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MODERN ROCK
POP 100
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Cover
Gwen Stefani performed "Luxurious" at this year's Billboard Music Awards, where she received her first BMA trophies as new artist of the year and for digital song of the year. For complete coverage, see page 21.
Photo: John Shearer/WireImage.com

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Jamie Foxx photo by Ben Watts.
Apple’s New Content Deals Put ‘Fair Use’ In Play

By Stacy Baird

In late October, Steve Jobs announced the Video iPod at a major Apple Computer gathering. More significantly, he revealed that users would be able to use iTunes to download hit ABC TV shows to the new iPod the day after broadcast and without commercials for a mere $1.99.

In the first week of November, CBS and NBC said they would be providing iTunes downloads at the same price point. Two weeks later, TiVo announced that its TiVoToGo service would allow subscribers to transfer their TiVo recordings to an iPod or Sony PlayStation Portable.

On one hand, Apple has a potential legal showdown to redefine fair use as it copyright (“copyleft”) pre-exists to digitally delivered content. The Apple deal may well set the parameters for the debate.

On the other hand, Apple has created a benchmark for pricing content using iTunes as the distribution channel and providing compensation to the copyright holders.

Consumers get their programming a day later (albeit without commercial interruptions) and fully portable. By contrast, it has been reported that the TiVo deal leaves copyright owners out in the cold, as they deliver programming to consumers' iPod portability for any programming they can record under a standard TiVo subscription.

Presumably, iTunes, iPod and TiVo could survive court scrutiny under the Supreme Court’s Betamax standard—that a manufacturer of a device is not liable for infringing uses where there are substantial non-infringing uses for that device. But that leaves the possibility of liability under the Supreme Court’s recent Grokster holding, where it determined that the manufacturer is liable where it induces others to infringe. There is the possibility of new lawsuits to determine the scope of the Grokster standard, potentially further defining fair use.

During the past several years, Congress has been asked to step in and redefine fair use, but has until this year been reluctant to do so. Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, the powerful chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, has joined the small chorus of voices urging parties to make progress on redefining fair use.

In March, Barton and Reps. Rick Boucher, D-Va., and John Doolittle, R-Calif., introduced H.R. 1201, the Digital Media Consumers Rights Act of 2005.

Unlike years past where the legal debate focused on such peer-to-peer applications as Napster and Kazaa, this is no longer simply technology and consumers moving faster into the digital age than the entertainment industry.

In the case of Apple’s latest content arrangements, the companies are negotiating deals to advance the use of their pre-existing technologies in anticipation of consumer interest.

TiVo has long based its business model on fair use. And the legal definition of fair use does not need to be changed to accommodate these new offerings. But if the studios seek to limit TiVo’s ability to transfer programs to the iPod, consumer advocates and some key players in the technologies industries may accuse content suppliers of greed and renew their push to tinker with the law.

It is ironic that Apple is at the current epicenter since it was the company to generate the first real digital distribution success for content suppliers with its original iTunes deals. Now Apple could find itself as an antagonist, having done the deals that set the table for a reinvented fair use debate.

Stacy Baird is a Los Angeles-based consultant on strategies for new-market development and intellectual property protection. He previously served as senior policy advisor and technology and intellectual property counsel to Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., and as an advisor to Rep. Howard Berman, D-Calif.

Thomas Maloney
Huntington Station, N.Y.
Musicland To Shut Stores, Seeks Help From Trade

NEW YORK — The Musicland Group has rolled the dice.

The chain is implementing a major restructuring in an attempt to restore its fiscal health once and for all. But the retailer’s call for help from its vendors could prove indefensible for some—and might trigger Chapter 11 proceedings or worse.

First off, sources say Musicland is liquidating MediaPlay, its online store and set a record for pre-orders on its Web site. The box set is also the top-selling music item in the company’s history.

It’s Grammy Time

Mariah Carey, John Legend, Kanye West Lead Nominations

To no one’s surprise, R&B and hip-hop artists led the nominations for the 48th annual Grammy Awards, announced Dec. 8 at Gotham Hall in New York.

Mariah Carey, Kanye West and John Legend drew the most Grammy nods, with eight each. Carey and West will now battle for album of the year—along with Gwen Stefani, U2 and Paul McCartney—for “The Emancipation of Mimi” (Island) and “Late Registration” (RCA-Fella), respectively.

“It feels wonderful,” Carey tells Billboard of her eight nominations, half of which are in the R&B field. “It’s all a blessing, and I’m just grateful to be here.”

Newcomer Legend was surprised by the nominations. “I didn’t expect this many,” he says. “We worked really hard, and there were people that believed in what we did early, but there were also people who didn’t.”

Legend’s debut, “Get Lifted” (G.O.O.D./Columbia), has sold 1.5 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, but the singer is optimistic that some may now give the album a second look. “Kanye and Mariah have both sold a lot more records than me, so I probably needed the attention more than they did,” he says. “It’s really helpful for me to get my album publicized.”

Six of Legend’s eight nods are in the R&B field, including best traditional R&B vocal performance (“Stay With You”), best R&B song (“Ordinary People”) and best R&B album (“Get Lifted”).

Garnering six nominations each are 50 Cent, Beyoncé and Stevie Wonder. Stefen, Missy Elliott, Alicia Keys, Bruce Springsteen and U2 each received five. Country artists Gretchen Wilson and Brad Paisley received four nods apiece, including for best country song and best country album.

For a select list of nominees, see pages 58-60. The full list can be found at grammy.com. The 48th annual Grammy Awards will be held Feb. 8 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles and will be broadcast live on CBS.

Additional reporting by Susan Butler and Clover Hope in New York.
Media Play stores were to begin their going-out-of-business sales Dec. 5. Once those stores are liquidated, Sun Capital will probably file Chapter 11 or Chapter 7 for the Media Play business.

In asking major vendors to forgone product payments, it could trigger an overall company bankruptcy filing if the vendors choose not to support Musicland.

Vendors pulled by Billboard seem divided on the subject. Philadelphia law firm Morgan, Lewis & Bockius has been hired to represent the major music and video suppliers in negotiations with Musicland and Sun Capital.

A financial executive at one of the suppliers says, “Ultimately people will have to weigh the true dollar value of the ‘ask’ versus the cost of the liquidation.” In addition to the bottom-line considerations, that executive says he is also keeping in mind revenue, too. He notes that the current weak sales environment will likely translate into music losing space to other product lines in the near future, which will further depress sales.

“Look what happened with Wherehouse Entertainment,” the financial executive says, in reference to that chain’s Chapter 11 filing in September 2003. “Wherehouse started out with 400 stores, and when Trans World Entertainment got done cherry-picking their best stores, we would have less than 100. Wherehouse stores still open. I don’t think that is a place we want to be now.”

But a senior distribution executive at another major says there was little surprise or concern on the matter. “Obviously we would like [Musicland] to stay in business, but if they don’t convince us that they can run the business, [their proposal] will not fly,” he says.

Musicland executives have pointed out that Best Buy was two weeks away from liquidating the chain when Sun Capital assumed ownership. Vendors said they have forgone nearly $1 billion in product purchases by the chain in the last 2½ years, something that will continue during the next three years if the vendors agree to Musicland’s request.

Musicland used a similar strategy in 1997 when it asked for a moratorium on product payments. That time vendors agreed to support the chain, and Musicland management pulled off a successful turnaround.

While most of the Musicland leadership that Sun Capital instilled in 2003 is still in place, the chairman/CEO office has had a revolving door lately. Eric Weisman, a well-known industry executive who had been running the chain since August 2003, surprised everyone by resigning in early October. His replacement—Jack Chadsay, a retail executive with no industry background—left before any major investments in the company’s future were made.

 antennathon expects MTV and other music video networks to follow BET’s lead in the coming year and hopes to provide the back-end technology and services necessary to do so, like Motricity does with BET. VeriSign already powers these types of services for several music video networks in Europe.

“With think there will be a large increase in TV networks delivering this kind of content in shows,” says Dan Mosher, director of content services for VeriSign. “We see a large opportunity there.”

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NEW YORK—With digital competitors gaining traction and stealing heard share, a third of radio's largest companies are coming together to put high-definition digital radio on a fast track.

Unveiled here Dec. 6, the HD Digital Radio Alliance comprises Bonneville International, Citadel Broadcasting, Clear Channel Radio, Cumulus Media, Emmis Communications, Entercom Communications, Greater Media and Infinity Broadcasting. More companies are expected to join.

The unprecedented coalition brings otherwise fierce competitors together to accelerate HD consumer penetration and coordinate the rollout of new HD2 multicast channels. The new channels—formed by splitting an existing station’s digital signal—will carry new localized formats dedicated to jazz and blues. Hispanic love songs, female talk and other programming not widely available on free radio.

By coordinating local format allocations, industry execs hope to create digital radio without having to create digital radio without having to create a “digital radio Wild West” as they begin launching multistreams in the top 25 markets next month. The additional channels are expected to be commercial-free for at least two years.

Group executives say they are looking beyond the mainstream for HD2 radio programming. “If it’s already being done, don’t do it,” Emmis radio division president Rick Cummings says. These execs hope HD2 will lure disenfranchised younger listeners back to radio. A new study by Bridge Ratings of 2,000 people aged 12-24 found that 85% would choose their MP3 player over traditional radio as a preferred option for music.

So far, 865 U.S. radio stations have made the transition to Biquity Digital’s HD standard. About two dozen side channels have launched. But manufacturing problems and delays are dogging the new technology. Just seven HD radio models are available—five after-market car radios, one high-end home system and a tabletop priced at $499. Receiver sales are estimated to be low thousands, according to Biquity. BMW is, so far, the only automaker installing HD receivers. In contrast, by the end of this year, satellite radio providers XM and Sirius anticipate a combined 9 million subscribers. Research firm Fulcrum Global Partners predicts Apple Computer will sell 10 million iPods in the fourth quarter, and radio-like services, such as Motorola’s Road ID mobile phone service, are expected to be commercial-free for two years.

The Japanese recorded-music market—the world’s second-largest—has been almost completely driven by the strong domestic iPod [Japanese pop] category, which accounts for more than 75% of total sales. Japan continued its ongoing decline during the first three quarters of 2005, according to labels body the Recording Industry Association of Japan.

But with 200 million listeners per day, the 85-year old radio business is betting a new menu of free, diverse programming will—in the words of Greater Media president/CEO Peter Smyth—create “a radio renaissance.”

The eight groups have pledged more than $200 million in airtime next year to sell HD to listeners. “No one else has the marketing muscle of 10,000 radio stations,” Emmis chairman/CEO Joel Hollander says. Boston Acoustics director of product development Dave Kroll says the alliance “has the potential to generate tremendous amounts of consumer awareness, which will build demand and help bring [receiver] prices down.”

Of the coming fight, Cumulus president/CEO Lew Dickey Jr. says a “sleeping giant has been awakened.”

As digital radio gains ground, the question of who owns the rights to previously released digital radio content will come to a head. The greatest knock of the new system is that only a digital radio receiver is able to play the content. However, “technology transfer” to FM will soon be imminent. As such, the industry will need to address the question, Who owns what, when and how?”

Audiogen said it has gotten the green light from music companies, labels and BMI to license the song “Hey Jude” by the Beatles. As a result, Audigen says it will be able to bring the song to the HD2 audience.

Shakira Now More Famous


Famous Music chairman/CEO Irwin Robinson says parent company Viacom’s reach was a key factor in the deal.

“We brought the possible synergies of the other Viacom divisions,” says Robinson, citing MTV, BET and Paramount.

Latin music’s most successful star worldwide, Shakira is recognized as a top songwriter who records only her own (or co-written) material. Her current Spanish-language single, “La Tortura” (featuring Alejandro Sanz), established a record as the longest-running No. 1 track (25 weeks) on the Billboard Hot Latin Songs chart. “La Tortura” is also the first Spanish-only video to receive regular rotation on MTV in the United States.
MASEKELA PLANS FOR THE FUTURE
Jazz Legend's Chissa Entertainment Expands With Publishing, Distribution Deals

JOHANNESBURG—During the past four years, Hugh Masekela's Chissa Entertainment has established itself as one of South Africa's most visionary independent music companies.

The renowned 66-year-old jazz trumpet/flugelhorn player is chairman of Chissa Entertainment, which he founded with CEO Irfan Gill. The rapidly expanding company has just made a worldwide publishing administration deal with Sony/ATV Music Publishing.

Masekela's vision is to create a "songwriter's laboratory" with a "world view" for South Africa, "where we can nurture songwriters to create songs that can be played both in South Africa and internationally."

London-based Sony/ATV Music Publishing senior VP of international Guy Henderson calls the November deal "particularly significant for our South African affiliate." There, managing director Jay Savage "has created an environment where writers are the stewards of Hugh can feel comfortable," Henderson says.

The Chissa publishing division represents five writers, including Masekela, his own recording career spans five decades and numerous labels, including MCA/Universal, Verve, Sony, and in the early 1970s—his own U.S.-based Chisa imprint.

Masekela left his native South Africa in 1960 to escape apartheid and eventually settled in the United States, where he married vocalist and fellow South African exile Miriam Makeba in 1964. Although the pair divorced in 1966, they became musical icons of the anti-apartheid movement in the following quarter-century.

Masekela eventually returned to his homeland in 1990, after future president Nelson Mandela was released from prison. However, he struggled during the next seven years with alcohol and cocaine abuse, recalled in his 2004 autobiography "Still Grazing."

Having cleaned up, in 1998 he helped launch the Musicians and Artists Assistance Program of South Africa to help others with similar problems.

"Hugh has been an exceptional role model over the past few years," says Nick Motsatshe, deputy CEO/marketing director at authors body the South African Music Rights Organization. "He has always carried the flag for South African music internationally."

The Chissa group includes labels division Chissa Music Entertainment, which contains two imprints, Chissa Records and Bala Bros. Records. Other divisions deal with video production, artist management and concert promotion. Masekela says the company is currently finalizing a deal that will give it control of national distributor Bowline Music.

Distribution "has always been a white-owned business," he says. "I don't think anyone thought a black-owned company would move into it. But we realized that depending on old-establishment structures would not get us anywhere."

Gillan says the group's long-term vision is to move into other African markets and then international territories. "That's why it's important to establish administrative structures and centers," he says, "to support the creative element and take great product to the world."

Masekela is signed as a recording artist to Chissa Records. In October, the label released his latest album, "Almost Like Being in Jazz," licensed to Straight Ahead Records in the United States. Chissa is also negotiating with Masekela's former labels to obtain the rights to his back catalog.

The Chissa labels' roster contains nine other artists. Releases planned for 2006 include African vibraphone player Ngwako Manamela, Zulu singer/songwriter Busi Mhlongo and 18-year-old Africans soul singer Corlea.

Masekela says he hopes Chissa can help bring South African music to international audiences. "South Africa became popular overseas through a liberation perspective," he says. "What the world tended to sideline is that South Africans are talented; we don't just derive our talent from the struggle."

Chissa already plays an important role in South Africa as a black-owned independent music company, Motsatshe says. The group's "diversity, its vision and commitment to creating a new business model makes it a real force in this country's music sector," he says.

"We're currently doing a lot of groundwork in terms of putting American deals in place for our product," Gillan adds. "Hugh's reputation and contacts will play a key role in this; with the Sony/ATV and Bowline deals, we feel very confident about what 2006 holds in store."

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London.

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Canadian A&R Execs Embrace Expanded Roles
Duties Now Include Pitching Music For Film/TV Projects, Overseeing DVD Releases

TORONTO—While Canada's independent label sector is being celebrated internationally as a launch pad for new acts, the country's major labels have been reshaping their own A&R policies.

The Canadian affiliates of Universal Music Group, Sony BMG, Warner Music Group and EMI have significantly cut back on direct domestic signings in recent years. Insiders confirm each has a roster half the size of the ones they had a decade ago.

A&R execs at Canadian majors say they are increasingly working with a smaller number of acts they deem capable of moving beyond national boundaries. At the same time, these execs have strengthened their links with Canada's independent sector and have become more involved in pitching music to film and TV producers and overseeing DVD releases.

"Today, A&R is more than just looking for a band with songs," EMI Music Canada A&R director Fraser Hill says. "Visually have become such a big part of our job."

Universal Music Canada senior VP of A&R Allan Reid confirms his department is also looking beyond its traditional role. "When our artists do a live recording or are filmed," he says, "we make sure we get content (rights). If they do something with a radio station, we think, 'OK, who owns this performance? Can we monetize it somehow?'"

Canadian A&R execs are also increasingly acting as brokers between artist managers and merchandisers or TV producers. "They aren't [just] in the studio; making it happen anymore," says Toronto manager Chris Smith, who handles K-Os (EMI) and Divine Brown.

One A&R exec says that his label's smaller roster has enabled him to spend more time with such artists as BUCK 65.
Rock Star Biopics To Debut On Sony’s PSP

Flamingo Features and M3 Entertainment want a piece of the PlayStation Portable pie. On Dec. 15, the two production companies will launch their joint-inked, long-term partnership with a series of music star biopics in the Universal Media Disc format—that software that plays on the PSP.

The Memoirs biographies will focus on one artist or band. There are 52 90-minute episodes planned for release in the next 12 months; the first acts profiled are Queen, Ray Charles, Willie Nelson and Nat “King” Cole.

More Memoirs series are planned for 2007 and beyond, spotlighting sports figures, film and TV stars, business moguls and other intriguing personalities.

Memoirs is similar to such popular cable shows as A&E’s “Biography” and Lifetime’s “Intimate Portraits.” But unlike these TV productions, each Memoirs installment will arrive first on UMD, followed by a DVD release and TV broadcast.

Flamingo Features co-founder Austen Taylor says the distribution model makes “perfect sense,” and positions her company as an early adopter. “With PSPs flying off the shelves, we are in a position to paint the face of a new kind of programming.”

As with any emerging media platform, UMD still faces some challenges, particularly at the retail level. Eagle Rock Entertainment already has 11 music UMD titles in stores. But Eagle Rock executive VP Mike Carden says, “Retailers are figuring out what to do with this format that needs its own section.”

Retailers agree. “When it launched, we weren’t sure where it would fit in,” says Richard Bridge, a music product manager for Virgin Entertainment Group. And while there are not any breakout titles yet, Bridge says, “Sales are there.”

Carden says he is now seeing new customers—like big-box retailers Wal-Mart and Best Buy—placing orders for UMD video; such edgier retailers as Virgin Megastore have already been selling the format.

Of Eagle Rock’s initial UMD offerings, Carden says releases by such classic acts as Pink Floyd, Nirvana and Metallica are selling best and that the PSP customer is skewing older than originally thought. This helps to explain why Eagle Rock is “going for classic artists,” Carden says.

Sony will distribute the Memoirs UMDs worldwide. Fuji/Pony Canyon will distribute the DVDs in Japan. A DVD distributor for territories outside Japan is being discussed.

In the Japanese market, the Memoirs UMD videos will arrive 17 days before the DVD release, says Keiji Shimizu, a senior executive with M3 in Tokyo. The UMD price will range from 2,800 yen to 3,800 yen ($23–$31). The U.S. retail price is expected to be about $20.

M3 and Flamingo are also in discussions with TV networks around the world to air the Memoirs programs.

Based music buyer for record chain WOM, reports that sales of DVDs and games are up, and CD sales are “holding steady.” He says, “If business over the next few weeks—particularly in the three days before Christmas—keeps pace with what we have achieved so far, we will have every reason to be satisfied.”

In France, the world’s fifth-largest music market, sales have been slipping for the past three years, and early signs show that 2005 should follow the same trend, but at a slower drop rate.

Guy Messina is the Clue by Jukebox-based director of music and video for France’s biggest music retailer, FNAC, which has 64 stores in the country. He says that FNAC’s CD sales this season are “flat” compared with the same period last year, while DVDs show a 2% increase.

Messina says that the recent riots in France affected business in November, but that “Christmas sales really kicked off in the first week of December.”

Madonna’s “Confessions on a Dance Floor” was the chain’s best-selling item in the past weeks. On the French side, Benabbar, Cali, Alain Souchon and charity compilation “Les Enfoirés” are not any big hits.

While business in Europe is slow, Latin America shows signs of resurgence. Music sales in key markets in the region have risen compared with last year. Those numbers were widely expected to maintain themselves through the year’s end, thanks to a strong release schedule, lower prices at retail and aggressive anti-piracy action in integral Latin markets.

“It’s too early to have a definitive answer,” says Lorena Sanchez, director of sales for the Mixup chain of music stores in Mexico. “But we think it will be a wonderful season.”


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Rob Cavallo is no stranger to the film industry. He has produced tracks for "City of Angels" (Alana Morrisett's "Unvirginited") and "Runaway Bride" (Eric Clapton's "Blue Eyes Blue"). Among other films, Cavallo's Hollywood profile increased with the recent arrival of "Rent." He produced all the music for the movie and attendant soundtrack, which came out Sept. 27 on Warner Bros. The 1998 Grammy Award-winning producer of the year, Cavallo has also helmed career-defining records by Green Day and Coo Goo Dolls. These days, he is producing Jewel's new album, "Goodbye Alice in Wonderland," due next year. When not working with artists in the studio, Cavallo can be found in his office at Warner Bros. Records, where he is senior VP of A&R.

**Q:** How does producing the music for a movie differ from producing an album by one artist?

**A:** When you're working with an artist to make a record, there are no real bosses. It's just you and the artist. When you're producing the music for a musical, you have to satisfy the story and the people who's the master of it all: the director. So, every time you're doing a vocal take or choosing instrumentation, it's all adding up to serve the movie, the music, the actor and the director. It becomes 10 times more complex than working with one artist on an album project.

**Q:** Do you have a strong desire to tackle another movie soundtrack?

**A:** Absolutely. In fact, there may be a movie attached to the next Green Day record. The band would be in it, but we don't know what to know about the degree. The scripts are just being written. We're likening to our version of a "Quo vadis?" to our version of a "Quo vadis?" to our version of a "Quo vadis?"

**Q:** When are you in the studio working with an artist, what is most important to you?

**A:** You have to have a great song. Then, you must have a great performance and arrangement of a great song. Whatever the artistic intent is, if you're really living and loving the energy in the studio at the time of performance, the fast will feel it and respond to it in the way you were hoping for.

**Q:** You have worked with Green Day for many years. How has your relationship changed over time?

**A:** Signed the in 1993 to Reprise. They subsequently asked me to produce "Doctor," which was my second album (production) ever. We were always good friends and musical brothers. All that's really happened is that it's gotten deeper. There was one painful period, when I was at Disney and couldn't work with them. Of course, I returned to Warner Bros. and one of the first things I did was bring in "The Help." Scott Whitley worked with me to bring in "Too Dumb to Do That." We worked on "American Idiot" for about 10 months. It was a great reunion.

**Q:** You are a label executive and a producer. How do you keep the two worlds separate?

**A:** It's difficult. Traditionally, a producer doesn't make the best A&R guy. Similarly, A&R guys don't usually make the best producers. It's tough to do both, because they require two really different mind-sets. The producer mind-set can invade the A&R mind-set and hurt a signing. It might be exciting about what kind of record you could make with the band, but you might miss some of the broader strokes, like, is this band important to the culture? And sometimes, the mechanics of making a record can blind you to looking at a band purely from an A&R point of view.

**Q:** Is there any one band that you would like to work with?

**A:** My Chemical Romance. Though they haven't said yes to me yet, I remain hopeful.

---

**Latin Notes**

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**Musical Fetes Cruz’s Life**

The life of Celia Cruz is being made into a musical, conceived and produced by a longtime producer and close friend of the late salsa queen.

"Assuca!" is the brainchild of Cuban-born, Spain-based songwriter/producer Oscar Gómez, who secured the worldwide rights to the Cruz musical and its ensuing cast album from widower Pedro Knight shortly after Cruz's death in 2003.

Gómez has since teamed up with Chicago-based events promoter/manager Henry Cardenas of Cardenas Marketing Network to produce the show, which is set to premiere in 2007 in Tenerife, Spain. It is then projected to play off-Broadway.

"Celia was part of my family," Gómez tells Billboard exclusively. "This is a very special project, not only because of what it entails as a show but because it is Celia." Cruz, who died at 78, was perhaps the most widely beloved and recognized contemporary Latin musician, with nearly 60 albums and countless awards to her name, as well as an exhibit currently running at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

A woman of extraordinary vocal range and larger-than-life personality, Cruz took salsa music to virtually every corner of the world and also pushed the boundaries of the genre. In this age of rampant reggaeton, many forget that Cruz was one of the first mainstream Latin artists to use the rhythm in her material, specifically in her 2001 hit "La Negra Tiene Tumbo." Appropriately enough, reggaeton star Daddy Yankee is one of several artists who are investing in the project, and will also have a role as musical consultant.

The musical, Gómez says, will feature tracks immortalized by Cruz, as well as original material he wrote specifically for the film.

**Classical Score**

**ANASTASIA TSIOLCAS atsioulcas@billboard.com**

**Dessay’s Stellar Ascent**

**Metropolitan Opera Gig, PBS Appearance, New Album Put Soprano In The Spotlight**

There is no doubt that this winter belongs to Natalie Dessay. The French soprano offers a one-two-three knockout this season, starting with a string of lavish Paris-based recent performances at the Metropolitan Opera, an appearance on PBS later this month and the release of a new album just after the new year.

Certainly, Dessay did not have the easiest start. Illness forced the soprano to miss the opening night of her much-anticipated run singing Gounod’s opera Romeo Et Juliette at the Met, which marked her first leading role at the opera house. And on the first evening she did perform, there was another mishap: A suspended bed, elaborately hung from cables, appears to float in a star-spangled sky. Just before the curtain went up on Act Four, however, one of the cables holding the bed — and the soprano — snapped, sending Dessay plummeting several feet.

Happily, she emerged unscathed, and Dessay was in fine form when she discussed the incident a few weeks later.

"That was quite a surprise!" the jocular singer says of her tumble. She was also in high spirits: in comparing Shakespeare’s famed character’s age to her own, she kids, “She’s 14, I’m 40, same thing, right?”

That vivacity of spirit translates well to her performances. She sings with a dazzling lightness and agility that has won her kudos around the globe from critics and audiences alike. It is a quality shown to great effect in her appearance in Christian Chaudet’s whimsical animated film interpretation of Stravinsky’s Chinese fairy tale opera Le Rossignol, which PBS will broadcast Dec. 21. While some might not embrace Chaudet’s thoroughly 21st-century envisioning, replete with computers and cell phones, Dessay’s performance in the title role as the Nightingale is simply entrancing.

That same description applies to a brilliant recording of Handel arias titled "Deliria," in which Dessay is accompanied by fast-rising star conductor Emmanuelle Haïm and baroque ensemble Le Concert d’Astrée. Virgin Classics will release the set Jan. 10.

"Emmanuelle and I have been working quite a bit together," Dessay says. "She is just amazing, and so intense."

The two spent part of the summer preparing for a recording of more Handel: this time, the oratorio Il Triomfo Del Tempo. The Dessay deluge will actually continue well into 2006: The soprano appears in Christian Carion’s film "Joyeux Noel," which is based on the true story of Scottish, French and German troops who in 1914 arranged a temporary ceasefire during World War I to celebrate Christmas together. (Despite the film’s yuletide theme, the movie will not be released in the United States until March. The soundtrack will be available Feb. 7 on Virgin Classics.)

**NOTES FROM ALL OVER:**

The 79-year-old Hungarian composer Gyorgy Kurtag has won the 2006 Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition for his piece, Concertante Op. 42, for violin, viola and orchestra. The University of Louisville awards the $200,000 prize. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra has named Osvaldo Golijov and Mark-Anthony Turino as its next composers-in-residence for the 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons. The two succeed Augusta Read Thomas, who was in residence with the CSO for nine years.

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 dishes some gummy starts of life. NATALIE DESSAY has been wowing critics and audiences.

www.americanradiohistory.com
A Hi-Tek World
Producer Busy With Multiple Projects, Including A New Solo Set

Noted producer Hi-Tek calls himself a free agent right now. But do not think that means he is not busy.

The Cincinnati talent sports two songs on 50 Cent's soundtrack to "Get Rich Or Die Tryin.'" And during the last couple of years, he has been steadily racking up credits on albums by other Aftermath and Interscope acts, including the Game, Lloyd Banks and D12. Current studio gigs include collaborations with Snoop Dogg, Stylus P, Busta Rhymes and Dr. Dre's long-awaited "Detox" album.

"I've been submitting tracks to see what he's feeling," Hi-Tek says of Dr. Dre.

In the meantime, Hi-Tek is juggling several other projects. One is the follow-up to his 2001 solo debut on Rawkus Records, "Hi-Tekology." He describes the work-in-progress as similar in concept to his last effort, which featured a diverse artist lineup. "Upgrade this one to the 10th power," he declares of the new album that presently lists Nas, Snoop Dogg, Mos Def and Raphael Saadiq in the guest column.

"I don't consider myself a rapper," Hi-Tek adds, "though I do have some verses on this album. It's more about my versatility as a producer."

Building buzz through his work with various underground artists, Hi-Tek netted above-ground notoriety when he produced rappers Talib Kweli and Mos Def (as Black Star) on their pivotal 1998 self-titled album. Two years later, Hi-Tek and Kweli partnered as Reflection Eternal for the critically acclaimed "Train of Thought" album, which helped cement the reputation of Rawkus. In between their busy schedules, the pair are planning to record a second album.

"We're nitpicking at it right now," Hi-Tek says, "because Talib is working now on his next solo album. But we've done a couple of joints."

For the last three years he has also been grooming an R&B singer he discovered in Cincinnati named Dion. Hi-Tek has featured him on various projects, including the track "I'm Runnin'" from the Game's 2005 debut album.

Lamenting that a lot of hip-hop sounds the same, Hi-Tek says he is shopping for the right distribution deal that will help him "keep my creativity. The major labels can stop you from being original. Right now they're looking for something that's already going on. I'm looking ahead of the game."

DECK THE HALLS: This holiday season marks the 10th anniversary of Stevie Wonder's House Full of Toys benefit concert. The annual event shifts from the Forum in Los Angeles to Hollywood's Kodak Theatre on Dec. 17... Legendary Motown band the Funk Brothers will help the East Coast ring in 2006 by way of the regional Comcast Network. The five-hour "CN8 Presents: Celebrate '06" will air live from the Universal Orlando (Fla.) Resort. Other headliners are Styx and Gloria Gaynor.

OF NOTE: R&B pioneer and former Drifters lead singer Ben E. King ("Stand by Me") signs a two-album deal with True Life Entertainment. The New York-based indie label—distributed by Navare—plans to release its first King project, "I've Been Around," in January... Jill Scott and Patti LaBelle pair up on the first single from the forthcoming cast album to the Broadway musical version of "The Color Purple." Their duet, "What About Love?" is produced by James Poyser and will be released via EMI Music division Angel Records in January. Angel plans to issue the cast album, produced by Jay D. Saks, Jan. 24.


Singer Brandy Moss-Scott's new album, "Lollypop," will be released through Universal Records in late December. Moss-Scott operates the indie label Heavenly Tunes... Essence magazine temporarily relocates its annual music festival from New Orleans to Houston next year (July 1-3 at Reliant Park).
Goapele’s Major Move
Singer/Songwriter Enjoys Benefits Of Sony Urban Deal

With fans like Prince and Stevie Wonder, it is no surprise that Oakland, Calif.-based singer/songwriter Goapele is feeling pretty good about her prospects. Her sophomore album, “Change It All,” is due Dec. 27, and it will be her first release under a joint venture between Columbia/Sony Urban and her own Skyblaze Recordings.

Goapele independently released her first full-length album, “Even Closer,” through RED, following her EP, “Closer.” An expanded version of “Even Closer” was then re-released through Sony Urban. The title has sold 147,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

After performing music from that album for a couple of years, Goapele, who writes all of her songs, built her own Bay Area studio. It was there that she created the new project.

“I could spend most of my days and months in there, unlike on the last album where we barely had any budget at all and it was hard to get into studios,” Goapele says. “I didn’t feel like I got to do as much experimenting and take as much time” on the last album.

The experimenting she did on “Change It All” led to an eclectic sound that ranges from vintage soul to edgy pop. Goapele, who counts Nina Simone and Björk among her musical influences, worked with a bevy of producers, including Linda Perry. However, only two tracks featured guest spots from singer Dwele and newcomer Clyde Carson.

“I wanted this album to be a true representation of me and not have a lot of forced collaborations,” Goapele says. “The album is really eclectic and features about every different mood and thought I went through while recording—from aspects of love to war to just trying to express different stories that don’t always get out there that happen in our daily lives.”

The singer held onto much of her independence and creative control even after signing with Sony Music. “It felt good to have the support of a major label, and I’m extremely grateful that my label Skyblaze is still involved,” she says.

Although Goapele’s album is coming out during a crowded fourth quarter, Sony Urban product manager David Belgrave does not believe she will have any trouble standing out.

“She’s her own best salesman,” Belgrave says. “She’s had a great deal of success because of people connecting with her.”

So far, the people who have connected with Goapele are primarily other Bay Area residents who have known about the singer for years. Now Sony has the task of trying to maintain Goapele’s existing fan base while expanding her audience.

“Her fan base wants her to be their little secret, but we want her to be a big secret,” Belgrave says.

In an effort to reach new fans, Goapele will spend much of the coming months on the road. She is on tour with Lyfe Jennings until Dec. 18, and Bay Area shows are planned around the new year.

Additionally, she has aligned with the Youth Aids Foundation and the Keep A Child Alive Foundation. Also, a Web site, changeitall.org, which promotes Goapele’s musical themes of social/political activism and creativity, has been launched as a sideline campaign for her album.

The site was started “to really see how far we could go with the idea and not let it just be a song that talks about what changes we can make in this world,” Goapele explains. “It’s a way for everyday people to get involved.”

According to Belgrave, Sony Urban is working the single “First Love” in such key markets as San Francisco, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., before branching out to other regions of the country.

Kevin Brown, PD at adult R&B KBLX San Francisco, says that although “First Love” is not getting as many spins as cuts from “Even Closer,” he has no doubt the single will catch on. “She’s due for a breakthrough. We’re believers. I think the rest of the nation has to catch on. I think she’s going to deliver.”

Belgrave says, “With Goapele we’re not focusing on big first-week sales. It’s not that type of thing. We want her album to progress the way Lyfe’s album progressed. We look at her as a career artist."

FACT FILE

Label: Skyblaze Recordings/Columbia/Sony Urban
Management: Namane Mohlabane
Booking Agency: William Morris Agency
Publishing: Life Is What We Music Publishing (ASCAP)
Best-selling/last album: “Even Closer” (2002), 147,000

B.I.G. (cont.)

Big Gee, one-fourth of Bad Boy South’s Boyz n Da Hood, who appears on “Hustler’s Story,” seconds Valentino’s sentiments, saying, “B.I.G. is the best MC to ever spit on the mic. Being on this song is the opportunity of a lifetime.”

Even such producers as Timbaland, Scott Storch and Swizz Beatz were lining up to appear on the project. Andre Harris, one-half of Dre & Vidal—the hit-making duo behind Usher’s “Caught Up” and Ciara’s “Oh”—says they were equally excited when they found out that their creation, “1970 Somethin’,” featuring the Game and Faith Evans, was selected for the album.

“Not only was it a good opportunity for us to get something on the rap side, but it was also the Notorious B.I.G.,” Harris notes. “Who wouldn’t want to get something on Big’s album? It was just a chance we couldn’t pass up.”

While Combs says crossover success is not his primary goal, he does believe the guests feature on the album, such as rock group Korn and Nelly, can help make the project a main-stream hit.

“Honestly, we’ve never gone for that, but we think we have that with the first single [‘Nasty Girl’], which has myself, Nelly and Jagged Edge on there. All of us on the record have a track record at crossover.”

The song, which also features newcomer Avery Storm, is No. 43 on the Billboard Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. Another track, “Whatchu Want,” featuring Jay-Z, is also garnering spins.

Bad Boy is launching an extensive marketing campaign that has an interesting component.

“We’re partnering with the Loews movie theaters, so you’re going to hear his music there,” Wiley says. “You’re also going to see posters and standees [in the theaters] like there’s a movie coming.”

Bad Boy has also joined with Walmart and Black Entertainment Television to sell a CD/DVD combo that offers consumers a chance to win a limited-edition double-face Notorious B.I.G. watch. Bad Boy has also teamed with Biggie’s mother, Violett Wallace, for a promotional tour that will push the album and her memoir, “Biggie.”

In addition, a never-before-seen Pepsi commercial that the rapper shot shortly before his death will be resurrected. Throughout this month, a mobile phone rollout will occur with various carriers that will feature tunes from “Duets: The Final Chapter,” as well as Biggie’s catalog. More than 60 ringtones will be offered, many of them exclusive to the mobile space.

Retailers feel that the strong marketing plan combined with the album’s star power and Biggie’s magnetic attraction will translate into success at the cash registers.

“Judging from the list of artists, we think anything with Notorious B.I.G. is a given. A few people have been coming in and asking about it already, so I think it will do very well,” predicts Paul Harrington of George’s Music Room in Chicago.

Even with so much marketing might behind it, Combs is confident that in the end, one factor alone will sell the album: Biggie.

“The album is just incredible,” he says. “He’s at a level of a Frank Sinatra or a Nat ‘King’ Cole as far as the hip-hop generation goes.”

Photo: Doreen Andrade/Wireimage.com

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B.I.G. RESURRECTED FOR ‘DUETS’

Even though eight years have passed since the 1997 murder of the Notorious B.I.G. (aka Christopher Wallace), the hip-hop community’s love for the rapper has never wavered. On Dec. 20, Sean "Diddy" Combs will offer fans new tracks featuring the slain artist when "Notorious B.I.G. Duets: The Final Chapter" hits stores on Bad Boy Entertainment/Atlantic Records.

The album pairs the voice of Biggie with some of today’s most popular artists and producers, such as Eminem, Jay-Z, R. Kelly and Mary J. Blige. Biggie is also joined on several duets by other such departed legends as reggae artist Bob Marley, rapper Big Pun and his most notable rival, Tupac Shakur, who was shot to death in 1996 and whose unsolved murder has been linked to that of Wallace.

To create the material, producers took Biggie’s existing vocals and created new tracks around them with the living performers adding their parts. For the deceased artists, vocals from both parties were wrapped around new tracks.

Combs tells Billboard that the album came about because of the overwhelming demand from artists seeking to sample Biggie’s vocals.

"Different people wanted to utilize his vocals and do duets with him on mix tapes," he says. "It showed us that...continued on >>p30"
At a time when much of the music industry is ailing, Alternative Distribution Alliance, the independent distribution arm of Warner Music Group, claims a nearly 30% increase in billing in each of the last three years. The Postal Service, Interpol, The Arcade Fire, Bright Eyes, Death Cab for Cutie. All of these artists have been sold via ADA. Andy Allen has served as president of ADA since 1994, starting just months after its inception. Today, New York-based ADA has a stable of independent labels that includes Sub Pop, Saddle Creek, Touch & Go, Matador, Beggars Group and Epitaph Records. ADA also handles certain developing-artist releases from Atlantic and other WMG labels.

Despite its recent successes—including high chart debuts from the likes of Interpol and Bright Eyes—challenges loom for ADA. As independent-label market share grows, so grows competition. Also, a shifting marketplace is making the internet and mass merchants a more significant part of the indie sales picture and jeopardizing traditional independent sales outlets.

Allen, whose experience selling music dates back to managing Death Cab for Cutie for the Eyes label, is unfazed. A strong release slate is planned for 2006, and acclaimed indie rock labels Domino, Secretly Canadian and Hopeless have all joined ADA in the past few months.

Q: One of the key changes affecting independent distribution has been a shrinking of indie retail and a growing need for indie labels to get their releases into larger chains. What has this meant for the labels you work with?
A: One time, independent labels mostly sold records in independent stores. Today, most national chains and even the mass retailers all have a significant role to play in selling independently released music. We’re experiencing a time when it’s not uncommon to see independent releases in The Billboard 200, on a very consistent basis, and it’s not unusual for a significant part of the chart to be devoted to independent releases.

All of this is new in the last 10 years. Most of the larger accounts prefer to work with a small group of vendors, so the fact that there are significant national distribution entities that represent the large part of the independent marketplace is good for labels. It’s easier for [the chains] to represent the independently released music in their stores.

So I think the fact there’s a group of national independent [distributors] now has actually been good for the independent community, in terms of a complete representation in the marketplace.

Q: Just big-box chains devote only a small section of floor space to music, and even key indie stores have branched out to other products. Didn’t we see that with the Arcade Fire where retail underestimated the album’s Internet buzz?
A: I don’t know if that’s true. The Arcade Fire started with a very humble ship-out, but it wasn’t that it wasn’t received well. I think the retail community reacted extremely quickly to that record. I believe we shipped 2,100 units to start, but we had taken orders for almost 30,000 by the fourth week. Even the chain guys figured that record out very quickly. It illustrated the idea of music blogs becoming such an influential way to get the word out on a new band.

But I don’t believe that we’ve had more difficulty with catalog or new releases this year. I think, in fact, this year we’ve encountered less resistance [at retail] than in years past.

Q: What do you attribute that change to?
A: If you look at the group of labels we distribute, you’d see they are generally all labels with a history. They’re finding acts that even if they’re not growing in audience numbers or units, are significant from a critical standpoint. There are some terrific labels out there that do great billing, but I don’t know if we’d be a great solution for them.

Our growth has been in attracting big labels to ADA. Our growth has been helping the labels we’re involved with grow their artist rosters. We’ve also benefited because indie rock right now is experiencing a mainstream visibility that it’s never had before, so we’re in a good position.

Q: As more music gets sold online, are ADA-distributed labels required to use your services for their digital needs?
A: We offer a complete solution to digital for the labels that are looking for it. There are some labels that have some direct digital partnerships [already in place] and we do everything else. There are some cases where labels are doing their own direct partnerships with download accounts but not in the mobile or ringtone space.

A full set of services are available, if required, or a subset of services are available, if needed. International distribution, or digital services, or whatever, are all available. But we don’t want you to have to build your company with the overhead of all those resources. They’re available to the companies when they need them, as opposed to being charged to the company when they don’t need them.

Q: In the case of Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, you are distributing an unsigned act that had won national attention without a label and almost entirely by using the Internet. As the Web allows more artists to find success without a label, will this kind of deal become more commonplace?
A: The Clap Your Hands arrangement for us is a very unusual one. They got to the point where they were being overwhelmed by the structure that needs to be in place to support a growing band. They were unwilling to commit long term to a label, and knew they had demand for their record.

I don’t know that we could do that often. There’s a fair amount of hand-holding that goes on in that way. I don’t know if the band believes long term that their future is to go it alone. They certainly know they need distribution. I believe that they know that to continue to grow they’re going to need help, and I suspect that help will come in the form of either an indie or major label.

But the reason we can’t do that often is because I think it’s unfair to the [labels] that we work with on a day in, day out basis. That is, taking things on an ad hoc basis. We try to limit our relationships so we can concentrate long term on the projects that are already in the house.

Q: Indie retailers are becoming more aggressive in going after exclusives. For example, Saddle Creek-affiliated Team Love released a live Bright Eyes album solely to indie stores. Does this put the distributor in a tough spot?
A: The labels determine what it is they think is right for their artists. Sometimes that does put us at odds. We’ve always felt that music should be put out in a way that it’s easy for the consumer to find it, whether it’s an indie store or a chain store or a mass merchant or a digital store.

So our position on exclusives has been—and remains—that if you’re putting a consumer in a position [that] where they have to go to find it [is] not their preference, it’s probably not the right thing to do.

Q: Can you give a preview of key 2006 releases you are looking forward to?
A: There’s a new Cat Power record in January, and a new Belle & Sebastian record in February, both from Matador. We’re very excited about Domino Records’ Arctic Monkeys in February. Epitaph has a new Matchbox Romance in February, and there’s also new albums from Neko Case [Anti/Epitaph] and Calexico [Touch & Go] in the early part of the year.
years), the venue saw only 40 dark days in 2005. Star acts tend to play multiples at the build-
ing. U2, for example, sold out eight Garden dates on its Vertigo outing, and could have done sev-
eral more. New York Jave Bill Joel already has three sold-out dates for January, with more being
ea possibility. Other big runs are in the works, and Marciano says the Garden is already in early
talks to bring the Grammy Awards back in 2007.
The hiring of respected talent buyer Melissa Miller Ormond should provide another boost
to the venue's datebook (billboard.biz, Nov. 10).

REPLANTING THE GARDEN
Since 1879, the Garden has had four incarnations, moving to its current site atop Penn Station in 1968. Now it is ready for another big change.

"We're in an ideal period," Marciano says. "We can simply renovate the current Garden where it is, and frankly would spend as much on a renovation as many people spend to build a new arena.
Marciano says there are two "terrific" ideas for the renovation, one of which calls for lowering the suites deeper into the arena bowl from their current "nosebleed" location.
The other [plan] is a new product that we call "floor suites," which would be suites actually on the floor," he says. "You can imagine what they might sell for. But it's a new product, and I haven't really seen it executed.
Whatever the renovation, all facilities—
including public spaces, restaurants and conces-
sion stands—will be refurbished during a
two-year period, with most of the work taking place
in the summer, with the Garden being closed.
Then there is the option of building a new
venue, which Marciano says is seriously
being considered.
"We're really not in much of a position to talk
about it much other than saying there is an in-
teresting opportunity for us to perhaps build
a brand-new arena literally across the street on
Eighth Avenue," Marciano says.

"When that opportunity came to us we were
50% done on schematic drawings for the ren-
ovations here," he continues. "So we said,
'Let's just pause for a minute and look at the
other opportunity.'

The renovation plan carries a $350 million
price tag, and Marciano says a budget for build-
ing a new arena has not been put together. A
decision will be made within the next six to
nine months on whether another building will
be constructed, but Marciano says whatever
venue MSGE ends up with will maintain that
"Garden" feel.
"You can always make something pretty, and
you can always talk about the quality consumer
experience you can have as a result of offering
modern amenities," he says. "But the real chal-
lenge is not to screw up that sort of texture, that
grittiness, that is uniquely the Garden. You want
to keep the character, the history and the soul
in the building and still try to improve upon
some of the modern amenities that people have
come to expect elsewhere.
As part of the redevelopment, MSGE will look
at repositioning the 6,000-seat Theater at Madis-
son Square Garden, a self-contained venue ad-
jacent to the Garden. "The problem is we've got
the mother of all 6,000-seaters in Radio City up
the street, so in many respects we're compet-
ing with ourselves," Marciano says.

Few would argue that a naming-rights deal
for the Garden could be the most lucrative in
history. But that's off the table," Marciano as-
serts. "When you have two brands like Radio
City or Madison Square Garden, there will
never be a naming-rights deal on either one
of those buildings.
Marciano could not confirm speculation that
parent Cablevision might divest itself of the
MSGE properties. "It has been announced pub-
licly that the Dolan family is looking at its op-
tions to separate the two companies and unlock
the value," he says, "I think that's still in the
evaluation stage.

LIVE FROM RADIO CITY
Marciano thinks Radio City Music Hall, itself one
of the most successful buildings of its size in the
world, could perform even better, particularly in
the summer. He says when bands are in the re-
gion playing Clear Channel Entertainment sheds
in Wantagh, N.Y., or Holmdel, N.J., for example,
they could also add a date at Radio City.
"We can pick up another 15-20 shows a year
just by working with CCE, Marciano says. "We've
demonstrated in the past years that we don't re-
ally cut into sales at Jones Beach [in Wantagh] or
PNC [Bank Arts Center in Holmdel]. And we
know with 6,000 seats, it's not that difficult to fill
Radio City with just the people in Manhattan.
Jim Glancy, president of New York promoter
Ron DeSensi Presents, which books both sheds,
is open to the idea. "As long as the on-sales and
advertising are coordinated, there is no reason
why that can't work," he says.

However, he adds that the relatively small ca-
cacity of Radio City versus the sheds is a factor.

"If the economics work out in what is histori-
cally an expensive building to play, we would
certainly look at it. Any number of artists could
play Radio City, Jones Beach and PNC.
"

In booking events for MSGE venues, the first
choice would be to work with outside promot-
ers, Marciano says. "But if it means we're going
to get additional dates, we're prepared to self-
promote, co-promote or joint venture. We al-
ready co-promote most of the events that take
place in Radio City."
Radio City's franchise product, the Christ-
mas Spectacular, remains an entertainment jug-
gernaut. This year, it will hit nine cities with six
different companies. At Radio City Music Hall
alone, it will play to 1.2 million people during
225 performances in a 10-week period, accord-
ing to Marciano.

He would like to see MSGE duplicate that
success with a new, similar production.

"Most theaters would love to see our show
back every year, and we've learned that in most
cases we're better off coming back every two or
three years," Marciano says. "So those years we're
not back in those markets is an opportunity for
us to come up with another holiday property."

A new executive VP of production will be join-
ing MSGE with the specific mandate of devel-
oping content, Marciano says.

But for the most part, MSGE will leave national
tour promotion to the existing producers like AEG
Live and CCE. "The touring space is pretty well-
serviced by the existing players, and they have
a great time duking it out on guarantees and who's
going to end up with the tour," Marciano says.
"It's a pretty risky proposition at the guarantee
levels that are out there today."
BY RAY WADDELL

Madison Square Garden and the entertainment company that runs it are about to undergo a major transition.

Leading the way is Jay Marciano, who was hired in March as president of Radio City Entertainment, the production, promotion and venue management operation that oversees the Garden and its sister New York venues the Theater at Madison Square Garden and Radio City Music Hall.

The RCE brand will disappear, to be replaced by a new brand, Madison Square Garden Entertainment, with Marciano as president.

"We're going to line up behind the 'mother brand,'" Marciano tells Billboard in a rare interview from the Garden camp. "Radio City will be a wholly owned subsidiary of Madison Square Garden Entertainment.

Under the new banner, MSGE is looking for content opportunities. "There's a new entrepreneurial spirit here," Marciano says of his operation and its New York-based staff of nearly 200. "Open for business" is the slogan we're hanging out. We know we can't have a monopoly on all the great ideas, so we're looking that anybody with a terrific entertainment idea will come talk to us as a potential backer, co-producer or co-venturer with their good idea.

The move to the new MSGE brand becomes effective in January. At the same time, the Garden is exploring a massive revamp that could see the 20,000-seat Manhattan icon either undergo a complete renovation or possibly move across the street.

The 50-year-old Marciano hit the ground running when he came onboard with the Garden properties. He had been chief strategy officer at AEG Live. Prior to that, he served as president/CEO of House of Blues Concerts. Both businesses are based in Los Angeles.

So what enticed him to flip coasts? Marciano says it was the opportunity to be involved with two of the most significant assets in live entertainment, the Garden and Radio City Music Hall. Cablevision Systems owns both.

"I've always had a lot of interest in those two buildings and followed them throughout most of my career," Marciano says. "And then I met [Cablevision CEO] Jim Dolan and understood his passion and commitment to the business. You put those two things together with capital, and suddenly you realize this is a great platform.

AMBITIOUS AGENDA

Marciano stepped into an operation that was hugely successful at running its famous venues. "If that's all [Cablevision] wanted to do, frankly, they didn't need me for this job," he says. "But I think Jim Dolan has a much bigger agenda. He made it clear to me that at the core of it, we're a regional-based company.

As such, Marciano would like to see MSGE become even more active in the Northeast. "There are lots of things we think we can do in the entertainment space just regionally," he says. "They could be as simple as a 300-seat club or three big events in Central Park in the summer.

RCE had never been known for competing aggressively against other promoters, but that may work to its benefit going forward. "There's an advantage to being Switzerland," Marciano says. "We're not always competing with another promoter, so we can joint venture with another promoter, we can work with Clear Channel, we can work with AEG, we can work with House of Blues, we can work on our own.

And MSGE will not be limited to music projects. Marciano adds. "There are some interesting ideas about some sporting events that could take place under the Garden brand, perhaps the East Coast version of the X Games, with both a music and a sports component, that could take place annually in the city," he says. "When you're lined up behind the 'Garden Games,' just as an idea, everyone understands that right away. That's the advantage the brand gives you."

So, it appears now would be the time to pitch Marciano and MSGE on entertainment project concepts. "Any good idea that comes along, we've got the capital to do deals," he says.

Anything in the region is worth a look. "At this point in time we don't have any desire to go into Kansas City to promote shows; that would be off-strategy," Marciano says. "One of the big ideas would be to work with a sponsor to do a couple of big events every summer in Central Park and underwrite it just like AOL did with Dave Matthews Band a few years ago. But you have to be very focused on that business. You can't let it come to you, you have to go get it."

REAPING MUCH FORTUNE

As the top-grossing arena on the planet for most of the last decade, the "world's most famous arena" truly has no peers. Blessed with a market of unparalleled diversity, affluence and media exposure, the Garden is a cornerstone stop on any tour of significance.

"The Garden is the Garden. It's the premier large venue in the biggest media center in the world," says Peter Grosslight, worldwide head of music for the William Morris Agency.

"Most major artists don't want to miss it," Grosslight says. "Also, it's a great play at or near the beginning of a tour… as it generates so much publicity about their new show."

Most arenas would be thrilled with 20 concerts per year. By the end of 2005 the Garden will have hosted 60 for the year, 85% of which were sold out. As home to three professional sports tenants and such high profile events as the Country Music Assn. Awards and the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show (a Garden client for 130 years), it's a major draw with a variety of audiences. Many believe you can name about 20 arenas in the world that can claim to have a similar draw.

"The Garden is our crown jewel," says Dolan.
his beloved grandmother who adopted and raised Foxx (born Eric Bishop). "It's one of those songs where you sit with some Kleenex. It really detoxes you," Foxx says of "Here."

Right now, the label's full-court press is on the title track/lead single, which features Ludacris. Currently No. 20 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, the cut has also been garnering airplay at adult R&B radio stations—even with the Ludacris rap version," V.P. of promotion Randy Franklin notes. As a result, Franklin says the label is making available a version for adult radio without the rap.

In addition to Ludacris, Blige, Twista and West, the "Unpredictable" guest list includes the Game, Snoop Dogg and Common. Such star power may appear to some as an attempt to overshadow any shortcomings Foxx brings to the table as a solo artist. Others may think the intention is to increase the 38-year-old Foxx's appeal to younger audiences. Edge and Foxx dismiss those notions.

"These kinds of collaborations are hot right now," Edge says. "Plus Jamie's whole persona leans young. This album captures where he's at in life right now, spending time in the clubs and with the ladies."

Foxx adds, "The record business has changed considerably since the days of just R&B singing, wearing linen and walking in slow motion. You want to make things an event now. So when you look at Jamie Foxx and Ludacris, it's like the Batman and Robin effect."

Lamonda Williams, director of urban programming for Music Choice, predicts Foxx's album will do well. Williams says Foxx's silver screen exposure and West connection are important, but his existing base of music fans should not be overlooked.

"There's history with Foxx before he channeled Ray Charles," Williams observes. "True Foxx fans respect and remember his first single 'Infatuation.' Emarrassingly, we liked his writing on Adina Howard's 'T-Shirt and My Panty's On.' Sonically, his voice is on point, and the piano skills are tight. This is no fluke or an actor trying to sing gimmick."

The "Unpredictable" media blitz kicked into gear Nov. 29 when Foxx showcased his singing skills on "The Oprah Winfrey Show." He will also appear on a new half-hour offshoot of the Winfrey show Dec. 12, and a rebroadcast of the first appearance is planned before the album's street date.

Additionally, Foxx will make high-profile TV appearances on "Today" (Dec. 19), "Live With Regis and Kelly" (Dec. 21), "Late Show With David Letterman" (Dec. 22) and "The View" (Dec. 23).

Foxx was already seen performing "Gold Digger" on this summer's MTV Video Music Awards. The subject of a September cover story in Vibe and was interviewed in the November issue of O magazine.

What is more, several cuts from the album have already been featured on Foxx's Web site. During press tours for "Stealth" and "Jarhead," he talked up the album and handed out samplers.

On the video front, Hype Williams directed the clip for "Unpredictable," which has been added at MTV and BET. The latter channel is also giving away a Range Rover Sport vehicle in a contest tied to the album. Plans to have Foxx out on the promotional circuit in September in advance of the album's original Nov. 22 release date were waylaid by Hurricane Katrina. The storm forced a delay in the filming of "Miami Vice" in Florida, limiting the label's access to Foxx. With Foxx set to start work on the movie version of Broadway's "Dreamgirls" in January (with Beyoncé and Eddie Murphy), his availability between now and then remains tight. And there is also his new production deal with MTV Films.

"It's tricky, but we're not worried," GM Tom Corson says. "I hate to use an old cliché, but it's about where you finish. Jamie has made a competitive record."

"Unpredictable," which is set for international release in March, faces formidable U.S. competition on Dec. 20. Also arriving in stores that day are an album by one of its own guest artists—Blige's "Breakthrough"—and "Notorious B.I.G. Duets: The Final Chapter."

While a traditional promotion tour is not in the offing, J urban marketing chief Jeff Burroughs says Foxx will visit several cities for major appearances and some performances—some unscheduled.

Williams is hoping one of those stops might be at Music Choice's midtown Manhattan studios. "Aggressive promotion is the missing ingredient," she notes. "Hopefully, Records and Foxx won't miss out on this important factor."

Describing himself as "fearless," Foxx says he is up for the "Unpredictable" challenges. "Hats off to the people who do this every single day. The record business is tough. But as long as I got my moxie, I can get out there and do whatever."
Funny thing happened to Jamie Foxx on the way to starting a music career.

Acting on a girlfriend's dare to take the stage during a comedy club's open-mic night, Foxx parlayed his humorous ad-libbing into a successful TV turn ("In Living Color," "The Jamie Foxx Show"). Trading the small screen for the big screen—plus a string of forgettable films—Foxx locked into his acting stride with several key movies ("As Good as It Gets," "Collateral"). These opened the door to his Academy Award-winning turn in "Ray.

But come Dec. 20, he is back to square one—at least musically speaking. That is when J Records will release Foxx's first album for the label, "Unpredictable."

Songwriter/producer Sean Garrett promises a surprising album. "People will recognize that they should take him seriously as an artist," says Garrett, who contributed two songs to the set. "His heart is in it. He really wants this."

For his part, Foxx insists "Unpredictable" is not an exercise in vanity or about achieving an elusive entertainment trifecta. "Nobody's looking at it that way," he says. "It's a 24-year-old kid who's taking the world by storm. I've got friends who are on TV and I'm not on TV. I'm trying to get on TV."

Foxx's musical alter ego did not command attention again until his guest turn in 2003 on "Slow Jamz," the Kanye West–helmed No. 1 R&B/pop crossover hit by Twista, following his 2004 performance at the fabled pre-Grammy Award party staged annually by BMG North America chairman/CEO Clive Davis—in addition to on-stage pairings with Alicia Keys and Angie Stone—Foxx signed with J Records.

"I was impressed by his natural passion for music," Davis says. "He's a true music lover. When he's not making a movie, he's in a studio making music."

During his childhood in Terrell, Texas, Foxx took piano lessons, was music director of the church choir and started his own R&B band. Before his career took its comedic detour, Foxx attended United States International University in San Diego (now Alliant International University) on a classical piano scholarship—quite a distance from today's hip-hop-dominated scene.

But since "Slow Jamz," Foxx has been steadily adding to his musical credentials. There was his second R&B/pop hit with West, the infectious "Gold Digger," as well as an appearance on 50 Cent's album "The Massacre" ("Build You Up").

Foxx began recording "Unpredictable" nearly three years ago between juggling roles in "Stealth," the recently released "Jarhead" and the just-wrapped "Miami Vice." During the recording process, he worked to strike a happy medium between his old-school R&B influences (including Prince and Zapp) and contemporary hip-hop faves (such as Young Jeezy and 50 Cent), without letting the "Ray" afterglow overwhelm the proceedings. "It's something I've been toying with for a long time," Foxx says. "How do you capture the club crowd with R&B while still keeping it hip-hop, young and with a bounce to it? That's the way we wrote a lot of the songs."

Working with J Records executive VP of A&R Peter Edge, Foxx hooked up with such contemporary R&B/hip-hop songwriter/producers as the aforementioned Garrett, Mike City, Harold Lilly, Tank, Polow Da Don, Yandy Campbell, Timbaland, 112's Daron Jones and Mr. Collipark. These collaborations, Foxx notes, mark the major difference between his two albums.

"I've got some real writers and producers this time and a real record label that has the money. I didn't have anything back then. I wanted 11 years because I didn't want to be out there looking goofy. Like, 'Man, what is he doing?'"

Edge describes the 15 songs on "Unpredictable" as reminiscent of an old-fashioned vinyl album. "Side one would be the club suite, side two the bedroom suite," he says. "This album manages to translate Jamie's different personalities."

Among the songs suited for the club suite are "DJ Play a Love Song" with "Slow Jamz" colleague Twista and "Extravaganz". The latter, another pairing with West, was an August setup single later issued as a 12-inch, $5.98 vinyl single in October. Its No. 77 debut on the Hot R&B/Pop Songs chart marked Foxx's first chart entry as a lead artist since 1994.

In the mood for the bedroom suite are such selections as "Warm Bed," "Three Letter Word" and a duet with Mary J. Blige, "Love Changes." A nod to Foxx's old-school roots, "Changes" was originally recorded by 70s R&B group Mother's Finest.

Foxx co-wrote six songs on the album, including the introspective "Heaven" and "Wish U Were Here." Produced by Babyface, "Heaven" is dedicated to Foxx's teenage daughter. "Wish U Were Here" pays tribute to
Far from being in trouble, Latin pop album artist of the year Shakira could be living the life of luxury, hailing her single "La Tortura" featuring Alejandro Sanz as Latin song of the year and "Ejecución" as Latin pop album of the year.

The first Billboard Music Award for executive excellence and achievement is presented to Island Def Jam chairman/CEO Antonio "LA." Reid.

Host LL Cool J calls 50 Cent in Europe to tell the rap artist of the six Billboard Music Award honors including artist of the year, album of the year for "The Massacre." The first Billboard Music Award for executive excellence and achievement is presented to Island Def Jam chairman/CEO Antonio "LA." Reid. 50 Cent, left, and hip-hop artist of the year winner Mario chill out backstage at the MGM Grand.

Country artist of the year Toby Keith, comedy artist of the year Larry the Cable Guy and "American Idol" contestant Bo Bice share laughs backstage following Keith's premiere performance of new tune "Let's Get Drunk and Be Somebody."

R. Kelly remembers the devastation of Hurricane Katrina with a special performance of "Let Your Light Shine."

At the Billboard Music Awards after-party at Studio 54, Rick Rogers of GaryGroupInteractive, center, and Pamela Rogers of Bel Air America Public Relations, right, mingle with Billboard West Coast advertising director Ali Kaneko.
THE YEAR'S TOP ACTS
HEAT UP LAS VEGAS

The 16th annual Billboard Music Awards, held Dec. 6 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, featured performances from Green Day; Gwen Stefani and Slim Thug; Pretty Ricky and Ashlee Simpson; R. Kelly; Toby Keith; Carolee Underwood; and Daddy Yankee and Pharrell Williams.

The celebration began Dec. 5 with a cocktail party at the MGM Grand's Teatro club and an event honoring Island Def Jam Chairman/CEO Antonio "L.A." Reid at the Wynn Hotel's Lure nightspot. The Billboard Music Awards show was followed by an after-party at the MGM Grand's Studio 54. (Photos: WireImage's Michael Caufield, Kevin Mazur, John Sciulli, John Shearer and Denisse Truscello)

Though Century Award honoree Tom Petty jokes that his band The Heartbreakers may not have always acted like Boy Scouts, he says the secret to their 30-year career has been a constant focus on making quality music.

Green Day's Billie Joe Armstrong pledges his allegiance to a pseudo-American flag during show opener "Holiday.

Mariah Carey is all smiles backstage at the MGM Grand after winning Hot 100 song of the year for "We Belong Together" and four additional awards.

Networking at Teatro are, from left, VH1's Media Business Development Manager Evian Ambinder, Hanshin Express Link's Ryota Kosuga, Billboard publisher/president John Kicullen, Hanshin's Tomoko Yurugi, Billboard president/COO Peter Allen, Kil البلد, Hanshin's Tomoko Yurugi, VH1's Media Business Development Attorney Elizabeth Rubenstein, Billboard West Coast Publisher/President Art Notebaert and Mariah VP Masato Kitaguchi.

Enjoying the Studio 54 after-party are, from left, Optimedia's Mindi Merch, Marc Jakary, Zarana Kahr, Keturah Alsworth, Arun Leslie, Jennifer Bergbott and Adam Smeymua and VH1's Media Business Development Director of Sales Jeff Green.
GREEN DAY, 50 CENT
COME UP BIG IN VEGAS

LAS VEGAS—Rap and rock ruled the 16th annual Billboard Music Awards, held here Dec. 6 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena. 50 Cent and Green Day shared honors for the most wins, each taking home six trophies.

Going into the ceremony as the top finalist with nods in eight categories, 50 Cent was named artist of the year and rap artist of the year. And his record "The Massacre" was honored as album of the year.\n
Rounding out his trophy cache were awards for Hot 100 artist of the year, R&B/hip-hop artist of the year and top ringtone for "Candy Shop" featuring Olivia. 50 Cent, who was in Europe, accepted his awards via a phone call with host LL Cool J.

Paralleling those achievements, Green Day’s kudos included rock artist of the year, modern rock artist of the year and rock song of the year for "Boulevard of Broken Dreams.

Among the night's other major winners were Mariah Carey, Carrie Underwood and Shakira. In the midst of enjoying one of the best years of her career, Carey picked up five awards, including female Billboard 200 album artist and female R&B/hip-hop artist. Her No. 1 comeback hit "We Belong Together," took the honors for Hot 100 song of the year, Hot 100 airplay of the year and rhythmic top 40 title of the year.

For Carey, who flew back from Europe to receive her trophies on the Fox-television show, winning these awards is significant because "they’re completely representative of the charts, and there’s nothing political that comes into it. It’s real. It’s been an exciting year, and just being able to cap off the year with such a celebratory moment is a great feeling.”

Among the evening’s first-time Billboard Music Award winners were “American Idol” victor Underwood and Shakira. Underwood’s wins included topping Hot 100 song for “Inside Your Heaven,” while Shakira was recognized as Latin pop album artist of the year.

No Doubt frontwoman Gwen Stefani earned her first such trophy as a solo artist for new artist of the year. The 1 million downloads of her hit single “ Hollaback Girl!”—from her solo debut, “Love, Angel, Music, Baby!”—resulted in a second statue for Stefani for digital song of the year. 2005 marks the first year that this honor has been given.

Additional winners taking home two trophies each included Mario, Toby Keith, reggaeton ambassador Daddy Yankee and Larry the Cable Guy. Green Day opened the show with a rousing rendition of “Holiday.” R. Kelly capped the proceedings with a moving performance of “Let Your Light Shine.” Accompanied by an orchestra, a 50-voice choir, praise dancers and a host of the show’s participating artists—all dressed in white—Kelly performed the song that he wrote on behalf of the “Come Together Now” hurricane relief project.

Rounding out the evening were performances by Underwood; Keith; Ciara; Yankee with Pharrell; Stefani with Slim Thug; and Ashlee Simpson with Pretty Ricky.

Highlighting the show were special tributes to Tom Petty and Kanye West. Green Day’s Billie Joe Armstrong presented Petty with the Billboard Century Award. Destiny’s Child member Kelly Rowland gave the Artist Achievement Award—which the trio received last year—to West. Destiny’s Child also took home an award this year for top R&B/hip-hop group.

The two-hour show, produced by Bob Bain Productions, drew a 4.0 rating/share, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Winners are based on the Billboard year-end charts, which reflect overall performance on the weekly charts from December 2004 through November 2005. The charts are determined by sales data from Nielsen SoundScan and radio information compiled by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems.

The complete list of 2005 BMA winners appears on billboard.com. The year-end charts will run in the year in Music & Touring issue, which arrives on newsstands Dec. 16.

Additional reporting by Melinda Newman in Las Vegas.

Backstage At The BMAs

Compiled by Melinda Newman, Jonathan Cohen and Gail Mitchell in Las Vegas.

GREEN DAY lied with 50 Cent as the big winner at the Billboard Music Awards, taking home six statues, including pop group, Billboard 200 album group and rock artist and modern rock artist of the year. Such domination is what the trio planned all along. “We wanted to be the biggest band, the best band in the world,” frontman Billie Joe Armstrong said. “That [may] sound egotistical or whatever, but it’s just something that we worked for.” When asked if he felt the band had achieved that goal, Armstrong said, “I don’t know. I think we’ll wait till we’re dead and everyone else can figure it out.”

TOM PETTY, this year’s Century Award honoree, and his band, the Heartbreakers, will be the subjects of a documentary directed by Peter Bogdanovich (“The Last Picture Show,” “Mask”). “There’s probably some new music we’ll do for that,” he said of the project, which will come out in 2006. (For more on Petty, see Inside Track, page 62.)

ARTIST ACHIEVEMENT AWARD winner Kanye West said he is still not satisfied with his achievements. “My goals are the cockiest thing about me, not what I say out of my mouth,” he said. “I go into the studio to make a new album and I'll pop in ‘Songs in the Key of Life’ or a Marvin Gaye record and attempt to beat that record.”

At last year’s BMAs, West discussed a collaboration with John Mayer: “I held it for the next album, because, you know, you only get to perform one song at the Grammys.”

Gwen Stefani, who performed “Luxurious” on the show, said her tour is the highlight of her year. “I was never going to tour behind ‘Love, Angel, Music, Baby!’ ... I never expected the record to do as well, and [then] I just wanted to hear the fans sing the songs back and make it feel real. The initial tour was only 19 shows and now it [has] turned into 42.” But she adds that after the tour ends Dec. 21, “I’m going to go home and take a nap in January.”

Shakira won three Billboard Music Awards, including Latin song of the year for “La Torcida” featuring Alejandro Sanz. The cut spent an incredible 25 non-consecutive weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot Latin Songs chart. “It’s one of the biggest satisfactions of my entire career,” she said of the tune. “It also left me with a friendship that I treasure so much.”

Shakira admitted it was very ambitious to release two albums, “Fijación Oral Vol. 1” and “Oral Fixation Vol. 2,” within this calendar year, but said, “I couldn’t help it. It was like a woman who wants to get pregnant and doesn’t figure out that she’s going to end up with twins instead of one kid.”

TOBY KEITH, winner of two trophies, said the Billboard Music Awards are among his favorite.

“Billboard always makes sure that if you had a big year, they recognize you,” he said. “It’s not really agenda-driven, as you get rewarded on your results.” Keith premiered “Let’s Get Drunk and Be Somebody,” the first single from his new album, on the show. The project will come out on his own Show Dog Records and is being produced by Lari White.

R. KELLY’s stirring finale, featuring the hurricane benefit relief song “Let Your Light Shine,” was staged by the man himself. Instead of performing one of his hits, Kelly opted to “go along with my heart ... People were trying to get me to do something else, but I would have felt guilty. People are still lost, still hungry, still without homes or clothes in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. This is not about R. Kelly. It’s about hope. And hope is more powerful than any crisis.”

DADDY YANKEE, who snared two awards, starts his push for a mainstream audience with the Dec. 13 release of “Barrio Fino Live.” The Interscope set is a live version of his top-selling “Barrio Fino” album, accompanied by a DVD. The release has five new songs, including one featuring Snoop Dogg. “With this [live] album, I’m going to educate the Anglo people on who Daddy Yankee is. That’s the importance of this album. Interscope and [I] said, ‘Let’s do this first so they can understand you and get to know you before dropping your [studio] album.’”

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EAGLES SOAR IN CALIFORNIA
Band's Sellout Tour Of Its Home State Is One Of Year's Top-Grossing Treks

They do not call California the Golden State for nothing. Just ask the Eagles, who put together one of the top-grossing tours of the year by sticking almost exclusively to the state that gave them their start.

Beginning in August, the Eagles embarked on a 30-date tour of California, grossing a hefty $38 million and drawing 344,460 in attendance. Every show was a sellout.

Longtime Eagles manager Irving Azoff says the tour was the brainchild of founding band member Glenn Frey. "I'll take credit for the execution, but it was Glenn's idea," Azoff says. "The plan, which worked well, was to start by playing some of the 'B' markets. Instead of making our fans come to us, we went to them."

Early dates on the tour included such venues as the Calaveras County Fairgrounds in Angels Camp, Rohnert Park in Sonoma and the Salinas Sports Complex.

"We had to play some weird venues in August, then came into the indoor venues September through October," Azoff says, "and then we just kept expanding the tour."

The Eagles are booked by John Brangan and Peter Grosslight at the William Morris Agency. Virtually every major promoter active in the state took part in the California tour, including Another Planet Entertainment, Bill Graham Presents, Nederland, House of Blues, Avalon Attractions and Golden Voice/EG Live. "We spread it around pretty good," Azoff says.

While the Eagles notched doubles in Sacramento; Lake Tahoe, Nev.; and San Jose, the band's take in its home market of Southern California was truly remarkable.

The Eagles played six dates at the Arrowhead Pond in Anaheim and six dates at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, as well as stops at Cox Arena in San Diego, Coors Amphitheatre in Chula Vista and the Santa Barbara Bowl. They also played three dates at Indian Wells Tennis Center near Palm Springs, all of which brought the total SoCal gross to $23.5 million and 202,933 in paid attendance.

Asked if any other band could come into Southern California and put up these kinds of numbers, Azoff replies, "Boy, I don't think so, no. To do three shows in Palm Springs is just silly."

Larry Vallon promoted the Indian Wells shows for AEG Live. "We were very bullish on the one show, then we were shocked by the demand," he says. "Ninety-five percent of the tickets were sold in the Coachella Valley, they were local."

Most of those involved in the Southern California dates were veterans with the band. "It was really cool of the band and Irving to involve all of the promoters who have been involved with the Eagles in Southern California for a long time, myself included," Vallon says.

At the Staples Center, home to five professional sports tenants, the Eagles are like another franchise. "I joked with them that as our sixth team we are holding dates in case they make the playoffs," says Lee Zedman, senior VP/GM of Staples Center. The Eagles close out the year with a trip to Hawaii that includes five sellouts, four of them at Honolulu's Blaisdell Center. The band begins next spring with a trip to Europe. "We just put some shows up in Europe, England, Ireland, May 23-June 23," Azoff says. "We're in the process of adding some shows there, too, because they sold out."

Azoff believes a live DVD and NBC concert special have added even more juice to the touring efforts. "I think the DVD and the NBC special positively impacted everything," he says. "And they changed the setup, changed the set list some, which helped. We go back in, and the second shows are selling out quicker than the first shows."

The California jaunt was part of the Eagles' semi-proclaimed Farewell Part I tour, which began three years ago. Azoff is ambivalent as to when Part II might begin.

"I think we're still on Farewell I," Azoff says. "We've got to get at least three or four, right?"

Next year might bring more U.S. touring and even a much-discussed new Eagles album. "You never know," Azoff says.

Making The Brand
MICHAEL PAOLETTA mpaoletta@billboard.com

Hinder Goes ‘Wild’
Universal Act Hits The Road With ‘Girls’ DVD Series

In a match made in rock 'n' roll heaven—or hell, depending on who you ask—a new band Hinder has partnered with the Girls Gone Wild DVD brand for some good, clean debauchery.

In February, the rock group will headline the Girls Gone Wild Rocks America—Backstage Pass Tour. The trek, with supporting act Revelation Theory, will take in more than 25 markets. A DVD—and possibly a pay-per-view—will follow.

Steve Kaul and Ken Fennig of the Agency Group are putting the tour together. They are working closely with production company Vulcan Marketing Group, which created the tour for Mantra Films owner of the GGW brand.

Hinder lead singer Austin Winkler is predicting that the tour is likely to get out of hand. "We both bring a party," he says. “Girls Gone Wild brings the girls. We bring the liquor. Sponsors. We're a rock band. Something is bound to happen," joking, he adds. "We expect to get a lawsuit out of this."

Are the execs at the band's label, Universal, worried? Well, it appears that there was some hesitation at first. The label did not want to alienate young girls. Universal director of marketing Bill Richards says, "But it’s too late to stop being so sensitive."

Richards adds, "We want the photos of the 13-year-old girls crying because they can’t get into the venue. That’s part of the hype."

Yep, the label fully grasps the band's Gun N' Roses/Motley Crue/Nickelback sensibility. "Let's face it, Richards says, "they're a strip-club kind of band." In other words, the wet T-shirt and "hot body" contests that are the norm at GGW events will remain very much intact.

Tom MacKay, the Universal VP of A&R who signed the band, only smiles. "That's what this band is about," he says. "They're out to play rock music, get drunk and chase girls. This partnership is a perfect marriage."

Throughout the trek, Hinder will visit morning radio shows in each market—armed with bottles of tequila, Winkler acknowledges.

In a perfect world, this partnership will help build a story for who and what Hinder is about. Hopefully, this will be the catalyst to shoot the band forward faster—without selling out," Richards says.

Hinder is currently on tour with Default. The band's debut album, "Extreme Behavior," has sold 30,000 units since its September release, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

AT HOME WITH MARTHA: Martha Stewart's "Apprentice" failed to click in a major way with TV viewers. Hence, NBC did not renew the show for a second season. Similarly, parent company Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia has reported a greater-than-anticipated fourth-quarter loss and the company's stock has faltered.

Others in a similar situation might step back and reassess. Not our Martha, she has looked for—and found—other ways to keep building her as a brand. This fall, MSLO and Sony BMG created Martha Stewart Living Music, which will release themed compilations. The initial titles in the series ("Traditional Songs for the Holidays," "Jazz for the Holidays" and "Classical Favorites for the Holidays") arrived Oct. 19 via Epic/Legacy. The titles are sold collectively as "The Holiday Collection."

In this issue, "Traditional Songs" debuts at No. 151 on The Billboard 200. It sold 11,000 copies in the week ending Dec. 4, according to Nielsen SoundScan. This is a 31% increase in sales from the previous week. Total sales of the four holiday releases is 82,000.

On the DVD front, Warner Home Video issues "Martha's Baking Favorites" Dec. 20. And in May, a new MSLO magazine (Blueprint) is scheduled to launch.

Will all this activity help bolster the Stewart brand? Though it is too soon to tell, thus far, the CD compilations have collectively sold 56,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Robert Passikoff, founder and president of New York-based brand and customer loyalty consulting company Brand Keys, says there is a big difference between bringing out new products, having a strong brand and being profitable. In this way, he likens Stewart to General Motors.

"GM brings out new products all the time and folks don't consider buying them—until GM cuts the prices in half," Passikoff says.

"The Martha Stewart industry will continue to grind on," he continues. "She's a known brand and represents certain things. But it doesn't guarantee that people will buy it. Just being out there with products is a very 'Field of Dreams' kind of syndrome."
"In New York freedom looks like too many choices
In New York I found a friend to drown out the other voices
Voices on the cell phone
Voices from home
Voices of the hard sell
Voices down the stairwell
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‘Chaos’ Fills Every Seat On McCartney Tour

We simply cannot let the conclusion of Paul McCartney’s North American tour pass without some acknowledgement. McCartney’s 37-date U.S. leg, in support of his latest album, “Chaos and Creation in the Backyard,” began Sept. 16 at Miami’s American Airlines Arena and wrapped Nov. 30 at Los Angeles’ Staples Center.

News of McCartney’s North American tour first broke Jan. 26 on billboard.biz. ‘The tour went on to gross in the $80 million range and drew about $50,000, according to Billboard estimates. Official totals are still being tallied. Every date sold out quickly, and McCartney raked up doubles in Philadelphia, Boston, Detroit; Chicago; Anaheim, Calif.; Las Vegas; and Los Angeles. He also sold out four dates at Madison Square Garden in New York that grossed $8.5 million.

The tour was produced by longtime McCartney associate Barrie Marshall, Marshall’s Marshall Arts. Promotional rights were split between AEG Live; Concerts West and Clear Channel Entertainment. CCE VP Brad Wavara, CCE’s point-person on the Macca tour, says he can sum up the experience in one word: ‘unbelievable.’ CCE’s 20 shows moved more than 300,000 tickets and grossed about $44 million, according to Wavara. “He sold more tickets, faster, this tour than last,” Wavara says. “Every show completely sold out. We did really well.

HELP: Atlanta independent promoter Pete Sobel, president of Jamland Productions, is trying to help New Orleans-area musicians in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He and musician Bill Summers are putting together a tour to aid the Crescent City and its artists. Summers’ itinerary includes stage and studio time with Herbie Hancock’s Hombres Calientes and Quincy Jones. “Bill has a Mardi Gras-style show he wants to take worldwide, a virtual rolling New Orleans celebrating the city, its music and heritage,” Sobel says.

The project is called Wade in the Water. The core band would be a 20-piece collective of some of New Orleans’ finest musicians, including Summers, Davell Crawford, Donald Harrison, Shaka Zulu and Big Chief Bo Dollis. Summers hopes players like Wynton Marsalis, Irvin Mayfield and others associated with the Big Easy will appear in some markets. Summers and Sobel would like to have the tour on the road by Mardi Gras in late February. Sobel is seeking financial partners and/or sponsors. He can be reached at 404-403-7332.

BOXSCORE: Xbox 360 will promote the upcoming Truckstops and Stateliner tour by indie rock act the Academy Is. Promoted by House of Blues, the tour kicks off Feb. 7 at the Opera House in Toronto. Among the 30 dates are HOB clubs in Atlantic City, N.J.; Myrtle Beach, S.C.; New Orleans; Los Angeles; Las Vegas; and Anaheim, Calif.; San Diego, Cleveland; and the band’s hometown of Chicago, where the tour wraps March 25. The act’s debut bowed in February on Fuel’d by Ramen.

After opening for such acts as Fall Out Boy and the All-American Rejects earlier this year, the band is on its first headlining tour. Support on the Truckstops and Stateliner tour includes Panic! at the Disco, Acceptance and Helloworld. •

The 37-date U.S. leg of PAUL MCCARTNEY’S 2005 tour grossed in the $80 million range, promoters say.
LOS ANGELES—They say that variety is the spice of life, so perhaps it is not surprising that TV variety and talk show packages are a growing category on DVD.

The fourth quarter has seen new releases led by “The Oprah Winfrey Show—20th Anniversary DVD Collection” (Paramount Home Entertainment). They also include “Tony Orlando & Dawn—The Ultimate Collection” and “The Captain & Tennille Ultimate Collection,” both from R2 Entertainment.

Shout! Factory has additionally put out a number of compilations from "The Dick Cavett Show" during the last several months, including titles that highlight rock icons Ray Charles and John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

A nine-hour collection of the “Donny and Marie” show is coming next spring from R2; also expected next year from R2 is a 1950s favorite, “The Dinah Shore Show.” Alpha Home Entertainment is expected to release “The Merv Griffin Show: 40 of the Most Interesting People of All Time” next year.

The category started proving itself about three years ago, when R2 released “The Ultimate Johnny Carson Collection,” which went on to sell more than 300,000 copies through a combination of direct-response marketing and a retail campaign.

After that, major releases such as “Ed Sullivan’s Rock n’ Roll Classics Boxed Set” (Rhino Entertainment) started entering the marketplace.

“There are a lot of different reasons why these titles are successful,” R2 VP Brant Berry says. “One is that they were never out on VHS, and that they haven’t been syndicated. The other thing is that there aren’t many shows like this on TV anymore.”

For shows that combine various elements such as music and comedy, DVD is an ideal format as well.

“On VHS, music videos and television were not a big deal and now both are a big deal on DVD, and variety shows encompass both of these elements,” Berry says. “These shows were events that people could watch together.”

Donny Osmond, who is currently working on the production of his show’s upcoming release on DVD, says that when Berry approached him about doing the project, he brought some compelling market research. “Nostalgia is back,” Osmond says. “I’d been contemplating doing this for many years, but the timing wasn’t right. I was watching my editor—27 years old, fresh from college—who has no idea about ‘Donny and Marie,’ and I caught her laughing and being mesmerized by these shows.”

The biggest challenge of putting these compilations together is clearing the music, which is why many shows have not been released.

Berry says that for “Sonny & Cher—The Ultimate Collection,” the clearance of 50-60 songs ended up adding to the price of the three-disc set.

He says that retailers are looking for a $29.99 product, but that clearances “add a huge amount to our cost of goods... Our Carson and Sonny & Cher collections look the same, but Sonny & Cher costs $6 more.” He believes fans will pay the difference.

Some retailers are particularly supportive of the category. R2 has teamed with Costco on a holiday promotion of all of its titles in the Ultimate Collection series, and Berry says his company’s slate of variety/talk shows has been sought after at such specialty stores as Tower Records, Borders Books & Music and Barnes & Noble.

“This is a great time of year for the category because it’s a perfect gift for mom or dad,” Berry says. “People can say that this isn’t an Emmy Award-winning stuff, but they brought a lot of joy to people.”

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W
ith Baker & Taylor up for sale (billboard.com, Feb. 28, 2005), the landscape could change for music wholesalers.

Baker & Taylor is the fourth-largest U.S. wholesaler in terms of music sales, behind Anderson Merchandisers, Handleman and Alliance Entertainment Corp. If any of the big three pick up Charlotte, N.C.-based Baker & Taylor and its $1.5 billion in sales, the marketplace dynamics could change drastically.

According to sources, Willis Stein & Partners, which acquired Baker & Taylor in June 2003, has hired Goldman Sachs to shop the distributor. Baker & Taylor recently re-introduced the Chicago-based Willis Stein, which did not return calls for comment.

Those familiar with the situation say that while they are unaware of any activity to unload the company, there is always the potential for the wholesaler to be up for sale, since it is owned by a financial institution, which exists to grow value and cash out.

Willis Stein paid $255 million to acquire the wholesaler from another financial firm, the Carlyle Group, which had bought the company from W.R. Grace & Co. in 1992. Willis Stein funded the acquisition with a $315 million equity investment and by drawing down $140 million from the company’s $200 million revolving credit facility, provided by LaSalle Bank Business Credit, according to company financial documents (Billboard, Feb. 7, 2004).

Since its acquisition, Baker & Taylor has become more aggressive in its growth. In particular, it became a force in music wholesaling as well as serving as a direct-to-consumer fulfillment house for online stores. In addition to organic growth, the company also has made acquisitions this year at some smaller music and video wholesalers to see if they were interested in selling, sources say.

While the company is private-held and does not release financial data, sources suggest that books are by far its largest revenue generator, accounting for about two-thirds of sales volume, followed by video and music. The music category is believed to have grown from $75 million in 2003 to almost $125 million today.

In addition to racking jobs like Anderson Merchandisers and Handleman, other possible suitors likely would include other book wholesalers like Ingram and Levy Home Entertainment, as well as AEC parent Source Interlink.

Let’s see why Baker & Taylor would be attractive to the three music merchandisers mentioned above.

Anderson Merchandisers is the largest music wholesaler, thanks to its strong relationship with Wal-Mart. It is the primary supplier to Wal-Mart for music, books and magazines, and also is one of its main video suppliers. It could find Baker & Taylor an interesting gambit because it would allow the Amarillo, Texas-based company to diversify beyond its dependence on Wal-Mart as its primary customer.

It also would give Anderson capabilities it does not have, such as selling to smaller independent retailers. And it would make the company a force in online fulfillment.

Source Interlink this year has been busy doing a roll-up of magazine distributors as well as acquiring giant music/video wholesaler AEC. It now has an annual sales volume run rate of about $1.5 billion. One of the magazine distributors it acquired this summer, Chas. Levy Circulation, catalyzed Source Interlink into the book business as the deal also brought along $40 million from book sales. Baker & Taylor would complete Source Interlink’s offering by making it a force in books. It would also enhance its strategy of cross-selling its new product lines to its existing customer base. And it would further enhance its industry-leading capabilities in direct-to-consumer fulfillment operations for online stores.

For Handleman, a Baker & Taylor acquisition would allow the company to further diversify its product offering, a strategy it has been following for almost three years. Once upon a time, Handleman was a book, music, video and magazine rack-jobber, but it decided to focus on music in 1998, and either sold off or shut down the other product lines. But as music sales slowed, it began looking at other wholesalers in other product lines. In fact, the Troy, Mich., wholesaler almost bought Baker & Taylor when it was up for sale in 2003, but it pulled out of those talks when its shareholders balked at the possibility of an acquisition. That was the year Willis Stein entered the picture.

Handleman recently acquired Cave Entertainment, a budget videogame distributor with about $240 million in revenue, which means that Handleman also has about a $1.5 billion annual volume base.

Executives familiar with the situation say that Willis Stein is probably looking at the wholesaler now because it sees an opportunity to cash out its investment. While Baker & Taylor is privately held, in early 2004 Retail Track obtained some of its financial results for fiscal 2003. Those documents showed that the wholesaler generated $1.2 billion in revenue that year. That means the company has grown by 25% since then.

“Revenue growth is not a problem for Baker & Taylor,” says one former suitor who has looked at the company in the past. “The problem is low net profit margins.”

The documents do not list the company’s net income for that year, but they do list earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization of $42 million. That was up from the previous year’s performance of $38.6 million in EBITDA on $1.1 billion in sales.

The 2003 documents do not break out revenue by product line but they did break out revenue by distribution channel and at the end of 2003, about 53% of sales were to retail and 47% were to libraries and schools.

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More Marketing Muscle
RED Ink Gets New Name, Acceded Promotional Responsibilities

RED Distribution has rebranded its RED Ink division as RED Strategic Marketing. In making the change, RED will begin offering the added marketing and promotional services of RED Ink to all of RED's third-party labels, as well as releases downstreamed from parent Sony BMG.

RED Ink previously worked primarily with smaller-staffed indie or artist-run labels, think we can help on, we're not going to take extra points to do that. Even with Sony BMG, we don't take on every project that is offered to us."

FOR THE TAKING: 50 Foot Wave, the rock trio led by Throwing Muses frontwoman Kristin Hersh, may forgo traditional retail releases in the future, she says. Coming in early 2006 is a new EP from the Nielsen SoundScan. Through

out her career, Hersh has recorded for such labels as Rykodisc, 4AD and Sire. But she has maintained an active Web community, and is not shy about her desire to circumvent the industry.

"All we've ever said is, 'Share the music,'" Hersh says. "Download, tape it, do whatever you can, as long as it gets heard, even if we die poor. Really, if you keep working as a musician, you won't die poor. You show up in town and the people you give your recorded music to show up as well, and they pay their fees, and now you're a working musician instead of a lazy one. So we're putting our money where mouth is and giving the whole record away."

IN MOTION: A few weeks ago this column ran an item on Portland, Ore.-based Tables Turned, a company designed to create safe podcasting licenses for independent labels (Billboard, Nov. 5). Since that mention, Tables Turned co-founder Marcus Estes says the company has reached agreements with a number of prominent labels, including Barsuk, Kranky, Temporary Residence, Monitor, Nacional, Warm, Orange Twin and Hush.

Additionally, Estes said the company intends to launch a library of songs this week. Tables Turned will initially offer more than 10,000 songs that have been cleared for use on noncommercial podcasts.

Etc.: Rich Masio has joined San Francisco-based Independent Online Distribution Alliance as manager of content development. His first day was Dec. 1. Masio was previously a director of sales at MDM Music.

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Hear the initial rehearsal, with the late Van McCoy playing the Fender Rhodes Keyboards. This "never before heard" live footage of The Queen of Soul, along with Van McCoy's live duet recording, was produced and performed at Van McCoy's Mansion, in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, prior to his demise in 1979. This unique body of work is authentic and straight from Van McCoy's hands. It has NOT been enhanced in any way. Van McCoy originally recorded this rehearsal session on a Maxell Cassette Tape.

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Stores Hope To Unlock iPod System

With iPod sales predicted to total 37 million by the end of the year, expect more digital music stores and back-end services to bypass— or at least attempt to bypass—Apple Computer’s control over its user base.

Currently, the only digital music that Apple permits on the iPod are unprotected MP3 files and tracks bought from the iTunes Music Store encoded with its FairPlay digital rights management technology.

Since Apple steadfastly refuses to license the FairPlay technology to other digital music services, the only way to sell copyright-protected music that also works on the world’s most popular digital music player is to hack the system.

The latest effort to do so is headed by Cupertino, Calif.-based Navio Systems. Navio enables online music retailers to sell digital rights as a package, instead of selling actual digital files, allowing consumers to take their music to various platforms—mobile or portable players, etc.

According to COO Ray Schaar, his customers have requested the ability to sell copy-protected music that can also work on the iPod, so Navio is reverse-engineering FairPlay to do so. Clients include Fox Music, TVT Records and Sony BMG.

“We’re DRM agnostic, so we’ll provide the files in the way our content-owner customers want,” Schaar says. “Apple doesn’t license FairPlay today, which is unfortunate. But we’re going to let our customers decide.”

He pointed to the example set by RealNetworks, which is July 2004 introduced a technology called Harmony that allows any track purchased from the company’s music service, Rhapsody, to play on the iPod.

Apple reacted severely, accusing RealNetworks of using "the tactics of a hacker" and applauding potential legal action, which never came. When Apple introduced the iPod Photo last December, it upped the software to block the Harmony functionality.

But in April, RealNetworks reconfigured the system, and a company representative says there has not been a problem since.

Representatives from Apple did not return requests for comment.

Apple “was self-righteously angry that you would let someone buy music somewhere else,” a Rhapsody representative says. “If it’s going to let them sell more iPods, what’s the big deal?”

The Harmony feature is not something Rhapsody markets very heavily, and RealNetworks will not disclose how many purchased tracks are transferred to iPod devices, even though it is able to monitor such usage. But executives say the iPod is the most popular single device used with Rhapsody to load purchased tracks.

Taking a slightly different approach is TiVo, which is updating the TiVoToGo service so users can transfer recorded TV shows to the new video iPod.

TiVo is not working to break the FairPlay technology. The recorded shows instead will be unprotected, but watermarked so they can be tracked to their original owner to prevent unauthorized sharing.

Just as online services want to sell files that work with the iPod, device manufacturers want to market products that will play tracks from the best-selling iTunes Music Store.

Only Apple-made devices can play such files. The only exception is the ROKR phone made by Motorola.

As such, device manufacturers are developing workarounds of their own, particularly in the home entertainment market. Digital Droplet is testing a product called AudioFaucet, for instance, that allows TiVo users to stream FairPlay-protected music through the TiVo device connected to a home network.

Currently, only unprotected MP3 files are accessible through the TiVo digital streaming service. AudioFaucet won the grand prize of TiVo’s Developers Challenge earlier this year.

MP3Files founder Michael Robertson hired infamous hacker Jon Lech Johansson to reverse-engineer the iTunes service as part of the company’s new Oboe digital music storage and streaming system.

The Oboe players plug-in for the service adds an Oboe folder to the iTunes menu, allowing users to drag and drop songs into the folder to back up their iTunes library to an online storage “locker.”

These individual efforts further highlight the interoperability problem many point to as a barrier limiting the growth of digital music.

“They screwed up DRM so bad that you’re treated better if you get music from a peer-to-peer service or burn it from your CD,” Robertson says. “Why not give the consumer greater options?”

According to a November Forrester Research report, consumers remain wary of digital entertainment purchases because of interoperability concerns. Of those who have bought content online, 38% say they expect to have the ability to transfer that content to any device they own.

As more devices become available with digital content capabilities—such as digital video recorders, home stereo systems and mobile devices—consumers may balk at paying for content that is limited to a specific device, like the iPod.

Consumers will only be more aware of it as a problem when they become aware of the alternative devices available to them.”

RealNetworks senior VP of premium consumer service Dan Sheeran says. ....
PC Downloads Get Big In Japan
iTunes Is Active, Napster Is Coming, Though Mobile Is Still The Main Medium

TOKYO—PC-based music downloads in Japan doubled in volume from July to September compared with the previous quarter. But labels body the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan says mobile downloads remain vastly more popular in the world’s second-biggest music market.

Either way, growth looks set to accelerate over the coming months with Napster Japan launching and Sony Music Entertainment (Japan)—the country’s biggest label—expected to finally make its catalog available through iTunes Music Store Japan.

Napster president Brad Dusa says Japan is ripe for a subscription-based music download service—currently there are none.

“Japanese consumers are used to paying for services such as photos and movies. It’s success and content on mobile phones,” Dusa claims. “We think we can grow the (download) market.”

The RIAJ has been collating quarterly digital-sales data since January, but only started releasing it in August. It says PC download sales by its 41 member companies in July-September totaled 2.3 million units, up 125% over April-June, with trade value up 87% to ¥436.7 million ($3.7 million).

The actual number of tracks involved remains unclear, as the RIAJ treats singles, albums, mini-albums and “other related content” sold on wired networks as single-unit transactions, regardless of the number of tracks contained. Single accounts for the overwhelming majority of download sales, according to the RIAJ.

PC-based download sales were dwarfed by mobile downloads during the quarter, according to the RIAJ. A total of 72.1 million units (including polyphonic ringtones, master ringtones and full-song downloads) were sold in the July-September period, a 25% increase over the previous quarter. Trade value rose 23% to ¥9.1 billion yen ($76.5 million).

The third-quarter stats show only a partial picture, though, since the Japanese version of Apple Computer’s iTunes Music Store was not online until Aug. 4. So there is no full quarter against which to measure iTunes’ impact yet. Apple claims it already Japan’s No. 1 legal music download service, although independent verification is unavailable. Other leading download services here include mora.co.jp, MusicDrop, Yahoo Music Download and Oricon Style.

The only sales data for iTunes Japan released by Apple to date was the claim that 1 million songs were sold in the four days following the service’s launch. “The RIAJ data tells me Apple’s sales of downloads slowed way down after the first four days,” one industry observer says. “I don’t think they sold as much in the rest of the quarter as they did then.”

Napster and retailer Tower Records Japan plan to launch Napster Japan in June. Dusa says the companies have met with local authors body JASRAC and Japanese labels to explain the joint venture’s subscription model.

However, some observers are skeptical. “I can’t see how subscriber services would work here,” one source says. “(iPods are doing so well purely on the strength of CD) rentals. People are using their (iPods or other digital players) to burn copies from rentals. Why download a track at iTunes for 150 yen when you can rent a whole album for a comparable amount?”

SMEJ, Warner Music Japan, Victor Entertainment and BMG Japan have yet to make their catalogs available on iTunes. However, a well-informed industry source tells Billboard that an SMEJ deal is likely in the spring.

The other major Japanese labels, meanwhile, are paying more attention to developing the download market.

Universal Music Japan, for example, projects that digital downloads will account for 18% of its sales of non-Japanese product in 2006. The company recently set up a “downloading business group” to coordinate the digital sales activities in Japan of its international labels, which include Interscope Geffen A&M, Polydor and Island Def Jam.

“Times are changing,” Universal Japan international managing director Hiroshi Aono says. But, he adds, he expects physical CDs to coexist with the digital marketplace.

(Blacksmith Entertainment/Universal). “They’re involved in all aspects of an artist’s career.”

One positive of overseeing a smaller roster is the attention an A&R exec can give an act. “We’re certainly spending more time with our artists,” Warner Music Canada director of A&R Steve Blair says. “I deal very closely with [Warner artists] Buck 65 and Sarah Slean on so many different things.”

Sandy Pandya is president of Vancouver-based Pandya Management, which represents Universal artists Hawksley Workman and Jully Black. She suggests that A&R execs’ increased closeness to artists means they are often the people “driving” a record within a company.

“It’s all connected," she says. "A&R people need to know about marketing, merchandising and whatever something will work as a ringtone or with iTunes or Puretracks. They have a lot more on their plates now.”

In recent years, Canada’s majors have built A&R strength through tie-ins with independent labels, from licensing deals and distribution agreements to co-productions. Understanding that independents often need supplemental support to meet marketplace challenges, major-label A&R personnel are using their resources and inter-company structures to support distributed labels’ acts.

“The majors [here] are investing and developing grass-roots independent music by providing an infrastructure so labels can sustain and develop talent," says Jeff Remedios, president of Toronto-based label/management firm Arts & Crafts.

“They are saying, ‘We can’t take on 10 new acts, but we will distribute these independent labels, and they can develop artists.’”

Canada’s majors have traditionally tried to build impressive sales at home before securing a confirmed release from their international affiliates. A&R execs confirm that now they also seek to expand their opportunities abroad by asking acts to deliver content exclusives for individual territories.

“We used to record 12 tracks, put 10 on the album and hold two back,” Reid says. “Now we’re cutting 16 tracks for the album with additional tracks for Japan and exclusive tracks for Britain and France.”

Blair adds, “We’re creating content our affiliates can use to bring them into the process of what we do, so they can feel [like they are] being a part of it.”

Despite those changes, however, Smith suggests some aspects of A&R remain constant. “When an artist delivers the record,” he notes, “A&R’s here are still saying, ‘You need two more tracks—and a first single’.”

> GLOBAL NEWSLINE

>>>AUTHORS STOKE ROYALTIES ROW

U.K. authors and publishers are asking record companies to declare the details of the revenue they obtain from legal downloads.

The proposal came in a legal “Answer” the Mechanical-Copyright Protection Society—Performing Right Society Alliance submitted Dec. 2 to U.K. Copyright Tribunal.

The document is a formal response to the British Phonographic Industry’s June referral to the tribunal of its proposal to reduce the amount paid for authors’ online music license fees from 5% to 3% of gross retail revenue.

The BPI was joined in the action by seven leading online music platforms.

MCPS-PRS’ current online tariff is 12% of gross retail revenue, temporarily discounted to 8%. The alliance wants the rate to remain at 12%.

It also wants “full disclosure” of the terms upon which BPI companies are licensing recordings to online services. MCPS-PRS reserves the right to “review and revise” its own online pricing in the light of this information being provided.

The BPI and the online companies have until Feb. 12 to submit a response to the Copyright Tribunal.

—Tom Ferguson

>>>JAPAN NIXES ‘IPOD TAX’

The so-called “iPod tax” proposed by Japanese labels and publishers has been given a final thumbs-down by a Japanese government committee.

In the present system, sales of Minidisc players, DAT players and DVD recorders are subject to a levy of 1% of their retail prices in order to compensate rights holders for the copying of their music. Music industry organizations including the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan and authors body JASRAC wanted the levy extended to include hard-disc and flash-memory digital players such as the iPod.

On Dec. 1, the Cultural Affairs Agency’s subcommittee on legal systems for copyrights rejected the proposal and recommended that the existing system be subjected to a “thorough review.”

The committee says the existing levy is unfair because it is imposed on consumers regardless of whether they record music privately.

—Steve McClure

>>>COWELLINKS SONY BMG PACT

Music entrepreneur Simon Cowell has extended the exclusive relationship between his production firm Syco and Sony BMG U.K. for the next five years.

The deal covers all of Cowell’s music and TV activities. Current Syco TV productions, including the “X Factor” reality TV show are included in the Dec. 5 agreement, as are future TV projects. Terms were not disclosed.

Syco’s music signings include pop/operatic act Il Divo, whose current Sony BMG album “Ancora” is certified double-platinum (600,000 copies) by the British Phonographic Industry.

During the past 15 years, Cowell has overseen the rise of such pop acts as Robson & Jerome, Five and Westlife for BMG and now Sony BMG.

—Lars Brandle

>>>JAPANESE HONORS O-ZONE

Romanian dance act O-Zone’s “Dragostea Din Tei” (Media Services/Axes) was named record of the year at the annual Japan Radio Popular Discs Awards Dec. 5 in Tokyo.

The act was also named brightest hope of the year. The awards are sponsored by the Japan Radio Hit Research Committee, representing 34 commercial stations. The awards committee votes in various categories comprising chart hits by non-Japanese acts. This year’s qualifying period was Nov. 1, 2004-Oct. 31, 2005.

—Steve McClure

>>>ARIA TWEAKS NAME

The Australian Record Industry Assn. changed its name to Australian Recording Industry Assn., as of Dec. 1. The trade body also changed its name to more accurately reflect the production, promotion and marketing of the recorded music business.

—Christie Eliezer
for this production.

The big question of who will portray Cruz remains up in the air. Auditions for the lead role will be held in Miami, Madrid and New York in the spring. Gomez says he has some famous candidates in mind, but is considering unknowns as well.

“We are open to a great artist, a black artist and powerful, like Celia was,” he says.

The musical’s title, “Azzuca,” is a deliberate misspelling of Cruz’s legendary cry of “Azucar!” (Sugar!), which he stamped in every public appearance.

“We used two s’s, because she would really emphasize the s, and dropped the r because she didn’t pronounce it,” Gomez explains.

Beyond the title, “Azzuca” is a unique project and an anomaly simply by virtue of being an original Spanish-language musical as opposed to a translation of an existing work. Because Cruz was a singer who toured the world with her band, the musicians of “Azzuca” will not sit in the orchestra pit, but onstage, interacting and changing costumes appropriately.

The show’s director will be Jaime Arzilliuetta, whose credits include Spanish-language versions of “Victoria/Victoria” and “Evita.” The libretto is by Miami-based journalists Carlos Alberto and Gina Montaner (who are father and daughter), and the musical director is Pepe Rivero.

Gomez says a cast album is a certainty, but a deal has not yet been struck regarding a label or distribution. As for the musical itself, “If it’s a hit and it should be—can it travel all over the world, because she was known all over the world,” he says.

Plans for an English version are not definite, but “we’re hoping for it,” Gomez adds with a laugh.

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MERRY MUSIC
A Look At The Latest Slate Of Holiday Albums

The holiday albums have been coming fast and furious this year, and, as usual, some have an extra push during the seasonal canon, while others are the aural equivalent of a lump of coal. Here goes our random sampling of some new offerings.

“40 Years: A Charlie Brown Christmas,” various artists (Peak): Can you improve on perfection? Should you even try? That is the question as David Benioff helms an updating of Vince Guaraldi’s classic tunes from the holiday standard. Benioff inherited the “Peanuts” mantle from Guaraldi, so he is definitely the right person to tackle a new version. Much of it succeeds: Norman Brown’s remake of “Skating,” Dave Koz’s slightly spicy take on “Linus & Lucy” and Brian McKnight’s cover of “Christmas Time Is Here.” But for purists, it is still all about the original. We consider no coincidence that almost every Christmas album we received this year included a cover of the “Charlie Brown Christmas” classic “Christmas Time Is Here.”

“What I Really Want For Christmas,” Brian Wilson (Arista): Wilson revisits two now-standard from the Beach Boys’ classic 1964 holiday album (“The Man With All the Toys” and “Little Saint Nick”), but the rest is all new, including compositions penned with his musical hero Jimmy Webb and Bernie Taupin. He also throws in a few traditional tunes. Wilson smartly surrounds himself with the Wondermints, who have been performing with him for years now, and their luscious harmonies provide the perfect yuletide treat.

“Through the Many Winters: A Christmas Album,” Michael McDonald (Hallmark): Warmer than Michael! The veteran artist sounds like he is sleeping his way through the first two cuts on this Christmas collection, available only through Hallmark. Things pick up considerably with “Deck the Halls/Angle Bell” and the travelogue effect of the celtic “Wexford Carol” (a striking duet with his wife, Amy Holand) and the zydeco-tinged “Christmas on the Bayou,” but McDonald’s 2000 holiday album is the better choice.

“The McGarrigle Christmas Hour,” Kate & Anna McGarrigle (Nonesuch): The sisters make it a family affair with contributions from Kate’s famous offspring, Martha and Rufus Wainwright, and Anna’s daughter, Lily Lanke.

Lee’s ‘Awake’ Goes Wide

Singer/songwriter Ben Lee’s “Awake Is the New Sleep” is Australia’s indie success story of the year.

Lee failed to find a home for the set at Aussie majors after disappointing sales for his fourth solo album, “Hey You. Yes You” (Modular/EML), in 2002. So he launched his own Ten Fingers imprint through Sydney-based Inertia Distribution to release “Awake” in February.

Radio hits “Gambling Everything For Love” and “Catching My Disease” have helped the album ship 100,000 units in Australia. Lee says the album has been on the Australian Record Industry Asso. charts since its release, peaking at No. 5 in October after Lee won three AIR Awards.

Lee first attracted international attention in 1994 with teenage Sydney-based pop/punk band Noise Addicts. who were signed to the Beastie Boys’ Grand Royal label. He released his debut solo set, “Grandpaw Would,” on Aussie indie Fellahseen in 1995.

“It’s a misnomer that I’m viewed as an indie or underground act,” he insists. “I’ve always seen myself as a pop artist.”

Lee says “Awake” has shipped 40,000 units on New West in the United States since February. European distribution is being finalized.

He will tour the United States through 2006. Lee is based in the William Morris office outside Australia, where he is handled by Sydney-based Frontier Touring. His songs are self-published.

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The 13-track set is the 10th studio release of Ramazzotti’s 23-year recording career, and

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

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EMERSON DRIVE PARKS AT MIDAS

Three-month-old Nashville indie label Midas Records has signed Canadian country band Emerson Drive as its flagship act. The group, which previously spent five years on the DreamWorks Records Nashville roster, is readying its Midas debut with no less than four producers: Midas A&R chiefs Keith Follesee and Brad Allen, along with Teddy Gentry of the group Alabama and Josh Leo. The album is due early next summer, with a first single expected to radio in February. Signing the band changed the entire business plan for Midas, according to Follesee. The original intent was to find and develop unknown acts, record and release singles and then follow up with full albums made for a reasonable budget if a single became a hit. "I never would have thought we could get an act as established and as good as Emerson Drive being an indie label with no track record," Follesee says.

The band previously recorded two albums for DreamWorks, a self-titled debut in 2002 and "What If" in 2004. Both landed in the top 15 on the Billboard Top Country Albums chart. The first CD spawned two top five hits: "I Should Be Sleeping" and "Fall Into Me." But follow-up singles were less successful and the act was dropped last year.

Since then, the group has been working with Gentry and Leo in the studio finding out what we think is missing and what we need to work on," lead singer Brad Mates says. The band members first got to know Gentry when they opened several dates for Alabama during the last few years. The result is a CD that Mates calls the "strongest album we've put out yet." Follesee says the band has found a sound that is "rooty, earthier" and "less slick" than its previous work, while still "unmistakably Emerson Drive." He goes as far as to describe the band's new style as "Alabama-esque. They don't sound like Alabama," he explains, "but you'll know Teddy was involved.

Mates has a harder time explaining the sound, but says, "If you want to call it more raw or rootsy, that's a good place to start." He describes the last two albums as "a little bit overproduced." In the year they have been without a label deal, Mates says he and bandmates Mike Melancon, Dale Wallace, Danick DuPelle, Patrick Bourque and Dave Pichette did "some soul-searching" to rediscover what Emerson Drive "was all about in the beginning." With this new project, he says, "we just nailed it on the head."

Midas was launched earlier this fall by gaining construction entrepreneur Ron Clapper (Billboard, Sept. 3). Its executives include Mike Martinovich, Stan Moress and Al Schiltz of Nashville artists management firm the Consortium, along with Follesee, a top country songwriter, and Allen, a successful music publisher. Mates says he and his bandmates were drawn to the Midas staff's enthusiasm. "They are passionate about everything they want to do with this group," he says. "It's going to be exciting."

The label has also signed newcomer Lindsay Grant, and will release her debut single in April. Additionally, Midas will put out a single from the winner of the Colgate Country Challenge, to be selected in January, with an option for a full album. Follesee says label execs are also in negotiations with two male artists for the roster. He predicts the label, which is now staffing up its promotion department, will release singles from four acts in 2006.

Despite signing an act with name recognition, Follesee says the goal for Midas is still to be "unique and boutique... We're trying to keep it simple and remember that the song is king."
Southern outook on life are once again at the heart of the matter on the follow-up to Hamilton’s 2003 breakthrough, “Coming From Where I’m From.” Hamilton does not stray far from the winning blend of contemporary/old-school blues and soul that powered that platinum debut. Not surprisingly, his deep, supple baritone is at its most seductive on the love songs that dominate this 12-song set, namely “The Truth” and “Never Love Again.” A flirtation with reggae (“Everybody”)—an attempt to do something a little different—does not fit here. But Charlotte, N.C.-born Hamilton slips back into his comfortable Southern boots on the funky tribute to larger women, “Sista Big Bone.” And his social commentary (“Ain’t Nobody Worriyin’ “—“Preacher’s Daughter”) comes peppered with the right amount of down-home seasoning. —GM

**BECK**

**Guero**

**Producers:** Various

**Release Date:** Dec. 13

It would be hard to improve on Beck’s gold-certified “Guero,” a drowsy collection of crunchy guitar, Spanish flourishes, ’50s vocal refrains and his most seductive, his own low-toned vocals. Luckily, “Guero,” a track-by-track remix of the entire album, does not try. Instead, the all-star producers simply garnish the shaky one’s originals with their own spices. Dreamy electronic outfit Air breathes more oxygen into the already-floating “Missig,” while Beady Eye Ad Rock replaces the nervous drums of “Black Tambourine” with a laid-back, intergalactic groove. And Homelite rethinksthe hit single “E-Pro” as an ambilso, Casio-toned trip, instead of a guitar-heavy-modern-rock anthem. “Gueroito” proves that remixes do not have to work solely for dance crossover. They can give a well-received album new legs among its original fans, too. —KM

**VOZ A VOZ**

**En Presencia Del Futuro**

**Producers:** Pedro “Sapo” Villanueva, Joseph “Jkey” Diaz

**Release Date:** Dec. 6

Latin music has long been on the quest for a winning R&B vocal group. So far, most attempts have come and gone with varying degrees of success. Latest up is Dominican trio Voz A Voz, a group that sings about Latin life atop traditional R&B arrangements. The potential is clear in tracks like “Un Pedacito De Navidad” and “Solo Lloro,” where harmonies play beautifully over soulful keyboard lines. Sometimes, the trio is overly ambitious, as on “Lo Que Te Puedo Dardo,” which is set simply over piano and bass and is thus too exposed and exposed. But “Un Pedacito De Navidad” is a good job of mixing social conscience with a nicely done R&B backatcha. This is a group to watch. —LO

**LESLEY GORE**

**Evil in Love**

**Producer:** Blake Morgan

**Engine Company**

**Release Date:** Nov. 15

Lesley Gore entered a New York recording studio with producer Quincy Jones to record the new-classic “It’s My Party.” On her first album of new material in 30 years, Gore goes the pop-cabaret route via 10 songs that reveal in an intimate setting. Simple yet lush arrangements surround her voice, which has become deeper and more mured over the years. The ever-hipper “Better Angels”—how did Cyndi Lauper get this one?—is an absolute high point in a collection of several peaks. Not the Full” Ends Gore revisiting the sassy spirit of “Judy’s Turn to Cry,” her follow-up sequel to “It’s My Party.” She revises another one of her early hits, the empowering “You Don’t Own Me,” as well as “Out Here On My Own,” a track she wrote with her brother Michael for 1980’s “Fame” soundtrack. —MP

**BO BICE**

**The Real Thing**

**Produced:** Marty Frederksen

**Writers:** K. DioGuardi, M. Frederksen

**Publishers:** Various

**Label:** RCA (CD promo)

Anyone who wondered how “American Idol!” runner-up Bo Bice might convincingly channel his retro rock roots into mainstream radio fodder need give “The Real Thing” only a single listen. Written and produced by A-list hitmakers Kari DioGuardi and Marty Frederksen, the midtempo pop/rocker is so ideally suited to the affable Bice that the show’s lingering reputation for cheesy dramas is effectively whisked out the door. “Real” is certainly catchy, but not at the expense of an arrangement meaty enough for Bice to sink his seasoned chops into with satiating panache. The rocker’s innate talent and star quality were already undisputed, now he has the song to make him a star. A perfect vehicle. —CT

**TRAIN CAB**

**Producer:** Train

**Writer:** Train

**Publisher:** Not listed

**Label:** Columbia (CD promo)

Train is behind the wheel of a luxurious “Cab,” and the band returns with the first single from its upcoming first-quarter 2006 release. Lead singer Pat Monahan reflects on those things around him, both outside the window and in his mind, as he drives across a snowy New York winter day, reflecting on the loneliness he feels after a relationship has ended. He sings, “This new rhythm I’ve pursued is just my getting over you,” all the while admitting that he feels like only the cab on the road. The midtempo song is supported by piano and beautiful strings that carry the plaintive mood to a sad if picturesque scene. This single is big on atmosphere and one of the prettier releases from the enduring Train. What an deal entry as the skies fill with white and the nights turn cold. This is a perfect little song to snuggle to. —CT

**INXS**

**Switcho**

**Producer:** Guy Chambers

**Release Date:** Nov. 29

We will not debate the merits of INXS’ “Switcho,” Replacing the nervou of “Black Tambourine” with a laid-back, intergalactic groove. And Homelite rethinksthe hit single “E-Pro” as an ambilso, Casio-toned trip, instead of a guitar-heavy-modern-rock anthem. “Gueroito” proves that remixes do not have to work solely for dance crossover. They can give a well-received album new legs among its original fans, too. —KM
“Tunox” and “Lava” explode with wordless declarations of a futuristic apocalypse. You half expect Schwarzenegger in “The Terminator” to pull up on a motorcycle, asking after one John Connor. In the hands of a powerful DJ like Carl Cox, every cut here would wreak havoc on a dancefloor, never mind what they do to a home stereo.—KM

FROM P335

ROCK

ISOBEL CAMBELL & MARK LANEGAN

Rambin’ Man

Producer: Isobel Campbell

Release Date: Dec. 13

This EP previews the forthcoming full-length collaboration between Isobel Campbell (formerly of Belle & Sebastian) and Mark Lanegan (Screaming Trees, Diabolos and the Stone Age). Their voices and performance styles could not be more dissimilar, and that is the secret weapon. The yin-yang interplay between Campbell’s ephemeral wisp and Lanegan’s earthy growl is especially effective on the title cut, a reversion of the Hank Williams standard with Campbell offering a woman’s perspective on an otherwise one-sided tale. The acoustic ballad “(Do You Wanna) Come Walk With Me” also showcases the duo’s harmonic appeal, while “Revelry—Pt. 2” pairs Campbell’s soaring voice with Lanegan’s plaintive treble moan. The standard “St. James Infirmary” features Campbell on lead vocal and cello. An intriguing, and promising, creative partnership.—PV

COUNTRY

RAY SCOTT

My Kind of Music

Producers: Phillip Moore, Buddy Cannon

Warner Bros.

EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)

CONTRIBUTORS: Beth Caulfield, Leila Coop, Clover Hope, Kerri Mason, Gail Mitchell, Michael Paolotta, Deborah Evans Price, Chuck Taylor, Anastasia Tsoutsas, Paul Verna, Ray Waddell

PICK • A new release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format

CRITICS’ CHOICE • A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

LEGEND & CREDITS

www.americanradiohistory.com
**Market Watch**

**WEEKLY UNIT SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Clear Eyes, Full Shells</em></td>
<td>583,125,000</td>
<td>524,920,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Bodyguard</em></td>
<td>580,725,000</td>
<td>555,734,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>American Idol</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>American Idol 3</em></td>
<td>580,725,000</td>
<td>555,734,100</td>
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**YEAR-TO-DATE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OVERALL UNIT SALES</th>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Store Singles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Tracks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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*For 2004 data begins with week ending Jan. 4.

**ADJUSTED SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Albums</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

*For 2004 data begins with week ending Jan. 4 for Top 100 albums.

**Album Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sales</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>583,2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>524.9 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHARTS

**Over the Counter**

GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com

**Chart’s Ceiling Sinks To New Low For Holiday Period**

If Thanksgiving week struck you as a stinker for album sales, you will hate the numbers from the stanza that followed.

**ALBUMS**

Volume is down 12.9% from the same week last year, and if you look at the sales totals at the top of The Billboard 200, you realize the results could have been even worse.

Returning to No. 1, despite a post-Thanksgiving decline of 45%, is "Now 20." Its sales for the frame that ended Dec. 4-158,000—mark a new Nielsen SoundScan low for a chart-leading title in a week between Thanksgiving and Christmas. That is well below the previous low, which had been 292,000 copies for the soundtrack to Whitney Houston's "The Bodyguard" during the Thanksgiving rally of 1992, just a few weeks before the album mounted SoundScan's first million-plus week.

The big chart's upper reaches look barren compared with the post-Thanksgiving week of 2004, when Jay-Z's collaboration with Linkin Park led the list with first-week sales of 368,000, or the turkey week of 2003, when Alicia Keys' "The Diary of Alicia Keys" opened at No. 1 with 618,000 sold.

Just 10 albums on the current chart surpass 100,000, compared with 18 in the same week of 2004 and 16 for that of 2003.

**YOUNG BLOOD:** Looking tall on this week's short list is teen rookie Chris Brown, who opens at No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and No. 2 on The Billboard 200.

He edges "American idol" champ Carrie Underwood by less than 200 copies to claim the runner-up slot on the big chart, as both clock a couple of hairs above 154,000.

Brown's lead single, which tops The Billboard Hot 100 for a fourth week, previously ruled Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs.

Weighing in at 128,000 copies for the week, a bit lighter than its first-day numbers suggested, is Shaksira's "Oral Fixation Vol. 2." It is the English-language companion to a Spanish album she released earlier this year.

The new set's star falls more than 29,000 units shy of where "Fijacion Oral Vol. 1" began when it hit stores in June, and 74,000 behind opening sales in November 2001 for "Laundry Service," her first English-language outing.

The general consensus among chart watchers is that Eminem's hits "Culture Call," which hit stores Dec. 7, appears on track to lead next week's Billboard 200 with a start of 350,000.

Like "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb," the 2004 U2 album, Eminem's anthology became the poster child for Apple Computer's ubiquitous iPod TV campaign. That may have led some to expect "Culture Call" to emulate U2's opening sum of 400,000 copies, but that is an unfair comparison, especially considering that "Bomb" dropped during the busy traffic of Thanksgiving week.

At the risk of sounding like an apologist, I will point out that few greatest-hits albums see weeks north of 300,000, ones last year by Shania Twain (529,500) and Toby Keith (435,000) being among the rare exceptions.

New albums by L'il Wayne and Korn are also predicted to beat 200,000, which will both be the first of them inside next week's top 10.

**Chestnuts Roasting:** If you own both of the "Now" Christmas albums, your collection includes eight of the 10 most-heard holiday songs for the week ending Dec. 4.

FRED BRONSON WEBSITE OF THE WEEK AT BILLBOARD.COM/FRED

**With the ascension of "Up on the Housetop" to the top of the Contemporary chart, Kimberly Locke collects the No. 1 for the "American Idol" franchise. A breakdown of, how many No. 1s each contestant has earned appears in Chart Beat. "Housetop" is the first AC No. 1 for the "Housetop" moment since LeAnn Rimes' "How Do I Love Thee?" ruled for 11 weeks in September 1997. "Housetop" leads the fourth song to hit No. 1 this last Dec. 11, 2005, which second by a female artist.

**CHARTS**

**Holiday Cheer**

"Little Drummer Boy" by Michael Buble sets a new Adult Contemporay record for the most charted in that list's history. This marks the second straight year that it day long clocks the chart's fastest start, as James " sonsty's "Deck the Halls" began at No. 1 last December.

**Merry Harry**

"Maria!" The Ellen DeGeneres Show" raises Harry Connick Jr.'s stock. He bulletts at Nos. 13 ("Only You!") and 17 ("C'Occasion") on "Top Jazz Albums, while each of his Christmas albums sees a gain of more than 5% at Nos. 11, 19 and 29 on Top Poo Catalogue.

**Blue Hues**

"Visits to National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" and "Worold Cafe" help to more than double sales on Jason Tweetcher's "Hope and Cole," returning it to No. 1 on Top Blues Albums. She bulletts only the fourth artist to place three albums simultaneously in the chart's top 10.
THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX

ARTIST | Title
--- | ---
CHRIS BROWN | The X
CARRIE UNDERWOOD | Some Hearts
KYLE SENSLEY | The Road And The Radio
SHAKIRA | One Fixation Vol. 2
EVA | Amarantina
MARIAN HALL | All The Right Reasons
THE BLACK EYED PEAS | Monkey Business
KELLY CLARKSON | Breakaway
JOHNNY CASH | American Boy
RED MCINTIRE | Reba #14
IL DIVO | The Christmas Collection
ROD STEWART | Feels Like Today
MARK SHANNON | The Sound Of Revenge
TRACE ADKINS | Songs About You
HILARY DUFF | Most Wanted
SCOTT STAPP | The Great Divide
KEITH URBAN | Be Here
SUGARLAND | Twice The Speed Of Life
THE PUSYCAT DOLLS | PCD
KANYE WEST | Late Registration
GRECHEN WILSON | All I Ever Wanted
DAVE MATTHEWS BAND | Weekend On The Radio
KENNY G | The Greatest Holiday Classics
SOUNDTRACK | Rent
NELLY | Sweat Suit
SANTANA | All That I Am
SOUNDTRACK | Rent: Selections From The Original Motion Picture
GORILLAZ | Demon Days
NEIL DIAMOND | 12 Songs
ERIC CANTONA | I Am Me
MADONNA | Confessions On A Dance Floor
YOUNG JOEY | Let's Get It: Thug Motivation 101
DIEKERS BENTLEY | Modern Day Drifter

Gwen Stefani | Love, Angel, Music, Baby
BON JOVI | Have A Nice Day
VARIOUS ARTISTS | NYC CHRISTMAS 2004 COMPILED: 2 CD (22.98)
VARIOUS ARTISTS | WOW Christmas (Green)
JOHN FOGERTY | The Long Road Home: The Ultimate John Fogerty-Colection
Vince Gill | The Very Best Of Vince Gill
BILLY CURTIS | Big Thats Christmas
THE PADERNINA | One Way Ticket To Hell... And Back
JOHNNY RE==> | Try' Live In Concert
ALI CURTIS | Unplugged
CELEBRITY | Ten Thousand Fists
JOE MYERS | It's Time
MERCEY | The Christmas Sessions
SHERYL CROW | Wildflower
VARIOUS ARTISTS | 40 Years: A Charlie Brown Christmas
PAUL MCCARTNEY | Chaos And Creation In The Backyard
FREEWAY | Wherever You Are
THREE 6 MAFIA | Greatest Hits
KEYSHIA COLE | The Way It Is
KIRK FRANKLIN | Hero
BROOKS & DUNN | Hilbilly Deluxe
THE CHERISH GIRLS | Christmas Licious Christmas
BRAD PAISLEY | Time Well Wasted
MATTHEW MASTERS | Back To Bedlam
Toby Keith | Back 4 Basics
COOL & AJ | Into The Ruuh
SARA EVANS | Real Fine Place
JOE NICHOLS | Here
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN | Born To Run: 30th Anniversary Edition
JESSE MCCARTNEY | Beautiful Soul
THE ALL-AMERICAN REJECTS | Move Along
PAUL McCARTNEY | Wherever You Are
VARIOUS ARTISTS | Most Known Unknown
GREG PHILbin | The Regis Philbin Christmas Album
DAVE MATTHEWS BAND | LifeBuilders: Greenridge

Data for week of DECEMBER 17, 2005

www.americanradiohistory.com
## Billboard Hot 100 Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Don't Forget About Us</td>
<td>Chiddy Bang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Baby Fly</td>
<td>Ciara/Chris Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Soul Survivor</td>
<td>Method Man/Jay-Z</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I'm Sprung</td>
<td>Big Boi</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gold Digger</td>
<td>T.I.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Because of You</td>
<td>Jordin Sparks</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>One Wish</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Here We Go</td>
<td>J. Cole</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Stay Fly</td>
<td>Kaskade</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>There It Go (The Whistle Song)</td>
<td>PnB Rock</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>My Humps</td>
<td>Cole Collective</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Tinashe</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Sugar, We're Going Down</td>
<td>Trouble</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Seasons of Love</td>
<td>Jahan</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Luxurious</td>
<td>J-Dogg</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The Black Keys (1/2/3)</td>
<td>The Roots</td>
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Data for week of December 17, 2005 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
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Between the Bulletins, www.billboard.com
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Data for week December 17, 2005

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

www.americanradiohistory.com
**HOT COUNTRY SONGS**

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**RISING**

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<td>WEEDS IN MY GARDEN</td>
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**HITPREDICTOR**

**ARTIST/TELEMETA (Score)** | **Chart Rank** | **COUNTY**
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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

The traditionalist singer Joe Nichols tops his first No. 1 with "Tequila Makes Her Clothes Fall Off," the lead single from "III," his third set of new songs. His single gains 15 million audience impressions and tops 3-1, interrupting a two-week run atop the chart by Dierks Bentley's "Come a Little Closer." "Tequila" makes more than 23 million audience impressions during the tracking week (up 1 million). That is a tad light for recent No. 1 country singles, but the chart is terrribly

**DON'T MISS ANOTHER IMPORTANT COUNTRY MUSIC UPDATE**


**HOT COUNTRY SONGS** 116 country stations are electronically monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Airplay awarded to songs appearing in the top 20 on both the BDS Airplay and Audience charts for the last full week. Audience in both detections and audience © 2005 BDS (on a scale of 1-100). All rights reserved. COUNTRY SINGLES SALES © 2005 BDS (on a scale of 1-100). All rights reserved. HITPREDICTOR © 2005, Promusiq and HitPredictor are trademarks of Think First Media. ALL CHARTS: See Chart Legend for rules and explanations.

Data for week of DECEMBER 17, 2005 | For chart reprint call 646-654-4633

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
**HOT LATIN SONGS: ALL HOT LATIN SONGS: 01.30.05**

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<td>&quot;Yo No Tengo&quot;</td>
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**TOP LATIN ALBUMS: 01.30.05**

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<td>&quot;Las Flores De Alquiler&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSE ALFREDO JIMENEZ</td>
<td>&quot;Tesoros Musicales&quot;</td>
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<td>A.B. Quintanilla II</td>
<td>&quot;El Documental&quot;</td>
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<td>YANDEL</td>
<td>&quot;La Fuerza Del Chant&quot;</td>
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<td>LUCAS HERMANOS</td>
<td>&quot;Las Islas De La Noche&quot;</td>
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<td>LUIS MIGUEL</td>
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<td>Vicente Fernandez</td>
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*Data for week of DECEMBER 17, 2005*
### Latin Airplay

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### Hot Latin Songs

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**Source:** Billboard | Date: December 17, 2005 | Issue: 17/2005 | Chart: Latin Airplay, Latin Pop, Hot Latin Club Play, Hot Latin Songs | **Link:** [Billboard Chart](http://www.billboard.com)
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<td>MADONNA</td>
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<td>CRACK OF DAWN</td>
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<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>HUNGER'S RECORDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>December 17, 2005</td>
<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>HUNGER'S RECORDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>December 17, 2005</td>
<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>HUNGER'S RECORDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>December 17, 2005</td>
<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>HUNGER'S RECORDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>December 17, 2005</td>
<td>MADONNA</td>
<td>HUNGER'S RECORDS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data for week of December 17, 2005 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 52
**ALBUMS**

- **MADONNA**
  - Confessions on a Dance Floor
- **ENYA**
  - A Hummingbird
- **IL DIVO**
  - A Marry Christmas
- **JAMES BLUNT**
  - All About You
- **TINA ARENA**
  - All or Nothing
- **MARY MARY**
  - Mary Mary
- **BABYFACE**
  - Confessions
- **MELANIE**
  - Love
- **DIESER WEG**
  - Mein Herz ist so leise
- **CRAZY FROG**
  - Mach1 Records

For more details, refer to the webpage at [www.americanradiohistory.com]
### Top Singles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Date Released</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pitbull</td>
<td><strong>Wcover</strong></td>
<td>417,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DANE COK</td>
<td><strong>clipse</strong></td>
<td>387,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td><em>Red Dragon</em></td>
<td>360,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>JIMMY BUFFETT</td>
<td><strong>Oh, C'mon</strong></td>
<td>347,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>JASON ALADEN</td>
<td><strong>Never Will</strong></td>
<td>213,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top Independent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PINK</td>
<td><strong>Try</strong></td>
<td>285,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>KELIS</td>
<td><strong>3AM</strong></td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td><strong>Masterpiece</strong></td>
<td>220,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>JIMMY BUFFETT</td>
<td><strong>God Bless the U.S.A.</strong></td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>JASON ALADEN</td>
<td><strong>Love Dilemma</strong></td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>30 Nov 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Music Video Sales Charts

- **DOLLY PARTON** - *9 to 5 (Theme)* - 34,000
- **FRED ARTHUR** - *The Rhythm of the Ghosts* - 32,000
- **DANISH LAMPA** - *thrown away* - 28,000
- **PATRICK STUMP** - *I’m Not a Vampire* - 26,000
- **THE KILLERS** - *Mr. Brightside* - 24,000

### Top Artists

- **MADONNA** - 90,000,000
- **MIHEAL J. FLYNN** - 35,000,000
- **JANIE JOHNSON** - 25,000,000

### Album Sales

- **WILLIAMS NOEL** - *The Golden Hits* - 500,000
- **THE OJAYS** - *Greatest Hits Vol 2* - 400,000
- **GEOXOS** - *The Very Best of* - 300,000

### Vinyl Sales

- **THE BLACK CROWES** - *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* - 20,000
- **DAVID BOWIE** - *Let’s Dance* - 15,000
- **KISS** - *Merry Chris-Mas Kisses* - 10,000

### Additional Information

- The charts compiled from a national sample of outlets using Nielsen SoundScan data, which is known for its accuracy and reliability.
- Songs are removed from the Hot 100 or 100 once they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 50.
- The top singlesingles are compiled from Nielsen SoundScan data and are updated weekly.
- The charts are updated weekly and provide a snapshot of the most popular songs in the United States.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TOP MUSIC VIDEOS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TITLE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window Shopper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live In A Minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headstrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luvin' It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give Me Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Rubber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-plied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadowbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Forget About Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way I Feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartbreaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masterpiece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way I Feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show Me Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There's Nothing Holdin' Me Back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's My Jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's Go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The One That Got Away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tide Is High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's Over Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickhouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's Get Ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Don't Want This</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Only One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way U Move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in the USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sopranos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I Kissed The Girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where Is Your Mind?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can't Remember To Forget You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way U Move</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TOP HEATSEEKERS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARTIST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin Bandana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Invitation To Worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calle 13 feat.evity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Einstein: Lullaby Classics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lip Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Es Nuestra Navidad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Kind Of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak For Yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Super Exitos Lagrimas Tonas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ionica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Sonoritas, Una Historia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico-Madrid: En Directo Y Sin Escala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty From Pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strange And Beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Change Is Gonna Come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They're Only Chasing Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pitbulls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Southern California Properties

Local Experts Worldwide

BAR Z RANCH  $225,000,000
Santa Ynez Valley 850+ ac ranch on Fazett Cyn Rd + addtl frontage on Zaca Station Rd in heart of wine country. 4bd/5ba farmhouse, porches, pool & pool hse. Bradly/Bradly 805.531.3553

BEACH CLUB RD  $20,000,000
Carpinteria-Summitwood. 1995 Andy Neumann Beachfront Contemporary 1st time on the market. No expense spared in this 4bd/5ba coastal beauty. Suzanne Perkins 805.365.8643

256 ACRE RANCH  $12,000,000

PAREDOH RIDGE VINEYARDS  $5,000,000
Montecito Vineyard producing 200 cases of premium Syrah! Fantastic building site. All utilities underground. Unbelievable views! Only vineyard facing coast. Suzanne Perkins 805.565.8643

RANCHO MIRAGES' FINEST  $3,495,000
Beauvoir 760.832.1517

BIGHORN CONTEMPORARY  $3,300,000
Palm Desert. Lifestyle of the rich & famous. Newly built 3bd/3ba, plus 2 new offices, on the golf course w/ mtn views, pool/spa. Karen Joy 760.799.1405

ELEGANT VILA  $3,295,000
Studio City. Tastefully redone pvt estate. 4bd/5ba + 2 story gft hse w/ pool, spa, indoor/outdoor LR/DR. A perfect industry retreat. Wilson/Alperin 310.808.3870

WOODSTOCK RANCH  $2,995,000
Santa Ynez Valley. 3bd/2.5ba home on 18+ acres. Vaulted ceilings, fireplaces, workshop, 3bd/2ba guest hse. Garage. Joniee Hanson 805.455.6175

OPEN 1-4 12/11/05

408 CASCADA WAY  $2,169,000
Be Av. 4bd/3ba. Spacious & done. Home in great neighborhood, acclaimed Warner Schol Dist, oil site st, formal dining mmw w/bg. Camrdcy/Blum 310.481.6266

20 +/- ACRES OF LAND  $1,950,000
Malibu. 20 +/- acres in prime location. Ocean view. Several plans approved; remaining scheduled to be approved by 1st qr. 2006! Esh property. Jennifer Levit 310.351.7487

OPEN 1-4 12/11/05

3132 HOLLYRIDGE  $1,949,000
Hed Hills. Stunning mid-cent modern pvt retreat w/ cny vistas, architectural details & integrity throughout. Pool, flat grassy yd, gd suite, Beachwood Cyn Gem! Sharonne Alperin 310.888.3709

7611 WOODROW WILSON  $1,297,000

OPEN 1-4 12/11/05

INDIAN RIDGE C.C.  $1,250,000
Palm Desert. Updated & finished to perfection, privacy slashed. Ocotillo 2 most popular floor plan. Quiet & peaceful at gorgeous, on the golf course. Uta Bone 760.832.1517

2245 TALMADGE ST  $1,190,000

OPEN 1-4 12/11/05

BEACH & GRANNY FLAT  $549,000
Channel Islands. Walk to ocean & marina. Three levels & roof deck w/ great views. 3bd/2ba, lg living rm & kit, ground floor w/ entrance & m/m. Marcia Chamney 805.320.0700

OPEN 1-4 12/11/05

INDIAN RIDGE C.C.  $739,000
Palm Desert. 3bd/3ba. Dramatic lake, fairway & mountain w/s. Highly upgraded w/shutters, sk, ac in garage, outdoor lr & fountain. De Silva/Harvey 760.578.6700

7911 NORTON AVE  $675,000
West Hvd. Stunning 2bd/1.5ba end unit w/ hill view, full remodeled in 05. 1920s, ddm, custom lighting, top of the line all over. One of a kind! Jefferson-Hendrick 310.888.3103

OPEN 1-4 12/11/05

PRIMEROSE BEAUTY  $525,000
Palm Desert. 6bd/3ba home w/ absolutely the best views across the Lakes Country Club. On quiet cul-de-sac in a great family neighborhood. Pool/spa. Timothy Baldwin 760.799.5942

Beverly Hills Rodeo 310.724.7000
Beverly Hills Wilshire 310.481.6262
Brentwood 805.967.1557
Camarillo 805.382.8200
Hollywood Beach 310.456.1511
Malibu 310.456.0080

www.americanradiohistory.com

SANTA YNEZ PERFECTION $4,395,000
Santa Ynez Valley. Great Spanish-style home w/1,200 sq ft
Palm Springs. 2bd & 2ba. Recently built. Contemporary style.
Sharon Alperin 310-183-3708

SECLUDED GATED COMPOUND $4,290,000
BHPO Privacy & views at end of driveway in liner
Benedict. Newer gated home w/7bd & 7ba; media &
David Findley (805) 345-6911

8706 HOLLYWOOD BLVD $4,250,000
Sunset Strip. 1920's classic. Sprawling, stomping
unobstructed views of ocean & sky. Original fixtures,
3bd, 1.5ba & spa. 4bd/4ba.
Murray Winsberg, 213-481-6296

2696 BARRYMORE DRIVE $3,795,000
Malibu. Spectacular ocean views. Over 11 acres of
almost all flat land. Guesthouse, orchard, gated, very
private. Rosemary Low, Jim & Carol Shogren 310-414-2405

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

514 HILLSIDE AVE $2,900,000
Sunset Strip. Hip & stylish rem owned contemp style
w/ vs. 4bd & 4ba. App 4500 sq ft. Exquisite spa-like
pool suite, grand LR, chef's kit, marble/tile floors &
4fpl. 3'8x20'6. Tracy Mathis 310-722-2267

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

HAROLD LIVADIS DESIGN $2,650,000
Palm Springs. Arch'd glamour feat terrace into-out w/
surround living room & bar, swim-up pool & fab hardware
& fpk. 4bd/3.5ba. Makes it one-of-a-kind. Blair/Swan/Tylor 760-327-9762

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

908 BUNNY DRIVE $2,495,000
Brentwood. Beautiful pool & 8bd 2.5ba. Kit w/
maple cabs, sub-zero, viking mg, granite & granite,
spa-like w/ koi pond. 4bd/3.5ba. Blair/Swan/Tylor 760-327-9762

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

CUSTOM MEDITERRANEAN $1,695,000
Palm Springs. Desert showstoper perfect for entertaining
2bd & 2ba, pvt w/ dramatic pool & spalike, great kit, 425
heated pool/spa. Vina.
Blair/Swan/Tylor 760-327-9762

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

MID CENTURY DREAM $1,675,000
Palm Springs. Mid Century w/Jetliner views stretching
from the mtns to the ocean. More info see www.
clevelead.com.
Charles Clark 213-671-2311

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

9422 REACREST DRIVE $1,499,000
BHPO Best priced home in the Crest $1 area. Open fi
plan, updated kit, 2bd/2.5ba. Lg. rol. cab. or fiv areas,
endless possibilities.
Berry-Fleisch 213-488-3740

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

INDIAN RIDGE C.C. $1,399,000
Palm Desert. Lovely turn-key furnished 3bd/3.5ba,
great rm plan w/ eastern, triple fairway & lake views.
Warm & inviting. Very private.
DeSilva/Johnson 760-578-6600

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

INDIRECTIVE DIPLEX $1,150,000
Santa Barbara. Two Units 1400 sf. 2bd & 2ba.
Huge mls, rooftop mls, covered pkg, spaces, granite kitchens.
Full trees.
Evelyn Yager 805-537-5174

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

BEAUTIFULLY APPOINTED $1,022,000
La Quinta. Minsnghome in Rancho Cima. 3bd/2ba.
Contemporary, FP, kit, pool, spa, very light & bright.
Ins Asmarn 760-567-8661

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

SOLAR POWERED HOME $995,000
Palm Springs. Stunning 1956 home in Desertwill. 3bd
2ba. 3bd & 2ba. Travertine floors, pgs & spa. 5bd turnkey
furnished. Eco-friendly solar pw.
Tim Neiger 714-218-0311

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

651 SA+ VENTO #313 $899,000
West Hollywood. Awesome modern terrace style w/ 2bd
Sharon Alperin 310-183-3708

OPEN 1-4 12/1/05

MALIBU GATED ESTATE $115,000mo
Malibu. Short term lease on majestic grotto wth white water
views. 3bd/3ba.
Jim & Carol Shogren 310-414-2405
Here is a partial list of the 48th annual Grammy Award nominations. For a complete list, including nominees in the classical, composing/arranging, surround sound and music video categories, visit grammy.com.

GENERAL FIELD


POP
BEST POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE: "Like That," Mariah Carey (Island Records); "137," Adele (Atlantic Records); "You Don't Know My Name," Nate Ruess (Atlantic Records); "Shook Up," Taylor Swift (Big Machine Records); "Shades of Grey," Coldplay (Parlophone).


R&B
BEST R&B VOGUE PERFORMANCE: "Baby," Rihanna (Def Jam/Columbia); "Hotel," Miguel (Delusion); "Echelon," Estelle (Downtown); "I Like That," Nicki Minaj (Cash Money); "This Is Love," Usher (J Records).

BEST R&B ALBUM: "21," Adele (Atlantic); "The Fame," Lady Gaga (Interscope); "1989," Taylor Swift (Big Machine); "Randomaccessmemories," Coldplay (Parlophone); "The Truth About Love," Katy Perry (Capitol).

ROCK
BEST ROCK VOCAL PERFORMANCE: "The Cave," The Black Keys (Nonesuch); "Under the Gun," Foo Fighters (Roswell); "I Will Follow You Into the Dark," Muse (Interscope); "Welcome," Metallica (Epic); "Strawberry Fields Forever," The Beatles (Epic).

BEST ROCK ALBUM: "21," Adele (Atlantic); "The Fame," Lady Gaga (Interscope); "1989," Taylor Swift (Big Machine); "Randomaccessmemories," Coldplay (Parlophone); "The Truth About Love," Katy Perry (Capitol).

BEST ROCK SONG: "The Cave," The Black Keys (Nonesuch); "Under the Gun," Foo Fighters (Roswell); "I Will Follow You Into the Dark," Muse (Interscope); "Welcome," Metallica (Epic); "Strawberry Fields Forever," The Beatles (Epic).

Gwen Stefani
"Sunneova" (Fantasia Records); "A Hoses Is Not A Home" (High School Records); "Fake Love," (J Records); "I Ain't Nothing," (Work Records).
Mileposts

Compiled by Saram Man shan@billboard.com

GRAMMY NOMS

จาก>>p59

Blink and the Strings of the English Chamber Orchestra (Heads Up Internationally); “Rise.”
Annushka Shukur [Angel Records]

POLKA

BEST POLKA ALBUM: “Under the Influence.”
Eddie Walczynski’s Verstovettes (Bell Ave Records); “Dance.”
Bill Belokopitoff & Mike Buzaski’s” Polka Boys.”
Peter Ochynski’s Golden Polka Boys; “The Best of Polka.”
Carlos Moreira; “Polka & Claves.”
Roberto Fuentes; “Polka.”

CHILDREN

BEST MUSICAL ALBUM FOR CHILDREN: “I Love You Best,”
Red Grammar (Red Note Records); “Green Gorilla, Monster, and Me.”
Rikiki World (Fred/MusiCares); “A Happy Christmas.”
“Little Jennika.”
“Little Miss Matched.”
“Rotten to the Core.”

MUSICAL SHOW

BEST MUSICAL ALBUM: “Dirty rotten Scoundrels.”
Billy Stray and David Yezlick. producers: David Yezlick, composer: Yezlick.[Director’s Cut.]
Including: John Lithgow, Norbert Leo Butz [Glighthouse Records]; “Hair.”
Kurt Deutsch and Joel Moss, producers: Cali Davidson, composer: Jo Rome and Geniene Ragni, lyricists. The Actors’ Fund of America Benefit, [Glighthouse Records]; “Light in the Piazza.”
The Bad Beginning, various artists, (Harper Children’s Audio)

MUSICAL \TV/VIDE0ALBUM

BEST COMPILED SOUNDTRACK ALBUM FOR MOTION PICTURE, TELEVISION OR VIDEO: “Memoirs of a Geisha.”
Kevin Spacey (ATCO/Rhino); “Napoleon Dynamite.”
Jaron Lowenstein; “Life is Long,” various artists, (Warner Strategic Marketing), “Poolside;”
“First Time Under Six Feet.”
John Williams, composer. (Original Broadway Cast Recording [Raz & Tie]—Glighthouse Records)

HISTORICAL

Jeffrey Greenberg and Anna Lomax Wood, compilation producers. Adam Aron and Steve Rosenthal, mastering engineer: (Pellon/37.)
Rounder Records, “Hollywood: Rare and Unrecorded Records.”
“Deadwood Blackwood and Ben Young. mastering engineer: (Allman Brothers Band).”
Rounder Records, “The Legend;”
“Cerys Matthews.”
“Yoko Ono.”
“Chu Berry.”

BEST ENGERED ALBUM, NON-CLASSICAL: “Psychedelic Rock and Roll.”
Robert Hunter and Mike Grady, producers: (Eric Clapton, Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys).”
“Mick Jones.”
“Chris Hillman.”
“Linda Ronstadt.”
“Chad Channing.”
“Steve Gadd.”
“Steve Gadd.”
Al Schmitt, producer (Paul Aka).”

BEST MUSICAL ALBUM, TELEVISION OR VIDEO: “The Aviator.”
Howard Shore, composer (Decca Records); “The Incredibles.”
John Williams, composer (Walt Disney Records); “Million Dollar Baby.”
Clint Eastwood, composer (United Artists); “Hustle.”
“Crazy Town.”
“Live.”
“Dazed and Confused.”
“Rocky Mountain”
“Stolen Innuendo.”
“Electra Glide.”
“San Andreas.”
“Gone Baby Gone.”
“Doorways.”

INDUSTRY EVENTS


FEBRUARY 23 Juno Awards, Halifax Metro Centre, Halifax, Nova Scotia. junoawards.ca.


FOR THE RECORD

In last week’s issue, what’s the Download Interactive Advisory Board would have been identified as an initiative of the Recording Academy in both the story and the accompanying photo caption about the DEMUXconference in Los Angeles.

www.americanradiohistory.com
A team of experts debate digital music business models Dec. 1. From left are moderator Hywel Coghill of Atlantic & Bird, Rob Budi, Robert Sammon, Tony EMI, Thomas Gewecke, Qualcomm, Tom Grech, iMesh's Mike Bubel and CRC Larry Kessell.

Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter and Adweek magazine hosted DEMXPO Nov. 30-Dec. 1 at the Los Angeles Hyatt Regency Century Plaza. The digital entertainment conference and awards brought together more than 1,000 industry leaders and CEO executives to debate and discuss key issues and emergent business models for music, mobile, gaming, advertising and a host of other media platforms.

Bilboard executive editor Tamara Conniff, far left, moderated a panel on "What's the Download?" Some panelists were all smiles before their Dec. 2 discussion "Politics and the Future of Digital Entertainment," which centered on such topics as the Supreme Court's Groovus ruling and collective licensing.

The scene before the panel. From left, the Recording Academy's Neil Portnow, Congresswoman Mary Bono, Billboard digital executive editor Tamara Conniff, the Digital Media Asia's Jonathan Potter, the Recording Industry Association of America's Mitch Bainwai, and StreamCast Networks' Michael Steele were all smiles before their Dec. 3 discussion "Politics and the Future of Digital Entertainment," which centered on such topics as the Supreme Court's Groovus ruling and collective licensing.

XM Satellite Radio president/CEO Hugh Panaro, right, addressed his company's future growth opportunities during keynote Dec. 1. Here he checks out Phantom North's latest Hask technology on the EIRadio exhibition floor.

Which will radio sound like in the coming years? Billboard's executive editor Bill Werde, far left, posed the question to, from left, Algo's Cary Matthews, 3 Hut Satellite Radio's Greg Steele, Metrolink's Mike Panto, Yahoo's Jay Frank, Motorola's Dave Ulmer and Musycrypt's Peter Diemer.

Backstage at the awards, Cybil Peluso of Electronic Arts, whose "SSX on Tour" won for best use of sound, celebrates with Billboard president/publisher John Kilikian, left, and Ted Cohen, EMI Music senior VP of digital development and distribution.
CHANGE OF HEART

Similarly, although rumors swirled for months that Tom Petty was leaving Warner Bros. Records, his home since 1994, he tells Track that his third solo album, "Highway Companion," will come out on WB, through Rick Rubin's American Recordings. Rubin, who has produced Petty albums in the past, moved his label to WB earlier this year.

"Rick talked me into it," Petty says. Even though the album will be on the American imprint, Rubin will not produce the project. Those honors go to Petty's former Traveling Wilburys mate Jeff Lynne. "We're still working on it," Petty says. "We're just finishing a couple more songs. It should be out by spring or summer."

WORKING CLASS HERO

The New York chapter of the Recording Academy honored Mariah Carey, Yoko Ono and John Lennon, Howard Shore and Jay-Z at the Recording Academy Honors, held Dec. 7 at Gotham Hall in New York. During her acceptance speech, Ono, reflecting on the 25th anniversary of Lennon's murder on Dec. 8, 1980, acknowledged that it had been a difficult week for her. "But now I'm smiling," she told the crowd. "Thank you so much for this honor. That our partnership has been acknowledged in this way would have made John happy." Pausing for a few seconds, she added, "I wish John was here tonight."

TOGETHER AGAIN

A few months after demanding its release from Warner Music Group, Linkin Park and the label have kissed and made up. "We're resolving our differences, and we're looking forward to putting out a record next year," guitarist Brad Delson told Track at the Billboard Music Awards. "We're all focused on the creative process right now." In May, Linkin Park said it had stopped work on its new album and wanted out of WMG's Warner Bros. Records, citing concerns about WMG's cost-cutting and plans for use of proceeds from its three forthcoming initial public offerings. The band claimed WMG's strategy would make it incapable of living up to its "fiduciary responsibility" to market and promote the act. Without revealing details of its WMG arrangement, MC/vocalist Mike Shinoda says the band has "been working on new stuff for at least a month."

FAMILY TIES

Those combining the Grammy Award nominations might recognize an ex-Billboard staffer's name. Adam White—formerly Billboard's international editor-in-chief and now VP of communications at Universal Music Group International—in London earned a nod in the best album notes category for the Hip-O/Motown collection "Heaven Must Have Sent You: The Holland/Ozier/Holland Story." White tells Track that he spent last year's Christmas holidays out on his 7,000-word 72-page essay, "To the chagrin of my family. But it had to be done. "HDwre my gods," White adds. "So, the chance to write the story for Hip-O was, ahem, heaven sent."

Another ex-Billboard staffer, Nelson George, took home the best album notes award at the 54th Annual Grammy Awards for his work on the James Brown boxed set "Star Time."

REGGAEFÓN FEVER

Machete Music will release a live CD/DVD culled from "Megaton," the reggae concerts that took place in November in Los Angeles and New York. "Megaton: The Biggest Live Reggaeton Concert" is due in February and features tracks from the likes of Hector "El Father," Lenny Tunes and Wisin & Yandel. The set is a joint venture between the Universal-owned Machete label and SBS Entertainment, which produced the shows. This month, Machete and SBS will jointly release a greatest-hits album titled "Megaton: The World's Greatest Reggaeton Hits."

CAPTAIN SPLITS OR

The co-founders of Or Music are parting ways. Michael Cohan is returning to Sony Music for a senior corporate A&R position, and will get his own custom label. Larry Miller will continue to run Or Music, which is evolving into Or Media Group. As OMG chairman/CEO, Miller says he is in the process of lining up new investors. Once that is completed, the company will invest in publishing assets and label catalogs, while also getting involved in branded entertainment, licensing and events. As for Or Music, Miller says the label will continue to participate in its joint ventures with Sony Music for "Los Lonely Boys, who could have an album out at the end of first-quarter 2006, and Manu Chao, whose first studio full-length is due at the end of January."

YOKO ONO AND JAY-Z

were among those feted at the Recording Academy Honors.

EXECUTIVE TURN TABLE

RECORD COMPANIES: Virgin Records America in New York names Lee Trink executive VP/GM. He was senior VP/GM at Lava Records.

Sony Music Nashville promotes Deb Haus to VP of marketing, artist development and creative services. She was VP of marketing and artist development. Sony Music Nashville also promotes Tanya Welch to director of marketing. She was associate director of marketing.

RCA Music Group in New York ups Claudia Rutzkzy to VP of sales and retail marketing. She was senior director of national sales.

DISTRIBUTION: Handleman Co. in Troy, Mich., promotes Gerry Espinoza to operations project manager. He was manager of finance and operations audit. Handleman Co. also names James Buckley assistant VP of marketing. He was director of marketing at Valassis Communications.

PUBLISHING: Sony/ATV Music Publishing chairman/CEO David Hockman in New York has been elected to the ASCAP board of directors.

Chrysalis Music Publishing in Los Angeles names Melissa Mumura director of synchronization licensing/special markets. She was licensing administrator at Warner/Chappell Music.

BMI in New York names Ben Tischker as associate director of writer/publisher relations. He was owner of New Music Network in Paris.

HOME VIDEO: Universal Music & Video Distribution in Universal City, Calif., names Erin Kroeger VP of sales analysis. She was divisional VP of marketing finance at Macy's Merchandising Group.

MUSIC VIDEO: MTV Networks in New York appoints Frederick Morton as senior VP/GM of new cable channel TEMPO. He was senior VP/deputy general counsel of business and legal affairs for MTV Networks.

RELATED FIELDS: In Demand Networks in New York names Emilio R. Núñez VP of original programming. He was director of music and drama programming at A&E Television.

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- Motorola, Mike Gaunnon, VP & GM, Digital Media Solutions (US)
- MTV Networks, Jeff Yapp, EVP, Music & Logo Enterprise Group (US)
- RealNetworks, Tim Quirk, SVP, Music Content & Programming (US)
- SK Telecom, Won Yong Jo, Senior Manager (Korea)
- Sprint, Nancy Beaton, GM, Wireless Music & Personalization (US)
- Sony BMG Music Entertainment, Jeremiah Boggs, EVP, Television (US)
- Sony BMG Music Entertainment, Thomas Hesse, President, Global Digital Business Group (US)
- Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications, Rikko Sakaguchi, SVP, Head of Product & Application Planning (Sweden)
- TVT Records, Steve Gottlieb, CEO (US)
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