ON TOUR WITH TIM & FAITH

HOW TWO MANAGEMENT TEAMS FUEL ONE RECORD-BREAKING RUN

PLUS: EXCLUSIVE Q&A WITH COUNTRY'S FIRST COUPLE

CAN BUSTA RHYMES SAVE NY HIP-HOP?
ASCAP's 19th Annual RHYTHM & SOUL MUSIC AWARDS

TOP R&B/HIP-HOP SONG:
"Let Me Love You"
Writers: Canciones "Karm" Houll, Scott Storch

AWARD WINNING R&B/HIP-HOP SONGS:
"I, 2 Step"
Writers: Ciara, Missy Elliot

"2 Thing"
Writers: Ariele Rogers, Stanney E. Walden

"Bring Em Out"
Writers: Jay-Z, Swizz Beatz, T.I.

"Candy Shop"
Writers: 50 Cent, Scott Storch

"Cater 2 U"
Writers: Shyloak, Kelly Rowland, Michelle Williams, Rob Thicke "EST" Wolfer

"Disco Inferno"
Writers: 50 Cent, Terrell "Chris Styles" Crawford
Publishers: 50 Cent Music, Club 700 Music Universal Music Publishing Group

"Free Yourself"
Writers: Craig Xavier Bratrissian, Missy Elliot, Nisan Stewart

"Give Me That"
Writers: Bun-B, Chato Hug, Jeremy Allen, Weebie

"I Don't Want You"
Writers: Jeremih "The Kid Slim" Aston, Jharice Austin, Hicky Bell, Jeremane "JD" Dunis

"Is It" Award
Writers: Jeremih "The Kid Slim" Aston

"Just a Girl"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dunis, Brenda Russell

"Let Me Be Nice"
Writers: Jody W. Love
Publishers: Lyric Inc., Sony/ATV Tunes, LLC

"Fly Like"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dunis, Alicia Keys, Mark Rice, Ahmir "Phife Dog" Shakir, Usher

"Girl"
Writers: Andrae C. Dixon, Harvey Mason, Jr., Tank
Dance \\

"I'm A (Quotla"
Writers: Cassidy, Jay-Z, Terrell

"Just A Lil Bit"
Writers: 50 Cent, Scott Storch

"Karma"
Writers: Lloyd Banks, Greg "Gin" Duly Charles "Chuck" Jackson, Marvin Yancy

"Let Me Build "Up"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dunis, Brenda Russell

"Missy Elliot"
Writers: Jecia "Vital Daisis" Amore, Anche Harris, Ludwic
Publishers: Dirty Doe Music, Hicco South Music, Universal Music Publishing Group, Rhythm Rightings, Universal Music Publishing Group

"U"
Writers: David Banner
Publishers: Chappell Print and Publishing

ASCAP Rhythm & Soul Heritage Award
Bill Withers

"Shake It Off"
Writers: Jay-Z, Austin, Jermaine "JD" Dunis

"Soldier"
Writers: Beyoncé, Sean Garrett
Katy Perry, T.I., Michelle Williams

"Soul Survivor"
Writers: Alon

"Trick It"
Writers: Emile, Ikey, Marvin "R" Jigga, Ikey, Ronald Ikey, Roddy Ikey, Chris Johnson, 30 Honeymoon

"U Already Know"
Writers: Ne-Yo ...

"U Don't Know Me"
Writers: T.I.
CONGRATULATIONS 2006 ASCAP RHYTHM & SOUL MUSIC AWARD HONOREES

ASCAP Golden Note Award
LL Cool J

Songwriter(s) of the Year
Jermaine "JD" Dupri and 50 Cent

Top Reggae Artist of the Year
Sean Paul

Publisher of the Year
EMI Music Publishing

"We Belong Together"
Writers: Johnta Austin, Jermaine "JD" Dupri
Publishers: J Records, DMP, Bad Boy

"Top of the World"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, Jamal "Jamal" Jones, Brandy
Publishers: J Records, L.A. Reid Music Group

"Give Me Love"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, Ester Dean,马桶
Publishers: J Records, L.A. Reid Music Group

"Some Call"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, T.I., Sean "Puffy" Combs
Publishers: J Records, EMI Music Publishing

"Ringtone of the Year"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, T.I., Sean "Puffy" Combs
Publishers: J Records, EMI Music Publishing

"We Must Praise"
Writers: J. Mann
Publishers: Million Dollar Music

"You Survived"
Writers: James Fortune
Publisher: TVT

TOP RAP SONG:
"How We Do"
Writers: 50 Cent, Dr. Dre, Mike Epps, The Game
Publishers: 50 Cent Music, Dr. Dre Music, Mike Epps Music, The Game Publishing

"Let Me Hold You"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, Brenda Russell
Publishers: J Records, L.A. Reid Music Group

"Like You"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, Marques Jefferson
Publishers: J Records, L.A. Reid Music Group

"We Create Music"
Writers: Jamal "Jamal" Jones, Brandy
Publishers: J Records, L.A. Reid Music Group

TOP RAP SONGS:
"Bring Em Out"
Writers: Jay-Z, Beatz, J.O.C.

"Candy Shop"
Writers: 50 Cent, Scott Storch

"Deuces"
Writers: 50 Cent, Terrioke "Chis Styles" Crawford
Publishers: 50 Cent Music, EMI Music Publishing

"Some Call"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, T.I., Sean "Puffy" Combs
Publishers: J Records, EMI Music Publishing

"We Must Praise"
Writers: J. Mann
Publishers: Million Dollar Music

"You Survived"
Writers: James Fortune
Publisher: TVT

TOP GOSPEL SONG:
"Heaven"
Writers: Eric Campbell, Tino Campbell
Publishers: EMI Gospel

"I'm Not That Man"
Writers: James Fortune, Michael Tipton, Jr.
Publisher: EMI Gospel

AWARD WINNING RAP SONGS:
"Bring Em Out"
Writers: Jay-Z, Beatz, J.O.C.

"Candy Shop"
Writers: 50 Cent, Scott Storch

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"We Must Praise"
Writers: J. Mann
Publishers: Million Dollar Music

"You Survived"
Writers: James Fortune
Publisher: TVT

TOP RINGTONE OF THE YEAR:
"Candy Shop"
Writers: 50 Cent, Scott Storch

TOP SOUNDBLOCK SONG OF THE YEAR:
"... Thing"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, T.I., Jamal "Jamal" Jones
Publisher: EMI Gospel

AWARD WINNING GOSPEL SONGS:
"Be Blessed"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, T.I., Sean "Puffy" Combs
Publishers: J Records, EMI Music Publishing

"Freestyle"
Writers: Jermaine "JD" Dupri, T.I., Jamal "Jamal" Jones
Publisher: EMI Gospel

"I'm Not That Man"
Writers: James Fortune, Michael Tipton, Jr.
Publisher: EMI Gospel

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Martin Bergman | President & Chairman of the Board

EMI Music Publishing
www.emimusicpublishing.com
In the world of music, the HIP-HOP scene continues to thrive, with artists and culture impacting the industry. Billboard covers various aspects of the music industry, including the charts and features. In this issue, we see the Indoies, Retail Track, and India.Arie for 'Higher Ground.' In the music section, Busted's New York Groove revives its own career and discusses the rejuvination of NYC's scene. The editors also delve into the importance of music videos and their impact on the music industry. A Q&A with Stephen Navin adds to the features. In the conferences section, we see Hip-Hop & Soul Conference and Awards, highlighting the impact of these events. The On The Web section features the Billboard Video Watch this, where artists and musicians share their experiences with videos. The Blogging section includes stories like 'Get Jaded,' discussing the world's best air guitarists. Overall, this issue provides a comprehensive look at the music industry, covering various aspects from charts to conferences.
Mounting A Global Push For New British Talent

BY STEVE REDMOND

British music is going through its most creative period in at least a decade. Acts like James Blunt, Gorillaz, Razorlight and Corinne Bailey Rae bring a contemporary shine to the United Kingdom’s historical record as the world’s second-greatest music exporter after the United States.

A challenge for organizations like the BPI, the U.K. record industry trade association, is to showcase this new wave of talent in ways that help members better address the international market.

Of course, there are trade shows. Scores, if not hundreds, of them. Sometimes it feels like it would be possible to do nothing else but to traverse the globe attending music conventions.

Not only does that sound like an idea of hell, but the limitations are obvious. Conventions by definition, there is a lot of competition from other countries selling their wares. And because these are invariably business-to-business events, it’s all at least one removed from the end consumer.

Our breakthrough came last summer with a mission of U.K. labels to meet their Japanese counterparts in Tokyo. As well as the business meetings, the mission included a heavyweight promotion with retailer HMV and it coincided with the Fuji Rock festival—which happened to include a healthy mix of U.K. acts. For the first time there were locals on the ground who had a vested interest in U.K. music succeeding.

Coordinating all these activities created something that was much bigger than the sum of its parts. It was our most successful British music promotion yet, and so the idea emerged to push the concept even further.

So when BPI international manager Mark Glover and I found ourselves in Berlin last fall for the PopKomm convention, we began to wonder whether it might be possible to put these ideas into action in the German capital.

Rather than attempt to push British music onto a sometimes reluctant international audience, could we find local partners who had an interest in promoting British music themselves?

Berlin has certainly had a long-term love affair with British music. Remember that incredibly fertile period when David Bowie created not only his own “Low” and “Hunky Dory” albums, but also produced The Idiot” and “Lust For Life” for Iggy Pop? Remember the long Berlin association between Depeche Mode and its label Mute? Remember U2’s “Zoo Station”?

With Berlin’s history of inspiring British artists, we had high hopes that a new generation of British acts could inspire the city’s music fans.

Key to the venture was landing committed local partners. We were lucky to find Peter Radosohn, head of music at public broadcaster Radio Eins, and Spencer Theile of promoter Karrera Klub. In addition to being respected members of Berlin’s music community, both are Anglophile music fans.

And then we approached the labels. In what seemed no time at all, we had a bill of more than 40 acts and label showcases from V2 (Cooperative, Stephan Jenkins and Sony Red Ink).

Among the acts that performed were Razorlight (Mercury/Universal), Belle & Sebastian (Rough Trade), the Rifles (Sony Red Ink), our Sons & Daughters (Domino), the Feeling (Island/Universal), Boy Kill Boy (Mercury/Universal) and Clearlake (Domino).

We even acquired a film festival as a local cinema owner decided to join the party and broadcast a week of British music films.

As more partners came onboard, from MTV Germany to magazines Tip and Uncle Sally’s, it became clear we were on to something.

British Music Week opened May 19 with a reception at Berlin’s British Embassy. A notable participant was Germany’s great rock star Herbert Grönemeyer, who has sold more than 20 million albums in his 27-year career. It was clearly compelling for the 180-strong German audience to hear one of their own artists extol the virtues of the current U.K. scene.

As for the gigs, during the course of the week around 8,000 Berlin music fans were exposed to new British acts. The artists themselves were overwhelmed by the reception.

However, the most notable reaction has been the pitches we have subsequently received from other cities around Europe suggesting they might run their own weeks committed to British music. Those discussions are under way but it is clear that our initial hypothesis—that it is possible to mount an international promotion based on “pull” rather than “push”—has been vindicated.

Perhaps it’s not too much to imagine that one day soon every week will be a British Music Week somewhere around the world.

Steve Redmond is director of communications and development at the BPI.
Peace and Love

Apple
MUSIC VIDEOS: THE NEXT QVC?

At StarStyle, Product Placement Goes Direct To Consumer

Care to purchase the fashions worn by Joan Jett and Carmen Electra in the music video for Jet's new single, "A.C.D.C.?" What about the clothing featured in the videos of Nickelback's "Save Me" or Urban Mystic's "I Refuse"?

Those getting heart palpitations at the very thought may want to log on to starstyle.com, which launched its music section with a handful of videos June 20. Visitors to the site can watch videos while an adjacent online catalog spotlights merchandise featured in the videos.

A couple of clicks—and $158—later, and you could be the proud owner of the Juicy Couture regular-rise, boot-cut jeans worn by Electra.

StarStyle, which debuted earlier this year, is taking the trend of TV and music video product placement to the next level. The site focuses on merchandise featured in such TV shows as "The Simple Life," "American Idol" and "The Young and the Restless." (TV shows are not viewable on the site.)

"We empower consumers with information," says Ashley Heather, CEO of StarStyle parent company Entertainment Media Works. "Hopefully, they then buy the products."

Call it contextual commerce—or purchases based on the context of an experience.

StarStyle receives revenue from participating e-tailers based on actual purchases and/or click-throughs. The revenue stream trickles down to participating record labels and, depending on the deals they have in place with their labels, artists.

Heather says she and StarStyle VP of music services Tony Zeoli are in the process of lining up deals with labels. Universal Music Group has already signed on to license its music videos to StarStyle—just as it does with AOL, Yahoo, MTV, MSN and other sites.

Wendy Nussbaum, senior director of business development at eLabz/UMG, views StarStyle's model as a plus for labels. In addition to sharing in StarStyle's gross revenue, Nussbaum says UMG will receive a sales commission based on products sold from its music videos featured on the StarStyle site.

With UMG at its side, StarStyle's music cache is poised to increase, particularly if UMG acts like Gwen Stefani, Mariah Carey, Mary J. Blige, the Pussycat Dolls and the Black Eyed Peas support the site with their videos. StarStyle expects to spotlight 10 new videos per month.

According to Heather, StarStyle has had 800,000 unique visitors since its launch. This, he says, has resulted in 8 million-9 million page views across starstyle.com and its partner sites, which include americanidol.com.

Though Heather will not disclose exact sales figures, he acknowledges that StarStyle "has generated hundreds of thousands of dollars as a business." Critical mass, Heather notes, will be reached via distribution—beyond the StarStyle site.

By the end of summer, Heather says StarStyle will be linked with mobile providers and other channels of interactive TV. "We want to create as many opportunities to spread sales."

According to Zeoli, traffic at the site is predominantly 18- to 35-year-old females. Irma Zandl, a principal with the Zandl Group, a New York-based research firm that specializes in brand management strategies, refers to this audience as "the US Weekly reader."

And from where Zandl sits, most visitors to the site will not be able to afford the $35 Christian Louboutin polka dot bow pumps worn by Electra in Jet's music video. StarStyle should consider offering "less expensive alternatives," Zandl notes.

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StarStyle is launching its music services at the same time as product placement in videos is becoming a hot topic—particularly with R&B/hip-hop artists.

Notes Arden Doss, managing director of Propaganda Global Entertainment Marketing. "Propaganda assists brands in placing products in music videos. Music videos offer a "high rotation entry point" for brands, Doss says. A few-second placement in a popular music video could result in a multimillion-dollar media value.

Doss calls StarStyle "an interesting stepping stone." The site is monetizing content and showing the value of eyeballs, he says. "These are interesting numbers to have."

Recent videos from Nelly Furtado, Rihanna, T.I., Bon Jovi and Cassie prominently feature mobile phones and other name-brand electronics. In addition to potentially having a multimillion-dollar media value, product placement can help underwrite the cost of a music video. "And as the marketplace has shifted, artists are scrambling to get budgets up for videos," Doss says. "But it must be done seamlessly," Doss adds. "And the end consumers are savvy. If they think they're being sold to, or if the product placement is too overt, it won't work."
PRODUCER/ARRANGER ARIF MARDIN DIES, 74

Atlantic Mainstay Became A Legend Working With Legends

Arif Mardin never stopped working. Even in his hospital bed, one week from death, Mardin was reaching for manuscript paper to arrange one final track.

The legendary producer, arranger died June 25 in New York. He was 74 and had been suffering from pancreatic cancer since September 2005.

Mardin was a mainstay at Atlantic Records for four decades, producing and arranging hits for Aretha Franklin, Phil Collins, Hall & Oates, Roberta Flack, Brook Benton, Dusty Springfield and other stars.

Retiring as senior VP of Atlantic in 2001, he re-emerged as co-VP/co-GM of EMI's revived Manhattan label under EMI Jazz & Classics president Bruce Lundvall. It was at EMI that Mardin put the final crescendo on his producing career with Norah Jones' breakthrough album "Come Away With Me." Born in 1932 into a prominent family in Istanbul, Turkey, Mardin earned an economics degree from Istanbul University.

Jazz was his true love, but he never thought of a career in the business until meeting Dizzy Gillespie and Quincy Jones at a concert in Turkey in 1956.

At Jones' urging, Mardin enrolled in the Berklee School of Music in Boston.

In 1963, Mardin met Nona Ertegun, a fellow Turk and jazz enthusiast, who brought him to Atlantic Records, where Mardin learned his trade working alongside label co-founder Ahmet Ertegun and in-house studio geniuses Jerry Wexler and Tom Dowd.

"When he first came, he was relegated to 'hey you, in the studio,'" Wexler recalls. "Nobody knew about his potential. It took a while. Gradually, it became clear. He'd begin writing a little chord chart. He'd fill out a string chart... it was a gradual series of upgrading and recognizing his talent, which just could not be stopped."

Mardin caught the pop bug in 1965 while co-producing the Young Rascals' first big project with Dowd. In the ensuing years, Mardin, Wexler and Dowd collaborated on a pop-soul stew known as the Atlantic Sound.

In the mid-'70s, Mardin helped the Bee Gees redefine their sound and revive their career with the album "Main Course," which included the No. 1 pop single "Jive Talkin'."

Other No. 1 singles included the Rascals' "Good Lovin'" (1966) and "People Got to Be Free" (1968), Average White Band's "Pick Up the Pieces" (1974), Collins' "Against All Odds (Take a Look at Me Now)" (1984) and Bette Midler's "Wind Beneath My Wings" (1980).

Mardin showed great diversity, producing funk tracks for Chaka Khan, folk albums for John Prine, jazz sessions for Eddie Harris, Herbie Mann and Charles Lloyd and country albums for Willie Nelson. He also had a knack for working with pop divas. "He had an amazing way of calming the situation," says Ian Ralfini, Mardin's co-GM at Manhattan.

This was evident in his two successful Blue Note recordings with Norah Jones.

Lundvall says Jones initially was hesitant to go into the studio with Mardin.

"Norah was afraid because he was such a gum," Lundvall says.

But Mardin went to see Jones perform and she agreed to try one song with him. He ended up producing the whole album.

"It was just great to watch them together," Lundvall says. "He would make a gentle suggestion about doing the piano solo again... she would do that. They got it right after about two takes. It was kind of production. It was not heavy-handed. He was never that way... "Come Away With Me" won Grammy Awards for album of the year and record of the year in 2003 and earned Mardin producer of the year honors.

He also produced Jones' "Feels Like Home." Combined, the two albums have U.S. sales of 14.1 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

At the time of his death, he was working with his son, producer/arranger Joe Mardin, on a collection of his own compositions with many of the artists he produced through the years.

In addition to Joe, Mardin is survived by his wife Latife and daughters Julie and Nazan. Funeral services will be held July 2 in Istanbul. A memorial service is planned for September in New York.

Back-and-forth bids indicate neither side is willing to surrender management control.

EMI has upped the ante in its play for Warner Music Group, bidding $31 per share for its U.S.-based rival. But in the latest wrinkle, WMG may now be looking to play the role of buyer, not seller.

A cash-driven bid from EMI north of $10 billion for WMG was once believed by many analysts to be the magic number that would trigger a deal between the two music giants. No more. WMG is trying to position itself as the would-be acquirer in any merger scenario with EMI.

After rejecting a £2.3 billion ($4.2 billion) approach from EMI, worth $28.50 per share in cash and stock on May 3, WMG countered with its own all-cash bid for EMI for $31.50 per share ($5.70 on June 14).

EMI rejected that proposal June 23 and responded with its latest bid for WMG—a $31 per share cash bid that values the company at $4.6 billion. WMG promptly rejected the offer and countered again, this time at $32 per share ($5.80) valuing EMI at $4.5 billion. EMI released a statement June 28 describing Warner's latest offer as "wholly unacceptable."

Still to be seen is how serious WMG is about buying EMI.

Right now WMG is taking a good game. "The WMG board agrees with EMI that there are potential merits in combining the businesses of WMG and EMI, but believes that a WMG acquisition of EMI will provide shareholders of both companies with a superior opportunity to realize significant value in their shareholdings," the company said in a statement.

But analysts are divided over whether the WMG and EMI round represent a serious play by WMG's private equity backers to double down on their bet on the music business or an elaborate negotiating ploy designed to get EMI to sweeten its bid.

WMG is expressing reservations over EMI's need to sell Warner/Chappell Music and raise a substantial amount of cash in a stock sale before any deal can go through.

Many analysts continue to think that EMI's investors—including TH Lee and Bain Capital—won't have any problem cashing out for the right price.

If not, analysts caution a merger could be problematic, not to mention expensive, because the back-and-forth bids indicate that neither side is willing to surrender management control to the other. Merrill Lynch analyst Jessica Reif Cohen said in a June 28 note to investors, "As the bids escalate, WMG and EMI may be eroding the value of synergies through higher financing costs."

Analysts say the two companies could realize more than $200 million in cost savings if they merged.

Additional reporting by Lars Brandt in London.
Dear Ketel One Drinker
Do you enjoy pushing the envelope, thinking outside the box, zagging when the world zigs, coming from left field, being ahead of the curve, breaking the mold, swimming against the tide, marching to the beat of a different drum, drinking Ketel One Citroen?
Latins Get Their Space

Two New Social Networking Sites Emphasize Hispanic Music, Culture

Given the success of MySpace among all users, Latins included, it was only a matter of time before a social networking site specifically targeted that demographic. In fact, there are two sites now up and running that are in Spanish and music-centric.

MTV Networks Latin America's LaZona.com, officially announced June 25, may evolve to become an all-encompassing social networking site. But right now, it is being touted as a Spanish-language site for bands and music lovers, with an emphasis on new and unsigned acts from Latin America.

Meanwhile, Miami-based Elhood.com followed its March beta launch with an official June 26 kickoff, with similar goals in mind. The bilingual site is described by Damian Bellu- mio, president of parent company Hoodly Entertainment Group, as “an entertainment site that begins with music but wants to evolve into all media.”

The heads of both sites acknowledge the influence and success of MySpace, but say there was still opportunity in social networking. “We felt the Latin American audience had been under- served,” says Luis Goicouria, VP of new media for MTV Net- works Latin America. “Sites like MySpace work in all lan- guages, but don’t target Latin Americans. We felt there was a niche to fill.”

Bellumio says Elhood, which also has an office in Spain and expects to open one in Los An- geles, plans to address the bilingual, bicultural reality of much of the younger Latin de- mographic in America.

“We wanted to create a company that presented the best of both worlds,” Bellumio says. “Unfortunately, most of the innovation happens in the Anglo market, and that is one of the things that frustrates us.” So we looked at the best prac- tices in the U.S. market, and put them into a portal. With social networking, the beauty is the content creates itself.”

While Elhood offers personal and miscellaneous postings, the site is most definitely music-oriented, with established artists alongside unknowns. Technical features include 1GB of storage, ad-free content, and help to create individual playlists for streaming. To date, Bellumio has been financed with private funding, but the plan is to become advertising-driven.

MTV also plans for its model to become advertising-driven. LaZona will no doubt benefit from the reach of the MTV brand. The site would logically
THANK YOU BRUCE

FOR HOOKING US UP WITH THE BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE.

Now on AOL® Music, you can watch a different video from each stop on Bruce Springsteen's 18-city tour with the Seeger Sessions Band. Songs hand-picked by the man himself. Free and on demand, only on aolmusic.com.
The $13.7 billion sale of Univision Communications to a private consortium of investors could be an interim step in the ownership of the Spanish-language media and entertainment giant.

The consortium, which includes billionaire media mogul Haim Saban, Madison Dearborn Partners, Providence Equity Partners, Texas Pacific Group and Thomas H. Lee Partners, is not expected to close on the Univision purchase until spring 2007. But some analysts, like Michael Kopelman of Merrill Lynch, are already predicting that the new owners “will ultimately sell Univision.”

The future shape and ownership of Los Angeles-based Univision could be crucial to the continued development of the U.S. Latin music market. Univision, whose holdings include market-leading TV, radio and online properties, offers integrated, multipplatform opportunities for marketing Latin artists. It also is home to several televised music shows, including the Latin Grammy Awards, Premios Lo Nuestro and Premios Juventud.

Some analysts have hinted that the consortium might break up Univision; others doubt that will happen.

“They think that is pretty unlikely,” says Andrew Campbell, a media analyst with Credit Suisse, citing the company’s successful business model. “They’re well aware of the synergies of having all the multiple platforms,” adds radio consultant Bill Tanner, who was formerly with rival radio network Spanish Broadcasting System.

Univision also owns Univision Music Group, which includes the Univision Fonovisa and Disa labels, and is the U.S. Latin market-share leader; group acts include Marco Antonio Solís, Los Tres del Norte, K-Paz de la Sierra and Akwido.

Univision Music Group artists benefit from preferential advertising rates on Univision radio and Univision-owned TV networks Univision, Galavisión, Telefutura. Likewise, artists affiliated with Venesión (through the Vene Music label) and Televisa (through EMI Televisa) are understood to enjoy preferential ad rates. Venesión owns 13% of Univision’s stock; Televisa owns 11%.

It is unclear what will happen to Venesión’s and Televisa’s stakes in Univision. Both are under contract to provide programming to Univision through 2017. In fact, Mexico City-based Televisa made a strong bid to purchase Univision, and some analysts contend that Televisa remains the most likely long-term buyer for the company.

The Access to the Show program will showcase the MLB Authentic Collection line of apparel at concert venues and in retail outlets.

“Definitely, we’re out there to reach the kids, the 16- to 24-year-old demo,” says Steve Armus, VP of consumer products for MLB. “Certainly, part of being out there with this program is spreading the good word about baseball that we are cool. We know that the people going to these shows are cool, and we’re trying to embrace the lifestyle that they really live on a day-in, day-out basis.”

Armus says that MLB also wants to create awareness for the MLB Authentic Collection, so the league has aligned with retailers to make that happen.

“It’s also important that we drive sales and awareness to our retailers,” he says. “This year we’ve lined up with all 600 Champs stores on the Vans Warped tour with a massive promotional effort, which is great for the tour, great for us and hopefully rings the cash register at Champs.”

Armus says the MLB has been able to quantify boosts in retail sales. “Traditionally, in past years, we’ve been able to track back double-digit increases with our retailers based on the promotional programs we’ve laid out,” he says. “When you walk into the mall, you’re hopefully going to see, if everybody’s done their jobs right, POP materials, window banners, video loops within Champs stores. And we’ve got radio running can purchase licensed products directly through mlb.com.

“Our gut feeling told us that music was a great way to turn on some of the young kids out there because we’re not just fans of music, ourselves,” Armus says. “Music is part of the fabric of America; baseball we believe is a huge part of the fabric of America, and so we took these Trailers, gutted them and converted them into something that would be fun.”

The goal is to have the program on the road as much as possible this summer, not an easy task given the intricacies of tour routing.

“This year is the most extensive set of dates we’ve ever been able to do on that really hit the most targeted group for us,” Armus says. “With any luck, we’ll be on the road doing music with 90 and 100 dates through this year, and actually we should be consistently sticking with music through the middle of September.”

At Bonnaroo in Manchester, Tenn., in June, artists, press and fans checked out the batting cages. At a Nashville Warped stop days later, 100-degree heat kept fans away from the cages, but the video-games saw action.

“Over the last few years, we’ve seen a remarkable spark in our business based just on what’s happening on the field but on what’s happening in these kids’ lifestyles,” Armus says. “You see a lot of people wearing our stuff when you get to these shows, which really confirms for us that we are happening out there, and these kids really believe in what we’re doing.”

As part of the Warped tour, the MLB Authentic Collection will sponsor the Vagrant Records stage. The sponsorship gives Major League Baseball Properties access to Vagrant bands for potential songwriting, touring and similar activities in many activities, from interacting with fans at the MLB Road Show batting cages to judging the New Era Cap Design contest and a nationwide contest to win a trip to Warped.

The MLB Road Show takes place at Recap Sports stores where one fan can win a trip to the 2006 World Series with Vagrant act Senses Fail.
Digital Music Group is proud to announce the acquisition of Chancellor Records
Majors Catch The Viral Bug

Labels Look To Get In On Viral-Video Action

The major labels are trying to cash in on viral-video swapping—even as the RIAA is scrambling to stamp out unauthorized music-video trading on popular Web sites like YouTube.

All the industry’s heavyweights are already in talks with leading viral-video sites about allowing swapping of their music videos as part of an ad-supported model or some other hybrid business model that also could include revenue sharing or pay-per-play fees. And many labels are making select videos available for viral-video distribution for purely promotional uses.

Now Sony BMG is looking to take the concept one step further by piggybacking on the YouTube craze and developing its own viral-video service.

The music giant has teamed with Brightcove, a Cambridge, Mass.-based Internet TV specialist, to launch Musicbox Video—a one-stop source for authorized viral-video content from Sony BMG artists.

The label did not provide execs for comment. But in a statement it said it is offering interviews, live performances and behind-the-scenes footage of artists in addition to music videos.

Sony BMG plans to integrate the service across its network of artist and label Web sites. Each site will feature customized video content related specifically to the artist or label. For example, visitors to the official Jennifer Lopez site can view a preprogrammed playlist of her videos, watch popular videos from other related acts and link to purchase ringtones.

Musicbox also has a destination at sonybmg.com/musicbox/video where visitors can sample video playlists centered around top clips and genres.

Perhaps most important, the videos all feature “share with a friend” functionality and RSS syndication feeds that allow for viral distribution of the clips. Users can also add videos to their blogs, Web sites and other online profile pages.

Driving Sony BMG’s interest in its own viral-video offering is the opportunity to capture a bigger share of the ad-supported business around it.

Brightcove will sell and deliver the advertisements for Musicbox on behalf of Sony BMG. The company has lined up DreamWorks Animation, SKG and HPI as initial sponsors. The two companies are promoting the release of the new animated film “Over the Hedge” on a banner within the player and in front of videos from Sony BMG acts.

So far, business-model development around the viral sharing of music videos, or other videos, has been limited. But there are new signs of progress. On June 27, NBC entered into a marketing deal with YouTube to promote its fall TV lineup and other select clips from the network.

“Figuring out ways to monetize all that stuff is the interesting challenge for the labels, but the opportunities are pretty significant,” says Mike McGuire, an analyst with Gartner. The rise of user-generated content sites like YouTube, MySpace, Google Video and iFilm has sparked a revolution in the viral sharing of music videos across these Web communities. The problem is, much of the distribution taking place—outside a select number of promotional deals—is happening without the approval of record companies.

At the same time, music videos have transformed from a promotion for selling albums to a rapidly growing money-maker for the music business during the last 18 months.

The RIAA estimates that sales of music videos, led by iTunes, topped $3.7 million in three months, after being introduced last October. Meanwhile, the majors are also sharing in the profits of ad-supported video-on-demand offerings from AOL, Yahoo, Music Choice and others.

That is where many labels are keenly interested in promoting, hopes are that YouTube and others will ink similar deals with the industry in the long run. McGuire says one of the big questions for viral video ultimately is its ability to spur purchasing of music products.

In the end, you want not only driving ad revenue but also a full-blown financial transaction where somebody is paying,” he says. “The labels and their promo people have to figure out how this channel works for them in terms of creating demand for things like downloads and CDs and ticket sales.”

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FINALLY, BLU-RAY

While much of the world will get its first taste of Blu-ray video technology with the launch of the Sony PS3 later this year, Samsung Electronics America is the first to market with a stand-alone Blu-ray disc player. The BD-P1000 hit stores June 25 and boasts close to five times the resolution of conventional DVDs. “Until now, there hasn’t been a prerecorded media solution for consumers to take full advantage of the pristine picture their HDTVs are capable of producing,” says Jim Sanduski, senior VP of marketing for Samsung’s Audio and Video Products Group.

For the uninformed, Blu-ray is one of two next-generation video formats—along with HD DVD—vying for the attention of consumers. But that higher picture quality comes at a steep price. The BD-P1000 carries a price list of $3,000.

—Brian Garrity

BITS & BRIEFS

MOVIES GO GUBA

Warner Bros. Entertainment has inked a deal to sell and rent downloads of its movie and TV titles through online video site Guba.com. More than 200 titles will be available at launch including “Syriana,” “Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire” and “Everything Is Illuminated.” Rental prices start at $1.99 per movie for unlimited views during a 24-hour period. Viewers can buy extra viewing days for reduced fees without the need to download the film again. Catalog films will retail for $9.99 and new releases, available on the same date that DVDs are released in stores, will rent for $19.99. TV shows will rent starting at $1.79 per episode. The deal comes on the heels of a similar licensing pact Warner Bros. entered into with BitTorrent in May.

RADIO DISNEY GOES MOBILE

Radio Disney is coming to cell phones via a new deal with mobile entertainment specialist mSpot. Under the agreement, mSpot Radio, a mobile radio service that streams close to 300 channels of music, news, sports and talk radio to mobile phones, will launch a new channel showcasing Radio Disney programming. “This alliance is another step in our strategy to keep Radio Disney connected with kids and families, whenever and wherever they are,” Radio Disney president/GM Jean-Paul Colaco says.

NAPSTER OFFERS PLAYERS

Napster has introduced a new branded digital music player. The 1GB flash-based device features a color LCD screen, FM tuner, six equalizer settings and support for Windows Media Audio and MP3 files, as well as pictures and videos. The device is sold through Napster.com at a discounted price of $50 to customers who purchase a full-year subscription to its Napster to Go portable music service. The company is also offering a 256MB flash-based Napster-branded player for free with a paid full-year subscription. Napster is promoting the device in connection with its latest client software, version 3.7, which also features the ability to auto-sync content to portable devices.

JENNIFER LOPEZ’S videos—and links to related acts—will be on Sony BMG’s Musicbox Video, an authorized viral-video source.

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YAHOO! MUSIC TOPO 20 STREAMS

YAHOO! MUSIC TOPO 20 STREAMS

JENNIFER LOPEZ’S videos—and links to related acts—will be on Sony BMG’s Musicbox Video, an authorized viral-video source.

Nicki Minaj and the Black Eyed Peas lead the way on the latest Yahoo! Music Top 20 Streams chart. The rapper took part in Yahoo’s “Ladies of Pop” promotion, soliciting viewers to submit their own videos, echoing the “Fans Only” Love Nicki! Nicki’s “Super Bass” and the Peas’ “Give It To Me” are also on the charts.


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—Brian Garrity
Billy Preston
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Bonnaroo Organizers Keep It Together
In Their Fifth Year, Fest Planners Maintain A Seamless Event

Much has been made about Bonnaroo’s shift in musical direction (which organizers downplay), but what’s really remarkable to a veteran behind-the-scenes attendee is how seamless the logistics have become. The festival ran June 16-18 this year (Billboard, July 1).

And the Bonnaroo site is a virtual city that arises from a hay field in a completely rural area 60 miles south of Nashville. Some 80,000 fans and another 10,000-plus staff and emergency and medical personnel, as well as industry players, exist comfortably and stress-free for four days. Bonnaroo producer Superfly Productions and A.C. Entertainment have this thing down.

"This being our fifth year, the team has worked together. We know the site better, which allows us to pay more attention to the details," Superfly president Jonathan Mayers says.

A.C. president Ashley Capps adds, "We plan this event year-round, and the team that works on it is very conscientious about all the details. Our goal is to create the best festival experience that we can for the fans, for the acts, and everything else comes from that one goal."

Bonnaroo enjoyed its first year without significant rain—and mud—saving the producers about $250,000 of their contingency budget. "We still budget for the weather and take a lot of precautionary steps," Mayers says, "but this was our best weather of the five years."

Bonnaroo’s multimillion-dollar budget (those involved decline to release figures) is still inching up, mostly on the production end, according to Mayers. "There’s so much room still for continued improvement," he says. "It’s expensive to run a 24-hour event. We’re able to kind of stabilize the budget a bit, but it’s still a significant budget."

For the third year, Bonnaroo offered Thursday entertainment as campers moved in and staked their claims. "That’s such a great slot (for acts), because people are so ajar and ready to have a good time, and there’s not much competition," Mayers says. "It’s a really good first-Bonnaroo play." Bonnaroo has also fine-tuned its relationship with the city of Manchester and Coffee County. Many failed festival producers know how crucial these relationships are:

"We think the town really wants us here, and we want to be part of the community and to be here a long time," Mayers says. "We’re bringing 80,000 people to this town, and we’re very conscious of that and we do a lot of different programs to help try and raise money. We put a lot of people on our staff who are part of the local community, we go to board meetings and community meetings to hear constructive criticism and people’s concerns because we want to address them."

Bonnaroo producers negotiated a new deal with the local municipalities last year. "We give them a ticket, and we also raise money through a silent auction," Mayers says. Our concessions people work with local organizations to staff out, and they get a percentage of that. "I feels like the community wants us here, and that’s important: We want to be somewhere that embraces us."

As is the case with any city of nearly 100,000, the odds of something bad happening during the course of several days are high, and the Bonnaroo locale is not exempt from those odds. This year, a festival worker was killed in an accident in the days leading up to the event. And as bluegrass legend Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder left the festival after their Friday night performance, their bus struck and killed a concert goer who had climbed the fence. Left the festival grounds and wandered out onto Interstate 24 adjacent to the site.

"Any time something like that happens of course it’s very upsetting. It’s hard to really take that in," Mayers says. "More than anything we send our condolences to the family."

But negative incidents at Bonnaroo are few, given all the factors in play. "If you look at our statistics, [negative incidents] are extraordinarily low," Capps says. "Over the years, for example, we’ve had very few fights. Over the five-year period I can point on one hand and fingers left over."

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One Year Old, AAIM Continues The Indie Fight
Trade Body Tackles New Issues, Seeks Out New Members

In its first year of existence, the American Assn. of Independent Music (AAIM) confronted old and new technologies. The trade body negotiated with Apple to raise the rates indie receive on paid downloads from 65 cents to 70 cents, then fired off documents to the FCC arguing for the strict enforcement of anti-piracy laws.

The former excites labels about the possibilities of what a coalition can accomplish. But fighting for radio access? Not so much.

Most in the industry agree that the independent community has enjoyed a healthy few years. The Internet is empowering labels and artists, and Billboard has documented many examples of success snared without radio by such acts as Arcade Fire, Clap Your Hands Say Yeah and Tapes ’N Tapes. But the independent sector’s growth—highlighted by the emergence of Barsuk, the resurgence of Sub Pop and the consistent triumphs of Victory Records—has had little to do with U.S. radio.

For now, plenty are happy to sit out the costly radio game. In a recent interview, Definitive Jux head Aamaechi Uzoigwe noted that people aren’t “really clamoring for indie rock or indie hip-hop” on the airwaves. And speaking on the condition of anonymity, one indie label head says, “It’s a little bit hypocritical. [AAIM is] flying the indie flag so we can act more like majors.”

That’s not so to say labels would turn down increased airplay from modern rock stations like KROQ Los Angeles or WKQX (Q101) Chicago, but the Web is priority one for most labels. Talking with.indies during the past few weeks, we found that radio play is a distant thought. Of greater concern is the possibility that pay-for-placement tactics will take hold on the Internet. In an era where Web site Pitchforkmedia.com can break a band, time spent fighting for airplay seems almost like a step backward.

“I just can’t help but think that access to the Internet, or the ability to participate in it, is going to become far more expensive,” Sub Pop head Jonathan Poneman says. “It is not going to be as accessible to [indie labels] as it is now.”

An AAIM acting president Don Rose has heard all of the above.

“That is exactly the problem,” he says. “I’ve heard that from large indie who are in the rock and pop worlds. They tell me they’ve given up on radio. That makes the effort that much more relevant. These are people who are re-launching music that should be pop music. I would hope these labels would find radio more relevant and once again engage in it if the process were more open and fair.”

To be sure, radio access is just one issue AAIM is attempting to address. It happens to be a high-profile topic—and it’s one that even inspired an editorial from Rose in this magazine (Billboard, May 13). Additionally, the fact that AAIM has been advising Sun, Russ Feingold, D-Wis., on antipiracy legislation is an accomplishment not to be taken lightly, even if other senators have not joined in.

It reminds us, however, of the difficult task Rose has undertaken. As the head of a trade body that represents 125 indie labels, he is attempting to give voice to labels of varying sizes, whose ideologies and business practices often are not in line with each other.

“Don is doing a good job,” Poneman says. “My priorities may be different than his, but he’s a level-headed individual, and he’s a good businessperson. He’s just the person this organization needs to get it off the ground, and it is off the ground.”

AAIM enters its second year stating that it has raised more than $550,000 in dues. According to documentation from the organization, its member labels represent about a 7% share of the U.S. market.

This, Rose says, is about half-way to the coalition’s market-share goal of 14%. With the hope of expediting its efforts, AAIM delivered a call to arms to the independent community in June. In a memo sent to nonmember labels, AAIM’s board states: “It’s time for us to ask the question: Are you with us? Don’t burden the independent believers with shouldering the load for everyone.”

Among AAIM’s first-year supporters are such prominent labels as Sub Pop, Epiaph, Ultra and Touch & Go. But a 7% market share indicates that a number of high-level indies disagreements with some of those on the nine-member AAIM board. Rose notes that Def Jux’s Uzoigwe and Kill Rock Stars founder Slim Moon were recently elected to the AAIM board, and the organization is trying to cast as wide a net as possible.

“You get some people who are activists by nature, and they want to be part of a movement,” Rose says. “Then you get other people who are sort of ‘show me’ types. We’re in that process right now, trying to demonstrate the relevance of a coalition.”

For the coming year, Rose and AAIM have identified wireless downloads, video-on-demand Web sites and satellite radio recording devices as just a few of the topics on which the organization will be advising labels. Rose says AAIM will continue to reach out to labels to diversify its membership.

But when will move from “acting” president to president?

“It’s not even an issue that’s been talked about for some time,” Rose says. “The board will have to decide if that’s what they want. I’ve been very happy to see the organization launched and continue with it for the foreseeable future.”

Best Buy Turns A Promo Page
Major Retailer Opens Up Its Shelves To Magazine’s Faves

In what appears to be a first for Best Buy, the pre-eminent retail marketer of music is partnering with a consumer magazine covering the entertainment sector in a promotion that pushes new and catalog titles.

In partnering with Blender magazine, Best Buy appears to be embracing a strategy used by some chains and indie stores. The 754-unit chain will feature music titles endorsed by the magazine in special Blender-branded locations.

In the past, Tower Records supported titles and artists featured in the chain’s Pulse magazine as did Musicland with its Request magazine.

A number of independent merchants, particularly in the three national indie-store coalitions, also embrace that marketing strategy.

According to Blender publisher Lee Rosenbaum, Best Buy will have a Blender-approved section featuring new music and catalog titles in a designated area in the bins in 658 Best Buy stores.

Best Buy will also devote endcaps for two monthlong sale periods, the “Back to School Cool” program, kicking off July 18, and a second program launching Sept. 10 in 750-plus Best Buy stores.

The Blender sections and endcaps will be supported by Best Buy’s powerful weekly insert and on the home page of bestbuy.com.

“They were looking for a trusted source to add to the retail section by identifying titles that will appeal to young men,” Rosenbaum says. “When you get an invite from the likes of Best Buy, you RSVP.”

Blender, which has a circulation of about 750,000, has an audience with a high composition of 18- to 34-year-old readers, including a lot of college students.

“This alliance with Blender is another compelling way that we can help expose our customers to new music and generate excitement about entertainment,” Best Buy senior music buyer Ed Hogan said in a statement.

Initial titles in the program include Joan Jett’s “Sinner,” Cam’Ron’s “Killa Season,” Dixie Chicks “‘Takin’ the Long Way,” Def Leppard’s “Rock of Ages,” Christina Millian’s “So Amazin’” and Tears for Fears’ “Songs From the Big Chair: Deluxe Edition.”

Each title will have a short Blender-styled review on yellow bin cards.

Blender’s editorial department recommends titles and writes a customized bin card for each selection. All titles must be approved by Best Buy, and then Blender solicits the labels to see if they want to participate, according to sources familiar with the promotion.

“We are working with the retailer and record companies to help the business by exposing people to the product,” Rosenbaum says. “It will be a compelling presentation.”
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Zomba’s Development Plan
Talent Focus Is On Up-And-Coming, Unaffiliated Artists

nine months into David Mantel’s gig as president of Zomba Music Publishing U.S., the company is seeing positive results. Songs written by new signings are climbing the charts, the A&R team is scouring garages to find undiscovered talent, and business affairs is crafting a new structure for development deals.

T-Pain was Zomba’s first signing after Mantel took the reins last September from Richard Blackstone, who moved on to head Warner/Chappell Music. Faheem Najm, professionally known as T-Pain, writes, produces, sings and raps. “I’m Sprung,” from his album “Rappa Ternt Sanga” on Konvict Side” (Virgin Records/EMI), has sold 1.7 million units worldwide, according to Zomba.

Meanwhile, Mantel says Zomba is shifting its development focus to find talent at a much earlier stage. In the past, the publisher would sign songwriter/artists to develop, but the talent was already signed to a label or had something else going on that would get them attention. “Now we’re going in at a much earlier stage when someone has no affiliation,” Mantel says. “What I want to bring into Zomba is an element of developing talent that hasn’t really been recognized by the traditional A&R community, who often times doesn’t have a man—until the first advance has been recouped from earnings. There can be a long lag time that elapses before songwriters receive additional funds.

While Mantel won’t disclose specific deal terms, he explains that the developing artist/songwriter can realize financial benefits much quicker under Zomba’s new agreements. “We’re working with artists like they’re stars and flowing through the economic benefit that we can find for them essentially immediately,” Mantel says. "Once we know that we have these opportunities — that the money will eventually come in — we’re giving the benefit of that back."

The writers do not necessarily have to wait for full recoupment of an advance before receiving additional funds, he says. Before they land a record deal, Zomba is working closely with the film/TV sync network of parent BMG Music Publishing and its offices worldwide to generate revenue for the songwriters. Earnings generated from these opportunities can flow through to the writers.

"What I’ve found these days is that more music supervisors for films and television shows are interested in breaking bands that are the interesting bands—that are going to be the great bands — and not necessarily going all the time for a well-known name," Mantel says. "They know that kids listening to music on the Internet and communicating by blogs, know what the great music is, and it doesn’t always translate into what the record companies are signing."

‘I want to bring Zomba an element of developing talent that hasn’t really been recognized by the traditional A&R community.’—DAVID MANTEL

Music/line, reached No. 8 on The Billboard Hot 100 last November. “I’m N Luv (Wit a Stripper)” hit No. 5 in February. The two singles have sparked 4 million ringtone sales, according to the publisher.

Flyleaf, another signing under Mantel’s leadership, is a difficult-to-classify screamed-hard-rock alternative band from Texas. Lacey Mosley, who fronts the group, writes with bandmates James Culpepper, Sameer Bhattacharya, Jared Hartmann and Pat Seals. They all signed with Zomba.

"I’m So Suck” from the group’s self-titled album on Octone/Records, peaked at No. 12 on Billboard’s Mainstream Rock chart in April. "Futly Alive” entered the chart in June and rose to No. 34 in the July 1 issue. Flyleaf is on tour with Korn, whose members also have a co-publishing deal with Zomba. Korn’s latest album, “See You on the Other Side” (Virgin Records/EMI), has sold 1.7 million units worldwide, according to Zomba.

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WELCOME. We’ve decided to celebrate the undervalued Go-Go’s by revisiting their latest, “God Bless the Go-Go’s,” and declare “La La Land” the coolest song in the world this week.

New groups like the Holograms (and most of the super-cool Teenacide roster) remind us that it was the Go-Go’s, and their original producer Richard Gottehrer, who revitalized and institutionalized the girl-group, punky-pop genre made popular by the Runaways (with producer Kim Fowley) and started by Genya Ravan’s Goldie & the Gingerbreads in 1964.

Any group with its original members 25 years later is a living miracle and an inspiration to their fans, and “God Bless” shows they’re as good and maybe better than ever.

Revisit the record and you’ll see what I mean. The Go-Go’s are touring now, so let’s hope they start recording regularly again.
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LAMEIGNÈRE TAKES SNEP HELM
Christophe Lameignère, chairman/CEO of Sony BMG France, was elected president of French labels body SNEP during its annual general meeting June 22 in Paris. Lameignère will serve a two-year term. He succeeds Gilles Bressand, president of Paris-based indie label XIX Bis Records, who has helmed SNEP for the past five years. Bressand is now VP of the body. SNEP published a list of key priorities at the meeting with particular emphasis on ensuring the effective application of the country’s forthcoming Copyright Bill, which will bring French legislation on digital delivery and copying into line with other key European markets. The bill is due to be voted on shortly by the French Parliament. SNEP’s existing board was also re-elected for two years.
—Ymeric Pechiev

WRAGG EXITS UMG
Barney Wragg, senior VP of Universal Music Group International’s eLabs unit, has exited the company. UMG declined to comment on the departure. Wragg was widely considered one of the company’s leading executives in new technology and digital music. Since joining Universal in 2001, he had been credited by insiders with driving the company’s transition toward a digital future. Prior to Universal, Wragg was operations manager at U.K.-based Advanced RISC Machines, a leading provider of microprocessor technology for cell phones. He was promoted from VP to senior VP of eLabs in June 2005.

DIVINYLS TO ENTER AUSSIE HALL
The Divinyls, Icehouse and Daddy Cool will be inducted into the Australian Recording Industry Assn. (ARIA) Hall of Fame in August. Two more inductees will be announced in the coming weeks. The induction ceremony—now in its second year—will be held Aug. 16 in Melbourne with high-definition screened Aug. 20 on cable channel Foxtel’s TV1 network. The Divinyls had Australian hits with albums “Desperate” (1983), “What a Life” (1985) and “Temperamental” (1986). The group’s biggest international success was the single “I Touch Myself” (Virgin), which reached No. 4 on The Billboard Hot 100 in 1991. Icehouse had eight top 10 albums in Australia and scored a major international hit with the 1983 single “Hey Little Girl” (Chrysalis).

Daddy Cool’s debut 1971 album “Daddy Who? Daddy Cool!” (Sparmac) yielded Australian chart-topping singles “Eagle Rock” and “Come Back Again” and was the first Australian album to ship more than 100,000 copies domestically. Inductees, whose careers started at least 25 years ago, are chosen by the 10-person ARIA board. —Christie Eliezer

TOFT QuITS EMI
EMI Music Denmark managing director Lars Toft has left the company after two years in the role.
An announcement on future management will be made in August, according to EMI. Adrian Chartley, managing director of EMI Continental Europe’s Eastern European, Middle East, Turkey & Africa unit, has been named interim GM of EMI Music Denmark. He will oversee the company’s day-to-day activities as part of a supervisory board chaired by EMI Music Continental Europe COO Chris Kennedy.
Toft’s plans have not yet been specified, but in a statement EMI Music Continental Europe chairman/CEO Jean-Francois Cockeron says: “I fully understand his decision to pursue a new career direction beyond the term of his contract with us, and I wish him every success in his next career step.”

Toft was an executive at Danish furniture company Fritz Hansen before taking the EMI role in late 2003.
—Charles Ferro

SYDNEY—Weekly chart positions are the music industry’s traditional currency, the coinage that eases the way to increased radio play and media attention. But what would happen if that currency was devalued? That’s a question Australian industry insiders are pondering as a chart data stalemate between the country’s main labels body and its largest music retailer rumbles on.
In May, the Australian Recording Industry Assn. (ARIA) announced it was no longer using sales data from retail group Brazin to compile its singles, albums or digital charts.

ARIA loses sanity, keeps grip on charts

ARIA pays Black Yak co-founder Sebastien Chausse the Brazin/ARIA situation “a dilemma that has to be overcome.”

Black Yak Warner act the Whirlins’ March 20 release “Little Cloud” dropped out of the Top 50 album chart published June 5 from No. 1 to the previous week’s No. 1. The band’s earlier releases had longer chart runs.

Acknowledging that different stores have different biases in their customers’ tastes, Chase agrees there is a possibility the chart slide may have been accelerated by the Brazin/ARIA standoff.

Some observers had been waiting to see how Brisbane-based alternative rock quartet the Butterfly Effect’s sophomore album “Images” (Roadshow Music), fared in the ARIA listing. At first sight, ARIA’s weighting system seems to be working—charts for the week ending June 24, “Images” entered at No. 1 on the GFK compiled HVM midweek chart, No. 2 on the ARIA listing.

The knock-on effect of a relatively low chart position leading to less airplay on chart-focused stations would concern many acts, although Butterfly Effect’s Brisbane-based manager Dave Leonard takes a measured view.

“The issue doesn’t worry us so much,” he says. “Our sales come from the following we build up through touring rather than radio airplay.”

However, Leonard adds: “I have no doubt in my mind that we’d have had a No. 1 debut if Brazin sales had been counted. The album was well-stocked at Sanity and HMV, and was No. 1 on both [their] midweek charts. But we had no product in department stores, because they only stock top 10 product or bands that had top 20 success.”

Ironically, ARIA could have expected the charts to be under the spotlight for different reasons. In April, it launched a digital chart and O’Donnell—who is also managing director of EMI Music Australia—said digital data will be incorporated into its main charts Sept. 1.

The trade group also recently announced a sponsorship deal with cell phone maker Motorola (billboard.biz, Feb. 2) tied to a new national chart show on radio network Nova, and began supplying free printed charts to retailers for distribution to customers.

The amount of sponsorship was not disclosed, but Leonard suggests that ARIA “could have reached a compromise and paid [Brazin]” with Motorola’s money.

Regardless, O’Donnell says negotiations with Brazin will continue. “We have a good relationship with Brazin,” he insists. “They’re an important part of our business, we’ll work with them in the future and hopefully resuscit this.”
Purchase of Spain’s Top Indie Marks New Global Strategy

MADRID—Universal Music Group’s (UMG) June 22 purchase of Spain’s biggest independent label looks set to be the first of many such buys. According to Miami-based Universal Music Latin America & Iberian Peninsula chairman Jesus Lopez, the purchase of Barcelona-based Vale Music marks a new global strategy for Universal of acquiring key indies with proven domestic A&R track records.

Lopez says the goal is to boost local repertoire in territories where Universal is not the local market leader. He adds that the strategy is being spearheaded by a triumvirate: UMG CEO Doug Morris in New York, London-based UMG International chairman/CEO Lucian Grainge and Paris-based Pascal Negre, president of UMG’s Mediterranean, South America & Middle East Regions.

Universal is Spain’s third-biggest label, with a 16.3% market share in 2005, according to labels’ body Promusicae. Sony BMG was the market leader with 27.2% share, ahead of Warner in the second spot with 19.7%.

Vale was Spain’s fifth-biggest label in 2005 with 11% behind EMI’s 15.7%. A combined 27.9% for Universal and Vale would, then, put them slightly ahead of Sony BMG.

But, Lopez adds, “buying Vale and other indie labels around the world in coming weeks is not primarily about gaining market share. Neither is it about saving costs or cutting jobs.”

Although terms were not disclosed, Lopez calls industry speculation that Universal paid €47 million ($59 million) for Vale “not accurate.” Vale reported total sales of €271 million ($340 million) in 2005.

The acquisition has to be cleared by a Spanish Economy Ministry competition tribunal, although Lopez calls that “a technical formality” and expects approval by late summer.

Vale was launched in Barcelona in 1997 by president Ricardo Campoy and two partners as a dance compilation specialist and has immediately succeeded with various-artist collections. A quantum leap in its fortunes came in 2001 when Vale partnered with Barcelona-based TV production company Gestmusic to sign artists emerging from its reality TV/talent show “Operación Triunfo.”

The show began in October 2001 and was massively successful (Billboard, Jan. 12, 2002), launching the careers of David Bisbal, Bustamante and Rosalía.

Vale says it has sold 40 million albums globally through an international distribution deal with Universal; 14 million were “Operación Triunfo”-related, including 4 million by Bisbal.

Vale’s progress has taken Campoy light years away from a dark period in his life shortly before he launched the company.

In 1992, Campoy founded another successful Barcelona-based dance compilation company, Max Music, but fell out with partner Miquel Dega and left to set up Vale Music in 1997.

In September 1998, the Barcelona music scene was stunned when DJ Josep Maria Castells was found badly beaten outside Barcelona. Castells worked with Campoy, resembled him and drove a similar red car.

Before long, ex-partner Dega and three hitmen were behind bars, serving six-year jail sentences; Dega had hired the hitmen to give Campoy a beating—or worse—over an alleged debt, and they assaulted Castells, mistakenly.

Campoy says he did not want to sell when Universal approached him three months ago. But he says that, given market conditions, Vale ultimately needed Universal’s investment dollars. Vale will continue operating from its Barcelona offices, with Campoy installed as president for five years. It has a 15-artist roster, including eight signed from “Operación Triunfo.” Campoy promises more signings before the end of the year.

The acquisition of Vale has been greeted with equanimity by the local indie-label sector. “The voracity of the major labels is part of the law of life,” says Mario Pacheco, president of independent labels body UFI.

Bisbal’s manager Eva Cebrián says she is “pleased that the Vale team is staying on at the label, as it means David’s next albums will be in their hands. [Bisbal] is already an international star, but now he will be even more so, and as an artist in his own right, not one licensed out to another label.”

Doug Morris

By Howell Llewellyn

www.americanradiohistory.com
Sprite Exposed
Soda's Relaunch Includes Teens' Video Diaries For Web Site

The Coca-Cola Co. is in the midst of injecting Sprite with a hip, new attitude—complete with a new yellow and green logo. A brand relaunch, if you will.

Out of left field, eye-grabbing ads created by the Crispin Porter + Bogusky agency in Miami began appearing a couple of months ago. More recently, the lemon-lime beverage, together with MSN and MediaVest, introduced an online campaign targeting the youth market.

A unit of Publicis-owned Starcom MediaVest Group, MediaVest concocted “Exposure,” which focuses on three groups of teens (fine artists, athletes, musicians) who have been equipped with film technology being developed by MSN Hardware. With this gear in hand, each group’s members have been capturing their daily lives for viewing at exposure.msn.com. In a nutshell, the storylines will, if all goes according to plan, lead to “exposure” for the teens.

According to group director for Sprite Don King, the goal of “Exposure”—as well as Sprite’s larger relaunch effort, which also includes a new, trippy Sprite Web site (sprite.com)—is twofold. It is a way to create an emotional reappraisal for teens who know the brand and a way to introduce new teens to the brand.

The one-off “Exposure” campaign is neither an unfiltered Web site nor a full-fledged reality show. It sits somewhere between the two, offering user-generated and interactive content with context and purpose to those logging on.

For MediaVest associate media director Jonathan Hsia, what makes this campaign so special is that the participants are not airbrushed or manufactured. They are, he notes, “very talented and very relatable.”

He continues, “We set out to champion the unique, talented young people whose stories have yet to be written, but have the potential to be.”

Those following the trials and tribulations of musical act Odyssey on “Exposure” know this: The unsigned, multitalented R&B/hip-hop act is fronted by female singer/songwriter Santalina, who, along with her bandmates (Rayvon, Chris, Jesse and Elijah), makes the trek from her Philadelphia neighborhood to New York.

In the Big Apple, they perform for Violator Management co-founder Chris Lighty.

With this campaign, and like the teens it targets, Sprite is hoping to cut through the sameness in the world by creating a new and unique brand identity. In other words, King explains, the relaunch of Sprite has nothing to do with conformity and everything to do with individuality.

“By leveraging the accessibility and intimacy of the Web, we were able to create a kaleidoscope of perspectives around a single event,” Hsia says. “It speaks to the uniqueness in all of us. It approves individuality. It celebrates self-expression.”

Since launching in June, “Exposure” has experienced “good traffic” on the site, King notes. Though King will not give an exact figure, he says that there have been “millions” of impressions.

Whether Odyssey突破s through or gets signed to Lighty’s company remains to be seen (Lighty was unavailable for comment). But it appears that the quintet has found an audience. Of course, whether it can leverage this newfound audience into something more lucrative remains to be seen. The same is true of Sprite. Stay tuned.
Q: Is music publishing still a game for industry veterans or is it evolving?
A: Publishing is a fantastic mix where the old can benefit from the great catalogs of the past and where the new can create great music for the future. A lot of our classical publishers have been working for their companies for a very long time. It’s a long-term commitment for very little reward. Pop business tends to be a bit more ephemeral; everybody wants a quick return. But music has to come to the market to record to have music on paper. Publishing is enriched by the fact that it takes time, a little bit of money and a lot of encouragement. You’ll have to be older, I suppose, to actually understand the complexities.

Q: Is there money out there that songwriters aren’t getting their hands on?
A: All the societies I speak to—obviously our own MCPS-PRS Alliance—their big selling point is their transparency. I would think that would be the order of the day for all of the societies going forward. Collecting money is liable to human error. Registering songs is a complicated business. Registering songs with a variety of collecting societies requires a lot of expertise and close attention to detail. There are always possibilities that a song is incorrectly registered, which might mean that the money that was otherwise allocable to that song might end up in some sort of suspense account.

Q: Although the record business has been banging the drum for a long time, do you think the U.K. government is truly aware of the role of music publishing?
A: Having been within the bosom of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, I think it is probably true to say that the message of music publishing was not entirely clear. Part of the plan going forward is that I have to be more messianic about what publishing is. From within government, looking out, I was a big advocate of the industry having a common view, purpose and focus. Now that I’m here at the MPA, one of the strengths I see is the partnership we have with our composers. As far as I can see going forward, I have to sacrifice myself to ensure the relationship between publishers and recording companies—they are part of the same root and branch.

Q: What is your vision for the MPA?
A: My vision is that when people ask me what is music publishing, they will be able to understand very clearly what it is. I have to demystify for the public and government what that is, the importance of it, and why it is not an old Victorian concept run by old men. We want to break down the barriers between the songwriters and the public. The vision is like magnetic north on the compass. We take bearings off that vision and focus in three different areas—toward our members, users and government. I will have to beef up our organization to make sure the message is properly communicated.

Q: You’ve been in the job now for about six months. What do you feel are your greatest achievements in that time?
A: In my original interview, I remember musing on Napoleon’s 100 days campaign, from the Island of Elba through to the Battle of Waterloo. I don’t think it had been quite as catastrophic after my first 100 days. In achieving the vision, there’s an awful lot of important day-to-day work that has to be achieved. There are still areas where I feel we need to help our members in the business. We are looking at finding ways in which to work with government, whether there may be tax incentives. The education of people, particularly young people, about the industry is key. Not just on the importance of copyright, but training people to be good at business. I think we have a very important role to play in that, so that those rising entrepreneurs will be both creative and business-orientated at the same time.

Q: Do the opportunities outweigh the challenges in the music publishing field?
A: Publishing is all about partnership and relationship. There are so many different models for generating revenue to compensate creators for their work. Whether it’s through advertising or subscription revenue or whatever. There’s a multiplicity of ways of earning your keep. And we’re not that greedy. I don’t think publishers are that greedy. I just think there needs to be respect for the music, and that’s what we are in the business of.

There will always be challenges. There were challenges from day one. The reason why this company was set up was because people were copying music and the person who wrote the song wasn’t getting value. Is anything different in 2006? Not really. The issues are still the same but the opportunities now are enormous.

Q: What do you see as the shape of the modern publisher?
A: The skills that you naturally associate with record companies—whether they were A&R, marketing or selling—to some extent collapse into precisely what a modern publisher might or could be doing. A lot of our publishers have really seen the importance of the online environment to bringing music to the market.

Q: Which brings us to the MPA’s 125th birthday party July 6 in London. What do you have in the works?
A: The party will be a brilliant moment to punctuate time with a celebration of British music over the last 125 years. We’ve got a fantastic mountain of talent lined up and I was hoping to add a little cherry on top. We have a few super-wow factors. The Bank of Ireland corporate banking has come onboard as sponsor. Hopefully we’ll finish up with everyone singing together “We’ll Meet Again” (laughs). We’re celebrating that in 1881, this old Victorian organization was built. In those days, the Victorians built great loo (toilet) pipes. (Civil engineer Sir Joseph) Bazalgette’s London pipes were built in those days and are still doing their job now.

In this new age of digital distribution, 125 years later, let’s hope our pipes can now be as fresh and full of exciting music as the loo pipes were full of poo in those days.
Country Music's Reigning Couple Bare Their Soul2Soul Tour a Second Time

By Ray Waddell & Tamara Conniff

Photograph by Danny Clinch

On the Road
Shortly before show time,

Tim McGraw and Faith Hill—arguably the king and queen of country music—are backstage at the Bryce Jordan Center in University Park, Pa., on June 21. They joke around and laugh with the crew. The casualness and fun in McGraw and Hill’s demeanor belies the hard work they and their teams have put into the Soul2Soul II tour. And the numbers don’t lie: This 74-date, 56-city arena is expected to be the highest-grossing country tour of all time during a calendar year—and among the highest-grossing tours of 2006 in any genre. For the week ending June 25, ticket sales passed the 1 million mark, according to organizers. By the time Hill and McGraw wrap Soul2Soul II in September, they will have shattered Kenny Chesney’s single-year country gross record of $63 million set in 2005, and may even surpass Shania Twain’s 2003-04 mark of nearly $90 million.

Talks for Soul2Soul II began in 2000, while the first outing was still on the road. The first Soul2Soul grossed $50 million. But Hill, McGraw and their management companies had bigger plans for No. 2.

“We never do anything unless we want it to be the biggest and the best thing out there,” McGraw says. To surpass the success of the first Soul2Soul, some changes had to be made, from the staging of the show to how McGraw’s and Hill’s management teams worked together.

“It’s a completely different tour,” McGraw says. “I don’t think it has any resemblance at all to the last time we toured, and that’s what we wanted.”

The key was to view the tour as not only a husband and wife collaboration, but also a marriage of two very different superstar management cultures, one from Nashville and one out of Los Angeles. McGraw is managed by Scott Siman’s team at Nashville-based RPM Management, and Hill is managed by Gary Borman’s team at Los Angeles-based Borman Entertainment.

“You have two superstar artists who have incredible careers,” Borman says. “And you have two different philosophies of how to do things. It really took the experience from 2000 to see how it didn’t fit together and for us to create a new philosophy that is neither Tim’s nor Faith’s.”

According to Siman, each team brings its own strengths to the party. “It never hurts to see how somebody else is doing things and what their view of it is,” he says. “We shared a common goal of making this the biggest tour it can be.”

While the two teams did not exactly have a “culture clash” in 2000, there were some bumps in the road. “But when you live in your little bubble you think everyone does it the same way you do it,” Borman explains. “Until you actually interact with someone in this kind of dynamic, you don’t realize there are 100 different approaches to a career. We knew we had to create a third culture, and I think we’ve been very successful at doing that.”

McGraw says it was key to build a crew neutral to both camps.

“We each have our teams,” McGraw says. “The challenge was trying to find people and crews that weren’t part of either team who could come on and be the independent crews. The biggest challenge was trying to find the right people to fill those positions. It was a conscious effort to bring in an overall tour manager, because we each have one. You certainly don’t want to go back and forth between each other’s people trying to get different decisions.”

Co-headlining tours are always complicated. Even though Hill and McGraw have been married for 10 years, their careers are handled separately.

“They bring a celebrity couple brings a certain energy that neither one can attain on their own,” says John Huie, Hill’s agent at Creative Artists Agency (CAA). “I think they’re cognizant of it and are smart about how they manage their lives on and off the stage.”

THE ROAD TO SOUL2SOUL

“This tour has been talked about since we toured last time,” McGraw says. “We’ve laid in bed at night for six years talking about what we would do and how we would do it.”

For McGraw and Hill, how the show was staged and designed was a high priority. “We wanted to do it in the round because we felt like it was a different experience,” McGraw says. “It brings us closer to the audience.”

Why six years? Borman says both artists were very active with other projects including films, albums and, in McGraw’s case, touring. “The couple’s growing family threw another wrinkle into planning.”

“That’s a lot of moving parts, from family issues to professional issues,” Borman says.

Serious planning and routing began 18 months out. “I think many people don’t realize how hard it is to do something at this level, you can’t just start six months out,” Siman says. “What happens when you give yourself less time is you give yourself less options. You want to make sure you get the right buildings, you get the right production and opportunity to get it manufactured, all those kinds of things take time.”

Hill’s and McGraw’s agents work at CAA’s Nashville office—veterans Rod Essig (McGraw) and Huie (Hill)—but the entire CAA Nashville team worked on the tour.

“It’s really cohesive,” Huie says. “Between Rod, myself and [CAA agents] Darin Murphy and Marc Dennis, we each have a quadrant of the country, and we route based on territory. Neither one of us view it as a Tim McGraw or Faith Hill tour, it’s the Soul2Soul tour. These two people are joined at the souls.”

FAMILY AFFAIR

Family is a priority for McGraw and Hill. Soul2Soul II was designed around their daughters’ school schedules, so dates were booked only on weekends until school was out for summer.

“They’re great parents,” Essig says. “When we started in April, the rule was the kids get out of school, get on a jet, and we can’t be farther than two hours by jet for the first show.”

The tour route does not include Canada or any international markets, though the demand is strong. Had they toured in these markets as well, the tour gross would be even larger.

“If we do the same thing, yeah, we could, but basically we have a time frame we could work in,” Siman says. “Family was always the priority.”

The artists also made their bands’ families a priority. Because the tour had such planning, McGraw and Hill could arrange for a “family bus” to accommodate visitors on the road.

“It’s like rolling barbecue,” McGraw says.

THREE AUDIENCES

While many tours strive for synergistic packaging, few achieve the true “one-plus-one-equals-three” result. But the Hill/McGraw union draws three unique audiences: McGraw fans, Hill fans and those who revere them together.

“What I think is really cool about this tour is it’s bringing different fans together,” says Brian O’Connell, president of country touring for Live Nation. “It’s not your traditional show with
three acts and a cloud of dust. It's a full two-and-a-half hours of the best of Tim McGraw, the best of Faith Hill and the best of the two of them together."

Management has long recognized this potential. "We've always viewed Tim and Faith as having three careers. Tim's career, Faith's career and then there's the one together," Siman observes.

FEEL THE HEAT

Presales and initial public on-sales indicated serious heat for the tour. "We saw early on some of the presales were huge numbers, better than we'd ever done before, better than most people had ever done before," Siman says. "That gave us a pretty good idea we had a winning package."

As the sales progressed, the tour rang up double-plays in 11 markets and, remarkably, triples in Chicago, Los Angeles and Las Vegas. The 60 dates initially planned turned into 74. "We knew from the word go it would be big," Essig says. "But the multiples are bigger than I expected. When you can play three Staples Centers [in Los Angeles], two Madison Square Gardens [in New York] and on and on, that's a lot of people. There are a number of cities we have not played because we didn't have any more time."

The artists made an effort to play for the promoters and buildings who hosted the first Soul2Soul tour. "Tim and Faith are extremely loyal, so the people who played them six years ago got the play this run," Essig says. That means independent promoters like Jam, G.A.M.E., Fantasma, Beaver and Outback got the nod in their respective markets.

Borman Entertainment VP Joni Foraker notes, "In a lot of cases they are co-promoters. Live Nation has a chunk of dates, AEG Live has a chunk of dates, and we tried to be true to everybody."

The approach is appreciated by independents in these days when national tour promotions are common. "They supported all the people that supported them in the past," says Jam co-president Arny Granat, who promoted the Chicago sellouts.

THE SHOW

At Live Nation, which promotes or co-promotes 38 shows, O'Connell says the show's look and production elements are drawing almost as much acclaim as the performances. "They spent so much time designing this show, it's one of the biggest shows I've ever seen in terms of the set and everything else," O'Connell says. "No matter where you sit in the arena, the presence they have with this set is they're everywhere. They work the entire stage and it's aesthetically gorgeous to look at."

The set was designed by Roy Bennett, "along with an awful lot of input from Tim and Faith," Foraker says. "The only challenge is trying to cram enough music from each artist into the slot," she says. "They both have so many hits, and you only have room for so much, so you have to take a sampling of what you think is the best representation of each artist."

Borman adds, "You have a husband and a wife who have a built-in advantage in that it brings a whole other element of emotion and message to the mix."

As the tour passes its midway point, the team is knocking down five shows a week and running at high gear. "It's so much different from 2000, which was crazy," Borman says. "We really took what we learned in 2000 and put it to good use in 2006, and at least internally we're seeing the benefits of that. This is a real harmonic experience for us—as it is onstage, it is behind the stage."

As for the record-shattering numbers, McGraw is surprised but confident. "You never know that people are going to listen to this year or the next year," McGraw says. "All you can do is go with what you want and hope a lot of people agree with you."

SOUL2SOUL III?

With so many markets untapped, it's clear there are more Soul2Soul plays left on the table. "We realize there is more demand than we could imagine and there's talk about doing things again next year, maybe a little differently," Borman says. However, Borman adds that one reason the tour is so successful is because McGraw and Hill have such strong solo careers. "Each of the artists individually is so strong," he says. "We can't give that up."

McGraw is game for III. "We love doing it. I'm sure we'd love to tour together again," he says. "We're still young."

MOTHER, WIFE, COVER GIRL, country superstar, actress —now Hill can add touring phenomenon to her bio. As Soul2Soul II marches toward becoming the biggest calendar year country tour of all time, Hill's focus remains on her family and her fans.

Q: How do you feel about the success of the tour?
A: It's pretty exciting to say the least.

Q: What guidelines did you give management?
A: The management companies know there are strict guidelines on how Tim and I tour, especially together. I think that's one of the reasons why it took six years. We worked the tour around the girls' school schedules, which is very, very difficult. It went through many, many stages before it was workable.

Q: Has family played a big role on this trek?
A: We were able to plan for a family bus to come out for some of the band's family, our family and other people on the road so family can come out and travel with us. The only reason that's been able to happen is because we planned the tour so far in advance. That was a priority for us. It's made it like a traveling concert family reunion.

Q: Why did you want to make changes from the last tour?
A: Soul2Soul was a great success then, but knowing that we were going to do it again, we really wanted to make changes on every level. The biggest was trying to offer an experience in the round—something our fans had never seen and we had never experienced before. We wanted to try to get closer to the fans and give them a different kind of show.

Q: How long have you been planning Soul2Soul III?
A: The preparation has been years in the making. It's not something we just decided a few months ago. Tim and I started talking about this before the last tour ended. It takes a lot to put this type of show on. It's a fun show, and it's fun for everyone out on the road. You've got 144 people out there. It's nice to say that we are all enjoying it.

Q: How did your respective management teams work together?
A: Tim and I have been together for close to 11 years now, we've been married for 10, and we've had different management companies that entire time. Over the course of working together during that amount of time, you learn to work with people. That's one thing we said getting into this, that it was just going to have to be a massive team effort. But I have to say our management companies have been unbelievable and brilliant in working together. They got into one room and just worked it all out... Otherwise it wouldn't have worked.
Like Malcolm Gladwell’s “The Tipping Point” or Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner’s “Freakonomics,” Wired editor-in-chief Chris Anderson’s “The Long Tail”—released July 11—is a book comfortably planted at the junction of economic theory and pop culture. To understand the theory’s name, imagine every album ever released as data points on a graph. The hits are represented by spectacular spikes. And to their left, in descending order, is everything else. The numbers keep dropping, but they stretch on, seemingly forever—the Long Tail. The theory sounds simple: Give consumers more choice, and they will indulge in the options. But impressed upon a media world in transitional chaos, that means industries grappling with diminishing blockbusters and niche purchases that, in aggregate, yield staggering revenue. Anderson first published his research in Wired in September 2004. Since then, via his blog, longtail.com, he has applied Long Tail economics to everything from kitchen appliances to beer. As he asks in his book, what happens when everything in the world becomes available to everyone?

In the conversation below, Anderson speaks to the origins of the theory, the value of blogs and how a music business built on his must learn to love little successes.

“...The Long Tail has existed as a statistical theory before you wrote about it, but you certainly put it together in such a way and at such a time that it’s as if you created it yourself. How did you first come to the idea? I spend a lot of time just talking to people, collecting data, trying to understand how to prove what I believe are the ascendant technology trends in the world. It was in the course of preparing a series of speeches that I first came across the Long Tail as a data phenomenon. I fleshed it out and looked for similarities in other companies and articulated it. So that was a research project that took me through most of 2004. And the article came out in the October issue in September 2004, and became the most cited article Wired’s ever done. I knew then that I was onto something.

You’ve blogged on the topic almost from the time the article came out. Why? And how did this affect the process of putting together and ultimately promoting the book?

The article came out in September 2004, and the book was going to come out in July 2006. It just felt so unnatural to go quiet. So I ended up with three reasons for going to the blog. The first reason was to continue the conversation. I talk about that in the book—meeting the meme, cultivating conversation. Not policing the conversation, but to be Long Tail central—the one place you could go to collect all this.

The second was that through the course of research as I put data out there, I could find resonances in places I didn’t know anything about—industries, beer, travel, soccer, whatever. It was the notion of blogging my observations and data—half-baked ideas—and then having this audience that got the subject bake the ideas for me and enhance my own thinking.

The third reason to do this is that I figured that if I continued to curate the conversation and have a collaborative work with these readers that when time came to publish the book it would be a fantastic marketing vehicle. I had a built-in audience who both knew the book was coming and knew what it was about. I have a presentation on this using Google trend data. Long Tail trend searches peaked when the article came out, then went back down. And then when the blog was launched, they went back up, and now the searches today are higher than when the article came out.

You spoke at the Alternative Distribution Alliance’s “Declaration of Independence” conference in Philadelphia in mid-June. What were the best questions you heard from the music business about the Long Tail?

Everybody could see pretty clearly what needed to be done. People are trying to figure out how to value the archives. Right now the backlist is estimated at a certain number based on the distribution channels. And as you

‘If you’ve got more supply and more demand, then that’s simply an opportunity for someone to be smart about connecting it.’ —CHRIS ANDERSON

know, back catalog is very popular, especially in any format change, because people repopulate their library. One of the questions was, “Is the very strong back catalog presence on these Long Tail markets an artifact of the early adopters or is that the static shape?” I looked at the Head/Tail ratio over time for Rhapsody ... and the niches became a bigger part going forward.

You cite Rhapsody data in your book but not iTunes. Were you able to see Long Tail trends in per-track purchases?

Rhapsody not only has a streaming service, they also have a pay-per-track service. I couldn’t publish those numbers, but I could get them to calibrate the curve. It turned out there were no gross distortions. There are many times more streams than there are downloads, but the curve [the ratio of hits to non-hits] isn’t shaped differently.

I put some data up a couple days ago on the blog that gives the percentage of sales accounted for by the top 100 artists in Wal-Mart, iTunes and in peer-to-peer networks [based on BigChampagne data]. And all the Long Tail markets are much less hit-centric than Wal-Mart, but iTunes is more hit-centric than Rhapsody. If Rhapsody is 40% Tail, iTunes might be 30% Tail or 25% Tail. And those numbers will vary from market to market, but the point is the Tail is growing.

In spending so much time thinking about the business of music, did you come up with some ideas for what could be improved?

Artists are great at adapting to change. Consumers are great at adapting to change. There has never been a better time to be a musician or to be a music consumer. You have more supply and you’ve got more demand. The only problem is in the middle. If you’ve got more supply and more demand then that’s simply an opportunity for someone to be smart about connecting it.

One of the things that I focused on and learned about is how really bad the metadata for music is. The data you see is the fields you find on iTunes—
The Buzz Economic Theory Is Coming Out In Book Form.
Bill Werde Sneaks A Peek And Sits Down With Author Chris Anderson

BOOK EXCERPT

DOES A LONGER TAIL MEAN A SHORTER HEAD?

"The Long Tail" makes the case that the future of many industries—music, books, film and countless others—may depend on recognizing that a whole lot of small success stories may be just as important as a few really big ones. For entertainment industries built on the blockbuster, that may be a tough pill to swallow. But as Anderson details in the excerpt below (with a little help from Nielsen SoundScan) the new media consumer isn’t your grandfather’s—and possibly not your dad’s, your brother’s or even your son’s, depending on your generation—customer.

The average niche music album title—those beyond the top 1,000—sold about twice as well online than offline.

One of the main questions that came up as I got deeper into quantifying Long Tail markets was about the effect of increased variety on the overall shape of the demand curve. As aggregators are able to carry more and more products, lengthening their Tail, will the relatively few hits at the Head sell less? More? The same?

There are three aspects of the Long Tail that have the effect of shifting demand down the Tail, from hits to niches. The first is the availability of greater variety. If you offer people a choice of 10 things, they will choose one of the 10. If you offer them a thousand things, demand will be less concentrated in the top 10.

The second is the lower “search costs” of finding what you want, which range from actual search to recommendations and other filters. Finally, there is sampling, from the ability to hear 30 seconds of a song for free to the ability to read a portion of a book online. This tends to lower the risk of purchasing, encouraging consumers to venture further into the unknown.

There are several ways to try to quantify this with hard data. One is to compare a market that offers relatively limited variety with one that offers much more variety of the same sort of products. Another is to track a Long Tail aggregator/retailer over time, watching what happens as its inventory grows. Yet another would be to just look at the effect of lowered search costs online, making an apples-to-apples comparison with a similar offline inventory.

A 2005 study by a team at MIT led by Erik Brynjolfsson, who did some of the early work at Amazon’s Long Tail inventory, looked at this effect at a women’s clothing retailer. The company has a catalog business and an online business, both of which offer the exact same inventory and prices. The difference is that online, it has search, easy browsing of both products and variations of those products, and ways to organize the offerings using “rank by” filters.

The result was that consumers—even those that shopped in both the catalog and online—tended to buy farther down the Tail online. The bottom 80% of products accounted for 15.7% of catalog sales, but 28.8% of online sales. Or to switch it around and see it from the top 20% perspective, the catalog exhibited an 84/20 rule, while the online site was closer to 71/29.

That’s the effect of lowered search costs for the same inventory. To measure the effect of different inventories—one much larger than the other—we worked to construct an apples-to-apples comparison between a retailer with unlimited shelf space and one with unlimited shelf space. In practice, that means comparing a bricks-and-mortar store with an online one selling or renting the same things. We decided to use entertainment examples because the online markets were mature enough to measure with confidence and the data was available. We looked at both music and DVDs.

Rather than pick a single bricks-and-mortar retailer, we used industry-wide data compiled by Nielsen divisions—SoundScan for music and DVDScan for movies. We compared that with online data from Rhapsody and Netflix, respectively.

(There are several corrections required to do these comparisons properly. In music we had to find a way to compare album sales offline with track sales online, and then from individual sales to streams under a subscription plan. In DVDs it was a matter of comparing sales and single-copy rental data offline with subscription rental online. Although the methodologies are beyond the scope of this book, they broadly revolve around using other data sets, such as pay-per-track online sales, to calibrate the curves and eliminate as many systematic biases as we could.)

After the corrections, the results were striking: The online demand curve is much flatter. The average niche music album title—those beyond the top 1,000—sold about twice as well online than offline. And the average niche DVD—again those beyond the top 1,000—was three times as popular online as it was offline.

Another way to look at this is to see how much less dominated the online market is by the top hits. Here’s the data for music. Offline, in bricks-and-mortar retailers, the top 1,000 albums make up nearly 80% of the total market. (Indeed, in a typical big-box retailer, which carries just a fraction of available CDs, the top 100 albums can account for more than 90% of the sales.) By contrast, online that same top 1,000 accounts for less than a third of the market. Seen another way, a full half of the online market is made up of albums beyond the top 5,000.

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LOS ANGELES—It's a brave new world for licensing music for TV shows. Unfortunately, it doesn't come with instructions.

The number of TV shows available on iTunes has swelled from five titles to 100 during the last six months. And possibilities for playing episodes over cell phones have everyone's heads spinning.

At question is how to compensate copyright holders for digital and mobile usage for the music featured in these TV programs.

Ellen Ginsburg, VP of music clearance for film and TV at Fox Music, remembers asking a music publisher several months ago how much it would cost to clear all the usual rights plus new digital rights. The publisher replied: “We’ll probably just take you to the cleaners for the first year until we can figure out what we’re doing, and then we’ll be more in line with reality.”

“It’s a new era for us,” says Gay Di Fusco, VP of music clearance and licensing for Warner Bros. Television Production.

Everyone is eager to get their piece of the new pie without having any idea what a slice is worth. Music supervisors and clearance companies say studios are paying copyright holders—primarily publishers and record labels—between 15% and 50% more when they include all digital media on top of existing rights.

While everyone waits for the dust to settle, industry experts say there are two main reasons for this:

• Studio contracts are changing to “all media excluding theatrical” usage as mandatory instead of as an option.
• Contracts are forgoing the five-year option and going straight to perpetuity rights.

“Publishers are crying because we’re asking for more and wanting it for less,” says Pat Lucas, exec VP of music at EMI Music Publishing’s film/soundtrack division.

To decrease the shock value, EMI is setting up a per-season price structure that spells out licensing ranges. “We give low- and high-ball figures for things like ‘Over the Rainbow’ versus [music from] a new band from Sweden,” Lucas says, adding that if sales explode in digital formats, “we can say we need to boost up” rates for future clearances.

One licensing source says the average cost to obtain a synch license from a publisher is now between $15,000 and $25,000, up from an average of $17,000-$20,000 per digital (the same amount usually also goes to the record company to license the master). But clearance for a song by a major artist can soar into six figures, while usage for an unknown act can be as little as $500. Often, it costs more to license a track for TV than for film.

Music budgets can be as high as hundreds of thousands of dollars per episode for a music-intensive show that uses selections from top artists.

THE NEW DEALS

Music supervisors have a new mantra: all media excluding theatrical (AMXT). While not a new term, this right is becoming the standard for many contracts. In the past, usage has been per platform: a certain amount for when the show airs on basic TV or cable, when it airs internationally, etc.

But as was evident with home video, not having preclearance to use songs when the TV series comes out on DVD has led to replacing songs if it’s too expensive to get the rights. Crowley says she “ripped out” the music for seasons four and five of “Northern Exposure,” replacing it with music library tracks at between $1,000 and $1,200 a pop. In many cases, AMXT clauses would eliminate the need to replace music because all usages are precleared.

Many of these new rules strike fear in the hearts of copyright holders who sometimes refuse such rights. One publishing exec is very reluctant to sign AMXT deals, while a record company exec feels they make life easier.

AMXT makes perfect sense for all involved. The publishers and
master holders don't want to go through every little usage. They want to get as much done upfront,” says Jonathan McHugh, VP of creative development for Zomba Label Group. “But they don’t want to give away the farm.”

Warner Bros. is going to AMXT with the 2006-07 TV season, says DiFusco, who oversees music usage for 28 shows, including “Gilmore Girls,” “The OC” and “Cold Case.” “We need to have as broad a right as possible to distribute and to take advantage of technologies to grow our viewership,” she says.

While AMXT is one of the biggest changes, some contracts are also being amended for all rights in perpetuity.

“Five-year quotes are on the way out,” says Evan Greenspan, head of music licensing firm EMG Music Services, which clears music for HBO’s shows, including “Entourage” and “The Sopranos.”

The remaining exception is shows in their first year. Since the odds of any series succeeding is slim, like most studios, at Warner Bros., “We’re not going to perpetuity for all our first-year shows unless we think it’s going to be a hit right out of the box,” DiFusco says. “But it will be all [AMXT] and we have an option to extend to perpetuity. When we have a second year, we’re going into perpetuity.”

While Mark Pinkus, senior VP of strategic marketing, custom products and sync licensing for Rhino Entertainment, stresses that parent company Warner Music Group makes a variety of deals, he has no problem signing perpetuity pacts: “If they have plans to make ‘My Name Is Earl’ available for the next 100 years, we’re fine attaching our music to it. The only thing we’re adamant about is being compensated.”

The third change is clearance for platforms not yet created.

Greenspan credits Peter DiCecco, Disney/ABC senior VP of business and legal affairs for music, with including “all media now known and hereafter developed” as obligatory language in contracts, starting with “Desperate Housewives” and “Lost.”

“That is really new,” Greenspan says, adding he saw it for the first time last year. “2005 was the breaking point. Disney knew something was coming and they said we can’t have platform-limited licenses and having publishers coming back to us every time, so they said, ‘We want to pay for all media, now known and hereafter devised, so we can put your music in our shows, so we can grow our business.’ ”

Plus, the term keeps show producers from constantly playing catch-up. “HBO, ABC, NBC are asking us to go back on shows that were done years ago and expand those rights so it’s available for wireless and handheld devices,” Greenspan says. DiCecco declined to be interviewed.

Simply put, copyright holders who won’t play along may get pushed to the side. “We can’t afford the rising costs of music,” one studio exec says. “We don’t want to start cutting down the amount of music we use, but if the costs continue to go up, those decisions have to be made. We have to have a product that has to be free and clear.”

The Chop Shop’s Alexandra Patassavas, who serves as music supervisor for such shows as “The OC” and “Grey’s Anatomy,” says the cost of clearing the new rights may affect the song selection. “Producers really do put aside money for the amount of songs they want. If the show calls for seven cues, we find seven cues,” she says. “It just may not be the seven cues we’d get before. There may be shifts around the expectations for the song.”

Greenspan says many copyright holders are agreeing to the new usages, but are very quiet about it. “For years, publishers and labels withheld rights for future media and just wanted to do ‘now known,’ but now that the door is open on future media they don’t want it to appear they’ve knuckled under,” he says.

While cell phones technically count as a “media now known,” clearance is still an issue. “The phone is the one thing licensors are a little careful about,” Zomba’s McHugh says. “If it’s in the context of the whole program, we’re OK with that, but if they’re chopping it up, licensors are not going to want to do that.” For example, some “musicosides” are condensed from original TV episodes instead of created anew and licensors often consider that a new production as opposed to one covered by existing rights.

EXPOSURE PLUS MONEY

Often, it comes down to who needs the placement more when it comes to signing away rights. In many ways, the shows have the power because so many acts are clamoring to have their music used. The sustained hit the music industry has taken from decreased album sales and Internet piracy further weakens negotiating clout for publishers and labels.

Plus, exposure garnered for artists—“Grey’s Anatomy” is credited with breathing new life into Anna Nalick’s album—can lead to sales down the road. Therefore, labels and publishers are often willing to accept less money for greater exposure.

“[TV play] can turn a record around,” McHugh says. “The TV shows weigh in as heavily as radio. It’s not only about revenue.” He adds that such thinking can often lead to interesting discussions at labels between the marketing team, which is looking for opportunities for exposure, and licensing execs, who are looking for revenue. “If I have a new band, I’m not going to give it away, but I’m going to let you give me every usage you can give me so I can leverage it marketing-wise. Money is secondary.”

As Lucas says, “If it’s a new band like Kasabian or Bloc Party, then sure, we’ll give [the studio] the low-end of the fee, but David Bowie is still David Bowie.”

That willingness to bargain is making some independent publishers a little queasy since they often don’t have the leverage the major publishers do. “The specific fee may be $15,000-$20,000 for a complete buyout, but [TV shows] are trying to get that down to $7,500 [and] they’re asking for more usages,” says John Anderson, senior VP of film and TV music/lifestyle at Windswept Pacific. He’s feeling the pressure even on classics. For example, Windswept would generally get $25,000 as a sync fee for “What a Wonderful World,” which it co-owns, but that has now shrunk to around $17,500. “They’re drawing the line,” Anderson says of the studios.

THE GREAT UNKNOWN

Studios say they are trying to hold down music budgets because it is too early to know if the digital revolution will lead to increased overall viewership and sales. Will people still buy series’ on DVD or switch to downloading individual episodes at $1.99 a pop? “It may make us less money for all we know,” DiFusco says of episode downloading.

“None of us seems to know what [digital usage] is worth,” Lucas says. “It’s a guessing game.”

Fox’s Ginsburg puts it in simple terms: “People may be downloading [a show] on iTunes, but they’re not buying it on VHS anymore. The publishers and labels feel you’re making more money so they should, but the truth of the matter is we’re losing other sides of the market. There are only so many buyers out there.”

No matter what side of the debate, everyone involved believes compromises will be reached. “We want exactly the same thing the labels and publishers want,” Ginsburg says. “Absolutely, we’ll find some common ground.”
Having its history in the US for over 110 years, with its great influence over international music scene in Japan, HCL has launched its official mobile website based on weekly charts where subscribers can download latest hits as ring tone.

First club was opened in 1990 as Osaka branch of "Blue Note", a first-class jazz club in New York. Blue Note in Osaka has established itself as an entertainment spot for adults, where they can be satisfied with the artists of the first rank at close with the enjoyment of dinner and drinks. In 2004, Blue Note in Osaka was relocated to HERB'S ENT (a complex building of commerce and offices at Nishi-Umeda, Osaka) with graded up facilities. and a sister club, Blue Note in Nagoya, opened in 2002

Have experience of promoting various concerts throughout Japan, with partners i.e. public hall, major hotels, and coordination of outdoor festival

Specializing in Gospel music, the school takes pride in providing the full-fledged lessons by teachers from overseas. Schools have a presence nationwide in Osaka, Tokyo and Fukuoka.

Aside to music related projects, we broadcast the most popular professional baseball team, Hanshin Tigers' games, as well as handles sales promotion, one of the active tool is the operation of their mobile website, and control publishing as well.
SELLING 50 MILLION SINGLES IN 18 MONTHS IS NO mean feat. That's how many individual tracks were sold via the Chaku-uta Full mobile phone-based music-download service from Japanese telecom operator KDDI between its November 2004 launch and May 2006. Although exact figures aren't available, it's safe to say that none of Japan's computer-based download services come close to matching Chaku-uta Full's sales tally. Mobile phones are overwhelmingly the digital-download medium of choice for Japanese consumers and will likely remain so as new music services and bigger capacity handsets are launched during the next several months. Meanwhile, Japan's three major telecoms—NTT DoCoMo, KDDI, and Vodafone—along with such companies as Apple, Microsoft and Softbank are forging alliances and jockeying for position in the rapidly growing mobile-music market.

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Revenue from mobile music applications—including full-length tracks, polyphonic ringtones, master ringtones and other related content—toaled 10.9 billion yen ($97 million) in the first quarter of 2006, up 63% from the first quarter of 2005, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan.

The value of computer-based download sales by the RIAJ’s 42 member companies during the January–March quarter totaled 1.2 billion yen ($10.8 million), a rise of 29% over the previous year.

Mobile phone-based music applications thus account for roughly 90% of Japan’s digital-music market.

Helping power Japan’s mobile-music boom is a plethora of new music services aimed at mobile-phone users.

One service that got a lot of attention when it was introduced last December by KDDI and Warner Music Japan is WAMO Pack, billed as the world’s first “mobile music bundle,” comprising audio, video, graphic and textual products in a single, downloadable file. The service’s initial offering was a package featuring vocalist Sean Paul.

Also offering bundled content for mobile users is Universal Music Japan with its Chaku-uta Full plus image service, which features master ringtones and full-track versions of songs along with artists’ images. UMJ launched the service with a selection of Bon Jovi’s greatest hits and photos taken during the band’s most recent Japan tour.

“I believe this product will be able to show new possibilities for our music business,” says Ryo Miyasme, senior manager of Universal Music Mobile Japan.

“Technology will continue to give us opportunities to create new products,” he says. Warner Music Asia Pacific president Lachie Rutherford says bundling is an example of how mobile phones are more than just another distribution channel for music.

“With bundling, you can offer 100 different product lines from just one artist,” Rutherford says.

This new way of packaging and marketing content has major implications for the music industry, he adds.

“The liberating factor for the music business is the ‘un-bundling’ of the album into single downloadable tracks,” Rutherford says. “This changes the way we do business.”

WMJ made some more news in the mobile-music sector when a May 26 concert by teenage singer/songwriter Ayaka—one of the label’s bright new hopes—could be seen as a streaming live broadcast on three major mobile carriers.

One song from the concert was made available for download immediately after the show.

Another new service launched in December is free radio-by-mobile from Tokyo-based radio network Nippon Cultural Broadcasting. Jointly developed with information content developer Frontmedia, the service—billed as the first of its kind in Japan—allows users to download music programs (including commercials) from its Web site and play them back on their handsets.

In April, Tokyo-based cable-radio operator User and NTT DoCoMo launched a mobile-based streaming audio and video service called Docodemo User consisting of various music programs offered by User.

Users can access online services selling ringtones and master ringtones of the song currently being played by clicking an icon next to the song’s title. They can also save information about the song so that they can access the stores later.

One of the most significant developments in Japan’s mobile-music sector came in May when KDDI became the country’s first telecom to launch a Web site featuring full-length tracks and master ringtones that can be downloaded onto personal computers. The move was seen as yet another sign of KDDI’s commanding position in the Japanese mobile-music business.

Users of KDDI’s new Lismo service can transfer downloaded tracks from their computers to mobile phones designed to be used with the service. The au Music Port software package that comes with Lismo phones enables users to copy songs from CDs and manage their song library as well as videos, photos, calendar and e-mail. And Lismo’s au Music Player has Global Positioning System technology to let users know what other people using the service within a radius of a few miles are listening to, reinforcing the sense of community that’s so important for mobile users.

Could Japan eventually develop the mobile-music platform to threaten the iPod’s digital-music dominance? Right now, the services in Japan are targeting different demographics, observers say.

“While most Japanese iPod users are in their late 20s and 30s, KDDI seems to be targeting teenagers first, most of whom are learning about non-ringtone digital music for the first time, know little of file sharing and don’t have $300 to spend on a dedicated music player,” says Steve Myers, president of Theta Music Technologies, a Tokyo-based software developer.

Myers says he expects KDDI to actively court this group in its promotional campaigns during the next few months.

May saw a flurry of activity on the mobile-music front in Japan, starting with the announcement by DoCoMo and Microsoft on May 10 of a collaboration that paved the way for the June 7 launch of DoCoMo’s own mobile-based music download service. Two new handsets being introduced this summer will support Microsoft’s Windows Media Audio and Windows Media Digital Rights Management 10 for portable devices. That will allow users to play music downloaded to a computer from more than 100 online music sites.

Among the new handsets coming from DoCoMo is the NEC N902iX High-Speed, the first mobile phone in Japan to feature high-speed downlink packet access, with transfer speeds of up to 1.6MB per second—about 10 times as fast as currently available FOMA handsets.

Content providers have been quick to introduce services aimed at users of the new generation of high-capacity handsets. For example, music trade paper/music chart compiler Oricon is launching a mobile-based album-download service on DoCoMo’s upcoming “Music Channel” this summer and will be available on the FOMA N902iX High-Speed handset. Users will pay 300 yen ($2.67) to download all of a CD’s tracks, which they can listen to for a week before it expires.

It remains to be seen whether Japanese mobile users will go for a subscription-based music-download service such as Napster, although there are already many subscription-based services in the mobile sector.

Tower Records Japan, now partly owned by DoCoMo, launched Napster Japan in November.

“DoCoMo has been falling behind [rival telecomm KDDI] in terms of music services,” one industry source adds. “And Tower Records Japan must have thought that it should do something to compete with iTunes and other down-
As any pop culture fan knows, anime has become an important medium for promoting Japanese music overseas. Such acts as Puffy (known outside Japan as Puffy AmiYumi), T.M. Revolution and Nami Tamaki have developed solid fan bases beyond their native land by having their music used in anime theme songs or, in the case of Puffy, by having their own U.S. animated TV show (“Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi”) on Cartoon Network.

One measure of Puffy’s impact in the United States was the presence of Puffy members Ami Onuki and Yumi Yoshimura performing on their own the float in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York last November—the first Japanese music act ever so honored.

Puffy’s role in popularizing Japanese pop culture abroad received official recognition in January when the Japanese government on Jan. 16 named Puffy as goodwill ambassadors to the United States. The act, which is signed to Ki/soon Records, will help promote an initiative to encourage Americans to visit Japan.

Another Japanese artist who became a hit with American fans of anime is female vocalist Yoko Ishida, who has sung theme songs for such anime hits as “Sailor Moon.” Ishida, who is signed to Tokyo-based Geneon Entertainment, brought her Anime Fusion Tour to U.S. cities on the East Coast in September 2005 and to the West Coast this past January.

The latest Japanese act to jump on the overseas anime bandwagon is six-man rock group High and Mighty Color (SME Records), which hails from Okinawa, Japan’s southernmost prefecture.

The band’s song “Pride” was used in the anime series “Gundam Seed Destiny,” and another tune, “Ichirin no Hana,” was featured in the series “Bleach.” Both series are popular with U.S. anime fans.

That exposure led to the U.S. release in March of High and Mighty Color’s album “Goover,” followed by its American debut in front of an audience of 2,000 at the Shiokazecon anime convention April 28 in Houston.

Back in Japan, the anime/music connection obviously isn’t anything new. While in the past anime theme songs were usually performed by artists closely identified with anime, lately there has been an increase in the number of top-tier artists who are working with the genre. As a result, an increasing number of anime songs are expected to enter the charts.

For example, the winner of the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan’s animation album of the year award this year was “Mobile Gundam Seed Destiny,” which featured songs from the popular anime series performed by such big-name acts as T.M. Revolution and Chemistry. The award for animation song of the year went to mega-popular pop-rock band Orange Range for its song “Asterisk,” which was the theme song for the “Bleach” series.

Among Japanese labels, Sony has played a leading role in developing the anime/music connection, both overseas and in Japan. The label group—Japan’s biggest, in terms of market share—recently held the Sony Anime Fest, which featured live performances by music acts involved with Sony anime titles such as T.M. Revolution, Rie Fu and Tommy Heavenly 6. Also appearing at the events were several top voice actors, who to hardcore anime fans are stars in their own right.

“Japanese animation has recently become popular all over the world,” observes Yuji Kawaguchi, manager of the licensing department of Tokyo-based label Victor Entertainment.

“Of course, stories and characters are very important, but music is also a key factor,” he says. “We would like to establish new markets for anime music in overseas territories.”

Victor has released some 30 anime soundtrack titles overseas via licensing deals and reports the “Akira” series soundtrack has sold some 100,000 copies outside Japan.

—Steve McClure

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THERE IS
ALWAYS
A SONG.

JAPAN'S
FESTIVALS
BOOM

But Some Fear Packed Season Is
Too Much Of A Good Thing

This year's summer music festival calendar in Japan is more packed than ever. The big-name, internationally known events such as Fuji Rock and Summer Sonic are the mainstays of the season. But smaller, regional festivals have been popping up with length and breadth of the Japanese archipelago, from the island of Okinawa in the semitropical south to the wide-open spaces of Hokkaido in the north.

"It may have taken longer for most of the regional festivals to be established and known throughout the nation, but we see more strong regional festivals with very strong local lineups this year," says Nori Tsuzuki, manager of concert promoter Kyodo Tokyo's international division.

For example, Kagawa Prefecture on the Seto Island Sea coast of the island of Shikoku is the smallest of Japan's 47 prefectures in geographical terms. But even Kagawa has its own rock festival, Monster Bash (monsterbash.jp), which this year takes place Aug. 26-27 in Manazuru Park amid Kagawa's gently rolling green hills.

Like many Japanese summer festivals, Monster Bash has a corporate sponsor, NTT DoCoMo Shikoku, the local branch of Japan's leading mobile phone company. And like several other summer music events, Monster Bash features Japanese acts only, among them Okinawan rock band HY, jazz-rock group Pe'z and indie-rock act ElleGarden.

Although the summer festival boom shows no signs of ending, some think the whole phenomenon has passed its peak with some 25 large-scale outdoor music events scheduled to take place in Japan this summer.

"It's just a knee-jerk thing now, putting on festivals in summer," one industry source says. "The more festivals there are, the thinner the bills become."

Perhaps. But there's definitely no shortage of big-name acts, domestic and international, playing at summer festivals in Japan this year.

For instance, Fuji Rock's lineup includes such international acts as Red Hot Chili Peppers, Franz Ferdinand, Broken Social Scene, the Hives, Sonic Youth, Super Furry Animals and Madness, as well as leading Japanese acts like Asian Kung Fu Generation and Mo'some Tonebender.

As in past years, the 2006 edition of Fuji Rock will be July 28-30 in the bucolic setting of Niigata Prefecture's Naeba ski resort, about two hours by express train from Tokyo. Visitors coming to Japan to attend Fuji Rock may be in for a bit of a shock if they expect to see Mt. Fuji's famous snow-capped peak as a backdrop to the show—Japan's national symbol is actually about 200 miles south of the Fuji Rock festival site.

Ever since the first Fuji Rock festival in 1997 set the template for Japanese festivals there's been an emphasis on community and culture at summer music events. Several offer camping facilities and most feature a wide variety of food stalls and stands selling all kinds of crafts, clothes and other goods.

Giving Fuji Rock a run for its money in terms of big-name acts is Summer Sonic, which takes place Aug. 12-13 in Tokyo and Osaka (summersonic.com). International acts appearing at this year's Summer Sonic include Metallica,
Linkin Park, Daft Punk, Massive Attack, the Flaming Lips and Tool.

Another major summer festival featuring well-known foreign acts is the Udo Music Festival (udome.co.jp), organized by Tokyo-based concert promoter Udo Artists, also in Tokyo and Osaka. The lineup has a distinct classic-rock flavor; Santana, Kiss, Jeff Beck and the Doobie Brothers are among the acts playing the Udo festival.

Billing itself as Japan's biggest summer festival in terms of attendance is the Rock in Japan Festival (rifes.co.jp), which this year will be Aug. 4-6 in a park near the city of Ichinomiya in Aichi Prefecture, northeast of Tokyo. Rock in Japan is sponsored by leading Japanese music magazine Rockin' On and produced by Tokyo-based concert production/promotion company Disk Garage.

"In the last five years, summer festivals in Japan have finally taken root among Japanese music fans," Disk Garage president Takeo Nakanishi says. "They all understand that is the place to enjoy music."

Naoki Shimizu, president of Tokyo-based promotion company Creativeman, which organizes Summer Sonic, is upbeat about Japan's summer festival market.

"As far as Western music is concerned, there are only two—one urban festival [Summer Sonic] and one rural [Fuj Rock], so the market is far from saturated," Shimizu says. "The Udo Music Festival has not established itself as an annual player yet." The event first occurred in 2004 and will be staged for the second time this year. "But it may turn into the third major Western music festival," Shimizu adds.

Shimizu says that because regional festivals featuring domestic repertoire are evenly dispersed throughout the country, "the market is pretty well-balanced."

Masayuki Hayashi, president of Tokyo-based concert promotion company H.I.P., disagrees.

"There are too many festivals—they're killing the market." Hayashi says bluntly. In the '80s, H.I.P. held a series of Japan Jam outdoor summer festivals—but no more, Hayashi says.

He admits that the summer festival boom has its good side, because 50 days of live music during the summer helps to promote music in general. But having so many acts play in such a relatively short span of time weakens demand in the year-round concert market, Hayashi argues.

The continuing popularity of summer festivals has led companies from outside the concert promotion business to enter the fray. Tower Records Japan, for example, recently organized an event called the Nagoya "(seaside)" Music Festival, which was held in Tokyo's Odarba district beside Tokyo Bay on April 16. The festival's main "all-genre" stage leaned toward club/techno, with Japanese DJ/producers Takuya Ishino, Jeff Mills and Japanese techno/dub band Audio Active among the featured acts.

The festival also included a hip-hop/reggae stage, a house stage and—unusual for Japan—a stage labeled "Rainbow Gay Mix."

And Avex, Japan's biggest independent label, is again holding its A-nation festival series (anation.net/jp), which features major Avex acts such as Ayumi Hamasaki, Kumi Koda and BoA. This year's edition of A-nation comprises seven shows in five cities across Japan from July 29 until Aug. 27.

—Steve McClure
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Busta’s New York Groove

He’s Revived His Own Career—Can He Rejuvenate NYC’s Scene?

Returning to hip-hop after a four-year hiatus is a high hurdle for any artist—and one Busta Rhymes has cleared with aplomb. First-week sales of “The Big Bang” topped 200,000 and earned him a spot atop The Billboard 200. And with two singles from “The Big Bang” in the top-25 of the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart—“Touch It! peaked at No. 3 while “I Love My B**ch” is at No. 25 and climbing—it seems Rhymes may have some legs. But can he carry an entire region?

New York, the breeding ground of hip-hop, and once its shining beacon, has fallen on tough times. Rhymes says he is determined to return it to glory.

New York artists have disappeared almost completely from the singles charts. Within the last decade, it was not uncommon to find 10 or more New York area acts within the top 10 on the R&B/hip-hop chart in any given year. This year, Rhymes and Juelz Santana are the sole representatives.

It’s a fall off that hasn’t escaped the attention of hip-hop fans, artists, the music press—and Rhymes.

“I’m just tired of that,” Rhymes says at the New York office of his management company, Violator. “Fuck the excuses, fuck the whole ‘New York ain’t got a swag.’ We got the swag! We just need to make sure we reiterate the throne to New York’s swag holders.”

New York’s fall from grace occurs as other cities and regions—the Bay Area’s hyphy scene, Houston’s chopped and screwed sound. Atlanta’s snap tracks—are making a name for themselves.

Artists and industry sources who spoke with Billboard say that one reason for this is that scenes outside New York are more supportive of local talent.

New York’s two R&B/hip-hop stations, WQHT (Hot 97) and WWPR (Power 105), have only one New York act within their respective top 10 playlists—Remy Ma, with “Feels So Good.”

“It’s like you’re Mary J. Blige and you’re locked in a room forced to listen to Keyshia Cole,” Hot 97 jock and mix-tape guru DJ Kay Slay says. “Maino, Saigon, Tru Life, Jae Millz, all these [new New York] artists get mix show spins. But a new Southern artist gets support.”

A look at the top 10 playlists of Atlanta’s top two R&B/hip-hop stations, WVEE (V-103) and WHTA (Hot 107.9), proves DJ Kay Slay’s point: Both have at least one lesser-known, local artist in their top 10, with V-103 spinning D.G. Yola’s “Ain’t Gon’ Let Up” and Hot 107.9 spinning DJ Unk’s “Walk It Out.”

New York may also simply be in a down cycle prompted by Jay-Z’s retirement and Ja Rule’s sales decline. Queens MC Nas has also been quiet since 2004’s “Streets Disciple.”

“The only records out right now are Busta,”
24 and music.

Bluegrass channel.

"Hand Picked will the McCoury, »SIRIUS "Sapphire," Motown second

Brice Long Everett, the merger of recently cut other artists year. They album Eminent Group, recorded working The BMG

RANDALL, ALEXANDER DROPPED Artists Jon Randall and Jessi Alexander have been cut from the Sony BMG Nashville roster. The artists, who are a couple, had been working on a duets album together. Prior to releasing an album on Epic last year, Randall recorded for RCA Label Group, Asylum and Eminent Records. Alexander released one album on Columbia last year. They joined four other artists who were recently cut following the mergers of RCA Label Group and Sony Music Nashville: Jace Everett, Susan Haynes, Brice Long and Jamey Johnson (Billboard, July 1). —Phyllis Stark


SIRIUS AIRS McCOURY'S "PICKS" Bluegrass legend Del McCoury, frontman for the Del McCoury Band, will host a new show, "Hand Picked With Del McCoury," on Sirius Satellite Radio's bluegrass channel. The show features traditional and progressive bluegrass music. It launches July 24 and airs Saturdays at 5 p.m. ET. —Phyllis Stark

From >>p43

Dj Kay Slay says. "Camron's crew the Diplomats do their thing. But New York fell off." Staten Island's Ghostface, whose recent album "Fish-scale" sold 110,000 first-week copies, has been especially vocal about defending the borough's hip hop scene. At a concert earlier this year, Ghostface called Atlanta rap group Outkast "Lafly Taffy," which reached No. 1 on The Billboard Top 100, "unauthentic hip-hop," comments widely interpreted as taking a shot at the South. Hot 97 middy mixer Mr. Cee explains: "His beef is that it's from the South. Ghostface feels like 'Lafly Taffy' was a novelty record.

But New York may want to pay a little more attention to some of the decidedly light fare bouncing around clubs and up the charts all over the country. "New York has gotten so hardcore, it's not cool to dance," DJ Kay Slay says. "The South is hip-hop in 1979. It's fun."

It's a point that may explain Rhymes' enduring success. "You gotta make music for the world," Rhymes says. "Every venue ain't a hood venue."
The rapper has learned his lessons from years of hitmaking. "If you want to get the whole scope, you gotta be able to make the joints that is gonna work on all radio formats," he says. "Keep your little shit for the street the way you gotta keep it for the street. But you gotta make the ladies happy, you gotta make them proper people happy. Upscale middle class people don't want to hear all that shit about the chains and the whips."

"The Big Bang" shrewdly blends pop tracks like the will.i.am-produced "I Love My B**ch" featuring Kelis with more classically hip-hop songs like the Eric Seimon-produced "Goldmine" featuring new labelmate Ruckwon.

"There's an identity crisis where dudes don't understand how to make a New York record that ain't going to compromise who they are but still keep it borderline global enough to be mainsteam," Rhymes says.

Of course, comparing a metro area of about 100 miles in diameter to vast regions of the country may be unfair. Houston, Atlanta, New Orleans, Miami, the Carolinas and Tennesssee all have their own sounds and styles, and have the benefit of relative newcomer status to the hip-hop's brightest spotlight. As hip-hop's first city, it's hard for New York to redefine itself as "the new thing."

"New York hip-hop needs a new sound and a new young face," says Shaker Stewart, Def Jam senior VP of A&R, who signed Rick Ross and Young Joc. "[The South] is a breath of fresh energy."

"Everybody in New York was a gun-busting, crack-dealing something," says Chaka Zulu, co-CEO of Atlanta-based label Disturbing Tha Peace. "New York has to tell its current story. People won't want to talk about New York again until they don't know about New York." Fortunately for New York, there are some new faces in the region (see sidebar). One of them, Papoose, has been named mix-tape artist of the year at Justo's Mixtape Awards tonight in a row, and is signed to the individual labels of both Rhymes and DJ Kay Slay, who are, in turn, shopping a major-label deal.

In June at Hot 97's Summer Jam concert, Rhymes brought other New York artists with him onstage. Now he's using footage from that performance in his next video, for "New York Shit." Grabbing everyone from Kool Herc to Kid Capri and including shots of junior's Restaurant in Brooklyn and the Apollo Theater, Rhymes' video sets him up as a one-man resurrection team.

"Everybody from [Big Daddy] Kane to Slick Rick to Q-Tip and a bunch of [others] came out with me to Summer Jam," Rhymes says. "It was a monumental event, live, just microphone, rhyming on the beat, 32,000 people — that was raw, stripped-down, classic and traditional hip-hop, acknowledging the fact that the birthplace of it is New York." —Gail Mitchell


Jazz Thrives At Playboy Fest

Jazz is one of the creative cornerstonest of R&B and hip-hop. While the number of full-time commercial radio stations playing jazz is dwindling and jazz festivals these days are frequently headlined by smooth R&B and jazz/pop acts—rather than straight-ahead jazz artists—the genre is not lacking in promise.

While a strong New Orleans undercurrent ran throughout the 28th annual Playboy Jazz Festival, the June 17-18 event at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles also put the spotlight on young talents such as pianist Eldar Djangirov, trumpeter Christian Scott and the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Jason Goldman.

Scott marked his festival debut as a featured performer and as a member of host Bill Cosby's ad hoc ensemble Cos of Good Music.

A self-assured performer at 22, Scott is a Berklee College of Music grad whose expressive style hinges on his compelling, breathy tone. The New Orleans native points to such influences as King Oliver and Louis Armstrong, but was mentored by his uncle, alto saxophonist Donald Harrison Jr., and veteran hornman Clark Terry. You can hear what I'm talking about on "Rework That," Scott's Concord Records album debut.

Also making an impact in his own festival bow was 19-year-old Djangirov. From San Diego by way of Kyrgyzstan (formerly part of the Soviet Union), Djangirov is another confident player whose skill belies his age. Two years ago he was invited by Wynton Marsalis to perform at the opening of Jazz at Lincoln Center's new Rose Hall. Demonstrating jazz's versatility were a couple of relative newcomers: singer/pianist Jamie Cullum (who did a crowd-pleasing snippet of Kanye West's "Gold Digger") and composer/vibraphonist Stefan Harris.

Playboy icon Hugh Hefner calls jazz the "music of my childhood." The magazine's first Hollywood Bowl fest 28 years ago featured Ella Fitzgerald, Count Basie, Duke Ellington and Miles Davis. More of the jazz performers he has a soft spot for appear on "Hef's Favorites," the new Concord release that he compiled.

Hefner added that the Los Angeles community's embrace of the festival was the reason for its longevity. "People who support that you can't make it [a success] with jazz are obviously wrong. We have beat the odds," he said backstage Saturday afternoon. "This music is the stuff of dreams. It speaks to the heart and soul."

CHRISTIAN SCOTT

MUSICAL NOTES: Producer Rodney Jerkins will release his all-star remake of Sister Sledge's "We Are Family" on Aug. 28 to coincide with the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. The single features Sister Sledge, Patti LaBelle, Chris Brown and Lyfe Jennings, among others. The single will be followed Oct. 17 by a special edition Hurricane Katrina relief CD/DVD issued by Bungalo/Universal Music Group in conjunction with the Points of Light Foundation. Sales of the CD/DVD, featuring the "Family" single and nine other tracks, will benefit hurricane-displaced families.

NBA star Ron Artest of the Sacramento Kings had Casper Smart, buddy of the Los Angeles Lakers, preparing his downtime prepping for the release of his rap album "My World." Guests include Mike Jones, 112, Allure and Capone. It arrives Aug. 29 through Artest's Tru Warner Records Productions, distributed by WEAT's Light-year Entertainment.
Church’s Mass Appeal
New Capitol Nashville Artist Is Living Up To The Buzz

NASHVILLE—Mike Dungan is a record executive not given to hyperbole. So when the Capitol Records Nashville president/CEO walked onstage at Country Radio Seminar (CRS) in Nashville on February and declared that Eric Church’s debut CD, “Sinners Like Me,” was the best record he had made in his six years at Capitol, it got radio’s attention.

Standing in the wings, Church heard Dungan say publicly what he’d often heard the label chief say privately and remembers thinking, “Great, now the whole world just got [thrown] on my shoulders.”

Still, he barreled onto the stage and immediately launched into a song about, of all things, the anxiety of waiting for pregnancy test results. By the time he got to the line “We were young and on fire and just couldn’t wait/Six weeks in, she was three weeks late,” Church owned the room.

He says everything changed for him at that day as he emerged from CRS as one of this year’s buzz artists—five months before the scheduled July 18 release date of his album. He was already well into his introductory radio tour.

But when Church resumed the tour, he found he had graduated from the conference room/cold pizza circuit to being ushered into station studios for on-air interviews.

Not surprisingly, debut single “How Bout You” quickly became a hit. The song is No. 17 on Billboard’s Top Country Songs chart this issue.

Like many young country artists, Church leans heavily on rock sounds, but Jay Joyce’s edgy production brings some unusual textures to Church’s music; there’s even a tuba on one track.

Church says Joyce and he worked hard to make an album that wasn’t “the Nashville norm.” Where most people go right, we went left,” he says. “We tried to make as interesting a record as we could.”

Thematically, “Sinners Like Me” is a little more traditional country. Topics range from songs about capital punishment to learning life’s lessons the hard way.

WYCD Detroit PD Tim Roberts calls the album “sonically diverse” and says, “I like his cutting-edge lyrics with real honesty that cuts to the heart.” Roberts cites planned second single “Two Pink Lines”—the pregnancy test song—as an example.

Capitol senior colleague of A&R Arthur Buenahora first signed North Carolina native Church as a songwriter in 2003 when he worked at Sony/ATV Tree Publishing. He later followed him to Capitol after helping Church land his deal there.

In addition to his songwriting, what immediately impressed Buenahora about Church was that “this kid knew exactly who he was and what kind of music he wanted to make. That’s something you can’t teach an artist.”

Church wrote or co-wrote all the album’s tracks. Many songs, like “Lightning,” inspired by the film “The Green Mile,” are dark. Church calls that tone “my natural place when I write by myself.”

But his humorous side shows through in plenty of his co-writes, like the crowd-pleaser “Pledge Allegiance to the Hag,” which features its namesake, Merle Haggard, on the album.

In an effort to expose him to his potential fan base, his agents at William Morris have been carefully booking Church in a combination of headlining gigs at clubs—many in college towns like Athens, Ga., and Fayetteville, Ark.—and opening slots on various country tours. This summer, he’s opening dates for Brad Paisley, and a supporting slot on a big fall tour is being finalized.

Meanwhile, Church has already made solid fans at country radio. Roberts is among those expecting him to stick around and become a real star.

“The future of our format,” Roberts says, “depends on us developing great new acts like Eric Church with typical and musical integrity [who are] not afraid to take some chances musically.”

FACT FILE
Label: Capitol Records Nashville
Management: Q Prime
Booking: William Morris Agency
Publishing: Sony/ATV Tree Publishing (BMI)

New Nashville Names
Entrepreneurs Try Their Hand At The Music City Game

As the music industry’s fortunes ebb and flow, the business remains sexy enough to attract a steady stream of wealthy outsiders. Many made their fortunes elsewhere, but were lured by the music to try their hands in a volatile industry.

In the country music world, one of the more successful recent examples is Benny Brown, a California car dealer who launched Broken Bow Records in 1999. In recent months, he’s been joined in the label game by New England nursing home entrepreneur Raymond Termini, CEO of Connecticut-based Haven Healthcare, and by attorney/entrepreneur John Simmons, CEO of Hedgewood International and founder of the law firm Simmons Cooper. Through Hedgewood, Simmons owns such ventures as a steel mill and two minor league baseball teams.

In January, Termini launched Category 5 Records in Nashville, a company that also has a publishing arm. Simmons is in the process of launching Montage Music Nashville, which is being billed as a multigenre record label as well as a publishing and management company.

If Broken Bow’s history is any indication, it may take Termini and Simmons a few years to find their footing. After several years of financing Broken Bow from his back pocket, Brown’s label finally took off in 2005 when it hit moderately big with artists Craig Morgan and Jason Aldean. The label is now financially self-sustaining.

While it’s still very early in the label’s life, Category 5’s rocky start is indicative of how tricky it can be to navigate the waters in this town.

After spending wads of cash for signage and sponsorship at Country Radio Seminar in February, Category 5 failed to even chart the debut single, “Direct Connect,” from its first artist, Craig Hand. Meanwhile, it signed veteran country artists Travis Tritt and Sammy Kershaw, reportedly for big bucks. Tritt, however, won’t have a new project out until next year. Kershaw’s first album for the label, “Honky Tonk Boots,” is due June 27.

Next the label got sideways with the media and jeopardized its credibility when it announced that it had “signed” George Jones to its roster, much to the consternation of the folks at Jones’ actual label home, Bandit Records. In truth, Jones had signed up to record just one song for a tribute album Category 5 is planning that will feature artists from a variety of genres singing Jones’ songs.

Then, just four months after its launch, the RED-distributed Category 5 jettisoned much of its original staff, including VP of operations John Northrup, VP of promotion Tony Benken and three members of Benken’s team. It did make a key replacement hire in former Epic Records VP of promotion Bill Macky, who came onboard as executive VP of promotion and is reconfiguring the label’s promotion team.

It’s much too early to tell how Montage will fare, but Simmons’ first hire is a promising one. He’s tapped former Sony Music Nashville president/CEO Allen Butler to head the company and oversee its launch. Prior to his tenure at Sony Music Nashville, Butler was VP of promotion and artist development at Arista Nashville.

Still in the works for the fledgling Montage are a distribution deal, artist and staff signings and the acquisition of office space for the company on Music Row.

Since the success of any label is good for the whole industry, let’s hope it happens for Category 5 and Montage Music sooner than later.


PHYLIS STARK pstark@billboard.com
Home To The Music
In Colombia, Reflections On What Music Means

It's inevitable.
Every time I go home, I return nostalgic and patriotic, particularly when it comes to music.
After 10 days in my native Colombia, I am—at least temporarily—completely and absolutely convinced that the best salsa in the world, the most eloquent troubadours and the broadest possible variety of music is to be found in this one country.

This time, however, my twice-yearly trip south yielded an "eureka" moment in terms of Latin American musical identity.
It happened in the midst of one particularly excellent party, where drinks, a piano and a microphone kept us up and singing until 5 a.m.

The collective revelry, to be repeated several times during the week, made me realize that the commonality shared by Latin music region-wide goes beyond merely the common language theory I have long espoused.
It also has to do with two essential ingredients: a melody that can be easily sung and a rhythm that invites dancing.

At first blush, these two characteristics seem obvious to music in general. But among Latins, they also define a lifestyle.
Music is an intrinsic element of Latin culture, as it is of most cultures.
But throughout Latin America, it is also common to enter a party or gathering, find a guitar, someone to play it and a host of people to sing.
It is akin to the piano singalong tradition of the United States, except that the latter has mostly become the realm of cruise ships and the rare singalong bar.

In Latin America, the tradition of singing and dancing in gatherings remains firmly entrenched across generations.

The repertoire transcends borders.

At a recent Argentine party in Miami, we sang everything from "American Pie" to Argentine rock by Charly Garcia and Soda Stereo to bol-lads by Mocedades and Agustín Lara.
Our Cali repertoire spanned a very late-night version of "Hotel California" as well as such standbys as "Sabor a Mi" and "Adoro."

Beyond the American pop standards, a deep arsenal of pan-regional Latin hits ensures the ongoing marketability of cover albums in Latin America, by acts as diverse as Andrea Bocelli and Il Divo (whose new albums include Latin standards) along with the likes of Julio Iglesias and Luis Miguel.
Latinos are infinitely melodic and romantic.
Even newer repertoire by acts like Juanes, Maná and Chayanne sticks, as long as the melody is strong enough.

It is no accident that American rap acts have rarely enjoyed the same kind of popularity south of the border as their pop and rock counterparts. Even in a foreign language, it's possible to phonetically make out the lyrics to melodic fare, with rap in English, there is little to grasp onto.
Why, then, is the melodically challenged reggaetón so hugely popular in Latin America? Because you can dance to it.

Of course, not all dance songs are created equal, a fact underscored during my singing holiday in recurrent rotation during the week—and, indeed, of my life—were "Plástico" and "Pedro Navaja," two tracks from the late 1970s Willie Colon/Ruben Blades album "Siembra," touted as the best-selling salsa album of all time.

The tracks, sung by Blades, are long and the lyrics intrinsic: "Pedro Navaja," a take on "Mack the Knife," is a nearly eight-minute tale of a man knifed down by the prostitute he tries to steal from in the streets of New York.

It's a great track to dance to and a great melody to sing.

A perfect combination for a Latin American audience.

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Q: Are you nervous about returning after almost four years?
A: This album shows a more vulnerable side of me, so it does make me a little nervous. But not afraid. Part of what I wanted to do this time was speak my truth about my quest in life. My music has always been very personal. That's what I do.

Q: What's your idea of a good party?
A: A: It was coined to make people money. You know, "This is a spe-
cial kind of water in a special glass that costs $15 instead of $9." That's what the music in-
dustry is about.

Q: Is there a country album in your future?
A: Music is what I love to do. And now that I have better producer chops, a country album is something I want to do one day. I don't know who's going to put it out. But when I do, I don't think people will call it "country music." They'll probably call it "neo-soul!" [laughs].

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Sheard Stays Cool As Career Heats Up

They say you can tell a lot about a person by the way they handle lost luggage or a rainy day, but the true test of an artist's mettle is how she handles a video shoot in 90 degree weather.

On a recent sweltering day in Nashville, Kierra "Kiki" Sheard was the epitome of graciousness and cool. During a break in the action, she took time to talk (thankfully in an air conditioned trailer) about her new album, "This Is Me," which came out June 27 on EMI Gospel.

"There's that thing called the sophomore jinx and I was a little nervous about whether or not I would be able to do what I did on 'I Owe You,'" Sheard says. She was referring to her debut album, which made history by becoming the first such effort to debut at No. 1 on Billboard's Top Gospel Albums chart.

Despite being nervous, the talented teen is pleased with the results on "This Is Me," a spirited collection of R&B/hip-hop-flavored gospel tunes. "I think that the Lord made the way. He kind of worked it out for me and it's a great album, but I was most definitely nervous, very scared," the 18-year-old admits.

Sheard is a third-generation gospel artist. Her mother is Karen Clark Sheard of the famed Clark Sisters and her grandmother is gospel pioneer Dr. Mattie Moss Clark. "I believe that it was much easier for me as a new artist to come in the industry because my mom and aunts shared their wisdom with me and I was able to get the knowledge that some new artists didn't have," she says.

Sheard also benefits from her father's profession. Dr. J. Drew Sheard is minister of Greater Emmanuel Church of God in Christ, one of the largest churches in Michigan. Sheard says she draws inspiration from his sermons that find its way into the songs she writes.

Continuing the family connection, her 16-year-old brother, J. Drew, is one of the album's producers, along with Fred Jerkins, Warryn Campbell, Antonio Neal, Tommy Simms, P.J. Morton and PAJAM.

"This is definitely a personal record," Sheard says. "It has songs that I sang from the bottom of my heart in the studio. I cried on some of the songs. It ministered to my soul, so I know it will minister to those out there that may need a little encouragement or just the gospel word to help them get through the week."

Sheard penned eight tracks on her new album and says she finds time to write in various locales. "When I'm on the plane or we have studio time, I'll write," she says. "(The songs) just come. Sometimes I write them in a journal. The Lord just gives them to me. It's an awesome thing."

A lot has happened to Sheard since the release of her first album. She graduated from high school, started college at Detroit's Wayne State University and is majoring in law. She's also become a sensation in Japan, where the single "Let Go" (from "Just Until ..."

IN BRIEF: Newsboys bassist Phil Joel, who also records as a solo artist, has signed a record deal with Indebelible Creative Group. Look for Joel's new album, "deliberate People," Sept. 12.

Integrity Music is launching a new initiative, GlobalWorshipNow.com, an online community of churches offering new worship resources and content. The launch coincides with the July 11 release of "Living for You," a new CD and companion resources from Dallas-based Gateway Church, which will be a major contributor to the site.

Third Day is in the studio working on "Christmas Offerings," the third installment of the band's popular series of "Offerings" worship CDs. The project will include newly written songs alongside Christmas classics.

When A&R executive John Kalodner leaves Sanctuary Group's Los Angeles offices for the last time on July 14, his exit strategy is securely in place. "When I pull out of the parking lot, I'm putting my BlackBerry under the rear wheel of the Lexus. I'll put it in a plastic bag, so it won't make a mess for the other drivers." In other words, don't expect an announcement anytime soon about a new venture. Kalodner broke the news of his retirement June 19 on billboard.biz. Even though Sanctuary laid off Kalodner with several other staffers last fall, he kept working out of its offices. He also continued his A&R role independently: He oversaw an album by "Rock Star" finalist Suzie McNeal for manager Irving Azoff.

But after he finished that project, Kalodner realized what he'd long suspected: The thrill was gone. That, coupled with other signs—he says the June 1 departure of Don Jener and Michele Anthony from Sony, both of whom he worked with during his nine years at Columbia—helped him realize it was over. "It seemed it was time to retire instead of being a jerkoff and forming a publishing or management company," Kalodner says, displaying his classic candor.

There are few executives with A&R track records that extend more than 30 years in pop music. The list of acts Kalodner worked with at Atlantic, Geffen and Columbia includes Foreigner, Whitesnake, Shawn Colvin, Aerosmith, Bon Jovi, Cher, Phil Collins, Genesis, XTC, AC/DC and Peter Gabriel.

But the simple fact is major labels have little use for a one like Kalodner anymore, something he freely admits. While there are clearly still some tremendously talented A&R reps who can see a diamond in the rough in a chunk of coal, the art of A&R has largely been subsumed by egodriven artists and producers who feel insulted if the A&R exec ever comes by the studio and by risk-adverse labels who care more about the bottom line than the creative arc.

As Kalodner says, "A&Ring was a process where you tried to get the artist to do their best work, which always involved having them go back into the studio, which costs money. Nowadays, the labels don't have that kind of money." Then, as he notes, once an artist has some success, " I'm the luckiest person ever that I got to be around when there was so much talent and to have worked with Ahmet Ertegun and David Geffen and the people at Sony," he says. "I had the best career of anyone ever."

WE WANT MO! As one leg-end exits, another is coming back. Warner Bros. has brought back former chairman Mo Ostin in a consulting capacity. Ostin's legacy as one of the greatest record men ever is secure—he struck a bal- lance between art and commerce that few music execs have ever achieved—but how rewarding will it be for a younger generation, many of them young enough to be Ostin's grandkids, to learn from the master? Instead of folks running around muttering, "They don't make them like Mo anymore" (and admit it, fair or not, we've all heard people say it), maybe his presence can reverse that. Ostin has been spotted in the Burbach, Calif., offices, spies say, but his role is still being defined.
**Puppini Sisters Head Back To The Future**

“Forward to the ‘40s” is the message from the Puppini Sisters, whose lighthearted musical re-creation of the era has drawn widespread media attention for Britain’s “new Andrews Sisters.” Marcella Puppini, Stephanie O’Brien and Kate Mullins formed the trio in September 2004. They are signed worldwide to Universal Classics & Jazz, which will release their debut album, “Betcha Bottom Dollars,” July 31 in the United Kingdom. The Puppinis embrace such wartime originals “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy (From Company B)” — out July 24 as a U.K. single—and “Mr. Sandman” alongside period-style versions of such pop/new wave hits as Blondie’s “Heart of Glass,” Kate Bush’s “Wuthering Heights” and the Smiths’ “ Panic.”

Universal Classics & Jazz A&R/artist development manager Tom Lewis signed the band after seeing it live at London’s Trinity College of Music. “They were so fresh, energetic and engaging, I couldn’t help laughing out loud,” he says. “The ‘40s revival has been bubbling away for some time—the girls could make it explode.”

Lewis describes the trio as “superb musicians who do all their own arrangements” and is hopeful that international releases will follow the album’s U.K. appearance. “When I presented the group in New York to other [Universal] territories,” he says, “there was a unanimously positive reaction.”

**FRESH VENEER:** For a singer/songwriter who spends so much time on the road, it’s somehow ironic that Sweden’s José González owes so much to TV exposure of a cover version.

González wraps a series of North American shows July 3 in New York, four days before hitting the United Kingdom and Europe for festival shows and dates in Australia and New Zealand. He is booked through Monstera (Scandinavia), Windish (North America) and the Agency Group (rest of world). González’s European calling card was “Heartbeats” from debut album “Veneer,” as featured in a 2005 TV ad campaign for Sony’s Bravia range of high-definition TVs. It was initially a 2003 Swedish hit on Stockholm independent Imperial Recordings, which says domestic shipments are close to 60,000 units. González’s “Heartbeats,” an acoustic remake of a 2003 single by countrymen the Knife, was a hit in several European countries earlier this year. London-based indie Peacefrog signed González for European markets, releasing “Veneer” in April 2005, and reports that U.K. sales are nearing 400,000 copies. A September 2005 U.S. release on indie Parasol/Hidden Agenda preceded a major release April 4 on Mute, which has signed him for North America.

González is published by Imperial Music Publishing/Misty Music (Peacefrog Publishing in the United Kingdom). He plans to record his second album in late summer with several songs already written. “The last time I had some restrictions—most of the songs were a verse/refrain structure,” González says. “Now I don’t want any rules; if it sounds good, it sounds good . . . with just guitar and vocals.” —Jeffrey de Hart and Tom Ferguson

**TOP RAP:** Italian rapper Fabri Fibra captured the No. 1 spot on the FIMI album chart in early June, becoming the first hardcore local hip-hop artist to do so. His third album, “Tradimento” (Universal), topped the chart in the week after its May 25 release.

The album has attracted widespread publicity for its “politically incorrect” explicit lyrics about gays and women. Although Fibra’s lyrics initially limited radio play, Universal Music Italy director of local repertoire Marco Zischka says programmers have been steadily won over by the album’s success.

“Successful Italian rap acts have tended to be softer and more commercial,” Zischka says. “But ‘Tradimento’ has already gone gold [40,000 shipments]; we feel this is just the start.”

The 26-year-old Fibra (real name Fabrizio Tarducci) previously released “Turbio Giovanill” (2002) and “Mr. Simpatia” (2004) on independent Vibra Records, building an underground following. Zischka adds that Universal has no definitive plans for overseas releases at present.

Fibra is published by Universal/MCA Music Italy. Live bookings are through Milano Concerti.

—Mark Worden

**Bell Gives Violin ‘Voice’**

New Album ‘Voice Of The Violin’ Transforms Vocal Classics Into Strings

Nearly three years ago, Joshua Bell hit some high chart notes with the release of his album “Romance of the Violin.” That disc encompassed an array of beloved classical melodies—everything from Puccini’s aria “O Mio Babbino Caro” to a theme from Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 21—in arrangements for solo violin and orchestra.

Perhaps it was Bell’s sweet tone, the album’s interesting and approachable programming choices or the violinist’s famous boy-next-door good looks that made the project such a success, but “Romance of the Violin” became a huge hit. For more than two years the album was a fixture on Billboard’s classical chart.

Now the affable and perpetually boyish 38-year-old violinist returns with a follow-up mining that same vein of romantic favorites. “Voice of the Violin” arrives Sept. 5 on Sony Classical. Unlike its predecessor, this release features selections taken exclusively from the vocal music canon of opera, song and oratorio, heard in new arrangements for solo violin and orchestra.

Bell might be a wee bit biased, he admits generally, but still confides, “I actually prefer the sound of the violin to any other instrument, including the voice.” That’s a pretty big admission for instrumentalists who are constantly told by teachers that their ideal should be to evoke the tone and phrasing of a human singer. So going toe-to-toe with singers on such chestnuts as Schubert’s “Ave Maria,” Rachmaninoff’s “Vocalise” and Donizetti’s aria “Una Furtiva Lagrima” from the opera “L’Elisir D’amore,” not to mention more unusual choices like Mexican composer Manuel Ponce’s 1912 song “Estrellita,” places Bell squarely in some heavy competition.

We wouldn’t bet against him. Judging by the success of “Romance of the Violin,” Bell’s enduring popularity since his teenage stardom and a well-timed guest appearance on this new album by the soprano of the day, Anna Netrebko (joining Bell for the Richard Strauss song “Morgen”), it seems a sure bet that this “Voice” will be heard on the charts for some time to come.

**ON THE TUBE:** The San Francisco Symphony and its music director Michael Tilson Thomas recently announced the launch of a nationally distributed PBS series, “Keeping Score,” which will begin airing in November. (Future seasons are scheduled already for 2008 and 2010.) The first season’s three episodes explore music of Beethoven, Stravinsky and Copland in three hourlong documentaries and two live-concert programs. In addition, “Keeping Score” will have a significant online component (keepingscore.org), provide an education program and professional development training for teachers in K-12 classrooms and will also encompass eight 60-minute public radio programs called “The MTF Files,” hosted by Tilson Thomas and co-produced with American Public Media.

**NEW & NOTEWORTHY:** The DVD of last summer’s Salzburg Festival mega-hit production of Verdi’s “La Traviata,” starring Anna Netrebko, tenor Rolando Villazon and baritone Thomas Hampson, conducted by Carlo Rizzi (Deutsche Grammophon, June 13). . Two for the Mozart 250th birthday anniversary year: First, “Die Zauberflote,” conducted by Claudio Abbado with bass Rene Pape, sopranos Dorothea Roschmann and Erika Miklosa, and tenor Christoph Streit; and also Rene Jacobs leading Mozart’s “La Clemenza di Tito” with tenor Mark Padmore, soprano Alexandra Pendatchanska and mezzo Bernarda Fink (Harmonia Mundi, Sept. 12).
JOHNNY CASH
American V: A Hundred Highways
Producer: Rick Rubin
Lost Highway
Release Date: July 4
With his heart broken and his health failing, Johnny Cash saddled up one last time with Rick Rubin for the final curtain on both a career and one of the most remarkable collaborations in music history. Cash’s swan song is uplifting and incredibly sad as he approaches his mortality with characteristic stoicism and courage. Perhaps the most intimate of an intimate series, “American V” puts Cash in our living room, as he expresses perspective on faith (“God’s Gonna Cut You Down,” “I Came to Believe”), death (Bruce Springsteen’s “Further On (Up the Road),” “On the Evening Train”), and, of course, love (Gordon Lightfoot’s “If You Could Read My Mind”). A lifelong fascination with trains comes full circle with Cash’s final ride. “Like the 309,” said to be the last letter he ever wrote, Rubin here affords Cash a graceful exit rarely seen in music.—RW

GODSMACK
Shine Down (4:59)
Producer: Sully Erna
Writer: S. Erna
Publisher: Universal Music Publishing/Meeenga Music (ASCAP; Rounder
Republic Records/Universal Records
Godsmack gives its sound a unique perk by whipping out a bluesy harmonica for “Shine Down.” The instrument conjures images of fervent revivals in the heat of the Deep South, playing into the single’s messages of hard-won sobriety and spiritual renewal, themes songwriter/singer Sully Erna has been praising after a harrowing 2005. The words “And I know I’ve been away too long/All these years I’ve been hiding/I’m feeling I’m coming strong” say it all. Erna’s handle on the production makes “Shine Down” sound less canned than previous efforts, another move in the song’s favor. Drummer Shannon Larkin steadily leads the way with a lot of crack, setting a determined pace you can imagine someone using as a guide to help them move forward. Pretty inspiring.—CLT

JOHNNY MAYER
Waiting On the World to Change (3:20)
Producers: John Mayer, Steve Jordan
Writer: J. Mayer
Publisher: Sony/ATV/ Specific High, ASCAP
Columbia
John Mayer is already off to a blockbuster start at adult top 40 radio—No. 27— with “Waiting On the World to Change,” marking his highest debut ever at the format. Unlike his Grammy Award–lauled softie signature “Daughters,” “World” lobs a controversial lyric that dares to question right-wing politics and the queers surrounding the enduring war in Iraq. “When you trust your television/What you see is what you get/Cause when they own the information/They can bend it all they want.” Melodically, it’s still a smooth ride with Mayer’s serene vocal easing the message into more of a plea than an assault. His action on the charts, however, is a different matter: No. 1 is all but a given at adult top 40 and triple-A.—CT

SINGLES

CORINNE BAILEY RAE
Columbia Bailey Rae
Producers: various
Capital
Release Date: June 20
“Further” and “Bittersweet” are just two of the many highlights from Corinne Bailey Rae’s self-titled debut landed in the top spot of the U.K. albums chart. While this feat will unlikely repeat in the United States, a debut recording as fine as this one deserves immediate attention. The London native, who had a hand in writing all the album’s songs, has a style that, blending the track, recalls Rickie Lee Jones, Alicia Keys, Lizz Wright, Billie Holiday and Sia. Album opener “Like a Star” is breathtakingly beautiful and sets the tone for the delights that follow. Highlights include such winked-up jams as “Put Your Records On” and “I’d Like To,” as well as the disco-kissed “Call Me When You Get This.” Songs like “Breathless” and “Choux Pastry Heart” detail the ups and downs, respectively, of love. Throughout, enchantment reigns supreme.—MP

Single

BENEFENTO/RUSSO DUO
Play Pause Stop
Producers: Matt Chamberlain, Tom Biller
Buettner Problems/
Reincarnate Music
Release Date: July 11
The album offers a cinematic scope—a mini-epic, really. Colorful head trips abound, with Marco Benevento’s evocative, spiraling organ, piano and synth excursions and Joe Russo’s propulsive yet elegant drum workouts tracking our two heroes across deep-space voids (the title track), Parisian street fairs (“Something for Rockets”), subtropical rock clubs (“Hate Frame”) and the muddy Mississippi (”Memphis”). Guitar, bass, accordion and other noisemakers are given memorable cameos, but vocals are virtually absent, only adding to the sense of intoxication created by these acid-drenched soundscapes. But take note: There’s probably more here for the brooding Arcadia Fire or Tortoise fan than the twirling neo-hippies descending the group’s intermittent hookups with ex-members of Phish. Above all, the disc is a celebration of holding down the line, Corinne Bailey Rae while stretching out to touch the edges.—SV

BUTCH WALKER
The Rise and Fall of Butch Walker and the Let Us Go Tonites
Producer: Butch Walker
Epic
Release Date: July 11
Self-consciousness is never really sexy, but producer/songwriter Butch Walker is going for it anyway. Blessed with a breathtakingly self-centered title (a reference to Bowie’s “Ziggy Stardust”), his third solo album marries power-pop hooks and polished guitars in a glam-rock sauce. Like Bowie’s 1972 masterpiece, “The Rise” is a concept album, albeit one about a guy in a $10-per-drink bar, “pretty strung out for a gig” (“Sethamphetamine”). Retro-styled party starters like the Man’s Bolan rip-off “Hot Girls in Good Moods” and the Bowie-esque “The Taste of Red” are slick and catchy, but feel cool and calculated. The problem is that Walker is hopelessly unaware of what he’s doing— he picks titles like “Song w/o Chorus” or “This is the Swimming Pool” and doesn’t offer a voice that is his own.—SP

PETER GAMMONS
Never Slow Down, Never Grow Old
Producer: Mike Danneen
Rounder
Release Date: July 4
The phrase “ESPN reporter covers track from London Calling” is not necessarily one that elicits great faith, but the longtime baseball guru proves he knows his stuff on this surprisingly enjoyable detour. Gammons sounds like the network announcer to John Hatt on heartland rock covers of Warren Zevon’s “Model Citizen,” the Clash’s “Death or Glory” and his own “She Fell From Heaven,” while indulging a who-knew blues side on “Tanqueray” and “Love’s Made a Fool of You.” As befits his Boston roots, Gammons enlists a roster of Red Sox past and present here: Bronson Arroyo, Troy Williamson, Kevin Youkilis, Trot Nixon and even GM Theo Epstein show up to supply vocals and guitar as do George Thorogood, Juliana Hatfield and Letters to Cleo’s Kay Hanley. Proceeds benefit Epstein’s Foundation to Be Named Later.—JW

JAZZ

SKERIK’S SYNCPATIZED TAINT SEPTET
Husky
Producer: Skerik
Hyena
Release Date: June 27
Skerik’s new album opens with what sounds like an omen of fates bombarding overhead, superimposed by a horn-layered lament. But then the tenor-saxophone leader and his hip, tight septet bloom into a lyrical, Hammond B-3-led rhythm with electronic effects and sauntering horn lines. Add to that such contrary descriptors as trod-infused-/nonconforming, swinging/shredding, soulful/skanky, sprightly/urgent, and you’ve got one of this year’s best jazz CDs that shines from start to finish. Skerik and crew pull off the improbable—combining curiosity and freedom from constraints to record a delightfully unpredictable journey of tunes both harsh and beautiful. Highlights include “Go to Hell, Mr. Bush,” where the president getsashed by flute/Wurzler impressions and horn exclamations, and the gleeful, happy-feet “Summer Pudding.”—DO

ELECTRONIC

PEACHES
Impeach My Bush
Producer: Peaches
XL Recordings
Release Date: July 11
Despite the most recent title, Peaches’ new album does not abandon her regularly racy approach for politics. Replicate with references to her “pleasure dome,” continued on p.50
“the shocker” and “leapfrog ditty.” Peaches remains safely inside the realm of horny electro while also offering a handful of rock tunes featuring folks like Joan Jett (“You Love It”) and Josh Homme and Feist (“Give Er”). While part of Peaches’ schtick is her repetitive, lyrical tag lines, such as “Two guys for every girl/Every girl,” the latter half of the album moves away from this purely rhythm-centered habit and into, well, songs arranged in verses. Her big sense of humor and little sense of shame should help keep “Impeach” in rotation for incumbent spinsters.—KH

FERRY CORSTEN
L.E.R.
Producer: Ferry Corsten
Ultra Records
Release Date: July 11

Trance is America’s favorite genre of dance music, and no one makes it for the masses better than Dutchman Ferry Corsten. The profoundly prolific producer and world-touring DJ doesn’t go for dramatic, string-laden opuses. Instead, he layers humming synths and punchy basslines into a giant cacophony of electronic power-pop- heavy metal drum tracks and a second full-length—Loud. Electronic. Ferocious. The album’s 16 glow stick-clad, ear-plugging tracks are nonstop and gloopfree on the top, like a Bruckheimer summer blockbuster. Already a hit, “Fire” features Duran Duran’s Simon LeBon crooning the ultimate raver love song in an ingenious blend that’s as much dance as pop. “Beautiful” is a big wet slap of arena trance, while “What You Do” punks out with a sped-up ruff and pogo pulse. Brain food it’s not, but “L.E.R.” is vivid, fun and expertly constructed.—AM

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

CSS
Cansei De Ser Sexy
Producer: Adriano Cunha
Sub Pop
Release Date: July 11

Brazilian electro-pop group CSS has figured out two things: the internet can get you a record deal, and everything goes better with booze. You see, Sub Pop picked up “Cansei De Ser Sexy” (Brazilian for “tired of being sexy”) after the amateur dance punks garnered a sizable fan base via the web. “Cansei De Ser Sexy” buzzes with erratic synth beats (“Alaia”), wry lyrics (“Linhas”) and Lê Têgue-style shout-outs (“Patins”), plus an ode to the sextet’s apparent vice of choice (the aptly titled “Alcohol”). All the elements for a smart, catchy dance-rock album seem to be in place, but the final product still remains slightly unstructured and rehashed. Nonetheless, CSS can’t go wrong with a few beers, though.—JM

VITAL REISSUES

ARETHA FRANKLIN
Live at Fillmore West Producers: Jerry Wexler, Artie Schuff, Rhino
Release Date: July 11

Aretha Franklin’s three-night gig at San Francisco’s Fillmore West birthed a seminal 1971 live album, reissued in 2005 as a limited, two-CD set. Commemorating its 35th anniversary, Rhino has compiled a second double-CD of the original recording (including two formerly edited tracks in their entirety) and a second disc of rare alternate takes from the now out-of-print limited edition. The revivalist vibe remains just as intense and electric as it was 35 years ago after Franklin’s scorching vocals are backed by an A-list band (featuring organist Billy Preston and sax virtuoso King Curtis). “Everything I Do” is a charging, cock-rocker featuring the class “Respect” to covers of “Bridge Over Troubled Water” and “Eleanor Rigby” that Franklin makes her own. Still worth the price of admission alone is Franklin trading electric piano and vocal stylings with Ray Charles on “Spirit in the Dark.”—GM

DIO
Katharine McPhee Somewhere Over the Rainbow/My Destiny (3:30/3:47)
Producers: David Foster, Harry Sommerdahl, Brad Goldner
Writer: Katharine McPhee
Publishers: various RCA

Last issue, “American Idol” season five victor Taylor Hicks became the fourth series champ to top The Billboard Hot 100, as his “Do I Make You Proud” ruled at retail. Cross-format radio response for the formulaic song has been tepid, with even his Soul Patrol die-hards admitting that the song is hardly punchy or even a little more than a souvenier single: Original radio “Contender” has actual significance demoted to track No. 2 (perhaps after “American Idol!” judges all but deemed it tame) behind a studio cover of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow,” which she performed multiple times on the show. Her performances? Lovely, but exasperatingly processed. Her potential? Without a particularly entretening image, she is RCA’s to mold. Which could mean all or nothing.—CT

PITBULL
Bojangles (3:46)
Producer: Jonathan “Lil Jon” Smith
Writers: J. Smith, A. Perez
Publishers: Songs of TTV/ Mambo Music/BMG Music Publishing TTV

Pitbull’s latest Lil Jongenerated club effort, “Bojangles” (the first from his upcoming sophomore album “El Mariel”), doesn’t stray much from previous singles “Toma” and “Shake.” But no matter, because buoyant basslines and synth-heavy beats in vogue (check DJ Khaled’s “Holla at Me” or Lil Jon’s “Snap Yo Fingers”) like the thrill of "Bojangles" relies more on call-out and dance commands (“baby turn around,” “bring it back”) than lyrical finesse. But this type of song lacks the punch of Michael Jackson’s “Smooth Criminal.” Five years later, the California act has weaned away from its potent drug changes (injuries from a fatal bus accident, lineup shifts, its label folding), but is still pugging away with third record “Up in the Attic,” due July 18. First single “Forgive & Forget” does not reference those dramas. Instead, it vents about plying a beautiful, hoity-toity girl with everything she wants: “Drools and lockets/Made out of my pocket,” only to dump her and keep those dollars later. Dryden Mitchell reels off the lyric like a captured spoken-word artist, backed by Mike Cosgrove’s hollow drums and a repetitive chord or three by guitarist Joe Hill. With summer heartbreaks around the corner, it’ll give hardworking Joes something to drown in their beer with.—CLT

SYSTEM OF A DOWN
Kill Rock’n Roll (2:33)
Producers: Rick Rubin, Daron Malakian
Writer: D. Malakian
Publishers: various Columbia

The thinking man’s fan’s band, System of a Down simultaneously slices and slams into its sophomore effort, the edge-dwed assault. It’s different. But it’s all right on “Kill Rock’n Roll.” A tight, clean guitar churns into mounting drums and moans until it blooms into a fast, tough-as-nails rock hit that’s unlikely, but not impossible. Nostalgia is a powerful thing.—SP
Furtado Scores Daily Double; Digital’s Sales Boost

Even in a soft sales week, the Interscope labels and Universal Music Group Distribution (UMGD) find reasons to celebrate, party led by the triumphant return of Nelly Furtado.

Furtado bows at No. 1 on The Billboard 200, giving hope to any artist who had trouble finding traction after a big-time freshman album. Her first set hit No. 24 on the big chart in 2001 on its way to double-platinum status but her 2003 follow-up “Folklore” had to settle for a gold certification and a chart peak of No. 38. She also becomes the first artist since No-No, in the March 18 issue, to simultaneously lead the album chart and The Billboard Hot 100, as the latter sees lead track “Promiscuous” jump 3-1. Only three artists managed that feat in all of 2005: 50 Cent, Mariah Carey and Kanye West.

Aside from being her first top 10 album, the opening shot of 219,000 copies obviously represents her biggest sales week by far. Rookie set “Whoa, Nelly!” did 100,000 copies during Christmas week of 2001 and 73,000 the frame before that, marks that 2003’s “Folklore” could not match.

Furtado’s is one of five albums that Interscope claims among the chart’s first nine slots and one of seven that UMGD holds in the top 10. She is also the third straight artist from the Interscope family to lead the big chart, following one-week turns by Busta Rhymes and AFI.

That streak might grow to four weeks next issue, as chains first-day sales suggest Vagrant’s Dashboard Confessional will open in the range of 150,000 copies. But don’t skip the next battle of chartpage to Interscope just yet. At least two professional chart watchers think the new album from Universal Motown’s India.Arie could roll a similar number, so we might see a tight race.

DOWN, BUT UP: Comparing album sales to those of the same week last year starts to feel like predicting whose photo you’ll see on the cover of the next issue of lifestyle magazine O. You already kind of know what the picture will look like before you look at it.

Opah Winfrey’s image greets you with every passing edition of O, and since the early going of 2006, album sales have consistently trailed those by last year’s Christmas, except in cases where the calendar has kicked a gift-giving occasion from one frame to another. So, with only one album surpassing 100,000 copies, the sales week that ended June 25 lags the comparable 2005 stanza by 7.8%, which widens the year-to-date gap from 3.8% last issue to 3.9%. That slide happens despite the fact that digital album sales have more than doubled over the same period last year, from 6.2 million to 14.1 million.

Mind you, the sky isn’t falling. Add the à la carte sale of digital tracks to the mix and you have a positive picture — regardless of whether you want to use 10 tracks or a larger number to calculate “track equivalent album sales” — with the tag category improving by 77.3% during the first 25 weeks of the year. Add master ringtones to the mix and the picture becomes even brighter. Performing rights organization BMI estimates ringtone sales will rise from $500 million in 2005 to $1 billion in 2006, with masterstrokes driving that growth. We’ll have more specific metrics on that market segment when Nielsen RingScan rolls out later this summer.

That said, the album — whether sold on vinyl, tape, CD or digital download — has carried the music industry’s mail since the ’70s. Although music companies are shaped differently now than they were a few years ago, have they retreated sufficiently to make dollars and sense from the new realities that continue to unfold?

NEW DAY: The strong start by U.K. newcomer Corinne Bailey Rae, who single cookie-cutter classification yet opens at No. 17 on The Billboard 200 (40,000 copies), shows how changing dynamics can yield positive results.

If you subtracted the 3,000 sales that she derives from Internet orders and digital downloads and about 5,000 copies sold at Starbucks, Bailey Rae would have fallen shy of the top 20.

Release-week visits to “Live With Regis and Kelly” and “Good Morning America” and exposure from VH1 and VH1 Soul help compensate for the lack of a large-audience radio format.

Nielsen SoundScan

For weeks ending June 11, 2006. Figures are rounded. Compiled from Nielsen SoundScan's retail store and retail sales reports collected and condensed by
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Field Mob</td>
<td>Light Poles And Pine Trees</td>
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<td>In My Own Words</td>
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<td>Eye To The Telescope</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>The Legend Of Johnny Cash</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Soundtrack</td>
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<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>Precious Memories</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>Mary J. Blige</td>
<td>The Breakthrough</td>
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<td>Kelly Clarkson</td>
<td>Breakaway</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
<td>Feels Like Today</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>The Road And The Radio</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
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**Music Charts for July 8, 2006**
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Format)</th>
<th>Promotion Label</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>It's Gonna Be May</td>
<td>500 Miles feat. Dave B</td>
<td>Dreamville/Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What You Know</td>
<td>Usher feat. Pitbull</td>
<td>Dreamville/Interscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Save Me</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts (Lyric Street)</td>
<td>Capitol Nashville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Paradise</td>
<td>Muse</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mr. Brightside</td>
<td>The Killers</td>
<td>Island/IDJMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Creep</td>
<td>Radiohead</td>
<td>Parachute/Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sun Shine</td>
<td>The Black Keys</td>
<td>RCA/SRMG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rockstar 2</td>
<td>Maroon 5 feat. T.I.</td>
<td>Epic/Interscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bowtie</td>
<td>Pitbull feat. Keri Hilson</td>
<td>Interscope/Zomba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Real Thing</td>
<td>Lifehouse</td>
<td>BMG/Capitol</td>
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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

<table>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Format)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Just a Dream</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood</td>
<td>RCA/SRMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I'm Yours</td>
<td>Jason Mraz</td>
<td>Columbia/Columbia Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I Believe</td>
<td>Daughtry</td>
<td>Atlantic/Interscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kiss Me</td>
<td>BastILLE</td>
<td>Epic/Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rolling in the Deep</td>
<td>Adele</td>
<td>Universal Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Start Me Up</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>Interscope/EMI Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>California Girls</td>
<td>Robin Thicke feat. T.I.</td>
<td>RCA/SRMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>California Girls</td>
<td>Robin Thicke feat. T.I.</td>
<td>RCA/SRMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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### MODERN ROCK

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Black Horse &amp; The Cherry Tree</td>
<td>Kaiser Chiefs</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Real Thing</td>
<td>Lifehouse</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Rockstar 2</td>
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<td>Epic/Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bowtie</td>
<td>Pitbull feat. Keri Hilson</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Creep</td>
<td>Radiohead</td>
<td>Parachute/Atlantic</td>
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### ADULT TOP 40

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<td>3</td>
<td>Start Me Up</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>Interscope/EMI Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>California Girls</td>
<td>Robin Thicke feat. T.I.</td>
<td>RCA/SRMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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### ADULT CONTEMPORARY

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<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Real Thing</td>
<td>Lifehouse</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Start Me Up</td>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>Interscope/EMI Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>California Girls</td>
<td>Robin Thicke feat. T.I.</td>
<td>RCA/SRMG</td>
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<td>5</td>
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**TOP R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS**

<table>
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<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album Title</th>
<th>Sales (Units)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Donell Jones</td>
<td>Journey Of A Gemini</td>
<td>177,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Field Mob</td>
<td>Light Poles And Pine Trees</td>
<td>121,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Busta Rhymes</td>
<td>The Big Bang</td>
<td>100,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Young Joc</td>
<td>New Joc City</td>
<td>87,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ice Cube</td>
<td>Laugh Now, Cry Later</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Rihanna</td>
<td>A Girl Like Me</td>
<td>61,000+</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Gnarls Barkley</td>
<td>St. Elsewhere</td>
<td>56,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ne-Yo</td>
<td>In My Own Words</td>
<td>54,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2Pac featuring Ronald Isley</td>
<td>Baby Mista! Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>DJ Jaled</td>
<td>Listenenn: The Album</td>
<td>46,000+</td>
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**TOP REGGAE ALBUMS**

<table>
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<td>Reggae Gold 2006</td>
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<td>Matisyahu</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>120,000+</td>
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<td>Bob Marley and the Wailers</td>
<td>Africa Unite: The Singles Collection</td>
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<td>Dianam &amp; Long John</td>
<td>Welcome To Jamaica</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
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<td>Various Artists</td>
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</table>

**JONES LANDS FIRST NO. 1 ALBUM**

Or his fourth visit to Top R&B/Hip-Hop Album chart, Donell Jones toasts his first No. 1. "There's a reversal of fortunes on The Billboard 200, where Jones' 'Journey Of A Gemini' (No. 15, 45,000 sold), trails Field Mob's 'Light Poles and Pine Trees,' the duo's first top 10 or that list (No. 10, 63,000). Both albums were salse-priced for less than $10 at Target and Circuit City. Standing on the R&B/Hip-Hop chart differ from Billboard 200 because the former is determined by a core subset of stores that specialize in those genres. Jones' best is "Life Goes On," which sold 110,000 when it hit the big chart at No. 3 in 2002; the same year saw Field Mob's "From Tha Roots Da Toots" do 28,000 for a Billboard 200 rank of No. 33.

—Raphael George
COUNTRY SONGS: 131 country stations are electronically monitored by Nielsen Broadband Data Systems, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Awards are given to songs appearing in the top 20 on both the BDS Airplay and Audience charts for the first 20 times with increases in both detections and audience. © 2006 Nielsen Business Media, Inc. All rights reserved.

HIT COULD BE 'GIVE' CHART RECORD TO STRAIT
Format veteran George Strait racks up his second-highest debut with "Give It Away," which pops on Hot Country Songs with 5.5 million audience impressions at No. 34.

Strait recently achieved his highest debut in his more than 25 years on the chart when "You'll Be There" arrived at No. 30 in the April 9, 2005, issue. That single peaked at No. 4 two months later in the June 18 issue. Strait manages a new feat with a total five full days of airplay at 70 of the 131 stations

Don't miss another important COUNTRY MUSIC UPDATE

BETWEEN THE BULLETS: www.billboard.com
HOT LATIN SONGS:

**No. 1**

**TITLE**: Mi Vida

**ARTIST**: Grupo Montez De Durango

**WEEKS**: 20

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 2**

**TITLE**: La Vida

**ARTIST**: Grupo Montez De Durango

**WEEKS**: 18

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 3**

**TITLE**: Dolor

**ARTIST**: Ricardo Arjona

**WEEKS**: 14

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 4**

**TITLE**: Nuestro Amor

**ARTIST**: Banda El Potro

**WEEKS**: 13

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 5**

**TITLE**: Te Hago El Amor

**ARTIST**: Grupo Montez De Durango

**WEEKS**: 10

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 6**

**TITLE**: En Ti

**ARTIST**: Laura Pausini

**WEEKS**: 9

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 7**

**TITLE**: La Vida

**ARTIST**: Grupo Montez De Durango

**WEEKS**: 8

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 8**

**TITLE**: Nuestro Amor

**ARTIST**: Banda El Potro

**WEEKS**: 7

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 9**

**TITLE**: Te Hago El Amor

**ARTIST**: Grupo Montez De Durango

**WEEKS**: 6

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 10**

**TITLE**: En Ti

**ARTIST**: Laura Pausini

**WEEKS**: 5

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 11**

**TITLE**: La Vida

**ARTIST**: Grupo Montez De Durango

**WEEKS**: 4

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 12**

**TITLE**: Nuestro Amor

**ARTIST**: Banda El Potro

**WEEKS**: 3

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 13**

**TITLE**: Te Hago El Amor

**ARTIST**: Grupo Montez De Durango

**WEEKS**: 2

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 14**

**TITLE**: En Ti

**ARTIST**: Laura Pausini

**WEEKS**: 1

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10

---

**No. 15**

**TITLE**: La Vida

**ARTIST**: Grupo Montez De Durango

**WEEKS**: 1

**LABEL**: Sony BMG Norte

**REMARKS**: Top 10
### LATIN AIRPLAY POP

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<td>TOMMY SAYS / REPRISE</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>DONDE</td>
<td>CHICO FEATURING ASHLER RIZZ - ONE</td>
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<tr>
<td>SANTOS</td>
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<td>THRIVEDANCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAY</td>
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### LATIN AIRPLAY TROPICAL

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### LATIN ALBUMS POP

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### REGIONAL MEXICAN POP

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<td>NO</td>
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<td>SOUND OF MUSIC</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Data for week of JULY 8, 2006 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 63
### Japan Singles

**1.** Blue Bird (CD+DVD)  
**2.** Goodbye Days  
**3.** Blue Bird  
**4.** Blue Bird (CD+DVD) Beautiful Fighters  
**5.** Working Wonders  
**6.** Three Sevontiga  

### France Singles

**1.** Roc  
**2.** Living on Video  
**3.** La Oj Je temperatura  
**4.** Une Demoiselle  
**5.** Le Raggas des Pingouins  
**6.** Hips Don't Lie  

### Italy Singles

**1.** Stop! Dimentica  
**2.** Get Together  
**3.** Crazy  
**4.** Cuore Azzurro  
**5.** Svegliarsi la mattina  
**6.** Hips Don't Lie  
**7.** Sooner or Later  

### Spain Singles

**1.** Get Together  
**2.** They Don't Care About Us  
**3.** Earth Song  
**4.** Viva para Contarlo  
**5.** John the Revelator  
**6.** We are the Champions  
**7.** Stop! Olvidate  

### Mexico Singles

**1.** Julieta Venegas  
**2.** Enrique  
**3.** Alejandro Guzman  
**4.** Gustavo Cerati  
**5.** You Are the Miniscula  
**6.** La Oreja de Van Gogh  
**7.** Rocío Durcal  

### Finland Singles

**1.** Mika Kesa  
**2.** SeaSailin'  
**3.** Momentum  
**4.** Rukous  
**5.** Lordi  

### Poland Singles

**1.** Get Together  
**2.** Various Artists  
**3.** Various Artists  
**4.** Various Artists  
**5.** Various Artists  

### Hungary Singles

**1.** Rusa Magdolna  
**2.** Various Artists  
**3.** Various Artists  
**4.** Various Artists  
**5.** Various Artists  

---

**EURO DIGITAL TRACKS**

**1.** Hips Don't Lie  
**2.** Crazy  
**3.** Good Morning Mike  
**4.** Jeune Demoiselle  
**5.** Living on Video  

**WALLONIA SINGLES**

**1.** Garou  
**2.** Florent Pagny  
**3.** Jean-Claude Brialy  
**4.** Keane  

**ALBUMS**

**1.** The Swan Lake  
**2.** Raphael  

---

**HITS OF THE WORLD**

**JAPAN**

**1.** Blue Bird (CD+DVD)  
**2.** Goodbye Days  
**3.** Blue Bird  
**4.** Blue Bird (CD+DVD) Beautiful Fighters  
**5.** Working Wonders  
**6.** Three Sevontiga  

**FRANCE**

**1.** Roc  
**2.** Living on Video  
**3.** La Oj Je temperatura  
**4.** Une Demoiselle  
**5.** Le Raggas des Pingouins  
**6.** Hips Don't Lie  

**ITALY**

**1.** Stop! Dimentica  
**2.** Get Together  
**3.** Crazy  
**4.** Cuore Azzurro  
**5.** Svegliarsi la mattina  
**6.** Hips Don't Lie  
**7.** Sooner or Later  

**SWITZERLAND**

**1.** Bring En Me  
**2.** Crazy  
**3.** Mina  
**4.** Man  
**5.** One  

**FINLAND**

**1.** Mika Kesa  
**2.** SeaSailin'  
**3.** Momentum  
**4.** Rukous  
**5.** Lordi  

**POLAND**

**1.** Get Together  
**2.** Various Artists  
**3.** Various Artists  
**4.** Various Artists  
**5.** Various Artists  

---

**GERMANY SINGLES**

**1.** Zeit dass sich war dreht  
**2.** Heaven  
**3.** Monster  
**4.** No Never  
**5.** Love Generation  

**MEXICO**

**1.** Julieta Venegas  
**2.** Enrique  
**3.** Alejandro Guzman  
**4.** Gustavo Cerati  
**5.** You Are the Miniscula  

**FINLAND**

**1.** Mika Kesa  
**2.** SeaSailin'  
**3.** Momentum  
**4.** Rukous  
**5.** Lordi  

---

**US Charts**

**Billboard**

**1.** Hips Don't Lie  
**2.** Crazy  
**3.** Good Morning Mike  
**4.** Jeune Demoiselle  
**5.** Living on Video  

**Canadian Albums**

**1.** The Swan Lake  
**2.** Raphael  

---

**Radio History**

**American History**

**1.** Hips Don't Lie  
**2.** Crazy  
**3.** Good Morning Mike  
**4.** Jeune Demoiselle  
**5.** Living on Video  

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**Website:** [www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com) for complete chart data

**Data for week of July 8, 2006**

**Charts Legend** on Page 66

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**www.americanradiohistory.com**
Albums sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/Hip-Hop charts is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of core stores that specialize in those genres.

- Albums with the greatest sales gains this week.

- Where included, this award indicates the title with the chart's largest percentage increase.

- Indicates album entered Top 10 of The Billboard 200.

- Has been removed from Heatseaker chart.

**PRICING/CONFIGURATION**

- CDs are suggested list or equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. Actual price indicates album cost available on DuDaDisc. All prices indicate CD without premium prices on DVD.

- **$** Suggested list price available. **$** DVD available. **$** DVD available. Available. **$** DVD available.

- When included, this award indicates the title with the chart's largest percentage increase.

**SHORTFORM VS. LONGFORM VIDEOS**

- Shortform videos and Longform videos. Research data provided by Nielsen SoundScan.

- Indicate title's R&B/Hip-Hop Singles status as Gold certification for net shipment of 50,000 units or more, the Diamond symbol indicates albums' net shipment of 100,000 units or more for country albums ordered through Internet.

- Indicates title's R&B/Hip-Hop Singles status as Gold certification for net shipment of 50,000 units or more.
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<td>HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL: ENCORE EDITION (29.98)</td>
<td>Zac Efron/ Vanessa Anne Hudgens</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>HW</td>
<td>THE PINK PANTHER: COMPLETE COLLECTION (29.98)</td>
<td>Steve Martin/Kevin Kline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>HW</td>
<td>THE UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION (29.98)</td>
<td>Kate Beckinsale/ Scott Speedman</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>HW</td>
<td>DAVE CHAPPELLE'S BLOCK PARTY (29.98)</td>
<td>Dave Chappelle</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>HW</td>
<td>GLORY ROAD (29.98)</td>
<td>Josh Lucas/Derek Luke</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>HW</td>
<td>FIREWALL (29.98)</td>
<td>Harrison Ford/Paul Bettany</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL: ENCORE EDITION (49.95)</td>
<td>Zac Efron/Vanessa Anne Hudgens</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>HW</td>
<td>DUMBO (29.98)</td>
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<td>NEIL YOUNG: HEART OF GOLD (29.98)</td>
<td>Neil Young</td>
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<td>CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 (29.98)</td>
<td>Steve Martin/ Bonnie Hunt</td>
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<td>RUNNING SCARED (29.98)</td>
<td>Paul Walker/Cameron Bright</td>
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<td>THE WORLD'S FASTEST INDIAN (29.98)</td>
<td>Anthony Perkins/Dada Lade</td>
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<td>THE THRICE (29.98)</td>
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Data for week of July 8, 2006 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
INTERNATIONAL TALENT & TOURING GUIDE:
The leading source in the industry for information on all aspects of the music business. More than 30,000 listings in all, including leading facilities where artists perform, agents and managers, artists, sound and lighting services, instrument rentals, security services, merchandisers, and virtually any service or supplier you'll need when going on tour. All listings are A to Z and fully cross-referenced for easy searching. If you book, promote, program, or manage talent, this is a must-have for your business. $139

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BY MAIL: Send payment plus $9.95 S&H ($14.95 Canada/$24.95 international orders) with this ad to: Billboard Directories, P.O. Box 15158, North Hollywood, CA 91615.

BY PHONE: 1-800-562-2706, 818-487-4582

Order online: www.orderbillboard.com
or call 1-800-562-2706 • 818-487-4582

www.americanradiohistory.com
SELECTED PROPERTIES

COMPUND IN BIRD STREETS: Sunset Strip Villa daged by Offerman/Auer/oean view on aprx. 0.75 acre site. $3,063,500, 5bd/5ba & garage, tennis ct, pool, spa, www. orioledrive.com $14,900,000 WEB: 0292033
Helm Starrett 310.385.7137

ARCHITECTURAL BEAUTY: Westlake Village, Approx. 10,000 sqft. 5bd/6ba, beach entry pool, spa w/ waterfall & 6 car garage in gated Country Club Estates. $5,295,000
Nicki LaPorte 805.495.2000

STUNNING SOPHISTICATED: Beverly Hills. Dramatic sun filled 3bd PH. Bld in 2004. Immaculate condition. Hwfd flrs, bclc, gmrst kt w/gran counters, huge rm w/ Dtwnn vus. 4 plg. $2,150,000
Lisa Willi 310.422.7140

TENNIS LOVERS ESTATE: Brentwood. It’s a love match when you stroll onto your own private tennis court that adjoins a family home with freshwtr pool. $3,495,000 WEB: 0341519
Rebecca Pennise 310.786.1839

OCEAN VIEW GATED ESTATE: Malibu: Top of the line finishes throughhout. Complete privacy, surrounded by federal park, land & bbq, tennis pool, spa & outdoor BBQ area. Zoned for horses. $10,500,000 L001-017-0601-1220 Shirley Sherman 310.317.2083

HOPE RANCH: Hope Ranch. Set on over seven acres of magnificently landscaped grounds. $3,750,000 WEB: 0112421 Harry Kalb 805.969.9993

1150 N. EASLEY CANYON RD: Glendora. Country French approx. 9000 sqft estate, on a 1.78 acre lot in pvt gated area. 6bd/9ba, fam rm, billard rm, lib, 5plts, pub/room, spa. $6,495,000 WEB: 22064354
Maureen Williams 862.229.0909

210 23RD ST: Santa Monica. Stunningly designed new construction Mediterranean 6bd/5.5ba h� north of Montana w/ gmrst kit, fr & much more. $4,650,000 WEB: 0311680
Susan Kastner 310.260.8200


OPEN 2-5 07/06 & 07/02/06

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Preferred Qualifications:
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- 3 years multi store buying experience.
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Please email resumes to careers@twec.com or send resumes to position Location: 38 Corporate Circle Albany, NY 12203

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MARRIAGES

Nicole Kidman to

DEATHS

Freddie Gorman, 67, of lung cancer, June 13 at the Kaiser Hospital in Panorama City, Calif. Gorman was the lead singer of Motown group the Originals. The Detroit quartet is best known for scoring a No. 1 R&B hit in 1969 with “Baby, I’m For Real,” written and produced by labelmate Marvin Gaye. The all-male Originals also provided background harmonies for other Motown icons including Jimmy Ruffin’s “What Becomes of the Brokenhearted” and Stevie Wonder’s “For Once in My Life.”

Gorman, a successful songwriter, co-writing the Reflections’ 1964 hit “Just Like Romeo & Juliet” and the Marvelettes’ 1961 No. 1 R&B/pop hit “Please Mr. Postman” with Brian Holland.

In the late 1970s, the Originals departed Motown and signed with Fantasy Records, where they scored with a dance remake of 1950s hit “Blue Moon.” The band ceased recording by 1981 and, after a brief comeback in Europe as part of Ian Levine’s Motorcity Recordings project in 1982, disbanded.

INDUSTRY EVENTS

JULY 13
What Teens Want—East, Grand Hyatt, New York. 646-654-7268. whatteenswant.com

JULY 19-20
Ticket Summit, Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas. 860-870-3400. ticketsummit.org

AUG. 2-5
NARM 48th Convention & Marketplace, Gaylord Palms, Orlando. Fla. 856-596-2221. narm.com

AUG. 2-5
Latin Alternative Music Conference, the Puck Building, New York. 818-763-1397. latinalternative.com

AUG. 4-8
International Assn. of Assembly Managers Conference and Trade Show, Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio. 972-538-1013. iamm.org/2006_conf

AUG. 18-19
The Bandwidth Conference, the Regency Center, San Francisco. 415-823-4540. bandwidthconference.com

SEP. 1-11
Billboard MECCA Fall 2006, Los Angeles Convention Center. 646-654-4660. billboard-events.com

FOR THE RECORD

To clarify an item in the Real Talk column in the June 17 issue, Baby Cham’s “Ghetto Story” was not banned by the Jamaican government. Rather, it was held up by the Radio Jamaica Communications Group for one week in order to edit lyrics relating to guns. Further, the track “Ghetto Pledge,” not “Ghetto Play,” has never been played by the Radio Jamaica Communications Group.

Contrary to the Latin Notes column in the July 1 issue, recording artists Jorge Celestión and Malà are signed to Sony BMG and Illona to EMI.

Gorman is survived by wife Dodie, son Dillon and daughter Sheila Evans.

Claydes Charles Smith, 57, of unspecified causes in Maplewood, N.J. Smith was a founder and lead guitarist for the long-running R&B act Kool & the Gang.

A native of Jersey City, N.J., Smith tuned into jazz guitar as a teenager. He became part of the original Kool & the Gang in the mid-1960s, along with Robert “Kool” Bell, his brother Ronald Bell (later Khalis Bayyan), George Brown, Dennis Thomas, Rick Westfield and Robert “Spice” Mickens. Lead singer James T.T. Taylor came aboard in 1978.

Kool & the Gang scored their top 20 pop hits in the ’70s and ’80s, mainly on the De-Lite label. The group broke through in a big way in 1973 with “Jungle Boogie,” which rose to No. 4 on Billboard’s singles chart. Other memorable hits included “Ladies Night,” the No. 1 smash “Celebration” and the No. 2 hits “Cerabiah” and “Joanna.”

In 2005, Smith issued a solo album, “Children’s Games.” He continued to tour with the band until January, when illness forced his retirement from performing.

Smith is survived by three daughters, three sons, a sister, a brother and eight grandchildren.
RINTrONE AWARDS: The RIAA, CTIA—The Wireless Assn. and Billboard introduced a gold and platinum certification program for master ringtones June 14 at an awards ceremony/press conference at the Time Warner Center in New York. The same evening, the RIAA invited music industry players to celebrate the launch of its master ringtones sales award at the Cutting Room, where guests were treated to a performance by Doghouse act the Honorary Title. Also at the conference, Billboard executive editor/associate publisher Tamara Conniff announced that Billboard’s master ringtones chart would launch this summer.

PHOTOS DOUGLAS SONDE S PHOTOGRAPHY

CTIA president/CEO Steve Largent emphasized how the “impressive awards ceremony signifies the enormous effect that mobile music is having on individuals all around the globe.”

The CTIA’s Athena Polydore, left, and GROW Network’s Marie Brattberg put on their festive smiles at the soiree. Networking opportunities couldn’t have been more enjoyable as attendees mingled all night with the accompaniment of good food, drinks, live entertainment. Shown, from left, are Morgan Baden and Kate Jackson of Reuters Corporate Communications, Trine Juliussen of Ernst & Young, Mark Messina of M2M2/--/X, Jason Tumer of Tuneable, and Amanda Hunter of the RIAA.

Smiling throughout the celebration, from left, are the CTIA’s Mark Desautels and Billboard’s Tamara Conniff and Douglas Trueblood.

All RIAA certifications for the new sales award are audited by the firm of Gelfand, Bennett & Feldman. Pictured, from left, are the RIAA’s Laura Doud, and Christopher Fazzolari and Michelle Howell of Gelfand, Bennett & Feldman.

Featured band the Honorary Title started the night away with tunes, including songs from their album “Anything Else But The Truth.” Pictured, from left, are band members James Ooster, Alan Boulton and Jon Wiley; Billboard’s Tamara Conniff; the RIAA’s Mitch Bainwol; and band member Aaron Janes.

Virgin Records president of urban music Jermaine Dupri, left, congratulates Bubba Sparxxx on winning a gold award for “Ms. New Booty.”
ON THE DOWN LOW

Warner Bros. Records exec including label chief Tom Whaley and senior VP of urban promotion Cynthia Johnson welcomed Brian McKnight to the family June 28 with an intimate luncheon previewing his forthcoming album, "10." Yes, it’s his 10th album from McKnight, in a career that includes stops at Mercury and Motown. The artist sat down at the keyboards and performed three tunes from the set, which he describes as “full of theme songs,” inspired by his post-divorce life. Among the album’s standout tracks: “More Than Just a Thang” featuring Jill Scott.

McKnight told Track he is optimistic about his move to WB: “I’ve seen what they can do—they think outside the box. When I was a teen, all the acts I loved were on Warner Bros., including my brother Claude of Take 6. It’s kind of surreal but it feels like this is where I should be.”

The new album, slated for a fourth-quarter release, is not alone on McKnight’s plate. In late July, he’ll shoot a TV pilot for a weekly talk/music show that he says is attracting the attention of Fox and ABC. He is also “toying” with the notion of signing his two sons to a label. “Niko is like a Jimi Hendrix on guitar, and BJ is a carbon copy of me,” the proud dad says. “I tell them to just relax but they see other kids making records, and they’re anxious to do the same thing.”

MAKE IT HOT

Missy Elliott is exper encing a creative block. “But give me a minute and I will be back,” Elliott told Track backstage at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles after winning a 2006 BET Award for best female hip-hop artist. Elliott said she new album she is working on will feature hits and new, original material. Also gearing up for production is a movie about Elliott’s life. The artist does not know if she’ll tackle a second stint on the reality show circuit after last year’s “The Road to Stardom—MTV.” That reality show stuff is a little rough. I don’t know if I will be doing that again,” she said with a laugh.

A NEW DAY

While backstage at the BET Awards. Track also checked in with Jamie Foxx, who says he and LL Cool J have done two songs together that will be coming out next year. It is no secret that Foxx and the Cool one did not gel along during the filming of the 1999 football movie “Any Given Sunday” starring Al Pacino. But according to the Foxx, the two buried the hatchet when they saw each other at a basketball game after this year’s Academy Awards. “We looked up at each other and said, ‘Gee, look at the years we’ve wasted.’ As for coming attractions, Foxx will appear in the movie version of “Dream Girls” and LL is the subject of an A&E Biography segment that will air July 31.

BANNER DAY

Look for rapper David Banner, who is now managed by the Firm, to mount a second Heal the Hood concert to benefit Mississippi coast victims of Hurricane Katrina. Banner says he has helped raise $500,000 for relief efforts and remains determined to rebuild the ravaged coastal communities. “Most of my efforts have been dedicated to the coast of Mississippi because that’s where the eye of the storm was. That coast is totally gone,” the Mississippi native says.

GET HAPPY

If the title track is any indication, Uncle Kracker’s upcoming album, “Happy Hour,” will be gloriously steeped in Motown- and Philly-styled R&B grooves. In fact, a sneak peek into the title track shows our favorite Uncle reveling in R&B-based disco sounds, complete with live strings and horns. Track hears Leo Sayer will add his signature falsetto to the song.

FASHIONABLE STONES

Track hears that Italian fashion brand Melton’ Pot is making sweet music with the Rolling Stones. It appears that Keith Richards, Charlie Watts and Ronnie Wood will be sporting specially designed Melton’ Pot jeans on the next leg of the band’s world tour. And yes, those were Melton’ Pot denim worn by Tom Cruise on the June cover of British magazine Arena.

REID’S VISION HONORED

The UJA-Federation of New York and the Music for Youth Foundation will honor Antonio “L.A.” Reid at a July 18 luncheon at the Pierre in New York. He will receive the 2006 Music Visionary of the Year award. Proceeds will be divided between the two host foundations. For more info log on to ujafedny.org.

SHAKIRA’S LIPS DON’T LIE

Shakira has partnered with Hard Rock International on behalf of child victims of violence in Colombia. She donated items to Hard Rock’s memorabilia collection while Hard Rock donated $40,000 to the artist’s Pies Descalzos Foundation.
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