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Setting The Record Straight On Digital Rights Management

BY DR. RICHARD GOOCH

As the IFPI’s recently published Digital Music Report shows, these are incredibly exciting times to be in the digital music business. New services are burgeoning on the Internet and on mobile.

Everywhere you look there are operators jostling with different products and different kinds of deals. A plethora of mobile services is emerging. There are subscriptions, previews and downloads. And a new generation of licensed peer-to-peer file sharing is beginning to appear.

As with all new technology, the digital music business is still in its infancy. It is driving new flexible music services for consumers in the digital market. It has proved to be the framework that has allowed today’s thriving legal digital music scene to flourish, making more music available to the public than ever before in more formats and distribution channels.

It is DRM that gives consumers different options and helps different kinds of services compete. Look at the differences between the services on offer today. The biggest—like taking digital music to the mainstream, there are hundreds of smaller services too. Some are deliberately small and cater to a niche audience. Some are small because they are just starting out. Mobile is huge with ringtones but mobile music and video are springing up too. This diversity is great for the market and for consumers.

Take away DRM and you take away these options. There could be no subscription services. No ringtones. No Napster to Go. No super-distribution models to look forward to. Without DRM it would be very difficult to monetize digital music—and to invest in the creation of future music.

Some artists and record companies do not want to use DRM—and that is fine if it is their choice. They think they can get value from their music that way. In some circumstances I can see that it is possible to gain promotional value by giving away MP3s or to have paying customers for unprotected files. That should be a matter of choice to suit the circumstances.

The digital age has broken the mold and DRM is driving it forward. Many people want cherry-pick individual tracks, burn CD-Rs, rent tunes, subscribe to a service, download and keep music on their PC or burn ringtones for their mobile phone. DRM allows all this to happen while ensuring that the fundamentals of the music industry remain sound.

DRM enables consumers to get exactly what they pay for, and to pay for exactly what they get.

‘DRM enables consumers to get exactly what they pay for, and to pay for exactly what they get.’

Contrary to what some may think, DRM is not a new idea. It has been around for more than a decade. For software and games it was the early 1980s, on computers like the original IBM PC and the Commodore 64. Macrovision started protecting VHS tapes around 1985. DVD was launched in 1996 (with copy protection) and became—according to the Consumer Electronics Assn.—the most successful electronics product ever. Today, DRM has already been widely accepted in the marketplace.

DRM is sometimes misunderstood and sometimes misrepresented. Let’s look at some of the myths.

First, no record company is in the business of blocking access to content—that way lies to commercial suicide. DRM protected content, like everything else made available to the public, is subject to the laws of supply and demand; if DRM is badly implemented, consumers will vote with their feet and reject it. This means that record companies and others will have to deploy DRM in commercially sensible ways.

Second, the record industry does not use DRM as a “big brother” tool to inappropriately gather personally identifying information on consumers. The use of DRM to ensure that the right people get paid for consumption of music does not override laws about privacy and consumer protection. Indeed, DRM can ensure that they are obeyed.

The lack of interoperability between services and devices is currently a frustration for consumers, this is primarily an issue for technology companies. Users should be free to select among a wide range of services and devices from different DRM providers to play in a browsing safe in the knowledge that these will work properly together. The fact that this is not always the case is dependent on technology providers who must act in order for their systems to work together.

DRM has a crucial role in protecting music as well. It can prevent a download from becoming an upload to the rest of the world. Without taking away from the rights of the consumer, it ensures the flow of payment to rights holders that feeds the virtuous circle of investment and creativity that is at the core of the music business.

I recently spoke at a forum titled “Digital Rights Management: Copyright Protection vs. Consumer Frustration.” Nothing better illustrates the misguided notions about DRM nor neglects its key role as an enabler of great music services, than this completely false dichotomy.

The real issue is just getting DRM to work properly: to work for rights holders, technology firms and consumers. It should continue to serve quietly and unobtrusively as a trustworthy, reliable back-end worker—working in the background to support the music services that are at the center stage in the marketplace.

DRM is the key to our successful digital music business. It enables consumers to get exactly what they pay for, and to pay for exactly what they get. But to work in the future, DRM will need support from our technology partners and from governments. It is time to get beyond the unbelievable acronym and recognize the integral role DRM has to play in a flourishing future digital music market.
CANNES—The world's largest music publisher and two collecting societies are changing the century-old landscape of European music licensing for the digital age.

The United Kingdom's MCPS-PRS Alliance and Germany's GEMA are forming a joint business entity to exclusively administer Pan-European online and mobile licenses for certain repertoire of EMI Music Publishing, which forged the arrangement.

"This has been an unfulfilled dream of mine for many years," Martin Bandier, EMI Music Publishing Worldwide chairman/CEO, told Billboard at the MIDEM conference here.

Bandier contends that the European licensing structure—set up through more than 25 collecting societies—has always been twisted. Laws in many European Union countries require composers to permit local societies to exclusively license their songs for certain uses.

Even the European Commission has recognized a problem with this system when it comes to licensing online rights. It recommended Oct. 12 that European collecting societies make changes for the digital age (Billboard, Nov. 5, 2005).

The EMI agreement sets the framework for the business arrangement between the publisher and the currently unnamed joint venture. Negotiations on specifics will follow; final terms are expected in about two months.

The venture will offer Pan-European licenses for all accessible music repertoire controlled by EMI's affiliates in the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia and South Africa, EMI Music Publishing U.K. executive VP/GM William Booth says. Rates will probably vary by territory. Other repertoire is not yet included because of legal restrictions.

Peter Ende, president/CEO of EMI Music Publishing Continental Europe, said that while the joint venture will license Pan-

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**PUBLISHING**

BY SUSAN BUTLER

**LICENSING REVOLUTION**

EMI, Collecting Societies Link To Simplify European Clearances

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**HIP-HOP**

BY GAIL MITCHELL

**Nas, Jay-Z Bury Hip-Hop Hatchet For Album Deal**

When Nas' first album under his new Def Jam Recordings pact is released later this year, it will be on his own imprint, the Jones Experience.

The joint venture is a key component of the newly minted agreement between the artist and Def Jam president Jay-Z, which has Nas switching labels from Columbia to Def Jam. The jump follows on the heels of the rap icons' headline-making, onstage truce last October during R&B/hip-hop WWPR New York's Power House concert.

"I've been in this business a long time and knew what a great deal it is," Nas (born Nasir Jones) tells Billboard in his first interview since news of the pact was reported. "I signed a significant and excellent situation."

The deal's terms have Def Jam parent Island Def Jam and Columbia parent Sony Music participating as financial partners in Nas' first two albums under the four-album deal. Def Jam will provide A&R, promotion and distribution for the two sets, while the labels will share marketing.

The recording budget for each album is $3 million. It has been reported that the $3 million includes advances for Nas, but sources familiar with the deal say the rapper received a separate, substantially higher advance.

Sony retains ownership of the masters from Nas' 19-year tenure with Columbia as well as the right to release a greatest-hits collection not shared with Def Jam. Under terms of the pact, Nas will deliver two new tracks for a Sony hits package. Sony may also include up to three tracks from the joint albums on a hits compilation. The company's executives declined to comment.

Prior to the new agreement, Nas had one album left on his Sony contract. IDJ was motivated to swap profits, says Nas' attorney, Kenny Meiselas, a part-

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continued on >>p6

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**UpFront**

** LICENSING (cont.)**

from >>p5

European users, it will most likely work with other collecting societies when users only want licenses within a local territory. “We want [the smaller societies] to participate,” Emi Music Publishing Continental Europe COO Terry Foster-Key added. “We want the [European collecting society] network to work, but we want the main agreement to be the framework within which they work.”

Setting up a one-stop license shop came out of necessity and has been two years in the making, Emi executives said.

Because of the complex system and the lack of contractual or legal requirements governing digital licenses for compositions, even the giant Emi has been in the dark on the status of its European digital licenses. Emi executives told Billboard that they do not know which European societies are licensing which users, what repertoire has been licensed or the royalty rates being charged. The collecting societies “are not sharing that with their members, and they’re not sharing it with each other,” Foster-Key said. “We know the level of use and the level of income we’re collecting. We’re not getting anywhere near what we should be getting to distribute to our writers and composers.”

After the Emi board approved the one-stop concept 15 months ago, the publisher began talking with collecting societies. Four of them—Including Holland’s Buma-Stemra and France’s Sacem—offered plans. After reviewing the proposals, Emi narrowed the field by asking the Alliance and Gema to work together on a proposal, Emi Music Publishing president/COO Roger Faxon said. “Their business philosophy, their sense of trying to be progressive and their ability to work cooperatively with the other societies” were important factors leading to the selection of the two societies, Faxon said.

Other publishers responded positively. “I’m delighted that collecting societies and rights holders are working together, with rights holders managing their own copyrights,” BMG Music Publishing chairman/CEO Nicholas Firth said. “We’re looking to do something similar.”

The United Kingdom’s Music Publishers’ Assn. will be contacting its indie publisher members to explore a similar arrangement as a group with one or more societies. MPA chief executive Stephen Navin said. Other publishers said they will wait until the Emi details are hammered out before commenting on the arrangement.

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**GLOBAL**

**By Emmanuel Legrand**

**Buzz At MIDEM: Digital Growth**

In Cannes, Tech Was Talk Of The Town

CANNES—The global music industry is starting to see digital music as a key driver of revenue growth. So went the buzz at this year’s 40th annual MIDEM conference here.

Emi Group chairman/CEO Eric Nicoli, who keynoted the tech-focused, two-day portion of MIDEM called MidemNet, said he anticipated that digital revenue would account for 25% of Emi’s overall business, a figure if Fpi chairman John Kennedy sees as realistic for the whole industry.

We’ve seen a tripling in the last year, and we’ve hardly gotten started,” he said. According to the IFPI, digital sales represented 6% of the industry’s total revenue in 2005, with a 60-40 split between online and mobile.

“We’ve moved on from the days when the main impact of digital technology was to harm our industry by facilitating rampant online and physical theft. The day is within our sights when digital growth overstrips physical decline and we can all compete for share of a growing pie.”

Nicoli told a packed audience of 1,200 delegates that he was confident digital sales would help push the industry’s revenue total above the current $30 billion level. “Our belief is that the total market will be bigger in 2010 than it is today—and potentially much bigger.”

The industry is betting on a future that is still taking shape. Nicoli said that although mobile music offers a lot of potential, the market is still in its infancy. “We’re at year zero—if that—with mobile,” he said.

However, Ed Kershaw, head of music for U.K. mobile operator Vodafone, believes the distinction between the Internet and mobile phones will blur in the near future. “What will then be interesting to see is whether mobile will be the mobile retailer will be,” he said.

With so many new players having an interest in music—from Internet service providers to mobile phone operators and coffee shop chains—some expressed concern about music’s position in the value chain.

“Music has become a disposable item,” said Nicholas Firth, chairman/CEO of BMG Music Publishing during the “Breaking the Value Chain” panel at MidemNet. “For many people it’s a traffic builder.”

But others at the conference argued that the industry is going through a process of adaptation and that part of the learning curve has been achieved.

Adam Singer, chief executive of the MCPS-PRS Alliance, cited the deal between the British collecting society and Emi to get with Germany’s GemA as a “step in the right direction” toward a more efficient industry. The deal was announced at MIDEM (see story, page 55).

“Music will go on forever,” Singer said. “What we need is for institutions who deliver a service to adapt to the digital age.”
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Two New Apps Take P2P Mobile

A pair of startup companies have introduced different mobile peer-to-peer distribution services that aim to marry the viral benefits of P2P trading with the security and protection of wireless networks.

At the MIDEM conference (see story, page 6), Israeli-based Nareos took the wraps off a P2P-based music file-sharing application developed for mobile phones. Called PeerBox, the service will allow wireless users to search for and download music from existing P2P networks like eDonkey and Gnutella directly to their phones, with no PC interface needed.

Like many of the PC-based P2P services emerging, PeerBox will use audio fingerprinting technology to identify copyrighted songs and block their transfer unless users purchase the track or sign up for a monthly subscription. The service will also block the transfer of music from labels that do not license their catalog.

The company currently is negotiating with two of the four major labels to register their music.

Nareos founder and CEO Alexander Lazovsky will not name the audio and fingerprinting technology used for the service, but says he has been in discussions with Gracenote and Snopac. Downloads will be protected by the OMA 2.0 mobile-optimized digital rights management standard.

Nareos also operates an online P2P service called PeerReach, which limits search results to files that require payment before they can be played. According to Lazovsky, any song purchased through the PeerBox mobile P2P service can be subsequently downloaded online via PeerReach.

“We have a complete solution,” he says.

Nareos has licensing deals with CD Baby, InGrooves, the Digital Rights Agency and the Independent Online Distribution Alliance, among others, totaling 1 million tracks available on the PeerReach service, which are expected to extend to the PeerBox service.

Lazovsky predicts a second-quarter launch in the United States and Asia. He said the application will be distributed via flash memory cards, embedded in mobile devices and possibly offered by wireless operators.

Meanwhile, Canadian firm Cascada Mobile has developed a technology that allows mobile users to recommend the applications they like to one another with wirelessly messaging.

Unlike a traditional P2P service, Cascada Mobile does not allow users to send files from phone to phone. Instead, the company works with content developers to add proprietary referral technology into their applications. When embedded in mobile games, for example, a “recommend” option lets users refer the game to friends. The phone sends a text message to friends, with a link to purchase.

“We cut out that whole issue of trying to find the application on the deck,” says Tony Davis, executive chairman of Cascada Mobile.

Today, the referred content must be offered by the recipient’s carrier in the future, it may be open to third-party providers.

Only applications created using a mobile-optimized version of Java can embed the TAG referral technology, which excludes ring tones and full-song downloads. Davis says future mobile music applications will likely support the recommendation feature.

MECCA Keynotes: Kevin Wall, WMG’s Cordless Label Execs

As executive producer of last summer’s Live 8 concerts, Kevin Wall managed a global text messaging campaign that resulted in 26 million SMS messages sent in a single day. As CEO of Network Live, he is taking the concert experience digital across multiple platforms.

Now, Billboard is pleased to announce, he is taking on another challenge: keynoting MECCA 2006, the Mobile Entertainment, Content, Commerce & Applications Conference.

MECCA is scheduled for April 4 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. The event is the official CTIA mobile entertainment conference as part of CTIA Wireless 2006, the mobile industry’s largest gathering of professionals.

MECCA engages more than 1,000 VIPs from the mobile, entertainment, technology and digital content industries in a full day of panel discussions, keynotes and networking opportunities.

Wall tells Billboard he plans to discuss today’s consumer. They want their content when and where they want it, live or on demand,” Wall says. “Mobile distribution is key to Network Live’s vision of offering fans the highest quality in live entertainment and providing the entertainment industry with connections to consumers worldwide.”

Another keynote slot will break down the deal signed recently between recording trio Maven and Warner Music Group’s new digital-only Cordless Recordings label.

On hand will be Maven singer Bon Harris, former frontman for Nitzer Ebb, and Cordless president Jason Fiber and chairman Jac Holzman. Maven will also perform.

“Cordless Recordings is a new kind of record label that uses the latest digital products, formats and online and mobile technologies to discover and develop the creative voices of tomorrow in a supportive, low-risk environment,” says Fiber. “The MECCA agenda on convergence in entertainment and technology is uniquely aligned with our approach to music.”

For additional information or to register for MECCA, go to billboardevents.com.

Sales Snapshot: It Could Be Worse

The First Quarter Of 2006 Looks To Be Down, But Not Out

NEW YORK—Although album sales are up 1.6% for the first three weeks of 2006, merchants are still projecting a down first quarter for music because of a lean release schedule.

Rob Perkins, president of Marietta, Ga.-based Value Music, says he expects a “pretty challenging environment” in the coming months.

“We didn’t get the releases we need in January,” says Bryan Everett, director of music purchasing for Hastings Entertainment in Amarillo, Texas. In terms of year-to-year comparisons, “We are going up against the Game and Kenny Chesney from last January.”

Moreover, Jerry Kamiler, Trans World Entertainment’s divisional music merchandise manager, foreseeing that February will continue.

This year’s first-quarter schedule so far includes releases from Hawthorne Heights, Kid Rock, Il Divo, Matisyahu, T.I., Barry Manilow, LL Cool J and a “Curious George” soundtrack featuring music from Jack Johnson and others.

While merchants are thankful for those potential hits, they say there is not enough firepower to match last year’s first quarter, which also included titles by LeAnn Rimes, Bright Eyes, John Legend, Tina Turner, Mötley Crüe, Brian McKnight, Michael Bublé, Omarion, 50 Cent, Jennifer Lopez, Jack Johnson, the Mars Volta and the 18th volume in the “Now” series.

Merchants also blamed a soft release schedule for their weak fourth quarter. Now they are looking forward to late March and April, when things start to pick up with releases tentatively scheduled by Toby Keith, Rascal Flatts, Godsmack, Pink, Morissette, Diddy, Cam’ron and Mike Jones, a greatest-hits album with new songs from Tim McGraw.

Until then, some merchants are expecting their top 30 sellers to be down 30%-40%.

Still, things are not as bad as they seem to this point. Album sales in the week ending

Continued on >>p10
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Orchard, IODA See $ In Videos

Indie Distributors Push Paid Downloads, While Labels Remain Uncommitted

Of the 100 best-selling videos on iTunes on Jan. 24, the one at the top was from an independent label, Sub Pop, for the Postal Service's "Such Great Heights." Couple that with the mid-January news that digital indie distributors the Orchard and the Independent Online Distribution Alliance were going to start pushing videos, and it is tempting to predict a trend.

We have all heard it like a mantra, after all: The Internet will democratize the music industry. It may, still, but not quite yet. In indie-label land, executives are increasingly embracing videos. But they are being made—and their budgets assessed—as promotional efforts, and not as a dynamic new revenue stream.

Indie labels have long been cut out of mainstream video channels, with few exceptions. And it is true that the Web has provided new opportunities for exposing indie videos. Sites like Yahoo Music and MySpace have purevolume.com have given indie videos an audience.

"It's definitely starting to make more sense for us to make videos than it has for a long time," says Dean Hudson, Sub Pop's director of new media. But label executives say they do not expect revenue from video downloads—generally selling for the industry standard of $1.99 apiece—to cover the cost of shooting a video. Los Angeles-based label Suburban Noize Records (Kottonmouth Kings), for example, uses IODA to distribute content online, and is happy with the performance of its free video podcasts.

"If somebody gets something for free, it doesn't mean they're not going to be a part of your consumer base," Suburban Noize president Kevin Zinger says. "There are so many ways to make money, you don't have to worry about every single little dime. This is about exposure."

Most of Sub Pop's videos are streamed for free on MySpace, and the Postal Service clip is the label's only iTunes hit thus far. Even the success of that video is due partly to the controversy surrounding it; blogs have been abuzz for weeks regarding a recent Apple commercial that closely—too closely, many say—resembles the Postal Service video.

Erik Eberly, who does promotion/distribution for San Francisco-based Fat Wreck Chords, says videos used to promote the label's recent Fat Tour were streamed more than 10,000 times per week on MySpace. But even as videos become more integral to the label's promotion efforts, Eberly does not see bandwidth ramping up production. "Even if they sold as well as some of our top [digital] singles, it wouldn't pay much," he says.

In fact, IODA founder Kevin Anderson says it is the film industry—not the music industry—that began calling after Apple announced its video iPod. "Labels are interested," Arnold says. "But it's actually production companies that have been coming to us."

The Orchard and IODA plan to deliver film content along with music videos. For Orchard head Kevin Scholl, it is more about being early than creating a new revenue source.

"The launch of the video iPod kind of announced that this is a business that is here now," he says. "It'll take a while for penetration to get to a point where people can actually use the stuff they're buying."

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SALES (cont.)

Jan. 22 were down only 0.9%, even though that week corresponds with last year's debut of the Game.

Merchants were expecting things to be far worse for the CD business, considering all the iPods sold during the holiday season.

Digital sales have been brisk in the new year, with digital tracks selling 15 million units in the first three weeks of 2006, versus the 13.9 million scanned in the corresponding time frame last year. Digital album sales also are growing, with 1.6 million units downloaded this year, versus 679,000 at this time last year.

"That's been interesting, that so far sales aren't as horrifying as it could be," says one chain buyer who requested anonymity. "We could still use a few good releases, but it is definitely not a worst-case scenario that was anticipated, due to the iPod sales."

Retail executives say they are hoping to pick up some juice from the Grammy Awards and Valentine's Day. "The combination of the two makes for a very impactful week," Kamiller says. This year, the Grammys will be broadcast Feb. 8, six days before Valentine's Day.

But Kamiller says the industry does a "terrible" job giving merchants advance notice on the Grammy performers, leaving the stores little time to prepare.

AS for Valentine's Day, merchants predict strong sales for the likes of Manilow, ll Divo, Remo Ma, Andrea Bocelli and Heather Headley.

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INDIES BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

Indie Groups Unite For Global WIN

CANNES—Indie labels already had trade groups in most of the music industry's top territories. At this year's MIDEM conference (see story, page 6) the log- nal next step was taken: The Worldwide Independent Network was announced by members of some 20 of those groups. WIN leaders say the group will provide a single voice and structure to represent the indie community, globally.

Alison Wenham, chairman of British organization AIM and VP of European body Impala, was elected the first president of WIN. She says the group will negotiate agreements to benefit the whole indie sector with such players as Internet service providers, mobile phone operators and broadcasters. The key to the future of indies, Wenham says, is in their collective strength.

The first seed to the creation of WIN were planted a year ago at MIDEM. Martin Mills, chairman of U.K. music company Beggars Group and a principal at AIM and Impala, says WIN was not created "in reaction to JFPI or RIAA. On some issues we'll collaborate with them, and on others, we may have other views."

He says indies and majors differ, for example, on the notion of "digital rights management," or DRM. "Majors seem fixated on [digital rights management]," he says. "We have a more open view."

One hot issue on WIN's agenda is to figure out how to get video streams from such online operators as AOL and Yahoo. "We have created a worldwide one-stop shop for independents that will enable indies to act collectively," Mills says.

 Aside from AIM, AIR and U.S. indie group AAIM, WIN gathers other indie bodies from Brazil, France, Germany, Spain, Norwary, Sweden, Quebec, New Zealand, Israel, Mexico, South Africa and Canada.

Peter Gordon, international representative for AAIM, and David Vodicka, chairman of Australia's AIR, are VPs of WIN. As for term, their term will be for two years; thereafter, WIN leaders will serve for one year.

"The opportunity to represent the independent community on a worldwide basis," Wenham says, "is daunting and very challenging."
New Gov’t In Canada
Biz Hopes Conservative Party Will Overhaul Copyright Laws

TORONTO—Canadian voters put an end to 12 years of Liberal party rule on Jan. 22. Now the music industry here hopes the newly elected Conservative party will overhaul the country’s outdated copyright laws.

Canada’s music industry has long been frustrated by the Liberal government’s failure to ratify two World Intellectual Property Organization treaties signed in 1997. The Performances and Phonogram Treaty and the Copyright Treaty deal with copyright protection in the digital age.

Copyright protection has been a controversial issue in Canada. As in other countries, the issue breaks down along party lines and more along the lines of allegiances to copyright holders or technology and consumer advocacy groups.

Artists are often caught having to balance their own financial interests with the interests of their fans and their record label. “It’s unfortunate there has been a long delay in dealing with copyright in this country,” says Bev Oda, a Conservative and former broadcaster likely to be the new Minister of Heritage. Oda has served on the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. “We will work on behalf of the creators to make sure we have all the protections we can, but make sure there is a balance for the users.”

Bill C-60, a controversial Liberal government initiative to protect online intellectual property through amendments to the Copyright Act, did not pass before the election was called, ending the last parliament. New legislation would have to be drafted and introduced by the Conservatives.

“I feel very confident that copyright reform fits with the Conservative agenda,” says Graham Henderson, president of the Canadian Recording Industry Assn. “Copyright reform has always enjoyed all-parties support. But with such a fragile majority [for the Conservatives], anything can happen.”

The final tally in the House of Commons for the Conservatives under leader Stephen Harper was 122 seats. The Liberals won 105 seats, 50 seats went to the Quebec-based Bloc Quebecois, and the New Democrats totaled 30 seats. A single independent was also elected.

Bill C-60 was part of one of the more interesting—and music industry-related—subplots to the election.

Liberal MP Sam Bulte was defeated following a campaign in which her close connections to the copyright industries had mainstream newspapers and popular bloggers raising ethical questions.

Bulte had served as parliamentary secretary to outgoing Heritage Minister Liza Frulla and was involved in the creation of C-60. Critics, opponents and—to great effect—the blogosphere objected to a Jan. 19 fund-raiser that was sponsored by key copyright industry leaders, including music, software, publishing, TV and movie executives. The CRIA’s Henderson was one of the event’s organizers.

The controversy hit the pages of mainstream Canadian publications including Macleans, the Toronto Star and the (Toronto) Globe & Mail, and Bulte’s opponent, NDP candidate Peggy Nash, seized on the issue. During a national election that many analysts said was driven by ethical concerns in response to recent Liberal party scandals, Bulte lost a close race.

One effect of the controversy was to promote high-profile discussion of copyright issues that are generally left to industry executives and lawyers. In addition to rampant blog rants on the matter, top Canadian musicians, including Barenaked Ladies and Matthew Good, weighed in on the matter via their Web sites.

“I’ve said to friends, ‘We can’t expect to tell our fans, ‘See you in court,’ and then, ‘See you at Massey Hall next fall.’” Barenaked Ladies singer/guitarist Steve Page wrote in a Web posting referring to aspects of C-60 that would have further criminalized file sharing. “We have to choose one, and I choose the latter.”

In his posting, Page, a known NDP supporter, objected to Bulte’s fund-raiser and her positions on copyright, and exhorted fans to vote her out of office.

“C-60 did not look forward to the new frontiers, but only helped industry maintain their business model, which is not the responsibility of the Heritage Ministry,” Page wrote. “The labels aren’t the enemy; they’re often run by people who love music and are passionate about the promotion of Canadian culture, but their responsibility is not to the Canadian people, but to their parent companies’ shareholders.”

Additional reporting by Brian Garrity in New York.
Canada’s On The Beam
Sirius, XM Launch Up North, Exposing Acts To U.S. Audiences

TORONTO—Canadian picks and plays on the country’s new satellite-based subscription radio services are also getting much-coveted U.S. exposure.

Sirius Canada launched Dec. 1, with XM Canada following Dec. 12.


Its package includes 10 Canadian-produced channels, with four of them dedicated to music: English-language Iceberg Radio and CBC Radio 3 and French-language Rock Velours and Energie 2. The music channels are all available to Sirius subscribers in the United States.

XM Canada is operated by publicly traded Canadian Satellite Radio Holdings with a minority stake held by Houston, Texas-based XM Satellite Radio Holdings. Its $12.99 Canadian ($11.14) monthly package contains 80 channels, eight of them Canadian-produced.

All of its Canadian channels can be heard on XM’s U.S. service. They include three music strands: the English-language outlet Unsigned and French-language Air Musique and Sun Route.

"XM and Sirius are being aggressive in seeking domestic content," says Derrick Ross, EMI Music Canada VP of national promotion and media relations.

Among the acts being heard on XM’s triple A-based Unsigned are alternative acts Broken Social Scene (Arts & Crafts), the Novaks (Sonic), Metric (East Gang) and Luke Doucet (Six Shooter). Sirius’ triple A-Americana-styled Iceberg has been playing roots-based Blackie & the Rodeo Kings and singer/songwriters Peart (Arts & Crafts) and Colin Linden (True North).

"XM Canada has really gotten behind the Novaks, and, to a lesser extent, Luke Doucet," Warner Music Canada VP of radio promotion Steve Cosad says. "These are acts on labels we distribute that we were struggling to get airplay on."

With Unsigned, XM Canada VP of programming Ross Davies says he is "discovering this incredible depth of music that hasn’t been played before on Canadian radio."

Sources at XM and Sirius say that subscriptions at both Canadian operations are running ahead of expectations, but the companies decline to provide details.

"In Canada, there aren’t many people listening yet," Standard Radio president Gary Slaight admits. "Most of the people listening to us are in the U.S. The big benefit right now for Canadian acts is in the United States."

Cosad says, "I suspect the effect in the U.S. will be apparent as artists start getting hits on their Web sites from Oklahoma City or elsewhere."

But according to Iceberg program manager Liz Janik, Canadian labels are not yet taking advantage of the two satellite companies reaching over 3 million subscribers on Sirius in the U.S. and almost 6 million on XM there.

"With a few exceptions, she says, "the Canadian labels are asleep at the wheel" with servicing.

Broadcast regulator the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission granted the two satellite licenses in June 2005.

Under their license terms, the satellite providers can carry less Canadian content than commercial radio over-all, but must offer at least eight Canadian-produced channels with 85% Canadian programming. They can also have a maximum of nine U.S.-based channels for each Canadian channel.

That ruling looks likely to be a central topic at hearings during the review of commercial radio slated to start May 15 in Ottawa. The Canadian Assn. of Broadcasters has said it will push for modifying Canadian content quotas at the review.

"Heading into the review of radio, we’re very concerned how the satellite decision will have an impact on Canadian content levels," says Cori Ferguson, executive director of the Canadian Independent Record Production Assn.

Sources say that media spillover from Howard Stern’s launch on Sirius in the United States has increased awareness of the satellite broadcaster in Canada.

However, Sirius Canada does not carry Stern, and it seems unlikely he will be heard in Canada anytime soon.

Under the satellite licenses, XM Canada and Sirius Canada’s programming falls under CRTC radio regulations dealing with abusive comment. Both services also have to abide by the standards and codes of the Broadcast Standards Council.

"If there was complaint over Stern, and the Broadcast Standards Council found the programming in contravention to their codes, Sirius would have a big headache," one source notes.

"I don’t think it would be a problem," Slaight counters. "People have to pay for service and can opt out of a channel. We’re still evaluating the channel lineup and how Howard is doing in the U.S."

Industry Calls For Anti-Piracy Support From ISPs

LONDON—Amid the growth in legitimate digital sales, the global music industry promises to intensify its anti-piracy activities this year and is pushing Internet service providers to cooperate in the battle.

In its Digital Music Report 2006, industry body the IFPI reveals that consumers worldwide downloaded an estimated 420 million tracks from legitimate services in 2005, a twentyfold increase compared with the previous year.

In the United States alone, single-track downloads doubled to 353 million, according to Nielsen SoundScan, while album downloads rose to 16 million—nearly 3% of the total U.S. album market.

In Europe, the United Kingdom led the way with 26 million single-track downloads, followed by Germany (21 million) and France (15 million).

In the report, IFPI chairman/CEO John Kennedy describes digital music as being at "a pivotal moment at the start of 2006," with more consumers downloading more legitimate tracks than ever. At the same time, Internet file sharing remains a threat, and he calls upon all industry partners to show support for anti-piracy efforts, especially ISPs.

"Internet service providers are becoming the new retailers and distributors of the digital market," Kennedy says. "They are making revenues from digital music, but not taking enough responsibility for protecting our copyrights."

Kennedy says the industry will step up its discussions with the ISPs about stemming online copyright infringement.

The labels believe the ISPs could be more aggressive in blocking illegal access to music. Among other steps, the industry is urging ISPs to monitor and report illegal usage.

"In the physical world, respectable music store or distributor would stock pirated product on its shelves or allow piracy to take place in a corner of its shop," Kennedy says.

Mark Mulligan, research director at U.K.-based Jupiter Research, agrees that ISPs "have the ability to block much of the illegal stuff." He argues that ISPs "should have been the first port of call" before the music industry began its legal campaign against file sharers.

Suing consumers remains a sensitive public issue, Mulligan says. "It’s going to get harder to chase individuals, who are growing resentful at the litigation tactics, so [the music industry] needs to chase the ISPs."

The Brussels-based European Digital Media Assn. says there is not much more its ISP members—including the European arms of AOL, Yahoo and Tiscali—can do.

"If there is a request for information from a rights holder, the ISP does its best to provide answers," EDIMA executive director Lucy Cronin says. "But how can the ISP be the main policeman for this activity and not be compensated for the large number of man hours spent on it?"

Mulligan also warns that illegal file-sharing applications are being developed to replace Kazaa and Grokster that not even the software developers, let alone the music industry, will know how to stop.
PARIS — The industry here is anxiously awaiting the fate of proposed legislation that would introduce a blanket license for consumers accessing online content.

Legal download services in France claim such a move could destroy the country’s fledgling online music business.

The measure would make it illegal for Internet users to download copyrighted material for private use, including music from peer-to-peer networks. Consumers would pay their Internet service provider a monthly license fee, which sources say would be around 6 euros ($7.27). The ISPs would turn compensate rights owners.

The proposal came as an amendment to the forthcoming Digital Copyright bill, which is due to be debated in Parliament in February. The amendment was added after a December vote in Parliament during a session attended by only 58 of the body’s 577 members (billboard.biz, Dec. 22, 2005).

The government subsequently withdrew the bill and in mid-January announced it would introduce a new draft in February. Although the blanket license amendment is not included in the new draft, it still can be reintroduced.

Such a license “would mean the end of VirginMega and all the other French download platforms,” VirginMega managing director Laurent Fiscal says. “You can’t compare [a la carte] pricing with a levy. These two models cannot exist together.”

Online music portal virginmega.fr is a division of Virgin Megastore France, which is part of retail and media company Lagardère Group.

“If by paying six euros you can have either six songs from a legal online store or as many titles as you want on P2P networks, the preference for P2P will be massive,” says Denis Olivennes, CEO of France’s market-leading music merchant Fnac. “It is hard to see a future for legal downloads—

FnacMusic’s catalog is smaller, with 550,000 titles. Managing director François Mombouisse says the company is working on an unlimited subscription service, although a launch schedule has not yet been set.

Meanwhile, VirginMega, FnacMusic and the French arm of content aggregator LoudEye/O2 are also working on mobile music services.

Telecommunications giant France Telecom already has music services available to its Wanadoo and Orange subscribers. The services were built by French mobile company Musiwave.

“Mobile is becoming very important for digital sales” in France, Musiwave CEO Nicolas Pelletier says. “Building bridges between mobile and Internet will help grow the overall activity.”

‘It is hard to see a future for legal downloads if there are virtually free legal alternatives.’

—DENIS OLIVENNES, FNAC
Ministers of culture from seven European Union countries attended the third European Border Breakers Awards Jan. 22 at the MIDEM trade show in Cannes.

The awards recognize European artists whose debut albums have had sales success outside of their country of origin, based on data from Billboard Information Group.

The winners were KT Tunstall (“Eye to the Telescope,” Relentless/EMI, United Kingdom), Juli (“Est Est Juli,” Universal, Germany), Husch (“A Lifetime,” Universal, Denmark), Amel Ben (“Un Jour D’Ete,” Jive/Sony BMG, France), Bebe (“Paufuera Telaranas,” Virgin, Spain), Arash (“Boro Boro,” WEA, Sweden), Sarah Bettens (“Scream,” Flow, Belgium) and Hal (“Hal”), Rough Trade, Ireland.

The European Commission organizes the awards in collaboration with the European trade bodies. Winners qualify for up to 12,000 euros ($14,500) in EU cofinancing of a European tour that must include at least four member states.

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John Varvatos, the man behind the award-winning clothing brand, is always looking for artists with “real” rock roots. These are artists, he explains, who have made an impact—and will do so for years to come.

He counts Chris Cornell as one such artist. Varvatos selected the Audioslave frontman (formally of Soundgarden) to be the face of the brand’s spring 2006 ad campaign.

Created by New York agency Yard, with photography by music documentarian Danny Clinch, the campaign captures Cornell in such New York locations as Greenwich Village and Central Park.

In the photos, nothing appears out of place—not the clothes and not Cornell. And that is the Varvatos way.

The goal is to capture artists wearing clothes they would normally wear. “It’s not like we’re styling them up in a traditional ad campaign way,” Varvatos VP of marketing Donna Faircloth says. “It’s more like we’re tagging along as they live their life.” In other words, she says, “we’re simply capturing a moment.”

The Cornell campaign runs for six months and includes print, Internet and outdoor advertising. Though Cornell is identified in the campaign, his hand affiliation is not.

“You either know who it is or you don’t,” Faircloth says. It was the same scenario when Joe Perry and Ryan Adams appeared in Varvatos’ fall 2005 and spring 2005 campaigns, respectively.

To get the job done, Varvatos and Faircloth work closely with Yard creative director Stephen Niedzwicki and creative agency/casting service Starworks.

Niedzwicki acknowledges that Cornell’s deal included a “financial element.” But he adds, the Varvatos brand “doesn’t have massive budgets to pay talent.” Said another way, in lieu of a high fee, Cornell’s cool quotient may be ratcheted up a notch or two.

And who knows. Cornell’s Varvatos association may help sell a few more copies of Audioslave’s latest Epic/
FRENCH LESSON: France is an especially attractive place for songwriters who are hesitant to assign their copyrights to publishers for fear that the companies may not continue to promote them in the future. A little-known French law essentially requires a publisher who owns a composer's copyrights to promote those compositions to the best of that publisher's ability. If the publisher cannot produce evidence of promoting the songs, the writer can force the publisher, through a court, to return the copyrights.

Under this French law, an indie publisher is not expected to spend the same amount of time and money as a major publisher, but some reasonable promotion must be done. As a result, many indie publishers in France set up nonrecoupable promotion budgets for songwriters who might never be offered a promotion budget by publishers in other countries.

French business and legal experts tell Billboard that the law is not used very often. Sometimes dissatisfied songwriters do not want to ruffle feathers—afraid that if they make a claim, other publishers would refuse to sign them—or they are simply unaware of the law.

THE HOMEFRONT: The National Music Publishers' Assn. has named Jacqueline Charlesworth senior VP/general counsel. She will remain in New York and report to NMPA president/CEO David Israelite. Charlesworth had been senior VP/general counsel for the Harry Fox Agency.

HFA's Michael Simon will add Charlesworth's former HFA duties to his current responsibilities for licensing, strategic development and marketing. His new title is senior VP of business affairs/general counsel and chief strategic officer. He will report to president/CEO Gary Churgin.

Interscope disc, "Out of Exile," which debuted in June 2005 at No. 1 on The Billboard 200. The CD has sold 984,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Hardcore Audioslave enthusiasts may simply shrug their shoulders and wonder what their man is doing in a fashion campaign. Soundgarden fans may view the campaign as a sellout. Either way, the campaign's stylish sensibility cannot be denied.

Fashionistas, take note: Vavasos will present his fall 2006 collection Feb. 3 during Olympus Fashion Week at Bryant Park in New York. See you there.

HEADLOCK: Peter Gabriel's "Big Time" is receiving much play on several World Wrestling Entertainment platforms. Yep, nearly 20 years after the song went top 10 on The Billboard Hot 100, it has become the official theme of WWE's upcoming "WrestleMania 22."

The song is heard in "WrestleMania 22" spots on TV and online. The ads began airing earlier this month and will continue through April 2, when "WrestleMania 22" touches down in Chicago.

WWE fans logging on to wwe.com shows/wrestlemania are able to stream "Big Time" — the song and its accompanying video.

The site sells Gabriel's best-of CD ("Hit") and DVD ("Play") collections. This is the type of smart cross-promotional effort that is poised to drive sales to both.

By the way, "WrestleMania 22" is already sold out. Those without tickets will have to settle for the next best thing: pay-per-view.

INTERVIEW: It's been a while since you heard the theme song of "WrestleMania 22" — the back of your head has it playing. How is it that music and wrestling intersect so well?

GABRIEL: If you can pack a lot of excitement into an arena, it's something that's happening. . . . In a way, that's the kind of thing I was trying to do with my music. . . .

BILLBOARD: How does it feel to see your music associated with the biggest wrestling event in the United States?

GABRIEL: As a songwriter, it makes me feel like I'm doing my job. . . . I hope people will be listening to the album, rather than the song. . . .

BILLBOARD: What can you tell us about the release of "Big Time" as a ringtone? How was it different from releasing a song on the regular market?

GABRIEL: It was different because I'm a little bit more involved with the way the music is used. . . . I've also been asked to do the theme for "The Young and the Restless," so I thought it would be great to have a theme that would appeal to a more general audience.

BILLBOARD: The song "Big Time" has a killer bassline. Can you tell us who played it?

GABRIEL: The bassline is very classic. . . . I think that's one of the things that makes it so popular — the fact that it's a simple melody. . . .
Internet Protocol Coming To The Tube

TV viewers in select areas of the country are experiencing what is expected to be the next evolution of digital entertainment: IPTV. Short for Internet protocol TV, IPTV is one of many efforts to bring Web-like interactivity to home entertainment centers.

IPTV subscribers can view and record several programs simultaneously, access detailed program information like sports statistics, send and receive instant messages and order a broad array of on-demand movies. What separates IPTV from broadcast technology is its two-way nature: Viewers actively request IPTV content.

IPTV networks keep programming on centralized servers and deliver only the video and audio channels requested and ordered by the user, which means that no content is transmitted to the viewer unless requested. This makes IPTV particularly attractive for providers looking for ways to deliver video and video-on-demand programming to a broad audience. It also allows providers to deliver more targeted content to individual viewers, which can be used for marketing and advertising purposes.

This isn't blue sky speculation. We're actually doing something with this. It's top of mind with everybody.

—TED COHEN, EMI MUSIC

Such TVOIP upstarts as Brightcove and Aeon Digital (see story, below), and existing portals like Yahoo and Google, will compete with IPTV services by offering the same programming and functionality, but made available over the open Internet.

This makes available a wider variety of content—not just the limited programs offered inside a walled garden, all of which can be aggregated into a customized home page on the TV, similar to TiVo's "Now Playing" guide.

This has the music industry equally excited, as long as its content will be protected and monetized, major content companies, including record labels, do not seem to care which formats win. Since IPTV and TVOIP use the Internet protocol, music labels and others in the entertainment industry can easily contribute content to both.

EMI's Cohen says: "It basically frees up how you deliver content to a consumer, no matter where they are."

Sony BMG late last year licensed its catalog to an Australian Web-based TV show called Crank TV. Other such upstarts are expected to emerge and compete with the established networks once viewers can access them from their TV and not just their PC. "It puts the consumer in control and gives the content owner the ability to create their own channel to the consumer," Cohen says. "This is the opportunity to reach the consumer directly and not be constrained by gatekeepers, whether it's satellite or cable."

BITS & BRIEFS

ITUNES UP

According to Nielsen/NetRatings, traffic at Apple Computer's iTunes Music Store skyrocketed 241% during the last year, from 61.1 million unique visitors in December 2004 to 20.7 million in December 2005. That is nearly 14% of the active Internet population.

VIDEOGAMES CALLING

Namco Networks has introduced its latest series of ring tones based on videogame soundtracks. The new ring tones include sounds from such games as "Tekken," "Ace Combat," "Time Crisis" and the "Katamari" series. They join ringtones created from such classics as "Pac-Man," "Ms. Pac-Man," "Galaga" and "Sonic the Hedgehog."

DMA RULES

The Direct Marketing Assn. has issued new guidelines concerning software. Members must now note when any marketing-related software will be installed on users' computers—such as when joining a service or loading an application—and give users a simple way to opt out. The guidelines also state that member software may not deceptively modify or disable security or browser settings, or prevent users' efforts to disable or uninstall such software.
The Indies
TODD MARTENS tmartens@billboard.com

Caroline Is Back In The Best Buy Pipeline

As Best Buy's importance to indie labels continues to grow, it has also caused the independent community some headaches. The retailer's recent switch in purchasing systems profoundly affected at least one independent distributor.

About two months ago, word hit the Internet that New York-based Caroline Distribution was no longer selling direct to Best Buy. Sources close to both companies said that the move was temporary, but it took the distributor a good three or four days to calm the worries of its labels.

By the end of this month, Caroline will be back to direct with Best Buy. Sources familiar with the situation say distributors had to make minor changes, such as the way boxes are labeled, to conform to the retailer's new system. Best Buy ensured major labels were in compliance first, sources say, but when the retailer encountered a few snags during the conversion, the indies—in this case Caroline—had to get in line.

On a positive note, sources say Caroline is back with Best Buy almost two months ahead of schedule, and the distributor is said to be absorbing any new fees the retailer has added. Best Buy did not return a call for comment by press time.

In other good news, Caroline has extended its agreement with Los Angeles-based Century Media. One of Caroline's top labels, the hard rock imprint will issue a new album from Lacuna Coil, "Karmacode," April 4. The band's last album, "Comalies," has sold 228,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Caroline distributes ESL.

Some high-profile gigs should increase the act's profile. Hilton says the duo will perform with the Flaming Lips in July at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and adds that an appearance at Lollapalooza in Chicago will follow.


Fundamental was previously with Haw River, N.C.-based Red Eye Distribution.

Burnside has also struck a deal with Toronto-based Six Shooter Records, which is distributed by WEA in its native country. In Canada, the label has released albums from the likes of folk/rock act Elliott Brood and country singer/songwriter Luke Doucet.

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How Musicland’s Chapter 11 Might Shake Out

The big news so far this year is Musicland’s Chapter 11 filing—quite possibly vying with Valley Media’s 2001 liquidation as the largest in the history of the music industry.

Retail Track has been inundated with phone calls from independents, wanting to know how Musicland’s Chapter 11 will wind up.

While I have covered many a Chapter 11 filing—and they all go through the same motions—one each seems to take on its own rhythm. But I am willing to take a swipe at how this Chapter 11 will play out.

Most unsecured pre-petition creditors are wondering whether they will get any payout from the money owed them, and the writing on the wall indicates they will be lucky if they get pennies on the dollar. While the banks are good to go, the secondary secured trade creditors are hoping to get 50 cents on the dollar, which leaves the unsecured creditors on the outside looking in.

What the majors will get depends on whether the bankruptcy judge approves 546-h petitions.

Formerly known as a 546-g before the bankruptcy laws were rewritten last year, a 546-h is a clause in the bankruptcy code that allows certain vendors—chosen by the bankrupt company—to take back returns. Those returns are subtracted from the pre-petition amount a vendor is owed. In exchange, the vendors agree to supply post-petition credit equal to anywhere from 50% to 100% of the returned product. If the judge approves such petitions, the secured creditors very likely will see the upside of 50 cents on the dollar.

While the secured vendors pursue that option, the main strategy for the unsecured to score a payout is their potential nuisance value to the proceedings. More on this later.

In court documents, Musicland has said it is following the two-track approach, with the chain up for sale, even as management prepares for a stand-alone reorganization. But the reality is that the bankruptcy proceedings are being fast tracked to wind up with a sale of Musicland assets.

A stand-alone plan would be a worst-case scenario as far as the secured creditors are concerned. That is because it does not promise a payout and leaves them in the position of supporting Musicland once again, something that just ain’t going to happen, if I am reading those vendors correctly.

So if it is a sale, who is buying? And what are they buying?

The chain has 801 stores, with 284 of them slated for a going-out-of-business sale beginning Feb. 1. That leaves 517 stores. But sources say that a more realistic final count is in the range of 390-400 stores.

The obvious suitor to buy some stores is Trans World Entertainment, even if it already passed once on Musicland in 2003 when Best Buy tried to dump the chain. But back then such a deal would have left Trans World with the task of cleaning up Musicland’s bad real estate, something that this Chapter 11 takes care of nicely.

So bid Trans World will—that is my prediction. Ever since the day in 1997 when the major vendors chose to back a Camelot Music stand-alone reorganization plan over a Trans World breakout of that chain, my favorite moment each year at the annual Trans World vendor dinner at the Rainbow Room comes when chairman/CEO Bob Higgins reminds suppliers of his vow to be “the industry’s [store] consolidator.”

Also, don’t forget, Trans World spent most of the ’90s going toe-to-toe with Musicland, so buying its logos and some of its stores may be too hard for Higgins to resist, especially since he will basically cream the chain’s best stores.

While Higgins is the most likely bidder, some suggest that Musicland management has also reached out to Jack Eggert, the former Musicland chairman/CEO who sold the company to Best Buy. But that scenario is viewed as a long shot.

Others suggest that one of the video rental chains like Blockbuster may be interested in Suncoast, but I am pretty sure it has been offered to the Dallas-based chain in the past, and they did not bite. And that was when Blockbuster was in a stronger position than it is now.

It is unlikely anyone else would bid on Musicland because, in case you have not been reading the mainstream press, record stores are over. So where does that leave the unsecured? It all comes back to the nuisance factor.

Sure, the secured trade creditors will argue that they should get all funds that come from store sales because the main value in those stores is the inventory. The unsecured will argue that the chain’s leases are the valuable component because, after all, the stores being sold are the best ones. That could be good for, say, 10 cents on the dollar. Whatever is left will be liquidated, with the inventory proceeds going to secured trade creditors and the proceeds from the leases, fixtures and other assets being put into a pool for the unsecured, leaving pennies on the dollar.

But don’t forget the lawyers, liquidators and consultants all need to get paid. So it is anyone’s guess as to what will be left in the pool for the unsecured.

No Theater? No Problem; Direct-To-DVD Takes Off

Declining Movie Sales, New Home Theaters Fuel Trend

LOS ANGELES—Sexual innuendo involving clarinets may not be your cup of tea, but the “American Pie” series of films has resonated with consumers to the tune of more than $351 million in receipts.

No surprise, then, that the latest offering of the franchise, “American Pie Presents Band Camp,” was a hit. What is interesting is that it did not happen in the theaters.

Universal Studios Home Entertainment opted to release the film Dec. 26 as a direct-to-DVD title, and it moved more than 1 million units in its first week of sales.

This direct-to-DVD release strategy is catching on with the major studios, as titles garner notable sales without the need for big theatrical budgets.

“There is an increasing desire for these products,” says Tom Siegrist, VP of production for Fox Home Entertainment Productions. “I’m seeing each new DVD premiere outdo itself.”

The studios contacted by Billboard did not provide specific sales figures on their recent direct-to-DVD releases, though they do say that sales are strong for the category.

Recent direct-to-DVD successes include Universal’s “Carlito’s Way—Rise to Power” and “Bring It On Again” and Twentieth Century Fox home Entertainment’s “The Sandlot 2.”

While theatrical DVDs can sell more than three times the first week total of “Band Camp”—Universal’s “The 40-Year-Old Virgin” sold 3.7 million in its first week on sale in December—a million units is quite a feat for a title without the strick release.

Many studios have had home video divisions to produce direct-to-DVD titles for years, but executives contacted by Billboard say that greenlighting new projects is becoming easier as movie attendance declines.
Joel Plants Record Run At The Garden

Piano Man’s Solo Trek Highlighted By 11 Sellouts At Hometown Venue

By RAY WADDELL

Billy Joel has returned to the concert stage in explosive fashion, highlighted by an historic run at New York’s famed Madison Square Garden.

As of Jan. 21, Joel has sold out 11 Garden shows, breaking the record of 10 set by Bruce Springsteen in 2000. Joel’s run of shows begins Jan. 23 and now it looks like the Piano Man will add a 12th show to the stand.

Artists Group International president Dennis Arfa has been Joel’s agent for 30 years and knew demand would be high for the artist’s first solo tour since 1998. But this high?

“We’re always cautious when we begin and we’re humbled by our success,” Arfa says. “You never think about breaking Babe Ruth’s home run record until you get to that point where it’s within reach, then all of a sudden you say, ‘Wow, we’re Hank Aaron here.’”

Joel’s tour will have an in-the-round stage setting. With a 19,000 capacity in the Garden, the total attendance for 11 shows will be approximately 209,000 and the total gross could be north of $17 million. Even without a 12th show that would take the gross close to $20 million, it is likely Joel’s Garden run will be the top boxscore of 2006.

Arfa points out there was only a limited presale for Garden and New York Yankees season-ticket holders. “This is the public,” he stresses. “This is not about American Express [and] buying a ticket if you’re a card member. This is the good old on-sale Saturday, everybody gets an equal shot, as best as we can do in the environment.”

Ticket prices for the New York shows top out at $85.50. “We’re trying to make it affordable for the guy who works in the plant,” Arfa says, “not just the guy who owns it.”

This is not for Joel box office holders in New York. “Billy in New York is always special,” Arfa says of Joel, who grew up in and has lived most of his life in suburban Long Island. “He played nine Nassau [Long Island] Coliseum shows in 1998. We’ve done two Yankee Stadiums and two Giant Stadiums on the same tour.”

The Joel Garden dates, promoted by Live Nation, are Jan. 23, 26; Feb. 2, 9, 11, 16, 25, 27; March 2, 4; April 19; and a 12th date to be determined.

“It’s pretty crazy,” says Jim Glancy, president of Live Nation’s New York operation. “And it’s even more extraordinary when you realize we’re selling 140. It’s not often in New York you can say something is unprecedented, and to be pushing a dozen shows is just fantastic.”

Glancy says the shows are priced right and the on-sales were strategically planned. “Dennis and Billy concocted a creative way of setting all the thing together and devise a game plan,” Arfa says. “We knew we wanted to play in the winter months, and in New York and some of the cities he hadn’t played since 1998. We knew [we would play] the Northeast, Florida and some dates in the West.”

The tour began Jan. 7 in Sunrise, Fla., and is selling out everywhere, including five shows in Philadelphia, three in Boston and four in Hartford, Conn. “Who does four Hartford shows?” Arfa asks.

Joel has also booked a March 25 date at the 50,000-seat Carrier Dome in Syracuse, N.Y., which has not hosted a concert since Joel played there with Elton John in 2001. Tickets for AEG Live, promoter of the Syracuse show. “Billy Joel has a very special relationship with the people of upstate New York, and they consider him a hometown boy in Syracuse.”

Joel’s last solo tour grossed $47 million from 64 shows that drew 1.1 million people, according to Billboard Boxscore. Since then, Joel’s tours with John have made them the most lucrative co-headlining duo of all time. John and Joel last toured together in 2003. The tour was expected to gross $46 million from just 24 dates.

Despite the consistently high numbers, Arfa muses, “The industry always seems surprised at Billy’s success, and I’m surprised when they’re surprised . . . Billy’s one of those great icons, up there with Springsteen, Buffett, U2, Rolling Stones, Elton John. There’s a group and he’s one of them.”

The tour wraps April 14 in Washington, D.C. Asked if there will be more dates to come, Arfa replies, “We’re talking about it. Certainly, Billy is having a good time.”

‘We’re always cautious when we begin and we’re humbled by our success.’

—DENNIS ARFA, ARTISTS GROUP INTERNATIONAL

The straight-to-DVD film American Pie Presents Bend Camp sold 3 million plus copies in its first week.

“People’s lifestyles are just different today,” says Kevin Kasha, senior VP of acquisitions and programming for New Line Home Entertainment. “There’s just not enough time in the day to get out to the theater. These titles are great because they offer audiences more choices.”

Studio executives are also betting that as the home theater experience improves, consumers will be even more motivated to rent and buy DVD-only releases.

“The line between watching movies in theaters and in the comfort of your home is becoming very blurry these days with big-screen TVs and the upcoming high-def DVDs,” Kasha says. “As these technologies make their way into the living room, that is great for these DVDs.”

The Consumer Electronics Assn. predicts that high-definition digital TVs will outsell analog sets by 85% by year’s end, and that consumers will spend $23 billion on HD TVs. According to the CEA, 85% of the 12 million digital TVs shipped last year were HD sets.

Retailers expect to enjoy continued sales of the category as long as upcoming releases are chosen with care. Bob Belt, DVD product manager for the Los Angeles-based Virgin Megastores chain, says the “Carroll’s Way” and “American Pie” direct-to-DVD sequels have been big sellers, and calls the genre “a great idea.”

Just because a studio isn’t planning to keep making theatrical releases, there’s no reason they can’t continue to develop new product for the DVD market if they’ve got a viable franchise,” Belt notes. Belt adds that the key to success is proper marketing and promotion, given the lack of a theatrical campaign.

“They can’t just be dumped on the market,” Belt says. “There needs to be advertising to make sure the consumer is aware that there’s a new movie in the franchise.”

Sometimes, that promotion comes in the theater. New Line, for example, just started production in Vancouver for the direct-to-DVD sequel “The Butterfly Effect 2.” The DVD is expected in the fourth quarter, and may get theatrical exposure as a prerelease marketing tool.

Studies are also crafting direct-to-DVD marketing campaigns targeting highly specific audiences. Fox’s Siegist notes that for “The Sandlot 2,” “we did a lot on ESPN. For ‘Dr. Dolittle 3,’ we’ll do a lot of kid print and family media.”

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Billed as the “world’s premier touring belly dance troupe,” the Bellydance Superstars have just begun a 45-city North American tour. The project is the brainchild of Miles Copeland, whose Copeland Group manages the act.

He says that after 300 shows in 16 countries during the past two years, the Bellydance Superstars have developed to where they are primarily booked into performing arts centers and theaters, along with the occasional large club like the Park West in Chicago and the Birchmere in Washington, D.C.

“We try to keep the theaters under 2,000 seats to allow all the audience to see the dancing,” Copeland says. “Beyond that, we need big screens.”

Copeland says that in the early days of the troupe, few promoters were interested. “Now, out of our 45 shows on the upcoming U.S. tour, 50% are promoted with guarantees or co-promoters,” he says. “The balance are halls hired and promoted by us.”

The cost to talent buyers for the Bellydance Superstars ranges from $15,000 to $20,000 for a performing arts center with 2,000 seats. “We do much of the promoting via our extensive fan base and Web presence,” Copeland says. “We also handle the ethnic market, which is in some cases significant.”

But Copeland says that for the most part audiences are non-ethnic and predominantly women, representing a cross-section of the American public.

“We try to keep tickets between $30 to $40,” he says. “We have already proved the viability of this show to an American audience, even with a small advertising budget.”

Production requirements are simple and low-cost, with 25% of the music live percussion and the balance prerecorded. “‘Riverdance’ proved that a relatively obscure music combined with visual dance style could work in a big way with audiences seeking something a bit different and visually exciting,” Copeland says. “We are very careful to use music that works to a Western ear.”

**EVERYTHING’S LOCAL:** In a recent Billboard interview, Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino confirmed that the local promoter offices would remain autonomous, though which historic names will stay active remains unclear. The names were dusted off as one of Rapino’s first moves when he came in as Clear Channel Entertainment CEO in 2004, and promoted organization, with a centralized strategy and a decentralized execution,” Rapino explains.

He says there is “no black and white” as to which names will remain active. “We have a lot of names in our portfolio—whether they’re venues or locally strong names,” he says, adding that live Nation.com would shepherd visitors to the appropriate region. “We’ll make sure that regardless of what names we continue to keep...”

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**THE BELLYDANCE SUPERSTARS:**

The Bellydance Superstars will primarily visit performing arts centers and theaters in North America.

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**Vertigo Rules:** No matter what other pundit says, U2 was far and away the top-grossing band in the world in 2005, topping its closest rival by more than $100 million. One simply cannot ignore a summer of sold-out stadiums in Europe. This is an international band on an international tour and as big as it gets.
Today’s best-known Brazilian export may well be its minister of culture, fabled songwriter/guitarist/singer Gilberto Gil. A multiple Grammy Award winner, the 63-year-old Gil—one of the founders of the tropicalia movement—holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration and has been involved in political, social and environmental causes since the launch of his recording career in the 1960s.

Most memorably, in 1969, his politically charged music led to his arrest (along with friend Caetano Veloso) by Brazil’s then-military government. Eventually, he was exiled to England. Now, Gil is inside the government as minister of culture, an appointed post he has held since 2002. He visited South Florida in January to declare the Broward Center of the Performing Arts a “Brazilian Point of Culture”—part of a global program to promote Brazilian artistry.

Still active as an artist—he tours regularly and released his last album in 2004—Gil spoke with Billboard about music and politics.

Q: What are the “points of culture”?
A: The “cultural hot spots” or “points” as we call them are part of a project called cultura vivente—live culture—concerned with bringing many, many different projects to the communities in Brazil, especially the poor communities in the outskirts.

Q: When you became minister, you said you wanted cultural houses in every Brazilian community. Is this an extension of that plan?
A: Yes. The cultural points are a slight variation of the cultural houses. We prefer to go to cultural points because they build on experiences already in place. As opposed to having to actually build from the ground up, we are using the initiatives already in place and supporting them in various ways.

Q: How is the work progressing?
A: We have over 400 points in Brazil already, so we have this entire program outside of Brazil with Brazilian communities in different countries. We are installing around 20 points worldwide. Here in the United States, we are naming points in Broward, in San Francisco and in Boston and we will start practical initiatives very soon.

Q: If you had to give some examples?
A: Like music and performing theater. We are signing an agreement with 120 different American institutions—theaters, cultural centers and galleries—and with one of the Brazilian airlines, so we are going to share the costs of the projects. In one or two months we’ll have our first performance.

Q: It is unusual to find a minister of culture who is an active artist. Do you use your stature to convince your government of the importance of art and culture?
A: This is a convincing process. It’s not just by being there. It’s a challenge. It’s a pedagogical work that we have to do, arguing and challenging and also inspiring. Being an artist, as I am, fulfills the inspiring part of the process. It’s inspirational to them, the fact that I am an artist and that I keep playing my music and I have a continuing connecting process with foreign countries by being an artist.

Q: Privacy remains a major issue for the Latin music business. Now that you are in government, do you feel enough is being done in this arena?
A: The Brazilian government has been very conscious about the problem and very active in terms of mobilizing the police force and enforcing the law. And also, discussing new industrial and commercial models, and how the new technologies affect public access to different cultural sources, including music.

Q: What policies do you advocate in terms of digital music?
A: It’s a blend of different things. I think public policies concerning software and Internet sources for providing music, or literature or whatever, have to be submitted to a more flexible process in terms of intellectual property. Not only lower prices and better access, but flexibility in terms of giving the public the possibility of some free access to some forms of cultural product.

Q: Have you done this with your music?
A: Yes. I have samples I have given for free. The thing is to move from all the rights reserved, to some rights reserved, depending on various elements. To find a balance between public domain and public interest and private interests and remuneration.

Q: Have you found time lately to work on new material?
A: After three years in the ministry, where I had practically abandoned the writing process, I resumed now. I wrote three songs during Christmas and I’m preparing a new album. I hope I can be able to work on it these next two, three months. Perhaps by the end of the year I will release an album.

Q: Your good friend and producer Tom Capone died in 2004. How hard is it to find someone to step into his shoes?
A: Someone as good as him, as committed, as close, as friendly—difficult to find. I don’t have a producer in mind yet. Maybe I’ll do it myself. Just get the musicians, get your friends together and run it myself.

Q: As an artist, you have always been socially and politically active. Do you think all artists have a social responsibility beyond their art?
A: That depends on talent, on skills, on neck [gestures toward his neck]. It has to be someone who is inclined toward that sort of thing.

I was reading an interview with Mick Jagger. He was asked if he would commit himself to a government job. And he said not the way the Brazilian minister—Gil—has done. But as an attaché. In a different way he said yes. So, I think there are different ways to approach it. Some are very close; some are not close at all.

Q: But should every artist give something back to society in some way?
A: That’s already there. By doing music, by singing, by performing, by addressing people, by communicating, by getting messages across, they are already doing that. So this kind of social responsibility by committing in terms of social projects, this is not absolutely necessary. I think that art and cultural manifestation plays a role in itself as a public service. Just by being there.

Q: What is the biggest challenge for the Brazilian music industry, and how are you trying to resolve it during your tenure?
A: The first challenge is to be able to cover the musical diversity we have in Brazil. It’s huge. Second, that we can get new business models, because the old industrial record model is passing. By giving opportunities to new groups, regional groups, to idealistic managers that come up with new ideas and that sort of thing. And third, be able to count on government sources to promote Brazilian music outside. To create an international market.

Q: Isn’t that difficult because of the language barrier?
A: It used to be more difficult in the past. After the rise of Spanish-language music and the African and the Asian forms of music internationally, I think that music in Portuguese has a chance. Especially Brazilian music, which has a blend of many countries and has an appealing element in it. I think language is not going to be such a barrier.
While Olympians like Bode Miller, Sasha Cohen and Apolo Anton Ohno go for the gold Feb. 10-26 at the XX Olympic Winter Games in Torino, Italy, an array of music acts will be going for the platinum.

Established stars including Andrea Bocelli, Bon Jovi, Whitney Houston and Lou Reed, as well as new and developing acts like Switchfoot, Flipsyde, Morningwood, the Donnas, Rock 'N Roll Soldiers, We Are Scientists and OK Go are hoping for a boost from Olympic exposure either through appearances on NBC's commercials for the event or by performing in the nightly Olympics concert series.

By using hip, under-the-radar acts, NBC hopes to connect with the much-coveted youth demo. "We're constantly trying to get the 18- to 34-year-old attachment to the Olympics," says Vince Manze, president/creative director of the network's in-house NBC Agency.

NBC uses music in four ways for the Olympics: network campaigns in advance of the Games; co-branding opportunities; features and interstitial footage broadcast during the athletic events; and the nightly concerts.

"[The Olympics are] about the thrill of victory—the emotion of the stories and the medals," Manze continues. "Music helps us to convey that emotion to viewers."

Emerging acts like Morningwood and Fighting Instinct work across a number of the network's Olympic-related platforms, says Barbara Blangiardi, NBC's VP of marketing and special projects.

In addition to TV, the spots are serviced by Premier Retail Network to national and local retailers for in-store play. Similarly, the music is streamed at nbcolympics.com and its lifestyle microsite (offthepodium.com), which was created by
Fuse Marketing.

A three-minute Chevy co-branded spot using We Are Scientists’ “Great Escape” and Junk’s “Life Is Good,” is running in NCM theaters across the United States.

As the network hopes to raise the cachet of the Winter Olympic Games and NBC among twentysomethings—Mane says the 35-54 demo is already hooked—the featured artists will be heard by millions of people in TV land.

Being associated with the Olympics can add to an act’s prestige, Atlantic chairman/CEO Craig Kallman says. In addition to the Donnas and Rock ’N Roll Soldiers, NBC is using music from Atlantic’s James Blunt and Big City Rock.

“It’s one of the highest honors when you’re talking about sports placements,” Kallman says. “And the Olympics have such national importance and significance. The music in these spots can definitely have a lot of emotion.”

Morningwood lead singer Chantal Claret agrees, although in saltier language. “At this point, getting our music out there is so important to us and it’s an honor to me,” she says. “It’s the fucking Olympics!”

Two acts, the Donnas and Cherrytree/Inter-scope act Flipsyde, can expect to score perfect 10s.

Most of the acts will be heard in the TV spots and identified, but not seen. But Flipsyde and the Donnas each appear in Joseph Lee-directed spots, up to two minutes in length, which feature them performing while surrounded by Olympians.

Flipsyde is already seeing the fruits of its Olympic exposure through its song “Someday” (Billboard, Jan. 14).

SALES GO UPHILL

“Exposure to the song is generating immediate sales,” Cherrytree head Martin Kierszenbaum says. Since the December relaunch of Flipsyde’s album, “We the People,” which coincided with the debut of the Olympic spot, the disc has sold 8,000 of its 14,000 total, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

While Kierszenbaum is eager to connect the dots between the Olympic spots (another song, “U.S. History,” is being used to a lesser extent) and radio, he is proceeding with caution. “The last thing I want is for Flipsyde to be seen as a one-dimensional band that people judge and dismiss,” Kierszenbaum says. “We’re letting the spot marinate before [a push] to radio.”

Footage of an extended video of “Someday” has been serviced to MTV and other outlets. It will air on Fuse’s “Oven Fresh” the week of Jan. 30.

The Olympics commercials also helped secure a monthlong promotion with iTunes starting Jan. 31. And at traditional retail, “We the People” is now stickered noting the Olympics connection.

“That NBC took a chance with a new band like ours means a lot to us,” Flipsyde frontman Piper says. But he sees a deeper link: “Athletes train for years on the slopes or in water—just like a band trains for years in a garage.”

The Donnas’ “Fall Behind Me,” from its appropriately titled 2004 album “Gold Medal,” is being used in a spot highlighting the female snowboarding team.

The Donnas have seen albums, but lead singer Brett Anderson says the exposure is invaluable.

But Macy feels the Olympics afterglow will continue as the label gears for airplay or for other usages.

Up next are late-night spots for another Capitol act, OK Go, and its song “Do What You Want.” Atlantic also is getting exposure for baby acts.

Blunt is heard in a high-definition spot for cable operators, while Rock ’N Roll Soldiers and Big City Rock are getting some of their first national placements.

Rock ’N Roll Soldiers’ single “Funny Little Feeling” is highlighted in a Budweiser-sponsored ad. “We were thrilled that we got this as a setup to warm the track up,” Kallman says. “The song goes to radio in late March. “I think there will still be some familiarity with it from the Olympics.”

For Big City Rock, exposure of “Touch the Horizon” plays into a campaign that does not immediately include radio. “We want to follow the Olympics spots” with live dates,” Kallman says.

Music from the cherrytree label will be heard during commercials every night of the Olympics. “We Believe,” the song for the female snowboarding team.

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Determining whose music gets identified in the commercials often comes down to dollars and cents, as well as the spot’s creative direction, according to Manze and Blandiardi.

Sometimes, it is simply wanting a cool piece of music but not having the budget for it. Blandiardi says, “The deal then calls for an ID to get a great price.”

As for the cash NBC is putting behind these promotions, Ailen Schneider, director of music supervision for NBC Universal Television, says, “People think we have the big bucks, but every project has a different budget. And music may not have the biggest budget.”

Ultimately, the Olympic Games are about the athletes. “It’s almost as if the Olympics are a nonprofit,” Schneider says. “Fortunately, musicians see athletes like they and admire and then want to participate. It’s almost like an act of good will on the artist’s part.”

MEDALS, BUT NO METAL

Acts on tap to give full concerts following each night’s medals ceremonies include Houston, Reed, Bocelli, Ricky Martin, Avril Lavigne, Ricardo Cocciante, Kelly Clarkson, Duran Duran, Anastacia and Ennio Morricone.

Among the acts that played the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City who saw at least a 25% increase in sales were John Williams, whose track Feb. 9 from Torino on NBC’s “Today.”

Reed’s manager Tom Sarig hopes to leverage his performance into additional exposure. “I’d like to find a way for this to be shown on an NBC-owned cable outlet, like Bravo,” he says. “That’s what we’re discussing right now: how we can use the footage for further exploitation.”

The Olympic Committee owns all the footage and can license it for other purposes. Sources say there are no plans for any DVDs or CDs featuring musical appearances.

Reed has a “huge following in Europe, significantly bigger than in the U.S.,” Sarig says. Therefore, playing in Italy appealed to him.

The same is true of Canadian DJ/producer and M.nus/Novamute artist Ritchie Hawtin, whose track “9:20” will be heard in the opening ceremony. Hawtin understands that electronic music remains a niche genre—particularly in the United States, so “any opportunity to bring new and interesting music to a wider audience, you have to take full advantage of it.”

He adds, “This is a great opportunity to introduce people to what I do, without compromising [myself] musically. If they enjoy it, great. If it leaves them scratching their heads, so be it.”

Additional reporting by Leila Cobo in Miami, Katy Krol in New York and Geoff Mayfield in Los Angeles.
Changes At Live Nation Have Opened The Door For Independent Promoters To Grow In Some Key Concert Markets

By Ray Waddell

Indepedent concert promoters, after years in the shadow of corporate giants, suddenly have a new opportunity to shine.

As part of its reorganization prior to spinning off from parent Clear Channel late last year, Live Nation closed other slided offices or diminished its presence in such markets as Nashville; Austin; Pittsburgh; Milwaukee; Cincinnati; Minneapolis; Virginia Beach, Va.; Kansas City Mo.; and Birmingham, Ala.

With no Live Nation talent buyer on the ground in those markets, indie promoters can jockey for a bigger share of the local business.

"If [Live Nation] is not here in Nashville or they're not in Pittsburgh and they're serving them from outside the market, they'll be booking less shows to those markets, there's no doubt about that," says Mike Smardak, president of Nashville-based Outback Concerts. "And that is creating opportunity for us, and other promoters."

Indie promoters typically focus on smaller venues and work with developing acts that are often under the radar of the national promoters. Live Nation's changes could give the local promoters greater leverage in certain markets to move with the acts as they progress to larger venues.

For its part, Live Nation minimizes the anticipated impact of its reorganization.

"We just consolidated some of our offices so we can have stronger central hubs instead of some of our fragmentation we've had," Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino says. "We have a heck of a big footprint, and we found it more efficient to book Nashville out of our Houston office, for example."

While Live Nation still operates amphitheaters in most of these markets, Rapino's restructuring split the content (Talent buying) and distribution (venues sides of the business), with Bruce Eskowitz as president of the newly formed Global Venue Management & Sponsorships group. It appears the bulk of programming for these sheds will come from regional offices and Live Nation's touring division in Los Angeles.

This shifting market dynamic is already playing out in Nashville, where Live Nation talent buyer Jason Wright recently transferred to Chicago. As part of the Live Nation reorganization, Beckye Levir was named executive VP of book-
indies based in Houston (Billboard.biz, Jan. 19). Levin's primary focus will be booking markets in Tennessee, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana.

"In our particular market it's going to be a huge difference for us," says Rick Whetsel, president of Nashville-based Great Big Shows. "But I think nationwide this will create a lot more opportunities for independents."

Pam Matthews, GM of Nashville's Ryman Auditorium, a much-respected 2,000-seater, believes Live Nation is still committed to her market. However, she says the lack of full-time personnel in Nashville could be a factor.

"The logistics of the day of the performance are what most concern me," Matthews says. Then there is the familiarity issue. "The thing about not being here is not knowing what the weather's like, not knowing what's happening on the evening news, not knowing what's hot and what's not," Matthews says. "You lose the local pulse."

Ali Harnell is a talent buyer for AEG Live's Nashville operation. She says her company will continue to be active in Nashville as well as Atlanta and other surrounding markets in Tennessee, Alabama and Florida.

"In Nashville specifically, AEG produced approximately 50% of the concerts that played the Ryman in '07 and 33% of the shows that played the (20,000-seat) Gaylord Entertainment Center," Harnell says. She says Live Nation produced about one-third of the shows at GEC, with the balance handled by a variety of promoters.

Harnell points out that she has been living in Nashville and promoting shows for more than a decade. "If I feel like I know the market as good if not better than anyone could, and therefore can do the best job for the artists we work with here," she says. "I do believe that indie promoters will have more opportunity if for no other reason than Live Nation did close several offices around the country."

Indeed, other markets are also being folded into larger Live Nation offices, and indies believe there is no substitute for being there. "The need to be heavy-handed and offer that kind of special service to the artist and to the community in which you're promoting is ultimately one of the key ingredients of successfully promoting an event," says Ashley Capps, co-president of Knoxville, Tenn.-based A.C. Entertainment and co-producer of Bonnaroo in Manchester, Tenn.

Outback's Smaradak says his company is already getting calls from agents and venues regarding markets Live Nation has exited. "We have a good relationship with a lot of the people at [Live Nation], so we're not in an adversarial position," he says. "We try to go to markets that either the acts are bringing us to or that appear to be underserved."

Likewise, Gary Weinberger, president of Red Mountain Entertainment in Birmingham and a former promoter for Live Nation's predecessor, Clear Channel Entertainment, is paying attention to these developments.

"Our business plan since we started is to promote in several markets outside of Birmingham, as well as in Birmingham," he says. "We make offers, we get some and we don't get others. At the end of the day there's enough business out there for a small company like ours to generate the types of revenues we want."

Jerry Mickelson, co-president of Chicago-based Jam Productions, says it was inevitable that promoter consolidation would lead to some local offices being shuttered and booked out of regional hubs.

"While that may help their company save overhead, it doesn't help the bands they are promoting, because they're not in the marketplace anymore," says Mickelson, who adds that Jam already has an office in Minneapolis. "We have a larger market share in Minneapolis than [Live Nation]."

**TELL YOUR STORY**

"Indies have long argued that they live and breathe their markets and sweat every show," I tell the bands they are promoting, because they're not in the marketplace any more," says Mickelson, who adds that Jam already has an office in Minneapolis. "We have a larger market share in Minneapolis than [Live Nation]."

Indie concert promoters are key to developing new hit bands. From left: Hawthorne Heights' Mitch Catlin, Death Cab for Cutie's Ben Gibbard and Franz Ferdinand's Alex Kapranos.

Indie concert promoters are key to developing new hit bands. From left: Hawthorne Heights' Mitch Catlin, Death Cab for Cutie's Ben Gibbard and Franz Ferdinand's Alex Kapranos.

**Partnerships Possible**

Live Nation's Rapino says he is "absolutely open to partnering with independents. I have always had the philosophy that I'm open to working with other promoters and partners," he says. "We did it on Coldplay [with I.M.P.'s Seth Hurwitz in Washington, D.C.,] we do it every day of the week in Europe, we worked with Gregg Perloff [of Another Plan in San Francisco] on a Depeche Mode date. Whatever's right for the artist and the market, we'll do what we can.

Austin promoter Charles Atta says he is strong in his market, with or without Live Nation's presence. "We have been doing 80% of the concert tours through Austin for the last three years," he says.

Austin is known for its live music scene, "it is still a small market and I don't think it will create any more opportunity now that [Live Nation] is gone," Atta says. "Moreover, they will still be doing events in Austin, they just won't have an office here."

In other markets, the door to growth will open wider. "I believe that Live Nation, as a stand-alone public company, will provide a great number of opportunities for independent promoters across the country," says Tom Cook, president of Rival Entertainment in Atlanta, adding that a new discipline promised by Live Nation on artist guarantees will also improve the situation.

"I think independent promoters will now be able to make their pitch that they are the best route for an act to go in a particular market, and will not merely be left on the sidelines based on the amount of guarantee," Cook says.
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BOCELLI’S UNIVERSAL LOVE SONGS

The difference between “Amore” and “Amor” is more than just a letter. The words are the two titles to Andrea Bocelli’s upcoming albums. “Amore,” the international, multilingual version, comes out Jan. 31 in the United States and Feb. 24 in much of the rest of the world. “Amor,” the all-Spanish version, will arrive in the Latin market March 22. It is not just different editions that set “Amore”/“Amor” (Sugar/Universal) apart from Bocelli’s previous albums. Thanks to strategy and sheer luck, the release of “Amore,” a collection of romantic pop standards, will coincide with Valentine’s Day and with the Winter Olympics taking place in Bocelli’s native Italy. This has opened the door for the superstar, who has sold more than 50 million albums worldwide, according to his label, to benefit from an unprecedented multimedia avalanche. In addition to love songs for the romantic holiday, Bocelli sings an Olympics theme, which he wrote with David Foster and Amy Gillies. Foster and Humberto Gatica produced the albums. Tony Renis co-produced them. Bocelli will perform the track, “Because We Believe,” at the Feb. 26 closing ceremonies of the Olympics. In the United States, Universal Music Classics will send it to AC radio Feb. 7, making this the first Bocelli song since 1997 that the label will work as a radio single. “You can’t really overlook the Valentine’s Day aspect,” Universal Classics chairman Chris Roberts says. “Every one of his previous albums, except two, were released in the fall gift season. We said, ‘Let’s have this be less about a gift and more about connecting an emotion.’ That’s the center of it and everything else floats from that.”

All of Bocelli’s...continued on >>p28

ANDREA BOCELLI, right, is accompanied on the piano by DAVID FOSTER during a December 2005 performance in Lake Las Vegas, Nev.

FACT FILE

Label: Sugar/Universal
Management: Michele Torcicolini, MT Blues, Bologna, Italy
Booking: Geb Promotions
Publishing: Sugar Srl /Almud (SIAE)
Best-selling album: “Romanza” (1997), 4 million (in the United States)
Last album: “Andrea” (2004), 787,000 (in the United States)

LATEST BUZZ

>>>ADRENALINE FADES
Audio Adrenaline is calling it quits after 15 years, citing vocal problems by lead singer Mark Stuart as a factor. The ForeFront Records band’s last album, appropriately titled “Adios,” will be out later this year. The act will wrap its last tour in 2006 as well. Stuart, Audio Adrenaline’s Will McGinnis and founding member Bob Herdman will continue to operate their label, Flicker Records.
—Deborah Evans Price

>>>’POPS’ SHOW TO U.S.
The United Kingdom’s longest-running pop music TV show, “Top of the Pops,” is coming to the United States. “Making the Band” impresario Lou Pearlman—also known for developing *N Sync and Backstreet Boys—is reportedly shopping the BBC show to major U.S. networks, including Fox and ABC, for a possible second-quarter debut. The American version will keep the title and logo of the original show, and like “Top of the Pops” in the United Kingdom, most of the performances are expected to be live.
—Jill Kipnis

>>>MESSINA TO TORINO
Radio network Westwood One has tapped Curb Records artist Jo Dee Messina as an exclusive correspondent for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Torino, Italy (see story, page 22). From Feb. 13 to Feb. 24, Messina will provide Westwood One affiliates with feature reports as a spectator at the games. More than 160 stations will air her commentary, including country radio outlets WUSN Chicago, WXTU Philadelphia, KNIX Phoenix and KUSS San Diego.
—Phyllis Stark

>>>COOL NEW LABEL
The Crabb Family has joined forces with its longtime label Daywind Music to form Clear Cool Music. It will be the first act on the new imprint. Due March 28, the Crabb family’s “Blur the Lines” will be distributed by New Day Christian Distributors, Word Distribution and WEA.
—Deborah Evans Price
Music

BOCELLI (cont.)

from p.27

Bocelli says the choice of repertoire hinged on quality and emotion. "Millions of songs have been written, and at the end of the day there are only seven notes," he observes, speaking on the phone from his home in Italy. "Why, therefore, should we insist on recording new music when it lacks true inspiration, that fundamental honesty which is the only thing that can touch people's hearts? It's much, much better to focus our attention on a repertoire which has made entire generations dream all over the world." Bocelli played many of the songs as a student performing in piano bars. "It was a very moving experience for me to revisit this extraordinary musical repertoire and relive the experience I have today and a different vocal awareness," he says. "It is with these songs that many people experienced their first love, many got engaged, married or simply spent unforgettable evenings."

Much of the repertoire also happened to be in Spanish. This prompted Gatica to propose an all-Spanish version of the album to market to the Spanish-speaking world. "I always thought a man with so beautiful a voice singing in a different timbre, softer and more romantic, brings originality and credibility to a language as romantic as Spanish," Gatica says. "Amor" does not include the Olympics theme, and, therefore, will be marketed in a different manner at a different time, which accounts for its later release.

"We wanted to convey that ["Amor"] is a very Latin album. All the songs are Latin songs, and we want the consumer to hear the album as an album that is 100% in Spanish," says Jesus Lopez, chairman of Universal Music Latin America and the IBERIAN Peninsula. Lopez is coordinating the release of songs throughout Spanish and Portuguese, where the first single will be "Bésame Mucho." In the United States, Universal Music Latino will work "Bésame Mucho" to radio and will also orchestrate a Spanish-language TV campaign.

In Latin America, a tour is being discussed for the fall. Bocelli has achieved worldwide fame. But "Amor" and "Amor!" are internationally ambitious, aimed to expand the singer's audience as well as reclaim some of the fan base he established with his previous pop albums.

In Italy, Bocelli will follow his Olympics performance with an appearance at the Sanremo Festival (which will run Feb. 27-March 4), along with the country's three other main musical exports: Eros Ramazzotti, Laura Pausini and Zucchero.

Sugar admits that Bocelli is usually so busy promoting abroad that his sales have slipped domestically since his international career took off. "But Bocelli thinks success will be natural. "This is a repertoire which doesn't feel any disadvantage from the difference in the language, as it is firmly based on the principles of the two undoubtedly universal languages, which are those of music and of love," Bocelli says. "Both of these speak directly to people's hearts, and the words used to express these simply serve as a support.""}

Additional reporting by Mark Worden in Milan.

Browns Push Their 'Boundaries'
Familial Quintet Aims For Wider Audience With New Release

Last year was a great one for a certain quintet of fresh-faced, unassuming young Utah siblings. With their self-titled debut for RCA Red Seal, the 5 Browns scored a No. 1 hit on Billboard's Top Classical Albums chart, remaining there for eight weeks. Now, the family Brown—Desi, Deondra, Gregory, Melody and Ryan—return April 4 with a new album of classical favorites arranged for piano called “No Boundaries,” which they hope will win them an even wider audience.

The release includes new versions of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, Stravinsky's The Firebird, the "going home" theme from Dvorak's Ninth Symphony and Copland's Appalachian Spring. "No Boundaries" will also be released on DualDisc, featuring arresting videos of the Browns performing outdoors at Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats.

A Wagnerian's Exit: Swedish soprano Birgit Nilsson, a singer gifted with extraordinary power and a silky wit, passed away Dec. 25, her funeral was held Jan. 11 in her hometown of Vastra Karup, Sweden. For opera lovers the world over, she defined such great Wagner roles as Isolde, Brunnhilde and Sieglinde; her performance as Brunnhilde was memorialized in the landmark first studio recording of the complete "Ring" cycle, conducted by Georg Solti and produced by John Culshaw, which Decca made between 1958 and 1965. When Nilsson retired in 1982, she returned to the southern Swedish village of her childhood, where her family had farmed for generations and where she herself had farmed until her early 20s.

Live From Wigmore Hall: Koch will be the U.S. distributor for Wigmore Hall Live, the recently launched house label for London's famed chamber music venue. Wigmore Hall Live anticipates issuing up to 10 titles per year; planned 2006 releases include performances by the Academy of Ancient Music; tenor Peter Schreier and pianist Andreas Schiff; soprano Margaret Price and pianist Geoffrey Parsons; and the Nash Ensemble.

Move Over, Music Row: Nashville may still be better-known as the epicenter of country music, but the Nashville Symphony is making a splash with its new, 1,872-seat Schermerhorn Symphony Center, set to open Sept. 9. The construction budget is $120 million, as of now, the orchestra has raised $117 million. Designed by architect David M. Schwartz, the hall is named after the symphony's late conductor, Kenneth Schermerhorn. During the past several years, the Nashville musicians have recorded a string of well-received albums for Naxos, including a disc of orchestral works by Howard Hanson and Charles Ives' Second Symphony.

Grammy News: American soprano Jessye Norman will receive a Lifetime Achievement Award this year. Her prize will be announced at a special event on Feb. 7, as well as during the Grammy Awards' televised Feb. 8 ceremony. Norman is only the fourth opera singer to be so honored. . . . The groundbreaking Kronos Quartet will be honored at the Grammy Salute to Classical Music Feb. 3. . . . This year's list of new entrants to the Grammy Hall of Fame includes one classical recording: Arthur Rubinstein's album of Chopin waltzes, recorded in 1965 for RCA Victor. . . . Finally, a correction regarding the Grammy nominations from a recent column: Naxos earned 13 noms for releases on its own label; another six came from Naxos-distributed labels.
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In U.K., The Fever Rises For Arctic Monkeys

LONDON—“I haven’t seen this sort of impact for a new band,” HMV U.K. & Ireland head of music Phil Pennman says. The comment from Britain’s leading music merchant aptly sums up the buzz surrounding Arctic Monkeys, arguably the hottest-tipped British rock band for 2006.

The Jan. 23 U.K. release of the Sheffield, England-based rock act’s album debut “Whatever People Say I Am, That’s What I’m Not” is flying off the shelves. Sales chart compiler the Official U.K. Charts Co. says that sales of the album were “in excess of 100,000 units” by mid-Jan. 24.

At press time, HMV suggested that Arctic Monkeys’ country-wide first-week sales could exceed 350,000 units, based on the chain’s own sales and OCC data. That would make it the fastest-selling debut album in U.K. chart history, ahead of reality TV show-spawned pop act HearSay’s “Popstars” (Polydor, 2001), which the OCC says sold 306,631 units in its first week.

In the space of a few months in 2005, the four 19-year-olds in Arctic Monkeys rose from being an unsigned outfit with a dedicated fan base to a U.K. singles chart-topper receiving wide-spread critical praise and attention from the mainstream press. On Jan. 11, the band earned industry recognition in the form of a Brit Award nomination.

Domino Records founder Laurence Bell confirms that pre-release shipments topped 350,000 units. That will immediately earn the band platinum certification.

The album streaked a week earlier than originally planned. Bell says, because “it was so hot that there was no point sitting on it.” He adds, “It certainly wasn’t because of Internet piracy. The success of the band already has proved that the Internet is nothing to be scared of.”

HMV’s Pennman says pre-orders for its 200 stores alone are the highest for any rock debut since Oasis’ “Definitely Maybe” in 1994. The album has logged the most pre-orders on HMV’s Web site for a debut act since the site began in 1997.

The group’s quick rise at home was built on its glowing live reputation, which swiftly spread in the north of England. The act’s buzz has risen to a roar, so much so that the Arctic Monkeys declined Billboard’s interview request. Its U.S. publicist cited fear of overexposure.

At early gigs, the band distributed CD-Rs of demos, which some supporters posted online to share as digital files. “The fans were instigating the movement of the music,” Bell says.

Although Bell calls it a “word-of-mouth” phenomenon, “word of Internet” is more appropriate. “I’m not sure there’s anything we can compare it to,” he says.

In the United States, the album will debut Feb. 21 on Domino’s American affiliate through a new deal with Alternative Distribution Alliance. Retailers in America are well-aware of the hype, but no one is ready to call the Arctic Monkeys a sure thing.

“That’s a really good record, and it has good potential,” says Terry Currier, who runs Music Millennium in Portland, Ore. “It could turn into a Bloc Party kind of sales story, but nothing is guaranteed these days. That being said, it’s a great record, and we need more great records.”

2005 newcomer Bloc Party’s “Silent Alarm” has sold 226,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Domino GM Kris Gillespie, who heads the label’s U.S. operation, says the main objective in America has been to keep the hype to a minimum. “We’ve been trying to keep a lid on it so it could play out naturally,” he says. “The road is littered with bands who were huge in the U.K. and were supposed to do well in the States.”

While Domino licensed Franz Ferdinand to Epic in the United States, the label has thus far decided to hold onto Arctic Monkeys. “It’s a case-by-case basis with what’s best for the band,” Gillespie says. “We’re still thinking about [what] we’re going to do for the States, whether or not we’d join forces with someone. Right now, we’re putting it out on [our] own, but we’re always open to ideas.”

AROUND THE WORLD

In Europe, the title is rolling out the same day as the U.K. release through a string of separate distribution deals.

Domino head of international Mirrelle Davis says the record has shipped more than 50,000 units ahead of its release in Japan, where it is worked through independent label Hostess. EMI will release the album in Australia and New Zealand in mid-February on license from Domino.

In support of the album, the band has completed promotional dates and performances in key territories, including the United States and Japan. “I think people get tired of hearing about the latest big thing from England,” and I think that’s a terrible weight for a young band to carry,” Bell says. “To come in early and play before the record [is released] is a good thing. It dispels a lot of things.”

Domino executives moved quickly to add Arctic Monkeys to the London-based indie label’s roster. Within a week of seeing the group perform in spring 2005, Bell won the intense competition to sign the band to a worldwide recording deal.

“We were pursuing them but got beaten,” says Michel Lambot, co-CEO of Brussels-based independent label group PIAS. “But all was not lost for Lambot: PIAS distributes Domino in the United Kingdom via its affiliate Vital and also handles the label in France and Spain.

MELINDA NEWMAN mnewman@billboard.com

MIX-OFF ADDS SPICE TO CHILI PEPPERS’ SOUND

Although it may not have the tawdry tinge of excitement surrounding the alleged dance-off between a post-breakup Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake, the Red Hot Chili Peppers had a little competition of their own when it came to working on “Stadium Arcadium,” their first album since 2002’s “By the Way.”

The two-CD set, produced by Rick Rubin, comes out May 6 on Warner Bros. With a whopping 25 songs to mix, the band decided the task was beyond one engineer’s abilities. So, as frontman Anthony Kiedis tells it, “We had a mix-off with five engineers: three very well-known and two completely unknown. We gave them the same three songs each. Much to everybody’s surprise, the two complete unknowns won the battle by a long shot.”

Kiedis says the two engineers are taking the group’s music “to a new level, and it’s sounding like no other record of ours has ever sounded. It’s a bonus to like the music so much and have it improved in the mixing process.”

HEY THERE: Todd Sullivan, former A&R exec at Geffen Records and Virgin Records, has formed Hey Domingo. The label will be distributed through Fontana, in a pass-through deal with Austin-based High Wire Music.


Among the acts Sullivan signed during his 11 years at Geffen were Weezer, Sloan and Ted Hawkins. Following his stint at Virgin, which ended in 2002, he managed Weezer.

Sullivan says he fully intends to sign more acts, but he wanted to start slowly with Moth. “I wanted to take my time and really learn what needs to be done to break a band from this level. I will inevitably make some mistakes in doing this, so I don’t want to be in the position where I’m bogged down correcting mistakes for five bands. His tastes are rooted firmly in rock and pop, but Sullivan is interested in exploring regional music. “I was listening to a Dugy Keresh record the other day, and that was something that was so regional, mainly New Orleans, but Warner Bros. put it out and exposed the whole country to it.”
With the group’s debut single, “I Bet That You Look Good on the Dancefloor,” and its follow-up, “When the Sun Goes Down,” both hitting No. 1, British retailers expect sustained sales. “They have a great opportunity to sell throughout the year,” Penman says.

The influential weekly music magazine NME’s reviewer section gave “Whatever People Say I Am, That’s What I’m Not” 10 marks out of 10, and the group has subsequently received a clutch of noms for the Feb. 21 NME Awards, including band of the year. “Right now, the NME has made them the coolest band in the country, which is a brilliant, ringing endorsement,” says EMI Music Publishing U.K. senior VP/director of A&R Mike Smith, who signed the band to a worldwide publishing deal.

Lambert says the appeal stems from frontman Alex Turner, who he describes as “an obvious star. He’s so young yet he’s under- stood so much about how this business works, and on top he writes great songs.”

Smith adds, “There’s a dreadful paucity of good lyricists in music today, and he is by far and away the most impressive I’ve seen. He...hits the nail on the head in terms of where British culture is right now in a way no one else does.”

Furthermore, Lambert is confident about the band’s international potential. He says that with Domino, Arctic Monkeys is signed to a label that has “proves with Franz Ferdinand that they can develop Brit pop acts beyond British borders.”

The band will begin an extensive run of U.K. and European dates Jan. 31 in Nottingham, England. American audiences will have a chance to see Arctic Monkeys in March, including a performance at the South by Southwest Music and Media Conference in Austin. Gigas will follow in Japan in April.

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London and Todd Martin in Los Angeles.

Sullivan is a one-man shop for now and is outsourcing promotion and publicity.

NEW JEWEL: Jewel’s first album in three years, the highly autobiographical “Goodbye Alice in Wonderland,” will come out May 2. Bob Cavallo produced the Atlantic release with the singer/songwriter. A homemade video of the title track began streaming Jan. 25 on Jewel’s fan club Web site, and will be widely available starting Feb. 6. The first single from the project, “Again and Again,” goes to radio Feb. 27.

SIGN ME UP: Cherrytree/Interscope has signed the Feelers for U.S. distribution. The BBC has tipped the pop/rock band as one of the groups to break in the United Kingdom, where the act is signed to Island Records. The band, which will appear at a BBC Radio 2 showcase at the South by Southwest Music and Media Conference in Austin, is working on its first album with producer Peter Katis (Interpol, Get Up Kids).

Sparks, whose members include former At the Drive-In bandmates Tony Hajjar and Jim Ward, has signed a worldwide deal with Hollywood Records. The act previously recorded for Geffen and DreamWorks.

Whitby, Ontario-based Protest the Hero has signed with Vagrant Records. The hard rock band, which takes on political and social issues in its songs, will release “Kezia” April 4. The album is a song cycle dealing with a young woman’s execution. Vagrant has also inked a deal with Florida-based singer/songwriter John Ralston, who is slated to open for Dashboard Confessional later this year.

Grunion Records, the indie label operated by Q Prime’s Cliff Burnstein and Peter Mensch, has signed Ranier Maria. The Brooklyn, N.Y.-based band, named after poet/author Ranier Maria Rilke, has released several albums, including 2003’s “Long Knives Drawn” on Polyvinyl Records. Malcolm Burn produced the group’s Grujin debut, which is due in April.

STUFF: Effective Jan. 30, publicist Lellie Capwell moves from Vanguard to Rhino Records...

Additional reporting by Jonathan Cohen in New York.

British media tastemakers’ top tip for 2006 is EMI’s 26-year-old singer/songwriter Corinne Bailey Rae.

Leeds-born Rae, published by Good Groove Songs, was voted the “Sound of 2006” in a January BBC poll of 100 key journalists, broadcasters and industry representatives.

Rae began singing in church before developing a teenage taste for rock. Her soulful, jazz-tinged vocal and writing style is displayed on her self-titled debut full-length, due in the United Kingdom March 6 on Good Groove/EMI. EMI Music U.K. & Ireland senior VP of international marketing Mike Allen says Rae’s music was presented to global affiliates at an October 2005 marketing meeting where it “captured everyone’s imagination in a major way.”

In November, the title song from Rae’s debut EP “Like a Star” drew widespread U.K. radio play. Follow-up single “Put Your Records On” will appear in European territories shortly after its Feb. 20 U.K. release.

Rae begins her first headline U.K. tour March 27, booked by Heltter Skelter. She will play the South by Southwest conference in March, with a U.S. album release planned for later this year on Capitol.

—PAUL SEXTON

ABLE SEAMAN: When Cairns, Australia-based singer/Songwriter Seaman Dan collected the government-funded Red Ochre award in December 2005, it marked a new high in 76-year-old Henry Gibson Dan’s late-flowing career.

Arts funding body the Australia Council presents the $50,000 Australian ($58,000) annually to an indigenous artist. In Dan’s case, it was for popularizing the culture of his native Torres Strait Islands. He has been playing his laid-back blues/jazz/hula music with lyrics drawing on island folklore since moving to Queensland 50 years ago as a pearl diver.

Dan was discovered in 2000 by a Queensland resident, Canadian musicologist Karl Neuenfeldt, now his manager and producer. “There’s no artifice about him,” Neuenfeldt says. “His voice keeps aging like fine wine.”

Debut album “Follow the Sun” (Hot Records, 2001) won Australian college and AC radio support and Sydney-based Hot’s subsequent global releases “Steady, Steady” (2002) and “Perfect Pearl” (2004) led to festival appearances in the Netherlands and Japan. Dan’s songs, published by Hot Publishing, also are featured in the 2005 BBC/HBO TV movie “Girl in a Café” and several Australian surfing documentaries.

A fourth album is expected in the first half of 2006.

—CHRISTIE ELIEZER

INDOCHINE TOPS IN FRANCE: Being one of the few new releases in late December paid off for Sony BMG France alternative rock quintet Indochine, which began 2006 on top of the IFOP/Tite Live album chart with its 11th studio set, “Alice & June”.

The album was released Dec. 19 on the Jivepic imprint in France, Belgium and Switzerland, hitting No. 1 in France Jan. 3. A Canadian release is due in March. Sony BMG says previous studio album “Paradise” (2002) is Indochine’s best seller to date, shipping some 1.5 million units domestically.

Indochine released its debut album “L’Aventurier” on Ariola in 1982, although self-published principal songwriter and vocalist/uitarist Nicolas Sirkis is the only remaining member of the original lineup.

After peaking in 1985 with third album “Sème Sexe” (Ariola), which the label says shipped some 750,000 units, Indochine’s popularity declined until the poppy “Paradise” (Epic) took sales to a new peak. Sony BMG reports current shipments in excess of 200,000 units for the rocker “Alice & June,” with a domestic sales target of 500,000-600,000.

Indochine begins French and Belgian shows March 6, booked by Garance Productions.

—AYMERIC PICHEVIN
The best-selling release in Mexico for 2005 belongs to a newcomer. “La Voce De Un Angel” (Sony BMG) by Yuridia, a runner-up on a TV show, “La Academia,” has just been certified diamond for sales of more than 500,000 units since its August 2005 release.

The success has, admittedly, taken even Yuridia’s label by surprise.

“It’s very unusual, especially for a new artist,” says Roberto Lopez, managing director for Sony BMG Mexico. Yuridia’s sales have benefited from two key factors: exposure via “La Academia,” which earned strong ratings on Mexico’s TV Azteca, and radio success with the single “Angel,” a Spanish-language version of Robbie Williams’ hit “Angels.” (Not coincidentally, Williams consistently appears on Mexico’s top-selling albums chart.)

Making “Angel” her TV song helped Yuridia gain traction with younger fans, who requested the single at radio. Older fans jumped on the bandwagon with the rest of her repertoire—covers of Latin hits from the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, “La Voce De Un Angel” was sold as an expensive CD/DVD combo that featured songs as performed on the show.

Of course, plenty of artists get TV exposure and radio hits. Yuridia’s appeal is more intangible. Unlike the plastic appearance and reality TV contestants, she is from a Mexican province and had limited performing experience. She is a girl-next-door type who happens to have a prodigious voice.

“Something in the way she sings, in the way she connects with her audience, goes beyond the reality show,” says Kevin Lawrie, president of Sony BMG Music Entertainment for the Latin region.

“La Voce De Un Angel” came out in December in the United States, debuting on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart at No. 67. This issue it is No. 37. This has been achieved without a strong radio single—yet. “Angel” debuted at No. 38 on Billboard’s Latin Pop Airplay chart in the Jan. 28 issue. It is No. 23 this week.

Because Yuridia is managed through TV Azteca, she has received exposure on the network’s U.S. channel, Azteca America. A limited U.S. tour with the “La Academia” contestants last year also raised her exposure. Although there are no plans to release Yuridia in territories beyond Mexico and the States, radio and conversations are already under way for her next album, set for release this year with producer Rafael Perez Botija.

ROCK

BY PAUL SEXTON

Tunstall Scopes Out U.S.

Singer/Songwriter Hopes U.K. Success Spreads To America

LONDON—“Have guitar, will travel” has been the motto of many an itinerant singer/songwriter, but it has rarely produced such dramatic dividends as in the international success of KT Tunstall.

The Edinburgh, Scotland-born artist spent some of her early childhood in the United States and formed her first band there. Now, after relentless gigging started the word-of-mouth that led to the million-selling U.K. performance of her debut Relentless/Virgin album, “Eye to the Telescope,” she is looking across the Atlantic again.

Virgin will release “Eye to the Telescope” Feb. 7 in the United States, on the heels of strong support at triple-A for lead track “Black Horse and the Cherry Tree.” The song is No. 1 for a second week on Billboard Radio Monitor’s Triple-A chart. Additionally, starting Feb. 25 the video of Tunstall’s performance of the track on NBC’s “Today” will be available on iTunes for free download for two weeks.

The album was issued in the United Kingdom in December 2004, and after constant touring and four successful singles in 2005, it sold its 1 millionth copy on Christmas Eve, according to Official U.K. Charts Co. data.

“Telescope,” was the seventh-best-selling album of the year in the United Kingdom, and total international sales to date are 1.5 million, according to EMI, with France and Italy Tunstall’s next strongest markets.

Tunstall, who is nominated for three Brit Awards, will perform at the Feb. 15 ceremony at London’s Earls Court.

It is a dizzying climb for an artist who had spent about 10 years aspiring to such heights. “I totally maintain that what’s kept my head screwed on is having done some work in order to achieve stuff,” she says.

Many first heard Tunstall when she was a late replacement on the BBC 2 live music series “Later With Jools Holland” before the album’s release. On the show, she played “Black Horse and the Cherry Tree” solo on acoustic guitar, with the pedal that has since become a focal point of her gigs.

“We’ve gone from me on a pedal to me with a three-piece, then four-piece, then five-piece band. Very gradually over the course of the year, the live show was constantly changing.”

On her international forays, including 2005’s South by Southwest Music and Media Conference and more recent U.S. promotion, the pedal has been a remarkable icebreaker.

“I’m a girl with a ‘booy toy,’ and it’s something a lot of people haven’t seen or heard before. It was a very innocent way of trying to make more noise than I actually was, and it’s turned out to be an intrinsic tool.”

New Virgin U.S. chairman/CEO Jason Flom views the project as an early opportunity to test himself and his new label structure. “The buzz here is fantastic, and she’s a giant priority for us,” he says.

“The staggered timing really...

FACT FILE

Label: Relentless/Virgin Records
Management: Simon Banks, SB Management
Booking: Little Big Man (United States), Heiter Skelter (United Kingdom)
Publishing: Sony/ATV Music Publishing (BMI)
Top-selling album: “Eye to the Telescope” (2004), 15 million

THE HEAD SET

Although the Strokes’ guitar interplay have earned them regular comparisons to ’70s forebears Television, it was fellow New York act Head Set that actually got to sit in the studio with Television guitarist Richard Lloyd. “When we first started playing, a lot of people said we sounded a lot like Television,” drummer Mike Blaugrund says. “Then we were in our practice room in New York and he walked in the door, and we recorded our three-song demo with him.” Formed by Blaugrund and his brother Jordan, the Head Set members are five-year veterans of the city’s music scene. The group recorded an EP in 2003 with Nic Hard (the Bravery), which Jordan estimates has sold 2,000 copies. The slick guitar rockers have played with Sonic Youth and Ted Leo, and have a full-length in the can.

Contact: Chip Quigley, kingdomet@aol.com

—Todd Martens

Edited by Todd Martens tmartens@billboard.com
It was a memorable night for Verity Records' Donald Lawrence as he took top honors at the 21st annual Stellar Awards, picking up trophies for artist, producer and CD of the year for "I Speak Life.

J Moss netted three Stellas, among them the male vocalist and new artist accolades. Wyman Hawkins and Lil'I Roc Williams won two Stellas each. Icee Records' Dianne Williams was named female vocalist of the year. Aretha Franklin was on hand to present Jonathan Nelson the song of the year award for "Healed," which appeared on Lawrence's album.

"The Bible says, 'Your gift will bring you before great men,'" Nelson told Billboard backstage at the event, which took place Jan. 21 at Nashville's Grand Old Opry.

Tonight the Lord has really opened up a major door by bringing my gift before great men. Really experienced the true favor of God tonight...I'm excited that God has placed me in the hands of Donald Lawrence, who is my mentor."

Fred Hammond was the recipient of the Stellas' most notable achievement award, presented to him by Kirk Franklin following a performance of Hammond's songs by Joann Rosario and Men of Standard.

A high point of the evening was a tribute to the Winans family by Chante Moore, Kenny Lattimore and Rizen, spotlighting the contributions of the late Ronald Winans. The Rev. Jesse Jackson presented the family members with an award in recognition of their pioneering contributions to gospel music.

"It was an honor," CeCe Winans told Billboard. "It's always a blessing to be recognized and for people to tell you that your music changed them, and especially for them to think about Ronald, it was such an awesome moment."

Nashville resident Kirk Whalum was among those happy to see the Stellas return to Music City this year. They were held in Houston in 2003 and 2004."

"I'm very excited to have it here," said Whalum, who took home an award for instrumental CD of the year for "The Gospel According to Jazz Chapter II."

"I'm glad they saw fit to bring it where so much of the music is recorded, where a lot of the heart of the music came from. It's a perfect fit."

Hosted by Vickie Winans, Donnie McClurkin and Israel, the Stellas were produced by Chicago-based Central City Productions. The show will air in syndication from Jan. 28 through March 5.

For a complete list of winners, see billboard.com/awards.
ELLIOIT ‘STICKS’ TO SOUNDTRACK WORK

Missy Elliott is knee-deep in a career first. And it is something only a few African-Americans can claim. The Grammy Award-nominated rapper is co-scoring the upcoming Disney/Touchstone Pictures film “Stick It.”

Starring Jeff Bridges and Missy Peregrym, the April 2006 theatrical release centers on the world of competitive gymnastics. Elliott is collaborating in New York with the Dust Brothers’ Mike Simpson, who has produced Beck and the Beastie Boys.

The Disney hookup emerged after the company asked to place Elliott’s song, “We Run This,” on the movie’s soundtrack. “Run” is the third single from Elliott’s Grammy-nominated album “The Cookbook.” The rapper is nominated in five categories, including her work with Ciara and Fantasia.

Elliott is definitely ready for the challenge. “I’ve always wondered what scoring a film would be like, and this fell into my lap at a great time,” she says. “I’ve been doing the artistic thing for so long that you get to the point where you want to venture into other projects.”

Elliott says that working with Simpson eases some of the first-time pressure. The producers also helped her make the transition to film composer by taping scenes with music similar in tempo and tone to what they are expecting from her.

“I’ve been in scarier situations,” she says. “But this isn’t like I’m left in limbo. I have an outline. I’m just anxious to see what comes of it. This is a big thing for me.”

The rapper shot a video for “We Run This” Jan. 3-4 in Los Angeles with longtime collaborator/director Dave Meyers. It features Olympic gold medalist Dominique Dawes in a cameo as Elliott’s gymnastics coach.

Scenes from the “Run” video, due to premiere in February, range from a balance beam in the sky to uneven bars in a basement laundry room. Elliott assures the new video tackles the same innovative ground covered by her Grammy-nominated video for “Lose Control.”

“It’s crazy,” Elliott says with a laugh. “When it comes to uptempo records, I always get creative.”

Elliott is working on a tight schedule. The score is due at the end of January. Studios work differently than artists and labels, Elliott adds. “They’re on serious deadlines.”

Also in the works is a new studio album—not to mention writing songs for Monica and Fantasia.

However, Elliott definitely plans to squeeze in a visit to Los Angeles on Feb. 8. “I wouldn’t miss the Grammys for the world.”

MUSICAL NOTES: Get out your calendars. The Grammy Awards whirlwind is picking up its pace. Recording Academy events include salutes to classical (Feb. 3), jazz (also Feb. 3) and gospel (Feb. 4) plus Grammy Career Day at USC (Feb. 6).

There is also Clive Davis’ famous pre-Grammy evening soirée (Feb. 7). Preaching that shindig earlier in the day will be the third annual Artist Empowerment Coalition tribute to Grammy nominees and their community philanthropic endeavors.

This year’s honorees are BET president Debra Lee and president of entertainment Reginald Hudlin. Ludacris, John Legend, Ciara and actress Victoria Rowell. The luncheon will take place at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

The day before, Rowell will host the opening-night reception for noted music photographer Arnold Turner’s first exhibit “Arnold Turner: A Journey Behind the Music.” A Photographic Tribute to Black History Month” traverses two decades’ worth of pictures shot by the R&B music industry’s go-to guy.

Among the iconic sharing wall space will be Mariah Carey, DJ Jazzy Jeff & the Fresh Prince, Snoop Dogg and Queen Latifah. Opening to the public Feb. 7, the exhibit runs through March 15 at Hollywood’s Arc Light Theater.

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Johnson Finally Makes A ‘Dollar’

Seventh Audition For RLG Results In A Contract—And An Immediate Hit

Rap may have 50 Cent, but country music has “The Dollar” and Jamey Johnson. The poignant song about a little boy yearning to spend more time with his hard-working father has turned into a rare thing these days—a hit debut single. It is No. 23 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart this issue.

Like many singers, Johnson struggled for years to achieve his dream of landing a record deal. He moved to Nashville from Alabama in 2000. And while he quickly got a song-writing deal with EMI Music, the recording contract proved more elusive.

He auditioned for RCA Label Group six times before company chairman Joe Galtani finally signed him to the BNA imprint last spring on his seventh try.

RLG execs kept inviting Johnson back, but felt on each try that either he was not ready for the world, or the world was not ready for him. After multiple auditions, Johnson says he began joking with the label staff that he was going to start charging them a cover.

“It wasn’t like they didn’t like what I did and they didn’t get it,” Johnson says. “Every time Joe would tell me he liked my voice and loved my songs. But four years ago in country music they weren’t interested in someone with such a hard-core, in-your-face, traditional country mix. It just wasn’t a good time for that kind of music.”

Johnson feels the success of Gretchen Wilson’s “Redneck Woman” paved the way for mainstream acceptance of his more traditional sound.

Despite the multiple rejections, Johnson refused to give up. “It’s like any other business,” he says. “Just because they don’t buy your product the first time, you don’t quit.”

Gradually, through his frequent work as a demo singer, Johnson’s voice became familiar to all the Music Row A&R scouts. And finally, when it all came together, it happened rather quickly. Last year, Johnson says he found himself with four offers to choose from, most from labels that had previously shot him down.

Ironically, his success with his own single comes at the exact same time he is enjoying his first taste of success with an outside cut. Trace Adkins’ “Honky Tonk Badonkadonk,” which Johnson co-wrote, is No. 2 on the Hot Country Songs chart this week.

That song, a naughtily homage to a woman’s rear end, has provided some interesting moments for Johnson when he performs it during his own live shows.

“I have seen some ‘Jerry Springer’ stuff break loose when we go into ‘Badonkadonk,’” he says with a laugh. RLG originally wanted Johnson to cut “Honky Tonk Badonkadonk” himself, but he refused, assuming—probably correctly—that he would never get out from under it. “I thought for the rest of my life I’d be known as the ‘Badonkadonk’ guy,” he says. “So I passed.”

But he thrilled the tune found a home—and a hit—with Adkins. “He was definitely the right man for that song,” Johnson says.


Johnson, who is managed by the Erv Woolsey Co. and booked by Buddy Lee Attractions, wrote seven of the 11 songs on his album. Among the highlights is a duet with George Jones on a song appropriately titled “Keeping Up With the Jonesin’.”

In the studio, Johnson was in awe of Jones, who, he says, “walked in at 74 years old and ripped that song a new one. It blew me away every single time he opened his mouth.”

Since recording his album, Johnson has been working hard to get his career launched. But he does not consider it labor.

“This is not work, this is play-time for me,” he says. “I don’t ever remember not wanting to do this.”

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and his robust quartet—guitarist Wayne Krantz for t'ke rock edge, drummer Nate Smith for the soul factor, Craig Taborn on Fender Rhodes for the genre-busting sensuality—play it straight and free. Potter's funk-steepled originals like “Next Best Western” drive the set into the exuberance zone. The zeal is balanced by his evocative reads of three generations of popular tunes (Billy Strayhorn’s “Lotus Blossom,” the Beatles’ “Yesterday” and Radiohead’s “Morning Bell”). Key to it all is Potter’s assured voice: a compelling convergence of masterful technique, imaginative phrasing, improvisational smarts and heartfelt soul. —DG

WANDA JACKSON
I Remember Elvis
Producer: Danny B. Harvey
Goldenlane/Cleopatra Release Date: Jan. 31
She may not have become a household name the way Elvis Presley did, but in the mid-'50s Wanda Jackson shared a bill—and a special friendship—with the Hillbilly Cat. He inspired her to try her hand at rock ’n’ roll and rockabilly, and that experiment led her to her pioneering role as the first female star in those genres. Half a century later, Jackson pays homage to Elvis’ influence through an album of fiery covers (“Good Rockin’ Tonight,” “Heartbreak Hotel,” “Mystery Train”), spoken word reminiscence and an autobiographical tune (“I Wore Elvis’ Ring”). The package also includes rare photos and liner notes by another Elvis—Costello—who has led a campaign for a long-overdue Jackson induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. —PV

HEATHER HEADLEY
In My Mind
Producers: various RCA Release Date: Jan. 31
Like her 2002 debut album, “This Is Who I Am,” Heather Headley’s “In My Mind” spotlights one incredibly talented singer. The disc features a top five hit on the Adult R&B chart (“What’s Not Being Said”), Headley injects simple lines like, “Send me a letter/With no return address” and I think I’m hearing/What’s not being said” with subtle emotion that packs a real punch. “Am I Worth It” and “Back When It Was” are just as powerful. But lackluster, by-the-numbers dance tracks like “How Many Ways” and “Rain” belong on someone else’s CD. Fortunately, Headley ends the disc on an absolute high note with the gospel-tinged “Change,” a glorious tale of pressing on. —MP

R&B
THE TEMPTATIONS
Reflections
Producers: Steve Harvey, Benjamin Wright
New Door/UME Release Date: Jan. 31
Before covering songs standards became today’s rage, the Temptations put their harmonic stamp on pop classics in 1967 with the No. 1 R&B set “The Temptations in a Mellow Mood.” So it is only fitting the venerable quintet would come full circle and record classics from the Motown catalog. Actually, this album expands on the concept behind “The Temptations Sing R&B.” That 1965 set featured the group’s first No. 1 single, the Robin-Hood penned “My Girl.” Here, lone founding member Otis Williams and the guys lay out fresh takes on songs done first by Marvin Gaye, the Supremes, the Jackson 5 and others, and demonstrate that their chops are still in fine form. Among the more noteworthy tracks on this often likable outing are “What Becomes of the Brokenhearted,” “Never Can Say Goodbye” and “Neither One of Us.” —GM

JAZZ
PAUL MOTIAN BAND
Garden of Eden
Producer: Manfred Eicher ECM Release Date: Jan. 24
This ensemble tethered by master continued on p36
drummer Paul Motian's supple rhythmic handwork is one of the more unusual setups in jazz. In addition to his playing, Jerome Harris, Motian's band comprises top-drawer young saxophonists Chris Cheek and Tony Malaby, and a trio of accomplished guitarists (Jakob Bro, Ben Monder and Steve Cardenas) who negotiate the parameters of those same songs without collision. The set list includes two Charles Mingus classics (the gently swinging “Pilgrimage to the Empty Castle” and the darkly ballistic “Goodbye Pork Pie Hat”). There is a boffish double-header: Thelonious Monk's zigzaggy “Evidence” accented by Motian's solo tumble and a spirited take on Charlie Parker's “Cheryl.” Motian's lyrical originals dominate, highlighted by the ethereal title track and the jagged-upon-ecumene “Jumbo.” The operatic word for this engaging date: nuance to the max.—DOO

COUNTRY

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The 14 Burials of Melquiades Estrada
Producer: Marco Beltrami
Recall Records
Release Date: Jan. 31

The soundtrack to Tommy Lee Jones' directorial debut is an intoxicating mix of top-notch honky-tonk and Tejano artists and film composer Marco Beltrami's intense, insidious melodies. Beltrami is an expert at creating mood, and such set pieces as the haunting “Three Burials of Melquiades” and the Ennio Morricone-que “Leaving Town” sit nicely among easy-rollin’ jewels like Dwight Yoakam's “Fair to Midland” and such stone country fare as Bobby Flores’ “I Wonder Who'll Turn Out the Light” and Hank Williams Jr.'s “The Cheatin’ Heart.” Other classics include Merle Haggard's “Workin' Man Blues” and Freddy Fender's “Before the Next Teardrop Falls.” The collection ends with a brilliant segue from Beltrami's poigniant “Goodbye” to Roger Miller's jaunty “You Can't Rolllefeet in a Buffalo Herd.” —RW

LATIN

CARL LEE

Calle 13
Producer: Elías De León
Sony BMG Norte
Release Date: Dec. 6

Comprising brothers René and Eduardo Pérez, Calle 13 is reggaetón's evolution. Even though reggaetón is at the base of the tracks, the attitude is more clever than macho. There are cumbia beats on several tracks, occasional live percussion and interesting musical references (“Mujer Contra Mujer” in “La Aquacautona”). But what makes this group stand out are its lyrics: irreverent, clever, part social satire, part smart-ass frat boy. They are delivered precisely and incisively, with jabs thrown at just about everything (including Diddy on the hilarious “Pli Di Di”), Calle 13's hormonal fusion with girls and body parts is at times too sophomoric, and the track listing does not match the album credits. A small nuissance, compared with the overall promise of the group.—LC

WORLD

JULIA SARR & PATRICE LAROSE

Set Luna
Producer: Laurent Bizot
SunnySide
Release Date: Jan. 31

Senegalese vocalist Julia Sarr and French flamenco guitarist Patrice Larose offer an easy-to-enjoy collaboration on “Set Luna.” Sarr has a lovely, expressive voice, and there seems to be no end to the subtlety of her interpretive gifts. Both artists come from contributions by guitarist Ricardo Garcia and percussionists Taffa Cissé and Adelane. They end up in the formidable Yousouf N'Dour's vocal on “Set Luna” a joyful and enchanting melange of vocal, percussion and string textures that spin out in 12 pleasingly unpredictable tunes. Shades of Al-Andalus, world trading with Euro ballards are drawn into these tracks and, by some alchemy, become beautiful music.—PVM

GOSPEL

KAREN CLARK SHEARD

It's Not Over
Producers: Israel Houghton, Aaron Lindsey, PAJAM
Word/Curb/Warner Bros.
Release Date: Jan. 24

Since 1980, when she and her siblings the Clark Sisters stomred the gospel charts with “You Brought the Sunshine,” Karen Clark Sheard has played a seminal role in the evolution of contemporary gospel. On her fourth solo outing, she proves as vibrant as ever, keeping the spirit of the tradition while consistently stretching its boundaries. Partly recorded live at her hometown church in Detroit, the album finds Clark Sheard leaning more traditional—though no less incendiary—starting with tracks like “Authority” and “Hallelujah.” Studio cuts like the PJAM-produced “Be Blessed” and “A Living Testimony” find her chops as sharp as ever.—GE

ROCK

FOOT SOLDIERS

No Way Back (3:17)
Producers: Nick Raskulinecz, Fred Mascherino
Writers: Foot Soldiers
Publishers: various RCA (CD promo)

Remember Coldplay's evocative 2002 album title: “A Rush of Blood to the Head”? That is exactly what this punk rock-inspired crew of Foot Soldiers’ latest set “In Your Honor” feels like: a sweet, sonic kick to the skull, full of raw and hyper-energizing. The band issued a successful debut and now are charging. Though reggaetón's evolution. Sony

LUCAS COIL

Our Truth (4:02)
Producers: Lucas Coil, Wadimarc Sorcysa
Writers: Lucas Coil
Publisher: Magic Arts (ASCAP)

One of the dark gems on the “Underworld: Evolution” soundtrack, “Our Truth” is the lead single from Lucas Coil's upcoming “Karmacode” (due April 4). The Italian band's new album is one of the most anticipated metal releases of 2006, and by the sound of this track, the wait will be worth it. While it could hardly be considered a pop song, the hard-charging single, ready-made for the concert circuit, is certainly one of the group's catchiest tracks. Crammed with hooks, the roaring guitars in “Our Truth” lean more on Lucas Coil's metal side, but the piece retains a gothic air. Singer Chen Chapell and Gabriella (who shares vocal duties with Andrea Ferro) leads the way with her rich alto. This single will reignite the band’s U.S. presence, picking up where hits “Swamped” and “Heaven’s a Lie” left off.—CLT

INXS

Afterglow (4:08)
Producer: Guy Chambers
Writers: A. Parriss, D. Child
Publisher: not listed

Bennett's billing for his melodic 1994 jam “Regulate,” Warren G now serves up the equally mellow “I Need a Light” (also featuring Nate Dogg). The sensual snap of this soulful cut could lift Warren G's album sa as if it garners enough airplay. Here, simplicity is key. A two-beat bassline, steady piano tinkles and finger snaps are all he needs to get started, as he dotes on his troubled upbringing (“Long Beach back in the day was all hustle”) and yet longs for the days of old. The song's influence is evident, yet while the “smoke away the pain” theme is nothing groundbreaking, Nate Dogg's gruff and familiar baritone serves as the requisite X-factor.—CH

COUNTRY

LITTLE BIG TOWN

Bring It On Home (3:58)
Producers: Wayne Kirkpatrick, Little Big Town Writers: W. Kirkpatrick, G. Bieck
Publisher: Warner–Tamerlane/Selc The Cow (BMG), WB/Bieck's Bloom (ASCAP), Equity Music Group (CD promo)

There is nothing like gorgeous harmonies to turn a well-written song into an amazing experience, and this talented foursome some know how to create a beautiful walk through. This is one of those rare fine songs that are a beautiful because of the way they sound. Their harmonies are so tight that one can pick out each voice, and yet it feels like one voice. The way they sing with each other is just amazing. Every chord, every note, and every word has a purpose. From the bittersweet opening to the midsection payoff, this song makes you feel. Production is thoughtful and precise, meshing keyboards and lead guitar motifs flawlessly. This one deserves immediate attention and in no way should be left behind.—BO

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Blunt, Matisyahu Follow Chart Tradition

If you can remember a brilliant multi-act parody EP called "Kosher Club" from 1984 or the 1990 sendup of 2 Live Crew that was 2 Live Jews, you might have thought that a year ago last year by a young Hasidic reggae singer was the punchline to a joke.

Yet here in the early going of 2006, Matisyahu joins James Blunt as illustrations of the chart traction newer acts often enjoy in the early weeks of a new year.

The latter, a U.K. singer/songwriter whose U.S. debut album had been eagerly anticipated several months before it hit stores Oct. 12, reaches the top 10 for the first time in the 16 weeks it has spent on The Billboard 200 (13-9, up 1%). Although this marks the first time in the last 14 years, it is the first time in the last 14 years that his album sold more than it did in a prior week, this becomes the fifth straight week that "Back to Bedlam" rises to a higher rank. Blunt's climb to the top 10 is the slowest by any male artist since Scn Paul's "Duty Rock," which in its 19th chart week rose 12-9 in the April 5, 2003, issue.

Although fewer U.K. acts have charted this decade than we are accustomed to seeing, the presence of a Brit in the top 10 is certainly more common than that of a Hasid reaching the big chart's top 10.

Matisyahu makes that happen in his 11th week on the big chart (44-33), as a Jan. 16 stop on "Late Show With David Letterman" helps propel a 26% sales hike. His "Live at Stub's" has climbed to higher Billboard 200 ranks in eight consecutive weeks and has held No. 1 on Top Reggae Albums for each of the past five.

Of course, knowing how the music industry mimes success to excess, one can only wonder what comes next. A Buddhist rapper? A Hare Krishna ska band? We will see.

The progress shown by Matisyahu and Blunt recalls the change of tide that we see at the start of every year. The flow of big names that splashed onto store shelves in the first months of the prior year subsides; developing artists find chart hikes less daunting in the soft sales weeks of January.

John Legend, Keane, the Killers and Sugababes were examples last year, Paul, Michelle Branch, Dido, the Donnas, Nelly Furtado, Lifehouse, Los Lonely Boys, Maroon's, MercyMe, Puddle of Mudd, Ras-
cal Flatts, Musiq Soulchild and the Used are among those made first-quarter climbers from 2001 to 2004.

Reaching better chart numbers is not a guarantee that a newer name sticks with the music-buying public. The first Crazy Town album rose to No. 9 in early 2001, but its sophomore see peaked at No. 100. The following year, the first quarter of 2003 saw the debut album by T.I. sprint from No. 191 No. 13 in less than two months, but last year's second outing had to settle for a high of No. 113.

VICTORY IN DEFEND: Can you recall a time when the weatherman predicted a dire storm that turned out to be no more than a sprinkle of rain?

That is how it feels, as the tracking week for this issue's chart competes with the 2005 frame. That is when the first album by the Game set the Nielsen SoundScan era record for first-week sales by an album released in January.

Even against the odds of that album's 387,000 unit start, and despite the fact that no one title on The Billboard 200 reached 100,000 copies, album sales are down only 0.8% from the comparative 2005 week.

So friendly is the rivalry between Jamie Foxx and Mary J. Blige, who have traded the top slot on the big chart for the past five weeks, that the latter appeared on Foxx's Jan. 25 NRC special.

In the meantime, his 6% drop finds him overtaking Blige's "The Breakthrough," which erodes by 20%. The 97,000 sold by Fox's "Unpredictable" is the lowest sum by a No. 1 on The Billboard 200 since OutKast's "Speakerboxx/The Love Below" rang 86,000 copies in the Feb. 14, 2004, issue, one of two weeks that album led the list with less than 100,000 sold.

Some within RCA Music Group think Foxx's special and same-week visits to "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" and "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" could propel him to the neighborhood of 140,000.

That might not be enough to beat the bow of the third album in less than a year by Oprah Winfrey-endorsed II Divo.

First-day sales suggest the group, with its own tour of TV shows, will open in the range of 140,000-150,000.

Market Watch

A Weekly National Music Sales Report

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*Includes track equivalent album sales (TEA) with 10 track downloads equivalent to one album sale.

Digital Tracks Sales

| 05 | 15.9 million |
| 06 | 35.0 million |

SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

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For week ending Jan. 22, 2006. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of retail stores and rack sales reports solicited and provided by Nielsen SoundScan.

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

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<th>Production Label</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CHECK ON IT</td>
<td>GRILLZ</td>
<td>EMINEM / SHADY RECORDS</td>
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<td>FEEL THE WHEEL</td>
<td>ONE AND TWO</td>
<td>KELLY CLARKSON</td>
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<td>ONE</td>
<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
<td>MADONNA</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>WE BELONG TOGETHER</td>
<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
<td>RIAA</td>
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<td>LEAN WIT IT, ROCK IT</td>
<td>DIANA ROSS</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>ALONE WITH YOU</td>
<td>R&amp;B</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>RUN FOR LOVE</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
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<td>I'M A ROCKSTAR (PART 2)</td>
<td>LADY GAGA</td>
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<td>I'M IN LOVE</td>
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### ADULT TOP 40

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<td>PHOTOGRAPH</td>
<td>BRYAN ADAMS</td>
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<td>SUGAR, WE'RE GOIN' DOWN</td>
<td>THE BLACK EYEPEAS</td>
<td>SONY BMG MUSIC</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>BECAUSE OF YOU</td>
<td>NICKELBACK</td>
<td>ROADRUNNER</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>BEYOND YOUR BEAUTY</td>
<td>THE BLACK EYEPEAS</td>
<td>SONY BMG MUSIC</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>YOU GO TO MY HEAD</td>
<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
<td>RIAA</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>WE MEET AGAIN</td>
<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
<td>RIAA</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>TAKE IT EASY</td>
<td>KENNY CHESNEY</td>
<td>REPRISE</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>DO YOU REMEMBER?</td>
<td>KENDALL SCHMID</td>
<td>SONY BMG MUSIC</td>
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<td>I'M GONNA BE STRONG</td>
<td>KENNY CHESNEY</td>
<td>REPRISE</td>
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### ADULT CONTEMPORARY

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>YOU AND ME</td>
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<td>JAY-Z</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>LONELY NO MORE</td>
<td>JAMES BAY</td>
<td>CAPITOL</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>樫</td>
<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
<td>RIAA</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>WE WILL ROCK YOU</td>
<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
<td>MCA</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>PON DE REPLY</td>
<td>KANYE WEST Feat. JENNY B</td>
<td>RASTA SPIRIT</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>FOLLOW YOU TO THE WORLD'S END</td>
<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
<td>MCA</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>TONIGHT</td>
<td>KENNY CHESNEY</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>LIFE IS A JOURNEY</td>
<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
<td>MCA</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE</td>
<td>BRYAN ADAMS</td>
<td>EMI</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>YOU CAN'T MAKE ME</td>
<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
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### MODERN ROCK

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<td>1</td>
<td>PERFECT SITUATION</td>
<td>GAVIN DEGRAW</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>RIDE</td>
<td>DAMNED</td>
<td>MEAT WHISKERS</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>UNSTOPPABLE</td>
<td>UMAR J</td>
<td>SCISSORS</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>LIGHTS AND SOUNDS</td>
<td>BASSSOUNDX</td>
<td>TANZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SHE</td>
<td>CHEMICAL ROMANCE</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>BROTHERS</td>
<td>CHEMICAL ROMANCE</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>EVERY DAY</td>
<td>BILL JAMES</td>
<td>SONY BMG MUSIC</td>
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<td>DAY</td>
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<td>WHUP</td>
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<td>DO THE UNEXPECTED</td>
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Data for week of FEBRUARY 4, 2006 | For chart reprint call 646.654.4833

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 41

www.americanradiohistory.com
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stick it To My Baby</td>
<td>Kelly Rowland</td>
<td>J-M-D (J Records)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ain't No Other Man</td>
<td>Mary J. Blige</td>
<td>Epic (Sony/Clayton)</td>
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<td>Heartbreak Hotel</td>
<td>Miley Cyrus</td>
<td>RCA (Sony/BMG)</td>
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<td>For You I Will</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
<td>MDJ (MaiDahJah)</td>
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<td>Twisted Transistor</td>
<td>K.C. &amp; the Sunshine Band</td>
<td>Rare (Phonogram/EMI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pure Love</td>
<td>Frankie Beverly</td>
<td>Atlantic (WEA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Right Here</td>
<td>Young Jeezy feat. Akon</td>
<td>Cash Money (Cash Money)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crash</td>
<td>Lil Wayne feat. Plies &amp; Lil Chuckee</td>
<td>Cash Money (Cash Money)</td>
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</tbody>
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*POP 100: The pop Top singles & tracks, according to mainstream top 40 radio, audio-visual impressions measured by Nielsen SoundScan. Use Chart Legend for rules and explanations. © 2006, Billboard. All Rights Reserved. POP 100 AIRPLAY: Legend located below chart. SINGLES SALES: The data, according to complete sales figures for the Billboard Pop 100 and Top 100. See Chart Legend for rules and explanations. © 2006, Billboard. All Rights Reserved. HITPREDICT: See Chart Legend for rules and explanations. © 2006, Promusiq and HitPredict are trademarks of Print Line L.P.*
## R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label/Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jamie Foxx</td>
<td>Unpredictable</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>Chris Brown</td>
<td>The Breakthrough</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The Notorious B.I.G.</td>
<td>Duets: The Final Chapter</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>统筹 Keysia Cole</td>
<td>The Way It Is</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>Tha Carter II</td>
<td>Cash Money</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Eminem</td>
<td>Curtain Call: The Hits</td>
<td>Aftermath</td>
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<td>Mariah Carey</td>
<td>The Emancipation Of Mimi</td>
<td>DreamWorks</td>
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<td>Juelz Santana</td>
<td>What The Game's Been Missing</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Anthony Hamilton</td>
<td>Ain't Nobody Worryin'</td>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
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<td>Ludacris &amp; OTP</td>
<td>Ludacris Presents...Disturbing Tha Peace</td>
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<td>T-Pain</td>
<td>Rappin' TSENTA</td>
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<td>Destinys Child</td>
<td>#1's</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<td>Kirk Franklin</td>
<td>Hero</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
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<td>Ying Yang Twins</td>
<td>U.S.A. Still Unltd</td>
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<td>Sean Paul</td>
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<td>Chamillionaire</td>
<td>The Sound Of Revenge</td>
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<td>Kanye West</td>
<td>Late Registration</td>
<td>Roc-A-Fella</td>
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<td>Get Rich Or Die Tryin'</td>
<td>Young Boss</td>
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<td>The Black Eyed Peas</td>
<td>Monkey Business</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Da La Devoxx &amp; Krs-One</td>
<td>Down For Life</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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## TOP REGGAE ALBUMS

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<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label/Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mati Sihaye</td>
<td>Live At Stubb's</td>
<td>VP</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sean Paul</td>
<td>Welcome To Jamrock</td>
<td>VP</td>
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<td>Damian &quot;JR. Gong&quot; Marley</td>
<td>Welcome To Jamrock</td>
<td>VP</td>
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<td>Yolanda Adams</td>
<td>Gospel, Faith &amp; Worship</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Kem</td>
<td>Album II</td>
<td>VP</td>
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<td>Qwéle</td>
<td>Same Kinda...</td>
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<td>Warren G</td>
<td>In The Mid-Night Hour</td>
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<td>Ginuwine</td>
<td>Back II Da Basics</td>
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<td>Trina</td>
<td>Glamorous Life</td>
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<td>Twista</td>
<td>The Day After</td>
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<td>Tobi Braxton</td>
<td>Hustle &amp; Flow</td>
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<td>Pretty Ricky</td>
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<td>The Massaro</td>
<td>A Time To Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Christy Dior &amp; Ugly K</td>
<td>Bad Habit</td>
<td>VP</td>
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## DeVAUGHN's ALBUM REBOUNDS

Lp is 81% for its best percentage gain ever. The Love Experience by Raheem DeVaughn nabbs Facettesetter stripes on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums. Before this week, the greatest spike had been a 35% jump in the Nov. 26, 2005, issue. Boosted by a $19.99 price tag at Tower, "Experience" soars to No. 60 and its best rank in four months. At radio, DeVaughn tastes moderate play for first single "Guess Whos Loves You More," which peaked at No. 38 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs. Three other tracks also gain, including nest single "You," which more than doubled its detections, while "Believe" sparks initial airplay. DeVaughn recently finished dates on the Seagram's Live tour with Lil Mo and a reunited Xscape.

—Raphael George
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<tr>
<td>TOUCH IT</td>
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<td>WHAT YOU GOT</td>
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<td>BEAUTY AND THE BEAST</td>
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<td>THE HOOCHIE SONG</td>
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<td>DON'T TEST US</td>
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<td>BILLIONAIRE BOY</td>
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<td>SCREAM</td>
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<td>TOUCH ME</td>
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<tr>
<td>KEEP ON PUSHING</td>
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<td>HANG IN THERE</td>
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<td>IF IT'S NOT LOVE</td>
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<td>GLITZ</td>
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<td>NO GUARDIAN</td>
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<td>SOUP</td>
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<td>BE LOVED</td>
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<td>ONLY ONE</td>
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<td>BROKEN HEART</td>
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<td>OH YEAH</td>
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<td>MY HEAD AIN'T BOBBIN'</td>
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<td>GET BACK</td>
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<td>IN YOUR FACE</td>
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<td>WAITING</td>
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<td>MY NAME IS</td>
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<td>I'M NOT YOUR BABY</td>
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<td>I GET UP</td>
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<td>BACK TO YOU</td>
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<td>YESSSS</td>
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<tr>
<td>GONNA CUT IT UP</td>
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<td>I'M NOT YOUR BABY</td>
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For complete chart data, visit www.americanradiohistory.com.
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HOT COUNTRY SONGS: 123 country stations are electronically monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Airplay award is based solely on airplay monitoring in the U.S. on both the BDS Airplay and Audience charts for the first time with increases in both detections and audience. © 2006 Nielsen Media, Inc. All rights reserved.

HIT PREDICTOR: © 2006, Promosquad and HitPredictor are trademarks of Think Factory America in all countries. See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates recently tested title. “ indicates new release.

BETWEEN THE BULLETS

JESUS, TAKE THE WHEL 1 1 14
HONKY TONK BADDONKON 2 1 11
WE LET HERSELF GO 3 1 9
WHEN I GET WHERE I'M GOING 4 1 7
MUST BE DUN SOMETHIN' RIGHT 5 1 5
MY OLD FRIEND 6 1 3
I NEVER LOVED AT ALL 7 1 1
TODAY'S YOUNG CRY 8 1
COME A LITTLE CLOSER 9 1
SOMETIMES I'M ALLBIG 10 1
SHE DON'T TELL ME NO MORE 11 1
LIVING IN FAST FORWARD 12 1
WHAT HURTS THE MOST 13 1
GET DRUNK AND BE SOMEONE 14 1
NOBODY BUT ME 15 1
YOU'LL BE TODAY 16 1
THE DOLLAR 17 1
WHO SAYS YOU CAN'T GO HOME 18 1
NOBODY TELL ME WHAT TO DO 19 1
DRUNKER THAN ME 20 1
WHY 21 1
I DON'T CARE 22 1

This chart was created by Promosquad and HitPredictor for Billboard.
HOT LATIN SONGS: A panel of 101 stations (65 Latin pop, 15 tropical, 15 Latin rhythm, 50 regional Mexican) are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. © 2006. VHÜ Business Media, Inc.

HOT LATIN SONGS...

1. "Ranpe" by Daddy Yankee  
2. "A Chulín Culin Chunfly" by Alexis & Fido  
3. "El Chencho" by Wisin & Yandel  
4. "Flame" by K-Paz de la Sierra  
5. "A Compané a Acompañame" by Aventura Featuring Don Omar  
6. "A Mucha" by Albita Featuring Omar & Cotega  
7. "Hasta Que Te Enamores" by Don Omar Featuring Tito El Bambino  
8. "El Que No Tiene" by J Lo Featuring Tito El Bambino  
9. "Quisiera Que Te Contra" by Aventura Featuring Daddy Yankee  
10. "Mi Tiempo de Felicidad" by Wisin & Yandel Featuring Tito El Bambino  

TOP LATIN ALBUMS...

1. "La Mejor Historia" by Grupo Frikis  
2. "Amor de Mi Vida" by Alejandro Fernandez  
3. "El Regreso" by La Sonora Matancera  
4. "El Siglo de Oro" by Menudo  
5. "Historias" by Alejandro Fernández  

Charts Legend for rules and explanations.
### LATIN AIRPLAY: POP

| #1 | SUELT LA MANO | RAISA (EMI LATIN) |
| #2 | NUESTRO AMOR | RAISA (EMI LATIN) |
| #3 | ACUMULAMOS A ESTAR SOLO | JENNY & KAROL (EMI LATIN) |
| #4 | LO QUE ME GUSTA A MI MARIDO | JENNY & KAROL (EMI LATIN) |
| #5 | NO TE PREOCUPES POR MI | MARIA M. LANDI (EMI LATIN) |
| #6 | COMO SI NO NOS HUBIERAMOS AMADO | MARIA J. ARMENDARIZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #7 | LA TORTURA | BARBARA FAHRTSCHER KALLENLEBEN (EMI LATIN) |
| #8 | NO RESISTIR | BARBARA FAHRTSCHER KALLENLEBEN (EMI LATIN) |
| #9 | EN ELLA QUEDASTE EN SILENCIO | BARBARA FAHRTSCHER KALLENLEBEN (EMI LATIN) |

### TROPICAL

| #1 | AMOR TAN FC | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #2 | LO MEJOR DE TÍ | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #3 | EL BAILE PECA | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #4 | NUESTRO AMOR | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #5 | SOY DIFERENTE | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #6 | A QUIEN LE IMPORTA | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #7 | ANDA Y VÉ | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #8 | SI NO FUERA EL | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #9 | PRINCESA | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |
| #10 | ATREVETE TE, TEI | MAURITZ (EMI LATIN) |

### REGIONAL MEXICAN

| #1 | CONTRA VIENTO Y MAREA | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #2 | PERO TE YAS A ARREPENTIR | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #3 | A CHILLAR A OTRO PARTE | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #4 | NO PUEDO OLVIDARTE | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #5 | FRUTA PROHIBIDA | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #6 | DIRECTO AL CORAZON | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #7 | LAS CORSAS DEL AMOR | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #8 | ALGO DE MI CONGOLO PRIMAVERA (EMI LATIN) |
| #9 | NO PUEDO OLVIDARTE | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #10 | ERES DIVINA | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #11 | MI CREO | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #12 | ENSENAMOS A OLVIDAR | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |

### LATIN ALBUMS: POP

| #1 | AIRPLAY CHARTS: REGA LA SU NUEVA | WILLIAM IZQUIERDO (EMI LATIN) |
| #2 | EN LA CIUDAD | WILLIAM IZQUIERDO (EMI LATIN) |
| #3 | RINCON DE AMORES | WILLIAM IZQUIERDO (EMI LATIN) |
| #4 | A MI ME GUSTA | WILLIAM IZQUIERDO (EMI LATIN) |
| #5 | OTRA VIDA | WILLIAM IZQUIERDO (EMI LATIN) |

### LATIN ALBUMS: TROPICAL

| #1 | TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS: POP | JOHN BONHAM (EMI LATIN) |
| #2 | POR UNA NOCHE | JOHN BONHAM (EMI LATIN) |
| #3 | EN MI AMOR | JOHN BONHAM (EMI LATIN) |
| #4 | VIVIR | JOHN BONHAM (EMI LATIN) |
| #5 | MI GOTA DE MARAVILLA | JOHN BONHAM (EMI LATIN) |

### REGIONAL MEXICAN

<p>| #1 | REGIONAL MEXICAN | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #2 | LOS COROS DE DURANGO | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #3 | LOS COROS DE DURANGO | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #4 | ERES DIVINA | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #5 | MI CREO | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |
| #6 | ENSENAMOS A OLVIDAR | BRONCO / LOS BUKIS (EMI LATIN) |</p>
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**ALBUMS**

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**DATA**

For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

Data for week of February 4, 2006. For chart reprints call 646.654.4633.
TOP 40:

1. Johnny Cash
2. Tim McGraw
3. AC/DC
4. Pink Floyd
5. Korn

Singles Charts:

- Songs are removed from the Hot 100 if they have been on the Hot 100 for more than 20 weeks and rank below 50. Songs are removed from the Hot 100 if they fail to break into the Top 50 for more than 20 weeks and rank below 30. Titles are removed from Hot Country Songs if they have been on the chart for more than 50 weeks and rank below 40 in detections or audio-visual presence. If titles are not available through enough outlets, they are eligible for removal.

SALES CONFIGURATION:

- CD single available: *CD single available.
- Digital Single available: *Digital Single available.
- CD Ideal Single available: *CD Ideal Single available.

ALBUM CHARTS:

- Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 albums (Platinum).
- RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million albums (Diamond).
- Current certification for net shipment of 1 million albums (Platinum).
- Current certification for net shipment of 5 million albums (Multi-Platinum).
- Current certification for net shipment of 10 million albums (Super-Diamond).
- Current certification for net shipment of 50 million albums (Diamond).

SPECIAL CHARTS:

- Billboard Hot 100, Billboard Hot 100 Airplay, and Billboard Top 40 charts.
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<td><strong>4. HUSTLE &amp; FLOW</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5. WEDDING CRASHERS (FULL SCREEN UN-CORKED EDITION)</strong></td>
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<td>(Pinkman Latin, ASCAP/Cover 'B' / BMI</td>
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<td>FEEL GOOD</td>
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<td>GET A JOB</td>
<td>(EMI Records, Sony ATV Music)</td>
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<td>GET THE BUCK</td>
<td>(Morgan Wallen, Sony ATV Music)</td>
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<td>GET THE BLUES</td>
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<td>GET YOUR</td>
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<td>GIVE IT TO ME</td>
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**Data for week of FEBRUARY 4, 2006**

**CHARTS LEGEND on Page 52**

**Traps**:

- Trap Trap: tweegusta, BMI/BBC/EMI
- Trap Trap: tweegusta, BMI/BBC/EMI

**Other Notes**:

- tweegusta: tweegusta, BMI/BBC/EMI
- tweegusta: tweegusta, BMI/BBC/EMI

**About the Chart**:

- The Billboard Singles & Tracks chart is a weekly ranking of the top songs in the United States, based on various metrics such as airplay, sales, and streaming.
- The chart is published by Billboard magazine and is one of the most influential charts in the world of music.

**Additional Information**:

- The chart is updated every week and includes songs from various genres and artists.
- The chart is used by musicians, record labels, and the music industry to gauge the popularity of songs and artists.

**How to Read the Chart**:

- The chart is divided into sections based on different categories, such as Hot 100, Hot 100 Songs, Hot Latin Songs, and so on.
- Each section includes a ranking of the top songs, along with information about the artist, label, and release date.

**Example Song Information**:

- "Dancing in the Street" by the Rolling Stones is ranked 24 on the Hot 100 chart.
- The song features guest vocals from Mick Jagger and is produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber.
- The song was released in 2006 and has achieved significant popularity since then.

**Conclusion**:

- The Billboard Singles & Tracks chart is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the music industry, providing insights into the most popular songs and artists of the week.
- By analyzing the chart, one can gain a deeper understanding of the music landscape and the factors that influence song success.
For ad placement call 1-800-223-7524 or write Jeff Serrette at classifieds@billboard.com or fax 646-654-4798/99.
HELP WANTED

VNU Business Media publishes over 40 business publications, stages more than 70 trade shows and conferences and operates approximately 200 business-to-business electronic products. We operate around the globe, covering some of the most powerful industries in the world including entertainment, retail, media, travel and design. Billboard, a VNU Publication, currently has the following openings for qualified candidates with a passion for music:

**R&B Hip Hop Editor**

Billboard Radio Monitor, a VNU Publication, is currently seeking an R&B/Hip Hop Editor for its New York office. This position will be responsible for producing all copy related to the rap, hip-hop, and R&B beats in all Billboard Radio Monitor Branded products. This includes feature stories, specials, profiles and radio industry news in print, online and at conferences. This position also requires the qualified individual to generate regular stories for Billboard magazine and its associated online platforms.

The ideal candidate will be a self-starter, and have a minimum of 3-5 years of professional experience working either in journalism, the radio business, the record business or a related field. Must be able to speak the language of radio and understand their issues and challenges as well as have strong radio and industry relationships. Bachelor's degree in a relevant area of study required. Those without the above requirements should not apply.

**Event Marketing Manager**

This NY based position is responsible for developing and directing the marketing of 9 Billboard events with the goal of driving attendance & sponsorship dollars. Responsibilities include copy writing, creation of event materials (ads, brochures, postcards, e-blasts), design direction and messaging, development and implementation of all event marketing programs (online, direct mail, print), creation of audience and sponsor surveys, development of audience profiles for sponsorship sales, managing creative development, and database building through research.

Qualified candidates must have a minimum of 3-5 years of event-related experience in the marketing/event industry. Music marketing experience preferred. Travel required within the US. Events are currently held in Miami, Atlanta, LA, NY and Las Vegas.

**Senior Event Sales Associate**

This New York based position will work with the Director of Sponsorships to generate new sales revenue for Billboard Events. We are seeking someone who is a strong sales person: proven success in making major sales presentations, developing agreements and executing sponsor deliverables, and cultivating relationships with high-level clients.

Qualified candidates must have 3 to 5 years of sales experiences, preferably in the event or music industry. A college degree in a relevant area of study is required. Travel required within the US. Events are currently held in Miami, Atlanta, LA, NY and Las Vegas.

**Event Sales Associate**

This NY based position will work with the Director of Sponsorships to generate new sponsorship revenue. Must have professional telephone selling skills. Making a large volume of telephone prospecting calls is a MUST.

We are seeking someone who has excellent phone/presentation skills and the ability to develop relationships. Candidates will need 1-2 years of sales experience in the event or music industry. A college degree in a relevant area of study is required. Travel required in the US. Events are currently held in Miami, Atlanta, LA, NY and Las Vegas.

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**Johnny Bienstock, 83, Dies**

Longtime music industry executive Johnny Bienstock died Jan. 20 in Naples, Fla., due to complications from heart disease and a stroke. He was 83.

During his 60-year career, Bienstock moved back and forth between the publishing and label worlds, serving as a top executive at Big Top Records, Cotillion, RSO and Carlin America.


“He knew every aspect of music publishing, from the classical part of the business to the print part of the business to just the normal great pop part of the business,” Robinson says.

Born in Vienna, Bienstock and his brother, Freddy, escaped the Nazi occupation of Austria aided by their father’s Swiss citizenship. They arrived in the United States at the start of World War II. Johnny joined the army and was assigned to the 10th Mountain Division.

Johnny began his career in 1944, when he and Freddy joined the music publishing operation of their cousins, Jean and Julian Aberbach, who went on to found Hill & Range.

Johnny’s first job for the Aberbachs was pitching sheet music to big-band leaders like Lawrence Welk. Later at Hill & Range, he was involved in handling the publishing of such acts as Ernest Tubbs, Dreddy Arnold, Hank Snow and Elvis Presley.

In 1958, the Aberbachs launched Big Top Records, naming Johnny GM. During his tenure, the label had hits with Del Shannon, Johnny & the Hurricanes, Sammy Turner, Lou Johnson and Miss Toni Fisher, employing such producers as Leiber & Stoller, Phil Spector and Burt Bacharach. An affiliated label, Dunes, issued hit records by Ray Peterson and Curtis Lee.

Johnny also helped establish comedy albums in the marketplace, issuing sets under the Mad magazine logo in affiliation with Mad publisher Bill Gaines.

In 1965, Johnny joined the A&R department at Atlantic Records. Eventually, he headed up Atlantic’s Cotillion publishing operation later, and the Cotillion label. From there, he was tapped to head the RSO label for Robert Stigwood.


“Johnny was my brother, a great music man and a lifetime friend,” Freddy says. “The passion for his family, his many friends and the music business that he shared with everyone will always be a treasured memory for all who were privileged to know and work with him.”

In addition to his brother, Johnny is survived by Nichola, his wife of 15 years; daughters Jacqueline Kates and Andrea Bienstock; stepson Alexander McKenzie; four grandchildren; and a great-granddaughter.

—Ed Christman
Country artist Jason Aldean, center, celebrated his first RIAA-certified gold record for his self-titled Broken Bow album Jan. 10 at the Red Queen club in Nashville. A dean at Warner Brothers recorded the album co-writers Vicky McGehee and John Rich. (Photo: Scott Sycamore)

Underground Restaurant’s brush with fame took a break from frivolous fun. Their upcoming album with executive producer Nile Rodgers was becoming a hit, performing at the grand opening of Scott’s in New York. From left are arranger Jorge Calandrelli, Marilllow, arranger Ray Ellis, co-producer David Benson, arranger Artie Butler and recording engineer Bruce Botnick. (Photo: Dave Diarmac)

Van Halen bassist Michael Anthony celebrated his new line of Mad Anthony’s beverage sauces at the Hard Rock Cafe in New York, and U.S. and select European Hard Rock Cafes will offer a new menu, as well as Mad Anthony’s Alfredo Pasta Sauce. Featuring the sauce here, Anthony is signing bottles of the sauce for fans. (Photo: Ocean Way Studios)

Barry Manilow recently completed sessions for his Jan. 31 release "The Greatest Songs of the Fifties" at the Ocean Way recording studios in Los Angeles. The album marks Manilow’s return to Arista Records after five years. From left are arranger Jorge Calandrelli, Manilow, arranger Ray Ellis, co-producer David Benson, arranger Artie Butler and recording engineer Bruce Botnick. (Photo: Dave Diarmac)

Rock visionary Lou Reed, left, and electronic music composer Gerstmann reunited to offer a photo after being interviewed Jan. 17 at the "Soundcheck" show on NewTalk WNYC New York. Reed’s new release, "God is a Moth," a recording devoted to the first half side of electronics, was released the day of the interview. (Photo: Courtesy of WNYC)

The three sons of rock legend Ricky Nelson were on hand to perform songs from new Capitol/Elektra release "Ricky Nelson Greatest Hits" before the Jan. 9 screening of the documentary "It’s All Right Now," at the Museum of Television & Radio in Beverly Hills. From left are Brothers Gunnar, Sam and Matthew Nelson. (Photo: Lee Seban/WNYC)

The principals of Simmons Abramson Entertainment, including Richard Abramson, left, and Gene Simmons, right, and Benj Gershman; Radio City Entertainment President, center, and Radio City executive VP of bookings Melissa Ormond, and band member Richard On. (Photo: Avi Gerver/Radio City Entertainment)
THEN AGAIN, MAYBE?

EMI Group chairman Eric Nicoli has never been accused of tact. Nor of wisdom. But when pressed on the prospects of a merger with Warner Music Group, the British executive simply said, “Yes or no.” Nicoli was speaking Jan. 21 at the MidemNet digital music conference in Cannes. Again, when asked about a Warner EMI deal, the answer was the same. Back in London, EMI’s share price rose after Deutsche Bank issued a buy recommendation on the music major, adding that a breakup appeared “the likely endgame.”

FAIR GAME

Sources confirm that A&M president Ron Fair is in talks to become chairman of A&M and Geffen, reporting to Interscope Geffen A&M chairman Jimmy Iovine. The move does not appear to be sitting well with Geffen co-presidents Jordan Schur and Polly Anthony. The promotion would come on the heels of Fair’s success with such hot A&M acts as the Black Eyed Peas and the Pussycat Dolls.

CANNON’S BOOMING

MTV personality Nick Cannon moves to Motown (from Jive) with his new imprint, Call 1 Ball. The first project under the new deal is Cannon’s second album, “Stages.” Guests on the forthcoming set include Kanye West, Anthony Hamilton and first CBF signing Izy. Cannon also has a new manager: Michael “Blue” Williams, president/CEO of Family Tree Entertainment.

CONNECTED

Telecom companies have recently expressed a lot of interest in music, but what about the other way around? Press reports in the Bahamas suggest that the local government has received an offer for its state-owned telephone company, the Bahamas Telegraph and Communications Co. The Ministry of Finance confirmed it has received a proposal from Bluewaters Communications Holdings, a group of international investors. One of the principals for former Warner Music Group chairman/CEO Roger Ames. The Trinidad-born Ames has a British passport and currently serves as a consultant to EMI Group.

SWEET HOME ALABAMA

Drive-by Truckers’ Patterson Hood was in the studio recently with fellow Alabamaans the Driveage, producing that band’s third album. Hood also guests on a few of the tracks. The label-less album was co-produced and engineered by Dave Barbe (of Sugar fame) at his studio in Athens, Ga.

FLOETRY IN MOTION

Track has learned that Marsha Ambrosius, the singer/songwriter half of the duo Floetry, has signed a solo deal with Dr. Dre and Aftermath. The 28-year-old Ambrosius tells Track she jumped at the chance to work with Dr. Dre. “Who wouldn’t? It’s a lifetime opportunity,” she says. “It’s not like he offers to do an album with everybody.” Best assured, Ambrosius and her MC/songwriting partner Natalie Stewart will continue to record and tour as Floetry.

EAGLE ROCK WORKOUT

Eagle Rock Entertainment’s North American operation laid off six employees in December and also changed the employment conditions with some of its top executives. Rob Gill, VP of label operations for North America, and Stacy Poole, head of finance, are telecommuting, but are still affiliated with the company, says Mike Carden, president of operations for North America. “We moved things down, bringing finance, business affairs and the art department [functions] back to London,” ERE founder and chairman Terry Shand says. ERE is also no longer looking for a backer, as was reported (Billboard, July 2, 2005). We were exploring possibilities and we did get a firm offer, but it didn’t match what I was looking for on several different fronts,” Shand says.

MACHINE GETS BIGGER

While neither side will confirm it, look for veteran country promotion man Jack Purcell to join Scott Borchetta’s Big Machine Records in Nashville as head of promotion in February. Expect Purcell’s appointment to be part of a bigger announcement regarding a full promo staff for Big Machine, which currently shares a team with Toby Keith’s Show Dog Nashville label.
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