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VENUS IN VEGAS
The members of British duo Bananarama will discuss their musical journey in a QA session at this year’s Billboard Dance Music Summit, Sept. 17-20 in Las Vegas. Also headlining the event: Jody Watley, Kasabian, Kristine W and the Loose Cannons. Details: Page 11, billboardevents.com
And then there were two.

With Live Nation’s $350 million acquisition of House of Blues Entertainment, preceded by the implosion of Jack Utsick Presents in the wake of charges of Securities and Exchange Commission violations (Billboard, April 29), the field of active players on the international tour promotion scene is narrowed to two companies: Live Nation and AEG Live.

With the deep pockets of Anschutz Entertainment Group behind it, AEG Live certainly has the means to compete globally and is currently making major international waves with a hugely successful Bon Jovi world tour. However, from last November through May of this year, AEG Live was involved in partnering 662 shows, compared with Live Nation’s 2,261 shows, according to Billboard Boxscore.

Threats, like the ones we receive in the indoor game, live. Unlike Live Nation, it did not have the burden of 50 sheds to program and can position itself with a “quality versus quantity” approach. But Live Nation gets indoor quality too, with superstar tours by Madonna, U2 and, through its Michael Cohl/CPI relationship, the Rolling Stones.

Of course, there is more to this business than just writing a fat check. Today’s international promoter must offer a wide range of marketing and digital distribution value, which AEG Live and Live Nation bring to the table in spades.

Even so, the touring market is ripe for a new, well-heeled global promoter to emerge and make the game more interesting. Competition keeps promoters sharp and creative. It provides artists with fair market value and creates more opportunities for new and developing acts. And it works for the consumer by fostering compelling content and competitive ticket prices.

**Will EC Royalty Changes Come At Creators’ Expense?**

**BY ROBIN GIBB**

A few weeks ago, I found myself in the unique position of speaking to the European Commission in Brussels. As a member of the British Academy of Composers and Songwriters, I was there to speak in the name of CISAC, the international body representing authors’ societies. The commission is conducting a review of the licensing of creators’ rights, which directly affects the income of millions of creators worldwide. It was therefore our job to explain the vital role that collection societies play in enabling us, the creators, to collect revenue that is rightfully ours.

Collection societies frequently get bad press as abusive faceless monopolies acting against consumers and, indeed, authors’ interests. Nothing could be further from the truth. European collection societies were set up by authors as nonprofit organizations and are run by the authors, composers and publishers who are their members to administer their rights. Of course, the societies have never been popular with the big multinational commercial broadcasters and other music users who are constantly trying to cut their own “costs” at our expense. At the hearing in Brussels, it was perfectly clear that they wished to deflate copyright in order to benefit their shareholders. It was less clear where the consumer or any author would benefit.

Crucial to societies—and the 2.5 million creators whom they represent—are the reciprocal agreements between them, which make up the network that enables each society to offer in its own territory the entire world’s music repertoire. This system has benefited me and my fellow creators in at least two ways. This network is central to my work as a songwriter, not a performer. I have co-written many songs with my brothers over the years such as “Chain Reaction” for Diana Ross and “Heartbreaker” for Dionne Warwick. Without this system there is no way that we would have been able to receive a fair reward in all countries for our work as writers.

Secondly, in these days of multinational copyright users, the network creates collective bargaining power, which affords authors less well-known than me some chance to receive an equitable reward for their works. With increased threats to the creative community, the agreements between collection societies, which underpin the network, are more essential than ever.

A ludicrous idea voiced at the hearing was that competition between authors’ societies in the grant of licenses to users would somehow benefit creators. If a user were able to obtain clearance rights for my song “Night Fever” from 24 competing organizations, which organization do you think the user would choose? The user would, of course, choose the offering organization offering the cheapest possible price.

What interest would I have in such a scenario? I might be in a strong enough position to personally fight this reduction in value by withdrawing my rights from societies that undercut each other, but otherwise creators less well-known would be stuck.

Royalty degradation will also inevitably lead to cultural devaluation. As a creator who has benefited from the strength of the Anglo-American repertoire, I have no doubt that my genre of music would suffer.

I sincerely hope that the European Commission understood my message and will continue to listen to the voice of creators before taking any decision. It is not just a question of avoiding the erosion of the authors’ negotiating position in the sole interest of a small band of very powerful broadcasters.

Ragtime/After Gary: Robin Gibb is a founding member of the Bee Gees.
In a world grown accustomed to virtual reality, why not air guitar stars?
That's the question U.S. Air Guitar is asking. The company is betting it can build a business of tours and brand sponsorship around the answer.

U.S. Air Guitar, which has been holding air guitar competitions throughout the United States for the past four years, just entered into a very real deal with the William Morris Agency. The organization also attracted sponsors Schick and VH1 to the just-completed 2006 championships.

Co-founded by guitar enthusiasts Kriston Tucker and Cedric Devitt, the New York-based operation sends its annual U.S. winner to the Air Guitar World Championships in Oulu, Finland. That event is 11 years old. Perhaps the Finns are onto something.

In fact, it was at the Finnish finale five years ago that a virtual light bulb flashed on for Devitt, who performed in Oulu under the "Air Lingus" moniker and took fourth place. "All we knew was that there was this mystical idea that everyone is somehow into," Devitt says. "Kriston and I figured we might as well have an air guitar championship on the very breeding grounds of rock 'n' roll."

The U.S. competition kicked off in New York and Los Angeles in 2002. This year, the competition picked regional champions in 12 cities, plus college and online winners. Schick sponsored the collegiate competition, while VH1 backed the online action.

On June 22, U.S. Air Guitar crowned San Francisco regional winner Craig "Hot Lixx Hulan" Billmeyer as its 2006 national champion at New York's Bowery Ballroom. Billmeyer's prize is a trip to the world championships in late August.

If all this sounds a little, well, airy, the organization's deal with William Morris may bring credibility to the concept. "Our role is to take it and create even more of a tradition," says Morris music division agent Seth Seigle. "The brand lends itself to being a real rock event. The regionals are in places like L.A., San Francisco and New York all sold out in advance, and the response has been tremendous."

With William Morris onboard, organizers hope to launch a U.S. Air Guitar "tour" that will visit cities and college campuses, complete with celebrity judges. Seigle envisions a 12-week outing with - can you imagine - a real live band "to host it and warm the crowd up." He adds that the tour could be videotaped for future distribution.

U.S. Air Guitar has had no shortage of publicity. In its inaugural year, Howard Stern devoted hours of coverage to the event on his syndicated radio show. Budding air guitar legends like Fatima "Ruckus Monster" Hoang and MiRi "Sonoysk Rok" Park have made appearances on "Today," "Late Night With Conan O'Brien," CBS' "Early Show," "Last Call With Carson Daly" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live." Seigle hopes to increase the competition's presence with more exposure in TV and film.

"Our plan right now is to identify initiatives, options with merchandising and a tighter tour calendar. We'll bring this up to the level it needs to be on college campuses to major music festivals and maybe license it down the line," he says.

Of course, it all starts with the talent. "The contestants are the best part of the competition," he acknowledges. "They're the ones wearing leotards and gold stockings."
LIVE NATION THINKS BIG(GER)

Builds Biz With HOB Acquisition

The $350 million acquisition of House of Blues Entertainment is just the latest move in a new Live Nation acquisition spree. “We have an incredibly strong balance sheet and we believe there are great opportunities for growth on a global basis,” Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino says. “We will continue to review all options that offer the right return for our shareholders.”

In an exclusive interview, Rapino tells Billboard that the HOB deal, announced July 5, shows the difference between the new, free-standing “nimble and focused” Live Nation and its pre-spinoff incarnation, Clear Channel Entertainment.

One of the advantages of Live Nation versus Clear Channel Entertainment is that we have been very clear on our intent to focus on our global music business and venue platform, whereas historically we might have dabbled in a lot of live entertainment business,” Rapino says.

With the HOB acquisition, Live Nation—one of the world’s largest promoter and venue operators—adds key pieces to its amplitheater picture, gets an improved presence in the hot Canadian touring market and lands a vibrant club network.

Rapino is particularly excited about HOB’s club business and plans to retain the HOB club brand. “This will really help us accelerate our plans to enter into that small to midsize music venue business, he says, adding that Live Nation will be aggressive in opening new HOB clubs.

“We will absolutely be able to provide the resources to help them achieve their vision of taking House of Blues clubs around the world,” Rapino says.

The transaction is expected to close by the end of the year, pending approval by the Securities and Exchange Commission and other closing conditions. As for the future of HOB talent buyers, venue managers and executives, Rapino says, “It’s business as usual until we close this, and at the right time we’ll meet with all their staff and determine how we’ll all merge together.”

HOB operates 10 House of Blues clubs in such cities as Las Vegas, Chicago, San Diego, Orlando, Fla., and Atlantic City, N.J., and eight amphitheaters in Atlanta, Toronto, Denver, Seattle, Dallas, Cleveland, San Diego and Los Angeles. Live Nation can now claim a total of about 50 sheds.

The transaction is the largest in the concert business since the days of promoter consolidation that greeted the new millennium. It heralds a new acquisitive stance from Live Nation, which recently bought a controlling interest in the touring division of Michael Cohl’s Toronto-based Concert Productions International and a 50% interest in CP’s Grand Entertainment division (billboard.biz, May 30).

The $350 million price tag has raised some eyebrows. But Rapino says, “With our expertise and their brand we’re very confident that this will provide a great return for our shareholders.”

But the acquisition of HOB’s assets could also raise antitrust issues, as Live Nation now has no real competition in the summer outdoor concert business and one major competitor—AEG Live—in the national concert promotion business. “Bankers and consolidators ‘one,’ consumers and artists, ‘zero,’ ” AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips says of the Live Nation/HOB deal. Asked if the deal might trigger a complaint with the Department of Justice on antitrust grounds, Phillips says, “We’re keeping our options open.”

Rapino does not seem overly concerned about antitrust issues “Every day there are more and more venues in the marketplace,” he says. “We think there are still lots of opportunities for bands and the consumers to see bands in venues everywhere.”

Live Nation is far and away the industry leader, reporting $1.3 billion in grosses in 2005 to AEG’s $417 million and HOB’s $245 million.

The company had kicked the tires of HOB when the latter had its concert division on the block twice in the past three years. HOB CEO Greg Trojan recently told Billboard that his company remained enthusiastic about the concert business, adding, “I wouldn’t rule out anything, but I don’t see a sale happening” (Billboard, May 27).

Reminded of those comments, Trojan says, “The discussion, which ultimately led to a serious offer, came up very recently, and we responded accordingly, acting in the best interests of the company and its shareholders.”
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U.K. TV Production Arm To Create Programming For New Platforms

LONDON—With a focus on its future as an entertainment company, Universal Music U.K. is turning to TV. The music major has launched Globe, a U.K. production arm dedicated to creating TV programming and innovative visual platforms for Universal Music Group's current and catalog artists from both sides of the Atlantic. The label's U.K. roster includes Keane, Razorlight and Sugababes. Program concepts will be developed in-house, with Globe's executives working closely with independent production companies. The unit, for example, could develop a documentary around the launch of the Scissor Sisters' upcoming sophomore album release, "Ta-Dah."

"The programs can be as unique and wide as one's mind can think up," says Lucian Grainge, chairman/CEO of Universal Music Group International. The advent of Globe follows a number of TV-related initiatives at Sony BMG Music Entertainment, which one year ago created an audiovisual unit based in Santa Monica, Calif., and hired veteran TV executive Jeremiah Bogsgang as executive VP of television.

In the United Kingdom, Sony BMG struck an exclusive deal in December 2005 with Simon Cowell for his joint venture Syco, which will exclusively bind the production company with Sony BMG for a further five years. Syco created the popular "X Factor" TV property. Sources say Sony BMG plowed millions of dollars into the venture.

Moreover, Sony BMG pressed the button earlier this year on Fever Media, a U.K. independent TV production company. That joint venture, helmed by creative chiefs poached from the BBC, was declared as a push toward Sony BMG becoming a "multidimensional entertainment company."

Such moves are "natural and sensible," considering the proliferation of new platforms, Bridgwell Securities media analyst Patrick Vau says. By creating their own content, the music labels can build up a set of assets for the new media as they gain traction. It seems a natural progression to leveraging the investment [a label makes] in its artist rosters."

London-based Universal Music Operations president David Joseph will oversee Globe. Iain Punnell will run Globe's day-to-day operations as GM. He is currently Polydor U.K. director of TV & DVD.

U.K. music TV producer Suzi Aplin will explore opportunities for Globe as a consultant, while continuing to work with the BBC, Comic Relief and other operations.

Talent agent Anita Land joins the Globe board as nonexecutive director, alongside Grainge, Joseph and Universal Music U.K. executive VP Clive Fisher. Grainge says Globe has confirmed "five or six" commissions, with roughly a dozen other projects on the verge of coming to fruition.

"Despite the fact that we have a decentralized structure [at Universal], we have all the [U.K.] label presidents and label heads working with Punnell and Joseph to help create formats and programming," Grainge says. He adds that the initiative is being implemented "in conjunction with" U.S.-based UMG chairman/CEO Doug Morris and vice chairman/COO Nick Henry.

As for the costs of setting up Globe, Grainge says, "It's an area of the business where we feel comfortable with the level of risk in terms of investment and creativity. Everything that we do around artists and creating either music or programs and formats, we do for the long term."

Indeed, Vau notes, "I suspect that Globe might not end up making much for itself since production margins in the United Kingdom are 9% or less, with even lower numbers in the North American market where digital financing is the norm. However, the benefit would be felt in the recorded product areas."

IFPI Threatens Yahoo China With Legal Action

Tokyo—With record companies pushing for action, trade group IFPI says its label members plan to sue Web portal Yahoo China for copyright infringement. The portal is "operating a service which is infringing on our members' rights," IFPI chairman John Kennedy says. "It is astonishing that a brand name, a household name like Yahoo, would be doing this."

In a practice known as "deep-linking," Yahoo China's music pages link directly to unlicensed downloads and streams of songs by domestic and international artists hosted by sites that appear unaffiliated with the portal.

A Yahoo representative says the portal continues linking to labels about building a licensed download site. However, an Asian label source says the talks have gone nowhere. "This really leaves us with no option other than the legal one;" the source says. "I hope they can settle, but doubt it at this stage."

Another label executive describes the IFPI's threat of legal action as "the beginning of a tough fight, but long term we will get there."

Kennedy says the IFPI has held discussions with representatives of Beijing-based Alibaba.com Corp., which owns Yahoo China, and U.S.-based Yahoo Inc., which owns 40% of Alibaba.

The IFPI labels will file a civil suit against Yahoo China within a few weeks, unless Yahoo comes back with an acceptable offer, Kennedy says. IFPI officials declined to explain what they would consider acceptable, but stress that "we are always willing to talk." The four majors—Warner Music, Universal, Sony BMG and EMI—are expected to be among the plaintiffs, according to Hong Kong-based IFPI Asia regional director Maysee Leong.

"The process in China is slow and complex, and before we can formally file suit, we have to go through that process," Kennedy says. The IFPI's threat of legal action follows the Chinese government's July introduction of a set of streamlined regulations under China's Copyright Act that clarify the liability of content and service providers—including portals that deep-link—involving the distribution of unauthorized content. Under the new regulations such operations could be shut down in addition to being fined a maximum of 100,000 yuan ($12,461). "It's a fortuitous coincidence that these regulations have come into place while this has been going on," Kennedy says.

Previously, Yahoo China has maintained that if illegal content is streamed or downloaded from another site—even if it is linked through Yahoo—such violations would be the responsibility of that site, not Yahoo. "We can't be responsible for what's on other people's sites," said Yahoo. If such content is linked through Yahoo's search function, and if the site hosting the content is shut down, the user is forwarded to a new website. "It's a grey area, a grey area," Kennedy said.

Yahoo reps did not respond to the July 1 changes affect the legality of its site, however. In response to the IFPI's July 4 announcement of a pending suit, Yahoo China reps said, "The online services provided by Yahoo China strictly adhere to the relevant laws, regulations and policies."

Global Marketing

By Steve McClure

IFPI Threatens Yahoo China With Legal Action
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Mercury's Agents Of Change
Groundbreaking Label Co-Founders Die Within Months Of Each Other

At their deaths, the names of Irving Green and Art Talmadge may have faded from the collective memory of an ever-evolving music industry.

But Green and Talmadge, who co-founded Mercury Records in 1944 with Berle Adams—were agents of change in their day, creating new opportunities for black artists and developing new ways to promote records.

Green died July 1 of natural causes in Palm Springs, Calif. He was 90. Talmadge was 93 at the time of his death, also of natural causes, May 28 in New York.

The Chicago-based Mercury label was instrumental in breaking down racial barriers, signing and recording such African-American artists as the Platters, Sarah Vaughan and Dinah Washington.

In addition, Mercury was the "first real strong independent label to embrace all repertoire, even eventually classical," says John Sippel, a longtime Billboard reporter and editor who worked for Mercury from 1951 to 1958 and again from 1966 to 1971.

Green, whose father Al was the founder of National Records, was an early proponent of using TV to promote recording artists. In 1948, he was among those who successfully lobbied the American Federation of Musicians to drop its prohibition against live music performances on the road for the "front." But Green's impact on TV had just started. In 1957, Mercury's star artist Frankie Laine, at the behest of Green, performed on "The Nat King Cole Show" with the host, marking the first time black and white artists performed together on the same stage on network TV, according to Green's grandson, Jonathan Ross.

Green was also instrumental in getting Washington and fellow Mercury artists Count Basie and Lionel Hampton booked on Ed Sullivan's influential weekly TV show. In 1964, Green hired Quincy Jones as VP and head of R&B. It was the first time an African-American was tapped as an executive of a white-owned label.

Talmadge, who began his career at RCA, joined the formation of Mercury, initially as head of advertising. He soon led Mercury's A&R operations, overseeing such recordings as the Platters' "The Great Pretender," Patti Page's "The Doggie in the Window," Laine's "Mule Train," the Crew-cuts' "Sib-Boon," and the Big Bopper's "Chantilly Lace."

When Mercury's recording budget for the album "Costless" was too small to hire a second singer, Page did both voices. It was one of the first documented instances of overdubbing, according to Talmadge's son, Richard.

Mercury Records also either initiated or early-on embraced a number of record promotion tactics that would become industry standards.

For example, Talmadge helped initiate the Mercury Records Caravan, which debuted in 1950 in Milwaukee at George Devine's Million Dollar Ballroom, marking the first time a label sponsored a live tour of its roster as a promotional vehicle, according to Sippel.

In 1961, Mercury was sold to the Dutch company Philips Electronics. Green stayed on to run the Chicago office, but Talmadge left to become president of United Artists. While there, he formed the Musico imprint. Talmadge eventually left UA and ran Musico as an independent, putting out music by Gene Pitney and George Jones, among others. Musico also had a Latin roster that included Tito Puente and Tito Rodriguez.

Mercury was rolled into the new PolyGram group in the mid-1970s and Green left the company to go into real estate. Talmadge remained active in the music industry until he retired in 1985. Even after his retirement, he continued to be involved in music publishing activities, according to an official biography.

Green also is credited as being among the founders of the RIAA.

He is survived by his wife, Pamela, daughters Kelli Ross and Roberta Hunt; three grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Talmadge is survived by his children Richard and Joyce; a sister and brother; and five grandchildren.

For most reading these words, hipster favorite Gnars Barkley and somewhat garish restaurant chain Johnny Rockets go together like sushi and French fries. But guess what? The retro-fitted, diner-like chain, with tabletop jukeboxes spotlighting classic rock and Motown sounds, is looking to modernize the musical side of its operation.

In fact, Johnny Rockets held a listening party at its Los Angeles location on Melrose Avenue for Gnars Barkley's debut album, "St. Elsewhere" (Downtown/Atlantic)—the day before its May 9 release. Though certainly not a cool or trendy brand, Johnny Rockets, by bringing a tastemaking act into its world, is surely looking to expand its user base to include more teens and twentiesomethings.

The listening party served as an introduction to a new music Web site, which launched a couple of weeks ago. The site, johnnyrockets.com, attempts to connect the dots between today's chart-topping acts and the classic artists that inspired them.

New York-based lifestyle marketing firm Cornerstone Promotion was tapped by Johnny Rockets to help create this branded music promotion, which runs through 2007.

"Johnny Rockets is proud of its heritage," Cornerstone co-president Jon Cohen says. "At the same time, it wants to cultivate a new, younger audience." With this music program, Cohen believes the 20-year-old chain can please customers on both sides of the age fence.

Those logging on to the site find the interactive Music Routes Map. Fashioned after a subway map, it lets music enthusiasts trace the lineage of musical styles. For example, a ride on the "red line" offers "connections" to Aretha Franklin's "Think," Janet Jackson's "That's the Way Love Goes" and Carlos's "Oh." Those in need of a rock fix are advised to take the "blue line" (Grand Funk Railroad, Van Halen and Queens of the Stone Age).

Other elements of the campaign include custom Mixes, sold via iTunes, and free music downloads distributed at nontraditional retailers, special events, and radio and online promotions.

"Music has always been a part of our brand," notes Mimi Somerman, senior VP of marketing at the Johnny Rockets Group. "We view this campaign as a cool way to teach people about the roots of today's music. Parents can appreciate new music more, while kids can see the different ways music goes back in history."

Somerman says the campaign will create brand awareness and brand loyalty. "With this campaign, our customers are able to take their in-restaurant experience and expand it to other parts of their lives, with music being the link."

FASHION FORWARD: In three short years, Condé Nast's annual Fashion Rocks concert has become a vibrantly strong brand in fashion and music circles. During a chat with Condé Nast Media Group president Richard Beckman, executive producer of the concert, it became clear that Elton John will curate the third Fashion Rocks live event, to be held Sept. 7 at Radio City Music Hall in New York. The following evening, a two-hour Fashion Rocks special will air on CBS. The event kicks off Olympus Fashion Week (Sept. 8-15).

Beckman hails John as "one of those once-in-a-lifetime forces in music and fashion. Charismatic and talented, he is one of the few artists who is legendary as a legend."

As the event's curator, John will oversee artist pairings and help select classic songs that will be performed by contemporary artists. Naturally, he'll perform, too.

Though artists are still being booked for the concert, Beckman confirms the following: Christina Aguilera, Beyoncé, Bon Jovi, the Black Eyed Peas, Daddy Yankee, Jamie Foxx, Nelly Furtado, Faith Hill, Tim McGraw, the Pussycat Dolls, Rihanna, Scissor Sisters and Kanye West.

For Beckman, the ideal Fashion Rocks artist is one who has a strong sense of style and whose fashion and music fit "hand in glove." To illustrate, he points to artists like Madonna and David Bowie, and musical movements like punk rock and "Saturday Night Fever."

This year's event—sponsored by Citi, Circular, Chevy and L'Oreal—will cross several media channels and be re-broadcast in more than 20 countries. And for the first time, Fashion Rocks will have a wireless application via Circular. When pressed for details about this wireless component, Beckman says, "We're still figuring it all out."

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U.K. Ticketing Is Going Mobile

LONDON—Mobile ticketing has gone live and is getting ready for its first world tour.

Ticketmaster, which says it has sold $6 billion worth of paper tickets in 2005, saw its first mobile-phone ticketed events take place in June in the United Kingdom as the start of a worldwide rollout of "m-ticketing."

M-tickets allow entry to events after a mobile-phone screen bar code is scanned at a venue entrance. The system allows the companies involved to reach live music fans directly—and bypasses scalpers.

The United Kingdom is the European test-bed for the new approach. Ticketmaster is involved in m-ticketing ventures with handset manufacturer Nokia, concert promoter Live Nation and British wireless carrier O2.

"In the coming months, you will see [this] technology roll out globally to a new generation of people who want to interact with live music," Ticketmaster’s U.S.-based president/CEO Scan Moriarty says.

The largest-scale use of Ticketmaster’s MobileTicket-branded wireless service so far was at the O2 Wireless Festival music event June 21-25 in London and Leeds.

According to event sponsors O2, £100,000 ($125,300) worth of m-tickets—costing £12.50-£17.50 ($24.75-$35.25) each—for the Wireless events were sold in the first week of sales. O2 did not reveal the final total.

Instead of receiving paper tickets by mail or online to print at home, fans could supply their credit card and mobile-phone details to Ticketmaster or O2 via the companies’ Web sites or phone services. Tickets were then delivered directly to their mobile handsets as a text message with a unique bar code and number.

The United Kingdom is the first European market to see large-scale m-ticketing use for concerts, but the practice is expected to accelerate across the continent. "This is a buoyant market, out of which new business models could emerge," says James Toop, president of Tickettrust.co.uk Web site. Tickettrust is operated by Live Nation in partnership with Nokia.

Nokia recently launched a series of m-ticket-only shows, under the NokiaTrends banner throughout Europe.

The first, headlined by Scottish rock band Franz Ferdinand and U.S. R&B star Kelis, took place June 24 in Paris at the 2,000-capacity Opera Garnier. M-tickets, priced at £42.50 ($53.25) were available via a designated section of the Nokia.fr site.

Rival carrier Vodafone is also working with the European arm of mobile-marketing company Enpocket on a series of free monthly regional concerts accessible only with m-tickets (billboard.biz, June 28).

"The mobile phone is without doubt the next step for us to create close relationships with our customers," Live Nation U.K. managing director Stuart Galbraith says. "The technology not only gives us the ability to access customers directly, they also don’t have to wait for the mail or read their e-mail to know they have their tickets."

Galbraith admits the vast majority of ticket sales for Live Nation shows through to Christmas are in paper form, but he hopes to see the m-ticketing technology available at all the promoter’s U.K. venues within nine months.

O2 U.K. head of sponsorship Paul Samuels says its m-ticketing experience at the Wireless Festival has provided valuable knowledge to the 2007 launch of London entertainment venue the O2, in partnership with music promoter Anschutz Entertain-
Seeds have been planted for another legal challenge to copyright law principles.

Four years after Stanford Law School professor Lawrence Lessig led an unsuccessful challenge to the term of copyright protection to the U.S. Supreme Court for Eric Eldred, an electronic book distributor, Lessig is listed as counsel on a new lawsuit. Stanford University English professor Carol Loeb Shloss has sued the Estate of James Joyce, the world-renowned Irish author and poet, claiming copyright misuse and fair use.

Lessig is a vocal proponent of limiting the scope of copyright law protections; the appearance of his name suggests that the suit will be used to try to change existing law.

The Shloss complaint alleges that the Joyce Estate prevented her from including portions of James Joyce's published works and his published and unpublished letters to, from or about Joyce or his family. Filed June 12 in the Federal District Court for the Northern District of California, the complaint asks the court to declare rights of the parties and enjoin the Estate and its trustee, Sean Sweeney, from asserting copyrights against the professor for certain materials on her proposed Web site.

Copyright misuse is a defense to a claim for copyright infringement. The misuse doctrine forbids a rights holder from using the copyright to secure an exclusive right or a limited monopoly that the law does not permit. When there is misuse, the rights holder may not use the copyright for the period of misuse. Rarely has anyone succeeded in defending a copyright infringement case using this defense.

Fair use, another defense to an infringement claim, requires the court to consider a number of factors before deciding if the work may be lawfully used without permission. The factors include whether the work is being used for scholarship or research; whether the use is not for commercial or profit-making purposes; the nature of the original work (the more creative or complex the work, the less likely a court is to permit someone to use it without permission); the amount and quality of the original work that is being used; and whether the use will have an economic impact on the original work's potential market and value.

Shloss wrote a book, "Lucia Joyce: To Dance in the Wake," published in 2003. She alleges that she began extensive research in several countries on Lucia Joyce, the daughter of James Joyce, in 1988. Lucia allegedly had sporadic confinement in psychiatric institutions from the age of 25 until her death in 1982, the complaint says.

The book includes a description of the influence that Lucia exercised on her father's emotions and work. It also challenges Lucia's conventional portrayal as a "troublesome blight" on the Joyce family, the complaint says.

Shloss claims that she wrote a letter in 1996 to Stephen Joyce, a grandson of James, asking for his help on her book. He replied with an "unequivocal" and "definitive no."

During the course of further communications with Shloss, Stephen granted her permission to use, "for a fee," a published poem written by James, but then later rescinded that permission. He refused that permission so long as Shloss intended to use certain other materials bearing on the life of Lucia, the complaint says.

Shloss asserts that the Estate and its agents took steps to interfere with her book project and her scholarly work on Lucia, or to make that work more difficult. Although Shloss was "disturbed and frightened" by attempts to obstruct her work, she persisted in her publication plans.

After the book publisher received letters and telephone calls of complaints from the Estate's representatives, the publisher cut "all unpublished writing of James Joyce and Lucia Joyce" to avoid a lawsuit, the complaint alleges. Shloss claims that she argued that the cuts would eliminate almost all the evidence in the book, which would undermine its scholarly integrity.

While many reviews of her book praised her provocative theory, they nonetheless found her documentary support lacking, the suit says.

Shloss then created an electronic supplement to her book to place on a password-protected Web site as a resource for scholars, researchers and the general public. It contains material that was cut from the book.

The complaint alleges that the Estate's counsel wrote to Shloss saying that it did not give permission to use the material and rejected the notion of fair use. This will be a suit to watch. A broad ruling on copyright misuse or fair use could affect all copyrighted works, including music.
Indie Stores Down, Not Out

A Shuttered Vinyl Plant Means A Dearth Of Hot Singles, But Retailers Persevere

DISCLAIMER: Every time I write an article about independents, no matter how much I think I am championing them, some merchant or trade group takes exception to some aspect of the story, saying that I help con-

vict over independents. Here is my exception to that indi-

Java and the like, I truly believe that no matter how the evo-

duation of digital dis-

bution affects the brick-and-mortar store, indie merchants will be the last man standing. If it ever comes.

But while I believe most indie merchants are the strongest retailers this industry has to offer, I would be remiss if I did not listen to those indie retailers who are struggling, too.

For example, Gus Joannes, owner of Sound City — in my hometown of Astoria, in the New York borough of Queens — says, "I feel like I am standing in the center of the ring, with my hands tied behind my back while Ali, Frazier and Foreman are circling, taking shots at me."

All the advantages that urban retailers used to have over the big boxes are being stripped from indie stores, one at a time, Joannes says.

Sound City sales lean heavily toward rap, hip-hop and dance, and as recently as five years ago, Joannes said he generally moved about 1,000 units during the life of a big rap record. But then the music industry went into a tailspin. Best Buy moved into the neighborhood, and nowadays he says he is lucky if he sells 100 units on a big title.

Even with that downturn, he and other urban-oriented indie merchants carved out business by mining other niches. Some indie stores did big business by jumping street dates whenever they could. Other stores built a thriving enterprise by selling mix tapes. Still others distinguish themselves with the used CD business or by carrying all vinyl releases, particularly 12-inch singles.

However, a crackdown on street-date violations, particularly by Universal Music Group Distribution — the largest distributor of rap and hip-hop — has taken most of the sales pop out of that tactic. And even though the major labels implicitly encourage the selling of mix tapes, the RIAA has cracked down on indie stores selling such product. The result of the RIAA’s efforts is forcing customers out of record stores and back to swap meets, flea markets and street corners, where they can get the latest, greatest mix tapes, as well as bootlegged versions of hit albums.

To make matters worse, changes in the DJ market have now put the 12-inch singles business under attack. As of June 25, 12-inch singles sales have dropped from 333,000 units to 133,000 during the same time period as last year, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

To be sure, 12-inch sales have been slipp-

ing for about five years, mainly as urban stores closed shop. But now the decline is picking up speed thanks to innovations in mixing and scratching equipment. While it was not the first, the Scratch Live machine allows DJs to scratch and mix digital files and burned CDs, using software that connects their computers and turntables. The software tracks the stylus movement on a “control” record, overlaying it to the digital audio file as it plays to produce a sound and feel that is indistinguishable from vinyl, according to the Scratch Web site.

What the Scratch Live does allow DJs to now carry thousands of songs around with them on their computer or in a few CD carrying cases, instead of hiring a roadie to lug around crates of 12-inches for every gig.

Also, instead of shopping at record stores to see what 12-inches are out that do not come in promo mailings, DJs can now shop such sites as beatport.com, which specializes in selling dance and hip-hop tracks for $1.99 or $2.49. All of which means a further decline in the format’s sales.

But in another unexpected (down)turn of events, Joannes and other merchants like Sy Lerner of Hot Wax in Jamaica, Queens, complain that suddenly they top five 12-inch singles are out of stock, not only at their shops, but at wholesalers across America.

Those titles are Nelly Furtado’s “Promiscuous” on Geffen, Yo-Yo’s “New Joc City” on Bad Boy, Usher’s “Kiss” on Interscope, 2Pac’s “R U Still Down?” on Atlantic, Field Mob’s “So What” on Geffen Records and Cassius’ “Me & U” on Bad Boy.

That’s apparently because 21st Century Media (formerly known as 13 1/3 Records) Pressing Manufacturing), the second-largest vinyl plant, recently shut its doors and has been placed in receivership by a Pennsylvania court. The labels that manufactured their 12-inch singles at that facility, like Universal Music Group and Warner Music Group, are scrambling to find a replacement manufac-

utor. Meanwhile, the vinyl masters and the artwork for their releases are locked up at 21st Century Media, thus causing a further delay as labels try to retrieve their ma-

terial or duplicate them all over again.

Label executives say the shuttering of 21st Century Media has created a domino effect, causing problems at other vinyl plants. Or as Jerry Salerno, GM of Sun Plastics & Dynamics LP Stereo in East Newark, N.J., puts it, “The rate of shrinking capacity in vinyl manufacturing is outpacing the falling rate of demand for vinyl.”

Salerno estimates that with the closing of 21st Century Media, which ran 22 press lines, there are now a combined total of 98 vinyl presses in North America.

Tom Silverman, president of Tommy Boy Records, which used 21st Century Media, says that when he talks to vinyl plants about pressing up-

coming titles, he cannot get delivery commitments out of them because of the capacity squeeze.

But Chris Ashworth, presi-

dent of United Record Pressing in Nashville, disputes the capac-

ity issue and invites labels to call him. He claims to have the largest capacity of the remaining 14 plants left in North America. “We have 10 LP presses, one 10-inch press, four seven-inch presses and two test presses,” he says. He insists that the plants left in the United States can handle all vinyl manufacturing needs once the labels that used 21st Century Media find a home.

In the meantime “Between those five titles, I am losing sales on about 200 pieces a week,” Lerner says.

—Jayson Greenspan
Winnipeg: Cold, Isolated And Happening

TORONTO—In 2003, when local band the Weakerthans signed to U.S label Epitaph, frontman John K. Samson penned a tongue-in-cheek homage to the hometown he shares with Neil Young. It was called “One Great City” and featured the chorus of “I hate Winnipeg.”

That might seem understandable when you come from a western Canadian city where temperatures average below-freezing from mid-November through March, dropping most nights below minus 24 degrees Celsius. (Approximately 11 below zero Fahrenheit.) Despite this frosty backdrop, the prairie city’s music scene is heating up.

“There’s a lot of good things coming out of Winnipeg,” says Steve Bluiss, Toronto-based director of A&R for Warner Music Canada. “Musicians there are unbelievably creative. Isolation has lots to do with it.”

The capital of the province of Manitoba, Winnipeg has a population of slightly more than 700,000—and a diverse label scene. Notable local operations include hardcore labels Smallman Records and G7 Welcoming Committee, roots imprint Dollarton Records and ska/ reggae label Bacteria Buffalo Records. Other established names include Folkoot Records, with which the Weakerthans, folk-rocker Nicky Mehta of roots styled act the Wailin’ Jennys, “but it makes you aware of your place in a larger picture; there’s sense of ‘hunkering down.’”

Mehta’s band is signed to Vancouver label Jericho Beach, but last year inked a U.S deal with Minnesota-based folk specialist Red House Records, which on June 6 released its sophomore set “Firecracker.”

Several other local acts have signed direct U.S label deals during the past 18 months, joining longer-established names such as the Weakerthans, folk-rocker fusion band the Duhks (Sugar Hill) and thrash-punk act Propagandhi’s (Fat Wreck Chords).

Other acts come from the local talent pool by U.S labels include rock act Inward Eye (Abacus/Century Media). Although none of those acts have racked up eye-popping sales yet, some of their figures are still respectable. The Duhks’ self-titled sophomore album has sold 38,000 in the United States since its February 2005 release, while Comeback Kid’s “Wake the Dead” has sold 53,000 in the same time frame, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Other Winnipeg acts with domestic followings in Canada include roots-styled artists Nathan (Network) and James Keelaghan (Jericho Beach Music), rockers Waking Eyes (Coalition) and Novillero (Mint) and country act Doc Walker (Open Roads). These acts have emerged from an abundance of local venues, the best-known being the Zoo, Winnipeg’s premier rock club for three decades.

Local booking agent Todd Jordan of Paquin Entertainment Agency suggests the scene’s strength partly comes down to Winnipeg being so isolated. “The nearest interesting Canadian city is Calgary,” he notes, “and it’s a 14-hour drive. Toronto is 24 hours away.”

However, Winnipeg acts are becoming increasingly visible on national and international stages. Comeback Kid recently concluded a 27-date North American tour; Levandoski performed at a Canada Day event June 30 in London’s Trafalgar Square; the Wailin’ Jennys are currently touring the States; and Novillero has just taped an episode of the USA Network TV series “Monk,” in which the members appear as themselves.

Local insiders credit complementary development services offered by Manitoba Film & Sound and the Manitoba Audio Recording Industry Assn. with aiding the emergence of the new Winnipeg scene. Both bodies were launched in 1987.

MARA executive director Sam Baardman has one further positive piece of news for A&R execs admiring the Winnipeg scene from afar. The city is not yet crawling with reps from rival labels. “Our bands are going out to where the A&R people are—all across the States and in Canada,” Baardman says. 

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GLOBAL BY LARRY LeBLANC

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GLOBAL EMBRACE

City Showcase is an annual music and fashion festival in central London that focuses on international and local artists and designers. This year Billboard threw its support behind showcases devoted to the Australian and Canadian music scenes.

Natasha Thicked Catlow sings during a set that drew songs from her debut album "Blow the World." PHOTO MARK DAFIE

All-country pop cuff the Audreys turned up the heat at the Billboard Showcase at the Borderline. PHOTO DEPO OLUKOTUN

GLOBAL
WAITING ON CHINA
Online Piracy Laws, Yes, But Asian Execs Await Enforcement

TOKYO—Laying down the law is good; enforcing it is better.

That is the reaction from regional music industry players in Asia to the Chinese government’s latest move to clamp down on Internet piracy.

Responding to pressure from overseas governments and trade organizations, China’s supreme governing body the State Council has introduced streamlined regulations, effective July 1, that clarify the country’s copyright law regarding the liability of content and service providers involved in the distribution of unauthorized content.

Under the new regulatory framework, for the first time Internet portals that “deep-link” (Billboard, March 11) to sites offering unauthorized content can now be shut down, in addition to receiving a maximum fine of 100,000 yuan ($12,461). The new regulations also ban the sale and use of hacking technology to violate copyright online.

Hong Kong-based IFPI Asia regional director Maysee Leong says the body is broadly pleased with the revisions. “They are a vast improvement over the draft we had seen earlier,” she adds, “and many of the IFPI’s comments have been taken into account.”

However, industry observers note that in many Asian territories, enforcing bodies are understaffed, underfunded and have little experience tackling piracy.

“Everyone knows these sorts of periodic, feel-good government decrees aren’t usually worth much more than the red ink it takes to [officially] stamp the latest proclamation,” says Rick Myers, director of Shanghai-based entertainment consultancy agency Dragonfly Revolution. “The real measure of these things is on the street and in the market.”

As yet, the Chinese government has not provided details on how it intends to enforce the regulations. However, Leong says the IFPI will work with the government’s National Copyright Administration, which oversees copyright-related matters, to “hopefully bring cases under these regulations soon.”

Leong suggests the most significant aspect of the streamlined regulatory framework is that it came directly from the State Council. That has never happened before with Chinese intellectual property law.

“The idea of copyright protection is now being emphasized in China,” says Grace Zhao, Beijing-based manager of Motorola (China) Electronics’ mobile devices business development team. “Illegal sites will [decline] and even vanish in the future since they’re facing greater and greater pressure not only from labels but also from the government.”

Assuming the Chinese government will enforce its new laws, there are still many challenges to reducing piracy. One industry observer notes that the music industry’s main problem in China is not peer-to-peer file sharing but rather “small illegal sites hosting MP3 files—and they’re a lot harder to crack down on.”

A further issue is the Beijing government’s decreasing influence on independently minded local regions such as southern China’s Guangdong Province. Yet a source says, “if the Chinese government can block politically objectionable material on the Internet, they should be able to control file sharing.”

The new legislation followed China’s establishment in March of an intellectual property court (Billboard, April 22) to handle piracy crimes. Such moves come with Beijing under increasing overseas pressure to clean up its act regarding piracy. Most recently, European Union trade commissioner Peter Mandelson said he was “exasperated” by poor copyright protection in China (billboard.biz, June 20).

There were some indications earlier this year (Billboard, Feb. 25) that some Asian governments are taking a tougher stance on digital copyright issues. In Singapore, landmark cases were brought against online pirates, and a Hong Kong court ruled forcing local Internet service providers to identify individuals suspected of breaching copyright laws.

Industry insiders agree, however, that the experience of other Asian markets proves that new regulations and penalties mean nothing if they’re not backed up by effective enforcement.

South Korea, for example, “has a wonderful, wonderful, legal infrastructure,” says Brendan Carr, foreign legal consultant at the Seoul Law Group. However, he adds, the state has “a distressing lack of commitment to using it.”

In China, the letter of the law at least is a good start, Myers says. That should give Web sites providing unauthorized content a simple choice: “Close shop or turn to an authorized site like GoDigital that can help them start to go legit and, more importantly, get out of the crosshairs.”

That approach “doesn’t, and won’t, happen overnight,” he concedes. “It didn’t in the U.S. either where the issue was more with peer-to-peer. But it is happening.”
STUDENT VOICES
The Second Installment Of Billboard And mtvU Student Columns

Billboard and mtvU recently scoured the nation for five music-obsessed students with a desire to speak their minds. This month's winner is Natalia Lavric, a French major at Ohio University. Lavric's topic: In your ideal world, how would you ALWAYS get your music? CDs? Mobile? Online?

I WANT MY MP3s
Remember the angry youth of the '80s, sporting hair-sprayed 'dos, who fought hard for their beloved channel by screaming, "I want my MTV"? Well, their kids, including myself, now want our MP3s.

Call me the most old-fashioned 20-year-old out there, but back in the day, cell phones were used to call people, not play tinny, truncated versions of rap songs. But given my mood swings, equally odd musical choices and lack of tolerance for carrying around a CD player and clumsy discs, CDs won't work for me either.

Sure, buying a CD on the first day it comes out is fun. But now, why bother? With the digital à la carte menu of any music anyone can think of, I have taken advantage of the new format and dropped the 12-song CD complete with "Thanks, Mom, Dad and Jesus" liner notes and photos of brooding artists wearing too much makeup.

Online, users get the instant gratification they crave—quick downloads on iTunes or otherwise—and it's easy to carry an extensive music collection on a device smaller than the palm of your hand.

Plus, thanks to Al Gore or whoever invented the Internet, getting any track you could possibly want is more of a treasure hunt than a dead end. The live Wilco cover of "Yesterday" is almost as easy. Find as the original—and probably superior—Beatles version.

Until CDs can offer the exact versions and mixes that I want and cell phones provide the quality that even the most finicky listener can tolerate, I will stick to my digital collection with reasonable prices and portability.

However, I won't be trading my portable CD player anytime soon—but only for sentimental reasons.

It's WONDERFUL to be here; it's certainly a thrill.

A work of genius is usually a singular effort, or at best the interaction of two or three lifelong, complementary collaborators. The Beatles' "Love" by Cirque du Soleil is the rare exception. It is truly mind-blowingly marvelous and magical, transporting you to another place, a better place, a place you probably have not visited since the first time you heard the Beatles' music.

I was invited to the opening the other night, and all I can say is, wicked cool!

The concept began with a conversation between George Harrison and Cirque founder Guy Laliberte, who then passed the ball to director/writer Dominic Champigny and music producers Sir George Martin and son Giles.

I would need three times the space to begin describing the show, so let's just touch on the music.

It's a combination of 30 or so songs, song fragments, studio dialogue, demos and alternate takes. I asked Giles, "Where do you begin with such a complex undertaking?"

He told me, "With the music, dummy. Where do you think?"

All right, he was more diplomatic than that.

They worked two-and-a-half years on it, and I told him what blew my mind the most was the fabulous layering of one song's melody on another's chord changes or rhythm. "Tomorrow Never Knows" with "Within You Without You," a backward "Sun King" with "Something," "Nowhere Man" with "Blue Jay Way" with so much more.

If you can't get to the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas where I hope it will run forever, fear not. A record is going to be released.

See you next week.

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COOLEST GARAGE SONGS

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A Bigger Bang has already amassed grosses of more than $256 million, and has 21 more stadium dates in Europe on the route up until Sept. 3 in Horsens, Denmark. Another 10 dates that were postponed due to Keith Richards' injury could still be rescheduled. With stadium dates averaging in the $5 million-per-gross range, at the very least another $100 million could roll in, which would take the tour to record heights.

After a drama-filled break that included brain surgery for Richards and rehab for Ron Wood, the Stones are now in Europe for rehearsals. "The troops are gathering, it's very exciting," tour producer Michael Coll says, though he declined to comment on a gross record for Bigger Bang, or a possible tour extension. "All we're talking about is some rehearsals, getting starred in Milan with a great show," he says. "As soon as we get thrilled by that we'll figure out what's gonna be, or what's not gonna be. Anything's possible with the Rolling Stones."
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ORDER YOURS NOW!
With Papa Roach on board for a fall tour, the Zippo Hot tour is getting hotter.

The outing, named for the 74-year-old maker of cigarette lighters based in Bradford, Pa., is a promotional marketing initiative to support local music scenes and give up-and-coming bands a platform to bring their music to a national audience.

The project, which originated in 2004, began this year’s round in March when rock bands from 10 U.S. cities register, with finalists determined by online voting.

This year, 388 bands made the first cut, then the acts start showcasing in their respective cities in September to be judged by local celebrities. Another round of online voting begins in October to determine the winner from the 10 finalists, one from each city.

The bands are competing for a shot at showcasing their talent to a major label, almost $100,000 in prizes and the support slot for Papa Roach on the November tour. Two other to be determined acts will also be on the bill.

"Zippo is a great fit, because the brand is credible and works extremely well with Papa Roach’s core fan base," says Michael Arfin, agent for the band at A&G. "Zippo will also bring a very generous amount of marketing and promotion to the tour, and the timing is perfectly based on the band’s album being released in September."

The 10 cities from which the finalists are chosen are Austin; Charlotte, N.C.; Cincinnati; Columbus, Ohio; Indianapolis; Milwaukee; Orlando, Fla.; Phoenix; Philadelphia, and Tampa, Fla. Arfin says these are 10 good cities to bring to the Papa Roach route.

"Papa Roach did extremely well on their last cycle in the cities that have been picked for the tour," says Arfin, who points out that the trek works with different local promoters in each market. "Zippo has been very flexible in working with the band on performing in markets and venues that make the most sense for both parties." Stephan adds, "What the Zippo Hot tour endeavors to do is use the online space to help connect kids and let them understand there is great music in their city and other cities. Zippo wants to be the brand behind helping facilitate that and become a part of their lifestyle." Zippo's sponsorship underwrites production costs and provides a lot of promotion.

"Our promotion and advertising budget is approximately $1 million against the program and includes everything from online support from MySpace to e-mail blasts to sweepstakes in conjunction with Hot Topic stores."

Promotion includes full-page ads in alternative music publications throughout the year and radio station partnerships in each market. "We’re not only buying on-air spots, but we’re set up as promotional partners" with radio, Stephan says.

Contests and sweepstakes leverage the fall tour with Papa Roach, enticing fans with meet-and-greets and other promotions. "We have a multi-disciplined marketing platform here," Stephan says. "We even supply DIY packages for all the bands that have registered to be part of the program, so they’re out there not only marketing themselves and driving awareness at their level, but also promoting the Zippo Hot tour as an overall brand to help promote the tour at the end of the year."

Music retailer FYE recently signed on as a sponsor for the program for the rest of the year, which Stephan cites as evidence that the program is taking hold. "Those guys see the value of what we’re trying to do at the local level, so it helps with their local marketing efforts along with tying into the tour as well," he says.

StarTime Records founder Isaac Green had wanted to sign the Futureheads in 2003, but 679 Recordings—a joint venture with Warner Music Group (WMG) in the United Kingdom—had already inked the band to a multi-album deal. Yet one dismal-selling album in the United States later, and the Futureheads have found themselves on the American independent.

As a band signed to a Warner-affiliated label overseas, the major had right of first refusal on the act in the United States, where the Futureheads ended up on the Warner Bros. imprint Sire. The Futureheads, like the Kaiser Chiefs, Kasabian and Bloc Party, arrived with a flurry of hype in the States—hype that didn’t translate into record sales. The act’s self-titled debut, released in September 2004, has sold 42,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Green never lost contact with the band. Sire actually hired StarTime to help with early marketing and promotion. "We all sort of came up with a scenario where StarTime and Sire could release the record," Green says. "Once things got to a certain level, Warner Bros. would take over."

As for what a "certain level" means, Green doesn’t have an answer—but Warner never took over. "It didn’t go platinum," he says, "but I don’t know how they gauge success."

With a young band you always hope it will sell millions." Now Sire seems to have lost patience in developing the act in the States. Parent company WMG released the Futureheads’ sophomore effort, "News and Tributes," in every other territory on June 13 (the album arrived at No. 12 on the U.K. chart). But stateside, the album came out exclusively on StarTime, and has scanned about 8,000 copies.

The Futureheads traded in the spunky Britpop of its debut for a sophomore album that was more musically varied, with more midtempo tracks and some more pensive lyrics.

StarTime, which uses Los Angeles-based Vagrant to distribute and market its releases, jumped at the chance to work with the band again. While the 42,000 units sold may not have excited a major label, that’s big news in the indie world.

"That’s still a lot of people," Green says. "There’s a lot to build from that."

The band had an uphill battle from the beginning. While the act had prime gigs, such as a main-stage performance at the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival in 2004, it was constantly fighting the hype that surrounded that year’s wave of British acts.

"They were so visible in the U.S., but it didn’t translate into overall sales," says Sean Maxson, who works in Vagrant’s marketing department.

With a few more albums owed to Warner, Green was a little surprised at the opportunity to work with the band again. "These bands get signed to standard five-album deals, and most labels do not want to give that up," he says.

SECOND STORY: Paul Lower, a financing director at international publishing firm Music Sales Group, is rearchiving jazz label Storyville Records. Beginning July 11, the new Storyville will start rolling out a series of artist compilations. Artists featured include Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Ben Webster, Art Tatum and Clark Terry. Storyville, which was launched in 1950 by Danish jazz enthusiast Karl Emil Knudsen, will be distributed by RED via the company’s relationship with MRI.

STAY IN SCHOOL: Maybe Dashboard Confessional fans don’t age. For the act’s first album in three years, "Dusk and Summer," the Interscope via Vagrant singer saw his album discounted to $6.99 at Best Buy merchants—with a catch.

One needed to present a college ID card to receive the album at the budget price. Otherwise, the album went for the iTunes standard of $9.99. Dashboard Confessional—whose 2001 album "The Places You Have Come to Fear the Most" made artist Chris Carrabba the darling of the college music scene—debut at No. 2 on The Billboard 200 this issue with its new album.
Marley Bros. To Top Roots, Rock, Reggae Bill

Brothers Stephen and Ziggy Marley will reunite next month as co-headliners for the second Bob Marley Roots, Rock, Reggae (RRR) Festival.

The five-hour genre-blending outdoor fest will feature music, food, street vendors and a strong reggae vibe. The 17-city trek begins Aug. 6 at the Reggae on the River Festival in Redway, Calif.

The tour’s name comes from reggae legend Bob Marley’s song “Roots, Rock, Reggae” from his 1976 album “Rastaman Vibration.”

The first RRR fest, staged last year, featured Slightly Stoopid, Common, Toots & The Maytals and the five Marley brothers—Ziggy, Stephen, Damian, Julian and Kymani—on their first tour together.

“The idea was conceived as a vehicle for the Marley brothers to get their music out each summer, and, two, a showcase for roots rock music,” says Brian Edelman, agent for the Marley family at the William Morris Agency, along with John Marx and Orly Marley.

“There are so many great artists out there that have been inspired by Bob and reggae, so the idea was for a multigenre, cross-platform tour.”

This year’s lineup features the Marleys, Bunny Wailer, Grammy Award-winning Latin rock band Ozomatli and Muzik Mafia member John Nicholson, each of whom will perform a full set, as well as collaborating with each other.

“This year, we wanted to do something different,” Edelman says. “Bunny came up and seemed perfect—this reggae legend with Ziggy and Stephen, the sons of the legend. Throw Ozomatli on there, as good as it gets with that Latin vibe, then John Nicholson to open up. It should be a fantastic show.”

The diversity appeals to Ziggy. “It’s roots, rock, reggae that we do,” he says. “This kind of tour is a festival vibe, not like a show where it’s just me. It’s less workload on each individual, because we’re all supporting each other. It makes things a little more fun, a little lighter, we can let loose and have a great time.”

Ziggy will tour in support of his new CD “Love Is My Religion,” set for release July 2 on Tuff Gong Worldwide, the Marley family record label. In a special promotion, Target initially will be the sole U.S. retailer for the album. It is the first time Ziggy has released an album purely with independent distribution.

For Stephen, the tour will be an opportunity to perform songs from his solo debut album, “Mind Control,” set for release in the fall on Tuff Gong/Ghetto Youths/Universal Republic.

Edelman says reggae is enjoying renewed vigor in North America. “The genre had kind of leveled out and dropped off for a few years,” he says. “Now with Damian and Sean Paul and some of these others, there’s more interest now so we’re trying to keep the interest up from the roots level to the dancehall level.”

The first RRR festival last year finished in the black, which is very tough to do in the first two or three years,” Edelman says. “We didn’t make a lot of money, but we made enough and kind of established the event.”

Sales are strong out of the box this year. “We’re playing the Hollywood Bowl [in Los Angeles], which is the hottest hard-ticket venue in the world in my mind,” Edelman says. “We’re at 11,000 tickets and will probably sell that out at 17,500.”

The diversity of reggae music—and the Marley brothers—is a positive factor for the tour, Edelman says. “Ziggy has become more of this singer/songwriter, triple-A, crossover-to-hot AC act. Damian’s radio is urban and crossover rhythmic, with some alternative. When Stephen comes out, he’s a little more R&B, so he’ll be a little more urban AC, skewing with some triple-A.”

A variety of talent buyers will promote the tour, at a cost of $70,000-$100,000 for the show. The street vendors, which will offer such items as authentic Jamaican cuisine and wares, will be booked locally.

The top ticket at the Hollywood Bowl is $93, but generally most tickets are $30-$55, Edelman says. “At the festivals, people come not just for the music but for the vibe,” Ziggy says. “So you’ll find different people coming who might not be into reggae, but they have a free mind. Good music can be enjoyed by anyone.”

“It’s more than just reggae, it’s music that people can feel, no matter what genre it’s coming from,” he continues. “It’s spirit music, roots music. Roots music is not only reggae music, but any type of music that has a root.”

The tour wraps Aug. 27 at the Filene Center at Wolftrap in Vienna, Va., but Ziggy will tour all year. He precedes the RRR tour with a run through Europe. After the fest tour he heads to South America.

As he plays with multiple acts in multiple roles, he is fine to do them. They just tell me where to go, and I’m headed there. I’m looking forward to having a good time, summer of love, spreading love through music.”

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Crazy For ‘Delirium’

Cirque Du Soleil's Latest Show Having A Banner Year

For a touring industry starved for new product, Cirque Du Soleil’s “Delirium” has quickly become a force to be reckoned with.

Since January, “Delirium” has grossed nearly $40 million from 64 shows and moved nearly 450,000 tickets. Produced by Live Nation with Cirque du Soleil, “Delirium” will be out for most of the year and tour producers are eagerly eyeing international dates.

“Delirium” will play 161 shows in North America for 2006, according to Brad Wavra, Live Nation’s point person for “Delirium.” “The great thing about this tour is it’s kind of a fusion of music, art, and Cirque du Soleil,” he says. “For the first time in a long time we’ve created a different type of arena entertainment.”

And, perhaps most important, this is not a one-shot deal. “It’s got legs that can play forever, not dependent on a hit song or a pop star. It’s just a great entertainment vehicle,” Wavra says. “We’ve played a few repeats and people seem to be coming back again.”

With an unproven product unfamiliar to most consumers, the Cirque du Soleil brand is a huge selling point. “And we’ve created for ourselves an enormous advertising budget that allows us to go out and penetrate a market to try to deliver the message in the broadest platform possible,” Wavra explains. “We’re casting a wide net getting to try people to get in for the first time. And once they see the show, it’s kind of ‘game over’ because the show is extraordinary.”

“Delirium” has dates on the books through Nov. 26. “Then we’re coming back to North America for the first three months of next year, repeating the major markets,” Wavra says. “Then we’re going to Europe from Sept. 1 [2007] through the end of December. Then we’ll make a decision on whether we continue east to the Far East with it or come back to North America.”

The show will be slightly scaled back for Europe “because of the size of the venues available to us there,” Wavra notes. “So when the European tour is done at the end of 2007, I’ll have the ability to come back and play different buildings in North America, ones that we had to miss because the production was too big.”

The plan for Europe is being laid out right now, Wavra says. “We’re picking a building that we consider one of the great smaller buildings of Europe, and we’re going to streamline the production so it can play that kind of venue, then we’ll run all over Europe for four to five months,” he adds.

The current North American production travels on 22 trucks, with a crew of 150 and 40 performers. Load-in is approximately 11 hours, load-out, about three.

Southwest Asia, India, China, South Africa, Turkey and other markets are in the long-term game plan. “We’ve got requests for this show all over the world,” Wavra says. “People want it to come to their country, it’s just a question of when we can get it here and the economics of it.”

The potential for future Cirque du Soleil/Live Nation productions is vast. “Our partners at Cirque du Soleil in Canada are just an extraordinary creative force,” Wavra says. ...
In Warner Music Group’s push to embrace the digital transformation of the music business, Alejandro (Alex) Zubillaga is one of the company’s leading evangelists for change.

As WMG executive VP of digital strategy and business development, Zubillaga is focused on driving product and business model innovation. Since joining WMG in March 2004, he has been behind a number of landmark deals in the mobile and online music spaces, including a pact with Verizon Wireless in January 2005 to sell mobile music video downloads that was among the first U.S. deals of its kind. Also on Zubillaga’s résumé: a multiterritory, cross-platform “triple play” agreement with France Telecom in May 2005 that made WMG content available to more than 110 million subscribers in 12 countries.

More recently, Zubillaga has been the architect of a number of deals to expand WMG’s presence in international markets, including South Korea and South Africa. And in June, WMG became the first major music company to enter a direct, catalog-wide content agreement with a mobile operator in China. Ringback tones, master ringtones and artist greetings by Warner Music artists will be available to 130 million subscribers of China Unicom, the world’s third-largest mobile operator (Billboard, July 1).

Before joining WMG, Zubillaga was co-founder and managing director of WMG-investor Lesa Partners, a venture capital group headed by his brother-in-law, Edgar Bronfman, Jr. (now WMG chairman/CEO). Previously, Zubillaga was founder and managing partner of E-Quest Partners, a venture capital firm focused on investments in Latin America. Prior to that, he was chairman/CEO of Netuno, a provider of broadband communication services he founded in Venezuela.

Billboard caught up with the New York-based Zubillaga to discuss WMG’s digital and mobile initiatives.

Q: Warner Music Group recently has entered joint-venture deals with a number of media and telecommunications companies around the world. What has been fueling that push?
A: As an industry we need to rethink the kinds of alliances, partnerships and business models we want to establish. It can’t be a cookie-cutter approach and say, “This is what a music company looks like in every single market.” Deals have to vary by market by market internationally.

Q: How is that concept playing out in South Korea?
A: We formed a joint venture with Gallo Music, the music division of Johncic Communications, a diversified media group there. It’s a deal that allowed us to partner with the strongest local music company, use our global digital distribution footprint to distribute that catalog worldwide and establish a digital business in a market that has a significant and growing wireless penetration.

Q: What about in South Korea?
A: It’s a market where you have enormous consumption of digital content and a very dominant player in SK Telecom. The partnership we announced was one where we combined Seoul Records, which was owned by SK Telecom, with the local company we owned there. This is a joint venture that is going to leverage the strengths of both Warner and SK Telecom. Warner brings its expertise in signing, developing and promoting music talent. SK is by far the most advanced digital distributor of content—both on the wireless platform as well as through their Melon service. It was a great fit for us.

Q: What’s the ownership structure of the joint venture?
A: There is a new company called WS Entertainment. We own 60%; they own 40%. We still fully control all of our foreign repertoire.

Q: What are the implications of a music company having fully merged operations with a telecom business?
A: They’re not just going to distribute our content. But we think that by being partners and by having a preferred relationship, there are going to be many ways in which we are going to be at an advantage when we go out to sign a local artist. It is going to be very apparent that they are signing on to a company that is partially owned by SK Telecom.

Q: Do you expect other music companies will take issue with the preferred relationship you enjoy with SK Telecom because of the joint venture?
A: Other companies could [decide not] to distribute their content with SK, but that would be their loss. SK Telecom has 90.1% of the market share.

Q: Where do joint-venture deals work best?
A: It would be more difficult for us to combine our operations in a territory where a carrier had 20% of the market. Because in that case we’d be aligning ourselves with one of potentially four or five carriers in the market. That doesn’t make much sense. In a market where there is a dominant player, it makes more sense to align ourselves.

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LUPE

JAY-Z'S A FAN AND REEBOK WON HIM OVER. THIS CHICAGO RAPPER'S BLEND OF HIP-HOP AND SKATE CRED IS ABOUT TO BLOW UP.

Amid pro-skateboarders, wealthy contributors and their skate-enthusiast kids late last year, Tony Hawk held his annual fund-raiser on a spacious Beverly Hills estate. Hawk's large vertical ramp loomed tall on the property, ready for a skate demonstration. Comedian Paul Rodriguez Jr. briefly chatted up the crowd. Hawk talked about his effort to build skate parks in low-income areas. The first act to perform wasn't punk band Pennywise, but an obscure hip-hop kid with glasses named Lupe Fiasco. Pennywise followed.

The Tony Hawk Foundation event organizers are always looking for musicians/skaters to boost their fund-raisers, and in Fiasco they found someone who proves skating isn't just for affluent, suburban kids. In fact, hip-hop and skateboarding can coexist across ethnicities, salary caps and music genres.

"Lupe is very true to the skate culture," says Julie Greenwald, Atlantic Music Group president. "He's not trying to go there, he lives there."

The 24-year-old Fiasco has been grinding on Chicago's independent hip-hop scene for more than five years, building himself as a stand-alone brand. Now he's taking the major-label route with his debut album, "Food & Liquor," but it still will be released through his own record label, First and Fifteenth Entertainment (FNF), via a distribution deal with Atlantic.

Fiasco (born Wasalu Muhammed Jaco) was raised by a revolutionary, karate-chopping father and gourmet-chef mother. Growing up in Chicago's housing projects, Fiasco was more nerd than thug. He was a good student and refused to smoke or drink, following the strict guidelines of his Islamic religion. As a kid, he disliked hip-hop because he found the cursing offensive. Instead, he spent hours listening to jazz great Thelonious Monk's "Final Fantasy."

"My dad used to blast N.W.A., and I'd be so embarrassed I would duck down in the car," Fiasco says.

That was until he found the humor in foul-mouthed favorites like gangsta rap MC Spice 1. "Spice 1 did a song called '187 Proof' that was dope to me," Fiasco says. "I liked West Coast hip-hop, but I guess that's because I was brought up on that with my dad."

BY HILLARY CROSLEY
PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS CLINTON

BY HILLARY CROSLEY
PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS CLINTON

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I REALLY TAKE A MICRO-MANAGING APPROACH TO MARKETS I DON’T THINK HIP-HOP HAS TOUCHED.

As a young MC with the crew Da Pak, Fiasco traveled around, battling and meeting different industry folks. By 2000, he had already been signed and dropped by Arista due to the label’s implosion as well as courted by Roc-a-Fella and Epic Records.

Though Roc-a-Fella didn’t sign Fiasco, Jay-Z was in contact and introduced him to insiders like the Neptunes’ Pharrell Williams, who liked Fiasco’s flow enough to rhyme on the recent “Kick Push (Remix).” Jay-Z is even executive producing Fiasco’s debut album for Atlantic Records, “Food & Liquor.”

Far from an overnight sensation, Fiasco’s been building his brand identity one business at a time. In 2005, he founded design company Righteous Kung Fu, which makes and customizes sneakers, shirts, belts and other wear. He shrewdly linked it with the streetwear-marketing Web site Hypebeast, run by Canadian Kevin Ma.

“It was less of me being a rapper,” Fiasco says about Hypebeast. “It was the beginning of 2005, and I was just beginning. But as the site grew, we grew, and I could take people into my world.”

Focusing on niche markets like the sneaker cult and skater communities, Fiasco has kept a Hypebeast blog, did international footwear shows and solidified himself as a viable brand and MC.

Bringing streetwear innovation to hip-hop’s mixtape game, the pair switched up normal retail distribution by releasing Fiasco’s “Frenheit 1/15” Part II: Revenge of the Nerds” tapes via the Internet utilizing Hypebeast’s database and personal e-mail blasts.

Slicing up audio from the actual 1980s film as interludes, the mix tape has songs like “And He Gets the Girl,” a nerd courageously approaches the popular cheerleader and discovers they’re soul mates. “He was really trying to push the boundaries when he was unsigned and working the mix-tape circuit, and I was fortunate enough to hear it,” says Craig Kallman, Atlantic Music Group chairman/CEO. “His mix tapes got a fast reaction in the press and from the online hip-hop community.”

Bypassing printing fees and distribution costs, Fiasco was able to swiftly disseminate his music internationally, creating a significant hip-hop fan cache in countries like Singapore and Malaysia.

“The feedback is instantaneous and it gave DJs access worldwide,” says Fiasco. “I really take a micro-managing approach with markets I don’t think hip-hop has touched. Just off of ‘Kick Push’ I’ve got so many skate companies, shops and skateboarders interested. Tony Hawk just invited me to come perform again at one of his fund-raisers.”

Fiasco started FNF with CEO Chill in 2001. A self-proclaimed nerd who told his high-school classmates that he wanted to be the president of a multilayered company, Fiasco and Chill, through their Jay-Z link, maneuvered their FNF producers Prolyfic & Soundtrakk onto Beyonce’s Grammy Award-winning album “Dangerously in Love” with track “Kick Hip Hop Star.” FNF is now home to producers Prolyfic & Soundtrakk and artists Shaya-G, Gemini and female trio Risque. BMG Music Publishing signed FNF as well.

Fiasco’s tipping point in bringing his alternative hip-hop and sneaker culture to mainstream recognition was his spot on Kanye West’s single “Touch the Sky” from 2005’s hit album “Late Registration.” The video featured Fiasco in a vintage blue ‘70s tuxedo.

Fiasco originally caught the rapper’s attention with his take on West’s “Diamonds From Sierra Leone” titled “Conflict Diamonds,” a breakdown of the African genotype surrounding the diamond trade. Thanks to “Touch the Sky,” Fiasco is recognizable to the average MTV fan and has even crossed over to West’s preeminent ecclectic fan base.

Reebok has also come to the table. The company’s head of entertainment Que Gaskins says he felt Fiasco’s music early on and played tracks at Reebok board meetings, pushing for Fiasco’s marketing viability.

“He’s my target audience,” Gaskins says. “He’s an excellent representative of the brand. Lupe’s positive, he doesn’t smoke, drink or curse and has that youthful energy.”

Banking on Fiasco’s core sneaker identity, high-profile entertainment relationships and solid rhymes, Reebok reached out for its edgier R&B line campaign featuring Lil Wayne, Daddy Yankee, Nelly and Mike Jones.

For Reebok, each hard campaign depends on the individual hip-hop artist. Jay-Z, for example, wants a partnership with money coming on the back end, where 50 Cent wants his profits upfront.

Major brands are getting fewer and fewer free artist endorsements so don’t look for any more tracks like Nelly’s ode to Nike, “Air Force Ones.”

In today’s evolving music market, artists have a better understanding of their cachet, and high-impact deals like RBK’s have become smaller and more creative.

Fiasco’s RBK contract runs for one year, and he’s already in talks to create his own Reebok shoe apart from the RBK launch.

Gaskins won’t divulge specific numbers but says artist-driven Reebok campaigns have been quite successful. “Jay-Z’s shoe sold out in four days,” Gaskins says.

“I’ve already been approached by Pepsi,” Fiasco says. “Different wireless companies also, but I think they’ll probably wait until after the album’s release.”

“McDonald’s, DC shoe company, HBO’s ‘Entourage’ and EA Sports have all approached us,” Chill says of Fiasco’s Lebron James-like coup.

“I’ve gotten calls from Jay-Z, Pharrell and Kanye West saying he’s the future of hip hop,” Kallman says.

However, Fiasco benefited from the thievery and emerged with compliments from hip-hop’s toughest critics—online hip-hop chatrooms.

“If you read the excitement online and see the amount of file sharing of the music, it’s really ironic,” Greenwald says. “It’s only heightened the anticipation of his debut.”

As a result of the leak, Fiasco has completed a few new tracks and the album has been moved back one month from its original release date to Aug. 29.

Fiasco originally said he’d only work with Prolyfic & Soundtrakk, who created his first single, “Kick Push.” But now he’s added West, Three 6 Mafia, Williams, Mike Shinoda and newcomers Chris and Drog as producers. However, he refuses to divulge what guest performers may appear on the refurbished album, outside Jilli Scott.

His next single is the Williams-produced “Gotcha,” but most of the new album remains under wraps.

“From the music out of Atlantic’s hands, Chill says. “It’s hard to say where the leak came from. I know it didn’t come from me.”

Based on the 15 tracks leaked onto the Internet, Fiasco’s lyrics cover a range of topics from social factors perpetuating urban ghettos in “Steady Mobbin'” to simply courting a girl. And “Never Lie” lets Fiasco collaborate with his favorite band Linkin Park as the track features the band’s vocalist/MC Shinoda—it’s the ultimate union of the Hawk crew and Nas groupies.

The leaked “Food & Liquor” sounds like a return to “real” music. There aren’t a bunch of synthesized sounds and braggadocio where Fiasco threatens to shoot his listener. However, he is careful not to beat us with “righteousness”; instead it’s a subtle education. Tracks like “Kick Push” and the girly composition “Sunshine” balance out sadler, socially analytical pieces like “Hurt Me Soul.”

Fiasco has successfully married the, until now, opposing cultures of hip-hop and skateboarding. Both Atlantic’s rock and hip-hop promotional teams are working Fiasco’s records to their respective markets. Even his first solo video for “Kick Push,” the track Hawk’s foundation so much, depicts Fiasco sliding around a Chicago skate park to an intrinsic hip-hop track. And like the vertical ramp at Hawk’s fund-raiser, the skinny hip-hop kid with glasses is poised to make some serious demonstrations in hip-hop’s world.
For the first time in her career, Mariah Carey hops on the brandwagon

By Michael Paoletta
Illustration by ILOVEDUST
Mariah Carey is spending much time in Los Angeles these days. She is rehearsing for her upcoming trek, the Adventures of Mimi: The Voice, the Hits, the Tour. To be sure, she is in a good place, wholly focused on the tour’s presentation—as well as the brand that has become Mariah Carey. “I am in creative mode,” Carey says during a break from rehearsals, “ready to embark on the next phase of my journey.” Paving for a few seconds, she adds, “Yes, life is pretty good right now.” Indeed. Since the April 12, 2005, release of the multimillion-selling “The Emancipation of Mimi,” Carey’s career, which has had its share of ups and downs, has reached new peaks.

This is not lost on Carey or her manager, Benny Medina of Handprint Entertainment, who are both actively leveraging Carey’s brand, which is based around her artistry and music.

In a career that spans 16 years, Carey has steered clear of brand marketing initiatives—until this year, that is. In the past six months alone, she has partnered with Intel (a TV spot), Elizabeth Arden (a fragrance line due next spring), Pepsi (a multi-platform campaign featuring exclusive content) and Claire’s (where her jewelry and accessories line, Glamorized, is sold). On the near horizon is an inexpensive apparel line for dogs, to be sold exclusively at Claire’s. Further off in the distance is a line of high-end, luxury women’s watches. Consider the two sides of Carey: one focused on her younger fans, the other focused on her own lifestyle.

Early in her career, following such No. 1 hits as “Vision of Love” and “Someday,” Carey says she was approached by a company to appear in one of its commercials. “But the creative for the campaign was too goofy,” she says with a laugh. “It centered on my voice and a breaking glass. It just wasn’t me. It wasn’t how I wanted to portray myself.”

“Intel was my first brand partner,” Carey says. “The fact that the company deals in high-level technology, which music is a part of, appealed to me.” Carey also appreciated that the 30-second TV spot for the Intel Centrino mobile technology was not “hugely exploitive,” but rather “creatively inspiring.”

Created by McCann-Erickson New York, the ad, which debuted in February, featured Carey and the sounds of The Beatles’ “Min, Again.” a classic-sounding R&B song featured on “Emancipation.” Carey acknowledges that for this deal to work it was key that a nonsingle, album track be used. “It exposed the song as well as the album to more people.”

The ad was a preview to a larger, worldwide Centrino Duo campaign—encompassing print, Internet, TV and in-store platforms—that commenced in March and features Carey and other celebrities.

For Medina, such a campaign was the ideal way for Carey to be introduced to brand marketers. “A package like this one made perfect sense,” he says. “It’s a multiplatform, multi-initiative concept that was strategically planned. It hits many eyeballs.”

The same is true of the Pepsi Cool Tones & Motorola Phones campaign. For this summer-long sweepstakes, Carey wrote and produced 20 original voice and music spots. During this promotion, which also spotlights Mary J. Blige, the All-American Rejects, producer Scott Storch and others, Pepsi could give away more than 260 million ringtones. (One in three codes found under the caps of approximately 800 million Pepsi products will be for a ringtone at peptisrington.com.)

Carey kicked off the promotion with a national TV ad in May. The spot, helmed by BBDO New York, features one of Carey’s new ringtones, “Time of Your Life.”

According to Pepsi VP of colat Russel Weiner, by combining forces with Carey and the use of unique ringtone Pepsi was able to crack the teen market in an interesting way.

Since the promotion’s May 15 launch, unique site visits have doubled. “We’ve received several million entries,” he notes.

Thousands of consumers have downloaded Carey’s ringtunes, with the majority opting for “Time of Your Life.” Pepsi executives believe this is clear evidence that the TV com-

mental has helped raise awareness for the promotion.

The beverage company is hosting a one-off Pepsi Smash concert July 29 at the Kodak Theater in Los Angeles. Carey enthusiasts can win tickets to the show via radio (KIIS) and retail (7-11 stores) promotions.

ON TOP AND ON THE ROAD

Medina, who has overseen Carey’s career since 2004, views his client’s current business dealings as an ongoing development of her talent and vision—coupled with the ability and willingness to take chances and execute things on her own.

Consider this: After the flop that was “Glitter,” Carey will star in “Tennessee,” an indie film from producer Lee Daniels (“Monster’s Ball”).

“And she is at the top at this point in her career.”

The six-times platinum “The Emancipation of Mimi” garnered three Grammy Awards earlier this year and recently celebrated its one-year anniversary on The Billboard 200. In this issue, it sits at No. 120 on the tally.

The album includes the singer/songwriter’s 16th and 17th No. 1 singles, “We Belong Together” and “Don’t Forget About Us,” respectively. Carey with “Don’t Forget About Us” and tied Elvis Presley for the most No. 1s on The Billboard Hot 100. As an active recording artist, she now has the potential to pass the Beatles’ record.
high of 20 Hot 100 chart-toppers.

The biggest-selling album of 2005, "Mimi" has sold nearly 10 million albums worldwide, according to Island Records. This brings Carey's total career sales to 160 million units worldwide.

Tour promoter Live Nation has seen the luxury of not only aligning with a huge album, but also two decades of hits to promote. But historically, Carey's touring numbers have not been in the league of her success at retail.

Producers vow her North American tour, which commences Aug. 5, will be different. "Mariah Carey put out a career-defining album a year ago—we're about to embark on the defining tour for her," says Brad Wavra, VP at Live Nation and point person for the tour. "This will be the biggest tour she has ever undertaken and the largest audience she's ever played to."

Faisal Durrani, president of marketing for Live Nation, has orchestrated a massive national marketing and public-relations platform that has kept Carey in the public eye. While national promotions aren't exactly unique, what is unique here is Carey's commitment to the campaign.

"She's been involved in everything, from daily phone calls to working with us in creating the radio and television spots to being very hands-on with the print campaigns," Durrani says. "She's very focused on her brand and the message she wants to get out there."

A huge promotional blitz has led to Carey hyping the tour in USA Today and on several TV shows, including "Today," "Live With Regis and Kelly," MTV's "TRL," BET's "106 & Park" and "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live."

"Mariah has gone out and really done the work," Wavra says. "She has put in a tremendous amount of personal time. This is the difference between a successful tour and a tour that's mediocre."

Wavra says the level of cooperation between label and promoter has been high. "Benny Medina has orchestrated a great cooperative effort between the promoter and the record company on this project," he says. "Mariah delivered them a great record, (D) marketed and branded that record and helped bring it to the public's homes."

Label and promoter are sharing data on radio buys and promotions, and "we're working with the label's sales department to create retail promotions with their retail partners," Wavra says.

Carey's broad appeal presents a challenge and an opportunity. "She's a unique artist in that she means as much at the top 40 format as she does at the urban, rhythmic and hot AC formats," Durrani explains. "Normally, when we take a tour out we're hitting primarily one format and there's usually a secondary format that we're trying to hit. In Mariah's case, there are really five formats we hit simultaneously."

An unprecedented U.S. tour market and a red-hot Canadian market led to some shifting of the route, with three U.S. shows pulled and four more dates added, including three in Canada. Live Nation calls this action more a reaction to the heat north of the border than softness in promoting Carey Nation has USA Today says difference promotions aren't bringing. Carey Nation has USA Today says difference promotions aren't bringing. Carey Nation has USA Today says difference promotions aren't bringing.

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"She sold out Toronto, she sold out Vancouver, she did over 10,000 tickets in Montreal, and she did well in Edmonton. We thought, 'Why not go into Winnipeg and Calgary and add an other show in Toronto?' Wavra says. "The Canadian market is very hot now, and the exchange rate makes it very affordable to go there and not feel like we're playing for short money."

Wavra is confident that the tour will wind up as one of the year's most successful. "I'm going to say that we'll be doing 80%-100% business across 32 major arena dates on this tour," he says.

"The results are going to be there at the box office and on stage," Wavra continues. "It's the work ethic of the artist in realizing that to make a tour successful in this day and age you can't sit back and wait for it to happen. You've got to engage, and she has engaged with enthusiasm and vigor."

Carey's new taste for branding also plays a role with the tour—Gilette Venus is a tour sponsor. Named the official 2006 Celebrity Legs of a Goddess in May, Carey will lead the nationwide search for the woman with the most beautiful legs in the United States. Celebrity Legs of a Goddess contests will be held at five stops along the route—Miami (American Airlines Arena, Aug. 5), Atlanta (Philips Arena, Aug. 6), Philadelphia (Wachovia Center, Aug. 11), Boston (TD Bank North Garden, Aug. 21) and New York (Madison Square Garden, Aug. 23).

Whereas Carey once shunned branding opportunities, today the challenge is careful management of ongoing campaigns. "You don't want clutter of unmanageable campaigns going on at the same time," Medina says.

Carey's exclusive licensing agreement with beauty products company Elizabeth Arden includes development, marketing and distribution of her own prestige line of fragrances. Carey's first fragrance is due next spring; its name will be announced early next year. Price points will be in the $45-$65 range.

It was Carey's overall brand that resonated with execs at Elizabeth Arden, which also has fragrance lines from Elizabeth Taylor and Britney Spears. "Mariah is a remarkably dynamic and successful artist around the world," Elizabeth Arden executive VP of global marketing Ron Rolleston says. "She's a genuine star, larger than life and incredibly passionate. We like that passion."

And it doesn't hurt that she has a significant fan base worldwide that reaches across all age and ethnic groups, Rolleston adds.

When working with a celebrity, Rolleston says it's important to make the fragrance autobiographical. "Mariah has genuine opinions about what she likes. She provides leadership when it comes to what she wants."

Carey, who has taken an active role in the creation of her first fragrance, likes the process to writing and producing songs. Fragrances have top, bottom and middle notes, she says. "For me, this is where music and fragrance come together. I guess you could say we belong together."

Additional reporting by Ray Waddell in Nashville.
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Phinally! Pharrell Makes Up His ‘Mind’

Pharrell Williams' solo debut, "In My Mind," has had almost as many release dates as a cat has lives. First slated to street last November, then December, then early 2006, then April, the Star Trak/Interscope album is now locked in for July 25.

And Williams, best-known as one-half of production/writing team the Neptunes, says he has no one but himself to blame for the holdup.

"I’m a big kid," he confesses from London, where he is touring in support of the new disc. "I was being super artistic, and I wasn’t listening to anybody. I really didn’t give Interscope a chance to catch up with me in terms of promotion."

Eager to push his solo debut, the self-professed perfectionist says he prematurely issued the Gwen Stefani–featured lead single “Can I Have It Like That” late last year, while other tracks remained unmixed. His excitement also drove the release of a music video overseas for second single “Angel.” Meanwhile, Interscope had yet to set up marketing and promotional strategies for the project. "At a certain point," [Interscope CEO] Jimmy Iovine was like, “You gotta slow down a little bit, get us up to speed and explain what you’re trying to do,” " Williams says. But in the interim, the Virginia–raised producer failed to capitalize on any momentum that might have been created by "Can I Have It Like That," which peaked at No. 32 on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip–Hop Songs chart.

"It’s always hard to release a successful single and not follow up with an album," Star Trak president Yancey Ary says. "But Pharrell felt that he had more to add to this record."

One addition is his current self–produced single "Number 1" featuring Kanye West. The track is leisurely creeping up the urban charts but has yet to break into The Billboard Hot 100. "Everybody knows Pharrell, but the strategy is to make him like he’s a new artist," Interscope urban promotion executive Kevin Black says. "We’re marketing him across the board, from clubs and colleges to independent retailers."

Arty views the producer’s familiarity as a plus: "Most of his fans recognize that he’s always been an artist."

Still, Williams has yielded better results behind the boards (Stefani’s “ Hollaback Girl,” Snoop Dogg’s “Drop It Like It’s Hot," to name a few of his many hits) than on the mic. The 2003 Neptunes–produced set “The Neptunes Present... Clones” (Star Trak/Arista), which featured such artists as Nas, Kelis, Ludacris and Nelly performing alone and with Williams on a few tracks, moved 821,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The album bowed atop The Billboard 200 and spawned Williams’ first hit solo record, “Frontin’,” featuring Jay–Z. In contrast, N.E.R.D., the trio Williams formed with Neptunes partner Chad Hugo and their childhood pal Shay, sold 674,000 copies of its 2002 Star Trak/Virgin debut, "In Search Of." 2004 follow-up “Fly or Die” stalled at 412,000 units.

Williams insists that “In My Mind” is not an attempt to echo the commercial success of his production work. "I don’t see myself selling 5 million records," he says. "For me it’s about having fun, not trying to fit in. I’ve already sold tons of records as a producer."

The original premise of “In My Mind”—seven R&B tracks and seven–hip–hop cuts—stands, as well as the guest slots by Jay–Z, Snoop, Slim Thug and the Clipse. Instrumentation is heavy and reminiscent of the Neptunes’ sound, which is dictated by hard drumslines, eccentric keys and lush vocal washes. While the hip–hop tracks test Williams’ rhyming skills, the jazzier R&B cuts boast his signature Prince–like falsetto.

With the album release drawing near, Williams seems to be back on track. A new N.E.R.D. disc is in the works, plus upcoming production projects for Slim Thug, the Clipse, Robin Thicke, Fam–Lay, Jay–Z, Ludacris and Velor Revolver, among others. Additionally, Louis Vuitton recently drafted Williams for its fall and winter ad campaigns. He also plans to expand Star Trak. If he can’t be there for all of his solo work, they will still be able to find him easily. "It’s great when the rest of the world gets my music," he says, "but if they don’t, I can connect with them through Snoop, Jay, Beyoncé, Ludacris..." And the list goes on.
Superman may be faster than a speeding bullet, but he has nothing on John Ottman. The composer not only wrote two hours of music for "Superman Returns," he edited the Bryan Singer-directed summer blockbuster, which opened June 28.

The film marks the latest production between Singer and Ottman, who met more than 15 years ago at the University of Southern California. Among the other films scored by Ottman are "Kiss Kiss Bang Bang," "Gothika," "The Cable Guy," "The Usual Suspects," "X2" and "Fantastic Four." The "Superman Returns" soundtrack came out June 27 on Rhino/WEA.

Next for Ottman is composing the music for "A Night at the Museum," a family film starring Ben Stiller.

Q: Why did you incorporate John Williams' classic "Superman" theme in "Superman Returns"?

AT: It was a bittersweet process for me because it's always great when you can write your own theme and that really gives you the impetus to write the rest of the movie. It vacillated between that and "Hey, this is a great opportunity to keep alive one of the greatest themes ever written." My ego squashing the greatest theme ever would be tragic. I completely understand the fan mentality and I would be one of the rioters in the street if we didn't use his theme.

Q: How is playing the role of Superman different from other projects you've been involved with?

AT: I have a very close relationship with Superman. I have a lot of respect for the character and I was able to understand that. There's a lot of pressure in the role.

Q: What musical elements run through action/adventure movies?

AT: You always know you're going to get a big orchestra and you're going to get a big budget. That's always fun for me because I'm more of an orchestral guy. There's always going to be a lot of brass. Not that you want to be a cliché among all the superhero films, but let's face it, you always have to pull out all the stops.

Q: When editing a movie you've scored, what happens if you have to cut out your favorite part of the score?

AT: I really train myself to compartmentalize and be completely schizo. When I've got one hat on, I almost completely forget I've done the other job. That sounds completely unbelievable, but it's true. More times than not I'm lowering the music and Bryan will say, "You should pull it up a little bit."

Q: The two of you have worked together for years. What keeps that relationship ticking?

AT: It keeps working out, but every time I think I think it's going to be the one movie where I have a stroke or something or lose all my sensibilities. I think he has this worry that when I go off and score movies without him that I somehow will come back to one of his films having lost my mind or being too perverted by the other films I work on. And I try to tell him, "Your sensibilities don't change; they're there."

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'Low Rider' Returns

Earth, Wind & Fire's Verdine White Enters Artist Management, Preps To Release Remake Of Classic Song

Maurice White, whose music is the driving force behind Broadway's "Hot Feet," isn't the only Earth, Wind & Fire original member taping into his entrepreneurial spirit. His brother, EWF bassist Verdine White, has now jumped into the artist management/music production arena.

He's doing it by way of J.E.P. Entertainment (Julion Experience Presents), a partnership with fashion industry veteran Scott Julion. The Los Angeles-based label's inaugural release will be "The Key" (Sept. 12) from the six-piece multicultural band Slapbak. Specializing in R&B, funk and rock with some hip-hop flavor thrown in, the Orange County, Calif., group—headed by singer-songwriter/musician Jaris Harris—has a soundscape reminiscent of West Coast, underground CDs and has opened for Mint Condition, Digital Underground and Snoop Dogg. Slapbak's first J.E.P. single is a cover of the War classic "Low Rider." The album is distributed by KES Distribution in Chicago.

Asking about the reasoning behind picking such a well-known song as the group's first release, Julion says "Low Rider" will simultaneously appeal to adults and younger listeners. "This is a band that plays real music and has put a new millennium twist on 'Low Rider' to make it current. Adults will recognize the song and say, 'That used to be my jam,' while it will be brand-new and fresh to younger listeners.

White adds, "Slapbak's music with its funky grooves and melodic hooks revitalizes a genre that is still in demand."

"Low Rider" is being worked on college radio, while an accompanying video was just finished. Waiting in the wings is second single "California Girls," which will follow thanks to three underground CDs and has opened for Mint Condition, Digital Underground and Snoop Dogg. Slapbak's first J.E.P. single is a cover of the War classic "Low Rider." The album is distributed by KES Distribution in Chicago.

Additional artists on the roster include 14-year-old female pop/R&B singer/songwriter Clarion from Lancaster, Calif., and male R&B singer Aaron G. from Mississippi. Rounding out the J.E.P. management team is CEO Christophe Peerman, Raven Symone's father. Former DreamWorks executive Pat Shields is handling marketing for the label, and Solo2Soul Public Relations is managing the publicity front.

White oversees the management end of the partnership, with Julion serving as CEO. "If we keep it moving, we won't drown," Julion says of the partnership entrepreneurial launch. "We are going for broke."

QUICK HITS: TVT Music Publishing has signed songwriter/producer Devo Springfield. The Grammy Award winner's credits include co-writing three songs (including "So High") on John Legend's debut album. In addition to collaborating again with Legend on his sophomore album, Springfield is also working with Aethra Franklin and newcomers GLC and Consequence.

While in London promoting her new Motown set, India.Arie was invited to record the tune "Georgia" with noted U.K. pianist/bandleader and former Squeeze member Jools Holland for one of his future projects.

Springfield, Mass.—based Reflections Emporium, whose proprietor James Lewis was featured in Billboard's July 1 "Indie R&B 2006" cover story, is moving to a new location at 64 Boston Road. The store will share space with a black art gallery and a beauty care and health store. Its grand opening is scheduled for July 19. Among Lewis' future plans for the store: home delivery.
Pérez Has DIY Spirit
Artist Builds Her Own Brand With Self-Released ‘Stars’

The message of 2005’s Billboard Dance Music Summit was unmistakable: “Self-made artists are in.” Nearly a year later, MySpace and digital distribution have become winners of any campaign, indie or major, and unsigned artists without any real direction seem to outnumber bikini-clad pinups in cyberspace.

But then there is Malena Pérez. No artist embodies the modern DIY spirit quite like this re-splendent newcomer. Emboldened by the moderate success of her 2004 deep house single “Free to Fly,” Pérez assembled a team of producers, wrote a crop of original songs, recorded an album and launched her own label to release it. The result, “Stars,” comes out July 11 on Cuabanita Groove.

A relatively typical story, right? But the beauty of Pérez—apart from her bohemian, Audrey Hepburn good looks—is in the details. “Stars” is an effortlessly airy collection; simple, yet lush, with elements of Pérez’s Latin upbringing, as well as her adult appreciation for everything but the Girl and Sade. She sings in Spanish and English, sometimes within the same track. The album’s artwork—Pérez’s distinctive blue-grey eyes peering out from a swath of purple flowers—embodies the music within. MySpace page (nearly 2,000 friends and counting) lists her influences and tells her story: Atlanta-raised, daughter to a Cuban father and German mother, anthropology and literature major at Notre Dame, now dedicated to helping female artists make their own way in the music industry.

In short, Pérez is a woman’s woman who could make a man melt, or in industry-speak, “the total package.” Or maybe even “a brand.”

“I’ve always wanted to have control over my intellectual property, my image, who I work with,” Pérez says. “I think we as women in the industry should be able to feel self-sufficient. A lot of female vocalists tell me that they feel they fall into that trap, [that] their vision for their project becomes their producer’s vision, and five years later, they look back and think, ‘How did I get here?’”

Collaborations with house producers like Ousladé, Kenny “Dope” Gonzalez and Carlos Niño & the Life Force Trio will put “Stars” on dance fans’ radar, as will the involvement of marketing crew Giant Step. Pérez is also assembling an international street team via MySpace bulletins and getting a band together to interpret “Stars” live.

Pérez recently signed a new artist—smoky singer Jacqueline Marie. And she plans to donate a portion of Cuabanita Groove’s proceeds to charities aiding battered women.

All told, there is nothing helpless about this ingénue.

SUMMER PICK: Anthems don’t always need to have vocals. Since its release in October of last year, German duo Âme’s “Rej” (Sonar Kollectiv Germany), a wordless seven-minute odyssey into deep electro-tech, has slowly become the most influential release of the year, and even the sumer season. The deceptively simple track has been adopted by DJs from all genres, artistically unifying the usually fractured dance club circuit.

“This track reminds me of that Aztec Mystic track ‘Jaguar,’” “Billboard” reporting DJ David Garcia says. ‘Remember that even though it was purely a techno track, it was so beautiful that even DJs like Louie Vega were playing it. ‘Rej’ is along the same line; it just has a ton of emotion behind it.”

Solo On Manic Street
Preachers’ Bradfield Has Summer Single, Album, Tour

In April 2005, the Manic Street Preachers announced a two-year layoff. But the Welsh alternative rock trio’s devoted fan base won’t have to wait much longer to see vocalist/guitarist James Dean Bradfield again. With drummer Sean Moore busy becoming a father, Bradfield and bassist/lyricist Nicky Wire filled their time with solo projects. Wire’s album “I Killed the Zeitgeist” is due mid-September, but first comes Bradfield’s July 30 U.K. single “That’s No Way to Telephone” (Columbia). His album “The Great Western” will bow July 24 in the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan, followed by an international rollout.

Although Bradfield is the Manic Street Preachers’ main composer, he has penned only one set of lyrics for the band. “The Great Western,” however, is all self-written apart from the Wire track “Bad Boys and Painkillers” and a Jacques Brel cover, “To See a Friend in Tears.”


Bradfield’s lyrics largely echo the Preachers’ political sloganeering, but musically the album is “a nod to ‘Everything Must Go’ and ‘This Is My Truth’,” manager Martin Hall says. “It’s big and accessible.”


An eighth Preachers album that Hall describes as “a return to ‘big rock’ in a Green Day style” is being recorded for spring 2007 release.

—Tom Ferguson

ESKIMO JOE: Two years ago, disappointed at his band’s failure to turn any of its four boosted sales, “It absolutely stood out on radio,” he says.

Eskimo Joe formed in Perth eight years ago and released its first album “Girl” (Modular) in 1998. “Girl” shipped gold (35,000 units), but 2004 sophomore set “A Song Is a City” (Festival/Mushroom) shipped double-platinum, according to the labels.

International release plans are not finalized, but following U.S. and U.K. Warner label showcases during July, Eskimo Joe begins a lengthy Australian tour. July 26, booked through IMC. The band’s publishing is with Mushroom Music.

—Christie Eliezer
**Nashville Scene**

**PHYLIS STARK** pstark@billboard.com

**Big & Rich Pay Tribute To Vietnam Vets**

Last year Big & Rich found themselves crouching by a hole they had dug in Vietnam, drinking shots of Crown Royal, then throwing the shot glasses on top of a pair of bloody combat boots already nestled in the ground.

For the country duo, it was the culmination of a documentary they were filming based on a song the pair had written, “The 8th of November.” For their friend Niles Harris, crouching and drinking with them at what had been the scene of a devastating jungle battle 40 years prior, it was much more.

On Nov. 8, 1965, a then-19-year-old Harris and his colleagues in the Army’s 173rd Airborne engaged in a bloody firefight on that very spot. The battle left 168 American soldiers dead, and Harris and hundreds of others badly injured.

From that point on, every Nov. 8 Harris has dressed in a suit and gone out to have a steak dinner and a few drinks to toast his fallen comrades.

In 2002, John Rich and Big Kenny—who had not yet been unleashed on the country music world as Big & Rich—traveled to Deadwood, S.D., to do some songwriting. There, they met Harris, a local bartender with a poignant tale to tell.

Rich says Harris’ story struck a chord with he and Kenny, reminding them that for these American veterans, such experiences “stick with them and, in a lot of cases, are debilitating to them.”

The story inspired the duo to pen “The 8th of November,” included on Big & Rich’s current CD, “Comin’ To Your City.”

“We wanted to write a song that commemorated our friend Niles, but would also commemorate all of our veterans everywhere,” Rich says. “Kenny and I, being songwriters and entertainers, it was our chance to say, ‘Thanks! It’s all about reverance and respect.’

But after writing and recording the song, they still were not done with the story, eventually hatching a plan to travel with Harris and a film crew to Vietnam. Harris was to bury the boots that were cut off his feet after the battle, which Rich calls “the most horrific day of his life.” The boots had been hanging in his garage for decades. They hired a scout in Vietnam who spent several months trying to pinpoint the exact location of the Nov. 8 battle. Once it was identified, Rich, Kenny, Harris and three others obtained their visas, boarded a plane and traveled across 18 time zones to get there, where they hooked up with a local film crew.

The duo initially self-financed the project, although its label, Warner Bros. Nashville, later split the costs, according to Rich. But he insists that detail is unimportant.

“It was such a personal thing for us we couldn’t expect anybody else to pay for it,” he says.

The resulting hournal DVD is, by turns, quite funny and deeply moving. It includes an interview with the spy who exposed the location of the American troops to the North Vietnamese army 40 years before, sparking the battle Harris has never quite gotten over.

“We wanted the documentary to be a catalyst for healing for these Vietnam veterans” who got left “out of their own home,” Rich says. “We wanted it to be seen by millions of people and provide some healing for these guys to let them know they’re not forgotten.”

This year, Procter & Gamble’s P&G’s OTC is sponsoring the Big & Rich tour. After seeing the documentary, P&G executives extended that partnership, with P&G paying to press 1.2 million copies of the DVD. Throughout July, it will be packaged as a free give-away with the heartburn medication at retail locations.

The documentary made its TV debut July 1 on GAC. A mini-documentary video and digital booklet, packaged with the “8th of November” single and music video, is available this month as an exclusive at iTunes.

Ultimately, Rich says, he hopes the video has such an impact that it will inspire someone to stage a very belated homecoming parade for Vietnam vets. “That’s the ultimate dream for us. ‘Kenny and I consider this the most important piece of music we’ve ever been a part of.’

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**Latin Notas**

**LEILA COBO** lcbobo@billboard.com

**Hearing Van Gogh’s Ear**

Low-Key Rock Act La Oreja De Van Gogh Riding High

By now, most are aware that La Oreja de Van Gogh translates as Van Gogh’s Ear.

But not everyone may realize that the Spanish quintet has become one of Latin music’s most popular acts, selling more than 5 million albums worldwide. The group’s most recent album, “Guapa,” has surpassed global sales of 600,000 since its May release, according to Sony BMG.

In Spain, where La Oreja is in the midst of a 30-city tour, the album has spent eight weeks at No. 1.

Despite such success, the members of La Oreja—singer Anna Montero, keyboardist Xabi San Martin, guitarist Pablo Benedé, bassist,风光 Fuentes and drummer Haritz Gari—retain the look and attitude of unabashed university students who just happen to have a pop band.

Indeed, the five met as students, forming the band in 1996. Today, they are stars, but they are still not into glam. A recent weekday morning in Miami found them walking 10 blocks from a meeting to their hotel rather than waiting for a company car.

“We feel a little strange in this showbiz world,” San Martin says. “We were college friends who did this because we loved it. And suddenly, we see ourselves in this dynamic of making albums. We try to conserve a bit of the world and its saccharine, so that we don’t start to believe all of it.”

The band members say they have little concern about fame or industry honors. They have declined to the face or provide the music for an advertising campaign—although the band has paired up with brands for its tours. The current “Guapa Tour 2006 Seat” is named after the new Ibiza Seat automobile.

The secret of La Oreja’s success can be found in the basics: original songs that connect with an audience. It is clever material, with clever arrangements, yet easy to sing.

The band had immediate success in Spain with its first album, 1998’s “Dile Al Sol.” But sales outside its home market only arrived with the ensuing “El Viaje de Copperpot” in 2000, which La Oreja promoted heavily in Mexico. That served as a trampoline for a strong U.S. entry. The band’s first album to hit Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart was its third, 2003’s “Lo Que Te Confie Mientras Te Hacias La Dormida,” which has sold close to 250,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The members of La Oreja say “Guapa,” which loosely translates to “good looking” and features lush, complex arrangements, represents their current, satisfied state of mind.

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NOW HEAR THIS
YOUR GUIDE TO UNSIGNED BANDS

THE BLUE SCHOLARS

The Blue Scholars have become a local phenomenon in Seattle. In six months, the hip-hop duo's MC, Geologic, says he and partner DJ Sabzi have blown through an initial pressing of 5,000 copies for recent EP "The Long March." The pair were also recently tapped to play the main stage of Seattle's Sasquatch Festival in May, alongside such top national acts as the Flaming Lips and Nine Inch Nails.

Indie retailer Sonic Boom confirms "The Long March" was a top seller during the holidays. Meanwhile, a self-titled, self-released 2004 full-length debut has sold 8,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, with 83% of them coming from the Seattle area. Geologic, however, puts the number at about 10,000 copies. To help with distribution, the album was licensed till the end of the year to local label Light in the Attic.

"At the start, we didn't even explore the possibility of shopping the album to a major or hooking up with an indie," Geologic says. "And now the Blue Scholars never plan to.

The politically minded duo, marked by Geologic's working-class calls for action and Sabzi's jazzy backdrops, recorded its debut in 2003. It took about a year, but eventually the Blue Scholars saved the $3,000 it cost to master the album and press an initial batch. The Seattle Weekly responded by naming it album of the year, and the University of Washington's (UW) adult alternative KEXP Seattle-Tacoma began regularly playing the act. The duo also won a second-stage slot at the 2005 edition of the Sasquatch Festival.

"We saw other people do this on their own successfully, with success meaning the ability to sell at least 4,000 CDs locally and have enough local pull to open the next Ghostface show, for example," Geologic says.

Going forward, the Blue Scholars will handle all label duties themselves. This month, they announced the launch of their own indie, Mass Line Records. Geologic says they are shopping for distribution and are close to a deal.

For Mass Line, the Blue Scholars took inspiration from Minneapolis label Rhymesayers Entertainment. The latter has helped to define its city's hip-hop scene, establishing a well-regarded shop and a nationally known act in Atmosphere.

Mass Line will start its mission of unifying the Seattle rap scene by hosting monthly open-mic and cultural events. In October, the label will release the debut from Common Market, which features Sabzi, a classically trained pianist who has also played drums in a ska-punk band. A new Blue Scholars album will follow in early 2007.

And in a sure sign that Geologic and Sabzi are dedicated to their hip-hop pursuits, the two UW grads have quit their day jobs.

"We approach art and the music that we make as something that has to seek a higher purpose," Geologic says. "It cannot be art for art's sake."

Contact: geologic@bluescholars.com

THE BROKEDOWN

In just two years, Los Angeles act the Brokedown has evolved from an alt-country quartet to a full-on Western-inspired rock band. The band's self-released EP, "The Dutchman's Gold," was centered on Dan lead's mournful pedal steel guitar work, but bouncier songs such as "Down in the Valley" foreshadowed the act's rock'n'roll future. A forthcoming album, singer/guitarist Ross Flournoy says, is "a little bit more adventurous" than the EP. These days, the Brokedown has essentially shed the pedal steel in favor of a more rollicking brand of guitar pop. The band recently held down a monthlong residency at the Silver Lake Lounge in Los Angeles and will return to the venue Aug. 9. The Brokedown is looking for a home for its debut album. "We would love to sign with a label that was small to medium size," Flournoy says.

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Contact: geologic@bluescholars.com
Money's New Currency
A Skateboarding Savant Is Young Money Entertainment's Newest Star

It's no secret that DJ Drama's Gangsta Grillz mixtape series is Southern hip-hop's barometer as to who's hot and who's not. The most recent edition, "Drama and Lil Wayne: Dedication 2," boasts a new MC, Currency, on Lil Wayne's Young Money Entertainment imprint through Universal Records. Currency's first single, "Where Da Cash At?", featuring Lil Wayne and Benny Ma, uses production team the Runners (Rick Ross' "Hurly Burly") full-bodied organ production while they toss around pimpleolicious lyrics.

Currency, whose birth name is Shante Frank, ("I got a girl's name. The first day of school, I'd introduce myself and know that I was going to have to fight at lunch.") was born in and raised all around New Orleans. He was originally signed to C-Murder's record label Tru Records, in 2001 before hopping over to Master P's No Limit Records. That didn't end too well.

"I was trying to do P, and I was trying to actually be a rapper," Currency says.

After leaving No Limit Records in 2004, Currency, a magnum school smart kid, went against his mother's wishes and ditched college. Instead, he worked hard to perfect his skateboarding craft in hopes of joining some friends who were already sponsored by the popular skate shoe brand DC. But just before Currency dived in wheels first, Young Money Entertainment called.

"My album's called 'Music to Fly To,'" Currency says, "because I fly so much I figured I'd make an album that you could listen to for an entire flight; from the minute you take off to the minute you land.

While "Where Da Cash At?" is the brash street single, Currency promises that the rest of "Music to Fly To" is filled with funk and jazzy tracks due to his medicinal use during the album's production.

He's also talking up a spoken-word track, saying, "There are a lot of layers to me that people don't know about." The debut album is slated to drop later this summer.

And while some folks might think that Currency is biting Lupe Fiasco's marketing plan—Fiasco's debut video for "Kick, Push" showcases his love for skateboarding—Currency says, "That's ignorant people who thought nobody skated until 'Kick, Push' came out.

The same thing goes for Lupe in terms of Pharrell (who has been skateboarding and has a skateboarding team)," he adds. "What would be bad is if I was a poseur that just skates because that's what's in right now.

VOTE OR DIE: J. Period, mix-tape father of "The Best of Lauryn Hill," is prepping a mix tape to celebrate veteran hip-hop journalist Kevin Powell running for congressional office. And though Powell has pulled his campaign to 2008, J. Period Presents: Powell for the People Vol. 1, boasting rhymes from artists like Talib Kweli, Dead Prez's M-1 and Black Thought, is tenta

CURRENCY

The Playboy Party
Comic Returns As Host Of Annual Jazz Festival

At New York's Village Vanguard, club matron Lorraine Gordon sternly defies the audience to talk during a set. Three thousand miles away at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, patrons of the Playboy Jazz Festival receive the opposite message: Eat, drink and converse through two days of non-stop entertainment.

It's a daunting task for musicians to play over the din, but it's certainly not unprecedented (witness the background small talk and silverware clinking during the 1965 live recordings of the Miles Davis Quintet at Chicago's Plugged Nickel nightclub). The Playboy Festival celebrated its 28th birthday June 17-18 with an impressive lineup representing the breadth of jazz (Billboard, July 8). Playboy is unique among festivals in that the music serves more as a backdrop for the party. Bill Cosby, returning as master of ceremonies after a year's absence, acknowledged backstage that it's "a hard crowd," but added, "I know them. I tell them, 'Eat, talk, drink; we're here for you.'

Cosby, who orchestrated the band as well as noodled on the traps, said afterward that this festival staple has had "horrendous moments from what I thought were good ideas and great moments that were planned." Then, beaming, he added, "We've also caught some wonderful lightening in a bottle.

Noteworthy sets were turned in by Branford Marsalis' powerful swing-to-abstract quartet, the supremely entertaining Jimmy Cullum, Latin jazz ace Eddie Palmieri with special guests saxophonist David Sanchez and violinist Regina Carter, the ultra-swinging Clayton/Hamilton Jazz Orchestra paying tribute to Milt Jackson with guest vibes player Stefon Harris, Ron Carter's Golden Striker trio and three-crowd-pleasing New Orleans infused acts: Elder Edward Babb & the McCollough Sons of Thunder, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and the Elvis Costello/Allen Toussaint soul/rock collective.

The highlight was delivered by pianist McCoy Tyner's trio that accompanied the Los Angeles-based Lula Washington Dance Theatre. While the choreography was more "Flashdance" than Mark Morris, Tyner's dynamics on the keys carried the set. Much thinner in stature due to a health concern last year, the invigorated Tyner nonetheless played with a left-hand thrust that, at least momentarily, caught the attention of festivalgoers.

DUKING WITH CLARKE: Keyboardist George Duke and electric bassist extraordinary Stanley Clarke also rocked the Playboy Fest in the midst of their Clarke Duke Project national tour. Both have new CDs. Duke's "In a Mellow Tone" (BPM Recordings), featuring standards and reinterpretations of originals, steeled June 27. Clarke's "Standards" (Kind of Blue Records) showcases him playing acoustic bass, his first such recording in 20 years. It will be released Aug. 18.

BRECKER RETURNS: After being sidelined for 15 months, tenor saxophonist Michael Brecker triumphantly returned June 25 at Herbie Hancock's Four-PIES show, dubbed Herbie's World, at the JVC Jazz Festival at Carnegie Hall. Brecker appeared as an unannounced guest in Hancock's trio, featuring bassist Ron Carter and drummer Jack DeJohnette. It was Brecker's first horn blowing since being diagnosed with the debilitating MDS bone-marrow malady. At the previous day's rehearsal, Brecker, after entering Carroll Studios with a cane, launched into Hancock's blazing "One Finger Snap" three times. Was he fatigued after not playing his sax in a year? "Not really, but I didn't have my chops which was probably good," Brecker said. "I couldn't sit back and rely on them."
Three years after the modern rock smash “Hands Down,” Chris Carrabba’s Dashboard Confessional returns with an atmospheric midtempo anthem full of mature, melodic music. Kicking off with a wordless, arena singalong that could make Bon Jovi blush, “Don’t Wait” boasts a simple melody and soaring chorus that takes one by surprise. More focused than ever, the super-sensitive Carrabba squeezes the essence out of his punk-folk, but keeps his sad-boy lyrics smart and poetic. At a time when most emo startups are trying to be Fall Out Boy, Dashboard steps on the brakes and reaches for U2, a wise move that will resonate with ‘80s-friendly modern rock radio. —SP

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Currently on tour with the Heartbreakers, Tom Petty is finally ready to share some new material. “Saving Grace” begins with a space, Bon Jovi–style blues that builds to a rousing powerhouse. The guitar’s insistence on keeping things deliciously gritty, giving the song a fresh garage-style feel, and Petty’s stoner vocals are as laid-back and nostalgic as ever. A classic-sounding ode to restlessness, “Saving Grace” is the perfect prelude to the “Highway Companion,” Petty’s first solo album since 1994’s Rick Rubin-produced “Electrocutionists,” from Petty’s American Recordings label. The cut is off to a kick-start at triple-A radio; more important, it proves that Petty still knows how to rock. —SP

The Avalanche
The Avalanche
Producer: Sufjan Stevens
Supplier: Matinee Kids
Release Date: July 11
There’s something comforting about hearing the soft-voiced Sufjan Stevens merge American film noir with the biggest, most-rosy-fleeced choral music of the year. If you think of “Kid A” as a song and NOT the album, you can end up with an interesting, and refreshing, new sound. —MH

Radiohead’s “Black Holes” and “Kid A” have been searing, but theampoo’s “Kid A” is a song and NOT the album, you can end up with an interesting, and refreshing, new sound. —MH

SOUL ASYLUM
The Silver Lining
Producers: Steve Hodge, John Fields
Legacy
Release Date: July 11
Soul Asylum gave us the big hit “Love the One You’re With,” but the band’s “90’s” set piece “Runaway Train,” even if it was playing at President Bill Clinton’s first inauguration, only to disappear soon after. Now the band is back with its first studio recording in eight years and its last with bassist Karl Mueller, Jo Bland died last year. Mixing pop melody and garage grit, “The Silver Lining” is an old-school alternative rock album full of wide-eyed wails and open-hearted hooks. Dave Pirner’s moody rasp still has that scratchy, spine-tingling quality. While some cuts are flooded with lyrical clichés (“Stand Up and Believe”), its songs fail to captivate beyond a curiosity factor.—TM

MUSE
Black Holes and Revelations
Release Date: July 11
Like supersizing Fries when the portion is already too big, “Black Holes and Revelations” further blots Muse’s raucous crescendos and space-rocking riffs with heavier synths and weird, Queen-like harmonies. Don't be surprised - the timing and circumstance help make Muse a great band to begin with. Bigness does not an anthem make, or at least not at the expense of the Big Chorus. Though the album grows stronger as it2 rushes on, the trio's burst of bombast leaves the killer melodies lost in outer space. The falsetto psychedelia that is first single “Hysteria” is not all that damaging Black Hole” feels shaky, and the otherworldly pretentiousness of “Soldier’s Poem” feels like filler. Matthew Bellamy’s vocal performance is fantastic (as per usual), particularly on “Invincible” and “Take a Bow,” but the album is ultimately dragged down by its own heavy hand. —KH

GREG GRAFFIN
Cold as the Clay
Anti
Release Date: July 11
With this dusky and starkly recorded collection, longtime Bad Religion vocalist and guitarist Graffin, best known for the band's guy in recent months to temporarily trade in his rock’n’roll pedigree for that of a soulful troubadour bringing old folk songs back to life. Where Br- to a degree at least —is a more comfortable swimming around in folk’s dark side, the characters he highlights are truthful but hope-free (”Talk About Slumbering”), abandoned lovers (“Willie Moore”) or simple stone-cold killers (“Omie Wise,” ”Little Sadie”). His icy rasp perfectly suited to such blackhearted tales, Graffin also uses stripped-down detour to contribute a few of his own tracks, which figure exactly into the album’s sense of dusty isolation —JL

COUNTRY
RAY WYLIE HUBBARD
Snake Farm
Producers: Gurf Morlix, Ray Wylie Hubbard
Sustain Records/Universal
Release Date: June 27
This project, mastered by Englishman Peter Doig, is a flashback to the ’50s, when there was an active crosswalk between rockabilly and country. The album opens with the worn-out country tune “Lonesome Dollar.” “Turntable Matinee” brings Big Sandy’s album output to an even dozen and during that time his preoccupation with classic roots music has never paid bigger dividends than it does here. —PVV

World
SKA CUBANO
¡Ay Caramba!
Producer: Natty Bo Cumbancha
Release Date: July 11
This project, masterminded by Englishman Peter Doig, is a flashback to the ’50s, when there was an active crosswalk between rockabilly and country. The album opens with the worn-out country tune “Lonesome Dollar.” “Turntable Matinee” brings Big Sandy’s album output to an even dozen and during that time his preoccupation with classic roots music has never paid bigger dividends than it does here. —PVV
from >>p37
includes amazing vocals from Cuban singer Beny Billy (Juan Manuel Vily). The music is consistently
delightful. "Tungarara" is a slightly bent cumbia about
a little frog and a toad, enlivened by Rene
Dondé Borner's terrific flute. Witness the resurrection
via ska of the chestnut
"Jezebel," the ska-cumbia rendition of Ramon
Vargas' "Soy Campesina," and turn up the volume for the
thunderous ska-son
treatment of "Oye Compa Yuin," with lyrics by Gisela Navea,
Beny Billy's wife. A retro-centric
disco makes even the highest order—PVV

LATIN
ENANITOS VERDES
Pescado Original
Producers: Enanitos
Verdes, Gustavo Borner
Unreleased Dates: June
27, July 4
With this album
linged with nostalgia,
Argentine pop/rock
veterans Enanitos Verdes
will surely see a positive
impact thanks to their
recent U.S. tour and live
album. "Pescado Original"
is Enanitos' first studio set since
2002, and it sounds
melodious and beautiful.
More pop than rock,
this finds the group
collaborating with the
likes of Julieta Venegas
and Coti for an immensely
commercial sound.
Anchored by the
melodious and "A Las Tras"
(2004) —a story of
immigrant, we presume—
this set is straight to the
point in a good way.
Catchy first single "Mariposas"
could pave the way in a
radio atmosphere that
may finally be ready for
sounds of groups like
Enanitos.—LC

HUECO
Hueco
Producer: KC Porter
Warner MusicLatin Release Date: June
27
The first U.S.-released
album by Spanish act
Hueco is a melange of
costumes and styles reminiscent of Manu
Chao yet infinitely more
melodic. A mix of ska,
reggae, tango, mambo,
pop and rock, the end
result is often irresistible.
"Tacones Baratos" (Cheap
Heels), a monument to the
allure of that kind of girl,
is sexy and gritty at the
same time, while "Mamba
Negro" mixes folklore and
flamenco yet manages to
avoid being cheesy.
Hueco himself is edgy
and aggressive but
carries off the top
with his sheer exuberance
as he happily throws
everything into the mix.
There are no holds
barred here. But
precisely what gives this
album its edge. This music
may be way too in-your-
face for Spanish air
in the United States, but it's
worth discovering in other
lands.—LC

PHISH
Live in Brooklyn
JEMP/Arino
Release Date: July 11
Amid the summer
festival breakdowns,
grass and jam bands
Phish took the stage
at Brooklyn's Coney Island
on June 17, 2002, for one
of its last shows before
splitting two months later.
While "Live in Brooklyn"
isn't quite unique enough
from a set-list perspective
to warrant must-own
status, stellar jams like
Edgar Winter's
"Frankenstein" and
"Free" (check Mike Gordon's
funked-up bass solo), the
breakneck "Weekapaug
Gnome" and the finale
"Divided Sky" and an out-
spaced psychedelic run
through the theme
of "2001" and its
freewheeling qualities
that made Phish so beloved.
That day's soundcheck
and a backstage
unplugged performance
by guitarist Trey
Anastasio are also nice behind-the-
scenes touches. Only
complaint: Where are the
two songs with surprise
guest Jay-Z(1( from the
following night's gig at the
same venue?—JC

NEW & NOTEWORTHY
THE FORMAT
Dog Problems
Producers: Steve McDonald
Vanity/Nettwerk Release Date: July 11
The sunny exterior of "Dog Problems" pairs perfectly
with singer Nate Ruess' perky, even-keeled voice and
gargantuan tongue that seems firmly in
check. Rounded out with a
horn section, crowd-noise
together and shimmery
guitars, the breathless indie pop
and broken-hearted lyrics of "Dog
Problems" deserve every
bit of the attention they
are receiving.
Glockenspiel
and clap
class
are
weirdly
ready
for
"Ocean."
As
though
the
song
were
never
to
be
said.
The
title
track
is
impeccably
arranged
for
maximum
impact
of
words like "I never
finish phrases, I
mussle/ Open
arms are prison
cells." The
emotional outcome
from listening to "Dog Problems" all depends on
how closely one listens, but
it is as rare as regards the rest of the
result—KW

DVD
PHISH
Live in Brooklyn
JEMP/Arino
Release Date: July 11
Amid the
carnival
breaks, geezy hot
dogs stands and suntan
lotion, Phish
took the stage
at Brooklyn's Coney Island
on June 17, 2002, for one
of its last shows before
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While "Live in Brooklyn"
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same venue?—JC

ADDITIONAL REVIEWS:
- The Pipettes, "We Are the Pipettes"
- Grant-Lee Phillips, "Nineteen-Eighties"
- Final Fantasy, "He Poes Clouds" (Remixed)

METHOD MAN
Say (3:58)
Producer: Erick Sermon
Writers: B. Marley, C. Smith, S. Perrins
Publishers: ASCAP, PARS, BMI
Release Date: July 11
METHOD MAN'S first single
since 2004's poorly received
and critically chatted
"Tical 0: The Prequel," marks the
gracious return of Wu-Tang Clan's widest
MC. His debut single,
"Say," featuring Lauryn
Hill and Method Man's
"Classic" "So Much Things
To Say," takes the hook of "Hill's
singing Bob Marley's
classic "So Much Things to
Say." On the hook as
Hill's soulful vocals, like
silk on sandpaper, soar
harmoniously over Method
Man's ominous mid-tempo
flow, delivering a heartfelt
message with a
lyrical brilliance and head-
obbing beat, even radio
will be singing along to
this hot summer single
that restores Method to the
hip-hop madness.—SH

LeTOYANOVEMBER (4:21)
Producer: Teddy Bishop
Writers: T. Beil, L. Epstein, T. Bishop, O. Young,
L. Luckett
Publishers: Warner-Tamerlane, BMI Capitol
Release Date: August 11
This project shows that LeToya
is slightly more
sensible while
unloading
her
difficult
grooves on
"November."—PVV

FAITH HILL
Sunshine and Shadow (1:26)
Producers: Byron Gallimore, Faith Hill
Writers: J. Rich, R. Clawson, K. Sackley
Publishers: various
Release Date: August 11
The latest single from
Faith Hill's "Fireflies"
album is a peppery, up-tempo
cottonball, custom-made
for the regional radio
canvass. Penned by John Rich,
Rodenay Clawson and Kyle
Sackley, the song is
chock-full of
summertime
catchy samples and
catchy radio
cheerleaders. —PVV

JACK INGRAM
Love You (2:45)
Producer: Jeremy Stover
Writers: J. Knowles, T. Summar
Publishers: various
Release Date: August 11
Though the title might
suggest a mushy
romantic ballad, this song
is the polar opposite.
Teeming with attitude, it's a
tingue-in-cheek rant from
a guy at the end of his rope.
Ingram turns in a
personality-packed
performance that's
nipping with sarcasm and
defiance. His last single,
"Wherever You Are," made
to the top of the charts
and it looks like Ingram has
finally made the leap from
regional favorite to
national star. This cool little
single should keep him on
that successful track—DEP

CROSSFADE Invincible (4:11)
Producers: Crossfade, Randy Staub, Steve
Lillywhite
Writer: E. Sloan
Publishers: various
Release Date: August 11
While South Carolina-
based rock act
Crossfade has generated
major motion on rock radio
"Cold," and "So Far
Away," the band has yet
to tickle the mainstream
airwaves. "Invincible"
signifies the discovery
track for a band that, in
this context, could be
compared to Stand; Saliva
or Nickelback with its
similarities in tone and
sound, as well as in
commercial success.
Singer/guitarist Ed Sloan
has the freewheeling
catchy hooks that make
discovery a dream come true.
"Invincible" is a track that
deserves all its
accolades. —CT
India.Arie's 'Testimony' Draws Convincing Verdict

For the second week in a row, a best new artist nominee of the 2002 Grammy Awards bows at No. 1 on The Billboard 200. As the soulful India. Arie celebrates the best chart week of her career, the most intriguing aspect of this triumph may well be the race it at never developed.

First day sales reported by chains when her "Testimony, Vol. 1, Life & Relationship" track stores the same day as Dashboard Confessional's "Dusk and Summer" led critics to prognosticators to predict that both albums would start in the neighborhood of 150,000, suggesting the two were running neck and neck. While both artists achieved their best Nielsen SoundScan weeks, this was far from a photo finish. India.Arie easily exceeded the 150,000 \( \times \) 10 threshold, earning her second No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and her first on the big chart with a start of 161,000 copies. Dashboard beat its previous best frame by about 10%, but closed well shy of first place with 134,000 sold. Those are the only two albums on the chart to sell more than 100,000, although last week's chart champ, Nelly Furtado, comes close at 99,000 (No. 3, down 55%).

How did India. Arie turn what looked to be a close race into a laugher? The answer boils down, in part, to who buys what and how they buy it.

The simple fact is that for the last few years, the advent of the CD burner, followed closely by peer-to-peer Internet swaps and the eventual introduction of paid digital downloads, have made it tough to project a rock band's first-week total from its opening day sales. "Take the last 10 first-day projections from your favorite chart tout—that person from label sales or distribution, or an otherwise interested observer—and I'm willing to bet that at least nine of those forecasts turned out high compared with what the real SoundScan numbers ended up being. While Dashboard rocks the courtroom, a point proved mightily by its radio picture, India.Arie appeals to a more mature consumer who might not race to the music store or iTunes the first day that an album becomes available.

Her fans have also had a longer period of time to learn about: the new set. Lead track "I Am Not My Hair" has been at radio since last year, drawing 157 million audience impressions to date, according to Nielsen BDS, with most of its plays coming from adult R&B radio and other R&B-leaning stations.

In a much shorter window, Dashboard's "Don't Wait" has tallied 23 million audience impressions, with most of its spins garnered at modern rock stations. During the week both albums came to market, "Don't Wait" pulled 2.7 million in audience from all BDS-monitored stations, compared with 5.1 million for "I Am Not My Hair.

Yet, not surprisingly, Dashboard's song has been the bigger digital track. "Don't Wait" has sold 45,000 downloads to date, about double the amount sold so far by India.Arie's song, statistics that probably fit each act's far profile. The attention span of the younger rock-leaning consumer is more prone to bite-sized purchases, while the older music fan who enjoys the thoughtful themes that have pervaded India.Arie's music since her first album bowed at No. 10 in 2001 is more inclined to buy the whole meal.

Aside from radio, the chart's new queen got a boost from TV. She played the BET Awards June 27—with a big plug for her album from show host Damon Wayans—and also made release-week stops on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" and "Live With Regis and Kelly," along with big rotation for her "Hair" clip from VH1 Soul. That exposure helped this third album easily beat the Billboard 200 and SoundScan peaks set by her sopho more "Voyage to India," which started at No. 6 on the big chart with opening sales of 109,000.

JUST 'SUPER': "Superman Returns" bowed at No. 1 on Hollywood's report card, with $108 million during the first seven days it played North American theaters. The film's soundtrack bows at No. 110 on The Billboard 200, already the second-best ranked entry from any "Superman" film.

"Superman: The Movie" reached No. 44 in 1979. With 9,000 sold, "Returns" is the lone new entry on Top Soundtracks (No. 7).
Chris Carabba-fronted act is one of the band's best known albums. Set is No. 1 on Top Rock Albums.

At No. 3, the digital compilation from RoC-LA Familia also holds the No. 1 on Top Latin Albums (27,000).

The Dogg Pound (No. 28) sees the chart for the first time since 2001. Sets guest stars include Snoop Dogg and Ice Cube.

The U.K. band's album entered the charts at No. 1 in its home and States with 27,000 in United States.

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<td>I Can Only Imagine</td>
<td>MercyMe (INO)</td>
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<td>On My Way</td>
<td>Scotty McCreery (SONY)</td>
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<td>Rollin'</td>
<td>Terrence Howard feat. Ne-Yo (VEE)</td>
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<td>All Night Long</td>
<td>Parliament-Funkadelic (JIVE/ZOMBA)</td>
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<td>Can't Fight This Feeling</td>
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### ADULT TOP 40

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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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<td>PROMISSOUS</td>
<td>Adam Lambert (Hollywood)</td>
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<td>HIPS DON'T LIE</td>
<td>Shakira feat. Wyclef Jean (Epic)</td>
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<td>AIN'T NO OTHER MAN (REMIX)</td>
<td>Christina Aguilera (SONY)</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>LIFE IS A HIGHWAY</td>
<td>Tom Petty &amp; The Heartbreakers (Reprise)</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>OVER MY HEAD (CABLE CAR)</td>
<td>Joss Stone (Warner Bros.)</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>UNFAITHFUL</td>
<td>K'Naan feat. Will.I.Am (Interscope)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>ME &amp; U</td>
<td>Duffy (Interscope)</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>RIDIN'</td>
<td>Terrence Howard feat. Ne-Yo (VEE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>DANI CALIFORNIA</td>
<td>Incubus (Sony)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>IT'S GONNA DOWN</td>
<td>Snoop Dogg feat. Brandy (Def Jam)</td>
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<td>STARS ARE BLIND</td>
<td>Dashboard Confessional (Vagrant)</td>
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<td>SNAP TO FINGERS</td>
<td>Jimmy Eat World (RCA)</td>
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<td>BAD DAY</td>
<td>George Michael (Polydor)</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>SOS</td>
<td>Phoebe Bridgers (Polydor)</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>WHERE'D YOU GO</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts (Columbia)</td>
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### MODERN ROCK

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<td>A Perfect Circle (Roadrunner)</td>
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<td>LIFE WASTED</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>THE KILL (BURY ME)</td>
<td>The Editors (Fat Possum)</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>WOMAN</td>
<td>The Breeders (INgrooves)</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>REEFS (A LIBERATION BROADCAST)</td>
<td>The Breeders (INgrooves)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>DON'T WAIT</td>
<td>The Dirty Heads (Jive)</td>
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<td>THESE THINGS</td>
<td>My Chemical Romance (Geffen)</td>
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<td>KNIGHTS OF CYDONIA</td>
<td>Pink Floyd (EMI)</td>
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<td>HANDS OPEN</td>
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**TOP R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS**

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<td><strong>1</strong></td>
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<td>Shawshika</td>
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<td>Tha Dogg Pound</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Ice Cube</td>
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<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>Ray Cash</td>
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<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td>Rihanna</td>
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<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>greatest hits NEO</td>
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<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>Gnarls Barkley</td>
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<td>field Mob</td>
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<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td>T.I.</td>
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<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td>Young Jeezy</td>
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<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td>Chamillionaire</td>
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<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td>Chris Brown</td>
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<td>DJ Khaled</td>
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**TOP BLUES ALBUMS**

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<td>Camron</td>
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<td>Ke$ha Cole</td>
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<td>Dem Franchize Boyz</td>
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<td>Lil Wayne</td>
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<td>Soundtrack</td>
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<td>The Black Eyed Peas</td>
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<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td>Smokey Robinson</td>
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<td>Ghostface Killah</td>
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<td>Uncle Luke</td>
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**FOUR NEW ALBUMS DENT TOP 10**

With India.Arie leading the way, four albums bow in the top 10 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums this week:


*Note:* India.Arie leads the way with "Black Music," entering at No. 3 with *The Black Eyed Peas* at No. 10 with "The End Of A Century."  

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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

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

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<td>Get Up!</td>
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<td>46</td>
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<td>Get Up!</td>
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<td>Can't Let Go</td>
<td>RCA Records</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Take Back Your Love</td>
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### RHYTHMIC AIRPLAY

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### HOT LATIN SONGS

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<td>Don Karlos</td>
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Data for week of JULY 15, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND On Page 54

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
**HITS OF THE WORLD**

**JAPAN**

**ALBUMS**

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| 1 | Nous voyons | La Séptième Vague | |}
| 2 | Dia's | La Séptième Vague | |
| 3 | Les Nuits de Capitale | Capitale | |
| 4 | Nadya | La Séptième Vague | |
| 5 | Gnars Barkley | Warner Bros. | |

**AUSTRALIA**

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**SPAIN**

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**THE NETHERLANDS**

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<td>Shaker</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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**GREECE**

**SINGLES**

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Data for week of July 15, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 54 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
**EUROCHARTS**

**SINGLE SALES**

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**ALBUMS**

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**RADIO AIRPLAY**

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Data for week of JULY 15, 2006 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633

Go to www.billboard.com for complete chart data
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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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UPPER RIVIERA JEWEL: Pacific Palisades. Breathtaking views, restored Cliff May w/ Western accents. wrap-around decks, fab guest house, p/p, patios, sep legal lot.
$5,950,000 Joan McGaohan 310.255.5406

2006 TOLUCA LAKE AVE: Toluca Lake. Done, pvt. gated, 3bd/2.5ba Lakefront estate w/ it's own dock. Sound studio, p/p, chef's kit, viking range, 3 p/l. 3 car.
$3,895,000 Schramm/Javid 310.612.3041

10064 TOLUCA LAKE AVE: Toluca Lake. Done, pvt. gated, 3bd/2.5ba Lakefront estate w/ it's own dock. Sound studio, p/p, chef's kit, viking range, 3 p/l. 3 car.
$3,895,000 Schramm/Javid 310.612.3041

$2,995,000
Adrienne LaRusso 310.729.2841

232 ST. GEORGE STREET: Los Feliz. Sublime renovation of the Grand Dame of St. George with modern amenities & classic details. 4bd/4ba, pool, park-like grounds. 1,388,000
Brod & Joe 323.481.4700

$995,000
John & Elizabeth 760.883.1417

6704 HILLPARK DR #401: Hwd Hills. Beautifully re-modeled Penthouse. 1bd/1ba + 1,000 sqft w/ parking. No common walls, no one above.
$579,000
Michael Tuckn 310.646.3893

6736 HILLPARK DR #202: Hwd Hills. 1bd/1.5ba, 1,050sqft. Room to create 2nd bld. No common walls. 1st time on market in 26 years. A pad waiting to happen!
$545,000
Michael Tunick 310.646.3893

10064 TOLUCA LAKE AVE: Toluca Lake. Done, pvt. gated, 3bd/2.5ba Lakefront estate w/ it's own dock. Sound studio, p/p, chef's kit, viking range, 3 p/l. 3 car.
$3,895,000 Schramm/Javid 310.612.3041

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Patricia Hodson 310.888.3705

3993 CLAYTON AVE: Los Feliz. Franklin Hills Fixer. Built by owner in 1956. 1st time on market. 4bd/ 2ba, rock fplk, kitchen with breakfast booth.
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Karen Lower 323.804.8043

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Sandra Geft 310.387.1996
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The Henry Fonda Institute celebrated its 10th anniversary June 27 with a concert and gala dinner at the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood. Special guests included singing great Tony Bennett, the HMI Orchestra and, special event artist, Michelle Winters John Williams and Dave Koze who hosted the event. Event producer, Phil Ramone is flanked by Henry Fonda Institute's Patrick Williams, left, and Don Carlos. Photo: American Radio History.

The show's co-host Clara, right, presented the first award of the evening to Mary Jo Edwards who received three awards for "Lost Control", "Free Yourself" and "L.U. Steps." Clara was also honored for "I, 2 Step" and "Oh!"

PHOTO: LESTER COHEN/WIREIMAGE.COM

ASCAP RHYTHM AND SOUL MUSIC AWARDS More than 700 music and entertainment luminaries gathered at the 19th annual event held June 26 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles. Awards were presented to the songwriters and publishers of the most performed ASCAP songs on the 2005 R&B/Hip-Hop, rap, reggae and gospel charts.

PHOTO: LESTER COHEN/WIREIMAGE.COM


PHOTO: LESTER COHEN/WIREIMAGE.COM

Liza Minnelli received the Trailblazer Award June 13 at the 14th annual American Society of Young Musicians Spring Benefit and Show at the House of Blues in West Hollywood, Calif.

PHOTO: LESTER COHEN/WIREIMAGE.COM

Def Leppard recently celebrated the RIAA platinum certification of "Black Summer: The Ultimate Collection" at Robin Thomas Studio in Los Angeles. From left, are RIAA's Mike Davis and Emily Coppen, Def Leppard's Tim S同盟 Willats, Campbell and Nick Sagven, ASCAP's Bruce Rosen, Def Leppard's band members Rick Allen, Phil Collen and Joe Elliott and UMNG vice president Bruce Rosen. Def Leppard's publisher Phil Allen collected the ASCAP publisher's ASCAP Rhythm & Soul Heritage Award.

PHOTO: LESTER COHEN/WIREIMAGE.COM

Universal Music Publishing Group-silled artist Chris Brown was recently named best new artist of the 2006 BET Awards. Celebrating the award at UMPG's Los Angeles headquarters, from left, are UMPG vice president of business affairs Robert Allen and executive VP of creative affairs Tom Stibig; Brown's mother, Joyce Hawkins; Brown's manager, Tice Davis; Brown's VP of marketing, Mike Stewart; and UMPG VP of urban music, Ethiopia Habtemariam and chairman/CEO David Renselaer.

PHOTO: ARNOLD WINES/WIREIMAGE.COM
LIVE AND LOVIN’ IT

Kenny Chesney’s got quite a devoted following, as evidenced by his quick ascent to the top ranks of all-time country headliners. As such, the upcoming concert album “Live Those Songs Again” captures Chesney fully in his element. Due Sept. 19 via BNA, the 14-track release features “Off the Coast of Somewhere Beautiful” from a private show on an island in the Bahamas, a rousing crowd singalong on “Anything But Mine” and performances of the now-retired “Back Where I Come From” and “What I Need to Do.” Other cuts were taped in Pittsburgh, Nashville and Knoxville, Tenn. Chesney’s summer tour wraps Sept. 3 outside Indianapolis.

STILL TALKING AND TALKING

Negotiations are still ongoing over the formation of a joint business entity between EMI Music Publishing, the United Kingdom’s MCMPS-PRS Alliance and Germany’s GEMA. As reported from MIDEM in January, the new company will administer Pan-European online and mobile licenses for the publisher’s Anglo-American repertoire. The framework for the arrangement was completed in January and final terms were expected by April. Track hears that the best estimate for completion is now early August, assuming the monthlong European holiday does not begin first. Of course, those at Billboard’s U.S. offices will be at their computers that entire month, ready to report breaking news.

TEXAS TRAILMAKERS

Texas noisemakers, ... And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead will follow-up their maligned 2004 effort “Worlds Apart” (which, after being delayed for months, sold less than half of 2002’s acclaimed “Source Tags & Coders”) with its third Incense Set, due Oct. 3. The as-yet-untilted album was recorded at the band’s own Mob House studio in Austin. Mixing is wrapping up in Los Angeles, just in time for the group to play four European festival dates, beginning July 13 in Feldkirch, Austria.

ROGERS DEPARTS SONY BMG

Longtime industry publicist Melani Rogers has left Sony BMG, where she was most recently senior VP of special events. Rogers, who had been at Sony BMG for 14 years, is also well-known for her long stint at Arista Records. She can be reached at melanirogersny@aol.com.

SANCTUARY KNOWLES SEPARATION COMPLETE

In a long-expected move, British-based independent music firm Sanctuary Group plc has sold MW Entertainment, Productions and Management Inc. (MWE) to Mathew Knowles for $5 million. In a statement, publicly listed Sanctuary explained that $3 million had already been paid, with the remaining $2 million to change hands by the end of 2007. Knowles has agreed to sell his 17,826 shares in Sanctuary within two weeks, and return the proceeds to the company. As a result of the deal, Knowles now regains management control of a number of urban artists contracted to MWE, including his daughter Beyoncé and the now-disbanded Destiny’s Child.

YOUR SERVING ACADEMY

The Recording Academy has linked with Gibson Guitar and Baldwin Piano for the fifth Gibson/Baldwin Night at the Net, the Academy’s annual pro/celebrity tennis event. Held July 24 at the Los Angeles Tennis Center at UCLA, the evening will feature such court champs as Andre Agassi, Lleyton Hewitt and Marat Safin, as well as celebrity player Jon Lovitz, who, as God or our witness, is a shocking good tennis player. While we do not expect them to pick up a racket, Brian McKnight and Hindi Alibar will pick up microphones to perform at the event. It’s all for the benefit of the MusiCares Foundation, which focuses on health and human services for the music community.

BEYONCE

PUBLISHING: BMG Music Publishing North America in Los Angeles names Sam Kling VP of film and TV. He held the same position at FirstCom.

Johnny Bond Publications in Nashville names Robert Weedman creative director. He was part of the A&R initiative at Sony Music.

TOURING: Madison Square Garden in New York names Lucinda Treat executive VP/general counsel. She was chief legal officer at New England Sports Ventures.

MEDIA: MTV Networks in New York names David Gale executive VP of new media and specialty film content. He is based in Los Angeles. Gale was executive VP of MTV Films.

VH1 senior VP of programming strategy Ben Zurier expands his role to senior VP of programming strategy at VH1, VH1 Classic and MHD.

Music Choice in New York names Bryan Fernandez director of creative services. He was founder of Velocity Design Group.

RELATED FIELDS: The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation in New York names Joel Peresman president/CEO. He was executive VP at Madison Square Garden.

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