Writer: Audioslave
Interscope/Epic (CD promo)
Now this is more like it: Audioslave follows up “Brave” with The No. 1 single from its forthcoming album “Out of Exile,” with a song that is as much a fresh reminder as its predecessor wasn’t. Where “Be Yourself” was a midtempo snoozer, “Your Time Has Come” is upbeat, driving and shows off every bit of the promise that a union between Soundgarden and Rage Against the Machine subdues.—AG

E.S. POSTHUMUS
Nara (2:42)
Producer: E.S. Posthumus
Writers: H. Vonlichten, W. Wijngaarden, Frans Street
Records (CD promo)
With legal digital downloads giving consumers an inexpensive alternative to Billboard Hot 100 and Pop 100, fans of quality music again have the world at their fingertips. “Nara,” the instrumental theme to the CBS series “Cold Case”—available on iTunes—is affecting and evocative in its striking melodic imprint. Its delicate orchestral strings contrast with an urgent tribal beat, while a persistent, nagging urgency peaks with such impact—in fewer than three minutes—that it demands repeated listening in a way that few musical scores merit. E.S. Posthumus—the duo of Helmuth and Franz Vonlichten—has a bright future.—CT
To all the attendees, sponsors, performers, presenters and panelists for making this year's conference the best yet!

Special congratulations to Telemundo on the success of their highest rated Premios Billboard De La Musica Latina with an 11.6 rating and a 17 share!

For video interviews, photo galleries, list of winners, chart information and more visit www.LosPremiosBillboard.com in partnership with MSN Latino.
**Bruce Rides Acoustic Music To Top Of The Chart**

This isn’t the first time that the Boss has followed an acoustic path, but “Devils & Dust” marks the first time that route leads Bruce Springsteen to No. 1 on The Billboard 200.

Landing such a stark and personal album on the chart’s highest rung is a testimony to the equity Springsteen has built—in the studio and on the road—during his 30-plus-year career. When his raucous anthem “Born to Run” first grabbed airplay in 1975, did anyone ever imagine that the venerable morning show “Today” would one day emerge as a valuable marketing ally for this sturdy rocker?

Like his last studio album, the 2002 release “The Rising,” “Devils” bows at No. 1 following exposure from the NBC News show.

The new album also benefits from a profile on that network’s “Dateline” and an appearance on VH1’s “Storytellers,” along with two radio vehicles: an hourlong syndicated special that ran prior to release date and NPR’s “Morning Edition” ( airing April 25-26).

The exposure pushes this album further than Springsteen’s prior acoustic outings. Despite Thanksgiving-week traffic, 1995 set “The Ghost of Tom Joad” had first-week sales of less than half of “Devils,” selling 107,000 when it bowed at No. 11. In 1982, “Nebraska,” the quiet follow-up to his first No. 1 album, peaked at No. 3.

Springsteen’s seventh No. 1 album marks the second straight week that a DualDisc-only album leads The Billboard 200, following Rob Thomas’ “Something to Be” (now No. 4, down 42%).

The Boss rules beyond the U.S.A., as “Devils” bows at No. 1 in nine other countries: Austria, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

WHO’S WHO: Bruce Springsteen is the only artist this week to surpass 100,000 copies, although Mariah Carey hovers near that mark with 97,000 (No. 2, down 13%).

In all, six albums beat 100,000 copies, including bows by two developing R&B artists. First-timer Bobby Valentin, formerly of Mista, lands at No. 5 with 180,000, and Amerie hits No. 3 with 114,000. Country champ Jo Dee Messina falls just shy of that camp with a start of 99,000 (No. 7), the biggest Nielsen SoundScan week of her career.

In contrast, only three albums beat 100,000 during the same sales week of 2004. Yet this is the second straight frame in which the top 1c has more heft than it did a year ago with units up this time by more than 14% while overall album volume declines (see Market Watch, below).

The average scan of a top 10 album is down by 17.9% from this point last year, but even when we do run into an instance when the top 10 looks stronger than the corresponding 2004 frame, the rest of the chart seems weak. This is the third consecutive week and the fifth time this year that the No. 1 album sells less than 5,000 copies, an event that only happened once in 2004.

Those numbers make you long for the music industry’s old friend, the ancillary purchase—that second or third album that consumers use to buy when they stocked up on new, sought-after releases.

Attempting to stir business next week is a new Nine Inch Nails set; first-day sales suggest it will be No. 1 with at least 265,000. A soundtrack from the new “Star Wars” film looks to start with 125,000—maybe more if people waiting to buy tickets take a break from standing in line.

**CALIENTE:** Participants and winners at the Billboard Latin Music Awards, broadcast live from Miami by Telemundo April 28, stir four spikes on Top Latin Albums.

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**Market Watch**

**Weekly Unit Sales**

**Week**

**2004**

**2005**

**Change**

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<tr>
<th>ALBUMS</th>
<th>10,579,000</th>
<th>9,600,000</th>
<th>8,549,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
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<td>Change</td>
<td>-0.4%</td>
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**Weekly Album Sales**

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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>240,614,000</td>
<td>298,331,000</td>
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<td>Change</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Digital Tracks Sales</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>185.5 million</td>
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<td>Change</td>
<td>204.7 million</td>
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<th>Sales by Album Format</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>189,858,000</td>
<td>184,011,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>4,224,000</td>
<td>1,099,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>632,000</td>
<td>405,000</td>
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**For week ending May 1, 2005. Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected and provided by**

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**For the full chart data, visit**

www.billboard.biz
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Distributor/Label (Price)</th>
<th>Placement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td>BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN</td>
<td>Devils &amp; Dust</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td>MARIAH CAREY</td>
<td>Ain’t No Way</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td>Bobby Valentino</td>
<td>Disturbing Thiss Peace</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td><strong>ROB THOM</strong></td>
<td>Something To Be</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong></td>
<td><strong>AMERIE</strong></td>
<td>Touch</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong></td>
<td><strong>50 CENT</strong></td>
<td>The Massacre</td>
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<td><strong>6.</strong></td>
<td><strong>JO DEE MESSINA</strong></td>
<td>Delicious Surprise</td>
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<td><strong>7.</strong></td>
<td><strong>MIKE JONES</strong></td>
<td>Who Is Mike Jones?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8.</strong></td>
<td><strong>IL Divo</strong></td>
<td>Il Divo</td>
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<td><strong>9.</strong></td>
<td><strong>GWEN STEFANI</strong></td>
<td>Love, Angel, Music, Baby</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10.</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE KILLERS</strong></td>
<td>Hot Fuss</td>
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<td><strong>11.</strong></td>
<td><strong>GREEN DAY</strong></td>
<td>American Idiot</td>
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<td><strong>12.</strong></td>
<td><strong>FIRENZE</strong></td>
<td>Songs For Silverman</td>
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<td><strong>13.</strong></td>
<td><strong>KELLY CLARKSON</strong></td>
<td>Breakaway</td>
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<td><strong>14.</strong></td>
<td><strong>CIAA</strong></td>
<td>Goodies</td>
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<td><strong>15.</strong></td>
<td><strong>VARIOUS ARTISTS</strong></td>
<td>Now 18</td>
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<td><strong>16.</strong></td>
<td><strong>JACK JOHNSON</strong></td>
<td>In Between Dreams</td>
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<td><strong>17.</strong></td>
<td><strong>AKON</strong></td>
<td>Trouble</td>
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<td><strong>18.</strong></td>
<td><strong>MUDVAYNE</strong></td>
<td>Lost And Found</td>
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<td><strong>JASON RODRIGUEZ</strong></td>
<td>Guero</td>
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<td><strong>20.</strong></td>
<td><strong>LARRY THE CABLE GUY</strong></td>
<td>The Right To Bare Arms</td>
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<td><strong>21.</strong></td>
<td><strong>FRANKIE J</strong></td>
<td>The One</td>
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<td><strong>22.</strong></td>
<td><strong>WILL SMITH</strong></td>
<td>Lost And Found</td>
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<td><strong>23.</strong></td>
<td><strong>SOUNTRACK</strong></td>
<td>Three 6 Mafia Presents Choos 1: The Setup</td>
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<td><strong>24.</strong></td>
<td><strong>FAITH EVANS</strong></td>
<td>The First Lady</td>
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<td><strong>25.</strong></td>
<td><strong>KEITH URBAN</strong></td>
<td>Be Here</td>
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<td><strong>26.</strong></td>
<td><strong>RASCAL FLATTS</strong></td>
<td>Feels Like Today</td>
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<td><strong>27.</strong></td>
<td><strong>3 DOORS DOWN</strong></td>
<td>Seventeen Days</td>
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<td><strong>28.</strong></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
<td>Pleasure &amp; Pain</td>
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<td><strong>29.</strong></td>
<td><strong>MICHAEL BUYLE</strong></td>
<td>It’s Tame</td>
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<td><strong>30.</strong></td>
<td><strong>BUDDY JEWELS</strong></td>
<td>Times Like These</td>
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<td><strong>31.</strong></td>
<td><strong>JOSIE STONE</strong></td>
<td>Mind Body &amp; Soul</td>
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<td><strong>32.</strong></td>
<td><strong>ALICIA KEYS</strong></td>
<td>The Diary Of Alicia Keys</td>
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<td><strong>33.</strong></td>
<td><strong>MADELEINE ROUX</strong></td>
<td>Love</td>
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<td><strong>34.</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE GAME</strong></td>
<td>Drop The Mic</td>
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<td><strong>35.</strong></td>
<td><strong>LUDACRIS</strong></td>
<td>Red Light District</td>
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<td><strong>GRETCHEN WILSON</strong></td>
<td>Here For The Party</td>
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<td><strong>37.</strong></td>
<td><strong>ANNALIN RICCI</strong></td>
<td>Wreck Of The Day</td>
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<td><strong>38.</strong></td>
<td><strong>LIFEHOUSE</strong></td>
<td>Lifehouse</td>
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<td>Confessions</td>
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<td><strong>DADDY YANKEE</strong></td>
<td>Free Yourself</td>
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<td><strong>42.</strong></td>
<td><strong>FANTASIA</strong></td>
<td>Bled Like Me</td>
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<td><strong>43.</strong></td>
<td><strong>JESSE MCCARTNEY</strong></td>
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<td><strong>44.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NEW ORLEANS 73^0</strong></td>
<td>We’re Goin’ Places</td>
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<td><strong>46.</strong></td>
<td><strong>SUGARLAND</strong></td>
<td>Twice The Speed Of Life</td>
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<td><strong>47.</strong></td>
<td><strong>BEANIE SIGEL</strong></td>
<td>The B Coming</td>
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<td><strong>48.</strong></td>
<td><strong>KENNY CHESNEY</strong></td>
<td>When The Sun Goes Down</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>49.</strong></td>
<td><strong>VARIOUS ARTISTS</strong></td>
<td>Country Strong</td>
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**COUNTDOWN:**

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<td><strong>51.</strong></td>
<td><strong>MAROONS</strong></td>
<td>Songs About Jane</td>
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<td><strong>52.</strong></td>
<td><strong>CROSSFADE</strong></td>
<td>Crocodile</td>
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<td><strong>53.</strong></td>
<td><strong>JUNI ROSES</strong></td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
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<td><strong>54.</strong></td>
<td><strong>KENNY CHESNEY</strong></td>
<td>Be As You Are. Songs From An Old Blue Chair</td>
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<td><strong>55.</strong></td>
<td><strong>JOHN PRINE</strong></td>
<td>Fair &amp; Square</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>56.</strong></td>
<td><strong>TIM McGRAW</strong></td>
<td>How To Dismantle An Atomic Bomb</td>
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<td><strong>57.</strong></td>
<td><strong>SHANIA TWAIN</strong></td>
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<td><strong>JENNIFER LOPEZ</strong></td>
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<td><strong>OMARION</strong></td>
<td>Ghetto Kid</td>
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**THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX**

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**SALES DATA COMPILATION BY**

**Nelson SoundScan**

**WEB Site:** www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

**CHARTS LEGEND ON PAGE 64**

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

**Data for week of May 14, 2005**

**WWW.americanradiohistory.com**
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**Modern Rock**

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**Hit Predictor**

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**Off the Charts**

- **Modern Rock**
  - B.O.S.S.
  - The Backyard Band

- **Adult Contemporary**
  - Californication
  - Smells Like Teen Spirit

- **Adult Top 40**
  - Jack Johnson
  - Coldplay
  - Kelly Clarkson

- **Pop**
  - MatchMaker
  - A Thousand Miles

**Additional Information**

- Billboard Top 40
- Adult Top 40
- Modern Rock
- Hit Predictor

For complete chart data, visit: www.billboard.com
### HOT R&B/HIP-HOP PLAYAIR

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<td>Gotta Go So</td>
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<td>The Corner</td>
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<td>Everyday You Go Away</td>
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<td>1/1/2006</td>
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<td>Just For You</td>
<td>Lea</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>1/1/2006</td>
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<td>Can I Be With You</td>
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<td>It's Like That</td>
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<td>We Got That</td>
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<td>BUDDY JEWEL</td>
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<td>Twice The Speed Of Life</td>
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<td>When The Sun Goes Down</td>
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<td>My Kind Of Livin'</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLAINE LARSEN</td>
<td>Off To Join The World</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSH GRACIN</td>
<td>Josh Gracin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEANN RIMES</td>
<td>This Woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALISON KRAUSS</td>
<td>Lonny Runs Both Ways</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIOGENES ROYAL</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Dwight Yoakam</td>
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<tr>
<td>WILLIE NELSON</td>
<td>Songs</td>
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<tr>
<td>REBA McENTIRE</td>
<td>Room To Breathe</td>
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<td>DIERKS BENTLEY</td>
<td>Dierks Bentley</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL VASSAR</td>
<td>Shaken Not Stirred</td>
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<tr>
<td>TERRI CLARK</td>
<td>Greatest Hits 1994-2004</td>
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<td>ALAN JACKSON</td>
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<td>ANDY GRIFFS</td>
<td>Straight Talk</td>
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<td>SHOOTER JENNINGS &amp; THE DIRT ROAD DRIVERS</td>
<td>Put The O Back In Country</td>
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<tr>
<td>RANDY TRAVIS</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Randy Travis</td>
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<tr>
<td>BILLYinner STROPE</td>
<td>Nashville Star 2005 Finale</td>
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**TOP BLUEGRASS ALBUMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALISON KRAUSS</td>
<td>Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHONDA VINCENT &amp; THE RAGE</td>
<td>Back On The Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW</td>
<td>Songs Of The Southern Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE CHAPMANS</td>
<td>Simple Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICKY SKAGGS &amp; KENTUCKY THUNDER</td>
<td>Brand New Strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUNDDRIVE</td>
<td>The Appalachians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Brand New Strings</td>
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<tr>
<td>NICKY SKAGGS &amp; KENTUCKY THUNDER</td>
<td>Brand New Strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BILL GIVENS</td>
<td>Best Of Bluegrass Gospel</td>
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<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Brand New Strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BILL GIVENS</td>
<td>Best Of Bluegrass Gospel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BILLY MONROE &amp; HIS BLUE GRASS BOYS</td>
<td>The Definitive Collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHARLIE DANIELS</td>
<td>A Bluegrass Collection: Songs From The Longleaf Pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOYLE LAWSON &amp; QUICKSILVER</td>
<td>You Gotta Dig A Little Deeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEVE IVEY</td>
<td>Best Of Bluegrass Gospel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRAZY GRASS</td>
<td>The Grassials</td>
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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

Buddy Jewell, first-season winner of USA Network’s “Nashville Star,” places his sophomore set at No. 1 on Top Country Albums. It also cracks the top 30 on Hot Country Songs. "If She Were Any Other Woman" steps 35-34 with 47.7 million audience impressions.

Higher on the albums list is the third No. 1 album for Jo Dee Messina, who also moves to No. 7 on Top Country Songs. The chart has 99,000 copies for "Delicious Surprise" marks her biggest Nielsen SoundScan week ever.

—Wade Jennings
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Week No.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help Somebody</td>
<td>Van Zant</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's A Heartache</td>
<td>Trick Pony</td>
<td>Universal South</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>If She Were Any Other Woman</td>
<td>Buddy Jewell</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probably Wouldn't Be This Way</td>
<td>LeAnn Rimes</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somebody's Hero</td>
<td>Jamie O'Neal</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watin' On The Wonderful Woman</td>
<td>Aaron Lines</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia Pain</td>
<td>Trisha Yearwood</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I See Me</td>
<td>Travis Tritt</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Something Like A Broken Heart</td>
<td>Hanna McGee</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stay With Me (Brass Bed)</td>
<td>James Tisdale</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hickory Bend</td>
<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>Broken Bow</td>
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<td>Bring Me Down</td>
<td>Miranda Lambert</td>
<td>Universal South</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>4TH Of July</td>
<td>Shooter Jennings</td>
<td>Universal South</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hillbillies</td>
<td>Hot Apple Pie</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Real Fine Place To Start</td>
<td>Sara Evans</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He Oughta Know That By Now</td>
<td>Lee Ann Womack</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Good Life</td>
<td>Travis Tritt</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy's Got Her Beer Goggles On</td>
<td>Cross Canadian Ragweed</td>
<td>Universal South</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Break Things</td>
<td>Miranda Lambert</td>
<td>Universal South</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dream Big</td>
<td>Ryan Shupe &amp; The Rubber Band</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Name</td>
<td>George Canyon</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No One'll Ever Love Me</td>
<td>Rebecca Lynn Howard</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonight's Not The Night</td>
<td>Ranny Rogers Band</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Go Home</td>
<td>Steve Holy</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Hard Head To Keep</td>
<td>Mark Crighton</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>That Summer</td>
<td>Blue County</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HOT COUNTRY SONGS

**Title** | **Artist** | **Label** | **Peak Position**
---|---|---|---
"Help Somebody" | Van Zant | Columbia | 50
"It's A Heartache" | Trick Pony | Universal South | 32
"If She Were Any Other Woman" | Buddy Jewell | Columbia | 14
"Probably Wouldn't Be This Way" | LeAnn Rimes | Columbia | 7
"Somebody's Hero" | Jamie O'Neal | Capitol | 35
"Watin' On The Wonderful Woman" | Aaron Lines | Columbia | 16
"Georgia Pain" | Trisha Yearwood | Columbia | 31
"I See Me" | Travis Tritt | Columbia | 37
"Something Like A Broken Heart" | Hanna McGee | MCA | 18
"Stay With Me (Brass Bed)" | James Tisdale | Capitol | 16
"Hickory Bend" | Jason Aldean | Broken Bow | 8
"Bring Me Down" | Miranda Lambert | Universal South | 44
"4TH Of July" | Shooter Jennings | Universal South | 42
"Hillbillies" | Hot Apple Pie | Columbia | 40
"Skin" | Rascal Flatts | MCA | 27
"A Real Fine Place To Start" | Sara Evans | MCA | 41
"He Oughta Know That By Now" | Lee Ann Womack | MCA | 46
"The Good Life" | Travis Tritt | Columbia | 33
"Billy's Got Her Beer Goggles On" | Cross Canadian Ragweed | Universal South | 45
"I Break Things" | Miranda Lambert | Universal South | 44
"Dream Big" | Ryan Shupe & The Rubber Band | Columbia | 34
"My Name" | George Canyon | Columbia | 44
"No One'll Ever Love Me" | Rebecca Lynn Howard | MCA | 44
"Tonight's Not The Night" | Ranny Rogers Band | Columbia | 43
"Go Home" | Steve Holy | Columbia | 35
"A Hard Head To Keep" | Mark Crighton | Columbia | 36
"That Summer" | Blue County | Columbia | 37

**Country Music Update**


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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

With Gretchen Wilson hot on her tail, Jo Dee Messina celebrates her first No. 1 in three years as "My Give a Damned's Busted" gains 2.1 million audience impressions and lifts 5. The chart topper also holds her third spot on Top Country Albums. (Wilson's "Homegrown" surges 6-3, up 1.4 million.)

This is the first time in four years that solo females hold the top two slots on Hot Country Songs, and Messina is the first to lead the chart since Sara Evans regained a week in October 2001, with "Suds in the Bucket." The last time two women led, Messina's "Burn," at No. 2, trailed Jamie O'Neal's "There Is No Arizona" in the Feb. 17, 2001, issue.

Messina's most recent No. 1 on this chart was "Bring On the Rain" (with Tim McGraw) in March 2002. It has been almost a dozen years since two singles simultaneously leap four rungs to reach the top two. Garth Brooks "American Honky-Tonk Bar Association" and Martina McBride's "My Baby Loves Me" made 5-6 and 6-5 jumps, respectively, in December 1993.

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**American Radio History**

Visit: [www.americanradiohistory.com](http://www.americanradiohistory.com) for more information.

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**HITPREDICTOR**

See chart legend for rates and explanations. Yellow indicates record-breaking title. *Updated weekly.*

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**Country Music Update**

### Latin Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Eso&quot;</td>
<td>Luis Fonsi &amp; Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>Latin Pop Records</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Despacito&quot;</td>
<td>Luis Fonsi &amp; Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>Latin Pop Records</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Obelo&quot;</td>
<td>Akon</td>
<td>Dr. Dre &amp; Zacarias</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Alguien&quot;</td>
<td>Arely Gómez</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Amor de Vida&quot;</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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</table>

### Latin Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Lo Que Nos Faltaba&quot;</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Siempre En Mi Corazon&quot;</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;De Personas&quot;</td>
<td>Anuel AA</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Corazón Infinito&quot;</td>
<td>Maluma</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Más&quot;</td>
<td>Nicky Jam</td>
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### Tropical Airplay

<table>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;La Cinta&quot;</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Estoy Tu&quot;</td>
<td>Anuel AA</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Noche&quot;</td>
<td>De La Ghetto</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Viva Mami&quot;</td>
<td>Nicky Jam</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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<td>&quot;Qué Pasa&quot;</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
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### Tropical Albums

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<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Amor de los Dioses&quot;</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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<td>&quot;El Callejón&quot;</td>
<td>De La Ghetto</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Dioses&quot;</td>
<td>Nicky Jam</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Sueño&quot;</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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<td>&quot;La Vida&quot;</td>
<td>Anuel AA</td>
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### Top Electronic Albums

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<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Blow Up&quot;</td>
<td>Tiësto ft. Hardwell</td>
<td>Ultra Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Higher&quot;</td>
<td>Dua Lipa</td>
<td>Warner Bros. Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Strobe&quot;</td>
<td>Calvin Harris</td>
<td>Columbia Records</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Hard&quot;</td>
<td>Zedd &amp; Lil Dicky</td>
<td>Republic Records</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood&quot;</td>
<td>H.E.R.</td>
<td>RCA Records</td>
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### Regional Mexican Airplay

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;La Cumbia de Mi Vida&quot;</td>
<td>Anahy Gonzalez &amp; Rrise</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Corazón&quot;</td>
<td>Laura Pausini</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;El Amor&quot;</td>
<td>David Bisbal</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;El Corazón&quot;</td>
<td>Laura Pausini</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;La Cumbia de Mi Vida&quot;</td>
<td>Anahy Gonzalez &amp; Rrise</td>
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### Regional Mexican Albums

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<th>Title</th>
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<th>Label</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Amor Latino&quot;</td>
<td>Raul Di Blasio</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Corazón&quot;</td>
<td>Laura Pausini</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Amor&quot;</td>
<td>David Bisbal</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;La Cumbia de Mi Vida&quot;</td>
<td>Anahy Gonzalez &amp; Rrise</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;El Corazón&quot;</td>
<td>Laura Pausini</td>
<td>Sony Music Latin</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### HITS OF THE WORLD

#### JAPAN

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **LEA SMY**
- **ANOKU**
- **MICHIGAME**

**SINGLES**
- **GEFF MIU JIE ANGT**
- **LEFE MOCR FLAVOUR**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **KENT TIE DAN HE**

#### UNITED KINGDOM

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### FRANCE

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### GERMANY

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### CANADA

**ALBUMS**
- **IL DIVO**
- **LENNERT WYSS**
- **THE KILLERS**
- **ANOKU**
- **MICHIGAME**

**SINGLES**
- **GEFF MIU JIE ANGT**
- **LEFE MOCR FLAVOUR**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **KENT TIE DAN HE**

#### ITALY

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### SPAIN

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### AUSTRALIA

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### THE NETHERLANDS

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### SWITZERLAND

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### DENMARK

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### FLANDERS

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### NEW ZEALAND

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

#### POLAND

**ALBUMS**
- **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**
- **SUZUKI MEIRU**
- **THERESA SOYAKA**
- **TRIPLE OH THREE SPRING STEEN UNIVERSE**
- **THE KILLERS**

**SINGLES**
- **CANDY SHOP**
- **SWITCH**
- **LEKKER DING**
- **1 CENT INTERSCOPE**
- **MICHIGAME**

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**Editors' Note:** This chart reflects the hits of the world as of May 14, 2005, as published in Billboard. For complete chart data, visit [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz). **Data for week of May 14, 2005 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 64**
### EUROCHARTS

#### SINGLE SALES

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Heartbreaker</td>
<td>Interscope Records</td>
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<td>Blinding Lights</td>
<td>XO / Republic Records</td>
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<td>Circles</td>
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<td>Don't Start Now</td>
<td>Warner Bros. Records</td>
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#### ALBUMS

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<td>After Hours</td>
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<td>Post Malone</td>
<td>Hollywood's Bleeding</td>
<td>Republic Records</td>
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<td>Future Nostalgia</td>
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<td>After Hours</td>
<td>XO / Republic Records</td>
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#### RADIO AIRPLAY

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<td>LoveGame</td>
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<td>London</td>
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<td>Blinding Lights</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>London</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Dua Lipa</td>
<td>Don't Start Now</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>London</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Post Malone</td>
<td>Circles</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Save Your Tears (remix)</td>
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### EUROPEAN COUNTRY AIRPLAY RANKINGS

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<td>15</td>
<td>Dua Lipa</td>
<td>Don't Start Now</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>The Weeknd</td>
<td>Save Your Tears (remix)</td>
<td>France</td>
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**Data for week of May 14, 2005**

Go to [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz) for complete chart data.
Music Video Sales Charts

The Billboard Music Video Sales Charts are based on national retail sales of music videos. The charts are published by Nielsen SoundScan. The charts are created by tracking the sales of music videos across the U.S. and are based on the strength of available music. For a complete list of songs with the greatest sales gains, see the Billboard 100.

Radio Airplay Singles Charts

The Billboard Radio Airplay Singles Charts are based on Nielsen Broadcast Data System airplay data, which is compiled by cross-referencing exact times of airplay with Arbitron listener data. The criteria for inclusion on the chart are based on the amount of airplay received and the number of stations that play the song. The charts are updated weekly and reflect the songs that have been on the charts for more than 26 weeks and rank below No. 20 in the Modern Rock charts.

Singles Sales Charts

The Billboard Singles Sales Charts are based on the sale of music videos and the sale of music downloads. The charts are created by tracking the sales of music videos across the U.S. and are based on the strength of available music. The charts are updated weekly and reflect the songs that have been on the charts for more than 30 weeks and rank below No. 30. The charts are updated weekly and reflect the songs that have been on the charts for more than 30 weeks and rank below No. 30.

Recurrent Rules

Records are selected 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 No. 50. Records are removed from the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts for more than 20 weeks and rank below No. 50. Records are removed from the Pop 100 and Pop Songs charts simultaneously if they have been on the Pop 100 for more than 30 weeks and rank below No. 50. Records are removed from the Hot Country Songs & Tracks and Pop Songs charts if they have been on the chart for more than 30 weeks and rank below No. 50. Records are removed from the Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Adult R&B, and Hot Dance Club Airplay charts if they have been on the chart for more than 26 weeks and rank below No. 15 (for Modern Rock).
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<th>ARTIST</th>
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<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>(22.98)</td>
<td>JULIETTE LEWIS</td>
<td>JULIETTE LEWIS</td>
<td>THE INCREDIBLES</td>
<td>DREAMWORKS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPANKISH</td>
<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>(27.98)</td>
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<td>ANDREW FELDMAN</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>(19.98)</td>
<td>LINDSAY LOHAN</td>
<td>LINDSAY LOHAN</td>
<td>THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTRA (WIDESCREEN)</td>
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<td>(19.98)</td>
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<td>TILDA SWINTON</td>
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<td>TITANIC</td>
<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>(27.98)</td>
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<td>KATE WINSLET</td>
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<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
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<td>FINDING NEVERLAND (WIDESCREEN)</td>
<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>(24.98)</td>
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<td>RICHARD GERE</td>
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<td>JENNIFER GARNER</td>
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<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>(27.98)</td>
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<td>CARY ELWES</td>
<td>PRINCESS BRIDE</td>
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<td>JON HEDER</td>
<td>NAPOLEON DYNAMITE</td>
<td>20TH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SALES DATA COMPILED BY**

**LAUNCH PAD MAY 14, 2006**

**TOP DVD SALES**

1. **MEET THE FockERS (WIDESCREEN)**
   - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, Burt Reynolds, Teri Polo, Grace Potter

2. **MEET THE FockERS (WIDESCREEN)**
   - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, Burt Reynolds, Teri Polo, Grace Potter

3. **HORSE OF FLYING DAGGERS**
   - Principal Performers: Zhang Ziyi, Jiang Wen, and a cast of Chinese actors

4. **THE INCREDIBLES (WIDESCREEN)**
   - Principal Performers: Helen Mirren, Mike Judge, and Tim Allen

5. **SIDWAYS (WIDESCREEN)**
   - Principal Performers: Thomas Haden Church, Paul Giamatti, and a cast of actors

6. **HOTEL RWANDA**
   - Principal Performers: Don Cheadle, Halle Berry, and a cast of African actors

7. **MEET THE PARENTS (BONUS EDITION) (WIDESCREEN)**
   - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, and a cast of actors

8. **MEET THE PARENTS (BONUS EDITION)**
   - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, and a cast of actors

9. **THE INCREDIBLES (WIDESCREEN)**
   - Principal Performers: Helen Mirren, Mike Judge, and Tim Allen

10. **MEET THE PARENTS (BONUS EDITION)**
    - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, and a cast of actors

11. **MEET THE PARENTS (BONUS EDITION)**
    - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, and a cast of actors

12. **SPANKISH**
    - Principal Performers: Adam Sandler, Ted Levine, and a cast of actors

13. **TITANIC**
    - Principal Performers: Leo DiCaprio, Kate Winslet, and a cast of actors

14. **FINDING NEVERLAND (WIDESCREEN)**
    - Principal Performers: Richard Gere, Kiefer Sutherland, and a cast of actors

15. **X/Y UNCENSORED UNRATED DIRECTOR’S CUT**
    - Principal Performers: Jennifer Garner, Lauren Bacal, and a cast of actors

16. **PRINCESS BRIDE**
    - Principal Performers: Cary Elwes, Robin Wright, and a cast of actors

17. **NAPOLEON DYNAMITE**
    - Principal Performers: Jon Heder, Adam Scott, and a cast of actors

**SALES DATA COMPILED BY**

**TOP VHS SALES**

1. **MEET THE FockERS (WIDESCREEN)**
   - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, Burt Reynolds, Teri Polo, Grace Potter

2. **DOMA THE EXPLORER BIG SISTER DONA (special edition)**
   - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

3. **THE SPIDER GAMES (moving picture)**
   - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

4. **HOTEL RWANDA**
   - Principal Performers: Don Cheadle, Halle Berry, and a cast of African actors

5. **WONG"S PRINCESS DIORAMA CELEBRATION AT COMICON**
   - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

6. **BABBY FAIRYTOPIA**
   - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

7. **SHARK TALE**
   - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

8. **BARNEY LETS GO TO THE FARM**
   - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

9. **BAMBI (SPECIAL EDITION)**
   - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

10. **FAT ALBERT**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

11. **MEET THE FockERS**
    - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, Burt Reynolds, Teri Polo, Grace Potter

12. **MAX & MARY: SPARKLE FOR MAX & MARY (orlando J. scott)**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

13. **DOMA THE EXPLORER LOST TDS (orlando j. scott)**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

14. **A LOHMA SCOOBY DOO DACH SHORT (8 MINS. 46 SECS.)**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

15. **MULAN 2**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

16. **DOMA THE EXPLORER CITY OF THE LOST TOYS (orlando j. scott)**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

17. **DO YOU KNOW THE PINEAPPLE?**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

18. **THOMAS THE TRAIN, ENGINE & FRIENDS (dvd)**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

19. **BABY EINSTEIN: BABY MACDONALD**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

20. **BLUES CLUES & BLUES ROOM (7 MINS. 40 SECS.)**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

22. **BABY MONET: DECORATING THE SEASONS**
    - Principal Performers: Voices of children and adults

23. **MEET THE FockERS (WIDESCREEN)**
    - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, Burt Reynolds, Teri Polo, Grace Potter

24. **MEET THE PARENTS (BONUS EDITION)**
    - Principal Performers: Ben Stiller, Robert De Niro, and a cast of actors

25. **THE INCREDIBLES (WIDESCREEN)**
    - Principal Performers: Helen Mirren, Mike Judge, and Tim Allen

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For chart reprints call 646-654-4633

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
# SINGLES & TRACKS

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**May 14, 2005**

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist(s)</th>
<th>Label(s)</th>
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<td>BMG Rights/EMI Blackwood</td>
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<td>ALMOST RUNNIN'</td>
<td>Matt Goss</td>
<td>ASCAP/Barclay</td>
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<td>parachute</td>
<td>ASCAP/Number One</td>
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<td>DON'T JUDGE ME</td>
<td>The Waste</td>
<td>ASCAP/Number One</td>
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**Chart Codes:**
- CS (Country Songs)
- H100 (Hot 100 Songs)
- LT (Hot Latin Songs)
- POP (Pop 100 Songs)
- RBH (Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs)

**Additional Notes:**
- Chart positions may vary based on different charts and sources.
- For complete chart data, visit [www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com).
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4) Gaming product placement
5) Internet
6) Music
7) Print
8) Sports
9) TV product placement
10) Wireless promotion
11) Integrated campaign (includes three or more elements from categories 1-10 and 12)
12) Other

Finalists will be notified on or about May 31. A winner per category and one Grand Prize winner will be honored at Promax/BDA in New York on June 23.

For entry forms, rules and a description of contest categories, visit www.adweek.com/buzz or contact jrudolf@adweek.com with questions.
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Percy Heath Dies At 81

Percy Heath, whose gentle, swinging bass underpinned the Modern Jazz Quartet for more than 40 years, died April 28 of bone cancer in Southampton, N.Y. He was 81.

Heath was an original member of the group known around the world as the MJQ, along with pianist John Lewis, vibrapharist Milt Jackson and drummer Kenny Clarke. All were early disciples of the bebop developed by Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk and others in the 1940s.

Lewis, the group's music director, forged the unit to explore a stately, less frantic version of bop, but kept the reharmonizations and new rhythmic patterns. The MJQ, without a horn player, played quieter as well, and created compositions that utilized pedal point and counterpoint borrowed from classical music as well as the shadings of blues.

The MJQ's sound fit the times, and during the late '50s and early '60s its recordings on Prestige and Atlantic were commercially successful. The group later recorded for Antilles, Columbia, Concord and Strata East.

Heath's two brothers also pursued jazz careers. When the MJQ went on the first of several hiatuses in the 1970s, he and his brothers Albert, a drummer, and Jimmy, a tenor saxophonist, formed the Heath Brothers, a more freewheeling group whose recordings and concerts are well-received.

Heath returned to the MJQ when it regrouped in 1980 and stayed in the bass chair until 1994, when the group's longtime second drummer Connie Kay passed away. Soon afterward, the surviving members decided to shut down the act for good. Jackson died in 1999, and Lewis in 2001.

Before his music career blossomed, Heath trained as a pilot in the last years of World War II. He became a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, the elite African-American unit.

—Bill Holland

BIRTHS

BOY: William James, to Lara Anne and James Cerreta, April 6 in Los Angeles. Father is director of A&R for Chrysalis Music Publishing.

BOY: Lucas Antonio, to Jacqueline and Lance Sanchez, April 24 in Rockland County, N.Y. Father is director of national accounts and field marketing for TVT Records.

DEATHS

Robert Farnon, 87, of an apparent heart attack, April 23 in Britain's Channel Islands. The film, pop and jazz composer/arranger scored more than 40 movies and worked with such luminaries as Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and Lena Horne. In addition to several Ivor Novello Awards from the British music industry, Farnon won a Grammy Award in 1995 for best instrumental arrangement for the song "Lamento" on jazz trombonist J.J. Johnson's album "Tangence." He also nabbed Grammy nominations in 1976 and 1992. At age 11, Farnon played piano and drums in the Toronto junior Symphony and after a stint arranging for jazz bassist Percy Heath, composed his first symphony at age 21. He then focused on films and arranging, and was quoted as saying he didn’t own a gown and that he did not have a single film scoring project since work began in 1995 for the film "Tango." He was later recorded by the Champs. After the release "Out to Lunch" on New York's Norton Records in 1986, Atkins toured extensively. He is survived by two siblings.

Salvador "Tuto" Camarata, 91, after a brief illness, April 13 in Burbank, Calif. Camarata worked with the likes of Bing Crosby, Billie Holiday and Annette Funicello during a long career as a composer/arranger and trumpeter. After years of big band work in the 1950s for the Jimmy Dorsey Band, he became the music conductor for several TV series, including "The Vic Damone Show." Camarata co-founded London Records, whose roster included the Rolling Stones, then co-founded Capitol Records in the 1960s, where Funicello and Hayley Mills recorded. He is credited with helping develop the vocal style that made Funicello a '60s pop star. In 1960 he opened Los Angeles' Sunset Studios, which hosted such acts as Van Halen, the Rolling Stones and Miles Davis.

Camarata is survived by his son, a granddaughter and a brother.
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Latin Acts Bring Miami Heat

Stars, trend-setters and the music industry's top movers and shakers were on hand at the 2005 Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards presented by Heineken at the Hotel InterContinental in Miami. The 16th annual confab ended on a stellar note with the televised awards show on the Telemundo network, which garnered its highest ratings yet.

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TOP
The CTV prelaunch party featured performances by Didier, Sacha Naidoo, Funkybasics and GO. Pictured at the party are CTV's Gabriel Ramirez, flanked by hosts Carolina and Jenny.

MIDDLE
Title sponsor Heineken hosted the Heineken Happy Hour with Billboard Latino hosts, from left, Deborah Magdalena, Angie del Rosai and Grain Barrera.

BOTTOM
Pictured at the "Goin' Mobile" party are, from left, Consejo's Mark Frierson, Billboard's della Cobe, EMI Music Publishing Latin America's James Conao, Sony/ATV Music Publishing Latin America's Jorge Mejia, Liverpool Universal Recording's John Robertson and Wilson Entertainment's Luis Sancia.
EMI recording artist JD Natasha performs at the welcome reception, sponsored by MTV España.

Luny, left, and producer of the late Rudy Pérez.

Roselyn Sanchez, spokeswoman for Absolut Apeach, enjoys a moment at the Billboard Bash.

Acts participating at the Urban Box Office-sponsored "Urban Warfare" panel were presented with gifts from PrAired, from left, are Hennessy's Alan Solis, Victor Legarza, Caddy Tavares, Pitbull, Griselda Yotey, Ivy Queen, Johnny Lopez of Crooked Stilo, Hector "El Bambino," and Sergio and Francisco Gomez of Akwid.

MSN Music representatives offer samples of download cards in front of the Miami Arena before the Billboard Latin Music Awards.

Billboard's Leila Cobo interviewed film director and music producer Fernando Trueba at the conference.

Panelists strike a pose before the ASCAP-sponsored "Let's Make a Deal" panel. From left: Universal Music Latino's Walter Kolm and John Echevarria, ASCAP's Alexandra Lucidoff, Peermusic's Ramon Arias, Fuerte Group's Jerry Blais and attorney Marc Soliman.

Pop star Chayanne stops for a photo with Billboard co-executive editor Tamara Conniff.

During the Voz Latina conference, Univision Radio's Jack Hobbs, left, hangs out with producer Emilio Estefan Jr.

Billboard's Leila Cobo interviewed film director and music producer Fernando Trueba at the conference.
STONES FOR THE ROAD

Details of an upcoming Rolling Stones tour and an album of new material for Virgin are expected to be announced May 10 in New York. Track hears that the Stones will perform a handful of songs at the Upper West Side press conference, a portion of which may be broadcast live.

The Stones recorded songs for the new album in Paris with producer Don Was (billboard.com, Dec. 9, 2004) and additional songs this spring in New York. The set, due this summer, is the group's first studio album in eight years. Michael Cohl will again produce the Stones tour worldwide, and the band is expected to play theaters, arenas and stadiums. The last Stones tour (2002-2003) grossed just under $300 million from 116 dates, according to Billboard Boxscore.

—Ray Waddell

MARTIN GOES LUNY

In a further sign of reggaeton's growing reach, Luny Tunes have produced a track for Ricky Martin's upcoming English-language album. The track reportedly features the Black Eyed Peas. The Dominican cousins comprising Luny Tunes are widely considered the most influential producers in reggaeton, having worked with the likes of Don Omar, Tego Calderón and Wisin & Yandel. Latin pop star Chayanne, speaking at the Billboard Latin Music Conference, did not discount the possibility of using reggaeton in an upcoming recording.

—Leila Coba

SKOR BIG WITH VALENTINO


—Gail Mitchell

WORD PICKS UP FERVENT

Track hears that Word Entertainment has purchased the Fervent and Spirit-Led record labels from founder and president Susan Riley. She will continue to head those ventures, and the staff will remain intact.

Though there has been no announcement from the Word/Warner Bros. camp, Track understands that starting June 1, Fervent and Spirit-Led releases will be handled by Word Distribution in the Christian retail market and WEA in the general market. Provident Music Distribution previously handled both labels.

—Deborah Evans Price

ELTON RUNNING WITH SISTERS

Sources tell Track that Scissor Sisters recently got together with Elton John for a songwriting session. Whether John or his efforts with the band make the cut on the Universal act's second album remains to be seen. In the meantime, hardcore Scissor fans are enjoying band member Ana Matronic's guest spot on the new New Order album.

—Keith Caulfield

ROCKIN' THE MOUSE

Van Halen and Disneyland are rumored to be hooking up. To coincide with the Anaheim, Calif., park's 50th anniversary, its Space Mountain ride will reopen in July after years of refurbishment. It will be called Space Mountain by day and Rock It Mountain by night, and sources say the "twilight ride" will have a soundtrack provided by Van Halen.

—Keith Caulfield

POD PLAY AT BMI

BMI will announce Sept. 9 that it is jumping on the podcasting bandwagon. The performing-rights licensing agency is developing a podcast that will feature the unsigned acts it represents—a virtual showcase, if you will. The podcast will be available on the BMI Web site and pushed out to music lovers through its newsletter and e-mail blasts.

—Anthony Bruno

THE LATEST MERGER

Track tried last week to contact Maarten Steinkamp, Sony BMG Music Entertainment president for Continental Europe, for his comments on the company's performance during the first quarter, but he was missing in action. However, the Dutch-born exec had the best excuse of all—he was getting married. Track offers its best wishes to Steinkamp and his wife, Laura.

—Emmanuel Legrand
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For more information about QUALIA 010, visit www.sony.com/QUALIA_immers or call 1.877.QUALIA3 (782.5423).

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