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Female Role Models Offer Less Flesh, More Soul

BY JAGUAR WRIGHT

Twenty years ago (though the women's liberation movement had taken place 20 years before that), we fell upon another women's movement: It was the age of liberated females in the music industry.

Before this time, women were characterized strictly as marketing tools to sell sexuality over femininity and gimmicks over talent.

Every now and then, some incredible woman would come along and completely blow the world away with nothing more than sheer, flawless talent. But those times were few and far between, giving the music industry plenty of time to fill the airwaves, record stores and concert halls with pretty-faced model imitators instead of strong, confident and intelligent role models whom people could not only relate to but also rely on for strength and comfort.

Now, please understand that I'm not trying to take anything away from the pretty women I watched and envied when I was growing up. But they were not my role models.

Aretha Franklin, Janis Joplin, Tina Turner, Patti LaBelle, Gladys Knight, Nina Simone, Etta James, Billie Holiday, Mjllie Jackson, Minnie Riperton, Mavis Staples, Randy Crawford, Pat Benatar, Eartha Kitt... hell, even Grace Jones—these were the women I was drawn to. Women who possessed power, poise, uncommon beauty and brash attitudes.

Were they sexy? Yes. Were they bold? Hell, yes! But more important than all these things: They never disregarded their femininity.

Then came the '80s, a time when women proved we could rock just as hard as men.

Think of such acts as Debbie Harry, Roxanne Shanté, Stevie Nicks, MC Lyte, Go-Go's, the Judds, Madonna, Whitney Houston, the Bangles, Evelyn "Champagne" King, Eddie Brickell, Brenda K. Starr, Heart, Queen Latifah and Melissa Etheridge. From what I remember, they had just as many male fans as they did female ones. I'm not saying their sexuality wasn't part of their appeal—because obviously it was. However, it was their talent that was paramount.

So, what happened after all of the sold-out concerts, blockbuster record sales and magazine covers? We finally proved we were more than just nice to look at, listen to and fantasize about. We became people.

Today we have moved backward, with women in music allowing themselves to be presented as sexual objects again—and in more graphic and demeaning ways than ever.

If they cannot see your beauty with your clothes on, what makes you think they will see it with your clothes off? Whatever happened to leaving something to the imagination? What's up with the "buy one, get one free" mentality? Buy my record—see my ass for free, buy my single—see my breasts for free.

You could be the most successful and talented woman in the world, but the second you take off your clothes, your talent will fade. The purpose of music is to uplift, to give comfort and wisdom. If you want to be a go-go dancer, then be one. If you want to be a singer, then sing.

Don't sacrifice the struggles, challenges and triumphs for flash-in-the-pan success. Human sexuality is so incredible, and females are—hands down—the most beautiful thing God ever created. The lines, curves, shapes and, hell, even the weight of us, are simply gorgeous. Strip everything away and present this magnificent form as art (not trash) is probably the most courageous statement a woman could ever make.

So to belittle one's femininity by turning it into some superficial sales tactic for a product that should be marketed on its own merits is sacrilegious.

What do we do now that they only want our bodies and not our souls? Now that they would rather see us on our knees in music videos than on our feet at live music venues? (Go and check out those ticket sales are down this year for female acts.)

That's a question we will all have to answer sooner rather than later. I just hope we care enough to make the right choices for the next generation of women who rock so they won't have to throw rocks at windows begging for someone to let them into a game they were born to play.

Don't throw back, throw forward.

Please...

Finger/jangler: Jaguar Wright's new album, "Divorcing Neo 2 Marry Soul," is available through Aragon Records.
Payola Probe Fallout Begins

NEW YORK—New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer has settled his payola case against Sony BMG. Now, the radio and music industries, which felt they had already cleaned up their act, are left wondering what difference, if any, the settlement will make.

In the short term, Sony BMG’s July 25 payola admission is already making waves. Some Clear Channel PDs say they are now required to attach documentation to any merchandise received from labels, declaring it was not received in connection with providing airplay. And on July 26, Archway Broadcasting fired Blake Larson, music director of its top 40 station WRHT in Greenville, N.C. Spitzer said Larson accepted a $1,365 laptop computer, $590 in airfare and PlayStation 2 equipment from a label, in exchange for airplay of the label’s artists.

Meanwhile, overnight spin programs—in which labels buy commercial airtime to play their music, influencing chart positions—are expected to be curtailed or conducted with greater transparency. At Sony BMG, a source close to the label says, spin programs are over.

Certainly, Sony BMG’s promotion methods—and the people conducting them—are going to change. The day after the settlement, in which Sony BMG agreed to pay $10 million for pay-for-play improprieties, the label fired Epic promotion boss Joel Klaiman and reprimanded four other promotion execs.

The long-term success of Spitzer’s campaign to clean up the promotion business will hinge on his ability to get other labels to settle for similar terms and to create measures for accountability and enforcement. At the press conference announcing the settlement, Spitzer expressed his desire for the Sony BMG settlement terms to

Rubin’s American Signs Deal With Warner Bros.

LOS ANGELES—Rick Rubin will be the first to admit that producing superstars is great, but it is the thrill of discovering a band that makes his heart beat fastest.

And those are the acts he principally signs to his 17-year-old label American Recordings.

“It’s the artists I want to introduce who are for America,” he says. And now, via American’s new five-year deal with Warner Bros., the acts will have a new home.

American arrives at Warner Bros. following a three-year distribution deal with Island Def Jam.

The Warner Bros. pact was finalized a few months ago, but neither party could talk because of the blackout period surrounding Warner Music Group’s initial public offering (billboard.biz, Feb. 14). Rubin and his small staff are already ensconced in ‘Warner Bros.’ offices in Burbank, Calif. Rubin and ‘Warner Bros. Records chair- man Tom Whalley began speaking a year ago as it became clear that Rubin’s deal with Island Def Jam was unraveling.

Following the departure of Island Def Jam CEO Lyor Cohen, who Rubin has known since their days at Def Jam, Rubin says, “It felt like the company was changing away from the music I like to do.”

As Rubin surveyed his options, he liked what he saw at Warner Bros. “Whereas the other labels are being driven by the Dr.

LEGAL BY BRIAN GARRITY

BUSINESS BY MELINDA NEWMAN

At the press conference announcing the settlement with Sony BMG, New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer said he hopes its terms would become an industry standard.

Photo: Stephen Chernin/Getty Images
PAYOLA (cont.)

from >>p5 become an industry standard: “I would hope what you are seeing will be viewed as the threshold that they all meet in due course.”

Label sources say the remaining majors do not offer as compelling a trap of correspondence as the one Spitzer subpoenaed from Sony BMG. But, sources add, the attorney general likely has enough evidence to warrant a mass settlement with the recording industry.

Under the terms of Sony BMG’s settlement, the label will bar employees from giving cash handouts to radio. Other giveaways and promotions, including travel and artist appearances, require written assurances from radio executives that the deals are not trades for airplay.

Indie promoters employed by Sony BMG are barred from distributing any items of value to radio station employees or listeners and cannot be reimbursed for gifts to radio-related parties.

In addition, Sony BMG will discontinue all sponsored airplay to radio monitoring services; stop employees, interns and third parties from voting in call-in shows; create a database of all radio promotion expenditures; and provide annual reports to the Sony BMG board of directors and to Spitzer’s office. The label is screening candidates, subject to the approval of Spitzer’s office, for compliance officer to oversee these efforts.

For the time being, Sony BMG finds itself at a competitive disadvantage, as other labels continue to pursue some of the practices—particularly spin buys—targeted by Spitzer. The attorney general says investigations into the promotion practices of Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group and EMI are ongoing; the three companies have been cooperating with Spitzer’s probe. Executives from all three declined to comment for this story.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, however, executives from at least one of the majors said labels were initially flippant about the settlement. “This teaches us not to use e-mail,” one executive quipped, referring to the dangling, often incredible, e-mail communications that Spitzer displayed at his press conference.

But the executives also acknowledged that in the terms of the settlement, if applied and enforced, would dramatically alter the promotion game—and many are just fine with that. “The labels for years have been asking for someone to take the gun out of their hand, because they keep shooting themselves with it,” one longtime label promotion exec says of questions on promotional practices. “Corruption is possible at any time, at any level, but for the first time it seems like the pieces are in place for reform to take effect.”

Radio broadcasters in particular seem to be in the hot seat with Spitzer.

agency “an arsenal of smoking guns” to ramp up federal enforcement against payola violations.

Adelstein, an outspoken advocate for such heightened enforcement, says he has asked Spitzer for “everything he’s got” so that evidence uncovered in New York’s pay-for-play probe can be evaluated for possible federal violations. Adelstein also notes that an e-mail trail now exists to justify a full-on federal investigation.

The FCC also is examining its sponsorship identification rules and whether broadcast consolidation has enabled payola practices or other anti-competitive behavior. “It took an attorney general’s

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RUBIN (cont.)

from >>p5 Dres and Eminem or pop artists,” he says, “it seemed like Warner Bros. was really rootin’ in rock music, and it tend to sign more rock music than anything else.”

As for why Warner Bros. wanted to be in business with Rubin, Whalley says, “He stands for creativity in a business often accused of being superficial and only about the now, to have someone like Rick, who can draw from the past and the present and is that passionate, is very powerful.”

Whalley and Rubin stress that they started talks before Cohen’s shift from Island Def Jam to the WMG chairmanship.

Already signed to American are Semisonic’s Dan Wilson, rock band (International) Noise Conspiracy, Luna Halo and Slayer. Rubin has worked with Slayer for 20 years—proving he does not part with bands once he introduces them.

An (International) Noise Conspiracy album will come out this year, followed by Wilson’s in 2006. Rubin says he had never heard Semisonic, but discovered Wilson through Sheryl Crow. “It’s a beautiful singer/ songwriter record. It’s like we’re allowed to peek in and see this real thing happening. Not much music does that to me today.”

Whalley says that even though signing decisions are generally made jointly, “he’s Rick Rubin. If he believes in an artist, he’s going to have the ability to sign them.”

Warner Bros. will provide all support services including promotion, marketing and sales.

Rubin co-founded Def Jam with Russell Simmons in the mid-’80s. The label exploded with the Beastie Boys’ 1986 debut, “Licensed to Ill.” The Rubin-produced album has been certified for sales of 9 million copies.

Rubin and Simmons dissolved their partnership in 1988, after which Rubin founded Def American Records. (He dropped the “Def” in 1993.) Its first chart-topper was the Black Crowes’ “Shake Your Money Maker,” which has sold 3.9 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Through the years, Rubin has balanced running American with producing artists as diverse as Johnny Cash, Jay-Z and Nusret Fatih Ali Khan.

Most recently, he has worked with System of a Down, Audioslave, Neil Diamond, Dixie Chicks and Weezer. He is now producing the new Warner Bros. album for the Red Hot Chili Peppers. The Warner deal allows Rubin to continue to produce outside artists.

American has bounced around, stopping at Sony twice, Geffen, Warner Bros. and Island Def Jam, but Rubin says that is because of the vagaries of the music industry, and not any fickleness on his part.

“Usually I go into business with a person and then they’re gone,” he was at Warner Bros. [in 1994] because of Mo Ostin, then Mo was gone. I was at Island Def Jam because of Lyor.”

And while Rubin stresses he signs acts because he “falls in love” with them, he says he does hope for big sales. “It’s about the discovery, but there’s nothing better than commercial success. The best vote of confidence is when people buy records. We aim at doing great art and hope it sells.”

Whalley
First came “Gasolina,” now comes the real explosion for reggaetón star Daddy Yankee. The Puerto Rican artist has finalized a recording deal with Interscope Records, signed an administration agreement with EMi Music Publishing and is readying his first headlining tour.

Yankee’s deal with EMi Music coincides with the release of his phenomenally successful single “La Gasolina” in Europe. The song entered the U.K. singles chart at No. 5 and jumps 23-8 this issue on the Eurocharts Singles Sales chart.

EMi will administer Yankee’s catalog for the world excluding the United States and Puerto Rico, where Yankee will continue to self-administer his work. The deal includes Yankee’s material on a DVD and five previous recordings, among them his breakthrough album, “Barrio Fino.” Released in 2004, it has sold 750,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen Soundscan.

EMi will have first negotiation and matching rights for repertoire on future albums, including Yankee’s upcoming work for Interscope.

“We have established an excellent relationship with Daddy Yankee and his team,” says Nestor Casonu, regional managing director for EMi Music Publishing Latin America. “No additional details were available about the deal, which was negotiated by Yankee’s attorney Erwin Prado with Casonu and EMi Music Publishing U.K. managing director Guy Moot. Moot’s involvement underlines EMi’s interest in the international potential of reggaetón and Yankee.”

No details about Yankee’s Interscope deal were available at press time. His previous albums have been released by his own label, El Canel, through VI Music and Machete Music, which are distributed by Universal Music & Video Distribution.

Yankee (whose real name is Raymond Ayala) kicks off his Who’s Your Daddy tour Aug. 27 at Madison Square Garden in New York, where he will share the bill with palate-stirring star Carlos Vives. For most odds are, Yankee will get top billing, marking the first time a reggaetón artist will headline an arena tour in the United States. With this tour, “we’ll be able to determine if this genre really sells tickets,” says Henry Cardenas, president of Cardenas Marketing Network.

UMG’s Universal Music Group is close to finalizing a deal for an ownership stake in emerging wireless operator Amp’d Mobile, sources close to the situation said.

The exact percentage of ownership is not known, but it is not expected to represent a controlling interest. Additionally, sources says it is not an exclusive deal, freeing Amp’d to accept additional funding from other content providers.

Official UMG and Amp’d would not comment until the deal is finalized.

Amp’d is what is known as a mobile virtual network operator, or MVNO. Instead of building its own wireless data network, Amp’d pays Verizon for use of airborne and focuses its corporate efforts on branding and programming.

Amp’d will offer downloadable music, video, games and streaming services, all of which are expected to be available before Christmas.

The deal will make UMG the first content provider to invest in the mobile entertainment startup. Sources says UMG felt a strategic investment has more potential than a traditional content partnership.

Amp’d has scored content deals with multiple providers in the last two months: with Modemati for ringtones, THQ and Logitech for games and Airborne Entertainment for video. On July 25, the company unveiled a customized phone developed in partnership with manufacturer Kyocera Wire.

UMG Amp’d To Invest In Mobile Co.
Gap Into The Fall
Retailer Rolls Out Musical Lineup For Upcoming Ads

MARTIN WHITMIRE

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Gap is poised to swing its hitters around in Gap jeans once again — this time as part of the brand's fall "Favorite" campaign. 

This fall will join the lineup of artists including fellow Gap vet Alanis Morissette, John Legend, Jason Mraz, Destiny's Child's Michelle Williams, Keith Urban and Incubus' Brandon Boyd — who will appear in TV spots this fall performing their favorite songs from other artists while wearing their favorite Gap jeans.

The 30-second spots feature, for example, Stonerendering the Beach Boys' "God Only Knows" (while wearing her Original Ultra Low Rise Flares) and Mraz (in his Straight Fit) singing Bob Marley's "One Love.

One thing the commercials will not contain is an ID of the artist. For Gap, driving curious viewers to the company's Web site is part of the plan.

"We're taking a stance on great artists that you may recongize right off the bat," Gap creative VP of marketing Jeff Lores says, "to have to discover on your own and really glad you did.

This could serve the artists just as well as having their names mentioned in the commercial. Gap's target audience of 18- to 14-year-olds is savvy enough to head to the company's Web site for identification.

Tim Bass, fashion consultant at New York-based consulting firm Doneger Group, says that Gap's marketing reach can be icon-making.

"Gap is known worldwide and this is an ad they'll be running heavily, so just getting the musicians' images in front of mass America is key.

People look out for these ads, and they really watch to see who is in it and what the music is." 

PROVEN FORMULA

There is a history of "mystery" artists benefiting from exposure in commercials. The 2003 Volkswagen commercial featuring Nick Drake's "Pink Moon" sent U.S. sales of his 1972 album of the same name skyrocketing from 6,000 copies in 1999 to 74,000 copies in 2000, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Similarly, Mitsubishi's use of an unidentified Dirty Vegas track, "Days Go By," in 2002 in commercials for the Eclipse paved the way for the U.K. electronic trio's successful debut. The self-titled album entered The Billboard 200 at No. 7 with 64,000 copies that year; the group's 2004 follow-up, without a licensed single, started with just 2,000 copies.

Gap commercials have also made an impact. Stone appeared in the company's white jeans campaign in April, and her 2004 set, "Mind Body & Soul," saw an increase in sales of about 15% for a month afterward, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Stone's manager Marty Maiden says the exposure led to an appearance on "The Oprah Winfrey Show," which immediately launched her album from No. 76 to No. 18 on The Billboard 200.

"That campaign really opened a lot of doors for us," Maiden says. "Until that time she was known as a credible artist with a following, and what it did was put her more in the public consciousness."

Leny Kravitz saw a 31% sales increase for his 2004 album, "Baptism" (Virgin), in the weeks following his stint performing the song "Lady" alongside Sarah Jessica Parker in last year's Gap ads.

The company's fall campaign will also have a print component. Previous Gap ad participant Liz Phair will be featured — and identified — in the print ads, which will run through September in magazines like Vanity Fair, Vogue and In Style.

The campaign also includes a partnership with iTunes that kicks off Aug. 8. During the Find Your Favorite Fit event, customers who try on a pair of jeans at any Gap location in North America will receive a free iTunes download of their choice until Aug. 31.

Finally, all of Gap's nearly 1,400 stores will give away an eight-track CD containing the full version of each artist's performance plus behind-the-scenes footage, with any $60 purchase Sept. 1-17. The CD includes Michelle Branch's version of David Bowie's "Life on Mars," though she does not appear in the TV or print ads.

The CD is an important component of the campaign. Mraz's manager Bill Silva says. "We loved that all those Gap consumers can get exposed to jason through the exclusive CD," he says. "It's just another way to expand the potential audience."
ONE DESIGN, MANY CLAIMS: CAN THEY COEXIST?

On U2's Vertigo tour, Bono has brought worldwide attention to a symbol for peace and harmony, which adorns the singer's headband and appears in lights during a particularly intense part of the show. But the symbol has also prompted a trademark infringement battle.

The graphic creation used by the band—reportedly first seen by Bono as graffiti—forms the word "Coexist," with an Islamic crescent moon, Jewish star and Christian cross. It is also much like the logo a group of twentysomething entrepreneurs previously registered as a federal trademark for a clothing line.

Coexist LLP in Fishers, Ind., reportedly founded by four Indiana University graduates, filed a trademark-infringement lawsuit in May in the federal District Court in Indianapolis against Web site operators cafepress.com, tees.com and atheists-online.com, which were offering T-shirts with similar logos. The suit also includes as a defendant Thierry Mirambeau who is attempting to register his similar French trademark in the United States.

Although not a party to any lawsuit, the company also approached U2 about the registered trademark.

Yet as the founders of Coexist were basking in major media attention over their fashion sense and business savvy for apparently creating a design that Bono and others were donning, those with a higher purpose than clothing sales entered the fray in July.

The Museum of the Seam in Jerusalem issued a statement saying that Polish artist Piotr Mlodozeniec created the graphic design in 2000. Museum director Raphie Etgar says that the work is part of the international Coexistence traveling art exhibition, promoting tolerance and peace. The design has appeared on the museum's Web site, on T-shirts and on giant displays in major cities throughout the world—including the United States.

Coexist co-founder Joe Sadler was quoted in a June article published by Intake Weekly as saying that his company's logo was adapted from a similar design that he and co-founder Chris Tierney had seen on the Internet. "They reworked it a bit for their T-shirts, then formed their company in 2003. According to records in the U.S. Trademark Office, the design differs only in their sizes and the fonts used. The laws in most countries protect rights in trademarks, which are a form of intellectual property. The rights cover words and logos that are used in commerce to identify the source of goods and to distinguish them from the goods of others. Anyone who uses a "substantially similar" word or logo for similar goods can be liable for infringement.

In the United States, the first person to actually use a "mark"—across state lines or internationally owns trademark rights. However, someone else who files for federal registration of the mark after using it as well will hold exclusive U.S. rights to the mark throughout this country, except for those states or regions where another party used it first.

In effect, a federal registration freezes the rights of any prior users of the same or substantially similar mark to those geographic areas where they used it first. A prior user may, however, challenge the rights of anyone who tries to register the mark.

With the Coexist design, other intellectual-property rights may also come into play. Although copyright law does not protect titles or names, it protects certain designs. In fact, U.S. law protects copyright holders in Poland, where copyright law protects "graphical signs." This could mean that the Indiana company infringed Mlodozeniec's copyright—or possibly any rights held by the museum—by using a substantially similar design.

Muddying the waters even further are the museum's T-shirts bearing the Coexist image. It is unclear whether they were sold in the United States via the museum's Web site or during the exhibit's U.S. tour before the Indiana company began using the design on its T-shirts. Currently, the Indiana company is also attempting to register the word "Coexist" with the U.S. Trademark Office to prevent anyone from using the word, regardless of design, on clothing—including headbands. In the meantime, all the parties appear to be taking things out. Coexist's attorney, Alastair Warr in Indianapolis, says that his clients are waiting for Mlodozeniec to provide documents proving his rights. A spokeswoman for U2 tells Legal Matters that the band's reps are talking with Coexist and Mlodozeniec. Reps for the museum and Mlodozeniec could not be reached for comment.

‘RIZE’ Screening Kicks Off R&B/Hip-Hop Conference

The sixth annual Billboard/American Urban Radio Networks R&B/Hip-Hop Conference kicks off in Atlanta this year with a special screening of the critically acclaimed documentary "RIZE." Billboard is hosting the screening to help celebrate the release of the soundtrack, out on Social Capital/Forster Bros/EMI. Conference attendees are asked to join Billboard at 7 p.m. Aug. 2 at the AMC Buckhead Backlot 6, located at 3340 Peachtree Road.

"RIZE," directed by noted photographer/director David LaChapelle, sheds light on an underground dance movement that began in the early '90s called "krumping" and "clowning." Brothers Tone and Rick Talauega, who produced the film for Lions Gate, introduced LaChapelle to the burgeoning subculture while on the set of a Christina Aguilera video.

Martin Shore, a partner with Social Capital Records, says that the soundtrack captures the energy of krumping and clowning as showcased in the documentary. "The soundtrack is a collection of artists that embody the passion of this movement and what it means."

Jive Records' Jonathan McHugh served as the music supervisor for the CD, which includes tracks from Aguilera, Lauryn Hill, the Blind Boys of Alabama and relative newcomer Fifi Styx, who performs eight of the album's tracks.

"My job was really to facilitate Dave's vision. He really knew the music that he wanted, and I just expedited it," McHugh says.

The soundtrack is also the brainchild of Red Ronin Productions, a group whose partners include the Talauega brothers, composer Jose Cancela, Fifi Styx and the Backstreet Boys' Kevin Richardson. Tone Talauega says the production company came together as a result of the film.

"We realized how much music we were going to need. We knew we needed some hip-hop beats and music that would be substantial for the film," he says. "This was the best way to do it."

The conference runs Aug. 3-5 at the InterContinental Hotel.
Universities Enroll In Music Services

Get 'em while they're young. That appears to be the philosophy behind the recent effort to install digital music services at college campuses nationwide.

Fewer than 100 of the nation's 3,300 colleges and universities offer their students discounted access to authorized digital music services. But that figure is expected to increase in the next six months.

On July 18, the University of California and California State University systems selected four companies to provide digital music services to their combined 33 campuses. Cdigix and Mindawn have signed contracts, while Napster and Sony Connect are finalizing their agreements.

This is the largest systemwide deal to date, covering a total of 600,000 students.

Earlier in the month, Napster formed a partnership with Dell, and it continues to negotiate with other tech companies to bundle its services to schools.

Until recently, universities and digital services providers signed deals on a campus-by-campus basis. The systemwide deal by the California schools is seen as a catalyst for the rapidly developing market. "This sets a trend that other systems will look at closely," Cdigix president Brett Goldberg says. "Now we will really start to see the schools who've been waiting to see if this is just a trend say it's a viable idea."

Cdigix, Napster, Rhapsody, Rokus Networks, and other service providers targeting the university market have reported a sharp increase in requests for information and expect the number of deals to double by early next year.

"There are a number of systemwide states that are requesting proposals or have otherwise expressed a lot of interest," says Avery Kotler, director of business and legal affairs at Napster, which has deals with Cornell University, the University of Miami and the Pennsylvania State University system. "They're geared at signing up a lot of schools at once."

This comes as good news to the music industry, which has long viewed the Internet as a high-speed local area network available at most colleges and universities as a hotbed of piracy. In April, the problem led the Recording Industry Assn. of America to target more than 400 college students at 18 universities with infringement lawsuits and controversy over copyright infringement to 140 college administrators, alerting them to the file-sharing activity on their networks.

"We are concerned, and we want to orient people toward legal alternatives," says David Walker, director of advanced technology of Southern California and Cornell, Vanderbilt and Rutgers universities.

Sony also is developing a subscription version of its Connect service specifically for college campuses. The service, not yet live, was one of those selected by the University of California.

The way music services are offered affects whether students actually use them. When students are asked to pay the cost themselves, usage is low, according to several service providers; when the cost is built into existing student fees, usage is much higher.

At Cornell this year, more than 10 million songs were accessed via Napster on a campus with only about 13,000 students. "You're running into services versus beer issue," the Rhapsody representative says. "We try to work with universities to offer them the opportunity to make a good choice at a rate that's competitive with beer."

"We try to work with universities to offer them the opportunity to make a good choice at a rate that's competitive with beer."

XM + NAPSTER = NEW DOWNLOAD OPTION

XM Satellite Radio and Napster have teamed to unveil a digital music store and subscription service that allows subscribers to manage digital music files from each service in one interface.

Dubbed "XM + Napster," the service works on a new line of MP3 players and XM and Samsung Electronics are developing. The player, plugged into a car stereo station, can access XM programming. It can store up to 50 hours XM feeds for later listening.

Users can identify the songs they wish to keep from this time-shifted stream, and delete the ones they do not. Playlists can integrate songs from XM and those already in their personal libraries.

Tracks pulled from XM cannot be moved to other devices, however. That is where Napster comes in. When the device is connected to a computer, the service will match songs captured from XM to Napster's music catalog. Users can buy or save the track via the Napster to Go subscription service.

The XM + Napster service also allows subscribers to access XM Radio Online on their computers. Napster subscribers, similarly, have access to Internet radio stations.

Users can purchase songs they hear through the XM Online service as well. Current Napster subscribers can add the XM stream to their online service by switching to the XM + Napster version. Subscription and per-track download pricing has not yet been set.

More details on the service and the devices are expected this fall, with retail availability by year's end. XM plans to work with MP3 player manufacturers other than Samsung.

The deal gives a potential marketing boost to Napster, which now has XM selling its digital music service to the satcaster's 4.5 million subscribers. Napster currently has about half a million subscribers.

—Antony Bruno

THE FUTURE'S SO BRIGHT, I GOTA WEAR SHADES

MP3 player manufacturers almost always try to make their devices look cool in this fashion-conscious industry, but Global American Technologies takes style to a new level with the introduction of its Fio MP3 player sunglasses. The shades feature built-in, 3-D stereo sound earbuds in each arm, so users must wear the sunglasses to hear the music. The Fio comes in 128MB, 256MB, 512MB and 1GB versions. It supports MP3 and WMA audio files, and has a battery life of 7 to 9 hours. All player buttons, volume adjustments and other controls are located atop the arms. It is PC and Mac compatible, and uses a USB 2.0 port for transferring music.

For those concerned about their eyes as well as their ears, the sunglasses feature a polarized UV400 shattered lens and a shock-proof, flexible memory nylon body that wraps around the user's head for a secure fit. The Fio will retail for between $200 and $400, depending on the storage capacity. It is available for sale at iZoomstore.com.

—Antony Bruno

XM Satellite Radio and Napster have teamed to unveil a digital music store and subscription service that allows subscribers to manage digital music files from each service in one interface.

Dubbed "XM + Napster," the service works on a new line of MP3 players and XM and Samsung Electronics are developing. The player, plugged into an XM radio station, can access XM programming. It can store up to 50 hours XM feeds for later listening.

Users can identify the songs they wish to keep from this time-shifted stream, and delete the ones they do not. Playlists can integrate songs from XM and those already in their personal libraries.

Tracks pulled from XM cannot be moved to other devices, however. That is where Napster comes in. When the device is connected to a computer, the service will match songs captured from XM to Napster's music catalog. Users can buy or save the track via the Napster to Go subscription service.

The XM + Napster service also allows subscribers to access XM Radio Online on their computers. Napster subscribers, similarly, have access to Internet radio stations.

Users can purchase songs they hear through the XM Online service as well. Current Napster subscribers can add the XM stream to their online service by switching to the XM + Napster version. Subscription and per-track download pricing has not yet been set.

More details on the service and the devices are expected this fall, with retail availability by year's end. XM plans to work with MP3 player manufacturers other than Samsung.

The deal gives a potential marketing boost to Napster, which now has XM selling its digital music service to the satcaster's 4.5 million subscribers. Napster currently has about half a million subscribers.

—Antony Bruno

THE FUTURE'S SO BRIGHT, I GOTA WEAR SHADES

MP3 player manufacturers almost always try to make their devices look cool in this fashion-conscious industry, but Global American Technologies takes style to a new level with the introduction of its Fio MP3 player sunglasses. The shades feature built-in, 3-D stereo sound earbuds in each arm, so users must wear the sunglasses to hear the music. The Fio comes in 128MB, 256MB, 512MB and 1GB versions. It supports MP3 and WMA audio files, and has a battery life of 7 to 9 hours. All player buttons, volume adjustments and other controls are located atop the arms. It is PC and Mac compatible, and uses a USB 2.0 port for transferring music.

For those concerned about their eyes as well as their ears, the sunglasses feature a polarized UV400 shattered lens and a shock-proof, flexible memory nylon body that wraps around the user's head for a secure fit. The Fio will retail for between $200 and $400, depending on the storage capacity. It is available for sale at iZoomstore.com.

—Antony Bruno
CHUM Gives Canada ‘Much’ More TV Music Options

TORONTO—The June 30 launch of two cable/satellite channels by Toronto-based broadcaster CHUM Television underlines the company’s dominance of Canada’s music TV market.

CHUM’s new offerings are Razer, a youth lifestyle channel, and PunchMuch, which plays mostly music videos. They take slots formerly occupied by MTV and MTV2.

The two channels left Canadian cable after the termination of a licensing agreement between MTV International and TV broadcaster Craig Media, which CHUM acquired in December 2004.

Razer features music, film, animation and game-related programming. PunchMuch is an automated, all-request music video service, with its playlist displayed onscreen. CHUM Television VP of music and youth specialty channels David Kingsley is the executive producer of PunchMuch. “You can see vote counts [for requests] changing while you watch. CHUM-owned MuchMusic networks are ‘trying to have that interaction more and more in their programming,” says Adrian Strong, president of Toronto-based independent promotions company DMD Entertainment. “PunchMuch gives you the opportunity to text-message and request a song—that gives us a barometer of a record from fans instantly.” The leading channels in the Canadian TV music market are CHUM-owned top 40 outlet MuchMusic and its AC-based counterpart, MuchMoreMusic, known as M3. Both are available on basic cable/satellite packages nationally.

CHUM separately offers subscribers hard rock/heavy metal channel MuchLoud, urban-based MuchVibe and oldies-based MuchMoreRetro. All are based in Toronto. Such pop-leaning acts as Avril Lavigne, Coldplay and the Black Eyed Peas are in regular rotation on MuchMusic and M3, both acknowledged by the record industry as powerful sales tools in English-speaking Canada.

“Video is still one of the top ways to break an artist.”
—ADRIAN STRONG, DMD ENTERTAINMENT

Danish Indie Label MBO Scores Major Success

COPENHAGEN—When Danish label/publishing group Music Business Organization A/S launched in 2004, co-founder Benny Bach promised to “be in the black in our first year.” Bach and his partner, Michael Ritto, have kept their word. Not only has the indie made an operating profit, it also claims major-label purity in market share.

Co-CEOs Bach and Ritto formed the company in April 2004 (billboard.biz, April 28, 2004). The two former EMI Denmark executives, who own MBO A/S through their holding company MOBO Group, MBO A/S comprises 10 units, each of which either owns or co-owns the heads of the individual operations. It reports a 7.5 million kroner ($1.2 million) net profit in the year ending March 31 on revenue of 190 million kroner ($30.7 million).

“Our concept of ‘anarchy and structure’ has worked,” Ritto says. “We can act like an indie when we need to, and have the strength to function like a major.”

Ritto says MOBO takes a “hands off but hands on-when they need us” approach to its labels. “We don’t interfere with the creative processes, but provide the structure they need . . . We are an administration backbone. It might not be sexy, but it’s handy as hell.”

The Danish affiliate of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry says MOBO imprints claimed a 27.8% share on its album sales chart across the first five months of 2005, ahead of Universal Music’s 19.2%.

MOBO’s share of album shipments in January-May was 24.6%, the same as Universal. According to the IFPI, Sony BMG had 17.2%; EMI had 13.5% and Warner had 11.5%.

The album market share for MOBO during the 12 months ending May 31 was 17.2%, compared with 22.9% for Universal, 19.2% for Sony BMG, 17.3% for EMI and 11.2% for Warner. EMI was previously dominant in Denmark, claiming 34.3% of the album market in calendar 2003.

MOBO companies accounted for slightly more than 50% of shipments of local repertoire during the 12 months ending May 31. IFPI Denmark adds.

The 10 MOBO companies include labels Copenhagen Records and CMC Entertainment and catalog marketing arm TTC. In its first year, MOBO released 115 albums or DVDs and claims total shipments of 2.7 million units including seven platinum (40,000) and two double-platinum (80,000) albums. Bach says it will release around 100 albums in its second year.

Most first-year profits came from CMC and TTC, Bach says. CMC’s main output is compilation albums, although it also releases original single-artist albums.

“CMC products have been especially successful,” confirms Yvonne Hansen, product group manager at 70-store retail chain, F-Gruppen. She praises MOBO’s “broad repertoire with a big mix of big sellers from schlager [pop ballads] to rock.”

The group’s highest-profile label is Copenhagen Records, founded in early 2004 by four former EMI Denmark executives (Billboard, Jan. 24, 2004). Each of Copenhagen’s first dozen releases made IFPI Denmark’s albums chart. They included rock quartet Nephew’s “USADSB,” which spent more than six months in the top 10 following its June 2004 release. Copenhagen’s roster also includes ex-Blue Note/EMI jazz vocalist Carcille Norby and former Virgin Denmark rock singer Sanne Salomonsen.

Bach says startup costs generated a small first-year loss for Copenhagen, despite its success. “Like some of the other companies, Copenhagen didn’t even own a pen at the start,” he explains.

“For all the companies, we spent money to get the best people in the business,” Ritto adds.

Bach founded CMC in 1989 and headed it as GM after EMI took over the label in 1997. He brought back most of its assets in late 2003 and formed CMC Entertainment.

Ritto quit as president of EMI Denmark in February 2004. He had been with the company since 1992.

Danish distributor GDC handles domestic distribution for most MOBO releases. Swedish firm Bonnier Amigo Music Distribution handles product in the wider Nordic region. Elsewhere, licensing and distribution varies from act to act.
GlobaL Newsline

CHUM also dominates the primarily French-speaking Quebec market with Montreal-based, top 40-styled MusiquePlus and its AC counterpart, MusiMax. Both are co-owned by parent company CHUM Ltd. and broadcaster Radio Mutual.

MuchMusic and MusiquePlus are not perceived identically. "They are servicing different audiences," Strong says. One difference is that MusiquePlus and MusiMax are obligated under terms of their licenses to broadcast 35% French-language music. Pierre Borduas, music director for both stations, says the Quebec audience is more receptive to videos by acts absent from francophone radio.

"It’s a big plus for me when I see radio isn’t playing what I think is a great track," he says. "Then I can platter the video all over the place until it gets a reaction."

Most in the Canadian music industry are comfortable with the dominance of MuchMusic and the other CHUM-owned channels. "We’ve had more weird things happen very few months than we ever had," Koch Entertainment Canada director of media relations Eric Alper says. Play on CHUM’s MuchLoud or MuchVibe is increasingly viewed as part of a comprehensive marketing mix. "There are now more choices and more opportunities to experiment with videos," CHUM’s Kines says.

Labels and video promoters say they often hold back on pitching urban and hard rock videos to MuchMusic and M3 until there is appreciable mainstream support.

"A video may not get MuchMusic, but it will work for MuchLoud or MuchVibe," Strong says. "[And] if you have MuchLoud, you know those subscribers are real rock fans. Video is still one of the top ways to break an artist."

Despite the seeming abundance of video channel choices in Canada, Vancouver-based Network Productions president Ric Arboit contends that producing videoclips is not always feasible for domestic acts.

"Unless the demographic is 12-18 on an artist, I don’t have a video outlet," he says. "If I ask, "Why do you want to spend $40,000 (Canadian) on a video?" But if we deliver a radio hit, we do a video."

"Do you make a video? Is it always the question for any new domestic act," EMIMusic Canada VP of national promotion and media relations Derrick Ross says. "If you don’t have a video with a domestic act, you really need to have Much Support to have a full marketing package. But you’ve got to have the goods. A half-assed video isn’t going to get heavy rotation anymore."

GLOBAL

BY AYMERIC RICHEVIN

French Startup Goes To The Movies

New Label Sets Sights On Soundtrack Biz Through Four-Film Deal With Studio EuropaCorp

PARIS—Leading names in European cinema are linked through the arrival of a new player in the movie soundtrack business that has ambitions of becoming a continent-wide market leader.

Paris-based Recall Music for Films launched in May and has been busy striking studio deals since then, most notably with leading European independent movie studio EuropaCorp.

RMFF is a joint venture between French composer/musician Eric Serra and Paris-based indie group Recall. Serra’s credits include composing the scores for the 1995 James Bond movie “Goldeneye” and French filmmaker Luc Besson’s ”The Big Blue” (1988) and “The Fifth Element” (1997).

“There are very few labels dedicated to music for films in Europe, and we want to become the No. 1 label,” Recall Group chief executive Alex Sap says.

“During my career, I have been offered a lot of interesting projects that I couldn’t accept for lack of time,” Serra says. “I always felt frustrated that I couldn’t pass them on to young and talented composers, with movie producers or music supervisors afraid of hiring unknown guys. With my own label, I will be able to offer my experience to young composers and use my name to back them up.”

Paris-based EuropaCorp was co-founded in 2001 by director/producer Besson (as CEO) and French film producer Pierre-Antre Le Pagan (as GM).

Besson has worked with Serra since 1981, when he wrote the score for Besson’s first short film, “Lavant Dernier.”

RMFF paid a 650,000 euro ($785,000) advance to EuropaCorp for the worldwide rights over five years to the soundtracks to four of the studio’s films due during the next year.

The titles are action movie “The Transporter 2,” directed by Louis Letterer; crime thriller “Revolver,” directed by Guy Ritchie; “The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada,” directed by and starring Tommy Lee Jones; and the Serra-scored action comedy “Bandidas,” starring Salma Hayek and Penelope Cruz.

RMFF also has the French rights to the soundtracks to forthcoming U.K./French production “Colour Me Kubrick,” starring John Malkovich, and recent French comedy “Au Suivant,” with original music by Nicolas Errera. The first album releases are due in September.

“We need to sell around 200,000 albums to break even,” Sap says. “That’s pretty reasonable, comparable with four albums with worldwide sales potential, plus two others in France.”

Sap calls the EuropaCorp deal “a great opportunity for us. We will adapt aggressively with new sales strategies and experiment with new ways of marketing music for films.”

RMFF plans to release between 12 and 20 soundtracks each year, Sap says. He anticipates annual revenue of 2.6 million euros ($3.14 million) by the end of 2006.

RMFF has been conceived by Jacques Davidovic, secretary general of French soundtrack composers’ trade body UCMF.

“The soundtrack market is very specific,” Davidovic says. “We hope that with labels like RMFF, more Composers will get more exposure and that there will be more consistent sales. Until now, there were a few small, dedicated labels in France, and major companies only have a synchronization department.”

Sap says RMFF is negotiating with other movie studios and has licensed the French rights for the Brad Pitt/Angelina Jolie vehicle “Mr. & Mrs. Smith” from 20th Century Fox/Regency Enterprises.

Physical and online distribution in France is through Warner Music. Outside France, RMFF will negotiate licenses by territory. Physical services will be excluded from the deals, as the label intends to work directly with international and local operators.

CHAIRMAN MILLER EXITS HMV

Sir Robin Miller has resigned as HMV Group non-executive chairman to focus on his other business interests.

Miller holds various board-level positions in the United Kingdom, including chairman of music publisher Bossy & Hawkes. His resignation, effective July 28, was announced July 26 in a statement to the London Stock Exchange.

HMV non-executive director David Kappeller is filling in for Miller until a permanent successor is hired.


EMI TAKES ON AUSSIE DRAMA

EMI Music Australia has entered the nonmusic DVD field. The company signed a deal with free-air TV broadcaster Seven Network to release DVDs of popular local drama shows, including the long-running “All Saints” and “Last Man Standing,” and general interest programs.

Initial releases under the deal are the first two volumes of “All Saints” (July 25). DVDs for the rest of the series’ eight-year run will follow through late 2006.

“We want to get more into the DVD market,” EMI Australia managing director John O’Donnell says. “It’s a growing and exciting part of the consumer entertainment dollar.” O’Donnell estimates the deal could generate sales of $5 million Australian ($3.8 million) for the company in the coming year.

Trade body Australian Visual Software Distribution Assn. reports total DVD shipments of 57 million units in 2004, with a value of $1 billion ($760 million). DVD sales represent 8% of EMI Music’s turnover, according to O’Donnell. He aims to raise that share to 15% by 2010.

BERGMAN BUYS SPANISH CATALOG

BMG Music Publishing Spain has acquired the Autores & Productores Asociados catalog. APA is one of Spain’s biggest independent music publishers, specializing in traditional Cuban music.

The catalog includes more than 1,200 copyrights by Spanish and Cuban writers, including songs by Buena Vista Social Club members Compay Segundo and Ibrahim Ferrer. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

BMG Music Publishing Spain managing director Carmen Lopez says, “We are privileged to add a catalog with such rich Cuban and Spanish repertoire to our company.” BMG 2004 ed APA’s catalog from its owner, Antonio Perez Solis, who says he intends to continue in the music publishing business.

PEEL ENTERS U.K. HALL OF FAME

Late British broadcaster John Peel is to be inducted into the U.K. Music Hall of Fame in November. Peel, who died in October 2004, will be made an honorary member of the hall, a multimedia initiative that recognizes outstanding contributions to music. U2, Queen and the Rolling Stones were among the inaugural inductees last November, with Island Records founder Chris Blackwell receiving honorary membership.

Bob Dylan has been confirmed as a 2005 inductee, chosen by a panel of industry and media representatives.

Other potential inductees will be the subject of a TV series on British commercial broadcaster Channel 4 this fall, climaxing in a 120-minute ceremony on an as-yet-undisclosed date in November.

The industry-endorsed U.K. Music Hall of Fame is a joint initiative of Channel 4 and TV production company Initial.

—Lars Brande

www.americanradiohistory.com

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U.K. Label Free Reed Returns To U.S. With Thompson Boxed Set

U.K.-based folk archivist Neil Wayne has at least 4,000 admirers in the United States, judging from the number of mail orders his Free Reed label has received in the past few years. Come February, he expects that number to go up a few more.

That is when Free Reed will issue a five-CD boxed set covering the career of Richard Thompson. Each disc will be themed, and initial pressings will include a bonus sixth disc, with content still being finalized. The themes will range from "epic guitar workouts" to "songs based on real people, places and events."

Wayne and partner Nigel Schofield have been running London-based Free Reed for about 25 years. Thanks to recently inked deal with RED Distribution group MRJ Free Reed has U.S. distribution for the first time since the collapse of Valley Medio's independent distributor, DNA, in 2001.

"The initial samplers we did were two CDs, and then we expanded to three, and then we took the leap into commercial suicide and did a long-format Martin Carthy boxed set," Wayne says. "Then we did Fairport Convention, and we've mixed that scene quite deeply. Two of the early members, Ashley Hutchings and Dave Swarbrick, have both had boxed sets on Free Reed."

While details on the Thompson box are still being solidified, it will likely share the same humor that has marked previous Free Reed sets. For instance, the "Crooked Capers" boxed set—dedicated to England's 25-year-old, Fairport-organized Cropredy Festival—comes complete with a do-it-yourself miniature. "I had the crazy idea of having a model of the stage and all the festivity, with the Zen food bars and the cowbells and the lighting tower," Wayne explains. "People can cut it and build it—in other words, aorists, or nerds, as you call them in the U.S.A. Anyone who buys it and makes it must be a nerd, but that's great."

Another Free Reed boxed set includes a less wholesome extra: "The Dave Swarbrick box is a replica of his fiddle case with a handle on the side," Wayne says. "In the lid of the box are four bows and a lump of a dubious-looking substance on a piece of silver foil, because he used to be a bit of a dope smoker."

Wayne, who says his deal with MRJ/RED has him sending out a "few hundred" boxes every week, is well aware of his audience: "Our market is the forty-something fan with $100 to spare."

**BRG's NEW NEST:** Birdman Recording Group's more eclectic world epi, BRG, has found a new distribution home with Six Degrees Records, Oakland, Calif.-based Six Degrees is distributed by Revolver.

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**Pay Now, Download Later**

The album pre-order business is not just for CD sellers anymore.

In recent months Apple Computer and its label partners have been ramping up the slate of digital albums they offer for pre-order as well.

The iTunes Music Store is currently pushing pre-order sales of Faith Hill's "Fireflies" due Aug. 2 from Warner Nashville—one of more than a half-dozen titles that have received the pre-order treatment from Apple during the last six weeks.

Similar strategies have also been used for Missy Elliott's "The Cookbook" (Gold Mind/Atlantic), the Black Eyed Peas' "Monkey Business" (A&M/Interscope), Foo Fighters' "In Your Honor" (Roswell/RCA), the White Stripes' "Get Behind Me Satan" (Third Man/V2) and Thalia's "El Sexto Sentido" (EMI Latin), which is the first Spanish-language album to have a digital pre-order campaign.

The move is part of an effort by download distributors and labels to sustain interest for the album concept in an environment driven by à la carte track consumption.

Albums that qualify for Apple's pre-order programming are also coming with value add-ons, including bonus tracks, booklets in PDF file format and music videos—features that continue to be offered in the wake of a release.

The use of pre-orders is a variation on a well-established system already used by labels and e-commerce retailers to help create buzz for new releases and aid first-week sales.

Online sellers use pre-orders as a way to rack up a sale while a consumer is already shopping for other titles. They also help retailers better target their best customers with additional recommendations and marketing messages.

Meanwhile, for the labels, pre-order efforts serve as a measure of consumer awareness of a new release, as well as a tool for gauging the effectiveness of its marketing.

As an incentive for pre-orders in the digital arena, labels in some cases are offering exclusive bonus tracks.

Those who pre-ordered Coldplay's "X&Y" (Capitol) received two exclusive tracks, "Proof" and "Things I Don't Understand," that were unavailable after the album's street date.

The initiative helped "X&Y" bow with the biggest first-week digital album sales to date—claimed to be in excess of 62,000 units. That doubled the sales of the last high-profile digital album debut, U2's "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb" (Interscope) from last fall.

Apple claims it grabbed a 95% share of Coldplay's first-week digital album sales as a result of the initiative.

"For all the new big albums we'll certainly continue to do that," Apple VP of applications Eddie Cue says. "Our customers love the idea of coming in before the album is released and seeing all the content is there and being able to pre-order it." The strategy appears to be working. The Foo Fighters' latest—a double album priced at $17.99 through iTunes—sold more than 10,000 digital copies in its bow the week of June 19, according to Hints in SoundScan. The White Stripes noted first-week digital sales of more than 13,000—a burn the Black Eyed Peas exceeded 12,000.

However, such initiatives are not a guarantee of a boost in digital album sales. Elliott's latest sold 3,800 copies in the digital album format in its first week.

Consumers who participate in album pre-order initiatives receive an e-mail notifying them when the album is released and available for download. Once the music is available, the user automatically starts downloading the first time the user launches the iTunes software.

Digital booklet are emerging as standard supplements to most digital album pre-order specials. Videos are also increasingly popular: the Elliott video, Thalia and White Stripes releases all featured a bundled music videos as a bonus. The Black Eyed Peas release featured three videos. Other acts like the Foo Fighters are offering bonus interview videos.

These features also are helping to propel digital album sales in the second week and beyond, which in many cases are equal to or better than their opening-week sales performance.
Retail Track

ED CHRISTMAN echristman@billboard.com

Rod Stewart Among Stars Playing NARM

Two weeks from now, some readers of this column will head out to the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers’ annual convention Aug. 10-14 in San Diego. For those who have not yet made up their mind about attending, let me point out that, according to NARM president Jim Donio, this year’s event will have more musical performance than any NARM convention in the last 10 years.

In addition to Club NARM, which is basically the old PGD Zone rewrapped, NARM has instituted live performances—three per day—at the Marketplace (i.e., the trade show), which should draw traffic there.

As for Club NARM, WEA will sponsor one night and EMI another, with a catchall night in between. What’s more, this year’s convention will have more of an urban flavor than in years past, Donio says.

Among the acts slated to perform are Rod Stewart, who is getting ready to deliver the fourth volume in his “American Songbook” series, “Gavin Rossdale’s new band, Institute; Stephen Kellogg & the Sixers; Power Fam; Liz Phair; Charlie Sexton; Public Announcement; Tristan Prettyman; the Pussycat Dolls; Trey Songz; Delta Goodrem, and Antigone Rising.

Stewart, who performed during the 2001 convention, will play the awards dinner, which will kick off with a video documentary created especially by Sony BMG Music Entertainment.

Speaking of awards, Bonnie Raitt will receive NARM’s Harry Chapin Humanitarian Award, while Quincy Jones will be honored with the NARM Chairman’s Award for Sustained Creative Achievement.

The keynote this year will be Recording Industry Assn. of America chairman/CEO Mitch Bainwol. “This is an interesting close to the circle,” Donio says of Bainwol attending his first NARM convention to share his thoughts on the music industry just as his predecessor, Hilary Rosen, gave her closing thoughts on the industry last year.

With album sales down, attendees will be coming to town with a different mindset than in 2004, Donio notes. “While every convention takes on its own fabric and feel, when times are challenging there is an argument to be made that the conventions turn out to be more compelling,” he says. He expects that the public and private discussions at the gathering will grab people with such issues as Digital and media on demand. Certainly the latter will dominate the marketplace floor.

Donio says registration is tracking close to last year’s attendance, which was around 1,500. “We are back at the same location, and attendees in the survey gave the city and the hotel great reviews… the hotel has remodeled the lobby area and made the bar bigger, doubling the size. That is never a bad thing for the NARM crowd.”

NEW LINEUP: Information company Muze has beefed up its management staff, bringing aboard two veterans from All Media Guide and one from MusicMatch. New York-based Muze, which Enterprise Partners Venture Capital acquired in May, has appointed William Caiaf as chief information and technology officer. Lonnie Chenkin as executive VP of corporate development and Rob Lensman as senior VP of business development and sales.


The senior management staff reports to Bill Stensrud, a managing director of Enterprise Partners, who in late June was appointed Muze CEO. He replaced founder Paul Zullo, who left the company.

Before joining Muze, Caiaf most recently was Yahoo VP of music engineering and before that senior VP of engineering and Internet at MusicMatch. Chenkin most recently served as executive VP of corporate development at Alliance Entertainment Corp., where his responsibilities included strategic initiatives for All Media Guide, Muze’s main competitor.

Prior to that, Chenkin was COO at Premier Sports & Entertainment Group. Lensman also jumped from All Media Guide, where he was VP of sales. At Muze, he reports to Chenkin.

REVERSE MERGER: Sheridan Square Entertainment and Hirsch International have signed a definitive agreement to merge, which will result in the music company shareholders owning 62% of the outstanding shares of Hirsch.

The deal, which is expected to close in late October if it gets the necessary regulatory approvals, will create a company with annual revenue of about $88 million. While it gives Sheridan Square (which owns Musicrama, Artemis and Compendia) a vehicle to become a publicly traded company through the back door, it is not expected to result in much synergy. Hirsch is a wholesaler of industrial embroidery machinery. It carries about $11.5 million in cash on its balance sheet.

The two companies are roughly the same size, which means each has revenue of about $44 million.

After the deal is completed, key executives at the merged company will be Sheridan Square co-CEO Joe Bianco, who will serve as CEO; Hirsch president/CEO Paul Gallagher will be president/COO; and Hirsch executive VP CFO Beverly Eichel will remain in that position. Henry Arenberg, Hirsch’s founder, will be chairman of the new company, while Sheridan co-CEO Ami Narang will be vice chairman.

The board of directors will consist of Sheridan chairman Rob Michalik, whose firm Kinderhook Capital Fund is one of the equity investors in Sheridan; former Bain Capital partner Joe Prestow, who is also an equity holder in Sheridan; Arnberg; Bianco; Gallagher; and five independent directors who are to be named.

FEATURED ARTISTS INCLUDE 50 Cent, B-Real, Method Man, Nate Dogg, and D12.

IN STORES AUGUST 9TH

SEARCHING FOR JERRY GARCIA

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Barbie Looks For ‘Fairytopia’ On The Road

LOS ANGELES—Barbie is ready for the spotlight. After 50 years of entertaining young girls, the revered doll is coming to life in her first full-fledged live tour, thanks to a partnership between toymaker Mattel and Clear Channel Entertainment Productions.

The tour, set to debut next spring, will be based on the direct-to-DVD release “Barbie Fairytopia” (March 8, Lions Gate), an adventure story filled with fairies and pixies. “Fairytopia” is the fifth in the Barbie video series, which has sold 24 million VHS and DVD units worldwide, according to Mattel.

“Barbie Live in Fairytopia” performances will feature original songs and will be staged like a Broadway musical. The show will be booked in 80 cities over the course of two years.

The upcoming tour is expected to be a significant addition to CCEP’s family programming coffers. The company’s family show roster includes “Dora the Explorer Live!” and the just-concluded “Blue’s Clues Live!,” both ventures with Nickelodeon. Billboard Boxscore numbers were not available for “Blue’s Clues."

The most successful family tour in 2004 was Feld Entertainment’s Disney on Ice, which generated $18.5 million, according to Billboard Boxscore. Feld’s Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus grossed about $30.5 million last year.

VEE Corp.’s “Sesame Street Live” grossed more than $8.6 million, and HIT Entertainment’s “The Wiggles” grossed about $8.5 million.

“The family business has been a very solid, growing business for us,” CCEP senior VP Joanna Hagan says. “There are a lot of properties for children, but Barbie has been a long time coming. She’s such an iconic character and speaks specifically to young girls and a mother-daughter audience.”

The tour will be targeted to girls aged 3-11, says Barry Waldo, senior director of Mattel’s brand management team. “We went into this thinking we’d target a 3- to 6-year-old,” Waldo says. “Though older kids may not be playing with the dolls as frequently, this is the kind of show that can entertain them.”

Waldo adds that though marketing elements are still being determined, it is likely that the tour will be promoted nationally on Barbie packages and DVDs. Mattel and CCEP are working together to route the tour, focusing on markets where Barbie has a strong penetration and there are venues of the right size.

“This is a musical theater show, so it will play venues similar to where a Broadway show would perform, such as large theaters and performing arts centers,” Hagan says.

The tour will stop in primary markets, including Boston, Los Angeles and Dallas, according to Hagan. Each market is expected to host five to 10 performances. Venue managers are highly anticipating “Barbie Live in Fairytopia.”

Global Spectrum COO John Page notes that family tours are key for the venue management company. “We are always open to new ideas and concepts,” he says.

Tickets will probably range from $15 to $35, depending on the market. CCEP and Mattel are already setting their sights on future Barbie tours, depending on the success of “Fairytopia.”

Hagan says that when this tour ends, probably in fourth-quarter 2007, the goal is to bring out a new Barbie tour.

From there, Waldo says, “We’ll think about global markets and additional themes in the same market.”...
CCE's Monster Jam Show Storms Europe

Clear Channel Entertainment's motorsports division kicks off the first extended European tour of its Monster Jam production Aug. 12 at the Manchester Evening News Arena in Manchester, England.

Eric Cole, VP of booking for the division, says the 0-city production going to Europe is the same show that successfully played the United States.

"Last year we played Stockholm, Helsinki and Antwerp (Belgium) and sold 100,000 tickets," Cole says. "This year, sales in Stockholm are up 50% over last year's numbers."

The tour, overseen in Europe by Magnus Danielsson, senior director of European events for CCE Motor Sports, will stage four performances, including monster trucks and freestyle motorcycle in each market. CCE will have 25 people on the road; trucks and production have been shipped to Europe from the States and have been making special appearances since June.

CCE Motor Sports will partner with local promoters in each market. Typically, local partners are CCE Europe promoters, but Cole points out that some are not. "We look for the best promoter in each market," Cole says. "Most of the time that's a (CCE) promoter, but Clear Channel is not in some markets."

CCE Motor Sports is excited about the potential of the European market. "This is found business," Cole says.

MOUNTAIN MOVES: John Ruffino joins Gary Weinberger as a partner in Red Mountain Entertainment, a concert and event promotion company based in Birmingham, Ala.

Former last month, Red Mountain promotes concerts, buys talent and produces events for corporate clients, and consults on, develops and produces programming for festivals, venues and other entertainment events throughout the Southeast.

Weinberger and Ruffino were formerly partners in Birmingham's New Era Promotions, which programmed and operated the Oak Mountain Amphitheater in nearby Pelham, Ala., (now known as the Verizon Wireless Music Center).

New Era was sold to SFX in 2000, which was later purchased as part of Clear Channel's acquisition of SFX. Weinberger and Ruffino had worked for Clear Channel Entertainment since 2000. Weinberger left CCE May 23, Ruffino a month later.

Weinberger has been promoting concerts and producing events in Alabama, Mississippi and the Gulf Coast since 1979.

Ruffino, the son of legendary...
BY MELINDA NEWMAN

Keith Richards remembers a seminal moment in June 2004 when he and Mick Jagger started working on the new Rolling Stones album.

At the time, drummer Charlie Watts was going through cancer treatment and the prognosis was unclear.

"There's suddenly Mick and I looking at each other and going, 'Possibly we're the only two left of the originals,' " Richards says. 

"But you don't talk about that shit, you know?"

Instead, Jagger and Richards got busy.

"I go, 'Mick, you're on drums and I'll double on bass," Richards says, in his first interview about the new project. "In a way, we had to strip it down."

But Watts' treatment was successful, and he and guitarist Ron Wood reunited with Richards and Jagger at the latter's house in France to start recording "A Bigger Bang." The new set, the Stones' first studio album since 1997's " Bridges to Babylon," is due Sept. 6 in North America on Virgin and a day earlier in the rest of the world.

"There was a point, I'm sure, where Mick wanted to kick us out," Richards says. "But as I said to Mick, 'Listen, once upon a time, we cut a record in the South of France in my house, and it's called 'Exile on Main Street,' and now it's your turn.'"

No one would dare try to hold up "A Bigger Bang" to what is considered one of the greatest rock 'n' roll records of all time. Still, executives at Virgin and parent company EMI believe the group has created its strongest album in years.

"It feels so real and so authentic," says Matt Serletic, chairman/CEO of Virgin Records U.S. "With this one, they've really revitalized themselves."

Jagger, calling from tour rehearsals in Toronto, says the spirited play between him and Richards and switching up instruments helped bring a renewed energy to the album's creation.

"I was playing drums and all that sort of stuff I usually never do and that was fun," he says. "Happily for the fans, my drums never made it on the record apart from one or two little bits that were saved. Keith and I were just having a laugh with a lot of it."

And whether it was due to Watts' illness or some magical force, Jagger and Richards' often legendaryly fractious relationship seemed a little less so with this album. "The vibe is a lot better," Richards says. "Mick and I are looking at each other and going, 'Oh, come on. I'm not going to argue about this. There are too many plus for an odd minus to get in the way. Maybe it's called growing up.'"

The Stones' last few albums have certainly provided strong enough sales. EMI says " Bridges to Babylon" has sold 3.5 million copies worldwide, including 1.16 million units in the United States. The 2002 greatest-hits collection " Forty Licks" has sold 7 million, including 2.48 million stateside. (U.S. sales are from Nielsen SoundScan.) Still, there is a consensus among fans, retailers and radio programmers that the Stones have not made an album in recent years that stands alongside the band's classic works.

" Bridges" found the band partnering with—in addition to primary producer Don Was—such producers of the moment as the Dust Brothers and Danny Saber, with the album featuring smatterings of such contemporary flavors as electronica and rap.

By contrast, the 16-track "A Bigger Bang" retains the stripped-down tone of the Stones' earliest albums. Was, who produced with Jagger and Richards, believes it is the group's sparsest album since "Some Girls."

Highlights include the grinding, guitar-driven, classic Stones romp "Rough Justice," the harmonica-drenched, bluesy "Back of My Hand" and the country-shaded "Take Me Down Slowly."

Lyrically, tinges of regret are tempered with bravado; heartache is mixed with humor. Throughout, there is an emotional core that is easy to relate to, as opposed to blurting about what a pain it is when the private plane is late.

"It can be annoying when the wrong one comes," Jagger jokes, "but I'm not going to write a song about it. There's a lot of personal stuff on the album, but it's leavened with a sense of humor and odd rhymes to keep it from getting too serious."

Many of the tracks feature just Jagger, Richards and Watts. Apart from Wood, the only other musicians on the album are longtime Stones associates Darryl Jones (bass) and Chuck Leavell (keyboards).

"There's no hiding place if there's only three of you in the room," Jagger says. Or as Richards puts it, the album is "raw Stones."

Was, who has worked with the Stones for 13 years, says, "It was clear from the first day of recording that the Rolling Stones—the band rather than the individuals who comprise it—came into focus on this album."

GIMME AIRPLAY

The task before EMI is how to take the top touring band of all time and create the same pandemonium that exists around their concerts for their album releases.

"That's the question we've been asking ourselves," EMI Music senior VP of global marketing Mathieu Laurier-Prevost says.

An essential part of the plan, of course, includes getting significant support from radio—something that has often been supplanted by a curiosity factor, with the band's single dropped shortly thereafter.

"Being the biggest touring band in the world means very little when you are looking for sustained radio support," says Tony Wadsworth, chairman/CEO of EMI Music U.K. & Ireland. "You need to have the song, and we believe that on this album we have the songs that will appeal to radio programmers."

Bill Weston, PD of rock radio station WMMR in Philadelphia, would like nothing better. "It would have to be a really awful album for us not to play it," he admits. But Weston says that for a Stones song to get into heavy rotation on his mainstream/active rock

hybrid station, it will need to be either something incredibly relevant, i.e., Bruce Springsteen's 'The Rising,' or something that's up-tempo: lots of Keith’s guitars and Mick strutting around having fun, but that doesn't make him sound like a 60-year-old going after 17-year-old chicks."

To appeal to as many U.S. formats as possible, Virgin is releasing several tracks.

"Rough Justice" went to rock format July 22. As is usual with a new Stones track, "Rough Justice" received a strong welcome from heritage rock stations: it debuted at No. 10 on the Heritage Rock chart in the July 29 issue of Billboard Radio Monitor based on only three days of airplay. It will be followed at rock stations the first week of August by "Back of My Hand," which is also going to college and public radio stations.

Triple-A received both cuts as well as the midtempo track "Streets of Love," which will also be serviced to rock and adult contemporary formats. A video will be shot for "Streets of Love." The song, Serletic says, was picked in part to build on the Stones' younger, female fans, many of whom first met the band through "Forty Licks."

Virgin U.S. executive VP of marketing Randy Miller says Virgin is counting on programmers to give the Stones a shot: "They make their programming decisions on what's hot and current for the day, but, hopefully, a lot of them will hear the quality in these tracks," he says.

Listening parties, underwritten by one of the tour's secondary sponsors, Effen Vodka, will be held the week prior to release in 15 major U.S. markets, as well as worldwide. In the United Kingdom, first single "Streets of Love" is getting a thumbs-up from BBC's Radio One, which selected it as single of the week starting July 25.

TIMING IS ON THEIR SIDE

The Stones have not had a No. 1 album in the United States since 1981's "Tattoo You," although "Bridges" hit No. 3 and "Forty Licks" debuted at No. 2.

Virgin would like to return the Stones to the top of the heap. "They deserve to have a No. 1 album," Miller says.

Virgin could be aided by fairly light competition the week of release, as well as blowback from the sold-out American-sponsored tour that starts Aug. 21 at Boston's Fenway Park.

"Frankly, we wanted to get the album out before the tour, but getting it this close is a great gift," Miller says. Virgin is planning spot TV buys around each tour date.

A national TV advertising campaign with one- and two-minute spots rolls out the middle of August and will feature up to five songs from the album. "If fans hear the depth of this album, that will send the message that this is a classic Stones album," Miller says.

The initial spot flight will pinpoint the Stones' target audience of males aged 25-54. However, a wider, 30-second spot will roll out later in the campaign.

Miller says the label looked at tying in a presale campaign whereby ticket purchasers could also pre-order the new album, but because the time lag between ticket on-sales and the album's release was more than four months, the plan was scrapped. "We thought it would be a disservice to people who bought the tickets if they bought the album," Miller says.

Mike Fratt, buyer for the Omaha, Neb.-based chain Homer's, hopes the Stones will help themselves by pushing the album live. "When they get on tour, they should play four or five songs on it, instead of just one. I think they're capable of putting out a record that both their old fans will love and will also turn on new fans. If Dylan and U2 can connect and be viable again, why can't the Stones?"

But Carl Mello, buyer for Brighton, Mass.-based Newbury Comics, does not think the tour push will help. "The people that buy the concert tickets are going to get drunk on the weekend and enjoy the show, but don't really care about a new album by an old band."

Regardless of how the record fares, fans will have their pick of Stones releases this fall. EMI is running a standard catalog promotion in conjunction with the release of the $18.98-priced "A Bigger Bang."

In November, EMI will release a rarities disc featuring B-sides and songs from albums that have gone in and out of print. The collection will be sold through traditional retail and Starbucks.

Also tentatively planned for the holidays will be a special edition of "A Bigger Bang." "The content will come from the band and it will hopefully include extra tracks, remixes, video content, Web links and ringtones," Miller says. The special edition will be available as a CD and DVD or a DualDisc.

Even department store chain Bloomingdale's is in on the act. Starting Sept. 10, the men's fashion departments will feature Rolling Stones music and videos, while selling limited-edition Rolling Stones merchandise and the new CD.

Because of the tour, the Stones' promotional availability is limited. Therefore, Lariont-Priest says the 48 EMI companies that will release the record worldwide are taking advantage of any opportunity to expose the music.

In June, EMI brought in retailers from across Europe, Japan and Australia for a listening party in London.

EMI is bringing in top media from each territory to Toronto for face time with the band during rehearsals. "We're also trying to do as many generic interviews as we can to send all over the world," he says. "For example, we know we won't be able to give time to Chile and Taiwan."

The Stones' top sales markets are the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada and France, says Lariont-Priest, who called Billboard from Tokyo as he was preparing to fire up the Japanese company about the release.

The question remains: Will all the activity drive a high chart debut and sustained interest in the project through the holidays and beyond?

For his part, Jagger admits, "I like hit albums, hit singles, hit anything."

But mainly, he says, he just wants the album to get a shot. "You just want people to hear what you've done. We're pretty excited about this record, we think there's really good stuff on it."

Richards agrees, but adds, "I mean, I'm not looking for numero uno. It's not like that anymore. Been there, done that..."

Additional reporting by Keith Caulfield and Michael Libby in Los Angeles.
In the past 20 years, Nick Gold has built British indie World Circuit into a highly respected world-music label, earning Grammy Awards and introducing fans around the globe to some of the finest artists in the genre. Not bad for someone who entered the music business almost by accident.

Gold had completed a degree in history and was training to teach when he was placed at educational charity Arts Worldwide in 1984. The organization was starting a record-label—World Circuit Ltd.—and gave Gold an opportunity to work there. Within a few months, Gold was running the label and buying the shares of World Circuit from Arts Worldwide.

In the coming years, World Circuit would record such acts as Ali Farka Touré, Toumani Diabaté, Orchestra Baobab, Oumou Sangaré, Ibrahim Ferrer, Afro-Cuban All Stars and Orlando "Cachaito" Lopez.

Perhaps Gold’s finest moment came in 1996, when he and Ry Cooder traveled to Havana to record a group of local legends under the name Buena Vista Social Club. The resulting album became an instant classic, winning a 1998 Grammy Award for best tropical Latin performance.

"If Nick Gold has done nothing but draw together the ingredients of the Buena Vista Social Club and sell 6 million copies of the result to the world, he would deserve to be acknowledged as one of the great British record men of his era," says broadcaster Charlie Gillett, who hosts a weekly program on BBC World.

"But World Circuit’s story was already remarkable before that, setting the standard for production, packaging and bloody-minded determination that its artists should be recognized as being the best of their kind.”

Q: Do you remember how you became interested in world music?
A: Well, I always listened to jazz, early reggae and soul music—black music, basically. It wasn’t until maybe when I was 20 or so that I started to become aware of African music. In the very early ’80s, I heard an Orchestra Baobab record, which I fell in love with. Interestingly this was the record that we eventually tracked down and released as ‘Pirates Choice’ in 2002.

Q: It’s a big step from being interested in that kind of music to producing and releasing world music records. How did it happen?
A: When I came into this company, they had already released one record and they also had done a few recordings of traditional Sudanese music. Basically, they told me, “Here are the records, we need to make a record company out of it.”

Q: How do you feel about the whole experience?
A: These were very natural, organic records. It was very un-tampered-with and unmanufactured. It was just, “Wouldn’t it be nice if this record existed?” But it didn’t exist, so we went and made it. It was just fantastic to have the audience share that.

Q: How do you see your role as a producer?
A: Mostly, we let it happen organically. There’s usually a reason you want to make a record with an artist. We just try and put the musicians in a comfortable position as possible and use the best technology we can. Then, hopefully, we enable them to play as well as they can. I don’t interfere very much. I can’t arrange, and I’m not a musician, so I can’t be intrusive.

Q: How is your operation structured in terms of distribution?
A: In every country in Europe we work with a specific, different, independent distributor. But for the United States and Canada, we have a license agreement for the whole label with Warner Music Group’s Nonesuch. Otherwise, for Europe and the rest of the world, we manufacture everything in the United Kingdom and we export it.

Q: Is the Nonesuch deal working as you expected?
A: I’m pretty happy with it. At the moment we’re in the middle of renegotiating it. You know, we really don’t have much dealing with the rest of Warner. We only have to deal with the people specifically at Nonesuch. But it strikes me that they work almost as an independent within [WMG].

Q: To what degree is World Circuit’s financial viability based on the success of Buena Vista Social Club?
A: It would have been financially viable but on a smaller scale. One of the great advantages about Buena Vista is that it gave us the resources to spend more money on productions. There are many records that we could not have made without Buena Vista.

Q: You were critical of Live 8 for not including African musicians in the lineup. What did you make of it?
A: I still think that in the main arena it would have been a fantastic opportunity to have African musicians play. It is quite frustrating. One of the arguments given at the time was that people might have turned off their television if African artists had played. I very much doubt it. It was slightly insulting to the intelligence of the audience.

Q: What do you think of the expression “world music”?
A: I don’t like it really. At the time [1987], it was coined to serve a very specific purpose, which was to get a category into record shops. Initially, it got records in shops and kick-started an interest. But now I think it’s quite suffocating—it handcuffs the music to describe 95% of the music produced in the world as one category.

Q: What’s the genre’s current status?
A: It’s better than it was 20 years ago. Still the biggest problem is radio. There is simply no exposure on radio. And on television it’s very difficult.

Q: You’ve just released Ali Farka Touré’s “Toumani Diabaté’s 'In the Heart of the Moon.’ What are the next 12 months going to look like for you?
A: Ali and Toumani seem to be on this incredible creative surge at the moment. Coming up, we have a band album from Ali with traditional guitars... it’s like a sort of down-home, back-woods, traditional blues session from him. And then we have two albums from Toumani: an orchestral album with his modern band, with electric guitars, bass, keyboards and horns; and a solo album as well. And at the beginning of July, just before their concert in London, Toumani and Ali recorded another album of duets which they just put down in three days. We’ve just received new demos from Oumou Sangaré, and we’re finishing a new record from Cheikh Lo that will be released in October.

Q: Is crossing over your main goal?
A: Buena Vista crossed over, but we had no intentions for it to cross over. We just wanted to make this specific record, and then whatever happened happened. I think as soon as you start to have an agenda or start trying to manufacture something, you’re into potential difficulties.
CONFAB ENTERS NEW PHASE, MOVES TO ATLANTA

BY GAIL MITCHELL

How do you add a spin to a successful franchise? That was the issue *Billboard* and American Urban Radio Networks (AURN) faced as planning got under way for the sixth annual R&B/Hip-Hop Conference and Awards.

Previously, New York and Miami have played host. But this year a decision was made to move to the heart of it all: Atlanta.

The musical mecca of the South—home base for such R&B/hip-hop heavyweights as OutKast, Jermaine Dupri, Ludacris and LaFace Records—provides the hot backdrop as the conference brings the beats to the streets Aug. 3-5 at the InterContinental Hotel in Buckhead.

Ying Yang Twins will be the featured guests at this year's Q&A session. 

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CONFAB (cont.)

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The three-day affair replaces another rolling chapter in the conference's history, with this year's marquee boasting such names as the Ying Yang Twins, Chaka Khan and A Tribe Called Quest. Flush with the breakout success of their hit single "Wait (The Whisper Song)" and album "U.S.A.: United State of Atlanta," hometown boys the Ying Yang Twins will bring their special brand of levity to this year's Q&A keynote session Aug. 5.

Kicking off the entire proceedings will be the opening-night reception co-sponsored by AURN, GSAT and the Lowery Group and featuring a live performance by Hector "El Bambino," Buckshot and Yung King Pinz. And another popular conference offshoot, the new artist showcase, lunch and happy hour is back, this time with Justyn Matthew (Decade Records/AJM Records), Michelle Renee (Jadamar Music) and Compositionz (Strategic Alliance Entertainment).

Once again capping the conference will be the awards show Aug. 5. It will be staged at local-in-the-spot the Compound with syndicated radio personality Ross Parr as host, and feature performances by the Ying Yang Twins, Fatty Koo, Keyshia Cole and Chris Brown.

Induced as 2005 Founders Award honorees will be R&B pioneer Khan and hip-hop artisans A Tribe Called Quest.

For the fourth consecutive year AURN is the presenting sponsor, and the radio network will provide national coverage of the conference and awards show to 475-plus stations. Parr will be on-site to interview various conference attendees.

Among the conference's additional sponsors are performing rights organizations ASCAP, BMI and SESAC; the Royalty Network; Pepcid Complete; and the Atlanta Chapter of the Recording Academy.

TOPICS AT A GLANCE

Hot-button panel topics range from the reggaepton explosion to the ever-reverberating digital revolution.

The opening panel is the Aug. 3 session “Declaring Independence,” moderated by Billboard staff writer/Billboard Airplay Monitor R&B/Hip-Hop radio editor, Ivory Jones. Artists and executives enshewing the traditional major-label route for the lure of independence will share their experiences and perspectives. Panelists include Baylo Entertainment COO Danny "Blaq" Tran, Brash Music &R executive Richard Dunn and artist Anthony David, and Blackout Music artist Rob Jackson.

The age-old dilemma of navigating the industry’s financial and legal maze is the focal point of "Cents and Sensibility," which is sponsored by the Recording Academy. Sharing their expertise will be Walter Coulter of American Express; Rasheed Muhammad, a VP with SunTrust Banks; and Sean Glover, director of royalty administration for SoundExchange. Attorney Kendall Minter will be the moderator.

Discussing the appeal and staying power of the Latin reggae/toasting hybrid "reggaeton" will be Gus Lopez of Machete Music, GoldStar Music artist Hector "El Bambino" and Perfect Image Records' Anthony Perez. Leading the discussion will be Billboard R&B/Hip-Hop charts manager Raphael George.

The escalating partnership between music and corporate America will be illuminated during the "Branding Power" panel that kicks off the conference’s second day. Moderator Erin Patton, president of the Mastermind Group, will delve into how to secure and maximize branding liaisons with fellow panelists Scott Hunter Smith, director of the Coca-Cola global brand team, and eFashion Solutions’ Edward P. Foy Jr., who works with such clothing lines as Sean Jean and Phat Farm.

Terry Bello, label entrepreneur and founder of Groovenation/Soul Lounge, will guide "The Digital Dialogue.

Fun in the Sun pool party with DJ Ruckus at the Buckhead Grand.

A conference first will be the "Expert Conversation" session that opens the third and final day. To give attendees more direct interaction with industry professionals, this workshop will provide the chance for them to query a host of experts at tables set up throughout the room. Among the pros who'll be on hand: HITCO Music’s Shawn Holliday and songwriters/producer Sean Garrett, Fontana Distribution executives Chris Ayers and Steve Pritchett, songwriter Gordon Chambers, Family Tree Entertainment’s Blue Williams, J. Sharpe Agency owner Jennifer Williams, SESAC director James Leach and Rockstar Image president John Battaglia Jr.

"The Teen Beat 411," moderated by the author of this story, winds up the conference. Digging into what makes teens click musically is the subject matter. The panelists include Brian Vickers, a member of the Recording Academy’s What’s the Download interactive advisory board.

For more information, go to billboardevents.com.

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LIL JON, 50 CENT, KEYS LEAD FINALISTS

BY IVORY M. JONES

This year’s list of finalists for the Billboard/American Urban Radio Networks R&B/Hip-Hop Awards contains a smorgasbord of talent. The crux sound of Atlanta is alive and well again this year, while the West Coast reminds audiences that it is not too far behind.

The King of Chunk, Jonathan "Lil Jon" Smith, leads the list with an impressive seven nominations, while New Yorkers Alicia Keys and 50 Cent come in at a very close second with six nominations each.

Several of this year’s finalists are no strangers to fame—five nominations go to Usher, Destiny’s Child garners four, Snoop Dogg and Eminem nab three apiece, and Mariah Carey has one.

However, several newcomers established themselves on the charts this year, proving that they can hold their own against the vets. "American Idol" winner Fantasia and controversy-prone rapper the Game earn three nods each. Ciara’s debut landed two noms, while Kanye West protégé John Legend receives one.

The awards honor the genres’ most popular albums, songs, artists and contributors, as determined by actual sales and radio airplay data on the weekly Billboard charts. Finalists are chosen based on the performance of recordings on the Billboard R&B/Hip-Hop and Rap charts during the one-year period from the May 29.
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LIL' JON & THE EAST SIDE BOYZ (seven)

Barry J. Brown, J.R. & Big Sam of the East Side Boyz, continued to work fans into a frenzy with the 2004 release of "Crunk Juice" on BME/VTV.

The album debuted at No. 1 on the Top Independent Albums chart and included "Lovers and Friends," a midtempo groove featuring Usher and Ludacris that logged 28 weeks on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts. "Crunk Juice" also spawned the club hit "What U Gon' Do," featuring Lil' Scrappy, which climbed to No. 3 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales chart.

Lil' Jon was also nominated in the Top Producers and Top Songwriters categories for his work on such tracks as Brooke Valentine's "Girlfight," Trillville's "Some Cut" and Ciara's "Goodies."

50 CENT (six)

Earlier this year, 50 Cent saw his stake in the world of hip-hop rise as his sophomore album, "The Massacre," spent four weeks perched atop the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and Top Rap Albums charts. The Shady/AFTERMATH/Interscope release sold 1.14 million units in a four-day period, besting his previous sales record set in 2003 when his debut, "Get Rich or Die Tryin'," sold 872,000 during a similar four-day stretch.

Such hits as "Candy Shop," "Just a Lil Bit" and "Disco Inferno" reached Nos. 1, 2 and 4, respectively, on the Billboard Hot 100 Airplay chart. The controversial rapper (aka Curtis Jackson) also cemented his throne on the charts by appearing on former protege the Game's multiplatinum album, "The Documentary," which debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200.

ALICIA KEYS (six)

The 25-year-old New York native surpasses her five finalist nods in last year's competition by netting six this year's. The Grammy Award-winning artist continued her reign over the music charts with "My Boo," her duet with Usher, and "Diary," featuring Tony! Toni! Tone! Both singles remained in the top three on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart for five straight weeks.


She is also up for Top Songwriters and Top Producers honors.

USHER (five)

Spurred by the mega-succes of his fifth studio album, "Confections," Usher released a special edition of the album on LaFace/Zomba that featured one of his biggest hits to date, "My Boo," featuring Alicia Keys. The single swiftly rose to No. 1 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, where it perched for three weeks.

"Carked Up," the infectious fifth single from the album, helped the Tenenass native tighten his stronghold when it placed him at No. 13 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. His collaboration with Lil' Jon and Ludacris, "Lovers and Friends," returned the aspiring businessman to the top of the charts, placing him at No. 1 on Hot Rap Tracks.

TERROR SQUAD (four)

This time last year, Terror Squad was burning up the airwaves and causing clubgoers to rush dancefloors with what became 2004's summer anthem, "Lean Back." The Scott Storch-produced hit catapulted Terror Squad members Fat Joe, Remy Ma, Tony Sunshine, Armaggeddon and Prospect to the forefront. The song remained on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart for 41 consecutive weeks.

Terror Squad's album "True Story" on SRC/Universal/UMG debuted atop the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart. "Take Me Home," the follow-up to "Lean Back," peaked at No. 19 on Hot Rap Tracks.

DESTINY'S CHILD (four)

Although many were ready to write the trio off once Beyoncé tasted solo success, the ladies of Destiny's Child proved that they had more in store when they released "Destiny Fulfilled" on Sony/Columbia. The album peaked at No. 1 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart three weeks after its release thanks to lead single " Lose My Breath," which entered the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart at No. 34.

Such subsequent singles as "Soldier" featuring T.I. and Lil' Wayne, "Cater 2 U" and "Girl" peaked at Nos. 3, 5 and 10, respectively.

Incidentally, the threesome is up against its own frontwoman, Beyoncé: Both are in the running for the award for Top R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales.

SNOOP DOGG (three)

More than 10 years after he first hit the scene, Snoop Dogg is proving that he still has what it takes. He ruled the airwaves last fall with "Drop It Like It's Hot," featuring Pharrell. The song jumped to No. 1 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs, Hot Rap Tracks and Top R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay.

His album "R&G (Rhythm & Gangsta): The Masterpiece" released on Doggystyle/Geffen, was hailed as one of his best to date, and peaked on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart at No. 4.

EMINEM (three)

Everyone's favorite dysfunctional rapper made a triumphant return to the scene when he released his appropriately titled fourth solo album, "Encore." The Shady/Aftermath/Interscope set debuted at the pinnacle of the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart, and has spent the past 14 weeks nestled comfortably on Hot Rap Albums.

Singles "Mockingbird," "Encore" and "Like Toy Soldiers" have all been on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs simultaneously "Ass Like That," accompanied by its controversial video, is preparing to slik its way up the charts: it debuted at No. 20 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales.

THE GAME (three)

The West Coast-based rapper (aka Jayceon Taylor) created quite a buzz with his debut single, "Hate It or Love It," featuring then partner in crime 50 Cent. The single hit No. 1 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs, Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay and Hot Rap Tracks charts, helping propel his Aftermath/G-Unit/Interscope debut, "The Documentary," to the pinnacle of the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and Hot Rap Albums charts.

A much-publicized split with 50 Cent, who executive-produced "The Documentary," only helped spike its sales.

FANTASIA (three)

After wowing fans with her performances on "American Idol," Fantasia won their praises with her J Records debut, "Free Yourself." The album peaked at No. 2 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart, and has remained on the list for the past 11 weeks. So far it has yielded the High Point, N.C.-native four top 20 singles on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs: "Baby Mama," "I Believe," "Truth Is" and "Free Yourself."

T.I. (two)

After piquing interest with his 2003 album, "Trap Muzik," Atlanta rapper T.I. cemented his stak as King of the South with his 2004 Grand Hustle/Atlantic release, "Urban Legend." The album has logged 31 weeks on the Top R&B Albums chart, thanks largely in part to the Swiss Beatz-produced single "Bring 'Em Out," which peaked at No. 6. The follow-up single, "ASAP," has been riding high on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart.

CIARA (two)

Ciara has proved to be virtually unstoppable with her fancy footwork and catchy dance tunes since releasing her debut single, "Goodies," which made itself at home on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart for 36 weeks. Her Shmuff Musicline/laFace album held just as much appeal, checking in at No. 1 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart.

Nearly a year later, she is still going strong—her third...
single, "Oh," featuring Ludacris, zipped up the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart, peaking at No. 2.

MARIO (two)
Teen heartthrob Mario has come a long way since his 2002 debut single, "Braid My Hair." In 2004, he returned, minus the braids and with a more mature request in mind. The Scott Storch-produced "Let Me Love You" garnered major spins on radio, eventually landing the artist at the top of the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart for eight consecutive weeks.

The mega-success of the single helped his third Street/Atlantic album, "Get Lifted," West, after John Legend hooked up with Mariah Carey. Apparently the two fans shared the same label, G.O.O.D. Music/Columbia, and dropped one of the most anticipated albums of the year. "Get Lifted" debuted at No. 1 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart.

Fans were drawn to Legend's church-influenced voice and honest lyrical style that he showcased on his first album, "My First Time." He teamed up with fellow New Orleans native Juvenile. The duo's first single, "Slow Motion," which claimed pole position on the Hot Rap Tracks chart after 13 weeks. The single, which was featured on Juvenile's Cash Money Records album "Disco the Great," also climbed to No. 2 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart.

PATTI LABELLE (one)
Patti Labelle's timelessness is undisputable. She teamed up with Mr. Biggs (aka Ron Isley) on "Gotta Go Solo," one of her most successful singles in recent years. Music fans responded to the catchy hit "Waiting For the Parade," which sent it off, helping the Def Soul Classics single reach No. 1 in four weeks on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales chart and sending the album "Timeless Journey" to No. 5 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart. First-time nominee Clara and Eminem get multiple nods.

YING YANG TWINS (one)
The past year has been great for the Atlanta-based duo. Ying Yang Twins' 2004 Collipark/TVT album, "My Brother and Me," peaked at No. 4 on the Top Rap Albums chart, thanks to its infectious single "Salt Shaker." Just a few months later, the duo's follow-up with "Wait (The Whisper Song)," which would be the first single from its 2005 album, "U.S.A.: United State of Atlanta." The song hit No. 4 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales chart three months before the album was released.

JUVENILE (one)
Despite Sauce Slim's untimely death, his memory lived on in 2004 with his collaboration with fellow New Orleans native Juvenile. The duo's first single, "Slow Motion," which claimed pole position on the Hot Rap Tracks chart after 13 weeks. The single, which was featured on Juvenile's Cash Money Records album "Myth the Great," also climbed to No. 2 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay chart.

MARIAH CAREY (one)
After her last two albums had lackluster sales, Mariah Carey returned with a bang. Since "The Emancipation of Mimi" debuted at No. 1 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart, it has yet to fall below No. 3. Her good luck can mostly be attributed to her hit single "We Belong Together," which peaked at No. 1 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs just four weeks after its debut.

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TWINS ON TOP
OF THE WORLD
WITH NEW ALBUM
BY RASHAUN HALL

The Ying Yang Twins are on top of the music world right now with their TVT Records set "U.S.A.: United State of Atlanta," and the infectious hit single "W-a-t-t (The Whisper Song)." The track helped the duo of D-Roc and Kaine score its first No. 1 album when "U.S.A." topped the Billboard Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart in July. But do not let the group's crunk rhythm fool you. The Twins are about more than just tearing up the club, and "U.S.A." proves just that with a collection of songs that is inspiring and entertaining. "We had to grow with [our fans] but still stay the same Ying Yang that they know," D-Roc says of the group's newfound success. "That's why on this album we matured."

But how did the Atlanta-based duo become known for all things crunk?

Named after the Chinese symbol for light and dark (yin and yang), the Twins joined the hip-hop game in 1998 when DJ Smurf (aka Mr. Collipark) invited them to appear on his album "Dead Crunk." The song the Twins recorded, "One on One," was their first. Later that year, future labelmate Lil Jon featured the duo's "True City Thugs" on his "So So Def Bass All-Stars Compilation Vol. III." The success of those two songs on Atlanta prompted the Twins to release the double-sided single "Whistle While You Work/Bring Yo Aze Outdoor" in 2000. It sold 200,000 units, which was enough for the Twins to score their first Billboard chart hit. The single peaked at No. 16 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. The track became the lead single to their Universal debut, "Thug Walkin,'" that same year.

Two years later, the Twins left Universal for Koch and released their sophomore set, "Alley: The Return of the Ying Yang Twins." The album sold well, thanks in part to the hit "Say I Y I Y I." Soon after, Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz invited the Twins to record "Get Low" with them for their album "Kings of Crunk." And the rest, as they say, is hip-hop history. "Get Low" became a summer anthem, reaching No. 2 on The Billboard Hot 100. In 2003, the duo joined TVT and released "Me & My Brother," which became its first platinum album. The set featured "Get Low" and the hit "Salt Shaker." It debuted at No. 4 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart.

This journey has brought them to the success that is "U.S.A." and to this year's R&B/Hip-Hop Conference as the featured guests at the Q&A session. The duo will be joined by their producer/CEO of Collipark Records, Mr. Collipark.

KHAN, FROM
‘EVERY WOMAN’
TO R&B ICON
BY GAIL MITHCEL

"I'm every woman, it's all in me." Songwriters Nick Ashford & Valerie Simpson hit the proverbial nail on the head when they penned "I'm Every Woman" for Chaka Khan in 1973.

Nearly 30 years after the song became Khan's first solo R&B chart-topper, the opening line still rings true for the singer. She not only remains an R&B/pop icon, she also logs credits as a songwriter, author, actor, foundation organizer and chocolatier.

At this year's R&B/Hip-Hop Awards show, Khan will receive the R&B Founders Award.

Early Chakalites, as her fans are called, got goosebumps in 1973 when Khan's fiery, raw vocals provided the edgy accent for Rufus, a group that included keyboardist Kevin Murphy, formerly of rock band American Breed, and drummer Andre Fischer. Khan, who was only 18 years old at the time she joined Rufus, was born Yvette Marie Stevens in Great Lakes, Ill. Even as a young girl, she was in tune with her musical persona—by age 11, she had formed her first group, the Crystallettes. Before hooking up with Rufus, Khan worked with two other groups, Lyfe and the Babysitters. Rufus notched its first crossover hit in 1973 with the funky, Stevie Wonder-written "Tell Me Something Good." A chain of subsequent hits followed, including "You Got the Love," "Sweet Thing" and "Do You Love What You Feel." Opting to tread solo in 1978, Khan—under the direction of Arif Mardin—scored a home run her first time out with "Woman." That was followed in 1981 with a second album, "R&B No. 1. What's a Girl Gonna Do for Me." But it was her 1984 rap-inspired take on Prince's "I Feel for You," featuring Melle Mel and Wonder, that catapulted her back into mainstream consciousness. That was followed in 1989 by her duet with Ray Charles on the Quincy Jones-helmed "I'll Be Good to You."

"I never content to stay in one place musically. Khan is equally at home doing jazz standards with the likes of Chick Corea ("Echoes of an Era"), pop standards—she sang with the London Symphony Orchestra on her latest album, "Classikaini”—and children's songs, recording the theme song for PBS series "Reading Rainbow."


And she has even indulged her sweet tooth by creating Chakalates, a line of chocolates sold at Neiman Marcus.

In addition to this, the multiple Grammy Award winner's enduring musical legacy continues to be a creative compass for contemporary R&B, hip-hop and pop artists. Kanye West sampled her "Through the Fire" for his 2001 hit "Through the Wire," and Whitney Houston and Mary J. Blige both put their stamp on Khan's signature song "I'm Every Woman."

"Music is my calling," Khan says, "and making a career of music has been a tremendous blessing to me. I am grateful to Billboard for honoring me. Feeling this kind of love and appreciation for my talent is truly humbling."
The chart recaps for the R&B/hip-hop spotlight are year-to-date from the Dec. 4, 2004, issue (the beginning of the 2005 chart year) through the July 9, 2005, issue. Recaps for Top R&B/hip-hop Albums are based on sales information compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. Recaps for Hot R&B/hip-hop Songs are based on a combination of Nielsen SoundScan sales information and gross radio audience impressions monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, while recaps for Hot Adult R&B Tracks are compiled using radio airplay detected by Nielsen BDS. Titles receive credit for sales and/or airplay accumulated during each week they appear on the pertinent chart.

This recap was compiled by rock charts manager Anthony Colombo with assistance from R&B/hip-hop charts manager Raphael George.

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### Top R&B/hip-hop Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Imprint</th>
<th>Charted Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50 Cent</td>
<td>Shady</td>
<td>Aftermath/Interscope</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Destiny's Child</td>
<td>Destiny Fulfill</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Eminem</td>
<td>Shady</td>
<td>Aftermath/Interscope</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>Get Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Game</td>
<td>Shady</td>
<td>Aftermath/G-Unit/Interscope</td>
<td>Get Low</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lil Jon &amp; the East Side Boyz</td>
<td>BME/TVT</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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### Top R&B/hip-hop Album Imprints

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<tr>
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<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Columbia (14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Aftermath (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Shady (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>BME (3)</td>
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### Top R&B/hip-hop Album Labels

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Interscope (19)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sony Music (20)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Island Def Jam Music Group (18)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Universal Motown Records Group (28)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Zomba (19)</td>
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### Hot R&B/hip-hop Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Let Me Love You</td>
<td>Mario</td>
<td>3rd Street/J/RMG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lovers &amp; Friends</td>
<td>LL Cool J &amp; The East Side Boyz</td>
<td>Usher &amp; Ludacris/BME/TVT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Drop It Like It's Hot</td>
<td>Snoop Dogg</td>
<td>Pharrell</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Truth Is</td>
<td>Fantasia</td>
<td>J/RMG</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>How We Do</td>
<td>Destiny's Child</td>
<td>Columbia/SUM</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Soldier</td>
<td>Destiny's Child</td>
<td>Columbia/SUM</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Slow Down</td>
<td>Bobby Valentino</td>
<td>J/RIDJMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ordinary People</td>
<td>John Legend</td>
<td>G.O.O.D./Columbia/SUM</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2 Step</td>
<td>Missy Elliott</td>
<td>Shonuff/MusicLine/LaFace/Zomba</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Some Cut</td>
<td>Trillville</td>
<td>BME/Warner Bros.</td>
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### Hot Adult R&B Tracks

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Truth Is</td>
<td>Fantasia</td>
<td>J/RMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forever, For Always</td>
<td>Lalah Hathaway</td>
<td>GRP/Verve</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>I Can't Stop Loving You</td>
<td>Kem</td>
<td>Motown/UMRG</td>
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<td>Brian McKnight</td>
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<td>Whatever</td>
<td>Jill Scott</td>
<td>Hidden Beach/Epic/SUM</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Let Me Love You</td>
<td>Mario</td>
<td>3rd Street/J/RMG</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Ordinary People</td>
<td>John Legend</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Diary</td>
<td>Alicia Keys</td>
<td>J/RIDJMG</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Does It Feel?</td>
<td>Anita Baker</td>
<td>Blue Note/Virgin</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Think About You</td>
<td>Luther Vandross</td>
<td>J/RMG</td>
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</tbody>
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Mario: chart-topper and award finalist.
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MIAMI’S SIDEMEN KEEP THE BEAT


Using Miami-based musicians is a shift for the Grammy Award-winning George, who says he would not have recorded a tropical album here five years ago because the level of musicianship for the genre did not exist. Now, the caliber and versatility of Miami musicians is so strong, he is exporting them to other cities. George’s experience underscores the perception of many that it is an especially fertile time for Miami and its session men because of their ability to play virtually every genre of music. While their talent in playing a number of Latin styles has never been in doubt, what has increased markedly is these musicians’ activity in mainstream pop and beyond.

“I’m recording for Ricardo Arjona, and just finished the Barbra Streisand record,” says percussionist Richard Bravo, who worked on the Barry Gibb-produced Streisand album (Billboard, Feb. 26) alongside elite Miami-based players like drummer Lee Levin, guitarist Dan Warner and bassist Julio Hernández.

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6 QUESTIONS

with CARA LEWIS

by RAY WADDELL

What is a nice Jewish girl from the Bronx doing mixing it up with 50 Cent and Lil Jon? Serving as the premier booking agent in the urban market, that’s what William Morris Agency senior VP Cara Lewis began her career as a receptionist at the Norby Walters Agency. Based in the New York office, she joined WMA 16 years ago. In addition to 50 Cent and Lil Jon, her clients include Eminem, LL Cool J, Ludacris, Oxnard and Alicia Keys.

Q: Can urban music be as compelling in arenas and stadiums as it is in clubs and on CD and video?
A: Yes, but artists really need to invest in their live shows in order to have longevity in the touring arena. Production values and artist behavior play a large part. What makes a show compelling isn’t necessarily the genre of music, it’s the production and the overall fan experience that sets it apart and makes it interesting.

Q: Why haven’t rap concerts grossed in general lived up to the promise that the genre delivers at retail and radio?
A: Ticket prices, noncreative packaging, artist performances. Artists also are not being grown and nurtured into headliner status before touring as headliners. One platinum record does not mean you can sell 20,000 seats. That goes for any genre.

Q: What is the state of hip-hop touring?
A: It depends. Alicia Keys sold out every venue practically on the day the shows went on sale and added multiple dates in many markets. Jill Scott toured 36 theaters this spring and sold out every venue, with very limited airplay. Ludacris consistently does business. Usher and Kanye (West) did phenomenal business. John Legend, Common and Ty contain are having a successful run. It’s about putting together the right package, playing the right size venues and knowing the marketplace.

Q: On paper, Eminem/50 Cent looks like a lock for biggest rap tour ever, but reports from the road indicate that business on the Anger Management Touring outings has been uneven. Is this the case, and if so, why?
A: Anger Management is doing extremely well. The show is a statement of hits, talent and artists investing in order to give back to the fans.

Q: Why has urban music been more successful at developing new artists than its pop counterpart?
A: It’s about creating that street base and credibility before serving to the masses. So many of these artists are on mixtapes and doing gigs long before their album comes out. So they are somewhat established at that point. It becomes more about the artist than a hit single. Take Ciara, for example. Besides selling 2 million albums and having three bona fide singles, she also has an tremendous amount of street credibility. She has already finished a movie, and is gearing up to tour with 50 Cent, Ludacris, Lil Jon and Mike Jones. It’s about covering all bases, not just about relying on a hit record. Urban acts capitalize on the power of their relationships.

Q: What is the biggest misconception about live urban music?
A: That it’s a business filled with thugs. This is serious business, and I’m consistently impressed with the professionalism, creativity and passion I’m surrounded by.

MIAMI’S SIDEMEN (cont.)

from pp31

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Head Of The Class
Kike Santander Returns To Reality Show "Operación Triunfo"

Producer/writer Kike Santander is serving as headmaster of the artists academy for Spain's mega-popular music reality show "Operación Triunfo."

The Colombian-born Santander, who is based in Miami, is in Spain until the end of September, when the fourth edition of the show finishes its run. It began airing June 30.

"Operación Triunfo" made history when it premiered in 2002 (prior to "American Idol") and broke all ratings records in Spain. In this year's edition, 17 finalists, out of more than 21,000 who auditioned throughout Spain, live in an "academy" where they learn the art of performing and compete for recording contracts.

In his capacity as academy director, he oversees "the songs, the rehearsals, their curriculum, everything they're taught," says Santander, who is also chairman of the Latin Recording Academy.

Santander's affiliation with "Operación Triunfo," which airs on Spain's Telecinco channel, goes back to 2002. He produced the album for finalist David Bisbal, who has gone on to become a major Spanish-language recording star. Santander also produced Bisbal's second album.

Santander has also produced albums for "Operación Triunfo" finalist Bustamante.

GOOD PENMANSHIP: EMI Music Publishing has signed an administration deal with Gustavo Santander Songs, the publishing company for Kike Santander's brother. Gustavo Santander has written songs for Cristian Castro ("Azúr") and David Bisbal ("Bulería").

In other publishing news, Mexico-based songwriter/pro-ducer Aureo Baqueiro has signed an administration deal with Warner/Chappell Mexico. The deal encompasses Baqueiro's own songs as well as those signed to his publishing company, Brava Songs, which includes a number of other writers.

Baqueiro is completing the new album by Mexican sibling pop duo Ha*Ash and is producing new material for Sin Bandera. Both are Sony artists. He also produced an album by new Warner Mexico rock/pop group Motel.

IN BRIEF: Reggaetón and rap will meet at the upcoming Latin Rap Conference, set for Sept. 20 in New York. This marks the third installment of the LRC, which is headed by Jesse Perez (aka radio personality Skystylo), Rich Isaacson and Jerry Blair of Fuerte Group. The board of directors consists of a coalition of rap and reggaetón movers and shakers.

The LRC started in San Diego last year, but members wanted to expand beyond the West Coast. "Reggaetón will certainly be a part of it," says Isaacson, who says the LRC encourages participation from Anglo and Latin labels. The conference includes showcases. For more information, go to latinrapconference.com.

Annister Bonnet, former director of press and publicity for eXp Network, has launched her own marketing, publicity and consultancy firm. Bonnet Media Group will serve Hispanic and non-Hispanic artists in the entertainment industry. For more information, go to bonnetmedia.com.
Remixers Stroke Pussycat Dolls ‘Don’t Cha’

Just like Natalie Imbruglia famously did with Ednaswap’s “Torn” in 1997, the Pussycat Dolls have taken a great little song about the sublime truths of relationships and made it into easy-to-swallow top 40 fodder.

The song is “Don’t Cha,” a CoCo La Pinto production originally recorded by little-known artist Tori Alamaze. And then a range of solid remixes taught it to dance.

The package, A&R’d by Interscope’s Juan Martinez, sat atop the Dance Club Play chart for three consecutive weeks. The last time that happened was in 2002, with Mark’s “Dark Beat.”

There are supporting versions from the king of glitzy guitar, Kaskade, and the ever-reliable DJ Dan. But Chi-town vet Ralphie Rosarito’s mix is the attention hog: It has been added to what seems like every dance music radio station (terrestrial and satellite) and is No. 2 on the Dance Airplay chart.

And soon the Dolls—a Spice Girls–way-of-Vegas burlesque troupe led by former Eden’s Crush frontwoman Nicole Ray—will start to perform its mix on the road.

While the controlled regret of Alamaze’s slow-groove original is entirely lacking in the Dolls’ gayerating version, the brazen lyric—“Don’t cha wish your girlfriend was hot like me”—seems very at home on the dancefloor. “It was always a great song,” Martinez says.

MARK THE DATE: Are you getting ready for Sept. 19? That is the kickoff of this year’s three-day Billboard Dance Music Summit, held at New York’s Union Square Ballroom. Panelists include DJ Rap, Armanini’s Patrick Dody and Warner Bros. Records’ Orlando Puello. Also taking place will be the induction of a new set of legends into the Dance Music Hall of Fame during a ceremony at New York’s Manhattan Center. Can’t wait to know who’s getting the nod this year? You don’t have to—we’ve got the exclusive.

The 2005 artist inductees are Chic, Gloria Gaynor and Sylvester.

Songs entering the hall are “Stayin’ Alive” (the Bee Gees), “Got to Be Real” (Cheryl Lynn), “Good Times” (Chic), “I Will Survive” (Gloria Gaynor) and “Disco Inferno” (the Trammps).

Francois K. Frankie Knuckles and John “Jellybean” Benitez enter the hall as DJs. Kenny Gamble & Leon Huff, Nile Rodgers & Bernard Edwards and Quincy Jones are this year’s producer honorees. And Francois K. will be recognized a second time, as 2005’s sole remix inductee.

“The Dance Music Hall of Fame was founded to honor the pioneers of this overlooked genre. To recognize the significant accomplishments made by the DJs, remixers, producers and artists,” DMHF board member Eddie O’Loughlin says. “(Dance staples like) long versions, remixes and mixdown radio were all developed by our nominees.”

QUICK HITS: Producer Tim Rey has remixed his own “Releventless,” the inventive instrumental that defined DJ Junior Vasquez’s hard style during his 1997-2001 residency at New York superclub Twilo. “Releventless 2005” includes a new vocal by Verenica and a more straightforward rhythm. Rex is shopping it now... Nightclub document “Maestro,” which features pioneering DJ Francois Grasso’s last interview before his death, and grainy yet thrilling footage from inside the legendary Paradise Garage, finally got its double-DVD release July 19. The soundtrack, released separately, marks the first CD release for previously lost tracks like Martin Circus’ “Disco Circus,” which was adrift without a known licensor for 15 years. Both are distributed by Sanctuary. The Deep Dish boys recently completed a remix of Paul van Dyk’s “The Other Side,” due out on Positive in early August. Warner Bros. is planning to release remixes of soul powerhouse Leela James’ first single, “Music.” Eddie Baez, L.E.X., Dave Hernandez and Richard Morel all contributed versions.

Groves Puts Beat In Beatitudes

Singer Feels Album’s Subject Matter Should Have Broad Appeal

In the previous Higher Ground, we took a look at the inspiration behind Shara Groves’ new album, “White Flag.” Released July 12, it debuted at No. 8 on the Billboard Top Christian Albums chart. Inspired by the beatitudes, Groves feels the album’s subject matter should have broad appeal because of the relevance of those scriptures to different cultures.

“Everyone from Gandhi to Malcolm X to Martin Luther King, all kinds of moral teachers have looked at [the beatitudes] for a practical guide on how we can live life and get along with each other,” Groves says. “The Sermon on the Mount is one part of Christianity that people from different backgrounds tend to...”

“White Flag” is musically engaging and lyrically thought-provoking. Serving as his own producer for the first time, Groves understood the need to make the accessible even though he was dealing with weighty subject matter.

“I feel like it has enough candy in it to help the medicine go down, that it’s not going to come across like a theological lecture,” he says. “If you want some fun music, we’ve got that. But if you want to... you can go a little deeper with it.”

“I feel very stretched. I felt like I had settled for a mediocre, religious, safe existence,” Groves admits. “I need things like the beatitudes to push me beyond that and to show me what else is out there. And what else is out there is a life of discipleship—not just believing in God, but following God.”

Groves and his road manager, Brian Seay, recently launched the booking firm Hungmingbird Agency, with the long-term goal of mentoring independent artists. He will begin his first tour this fall with openers Kendall Payne and Jason Morant.

ON THE ROAD: Newly signed Rocktown act Reuben Morgan will hit the road this summer leading more than a dozen worship events in the United States. The Aussie worship leader’s U.S. debut, “World Through Your Eyes,” will be released Sept. 13. Morgan is co-pastor of worship at Australia’s famed Hillsong church.

Steven Curtis Chapman and MercyMe are teaming for a Christmas tour slated to hit 20 markets this winter. The trek begins Nov. 25 in Greenville, S.C., and wraps Dec. 20 in Indianapolis.

Chapman and MercyMe will be promoting their holiday projects—Chapman’s Sparrow Records release “All Really Want for Christmas” and MercyMe’s INO Records set “The Christmas Sessions” are due Sept. 27.

A DREAM COME TRUE: Plants are under way for the Gospel Music Channel’s “Gospel Dream 2005,” the latest entry in the TV talent competition phenomenon.

Actorg/comedian Jonathan Slocumb will host the show, and singer/songwriter Kelby Price, music journalist Andry Argykakis and Zomba Gospel president Paul Siegel have been tapped as judges.

The show will give acts from various styles—including traditional and contemporary soul, pop, rock and R&B—a chance to win a record deal.

Starting in August, auditions will be held in Atlanta, Dallas, New Orleans, St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit and Memphis. Those will conclude with a semifinal round and season finale, both to be held in Atlanta.

Tangible Vision has been hired to produce “Gospel Dream 2005.” Ford will be the lead sponsor. Black Diamond is the exclusive cosmetics sponsor of the show.
Sharp’s New Tack
Artist’s Indie Release Answers The Question, “Where Did He Go?”

Kevin Sharp came out of the gate swinging. His debut album on 143/Asylum Records, released in 1996, went gold. The first three of his six charting singles went top five, including “Nobody Knows,” which spent four weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot Country Songs chart in 1997.

Then, after two albums, Sharp seemed to disappear from the country music scene. His record label folded, and he was shifted to sister label Warner Bros. Records, where he says he sat around for a year-and-a-half before finally extending himself from his contract with it becoming "nothing was happening.”

Now, the 34-year-old is trying to stage a comeback on the tiny Nashville indie Cupid Records. Sharp’s first album for that label, “Make A Wish,” was released July 26. He has also published a book, “Tragedy’s Gift,” detailing the teenage battle with cancer that ultimately led him to a music career.

Sharp says he has had a hard time explaining to his fans who don’t understand the music business just where he has been.

“I never went anywhere,” he says. “I was still making music and writing songs. It’s just that nobody got to hear it.”

“Playing music and getting your music heard is the only thing that keeps closing your life kind of goals turned upside down,” he continues. “With all the different changes going on in Nashville in the last several years I got caught within that vicious cycle. It’s taken me this long to find a place to land.”

Sharp is glad to be on an independent label, but not for the “artistic freedom” reasons most artists cite when they move from a major.

He says producer Jerry Copit helped him rediscover the joy of making music in the studio. “I didn’t have a very pleasurable experience with the last record I made, mainly in the creative process,” he says.

Kevin Sharp never stopped making music. What he wanted this time was “more than anything not [to be] lied to.”

With “Make A Wish,” Sharp says that recording it was so pleasurable that it restored a lot of his hope in the business. “I hear guys talking about fighting for their creative rights, and I don’t want to sound like one of those guys,” he says. “It’s more about wanting to enjoy the process than about me wanting to have control.”

“Make A Wish” includes 10 new songs, a remake of “Nobody Knows” and 11 bonus tracks containing the album’s music without vocals.

The album’s first single, “Your Love Reaches Me,” did make a significant splash at radio, and the label is now working the follow-up, “I Think I’ll Stay.”

Sharp is anxious for this album to be successful, noting: “You only have so many shots at this before people are going to write you off.” To set up “Make A Wish,” Sharp went on an extensive radio tour. But his best pre-release exposure came from a July 18 appearance on the syndicated “Dr. Phil” show in an episode with a theme about the power of music. Sharp credits music with helping save his life.

The new album’s title track was included on a Walt Disney Records compilation CD that was released in May as a fund-raiser for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Sharp is a national spokesman for the group, which grants wishes for ill children. He is in good company on the compilation, “Walt Disney Presents: Wishes,” which also features tracks from Elton John, James Taylor, Bette Midler and Barbra Streisand.

Since Sharp is also a motivational speaker, he works his music into his many speaking engagements, and he loves that aspect of his professional life. “Unlike playing in a club (for) a bunch of drunks,” he says, “people hear every lyric and every word I say.”

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LEGAL NOTICE
Notice of Public Auction – Sale of Collateral

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: By virtue of the occurrence of a Termination Event pursuant to that certain Loan Agreement dated as of February 19, 1999, as amended, between Prudential Securities Credit Corp., LLC (the “Lender”), TVT Catalog Enterprises, LLC (the “Borrower”), TVT Music II, LLC, White Rhino Music II, LLC and Duchmanstas II, LLC (collectively the “SPE Subsidiaries”) and guarantees with the Borrower, collectively the “Debtors”), the Lender, pursuant to that certain Security Agreement dated as of February 19, 1999, as amended, between the Lender and the Debtors, will sell on August 17, 2005 at 2:00 p.m., at the offices of Proskauer Rose LLP, 1585 Broadway, New York, NY 10036, at Public Auction to the highest bidder, conducted by Lisa Weiss, as the auctioneer (the “Auctioneer”), the following property (the “Collateral”):

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DATED: July 5, 2005

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60/15 Prudential Investment Management, Inc.
Two Gateway Center – 7th Floor
Newark, NJ 07102
Attn: Edward M. Schwartz, Jr.

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U.K. Finds Hard-Fi Hard To Beat

West London alternative rock quartet Hard-Fi is fulfilling the promise shown at its South by Southwest appearance in March with U.K. hit single “Hard To Beat” and debut album “Stars of CCTV.” The single entered the Official U.K. Charts Co. listing July 2 at No. 9. The album, whose reggae-referenced rock has drawn comparisons to the Clash, came out in the United Kingdom July 4 on Necessary Atlantic. The OCC says the set sold 10,200 copies on its first day of release.

“Stars of CCTV” will hit overseas markets in September through a worldwide licensing deal with Atlantic. Hard-Fi’s first stateside release, the “Cash Machine” EP, arrived July 12. The album will follow later this year.

Band manager Warren Clarke, a former A&R exec at London Records and Edel, founded Necessary in 2001. “I didn’t mind starving for three years to be able to do something I wanted,” he says. Necessary’s other releases are distributed in the United Kingdom by Geneapool/Universal.


PEACE IN ASIA: A remix of “Give Peace a Chance” leads off a new Asia Pacific-only compilation of John Lennon’s solo work. Issued regionally July 11 on EMI, “John Lennon: Peace, Love and Truth” comprises 17 Lennon tracks including the remix, plus Yoko Ono’s “Listen the Snow is Falling.”

The concept dates from July 2004, when EMI Music South-East Asia executive director Hans Ebert and Terry Lee, leader of Singapore-based EMI act Parking lot Pimp, shared a Tokyo-Hong Kong flight. A discussion of Lennon’s commitment to peace sparked the idea of updating “Give Peace a Chance,” Ebert recalls. “I wrote to Yoko Ono and her lawyers, and they responded enthusiastically.”

Lee’s remix, released regionally July 4 as a single, adds lyrics composed and sung by several Asian acts in their own languages. Dubbed Voices of Asia, they include Parking Lot Pimp and labelmates Ronald Cheng (Hong Kong), Asuka Hayashi (Japan), Shaan (India), Junoon (Pakistan) and Alicia Pan (Taiwan).

Lee says the remix took six months to complete. “It was an honor to be part of something special,” he adds. “The song’s title still rings true today.”

The other tracks are previously released, apart from Ono’s own “Give Peace a Chance” remix.

JAMIROQUAI CALLING: English pop/funk outfit Jamiroquai has signed a marketing partnership with mobile-handset manufacturer Sony Ericsson. Under the deal, the company will be the main sponsor of the European leg of Jamiroquai’s upcoming world tour.

The partnership links with the global rollout of Sony Ericsson’s W300 Walkman phone and follows the June international release of Jamiroquai’s sixth album, “Dynamite” (Sony Music), through Sony BMG. In the United States, the album comes out Sept. 20 on Epic.

“Dynamite” entered the Billboard European Top 100 albums chart June 29 at No. 2. Sony BMG reports an initial global shipment of 750,000 units.

With four years gone by since previous album “A Funk Odyssey,” vocalist Jay Kay insists he’s “still got so much to prove. The bottom line is still love it. I love the thrill of seeing a track come together.”

The band’s 18-month world tour kicks off Sept. 7 in the United Kingdom. Booking is through ITB Internationally and the William Morris Agency in the United States. EMI Music Publishing handles publishing.

TEAIRRA MARI

The result? Songs that resonate as pages from the life of a young black female in urban America or what Teairra Mari terms “a girl’s dictionary.” “Make Her Feel Good,” already No. 10 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, confidently explains what a female wants emotionally from a male suitor.

Other songs reflect more personal issues. For example, second single “No Daddy” (co-written by the singer) addresses the artist growing up without a father. But rather than taking a sad tone, a defiant Teairra Mari sings over a club track. “She is rebellious here in the sense that she’s not going to internalize it, allow this to take her down or weep about it,” Roc-a-Fella Records VP/ senior VP of marketing Tracey Waples says. Jesse Terrero directed the “No Daddy” video, which Waples sums up as “‘Baby Boy’ the movie meets the film ‘Mean Girls.’”

The Def Jam machine is also revved up to deliver on Teairra Mari’s promise. To fortify her connection with the female 14-24 urban audience, Jay-Z and Def Jam have been hosting listening sessions in Los Angeles and other major markets. Helping to underwrite the promotional tour is Jay-Z’s fashion line Roc-a-Wear, whose fall 2005 campaign features Teairra Mari and other Roc-a-Fella artists.

Drawing its attendees from Roc-a-Wear’s consumer database as well as that of local radio stations, the listening sessions feature Teairra Mari discussing various album tracks.

Teairra Mari is also performing on Teen People magazine’s mall tour, which started in early July at the Mall of America in Minneapolis. Adding to the personal touch: Fans can e-mail the singer directly at teairramari@rocafelala.com.

“Teairra’s gift is she’s just a regular girl, not contrived,” Waples says. “Too many female artists are falling short of their potential—the songs and videos are bigger than them. We don’t want Teairra Mari to fall into that.”

Additional reporting by Michael Libby in Los Angeles.
PRODUCER SEAL PUTS HIS STAMP ON HITS

Manuel Seal Jr. is quite familiar with success. First there is the songwriter/producer's collaboration with Jermaine Dupri, a partnership responsible for such early Usher hits as "Nice & Slow" and "You Make Me Wanna..." plus Mariah Carey's "Always Be My Baby." Proving that lightning can strike more than twice, the duo also had two recent smash R&B/pop crossovers: Carey's "We Belong Together" and Usher and Alicia Keys' "My Boo." In fact, "My Boo" earned Seal a Grammy Award nomination this year.

However, on the eve of the February Grammy ceremony, Seal underwent a sobering experience: He was arrested in Fayetteville, Ga., for allegedly stealing used tires from a local shop. "We're going to trial on that in a minute," Seal says during a phone interview from Atlanta. "A bunch of nonsense is what it is. People will see there's way more to what went down." In the meantime, Seal is not letting the incident stop the music. His studio dance card includes the names Syleena Johnson, Ron Isley, Monica, Avant, Angie Stone and Musiq. For the last couple of years, Seal also has been developing international singer/songwriter Hannah Smith. Now based in Atlanta, Smith hails from the United Kingdom.

"Her music is some of everything," Seal says. "I call it world music, but it's just great songs."

Some may recall that six years ago Seal—signed with BMG Songs since 1997—secured a deal with Warner Bros. Records to start his own label, Seal Records. The roster included singer Lakeisha Wright and male quartet Touch, but the imprint folded before releasing anything. "Warner Bros. had too much going on at the time," Seal says. "That's a chapter I learned a lot from and lost a lot of money with... It costs money to develop artists, and that's what I learned with my label. You can only deal with (developing) one artist at a time.

Noting that he enjoys a challenge, Seal says he would like to work again with Aretha Franklin. His wish list also includes Whitney Houston. His ultimate aim, however, is to develop more R&B acts. "I would love for R&B to be hotter. I want to keep that momentum swinging."

QUICKIES: Songwriter Ne-Yo (Mario's No. 1 crossover hit "Let Me Love You") has inked a worldwide co-publishing deal with Zomba Music Publishing. The young talent is currently collaborating with Beyoncé on two projects: the soundtrack to "The Pink Panther," a remake of the popular Peter Sellers film; and her next solo album. Also on tap are songs for Capitol artist Javier. RCA's Heather Headley and J Records' Ruben Studdard.

In addition, Ne-Yo's full-length artist debut, "In My Own Words," is due Sept. 13 through Def Jam Records. Former Motown artist Sharissa has segued to Virgin Records. Her sophomore set, "Every Beat of My Heart," is due Sept. 27 via manager Jimmy Henchman's Czar Entertainment. Guests include R. Kelly, the Game, Millie Jackson, Wyclef Jean and Tank.

Sharrisa's debut, "No Half Steppin,'" was released in 2002. The singer/songwriter also has designs on the fashion world. Her Ma Dame Blueze & Co. line of "street couture" bows this month.

Jazze Pha and his dad, Barry Starks bassist James Alexander, have recorded a song together. It's called "Shoo Nuff," also the name of Pha and partner Henry Lee's Capitol-based label.

"I'm passing the baton," Alexander says with a laugh. "But daddy isn't quite ready to sit in a rocking chair on the front porch."

In addition to performing with the Bar-Kays, the Memphis-based Alexander operates indie label JAE. He says the father-and-son single is due later this year.

Words & Music

THE 'EL PASO' CONNECTION

Robby's Song Trilogy Is Linked Together On Columbia/Legacy Collection

Credit Gregg Geller for connecting the dots on the "El Paso" trilogy in reference to three Marty Robbins songs thematically linked on Columbia/Legacy's new two-disc set, "The Essential Marty Robbins." "El Paso," of course, is Robbins' classic 1959 country and pop chart-topper, which was followed by "Faleena From El Paso," a 1960 track from the album "The Drifter." Ten years later, Robbins topped the country charts again with "El Paso City." "That's quite an unusual achievement in songwriting," says Geller, the compilation's producer. "Everyone's familiar with the original "El Paso"—which was such a huge hit—and maybe half that many is familiar with "El Paso City," which was the first single he released when he returned to Columbia after being on MCA for a few years in the '70s and was a huge hit, but not a crossover. Very few people know "Faleena From El Paso"—the song in between the two."

The song clocked in at 8:18, making it too long for a single and guaranteeing its relative obscurity. Geller notes that "El Paso" was slightly more than 41/2 minutes, "very long for a single, too—but not so long it couldn't be fit on one side of a 45, and there were also edited versions."

As for the "trilogy," Geller recounts how "El Paso" "tells the familiar story of the cowboy falling in love with the 'evil' Mexican girl—and ultimately paying for his love with his life."

"Faleena From El Paso" then relates the tale from her point of view, while "El Paso City" tells the story from yet a third angle.

Geller says, "A man—Marty Robbins, presumably—is flying over the city of El Paso and thinking back to the song he heard, which is the classic "El Paso,' and imagining himself as an actor in that song, the reincarnated cowboy from that song."

"It's very unfamiliar," Geller continues. "Try to think of another song in which the basic situation is returned to by its writer several times over 20 years—and told from different points of view. For example, what if Elvis Costello, who recorded "Ali- son in 1977, later returned to the same topic—but told the same story from Alison's point of view—and then sometime later wrote another song about that particular situation? It just doesn't happen."

(Geller, a longtime A&R executive, signed Costello to Columbia.) "So I took advantage of the opportunity of "The Essential Marty Robbins" to make all three songs available in the same package—because they're worthy of consideration together," says Geller, who included the songs on a now out-of-print Robbins boxed set. "I keep trying to make people aware of this very unusual songwriting achievement."

In a similar vein, note the remarkable saga of "For Lovers Only," a beautiful title David Allan Coe introduced on his 1983 "Castles in the Sand" masterwork, then rewrote at least three times.

It was included as a series through Coe's next three albums ("Hello In There," "Just Divorced" and "Darlin', Darlin"). Released originally on Columbia, they exist now thanks to Bear Family's customarily splendid reissues.
Columbia Still Polishing Diamond Set

Neil Diamond's highly anticipated new Columbia album, which pairs the singer/songwriter with producer Rick Rubin, has been pushed back to Nov. 8.

The project was originally slated to come out this summer, in conjunction with Diamond's U.S. tour, which kicked off July 25 at the Greek Theater in Los Angeles, but was then moved to Sept. 6.

This latest move, according to a source, was made to give Columbia more time to set up the album, as it is now considered one of the label's top holiday projects.

Rubin tells Billboard, "We're mixing it, and it's going great. It's mostly acoustic. It's a very personal record. It's stripped-down Neil. I think you'll get to hear him in a way like you've never heard him before or like you heard him a long time ago. But I think it's different from anything you've heard from him before."

For more on Rubin and his latest dealings, see page 5.

The set will be Diamond's first album of original material since 2001's "Three Chord Opera," which debuted at No. 15 on The Billboard 200.

GOOD ROCKIN': Much of Brian Setzer's music has been rooted in rockabilly, so it only makes sense that his latest album is a salute to Sun Records. But even he is surprised by the reaction it is receiving.

"Rockabilly Riot! Vol. One: A Tribute to Sun Records" (SurfDog Records) was just released July 26 in the United States, but it has already landed in the top 20 in Finland and Germany.

"There's no way you could do something like this and expect to have any success with it in this day and age," Setzer says, calling while on tour in Denmark. "That a Sun Records tribute album would chart somewhere is kick-ass."

The project's 23 tracks range from such well-known hits as "Blue Suede Shoes" to obscure tracks like "Red Cadillac and a Black Moustache."

Setzer's 18-year-old son was the catalyst for the project. He burst into the room one day while Setzer was playing rockabilly records. "He and his friends loved it, and I thought, 'Eighteen-year-olds need to hear this stuff!'"

Setzer went to Tennessee to record the album but ended up about 180 miles east of Memphis in Nashville. "It turned out everyone I wanted to record with was in Nashville, and most of those original cats from Sun aren't around anymore."

One cat who was still around was "Jumpin'" Gene Simmons, who recorded "Peroxide Blonde in a Hopped Up Model Ford" for Sun in the '50s. A friend of Setzer's brought him a tape fragment of the song, but it wasn't enough to record. Setzer's manager tracked down Simmons in Mississippi, who gave Setzer permission to write a first half to the song. Simmons then joined Setzer in the studio for the recording.

Setzer doesn't know yet if there will be a second volume. "Volume One was kind of a loophole for me, in case I wanted to do more."

Steadfast Setzer fans will have to wait a little while to dust off their blue suede shoes. He won't be touring the material in the States until next summer.

STUFF: A number of other veteran artists are making news. Kiss' Gene Simmons has reactivated Simmons Records.

The first release in more than a decade from the Sanctuary-distributed imprint will be from male singer/songwriter Bag. It streets Sept. 13.

Jackson Browne didn't have to go far when it came time to find a new label home. He parted ways with his longtime record company Elektra Records at the conclusion of his last contract a few years ago. Browne's next project will come out on Inside Recordings, a label he founded in 1999. A live 12-song collection culled from his solo acoustic tours will bow Oct. 11.

Inside, which is distributed through Alternative Distribution, Alliance, has partnered with Croshol Entertainment for management responsibilities.

Although he doesn't appear on the album, Sly Stone is overseeing a Sept. 27 Epic/Legacy release that features current artists singing to the original masters of Sly & The Family Stone hits.

Among the participating acts are John Mayer with Buddy Guy, Jess Stone with John Legend, Steven Tyler, Moby, OutKast's Big Boi, Maroon5 and the Black Eyed Peas' Will.I.Am.

Starbucks' Hear Music and satellite radio provider XM have partnered for a series of multi-artist compilation CDs. The collections, which debut Aug. 3 and will be available exclusively at Starbucks stores, premiere with "Hear Music XM Radio Sessions, Vol. 1." The set will feature alternate recordings of two songs each from such artists as Tracy Chapman, Jewel and Jason Mraz. The set will sell for $14.95.

Umbria Festival Captivates Crowd

Italian Event Shines Spotlight On Seasoned Veterans And Promising Newcomers

A festivalgoer's holiday and a gastronome's dream, the Umbria Jazz Festival—held July 8-17 in the medieval hill city of Perugia, Italy—consistently delivers the goods. Even though detractors point to the outdoor Arena Santa Giuliana as a concession to pop music (Elton John's mediocre but entertaining set was a hit of even an ounce of jazz), this year's shows by pianist Oscar Peterson and crooner Tony Bennett were not only near sellouts but also immensely crowd-pleasers. And even Diana Ross sang a fine Billie Holiday mini set during her Motown roots over-the-top disco extravaganza.

But like most years, the fest highlights occurred at a pair of opera house-like venues: Teatro Morlacchi and Teatro Povone. At the latter, vocalist Lizz Wright captivated crowds for four early-evening shows, including a finale that featured her sublime a cappella take on "Amazing Grace," and Hammond B3 organist Dr. Lonnie Smith commanded an offspring funk workout with an all-star support team of former James Brown bandleader Fred Wesley on trombone, guitarist Mark Whitfield and drummer Vinard Harper.

At Morlacchi, the best show was provided by Italian trumpeter Enrico Rava's engagingly and highly unpredictable quintet, featuring guest saxophonist Francesco Caffiso and trombonist Gianluca Petrella. The former is a 16-year-old rising star while the latter is an established young band leader who headlined the theater the day before with his own fresh, lyrical and humorous set. Here's hoping Blue Note Records' taste classic operation picks up the option on his album "Indigo 4." to be released Sept. 25 by Italy's EMI/Blue Note imprint.

Rava was honored by the festival as a musical ambassador to the world, and he received an honorary doctorate from the Berklee College of Music, which for the last 20 years has run a jazz workshop in Umbria. The other honorees were classic pianists McCoy Tyner and Hank Jones. They received their degrees at the fresco-decorated Sala del Notari.

Meanwhile, the Umbria band continues to be exported. While its successful Melbourne, Australia, experiment in May will not return until 2007 (as not to conflict with the Commonwealth Games hosted by the city next year), Umbria will spread its wings. Aug. 27-30 in the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro with a series of good will concerts in Belgrade and Novi Sad featuring Italian groups. Next year Umbria visits New York again, with a week of shows March 27-April 2 at Birdland.

TRIOES OF THE FUTURE: At the Umbria Jazz Festival, alto saxophonist Greg Osby joined eight-string guitarist Charlie Hunter and electronics drummer Bobby Previte for one of their freewheeling, improvisational Groundruthers shows. (The second in a trilogy of Groundruthers albums, "Longitude," with guest DJ Logic, was released July 26 on Thirsty Ear Records.) These sometimes-mighty Teatro Morlacchi efforts with Osby drawing up blueprints of tunes, largely original, that suggest the shape of the trio to come.

In like-minded avant-garde fashion, Osby will release his 16th CD as leader, "Channel Three." Aug. 2 on Blue Note. This edgy trio's third ride features Osby drawing up blueprints of tunes, largely original, that suggest the shape of the trio to come. Instead of a classical interpretation and environmental colonization. He too can reference anything from funk to classical.

This Osby says, brings a freedom to the music: "It becomes about the trio, not the leader, where there's a concerted effort to create something based on everybody's personality."

BRECKER BLUES: The latest on saxophonist Michael Brecker's fight for life comes from Randy Brecker, who reports that his brother is at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center undergoing chemotherapy to be followed by a bone marrow transplant. Well-wishers can send cards and letters to him (Room 1137) in care of the hospital: 1275 York Ave., New York, N.Y. 10021.
REVIEW SPOTLIGHTS

ALBUMS

FAITH HILL, Fireflies
Producers: Byron Gallimore, Faith Hill, Dann Huff, Warner Bros
Release Date: Aug. 2
Leadoff single "Mississippi Girl"—a countryified "Jenny From the Block"—sets the tone for Hill's sixth and best album and signals a return to her country roots. Hill lets her vocal gifts soar on an outstanding group of songs ranging in mood from the hilarious shotgun marriage ode "Dearily Beloved" to the sweet title track to the dark, sad "If You Ask" and "Steepling Kisses." The 14-track album showcases the work of no less than 24 songwriters, including fellow country artists John Rich and the Warren Brothers as well as Massachusetts-based singer/songwriter Jon Mcie. The expected next single is the sweeping power ballad "Like We Never Loved At All" on which Hill shares vocals with her husband, Tim McGraw. Look for it to be this fall's country radio smash.—PS

LEE WILLIAMS & THE SPIRITUAL QC's, Tell the Angels
Producers: Jerry Peters, George Dean MCG
Release Date: July 26
Riding high from a 2004 Stellar Award sweep for their smash "Right on Time," Williams & the QC's deliver the album of a lifetime. The 14-song—already put one out a Williams original or co-write—is their most diverse and consistent. The group casts off any bogus stereotypes of cherubic, crooning gospel quartets as they rock with relentless, high-voltage energy. "Whom Shall I Fear" tears out of the gate atop a relentless backbeat, with Williams singing like his very life was in the balance. "He's Coming" is cool, jazzy swing, and the title song is a perfect lesson in classic R&B. Without so much as a pause for breath, Lee Williams & the Spiritual QC's have cemented their place as one of the truly vital acts of modern gospel.—GE

BRIAN SETZER, Rockabilly Riot: A Salute to Sun Records
Producers: Dave Darling, Brian Setzer, Sun
Release Date: July 26
"tribute" is much too formal a word to describe the raucous party Setzer throws here in honor of his family. The Stray Cats co-founder picked 23 songs from the Sun Records catalog from the thrilliby years 1954-1957, and lined up musicians who could play these tunes note-for-note yet still express spontaneity. Though Bernie Dresel charted the drum parts to replicate the originals, there is little of the musty wax museum scent that often accompanies such attempts. The song selection is inspired: only "Blue Suede Shoes" and "Get Rhythm" falter, since the definitive versions by Elvis (or Carl Perkins) and Johnny Cash, respectively, are so indelible. The brightest highlights are lesser-known tunes: "Flatfoot Sam," "Tennessee Zip" and "Rakin' and Scapin."

ANTONIO NEAL, Days of My Life
Producers: Tedd T., Antonio Neal
EMI
Release Date: Aug. 2
This top-notch debut introduces a writer/artist/producer who deftly navigates the mainstream while still charting a course that is fresh and original. With a perfect convergence of smooth, retro R&B and dance-pop hooks, Neal delivers inspirational, gospel-friendly messages of hope with an overall positive feeling. This album is sure young Luther Vandross meeting latter-day Prince on the way home from Sunday service. With moments of sparse instrumentation with a big bottom end and Neat's stunning multi-octave voice, and stacks of killer, all-Antonio background vocals the title song puts a modern spin on a classic Motown-flavored groove, while "The Only One" shifts into gentle, sophisticated balladry. Both the adventurous and radio-friendly, Neal could find a home in multiple formats for a long time to come.—GE

COUNTRY

THE WARREN BROTHERS, Barely Famous Hits
Producers: various
BMI
Release Date: Aug. 2
Given their limited success at radio, a "greatest hits" set for the Warren Brothers would be a limited collection at best. But this release's real title, which also ties in to the brothers' CMT reality show, gives Brad and Brett Warren the opportunity to showcase fine cuts from two BMI albums as well as previously unreleased songs. Among the highlights are the cowpokes' downbeat "King of Nothing," built for radio tunes like "Guilty" and "Waiting for the Light to Change," and the fearless country wanderer "Where Does It Hurt." The brothers are highly skilled songwriters with no delusions of grandeur. Check out the bodacious house rocker "Seil a Lot of Beet" but they also know how to pick a winner from another's pen, as on one of only two covers here, "Hey Mr. President." They may be barely famous, but they're plenty good.—RW

SINGLES

BON JOVI Have a Nice Day ($3.37)
Producers: John Shanks, Jon Bon Jovi, Richie Sambora
Writers: J. Bon Jovi, R. Sambora, J. Shanks
Publisher: not listed
Island (CD promo)
Bon Jovi long ago perfected the art of crafting infectious songs, and "Have a Nice Day" racks up another notch on the band's bed post. With its pounding beat and catchy guitar riffs, "Day" is reminiscent of the 2000 hit "It's My Life," which initially thrust the age-defying rockers back into the spotlight. Although the title track from their forthcoming album lacks the easily accessible, anthemic chorus that most radio programmers dream listeners desire, die-hards will surely clamor for it. That enthusiasm should create enough of a rock radio buzz for Jon and the gang to garner yet another hit. The full-length "Have a Nice Day" is due Sept. 20.—KK

BACKSTREET BOYS Just Want You to Know ($3.55)
Producers: Max Martin, Lukasz Gottwald
Writers: M. Martin, L. Gottwald
Publishers: Maratone/Zeitz
Zomba/Kasx, ASCAP
Jive/Zomba (CD cut)
Who would have expected the Backstreet Boys to score a full-blown comeback with "inautomatic"—not just a polite return, but a second swipe at world domination. And with a ballot at, that "Just Want You to Know," the second single from the wholly satisfying platinum set "Never Gone," only tops the sundae with a cherry. It is an up-tempo song in much the same vein as Kelly Clarkson's simproaching anthem "Since I Been Gone," with flypaper hooks from enduring musical maestro Max Martin. This guitar-octane perserveres that BSB has plenty of ammunition left in its arsenal. In a word: hit. In two words: global smash.—CT

ROCK

ALICE COOPER, Dirty Diamonds
Producers: Steve Lindsey, Rick Boston
New West
Release Date: Aug. 2
Dirty Diamonds is such a gutsy disc, Cooper gets lots of ladies on his mind. Troublemakers ("Woman of Mass Destruction"), can be jazzy stars ("Perfect") and naughty brats ("Sunset Babies [All Got Rabies]") all occupy "Dirty Diamonds," their tales set against rock backdrops that pay homage to the British Invasion. This style infuses most of the album, but it wouldn't be a Cooper record if he didn't take bizarre detours like the cover of the Left Banke's psychedelic ballad "Pretty Ballerina." "The Saga of Jesse Jane" is the hysterical story of a couple of truck drivers that references bridal gowns, Judy Garland and Happy Meals, and his Johnny Cash imitation kicks the shuffling country tune over the top. Cooper's humor is in top form, but the words to "Steal That Car" are juvace, and the rap-fringed "Stand" is out of place. Tune in to the sly, sagering "Run Down the Devil" instead, or give "Jesse Jane" at other deserving listen.—CLT

R&B

ANTONIO NEAL, Days of My Life
Producers: Tedd T., Antonio Neal
EMI
Release Date: Aug. 2
This stop-you-dead debut introduces a writer/artist/producer who deftly navigates the mainstream while still charting a course that is fresh and original. With a perfect convergence of smooth, retro R&B and dance-pop hooks, Neal delivers inspirational, gospel-friendly messages of hope with an overall positive feeling. This album is sure young Luther Vandross meeting latter-day Prince on the way home from Sunday service. With moments of sparse instrumentation with a big bottom end and Neat's stunning multi-octave voice, and stacks of killer, all-Antonio background vocals the title song puts a modern spin on a classic Motown-flavored groove, while "The Only One" shifts into gentle, sophisticated balladry. Both the adventurous and radio-friendly, Neal could find a home in multiple formats for a long time to come.—GE

JAZZ

GREG OSBY, Channel Three
Producer: Greg Osby
Blue Note
Release Date: Aug. 2
This multi-talented saxman Osby has tracked 15 albums for Blue Note without ever recording in a trio setting. "Channel Three" ends that streak as Osby cut this disc with bassist Matthew Brewer and drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts. Osby works soprano and alt saxophones on nine songs, seven of which are original compositions. The recording opens with a righteous cover of Ornette Coleman's bluesy "Mob Job" and closes with an equally swinging take on Eric Dolphy's "Masses." The ruling feel of "Channel Three" is improvisation within rhythmic structures. Osby is the thinking person's jazz component/ player, and there have been times in his career when critics have suggested that his approach may be too cerebral. "Channel Three," however, is an ideal meeting of spirit and mind; the tunes are challenging, yet the vibe is intimate.—PPV

WORLD

AMADOU & MARIAM, Dimanche a Bamako
Producer: Manu Chao
Nonesuch
Release Date: Aug. 2
Amadou and Mariam met while attending the institute for Blind People in Bamako, Mali, and have been performing together since 1980. Guitarist Manu Chao first heard the pair in 2003 on his car radio and soon thereafter invited them to join him in a Parisian recording studio. "Dimanche a Bamako" is this collaboration, which has been channeled major play in Europe and earned a Les Victoires de Music award in France. The 15-track disc is, difficult to lodge from a CD player once it starts spinning, because of the remarkably alluring blend of traditional African and modernistic elements and pensive contemporary melodies. Chao's overall contributions as co-write producer and musician are crucial to the familiar-yet-exotic feel, as are the deftly nuanced vocals of Amadou & Mariam.—PPV

BRAVE OLD WORLD, dus Gesagm Fin Geto Lodz (Song of the Lodz Ghetto)
Producer: Stefan Winter
Winter & Winter Music
Release Date: July 12
This amazing and beautiful album rekindles the passionate Yiddish songs performed by the Lodz Ghetto musicians during the 1940's in the Jewish ghetto of Lodz, Poland. Facing the nightmare of Nazi occupation and ultimate extermination, continued on >>p40
from >>399
these musicians penned and performed a host of
delightful tunes. Brave Old World (Alan Bern, Stuart
Brotman, Kurt Bjorling and Michael Alpert) has
accomplished a marvelous bit of musicianship in re-
creating these stirring songs. (There are English
translations in the liner notes.) While it evokes the
darkest years in the history of the Jewish people, it
doesn't have the troubling elements that are very
poignant and life-
affirming. BOW's musical combinations are exciting and
vibrant, imparting a
wholly appropriate period feel to lyrics gathered from
the memories of survivors. History rarely sounds this
marvelous. —PVV

Gospel
BINGO
H.O.G. Life
Producers: Jim Guttum, Christy Tucker
Release Date: July 26
On his solo debut, COG Music graduated from being the smooth lead singer of the soul-
gospel duo to the Kenoly Brothers to an edgy
Christian rapper/vocalist. Highlights here include the infectious “It's My Pleasure,”
which could find home at any R&B or gospel.
BINGO’s rapping skills have a way to go before giving 50 Cent cause to worry, but
his lyric is full of soul and sacred content is solid and
credible (“What I Do.”
“Change Tha Game”). Even the irresistible “Move Ya Bootie,” despite its
suggestive title, should give people of the faith nothing
to complain about and plenty
to dance to. BINGO should
shine brightest on ballads,
showing off his aching tenor (“Yes, I Will”.
“Can't Wait”). This may be a
leap for some, but it is one
worth taking.—GE

Reggae
THIRD WORLD
Black Gold & Green
Producers: Randall Grass, Third World
Shanachie
Release Date: July 26
The Venerable Third World made its debut album 30 years ago. Once criticized by traditionalists for
its eclecticism, Third World has not just survived but
thrive. Here the group translates Bob Marley and
cockburn’s “Lovers” in Dangerous Times” into a
convincing reggae
number and works its charms (complete with
oboe) on Joe Higgs’ lovely ballad “There's a Reward.”
Third World’s penchant for R&B is presented on
the Ashford & Simpson song “Solid,” with guest vocals
by B.O. and Benatar.

POP
Various Artists
Music for Lonely Housewives
Producers: Various
Audio Fidelity
Release Date: July 26
In the wake of ABC’s wildly popular
“Desperate Housewives,” pop culture aficionado
Hal Lifson has assembled a dozen songs whose
kitsch factor is only
surpassed by the quality of
this thematically
collected. Off-the-beaten-path
tracks come from the likes of
Pat Benatar (“I Need a Lover”), Cher (“You
Better Sit Down Kids”), Maria Muldaur, the 5th
Dimension and Dusty Springfield’s “Just a Little
Lovin’ (Early in the Morning)”, result in a
deliciously diverse platter of pop, R&B, jazz
and rock. Liner notes from Benatar, a “Dear
Diary” approach to each song’s inclusion and
deco-style artwork provide finishing touches. Fun concept.
crafty execution.—CT

New & Noteworthy
DunGen
Ta Det Lugnt
Producer: Gustav Ejstes
Kemado
Release Date: Aug 2
It wouldn’t be a stretch to say that most Americans
can’t speak Swedish, but for psychedelic rock outfit
DunGen, this isn’t necessarily a bad thing.
“Ta Det Lugnt,” an all-
Swedish album mastered for 24-year-
old Gustav Ejstes, transcends the language barrier.
With the sonic reach of Pink Floyd and
convincing, explosive pop in the vein of Rogue Wave
and the Apples in Stereo, “Ta Det Lugnt” is a
track with variety. “Panda” and
“Festival” will incite singalongs
even though you won’t know what you’re
saying, while songs like
“Om Du Vore En Vaktund”
involve into
dark, experimental psychedelia with frenzied
guitars and
crunchy noise. Although the
troto rock
fluence
is undeniable, DunGen
takes numerous forward-thinking
chances with its
arrangements and off-kilter
production “Ta Det Lugnt”
(which translates to “Grab the
Tongue” or “Take it Easy”)
is beautifully cerebral and
sunny—a triumphant entry into
the American rock
marketplace.—KN

Reggae
HOOTIE & THE BLOWFISH
Once Is Not Enough (01/07)
Producer: Don Gehman
Writers: various
Publishers: Monica’s
Relevance to Lab, ASCAP; Motech, BMI
Vanguard (CD promos)
Perhaps the superlativest affection
for the duo of mid-1990s deserves a
second.
defiant...where are we, is it a fourth chance? Or
not. Lead singer Danus
Roberts did not
in his vocals on “One Love,”
but without a forceful hype
machine behind the group (now signed to indie
Vanguard), Hootie and
company sound like a
machine splitting out
dated, paint-by-numbers
wallpaper music. Thanks
for the memories, guys, but your
place in history is sealed.
Time to move on.—CT

Country
DIERKS BENTLEY Come a Little Closer (01/12)
Producer: Brett Beavers
Writers: B. Beavers, D. Bentley
Publishers: Sony/ATV Tree, BMI; Sony/ATV Cross Keys, ASCAP
Capitol (CD/promo)


Critics’ Choice:

A new release, regardless of chart
potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

Legend & Credits

LEGEND & CREDITS

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appropriate format.

R&B
YOU&OZZZ
Presidential (01/02)
Producer: Jonathan "Lil" Smith
Writers: J. Grigsby, S. Joseph, J. Smith

Publishers: various
LafFace Records (CD promos)
Lil’ Joe is back, again. His
years, he lends his talents to
his Atlanta brethren.
Youngbloodz
"Presidential" is Atlanta
crunk and through, starting from
the incessant electronic
keyboard keys right on down
to the confident devil-
may-care attitude. Sean
Paul and J-Bo know how to
drink well, smoke good
and rap the same song
again. In the end, they have no
problem solving the
problem. The only problem
with the song is that it is too
typical. While the duo
does their best to
distinct themselves from
other Southern
rappers, the task is made
all the more daunting
when backed by one of Lil
Joe’s cookie-cutter beats.
This song proves that
the super-producer isn’t
talented; he just fails to live
up to his full potential,
delivering instead a track
that sounds like most of his
others.—IMJ

Rock
DISTURBD Stricken (01/05)
Producers: Johnny K., Charles Proctor
Written & Recorded by: Mother Culture/ WB
Reprise (CD promos)

Disturbed picks up
where it left off for
the first single from forthcoming
third CD “Ten Thousand
Fists.” Actually, it is the
first official single
from the band, which
took several weeks ago. Even though
it wasn’t worked, it made it
to No. 7 on the Active Rock
chart and debuted on
Modern Rock. “Stricken” has
already entered at No. 32 at
Active Rock, and has the
makings of another hit for
the Chicago quartet, even
though it doesn’t deviate from the
band’s formula.
Opening with one of David Draiman’s
trademark animal-like vocal tics, the
midtempo song is anchored by
his melodic piano. Its
primary calling card,
evertheless, is a shredding
guitar solo from Dan
Donogean, a first for
the band. If having two singles
out before the album is
released does not confuse
producers, the new
song should only
make them even better
than its unofficial
predecessor.—BT

Triple-A
ROBERT PLANT & THE STRANGE SENSATION
All in the Mind (01/03)
Producers: Robert Plant &
the Strange Sensation, Steve Evans
Writers: various
Publishers: various
Sanctuary (CD promos)
At 36, Robert Plant is no
less the golden god that he was
in Led Zeppelin. Current
CD “Mighty Rearranger”
demonstrates that he
remains possessed by a pure
rock ‘n’ roll soul, and is as
innovative and vital as ever.
On second single “All the
Kings Horses,” Plant and his
bandleader for the Strange
Sensation trade in the heavy
guitars and drums for a
more intimate, somber ballad
where Plant promises to be
our “soldier of love.” This
lovely, otherworldly tune
may not achieve the same
chart status as previous
songs but it is certainly
a treasure for fans.—KT
The Hot Box

A WEEKLY ROUNDUP OF NOTABLE CHART ACHIEVEMENTS

STANDARD TIME

> Carly Simon earns her best Billboard 200 rank in more than 30 years, as her standards set “Moonlight Serenade” bows at No. 7. Her last album to do better was “Hotcakes,” which hit No. 3 in 1974. The new collection, 58,000 copies, flips singer's best week since Nielsen SoundScan set up shop in 1991.

TASTE OF MEXICO

> The Latin-themed album by Beto Y Sus Canarios captures the regional Mexican ensemble’s best Nielsen SoundScan week ever: 15,000 units, enough to earn the group’s first link on The Billboard 200 at No. 62 while outselling top Latin diva Thalia (No. 63).

SECOND TO ONE

> Crooner Michael Bublé’s “It’s Time” holds at No. 1 for a 23rd week on Top Jazz Albums. The only album by a male artist in the Nielsen SoundScan era to wear this chart’s crown longer was Tony Bennett’s “MTV Unplugged,” with 41 weeks.

Chart Beat

READ FRED SPONCHI EVERY WEEK AT BILLBOARD.COM/FRED

> Two weeks after scoring two simultaneous top five hits on the U.K. singles chart, Eton John pulls off another first in his career. His duet with 20-year-old Australian singer Catherine Britt marks John’s first appearance on Hot Country Songs, although he has been previously credited as a songwriter on this tally, thanks to Tim McGraw’s cover of “Tiny Dancer.”

> Fred Bronson also reports on British composer John Barry having his highest-charting Billboard Hot 100 title in years, thanks to Kanye West sampling Shirley Bassey’s “Diamonds Are Forever” on “Diamonds From Sierra Leone.” Plus, Mariah Carey challenges a vulnerable Elvis Presley on another chart front.

Over the Counter

GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com

‘Now’ Is The Time For Series’ Best Start In A Year

The best week in a year for the “Now That’s What I Call Music” series perks a win for album sales, even if it’s just a little victory.

True, despite the 436,000-unit start for its compilation “Now 19,” industry sales trail those of the same week last year by 0.9%: the fifth straight downturn for same-numbered sales weeks. But the new “Now” and eye-catching starts by veteran Carly Simon and gospel duo Mary Mary help spur a 0.1% uptick in current album sales at Nielsen SoundScan. Thank heaven for small thrills.

That little bump comes despite the fact that titles in the top 10 are down 1% from the comparable 2004 week. “Now 19” comes in 83% ahead of the 238,500 units that helped Jimmy Buffett’s “License to Chill” enter the big chart at No. 1, but every other album in the top 10 sells less than its 2004 counterpart.

“Now 19” was on sale for less than $10 at Best Buy, Circuit City, Kmart and Target, a price tag that helps the album outsell runner-up Mariah Carey by a ratio of more than 4-to-1, as “The Emancipation of Mimi” sells for 90,000 copies, down almost 10% from the prior week.

The latest “Now” album also surpasses first-week sales for its siblings “Now 18” (339,000 copies) and “Now 17” (407,000). The last from this series to have a bigger start was “Now 16,” which bowed at No. 1 with 504,000 almost a year ago.

Three of the last four “Now” sets, and seven in the series, have reached No. 1 on the big chart.

The difference between how fast the 19th and 16th edition started and the ones in between? To tweak a favorite Betty Everett oldie, it’s in the hits. All 20 songs from the new one and from “Now 16” appeared on the Billboard Hot 100, while “Now 17” had one that missed the chart and “Now 18” had three exceptions.

Of those four, “Now 16” had the most top 10s (10) and “Now 18” held the lowest (four), while the new one and “Now 17” each carry six top 10s.

Half of the new album’s tracks hit the Hot 100’s top 20.

ATLANTIC CROSSING: With Virgin’s Gorillaz bouncing 14-9 on a 9% gain and Capitol’s Coldplay hovering at No. 4 (down 18%), EMI Music Marketing sports two British acts in the top 10 of The Billboard 200.

This marks the first time since fourth-quarter 2003 that two Brit acts from a single major-label conglomerate simultaneously hold real estate on the big chart’s top floor. BMG, prior to its merger with Sony Music, was the last to do so when sets from two RCA Music Group artists, Rod Stewart (“As Time Goes By … The Great American Songbook Vol. 1”) and Dido (“Life for Rent”), were ranked Nos. 2 and 9, respectively, in the Nov. 15, 2003, issue.

HOMEMADE: Here’s something you don’t see every day. An album not assigned to any label enters three Billboard charts, a distinction earned by the self-titled set from Clap Your Hands Say Yeah.

The Brooklyn, N.Y., band’s self-made album enters Top Internet Albums at No. 3, Top Heatseekers at No. 34 and Top Independent Albums at No. 36. Although there have been a few occasions when singles by developing acts have appeared on our charts sans label, this is the first time anyone here can recall an unlabeled album making our lists.

The band tells Billboard it is on the verge of signing a deal, so this rare sight may not last long.

ROUNDING THE BASES: Former Pixies member Frank Black enters Top Heatseekers at No. 11 with almost 5,000 sold. Although Black has had longer opening weeks with three prior We-A distributed solo titles, his start represents the best Nielsen SoundScan week yet for Back Porch, an imprint distributed by Narada … Of the 18 weeks that Natalie Grant’s “Awaken” has spent on Top Christian Albums, the title has shown increases over prior-frame sales in all but four. This week, a 9% gain sends her 174-151 for a new Billboard 200 peak.

A LOOK AHEAD: Of the titles released July 26, 2 Def Jam rookies have the fastest start. First-week numbers reported by chains give Young Jeezy a solid shot to beat 170,000 in his first week. That would place the rapper no lower than No. 2 on The Billboard 200 and an outside shot at bagging No. 1.

www.americanradiohistory.com

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 41
### The Billboard 200

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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>WEBE</td>
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<td>CAROLE KING</td>
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<td>C. M. DUCROSS</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>R. ELISA</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>KENDALL SUE</td>
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<td>DAVE INEZ</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>C. D.</td>
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### Various Artists

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<td>RAE</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>THE JOHN BARRY ORCHESTRA</td>
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<td>S-economic</td>
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<td>BIG &amp; RICH</td>
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<td>Skiee's Stars</td>
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<td>JAY'S</td>
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### Soundtrack

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**Debut**

Debuting this week on the Billboard 200 is *The Tlmm's star* by Simon Pegg, with songs from the feature film *The Tlmm's star* (27,000 sold). The film's soundtrack is currently No. 1 on the *Billboard* Top Soundtracks chart (17,000 sold). For more information, visit www.americanradiohistory.com. Searching for the perfect mix of music and entertainment? Check out the #1 radio station for all your music needs at Billboard.com.
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WE BELONG TOGETHER</td>
<td>NICK JONAS (MOTION DISTRIBUTION)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>DON'T CHA</td>
<td>THE BLACK EyED PEAS</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>SCARS</td>
<td>FREE YOURSELF</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>SOMETHING HE</td>
<td>JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE</td>
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<td>BABY I'M BACK</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>SPEED OF SOUND</td>
<td>EMILY HAINES &amp; THE UNION OF LOST</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>JUST A LIL BIT</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>HOLLYWOOD</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>SECOND CHANCE (REMIX)</td>
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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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### ADULT TOP 40

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### ADULT CONTEMPORARY

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### MODERN ROCK

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**TOP 100 Airplay**

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** Singles Sales**

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**HitPredictor**

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### R&B/HIP-HOP Albums

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### REGGAE ALBUMS

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### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

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<td>WILL SMITH</td>
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<td>JOHN CENA &amp; THA TRADEMARK</td>
<td>JUMP UP RECORDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>The J Moss Project</td>
<td>JOHN CENA &amp; THA TRADEMARK</td>
<td>JUMP UP RECORDS</td>
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<td>MEMPHIS BLEEK</td>
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<td>The Longest Yard</td>
<td>SOUNDSOURCE</td>
<td>Aries Records</td>
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<td>Livin' The Lucky Brown</td>
<td>WENDY WILLIAMS</td>
<td>JUMP UP RECORDS</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Top Gospel Albums

**Mary Mary's Double Success**

Gospel duo Mary Mary bows at No. 4 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart and boasts its 8th start on The Billboard 200. Both positions are career peaks.

The pa's self-titled third album scanned 57,000 units to set the mark for its best sales week ever, more than enough to earn No. 1 honors or Top Christian Albums and Top Gospel Albums. The last female act to

Go to [www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com) for complete chart data

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**Mary Mary's Double Success**

Gospel duo Mary Mary bows at No. 4 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart and boasts its 8th start on The Billboard 200. Both positions are career peaks.

The pa's self-titled third album scanned 57,000 units to set the mark for its best sales week ever, more than enough to earn No. 1 honors or Top Christian Albums and Top Gospel Albums. The last female act to hold the top gospel spot was Kierra "KiKi" Sheard in the Sept. 25, 2004, issue with "I Owe You." Mary Mary's previous best week was in 2002 when "Incredible" debuted with 43,000 units.

The album's first track, "Heaven," returned to No. 1 on Hot Gospel Songs after having its eight-week run interrupted by Dr. Charles G. Hayes' "Work It Out."

—*Raphael George*
### HOT R&B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Chart No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WE BELONG TOGETHER</td>
<td>R. KELLY FEAT. BOBBY VALENTINO (DTP DEF JAM /IDJMG)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU</td>
<td>CHARLIE LUST (L.A. LEE'S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FREE YOURSELF</td>
<td>MASHA (JIVE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIMPIN' ALL OVER THE WORLD</td>
<td>LUDACRIS FEAT. BOBBY VALENTINO (DTP DEF JAM /IDJMG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TELL ME HOW MAKE IT</td>
<td>MISSY ELLIOTT (G.O.O.D. /COLUMBIA/SUM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>U ALREADY KNOW</td>
<td>LADY GAGA (REDUX RECORDS)</td>
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<td>WELCOME TO JAMROCK</td>
<td>DESTINY'S CHILD (COLUMBIA/SUM)</td>
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<td>GONNA MAKE IT</td>
<td>BOW WOW (R&amp;B/REPLAY RECORDS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GET IT POPPIN'</td>
<td>FASHION OUTLET (DEF JAM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BADD</td>
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<td>TOUCH</td>
<td>YOUNG JEEZY (MUSICLINE/ROC-A-FELLA/IDJMG)</td>
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<td>WORK IT OUT</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRAP YOU IN THE CLOSET</td>
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<td>NAKED YOU</td>
<td>J. BRUCE (DEF JAM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SERIOUSLY WANT IT TO BE OVER</td>
<td>MISSY ELLIOTT (G.O.O.D. /COLUMBIA/SUM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLAYA'S ONLY</td>
<td>TASHA (JIVE)</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHOW TIME (REMIX)</td>
<td>JUICY ICE (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>IT OFF</td>
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<tr>
<td>GONNA GETCHA</td>
<td>JAMES DURBIN (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>DEAR SUMMER</td>
<td>MIKE JONES A MR. COLLIPARK (TVT)</td>
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### RHYTHMIC AIRPLAY

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<td>MASHA (JIVE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIMPIN' ALL OVER THE WORLD</td>
<td>LUDACRIS FEAT. BOBBY VALENTINO (DTP DEF JAM /IDJMG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TELL ME HOW MAKE IT</td>
<td>MISSY ELLIOTT (G.O.O.D. /COLUMBIA/SUM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>U ALREADY KNOW</td>
<td>LADY GAGA (REDUX RECORDS)</td>
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<td>GET IT POPPIN'</td>
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<td>TOUCH</td>
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<td>WORK IT OUT</td>
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<td>MIKE JONES A MR. COLLIPARK (TVT)</td>
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<td>NAKED YOU</td>
<td>J. BRUCE (DEF JAM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SERIOUSLY WANT IT TO BE OVER</td>
<td>MISSY ELLIOTT (G.O.O.D. /COLUMBIA/SUM)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>TASHA (JIVE)</td>
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<td>GONNA GETCHA</td>
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<td>DEAR SUMMER</td>
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<td>GIRL (REMIX)</td>
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HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;As Good As I Once Was&quot;</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
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<td>&quot;Something in the Water&quot;</td>
<td>Sugarland</td>
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<td>&quot;Fast Cars and Freedom&quot;</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
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<td>&quot;Play Something Country&quot;</td>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>&quot;Alcohol&quot;</td>
<td>George Strait &amp; USA Network</td>
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<td>&quot;You'll Be There&quot;</td>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
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<td>&quot;A Real Fine Place to Start&quot;</td>
<td>Sara Evans</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Goodbye Time&quot;</td>
<td>Blue Oyster Cult</td>
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<td>&quot;Somebody's Hero&quot;</td>
<td>Jame O'Neal</td>
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<td>&quot;Tired of the Pain&quot;</td>
<td>Trisha Yearwood</td>
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<td>&quot;Redneck Yacht Club&quot;</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
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<td>&quot;Stay With Me (Brass Bed)&quot;</td>
<td>Josh Gracin</td>
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<td>&quot;Arlington&quot;</td>
<td>Trace Atkins</td>
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<td>&quot;Makin' Memories of Us&quot;</td>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
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<td>&quot;Something to Be Proud of&quot;</td>
<td>Montgomery Gentry</td>
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<td>&quot;Georgia Rain&quot;</td>
<td>Trisha Yearwood</td>
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<td>&quot;Liamo's Hero&quot;</td>
<td>Jame O'Neal</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>&quot;That's a Heartache&quot;</td>
<td>The Buckaroos</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>&quot;I'm Gonna Love Me This Way&quot;</td>
<td>Leann Rimes</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;You're Like Comin' Home&quot;</td>
<td>Lonestar</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>&quot;Best I Ever Had&quot;</td>
<td>Gary Allan</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>&quot;Hillbillies&quot;</td>
<td>Hot Apple Pie</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>&quot;Delicious Surprise (I Believe It)&quot;</td>
<td>Jo Dee Messina</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>&quot;Dream Big&quot;</td>
<td>Ryan Shupe &amp; The Rough Riders</td>
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COUNTRY SINGLES SALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart/Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Dream Big&quot;</td>
<td>Amanda Shaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Inside Your Heaven/Independence Day&quot;</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;Somethin' Right&quot;</td>
<td>Miranda Lambert</td>
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<td>&quot;That's What I Like About You&quot;</td>
<td>George Strait &amp; USA Network</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>&quot;I'm Gonna Love Me This Way&quot;</td>
<td>Leann Rimes</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;You're Like Comin' Home&quot;</td>
<td>Lonestar</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;Best I Ever Had&quot;</td>
<td>Gary Allan</td>
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<td>Hot Apple Pie</td>
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<td>&quot;Delicious Surprise (I Believe It)&quot;</td>
<td>Jo Dee Messina</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;Dream Big&quot;</td>
<td>Amanda Shaw</td>
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HIT PREDICTOR

BRITT BRINGS FAMOUS COUNTRY BTO COUNTRY LIST

Although he is quick to a Brit is deep appreciation for country music, when John has not score his chart rank. That changes this issue as "Where We Bob Say Goodbye," his pering with Carrie Brit, pops on at No. 49.

With spins detected at 36 monitored stations, "Goodbye" makes 1.3 million audience impressions and tops the Australian teen's previous high debat.

She first appeared as a vixen in the Aug. 14, 2004, issue, when "The Up

side of Being Down" bowed at No. 57. It peaked at No. 36 in November.

Although her British-born duet partner is a country chart newcomer, he is no stranger to the music or the makers. John is a fan of the late Jim Reeves, and has recorded duets with Tammy Wynette and LeAnn Rimes. His 1971 "Tumbleweed Connection" album included "Country Comfort," which received some airplay at country stations.

— Wade Jessen
**Hot Latin Songs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> LA TORTURA</td>
<td>Shakira Featuring Alejandro Sanz</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> AMAR SIN SER AMADA</td>
<td>Estefania L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> ZAFIRO</td>
<td>Luis Fonsi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> CHICAS NO SE PIERDEN</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> LO QUE PASÓ, PASÓ</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee, Yotuel</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> MAYOR QUE Yo</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee, Tommy Tune, Willy, Yandel &amp; Herc</td>
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### Billboard Latin Airplay

<table>
<thead>
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<th>ARTIST</th>
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<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
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<td>La Tortura</td>
<td>Shakira</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<td>Go Más</td>
<td>Thalía</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>La Séptima</td>
<td>RBD</td>
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<td>Ninie</td>
<td>Vengada</td>
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<td>Amor sin amada</td>
<td>Yoquisera</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>Obsesión (No es amor)</td>
<td>Hector 'El Father'</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>Amor del bueno</td>
<td>J-Rock &amp; Chris Brown</td>
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<td>MC Pata</td>
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<td>Nohín más</td>
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<td>Ay qué paso</td>
<td>El Cangaceiro</td>
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<td>Pisa na vida</td>
<td>El Cangaceiro</td>
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<td>Todos mis sueños</td>
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<td>Canta Corazón</td>
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<td>Que yo</td>
<td>Andy Andy</td>
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<td>Play That Song</td>
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<td>Amor sin amada</td>
<td>Hector 'El Father'</td>
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<td>Yo Voy</td>
<td>Olga Tanon</td>
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<td>Don't Stop</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<td>Ven Bailalo</td>
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<td>Mi Mejor</td>
<td>Olga Tanon</td>
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<td>Tú andas solo</td>
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<td>Esta noche de Travesura</td>
<td>Olga Tanon</td>
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<td>Tu Quiero</td>
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<td><em>Regional Mexican</em></td>
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<td>Ya me habian dicho</td>
<td>J Lozano</td>
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<td>Eres divina</td>
<td>Patrulla GB</td>
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<td>Mi creído</td>
<td>Los Tigres</td>
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<td>Tiempo</td>
<td>Alejandro Sanz</td>
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<td>No puedo olvidarte</td>
<td>Los Tigres</td>
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<td>Y las mariposas</td>
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<td>Hoy como ayer</td>
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<td>Que mas quisiera</td>
<td>Los Tigres</td>
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<td>Ni en defensa propia</td>
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<td>A la altura</td>
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<td>Guerro que Atila y sus bravos del norte</td>
<td>Los Tigres</td>
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### Billboard Latin Albums

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<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
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<td>Gracias por tu amor</td>
<td>Elvis Crespo</td>
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<td>Déjame</td>
<td>Sergio Dalma</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<tr>
<td>El rey de los reyes</td>
<td>J Lozano</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>De ti nunca dejaré</td>
<td>Claudia Leitte</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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Data for week of AUGUST 6, 2005 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

Go to www.billboard.com for complete chart data
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## EUROAIRPLAY
### Main Chart
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Country</th>
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## Radio Airplay Information from 27 European Countries as Monitored and Compiled by Nielsen Music Centre.
CHARTS

ALBUM CHARTS

Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/hip-hop retail charts is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of stores that specialize in those genres.

ALBUMS

Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/hip-hop retail charts is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of stores that specialize in those genres.


HIT PREDICTOR

Indicates hit status in HitPredictor chart. Hits are determined based on a hit potential score calculated by Nielsen SoundScan from data gathered from a national sample of reports from club and mainstream radio stations.

SINGLES SALES CHARTS

The top selling singles compiled from a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Sales data is compiled from a national sample of reports from club and mainstream radio stations.

TOP SOUNDTRACKS

Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/hip-hop retail charts is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of stores that specialize in those genres.

CHARTS

SALES DATA COMPILATION BY Nielsen SoundScan®

Data for week of AUGUST 6, 2005

www.americanradiohistory.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>AGAIN BRING ME DOWN (Sony BMVZomba)</th>
<th>THE HARVEST IS RICH (Byefall Music, ASCAP/Famous, BMI)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>AC/DC Singles</td>
<td>LOVELY IN THE FALL (Sony BMVZomba)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>AC/DC Singles</td>
<td>MAKING THE TOP (Sony BMVZomba)</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>MATEO'S IN THE HOUSE (Sony BMVZomba)</td>
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<td>MAYBE (William Shatner's New Generation of Arabian Love Songs)</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>AC/DC Singles</td>
<td>MEANT TO BE (Sony BMVZomba)</td>
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**CHARTS LEGEND on Page 56**
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Singer Long John Baldry Dead At 64

British R&B singer Long John Baldry died July 21 in Vancouver after battling a chest infection for four months. He was 64.

After playing folk and jazz in the late 1950s, Baldry became one of the founding fathers of British rock 'n' roll in the 1960s. Eric Clapton has often said that he was inspired to pick up the guitar after seeing Baldry perform. While appearing at the Cavern in Liverpool in the early 1960s, Baldry befriended Paul McCartney, who invited him to perform for the internationally televised special “Around the Beatles” in 1964.

Later in the decade, Baldry, whose nickname was attributed to his six-foot-seven-inch height, played with influential British bands Blues Incorporated and Cyril Davies' & All Stars. He later fronted the Hoochie Coochie Men, which included Rod Stewart, who also joined Baldry in Steam Packet.

“Long John Baldry launched me on my musical journey,” Stewart tells Billboard. “He always had encouraging words when I was just getting out there as a performer at 16. He might not have been a legend in the proverbial sense, but he was a cult hero with his own following and has definitely been my mentor.”

After a brief period with Bluesology (with Elton John on keyboards), Baldry went solo and scored a No. 1 U.K. hit with the ballad “Let the Heartaches Begin” in 1967. With production assistance from Stewart and John, Baldry recorded the 1971 album “It Ain’t Easy” for Warner Bros. Records, featuring his signature song, “Don’t Try to Lay No Boogie Woogie on the King of Rock ‘n’ Roll.”

After immigrating to Canada in the mid-1980s, Baldry recorded for EMI Music Canada. Beginning in 1991, he cut five albums for Stony Plain Records, which is slated to reissue “It Ain’t Easy” and its follow-up, “Everything Stops for Tea,” this fall.

Since the early 1990s, Baldry was also known in Canada for his extensive voice work in commercials. He also provided the voice of Robotnik in the “Sonic the Hedgehog” computer game and narrated “Winnie the Pooh” recordings for Walt Disney Records.

—Larry LeBlanc

Former Harry Fox Head Al Berman Dies

Al Berman, who headed the Harry Fox Agency for 15 years, died July 23 of unspecified causes in Pompano Beach, Fla. He was 86.

Berman took over the New York-based mechanical rights organization in 1969 following the death of Harry Fox, the same year that the agency was officially incorporated as a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Music Publishers’ Assn. In the mid-1970s, Berman’s testimony before Congress was instrumental in upping the statutory rate for mechanical licenses from 2 cents, which had been in effect since 1909.

During his tenure through 1984, the industry saw the introduction of home recording, CDs and music videos. “Al Berman was at the forefront of the fight for publishers’ rights for almost 40 years,” NMPA chairman Irving Z. Robinson said in a statement.

Berman is survived by his wife, two children and four grandchildren.

—Margo Whitmore

Chi-Lites’ Eugene Record Dead At 64

Eugene Record, a founding member, lead singer and creative force behind R&B vocal group the Chi-Lites, died July 22 after a long battle with cancer. He was 64.

Record was best-known for writing the smooth soul group’s biggest R&B/pop crossover hits in the early 1970s, “Have You Seen Her” and “Oh Girl.” But he found himself back on the R&B and pop charts in 2003 when Beyoncé sampled the horn flourish from an earlier composition—the Chi-Lites’ 1970 R&B hit, “Are You My Woman? (Tell Me So)” —for her own mega-hit “Crazy in Love.” The song later won the Grammy Award for best R&B song.

Another top 10 R&B Chi-Lites entry, 1974’s “There Will Never Be Any Peace (Until God Is Seated at the Conference Table),” was sampled by Fantasia on the “American Idol” winner’s third single, “Baby Mama.”

Record co-wrote that tune and other Chi-Lites songs with his former wife, the late Barbara Acklin.

Record’s warm tenor/sweet falsetto and penchant for breaking mid-song into spoken verse became hallmarks of the Chi-Lites’ romantic sound.

The group began as the Chanteurs in the doo-wop era of the 1950s, later becoming the Hi-Lites. Modifying the name of its hometown, Chicago, the group became the Chi-Lites in 1964 with a lineup that included Record, Robert Lester, Marshall Thompson and Credell Jones.

The Chi-Lites had a No. 1 hit on the Billboard R&B Albums chart in 1972 with the Brunswick Records effort “A Lonely Man.”

Record embarked on a solo career in 1976, releasing three albums on Warner Bros. before reuniting with the original Chi-Lites lineup in 1980. Recording for Record’s label, Chi-Sound, the group enjoyed two more R&B hits in 1982 and 1983, respectively, with “Hot on a Thing (Called Love)” and “Bottom’s Up.”

In 2000, the Chi-Lites were inducted into the Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame. They also appeared in the 2002 soul music documentary “Only the Strong Survive.”

Record is survived by his wife. Jackie. —Gail Mitchell
Rock band *Stray* was on hand to dedicate memorabilia and meet with fans at the July 12 opening of the new Hard Rock Live at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, Fla. The band donated costumes and instruments from the 2005 Hard Rock-sponsored *Stray* tour. Front row, from left, are *Stray* members: Chuck Panozzo, James Young, Lawrence Gowan, Tommy Shaw, Rick Nilton and Todd Sucherman. Standing is Scott Putman, owner of the Hard Rock guitar through a promotion by classic rock station WRRR (Big 105.9) Miami.

*Photo: Christopher Manger*
MTV2 TAKES DIRECTION
Track has learned that Palm Pictures is teaming with MTV2 on a series of half-hour specials to air prior to the Sept. 13 release of four new titles in its Directors Label DVD series. The series, which compiles music videos and commercials by a featured director, will add Anton Corbijn, Jonathan Glazer, Mark Romanek and Stephane Sednaoui to its release slate this fall. Each MTV2 special will focus on one of these directors, featuring content from the DVDs and additional original programming.

WAVER IN'T L DROPS DISNEY
Warner Music International has decided not to renew its global licensing deal with Walt Disney Co.'s Buena Vista Music Group. Track has learned. BVMG's manufacturing/distribution/sales/marketing deal was brokered in 2001 by London-based Warner Music Europe president Paul-Rene Albertini, now chairman/CEO of WMI. A source at WMI tells Track, "It wasn't an expensive deal in that Warner couldn't afford it. It was a non-strategic deal that we've been trying to get out of for a while. Disney would not comment, but it is understood that the company has been shopping for an international agreement in the past six months.

WHITE JUICED
ABOUT CONCORD
Sure, it has been reported that Maurice White, a founding member of the legendary Earth, Wind & Fire, has signed with Concord Records for a couple of solo projects. But Track has additional details. White is pairing singers and label hot shots for a rehashing of some of his songs. Herb Trawick, White's partner in Kalimba Entertainment, tells Track the pairings thus far include the Roots with R&B singer Bilal ("Can't Hide Love") and Chaka Khan with Soulive ("Shining Star"). The album, with the working title "interpretations," is due early next year. And speaking of Soulive, the group's first record for Concord, "Break Out," is due in September. In addition to Khan, the album features guest spots by Ivan Neville and Robert Randolph.

CARNIVAL BEATS
Universal Music Publishing Group expands it R&B/hip-hop roster by signature production duo Carnival Beats to an exclusive, worldwide songwriter and co-publishing pact, Track has learned. The Austin-based team—brothers Salih and Tomar Williams—co-wrote seven tracks on Houston rapper Mike Jones' breakout debut album "Who Is Mike Jones?" (Swishahouse/Asylum/Warner Bros.). The duo has a penchant for craftily fusing soul music with looped samples. "It was a fresh, new energy that I felt coming through the speakers," says Maani Edwards, senior director of urban music, West Coast for Universal Music Publishing.

UNI PUB DEAL FOR CARNIVAL BEATS

WAIFS' PREGNANT PAUSE
Australian rock band the Waifs just toured the United States with not one, but two of its members quite visibly pregnant. "I apologize if you can't see the rest of the band because of my stom-ach," singer Vikki Simpson told the crowd at a July 25 gig at Joe's Pub in New York. Re-markably, after a lifetime of singing in perfect harmony, she and sister Donna are both due on Oct. 4. The countryfied quintet wrapped its tour with a series of dates in the Big Apple, then head Down Under for a 12-month hiatus.

ADIEU ASCOLI
Former Virgin Music U.K. managing director Philippe Ascoli spent his last day in the U.K. company on July 26. As previously reported, he is relocating to his native France to establish a joint-venture label with EMI Music France. EMI Music U.K. remains tight-lipped as to who will succeed Ascoli at Virgin.

GATE OPENS FOR FAIRES
We hear that Jay Faires is joining Lions Gate in a senior film music role. Track cannot help but wonder what kind of karma the founder of JCOR and Mammoth Records will bring with him.

DISTRIBUTION: WEA Corp. in New York names Steve Carbin VP of catalog sales. He was the founder of Lupo Entertainment.

RELATED FIELDS: Bullseye Marketing Research in Nashville ups Jennifer Blair to director of active radio marketing. She was active radio marketing associate. S1 Entertainment Group in Los Angeles appoints Jon Burk as marketing manager. He was West Coast sales director at BMG Strategic Marketing Group.

UNI PUB DEAL FOR CARNIVAL BEATS

GOODWORKS
A CLASSIC FUND-RAISER
WYD Media Management is producing limited-edition, signed, commemorative historic album covers to raise funds for the T.J. Martell Foundation. At press time, the images in the first of the series of commemorative prints were still being finalized.

A WARPED ROAD TO RECOVERY
In mid-August, nonprofits the Road Recovery Foundation and the Carson Foundation—a substance abuse prevention organization and drug/alcohol treatment center, respectively—take to the road with the Vans Warped tour. The two organizations will offer extensive outreach at tour stops in Philadelphia (Aug. 12) and New York (Aug. 13).
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Works out of ATL
The King of Crunk

ASCAP Songwriter of the Year
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Works out of Miami
The Tuff Jew

What could these two possibly have in common???