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Features


27 The New Soul Survivors It's the new old sound from the underground—but please, don't call them neo-soul.

31 Top Urban Songwriters To Watch Bryan Michael-Cox, Johnta Austin and Ne-Yo all make the list. See who else is on it.

Stars

35 Sean Garrett Songwriter/producer breaks out his pen and the hits start flowing.

Music

47 Three Days Grace: Beyond 'Hate'

48 Latin Notas

50 Jazz Notes

52 Nashville Scene, The Beat

53 Reviews

In Every Issue

6 Opinion

55 Over The Counter

56 Charts

76 Mileposts

77 Backbeat

78 Inside Track, Executive Turntable

360 Degrees of Billboard

Home Front

Directions

The Pro Side

Regional Mexican music is big business. Now, Billboard presents the first summit dedicated to the genre, the hottest-selling segment in Latin music. The event debuts Nov. 13-14 in Los Angeles. Details: Page 49 billboardevents.com

Web Sites

Not So Quiet

Don't let its name fool you. The Hush Sound is anything but demure. Read all about the band online at Breaking & Entering, billboard.com

Upfront

7 Payola Probe—Round Two The majors have agreed to settlements, but investigations are far from over.

12 Legal Matters

12 Global

16 On The Road, Boxscore

18 Digital Entertainment

19 Making The Brand

20 The Indies

21 Retail Track

22 Q&A, Pete Seeger

23 Garage Rock

Awards

Foxx Is Top Dog

Jamie Foxx is the top contender for this year's Billboard R&B/Hip-Hop Awards, to be presented Sept. 8 at the close of Billboard's seventh annual R&B/Hip-Hop Conference in Atlanta. Story: Page 10 billboardevents.com

Billboard's Sept. Awards, Presented by SRG-SESAC

www.americanradiohistory.com
The Record Company Of The Future

By Gerd Leonhard

In my work as a music and media futurist, I keep getting questions like "what should a "next-generation" record company actually look like? Here are my answers.

First of all, the so-called "Record Company of the Future" is not actually a record company at all. Rather, it's a music company. This may sound trite, but it is a crucial distinction.

While the "Record Labels of the Past" have often served as banks or venture capitalists—and have controlled the gate to global distribution—the RCOF will focus on finding, developing and releasing promising artists and writers. RCOF guides—but does not imperiously control—careers, and is in charge of many facets of an artist's branding, marketing and revenue-generating activities.

Does that sound like a manager or an agent? Well, it is, and therefore managers will either be part of RCOFs (or indeed, found them) or work in close conjunction with them.

The RCOF sources music through a vast network of real-life and virtual "stringers"—aka A&R scouts—who watch and gauge a band’s buzz around the world, whether online or offline. New artists will—quite literally—surface in online and mobile forums and in communities where "distributed selection" by the users is the norm. These new artists will cut their teeth in clubs and venues around the world, just like they always have and always will, only there will be hundreds of virtual venues available. In the age of Sonicbids, MySpace and YouTube, window-shopping for new bands may be easier than ever!

The RCOF will no longer own the artist's recordings or compositions, rather, RCOF is appointed to be the warrant of the artist's interests for a certain period of time. The RCOF makes money not off but along with the artist—somewhere between 15% and 30% of his or her income.

Because it needs to be able to do any and all deals that involve the artist's activities, such as placements in motion pictures and videos, mobile campaigns, ads, games, etc., the RCOF needs to represent the artist's compositions as well as his or her master recordings. As a result, the RCOF is likely to only sign artists who either write and perform their own music—or can easily provide both rights.

The RCOF’s revenue streams will be extremely diverse, and smart business-to-business software solutions in the asset management systems will handle the bulk of the transactions as well as their administration. The actual sale of "music products" (i.e. downloads, CDs, etc.) will contribute only 30%-40% to the bottom line, but the RCOF will thrive by providing music as a service, and will pursue revenue-sharing deals rather than fixed fee deals.

Significant new revenue will stem from public performances, such as in theatrical and digital radio offerings and the use of music in audiovisual works, and RCOF marketing teams will be true masters of getting "net-play." Other opportunities will include deals that provide for revenue sharing from the many new types of advertising, and from product tie-ins and sponsorships, live concerts and concert recordings, commissioned works, special products and much more.

New artists will be sent out on the road and the Internet to cut their teeth and prove themselves. The artist's own responsibility will be much greater because the "Rolls Royce or bicycle" paradigm of the past is gone for sure. Now, until an artist has achieved a certain level of exposure and can therefore point to some meaningful revenue opportunities, most RCOFs will tend to invest a lot less into an artist's career. Marketing will have to get 75% smarter and 75% cheaper, and therefore the price will be on the artists to "go DIY" and get attention for themselves as well. The concept of a "label," however, will survive since signing with a respected RCOF brand will still get attention.

Leonhard

All in all, RCOFs will generate a lot more revenue—and be a lot more profitable—than the entities formerly known as record companies. But these next-generation operations will be on equal footing with the artists/writers and their managers, and will have to prove themselves, again and again—just like the artists have to do every time they get on the stage.

Soon the music industry may, in way, go back to its roots: providing a service, finding and managing good artists who share the revenue and giving the power back to "the people formerly known as fans."

Gerd Leonhard is a music and media futurist (mediafuturist.com) and co-author of “The Future of Music” (Berkeley Press).

NEW MODELS, NEW GLITCHES

There’s no denying that record companies must change—and are changing. In fact, most labels already consider themselves “music companies” in name and practice.

But will these changes go? This week’s guest commentary (above) suggests a world of free-agent artists contracting with next-generation labels primarily for A&R and marketing services. Artists retain ownership of their work and can move it to future projects elsewhere after a specified term.

In this world, managers play a greater role in artist development. Label deals include publishing, licensing and other revenue streams. This paradigm will work for some artists. Others may find it a nightmare.

Let’s look first at artist development. Will a label with a short-term investment in an artist be motivated to take a longer view than a company with equity in a signee’s output? It’s unlikely.

Let’s assume an artist plays the field, moving among labels and scattering licensing rights along the way. That happens seems like a recipe for greater catalog exploitation or increased film or commercial placements. Managers as labels? In theory, it makes sense for personal handlers to handle more aspects of their artists’ careers. But we like the checks and balances of the current paradigm. And by the way, it is so uncommon to hear of an artist being mishandled by a manager, agent or attorney.

Then there is the matter of funding. If the labels do not fund recording projects, who will? Banks and private investors? We fall to see how this encourages artists.

We are also seeing an interesting scattering of new label models, each is likely to have its own flaws. When art and commerce meet, utopia rarely follows. — Ken Schlager
Round Two?
The Majors Have Agreed To Settlements, But According To Spitzer's Lead Investigator, Radio Stations—And Their Festivals—May Be Next

Though all four major label groups have agreed to monetary settlements and reforms that dramatically alter how they interact with radio stations, the curtain has yet to rise on the second-act of New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's sweeping payola probe.

“We're not done,” assistant deputy Attorney General Terry Brown Clemons told Billboard a few days after EMI Music became the fourth major to settle (Billboard, June 24).

Lead investigator Brown Clemons is now pursuing settlements with seven radio companies. An eighth, Entercom Communications, has walked away from negotiations. The state has subsequently sued the company.

In addition to examining radio's role in alleged abuses documented in reams of e-mail correspondence, phase two will also put station festivals under the microscope. "That's something that goes more to the demands made by the radio stations than to the offers made by the labels," Brown Clemons said.

With the industry still smarting from the settlements and subpoenas, Brown Clemons will make a keynote appearance July 15 at the Conclave radio conference in Minneapolis.

How did payola become an issue that crossed your office's radar?
Two reasons. We had a lawyer who has since left the office who had come from the FCC and was aware of some of these [practices]. And we had complaints about access to the airwaves from mostly independent labels and smaller artists. I think they probably came in because of the work they had seen the attorney general do in other areas.

How did you reach the conclusion that an investigation could be fruitful?
As a result of subpoenas we got from a small radio station in upstate New York. Getting their e-mails and going through the documents and seeing the discussions that were being had with major labels—that was the tipping point. That's when we realized, "Oh, all the big guys are in this." People had come to our office and said, "There are problems; payola still continues." We thought they meant bribes to programming directors. But once we subpoenaed their documents, we saw this whole other scheme of providing payments to the radio stations' bottom line and the spin programs and the fraudulent call-in requests and all the things that were being done to move a song up the charts.

The settlement amounts for the four majors were pretty small in terms of any impact to their bottom line. If you had a strong case, why let them off relatively easily? I don't know that they were let off so easily. You're just looking at dollars. Yes, they should pay a fine or a penalty because they have engaged in these practices, but our goal was getting the industry reforms.

Many in the music industry accuse Spitzer of undertaking the investigation to get some headlines rather than make a real difference in the business. Your thoughts?
It's already had an impact. We haven't had anybody come to us and say, "Those things weren't going on." It's hard to argue with black-and-white evidence. It is a case of sour grapes. You can say that about anything that the attorney general does, that he's doing it to get headlines and help as gubernatorial campaign. But what is he supposed to do? As the attorney general? Is he supposed to sit around and not do cases? That's his job to make sure that people are engaging in practices that are in compance with the law.

Some say that by instituting bans on independent promoters, radio has shut the door to independent labels that rely on indie promoters to work their music to radio. How do you respond to that?
Labels can still use independent promoters. The ban is on using independent promoters who are passing money to radio stations or indie promoters who have exclusive relationships with radio stations.

Labels and radio say the investigation has fostered an era of paranoia. How can these two industries remove the chill and work productively together?
There's no reason why they can't work together. Labels can provide items of value—trips, flyways, money, gift cards, etc.—and radio stations can ask for those items as long as it is not done in exchange for airplay. They can go off to dinner with the label folks. There's nothing wrong with a label promoting music to radio. But they cannot make demands on one another.
**UpFront**

**MOBILE BY BRIAN GARRITY**

**Amp'd Mines The Indies**

Mobile Company To Use ‘Niche Stuff’ To Boost Music Download Store

Independent labels are having a hard time finding prime merchandising space for their acts on the tiny shelves inside mobile music download stores. But one wireless startup is looking to use its selection of indie content as a point of differentiation against larger rivals.

Los Angeles-based Amp’d Mobile has inked deals with a number of leading independent labels and digital distributors in recent weeks as an effort to build up its indie content. Recent signings include labels Wind-up Records, Eighteenth Street Lounge, Metal Blade and the Militia Group; and distributors Digital Rights Agency (DRA) and the Independent Online Distribution Alliance (IODA).

 Acts covered under the deal include People in Planes, Breaking Point, Seether, Animal Collective, Antony & the Johnsons, Fall Out Boy, MF Doom, Bebel Gilberto, They Might Be Giants, The Hives, the Wrens, Master P. S. Zoe, Snoop Dogg and Chingy.

“Amp’d now claims an indie label catalog in excess of 500,000 tracks, including repertoire from an existing deal with the Orchard.

“We think there’s an opportunity there,” Amp’d senior VP of music Larry Mattera says.

“We’re looking to be broad enough to reach the mainstream, but narrow enough to lean left in terms of subgenres. And a lot of the niche stuff is independent-oriented.”

Mattera says indie-friendly genres like hip-hop, reggae, alternative rock, emo and metal particularly match up well with the Amp’d demographic.

To support independent label content, Amp’d offers an indie spotlight slot on the home screen of its music section.

“We want to give them some presence higher up our deck,” Mattera says.

While the mobile space’s embrace of independent music got off to a slow start, efforts to improve indie selection are picking up steam across the board.

Verizon has inked deals with the Orchard, CD Baby, DRA and IODA, and Sprint is in the process of lining up its indie deals. IODA CEO Kevin Arnold says that even as some wireless players look to improve their selection of independent label music, as well as their discovery and search tools, competition for merchandising positioning remains brutal.

“It’s the same old story on the deck,” he says. “There’s very limited space.”

Arnold says independent labels still need to look to marketing opportunities off the phone—like short message service codes—to drive mobile download consumption.

Still, labels and other content providers think mobile virtual network operators like Amp’d—and rivals including Virgin Mobile and Helio, once they start to sell downloads wirelessly—are well positioned to sell independent content because they can cater to niche user bases. MVNOs lease wireless airtime from established wireless carriers to offer mobile entertainment, news and other content and services.

**GLOBAL BY STEVE MCCLURE**

**Warner China Dials Up New Market**

China Unicom’s 130 Million Mobile Users Gain Access To Label’s Digital Catalog

The City of Hope Cancer Center’s Music & Entertainment Industry is bestowing its highest honor, the Spirit of Life Award, on Charles Goldstuck, president/COO of Bertelsmann Music Group (U.S.).

Goldstuck will receive the award at a black-tie gala scheduled for Oct. 5 in Los Angeles. The proceeds from the event will go toward City of Hope’s cancer and life-threatening disease research, treatment and education programs.

The award is presented annually to individuals who have made a notable contribution to their community and profession.

Two court cases are challenging the recently inked deal with China Unicom that gives the mobile operator’s 130 million subscribers direct access to the music major’s digitized catalog.

Goldstuck is the first of its rivals to enter a direct, catalog-wide content pact in China, a country with an estimated 1.3 billion population.

The major will make available recordings as master ringtones and ringback tones, and will offer artist greetings featuring its acts via China Unicom’s CDMA and GSM networks. Content will be drawn from a pool of regional acts including Stefanie Sun, Tanya Chua, A-Mei and F.I.R. (Taiwan), Wang Jing and Paul Wong (China), Jocie Guo (Singapore), Nicholas Zhang (Malaysia) and Fiona Sit (Hong Kong).

According to a statement from Warner, the artists will receive “significant marketing support” across China Unicom’s network—through short message service marketing, menu listing, a dedicated Warner Music zone and cross-selling links on WAP sites. Executives at Warner describe the pact as a key step in their global digital plan. “It is totally part of a comprehensive, cohesive strategy,” says Alex Zubillaga, executive VP of digital strategy and business development at Warner Music Group (WMG).

In recent months, the music giant has ramped up its digital activities in Asia. On June 6, Warner purchased a minority stake in Tokyo-based mobile-broadcaster and wireless-application developer FrontMedia. That followed Warner’s May 10 announcement of a joint venture with South Korea’s 5K Telecom.

Reaction to the new deal within the region has been generally positive. “It makes sense because it takes away a lot of the doubt of working with a service provider,” says Ashley Whitfield, managing director of Hong Kong-based entertainment company Elevation. “It gives [Warner] much greater control of their content. Everyone would love to make this kind of deal.

One industry source notes that, besides giving labels access to millions of mobile subscribers, such label-telcom agreements enable record companies to insist that transparent accounting procedures are followed—which is not always the case in China.

“Warner is, among the majors, the clear market and vision leader in terms of innovation in digital and mobile product mix, creative partnering and deal-making,” notes Rick Myers, Shanghai-based director of strategic entertainment agency Dragonfly Revolution.

“The Warner-Unicom deal is going to break real new ground in China.”

Zubillaga says that the Edgar Bronfman Jr.-led consortium that took over WMG in 2003 has always been “a big believer” in digital music distribution, "especially in Asia, where we had suffered from both physical and online piracy.”

Warner will likely announce similar deals in future, Zubillaga adds. “This is not a one-shot-turkey approach to this market. ‘We’ll set up deals market by market, depending on local circumstances.’

"There is no recorded music business in China," says Zubillaga. "We’re making the effort to enter the market and, with the right investment, be able to compete."
Thanks Daddy Yankee for bringing Reggaeton to $2 Bill.

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Bonnaroo Busts Boundaries

JAMIE FOXX TOPS CONTENDERS FOR R&B/HIP-HOP AWARDS

Jamie Foxx tops the list of finalists for this year’s Billboard R&B/Hip-Hop Awards. Foxx, who took home an Academy Award for his portrayal of Ray Charles, is a contender in eight categories including top R&B/hip-hop album and top R&B/hip-hop artist.

Foxx’s collaborations with Kanye West on “Gold Digger” and Ludacris on “Unpredictable” are both in the running in two categories including top R&B/hip-hop song.

The awards ceremony will close Billboard’s seventh annual R&B/Hip-Hop Conference to be held Sept. 6-8 at the Renaissance Waverly in Atlanta.

West, Mariah Carey and Mary J. Blige are all contenders in seven categories including top R&B/hip-hop album and top R&B/hip-hop album artist.

Young Jeezy will compete in four categories, including best rap album for “Let’s Get It: Thug Motivation 101.” He is also in the running for top new artist alongside Ne-Yo, Keysha Cole and Chris Brown.

Alicia Keys, last year’s top R&B/hip-hop female artist winner, and Destiny’s Child, winner of last year’s honor for top R&B/hip-hop duo or group, return as finalists this year in those same categories. The Black Eyed Peas are in the running for best duo or group and best rap album for “Monkey Business.” And T.I. is a finalist in two categories including top male R&B/hip-hop artist.

Top songwriter finalists are Johna Austin, Robert Kelly, Chris Greenwald, Howell Llewellyn, Jill Menzer, Paul Sexton and Reuters.

CLASSICAL BY ANASTASIA TSIOLCAS

In another round of musical chairs in the classical recording industry, key positions at EMI Classics, Deutsche Grammophon and Warner Classics changed hands in recent weeks.

In the highest-profile move, Costa Pilavachi, who until February was president of London-based Decca Music Group, is headed to EMI Classics as its president. Pilavachi will succeed Richard Lyttleton, who is retiring at the end of July. He will be based in London and report to Alan Levy and David Manns, chairman and vice-chairman of EMI Music, respectively.

Meanwhile, Matthew Cosgrove, who had been director of Warner Classics, is taking up the position of VP of A&R at Universal Classics’ Deutsche Grammophon label in July, reporting to Michael Lang, the label’s GM. Cosgrove replaces Beppe Riggio, who left Deutsche Grammophon to replace Pilavachi at Decca, with the title of managing director.

Cosgrove’s sudden departure and Warner’s decision to roll its classical division under the catalog-oriented Rhino U.K. fueled press reports earlier this month that Warner Classics was shuttering its doors to new, frontline releases—and that some 40 ensembles and artists might find themselves without a recording home.

The label’s roster includes international stars like conductor/pianist Daniel Barenboim, pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard, violinists Leila Josefowicz and Daniel Hope and mezzo-soprano Susan Graham.

Warner vigorously denies that Warner Classics is ceasing any current roster activities. It named Stefan Brown, a longtime Warner Classics employee, as its new GM, taking over some of Cosgrove’s former duties. Brown reports to Rhino U.K. director Nick Stewart.

In a corporate statement, officials said: “We do not expect the changes that have taken place in the U.K. to change the support given to the impressive Warner Classics catalog or the anticipated new releases that are generated by the U.K. repertoire company.”

The company says the decision to place Warner Classics under Rhino U.K. was made in order to enhance strategic planning and operations. In addition, Warner Classics points out that Los Angeles-based Rhino has managed the former label’s U.S. activities for almost three years. (However, Warner Classics’ main A&R center has been based in London under Cosgrove’s direction. He was not available for comment by press time.)

James Inverne, editor of Gramophone magazine, which broke the Warner Classics story, finds Warner’s moves “rather curious,” he says. “In many ways,” he notes, “Warner Classics wasn’t a ‘traditional’ major; it operated with a very small staff and had a very small release schedule, which was to their benefit—they really lashed a lot of individual attention on the recordings they did put out, and their releases were garnering a lot of acclaim.”
JOHNNY CASH AMERICAN V: A Hundred Highways
Available 4th of July
The Final Recordings of Johnny Cash. Produced by Rick Rubin.
Task Force Reports Progress Vs. Pirates
Prosecutions Up 98%; Global Battle Intensifies

When working with foreign governments, the DOJ has emphasized IP enforcement issues. For example, earlier this month IP enforcement was a primary topic at the annual United States (China) Joint Liaison Group on Law Enforcement meeting in Washington, D.C.

U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez raised IP issues directly with his Chinese counterparts during his trip to China last November, with Germany’s Minister of Justice in April and with officials in Pakistan, which has aggressively pursued the producers of pirated optical media. Legislatively, three new laws have passed since the 2004 report. The Intellectual Property Protection and Courts Amendments Act of 2004 expanded a previous law that prohibited trafficking in counterfeit labels for copyrighted works. It prohibits the trafficking in genuine, but unauthorized, labels, and allows the government to seize equipment used in producing the counterfeit and illicit labels.

The Family Entertainment and Copyright Act of 2005 amended the law to prohibit the knowing or attempted use of a video camera to make or transmit a copy of a film from a show in a movie theater or similar venue without authorization. The Stop Counterfeiting in Manufactured Goods Act modified current law; it prohibits trafficking in labels, documents or packaging with counterfeited marks intended for goods or services, attracting 130 representatives from 48 countries.

According to IFPI president John Kennedy, Madrid was picked because of its “frightening” piracy rates. The city accounts for 62% of Spain’s physical music piracy, Kennedy said in his opening address. “As recently as 1999, piracy in Spain was just 4% of the total [market],” Kennedy added. “We now look back on that fondly! It rose to 25% but has dropped to 22%.”

Billboard has learned that IFPI’s forthcoming Global Piracy report (due June 27) shows, for the third year in succession, that Spain is the only top ten global market in value terms that is also one of the ten worst in terms of piracy. “The big problem now is online piracy,” Kennedy said. “Our figures on Spain show that illegal downloads in 2005 totaled 508 million, nearly double the 270 million in 2004.”

Delegate José Luis Perez Quintero, director of enforcement, governments and strengthening relations with Internet service providers.”

Other key issues discussed, he added, included rapid piracy growth in former Eastern bloc countries, China’s commitment to tackle the issue to satisfy World Trade Organization membership demands and “a surprising growth of piracy in Africa.”

David Martin, head of BPI’s anti-piracy unit, described the biennial conference as a key opportunity for anti-piracy professionals to compare cases of interest or new procedures and to see how national strategies fit in with IFPI’s global approach. For Luca Vespignani, secretary-general of Italian record industry anti-piracy body FPM, a key attraction of the conference was the presentation of operations that could be replicated in Italy.

That view was backed by Germany’s Clemens Rasch, managing director of promedia, which handles anti-piracy activities for IFPI Germany, which tied together raids on street vendors and increased police presence in Madrid with stepped-up customs vigilance at airports and docks.

Delegates also heard Warner Music president Mariano Perez claim that a similar campaign throughout 2005 in Guadalajara, Mexico, resulted in a 27% annual increase in retail sales in that city. “Guadalajara Plus and Madrid Plus show we can fight back,” he said. Attendees also heard from Warner Music Spain singer/pianist Carmen Paris, who complained that piracy in Spain was causing much harm to “smaller composers” like herself.

Paris warned delegates not to underestimate the difficulty of making the public aware of the importance of the “abstract and ethereal” concept of intellectual property.

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London, Wolfgang Spahr in Hamburg and Mark Worden in Milan. 

On the eve of soccer’s World Cup, talk in Madrid’s bars focused on the national team’s prospects in the competition now under way in Germany. But while most of Madrid was obsessed with the immediate outcome for the beloved “Furia Roja” — literally, Red Fury — it was the long-term future of the world’s record industry that dominated discussions at the city’s Melia Castilla hotel. That was the setting June 7-9 for IFPI’s fifth biennial Worldwide Anti-Piracy Enforcement Conference, which addressed piracy prevention at Spanish labels body Promusicae, suggested the most important view to emerge at the conference was “the need for a single methodology [and] strategy to tackle online piracy; that the battle around the corner is global and must be tackled with a united IFPI with a coordinated global strategy.” Despite no formal statements were issued at the end of the conference, Perez Quintero said “drastic decisions” were taken to fight online piracy globally, by “lobbying

12 | JULY 1, 2006

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DEAR ARTIST:

With the recent noise and confusion around ongoing negotiations between XM and the recording industry, we feel that it’s important to speak to you directly at this time.

We want to make clear that XM’s respect for you is at the core of what we do. We provide artists from all genres with a unique connection to their fans, and unlike many new services in the age of digital music, we built our business from the very beginning on respect for copyrights and compensation for artists.

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XM’S NEW RADIOS PROVIDE TIME-SHIFTING FUNCTIONALITY — NOT DOWNLOADS

You have probably heard about our new radios — the Inno and Helix. A lot of what’s out there is misinformation. Some have characterized these products as download radios — they are not. They simply enable listeners to save songs off the radio for playback later — the 21st century equivalent of a cassette recorder, in the same way that TiVo allows them to save TV shows for later viewing. XM subscribers cannot choose the tracks that XM plays. And unlike download services, XM subscribers never own the programming that they record from XM — it cannot be burned to a CD, transferred to other radios or uploaded to the internet. In addition, XM subscribers can only listen to recorded XM content as long as they keep an active XM subscription.

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Much like how home video recording led to the phenomenal success of DVDs and now, on-demand services, we believe that the XM service and these new radios will generate more interest in, and more sales of your music. XM has partnered with the new, legal Napster online music service to make it easy for our subscribers to purchase and download a permanent copy of songs that they hear on XM and want to own.

In addition, artists receive additional payments from the sale of these new radios. The radio manufacturers pay royalties through a per-radio payment added to each digital recording radio sold in the U.S. under the Audio Home Recording Act (AHRA), established by Congress and fully supported by the music industry.

We are in the midst of a difficult negotiation with the major labels. These disagreements tend to get heated before they get resolved. Please remember: business is business, but artists are family.

Again, thank you on behalf of the more than 6.5 million XM music fans who appreciate the passion and innovation that you bring to your craft. If you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to e-mail me at ericl@xmradio.com. I look forward to continuing and building upon our terrific partnership.

Sincerely,

Eric Logan
Executive Vice President, Programming
XM Satellite Radio
ITALIANS LOBBY GOVERNMENT
Italy's three key record industry bodies have jointly presented the country's recently elected government with a 10-point action plan. The document's signatories include major labels body FIMI plus independent groups PMI and Audicoop. Live music organisations including Assomusic (concert promoters), Arci and Superclub (venues) also signed the proposal.

Key points include recorded and live music to be classified as cultural products (thereby qualifying for a lower sales tax), tax incentives for the digitalization of catalogs and setting up an Italian music office to boost exports.

The appeal is addressed to the government of Prime Minister Romano Prodi, whose center-left coalition won April's general election. According to FIMI president Enzo Mazza, the bodies hope to present specific legislative proposals to the senate and parliamentary cultural commissions "at some stage in July."

—Mark Worden

CASTELLO BRANCO OUT AT UNI
Universal Music Iberia president Marcelo Castello Branco was dismissed June 28. It is three years in the Madrid-based post, overseeing the company's operations in Spain and Portugal. Until a replacement is hired, Miami-based Universal Music Latin America and Iberian Peninsula chairman Jesús López assumes direct responsibility for day-to-day management of the Spanish and Portuguese affiliates.

López reports to Paris-based Universal Music France, Middle East and Mediterranean-South America president Pascal Negre. He also reports to Universal Music Group president/COO Zach Horowitz for activities related to Universal Music Latino and Mexico.

No reason was given for Castello Branco's dismissal. A 24-year company veteran, Brazilian Castello Branco moved to Spain in March 2003. He had been president of Universal Music Brazil/Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile and Uruguay).

—Howell Llewellyn

WARNING FOR EU HOPEFULS
The leaders of European Union member states have warned Romania and Bulgaria they must "step up their efforts to tackle decisively and without delay" action against piracy, organized crime and corruption if they are to join the body next year.

The 25 leaders issued a statement June 16 at the end of a two-day EU heads of state summit in Brussels. It said both countries need to speed up essential reforms over the summer. The EU's executive arm, the European Commission, will give a final recommendation in October on whether the two countries can join on Jan. 1, 2007, as originally scheduled.

Romania and Bulgaria face heavy cross-border trade in pirated materials; officials are concerned their customs agencies are not yet capable of defending what would become the EU's external border.

The leaders' statement said they remained convinced that both countries "can overcome the deficits to reach the envisaged date of accession."

—Leo Cendrowicz

CUBADISCO CUTS BACK
Venezuela will be the guest country at next year's Cubadisco trade fair, due to be held May 19-27 in Havana.

China was this year's guest country at the 10th annual Cubadisco (May 20-28). But according to the event's organizing committee, the Latin music trade fair will downsize and become more regional to focus on Latin American and Caribbean markets.

Cubadisco has embraced companies from Europe and Asia since its 1997 launch, but it has become a smaller trade fair in recent years. This year, there were no stands from overseas music companies at the event (Billboard, May 20) and longtime event backer Spanish authors' body SGAE drastically scaled down its involvement.

—Howell Llewellyn

ORIONTO—Could the breakup of a group involving two sets of siblings be anything other than a soap opera?

Consider the tale of the Cottars from wind-swept Cape Breton in Nova Scotia—the heartland of Scottish culture in Canada.

Among the cast of characters: four talented teen musicians; a folklorist father guiding the band's musical direction; and frustrated U.S.-based management struggling to keep two family factions together.

The plot line has the Cottars splitting within months of releasing their acclaimed Rounder Records debut, "Forerunner," and only weeks after a high-profile 23-date North American tour with the Chieftains.

It's a situation the band's exasperated manager Pam McDermott describes as "absolutely crazy."

The two sets of teenage siblings in the Cottars are vocalist Fiona MacGillivray, 16, and keyboardist/guitarist Ciaran MacGillivray, 18, plus fiddler Roseanne MacKenzie, 16, and guitarist Jimmy MacKenzie, 18. All grew up immersed in traditional Cape Breton music.

When they signed to Rounder in November 2005, label co-founder Ken Irwin predicted success for the Cottars, noting that the company had also signed Alison Krauss, Jerry Douglass and Mark O'Connor as teenagew.

Such hopes were dashed when the MacGillivrays' 'mother, Beverly, notified McDermott by letter that the act was disbanding.

"The four kids have been unhappy in the last while," she wrote, adding, "for Ciaran and Fiona, any future this band could have is not inducement enough to endure any more antagonism or stress. We feel our responsibility here is as parents first—and as band personnel second."

The move came as a blow to the MacKenzie's. "Jimmy and I are devastated," Roseanne MacKenzie says. "We haven't been able to talk to Fiona or Ciaran. We are going to miss playing music with them."

Boston-based McDermott Entertainment has managed the Cottars since 2002. McDermott says she and the label have been vainly trying to halt the breakup since receiving MacGillivray's letter on April 24.

According to McDermott, nine months of bookings in North America, followed by European dates in 2007 and a 10-week Australian tour in 2008, had been planned. But the Cottars will complete only eight North American festival dates this summer before disbanding.

"What's wrong with this story?" McDermott angrily asks. "Six months ago, we were sitting at a conference room table celebrating signing with Rounder.

Now, the MacGillivrays want the band to disband."

Puzzled, she asks, "Why would the MacGillivrays agree to sign with Rounder if this had been in the works?"

Beverly and Allister MacGillivray declined to comment and the MacKenzie's parents could not be reached.

Once a child performer himself, Cape Breton-born Allister MacGillivray played in the 1960s and 1970s as a guitarist with Canadian/ Irish act Ryan's Fancy and Irish duo Tommy Makem & Liam Clancy. In the 1980s, he returned to Cape Breton to concentrate on songwriting and writing books about the island's musical culture.

Insiders say the MacGillivrays controlled the day-to-day operations of the band. Allister chose its material and co-produced/arranged its albums while his wife supervised the act on the road.

"Beverly and Allister ran this group with an iron fist," Canadian folk singer and family friend John McDermott says, "but I don't think they understood what an amazing position the group was in."

Sources suggest that a growing international schedule coupled with outside pressures on the teenagers while on the road may have been beyond what the MacGillivrays could deal with—or wanted their children to cope with.

"The guts of the issue is that the MacGillivrays were losing control of the act," Pam McDermott says.

With the Cottars' career ending, Roseanne MacKenzie is currently playing in John McDermott's band. The singer (no relation to Pam McDermott) financed the Cottars' 2002 début, "Made in Cape Breton," and released it in Canada on his own Bunnygee Music label. According to Nielsen Entertainment Canada, the album has sold 15,000 units in Canada, 2004 follow-up "On Fire!" on the band's own Seal Cape Music label has sold 5,000 units.

"Foreunner" has scanned 2,000 units in Canada and 5,000 units in the United States since its 10 release. However, sources say the act enjoys substantially higher sales through non-Nielson outlets in Canada for which figures are not available.

Rounder first tapped Cape Breton's folk heritage in the 1970s, signing regional names like Buddy MacMaster and the Beaton Family. Cape Breton fiddler Natalie MacMaster is also signed to Rounder. The Cottars—whose name derives from an archaic Scottish word for peasant—were expected to surpass such acts' sales during their multi-album deal.

"We felt we had something with the Cottars," Irwin says. "For the most part, Celtic vocals have not gotten to a wider audience. We felt the Cottars were the group to do that."

"When signing any act, we try to get a feel for the stability of the band," Irwin adds. "But it's often difficult to see problems, especially if you don't see a band that often—or if the members make an effort to hide their difficulties."

—Brian Wise

NO HARMONY FOR THE COTTARS
Cape Breton Quartet Of Two Families' Teen Siblings Splits Unexpectedly

THE MACGILLIVRAYS

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Fresh Air Helps Bush Keep Growing
Bluegrass Innovator Thrives In Festival Season

Mandolin virtuoso Sam Bush will cover some serious mileage this summer in support of his new Sugar Hill album, “Laps In Seven.” Bush is playing a range of clubs, theaters, outdoor venues, and festivals with the emphasis on the last of the four. The string guru’s festival schedule alone is indicative of this flourishing scene with some 25 fest of varying styles and sizes booked between April and September.

“Once we started playing at Merlefest in April [in Wilkesboro, N.C.] it started up the whole season,” Bush says on the phone from Telluride, Colo., where he was booked at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. “I play all year, but once the festival season starts that’s for me the greatest time because I love playing outdoors.”

The scene has become more diverse over the years, encompassing many types of music. “When we first started out, I was in a situation where it was either a bluegrass festival or a country rock festival,” Bush says. “And now it seems to have homogenized over the years to where the audience loves bluegrass, but they also love rock ‘n’ roll, country rock or whatever.”

Bush says that’s particularly the case in Telluride. “They call it the Telluride Bluegrass Festival, but it’s really a wide-open thing with all types of music,” he says. “There have always been the kinds of places that appeal to me the most, e.g., as a listener.”

Duriing the last decade, the jam band scene has become incredibly intertwined with bluegrass and acoustic music, a positive development, Bush believes.

“I think it makes for probably a younger listening audience for acoustic music, and that’s really important because if you don’t have a younger audience, you really don’t have an audience,” he says. “Now we have generations that can dig this acoustic kind of scene because it doesn’t revolve around trends as fast.”

Bush, 54, started playing professionally right out of high school with his New Grass Revival revolutionizing the scene in the 1970s. “In this kind of acoustic world some of the originators of the style are still alive and still out there doing it,” he says. “You can see really young bands and then people like Ralph Stanley and Doc Watson.”

Bush, who is booked by Baron Bush at Skyline Music, says he has a lot of input into his live dates. “I have to be really careful where I play because if it’s really ‘old time’ sort of scene, I probably shouldn’t be there because my band is sort of like an acoustic rock ‘n’ roll, reggae, bluegrass band,” he explains. “In my situation, I love those audiences that are up for anything.”

That’s what he found when he made his debut at Telluride in 1975. “That’s when I discovered there were people that wanted to hear all kinds of stuff at the same show,” he says.

Bush and his band consistently play about 140 dates a year. “Where I come from in the world of bluegrass and acoustic music, you don’t just tour, you play,” he says. “You don’t have six months off and then tour for six months, you play all year, which is best for your music because you keep your chops up that way.”

Most of all, it’s still fun. “We travel for a living, and our reward is to get to play music for two hours,” he says. “That’s why we started learning instruments.”
CMA Fest Is A Downtown Hit

Six years after shifting to downtown Nashville, the CMA Music Festival has removed doubts that the move was a good one.

The Country Music Assn., which produces the annual country music pilgrimage, says it set an attendance record this year with 161,590 attending the four-day event, June 8-11.

The figure represents “aggregate” attendance for the four days. The actual number of individual attendees—approximated by dividing that figure by four—was in the 40,000 range. Tickets cost between $86 and $286.

That’s almost twice the 21,600 attendees the CMA reported for 2000, the final year the event—then known as Fan Fair—was held at the Tenes-see State Fairgrounds.

Perhaps more important than the attendance totals was the CMA Fest’s success at shepherd- ing fans to and from a diverse slate of venues that included the Nashville Convention Center, the city’s Riverfront Park, the newly named LP Field stadium across the Cumberland River (site of the festival’s nightly headlining concerts) and various parking lots, street stages, concourses and green spaces.

Also full of music and various fan-club gatherings for the entire week were the Ryman Au- ditorium and several Nashville nightlife spots.

The event has “finally taken on a life of its own,” says Tony Conway, executive producer of the CMA Fest. “This is the sixth year since we moved it downtown, and it ran like a well-oiled machine. The security was excellent, the ven- dors were all thrilled and way up, and we had a record-breaking year on merch sales.”

The event also rang up record sponsor participation, valued at about $2.5 million. “Without the sponsors, we couldn’t do the festival,” Conway says.

Single-day concert tickets, priced at $14, at the Greased Lightning Daytime Stages at River- front Park and the nightly concerts, priced at $30, at LP Field were up 8% from 2005, accord- ing to the CMA. The upper level of LP Field was opened for the second year, doubling the amount of seating to accommodate the demand for single-night concert tickets. CMA also experienced a 6% increase in the sale of four- day ticket packages. Gross ticket sales figures are not released.

A total of 33 acts performed at LP Field, includ- ing Gary Allan, Dierks Bentley, Brooks & Dunn, Sara Evans, Pat Green, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Hank Williams Jr., Trace Adkins, Kenny Chesney, Mont- gomery Gentry, Trisha Yearwood, Wynonna, Billy Ray Cyrus, Martina McBride, Brad Paisley, Carrie Underwood, Clint Black, LeAnn Rimes, Los Lonely Boys and Sugarland.

Another 86 acts performed on the dual stages at Riverfront Park. Additionally, a total of 326 artists and celebrities appeared in the Wrangler Fan Fair at the Nashville Convention Center for the autograph and photo sessions. Exhibit booths sold out with 115 exhibitors.

Conway says he is pleased with the level of star power at this year’s event. “I’m always amazed when certain press says, ‘You didn’t have Tim McGraw, you didn’t have Toby Keith, you didn’t have Faith Hill.’” Conway says. “Tell me any other genre of music where I can have 98%-99% of the biggest acts in the genre [perform], and I’ll kiss your ass.”

CMA Fest hosted 14 of the top 25 artists repre- sented in Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart and seven of the top 10 artists repre- sented in the Hot Country Songs chart for the June 4 issue. And having every act every year is not a goal, Conway adds. “Alan Jackson has played this festival 11 years in a row,” he says. “He loves to play it, but he asked if he could have this year off, and we said, ‘Sure, man.’”

The CMA Fest has an advantage over almost any other festival in that it showcases a lineup worth $7 million-$8 million without having to pay the artists.

In a tradition dating back to the festival’s early-1970s Fan Fair days, acts play for free, in part because the CMA donates half the fest’s net pro- ceeds to music education on their behalf. To date, the CMA has donated more than $800,000 to worthy causes.

“That’s one reason they do it,” Conway says. “The second reason they do it is for the fans.”

And with more than 500 credentialed media from around the world and a two-hour prime-time ABC special to air July 27, acts also play CMA Fest for the media exposure, Conway notes.

The CMA Fest seems to be on a roll. Tickets for the 2007 event, June 7-10, went on sale dur- ing this year’s CMA Fest, and Gold Circle four- day ticket packages sold out in a record two hours. Total advance sales increased 41% over sales during the same period in 2005.

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Human Touch: Sites Tap Friends For Music

Social Networking Links Those With Similar Tastes

Several new online services have emerged with their own takes on digital music discovery.

These services take the form of networking sites, music blogs, search engines and more. They are largely a response to the perceived lack of quality recommendation tools utilized by the larger digital music services, such as iTunes, Yahoo and AOL.

"The iTunes store is not a discovery tool," says David Hyman, CEO of MOG, one of the notable newcomers.

Launched June 20, MOG is a social networking site designed to give music fans a forum to express their musical interests and find others with a similar bent. Whereas MySpace member profiles can include virtually anything, MOG profiles are focused on the users' musical inclinations—favorite artists, albums, concerts, etc.

According to Hyman, former CEO of music recognition firm Gracenote, the goal is to bring word-of-mouth music recommendations to the digital space.

"Where do most of my music decisions come from?" he says. "It’s my friends. Trusted voices.

Most algorithm-based recommendation engines make suggestions based on similar genres or purchases. But these are not always accurate. Just because a user once listened to a song by Kanye West does not mean he will also like Ice Cube even though they are both hip-hop acts.

Instead, MOG reads the music files stored on users' hard drives and analyzes which have been played the most, either on the computer or a portable MP3 player. It then posts this information in users' profiles. Members can then examine not only the contents of their friends' music libraries, but also what they have been listening to lately.

And here is where the discovery part comes in: Members can sample 30-second clips of each song. Soon, MOG will incorporate links to the free trial versions of Rhapsody and Napster for the full song as well.

Another music discovery service growing in popularity is Pandora.com. Visitors to the site submit a song they like, and the service will build an entire playlist of similar music.

But rather than link songs based on genre or user recommendations, the service relies on the Music Genome Project, a system built by dozens of musicians and music analysts who listen to every song and create a profile for each, based on 400 musical attributes. These profiles are then organized into a database, which provides the recommendations based on matching profiles.

Despite the ability to expose new music, neither service operates a digital store. Instead they link to iTunes or Amazon and take a small cut of any resulting sale.

For these services, ad sales provide the primary revenue stream. While selling music could result in additional revenue, MOG's Hyman says the higher profit margins on music are simply not worth the effort.

"You can be a much bigger company today with an ad-based model than you can with a sales model," he says.

Additionally, according to Pandora’s founder Tim Westergren, it is simply too difficult to negotiate all the necessary licensing rights with record labels even with the assistance of such back-end providers as MusicNet.

"There’s just different core competencies needed to create a decent music discovery system and a decent music store..." he says.

At some point, the world of music discovery and music acquisition will merge, and the winners will be those that can most efficiently blend the two.

"One of the best ways to use the Internet to market music would be to tap into [the] discoverers and recommenders and help them spread the word directly to their friends," Jupiter Research analyst David Card wrote in a May report.

A similar report from Garner G2 analyst Michael McGuire forecasts that by 2010, 25% of online music transactions will be driven by consumer-to-consumer “taste sharing” applications either built into music stores or on external sites with links to stores.

Digital music services should hope that such sites do not eventually develop their own stores. The Jupiter report found that even though music services like AOL and Yahoo have such social networking features, MySpace is by far the most effective channel for promoting music.

Right now the main impediment preventing MySpace from launching a serious challenge to iTunes is that it can’t sell music compatible with the iPod.

Digital music retailers, particularly subscription services, would do well to model their marketing and services closer to those of the music-centric social networking sites than continue with the "all-you-can-eat" transactional marketing message that has failed to resonate with consumers to date.

Like any other nascent market, the solution may be consolidation. Sites like MOG or Pandora could become prime acquisition targets for a subscription service looking to make that jump.

Bare Naked Fan Mix

The Bareaked Ladies are allowing fans to remix various songs from their upcoming album, "Bareaked Ladies Are Me," that will be compiled into a separate EP released later this year. Between now and the album release date, the group will post five songs on its Web site in full-16-track format open for remixing for $2.50 each. A four, four-track version of each will be available on its MySpace page. Fans can then download, remix the song and upload their finished product to the site. The band will then pick the five best remixes and compile them into the remix EP. All proceeds from the EP will be donated to various charities.

"Easy," is available now.

Some Things to Stream About

Mobile music phones just keep getting cooler. The Fusico phone from LG raises the bar even higher. In a first for mobile phones and portable MP3 players of any type, the Fusico features a built-in FM transmitter so users may stream music played on the device through a car stereo or other FM radio.

FM transmitters are common products, and for many they are the only solution for playing music stored on an MP3 player through car stereos without a tape deck.

The Fusico, available from Sprint, also features Bluetooth stereo support, stereo headphones and an external memory card slot for up to 1GB of storage. It also features built-in support for Sprint’s mobile music download service.

The device costs $530, or $180 if purchased with a two-year service agreement for Sprint.

—Antony Bruno

Bits & Briefs

GETTING THEIR KICKS

Chalk up another indie/un-signed artist digital music distribution service. Fizzkickks.com is a new online music service that gives participating artists prepaid music cards that they can either sell or give away to fans. The cards are good only for that artist’s music. Fizzkickks is positioning the service as a cheap alternative to duplicating multiple CDs at performances or giving them away to promoters. Fizzkickks will print out an unlimited number of cards for artists, for an annual subscription fee of $150. Artists can create their own card design, post band news, bio, videos and photos to their Fizzkickks profile and access reports on how often their songs are being downloaded.

MAKING A MUVEE

Jason Mraz is inviting fans to contribute footage to his music video for "Geek in the Pink" via his Web site. Fans can upload their photos and videos to his Web site, and then use video online editing software from partner Muvvee to edit their footage into the video. All posts are viewable from the site, from which fans and Atlantic Records will select the five finalists. Mraz himself will choose the winner. The grand prize is a 27-inch flat-screen TV, camcorder and video iPod with home TV dock.
Crystal Method Gives Nike A Run For The $ Duo Creates Soundtrack For Nano/Sneaker Series

The Crystal Method creates fast and furious beats. Live, the electronic duo's rhythmic shifts and mood swings have been known to raise heart rates.

TCM masterminds Ken Jordan and Scott Kirkland surely did not create their three studio albums and two DJ mixes with the gym in mind. But that has not prevented fitness buffs—or Nike, for that matter—from embracing the duo's tough and sturdy sounds.

The fitness apparel company recently joined forces with Apple Computer to create the iPod nano-compatible Nike Air Zoom Moire running shoe (billboard.biz, May 26). And Nike tapped TCM to create the first original workout mix for this new initiative.

The 45-minute, 10-track mix, "Drive," is the first volume in the Nike+ Original Run series. It will be available as early as June 28 on iTunes' new Nike+ Sport Music section. TCM is also featured on the nikeplus.com Web site.

Priced at $9.99, the nonstop mix interweaves new, original TCM tracks and new remixes, including the Rogue Element mix of "Bad Ass" and the original dub of "Roadhouse Blues" by the Doors vs. the Crystal Method. A bonus unmixed version of the entire collection, minus the Doors track, comes with purchase.

"We found it interesting to go in and create a mix of goal-oriented tracks for this purpose," Kirkland says. "Goal-oriented or not, the tracks retain the moodiness of the duo's recordings and live sets. In other words, longtime fans of TCM's signature musical breakdowns and buildups should not be disappointed.

Jordan acknowledges that devising a mix for runners offered some challenges. "We weren't quite sure how our breakdowns and builds would play to runners," he says. "But we tested the tracks on a few of our runner friends, and they especially liked those moments."

Additionally, Jordan says he and Kirkland were very conscious of that gray area where "workout music" becomes "too poppy and too cheesy."

Kirkland adds, "With runners, there's that grit and determination where they have a goal set and that moment when you need a little extra oomph. People need that burst of energy, that kick-in-the-ass moment that gives them the motivation to keep going."

Indeed. When Nike was asking runners for examples of artists who create music that carries them through their runs, TCM was consistently mentioned. Nike global director of media digital content Stefan Olander says:

"Nike desired an act that could create a continuous track with great rhythm that provides runners with energy and motivation during a 40-minute run—without becoming repetitive or overwhelming," Olander adds.

In addition to TCM's "Drive," the Nike+ Sport Music section on iTunes will offer other workout mixes created from licensed material and featuring voice-overs from such coaches as Alberto Salazar.

For TCM, the Nike partnership comes between studio albums and on the heels of two Hollywood projects. Late last year, the duo scored its first feature film, "London." Prior to that, Jordan and Kirkland composed the theme for the Fox series "Bones.

Like their contemporaries in electronic music (Gorillaz, BT, Paul Oakenfold and others), TCM fully understands the importance of thinking beyond the dancefloor.

Each time TCM ventures outside clubland, "a new audience learns about them," says TCM manager SuzAnn Brantner of 3 Artist Management. "This is yet another way to reach another audience."

Kirkland seconds her words and says, "We look at our career much differently today than when we put out our first album [1997's 'Vegas']. These days, it's about touring and albums—and TV, films and videogames."

Pausing, he smiles and adds, "But this Nike project is totally off the wall. And in a way, it's setting the bar for our next album."

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Punknews Makes News

Push is On For Chicago Band Ryan's Hope

When popular music Web site punknews.org launched a label last year, some may have wondered that the company's own bands would start to take center stage. But the opposite has been true as the site's founders want to keep any accusations of favoritism to a minimum.

The label's most recent signing, however, has certainly given site and label founder Aubin Paul something to brag about. It's a band that he so inclined. Suburban Chicago act Ryan's Hope has released its second album, “Apocalypse in Increments,” through Punknews Records. It's a fine collection of anemic pop-punk, with trace elements of the band's hardcore roots.

(The group's debut was released on Mike Felumlee's Double Zero Records.)

The album was released in April, but only recently did the band receive a punknews.org interview. "We try to keep the two things rather separate, which is probably why you're not seeing tons of promotion," Paul says. "We treat our bands with the same neutral stance that we treat other bands with on the site."

Punknews Records has a production and distribution deal with Epitaph Records, which in turn works with Warner Music Group's Alternative Distribution Alliance. Paul, who graduated from the University of Toronto in August 2005, says he used to chat with Epitaph two or three times per week, but that's been thinned down to every couple of weeks.

Paul says a number of bands the site championed eventually signed with Epitaph including Matchbook Romance and Motion City Soundtrack.

The Epitaph deal does not include upstreaming Paul says. “The band is signed to us, and what they do after they're done with us is up to them. We have a lawyer and he gave us a pretty standard, reasonable contract.”

WORLDLY LABEL: Jacob Edgar left his gig as VP of A&R at Putumayo to try his hand at something the noted world music label was unable to accomplish: making the switch from releasing compilations to individual artist albums. Edgar recently launched his Cumbancha label in Charlotte, VT. Edgar will continue to work closely with his former company. He says Putumayo president Dan Storer provided funding for Cumbancha, and Edgar will be drawing from artists on Putumayo's theme-based world music sets for some of his initial signings. First up is London-based ensemble Ska Cubano, which has appeared on three Putumayo releases.

Edgar notes that Putumayo has tried over the years to release individual artists, such as was most certainly the resume of its founders.

Chime was launched by songwriter/producer Marc Posner (Aerosmith, Madonna) and former top Elektra and Geffen executive Mel Posner. The two reached an upstreaming agreement with WMG under which successful acts can be moved to WMG's Atlantic label at Chime's discretion, Posner says.

Other industry vets involved with Chime include head of creative Rob Coro, who has held similar posts at Columbia and Elektra; head of promotion and marketing Bob Catania, who has worked in

Residents' Latest CDs Go Blank

The Cordless e-label has teamed up to create something that is either a unique multimedia experience that will link the physical, digital and mobile worlds—or is just plain wacky.


The catch? It contains two blank CDs so that the five episodes, which will be released sequentially during a 10-week period, can be burned after the last one becomes available. A unique code for each package allows users to unlock the subscription at riverofcrime.com.

Customers purchasing the limited-edition digital subscription will also receive digital extras like ringtones and mobile wallpaper as well as materials that can be burned onto the blank CD-Rs, including alternate versions of the “River of Crime” artwork, scripts and instrumental soundtrack elements.

And Fibre asks, “How can a digital-only release be [positioned] as a collectible? Resident fans are collectors, and this gives them something tangible to add to their collection.”

The effort allows Cordless, Warner Music Group's e-label, to help brick-and-mortar stores sell digital product in physical form. "Brick-and-mortar merchants work to get customers to check out their online stores," says Stephanie Ford, a product manager with Virgin Megastore Group, which runs the Virgin Megastore chain. "The Residents release creates a synergy that works in two directions. Cordless drives customers to the store and then we in turn drive them back online."

"It is an experiment, but we think it is something that is relatively easy to understand," Fibre says. The package comes with a red sticker on the cover, warning that it contains blank media and telling buyers not to burn "River of Crime" until all episodes are retrieved. The inside includes an instruction card.

On the other hand, Fibre says it may also be confusing. If the helium rings off the hook, he says he'll know the effort was too ambitious.
ADA In The U.K.

Group’s British Offices To Help Move Titles In Europe

The Alternative Distribution Alliance’s’ new independent distribution division in the United Kingdom is up and running.

Susan Rush, formerly GM of Pinnacle Records, has been named managing director of ADA U.K. and will report to ADA president Andy Allen.

The new division, which was announced at ADA’s June 14-16 convention in Philadelphia, is an obvious first step in Europe. Allen notes the music that ADA historically distributes—alternative rock—“travels well.”

Allen says ADA was motivated to look beyond the United States by the label’s it distributes here. Those labels say they often experience difficulties with deals abroad, particularly with obtaining sales information, which is “often spotty or incomplete,” Allen says.

Also, he cites “the importance of the U.K. market and the symbiotic cross-pollination that has always existed between the U.K. and the U.S.” makes the launch of ADA U.K. the next logical step.

So far ADA U.K. has signed four U.K.-based labels: London’s Ear Candy Records, TuneTribe Records and Because Music as well as Earache Records in Nottingham. It has also inked a deal with Bieler Bros. Records in Miami.

The first release arrived in April from Mohair. ADA U.K. is also working two Warner Music Group (WMG) albums, M Craft on 679 Recordings and the Field on Black Lab Recordings.

ADA U.K. started building its front-end from scratch in February, putting together contracts, label statements and other nuts and bolts, Rush reports. The Entertainment Network, owned by Cinram, will handle manufacturing, pick, pack and ship services and other functions.

In addition to Rush, ADA U.K. has hired Nick Roden, formerly head of labels at TuneTribe, as repertoire manager; Lisa Barsdley as label manager; and Ian Harmon as business manager. Like Rush, the latter two came from Pinnacle Records.

At the convention, Allen also announced that ADA now offers its label partners “a global digital distribution solution” by leveraging WMG’s existing agreements with leading online and wireless carriers around the world.

Allen also addressed the “paradox of a major owning an independent distribution company,” in his closing address. “It’s a relationship that many have viewed with skepticism,” he noted. “But the reality is rather than be a threat to independence, the relationship with Warner Music has been a boon to it, opening up resources that would be simply unavailable otherwise.”

WMG doesn’t strip mine acts or force-feed services. It respects and supports the independent spirit, he explained. “WMG is, after all, a company [originally] founded by independent music entrepreneurs several of whom—legends like Ahmet Ertegun, Seymour Stein and Jac Holzman—can still be found working there every single day.”

Allen notes that the recent acquisition of Ryko, which is “working side by side with ADA but independently of each other” while both are backed by WMG’s resources, allows the company to provide even more services to a wider range of indie labels.

UAV RAYS: UAV Corp., the music and video racking, manufacturing and content company based in Port Mills, S.C., is up on the high wire—industry sources say the company is flitting with a Chapter 11 filing, although a company spokesman says the rumors are wrong.

On June 20, UAV announced that it shuttered its wholesale operation, laying off almost 300 employees.

The company, which had about $100 million in revenue in its most recent fiscal year, continues operation with about 40 staffers for its content business and manufacturing operation.

UAV had been trying to sell its content division, which licenses budget product for distribution in convenience stores, drug stores, gas stations and discount department stores. But a sale of that business fell through; an earlier effort to sell the racking division also failed.

The company said in a statement, “The sale of the content division was critical to the company as UAV has been operating for several months under increasing financial stress. Without this sale in place, the company no longer had sufficient funds to operate and therefore reluctantly closed its distribution division while it continued to seek a buyer for the entire company.”
Like a train in a Woody Guthrie song, Pete Seeger just can’t stop. Activist and pacifist, preacher and congregant, teacher and student, Seeger, 87, still believes that a song can change the course of humankind.

Billboard recently visited Seeger in Beacon, N.Y., to get his reaction to Bruce Springsteen’s “We Shall Overcome: The Seeger Sessions.” The album features songs that Seeger popularized over decades — and decades — of albums, mostly for Folkways, Vanguard and Columbia.

Seeger hopes the album will inspire other popular performers to explore the great American songbook. Of music with a message, he says, “There aren’t hundreds of songs — there are thousands. You don’t have to reinvent them. Just sing them the best you can.”

Gazing out at the mighty Hudson River over cantaloupe and croissants at the home of his dear friends and neighbors — Connie Hogarth and Art Kamell, founders of the Connie Hogarth Center for Social Action at Manhattanville College in Purchase, N.Y. — Seeger was positively Pete. He had hiked from his mountaintop home a mile away, tall and trim in a Schooner’s cap dappled from a gentle rain.

In a strong and hopeful voice, Seeger also discussed what happens when parents ignore their children; greed, consumerism and narcissism; anti-Semitism in the American workers’ movement; indigenous peoples and the world’s 4,000 languages; faith, friendship and Toshi Ohta, his wife and companion of 63 years; African melodies and a pressing need for U.S. copyright reform; planting forsythias; and the lesson of Noah’s Ark: “God gave Noah the rainbow sign / No more water, fire next time.”

Q: Tell us about “The Seeger Sessions.”
A: A three-weeks before it came out, Bruce phoned me to say the project was being released. I was honored, but I would have suggested another title. I didn’t pick the songs or craft the arrangements. (For a couple of songs) I only added lines — Jacob’s Ladder” and “We Shall Overcome.” And, good heavens, I don’t need the publicity.

Q: Seeger says he’s attracted to your work because it represents the scope of the American experience.
A: Bruce once said, and I never forgot this, “A rock singer can last as long as he can look down in the crowd and see his own face looking back.” I liked that.

Q: What about the songs he selected? Some critics wished for a more political clime, like “Bring Them Home,” “Wait Deep in the Big Muddy” or “King Henry.”
A: The one I wished for was “Walking Down Deach Row.” It’s a wake up call to the human race. It goes: “If we could learn to love each other’s lives, we’d be sitting here! And if only this we could believe/We still might, we might still be reprimed.”

Q: Did you see any of the shows on Springsteen’s current tour? What would you have worn?
A: Springsteen put on a particularly powerful performance at the Jazz & Heritage Festival in New Orleans this year. He restored an old verse to “The Saints.” Some say this world of trouble is the only world we’ll ever see / But I’m waiting for that morning when the new world is revealed.”

Q: I sang those words with the Weavers in 1950.
A: How do you see protest music affecting a new generation?
A: Protest music has been around for thousands of years. It just leaks out every so often. When did the leak start this time? [Smiles]

Q: Why aren’t more recording artists speaking out against the war? Surveillance of American citizens? The dangers of a warming climate?
A: [Long pause] I will duck the question.

Q: Because?
A: I’ve implied the answer.

Q: Do popular performers, through their enormous influence, have a social responsibility to speak out?
A: Does Billboard cover the coffeehouse circuit? Thousands of people are making up songs about war and peace. We just don’t hear them on the radio.

Q: What would Woody Guthrie sing about today?
A: He’d say, “Reach the kids!” You never heard “This Land is Your Land” on radio or television so how come everyone knew it? It got into the schools!

Q: In the new forward to your autobiography, “Where Have All the Flowers Gone” (Sing Out Press), you refer to folk music as “the folk process.”
A: My father, Charles, taught me that the folk process is tens of thousands of years old; it’s a part of every field and every walk of life. Cooks rearrange old recipes for new stomachs. Lawyers rearrange old laws for new citizens.

Q: What makes the folk process so rewarding?
A: Honesty. John Henry was a steel-driving man. Pretty Polly was a murder victim. A girl went astray in the House of the Rising Sun — those are honest songs.

Q: Isn’t that dismissive?
A: Honest songs aren’t written for money.

Q: How has the Internet affected the ability to organize and demonstrate?
A: Change comes through small organizations. You divide up the jobs. Some people sing bass, some sing soprano. Some copy the sheet music, others drive and pick up those who ride the subway. You take small steps until you’re in a position to act.

Q: Do you use the Internet today?
A: I don’t. It’s a family joke. But I plan to.

Q: Where is the first place to work for change?
A: Right where you are.

Q: Think globally, act locally.
A: Being generous of spirit is a wonderful way to live. Maybe you can bring cheer to a hospice or build a colorful playground for toddlers. The last thing to change will be the corporations. But what can they do about little projects everywhere, like the 800 community gardens in New York City? Developers can’t bulldoze them away!

Q: Tell us about the courage it took for you to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1955.
A: The real meaning of courage was the personal sacrifice of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King.

Q: Are you writing any new songs?
A: Sometimes a new melody will bubble up. Then I realize it’s my subconscious singing. “Enjoy yourself, enjoy yourself. It’s later than you think.”

Q: What is your greatest hope?
A: That scientists will know how, and when, to keep a secret.

Q: Would you share a fond memory?
A: When a half million people sang, “All we are saying is give peace a chance,” at the Washington Monument in November 1969. Parents swayed with children on their shoulders. Everyone roved like a gigantic ballet.

Q: What inspires you?
A: Singing for children. Seeing their smiling faces. It reminds me that millions of children, tens of millions of children, can save our world.

Q: A benediction, please.
A: If there’s something wrong, speak up!

Léo Sacks is co-producer of “Sing Me Back Home” by the New Orleans Social Club (Honey Darling/Burgundy/Sony BMG). The project was recorded shortly after Hurricane Katrina.
Ciao Ragazzi,

Kaiser George Miller's day job, the Kaisers, have kept the Mersey Beat sound of the Beatles alive in Hamburg and the Cavern Club alive for years, and his latest delivers once again.

This time out it's a marriage of Scottish Beat and New York garage as he teams up with Rochester's Hi-Risers to create "Transatlantic Dynamite," an album of nonstop fun.

The Who is going to release a six-part edited version of the mini-opera portion of its new album July 10 with the album to follow in October.

And, as if brick-and-mortar retail didn't have enough to think about with downloading, don't be surprised to see the Who make the same move Prince made by including the album in the ticket price and "selling" a record to everybody who comes to the live show.

As the distance between the few big live bands left and radio airplay becomes the Grand Canyon, record sales keep dropping but ticket sales keep increasing (everybody thinking every tour could be the last) so it makes some sense.

If the practice becomes a trend, look for retail to take a whole new interest in up-and-coming bands.

And speaking of bombing, Green Day was probably responsible for saving somebody's life when a 12-year-old girl in Halifax found a round metal object in her garden and because of her "American Idiot" T-shirt, recognized it as a hand grenade. It was safely detonated by authorities. How cool is that!

See you next week.

For more of this column, go to billboard.com.

### COOLEST GARAGE SONGS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/Label</th>
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<tr>
<td>I'D RATHER BE WITH YOU</td>
<td>KAISER GEORGE &amp; THE HI-RISERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUNTRY GIRL</td>
<td>PRIMAL SCREAM</td>
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<td>IF IT TAKES A LIFETIME</td>
<td>CHEAP TRICK</td>
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<td>EVERYONE KNOWS</td>
<td>JOAN JETT &amp; THE BLACKHEARTS</td>
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<td>HANDS</td>
<td>THE RACONTEURS</td>
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<td>LIFE WASTED</td>
<td>PEARL JAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>KING OF THE FREAKS</td>
<td>THE MAGGOTS</td>
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<td>AFTER THE GARDEN</td>
<td>NEIL YOUNG</td>
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<td>NOTHING TERRIBLY NEW</td>
<td>THE HELLACOPTERS</td>
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### COOLEST GARAGE ALBUMS

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<td>LIVING WITH WAR</td>
<td>NEIL YOUNG</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF EARTH</td>
<td>THE STROKES</td>
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<tr>
<td>SINNER</td>
<td>JOAN JETT &amp; THE BLACKHEARTS</td>
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<td>FLAT-PACK PHILOSOPHY</td>
<td>BUZZCOCKS</td>
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<td>WHATEVER PEOPLE SAY I AM, THAT'S WHAT I'M NOT</td>
<td>ARCTIC MONKEYS</td>
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<td>RIOT CITY BLUES</td>
<td>PRIMAL SCREAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRANSATLANTIC DYNAMITE!</td>
<td>KAISER GEORGE &amp; THE HI-RISERS</td>
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For more information go to: UNDERGROUNDGARAGE.COM
DATA FROM SOME leading research firms indicate that peer-to-peer (P2P) consumption is still on the rise—but don’t tell that to the major labels and the RIAA. A year after its win over Grokster in the Supreme Court, the music industry is pushing hard on the message that illegal file swapping of songs, while by no means dead, is flattening out.

The RIAA has been advising anyone who will listen that statistics suggesting digital piracy is growing substantially are, at best, misconstrued.

RIAA chairman/CEO Mitch Bainwol helped set up the argument in January when he wrote a guest editorial for Billboard taking the P2P growth numbers to task.

"The next time you hear some sky-is-falling funky number about the explosion of P2P activity, make sure it reflects domestic (not global) active (not passive) downloading of music (not movies, porn, software or games), excluding spoofs. If you measure something else, the picture gets badly distorted," he wrote.

Six months later, Bainwol remains on message.

"I don’t mean to suggest that we’re happy with the current level of P2P—far from it," he says. "But we have a sober perspective of what’s doable. Just as we’ve managed to find a way to make it work with physical piracy, there is a level of Internet piracy we can survive.

"We’re going to continue to drive down digital piracy," Bainwol continues. "But my fundamental point has been that over the last couple of years digital piracy has stabilized when it comes to users."

So has digital piracy really stopped growing at a significant rate?

The mixed signals coming from P2P trackers not sourced by the RIAA have fired up a debate over which data providers offer the best information about piracy rates—and how their data should be interpreted.

When it comes to hard numbers that can be related to online piracy, the two most-quoted sources for P2P data are NPD, a Port Washington, N.Y.-based research firm that has long conducted consumer studies on behalf of the music industry, and Beverly Hills, Calif.-based BigChampagne, a specialist in tracking online buzz that monitors music usage on P2P networks and other nontraditional outlets.

They are not alone in monitoring P2P, but they represent the leading schools of methodology for tracking it. Cambridge, England-based CacheLogic and Los Gatos, Calif.-based BayTSP also track piracy levels based on P2P network usage and yield results similar to BigChampagne. Other research firms track piracy in usage-behavior data relating to piracy—including Peter D. Hart, PEW, ComScore Media Metrix, Ipsos- Reid, Forrester Research—but they do not offer stats about the number of P2P downloaders or the unauthorized tracks being shared.

BigChampagne CEO Eric Garland likens the debate over the validity of P2P statistics to the parable of the blind men and the elephant: There is no consensus because each group is observing a different part of the same thing.

The agendas of those using or refuting the data also play a big part in the debate.

"You’ve got all of these different camps. There is a factionalization that’s not unlike a Democrat or Republican talking about an election," says Russ Crupnick, president of NPD’s music and movies division, the RIAA’s current favored source for P2P data. "Among the factions, if we have a number they like, we’re golden; if they don’t like it, we’re viewed as black magic."

NPD collects data by monitoring a panel of computer users, in much the same way Nielsen Media Research tracks TV viewership. A volunteer group of 12,000 Internet users allow NPD to keep tabs on everything they do online. In the process, NPD tracks downloading behaviors of users in commercial and unauthorized file-sharing environments and then projects its findings to create an estimate of Internet users at large. The company has the ability to track usage by region and file type as well as monitor post-download playback trends. NPD also does usage-behavior surveys to relate consumer attitudes to its tracking data.

By contrast, BigChampagne monitors usage on the network level, using propriety technology to track the number of users logged into a file-sharing network at any given time. The company tracks the two basic activities that can be monitored on P2P networks: "queries" (searches) and "acquisitions" (downloads). Then they match a computer’s IP address to its ZIP code, creating a map of P2P activity.

Garland says BigChampagne’s technology can isolate the use of any form of copyrighted material, from music, feature films, software and videogames to instructional manuals or TV episodes.
IS P2P GROWTH SLOWING?
DEPENDS WHOM YOU ASK

BY BRIAN GARRITY
ILLUSTRATION BY
STEPHEN WEBSTER
The company, which has been in business since 2000, sells the data to record labels, marketers and other entertainment companies. But Garland maintains BigChampagne’s mission is to help determine the popularity of songs online—not to track piracy.

From these very different measurement approaches come very different snapshots of the pirate market. Both firms agree that P2P usage continues to climb. But they differ on the pace of adoption.

Direct comparison of NPD and BigChampagne data is problematic.

NPD reports that the number of U.S. households actively downloading music from P2P sites has grown 14.8% over the last two years, rising from an estimated 6 million households in April 2004 to 6.9 million in April 2006. But as a percentage of the overall Internet population, P2P growth has slowed dramatically, according to NPD. It estimates that active P2P households represent 10.2% of the current U.S. Internet population, an increase of just one percentage point over the 9.1% of active P2P households in 2004. Over the same period, NPD notes, the percentage of homes connecting to the Internet has more than doubled, the amount of storage space on PCs has grown markedly and the number of iPods and other MP3 players has exploded.

In terms of music use, what is growing significantly, NPD says, is the number of files being traded. More than 333 million files were swapped in April 2006, up 54% from an estimated 216 million files in April 2004. That stat suggests an entrenched group of hardcore users increasing their consumption.

BigChampagne claims that growth rates for P2P users are much higher. It estimates that the average number of simultaneous P2P users in March 2006 was 7 million, up 49% from the 4.6 million users in April 2004. It also says that about 1.3 billion songs, 70% of the files offered through P2P networks, are available for download at any given time—although it does not project the actual number of downloads.

Stan Liebowitz, a professor of economics at the University of Texas at Dallas’ School of Management, has been closely monitoring the reports of P2P tracking firms. He says that each data source, regardless of methodology, suffers from one or more inadequacies.

In an April 2006 study titled “File-Sharing: Creative Destruction or Just Plain Destruction?” Liebowitz breaks down the flaws of the data trackers. Panel-based data sources like NPD might underrepresent the population of people actively engaged in file sharing. Liebowitz argues. He says the most active users may be "particularly reluctant" to have their computers monitored by third-party software. (Crupnick counters that the NPD panel includes heavy downloaders.)

As for BigChampagne’s method, Liebowitz says metrics based on the number of users alone might fail to capture increases or decreases in the number of files exchanged per user. He also argues that by tracking simultaneous users, BigChampagne may be double-counting some who are logged onto P2P networks for long stretches of time. (Garland says BigChampagne weeds out repeat individual users when determining its figures.)

So NPD or BigChampagne? The answer hinges on a second question: What’s actually growing, the number of files being traded or the number of users trading files? Therein lies the disparity between NPD data, which indicates file growth, and BigChampagne data, which says P2P households are expanding.

"We’re in agreement there is a lot of P2P activity," Crupnick says. "But BigChampagne suggests the cancer is growing and growing. We don’t think that’s the right diagnosis. We believe ours is a more accurate diagnosis of what the disease is."

Regardless of who is painting the more accurate picture, the RIAA says the rise in adoption of legitimate offerings like iTunes and mobile music is proof that digital piracy is at a more manageable level.

“Our focus is on whether or not digital piracy is so rampant it’s taking the oxygen out of the legal marketplace, and what we are seeing is that’s not the case,” Bainvold says. "We’re moving in the right direction and that’s a function of the stabilization of users on the P2P side."
THE NEXT SOUL SURVIVORS

IT'S THE NEW OLD SOUND FROM THE UNDERGROUND—BUT PLEASE, DON'T CALL THEM NEO-SOUL

BY GAIL MITCHELL
It is 11:15 p.m. on a Wednesday evening, better-known in urban working-class parlance as “hump night.” The opening act’s set has just wrapped at the Little Temple Bar, a bamboo-walled, candle-lit hipster haunt on the eastern fringes of Hollywood. Chilling and refueling with drink and talk, the mostly African-American crowd politely jockeys for what little elbow room is available on the floor. As the anticipatory buzz builds to just this side of impatience, the headliner takes the stage. From the moment he does, he has the audience eating out of his hand. Women shout his name and toss out requests. Males and females sing along word for word as the tight six-piece backing combo feeds off the audience’s vibe.

Judging by this scenario, you might think a super star was getting busy onstage. But the performer is none other than singer/songwriter Eric Roberson.

For fans of the independent soul scene, Roberson—who has four releases out through his Blue Erro Soul label—is every bit a high-profile crowd pleaser as a Prince, Usher or Mary J. Blige.

Roberson is not alone in his secret sanctum. This Little Temple Bar scene is repeated weekly at venues across the country. Sy Smith, Fertile Ground, P.J. Morton, Anthony David, Rebirth, Angola Johnson, Frank McComb and Gordon Chambers are just a few of the artists powering this new soul train. It’s a train still rumbling beneath the mainstream, but it is steadily gathering steam. Smaller venues (200-1,000-seating capacity) dedicated to showcasing underground soul acts are teeming with patrons in the large urban markets. Numerous online sites devoted to the scene have cropped up during the last several years, with traffic growing exponentially.

All of these developments have meshed into a budding coast-to-coast network of independent promoters, retailers, marketers, radio DJs and artists who are connecting the dots and spreading the word. Soul music’s creative legacy—as personified by Donny Hathaway, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, Aretha Franklin and others—is alive and thriving.

This modern incarnation of the genre should not be confused with the polished commercial R&B/hip hop dominating the Billboard charts and commercial radio from the likes of Jamie Foxx, Chris Brown and Ye-Yo. No, this soul music is more about heartfelt expression than a particular sound.

Today’s emerging soul artists give a noci to early soul music’s basic tenets: strong lyrics that tell stories instead of repeating cute hooks; emotional nuances molded by an acoustic foundation (guitars, drums, bass, horns, piano and organ) and impassioned delivery instead of an over-reliance on computer technology and slick vocals; and performers who get off on live shows instead of track dates and staged dance routines.

Some of these artists are signed to indie labels, but most self-release their records. Many define themselves as much by what they are not as by what they are. In an industry dominated by radio narrowcasting and carefully labeled formats, they are wary of being typecast—a wariness underscored by recent history.

After notchings several No. 1 R&B singles in the late ’90s, singer/songwriter Erykah Badu was crowned the poster child for neo-soul, the industry’s new catchall term for what was simply a fresh take on ’60s and ’70s music. Wanting to cash in on that success, major labels ultimately ran the style into the ground. By signing and promoting sound alikes, they failed to play up or develop the diverse talent that was available.

“When neo-soul came, labels put soul in a box and said, ’This is what soul music sounds like,‘” Atlanta-based singer/songwriter Morton recalls.

Ish. owner of retail outfit Bondy’s in New York, adds, “Artists like Maxwell, Musiq and Jill Scott were able to make hits, but the industry took a flavor-of-the-month approach. They got what they wanted out of them, and that’s it.”

Roberson contends that a soul pioneer like Gaye could not release “What’s Going On” through a major today. “Now the business is made to sell music like cheesburgers. It all tastes the same,” he says. “People are starving for good music. We’ve got to keep feeding this community.”

ON A DIFFERENT TRACK

To that end, soul music practitioners have turned elsewhere to spread their sound. The popular community site myspace.com, satellite and cable radio, online retailers like CD Baby and various artist sites have given soul fans sources to plug into. Word-of-mouth has gone digital.

Craig Bowers provides a link to this relatively unknown world through his Los Angeles-based SoulThought Entertainment, a multifaceted concern whose divisions include a record label, artist management, marketing and a Web site, soulthought.com, which Bowers estimates averages 10,000 unique visitors per month.

“People—particularly at radio—say to me that there are no good artists out here,” Bowers laments. “That’s frustrating, because I can list at least 25 artists you’ve never heard of who are more than just good.”

His enterprise is just one in an expanding number of ways stations that are popping up along the indie soul circuit.

Online compatriot SoulTracks.com is a soul music encyclopedia/electronic magazine that focuses on new soul releases. Founder Chris Rizik launched the portal in 2003, with the belief that soul fans “didn’t want to be stuck just listening to oldies stations.”

The site’s growth is proof that this underserved generation of consumers is still an active segment. Initially targeting the 35-55 demo, the site is skewing a little younger now. Rizik says the site averages 100,000 unique visitors per month and was ranked last year by Web traffic tracker site alexa.com as the No. 1 soul music site on the Web.

Elsewhere, Frances Jaye’s neosoulcafe.com reports 10,000 unique visitors per month. Chasing under the restrictive structure of commercial radio during her 10 years as a Dallas &R personality, Jaye took her show to the Web, where she proudly tags her Internet station as “anti-radio.”

While juggling her day job—selling advertising for Verizon—Jaye has since expanded her 4-year-old Web site to include a weekly show that airs on the Dish network and other pay TV entities, a newsletter and a podcast. She also hosts Soul Therapy, a special Monday-night event at Dallas club Tryst for soul fans that has grown from 30 people to 300-400.

From his base in Springfield, Mass., 90 miles west of Boston, James Lewis operates 3-year-old retail outlet Reflections Emporium, which ties into his long-running “Reflections” radio show on community station WTCC. He also hosts Gumbo Live, a weekly showcase series featuring indie soul acts.

Lewis, who helps program WTCC, estimates that indie soul comprises almost 70% of his store’s sales. He believes that CD Baby’s decision in May to provide in-store retail distribution for independent musicians in association with wholesaler Super D is a major step forward (Billboard, May 27).

“This is another door that can help indie stores like mine,” Lewis says. “A lot of my problem has been getting inventory. Many of these artists don’t want to send their material to indie stores, because it can turn out to be too much work.” The top sellers for Lewis include Roberson, Fertile Ground, Gary Taylor and Marlon Saunders.

Alex Steiningher, CD Baby VP of marketing and business relations, says the online retailer’s decision to provide in-store retail distribution for independent musicians creates 2,400 new brick-and-mortar outlets for the acts. “It will definitely be a boon to all indie artists,” he says. But he adds that how well an act sells “depends on the artists and their diligence in promoting and marketing themselves.”

Other key players in the indie soul scene’s de facto national network include Terry Bello’s syndicated radio show “The Soul Lounge,” retailers Dusty Groove America in Chicago, Mood’s Music in Atlanta, Serious Sounds in Houston and Kemp Mill in Washington, D.C.; other Web sites (soul-patrol.com, soulmusic.com, projective.net, rhythmflow.net), college and public radio stations, including KCRW Los Angeles and WCLK Atlanta; commercial stations (KOKY Little Rock, Ark., and WHUR Washington, D.C.), and local clubs across the country.

Looking for a ticket to ride on the underground soul train? Here are some singer/songwriters, each on their own labels or signed with an indie, you should schedule into your itinerary.

**ERIC ROBERSON**
Home base: Franklin Park, N.J.
His thing: Smooth baritone tenor weaving life stories over multilayered grooves.
Connection: ericrobersonmusic.com

**P.J. MORTON**
Home base: Atlanta
His thing: Gospel-bred singer sounding off on acoustic-based mix of soul, jazz and folk.
Connection: pjmortnonline.com

**J’DAVEY**
Home base: Los Angeles
Their thing: Fusion of soul, electronic; think Prince, Erykah Badu and Grace Jones all in one.
Connection: jdaveybaby.com

**ANGELA JOHNSON**
Home base: New York
Her thing: Bright-voiced singer whose musicianship recalls Patrice Rushen.
Connection: angelajohnson.com

**ANTHONY DAVID**
Home base: Atlanta
His thing: Southern baritone balances old and new school.
Connection: antonydavidmusic.com
People are starving for good music. We’ve got to keep feeding this community.

—ERIC ROBERSON, SINGER/SONGWRITER

When they are not performing, many indie soul artists are paying the bills by writing and producing for other acts. Morton, for instance, is signed to Famous Music Publishing and has worked as an in-house writer/producer with Jermaine Dupri. Through his publishing deal with EMI Music, Roberson has had his songs covered by Dwele, Musiq, Vivian Green and Will Downing. Like many of his indie peers, he also operates his own recording studio. Reached through a mailing list that numbers in the thousands, Roberson’s ERF (Eric Roberson Family) Web devotees are known to travel substantial distances to see him in concert. At his Little Temple Bar show, a female fan came in from Chicago. Another drove from South Carolina to attend a D.C. show.

“I pretty much stay on the road doing between eight and 11 shows a month,” says Roberson, who handles his own booking. “You do the best show you can, and then you stay out there, sign CDs, hug everyone you can and thank them.”

Roberson estimates that after factoring in sales from shows, his Web site and CD Baby, he has sold 40,000-60,000 CDs at $12 each. Coming this month is a live-performance DVD filmed at the Black Cat, followed by a new album later this year, both on his own label.

“We [indie artists] don’t have big budgets, but we’re making more pure records,” says Roberson, who notes that he does most of his projects through the barter system; he will write or produce songs for an artist in exchange for that person doing something on his project. “We don’t have to sell as much as the majors do to make money.”

After 13 years in the business and a couple of major-label flirtations, Roberson says he has no desire to re-sign with a major. But Oakland, Calif., soul fixture Ledisi is trading 10 years on the indie circuit for a run at the big time. Signed to Verve, the singer/songwriter—who generated a buzz with her performance on the Luther Vandross tribute album “For Ever, For Always, For Luther”—is due to release her debut early next year.

“It was a hard decision,” admits Ledisi, who still operates her label LeSun Music and owns her masters. “It’s not about selling out. Verve is giving me the visibility and opportunity to let more people know who I am. For a real indie artist, that’s hard to do. It takes a team to make a record happen.”

Verve president Ron Goldstein says he signed Ledisi based on her strong understanding of what the urban marketplace will bear. “She is an aggressive, smart artist with a built-in audience already in three key markets—Oakland, D.C. and Atlanta,” Goldstein says. “From what I’ve heard so far, I’m confident we’ll have a radio record to build on nationally from there.”

He is not alone. “We’re definitely interested in these acts, wanting to invest more in the collective resurgence of soul music,” Warner Bros. VP of A&R Naim Ali says. “This form of music is definitely coming back into the mainstream. Having someone like a Joss Stone singing covers of traditional black music has kind of opened up people’s eyes.”

Among those Ali would consider signing are P.J. Morton and Anthony David. “I love the music they’re making,” Ali says. “A lot of this music is coming from the South and the church. These kids are making music that isn’t beat machines. They can really play.”

Ali’s prediction: “This music will come back into the mainstream, and people will eat it up. It’s happening now. Within the next 12-24 months, you’re going to see it as just as equally represented as rap.”

So, with some at the majors watching closely and a strong indie soul network taking shape, the scene is definitely on the upswing. Drake Phifer says. He operates 5-year-old Detroit-based Urban Organic Lifestyle Marketing and regularly stays in contact with fellow promoters like Ruffin in Cleveland and Mark Powder in D.C.

“I am one of many counterparts in other cities wearing different hats to help indie and emerging major-label soul artists connect with an audience that has to scrape a little harder below the surface to find them,” Phifer says. “I don’t like to call it the ‘chitlin’ circuit,’ but it’s something similar to that. The ‘neo-soul’ term was a fad, but the lifestyle isn’t. There’s a craving for this type of artist and definitely some money to be made.”
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TOP URBAN SONGWRITERS TO WATCH

BRYAN MICHAEL-COX, JOHTA AUSTIN and NE-YO all make the list. To see who else is on it, just turn the page.
Up-And-Coming Songwriters Steal The Spotlight With New Wave Of Urban Hits

9TH WONDER
9th Wonder has made a name for himself in the backpacker and baller hip-hop sets.

The Durham, N.C., native jumped-started his buzz in 2003 with the threesome Little Brother and has since produced songs for acts like Destiny's Child ("Girl"), Jay-Z ("Threats") and Mary J. Blige ("Good Woman Down"). He still keeps his underground roots firmly planted by producing albums for Murs and Brooklyn, N.Y.'s Buckshot. He also has tracks on upcoming albums by Obie Trice, Lloyd Banks, Tru Life and Boot Camp Clik.

9th Wonder continues to build his brand with the release of his second solo album, "The Dream Merchant, Vol. 2" (6th Hole), as well as preparing his nostalgic-driven company True School, which focuses on bringing back the styles and sounds of the golden era of hip-hop.

"You know how [syndicated radio host] Tom Joyner is to his generation?" 9th Wonder asks. "I want to bring that to my generation."

JOHNTA AUSTIN
Johna Austin's songwriting career took off after RCA dropped him as an artist in 1995. Then his pen proved to be as mighty as his vocal chords.

The precocious Atlanta native got his first break at 16 when he wrote Tyrese's 1998 hit "Sweet Lady." In addition to penning songs for such artists as Ginuwine and Mario, Austin has also proved to be adept at writing from a woman's perspective—he created such songs as Aaliyah's "Miss You" and Toni Braxton's "Just Be a Man (About It)."

The Jermaine Dupri protégé also co-wrote Mary J. Blige's "Be Without You" and Mariah Carey's "We Belong Together" with Dupri and Manuel Seal. The latter won the song of the year honor at ASCAP's 2006 Pop Music Awards, tying with Green Day's "Boulevard of Broken Dreams."

Austin's debut album, "Ocean Drive" (So So Def/Virgin), due in August, will showcase his writing and singing talents.

COOL & DRE
Often pegged as the next Neptunes, Cool & Dre are quickly becoming one of the most in-demand producing/songwriting teams in hip-hop.

Up until last year, though, the Miami-based duo was relatively unknown in the industry, although it had been quietly producing songs for Fat Joe and the Terror Squad. Those affiliations led the pair to a string of hits, including the Game's "Love It or Hate It" featuring 50 Cent and Ja Rule's "New York." Cool & Dre also produced Christina Milian's latest album, "So Amazin,'" and co-wrote several tracks.

In addition to working with LL Cool J, Kelis and Busta Rhymes, the pair is also contributing to Sean "Diddy" Combs' new solo effort.

Dre, who has sung background on a number of songs—including Terror Squad's "Take You Home"—will flex his vocal skills with the release of his upcoming solo album, "The Trunk," due this fall via Cool & Dre's Epidemic Music/Jive imprint.

DRE of Cool & Dre is ready to move into the spotlight with his debut album 'The Trunk.'
DRE & VIDAL

Their given names are Andre Harris and Vidal Davis, but this Philadelphia writing/production team is better-known as Dre & Vidal.

Signed to Universal Music Publishing in 2002, the pair attracted considerable attention by way of co-writing/producing Michael Jackson’s “Butterflies,” as well as penning Glenn Lewis’s “Don’t You Forget It” and fellow Philadelphian Jill Scott’s “Getting in the Way.”

Fast forward to 2006, Dre & Vidal picked up two awards at the annual ASCAP Pop Awards for Ciara’s “Oh!” and Usher’s “Caught U.” Referring to working with Usher on this and a couple of other songs from the “Confessions” album, Dre told VH1.com that he and Vidal “really focused in on showing [Usher’s] vocal ability.”

Recently, Mario ("How Could You?") and Chris Brown ("Yo (Excuse Me Miss)") have enlisted Dre & Vidal’s services. And the credits list keeps growing. The twosome are currently collaborating with Trey Songz, Ludacris, the Game, Beneté Sigel, Usher, Bobby Valentino and Ciara.

SEAN GARRETT

Few urban songwriters have come on the scene so quickly and dramatically as Sean Garrett. Since co-writing Usher’s monster hit “Yeah!”—which BMI named its 2005 urban song of the year and was swiftly followed on the charts by Ciara’s “Goodies” and Destiny’s Child’s “Love My Life” and “Soldier”—the Atlanta native has become a virtual hitmaking machine.

Indeed, earlier this year his tunesmithing accounted for the top three songs on The Billboard Hot 100 (Nelly’s "Grillz," Chris Brown’s "Run It!" and Beyoncé’s "Check it On it").

He has worked with such luminaries as Kanye West, Jennifer Lopez and Janet Jackson, and is currently involved in projects for Beyoncé and One Chance, a group signed to Usher’s US Records.

A singer himself, Garrett looks to eventually record his own material. Until then, he continues his charitable activities for organizations like the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. He also plans to join forces with a pen company and tour schools to encourage students to express themselves through writing. After all, he has been christened the "Pen" by none other than Jay-Z.

HAROLD LILLY JR.

From warehouse employee to Grammy Award winner in six years, Harold Lilly Jr. was singing made-up songs while working in Richmond, Va., when he had an epiphany: Music could be more than just a hobby.

Having played keyboards and piano since he was 12, Lilly began recording demos. A duet with Missy Elliott protege Nicole Wray eventually led to Lilly signing with EMI Music Publishing. Since then, he has written for the late Luther Vandross (“Take You Out”), Angie Stone (“Brotha”), Mario (“Braid My Hair”), Brandy (“Talk About Us”) and Chris Brown (“Turtle’s Day”).

Indeed, earlier this year his tunesmithing accounted for the top three songs on The Billboard Hot 100 (Nelly’s “Grillz,” Chris Brown’s “Run It!” and Beyoncé’s “Check it On it”).

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Rhythm & Blues

GAIL MITCHELL gmitchell@billboard.com

RAISE YOUR PENS, LADIES

It is still a man’s world when it comes to writing urban music, but there are several women who are ready—and able—to change that.

"It’s happened twice where I’ve written a song and the artist or his rep wants 5% and a writer’s credit for inserting one word into my song," recalls Willis, who has also written for Luther Vandross and Charlie Wilson. "Refused and was called every name in the book. But guys doing the same are called assertive and innovative.”

Besides society’s—and by osmosis, the industry’s—gender and age biases, the 34-year-old Willis cites computer technology as another factor.

"The edge many guys have is that they’re both musicians and gadget freaks who have learned to incorporate machines into their musicianship. Very few women are able to do that in addition to writing melodies and lyrics.”

That isn’t stopping Willis from pushing forward. A producer and musician as well, the Atlantan has formed a R&B band with a small group of musicians and released an indie album, "K. Willis & the Collection," on Willisongs (kwillisandthecollection.com).

"It all goes hand in hand," says Willis, who offers up former writing client Kandi Burruss as an example. Burruss, who first made a name for herself as a member of Xscape, later co- penned "Bills, Bills, Bills" (Destiny’s Child) and "No Scrubs" (TLC). The latter song led to a Grammy win and Burruss’ becoming the first woman to receive ASCAP’s Rhythm & Soul songwriter of the year award.

"We [female writers] just need to take matters into our own hands,” Willis says. “If we stick with it, it will happen.”

BET HONORS ARTISTS

Annual Awards Show Celebrates R&B/Hip-Hop’s Success

The BET Awards roll back into Los Angeles June 27 at a new venue with a new host.

Now in its sixth year, the ceremony shifts from the Kodak Theatre to the Shrine Auditorium. The first-time host is comedian/actor Damon Wayans.

Actor/singer Jamie Foxx has the most nominations with five, including double nominations in the best duet/collaboration category: with Kanye West for “Gold Digger” and with Ludacris for “Unpredictable.”

Tied at four nominations each are Mary J. Blige, Missy Elliott and Busta Rhymes. Additional multiple nominees include West, Mariah Carey, Chris Brown, Keyshia Cole and Ne-Yo.

A new award has been added to celebrate the accomplishments of BET J and the sister network BET J (formerly BET Jazz). The BET J Cool Like That Award’s inaugural nominees are U.K. newcomer Corinne Bailey Rae, Eric Benet, Anthony Hamilton, Heather Headley and Kendrea the Family Soul.

Receiving special recognition this year are Chaka Khan (Lifetime Achievement) and Harry Belafonte (Humanitarian Award).

At the press conference announcing this year’s nominees, Wayans said of his first-time hosting gig, "I was honored when I was asked to do this. I don't know what I'm going to do, but that's when I'm at my best—when I'm unpredictable." And being unpredictable is a BET Awards hallmark.

Last year, hosts Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith introduced a surprise Fregeen reunion performance. Other just "wow" moments include plus-size comedian Mo’Nique’s faithful imitation of Beyoncé’s booty-shaking routine in the "Crazy in Love" video and Michael Jackson catching the audience and James Brown off guard when he stepped onstage to pay tribute to the lifetime Achievement honoree.

This year the network is already touting performances by T.I., Blige, Carey and West. "It's truly a celebration of talent," Wayans said of the show. "It's always entertaining, fun and has amazing talent."
from >>>33

I Love"

The songwriter/producer also picked up his first Grammy for best R&B song last year for co-writing Alicia Keys’ “You Don’t Know My Name." Lilly’s recent projects include Atlantic newcomer Trey Songz’s “Just Go Make It” and collaborations with Monica, Mario, Ruben Studdard and Akon.

BRYAN MICHAEL-COX

Everyone recalls Mariah Carey’s No. 1 chart-topper “Don’t Forget About Us.” especially Bryan Michael-Cox. He wrote it.

THE CLUTCH

The Clutch is a newly formed collective comprising songwriter/producer Patrick "J Que" Smith (Ushee’s “Yeah!”), songwriter/producer/arranger Ezekiel "Zeke" Lewis (Kevin Lyt- tle’s “Ya Kus”), songwriter Balaewa Muhammad (Ciara’s “Oh”), songwriter Candice Nelson (Ali- cia Keys’ “Heartburn”) and songwriter/singer Keril Wilson (Toni Braxton’s “Supposed to Be”).

The quintet formally joined forces last Oc- tober after sitting down for the first time ater the MTV Awards. One of the Clutch’s first full songwriting/production efforts is the new Jagged Edge single “Stunna.”

Other recent collaborations involving the Clutch—of whom plan to be based in Atlanta by September—include Avant (“4 Minutes”), Chris Brown (“Young Love”) and Mary J. Blige (“Take Me As I Am”).

Upcoming projects on the group’s docket include Kelly Rowland and Tyrese, as well as newcom- ers Bayajie (Atlantic), Keisha Chante (Sony) and Cristal Cue (Atlantic).

Smith notes of the writers’ decision to come together, “A brand will last longer than any one of us.”

TIM & BOB

Known for fusing R&B, pop, techno and gospel, Tim Kelley and Bob Robinson (aka Tim & Bob) pull double duty as producers and songwriters. In the mid-’90s, the Grammy Award- nominated duo from Peoria, Ill., started working closely with its mentor—famed Atlanta producer Dallas Austin—for a variety of acts, including TLC, Monica and 112.

Tim & Bob play various instruments, but while Tim was raised on R&B and influenced by pop, Bob’s musical roots lie in the church.

The pair first made an impact on the pop scene with Sisqó’s 2000 summer hit “Thong Song.” Since then, it has penned songs for Jon B (“They Don’t Know”), Tamia (“So Into You”), Boyz II Men, Deborah Cox, Joe and Ginuwine, among other acts.

Tim & Bob co-founded pro- duction company Pure Entertain- ment with co-owner Nate Smith and have secured production deals with several labels. They are working on projects for Bobby V, Van V, Ushee, Nas, Brandy and Myle.

NE-YO

Few singers can honestly say they are writ- ing because that’s what they would rather do. But not-so-newcomer Ne-Yo enjoys both, and he penned Marios’ “Let Me Love You” after his first solo deal fell apart.

Now that the 23-year-old Las Vegas native has dropped his own album, “In My Own Words,” which sits at No. 8 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart after 16 weeks, everyone is ask- ing him for a few phrases.

Ne-Yo wrote Rihanna’s current single, “Un- faithful,” and has written for Teairra Mari, O’Maraon, Beyoncé, Ruben Studdard, Christina Milian, Mario, Mario Vanquez, Heather Headley and Mary J. Blige.

“I hate songs that don’t talk about anything.”

Ne-Yo says. “As elaborate as the English lan- guage is, you’re going to do a song about noth- ing? Or the chorus is, ‘I love you,’ and then the verse is, ‘Look at your booty’? Cut it out.”

REAL TALK

HILLARY CROSLEY hrcrosley@billboard.com

MASHING UP ‘PURPLE RAIN’

Diplomats, Bangers join mix-tape frenzy and unleash fresh new tunes using Prince’s classic soundtrack

We all know that mash-ups have been the hip thing to do. After the Jay-Z and Linkin Park performance at the 2006 Grammy Awards with Paul McCartney, it’s officially mainstream. The blending of Jay-Z’s "Encore" with Linkin Park’s "Numb" and the Beatles’ "Yesterday" may conceptually sound far-fetched, but sonically it’s not.

If it’s adventure you seek from your mash-ups, check out "Jon Moskowitz Presents: Purple Reign." The mix tape is exactly what the name promises: a combination of the core MCs from the Diplomats—Jim Jones, Juelz Santana and Cam’Ron—mashed up with the "Purple Rain" soundtrack and audio clips.

Jon Moskowitz has made a run from these mash-ups, or combination mix tapes. He’s also the father of “Blue Eyes in Bed-Stuy,” a mix tape produced by DJ Cappel & Smitty, mashung up the Notorious B.I.G.’s lyrics with Frank Sinatra’s beats in 2005. It doesn’t sound as crazy as you might think.

“I usually come up with the ideas and pick producers with a background in the format,” Moskowitz says. “I did Bob Marley and Mobb Deep, it was called ‘Bobb Deep’ in 2004 with a producer named Swin-dle. And then I did ‘Blue Eyes in Bed-Stuy,’ and that’s when it all came together.”

Moskowitz doesn’t call his mix tapes mash- ups—after all, the term is passé—but rather, "remixes with a theme." And the Bangers, the production duo behind “Purple Reign,” agree.

Comprising Nik@Nite and Rok One, the pair of native New York club DJs are in their late 20s. Nik has been spinning since he was about 14 years old, while Rok, who used to MC, released a single in the 90s called "Certified Superior" on Bobbito Garcia’s old label, Fondle 'Em Records. The guys now have a residency at Savasal bar in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn, and plan to get into original production.

“We didn’t want it to be a gimmick album,” Rok says. “It is, but we wanted it to be musically good at the same time. I met up with Jon and asked him to keep us in mind when he put this one together, because I know Prince’s whole catalog back to front. No one knows Prince like I know Prince.”

And though the guys put together a fresh approach to Harlem cult king Cam’ron, not everyone’s excited.

“There’s a couple of Prince sites that hate it,” Rok says. “And some like it. But this is just an experiment. We were just combining two elements that you can’t see together.”

Unfortunately, another mix-tape group, the Tapemasters Inc. & John Shottt, allegedly heard about the impending Banger project and tried to corner the market. Shottt’s “A Prince in Harlem,” featuring Cam’ron, Jones, Santana, Big Pun, N.O.R.E. and the Lox, hit in April, just before the Bangers’ “Purple Reign” dropped in May.

“Moskowitz actually ran into the guy in a club, and he admitted that he stole the idea,” Rok says. “And he told Moskowitz that he should just try put- ting ‘Purple Reign’ out before they did. His project isn’t worth talking about. He brutalized Prince.”

We have not tracked down “A Prince in Harlem” yet, so we can’t judge the competition. But we will say this: The combination of Cam’ron’s “What Means the World to You” sliced over Prince’s “When Doves Cry” on “Purple Reign” is a pure, refreshing delight.
SPECIAL FEATURE

SONGWRITER/ PRODUCER
BREAKS OUT HIS PEN AND THE HITS START FLOWING

SEAN STARS GARRETT
PROVING THE POWER OF THE PEN

BY JIM BESSMAN

GARRETT Earns Praise As A FAST, VERSATILE COMPOSER-TURNED-PRODUCER WITH SUPERSTAR CLIENTS APLENTY

His name is Sean Garrett, but to none other than Jay-Z, he’s simply “the Pen.” And for good reason. The 27-year-old songwriter-producer from Atlanta has emerged as a creative powerhouse with a hot streak that’s undeniable. During the past three years, Garrett has co-written 16 songs that have scaled the Hot 100, including four that hit No. 1. Among those is Usher’s monster single “Yeah!,” which held down the No. 1 spot on the Hot 100 and the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart for several weeks in early 2004.

Garrett’s Hot 100 streak also has included the chart-topper’s “Ain’t It Hot,” cut by Chris Brown, “Check on It” from Beyoncé and “Grillz” by Nelly.

This spring, Garrett has been a force as five tracks he’s co-written debuted on the Hot 100 during April and May alone. They were Mary J. Blige and Brooklyn’s “Enough Cryin’,” Chris Brown and Lil’ Wayne’s “Gimme Tha Thang,” Janelle Monae and Twista’s “D.I. Play a Love Song,” Kelis and Too Short’s “Bossy” and the Pussycat Dolls and Snoop Dogg’s “Buttons.”

Along with the artists who have performed his songs, Garrett shares writing credits with fellow writer/producers, including Scott Storch, Jermaine Dupri, Rodney Jenkins and others.

Now increasing in demand for his producer’s touch as well as his songwriting talent, Garrett also has several compositions and co-production credits on Beyoncé’s forthcoming album. He has a hand in upcoming recordings from the likes of Lionel Richie, Britney Spears and Fergie of the Black Eyed Peas.

And his past credits have graced projects by a who’s who of contemporary pop: Kanye West, Jennifer Lopez, Ciara, Fantasia, Ben Jovi, Janet Jackson, Maroon 5, Mariah Carey, Donell Jones and Christina Milian.

No wonder that stories about Garrett often quote Jay-Z’s accolade: “The ink never dries in the Pen.”

Or as Interscope/Geffen A&M Records chairman Jimmy Iovine notes, “He’s a real songwriter, one who can cross into these different worlds, and he’s really quick. He wrote a song on the Fergie record over the phone. Every now and then one of these writers comes along, but it’s really, really rare.”

Larry Jackson, VP of A&R for RCA Music Group, observes that Garrett is a “very, very versatile young man who really has an innate gift for melody and an instinct for the pulse of what’s going on (expressed in his) edgy lyrics. And he can come up with something—right on the spot. It’s crazy, but he comes up with a melody right there in my office—and it’s always something strong. It’s a very short, list of people in that league.”

Garrett’s attorney, Peter Lopez, of Kleinberg Lopez Lang Cuddy Edel & Klein, explains his client’s achievement this way: “His success is in large part due to his incredible energy and work ethic—and an interesting background from having spent his childhood in Germany and being influenced by all kinds of music. And he recorded as an artist himself, so he has a unique perspective as an artist and songwriter as well as producer, which gives him special insight into the maximum potential for artistry.”

Garrett recalls his musical childhood. “I was always very creative, singing and doing talent shows,” he says, recalling his "military brat" upbringing in Europe. "My dad was a sergeant major in the army—definitely a drill sergeant, but a good guy who was always supportive in giving me the opportunities to do what we wanted to do in life. I was a little rebellious. Everything that had to do with music, I was always about.”

His mother came from Atlanta and his father from Philadelphia. Garrett grew up with an intuitive grasp of urban rhythm and melodies tempered, perhaps, by his European perspective on American pop music.

He was always writing songs though it would be awhile before he would accrue to being a songwriter. Among the influences are Rod Temperton, Diane Warren, Michael Jackson, Quincy Jones, Babyface, L.A. Reid, R. Kelly, Barry White, Lenny Kravitz and Jermaine Dupri.

And he is a “very huge fan” of rap.

“Whatever makes my style so much different from most songwriters is that I incorporate hip-hop and R&B and pop music,” Garrett continues. “I’m not just an R&B songwriter—I write country songs, too.”

After signing a recording contract in Germany continues on >p38
Sean it has been a true pleasure making hits with you and I wish you many more years of success.

Beyoncé
With Ariola/BMG as a teen, Garrett returned to the United States. At 21, he was set to record as a solo artist for Warner Bros., but that deal fell through.

Soured by the experience, he fulfilled his mother’s wish and went to college. He also found gainful employment as a mortgage broker. But he never lost the creative bug, and this part of his career, thankfully, was short-lived.

Living in South Carolina, Garrett began writing and recording songs on his own. Some of his tracks received local radio play and Garrett then moved to Atlanta and sought a publishing deal. He found it with L.A. Reid’s Hitco Music, a joint venture with Windswept Publishing.

"It was one of the luckiest days of my life," says Reid, now chairman of Island Def Jam Music Group, reflecting on his chance meeting with Garrett. "I happened to be in Atlanta at Hitco Studios, and Sean was in doing demos, and I heard him from outside and went, ‘Oh, my God. Who’s that?’ He was amazing, and I was immediately taken. My God, how could I get so lucky? I walked into this guy, and from there he started to write songs for me for various artists—and the next thing you know, he’s one of the biggest writers in the country.”

One of those songs, of course, was “Yeah!”

"I knew that Usher was almost finished with his album [‘Confessions’],” Garrett says. "L.A. Reid called me and said, ‘We need a first single.’ We spoke a little bit about it, and I went to the studio. Since all the other songs on the album were very hot and R&B-ish, I wanted to give him something out-of-the-box that was more creative and dynamic.

“So we went in and cut a demo and took it to L.A., and we sat and talked about it for quite a while. He thought it was very interesting, but he asked me a lot of questions in reference to how it worked for Usher and said he wanted a change or two. So I went in, and the rest is history—and the beginning of this beautiful run.”

That run has included tracks that Garrett singles out as creative milestones, including Usher’s “Red Light,” Ciara’s “Goodies” and “Ooh Baby,” Teairra Mari’s “Make Her Feel Good,” Destiny’s Child’s “Lose My Breath” and “Soldier,” Chris Brown’s “Run It!” and “Gimme That,” Mary J. Blige’s “Enough Cryin’,” Jamie Foxx’s “DJ Play a Love Song” and the Pussycat Dolls’ “Buttons.”

As for Usher’s “Yeah!,” Reid remembers that “it was an amazing song, but the lyrics needed more depth and needed to be a story. So Sean turned it into a story.”

Usher lauds Garrett for his knack for “identifying how to pull high energy and great vocal ability out of the artist.” He also offers credence to Garrett’s declaration that he specially crafts songs for individual artists.

“His style sounds so much like Michael Jackson, but once I got working with him it became Usher,” Usher says. “He really created greatness—and a sound that we can massage again in future projects and some of the writing he does for other artists.”

Garrett attributes his client’s achievements to a “sincere love and passion” for music. “He sits there humming and constantly generating music—incredible hooks and songwriting ideas—in his mind.”

Garrett’s triumphs stem from his being “a fan of the artist, for one,” says Mark Pitts, senior VP A&R with the Zomba Label Group. “He’s also a singer, and he has traveled around the world—so his vision is more broad. And he’s the first person I’ve worked with where we have a synergy—I’m in A&R, but I’m emotional and dramatic and animated, and he brings my thoughts to life all the time. He can tell what type of energy I want for a record, and he brings it home to me every time.”

Garrett is also “pushing and bettering himself as a writer,” Usher adds. “One hit record can make a career, but he’s not just celebrating the hits of the past but thinking about the next great projects to get in the future.”

Echoing Usher, Reid notes that while Garrett is consistently good, “you can push and challenge him,” as was the situation with “Yeah!” He cites “Let Go,” which Garrett wrote for new Def Jam artist Megan Rochelle, as an example.

“It’s absolutely the best song he’s ever written,” Reid says. “It’s best-known for his more rhythmic-leaning commercial records, but this one has a lot more depth and character. It’s a heartfelt, emotional record.”

Garrett’s songwriting/producing plate would appear to be full, if not overflowing.

“After one big hit, my man got so busy I can barely get him on the phone,” Usher laments. “But we eventually did hook up for other projects.”

One such project, he adds, is his own US Records R&B quintet One Chance, with whom Garrett is now working. And Garrett has hinted that he will at some point give his own recording career another go.

Amid his songwriting and production projects, however, Garrett also is notably involved in numerous efforts to guide young people who are exploring careers in the music business or elsewhere.

“I remember when I was young, before we went to Europe, and my mom used to take me to the Boys Club,” he reflects. “I remember having the best time there trying to figure out what I wanted to be in life. So I try to support those kinds of things that helped bring me up—little things that are really big for kids—and try to give something back in every possible way I can.”

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Sean Garrett talks in exclamations, a verbal style that conveys the energy that this songwriter/producer has brought to hit records by an ever-increasing number of artists. With co-songwriting credits on 16 hits on The Billboard Hot 100 during the past three years, Garrett is now establishing himself as a producer on projects including Beyoncé's next album. He recently took time to reflect on his career with Billboard contributor Jim Bessman.

You've achieved so much success, and so quickly. It does seem like it's been overnight. But I'm so very blessed to have had the opportunity to work with so many artists who have let me be a part of their careers, and get so much love back from the public. If it wasn't for them, there definitely wouldn't be a me.

And what about Jay-Z calling you "the Pen"? That's the biggest compliment I could get from anyone. He's a living legend in my opinion, the best rapper alive. And I have so much respect for him as a businessman as well as a creative guy. Being in the studio with him is amazing. I don't think the world understands just how gifted he is: When you see someone who comes from the Marcy [public housing] projects in Brooklyn to the top of the music world and then to Wall Street, that's history.

What kind of effect does that have on you? He's just given me so much confidence, and the belief that anything is possible. To carry the weight of the entire rap world on his back for so many years— and to be able to take a shoe and sell more Reeboks than they ever sold of one [kind of] shoe—it is absolutely ridiculous. So to have someone of that stature pay me that kind of compliment is incredible.

So how did you become "the Pen"? I always wrote songs, but I never looked at myself as a songwriter. I figured, you're not a songwriter until people buy your songs. But I was in a group when I was 21 and was about to sign a solo deal with Warner Bros., and then they fired everyone in the black music department and I lost the deal. So I started writing songs and tried to secure another solo deal. I was living in South Carolina, and recorded some songs and got them to some radio PDs, and they started playing them.

Then people said I should write for other people as well. But I said I wasn't a songwriter, but an artist. So I moved to Atlanta and wound up putting four songs on a CD as a demo, and started shopping a publishing deal.

Why did you sign to Hitco Music in Atlanta [the joint venture with Windswept Publishing]? I got four offers, but decided to go with Hitco/Windswept because I had so much respect for L.A. Reid and Babyface and the type of music they were delivering, and I wanted to be part of a situation where I knew they knew real good music. So I did a publishing deal with them, and six months later I wrote "Yeah!" and it's been incredible ever since.

What brought you to Atlanta? That's where my mom was from. I lost her almost four years ago. It was very traumatic. We were so close.

Did she have an effect on you? Continued on >>p42
S Dot,

Congratulations on being the **2nd** Greatest of All Time!

Ya boy,
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and Zone 4 Inc.

(OL’ Lil Boy King Face Ass!)
from >p40
your career?
She had this tremendous strength, which she passed down to me. Basically, I had a choice: I could give up, or keep moving and make something of myself. I know she wanted me to keep it going, and losing her was really the force behind me making history, which is what I set out to do.

Making history as a songwriter and producer?
By avoiding all the pitfalls and mistakes that have been made by those who came before me. I want to continue for years to always be a person that can deliver and stay successful, and not get caught up in all the hype, which is what can happen. And I want to be able to handle the success, not have success handle me and go to my head.

So I wanted to make history and show a positive side to working behind the scenes, to continue to work very hard and take every project very seriously and do 150% in everything and stay around for awhile without getting to a point where I start becoming irrational and disrespectful to people.

How do you go about your business, then?
I work very hard every day to do what I’m here to do, and one thing I can say is that it comes from God, absolutely. I hardly ever write songs in my free time.

Basically, I just go in the studio to work, and it really is a God-given talent, and I’m so appreciative of it and try not to take it for granted.

Do you write with specific artists in mind?
I never just write, but I custom-make songs and records for whoever the artist is, otherwise they’re not really true. Like for Chris Brown, those records were cut and pasted and shaped and formed just for him—his personality, his vibe, his feel, his tone. So that’s Chris Brown, [I’m] creating his vibe. Not to take anything away from him—he’s like my little brother and a super, super talent—or any of the artists I work with. But we all go hand in hand, and the artists definitely do a lot for my songs as well.

Do you ever write for yourself?
I don’t write music for me. If I wrote music for me I’d be looking for entirely different stuff. I write my lyrics for the kids and sometimes it’s a little edgy, but kids who are 12 are like [they were] 26 back in the day. You don’t want to hide anything from them, but be clear about it. They’ll respect you more if you’re being real with them. But they’ll find out about everything later, and then if they do they’ll make their own decisions rather than listen to yours because you’re hiding it in the first place.

How do you feel about the state of the music business as it relates to you as a songwriter and producer?
I feel there’s a lot going on for those of us who are songwriters and producers. There’s a very big business in what we do. The issue of digital downloading is very, very tough on us, and the aspect of having so much access to music in computers and downloading without paying is really tough on our survival.

This is our living: It’s not a game we’re playing around with, but how we feed our kids. So it’s important that people respect... continued on >p44
Congrats on all of your successes and for consistently dominating the charts.

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Above, from left, CIARA, SEAN GARRETT
and ASCAP executive VP/director of
membership TODD BRASEC. Below,
from left, BM VP CATHERINE
BREWTON and Garrett at the BMI Pop
Awards in May.

from >>p42

the hard work that goes into making the music.
And it's really not that expensive for people
to do the right thing and help the artists.

Do you have any thoughts on the current state
of songwriting?

I think songwriting is in a great place. I'm happy
that people are becoming more receptive to cre-
ativity and trying different things. It's gotten
out of R&B music being one way and pop music
being one way, that you have to be in a boy band
or your hair has to look like this or you have to
sing like this.

It's 2006, a new millennium, a time for tak-
ing chances. And I love the opportunity to take
chances. I think that's what making music is all
about—opening the door and coming in.

In the 1970s and '80s, there were great col-
laborations between different styles like pop
and R&B and now it's our version. So when peo-
ple say, "The music's not the same," of course
it's not. But look at the kids. They still buy music,
and we're giving the kids what they like—and
that's who I work for.

What do you think is the best thing about
the music business today?

I can tell you that the worst thing is the fact that
the creative side is sometimes looked upon as
the weak side, when they go hand in hand—cre-
ative and executive.

But sometimes the executive side doesn't re-
spect the creative enough to get the best out
of creative people, which eventually winds up hurt-
ing the business.

Don't get me wrong: I understand that busi-
ness has got to be business, that we got to keep
the lights on. But executives have to understand
how to deal with creative people in a way that's
not just about the dollar, that they have to take
to very good care of the creative machine that gen-
erates the product.

But is there, then, something you could point
to that's the best side about the business?

If there's anything you're working on, that's the
best side. If you're in it and you're working,
that's the best thing. Times are hard, and
who can complain if you have a job as a creative per-
son, creating music for the world? It just doesn't
get better than that.

Is there anything that you know now that you
wish you knew when you started out?

In this business, it's not like you read a book
about how to make it when you come into it. So
there's like one million and five things that if I
knew then I would have changed.

But to be very honest, I'm just really thank-
ful to be kind in my life so I can see things be-
fore they happen. And if I take a few bumps and
bruises, there are some things I needed to learn
and wouldn't have paid as much attention to if
I had known them before. You have to fall for
yourself to see things. I'm just blessed enough
not to see some really big falls and the bumps
and bruises that I have taken have been appre-
ciated, and I can pass them on to the next gen-
eration of super songwriters and producers.

Speaking of which, is there any advice you
would offer to young songwriters?

Definitely pay attention to every aspect of music,
not just the creative side but the business side.
Read articles and books about all the good and
the bad things that happen in the music busi-
ess, so you don't make the same mistakes. If
you find someone who totally respects that you
would like to be like, model yourself after them.
And don't take anything for granted.

One thing I've done is take everything so se-
riously, so that people say, "Sean, you take
this too seriously." You understand that in the
blinking eye you can all be taken away from me.
Life moves on, and I know for a fact that it feels
totally different to not be in the light when you're
in the light. So do all that you want: Keep
moving and believe in yourself. It's very im-
portant that in 10 years you don't say, "Damn,
I should have done an album."

What about you, then? You started out as a
singer, too. Any plans to return to the record-
ing side?

I'm planning something like that, but I just want it
to be the right thing. But I'm just getting started.
I'm very young-minded and energetic, and I still
have some great ideas in crossing and mixing
things up in my songwriting and producing. I
think the Beyoncé album will show people that
I'm just getting started and going to a whole
other level of music and being creative.
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The 2003 self-titled debut from Three Days Grace arrived just as the band's single "(Hate) Everything About You" was taking off at radio. With a song that would eventually peak at No. 28 on Billboard's Mainstream Top 40 chart, the heretofore-unknown Canadian rock act faced a problem many a band would be happy to have—spending the next two years on the road proving that it had more up its sleeve than one mass-appeal hit.

First-week sales numbers of its sophomore effort, "One-X," should silence any remaining doubters. The album arrived at No. 5 on The Billboard 200 with 78,000 units sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That slightly exceeds Jive/Zomba's initial projection of 75,000, and more than satisfies the label's goal of a top 10 debut. Zomba Label Group senior VP of national sales Rob Anderson says.

The new album adds some ominous textures to Three Days Grace's anthemic grunge-inspired rock. The gloomy undercurrent was directly influenced by the band's experience on the road, which drummer Neil Sanderson says early caused the group to drift apart. "It's the phenomenon of urban isolation," he says. "I think a lot of people can relate to being alone in a crowd."

Anderson says the label shipped 250,000 copies for street date. Jive/Zomba strategically targeted the June 13 release date because it fell right before Father's Day in the United States. "We think that releasing the week of Father's Day was crucial," Anderson says. "We know there are a lot of male shoppers that week."

Previously, Three Days Grace's best week was during Christmas 2003, when its debut sold 34,000 units. To date, the album has topped 1.2 million units and peaked at No. 69 on The Billboard 200.

The band's debut spawned three top 10 hits on Billboard's Modern Rock chart, but none had the crossover appeal of "(Hate) Everything About You," which also reached No. 53 on The Billboard Hot 100.

But the other Modern Rock hits did lead to "the audience discovering it wasn't a band that just had one great song," Jive/Zomba VP of A&R Michael Tedesco says. "That cemented the group in terms of being legitimate."

The act's new single, "Animal I Have Become," is giving retailers and promoters hope that the Howard Benson-produced "One-X" can also become a consistent seller. The single is No. 7 in its 11th week on the Modern Rock tally.

Rock KUPD Phoenix PD Larry McPeel says, "The audience has been phenomenal. As of the first few times we played it, we started getting a lot of phone calls."

Prior to street date, the band toured with Staind. At select venues, Jive/Zomba sold the new single for $2, which also acted as a ticket to an after-show autograph session/meet and greet as well as a $2 coupon for the new album at FYE outlets. Anderson says about 1,000 copies were sold.

Also boosting awareness at retail was a set of nine trading cards, which were given away as a value-added with the chain and indie level.

Jive/Zomba senior VP/head of marketing Julia Lipari-Kadarusman says the trading cards were part of a strategic effort to put a face to the band. "They had so much success at rock radio, but they were always known as the band with the 'Hate' song," she says.

The card promotion also had an online component, where fans could gain access to an acoustic version of the new single by sending e-cards to their friends. "In order to get the next card, you had to send one to a friend," says Jami Stigliano, manager of new media at the label. "They have a fan base, but it's not a rabid fan base that can do all the work for us. So we've had to sort of empower them."

"Thus far, everything is going as planned for the label. But these days, retailers practice caution even when they witness the most optimistic results."

"We've had a few people say good things about it," says Chris Oliver, a manager at Hastings' Galveston, Texas, location. "It's been selling well, but it won't be until the second or third week until we know if it's something that's going to hit once and go away or something that will stay for a long time."

Additional reporting by Courtney Leat in Los Angeles.

JULY 1, 2006
www.billboard.biz | 47
Colombia’s Strong New Brew

Given the international success of such artists as Shakira and Juanes, it is by now pretty much established that Colombian music—even at its most regional—has possibilities abroad.

The latest artist to get a heavy international push is singer/songwriter Fonseca, a native of Bogotá, whose mix of vallenato and cumbia fused with pop, jazz, and world beats vacillates between sophisticated and eminently mainstream.

His breakthrough was “Te Mando Flores,” the first single off “Corazón,” his EMI Latin debut. (Fonseca had a previous album on indie Lideres.) The song spent 22 consecutive weeks at No. 1 on Colombia’s radio charts last year, propelling sales of “Corazón” in that country and making Fonseca an exportable commodity.

Now, EMI is pushing Fonseca in the United States, following his success in Ecuador, Venezuela and Peru. Although single “Te Mando Flores” has yet to chart on Billboard’s lists, it is probably only a matter of time before it does as Fonseca has a similar sound to that of country mates Juanes, Carlos Vives and Jorge Villamizar (of Bacilos), coupled with a truly fine and distinctive voice.

The appeal of “Flores,” beyond a great melody, is how it combines dance rhythms with a palpable sense of yearning. The song, about a far away lover who can only send flowers in his dreams, may be interpreted in many dramatic ways. But actually, it has a quirky story behind it.

Fonseca wrote it between record deals while he was a contestant on a Colombian reality show called “La Granja” (The Farm).

“Wow, I’ve never told this story,” he says with a laugh. “They told me I could take my guitar with me, and I spent all my free time with my guitar. When you’re in a reality show, you’re totally isolated. My girlfriend was in Spain, and I didn’t know what came over me, and I wrote that song.”

We are betting on Fonseca’s success, however, for reasons that go beyond a single song. “Corazón” is a well-rounded album that touches upon many styles and gives glimpses of a thoughtful writer. And although Fonseca sounds a lot like Vives, he has developed his own direction. At the same time, he takes care to give Vives the props he deserves.

“I’ve had an evolution toward vallenato,” says Fonseca, whose sound was initially far more pop. “I always liked it, but it was a bit foreign to me. Then, I heard ‘Clásicos de la Provincia’ [Vives’ breakthrough album] and my [thoughts] changed. I heard the music in a different way.”

Although Fonseca says he would never dare call himself a vallenatero, he has received support from that musical community based on Colombia’s Atlantic coast.

Perhaps more important, he sees a real Colombian movement developing, emboldened by the international success of Shakira and Juanes.

“I no longer see it as an unattainable goal,” he says of worldwide acclaim, noting that these days merely being Colombian opens doors for radio and TV promotion. However, he adds, “it’s also a dangerous moment. We don’t want to be repetitive, or else we’ll bury ourselves.

I’m confident in what I can do with this album. Here, I want to take my first, firm step. I don’t want to be the guy who came, sang one little song and left.”

Other noteworthy, up-and-coming Colombians to watch include Andres Cepeda, newly signed to SGZ/Univision; as well as Malu, Ilona Jorge Colendon and Julio Nava. All are currently unsigned but surely not for long.
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Fantasy

Chris Carrabba is a slave to his feelings, a quality that fans of his band, Dashboard Confessional, have come to adore.

After almost two years of writing and recording, the band will release its much-anticipated fourth studio album, "usk and Summer" (Vagrant), on June 25. It is the follow-up to "Mark, a Mission, a Brand, a Scar," which came in at No. 2 on The Billboard 200. The new album's first single, "Don't Wait," is No. 21 on the Modern Rock chart.

Carrabba has expanded on the outfit's original acoustic feel to create a bigger rock sound on its latest effort, but his signature emo lyrics, such as "My heart is stady but I need you to survive" on the track "Reason to Believe," remain on message.

Dashboard Confessional will start a 21-date summer tour July 10. Although the amphitheaters on most of the dates are a far cry from the band's club beginnings, Carrabba still makes time to meet with his fans after shows, even now that they number in the thousands.

Q: How do you handle being labeled "the king of emo"? Is that something you embrace or are you trying to get away from with the new album?
A: Neither. I never thought it really applied to me. The press needs to tag you with something, I guess. So, as far as I'm concerned, eventually they'll get tired of calling me that and they'll call me something else.

Q: Don Gilmore, who has produced Pearl Jam and Linkin Park, and Daniel Lanois, who is best-known for his work with U2 and Bob Dylan, produced this album. They have very different sounds. How did you make sure the album sounded coherent?
A: One of the things we did, first we did it with Daniel, then when we started working with Don, we retracted certain elements from the second session on the first. So there was the same sound and continuity.

Q: This album definitely has the bigger rock sound that was first evident on "Mark, a Mission, a Brand, a Scar" and with the "Vindicated" single. Why did you decide to go in this direction?
A: I'm not sure I decided. I guess that's just how I was writing, how I was feeling. I'm sort of a slave to that. I don't have a lot of preconceptions. "Well, I should do this now." [It is] where I am as a writer at the moment.

Q: How did the collaboration with Counting Crows' Adam Duritz on the album track "So Long, So Long" come about?
A: We're friends, so we've been talking about doing something together, in the form of a tour, for a long time. We weren't really able to line it up where we both had the same schedule with record releases and all that nonsense. So, he heard that track, and he had mentioned me singing on his record, but he really liked this track so we invited him to sing on this record.

Q: Your lyrics are very personal and emotional. Are there certain areas that are off-limits?
A: Probably, but I just tap into whatever is resonating at the moment. I think there are certain things I don't need to sing about, to write about, as far as what triggers me as a writer. So there's plenty I don't write about, because it doesn't seem to need needing. Life, in general, serves as an inspiration for me for writing. I'm interested in minutiae and placing it elsewhere.

Q: Your fans expect a very specific sound from you. How far do you feel you can expand artistically before you risk alienating your fan base?
A: It's not really something I worry about. I think they've given us a really wide berth. It's hard to imagine that while we're writing. We hope they like it when it comes out. It's as simple as that. There's certain fans that will only like one way we did things and certain fans that will only like another way. We kind of ebb and flow between those two things. If you liked one, you may have to wait a couple of records, but you'll find it again.

Jazz Notes

DAN OUELLETTE douellette@ billboard.com

Fantasy Diminished By Hintes's Departure

Founded in the '50s as a jazz indie that recorded Dave Brubeck and Cal Tjader, among others, Fantasy Records became the house that Creedence Clearwater Revival abundantly built in the '60s. The Berkeley, Calif.-based label amassed a jazz empire by scooping up seminal but bankrupt indie's from the '50s and '60s such as Riverside and Prestige.

Similarly, Concord formed as a mainstream jazz label in the early '70s in Northern California and now headquartered in Los Angeles as Concord Music Group—found its financial stride thanks largely to Ray Charles' multi-platinum pop record "Genius Loves Company."

When Concord bought Fantasy a year and a half ago, feathers were ruffled among longtime employees at the latter. And the jazz community worried about how the new owners would spin Fantasy's catalog.

Although an impressive series of reissues and boxed sets have been set in motion—including the Thelonious Monk/John Coltrane two-CD set, "The Complete 1957 Riverside Recordings," bowing June 27—it was disconcerting to hear that Terri Hinte, a Fantasy employee for 33 years and its director of publicity for 28 years, was laid off May 31, with three business days' notice. Jazz at Fantasy lost one of its true advocates.

It's ironic that the Jazz Journalist Assn. had already planned to celebrate her. At its 10th annual Jazz Awards show June 19 at New York's B.B. King Blues Club & Grill, Hinte received one of its behind-the-scenes A-Team honors, inscribed as "De Facto Curator of Fantasy Records." While Hinte has been reluctant to talk about her dismissal, esteemed journalists have been weighing in on her behalf.

Grammy Award-winning liner notes scribe Bob Blumenthal calls her "hands down, the absolute best," while author Gary Giddins praises her for "her personalness, intelligence and humor." He wonders how safe Fantasy's catalog really is. "The new owners seem to have no idea what to do with this stuff, how to treat it or market it," Giddins says. "And now they've let go the one person in the company who did."

Concord president Glen Barros counters: "We're committed to jazz and the jazz catalog we've invested in." He adds that he has "tremendous respect" for Hinte as "a great caretaker, proponent and spokesperson" for jazz.

"However, when companies merge, there are unfortunate consequences," Barros says. "But I don't think Terri's departure means that we have any less respect for the Fantasy catalog."

Concord GM Gene Runsey says, "We're as bullish as ever on aggressively marketing the jazz catalog. We're not trying to alienate jazz aficionados, but we are trying to expand the market size, to broaden the number of consumers. Sure, we're not just reissuing titles, we're taking a serious stab at re-establishing the old labels' brands."

Runsey says that Hinte has been invited to consult on future reissues projects, while independent publicity company DL Media will lead the charge for upcoming releases. Hinte will take on freelance writing, editing and publicity gigs (hudbua@sbcglobal.net). She will also continue to work with saxophonist Sonny Rollins, having served as his only publicist since 1978.

NOLA TRIBUTE: On June 6, Crescent City native Wymon Marsalis, joined by singer Cassandra Wilson and Big Easy chef Emeril Lagasse, announced that he and his production team will present a live TV special Aug. 29, the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Titled "New Orleans: Rebuilding the Soul of America...One Year Later," the program will be one of a series of events planned during the three-day New Orleans Cultural Tribute (Celebrate Jazz Trio) fest running Aug. 27-29.

www.americanradiohistory.com
Sanchez’s U.S. Dance
DJ Turns On Some Serious Americana With ‘Come With Me’

We in dance music don’t get albums like Roger Sanchez’s “Come With Me” (Ultra) very often. We get avant-garde collections from underground artists that only a fraction of the music-laying public will ever support. We get serviceable pop from upstarts looking for an easier route to MTV-level success. We get confused, uneven castoffs by career DJs looking to make a name—and maybe some publishing dough—as writers and producers.

But it’s a rare day when we get an album that truly reflects what American dance music down to its roots is all about. And Grammy Award-winning producer/DJ Sanchez’s second full-length is exactly that.

“I want people to really listen to it and see if they can relate to it,” Sanchez says from Ibiza, where he spends half his year. “A couple of album sales definitely wouldn’t hurt. If it goes pop or crosses over, fantastic. But I’m not really worried about that.”

That sounds beatific, but from DJ of Sanchez’s stature, it rings true. In the world outside the United States, guys like him don’t need to make albums that do well. They can easily rest on their hefty performance fees. Which is perhaps why “Come With Me” sounds so unforetold.

The album is 11 tracks, each paying tribute to a different branch of the dance-music family tree, all rendered with a pop polish that could easily send them straight onto the charts. First single “Turn On The Music” is a foot-stomping club anthem, perfectly in place on today’s darker dancefloors; Grammy-winning Latin singer/guitarist Alejandro Sanz is featured on “I’m Yours,” a soundtrack for a moonlit tango; “Reason” could single-handedly bring back disco-style roller rinks and even features a rap (yes, dance and hip-hop are siblings), “Take A Chance” is a Spanish-flavored slowed solo that deserves Bob Fosse choreography.

There’s even a full-fledged breath-taker: “Free (Headwinds),” which started as straight-up reggae. The original singer, Jamaican recording artist Suzanne Cox, remained, but Sanchez reimagined the song’s style as “U.K. soulful dance, like Soul II Soul. I kept some of the original guitar, brought in the string section. I wanted to give it that classic soulful feel because that’s what her voice sounded like to me.” Indeed, Cox sounds like Chaka Khan, and the melody has an expansiveness that recalls Ashford & Simpson. “It just gives a bit of a breadth to the album,” Sanchez says. “It gives you that intimate moment.”

Unusually, and perhaps fittingly, “Come With Me” will be released first in America on June 27 with Europe to follow. Let’s support it and embrace it and love it before they do for once.

SUMMER DAZE: In celebration of the sunny season, I’ll name a different “Summer Pick” at the end of my columns throughout August. This week’s pick is “The Cure and the Cause” by Irish house duo Fish Go Deep featuring vocalist Tracey K. Still available for license in America through Defected in the United Kingdom, the quirky record has been adopted by the country’s dancefloor ladies as a rhythmic singalong over which to bond. Astute lyrics about toxic men can have that effect (see Kelly Clarkson, Mary J. Blige).

“The response has been brilliant particularly amongst American DJs, who have picked up on Dennis Ferrer’s stunning rework of the track,” Defected head Mark Smith-Dunlop reports. “Cure” is also featured on the label’s upcoming “Defected in the House: Eivissa” compilation.

Enthusiastic audiences and media exposure in India are luring Australian pop-rock act Taxiride back to the subcontinent.

Virgin/EMI India recently invited Melbourne-based Taxiride to play its first shows in Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore as part of a 10-date series of gigs flagged “VH1: Rock Rules.” The shows, organized by VH-1 India, took place between May 28 and June 6. They were filmed for broadcast, and also featured unsigned U.K. alternative rock act Haven and Swedish hard rock band Empire Dogs (Versity Music) as well as 12 Indian acts.

Following what Taxiride’s Sydney-based manager Alan Robertson calls “truly amazing” audience reaction, he is discussing a second Indian visit with local agents. In Australia, the act is booked through Premier Artists and published by Mushroom Music.

Robertson says VH-1 India played the album’s lead single “Oh Yeah!” ahead of the visit, then put second single “What Can I Say” in high rotation. English-language radio stations in Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore are also playing the latter track.

Virgin/EMI issued Taxiride’s third album, “Axiomatic,” in India in November 2005, two months after its Australian release on the band’s MGM-distributed Blue Tiger Music label. “Part of being an independent act is the need to find new markets around the world,” Robertson says. “India appealed because Virgin/EMI India label manager Craig Fernandez was very enthusiastic about Taxiride.”

Robertson says Taxiride’s first two albums “Imaginate” (1998) and “Garage Mahal” (2002) on Warner Music respectively sold 200,000 and 150,000 units globally. European deals for “Axiomatic” are being finalized, he adds.

—Christie Eliezer

FRENCH SOUVENIRS: Shipments of singer/songwriter Patrick Bruel’s first album of original music in seven years have just passed the 400,000 mark in his native France.

Bruel’s sixth album “Des Souvenirs Devant ...” (RCA/Sony BMG) remains in the top 10 of the IFOP/Tite Live sales chart three months after its March 20 European release. It is the latest step in a 20-year music career that has seen more than 10 million Bruel albums shipped, according to his label.

Initially a film and TV actor, Bruel became a major recording artist in France with his second album, “Alors Garde,” in 1989.

Although he had written songs since he was a teenager, Bruel had not recorded his own material since his fourth album, 1999’s “Juste Avant.”

RCA says global shipments of “Juste Avant” now stand at 1.7 million copies. The follow-up, “Entre Deux” (2002), saw him tackling French “chanson” classics, but Bruel is now back with his own material, published by his own company, 14 Productions.

“Juste Avant” was a hard act to follow, Sony BMG Music France international product manager Valérie Thiery concedes. “It worked incredibly well,” she says. “The market is different today and this album is more personal, but we still hope to reach very high figures.”

Thiery says international promotion for the album will intensify after the summer. Outside of French-speaking territories, Bruel’s strongest markets are the Netherlands and Germany.

In October, Bruel begins a 39-date tour of France, booked by Backline-VMA, interspersed with dates in Belgium and Switzerland.

—Aymeric Pichelin
Some familiar country names—Billy Ray Cyrus and Ty Herndon—have landed new label deals. Meanwhile, the expected artist roster cuts have started at the newly merged Sony BMG Nashville.

Cyrus has signed with New Door Records/Universal Music Enterprises. The first single, “Wanna Be Your Joe,” has been shipped to country radio. An album of the same name is due July 18.

Cyrus wrote or co-wrote all 12 tracks on the album, which features guest vocalists George Jones and Loretta Lynn. Tracks include tributes to Lynyrd Skynyrd and the late NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt as well as a tongue-in-cheek number called “I Want My Mullet Back.” It’s a toss-up as to whether Cyrus’ initial rise to fame in the early ’90s was due more to his hip-shaking “Achy Breaky Heart” or his elevation of the mullet to an art form.

An established actor who previously starred in his own series, “Doc,” Cyrus now appears with his daughter Miley in the Disney Channel series “Hannah Montana.” Cyrus previously recorded for the Mercury, Monument and Madyson labels. His last project, 2003’s “The Other Side,” was a Christian album released on Word Records.

Meanwhile, Herndon has signed with Titan Records, a division of Titan Global Entertainment. His first album for the label, “Right About Now,” is due this summer. Herndon produced with Darrell Brown, Dennis Matosky and fiddler Jonathan Yudkin.

Herndon recorded for Epic Records from 1995 until 2002, where he racked up seven top 10 singles including three No. 1 hits. His first two albums, “What Mattered Most” and “Living in a Moment,” were certified gold by the RIAA. Two more studio albums and a 2002 greatest hits set followed.

Titan Records is distributed by Fontana.

In other news, the first four artists to be cut from the Sony BMG Nashville roster. Gone are newcomers Jacie Everett, Susan Haynes, Brice Long and Jamey Johnson, who sold 63,000 copies of his 2005 BNA Records debut album, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That album debuted at No. 20 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart on the strength of top 15 single “The Dollar.”

Everett and Haynes had been on the roster of the now-defunct Epic Nashville imprint and sold 5,000 copies and less than 1,000 copies, respectively, of their debut albums. Long was on Columbia and had not yet released an album.

More roster cuts are expected by the end of the month.

**NATIONAL**

**SONY BMG NASHVILLE**

**PARENT OF THE YEAR:** We’ve often heard artists talk about how the studio feels more like home to them than anywhere else, but perhaps no one has put it quite the same way as Green Day’s Billie Joe Armstrong. As the band starts work on its follow-up to its Grammy Award-winning Reprise/Warner Bros. set “American Idiot,” Armstrong says the trio goes into the studio because “it’s fun, it’s like a clubhouse. If we didn’t do that, I don’t know what the hell else I would do. It beats the PTA meeting, that’s for sure.”

**SIGNINGS:** Warner Bros. artist and former “Nashville Star” contestant Lance Miller has signed a co-publishing agreement with Famous Music Nashville. Miller is in the studio with Brad and Brett Warren, who are producing his debut CD. The artists, better-known as the Warren Brothers when they recorded for RCA Records, are former “Nashville Star” judges.

Miller’s scads have been cut by Tim McGraw, Tracy Lawrence, Clay Walker, Restless Heart and Mark Wills. He previously was signed to EMI Music Publishing.

Show Dog Nashville artist Reba Lynn Howard has signed a co-publishing agreement with Roger Murrah’s Castle Street Music.

**MUSIC NEWS:** Dierks Bentley recently filmed a concert at the Fillmore Auditorium in Denver that is slated to become a full-length concert DVD. The high-definition DVD, directed by London-based filmmaker Russell Thomas, is due in late 2006 or early 2007.
REVIEW

SPOTLIGHTS

ALBUMS

DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL
Dusk and Summer
Producer: Don Gilmore
Vagrant
Release Date: June 27
Sounds like Chris Carrabba took notes when his band opened for U2 last fall. On "Dusk and Summer," Dashboard Confessional's first full-band studio effort in three years, the specter of Bon Iver hovers over his impassioned pleadings, which move from shriveled falsetto to operatic sweep. And while U2 producer Daniel Lanois collaborated on only a few songs, his sonic vision shines through all 10 tracks. The midtempo opener "Don't Wait" sends an impossible smile back over a classic U2 beat, while the delicate "Stolen," the album's best cut, unabashedly echoes "With or Without You." Slower paced and more atmospheric than any of its predecessors, "Dusk" is a standout showcase of maturity. However, the "Shrek"-ready piano ballad "So Long, So Long," featuring Counting Crows' Adam Duritz, will make longtime fans cringe and yearn for the bygone man-with-guitar days.—SP

PET SHOP BOYS
Fundamental
Producer: Trevor Horn
Rhino
Release Date: June 27
There is something quite comforting about a new Pet Shop Boys album. Neil Tennant's vocals always manage to soothe and, when necessary, invigorate. The same is true of Chris Lowe's electronic wizardry. To be sure, Boys Tennant and Lowe, accompanied here by producer Trevor Horn, offer much comfort on "Fundamental." The nightclub-primed electro beats the duo helped pioneer in the '80s are present as are lushly arranged, chill-out moments of bliss. Fans are treated to politically alive anthems ("I'm With Stupid," "Integral") and tales from the broken hearts club ("My Ex-Lover," "Indefinite Leave to Remain"). And while "The Sodom and Gomorrah Show" is one of the best-named songs ever, unfortunately, it's not a standout. Neither is "Luna Park." For greatness, look to the irresistibly melodic "Twentieth Century," the New Order-hued "Minimal" and the Diane Warren-penned ballad "Numb."—MR

INDIA ARIE
Testimony Vol. 1, Life & Relationship
Universal Motown
Release Date: June 27
Honest and personal, this record frequently associated with India.Arie's music. This follow-up to her 2002 Grammy Award-winning "Voyage to India" is no exception. But here the singer/songwriter displays a broader profile of who she is musically while dissecting the stages of a failed romance from heartbeat to acceptance to transcendence. To impart the personal wisdom she has gleaned from that journey, India.Arie draws on her country roots, pairing with Rascal Flatts' Gary LeVox on "Summer," and piano on the set's several interludes. The result is an ambitious, aurally rich suite of storytelling songs (à la mentor Stevie Wonder in his '70s heyday) enhanced by Ari's expressive vocals.—GM

TEDDY GEIGER
These Walls (3:36)
Producer: Billy Mann
Writers: T. Geiger, B. Cohen
Wallace
Publishers: various
Columbia
Golden boy Teddy Geiger gives us a better idea of his mettle on These Walls," the follow-up to popier breakthrough "For You I Will" (Confidence)," which reached No. 29 on The Billboard Hot 100. Here he evolves past teen idol typecasting with a gritty, lyrically astute song that steps down any potential comparisons to female-identified singer-songwriter labelmates John Mayer and Five for Fighting. Word is that this was the last song contributed to the album, and label honchos realized its potential but already had the program in place for "Confidence." As much as that song offered a formidable bid for playlists, this is the title that will establish a young artist and a star-making vehicle—and it takes only one spin. Welcome to the big time, Teddy.—CT

TELL ME MORE

JESSICA SIMPSON
A Public Affair (3:21)
Producer: Lester Mendez
Writers: J. Simpson, J. Austin, G. Kurstin,
S. Watters, L. Biancanello, L. Mendez
Publishers: various
N. Ashford, V. Simpson
This opens a new chapter in her life ready to set the charts ablaze. Her first release post-100 mph ascent to the A-list is an ecstatic pop-frolic reminiscent of Madonna's "Lucky Star." Giddy, wildly adventurous production from Lester Mendez is an absolute delight—mad-deningly catchy and brimming with melodic twists and turns. Giving "A Public Affair" the potential to actually signal a tidal shift back to the center for top 40—it's that good. Neglected pop fans will lather over this unapologetically fluffy summer song while habitual Simpson detractors will see her in a new light. A public affair, indeed. This record is perfect.—CT

SHAWNNA MURPHY
Ready to Pop
Producer: various
Def Jam
Release Date: June 27
Hiphop has become a nonprofit for its mistresses. The tepid pop formula doesn't work by itself anymore. A woman can't be a one-hit wonder, monster, but her verses can't be too rough or she's considered manly. What's a girl to do? Shawnna answers this question with "Block Music." Her recent hit "Gettin' Some" worked the sexy angle, killing with a thick bassline and a Too Short snippet. The "Gettin' Some" remix featuring Ludacris, Lil Wayne and Too Short has Pharrell imperating Twista's speedy rhyming. But Shawnna successfully showcases her storytelling on "Roll Wit Me," describing a drug run gone wrong. "Can't Stop, Can't Coat" slices up 8 Ball & MJG's "Lay It Down" into a trendy repetitive hook, featuring 8 Ball & MJG themselves, while in "Tha Chi" and "Chicago" are relaxed melodic tracks, featuring Shawnna's famous dad, blues guitarist Buddy Guy.—MC

MR. LIF
Mo' Mega
Producers: El-P, Mr. Lif, Nick Yarbough
Def Jux
Release Date: June 13
Mr. Lif enjoys status as the architect of some of the rap world's most vesceral polemics, both as a solo artist and with his Perceptronists. Strange then that "Mo' Mega" uses all its political juice in its first half, turning midway through to more generalized Everyman stories and, disappointingly, fairly standard sophomore album tales from the road such as "Long Distance," with its awkward sex talk, or the throwaway "Washupit," which rhymes "De La Soul's tossed-off-in-its-own-right "A Little Bit of Soap." Lil's in good hands production-wise, as El-P furnishes a grand storm of rock on "Collapose" and "Take, Hold, Fire!" Lil's desire to broaden his material with generation-jumping stories of family ("Looking In..." and "For You") is well-meaning, his own fierce catalyst unfortunately makes "Mega" seem like a missed opportunity.—JV

ROCK

UNDEROATH
Define the Great Line
Producers: Underoath, Matt Goldman, Adam Dutkiewicz
Tooth & Nail/Solid State
Release Date: June 20
Christian post-hardcore act Underoath revels in cacophony on "Define the Great Line," its tracks held together by numerous threads of melody. Its discordance is not without purpose. One moment the music screams and skids like a driver desperate to avoid a car wreck; the next, "There Could Be Nothing After This," it then throws out an intro filled with tension and impatient guitar ("You're Ever So Inviting"). In Regards to Myself, a "Moment Suspended in Time" and "Everywhere Looks So Good From Here" are equally chaotic. One sometimes can't tell what singer Caleb Shomo is Chamberlain screams, but that doesn't make it feel any less cathartic. The album's first single "Clarity" keyboardist Chris Dudley weaves a disquieting soundscape fit for purgatory on "Salmarnir." This album will steamroll the sales of Underoath's debut. "They're Only Chasing Safety."—CLF

GUSTER
Ganging Up on the Sun
Producers: Tom Anello, Joe Pesce, Ryan Repsir
Reprise
Release Date: June 20
Guster's sixth studio release Boston-born darling Guster brings the noise. The formerly acoustic band cranks up the guitars, while sticking to catchy melodies that feel as safe as a cuddly college sweatshirt. "Ganging Up on the Sun" starts with the softly entrancing "Lighting Rod," it soon becomes Guster's loudest and most ambitious effort to date. Standouts like the Fleetwood Mac-rubbed "Satellite" or "Ruby Falls," a sprawling, Pink Floyd-ish ballad, are unabashed pop anthems dressed in classic-rock trappings. And if there are bursts of political dissent ("Manifest Destiny"), cleverly nostalgic wins. On "One Man Wrecking Machine," singer Ryan Miller, who's back to high school to finally make out with the homecoming queen ("I want to relive my adolescent dreams Inspired by true events and movies screens").—SP

KENTUCKY HEADHUNTERS
Flying Under the Radar
Producers: Kentucky Headhunters, Tom and CJB J Entertainment
Release Date: June 13
This aptly titled collection of choice cuts from the Headhunters criminally ignored previous three releases (two on Audium, the most recent on CJB) is a fine representation of a moniker band. This is deep-fried, baccalaous Southern rock at its most robust, with a thunderous rhythm section, a heady groove and arguably the most undervalued guitar talent in rock in Greg Martin. Martin's solos shine throughout as the Headhunters play through original originals and warhorses alike, including "Big Boss Man," "Louisiana CoCo," "Rock On" and "Take These Chains From My Heart," as well as nicely rendered ballads like "Back to the Sun" and "Lonely Nights." Among new cuts that spice things up are "Midnight Special," "Ashes of Love" and an otherwise disregarded effort of Roger Miller's "A Chu a Luf." Fun to the extreme.—RW

JAZZ

BRAD MEHLDAU
House on Hill
Producers: Brad Mehlidau, Matt Pershong, Nonesuch
Release Date: June 27
In his prolific decade since leaving Joshua Redman's quartet, continued on >>ps4

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Mehldau has proved as comfortable with the masters as he has with the songbooks of the Beatles, Nick Drake and Radiohead. The all- originals "House On Hill" is the final recording from Mehldau's well-regarded trio with bassist Larry Grenadier and drummer Jorge Rossy. Most tracks hail from the same 2002 sessions that produced the covers record "Anything Goes." Like its brother, "House" finds the trio in sparkling, often exhilarating spirits, but with a steady reliance on theme where previous works occasionally spun off into distant orbits. "August Ending" wastes no time conjuring up a looming, circular piano riff, and Mehldau's busy fingers "Backyard" dance all over a melancholic bassline. Mehldau writes that "House" represents the apex of what the trio achieved, and it's easy to see where he's coming from. —JV

CHRISTIAN

FIRST CALL

Rejoice! An A Cappella Hymns Collection
Producer: Brent King
Discovery House Music
Release Date: June 20

This timeless hymns collection demonstrates there's no instrument more compelling than the human voice—especially when you've got three voices like Mel Tunney, Bonnie McClintock, and Marty McCull. Longtime Christian music fans will rejoice when they hear this amazing project because it reunites these three original First Call members. Here they open with the "Doxology" and proceed to serve up gorgeous a cappella arrangements of some of the church's best-loved hymns. Among the highlights are "The Solid Rock," "How Deep the Father's Love for Us," "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" and "Untold Hymn (Come to Jesus)." During the past few years, there have been numerous hymns projects released in the Christian market, but hearing these wonderful voices perform these classics a cappella is a taste of heaven right here on earth. —DEP

VITAL REISSUES

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Atlantic Unearthed: Soul Sisters
Atlantic Unearthed: Soul Brothers
Producer: David Nathan
Rhino
Release Date: June 6

Atlantic Records was known as the "house that Ruth built," an acknowledgement of the formidable female reign of R&B singer Ruth Brown during the '50s. Fortifying the label's soul foundation between the '50s and '70s were a host of talented male and female singers, many of whom appear on these quite satisfying single-disc compilations. Each 16-song CD features remastered versions of B-sides, hard-to-find singles and previously unreleased tracks. The treats include Aretha Franklin's gospel-influenced "Silver & Gold," Sinatra's "My Way" and unreleased gems by Donny Hathaway ("What a Wonderful World"), and Wilson Pickett ("Can't Stop a Man in Love"). Adding to the disc's allure are selections by such overlooked singers as Percy Wiggins ("Book of Memories") and Lloyd Price ("Strollin'""). Among the female vocalists are Laura Lee, whose "What A Man" sparkled some 25 years before Salt-N-Pepa and En Vogue were a gleam in anyone's eyes. First and foremost, however, this collection already underscores the style and substance frequently missing in today's R&B music. —GM

POP

PARIS HILTON Stars Are Blind (4:37)
Producer: Fernando Garibay
Writers: F. Garibay, S. Soliman, R. McCarthy
Publishers: various

When Paris Hilton announced she was releasing a summer album, written all over America's cringe. Let's face it, every "celebutante" is dropping a few self-indulgent days in the studio for overexposure. With that in mind, I felt little enthusiasm for the production, marking reign of R&B singer Ruth Brown during the '50s. Fortifying the label's soul foundation between the '50s and '70s were a host of talented male and female singers, many of whom appear on these quite satisfying single-disc compilations. Each 16-song CD features remastered versions of B-sides, hard-to-find singles and previously unreleased tracks. The treats include Aretha Franklin's gospel-influenced "Silver & Gold," Sinatra's "My Way" and unreleased gems by Donny Hathaway ("What a Wonderful World"), and Wilson Pickett ("Can't Stop a Man in Love"). Adding to the disc's allure are selections by such overlooked singers as Percy Wiggins ("Book of Memories") and Lloyd Price ("Strollin'""). Among the female vocalists are Laura Lee, whose "What A Man" sparkled some 25 years before Salt-N-Pepa and En Vogue were a gleam in anyone's eyes. First and foremost, however, this collection already underscores the style and substance frequently missing in today's R&B music. —GM

COUNTRY

TRACY BYRD Cheapest Motel (3:46)
Producer: Mike Geiger, Tracy Byrd
Writers: M. Geiger, T. Matthews, C. Deggs
Publishers: Sixteen Stars/ Belle Gladly/Key Brothers/ Fri/CMI

Byrd is taking a different route to consumers these days. He struck a deal with Artist 2 Market Distribution to handle his forthcoming set, "Different Things." The driver for any new album is always a strong single, and Byrd delivers a hit with this well-written, clean-sounding song. The lyric paints a picture of a rendezvous in a seedy motel room that, when discovered, ultimately costs the guy his wife, kids and everything he values most, fostering the great romantic ballad:"The cheapest motel in town cost him everything." Byrd's warm, rich baritone has always been one of the best voices in country music, equally capable of delivering frisky uptempo and poignant ballads. This fine single signals an exciting new chapter in the career of one of country music's most talented performers. —DEP

AC

IL DIVO WITH TONI BRAXTON The Time of Our Lives (3:28)
Producer: Steve M.
Writer: Eltossouh
Publisher: not listed

Columbia

While pop-opera quartet Il Divo's second album, "Anora," debuted at No. 1 in the United States, the quintessential pop stars have had little impact at AC radio and with good reason—there's a difference between melodic drama and over-the-top absurdity. "The Time of Our Lives," a duet with diva Toni Braxtonwhose "Un-Break My Heart" Il Divo covered on its first album—does have camp appeal, only because Braxton's eight-cylinder vocal is slathered atop the guys' butterball vocal assault. She somehow manages to hold on to the wheel despite the inevitable train wreck of hollowing that ensues from her tongue and the accompanying trying to reach a crescendo. Radio? Not likely. But for fans of the ever-catchy Il Divo/New Heavies, Michael Ross

SEND

THE BRAND NEW HEAVIES I Don't Know Why (3:31)
Producer: Brand New Heavies, Michael Ross
Writers: various
Publishers: various

This has certainly been a hot minute since the Brand New Heavies released new material. But the band that helped usher in the acid-jazz movement of the early '90s is back with singer N'Dea Davenport in tow. Finally one of the wondrous of the world, the vocally gifted Davenport doesn't just sing lyrics, she performs them with a Witness "I Don't Know Why (I Love You),” which sounds like some long-lost song from the Honey Cone. Original Heavies bandmates Jan Kincade, Andrew Levy and Simon Bartholomew lovingly surround Davenport's soulful delivery with spirited, funk-kissed rhythms. This is the total deal, kids. The group's new album, "Get Used To It," arrives June 27. Consider it a soundtrack for summer 2006. —MP

WORLD

SALIF KEITA M'Bemba
Producer: Jean Lamot Dacca
Release Date: June 20

Keita's 2002 album, "Moufou," was an all-acoustic sensation that found him revisiting his West African roots. "M'Bemba" is very much of the same spirit, as Keita digs into his Malian background and devises a musical tribute to his ancestor Soundata Keita, founder of the 12th century Mandingo Empire. With masterful assistance from Mama SiSSoko (injoni lute) and Toumani Diabate (kora), Keita and producer Jean Lamot have crafted a dynamic, evocative record, rich in groove and atmosphere. Bamako may not be on your itinerary this year, but the wondrous vibe of "Calicu" and "Kamouke" will take you there. Elsewhere, "Ladji" offers up both deep collaboration between Keita and Buju Banton. The title track is simply gorgeous and throughout Keita's vocals are typically astonishing. Many of the tracks on this one of the top world music releases of 2006. —PPV

LEGEND & CREDITS

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

CONTRIBUTORS: Hilary Cressey, Gail Mitchell, Michael Rodolfo, Sven Philips, Deborah Evans Price, Chuck Taylor, Michael Barone, Krista L. Titas, Kristofer Turb, Philip Van Vleck, Jeff Vrabec, Ray Waddell

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

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

ALL albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send album review copies to Jonathan Cohen and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.
Over the Counter
GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com

Busta’s First No. 1; Hicks’ Song Tops Recent Idols

Veteran rapper Busta Rhymes has The Billboard 200’s Hot Shot Debut in the same week that the best-selling retail-available single moves close to 200,000 copies. Almost feels like old times, doesn’t it?

By at least one measure, these are the good old days for Rhymes, who tops The Billboard 200 for the first time with 209,000 sold for “The Big Bang,” his best Nielsen SoundScan week since 1998. He also scores his fourth No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums.

Credit the fast start to “Touch It,” the album’s lead single and his biggest hit as a lead artist since 2002. The track touched No. 3 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and No. 12 on the all-format Hot 100 Airplay chart, even finding a home on the Tropical Airplay chart.

The new album’s start more than triples the opening-week sales of Rhymes’ last studio album, which, at “It Ain’t Safe No More . . .” which started at 62,000 in 2002. The only set in his career to enjoy bigger weeks was “Extinction Level Event: The Final World Front,” which powered 235,000 copies when it hit stores just before the Christmas frame of 1998 and 212,000 in its second week.

‘Proud’ Arrival: For all the chatter about his salt-and-pepper hair, awkward dance moves and a voice that doesn’t fit neatly into any large-audience radio format, did you have any idea that new “American Idol” winner Taylor Hicks’ debut radio song would sound with a bigger week than singles by either of the series’ last two champs?

His “Do I Make You Proud” roars on the scene with 190,000 sold, the biggest week by any title on Hot Single Sales since June 2003, when “Idol” runner-up Clay Aiken moved 393,000 for “This Is the Night”/”Bridge Over Troubled Water” in the same time that season’s champ, Ruben Studdard, pulled 286,000 for “Flying Without Wings”/”Superstar.”

2004 winner Fantasia rang 142,000 when “I Believe” reached stores, and last year’s queen, Carrie Underwood, tallied 130,000 when “Inside Your Heaven” arrived.

Two market drivers helped Hicks earn a larger number than the past two “Idol” winners: the cover of People and his starring role in a practically inescapable Ford TV ad. RCA Music Group also thinks Father’s Day gift shopping for Father’s Day. All but two of the 50 titles on Top Pop Catalog Albums best the prior-week sums.

COMEBACK KID: First-day reports from charts suggest that a former rookie-of-the-year contender will be next issue’s Billboard 200 leader. Chart-watchers predict Nelly Furtado’s “Loose” — driven by hot track “Promiscuous” — will open in the vicinity of 200,000.

Even if she misses that mark by 20% or more, the Canadian’s third album seems a lock for The Billboard 200’s No. 1 slot, which would keep the chart’s crown in the Interscope family for a second straight week.

Furtado’s album is the only June 20 release expected to top 100,000 in its first frame. Her first one peaked at No. 24 in 2001.

Market Watch
A Weekly National Music Sales Report

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year-To-Date</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL</td>
<td>265,545,000</td>
<td>256,824,000</td>
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<td>Digital Tracks</td>
<td>146,124,000</td>
<td>258,524,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Store Singles</td>
<td>22,434,000</td>
<td>3,173,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>409,885,000</td>
<td>530,210,000</td>
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</table>

- Albums w/TAI | 276,859,000 | 277,496,000 |
- 209,000 sold for “The Big Bang,” his best Nielsen SoundScan week since 1998.
- Scored his fourth No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums.
- Credit the fast start to “Touch It,” the album’s lead single and his biggest hit as a lead artist since 2002.

Other

- Sales by Album Format
  - CD: 253,596,000
  - Digital: 5,950,000
  - Cassette: 1,430,000
  - Other: 569,000

For next week, June 16, 2006, figures are rounded to the nearest 1,000. Catalog sales from a previous week of retail sales and catalog numbers are catalog sales from the previous week.

 Nielsen SoundScan

www.americanradiohistory.com

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 55
### Billboard 200 Chart Data

**Artist** | **Title** | **Peaked at**
--- | --- | ---
Busta Rhymes | The Big Bang | 1
Keith Urban | Take Me to the Other Side | 2
Ladies of the Valencia | 2
AFI | Decemberunderground | 2
Mary J. Blige | One - X | 3
The Isley Brothers ft. Ronald Isley | 3
Jack Johnson | Curious George (Soundtrack) | 4
Phil Vassar | Greatest Hits Volume 1 | 5
SonReal | Broken Boy Soldiers | 6
JD McPherson | King Of Kings | 7
Kathy Valentine | Hillbilly Delux | 8
Jill Scott | The Rising Tied | 9
Josh Turner | Play That所述 [sic] | 10

**Artist** | **Title** | **Peaked at**
--- | --- | ---
Jesse McCartney | A Little More Live [sic] | 11
Jeff Buckley | Rabbit Ripped | 12
2 Unlimited | Mickey Business | 13
Cyndi Lauper | The Trinity | 14
Soul Solution | In Between Dreams | 15
Limp Bizkit | Greatest Hits | 16
Kanye West | Songs About Me | 17
Beyoncé | Talk The Line | 18
Evanescence | Waking The Dead | 19
Bone Thugs-N-Harmony | A Million Miles | 20
Coldwater | Coming Up To Breathe | 21

#### Piano Man Returns to Top 20 for the First Time Since 1997 with His Fourth Live Release (49,000)

The album, up 62%, is one of the more obvious beneficiaries of gift-giving purchases for the Father's Day holiday.

#### Top Digital Songs

- "Kiss Me" by Crowded House
- "The Way You Look Tonight" by Elton John
- "Dancing Shoes" by The Killers

#### Chart Data Notes

- "To be Eligible to be listed in the charts, a song must have sold at least 10,000 copies in the previous week.
- "The album, up 62%, is one of the more obvious beneficiaries of gift-giving purchases for the Father's Day holiday."
**HOT 100 AIRPLAY**

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<th>Hot 100</th>
<th>Digital Chart</th>
<th>Bubbling Under</th>
<th>Certified</th>
<th>Top 300</th>
<th>U.S. Bubbling Under</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WE GO ON</td>
<td>Bush Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>TIE OR DIE</td>
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<td>She's Coming Home</td>
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**ADULT TOP 40**

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**HOT DIGITAL SONGS**

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**MODERN ROCK**

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<td>Silver</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>
### Pop 100

**Title** | **Artist** | **Label**
--- | --- | ---
1. **Do I Make You Proud** | **Lil Jon & The East Coast Playerz** | **Bad Boy**
2. **Hips Don't Lie** | **Shakira feat. Wyclef Jean** | **A&M**
3. **Junebug** | **Dave Matthews Band** | **A&M**
4. **I'm Not Gonna Let You Get Away** | **Alanis Morissette** | **A&M**
5. **I'll Be Missing You** | **Puff Daddy feat. Faith Evans & The Notorious B.I.G.** | **A&M**
6. **I'm biscuits** | **Daughtry** | **A&M**
7. **I'm Gonna Miss You** | **The Who** | **A&M**
8. **I'm Not the Only One** | **Mark Ronson feat. Bruno Mars** | **A&M**
9. **I'm on Fire** | **Bono & The Edge feat. Will.I.Am & N.E.R.D.** | **A&M**
10. **I'm So Lethal** | **Lil Jon** | **A&M**

### Pop 100 Airplay

**Title** | **Artist** | **Label**
--- | --- | ---
1. **All I Want For Christmas (Is You)** | **Mariah Carey** | **Arista**
2. **Angels Wearing Red** | **Coldplay** | **Atlantic**
3. **Back To Me** | **Toby Keith** | **Atlantic**
4. **Bargain** | **Tears For Fears** | **Atlantic**
5. **Before The Storm** | **Chad9** | **Atlantic**
6. **Before Your Love** | **Nelly** | **Atlantic**
7. **Believe** | **Orianthi** | **Atlantic**
8. **Beginning Of The End** | **Tom Petty** | **Atlantic**
9. **Bleeding Love** | **Leona Lewis** | **Atlantic**
10. **Blind** | **Carrie Underwood** | **Atlantic**

### Singles Sales

**Title** | **Artist** | **Label**
--- | --- | ---
1. **Breathe** | **Kanye West** | **Atlantic**
2. **Breathe** | **P!nk** | **Atlantic**
3. **Because We Believe** | **John Legend** | **Atlantic**
4. **Because We Believe** | **P!nk** | **Atlantic**
5. **Beyond The Lights** | **Mary J. Blige feat. Wyclef Jean** | **Atlantic**
6. **Beyond The Lights** | **Mary J. Blige feat. Wyclef Jean** | **Atlantic**
7. **Black Coffee** | **Cedric Gervais** | **Atlantic**
8. **Black Coffee** | **Cedric Gervais** | **Atlantic**
9. **Black Coffee** | **Cedric Gervais** | **Atlantic**
10. **Black Coffee** | **Cedric Gervais** | **Atlantic**

### HitPredictor

**Title** | **Artist** | **Label**
--- | --- | ---
1. **Baby I'm A Star** | **Jill Scott** | **Arista**
2. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**
3. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**
4. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**
5. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**
6. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**
7. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**
8. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**
9. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**
10. **Beautiful** | **Erykah Badu** | **Arista**

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*Data provided by [Promusiq](http://www.promusiq.com)*

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*Data for week of July 1, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 70*
SOUNDTRACKS STIR ALBUM LIST

Aside from Busta Rhymes’ first No. 1 on the list in six years, the upper floors of Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums house no new entries, but other titles make news.

A $9.99 tag at Best Buy helps Jamie Foxx’s “Unpredictable” fly 27-16 with a 24% increase. It’s his best gain since the Jan. 7 issue when he grabbed the Pacesetter medal at No. 2.

With a rather soft landing at No. 42 and no offering from co-stars Tyrese or the Game, the soundtrack to their upcoming flick “Waist Deep” is the Hot Shot Debut. A DVD launch stirs a re-entry at No. 53 for another soundtrack, as the album from “Dave Chappelle’s Block Party” rallies a 360% sales spike.

Meanwhile, Hill St. Soul enjoys a 90% lift, and the Pacesetter cup, at No. 57. — Raphall George

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

For a complete listing of the Top R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS, check out www.BILLBOARD.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>IMPACT &amp; MANAGER</th>
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<td><strong>1</strong> FANNIE MAY</td>
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<td><strong>2</strong> SUMMERTIME</td>
<td>Coolio</td>
<td>Coolio</td>
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<td>Jeff Golub</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong> THE WORLD</td>
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<td>MCA</td>
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<td><strong>5</strong> WHEN THE STARS GO BLUE</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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<td>RCA</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong> DON'T FORGET TO REMEMBER ME</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood</td>
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<td><strong>7</strong> A LITTLE TOO LATE</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
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<td><strong>8</strong> EVERY TIME I HEAR YOUR NAME</td>
<td>Keith Anderson</td>
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<td>Atlantic</td>
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<td><strong>9</strong> IF YOU'RE GOING THROUGH HELL (BEFORE THE DEVIL EVEN KNOWS)</td>
<td>Rodney Atkins</td>
<td>Rodney Atkins</td>
<td>Curb</td>
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<td><strong>10</strong> SOMETHING'S Gotta GIVE</td>
<td>LeAnn Rimes</td>
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<td>Arista</td>
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<td><strong>11</strong> SIZE MATTERS (SOMEDAY)</td>
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<td>C &amp; C Music Factory</td>
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<td><strong>13</strong> ME AND MY GAND</td>
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<td>Capitol</td>
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<td>Elektra</td>
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<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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<td><strong>16</strong> BRING IT ON HOME</td>
<td>The Wreckers</td>
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<td>Kenny Rogers</td>
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<td>Capitol</td>
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<td><strong>19</strong> DOWN IN MISSISSIPPI (UP TO NO GOOD)</td>
<td>Σ 2005</td>
<td>Σ 2005</td>
<td>Σ</td>
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<td><strong>20</strong> ONE RIDE</td>
<td>Billy Currington</td>
<td>Billy Currington</td>
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**HITPREDICTOR**

**COUNTRY**

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<td><strong>Tim McGraw</strong> When The Stars Go Blue</td>
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<td><strong>Tony Kendra</strong> Little Too Late</td>
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<td><strong>Rodney Sturtevant</strong> You're Going Through Hell</td>
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**FLATTS STEERS 'CARS' THROUGH NASHVILLE**

Rascal Flatts' "Highway" was ranked #2 on Billboard's Country Chart for the week ending July 1, 2006. The song is currently at #4 on the Hot Country Songs chart. The soundtrack also features other tracks from the movie "Cars."
### HOT LATIN SONGS

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<td><strong>Cual Te Diga (Yo Le Digo)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mambo Yando</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Me Voy</strong></td>
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### TOP LATIN ALBUMS

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<td>Amor</td>
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### Data for week of JULY 1, 2006

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### Chart Monitor

- **SALES DATA COMPILED**
- **ELECTRONICALLY MONITORED**
- **AIRPLAY MONITORED**
- **AIRPLAY GAINS**
- **ARTIST**
- **TITLE**

### Additional Notes

- **SALES DATA COMPILED** for various artists.
- **ELECTRONICALLY MONITORED** for sales.
- **AIRPLAY MONITORED** for radio airplay.
- **AIRPLAY GAINS** for music airplay.

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

Data for week of JULY 1, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 70
### LATIN AIRPLAY

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### LATIN DANCE SINGLES

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## UNITED KINGDOM
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<td>PAUL SIMON</td>
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## GERMANY
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## FRANCE
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<td>LES ENFANTS DU BENZ</td>
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<td>OLIVIA RUIZ</td>
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## AUSTRALIA
### ALBUMS

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## UNITED NATIONS
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## SPAIN
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## SWEDEN
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## NEW ZEALAND
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## MEXICO
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**CHARTS**

**TOP INDEPENDENT ALBUMS**

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<tr>
<td>DJ Khaled</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passion Pit</td>
<td>The5000 Days</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Time Rush</td>
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**TASTEMAKERS**

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<td>Struggle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neal Morse</td>
<td>The Great Adventure</td>
<td>InsideOut</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sólon YOUTH</td>
<td>Sólon YOUTH</td>
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**ALBUM CHARTS**

**500,000 ALBUMS (Gold)**

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Beyoncé</td>
<td>I Am...Sasha Fierce</td>
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<td>Jay-Z</td>
<td>The Blueprint 3</td>
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**SHADOW FALL**

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<td>Kottonmouth Kings</td>
<td>Welcome to the Jungle</td>
<td>SMG</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between the Buried and Me</td>
<td>Colors of the Glare</td>
<td>Relapse</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SINGLES CHARTS**

**RADIO PLAYLIST SINGLES CHARTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narvel Bostick Jr.</td>
<td>Memphis Made Me</td>
<td>Blaster</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>Girl That I Love</td>
<td>Epic</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Pardi</td>
<td>ISO</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECURRENT RULES**

- Songs are removed from the Hot 100 after their 30th week and rank below 50.
- Songs are removed from the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs, and the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the chart for more than 30 weeks and rank below 50.
- Titles are removed from Hot Country Songs if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 30.
- Titles are removed from the Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Adult R&B, and Hot Dance Airplay charts if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 15.

**SINGLES SALES CHARTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usher</td>
<td>What's Up</td>
<td>J Records</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelly</td>
<td>The Come Up</td>
<td>Bad Boy</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariana Grande</td>
<td>My Everything</td>
<td>Republic</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOP WORLD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tiesto</td>
<td>Hands Up for House</td>
<td>Superstar Records</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvin Harris</td>
<td>Feel So Close</td>
<td>Fonk Recordings</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Garrix</td>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>Gotek Recordings</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DANCE CLUB PLAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jump</td>
<td>The Knocks</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop</td>
<td>The Chainsmokers</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techno</td>
<td>Axwell &amp; Ingrosso</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AWARD LEVELS**

- Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) certification for net sales of 500,000 albums (Gold).
- RIAA certification for net sales of 1 million units (Platinum).
- RIAA certification for net sales of 5 million units (Diamond).

**SONGS**

- CD single available.
- Digital Download available.
- DVD single available.
- Vini Maxi single available.
- D Vini Single available.

**HYPED**

- Singles that are removed from the Hot 100 album charts simultaneously on their 30th week and rank below 50.
- Songs are removed from the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs, and the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay charts simultaneously.
- Titles are removed from Hot Country Songs if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 30.
- Titles are removed from the Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Adult R&B, and Hot Dance Airplay charts if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 15.

**INDEPENDENT ALBUMS**

- Independent albums are current titles that are sold via independent distributors or from independent labels, including those from full-time major branch distributors.

**TASTEMAKERS**

- Top selling albums from a core panel of trend-setting individuals and independent music stores. The panel is selected based on rules and requirements.

**CAST ALBUMS**

- Cast albums are removed from the chart after 10 weeks and rank below 15.

**ALBUMS**

- ALBUMS is a comprehensive chart that includes all albums, from major label releases to independent releases, providing a wide range of options for music enthusiasts.

**DISCOGRAPHY**

- Disco is a comprehensive chart that includes all albums, from major label releases to independent releases, providing a wide range of options for music enthusiasts.

**SALES DATA**

- Sales data for albums and singles are compiled from Nielsen SoundScan, a leading provider of music sales and retail data.

**TOP CHART COLLECTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Magic</td>
<td>Lenny Kravitz</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J ft.</td>
<td>Nicki Minaj</td>
<td>Atlantic</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kings</td>
<td>Daft Punk</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DANCE CLUB PLAY**

- Dance club play charts are compiled from national samples of retail music, providing a comprehensive overview of current dance music trends.

**AWARD LEVELS**

- Award levels are based on sales data, with Gold indicating 500,000 albums sold, Platinum indicating 1 million units sold, and Diamond indicating 5 million units sold.

**DISCOGRAPHY**

- Disco is a comprehensive chart that includes all albums, from major label releases to independent releases, providing a wide range of options for music enthusiasts.

**SALES DATA**

- Sales data for albums and singles are compiled from Nielsen SoundScan, a leading provider of music sales and retail data.

**TOP CHART COLLECTIONS**

- Top chart collections provide a curated selection of albums that are currently at the top of the charts, offering a dynamic and relevant snapshot of current music trends.
1. REPLAY X3
2. THE ROAD LONG HOME
3. GREATEST HITS
4. CHRISTOPHER'S JOURNEY
5. THE LAUREN BERKNER BAND
6. FAREWELL 1, LIVE FROM MELBOURNE
7. PRESENT, PAST & FUTURE
8. LIVE AT DONINGTON
9. CREAM: FAREWELL CONCERT SPECIAL EXTENDED EDITION
10. DESTINY'S CHILD: LIVE IN ATLANTA
11. ROCK OF AGES: THE DEFINITIVE COLLECTION
12. DAN ZANES AT MONTREUX 1994
13. THE BEST OF PANtera
14. THE BEST OF ANTHONY BURGER FROM THE HOMECOMING SERIES
15. COACHELLA: VARIOUS ARTISTS
16. LIVE AT THE RAINBOW
17. GREATEST HITS 1978-1997
18. FAMILY JEWELS
19. QUEEN: LIVE AT WEMBLEY '86
20. CAUGHT IN THE ACT
21. THE SILENCE IN BLACK AND WHITE
22. LED ZEPPELIN
23. MARK HARRIS
24. RMD
25. ENGAGEMENT VIDEO
26. SNAP YO FINGERS
27. PROMISCUOUS
28. IT'S GOING DOWN
29. I LOVE MY B**
30. TORN
31. ERIC CLAPTON
32. DANI CALIFORNIA
33. GIMME THAT
34. WHERE'D YOU GO
35. WHAT'S LEFT OF ME
36. DO IT TO THEM
37. HIPS DON'T LIE
38. WHAT MURDER
39. BOSCHY
40. ME & THE BOSS
41. REID RIM RIN
42. D Energy
43. NELLY FURTADO
44. AFI
45. PANIC AT THE DISCO
46. TIM McGRACER
47. LIL' WAYNE
48. SHAKIRA FEATURING WYCLEF JEAN
49. CHRIS BROWN FEATURING RIHANNA
50. NELLY FURTADO FEATURING JUICY J
51. SNOOP DOGGY DOGG FEATURING SNOOP DOGG
52. BLONDIE
53. TINIE TEMPLETON
54. SMOKEY ROBINSON FEATURING MARY WILSON
55. T.I.
56. TAYLOR SWIFT
57. CAREY
58. R. B. STEEL
59. CAPTAIN WILSON
60. YUNGBLOODZ
61. THE MCCOURY BAND
62. THE SNOLLS
63. THE DEL McCOURY BAND
64. THE ALCOSA STRAIN
65. DA MUZICIAN
66. ALCIA VILLARREAL
67. HILLSONG
68. GOMEZ
69. LA RAEJA DE VAN GOOG
70. THE BOUNCING SOULS
71. MISS MURDER
72. ANA GABRIEL
73. AVENTURA
74. GLORIA TREVI
75. LOS TUCANES DE TIJUANA
76. NELLY FURTADO
77. MIRIAM
78. BARRY MANILOW
79. NICK LACHEY
80. BILLY TALENT
81. COLLINS IN A MINDSWING
82. STREET SPARKS
83. MOBILE
84. DREXEL UNIVERSITY
85. Railroad Bill
86. FORMERLY
87. KING VICTOR THE GREAT
88. NELLY FURTADO
89. MIRIAM
90. BARRY MANILOW
91. NICK LACHEY
92. BILLY TALENT
93. COLLINS IN A MINDSWING
94. STREET SPARKS
95. MOBILE
96. DREXEL UNIVERSITY
97. Railroad Bill
98. FORMERLY
99. KING VICTOR THE GREAT
100. NELLY FURTADO

Data for week of July 1, 2006 | For chart reprint cal 646.654.4633
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Rapidly growing NT-based Home Video (DV) and music company seeks experienced sales person to head up the video/music account segment.

Responsibilities:
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- Demonstrate knowledge of account sales history, marketing plans, merchandising, and promotional strategies. Insure that company is major supplier of choice "gets in short" with key accounts

Job Requirements:
- Minimum 5 years experience in home video and/or music industry sales
- Existing relationships with buyers for "key accounts"
- High energy level
- Ability to make impressive sales presentations
- Overnight travel to key customers as needed
- Internet operations/navigation for information collection and sharing

Compensation:
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OCCUPY EMPLOYEES KNOW OF THIS AD. Resume: keyjob@mms.com

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1,299 1,499 1,699 1,999

1,299 1,499 1,699 1,999

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CMA MUSIC FESTIVAL: The 2006 Country Music Association Music Festival set a new attendance record with more than 80,000 people attending the four-day event that began June 8 in downtown Nashville. Attendees received a special treat as several acts, including Kenny Chesney, Keith Urban and Big & Rich, made surprise appearances throughout the event.

SHOF AWARDS: The 37th annual Songwriters Hall of Fame (SHOF) Awards were celebrated at the annual event, which included Throckmorton, Freddy Bienstock, Hal Davis, Ervin Drake and Kerri Edwards.

EDITED 3Y SARAH MAR..)
Peter Yarrow Goldberg, awe-cl presenter Wonder guest performers Stevie (Per, Mayer and Paul Paul Stookey award winners Young from left, are William Morris Agency's Jay Williams, KPH Music's Kent Edwards, Capitol Records Nashville's Mike Dungan, Bryan and Capitol Records Nashville's Tom BEC and Jimmy Harnen.}

Jack Ingram drove fans to this fest June 11 during his CMA Music Fest Backstage party some from left, are Big Machine president/CEO Scott Borchetta, radio personality/CMA Music Fest Riverfront Show host Karen Keeler, Ingram and Ingram's agent Brian Hill of Montgomery Peninsula Artists.

Anita Nashville artist Brad Paisley took the stage June 10, where his performance was taped for the July 24 prime-time special for ABC, "CMA Music Festival: Country Music's Biggest Party." From left are Sony BMG's Butch Waugh, Deaton Flanigen Productions' George Flanigen, Keeler, Sony BMG's Joe Galante, Fitzgerald Hanley's Bill Simmons and Anita Nashville's Skip Bishop.

Billboard executive editor/Associate publisher Dean Conant takes a moment to zoom for the camera with event performers, ABC's "Late Show With David Letterman" host Johnny Knoxville and ASCAP CEO Paul Williams.

Also attending the ceremony, from left, are BMI president CEO Del B. Bryant, SHOF president Linda Moseley, BMI's Will Jennings and Sylvia Moy, award recipient Kris Kristofferson, Billboard Sales manager Francis Preston, BMG Music Publishing chairman Herb Binder and ASCAP CEO John LoFolumento.

Kris Kristofferson displays his "story of the man" Johnny Mercer Award, given to those who have established a history of outstanding songwriting works.
I AM WHAT I AM

The out, loud and very proud Billboard chart-topping artist Kevin Aviance tells Track that he’s doing well and healing fast after being the target of a hate crime on the eve of New York’s Gay Pride festivities. At approximately 1:30 a.m., June 10, Aviance was verbally and physically attacked by four youths in New York’s East Village. According to reports, the youths have since been arrested on assault charges. In the days since, Track has communicated with Aviance via e-mail. In fact, e-mail is the best way to contact Aviance these days, as his jaw was injured during the assault and is wired shut.

“I ended up with a double fractured jaw. My mouth is wired shut for another week, and then I go to the help of rubber bands,” he writes. “It will take at least three months for the whole process.”

According to Aviance, who has scored three No. 1s on Billboard’s Hot Dance Club Play chart (including “Give It Up” in 2004), he has received much love from the music industry by way of phone calls, e-mails and flowers. “It has been a real blessing to know people are there for me,” he notes.

So, while Aviance is “angry, mad, bruised, sore, [having] lots of nightmares and flashbacks, scared and upset,” he is also “healing and plotting the next move.” He ended his message with eight simple words: “My spirit will not be taken from me.”

In true Aviance spirit, he will do his best, under the circumstances, to help promote his new single, “Strut,” which indie dance music label Liza Records recently issued.

LIKE A ROLLING STONE

Track hears that rock-obsessed fashion brand Lucky Brand Jeans—makers of Bob Dylan-inspired T-shirts—is in the process of lining up other musical deals. In the coming weeks, expect Lucky to unveil its new Beatles summer merchandise. For fall, the clothing company is preparing new fashions inspired by Martin Guitar, National Guitar, Tom Petty and Neil Young’s Bridge School. Next spring, images from record labels Rhino, ATO and Elektra will make their presence very known on Lucky clothing.

LENDING A HELPING HAND

A recent report by the Foundation Center—Snapshot of Philanthropy’s Response to the Gulf Coast hurricanes—recognized the Recording Academy’s MusicCares as one of the top 10 community and/or public foundations in hurricane relief work.

Not bad, eh?
Featured Speakers

Brad Coleman
Youngest Driver, NASCAR Busch Series; and his father, Brandon C. Coleman, Jr., President & CEO, 3ig Picture Thinking discuss their track to building a brand and making one teen's dreams come true.

Angela Leaney
Senior V. P., Brand Communications, The N, presents 8 rules of branding to teens across every platform known to man—plus any not yet invented.

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