In memory of Brian Williams
June 14, 1961 – July 8, 2006

We join hands with Brian’s family, friends, clients, and colleagues whose lives were enriched by his many gifts.

He inspired us with his vision, believed in the potential of people, and worked tirelessly to build a stronger, better community.

Brian’s legacy lives on in all of us.
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Conferences

HITBOUND
Celebrating the top-selling Latin genre, Billboard's Regional Mexican Music Summit hits L.A. Nov. 13-14. Come for the networking and learn all about this lucrative market. Register today for early-bird savings. billboardevents.com

HEAR HIM NOW
Sprint Nextel's Paul Reddick will keynote Billboard's annual MECCA conference, Sept. 11 in L.A. Reddick and other key influencers will discuss the future of mobile entertainment. billboardevents.com

On The Web

GOT BUZZ?
CBS and Billboard have teamed to provide music news and charts on the CBS Showbuzz Web site. It's a new way for music fans to get the buzz on the biz and discover each week's chart-topping titles. showbuzz.cbsnews.com

JADED INSIDER
The future Mr. and Mrs. Kid Rock's wedding gift registry. Nelly's part in The Fighter's take on sexual balance. Weezer's latest album...Wait, it's all there for the taking at Billboard's blazing blog. Get your daily dose. jadedinsider.com

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SIRA Provides Framework for Digital Future

BY DAVID ISRAELITE and JONATHAN POTTER

The next five years will be the most important period in the history of the music industry. Recognizing that we are at a watershed moment, music publishers, songwriters, artists, digital music providers and record labels have done something unprecedented. We have joined together to support legislation that will allow the music industry to jump aboard the digital revolution, providing music fans with more choices, creators with more opportunities and royalty-paying innovators with more freedom.

The proposed Section 115 Reform Act of 2006 (SIRA) would replace a nearly century-old system that grants the right to reproduce or distribute a composition only on a song-by-song basis. This system, originally created in 1909 for piano rolls, has not kept pace with technological and business-model innovation, including the emergence of legal online services seeking to offer consumers access to millions of songs.

The lack of an efficient licensing system has resulted in problems that keep songwriters from getting paid, prevent the legitimate music market from flourishing and limit the amount and variety of music that fans can enjoy. Congress has made it clear that it intends to change Section 115—the only question is, is that change good or bad for the music industry?

SIRA solves the problems with the existing system by creating a statutory blanket licensing method that will allow digital music services to make a simple filing for all musical works. It establishes a flexible framework that allows for quick licensing of new business models. The neutral Copyright Royalty Board will set rates for digital uses, based upon an independent evaluation of what each activity is worth.

Songwriters in particular benefit from this proposed legislation. First, SIRA will ensure copyright owners their guaranteed rights in the digital world, including those associated with interactive streaming of their works. This means that songwriters will protect their performance and mechanical rights in business models that implicate both rights. Because interactive streaming could someday be the dominant method of delivering music to consumers, this victory could be one of the most significant for songwriters in the history of copyright protection.

SIRA also establishes a direct licensing relationship between music publishers and digital music services, largely ending the practice of pass-through licensing by record labels. These direct relationships will become even more crucial as third-party digital providers—such as cellular phone companies, satellite radio services and webcasters—become the dominant music providers.

A special SIRA mechanism for a cost-sharing mechanism so that licensees who benefit from blanket licensing share the expenses of operating the system. Finally, SIRA offers a better system for collecting and distributing royalties. Knowing that compensation will be forthcoming, songwriters can focus on what they do best—creating great songs the world can enjoy.

The biggest winner, however, will be music fans. Legitimate digital music providers will dramatically expand the numbers of songs they offer consumers. New, innovative music services will join the market, no longer daunted by inefficient licensing procedures and the risk of costly infringement litigation. A more competitive digital music market will yield even greater innovation and greater choice for music fans.

SIRA also helps the entire music industry fight its biggest threat—piracy. With an entire universe of copyrighted songs at their disposal, digital music providers will be better able to compete with illegal networks that today offer a wider variety of music. Fans will enjoy songs legally that previously were only available illegally.

Some critics of the proposed legislation claim SIRA would not be good for small, independent music publishers. Nothing could be further from the truth. SIRA allows music publishers to land together to form additional designated agents if they do not wish to be represented by the statute created general designated agent. And recent proposed amendments will ensure songwriter representation on the governing board of directors of the generic designated agent as well as dispute resolution committees of all designated agents.

This legislation benefits everyone who loves music, from creator to fan. The music industry will be able to embrace the digital revolution, ensure that music creators get paid and cultivate exciting alternatives to piracy. Digital music providers get a manageable licensing system that will encourage growth and innovation. And most important, music fans will have an ever-growing array of exciting legal music options from which to choose.

Madonna is in the midst of a sold-out North American tour that may end up being the top-grossing tour ever by a female artist. But this on-the-road success is not carrying over to American radio airwaves. In the United States, the three singles from Madonna’s latest Warner Bros. album, “Confessions on a Dance Floor,” have not been embraced by mainstream top 40 radio.

“Hung Up” got middling airplay. “Sorry” was barely played, and “Get Together” has been all but ignored by pop stations.

Naturally, this state of affairs has left executives at her Warner Bros. label—and more than a few fans—wondering, what gives?

More than 3,300 fans have signed an appeal at petitiononline.com. The “End the Madonna on U.S. Radio Boycott” petition is addressed to Clear Channel Communications CEO Mark P. Mays.

Message boards at Entertainment Weekly and VH1, among others, are rife with everything from support for Madonna to conspiracy theories about why she can’t crack the radio dial.

Warner Bros. was aware that the songs on “Confessions” could present challenges at mainstream top 40 radio, acknowledges Tom Biery, senior VP of promotions at Warner Bros. “Top 40 radio is so hip-hop-driven,” he says. “We were coming in with a global pop star who made a dance record.”

Guy Zapoleon, president of radio consulting firm Zapoleon Media Strategies, calls it an “interesting dilemma for the woman who certainly held the Queen of Pop title for almost 15 years.”

Madonna’s ability to redefine herself is well-documented, and Zapoleon says that this has helped her keep a “leading edge” to the new group of pop music fans that comes along every three to five years.

But this time, Madonna may have turned left while the pop climate was turning right. Other pop chameleons such as Nelly Furtado and Mariah Carey reinvented themselves with recent rhythmic/hip-hop-leaning singles. Madonna opted instead to return to her dance-pop roots. There is a disconnect with a new generation of music fans weaned on R&B, hip-hop and rock—the foundation of today’s mainstream top 40 radio.

According to Dom Theodore, regional VP of programming for Clear Channel and PD of top 40 WKQI Detroit, today’s programmers consider each Madonna song on a case-by-case basis to determine if it fits mainstream top 40, adult top 40 or both. Or neither.

For Theodore, the sound of “Confessions on a Dance Floor” skews more retro-adult top 40 than top mainstream top 40, while recent club tracks like Rihanna’s “SOS” have “more hip-hop credibility.”

“The Rihanna jam may reference an early ’80s dance hit (Soft Cell’s “Tainted Love”) but Madonna believes it does not have the same “retro 70s” feel as the Madonna tracks.

Except for dance radio outlets like KNGY San Francisco, KNJR Phoenix and KNHC Seattle, Madonna is missing from the terrestrial radio landscape in the United States.

On Billboard’s Hot Dance Airplay chart, “Hung Up” logged eight weeks at No. 1, while “Sorry” held the top spot for seven weeks. In this issue, “Get Together” spends its fourth week in the chart’s pole position.

As Warner Bros. gears up for the release of the album’s fourth single, “Jump,” Biery remains optimistic, especially since the song was heard in TV and radio spots for the film “The Devil Wears Prada.”

The label will take a different strategy with this single, Biery says. “We’ll begin with AC and hot AC formats,” he notes. “Our goal is to have a true hit record with callout and then bring it back to the mainstream top 40 world.”

Additional reporting by Keith Caulfield in Los Angeles and Paul Pometjes in London.
Microsoft Preps Music Player, Service To Rival Apple’s Wares

Microsoft officials for the first time have confirmed that the Redmond, Wash.-based company is readying a portable music player and integrated service, shedding new light on a topic that has fueled rampant speculation in news reports and blog postings for weeks.

In an exclusive first interview with Billboard’s Chris Stephenson, Microsoft’s new GM of marketing for MSN Entertainment-Business, says the company will later this year launch Zune, an umbrella brand for what he says is “a family of hardware and software products” targeting various digital entertainment services.

The first implementation of this will be the portable music player and digital music service, in what is the company’s strongest effort yet to rein in Apple Computer’s iTunes/Pod juggernaut, currently responsible for about 70% of the digital music market and 75% of the portable digital music player market.

Additional Zune-branded devices will follow, including a portable video player and, potentially, a portable game device, although Stephenson would not comment on the videogame element of the initiative.

Because the product lines have not yet been finalized, Microsoft would not discuss specifications. However, Stephenson did confirm that the initial music device will contain a hard drive and the much-discussed Wi-Fi connection for wireless Internet access.

Exactly how Microsoft intends to utilize this wireless Internet capability remains unclear. Stephenson is examining “seven or eight” different wireless scenarios. They range from allowing users to view and sample music from other Zune devices in the same hot spot, to accessing content stored in an online digital locker, to buying and downloading music directly to the device.

Stephenson says that wireless Internet access is necessary for the portable devices to fit into Microsoft’s grander plan. That scenario is to provide ubiquitous access to digital media from a wide range of Windows-powered devices in what ultimately aspires to be one part MySpace, one part iTunes and one part Xbox Live.

Zune users will be able to view each other’s playlists, recommend music and sample tracks in what Stephenson describes as a multifaceted music discovery experience. This capability will extend to the Xbox 360 game console, PCs running Windows Media Center and mobile phones using the Windows Mobile operating system.

“While publicly praising Apple’s success in building the digital music space, music industry executives have expressed frustration at the company’s my-way-or-the-highway tactics. Competition means more opportunities to sell digital music in ways Apple won’t allow. For instance, Microsoft is more open to variable pricing, whereas Apple is not.”

“Definitely need the room for real competition in the marketplace,” White says. “We’d love to see more players getting in and offering more types of digital content. We think that having more, stronger competition is more likely to yield that outcome.”

Microsoft will support the Zune launch with a massive advertising and marketing campaign expected to be heavily artist-centric, including several live performances nationwide. Stephenson says the total effort will be on par with that of the Xbox 360 launch, which cost a reported $500 million.

Left hanging in all this is the fate of the existing MSN Music service. According to Stephenson, Zune is not a relaunch of the MSN service, but rather a new branded service altogether. While he says Microsoft will continue to support the service, it won’t be included in the Zune advertising efforts.

With all the company’s resources focused on Zune, it appears likely MSN Music will be left to die on the vine.

HOME FRONT

360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD

BEN-YEHUDA, PETERS JOIN BILLBOARD LATIN, TOURING STAFFS

In a sign of its continued commitment to the Latin and touring markets, Billboard Information Group is adding two new members to its editorial team in Los Angeles.

Starting July 24, Ayala Ben-Yehuda joins Billboard as Latin correspondent. She most recently served as a reporter and public radio producer in Los Angeles and New York, covering such issues as immigration and the arts for such outlets as NPR’s "All Things Considered" and "Marketplace," as well as for Newsday and Time Out New York. It marks the first time Billboard has had a full-time Latin reporter in Los Angeles.

Ben-Yehuda will work closely with Latin bureau chief Leila Cobo, who is based in Miami, where she was a news and features writer for Pollstar magazine, will work with Nashville-based senior touring correspondent Ray Waddell. "Mitchell’s understanding of this evolving business and his awareness and appreciation of developing artists will be a great asset to our touring coverage and across all platforms," Waddell says, adding that Peters will play a key role in Billboard’s Latin annual touring conference, held Nov. 8-9 in New York.

REAL OR FAKE?

The above image, leaked to blogs in mid-July, reportedly depicts an actual device in Microsoft’s upcoming Zune multimedia product line. But is it the real deal, or just a marketing stunt?

"There’s going to be a balancing of the benefits of discovery and remuneration of paid content acquisition."
In memoriam

Syd Barrett
1946-2006

shine on...

Hampshire House Publishing Corp.

TRO The Richmond Organization
LONDON—The heads of the world’s most powerful economies—collectively known as the Group of Eight (G8)—convened their annual forum July 15-17 in St. Petersburg, Russia. As the dust settles on that gathering, some of those who were most intimately involved with last year’s Live 8 concerts are left pondering the event’s ultimate impact.

Live 8, simultaneous events held in 10 cities around the globe on July 2, 2005, in the days leading up to last year’s G8 summit at Gleneagles in Scotland, lobbyied the world’s leaders to accept a proposal to double aid to Africa, drop the continent’s debt and “make trade laws fair.”

“A year later, some are still waiting. “Very little [action] happened in St. Petersburg, which was frustrating,” comments Oliver Burton, European director of Debt, AIDS, Trade in Africa (DATA), a lobby and charity organization co-founded in 2002 by U2 frontman Bono; U2 performed at Live 8 in London.

Bob Geldof, the former frontman of Irish punk-era band Boomtown Rats, conceived and crafted the Live 8 concerts. More than 1 billion people worldwide tuned into the event either in person or watching it via TV, mobile or digital broadcast, estimates Kevin Wall, Network Live founder and CEO and a Live 8 executive producer.

“It makes most of the goals of Live 8 were accomplished,” says Harvey Goldsmith, the pioneeering British concert promoter who oversaw Live 8 as co-producer. “The leaders certainly dealt with the debt issue. All the G8 countries have committed to aid. The only issue they haven’t got to grips with is the trade issue, which is a global problem.”

Geldof admits music alone will not change the status quo. “Did Live 8 work? Yes, it did,” Geldof told reporters at a recent press conference to launch a DATA report. “More people are being fed, more children are in school. But it’s not enough.”

Geldof will continue to closely monitor progress through an Africa Progress Panel, on which high-level players from Africa and the G8 will sit. The independent panel will be chaired by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and funded by Microsoft founder Bill Gates. It will produce an annual report to be submitted to the G8, United Nations and the Africa Partnership Forum.

Moreover, German chancellor Angela Merkel has put Africa on her agenda for 2007, when the country’s seaside town of Heiligendamm hosts the G8. Germany will take the reins of the European Union (EU) on Jan. 1, 2007, and assume leadership of the G8.

“In a way, we have 12 months to sort this out,” Buston says. “Campaigning goes in cycles. It really feels like next year is going to be a really big one to get these people back on track to keep their promises.”

Meanwhile, during this year’s summit, the participating countries committed to a work plan on tackling piracy and counterfeiting.

Those initiatives include investigating the potential for strengthening the international legal framework on intellectual property law enforcement; establishing a Web site outlining each G8 nation’s intellectual property and their enforcement regime; and increasing co-operation among international authorities such as the World Intellectual Property Organization, the World Trade Organization and Interpol.

The G8 has also commissioned the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development to compile a report outlining the costs and damage caused by piracy and counterfeiting.

The British recorded music industry applauds the G8’s promise on illicit goods. BPI chairman Peter Jameson says, “In an increasingly global marketplace and with the phenomenal rise of the Internet, intellectual property law enforcement increasingly needs to take place at an international level. That’s why we welcome the priority given to piracy and counterfeiting by the G8 countries.”

The G8’s reaffirmation on piracy follows a joint effort announced June 20 between the EU and the United States to quash the global counterfeiting trade.

Ultra Hands Distrib Reins To ADA

Label Will Also Collaborate On Remix Sets With WMG’s Rhino

Ultra Records is waving goodbye to Caroline Distribution and saying hello to Alternative Distribution Alliance. Effective Sept. 1, the New York-based dance/electronic label will be handled by the independent distribution arm of Warner Music Group (WMG).

After traveling through EMII-owned Caroline for nearly nine years, Ultra CEO Patrick Moe says it was time to embark on new adventures. “ADA is an innovator and leader in traditional and digital sales—they’ve developed an online presence,” he says. “That appeals to me.”

Ultra follows other labels, including Narnack and Southern, that have defected from Caroline in recent months.

According to Moeby, Ultra had more than $10 million in billing last year, accounting for 11% of Caroline’s overall total.

Though Caroline was unavailable for comment, ADA president Andy Allen confirms these figures.

As part of its arrangement with ADA, Ultra will collaborate with WMG’s Rhino label on remix packages of WMG catalog artists as well as an annual compilation aimed at the direct-response TV market.


Kaskade is a new addition to Ultra’s roster, as are Tiësto and Victor Calderone, who will release a new artist album and DJ-mix, respectively, early next year. (A new Tiësto single, “Dance4Life,” is expected this fall.) Additional big-name dance/electronic artist signings are in the works.

Ultra’s deal with ADA also extends to its two imprints: Sequence (urban and reggae) and Escondida (world music).

Allen says he is excited about working with Ultra’s first-rate roster of artists. He is confident that ADA’s strong relationships with retailers, physical and digital, “will accelerate Ultra’s growth in America and assist in extending the brand on a global basis.”

Year to date, Nielsen SoundScan figures rank Ultra as the No. 1 Dance Airplay Label, No. 5 Top Electronic Album Imprint and No. 6 Top Electronic Album Label.

In Billboard’s 2005 year-end issue, Ultra was the No. 1 Dance Airplay Label, No. 2 Top Electronic Albums Imprint and No. 3 Top Electronic Albums Label.

KASKADE’S new album is among the first releases under Ultra’s new distribution deal with ADA.

www.americanradiohistory.com
Sheridan Square Gets More Buying Power

Owner Of Such Indie Labels As V2 Has New Backers, Financing

Sheridan Square has a new lease on life with fresh financing that should allow it to resume its recent buying spree of independent labels and catalogs.

The New York-based company has orchestrated a two-step deal that will bring in new, undisclosed backers, according to co-owners Joe Bianco and Anil Narang.

During the last three years, Sheridan Square has spent an estimated $43 million acquiring indie labels V2 North America, Compendia and Artemis; distributor Musicorama; and certain catalog assets of Tone Cool Records, Triloca, Repeadope Records and Vanguard Classical.

To execute the refinancing, Bianco and Narang (and original investor Joe Pretlow, a former partner at Bain Capital) first had to buy back the majority stake of New York-based Kinderhook Industry, their initial private-equity backer.

Narang says Sheridan Square then signed deals to sell a large minority share to new, undisclosed private-equity backers and to bring in a new lender to pay off the initial loan provided by New York-based Fortress Investment Group. Narang declines to disclose terms of those deals.

The new deals are expected to close by the end of July. Sources indicate that the new equity and debt amount to more than $25 million.

Sources suggest that music industry veteran Charles Koppelman, backed by GTCR Goldner Rainer, made a play for Sheridan Square during this process. Koppelman denies he was involved.

With completion of the deals, the corporate name will revert to Redux Records, the brand Bianco and Narang used in their return to the music industry in early 2003.

Bianco founded Alliance Entertainment Corp. in 1990 when he bought Bass Distributors and built a wholesaling giant through a series of acquisitions orchestrated with Narang’s help. But in 1997, AEC filed for Chapter 11; eventually Bianco and Narang ex- tired the music industry.

While Narang refuses to disclose the company’s valuation, he says Redux is expected to generate $10 million in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization this year on revenue estimated at $60 million-$70 million.

**BAND IN DEMAND**

Two of the biggest sources of revenue for V2 are the White Stripes and the Raconteurs.

The latter group, which has scanned 204,000 units of its debut album, includes Jack White of the White Stripes, a band that is expected to be hotly pursued when its contract with V2 expires.

It’s unclear when that will occur, but some sources suggest that the White Stripes have fulfilled their current deal. V2 has most of the band’s catalog on a long-term license of about 10 years, although the licenses on a couple of records like “White Blood Cells” are due to expire. Narang says the label is working to extend the license for a few more years.

Others suggest that the band might be free to negotiate a new deal now because of a clause in its V2 contract that says if its latest album, “Get Behind Me Satan,” did not ship 1 million units within 13 months of its June 7, 2005, release, the band would be free to withdraw from the contract. According to Nielsen SoundScan, the title has scanned 817,000 copies, but that does not represent how many have shipped.

Sources within the Redux camp say the opposite is true. They claim V2 would have had an escape hatch if it did not reach that sales level. In any event, Redux does not plan to exercise that option and very much would like to re-sign the White Stripes for more albums. Also, it says V2 has matching rights on any deal of fed to the group.

The band’s manager/lawyer, Ian Montone, who heads Monomone Management, did not return a call for comment.

In the meantime, Redux has been in trimming mode, reducing the 150 employees it had after the V2 acquisition to about 100. Further cuts are expected to reduce that to 80-90 staffers.

The two biggest chunks of layoffs came from rationalizing V2 with Artemis and extensively cutting back the Musicorama staff by outsourcing distribution, credit, collections and some other backroom functions to Koch Entertainment Distribution.

Koch also will handle Artemis, Compendia and the catalog assets. V2 releases are distributed by either WEA or Alternative Distribution Alliance.
Impala says Sony-BMG’s days are numbered, while some major-label sources shrug off the ruling. The truth is far less absolute.

In the EU, the competition law is supposed to prevent dominance or its negative effects on a market. While there may be a single company that dominates a market, there may also be “collective dominance” when two or more companies have economic links that place them in a dominant position. In evaluating a proposed merger, the EC must determine whether there is a risk that the merger will result in a collective dominant position. The court wrote in its opinion that collective dominance is present when three conditions are found: (1) the market is sufficiently “transparent” for the merged companies to be able to monitor whether the rules of coordination are being observed by others; (2) there is a deterrent mechanism that can be used if other companies do not follow those rules; and (3) current or future competitors, who do not participate in the coordination, and customer reactions probably won’t be able to jeopardize the results expected from the coordination.

THE FINDINGS

The EC’s decision and a large portion of the court’s opinion focused on transparency in record industry pricing in Europe by the then-five major labels. The EC found that the major labels’ published prices to dealers (PPDs, which are comparable to U.S. wholesale prices) could be used as a reference point for “tacit coordination,” which may allow each of them to adapt to the others’ strategies in things like pricing. As they move in parallel with one another, they are unwittingly reducing the incentive to compete on price, which has the effect of constraining competition.

THE ANNULMENT

The court criticized the EC’s conclusion, especially since its statement of reasons only set out three points to support its decision. The court then pointed out eight factors that showed a “strong transparency” in pricing that may allow competitors to learn about—and coordinate—pricing. They include the public nature of PPDs, long-term stable relationships between retailers and all the majors, a large part of the major labels’ sales channelled to a limited number of customers and their weekly monitoring of the retail market.

The court held that the EC’s assertion that the markets for recorded music are not sufficiently transparent to permit a collective dominant position was wrong. The decision was not supported by the statement, it did not meet legal standards, and the evaluation was incomplete—the EC did not review or include all the relevant data that should have been considered.

In its 77-page opinion, the court also explored other aspects of the decision. It annulled approval because the decision lacked sufficient reasoning and evidence to support that reasoning under legal principles. Sony BMG is expected to submit another application for approval, but it is unclear whether the company must include evidence of the market as it exists today rather than in 2004. There may be negotiations to restrict certain activity to get approval, but industry lawyers and executives are not offering predictions on what types of restrictions may come into play.

Based on the court’s analysis, however, perhaps the most challenging and important job will be explaining the intricacies of the business to the commissioners. After all, the commissioners will be responsible for adequately portraying the evidence and reasoning to withstand another legal attack.
It is a bizarre coincidence that our coolest song in the world this week is by the Anderson Council, a group that took its name from the last names of blues musicians Pink Anderson and Floyd Council as a tribute to Syd Barrett, who used the first names for Pink Floyd.

Syd was the second-most famous drug casualty after Brian Jones even though both were fired from the bands they started. Even with Jimi, Janis, Jim Morrison and Brian dying, somehow Syd living to see the massive success of Pink Floyd seemed all the more tragic.

Floyd's first record, "The Piper at the Gates of Dawn" in 1967, was all Syd. It was both sophisticated and surprisingly visionary for a band playing American R&B just like everyone else only a year or two earlier, establishing an artistic and adventurous template for the entire British psychedelic era.

It is not surprising to hear it was recorded next door, virtually simultaneously, with the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band."

Silent since the mid-'70s, most fans thought Syd had gone a long time ago. Some fates are worse than death.

And here comes another... The Four Seasons music in "Jersey Boys": Great! The Beatles in Vegas: Amazing! Bob Dylan on Broadway: They better be kidding! Rumors are circulating about a Broadway musical called "The Times They Are A-Changin'." If the rumor is true, let me be the first to point out—they ain't changed that much, baby! No chance, trust me. Investors, please contribute to Woody Guthrie's home for indigent laborers, a homeless shelter, anything but this. We're open-minded, but enough is enough. See you next week.

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**COOLEST GARAGE SONGS**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Living Things</strong></td>
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<td>Bang Bang You're Dead</td>
<td><strong>Dirty Pretty Things</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>If It Takes a Life Time</td>
<td><strong>Cheap Trick</strong></td>
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<td>Country Girl</td>
<td><strong>Primal Scream</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Everyone Knows</td>
<td><strong>Joan Jett &amp; The Blackhearts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Wasted</td>
<td><strong>Pearl Jam</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hands</td>
<td><strong>The RACONTEURS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>King of the Freaks</td>
<td><strong>The MAGGOTS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>La La Land</strong></td>
<td><strong>Go-Go's</strong></td>
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**COOLEST GARAGE ALBUMS**

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<td><strong>Sinner</strong></td>
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<td>Flat-Pack Philosophy</td>
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<td>Broken Boy Soldiers</td>
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<td>God Bless the Go-Go's</td>
<td><strong>Go-Go's</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ahead of the Lions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rockin' Bones: '50s Punk and Rockabilly</td>
<td><strong>Various Artists</strong></td>
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New Fix For Rock Geeks
Anthology Records To Offer Rare, Out-Of-Print Titles Online

There is plenty of new indie and mainstream music available on legal download sites, but the obscure, the out-of-print and the experimental often remain relegated to used vinyl bins at indie retail. Enter Anthology Records’ Keith Abrahamsson. He’ll launch his Anthology Records online store this fall. His initial releases may not be household names, but there is plenty for music enthusiasts to get excited about. "The punk-inspired punk of China Shop’s ‘21 Puffs on the Cassettes,’ the ‘Midwestern garage rock of the Suicide Commandos’ ‘Make a Record,’ the scorching swamp-goth of the Scientists’ debut LP and the spacy rock of My Solid Ground’s self-titled effort. He plans to have about 15 titles by early 2007. "If Anthology is able to become successful with the digital stuff, I’d like to do some vinyl stuff," says Abrahamsson, who works in Kemado’s A&R department. "I don’t know that I’ll ever do a CD release. Digital and vinyl are the only two formats I’m really interested in." He’s secured exclusive digital licenses for three years, and will use TuneCore to distribute music to the likes of iTunes and eMusic if the acts request it. Abrahamsson hopes the Anthology Web site will score more than a business opportunity. "I’ll provide videos, extended audio clips and extensive liner notes. The site was designed with the help of freelance tech designer Matthew Gillespie. Abrahamsson raised money for the site from private investors—he declines to give a figure. Single MP3 tracks will cost 99 cents, and album prices will be close to the standard online rate of $9.99, but some may vary. For instance, one of Abrahamsson’s choices, the self-titled two-CD set from Sweden’s psychedelic Parson Sound, will sell for $11.99. Otherwise, it is available as an import from Subliminal Sounds for 200 Swedish kronor (about $28). "They are the Sweden equivalent of what Pink Floyd was to the U.K.," Abrahamsson says. "It is some serious head music. There is an online audience for this kind of music, eMusic CEO David Pakman says. His site has made available a number of deleted titles from K Records, blues label Blacktop Records and some heretofore unreleased music from the Sun Records catalog, including such artists as Charlie Rich, Rosco Gordon and Bill Justin. "All that stuff is in our sweet spot," Pakman says. "Any indie rock from the last 20 years or so does really well. The more obscure it is, the better we do with it." Abrahamsson says no act he’s working with pushed for a CD release, and he has no interest. That being said, he doesn’t think digital will kill the used LP business entirely. “This is more cost-effective, but for the people who are purists and gung-ho about collecting old, rare LPs, you’re always going to be able to buy the LP,” he says. “That’s the true format people will want this stuff in. But I just don’t see a difference between a CD reissue and a digital reissue.”

SIRE’S CANVAS: Pop-punk act the Spill Canvas will be up-streamed into the Warner Bros. system. The band’s 2005 album, “One Fell Swoop,” was released on 111 Records, which is part of Warner Music Group’s rock imprint Sire, plus Warner Bros. "The latter is headed by Fred Feldman. The Spill Canvas’ next album is slated to come out on WMG’s Sire imprint, Feldman notes. “One Fell Swoop” has sold 42,000 copies in the United States since its release, according to Nielsen SoundScan. In other East West news, the label group has just signed McKinney, Texas-based Pluto Records. A metal label, Pluto released the first As I Lay Dying album, 2001’s “Re-neath the Encasing of Ashes.” The group then went onto Metal Blade. Also on the horizon, East West will work the upcoming album from singer/songwriter Jesse Malin, to be released on Billie Joe Armstrong’s Adeline Records. Rumor has it that Armstrong and Ryan Adams appear on the set. Feldman had no word on whether Green Day’s new-wave side project, the Network, would be releasing another album via Adeline.

Vintage Cravings Resurrect Hendrix In Retail

Earlier this year, Epic Records reintroduced its classic Epic logo via a limited-edition T-shirt from Trunk, the high-end merchandise line that specializes in classic pop culture imagery. Elsewhere, fashion brands like Lucky Brand Jeans and Worn Free have created successful clothing lines that spotlight classic rock imagery. And what about the new Candie’s campaign for Kohl’s that features Cheyenne Kimball—and Pat Benatar? Indeed, everything old is new again—and so are the revenue streams generated from licensing art of iconic rock figures. To be sure, this retro trend, embraced by baby boomers and teens, is not going away. Come fall, the Jimi Hendrix Collection, a line of high-end leather jackets and handbags, will make its presence known in department and specialty stores.

Similarly, Signature’s Network has secured the exclusive license to the Woodstock brand and is developing a lifestyle line. Debuting fall 2007, the Woodstock Lifestyle Brand will encompass fashion, home decor and accessories. Tina Wells, CEO of New York-based youth-gear marketing agency Buzz Marketing Group, credits the iPod for much of this sartorial flashback activity.

She says the iPod has accelerated the discovery of music—new and old. “Kids have a strong desire to tap into the originators of much of today’s music,” Wells says. “They’re looking beyond MTV to find artists to connect with. This generation is being given options like never before. And they’re embracing those options.”

Look at someone like Jimi Hendrix, she says. “He was and remains a music and fashion icon. Young adults pick up on this.” The Jimi Hendrix Collection—a collaboration between designer Gina Alexander, Janie Hendrix (Jimi’s sister and the executor of his estate) and rock photographer Robert M. Knight—premiered July 18-16 at the Project Show in New York. The line consists of five jackets, 12 better designer handbags and 16 junior market handbags, according to Alexander. Each item will feature one of three rare images of the legendary guitarist, including onstage shots from his 1968 show at San Francisco’s Winterland venue. According to Janie Hendrix, president/CEO of Experience Hendrix, fans have been asking for high-end fashions for quite some time. “And we now have more women as fans,” she adds. Which helps to explain a luxury women’s line like this one. Pausing, she says, “Gina’s created the leather jacket I’ve always wanted to buy.”

“With this line, we’re giving the Jimi Hendrix name something stylish and couture, and not just another T-shirt,” Alexander says. “Smart move, considering the number of Hendrix T-shirts—legally sanctioned or not—sold around the world.” Janie credits the abundance of bootlegged Hendrix merchandise to an “old administration that didn’t care about licensing.” Since taking over the “family business,” Janie’s goal has been “to create and help put Jimi’s music and image out there in creative, original ways.” Janie acknowledges that, between publishing and sync licenses, it is the music that brings in the lion’s share of income. “But merchandising does well for us, too,” she notes. “Of course, we’re usually in five different litigations at any one time.”

Knight says he has a list of unreleased photos of Hendrix, which could find their way into forthcoming lines in the Jimi Hendrix Collection. “By fortune, in 1968, I happened to be around Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page and Jimi Hendrix,” he notes. The photos could also find their way into other licensing opportunities. “We’re very selective with the licensing of Jimi,” Janie says. That said, she admits that the “family company” did not always make the right licensing choices. “When my dad was alive, he wanted Jimi’s name attached to certain things. Now, we listen to the fans and try to make it happen.”
NARM Plans Confab Packed With Music Convention Mixes Biz With Top Talent, Panels And Parties

With the NARM conference a few weeks away—Aug. 2-6 in Kissimmee, Fla.—I thought I would rush to Sherry’s kitchen in advance and see what’s cooking for this year’s meet.

First off, Donio tells me that once again there will be plenty of music at NARM, and it sounds like there won’t be a shortage of parties either.

Universal Music Group Distribution comes forward with its product presentation tradition again this year.

“The product presentation used to be the center-piece of the convention, but then went away for a couple of years, until UMG D brought it back last year,” Donio says.

UMGD doesn’t announce artists in advance, but Donio says the company will probably feature more live acts this year during its presentation. The product presentations “pack the house,” Donio says.

WEA has opening night at Club NARM, which I still think of as the old PGD (PolyGram Distribution) Zone because that’s what it’s modeled after. Anyway, that night will see a performance by legendary songwriter P.F. Sloan (the Turtles’ “You Baby,” the Grassroots’ “Let’s Live for Today” and Barry McGuire’s “Eve of Destruction”).

Also on the bill are Tego Calderon, Lupe Fiasco and Paulo Nutini. “WEA always goes out of their way to throw a great party the first night,” Donio says.

Last year, EMI LIVE was one of the highest-rated events, Donio says, and this time the company will return with performances by the Summer Obsession, Amos Lee, the Starting Line and Grand Funk Railroad.

Not many people realize this nowadays, but Grand Funk Railroad was a bigger band in the early ”70s before it hit singles by the middle of that same decade. Retail Track saw the band at a sold-out Shea Stadium in 1971, and by the time the group finally had hit singles—the ones still heard on the radio—the band was only selling out arenas like Madison Square Garden.

EMI’s Capitol Records is also bringing in Corinne Bailey Rae for a featured performance on opening day.

It’s a coveted slot as many successful acts have made their debuts at the convention just as they were breaking through, says Donio, who names Josh Groban and Mariah Carey as examples.

On the other hand, “We always have had acts like Chick Corea and Etta James in the past, so it’s great to have bands like Grand Funk and Kool & the Gang,” Donio says. The latter band, which has a new album coming out through Bayside Distribution, will receive the chairman’s award at the close of the convention.

The Scissor Sisters will also play at the closing night award show. “So, we have turned it into a saturday night dance party,” and are encouraging people to have fun and dress festive,” Donio says.

By the way, Kathleen Madigan, the comedian on Warner Bros./Jive Records, is the MC that night. What’s more, there will be a red carpet reception sponsored by Absolut before the awards dinner finale with a Mr. B performance, courtesy of Megawave Records.

Thursday night, Club NARM will feature Five Star Iris, Jurassic 5, Missise and Powerman 5000. The last of which is a metal band, a genre not often represented at NARM, so that should be fun. Speaking of that genre, the Rhino-sponsored, opening night party will feature the Section Quartet, a classical act that plays heavy metal music. Rhino also plans to bring a 25-foot-tall Rhino, a former mainstay in the old Rhino Records store.

Also for parties, Sony BMG Music Entertainment and Blu-ray are co-sponsoring the Scholarship Cocktail Party, while Trans Continental Records, in conjunction with Rocket Science, will sponsor the Mix It Up Cocktail reception, where former New Kids on the Block member Jordan Knight will perform.

That’s the nighttime and the music. During the day, or at least the first three, speed dating will be back, where all the companies that signed up will get a chance to meet with one another. The marketplace, where product and related suppliers will have booths showing their wares, will now get staggered hours packaged with different events to generate more traffic.

See ya there and don’t forget the go-to-conversation starter for all socially inept convention attendees: “When did ya get in?”
The process of licensing music for a TV commercial, show or movie is notorious for being a time-consuming and often hair-pulling exercise in frustration. There’s no sinning of rates, it requires extensive negotiations at times and, with the explosion of new media formats, is entering a new era of pricing uncertainty. But what if licensing a song were as easy as buying it online?

That’s something a handful of licensing experts are about to find out. Music licensing companies Pump Audio and Rumblefish this summer introduced different flavors of Internet-based licensing services where anybody from an amateur podcaster to a TV music supervisor can go to search, sample and license music for their productions. Both companies pre-clear the rights for all music in their catalogs for a variety of different uses. License costs vary based on the size of the project, the use of the song and other predetermined criteria that users fill out in a sort of online questionnaire/rate card. Costs run from as low as $5 for a podcast license to $50,000 for nationwide TV use.

Once paid, the license is automatically generated and e-mailed as a PDF file. There are no phone calls, price haggling or lawyers involved. According to Rumblefish CEO Paul Anthony, what normally takes between 30 to 100 man-hours of effort is reduced to 10 minutes online.

“We learned that music supervisors were going into iTunes to find songs and then figure out a way to license them later,” he says. “Their dream scenario was to have a license button next to the buy button. So we wanted to make licensing as easy as buying it.”

Of course, there’s a catch: major-label publishers don’t participate in either service rates like the direct negotiation method preferred by most publishers.

“There’s no drop-down menu that asks, ‘How bad do you want it?’” Anthony says. “We split the money 50-50 with the artist, so it’s our incentive to charge as much as we can and at the same time set a fair price so our customers keep coming back.”

Rather than accept it as a limitation, these companies tout their indie-only catalog as a feature. A famous piece of music is not always the best thing for your brand,” says Pump Audio CEO Steve Ellis, who advertises his service as “an alternative to stock music.”

Both Rumblefish and Pump Audio are run by former musicians sympathetic to the plight of struggling artists. They hope their new online licensing structure will result in yet another digital avenue for indie acts to gain exposure and revenue.

“Music licensing supports the working-class musician,” Anthony says. “The future of the music business is about the rise of the independents; hundreds of thousands of smaller artists making $20,000 to $100,000 a year.”

This is particularly important when held against the expected explosion of online video. Research group IDC predicts Internet video will become a $1.7 billion business by 2010, a $1.5 billion increase over 2005. Additionally, the larger TV and film studios are creating Web-only episodes may not see the value in paying for high-priced hit songs when developing for a decidedly low-cost medium.

The result is more licensing opportunities (read: money) for indie artists.

“I don’t think going forward there’s going to be any less video in the world, and as a result all that video is going to need audio,” Ellis says. “There are many ways to promote yourself and generate some interest in what you’re doing, but I still think it’s very difficult to make money. Our market needs this music. Our clients pay. Our artists get paid. I don’t know that it’s helped them sell a lot of records, but it’s certainly helped them get paid.”

Rumblefish boasts a catalog of about 4,000 tracks, Pump Audio about 15,000, all independent acts or artists with expired contracts who now own their masters.

Online licensing requires pre-clearance and standardized, transparent pricing concepts that don’t help drive up
Chile Opens First Indoor Venue

Arena Santiago Will Host Concerts During Winter Season

For decades, Arena Santiago sat in the midst of Chile's capital like a white elephant, ungainly and unfinished.

Now, 52 years after construction first began, the arena finally opened its doors in May, becoming the country's first state-of-the-art indoor venue.

With a seating capacity of 15,000, Arena Santiago is expected to boost Chile's tour circuit, long hampered by the lack of an enclosed venue for winter concerts.

"Constructing a closed venue was something that needed to be done in order to work in Chile between March and November," which is Chile's winter season, says Jorge Ramirez Arrayás, executive director of event promotion company Multimúsica S.A.

Neighboring Argentina, which is on a similar calendar, is fertile ground for concerts year-round.

Already, Arena Santiago hosted a sold-out show June 12 by reggaeton star Daddy Yankee, co-produced by the arena and Multimúsica. Shows in the coming weeks include Lord of the Dance and Chilean band Los Tres.

"It will become the home of ballads and soft pop, rock and jazz." Ramirez Arrayás says of the venue, which also will handle sports and ice events. He adds that the arena will be ideal for such artists as Ricardo Arjona and Ricky Martin.

Such optimism is tempered by the fact that with a population of 16 million, Chile is a relatively small event market with limited possibilities. Still, it is economically and politically stable — unlike many other countries in South America — and this makes it appealing to outside promoters.

Carolina Mery, the arena's commercial director, says she is approaching these first months of operation as a learning curve.

"We weren't sure how the venue would behave and how promoters would behave with the venue," she says. "As we understood it, we should be the first to try out the arena instead of giving that task to a third party."

Thus, many of the arena's scheduled events are co-productions between the venue and promoters.

Mery says her goal is to have 130 shows between May and December, she is already 40% booked.

For the first four months of 2007, the venue is already entirely booked.

Arena Santiago technically belongs to the Chilean government, which has granted a 20-year concession for its operation to investment group Hiller Inversiones, whose holdings include entertainment and food properties.

The company won the bid to finish the arena's construction.

"It's a wonderful place," says Maria Ignacia Edwards, manager of local group Las Jaibas, who played at the opening and will perform at the arena in September. "We have a massive audience, and the winter months were always a challenge. This place is comfortable and well-equipped, and it is wonderful for local groups as we can bring together a big audience at affordable prices."

Edwards says there is an extra bonus. "It even has a Jacuzzi!"

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Mercury Shortlist Revealed
Radiohead frontman Thoryer's solo debut “The Eraser” (XL) is a favorite for the 2006 Nationwide Mercury Prize, as is alternative rock quartet Arctic Monkeys' “Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not” (Domino).

The two emerged as 5-1 favorites with U.K. bookmakers chart William Hill when the shortlist for the annual British/Irish album of the year award was announced July 18 at London's Commonwealth Club. The 200 albums submitted by labels were whittled down to a final dozen by the prize's 12 judges from the media. Qualifying albums had to be released between July 25, 2005, and July 17, 2006.

This year's shortlist contains fewer long shots than in previous years, with odds varying from 5-1 to 14-1, according to William Hill (for a full list, go to www.bobill.biz). The winner will be announced Sept. 5 at a gala evening in London, with broadcast coverage being shared among BBC Radio 1, national TV network BBC 2 and digital TV channel BBC 4.

—Tom Ferguson

HMV Hires Fox
HMV Group has named Simon Fox as its incoming chief executive. Fox joins the U.K.-based chain Sept. 4 as group chief executive-designate, and will succeed current incumbent Alan Giles at the company's Sept. 28 annual general meeting. Giles is retiring.

Fox joins HMV from goods retailer Kesa Electricals, where he was CEO. In a statement, HMV Group noneexecutive chairman Carl Symon said Fox had a "strong strategic mind combined with a first-rate track record in all aspects of retailing."

Following the announcement, HMV's stock rose 2.68% to 163 pence ($3) in morning trading July 18 on the London Stock Exchange.

—Lars Brandle

France Lowers Gold Standard
French labels body SPEN has lowered its album certification thresholds. Effective July 1, 75,000 album shipments are required for gold status, down from 100,000. Platinum status is now 200,000, down from 300,000. Diamond certification is 750,000 units, down from 1 million.

SPEN director general Herve Rony says that although digital sales will shortly be taken into account in the certification process, lowering the thresholds was necessary to address the downturn in the market.

SPEN members include France's four major-label affiliates and some of the biggest French Indies. —Aymeric Pichevin

Russian Pirate Fined
In a July 13 ruling, the Arbitration Court of the Moscow Region ordered Russian pirate disc manufacturer Russobit-Soft to pay 4 million rubles ($148,000) in statutory damages to IFPI member companies for producing and distributing illegal CDs.

The ruling is the result of a December 2003 lawsuit filed on behalf of eight labels: Arista Records, BMG U.K. & Ireland, CJSC Universal Music (Russia), EMI Music International Services, Mute Records, Sony Music Entertainment (Russia), Sanctuary Records Group and Warner Music Austria.

The 30 CD albums cited in the lawsuit included titles by Depeche Mode, Destiny's Child, Michael Jackson, Radiohead and Whitney Houston. Russobit-Soft was ordered to cease manufacturing further copies and has to pay further compensation to cover court legal costs.

According to the IFPI, Russia's $6 active optical-disc factories produce about 700 million discs annually in a country where $8 million legal music CDs were sold in 2004.

—Juliana Koranteng

Universal Group Inks Universal Deal
Universal Music South East Asia has linked a local marketing and distribution deal with its South Korean, China and entertainment company CJ Music, part of Seoul-based media conglomerate CJ Group. In partnership with Universal Music Korea, CJ will use its clout in the domestic market to push selected international titles.

The CJ Group's business activities include online and offline distribution, a record label, artist management and restaurants. It will act as a wholesaler to service convenience stores and mass merchants with product shipped to CJ by UMK, which continues to handle its own distribution and marketing in the territory. The agreement is the first of its kind for Universal Music South East Asia.

—Mark Russell

Beethoven Rolls Over
Modern Marketing Helps Classical Shake That Dusty Image In Germany

Hamburg—German music fans are bonging up on their classics. Label executives are applauding a transformation in A&R, marketing and promotion strategies, which is winning classical artists new fans and boosting sales.

"Fortunately, a new generation of classical stars is managing to reach wider target groups," says Stefan Piendl, managing director of EMI Classics Deutschland.

Leaving the comeback are artists such as Anna Netrebko, Rolando Villazon and Nigel Kennedy, who have bypassed the "obstacle, as it is still sometimes seen, of classical music," Piendl says. "Luckily this trend applies both to live music and CD sales."

Deutsche Grammphon/Universal has scored platinum sales (200,000) with the October 2005 opera album release "La Traviata," starring Netrebko.

"Opera Prohibita" (Decca/Universal), performed by Cecilia Bartoli, is expected to pass the 100,000 mark in the fall. Deutsche Grammphon-signed Chinese pianist Lang Lang is close to 60,000 units with his January 2006 release "Memory." Each of those albums made the top 60 of Germany's weekly Media Control Top 100 album sales chart this year. Bartoli: reached as high as No. 16—rubbing shoulders with mainstream pop and rock acts.

Greater cross-industry cooperation has opened up marketing possibilities for classical artists that were previously seen as taboo, even though they were widely used to promote other genres.

Deutsche Grammphon violinist Anne Sophie Mutter appeared on "Wetten Das...?" a game show on Germany's ZDF-TV that highlights pop acts to present her album of Mozart sonatas. Following her appearance on the TV show, which draws 13 million viewers, the album surpassed the five-figure sales mark, says her label.

Other German channels such as 3sat and Arte have also increased their coverage of classical music over the last two years, and in 2004, pay-TV channel Premiere launched a 24-hour classical music channel.

Borrowing another tactic primarily reserved for pop artists, German magazines are now covering free classical CDs.

"Completely new customers are now coming into my store who are young but have enough money to buy sophisticated classical music CDs," says classical music retailer Albert Wagner from L+P Classics in Berlin.

Industry data suggests that the genre, which suffered sales declines of roughly 50% since 1994, is well on the path to recovery.

Where classical accounted for 6.9% of market revenue in 2003, the Nuremberg-based market research institute GfK forecasts that figure to top 9% in 2006. And it's not simply a case of classical staying buoyant in a diminishing market. The German IFPI in Berlin projects sales of classical music in 2006 to reach euro 150 million ($190 million), up from euro 130 million ($160 million) last year. In the first quarter of 2006, the total classical music market rose by 17% over the same period in 2005, according to IFPI data.

Universal Classics, recognized as the classical music market leader with a 35% share, boasts a 50% rise in comparable revenue in the first quarter of 2006. At one stage earlier in the year, the label had seven classical albums in the national albums chart.

Classical is also receiving a facelift in the live market. Over the past five years, Universal Classics has regularly brought its Yellow Lounge classical event to nightclubs in Germany's biggest cities. Clubs in Berlin, Cologne and Hamburg that typically deliver house music, techno and electro beats, have been pumping classical sounds.

"Kids who normally listen to techno or rock are coming to our club and are now being exposed to classical music," says Ben Di Biel, who owns Berlin club Maria am Ostbahnhof. Di Biel adds that Universal's sponsorship of the evenings means a friendly ticket price of euro 4 ($5). "Young people," he says, "are very interested in hearing new sounds."

A TV appearance on a German pop show by violinist Anne Sophie Mutter helped boost sales of her new Mozart disc.
UMGI REVAMPS CD JEWEL BOXES

LONDON—The unloved CD jewel box is getting a makeover. Universal Music Group International is throwing its clout behind a new three-tiered CD packaging and pricing system, which it hopes will galvanize European consumer demand for physical product. While the media loves to fixate on the growth of the digital medium, London-based UMGI executive VP of marketing and A&R Max Hole says, “Ninety percent of what we still sell, though, is in the CD format, which we felt needed a ‘reboot.”

In September, UMGI will upgrade the jewel box with Super Jewel Box packaging—essentially the same as the current Super Audio CD case—for all new releases in European territories. The first albums to be issued in what UMGI claims is stronger, more durable packaging will be the Scissor Sisters’ “Ta-Dah!”, the Killers’ sophomore set, “Sam’s Town”; and “The Dutchess,” the first solo album from Black Eyed Peas member Fergie. All will be released Sept. 18.

From then on, “We will be releasing all of our standard offerings in Super Jewel Box,” Hole says. “As this represents the vast majority of our sales, we will be using the [traditional] jewel box less and less.”

UMGI anticipates shipping more than 100 million albums across Europe in the format during the 12 months following the switchover. At the top end of the new structure, the company will offer a “deluxe” version for all major artist album releases, containing an exclusive, limited-edition bonus CD or DVD with additional audio or video content.

Selected albums that were released more than one year ago will be available in a “basic” format, packaged in a streamlined slide-pack CD case.

Upcoming titles in the basic format that will arrive in September or October include Limp Bizkit’s “Greatest Hitz,” Madeleine Peyroux’s “Careless Love,” Ronan Keating’s “10 Years of Hits” and Zucchero’s “Zu & Co.”

In continental Europe, UMGI is recommending the three formats be priced at, on average, €19.99 ($25) for deluxe, €14.99 ($19) for standard and €9.99 ($12.70) for basic. UMGI declined to disclose dealer prices.

In the United Kingdom, the recommended retail prices are between £15.99 ($29) and £17.99 ($32) for deluxe, £9.99 ($18) and £13.99 ($25) for standard and £5.99 for basic ($10).

Hole says UMGI is conducting consumer research in other markets to establish whether the new structure could be rolled out elsewhere.

Despite the digital revolution, consumers have largely continued their love affair with the CD format. A recent NielsenNetRatings study of Internet users in the United Kingdom revealed that the CD is the preferred music format for 75% of music users. According to IFPI statistics, the CD album accounted for 82% of the retail value of global recorded-music market in value.

Retailers and the industry welcome the major’s new layered structure. British market-leading music and entertainment merchant HMV Group has vowed to support the initiative. “It’s still important to get pricing and marketing right, but it if takes off, we can expect other labels to follow suit,” HMV head of music Gary Royle says.

“Because they have the biggest market share, when Universal does something, it’s going to be looked at by everyone,” notes Keith Jopling, IFPI director of strategic analysis and research.

The jewel box was designed and developed jointly by Phillips and Sony Corp., who introduced the CD in 1982. However, since hitting the market, the packaging has been widely derided for its fragility. Few personal CD collections can boast mint-condition status, where the cases are not cracked, the front has not detached from the back or the disc-holding center is not broken.

“Every piece of research I’ve seen which goes anywhere near [CD packaging] shows that people hate the jewel box,” Jopling notes. “If this initiative eventually leads to an abandonment of the jewel box as the standard packaging for CDs, then it has to be a good thing.”
‘Idol’ Remains Touring Superpower

Hit TV Show Still Spurs Sold-Out Treks

Anyone who ever doubted that the “American Idol!" TV phenomenon would not have legs as a touring entity was wrong as 60 sellouts for the 2006 American Idol Live tour attest.

“On one hand it surprises me, on the other hand it doesn’t,” says Creative Artists Agency’s Jeff Franco, responsible agent for the tour. “The television show is so popular, the audience is wised with the kids throughout the entire season, and they just want to see them.”

This is year five for the tour, begging the question as to whether the audience changes based on who the contestants are. “We change the show every year, and we probably draw a lot of the same people each time,” Franco says. “I think the audience is just growing. The ratings are bigger, and it’s just embedded in the culture at this point.”

Few tours have the benefit of a hit TV show to promote its artists week after week. “It definitely helps to be able to reach 30 million viewers,” Franco says. 

“Idol” Remains Touring Superpower

In July, “American Idol” and the tour that it spawned caused a sensation. The show has five seasons under its belt, and its popularity is still growing. The tour, which started in 2003, has been a huge success, with many sellouts and high ticket prices.

The tour is produced by AEG Live and presented by Kellogg Pop-Tarts.

Rascal Flatts’ average nightly audience on its current tour is 18K.

The tour features a variety of artists, including Rascal Flatts, Faith Hill, and Kelly Clarkson. The tour has been praised for its high energy and entertaining performances.

The tour is very popular, with many sellouts and high ticket prices. The tour has been successful in promoting the artists on the tour, and it has helped to increase the popularity of the show and its contestants.

The tour is produced by AEG Live and presented by Kellogg Pop-Tarts.
Talent, Not Size, Rules Virgin Fest


In producing a major music festival, Seth Hurwitz knew he couldn’t be the biggest, so he shot for being the best.

Hurwitz, president of Washington, D.C.-based promoter I.M.P. and owner of the renowned 9:30 Club there, is booking and promoting the Virgin Music Festival at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore, set for Sept. 23.

The Red Hot Chili Peppers and the Who will headline the U.S. version of the Virgin Music Festival. The Baltimore event, as well as a two-day V Fest in Toronto, marks the first time the Virgin Music Festival brand has left the United Kingdom, where it will mark its 11th run this year. Virgin Mobile U.S. chief marketing officer Howard Handler says the U.S. version says been in the world for a few years.

The V Fest in the U.K. is such a powerful anchor event and allows Virgin Mobile to make such a deep connection with music fans, it’s just very natural to have this type of a partner, so bringing it to the United States,” Handler says.

Sir Richard Branson, founder and chairman of the Virgin Group, agrees: “Because Virgin is an international brand and we continue to look to the right type of events in each of the countries in which we operate, we believe that Canada and the U.S. are totally logical extensions for something tied to music.”

Hurwitz says he was very concerned about putting together a line-up that resonates with music lovers. “I didn’t want to book every band I could find and put up as many stages as I could and do a smaller version of Coachella or Austin City Limits or those other great festivals,” says Hurwitz, who will produce the event under the I.M.P. brand.

“My concept was to look for the absolute best, most power-packed, quality-versus-quantity lineup I could. I wanted to make this the most prestigious festival to play on for hands.”

Among the others on the bill are the Killers, the Flaming Lips, the Raconteurs, Scissor Sisters, Gnaris Barkley, Keane, Thievery Corporation, Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, New Pornographers, Wolfmother, Drive-By Truckers, Kasabian, John Digweed and Brazilian Girls. Hurwitz booked the two talent stages and promoter Andrew Dreskin, who initially brought Hurwitz to Virgin’s attention, booked the DJ tent.

Hurwitz says that when assembling the lineup he wanted to nail down the key anchor bookings first. “We booked it from the top-down, and we didn’t agree to go ahead with the festival until I knew what kind of show we could put together,” he says. “I was ready to walk away from it, I did not want to do a mediocre show.”

After the Peppers came the Who, a “dream booking” for Hurwitz due to the group’s popularity with kids, half of whom, Hurwitz says, listen to classic rock. “When I first brought up the Who, nobody got it, I fought everyone on this,” Hurwitz says. “The people at Virgin wanted to see this, they were young, and I am looking to bring in the kids who have never seen the Who but really want to.”

The Who’s management understood the importance of including playing V Fest, but when the tour was sold to Michael Cohl and Live Nation’s TNA, Hurwitz says he worried might not be able to get the Who since he’s independent.

“But to [TNA VP] Gerry Baral’s credit he actually did say from day one this is the coolest thing for them to do and our fiduciary duty is to the Who and we’re going to do what’s best for the Who,” Hurwitz says.

Virgin was keen to have a two-day event in Baltimore, as it is in Toronto and the United Kingdom. However, Hurwitz says, “I fought roots and said to keep it to one day because I felt that it would be against my strategy to stretch something to two days when I’d rather produce a power-packed one-day event that sells out quickly and turns people away.” Again, Hurwitz got his wish.

Tickets, priced at $97.50, go on sale July 22. Capacity at the Pimlico infield will be 60,000. A very limited number of VIP tickets will be available. Hurwitz says that as the talent budget, which was more than $2 million, became tighter, the ticket price began to inch up.

“If it started at $75, and then we realized we could book the Who and raise the price $10 it didn’t get better for everyone?” Hurwitz says. “And it kept going up with every great addition we put on there, and at some point, we said we don’t want to go over $100.”

The festival will be promoted in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York, Richmond, Va., and many other regional markets. “We’re advertising anywhere within driving distance,” Hurwitz says.

Virgin Mobile’s Handler adds that with major festivals already in place on the West Coast (Coachella), Texas (Austin City Limits Music Festival), the South (Bonnaroo) and the Midwest (Lollapalooza), the East Coast is a perfect fit geographically.

“We don’t really have something here that can give people in Boston, D.C., Philadelphia, New York and even cities farther south,” he says. “So Baltimore and Pimlico were just perfect.”

Virgin Mobile’s objective in investing seven figures into such an event is to spread. “We want Virgin Mobile to stand for satisfying music fans’ passions,” Handler says. “We want to have a great event to give our fans unique access to all different types of experiences. We’d love to have a great venue for some of our business partners. You see, for example, a very important handset partner of ours, jumped in right away.”

Virgin has 4 million customers and captures more than 8% of the ringtone market, according to the company.

**V Fest’s U.K. And Canadian Lineup**

**UNIVERSAL KINGDOM**

**Dates:** Aug. 19 in Cheamford; Aug. 20 in Staffordshire

**Produced by:** Simon Moran’s SJM Ltd.

**On the bill:** Radiohead, Morrissey, Faithless, Beck, Razorlight, Kasabian, Paul Weller, Hard-Fi, Keane, Bloc Party, Fatboy Slim, Groove Armada, the Charlies, the Magic Numbers, Editors, the Ordinary Boys, Starsailor, We Are Scientists, the Go! Team, Rufus Wainwright, the Cardigans, Stereophonics, James Dean Bradfield, Kubb, Orson, the Feeling, Gavin DeGraw, Delays, Girls Aloud, Daniel Powter, Phoenix, the Rifles, the Saw Doctors & Bic Runga

**CANADA**

**Dates:** Sept. 9-10 at Toronto’s Island Park

**Produced by:** Jacob Smid at Emerge Entertainment

**On the bill:** Gnarls Barkley, Alexisonfire, Eagles of Death Metal, the Dears, the Hidden Cameras, Buck 65, Phoenix, Starsailor, Plaster (9), Massive Attack, the Raconteurs, the Sam Roberts Band, Wolfmother (singer Andrew Stockdale, above), Triche, K’Naan, Zero 7, Jose Gonzales, We Are Wolves and Mickey Avalon

**Compiled by William Chiles, senior editor, Billboard Sponsorships**
When Microsoft implemented a massive reorganization of its business units last September, the tech giant's struggle with digital entertainment was a key motivator.

The company had found itself in the unfamiliar position of being marginalized in the growing digital media industry by Apple Computer's iPod and iTunes Music Store. Microsoft's MSN Music service remained barely a blip on the digital music radar and the portable media players utilizing its Windows Media Audio software had not made any impact whatsoever in the consumer electronics market.

So Microsoft merged all its device-centric product units and entertainment initiatives under one roof—the new Entertainment & Devices Division. Leading that group is Robbie Bach, who is responsible for ushering in the Xbox games system, Microsoft's most successful entertainment initiative to date. Along with Xbox partner in crime J Allard, Bach is staffing his new unit with fresh blood straight from the entertainment industry. He is also presiding over another major initiative, the Zune digital music service and player (see story, page 6).

The Xbox and the Zune illustrate how digital entertainment is transforming today's technology companies. Bach spoke with Billboard about the impact of this convergence of the entertainment and tech industries.

Q: What was the motivation behind the executive shuffle at Microsoft in the last year?
A: We have for a time been on a path to make entertainment an important part of what we're doing. Digital technology, connected homes and other opportunities in the marketplace are going to make entertainment more a software and service-driven experience. The more recent changes have been about getting more in sync across the company and have a more consistent and consolidated leadership view in what's happening in the entertainment space.

Q: How does this change the way the entertainment industry interacts with Microsoft now?
A: Over time you're going to get a more unified strategy from us. You're going to be able to track how we're approaching entertainment on a consistent basis, and people are going to see a lot more from us that in the next three to six months. There will be a set of people you know you can talk to who are driving this strategy and execution. Historically, one of the challenges was that if you wanted to talk to Microsoft about entertainment, you didn't always know who to talk to and get a story that's consistent.

Q: What lessons have you learned from the Xbox experience that you can apply to your broader entertainment initiatives?
A: It starts with the experience people get. In general, what gets people excited about things is when they have a great experience. It involves the hardware, the software, the service, the brand we created. All of that as an integrated experience is very important, so I'd say that's the first thing we learned. The second is that entertainment is not a solitary activity. It is a community activity. The game is the context. The entertainment that takes place is in the community in the time that they spend together playing it, and we think that carries across all forms of entertainment and will be a hallmark of the things we're doing going forward.

Q: But isn't the digital music different from videogames?
A: I think we've learned things from the Xbox experience, and we want to apply those lessons. But the playbook is completely different. The business model worked differently, our role in the ecosystem is completely different, and the publishing environment and content infrastructure is different. So what I think you'll see in the music and video space is a blending of all of that.

Q: How do you expect to narrow Apple's lead in digital entertainment?
A: The most important thing of all the things we're doing is the idea of connected entertainment and what that can bring. People want to be connected, they want to share, manage and control the experience themselves, and we have to enable that. It's a very rich approach. It's much broader than just "Here's a store, buy music and then play it." We've gone through one generation of digital music, and I think we are now entering another generation of innovation around music. I think it's very early in the cycle.

Q: How is digital media forcing the technology old guard to adapt?
A: The experience is essential and critical. There are places where for the experience to be great, we're going to do software, we're going to be involved in hardware, and we're going to be involved in services. There'll be other places where that experience will be better coming from multiple people. We're going to mix and match. There are people that are going to want to have choice, depending on the medium and the customer you're talking about, and we're going to support that. Depending on the situation, we're going to pick our role very carefully.

Q: How do you address the consumer complaints arising over restrictive digital rights management?
A: The value of DRM is in the eye of the content holder. It's their job to decide how they want to protect their content. Clearly one of the challenges we have today is making sure the content is protected as designed by the provider but without changing the all-important experience for the consumer. That is a very complicated, tricky balancing act. I think it's quite possible where the content holders are comfortable, consumers feel they have the flexibility and freedom they need, and the economics of the business can be well protected. But it's going to take the industry some time to work through.

Q: What is the impact of the "Web 2.0" user-generated content phenomenon such as YouTube and MySpace?
A: That you can be in contact with somebody without physically being in their presence—that's ephemeral. That's not going away. The real question there isn't whether people will want to create their own content and distribute it. I think the real question is what are the economics and business that evolves around that. The real challenge in the whole Web 2.0 space is understanding the business model—how you can have the great community experience people want and how to monetize it.

Q: So given all these new business models and technologies, how do you think the entertainment industry can best capitalize on such developments?
A: All of these forms of entertainment are going to change. That's a reality that everybody has to accept. Are people willing to experiment and try new things and move quicker to keep up with the pace that our consumers are defining? That to me is the challenge we must all face. Our job is to figure out how to get ahead and be bold in certain areas. It's a tricky trade-off. When you have an established business, deciding that you're going to challenge basic principals and push into new areas is always hard. But we have to do it because our customers are going to do it for us.
Everyone from tiny clubs to huge promoters is using the Web to reach more fans—and new revenue streams—with concerts

BY ANTONY BRUNO AND RAY WADDELL
The huge success of AOL’s delivery of the Live 8 concerts last summer made it clear that both consumer demand and the potential to offer compelling product exist. For Gig owner Peter O’Fallon—a film and TV director—recording and broadcasting shows is a way to not only marry his twin passions of video and music, but also an attempt to develop new revenue streams made possible by the Internet.

For the acts that pass through his doors, it’s free online exposure that rivals any multi-city tour, allowing them to post links to their performances on MySpace or send to friends, fans and promoters.

For the industry, it’s a rapidly growing business model that is changing the dynamics among artist, label, venue and digital music services.

THE BIG BOYS
AOL hosted its first originally produced live concert in 2003 featuring the Foo Fighters from the Black Cat in Washington, D.C. Since then AOL Music Live has delivered exclusive live webcasts by such artists as Usher, Rod Stewart, Nelly, Avril Lavigne, Josh Groban and Ashlee Simpson.

Erik Flannigan, VP/GM of AOL music, movie and TV, says venues are far better equipped to accommodate digital delivery these days. Back in 2003, “We were essentially bringing in all the crew and all the facilities and capabilities to the venues to make [digital delivery] happen,” Flannigan says. “But you’re seeing buildings built in the last 24 months, as well as those on the horizon, already presuming that capability is going to be desired and needed.”

The cost and difficulty of digitally wiring a venue is waning, Flannigan believes. “It think it’s fair to say that the cost of putting in T1 lines and a lot of back-bone pieces you need to do this stuff has come down dramatically in the last year or two as the bandwidth costs simply to deliver this programming,” he says.

The world’s largest promoters, AEG Live, Live Nation and House of Blues, which Live Nation acquired just weeks ago, have all bought into this concept, some more aggressively than others. HOB was the pioneer with live webcasts from its club dating back to 1995.

“We first focused on live digital delivery of shows because nobody else was doing it,” says Jim Cannella, national director of corporate partnerships for HOB. “The whole world was mesmerized by the infinite opportunity the Web represented, there were widely accepted technology standards to put your arms around and a market of hungry consumers which was doubling in size every few months.”

Then the dot-com bubble burst and things got complicated. “Digital initiatives started to be viewed as high-risk use of capital, and there were no devices that could transport the content people spent hours trying to find,” Cannella observes. “By the time MP3 players got easier to use, the two-page artist release had turned into a 10-page long-form agreement.”

Today Live Nation, also the world’s largest venue operator with its 40-plus amphitheaters, is making a “substantial commitment” to wire 120 venues and festival sites throughout North America and Europe with the ability to capture and repurpose thousands of live concerts. Live Nation currently has 36 wired venues in the States and broadcasted more than 350 concerts from around the world last year.

And Live Nation has been creative in the outlets for these concerts, including TV, mobile phone carriers, terrestrial and satellite radio, online and other digital music distribution avenues. “There’s no end to the uses once the content is captured,” says Bruce Eskowitz, president of digital partnerships for Live Nation. “It opens up tremendous opportunities with 3G, SDTV, HDTV, live ringtones, etc. The problem up to now has been the ability to capture it cost effectively.”

Eskowitz says his company’s current digital initiative is about extending Live Nation’s relationship with its customers. “An important new way to expand this relationship is through the recording and distribution of the live concert,” he says.
In the last year, the company overhauled the entire establishment to capture and broadcast the performances taking place within its walls.

CenterStaging’s outlet is Rehearsals.com, a Web site where fans can stream rehearsal footage of their favorite acts as they prepare for their upcoming tours. On the surface it couldn’t look more different than the Gig. Whereas the Hollywood bar is a decidedly DIY affair with exposed wires and a makeshift control room housing two Dell computers and a rickety air conditioner, CenterStaging’s upscale production boasts a multimillion-dollar state-of-the-art facility that spares no expense.

Each rehearsal room can be quickly equipped with up to 14 high-definition remote-controlled cameras and multiple mics. There’s one control room just to manage the lighting, with separate production and editing rooms for audio and video.

Yet another room boasts 160 terabytes of server capacity for video and another 20 just for audio. According to executive VP of business development Tommy Nast, the facility is equipped to capture more than 300 hours of content a day.

With such recording and broadcasting capabilities, a venue as small as the Gig or as large as CenterStaging can expand its capacity to the world.

The benefits are many. The promotional opportunities make it easier to look acts and at the same time inspires artists’ best performances.

“After about four or five takes, you almost forget the cameras are there,” says Dryden Mitchell, lead singer for Alien Ant Farm, during a session and a day at CenterStaging. “But it’s always in the back of your mind. You still watch what you say and remember to suck your belly in.”

**A CONCERT CASH COW?**

Although neither the Gig nor Rehearsals.com has started doing so, both companies plan to sell advertising on their sites to recoup their investments.

“Ultimately, the idea is to monetize it,” O’Fallon says. “At the moment, there’s not a tremendous amount of money to be made until there’s tens of thousands of people visiting the site.”

Live music is “definitely” a revenue producer for AOL, according to Flannigan, with such heavyweights as Intel, Nissan, Chevy, Lexus and Absolut on board as advertisers.

“There is certainly a large collection of advertisers out there who want to associate their brands with live performances,” he says. “Some of the biggest consumer-product advertisers in the world are starting to feel like digital live music is a fantastic showcase for their brand.”

AOL has a ready-made “billboard” of sorts on each computer screen where advertisers can reach consumers. Flannigan thinks live webcasts could also be an “enormous” ancillary revenue stream for artists, “especially artists like Pearl Jam or Bruce Springsteen that are mixing up their shows every night,” he says. “There really are 10,000-15,000, even 20,000, people who are interested in what’s happening at every single show, and if you add that up it could result in some very meaningful money.”

Grosky says the primary value of a Network Live broadcast is the “simultaneous launch across these multiple platforms that really creates an unprecedented impact from a visibility perspective.” Then there is the resulting product.

“This asset that we create, this hi-def, Dolby 5.1 sound, piece of live concert footage, is something that [the artists] own,” Grosky says. “It’s a copyright we don’t take ownership of, nor a master we get control of, so it’s something they can use for live DVD, live audio CD, exclusive product for retail, bonus content on the Web, really they can do with it are endless. So you’re creating a high-quality asset for them to leverage down the line.”

Lastly there is a revenue possibility through a revenue share on the backside, Grosky says. “The business model is pretty standard as it relates to the revenue that an artist shares in from the distribution of the exhibition of the content,” he adds. “But the ability for them to create additional revenues through their own exploitation of the master after the fact is unprecedented.”

It seems the financial breakdown of this new revenue stream is still evolving. “Obviously, this is a complicated area because there will be rights issues that need to be figured out,” Eskowicz says. “But we believe there are a wide variety of potential revenue streams for this live content.”

Cannella says digital delivery is easier and cheaper than ever, but getting clearance to offer the product to fans is tougher. “That’s why we believe our technology partners like Motorola are key to the equation by encouraging innovation and not being afraid to help underwrite a good idea,” he says. “It’s rare, but if a label can see you more as a promotional partner than a threat, then those good ideas can become profitable.”

Rehearsals.com’s Nast figures it will take about six months to reach its traffic goal of 1 million-2 million hits a day, which he feels are the numbers needed to sell advertising on any real scale.

Sweetening the deal is that they retain exclusive rights to the content, in most cases, as artists aren’t paying extra for the shoot. Participating acts can freely use the footage for their own purposes, such as DVD and B-Roll, etc., but don’t share in the advertising revenue gained from the site.

“The artists are recognizing the promotional value of it that’s going to spike their tour sales, CD sales, and DVD sales,” Nast says. “We’re able to amass millions of eyeballs with all these platforms, making us a great promotion and marketing partner.”

Consumers are responding to this, according to G rodsky, in a big way. Eskowicz says. “At the moment there is a tremendous thirst for content on a number of platforms, including mobile phones, online, television, satellite radio and more.”

As more venues get wired, more artists want to put their concerns out there in cyberspace, according to G rodsky. “Now we’re at a point where they are coming to us, really seeing the value and offering their content,” he says. “We’re getting a lot of positive feedback, almost to the point where we’re filtering more than we pitch.”

At the Gig and Rehearsals.com, many of the acts being recorded are unsigned. Rehearsals.com has a mix of well-known acts such as the Cars, Tom Petty and the Pussycat Dolls, but also a host of relative unknowns. The Gig is exclusively focused on unsigned artists.

Although a long shot, both hope to capture the performance of an act that one day may make it big, thus bringing great value to such an early “before-they-were-stars” performance.

“Just imagine if one of these guys becomes the next Nirvana,” O’Fallon says.

This gives these venues a vested interest in the artists they work with, investing in them the way labels once did. “We have an A&R process,” Nast says. “We spend a lot of time listening to these artists and looking at their potential, their history. I’d put the emerging artists on our site against any A&R exec.”

It’s this nurturing of young talent that drives O’Fallon more than anything else. He’s even started to promote the idea to other venues across the country, possibly establishing a network of smaller venues with recording capabilities—with all footage aired on the Gig’s Web site.

“The thing that’s so great about the Web right now is that it’s the Wild West,” he says. “There’s a tremendous amount of freedom for expression and showcasing artistic ability.”
CHRISTINA AGUILERA GETS INSPIRED BY 50S AND 60S IDOLS FOR HER UPCOMING ALBUM

Old School

BY MEJINDA NEWMAN

PHOTOGRAPHED BY

ELLEN VON JAMERETH

JULY 29, 2018

www.board.dix

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While recording “Back to Basics,” a project inspired by music and images from the 20s, 30s and 40s, Christina Aguilera had a secret weapon—bright red lipstick as shiny as a fire engine. “Just to get into the song,” she says, “to convey that emotion and high energy, especially to box out some notes, the red lipstick helped me get to that mind frame.” Saluting artists from the past was a role Aguilera was born to play. Since her RCA debut seven years ago, she has talked about her love for such torch and blues singers as Etta James. As she prepared for the album, “I would surround myself with old imagery of your Billie Holidays and your Pearl Baileys and people like that,” she says. Those photos accompanied her into the studio, as did “tear sheets and pictures of Louis Armstrong and [John] Coltrane and Miles Davis. I just wanted to get into the heart and soul of the music, literally. Actors call it ‘method acting.’ It was my way of method singing.”

Aguilera’s vision for the album was born from a poem she wrote while on her last tour. “I was like, ‘What is it that really makes me want to sing? What is it that makes me want to dance? What makes me love and enjoy music?’ And it’s really those old blue and soul and jazz music—that really had heart. Not to say that music today doesn’t have heart, but it’s really few and far between, because technology has advanced itself so much that anybody can be a singer. Back in the day, you had to know how to sing.”

With that in mind, RCA created a 12-song set, executive produced and co-written by Aguilera, her aim is no less ambitious than to pay homage to her musical heroes while inventing something completely new. The first disc, primarily produced by DJ Premier, combines old-song sensibilities with hip-hop elements, samples and modern technology (Billboard, March 17). Disc two, produced by Linda Perry (with whom Aguilera most famously collaborated on “Beautiful”), features all live instrumentation with no samples: Old-timey sounds were captured using vintage microphones sometimes covered with cloth to get a muffled effect. Geffen/A&K head Ron Fair, who signed Aguilera while he was at RCA, &A’d the project.

Aguilera solicited producers for the album via a letter expressing her vision. Also enclosed was a compilation of more than 30 songs spanning the ‘20s through the ‘60s that had influenced her, including contributions from Otis Redding, Millie Jackson, Ray Charles, Nina Simone, Eartha Kitt and even Screamin’Jay Hawkins. “I sent [the letter] out to producers that I thought might be able to get into this world with me,” she says. “I wanted to get obscure pieces of music and get people who would really, really use their imaginations in creating something new. I didn’t want any covers.” She encouraged producers to take the songs on the CD and “chop things up, feel free to experiment.”

In February, Aguilera called a Los Angeles meeting with her team at RCA to play portions of her record and to express her desires for “Back to Basics.” “I said, ‘I want to be very hands-on in all the meetings that we take and the decision-making, because I’m very specific in my vision of this record,’” she recalls. “I wanted to start putting [the music] in their heads so they had time to brainstorm.” She stressed a continuity that would run through all facets of the project from the songs, imaging, videos and touring that would combine the music with visuals that were “throwback to old Hollywood glam, that kind of old, retro, pinup style of sexuality.”

Aguilera’s deep level of involvement in all facets of her career is spurred by her own admitted workaholic tendencies (“I feel like I always need to work,” she says) and also borne from past bad experiences. “The first record was an uphill battle for me, and I really feel like I paid my dues on that first record. Being part of a huge pop explosion, I was very pushed by the
toc-tapping declaration of love. The song soared to No. 6 on the Billboard Hot 100 and is No. 8 this issue. Radio was ready for new Aguilera. Her last appearance in the top 10 of the Hot 100 was in February 2003 with “Beautiful.” “It’s going to prove, the records are unique, the production value is unlike anything that’s been out for a little while,” top 40 KSLZ St. Louis PD Tommy Austin says of “Ain’t No Other Man.” He adds, “She’s just hot, man.”

As is the song, says James Baker, PD at adult top 40 KIOL San Francisco. “It’s a great pop record. It sounds like fun, sounds like summer, that’s the hill for what pop is all about in 2006.” Baker also notes that Aguilera’s audience extends to “soccer moms,” a trend RCA VP of marketing Caron Veezey has noticed. Her core, Veezey says, is 12- to 34-year-olds, but her collaboration with Herbie Hancock on his 2005 album “Possibilities” expanded her demo upward and into the smooth-jazz audience. Her work with DJ Premier has also broadened her appeal among urban audiences. “We’re hearing from urban indie [retailers] that kids who are buying Chamillionaire and Young Jeezy are coming into stores asking for her album.”

“We are sensing a buzz on the record. The single is smoking hot,” says Mike Fratt, buyer for Omaha, Neb., chain Freeman’s. Although Fratt compares her career to that of Beyoncé’s, Aguilera has a head start on the former Destiny’s Child leader, whose “B’Day” streets Sept. 5. Newbury Comics buyer Carl Mello has only one complaint: “It would be better if it wasn’t a double album. She should’ve learned her lesson from Nelly. Pop should be just one album.”

To that end, RCA has added value to the package by including an exclusive 10-minute “making of” documentary. Veezey admits the label had initial concerns when it heard the project was a double album because of “today’s marketplace,” but “when the music was turned in and you look at the music you’re getting for $21.98,” she says all doubts were quashed. Aguilera’s introduction started with her performance at MTV’s Music Awards in June to introduce “Ain’t No Other Man.” She debuted the video on “TRL,” a 30-minute interview with John Norris begins running on MTV in August, and she will also host an hourlong launch special on the network Aug. 14. She’s slated to appear at sister station VH1’s “Fashion Rocks” concert Sept. 9.

Aguilera, who is booked by Creative Artists Agency and represented by Azoff Management, plans to kick-start the album by playing a limited number of intimate U.S. jazz clubs, followed by a European tour that will include private showcases in London and one sponsored by Ericsson’s Orange phone, with whom she has an international tie-in outside of the United States. (A worldwide association with Pepsi [excluding the States] concluded at the end of the World Cup). “We’re working on some [tie-ins] in the U.S.,” Veezey says. “It’s important to choose the right partnership and have strategic platforms” for exposure.

A full-scale U.S. tour will start next year that will tie in the imagery and music. And that’s where those pictures that accompanied her into the studio come back in. They are still near and dear to Aguilera. She totes them around in a small suitcase. “I wheel it around for larger-scale meetings. I’m still getting ideas for the tour, for all the visuals, the dancers, characters, things I want to portray on stage, so, yeah, it’s still totally a part of the creative process.”

Even with more than 23 million records sold worldwide, Aguilera feels like she’s just getting started, but admits she can already feel the wear and tear. And, without a trace of irony, the 25-year-old confesses, “I realize that I don’t have the same stamina I had when I was 17.”

But she knows she has a long way to go before she rests. “I look at people like Madonna, I saw her last tour, I go to check out her visuals, and I’m thinking, ‘Wow, I’m looking at this woman, she’s got two kids at home, she’s still able to do it, she’s got the stamina to be up on that stage, she looks amazing,’ and it’s just really inspiring. And so I look at that and go, ‘Wow, I’m 25, what am I complaining about, better get off my butt.’”

Additional reporting by David Greenwald in Los Angeles.

Go to billboard.com for a Q&A with Christina Aguilera.

CHRISTINA AGUILERA stepped back into the spotlight by informing “Ain’t No Other Man” at the 2006 MTV Movie Awards in June. Producer DJ PREMIER (photo right) shared Aguilera’s interest in working with authentic jazz sounds and samples.
STARS

JOHN MAYER

BUILDING UPON CHART SUCCESS AND CRITICAL ACCLAIM WITH 'CONTINUUM'
A RARITY AMONG YOUNG ARTISTS, THE SINGER/SONGWRITER GARNERS HITS AND THE ADMIRATION OF HIS IDOLS

The first day we met, he told me, 'All I want to do is play,'” artist manager Michael McDonald recalls of his initial meeting with future client John Mayer. “Just help me get in a position where I can just play music.” More than six years later, Mayer isn't only just playing music, he's playing with some of the best, from B.B. King, Buddy Guy, Eric Clapton, Herbie Hancock and his ace trio (featuring drummer Steve Jordan and bassist Pino Palladino) to guest shots with the Dixie Chicks, Common and Kanye West. He has performed at the Grammy Awards—while taking home three of his own during the past four years—and at sold-out venues from nightclubs to arenas. Along the way Mayer has become a rarity for a young artist. At 28, he's one of the few that has achieved multiplatinum mainstream success and also been accepted and embraced by the legends he idolizes.

He has also shown that he's not afraid to take commercial risks and follow his creative muse. His 2001 album “Room for Squares” has sold 4.1 million copies, according to Nielsen Soundscan, and “Heavier Things,” released in 2003, topped The Billboard 200 and went on to sell more than 2.7 million copies. "Daughters," a track on that album, won Mayer Grammys for song of the year and best male pop vocal performance. (He also won the award in the latter category for his first hit, "Your Body Is a Wonderland," in 2002.)

Yet instead of returning with a similar follow-up, the singer/songwriter followed his passion for the blues by forming the John Mayer Trio. With the rhythm section of Jordan and Palladino, Mayer mounted a club tour and recorded a live album, "Try!" It sold modestly. Yet it gave Mayer additional credibility and direction as he worked on his next studio effort, "Continuum," which arrives Sept. 12 on Aware/Columbia.

"The trio was a big influence on John," says Jordan, who co-produced "Continuum" with Mayer and played drums on the record. "Several songs on the album were born out of the trio. It's now a part of him, whether he's playing in the trio or not."

Mayer concurs: "The trio thing is a complete success on a musical level. It's just when that was over then I started listening to soul music and tunes, and I went, 'I'm a songwriter. Why am I trying to run so far off from being a songwriter?' "

"Once I tagged home on the trio thing and put a record out with me playing guitar, and was seen playing guitar and heard playing guitar, I went, 'OK, now at least I've [done] the record, now I'm not neglecting it.' "

"It really opened me up to go back, and that was only after that that I'd write the beautiful ones, because I wasn't ashamed of it anymore. 'OK, now I've got that out, people know I could do that.' "

While it remains to be seen if Mayer can take his soul-influenced material into the mainstream, executives at Columbia are confident that he will maintain his success with "Continuum," beginning with the album's first single, "Waiting On the World to Change."

"The trio thing for him was an evolution as an artist," says Barbara Jones, senior VP of marketing at Columbia Records. "He really wanted a chance to show his guitar playing. A lot of people had no idea what an amazing guitar player he was. With this album it's kind of a mixture." Columbia VP of marketing Greg Linn adds, "in many ways you can hear things on this record that were coming..."
Dear,

What an incredible first five years together. We can’t wait for the next 50.

Sincerely,

Gregg, Mark, Will, Steve, Tyler, Jenn, Caroline, Jason, Scott, Jason, Shayna and Maggie

The new album, *Continuum*, coming September 12
Artist: JOHN MAYER
Album: CONTINUUM
Single: WAITING ON THE WORLD TO CHANGE
Date: SEPTEMBER 12
Label: COLUMBIA RECORDS
from >>p28

to surface on "Heavier Things." You can watch and hear his development from "Room for Squares" to "Heavier Things" and "Heavier Things" to this. Mayer is supporting the album with a 27-city co-headlining tour with Sheryl Crow, which will begin later this month.

As its title suggests, "Continuum" is a natural progression for the artist who briefly studied at the Berklee College of Music in Boston but first gained notice on the Atlanta club scene. McDonald, his future manager, met Mayer through his friend John Alagia, known for his production work with Dave Matthews.

At that point in his career, Mayer was without a manager, but that didn't stop him from frequently flying up to New York, hoping to land a recording contract with the aid of his attorney Reed Hunter. McDonald and Mayer wanted to work together, but the timing was not right. Having recently launched ATO Records, McDonald was not ready to completely dedicate himself to management, but he did offer to help Mayer, including assisting him in negotiating his deal with Aware Records.

Once ATO was off the ground, McDonald was able to take the management reins full time and help nurture the young artist. "He was 22 when we first met," McDonald recalls. "I've watched him grow through pretty formative years and watched him try to navigate fame and his personal life with touring and being on the road. It's been amazing to be a part of. He's weathered every challenge with flying colors."

Even before McDonald became involved in his career, Mayer had developed a healthy following in the Southeast under the guidance of his first agent, Scott Clayton. McDonald built upon that base since Mayer's charisma and talent enabled him to take a low-cost approach to touring.

It's Mayer's musicianship, personality and communication with his audiences that helped him to build his fan base exponentially with virtually nonstop touring. "That allowed him to turn 50 people into 100 the next time he came through, and 350 the next time to 1,200 the next," McDonald says.

On the recording front, Mayer generated a buzz with his 1999 solo debut, "Inside Wants Out." He signed to Aware in 2000, following an appearance at South by Southwest. "Room for Squares," released initially on Aware Records, featured Mayer backed by a full electric band. By the summer of 2001, the title was upstreamed to Columbia, with executives at the major label noting Mayer's potential to become a long-term catalog artist.

Steve Jordan remembers a conversation he had with former Sony Music Label Group chairman/CEO Don Tenner. "He believed that John was going to be here a long time and had a big future, and I believe whole-heartedly that Donnie was right."

Columbia's current regime retains that faith. "Just as a player, he's incredible," Columbia Records chairman Steve Barnett says. "When you listen to this new record you really get the sense of how he has matured as a guitarist. It's been quite a while since the marketplace really embraced a guitar hero that had hit records. He has the opportunity to be that.

"I think this record is really going to solidify his place in the industry," Barnett adds. "He's an absolutely incredibly talented artist to Columbia. While I'm respectful of what's gone on in the past, we're excited about the future."

Aside from impressing executives, Mayer has also won over some of the best players in the business. The Who recruited ace bassist Pino Palladino to replace the late John Entwistle, and Palladino has played sessions with hundreds of artists, including Paul Simon, Eric Clapton and Seal. He didn't have to think twice when he got the call from his longtime friend Jordan to play with Mayer on NBC's tsunami benefit telethon in January 2005. That high-profile gig led to the creation of the John Mayer Trio.

"He can really play the guitar, he can write, he's even smart and he's very sure of his abilities," Palladino says of Mayer. "It's very rare for an artist to be in charge of his own destiny. John knows the business side and the record company side. It's very rare for an artist of his age to have all those things going for him."

The other half of the trio's rhythm section, Jordan has an equally impressive resume, which includes work with James Taylor, Sheryl Crow and Keith Richards. He's not afraid to mention Mayer in the same breath of some of his famous friends.

"He does remind me a little of James in his pursuit of songwriting," Jordan says. "He can really play an acoustic, and he's talented like Clapton. He has the ability with vocals to go to that direction. He's got all the tools to be there. There's no doubt about that."

Additional reporting by Melinda Newman in Los Angeles.
singer. songwriter. successor.

JOHN MAYER.

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left to right:
photos left and center: Dale Edsall / right: John Shanks

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There’s something about soul music that I just adore; something very comforting about it.

You said first and foremost you wanted to make a soul record. There’s something about soul music that I just adore. When I started to get so tired, soul music was kind of there. There’s something very comforting about it, and I have a great love and affection for that music. In a way, the continuum is, you know the way Elvis Costello makes records that are love letters to certain styles? It’s not me putting a cowboy hat on, but it’s me trying to put together a new sound using soul power.

Have you raised the bar since the first record? Yeah, absolutely. It’s a tricky thing because at every level of the career there are gonna be pitfalls. Level one is, like, don’t bang a celebrity, don’t say stupid shit, it’s really like basic stuff. The need for change is essential, but it’s very interesting when you try to start. It’s like a selective suicide. You have to kind of pick the right spot to kill the things you don’t need anymore while keeping the things that made you you.

Hence the continuum. There’s a lot of unresolved frustration in me. And a lot of people think it’s because of the success I’ve had from “Daughters.” I didn’t really want it to be a single, that was a giant stain. To make it a single, that was one of the worst mistakes of my career. Who is this 24-year-old guy telling me that I should be good to my girl when he’s the one going around kissing them?

So you didn’t like “Heavier Things”? The only thing I didn’t like about it was that I had a really short window of time to write a lot of songs. But if I had double the time to write that record, it would have been 100% right instead of 65%.

What other lessons have you learned? Record company people are not family. That’s not a terrible thing to say . . . the worst thing I ever did for my career was believe that I was in the Columbia Records “family.” You go out to dinner and you think, “Oh, family. I get it, I get it. Al-most by blood.” Enough life goes by that different things take place, and you realize like, “Whoa.”

So how do you see them now? I see them the same way I’ve always seen them, which is I want to do right by them, and I want to be done right by them.

The first single from the new album, “Waiting On the World to Change,” marks a change for you in that this song is from a political standpoint. Previously, your songs were mainly from a personal view. Were you say more in a song than most people say in a lifetime. Congratulations, John. We are honored to have you in the Sony/ATV family.
We congratulate

JOHN MAYER

BILLBOARD STAR HONOREE
from p34

you comfortable making that change?
Yes, because I'm just about to leave the "me" phase, not quite in the "you" phase, but I'm in the "us" phase. I'm on the way out of my 20s, there's a gravitational pull into my 30s, and I've got a lot out of "me." I'm transitioning to where I really think I have the perfect combination of passiveness and excitement. What that means is I can approach something without getting too enthralled in it that I can't see both directions.

What I say in this song is not that we don't care. We just know that the fight ain't fair. We're waiting. We're just waiting for the game board to change, the number of the squares to change... something we can engage in. I'll tell you the truth, the only thing we can really do is on an environmental level right now. Everything else is plotted out, after hours, or happy hour. That's why we're about to get very engaged.

To that end, you want to make the album packaging environmentally friendly, right?
We're going to make sure they do the whole thing post-consumer recycling. Maybe even 100% breakable. There's this methodology called cradle to cradle, which is kind of downside free. Completely beyond biodegradable, to the point where there's nothing in it that can kill you.

So if we get hungry?
You can take a bite out of it. And it's cool looking.

What did you get out of the John Mayer Trio's "Try!" album?
I was swinging day to day, back and forth, like a pendulum: Who I was, who I expect to be, who I want to be, who I need to be. And the trio helped me figure that all out. What is my calling? What comes naturally? If you take your hands off, where does the car go?

The trio was so incredibly difficult for me. On every level, I love it. My trouble is, I don't naturally live there, and I got that out of my system somewhere, and I also got to a point in my life over the last couple years where I don't need as much satisfaction from that stuff.

I have a life. I've never had a plan B until now. If this doesn't work out, I'm ready to walk at any moment and go to design school because I have a great love for design. When I figured all that out, I feel like I want to be the truest version of myself.

On the first two studio albums, your guitar playing stands out, but not like it does on "Try!" It's as if you have something you had to say on "Try!"

Yeah. I like structure. I like being subtle and very kind of inside. I don't need everybody to like me anymore. When you're younger, you need everybody to like you, but at this point, I just want the people who might like me to hear it.

Given that you didn't want "Daughters" released as a single, do you have a say with your label in what songs are singles now?
I was told I couldn't pick my singles or at least couldn't pick the songs eligible for singles. I would be half done with this record instead of fully done with my record... [I'll say to the label], "Here are the songs I'm willing to use as commercials. What is the commercial for the record? When you put them out as singles, I am right there."
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John Mayer
Poet
Performer
Music Creator
Some of your songs seem very personal. Do you worry about people second guessing who they are about?

The song is the last remaining kind of entertainment art form where you have immunity. If the song is good, it's maybe one of the last really good illusions because everything else is picked apart so much. The song, if it's successful, if it does its job, the last thing you're going to ask is who is that about because it lives in its own painting. So I've had very few people ask who the songs were about, except for "Wonderland," because that's such a novelty in and of itself that people want to know... that was (about) a girlfriend I had when I was 14 and she was 15.

You said early in your career that you hoped you can always stay accessible. Do you feel you can?

I thought I bought an apartment in New York. They gave me the keys, they decorated it, and I sat there, and I turned miserable because I'm in this high-rise apartment and I'm like, "I don't know any of my neighbors." I just sold it, and I rent a place out here with a roommate. I've written the best songs for this record since I returned back to the way it used to be—living with a roommate, going to the grocery store, having some real balance in my life.

How do you balance a career with a life?

I learned a lot when I came off the road after the four years I had been on it. I learned that I didn't have any connection with anybody. I had a connection with my friends on the road, and that's not meant to discount them, but when you come off the road the last thing you want to do is talk to them. I've made friends in the last two years, real friends. I don't want to lose them from going on the road. I don't want to lose the rooting that I have and if I start to feel it, guess what? I'm gonna go home.

Do you still care about radio hits?

Sure. The only people who will tell you they don't want radio hits are the people who have never had them. That's like saying, "I don't want my movie to get released. I just want it on DVD."

What musical stage are you in?

I'm still very self-aware, except I'm so motivated right now to really have a larger and deeper effect on certain parts of people. The music thing I've done, the first two records kind of started and now I really feel like I'm going for the gut.

The next time I put a record out, I have no guarantee that I'll be in the same head space. How am I supposed to know that? Three years from now, I'm married with a kid and another on the way, and I'm writing from 7 o'clock to 8 o'clock when they're taking a nap? I don't know if I'll ever have this focus again.

At the 2004 Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, JOHN MAYER took home two awards for his hit single "Daughters."

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MAYER'S AUDIENCE GREW GRADUALLY, BEFORE RADIO PLAY

TOURING BEYOND THE HITS

BY RAY WADDELL

For John Mayer, the touring landscape has been a wonderland from the very start. Before the radio hits and huge record sales, the singer/songwriter was already building his career through touring. Michael McDonald, Mayer's manager, says the road was always an emphasis. And it still is. Ahead of the Sept. 12 release of his new Aware/Columbia Records album “Continuum,” he is sharing the bill of a 27-city summer tour with Sheryl Crow, backed by his current band.

But in the earliest days of his career, Mayer played live as a solo guitarist. "Then we added a bass player, then as we could afford it, other musicians," McDonald recalls, adding that Mayer never felt the need to tap into label tour support dollars. "His audience numbers were going very naturally, so we never really felt the need to find the big support slot," McDonald says. "We really felt from the start that we could build this—at least for the foreseeable future—on our own, and that's essentially what happened."

As the buzz increased, so grew Mayer's audience, and the artist's willingness to allow tapping at his shows helped spread the word.

"His live show really grew to the point that when he had the hit ['Your Body Is a Wonderland' in 2002] we were already doing decent live numbers," McDonald says. "It wasn't like his entire fan base was hit-generated. Once things really did take off we had a solid base built, and then we continued to grow from there."

Touring was as much a focus as recording and writing. "With or without such success at radio he was definitely on a path to be a strong touring artist," McDonald says. "Obviously, the radio success probably expedited that, but he was definitely a live artist first, and that's how he generated his initial following."

But the hits from his first two albums, "Room for Squares" in 2001 and "Heavier Things" in 2003, juiced his live career, as the venues got larger and the crowds bigger.

The first hit "definitely sped it up and put more bodies in the seats," McDonald says. "What we tried to do while all the radio success was going on was to continue to build a genuine fan base based on his live work, and I think we've done a good job of doing that."

According to Billboard Boxscore, Mayer grossed $25.8 million in 2004 and drew 751,686 people, 24th among all touring. continues on >p42

At an Atlanta club date in 2004, JOHN MAYER takes DAVID RYAN HARRIS’ guitar into his own hands.
Happy Birthday Fender

"I hope I look this good when I'm 60."

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from >>40

artists for the year. In 2003, he grossed $28 million and drew 768,351.

In 2005, Mayer opted to pursue a more blues-influenced style, and in the fall of that year, with his producer Steve Jordan on drums and studio mate Pino Palladino on bass, toured under the John Mayer Trio banner. The tour opened several dates for the Rolling Stones and then embarked on a slate of intimate venues, including several House of Blues clubs.

"The idea was to get dirty and intimate again and show John in a little bit of a different light, and not worry about the size of the rooms but just the right rooms with the right feel," McDonald says. The tour grossed $1.5 million from 21 small-venue shows that drew 37,596.

"John has always admired the power trio and blues trios of the past, and the timing was right," McDonald continues. "He was working with Steve Jordan co-producing the album and Pino Palladino was playing on the album, and they were writing tunes that weren't necessarily going to be on the album but John felt needed a life of their own."

Besides, McDonald explains, Mayer simply does not like to be off the road for too long. "So this was a nice way for him to go back and play some more live shows with musicians that he really had never played with but had tremendous respect for. It was also a chance to just promote the guitar side of him and his abilities as a guitar player."

In the first years of his career, Scott Clayton at Creative Artists Agency (CAA) handled Mayer's booking. Last November, Mayer signed with the William Morris Agency (WMA), where Marc Geiger and Sam Kirby oversee his touring.

"We viewed John not just as a music and touring artist, but as a very potent, meaningful brand of which music was one component that John could be very successful in," Geiger says. "We very much saw John as a brand where, if we do our jobs well, we could help him touch a lot of different media areas."

Geiger says WMA president Dave Wirschhafter signed Mayer to the agency. "John was really a company priority from the top down," Geiger notes. "He wasn't signed because of music only."

While there are a lot of projects in development for Mayer at WMA, "the truth is, when he came over he was recording this record with deadlines, and we jumped right into the booking of this tour," Geiger explains. "So we're actively working very much on two fronts. One is long-term brand extension and the other is right now as a core third album touring and recording artist."

No matter what the future may hold, "John is very clear that he wants to be a perennial touring artist and to build and have a regular fan base that isn't tied to a hit record," Geiger says. After Mayer took the summer of 2005 off from the road, his team wanted to put the artist in a strong situation timed around the release of the new record in September.

"We had to find the right time for John to go out, but also get him out there with the right package," McDonald continues on >>44
WE ARE PROUD TO BE PART OF YOUR TEAM, JOHN.

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Congratulations, John on your upcoming album!

CONTINUUM
John Mayer in stores 9/12/06

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from >>42

says. “Sheryl’s a great combination with a lot of respect and a
great fan base, and they’re fans of
each other. It made sense tim-
ing-wise for them to do some-
thing together.”

Mayer has always been pack-
aged well, including runs with Ma-
room5 in 2004 and Counting Crows
in 2003. So the pairing with Crow
falls in line with that objective.

“John has already been on two
very strong packages: CAA on the
booking side did a great job,”
Geiger says. “So we had to put
something up equally exciting or
to better. As plans kept shifting,
we realized we were touring earlier
and earlier on the album cycle, so
we had to have a stronger and
stronger package. Truthfully, we
tried a lot of different things, and
Sheryl is the one that, luckily for
all of us, worked out.”

Geiger says he would have
liked to have had more dates to
work with on the shed tour. But
as many as 40 arena shows in sec-
ondary markets may follow head-
ing into next year, as well as
international dates.

“He’s going to take a really good
swing at Europe for the first time,”
Geiger says. “He broke in Aus-
tralia and he does well in Japan,
so we’ll spend a lot of time in Aus-
tralasia. He’s a great brand to
work for, and his management
very much understands the value
of taking this brand globally and
having a long third cycle.”

More shed dates will likely follow next sum-
mer. “I’ll probably have three or four legs to
this tour,” Geiger says.

“John is a long-term artist, so what we’re able
to do for him as an agency is probably going
to happen over the long term as well,” Geiger con-
tinues. “For us, the clear message we try to send
that I know that John wants out in the market
is, ‘I’m here to stay.’ I think he looks at the Clap-
tons, Neil Youngs and Tom Petties, and says, ‘I’m
gonna get there, and that’s a good goal to have.’

Asked what qualities Mayer possesses that
will make him an enduring touring artist, Geiger
replies, “Have you seen him play? I think per-
formers either have magic and connect with an
audience or they don’t, and John clearly has it,
it’s as simple as that. There are lots of people
we’ve all worked with who have had hit records.
There are not that many people that can go gal-
vanize a big audience.”

---

JOHN MAYER’S
MOST-PLAYED
SONGS

1. No Such Thing
2. Your Body Is A Wonderland
3. Daughters
4. Bigger Than My Body
5. Why Georgia
6. Clarity
7. Stitched Up
8. Who Did You Think I Was
9. Come Back To Bed
10. Only Heart

This exclusive chart, compiled by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, ranks John Mayer’s top 10 most-played songs ever
(through June 6, 2006). The list, ordered by detections, surveyed all formats of U.S. radio, (including classic rock, col-
lege and older stations), video channels (like MTV and VH1), satellite radio ( Sirius and XM) and cable music service
Music Choice.
Bad Boy's Done Good

Can Emerging R&B star Cassie Lead A Label Renaissance?

Newcomer Cassie Ventura’s demo turned-lead single “Me & U” has already collected 115 million gross audience impressions, according to Nielsen BDS. As it booms from jeeps and iPods alike, the pulsating dance beat sounds an awful lot like the song of the summer, heralding not only a new talent, but also perhaps the return of Bad Boy.

Written and produced by hitmaker Ryan Leslie (Cheri Dennis “I Love You,” Loon’s “Down for Me”), “Me & U” is No. 3 on The Billboard Hot 100 and No. 2 on Hot 100 Airplay. Its viral growth, which started before Ventura joined Bad Boy earlier this year, can be attributed to vigorous online marketing (MySpace, specifically) and word-of-mouth.

“The song grew pretty organically,” Ventura says. “Radio stations added it before I even got signed, and clubs were playing it three and four times a night,” she says. “It was already established by the time labels started noticing me.”

The 19-year-old model-cum-singer first performed “Me & U” in May at clubs in Germany. Early last year, Leslie, a Bad Boy in-house producer, signed her to his production company NextSelection, which is distributed by Tommy Mottola’s Casablanca/Universal. Since posting the song on her MySpace page in November, Ventura has generated more than 6.5 million profile views.

“The Web played a huge role in her appeal,” Leslie says, calling MySpace “the MTV of the Internet” due to its artist breakthrough potential. “Our notion was, ‘If you build it, they will come.’ We built it in the form of video blogs, broadband and other online media.”

Web surfers may have also recognized Ventura from ads for Abercrombie & Fitch, Della’s or Missy Elliott’s Adidas Respect M.E collection. At 14, she signed to Wilhelmina Models and used that success as her springboard into music.

“I don’t deny the modeling because it was my stepping stone, but we want people to respect me as an artist,” Ventura says. “I already work twice as hard to get away from the ‘pretty girl syndrome.’ People think I’m just singing what people feed me, but I’ve worked hard.”

Meanwhile, Ventura may be part of a Bad Boy renaissance. Despite a few near-misses (Shyne, Loon, Dream), Bad Boy has been slow to recover from the loss of the late Notorious B.I.G. and the departure of such multiplatinum acts as Faith Evans, Mase and 112. Other acts like Carl Thomas, Black Rob and G. Dep simply faded away. The label’s last platinum act was 112 in 2001.

But with the addition of Ventura, the newly minted Bad Boy Latino (Christian Daniels) and Bad Boy South (Yung Joc, Boyz N Da Hood) and a relocation from Universal to Atlantic, Bad Boy is mounting an across-the-
from >>p45
board comeback. Joc's debut album, "New Joc City," bowed atop the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and has shifted 365,000 units in five weeks. Its single "It's Goin' Down" and Venatra's "Me & U" have held the top two slots on Rhythmic Top 40 for the past four issues. This issue, the two songs swap spots, with "Me & U" taking pole position.

"It does feel like we're heating up, but we don't get overexcited," Bad Boy executive VP Harvey Pierre says. "Before we, we had a slow down period where we didn't have too many releases, but right now it's full steam ahead. You'll see releases nonstop until summer of '07." Those will include Diddy's solo effort "Press Play" (due in October) as well as projects by the "Making the Band 3" girls (now named Danity Kane), Cheri Dennis, 8Ball & MJG and recent signee Elephant Man.

"We just have to keep breaking new artists and keep the momentum going," Pierre says. "We've been working on this for awhile, but the Atlantic/Warner Bros. partnership definitely gives us more manpower."

Bad Boy head of marketing Jason Wiley agrees that the label is in a prime position to reclaim its top spot. "The focus is back on how the music is rather than what an artist did or said," he says. "Now it's about, 'Oh, that new song that's playing on the radio is a Bad Boy hit.'"

It might not be one Diddy signed, however. Ventura and Yung Joc are signed to subsidiaries of Bad Boy—NextSelection and Block Entertainment, respectively. "Puff helps groom some of the music and the sound, but if the artist is already signed somewhere, their people have already been working with them," Wiley explains. "But he still has that vision and that eye to bring the right talent to Bad Boy."

"Puff has to take a back seat because right now he's an artist," Pierre adds. "We all work on these projects together and that added help really gives us a boost."

All parties involved are hoping Ventura's popularity translates into physical sales when her self-titled debut drops Aug. 8 via NextSelection/Bad Boy/Atlantic. Second single "Long Way 2 Go," which finds her rapping, goes to radio this month. "All the Bad Boy artists bring something different to the table," Ventura says. "But at the end of the day, it's all about building the brand." --

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BAD BOY'S BACK

Three Hot New Acts To Watch

CHERI DENNIS

"Cheri Dennis." (No release date.)

A longtime Bad Boy signee and contributor, Cheri Dennis offers upbeat, sexy R&B i.e. her cheery lead single "I Love You.""DANITY KANE

"Danity Kane," Aug. 22

With aid from power-house producers like Rodney Jerkins and Scott Storch, the "Making the Band 3" girls are out to prove they are more than just a manufactured act.

CHRISTIAN DANIEL


The Puerto Rican singer, 22, will be Bad Boy Latin's premiere release, supplying a blend of hip-hop, reggaeton and pop a la Shakira and Ricky Martin.
Tapes ’N Tapes Finds XL The Right Size

Mere days after Minneapolis quartet Tapes ’N Tapes self-released its debut album, “The Loon,” last November, the band received an unexpected call from Capitol Records.

“It was really bizarre,” lead singer Josh Grier says. “We were just like, ‘What? What’s going on?’”

Much to the disbelief of the quirky art-rockers whose sound is rooted in ’90s alternative acts Pavement and the Pixies, the instant blog buzz following the release of the album led record labels to express interest right off the bat.

“We kept getting contacted by labels, and it was like, ‘Oh crap, this might actually be going somewhere,’” Grier says.

After fielding calls from labels big and small, Tapes ’N Tapes signed in May with XL Recordings, which will reissue “The Loon” July 25.

The decision to sign with a label arose after the band’s grass-roots operation grew unwieldy. Like other Internet-hyped bands such as Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, Tapes ’N Tapes experienced an explosion in popularity quicker than anyone manning the band’s bedroom office in Minneapolis could accommodate.

“Signing with XL was really more of a business decision,” band manager Keri Weise says. “We were designing the Web site, making our own T-shirts and doing all the distribution—every single aspect of it. We couldn’t function anymore.”

As Tapes ’N Tapes worked out a deal with XL, the band partnered with the Coalition of Independent Music Stores for temporary distribution.

“They were about to do a national tour and needed records in the right stores,” CIMS president Don VanCleave says. “We were able to sell thousands of copies into indie retail. Everyone feels it was a successful partnership.”

By the time Tapes ’N Tapes reached a deal with XL, the independent release of “The Loon” had sold more than 12,500 copies, 3,000 via iTunes. In addition to a swarm of media attention, the band was one of the highlights at this year’s South by Southwest festival, wowing crowds at no less than eight shows in four days.

The band says that, ultimately, XL best enabled the band to remain independent while taking its current operation to the next level.

“The whole reason for us signing to a label was so that we could extend our resource base,” Grier says. “They have a great roster of really diverse artists who all have an amazing amount of artistic freedom, which for us was really important. So it was kind of one of those things where you get the benefits of having the built-in resources and support of a label, but at the same time you’re still allowed to do all the things you had been doing beforehand.”

Although the new release of “The Loon” is slated for July 25, XL label manager Liz Hart says 400 stores across the country already have the new edition in stock. “We wanted to keep [the album] commercially available,” she says, adding that sales have seen a steady growth from week to week. To date, the XL edition has sold 5,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Because the XL version does not contain any new tracks or extra features, it is being targeted toward first-time buyers. “I don’t expect [current owners] to want to purchase it again. I just want them to go to shows, tell their friends about it and hopefully people who don’t have it are going to want to buy it,” she says. “That’s probably terrible to say from a business standpoint, but we just want people to hear it.”

TAPES N TAPES

I have a new favorite song in “About Me,” built around a Main Ingredient sample loop, by an MC/producer named Black Milk from Detroit. The Motor City is more than a little nervous with Prodigy’s and J Dilla’s passings and the violence that seems to follow Eminem and his crew. But fortunately, newbie Black Milk (aka Curtis Cross) is pumping fresh air into the Midwest’s historic hip-hop scene.

“I’m a producer first and MC second,” the 22-year-old Black Milk says. “I first got into production around 1999-2000, my cousins were into production real big. I hung around them and took a liking to it. Finally, the guy who was A&R for Slum Village’s album found me.

Working with another producer namednice MC/Rap. Black Milk went on to produce most of the last two Slum Village albums, “Detroit Deli” and “Slum Village.” After folks heard his soulful sound— reminiscent of J Dilla—other projects began to roll in. He did a few tracks on Prodigy’s solo project, “Searching for Jerry Garcia,” including “Gurls Wit Da Boom.” And he also has a few joints on Lloyd Banks’ next album, “The Rotten Apple.” But right now, Black Milk’s most excited about Pharoh Monche’s recently leaked single titled “Let’s Go.”

“My favorite song so far is this new Pharoh Monche,” Black Milk says. “I’ve wanted to do something for Pharoh for so long, and people are really anticipating his new project.”

Black Milk’s successful production career aside, he’s also a nice MC. Releasing his first album “Popular Demand” through Fat Beats later this year, Black Milk has produced the entire project and already has 14 tracks finished. Gathering buzz from releasing one off tracks internationally in Europe and Japan, Black Milk’s also releasing an EP called “Broken Wax.”

As for “About Me,” the song hasn’t been officially released—it’s up for listen at his MySpace page, and Black Milk says he might add it at the end of “Popular Demand.”

“I’m keeping it to spitting just to prove producers can rap,” Black Milk says. “I’m the best of the best on the producing side, but I want people to forget that I’m a producer when I’m rhymin.”

CASHING OUT: Cleveland native Ray Cash made his debut with “C.O.D.: Cash on Delivery” last week at No. 8 on Billboard’s Top R&B/ Hip-Hop Albums chart. Not bad for an MC whose city’s last exciting track was “Thuggish Ruggish Bone” by Bone Thugs’n-Harmony in 1994. Discovered by Sony executive VP/head of A&R Kawan Prather, Cash’s album was originally slated for last year but was pushed back. Still, he had a quiet hit in 2005’s hilarious single “Sex Appeal,” which introduced the bespectacled MC to hip-hop’s mainstream through ho-hum rhymes, proclaiming he was “a pimp in my own mind.” Regardless of the delay, his 2006 second single “Bumpin’ My Music” —featuring Scarface, with the two of them listing the numerous MCs they listened to growing up—is a catchy joint produced by Rick Rock. Midwesterner Cash is a solid MC who actually raps in a day when simply repeating words is, well, amusing, far too common.

“I never wanted to be a rapper from the time I was 13,” Cash says. “It just came on me when I hadn’t even been thinking about it. I’m here for a reason . . . I want to be respected.”
Bernstein Deals
Four Aces

In sports, free agency liberates a player to roam from one team to another when the contract expires. In the music world there is no waiting for a season to conclude as evidenced by upstate New York-based trumpeter/arranger Steven Bernstein, who is taking free agency to a whole different level with four major recording projects all hitting within a week of each other.

“It's all Bernstein, all the time,” he jokes. “Maybe it’s bad timing, I haven't put an album out in a year and a half, and now I guess I’ve reached critical mass.”

The soundtrack to the documentary film “Leonard Cohen: I’m Your Man,” with Bernstein serving as musical director/supervisor, streets July 25 on Verve Forecast. The 2005 live tribute recording at the Sydney Opera House features, among others, Rufus Wainwright, Nick Cave and Laurie Anderson. The backing band is Bernstein’s Sex Mob ensemble.

On Aug. 1, Bernstein’s triplets arrive, including the schlocky-sounding but hip recording “Go Baby Go” (Verve), part of the “Baby Loves Jazz” series co-produced by the trumpeter and Ropeadope Records owner Andy Blackman Hurwitz. Think “Sesame Street” for a future jazz generation. The group includes vocalist Sharon Jones, keyboardist John Medeski and saxophonist Briggan Krauss.

“While this was an arranging challenge because there’s not a lot on it,” says Bernstein, who sings out on the “Banana Boat Song” re-enshioned with the feel of Miles Davis' “In a Silent Way.”

Bernstein for adults blasts off with Sex Mob, his crazed 11-year-old electronic-meets-acoustic, and its fifth commercially available CD, “Sexotic” (Thirsty Ear). There are grooves, speeded tempos, snaky chases, instrumental crosscurrents and improvisation meanderings that unpredictably morph from the lyrical to industrial crunch.

In an entirely different vein, Bernstein unveils his 7-year-old big band. Millennial Territory Orchestra, with its debut “MTO Vol. 1” (Sunnyside). It is inspired by Bernstein's musical consulting work on Robert Altman’s 1995 film “Kansas City,” set in 1934 when so-called territory big bands traversed the Midwest.

“I've studied big band music where Duke Ellington is the root as well as funk horn charts from the JB's to the Tower of Power,” Bernstein says. “But this is so different. I became infatuated with it.” He says the instrumentation (guitar, banjo, violin, clarinet, horns) and intent (individuals playing with their personalities) has been “passing for 90 years. I wanted to bring it back to life.”

With residencies at New York's clubs Tonic and the Jazz Standard, MTO developed a repertoire that ranges from territory band-era tunes (the swinging “Boy in the Boat” to contemporary pop (the Beatles’ “Cry Baby Cry”), but Bernstein says the tune that un-

locked the MTO concept for him was Stevie Wonder’s “Signed, Sealed, Delivered.”

It is slowed down to a crawl and features guest guitarist Doug Wamble on delicious slide guitar. “I knew once I could work Stevie’s song into a ‘20s blues sound, I could do anything,” Bernstein says.

It’s been a busy year for Bernstein who just returned from the Jewish Culture Festival in Krakow, Poland, has been working with Levon Helm’s Woodstock-area band for the past two years and recently turned down tour offers from Bruce Springsteen, Jay-Z and Garth Hudson.

Bernstein’s recipe for success? “I’ve been in New York for 25 years, and I’ve worked with a variety of people who have a wide variety of interests,” he says. “The root of my musical religion is that I always want my concerts to be consistent with my studio trumpet playing but mixed with that intent as you go out of Don Cherry.”

Watt

Watt Captures Brave New Sounds On Latest Comp

U.K.-based Buzzin’ Fly is a label, a compilation series, a club night, a merchandising line, and, for the worldwide fans who ascribe to its genre-flouting musical policy, a way of life. Just don’t call it the b-word.

“I really hate the word ‘brand,’ “ Buzzin’ Fly founder and president Ben Watt says. “I try very hard not to use it these days because everyone just seems so obsessed with it. I’m interested in just building a really great little record label that has no agenda but just responds to the times that it lives through.”

Watt knows a thing or two about capturing zeitgeist. He was the production half of platinum-selling duo Everything But the Girl with singer Tracey Thorn, which shifted from a 10-year career of guitar-driven light jazz to emotive electronic pop on the landmark 1996 release “Walking Wounded” (Atlantic). The pair’s retrospective remix collection, released last year, was titled “Adapt or Die.”

On Watt’s latest DJ release, “Buzzin’ Fly Vol. 3” (Buzzin’ Fly), the adaptation is in response to electro-minimalism from Europe, especially Germany—what he calls “the most interesting music that’s out there now.”

He says this new music has made the “more deep, soulful sounds” that were central to the series’ first two installments “sound a little suburban and dated in some ways.”

“I wanted to spend time sifting through everything that was coming out and try to find the stuff that I could really link together through my own sensibility,” Watt adds. “I didn't want to just put out the five hottest tracks from Tiefenwasser, Trentemoller, John Dahlbäck, whatever.”

Indeed, “Buzzin’ Fly Vol. 3” does more on a single CD than most DJ comps do in two or more. All at once, Watt introduces brave new sounds, comforts the less adventurous with familiar soulful underpinnings and grooves enough to fill a dancefloor. It’s a virtuoso performance, and Watt is hitting the road for a five-city North American tour that includes two nights at New York house haven Cielo.

Even though he is inherently adaptive, Watt understands that clubgoers might be a bit stubborn. “With the younger generation, the tendency is to dismantle, to dispense with melody at the expense of energy. And you’ll often find that the more melodic stuff is appreciated by a slightly more long-in-the-tooth crowd,” he says.

“Sometimes you play in clubs, you have to look at who’s out there, you have to look out and see who’s come to see you. And if you see 19-year-old faces and 45-year-old faces, you take them on a journey that suits them. You offer them energy and sparseness and minimalism and aggression, and then you offer them beauty and depth, and somehow you try to give it all a meaning.”

Buzzin’ Fly recently went with Prommer/Caroline for North American distribution, leaving longtime partner Arthworks. “Buzzin’ Fly Vol. 3” is the first release under the new deal.

SUMMER PICK: Look no further than the top of Billboard’s Club Play chart to find this week’s summer song. With its give-peace-a-chance lyrics, “World, Hold On” might have captured as much of the World Cup spirit as producer Bob Sinclar's last worldwide hit, “Love Generation” (the official 2006 FIFA theme song). The hopeful record recalls Lighthouse Family’s “Free,” which was popular around another less joyous time of international unity: fall 2001.

The trancey Axwell mix appears as a bonus track on Sinclair’s “Western Dream” (Yellow/Tommy Boy).
**Latin Notas**

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**Music**

**‘Triunfaré’ Latest Immigrant Song**

While the immigration debate languishes in Congress, the issue continues to inspire new songs by Latin artists and regional Mexican acts in particular.

The latest high-profile example is “Se Que Triunfaré” (“I Will Triumph”), a song written by producer brothers Omar and Adolfo Valenzuela (known as Los Twinnis) and Pepe Garza, PD for regional Mexican KBUE (La Que Buena) Los Angeles.

Envisioned as a sort of Brotherhood hymn, the track boasts straight-ahead lyrics (“I'm the one who fixes your car, without having a driver's license/it's me who night after night asks the heavens for an opportunity”) intended to stir an emotional response.

“People will probably take it seriously because the people behind the song have all witnessed firsthand the trials and tribulations of immigrant life,” says Garza, who aside from his work as a radio programmer is an established songstir with whom has penned previous tracks touching on immigration.

Garza’s involvement with “Se Que Triunfaré” was prompted by radio colleagues and by the Valenzuela brothers, who have worked with some of the market’s top acts.

The track was recorded June 28 by a group of prominent regional Mexican artists, including Jenni Rivera, Conjunto Primavera lead singer Tony Meléndez, Tucanes de Tijuana lead singer Mario Quintero, Los Horoscopos de Durango singers Vicky and Marisol Terrazas and El Chape.

All are contemporary acts with easily recognizable voices—and all have links to the subject.

“El Chape was a dishwasher,” Garza says. “Mario Quintero crossed the border several times as a welder. The Horoscopos girls' father had problems with immigration, and Rivera's father) Don Pedro Rivera crossed the border with his wife, who was pregnant with Jenni at the time. Basically, the artists themselves are immigrants who have achieved success in the United States, and this is their message.”

Fonovisa Records plans to release the track as part of a compilation related to the issue of immigration. There is no release date yet, but the tentative track listing includes Marco Antonio Solís’ “Casas de Carón” (“Cardboard Houses,” a song about poverty in Latin America) and Los Horoscopos de Durango’s “Adiós a Mi Tierra.”

Another duranguense group, Patrulla 81, has also included an immigration-themed song as the title track on its latest album, “Tierra Extrana” (Strange Land). It is No. 29 on the Top Latin Albums chart this issue.

**ALTERNATIVE CALLING:** The annual Latin Alternative Music Conference (LAMC), to be held Aug. 2-5 in New York, promises an impressive array of performers in what may be the gathering's strongest lineup to date.

Highlights include Chile's Los Tres, Mexico's electro-pop trio Belanova and Mexico Institute of Sound, Puerto Rico's Calle 13, Venezuela's Los Amigos Invisibles and Argentina's Gustavo Cerati.

Also slated to perform is new Mexican act Allison. The group's self-titled debut has climbed to a surprising No. 2 on Mexico's Album charts.

For a complete list of LAMC panels and performances as well as registration information go to LatinAlternative.com.

**Nashville Scene**

**PHYLLIS STARK** pstark@billboard.com

**Raul Malo A Maverick No More**

Let’s make one thing clear, Raul Malo is no longer the lead singer for the Mavericks.

With the July 25 bow of his second solo album, “You’re Only Lonely,” Malo is firmly putting that chapter of his career behind him.

“I have officially and legally resigned from my post. It’s over for me and the Mavericks,” he says of the critically acclaimed group he fronted for well over a decade.

Malo felt that if he didn’t bow out of the group now, he’d “never be taken seriously as a solo artist.”

I’m proud of the records we did and what we achieved as a band, but there just comes a time to move on,” he says. “They still hound (Paul) McCartney about getting the Beatles back together. It’s like, Jesus, how many Beatles have to die before they stop?”

Malo’s new album for Sanctuary Records, an eclectic collection of covers, marks the start of a fertile and creative period in his career. He already has a second covers album in the can and plans to record a Christmas project this year. He just wrapped a new album he produced and co-wrote for Warner Bros. Nashville artist Rick Trevino.

Meanwhile, Malo continues to tour nearly nonstop, quipping, “I have no other marketable skills.”

When Malo plays gigs in his Nashville hometown, local clubs have taken to billing him as “the Voice,” and with good reason. Flat-out one of the best singers in the business, Malo showcases his gift to great advantage on the songs he and producer Peter Asher picked for “You're Only Lonely.”

They include Etta James’ ‘At Last,” Willie Nelson’s “Angel Flying Too Close to the Ground” and Harry Nilsson’s “Remember,” along with more unexpected choices like the Bee Gees’ “Run to Me” and Randy Newman’s “Feels Like Home.” The album includes two versions of the latter song, one a duet with Martina McBride.

The CD’s sole new song is a Malo-composed Latin number, “For You,” which was included to give the ballad-heavy album an up-tempo jolt.

The plan for this album was to “make a record that showcased my interpretive vocal stylings,” Malo says, immediately mocking his own “cheesy” word choice.

The singer was impressed with veteran producer Asher: “Nothing was left to chance, and nothing got in the way of the vocals,” he says of Asher’s methods. “He broke everything down to a very minimalistic pace, and it was a beautiful way to work.”

While he could convincingly sing the phone book, Malo says recording a collection of covers was a challenge for him. “When you're singing your own songs, you can pretty much do whatever the heck you want,” he says. “All those years with the Mavericks I never really thought about how I was going to sing a song. I just did it.

“But in this scenario, because we were doing a lot of famous songs, and songs that meant a lot to people, we really put some time into the arrangements and put some time into how I was going to approach each song.”

His follow-up covers album, which Malo recorded with his touring band, is due out early next year. On that project, which he alternately describes as “gorgeous” and “groovy,” Malo sings only country standards including “For the Good Times,” “Crying Time” and “Cold, Cold Heart.”

Despite the subject matter, Malo says, “I wouldn’t say it’s a country record by today’s standards. [Like] with everything I do, it’s not that simple. It’s country covers done as if Tony Bennett were doing a country album.”

**JULY 29, 2006 | www.billboard.biz | 49**
Marlango’s ‘Imperfection’ Goes Worldwide
Universal Classics & Jazz Rereleases Jazz-Pop Act’s Album

Leonor Watling is best-known outside her native Spain as the star of such movies as Pedro Almodóvar’s “Talk to Her.” She may soon be known for her music now that “Automatic Imperfection,” the second album by Watling’s jazz-pop ensemble Marlango, is receiving a global release through Universal Classics & Jazz. The album went gold (50,000 units) after it was first issued in Spain in September 2005 by Madrid indie label Subterfuge Records and is licensed for international distribution to Universal Music Spain.

In May, Marlango was signed directly to Universal Music Spain. During July, Universal Classics & Jazz began rereleasing the album in Europe, Latin America, Japan, Singapore and Australia on Emarcy/Verve. The reissue carries six bonus tracks and a DVD of a live Barcelona performance. Verve is expected to handle the album in the United States.

Watling, whose mother was British, writes the act’s English-language lyrics. She fronts a trio that includes Alejandro Pelayo (piano) and Oscar Ybarra (trumpet/flugelhorn), augmented in the studio by five other musicians for “Automatic Imperfection.”

“We are very satisfied with Marlango’s first international steps,” Universal Music Spain local product manager Maya Nieto says. The act is booked worldwide through RLM International and published by Warner/Chappell/Pizza Pop.

—Huwel Llewellyn

ROOSTER CROWS: After playing 150 shows in 2005, U.K. rock quartet Rooster can’t wait to get into the studio to record its second album, “Circles and Satellites” (Brightside/Sony BMG). The band’s experience on the road with a variety of acts from Franz Ferdinand to Robert Plant as well as through its own headlining shows is reflected in the accomplished approach of the album’s 12 tracks. It has a stronger melodic edge than Rooster’s 2005 self-titled debut, vocalist Nick Atkinson says. “I know this album’s better than the last one. We’re better musicians, and we’ve got better songs.”

Guitarist Luke Potashnick is particularly enthusiastic about the album’s producer, Matt Wallace (Faith No More, Maroon5), who he says was at the top of the band’s “wish list.”

According to the label, “Rooster” has sold 500,000 units globally, half of those in Britain. “Circles and Satellites” arrived June 19 in Japan and will be issued in the United Kingdom in September/October. An international rollout for “Circles” will follow, although a U.S. release date is yet to be confirmed. The band’s publishing is through Bluesky Music Publishing, and it is handled by Helter Skelter.

—Tom Ferguson

FERRO’S HIGH HOPES: Italian pop singer Tiziano Ferro’s third album “Nessuno è Solo” (EMI Capitol Nisa) is making a splash away from home. EMI has high hopes for its breakout success after the set "Me and My Gang," which has racked up sales of 1.36 million. No album had the sustaining power to land in the top 10 both years running, but Kelly Clarkson’s “Breakaway” comes close. It was No. 5 in 2005’s half-year tally. It only slips to No. 18 for the first half of 2006.

ROCK, WHERE ART THOU? Alternative-rock sales are down 14.9% from the first half of 2005. That’s also reflected in the top 10. (SoundScan does not have a rock genre; the format’s sales are divided into alternative and metal categories.)

Only one act, Nickelback, squeaks into the top 10 with “All the Right Reasons” coming in at No. 10 with slightly more than 1 million sold. In last year’s stats, the top 10 included Green Day, Gwen Stefani (who straddles the alternative line, we admit), Coldplay and the Killers. When we look at the Modern Rock chart, which registers radio play, it’s loaded with new acts, but clearly few of them are gaining significant sales traction with fans.

RASCAL FLATTS: We have one word: Believe. We can’t imagine there are many folks out there who haven’t noticed just how popular this trio is—at radio, retail and on the road. Rascal Flatts is the only act to land in the top 20 of the first half of 2005 and 2006 with new studio albums. “Me and My Gang” is 2005’s No. 2 seller at a silver under 1 million, while last year boasted “Feels Like Today” at the No. 14 spot with a little more than 1 million.

Eminem is the only other artist to make the top 20 of both half-year charts with separate albums, but his “Curtain Call,” which lands at No. 11 for 2006, was a greatest hits package. (For more on rap/R&B half-year figures, see Rhythm & Blues, page 46.)
TOM PETTY
Highway Companion
Producers: Tom Petty, Jeff Lynne, Mike Campbell
American Recordings/Warner Bros.
Release Date: July 25

Tom Petty's new album is a surprisingly moody affair. Showing a growing disillusionment with the promise of freedom, "Highway Companion," Petty's first solo effort in 12 years, is also his most personal and heartfelt to date. Melancholic road anthems like the blues-powered "Saving Grace" and hard-edged "Turn This Car Around" don't stick to the usual script—they cast a dark shadow on the Great White Open instead of romanticizing it. Heartbreakingly sparse, "Square One" may be Petty's most beautiful song ever, while melodic standout "Damaged by Love" offers a bittersweet coda to his '80s classic "Here Comes My Girl." Here's an icon stripped to his emotional core, armed with a last-man-standing voice full of loneliness and inner peace. Petty has come a long way, but he's never sounded closer to home.—SP

JURASSIC 5
Feedback
Producers: various
Interscope
Release Date: July 25

Since 2002's "Power in Numbers," Jurassic 5 has cultivated the sizable chunk of its fan base outside the barricades of hip-hop. "Work It Out" includes a vocal hook from Dave Matthews and is the group's liveliest yet lunge for spins. For the first time, there are outside producers such as Scott Storch, covering for the departed DJ Cut Chemist. As a result, "Feedback" is more organic and less cohesive than usual. Storch's Miam-flavored "Brown Girl" sounds like some other (less innovative) group, and the relationship-themed Matthews track may split fans down the middle. "Feedback" is a great argument for the theory of if it ain't broke... When J5 gets back to the basics of tag-team rhyming ("Red Hot," "Radio"), its broad, organic bang remains potent.—JV

NEW YORK DOLLS
One Day It Will Please Us to Remember Even This
Producer: Jack Douglas
Roadrunner
Release Date: July 25

With Arthor Kane gone, it's just David Johansen and Sylvain Sylvain from the original glam-bam-brat pack, and some cultists may have a problem with authenticity. But get over it. This first New Dolls album in 32 years is not just a legitimate entry in their catalog, it's a great one. Johansen, apparently having bathed in the fountain of youth, still spins out syllables like a teen with the munchies eating beef jerky. Having accrued decades of wisdom, his new lyrics manage to capture an adult sense of community one had forgotten could even exist in this, as one title puts it, "Punishing World." Few lyrics are as shreded as Johansen, making the potential radio/club hit "Dance Like a Monkey" a mocking statement about intelligent design, while "Fishnetts & Cigarettes" pungently evokes the sexy recklessness of the youthquake the Dolls facilitated in the early '70s.—WR

JESSE MCCARTNEY
Right Where You Want Me (3:06)
Producers: Adam Watts, Andy Dodd
Writers: A. Dodd, A. Watts, O. Lobo, J. McCartney

Hollywood
While Jesse McCartney puts his pretty-boy pout to good effect on "Right Where You Want Me," a jangly pop-rock insta-hit that is destined to steamroll the top 40 dunes and produce one hot summer second. The song adds a bit of edge to previous efforts along with a falsetto refrain and a singalong chorus that somewhat conjures heyday 'N Sync. Meanwhile, Hollywood is leaving no proverbial stone unturned, linking the "Beautiful Soul" singer with Yahoo, AOL, MTV, Nickelodeon, even an ABC Family concert special. No question, it's all systems go for McCartney. Here he makes hitsmaking seem simple.—CT

RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS
Tell Me Baby (4:07)
Producer: Rick Rubin
Writers: Red Hot Chili Peppers
Publisher: Moebroe-Bliame, BMG
Warner Bros.

As the unstoppable "Dani California" continues its run on radio rock, the Peppers unleash a sun-drenched, bass-heavy cut from "Stadium Arcadium." Bringing back the funk, "Tell Me Baby" is driven by Flea's bass-slapping salvoes and pushes a catchy pop chorus over a crisp feel-good shuffle. It's a classic funk-rocker, featuring one of Anthony Kiedis' madcap raps ("Chitty, chatterbox/Wanna play and fluff my nitty gritty/What a pity"), plus a stuck-up guitar. John Frusciante takes a back seat, yet still moves from Motown to metal to Hendrix like a spaced-out jukebox. "Tell Me" lacks the rock power of "Dani," but overflows with melody and energy and is closer to the Peppers' hard-grooving core.—SP

HIP-HOP
PHARRELL WILLIAMS In My Mind
Producer: Pharrell Williams
Star Trak/Interscope
Release Date: July 25

Pharrell Williams fully flexes his artistic license on this 15-track solo debut "In My Mind," split almost evenly between rap and R&B. But the Neptunes' hitmaker proves he is more believable as a producer or guest than as a starring attraction. It is easy to imagine more capable artists draped over the album's catchy arrangements and intense drum sequences. Nas would flow effortlessly on "You Can Do It Too." For example. And the actual guest rappers—including Jay-Z, "Young Girl/I Really Like You") and Snoop Dogg ("That Girl")—rhyme effortlessly while Williams struggles with his timing and delivery. He is creative in some places ("How Does It Feel") but his beats are simply more alluring than his often inscrutable lyrics. While he is certainly an innovative producer, that originality fails to translate on "In My Mind."—CH

POPPED BY EDDIE BRICKELL & NEW BOHEMIANS
Stranger Things
Producer: Bryce Goggin
Writers: Brickell, New Bohemians
Mushroom
Release Date: July 25

Eddie Brickell's enormously underrated "Volcano," released two years ago, marked an exciting departure even though it was not a hit album. Now, the singer/songwriter attempts to recapture the past by reuniting with the New Bohemians, the band behind his 1988 call to life "What I Am." One can hear that these old friends are having a lot of fun, but "Stranger Things" turns out to be excruciatingly unproduced. While "Volcano" sparkled with acoustic guitars and lush licks courtesy of Charlie Sexton, here the musicians simply jam without ever creating mood. Loose, jazzed up garage improves with '80s rock guitars and percussion leave little room for Brickell to breathe real life into his escape... nature-loving tales. With the right production, songs like the catchy title track or the outdoor reverie "Buffalo Ghost" could have been magical.—SP

SCRITTIPOLITI White Bread Black Beer
Producer: Green Gartside
Nonesuch
Release Date: July 25

Since his days as a protégé of Brian Eno, Green Gartside, aka SCRITTIPOLITI, is such a musical chameleon he's hard to follow, though his release schedule has included gaps of 11 and now seven years between new albums. The band's U.K. punk-era beginnings mutated into synth-pop perfection in the '80s. After a long hiatus, 1999's "Anomie & Bonhomie" blended hip-hop with Gartside's fluffy vocal harmonies. Now we get 14 tracks recorded solo in Gartside's Beloved Studios apartment, perhaps the first pure SCRITTIPOLITI album. "The Boom Boom Baq" is a smoothly textured ode to Gartside's beloved belated hip-hop, but its sparse arrangement is a better hint of what's to come. Gartside gets playful with melody and structure, resulting in such variegated efforts as "Road to Hanoi" and the haunting cover of "Dr. Abernathy." The chameleon has come home and still sounds like no one else.—TC

RAUL MALO
You're Only Lonely
Producer: Peter Asher
Sanctuary
Release Date: July 25

The title song by J.D. Souther is so derivative of "Only the Lonely" that Roy Orbison and Joe Melson should get co-writing credits; there are two versions of Randy Newman's "Feels Like Home" (one pop, one country duet with Martha McSporran) on "The Man," with the United States' release, and a Spanish version. On "Lavadora De Rio," the suity of "Rosebud" and the melancholy of "Distant Ember." This is sophisticated world music; but should appeal to all kinds of listeners.—LC

DAVID ROLAS Mi Mundo
Producers: various
 Fonovisa
Release Date: July 25

Rapper David Rolas' third album is more aggressive than his previous efforts. It is also more far-reaching, bilingual and contains collaborations with the likes of Spooky Loco and Rogelio Martinez. Bicultural Rolas is proud of his West Coast roots, but we continued on p52

www.americanradiohistory.com
From >>p51

Don't need to hear it stated track by track. The album vacillates between depth and sheer fun, with the sound of gunshot alternations with comedic skits. It's just one of many twists, including the accordion of guest artist Homero Vela on "Mi Mundo," the crunchy cumbia beat of "Morena," the acoustic/Spanish guitar of "La Lección," the steady rhythm of "Bienvenida al Oeste" (with Akwid) and the R&B edges of "Juanito Ti." —LC

**World**

**AZAM ALI**

_Elysium for the Brave_

Producers: Azam Ali, Carmen Rizzo

_Six Degrees_ Release Date: July 25

"Elysium for the Brave" is Ali's second solo project, the follow-up to her stunning 2002 solo debut, "Portals of Grace." The new set is a gripping fusion of electronics, traditional Middle Eastern music, and classical influences. Ali's voice, one of the most evocative in modern music, seems to rise from the collective unconscious, simultaneously new and ancient. —PPV

**Folk**

**LINDA RONSTADT & AL SAWAY**

Adieu False Heart

Producer: Steve Buckingham

_La Venganza_ Release Date: July 25

Ronstadt and Savoy previously recorded together on the Grammy Award-nominated Cajun album "Evangeline Made." This time around, they've combined with such players as Sam Bush, Dr. John, and Sam Bush to track a project that's more a pure folk-rooted album than a specifically Acadian effort. Songs range from Richard Thompson's "Burn's Supper" to Bill Monroe's bluegrass nugget "The One I Love Is Gone." For the most part, "Tournez, Tourne Bebe Creole" and a lovely cover of the Left Banke's "Walk Away Renee."

The quality of musicianship involved, if this CD were anything short of extraordinary it would be a disappointment. Luckily, "Adieu False Heart" is a special album, a moving collection of essential folk tunes, forged via a meeting of gifted musicians and equally adept songwriters. —PPV

**New & Noteworthy**

**Tapes 'n Tapes**

_The Loon_

Producer: Erik Appelwick

_XL Recordings_ Release Date: July 25

After self-releasing "The Love (Don't Go)" last November, Minneapolis quartet Tapes 'n Tapes have skyrocketed to indie rock's Next Big Thing status. Thanks in part to a blog-fueled buzz and an album that actually lives up to the hype, the group has managed to harness obvious Pixies/Pavement influences into a tight package, best heard on opener "Just Drums" and first single "Insister," which is as brilliantly unnerving as it is catchy. Elsewhere, the stripped-down "Omaha" shows the band's aptness with scintillating drumming and off-kilter harmonies. On first listen, "The Loon" is not as immediate as several key tracks are individually. But after further study, the pieces eventually take place, and it becomes clear that this foursome has a solid debut on its hands and, at this rate, a very promising future. —JM

**Gospel**

**THE MIKE BOWLING GROUP**

_Graceland_

Producer: Mike Bowling

_Daywind/SGV_ Release Date: June 27

Bowling is a Southern gospel music veteran who has spent time with the LeftEvers, the New Hinsons and the Perrys. After a successful season as a solo artist, he brings together a new group, with his brother Jeff, Jeff's wife Kim and their cousin Karen. Bowling has a powerful voice that shines on this collection, but he graciously lets other members share lead vocal duties. The result is a potent disc that combines Southern gospel and country influences. "Mercy and Grace" is a buoyant anthem while "There Is Power in the Name of Jesus" is a gorgeous ballad that could be a hit on multiple Christian radio formats. On the Karen Harding-penned title cut, the group conjoins a cool, swampy vibe, thanks to creative lyrics and an appearance from the Jordanaires. —DEP

**Pop**

**PANIC! AT THE DISCO**

_But It's Better If You Do_ (3:25)

Producers: Matt Squire, Panic! at the Disco

_Writers: Panic! at the Disco_ Publisher: Sweet Chin. ASCAP

With visions of disco balls and cabaret dancers still swirling in our heads from summer sleeper hit "I Write Songs Not Tragedies," Panic! at the Disco is riding the wave of holding us in its spell. Without missing a beat, "But It's Better If You Do" grips our attention with "Sins" left off its bouncy, lovemore-lyric—ah, emo—and delicious, carnival-like mix of drums and synths will surely whip fans into a raving, sweaty mess on the dancefloor. Fueled by a seductive troika and a flashy burlesque video that has quickly become a mainstay on MTV's "TRL," "Butter" should easily catapult Panic! into the stratosphere and leave listeners wanting more.—RK

**The VERONICAS**

_When It All Falls Apart_ (3:13)

Producers: Josh Alexander, Billy Steinberg

Writers: Alex Alexander, B. Steinberg, J. Orgilasso, L. Orgilasso

_Publishers: Universal/ASCAP_ At home in Australia, the Veronicas are unstoppable with their top 5 smashers, including their most recent U.S. single "When It All Falls Apart," an utter harmonic delight. Identical twins Lisa Marie and Jessica Louise Orgilasso are giving it their best shot, touring across The United States this summer, following previous outings with Ashlee Simpson, the Click Five, Ryan Cabrera and the Jonas Brothers. These young ladies are the real deal with a catchall songs that merits chart triumph. —DEP

**R&B**

**CHINGY FEATURING TYRESE**

_Pullin' Me Back_ (3:27)

Producers: Jermaine Dupri, LPMG

Writers: J. Dupri, J. Phillips, H. Bailey, B. Morgan, J. Pastonious

_Publishers: Universal MCA/Jaco Pastorious, ASCAP_ At home in Australia, the Veronicas are unstoppable with their top 5 smashers, including their most recent U.S. single "When It All Falls Apart," an utter harmonic delight. Identical twins Lisa Marie and Jessica Louise Orgilasso are giving it their best shot, touring across The United States this summer, following previous outings with Ashlee Simpson, the Click Five, Ryan Cabrera and the Jonas Brothers. These young ladies are the real deal with a catchall songs that merits chart triumph. —DEP

**AC**

**NATALIE GRANT**

_The Real Me_ (4:31)

Producer: Bernie Hermis

_Writers: Nat in the Hat_ _ASCAP_ 

_Christian-turned-AC superstart Natalie Grant is on the cusp of becoming a mainstream star, thanks to current alt-pop hit "I Am" (Anison), which replete with universal themes concurrent with the latter format's need to snuff out new talent to revamp its identity. First, Grant is a world-class singer, giving AC the builds it needs to connect with grown-up listeners; second, this song is just lovely in its unabashed recognition of the magic inside all of us. "I Am," which she wrote, is already charting at the format so no hard sell is necessary, but Grant deserves to catapult to format staple status. She's done her job and has all the tools ready to homewel. Will she ultimately be another champ at satellite radio? Not a great terrestrial didn't get? This will be the telling moment. —CT

*From: American Radio History*
Sony BMG Reaches Weird Turn; ‘Now’ Leads Pack

Just when I was convinced that the music industry of the new millennium could become no more dramatic or chaotic than it already was, news reports that Sony and BMG are treating their merger as if it were a posthumous event with barely a regulatory hitch from either the Federal Trade Commission or the EU—each of the remaining four major music conglomerates felt pressure to expand through merger or takeover. These pressures have only increased since 2001, when album sales began to lag.

With thousands of layoffs already expected to create Sony BMG, what happens if Europe’s blessing does not happen this second time around? Will BMG’s West Coast staff have to move from Santa Monica back to Beverly Hills? Unchartered waters indeed.

Yet smart as I try to be, and as often as I’ve read Impala’s assertions, I still have trouble figuring out how consolidation hurts independent competitors, especially since Sony BMG’s U.S. market share has turned out to be smaller than the combined shares those companies rang before the merger.

Prior to the wedding, Nielsen SoundScan put the combined assets of Sony and BMG at 31.27% in 2003 and 30.14% in 2004. But the newly formed Sony BMG Music slipped to 29.82% in 2004 and dipped again to 24.83% last year.

In that same time frame, SoundScan shows independently distributed albums growing. Indies hovered around 13.5% in 2002 and 2003, and slipped to 13.41% in 2004, but 2005 saw the sector grow to 18.32%. If you add major-distributed but independently owned labels like Buena Vista Music Group, Curb, Rounder and Razor & Tie to the mix, the indie share looks even more vibrant.

When six majors became five and later four, cuts to artist rosters and payrolls meant independents suddenly had access to acts with developed fan bases as well as experienced music executives to help them keep their heads above water.

Given those potential resources and the numbers that have played out in the United States since BMG and Sony got hitched, I would imagine indie labels might be tempted to encourage, rather than thwart, further consolidation among the majors.

IN THE ‘NOW’: The No. 1 bow by hits compilation ‘Now 22’ makes The Billboard 200 look healthier than it did a week ago, when a posthumous Johnny Cash album led the page with 88,000 sold. But although the new chart-topper posts 398,000 copies, it offers little relief from summer’s doldrums for traditional music stores and chains.

The multi-label series’ latest edition, which includes Rihanna, The Fray, Kelly Clarkson and Sean Paul among its 20 songs, saw 83% of first-week sales come from mass merchants like Wal-Mart and Target. That’s consistent with recent behavior. Each edition since “Now 18” has had at least 72% of opening sales come from department stores.

Since July 2002, when mass merchants logged 66% of the start for “Now 10,” none has seen the sector own less than 71% of first-week sales.

This becomes the ninth “Now” to reach No. 1 and the 10th to start with at least 350,000 copies.
The Billboard 200

**Top Songs Chart**

**Artist** | **Song** | **Label** | **Weeks at No. 1**
--- | --- | --- | ---
**1** | **VARIOUS ARTISTS** | **NOW 22** | 7
**2** | **JAMES BLUNT** | **ABC (WALT DISNEY)** | 4
**3** | **CHAMILLIONAIRE** | **INTERSCOPE** | 4
**4** | **DIPLOMATIC MAN** | **INTERSCOPE** | 4
**5** | **EPIC** | **INTERSCOPE** | 4
**6** | **ROADRUNNER** | **INTERSCOPE** | 4
**7** | **WALT DISNEY** | **INTERSCOPE** | 4
**8** | **MUSE** | **INTERSCOPE** | 4
**9** | **JAMES BLUNT** | **ABC (WALT DISNEY)** | 4
**10** | **RHYMEFEST** | **INTERSCOPE** | 4

**Top Albums Chart**

**Artist** | **Album** | **Label** | **Weeks at No. 1**
--- | --- | --- | ---
**1** | **KELLY CLARKSON** | **Breakaway** | 7
**2** | **T.I.** | **D.O.C.** | 3
**3** | **TAKING BACK SUNDAY** | **What's Left of Me** | 3
**4** | **ALAN JACKSON** | **Precious Memories** | 3
**5** | **ANGELS AND AIRWAVES** | **We Don't Need To Whisper** | 3
**6** | **KEITH URBAN** | **King Of Kings** | 3
**7** | **THE ROAD AND THE RADIO** | **What's Left Of Me** | 3
**8** | **NICK LACHEY** | **Feels Like Today** | 2
**9** | **RASCAL FLATTS** | **Long Live Love** | 2
**10** | **BRAH PAISLEY** | **Time Well Wasted** | 2

**Radiohead fronts chart at No. 1.**

**The Week in Review**

- **Critics' picks**
  - A return to the band's roots with an album filled with anthems. Its first single, "F Knobs," has sold 12,000 copies in its first week.

- **Ambitious one-disc album comes with rock band's first single, "11:18," at $10.98 for pre-sale.**

- **At No. 9, U.K. rock band Muse breaks into top five of chart for first time as fourth album bows with 45,000 copies.**

Data for week of JULY 29, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 70

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

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### HOT 100 Airplay

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Label)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>U &amp; I</td>
<td>D1ME (Independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PROMICIOUS</td>
<td>Nelly (Epic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>IT'S GOING DOWN</td>
<td>Don Jazzy (Don Jazzy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SNAP Yo FINGERS</td>
<td>J. J. Fingers (DTP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>UNFAITHFUL</td>
<td>112 (East West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>DEJA VU</td>
<td>Miley Cyrus (RCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CRAZY</td>
<td>Baby Bash (Zomba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I WRITE SINS NOT TRAGEDIES</td>
<td>Kelly Clarkson (RCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SHOULDER SHOULDER SHOULDER</td>
<td>Crysta Morgan (Edel)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>OVER MY HEAD (CABLE CAR)</td>
<td>The Wanted (Polydor)</td>
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### ADULT Top 40

<table>
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<th>Position</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DIRTY LINING</td>
<td>B.o.B. feat. Bruno Mars (Atlantic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>STUCK IN THE STUDIO</td>
<td>T-Pain feat. B.o.B. (Loud)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BREATHE (2 AM)</td>
<td>Ne-Yo (Def Jam)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>DIRTY LITTLE SECRET</td>
<td>Lenny Kravitz (DGC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SWING</td>
<td>The Strokes (Interscope)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>HYPNOX</td>
<td>J. Cole (Def Jam)</td>
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### Modern Rock

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Label)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>TOGETHER</td>
<td>Keereez (RCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>WE'RE NOT GOING OUT</td>
<td>The Used (Epitaph)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LOVE TO THE MAX</td>
<td>The Summer Set (Keane)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SO WHAT</td>
<td>Tom Petty (Reprise)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ROYAL EMERALD</td>
<td>The GNM (Epic)</td>
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### Hot Digital Songs

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<td>GIMME THAT</td>
<td>Ed Sheeran (Atlantic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>U AND I</td>
<td>Don Jazzy (Don Jazzy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SNAP Yo FINGERS</td>
<td>J. J. Fingers (DTP)</td>
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<td>UNFAITHFUL</td>
<td>112 (East West)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>DEJA VU</td>
<td>Miley Cyrus (RCA)</td>
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### Adult Contemporary

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<td>GIMME THAT</td>
<td>Ed Sheeran (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>DON'T FORGET TO REMEMBER ME</td>
<td>James Morrison (EMI)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>SUMMERTIME</td>
<td>Amy Winehouse (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>A LITTLE TOO LATE</td>
<td>Dido (Rhino)</td>
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<td>Ed Sheeran (Atlantic)</td>
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### Modern Rock

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<td>DEJA VU</td>
<td>Miley Cyrus (RCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>Album</td>
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<tr>
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<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promiscuous</td>
<td>Rihanna</td>
<td>A Girl Like This</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Stop</td>
<td>Just Blaze</td>
<td>Back On Top</td>
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| Leaving Love                                | The Faint                                   | Dark

*Data provided by Billboard.*
## Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

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<th>#</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<th>WEEKS</th>
<th>DISTRIBUTING LABEL (PRICE)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CHRISTINA MILIAN</td>
<td>JUST A FRIEND</td>
<td>UNIVERSAL MOTOWN</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>JUICE WRLD</td>
<td>LET IT GO</td>
<td>CASH MONEY</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SNATCH</td>
<td>GET IT</td>
<td>MATRIARCH/GEFFEN</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>EMPIRE</td>
<td>THE CLASSIC COLLECTION</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CHAMILLIONAIRE</td>
<td>CHINATOWN</td>
<td>INTERSCOPE</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>T-PAIN</td>
<td>FAKE LOVE</td>
<td>WARNER BROS.</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>MARY J. BLige</td>
<td>TESTIMONY: VOL. 1, LIFE &amp; RELATIONSHIP</td>
<td>SONY MUSIC</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.98</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>AVANT</td>
<td>SUCCEED</td>
<td>EDGE</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>COLUMBIA RECORDS</td>
<td>LIL WAYNE X 2</td>
<td>SCHUMER/MILLS</td>
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<td>13.98</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>THE CARTER 3</td>
<td>DIPLOMATIC MAN</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17.98</td>
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## Top Blues Albums

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<tr>
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<th>ARTIST</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>JOHNNY WINTER</td>
<td>SONGS FROM THE MOJO FORK</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>LUCILLE BLOOM</td>
<td>THE RAINBOW SESSIONS</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BOB DYLAN</td>
<td>THE CLOSER YOU GET</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>JOHN LEE HOOKER</td>
<td>THE EARLY YEARS</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21.98</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND</td>
<td>SING THE BLUES</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
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<td>B.B. KING</td>
<td>THE LEGEND</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
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<td>24.98</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>SONNY STITT</td>
<td>FROM MY HEART</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24.98</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>BOB DYLAN</td>
<td>THE HICKORY MOUNTAIN SESSIONS</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
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<td>24.98</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>JOHN LEE HOOKER</td>
<td>ROCKIN' THE HALL OF FAME</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
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<td>24.98</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND</td>
<td>THE COMPLETE ALBUMS</td>
<td>CHRONICLES</td>
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**PIMP C LANDS FIRST NO. 1 ALBUM**

Pimp C's album "Pinpoint," featuring hit single "History In The Making," debuted at No. 1 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart. The album was released on Cash Money Records and reached the Billboard 200 at No. 4.

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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**


---

**BUTTacksCom**

For more information on Billboard, visit [www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com) for complete chart data.

---

**Contact**

go to [www.americanradiohistory.com](http://www.americanradiohistory.com) for rules and explanations.
### HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<thead>
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<th>No.</th>
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<td>Love You</td>
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<td>Don't Forget to Remember Me</td>
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<td>4.0</td>
<td>A Little Too Late</td>
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<td>5.0</td>
<td>Life Ain't Always Beautiful</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>Me and My Gang</td>
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<td>7.0</td>
<td>Leave The Pieces</td>
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<td>Bring It On Home</td>
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<td>Last Day of My Life</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
<td>Brand New Girlfriend</td>
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<td>Why, Why, Why</td>
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<td>California Girls</td>
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### COUNTRY MUSIC UPDATE

**Don't miss another important update!**

Visit [www.billboardradiohistory.com](http://www.billboardradiohistory.com) to sign up to register for your free Country Radio Blast.

**BillboardRadioMonitor.com**

*OT COUNTRY SONGS: 131 country stations are electronically monitored by 2000 Promusica Monitor Systems, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Airpower reported to songscope on the top 20 on both the BDS Airplay and Audience charts for the first time. All rights reserved. *S.L. SHAH*: See Chart Legend for rules and explanations.

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**WRECKERS DO NEW DUOS PROUD IN TOP 10**

Michelle Branch makes country chart history as half of new country duo the Wreckers, her union with Jessica Harp. The pair takes "Leave the Pieces" #11, marking the first time a rookie duo lands a top 10 with a track from a debut album since Montgomery Gentry did so with second single "Lonely and Gone" in October 1999. That song peaked at #5 in the Nov. 6, 1999 issue.

Wreckers' debut album "Wreckless" debuts at #11. No duo has taken a debut to #1 since Brooks & Dunn spent two weeks at the top with "Brand New Man" in September 1999.

Also of note on this week's Hot Country Songs is that Brad Paisley's "The World" spends a second week atop the chart. Half of Paisley's six chart-toppers have now spent more than one week atop the form. Former veteran Alan Jackson also registers his highest solo bow in three years with "Like Red on a Rose" at #42.

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**Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.**
### Latin Airplay

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Position</th>
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<td>Juliana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Te Echo de Menos</td>
<td>Gustavo Santaolalla</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Como Duela</td>
<td>Sergio Vega &amp; Patrulla</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Tigres del Norte</td>
<td>Alejandro Duran</td>
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<tr>
<td>Te Vas a Hacer Llorar</td>
<td>Alejandro Duran</td>
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<td>A Ti</td>
<td>Dady Yankee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enamorados</td>
<td>Daddy Yankee</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vivir De Mis Sueños</td>
<td>Tito &amp; El Principe</td>
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### Regional Mexican

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mi Tiempo</td>
<td>Juan Gabriel</td>
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### HITS OF THE WORLD

#### JAPAN

**ALBUMS**

1. **NEW**
   - **MEGAPROJECT**
   - **KARA (EYES CATCHING EDITION)**
   - **FIRE BALL**
   - **SOWELL**
   - **VARIOUS ARTISTS**
   - **MUSE**
   - **TUBE**
   - **THE ABYSS OF THE EIGHT**
   - **THAT'S JULY 29, 2006**
   - **ANGELA AKI**

#### UNITED KINGDOM

**ALBUMS**

1. **NEW**
   - **KOOKS**
   - **THOM YORKE**
   - **THE ZUTONS**
   - **Rihanna**
   - **NINA SIMONE**
   - **POLIO SIMS**
   - **MUSIC**
   - **RAY LAMONTAGNE**

#### FRANCE

**ALBUMS**

1. **NEW**
   - **LAURENT VOLUZ**
   - **MUSE**
   - **OLIVIA RUIZ**
   - **THOM YORKE**
   - **GNAWO**
   - **NADYIA**
   - **FLORENT PAGNY**
   - **GRAND CORPS MALADE**
   - **PINK**

#### SWITZERLAND

**ALBUMS**

1. **NEW**
   - **TIZIANO FERRO**
   - **GIANNNA NANNINI**
   - **THOM YORKE**
   - **SHAKIRA**
   - **EROS RAMAZZOTTI**
   - **FINLEY**
   - **RED HOT CHILLI PEPPERS**
   - **FABR FIBRA**

#### ITALY

**ALBUMS**

1. **NEW**
   - **TIZIANO FERRO**
   - **GIANNNA NANNINI**
   - **THOM YORKE**
   - **SHAKIRA**
   - **EROS RAMAZZOTTI**
   - **FINLEY**
   - **RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS**
   - **FABR FIBRA**

#### SWITZERLAND

**SINGLES**

1. **NEW**
   - **CRAZY**
   - **HIPS DON'T LIE**
   - **SHAKIRA FT. Wycle F and LCD**
   - **MACAU**
   - **MAS QUE NADA**

#### FINLAND

**ALBUMS**

1. **NEW**
   - **MUSE**
   - **TIZIANO FERRO**
   - **LOVEBUGS**
   - **NELLY FURTADO**

#### POLAND

**ALBUMS**

1. **NEW**
   - **LORDI**
   - **MUSE**
   - **POETS OF THE FALL**

---

### EURO DIGITAL TRACKS

**ENGLISH SONGBOOK INTERNATIONAL**

1. **NEW**
   - **HIPS DON'T LIE**
   - **AIN'T NO OTHER MAN**
   - **CRAZY (SINGLE VERSION)**
   - **SMILE (RADIO EDIT)**
   - **UNFAITHFUL**
   - **STARS ARE BLIND (ALBUM VERSION)**
   - **MONSTER**
   - **LAST REQUEST (ALBUM VERSION)**
   - **WHO KNEW**
   - **STARS ARE BLIND**
   - **LIVE IN THE LIVING ROOM**
   - **ANGERFUL BLACK HOLE**

### WALLONIA

**SINGLES**

1. **NEW**
   - **CRAZY**
   - **WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS (RING A DANG DONG)**
   - **DON'T HATE ME BECAUSE I'M BEAUTIFUL**
   - **LIVING ON VIDEO**

### HUNGARY

**SINGLES**

1. **NEW**
   - **GET TOGETHER**
   - **RECORD STRAIGHT**
   - **SUFFER WELL**
   - **WHITE HORSE**

---

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

Data for week of July 29, 2006 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 70

www.americanradiohistory.com
## SINGLE SALES

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Artist</th>
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<td>REPRISE</td>
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<td>LET THE WIND DANCE</td>
<td>BNA</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NOTHING TO SAY</td>
<td>BNA</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Heart Of It All</td>
<td>Sparrow</td>
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<td>Sparrow</td>
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## ALBUMS

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## RADIO AIRPLAY

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Data for week of JULY 29, 2006 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4333
Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
Compiled from a national sample of data supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. Charts are ranked by number of sales impressions, computed by computer from consumer surveys taken at stores participating in the Nielsen scanner program. The exceptions are the Rhythm Top 40, Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Modern Rock and Adult R&B charts, which are ranked by total detections.

<b>RECURRENT RULES</b>

Songs are removed from the Hot 100 and Hot 100 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Hot 100 for more than 20 weeks and rank below 50. Songs are removed from the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs Chart simultaneously if they have been on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs & Tracks for more than 20 weeks and rank below 50. Songs are removed from the Pop and Top 40/60 Airplay charts simultaneously if they have been on the Pop 100 for more than 30 weeks and rank below 50. Titles are removed from the Country charts if they have been on the chart for more than 25 weeks and rank below 25. Titles are also removed from the chart if they have been on the chart for more than 25 weeks and rank below 15. Titles are also removed from the chart if they have been on the chart for more than 25 weeks and rank below 10. Titles are removed from the Adult Top 40, Adult Contemporary, Adult R&B, and Hot Dance Airplay charts if they have been on the chart for more than 20 weeks and rank below 15 (for Modern Rock and Latin) or if they have been on the chart for more than 52 weeks and rank below 10.

<b>SINGLES SALES CHARTS</b>

The top-selling singles compiled from a national sample of retail store, mass merchant, and internet sales reports collected, compiled, and provided by Nielsen SoundScan. For R&B/Hip-Hop, Adult R&B, Adult Contemporary, Modern Rock, and Adult Top 40 charts, sales data is compiled from a national subset of core R&B/Hip-Hop stores by Nielsen SoundScan.

<b>DOWNLOADED SINGLES</b>

<b>SINGLES CHARTS</b>

<b>TOP INDEPENDENT</b>

<b>TOP INDEPENDENT</b>

<b>TOP INDEPENDENT</b>

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**Note:** This chart includes the top 20 songs of the week from Billboard magazine. The chart codes are C8 (hot Country Songs), H100 (Hot 100 Songs), LT (Hot Latin Songs), POP (Pop 100 Song), and R&B (Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs). The chart data is for the week ending July 29, 2006.
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Notice is hereby given that Fortress Credit Opportunities I LP, a Delaware limited partnership, as a lender and as agent on behalf of the lenders (the “Agent”) under that certain Loan Agreement, dated as of March 1, 2004, as amended (the “Loan Agreement”), among The Songwriter Collective, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, as borrower (the “Debtor”), the Agent and the lenders, having postponed the public sales scheduled for November 4, 2005, December 14, 2005, January 31, 2006, March 14, 2006, April 25, 2006, June 6, 2006 and July 18, 2006, intends to sell at public sale in accordance with the provisions of the New York Uniform Commercial Code, certain personal property assets of the Debtor, generally described as all of the Debtor’s right, title and interest of every kind and nature in and to all accounts, chattel paper, deposit accounts, documents, equipment, elephants, furniture, fixtures, goods, instruments, inventory, investment property, payment intangibles and software belonging to the Debtor, in each case whether tangible or intangible, wherever located or situated, including all rights to a portfolio of musical compositions, including, among others, copyrights of the musical compositions, the right and interest in and to all revenues derived from such musical compositions, and all claims and causes of action related to the musical compositions accruing at any time and all other rights of the Debtor of any nature whatsoever in the musical compositions (the “Collateral”). A more detailed description of the Collateral will be provided to you upon execution of a confidentiality agreement.

The public sale will take place at the office of Sidley Austin LLP at 787 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019, on Tuesday, August 29, 2006 at 11:00 a.m., New York time. The Agent reserves the right to cancel the sale, without notice, in its entirety, or to adjourn the sale to a future date. The Agent may further adjourn the sale herein described to another date from time to time, before, during or after commencement of bidding, at its sole discretion and without notice, by announcement at the time and place appointed for such auction, or at any adjournment thereof, and, without further notice, such auction may be made at the time and place to which the auction may have been so adjourned.

Interested persons should take notice that the Collateral will be sold on the following terms and conditions:

1. All bids must be given orally at the public sale.
2. The Agent reserves the right to bid for and purchase the Collateral and to credit the purchase price against the expenses of sale and principal, interest and any and all other amounts due and payable to the Agent pursuant to the terms of any and all indebtedness secured by the security interest in the Collateral.
3. The Agent has sole discretion to determine which offer is the highest or best offer, and to reject any offer which it deems to be insufficiently.
4. Concurrently with the acceptance of any bid, the prospective purchaser shall be required to execute and deliver to the Agent the Asset Purchase Agreement, a copy of which may be obtained by contacting one of the person’s identified in the final paragraph of this notice, containing terms of sale and conditions for the Agent’s obligation to sell. In each case, in addition to those set forth herein, including, without limitation, the requirement that the sale of the Collateral pursuant to the Asset Purchase Agreement be consummated no earlier than 30 days following execution thereof.
5. Upon acceptance of any bid, the prospective purchaser shall be required to deposit (the “Deposit”) with the Agent earnest money in an amount equal to ten percent of the purchase price. Such Deposit shall only be refundable to such prospective purchaser as, and to the extent, provided in the Asset Purchase Agreement. In all other cases, the Agent shall have the right to retain such Deposit. If such sale of the Collateral is consummated with such prospective purchaser, the full amount of such Deposit shall be applied to the purchase price. If such sale is not consummated, the Agent shall have the right, but shall have no obligation, to reoffer the Collateral for sale, without further notice, in each case, at the Agent’s option. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, the Agent shall not be obligated to make any sale of the Collateral pursuant to this notice.
6. In the event the Agent is unable to consummate any sale and deliver the Collateral to a purchaser, then the sole liability of the Agent to such purchaser shall be to refund the purchase price, if any, previously paid to the Agent.
7. The Collateral will only be sold in its entirety unless the Agent announces otherwise at the outset of the public sale.
8. Subject to satisfaction of all of the conditions precedent to the Agent’s obligation to sell the Collateral pursuant to the Asset Purchase Agreement and the terms and conditions hereof, consummation of the sale of the Collateral will be made immediately upon receipt by the Agent of the purchase price and shall be evidenced by delivery of the Collateral to the purchaser thereof, BUT WITHOUT DELIVERY OF A BILL OF SALE, BUT WITHOUT GUARANTEE OF SIGNATURES, WITHOUT PAYMENT OF ANY TRANSFER OR OTHER TAX, AND WITHOUT REPRESENTATION OR WARRANTY BY THE AGENT, AND SUBJECT TO ALL DEFENSES.
9. The above terms and conditions of sale may be subject to additional or amended terms and conditions to be announced at the time of sale.
10. If any dispute arises between two or more bidders, the Agent may decide the same or put the Collateral up for sale again and resell to the purchaser submitting the highest bid, as determined by the Agent. In all cases, the Agent’s decision shall be final.
11. All bidders and other persons attending this auction agree that they have full knowledge of the terms set forth above and contained in the Asset Purchase Agreement and agree to be bound by the terms hereof and thereof.
12. The Debtor shall have the right to redeem the Collateral in accordance with, and only to the extent provided for, under applicable law.
13. For further information as to the public sale of the Collateral, and the terms and conditions relating thereto, and/or to obtain copies of the confidentiality agreement or the Asset Purchase Agreement, contact either Martin Jackson (212/839-6726) of Sidley Austin LLP, 787 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019 or Colleen McDonald (415/772-1207) of Sidley Austin LLP, 555 California Street, San Francisco, California 94104, counsel for the Agent.

July 22, 2006

LEGAL NOTICE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF ASSETS OF THE SONGWRITER COLLECTIVE, LLC

LEGAL NOTICE
NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND OTHERS REGARDING THE WINDING UP OF PASQUA MUSIC LTD., Pasqua Music Ltd., was incorporated pursuant to the provisions of the Ontario Business Corporations Act on February 5, 1986. On May 17, 2006, the shareholders of Pasqua Music Ltd., at a meeting called for that purpose, by special resolution, voted to wind up the corporation voluntarily pursuant to the provisions of the Ontario Business Corporations Act. David Markovitch was appointed Liquidator of the estate and effects of the Corporation. Anyone having a claim against Pasqua Music Ltd., shall deliver proof of such claim to Liquidator, David Markovitch, at the address below, on or before September 10, 2006, thereafter, the liquidator will distribute the assets of Pasqua Music Ltd. having regard only to the claims then filed. David Markovitch, Liquidator of Pasqua Music Ltd., Suite 319, 30 Bathurst St., Toronto, ON, M6A 2B2, Canada.

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Eric Hirshberg
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CONFIRMED SPEAKERS
- John Babitt, Talent Manager & Marketing Consultant, Tsunami Entertainment
- Brandon Jakshi, Director of Writer-Publisher Relations for Europe, BMI
- Chuck Barrett, Executive Producer, Promo Only
- Maurice Bernstein, CEO/President, Giant Step
- SuzAnn Brantner, GM, 3 Artist Management
- Lainie Copicotto, President, Aurelia Entertainment
- Patrick Dddy, VP of Brand Imaging, Armani Exchange
- Sonny Dolan, VP/Music Producer, Leo Burnett
- Simon Dunmore, A&R Director, Defected Records
- Hosh Guwii, VP of A&R, RCA Music Group
- Jennifer Masset, U.S. Label Manager, 1K7 Records
- Patrick Moxey, President, Ultra Records
- Chris Murphy, Founder, Petrol Records
- John Peake, Program Director, KNKY San Francisco
- Gary Salzman, President, BIG Management
- Jeffrey Straughn, VP of Strategic Marketing, Island Def Jam
- Jared Willig, Director of Music Programming & Industry Relations, AOL Music

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JORDAN TRIBUTE TO ANTHONY HAMILTON: Brand Jordan recently salute Anthony Hamilton's creativity and perseverance as an artist by "eating the Jordan Tribute to Anthony Hamilton" event held at the Kalaea in West Hollywood, Calif. Above: Shown, from left, are Hamilton's stylist, Michael McMillan; United Talent Agency's Nikki Wheeler; Hamilton's wife, Tanisha; Hamilton's manager, Special Assignment Operations' Eli Dwek; and Special Assignment Oberhansl's Kimrie Lovitt. Below: Enjoying tonight's festivities, from left, are Viva's Mariane Enley, Hamilton and Brand Jordan director of communications Theresa Tran.

The Berklee College of Music's R&D commissioning/renovator, doctor of music, degrees were presented by special guest Andy McGhee, Sleeping Americans producer Elliot Schoenthal, special guest/writer

 prefer this one: march 3rd at northend

Cary Adams at Northeastern University's Matthews Arena in Boston.

The Sunday's founding members of the Beach Boys, Al Jardine, Mike Love and Brian Wilson, are with Bruce Johnston at Beach Boys' file Photo by Kevin Estrada.

British pop star Robbie Williams took time out from his current world tour to celebrate his reaching of the 20 million album sales mark for Continental Europe, after his performance at Paris' Bercy Palace. He is seen. From left, Williams' BMG France managing director Jean Franco Ceccid, BMG Recorded Music chairman Alain Levy, Williams, BMG France's editor, vice chairman David Marks and BMG Music Continental Euro chairman Jean Francois Ceccid.

Helen Nye set Judie Armes, was presented to Holly Brown, Sony BMG.
REID RAISES CASH (LOTS), GETS PROPS

"I don't understand why it's L.A. who's getting the visionary award when I was the one who had the vision to hire him," joked Universal Music Group chairman/CEO Doug Morris at the 2006 Music Visionary of the Year Award Luncheon. Island Def Jam Music Group chairman Antonio "L.A." Reid was honored for his 25 years of excellence in music. Part schmooze- and congratulatory-fest, lunch and auction, the July 18 event, held at the Pierre in New York, raised money for UCLA's Federation of New York and the Music for Youth Foundation.

More than $800,000 was raised, setting a record for the annual event. While industry vets Steve Bartsels, Daniel Glass, Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter and others waxed poetic about Reid from the podium, an impromptu auction, courtesy of Reid's artist Mariah Carey, paved the way for a normally staid industry crowd to let loose in a major way. Since she couldn't be in New York (girl is in Los Angeles rehearsing for her upcoming tour), Carey offered the next best thing: "A dinner with Mariah auction." Some fierce bidding followed. At one point, Virgin Records chairman Rob Flom yelled, "I'll take her for $15,000 if she promises not to mention that she was on Virgin." Pausing for a moment, he reminded those in the room that Virgin already "lost $40 million on its deal with the singer—what's $17,000 more?" The auction topped at just that figure, with Flom the proud owner of a dinner with Carey. Attendees were then treated to a performance by Rihanna, who sang "Unfaithful" and "SOS." But between "put your hands together for Rihanna" and her actual arrival on the stage, what seemed like an eternity passed. Naturally, this prompted the too-happy Flom to shout, "I'll pay another $5,000 for dinner with Rihanna!" Following Rihanna's passionate performance, the laughter continued. Before leaving the stage, the 18-year-old Rihanna commented on Reid's 25 years in the business, saying, "That is a very, very long time." When it came time for Reid to give his award acceptance speech, thoughts of Flom's forthcoming dinner with Carey were embedded in his brain. "Jason, you got off cheap on the Mariah dinner," Not missing a beat, Flom shot back, "Cheaper than my bosses did."

Switching into serious mode, Reid said he felt "most honored and lucky to come into the world of Doug Morris" and that it was "an inspiration being around Jay-Z." Seconds later, Reid called Bertelsmann Music Group U.S. president/COO Charles Goldstuck "the future." A visionary, indeed.

LOHAN NEW PROACTIV BAE

Lindsay Lohan has been tapped by Proactiv to be its next celebrity spokeswoman. She follows in the footsteps of Sean "Diddy" Combs, Britney Spears, Alicia Keys and Jessica Simpson, who have each hawked the acne medicine. Lohan's contract with Proactiv is reportedly worth $2 million. Such a bank deposit should lessen Lohan's stress levels, which could make her need for Proactiv a thing of the past.

A GROOVY KIND OF DEAL

Track bears that legendary songwriter Carole Bayer Sager has signed an exclusive, worldwide administration agreement with Universal Music Publishing Group. Sager, who was previously with Warner/Chappell, is in her fifth decade of writing hit songs. She wrote her first hit, 1966's "A Groovy Kind of Love," when she was still a teen. The UMPG deal includes Sager's past works, which include "That's What Friends Are For," "Don't Cry Out Loud," "On My Own" and "Nobody Does It Better."

DYNAMIC DUO

Reggae:rhythm power duo Wisin & Yandel are not missing with collaborations. Sources say the pair is about to go into the studio to record for the Kumbia Kings' upcoming album on EM! Televisa. They are also slated to record with Mexican pop duo Sin Bandera for Wisin & Yandel's own set, due in September. That album, "Los Vaqueros," will be the first release via Wisin & Yandel's own imprint, WY Records/Machete.

Additionally, Reid has been hearing much talk of a collaboration with David Bisbal for the Spanish star's next release on Universal. And what about "Pam Pam," the bonus track included in the deluxe edition of Wisin & Yandel's current album, "Palmundo?" We hear it's being recorded as a remix with Wyclef Jean and Aventura.

VOICES CARRY

DJ AM turned it out at the July 15 grand opening of mur mur, the club within the Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa in Atlantic City, N.J. According to a New Jersey Track correspondence partygoers like actors Shannon Elizabeth, Danny Masterson, Jamie Lynn Sigler and Wilmer Valderrama couldn't get enough of AM's eclectic sonic journey. One second he was playing the Killers, then it was Gnarls Barkley. Twenty seconds later, the revelers were screaming for "Oh, Pretty Woman" by Roy Orbison. On and on it went, until five tequila shots later, Track decided to call it a night.

ALL BECAUSE OF TALENT

Come July 23, at the annual African-American Ethnic Night, dance music veteran Carolyn Harding will be honored by Nassau County, N.Y., officials for her outstanding achievements in the performing arts. Held at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow, N.Y., the event will also honor actress Carolyn Brown, playwright Louis Carter and poet/spoken word performer David McLean. The four honorees will be cited by Nassau County Executive Thomas Suozzi. If we're lucky, Harding may even perform her new Deep Haven Music single, "All Because of You," or perhaps her 20-year-old classic, "Memories."

KEEPING MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS

Ciara and Lyfe Jennings will perform at the fourth annual VH1 Save the Music Hamiltons Benefit. The July 28 fundraiser, held at the home of Jaci and Morris L. Reid in East Hampton, N.Y., will raise money for the VH1 Save the Music Foundation, which is dedicated to restoring musical instrument instruction in public schools. For more info, log on to vh1savethemusic.com.

RECORD COMPANIES: Independent Label Group in New York names Matthew Flott CFO. He was COO at Jack of All Games.

SRC Records in New York names Nora Perry GM. She is co-founder of Catalyst Group Entertainment Consulting.

Montage Music Group in Nashville names Anthony Martin head of A&R. He was president/CEO of Anthony Martin Productions. Montage Music Group also taps Bob Reeves as Northeast radio marketing team member. He was national director of radio promotions at Midas Records Nashville.

Capitol Records Nashville promotes Brent Jones to senior manager of promotion. He was manager.

Category 5 Records in Nashville names Jennifer Thompson director of national promotion. She was director of promotion at Ace Records.

PUBLISHING: BMI in New York promotes John Coletta to assistant VP of legal affairs. He was senior attorney.

Dimensional Music Publishing in Nashville names Sara Cameron publishing administrator. She was A&R coordinator at Warner/Chappell.

DISTRIBUTION: Universal Music Group Distribution in Universal City, Calif., names Julie Gibbs VP of sales for new business development. She was director of sales at Electronic Arts.

MEDIA: MTV Networks in New York promotes Marnie Black to senior VP of communications at MTV: Music Television. She was VP.

RETAIL: Handleman Co. in Troy, Mich., promotes Jeff Hodak to rock product manager. He was a product forecaster/distribution analyst.

RELATED FIELDS: The Motion Picture Assn. of America in Los Angeles names Steve Weinstein president/CEO of Motion Picture Laboratories (Movielabs). He was executive VP/chief strategy and technology officer at Macrovision.

Fox Mobile Entertainment in Hollywood names Natalie Fars senior VP of content and e-commerce for Mobizzo. She was VP of media at m-Quube.

Send submissions to shan@billboard.com.
SELECTED PROPERTIES


OPEN 2-5 07/23/06

1006 TOLUCA LAKE AVE: Toluca Lake. Prvt, gated. 5bd/4.5ba. Lakefront estate w/ its own dock. Sound studio, pilapa, chef's kit, Viking range, 3 fpl, 3 car grg. $3,895,000 WEB: 0303036 Adrienne Loffta 310.729.2841


OPEN 2-5 07/23/06

2120 WESTRIDGE RD: Brentwood. Views of SM Bay, downtown & Getty. Highlight this sprawling 1 story pool home. In/outdoor spaces create the ultimate Cal lifestyle. $2,499,000 WEB: 0341526 Susan Montgomery 310.255.5441

LAKE VIEW ESTATE: Lake Sherwood. Approx 4,100 sqft, 3bd/4ba, great rm overlooking lake, gourmet kit, game rm, office & 3 fpce. One-of-a-kind. $2,499,000 805.495.2000 Nicki Laffont 805.390.6591

OPEN 2-5 07/23/06


OPEN 2-5 07/23/06

2114 ROCKFORD RD: Silverlake. Casa Del Lago. Just shy of 5,000 sq ft of casual upscale modern day living w/ multi-functional spaces. www.2114rockfordroad.com $1,775,000 Karen Laver 323.804.8043

OPEN 2-5 07/23/06

1373 PACIFIC PROMENADE 102: Gorgeous Playa Vista condo located across from Center Point Club. Built-in's, 3 bd, 2.5 fpl, 3,531 sq ft, 2 bed, Den. 2.5 Ba $1,329,000 WEB: 0352039 Othens / Helberg 310.481.6262

OPEN 2-5 07/23/06

LUXURY HOME LOT: Palm Springs. Incredible lot in most exclusive Palm Springs community. Includes $100k in grading & planspermits from noted SoCal Architect. $995,000 WEB: 0130000 Greg Gray 760.833.5434

OPEN 2-5 07/23/06

2001 N. CURSON AVE: HWD Hills. Clean & very cool Mid-Century w/ atrium entry & dramatic floating staircase. Move in condition 3bd/2.5ba. Not to be missed. $1,499,000 WEB: 0303081 Fields/Forhan 310.205.0305

OPEN 2-5 07/23/06

1453 PRINCETON ST: Santa Monica. Very private & stylish CA bungalow w/ 3bd/1ba, open fl pl, hw fl, fpl, tons of windows, ludry rm, gated & walled yard. $709,000 Kirshner/Fren 310.260.8230

OPEN 2-5 07/23/06

12621 WASHINGTON BLVD 302: Brand new conversion in Mar Vista. 2bd/2bth/dash/1.59 sq ft. Top floor, high ceilings, balcony & views. New appliances. $1,049,000 new. Jack Biltan 310.481.6262

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