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UMG Nashville Congratulates Our 50th Annual Grammy Award Nominees

MCA Nashville

Vince Gill
- *These Days*, Album of the Year (General Field, Category 2)
- *These Days*, Best Country Album (Field 8, Category 42)

George Strait
- “Give It Away,” Best Male Country Vocal Performance (Field 8, Category 37)
- *It Just Comes Natural*, Best Country Album (Field 8, Category 42)
- “Give It Away,” Best Country Song (Field 8, Category 41)

Reba McEntire
- “Because of You” with Kelly Clarkson, Best Country Collaboration (Field 8, Category 39)

Mercury Records

Bon Jovi
- “(You Want To) Make A Memory,” Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group (Field 1, Category 7)
- *Lost Highway*, Best Pop Vocal Album (Field 1, Category 11)

Lost Highway Records

Johnny Cash
- “God’s Gonna Cut You Down,” Best Short Form Music Video (Field 31, Category 109)

Willie Nelson
- “Lost Highway” with Ray Price, Best Country Collaboration (Field 8, Category 39)

Lucinda Williams
- “Come On,” Best Solo Rock Vocal Performance (Field 4, Category 15)
- “Come On,” Best Rock Song (Field 4, Category 20)
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Many years ago I began my music business adventure working with Alan Becker and Howie Gelbert at Record Distributor's Win Records and Record Shack. Thirty years later I find myself back working with Alan and Howie at RED Distribution.

I joined RED in 1978 as a field merchandiser handing posters (stores "welcomed us that") in accounts like E.J. Korvettes (then managed by current RED president Bob Morelli). Today Korvettes is long closed and we pay handsomely for that merchandising space.

Many of the record guys I started with promoted music from a bag stuffed with releases from the best independent labels. (In a way, exactly where I find myself today.)

In 1979 I became the New York-based local promo manager for Atlantic Records at the height of the disco boom. By 1982 we were told disco was dead—although rock music continues to thrive today.

In the early '80s disco was replaced by heavy metal. And of course, by the early '90s the industry was told heavy metal had died—although hard rock music continues to thrive.

In the late '80s I worked with "hot" sexy rock bands ("hair bands") Winger, White Lion, Skid Row, Twisted Sister, Ratt and Kix. By the late '90s "hot sexy rock" was dead—although the genre continues to break new sexy, new rock bands like Everclear, Counting Crows, Scary Kids Scaring Kids, Metro Station, Bullet for My Valentine and others.

Grunge happened and died? Techno? New wave? New age? All these styles came and were declared dead—yet those styles continued bigger than ever.

In 2004, after losing my job during Atlantic/Elektra consolidation, I was told that Danny Buch "had a good run" (translation: "over and done")—yet I am luscious people might be those who were also told their careers were over.

And most important, the formula that Doug Morris and Ahmet Ertegun taught me and much of the current industry—Jason Flum, Monte Lipman, Craig Kallman, Sylvia Rhone, Danny Goldberg, Rea Garvey and many others. It's really very simple: Find music people want. Music that has the magic. Put on blinders and focus and fight and kill with everything you've got and get that song exposed.

"Music the consumer wants" plus "exposure" equals a hit. The formula is exactly the same in 2007 as it was in 1979. The more things seem to change, the more I find myself pretty close to the same place as when I started.

Danny Buch is senior VP of promotion and artist development at Sony BMG's independent distribution arm, RED.
"the music and features that our stations need"
Jeff Littlejohn, Executive VP Distribution Development (Clear Channel Radio)

"Play MPE is great!"
Tom Calococci, OM (WPOW)

"best and easiest system out there"
Mike Mullaney, APD (WBMX)

"one-stop shopping"
Cat Collins, PD (KQKS)

"saves me time"
Stan "The Man" Priest, PD (WKSS)

"KMXB's new music source"
Justin Chase, PD (KMXB)

"I love the Play MPE system"
Tim Richards, Regional VP of Programming (Clear Channel Radio)

"the only way I retrieve new music"
Larry McFeenie, PD (KUPD)

"higher audio quality than any other download service"
Skip Dillard, PD (WPGC)

"best quality files...I love it"
Erik Bradley, APD/MD (B96)

"an indispensable tool"
Charlie Cook, Senior Format Director (Cumulus Media)

"the only thing I use"
Jeff Kapugi, OM (Clear Channel Radio)

"keeps me on top of new releases"
Al Levine, APD (WBLI)

"downloading is fast"
Jim Bonner, Senior Director, Programming Operations (XM Radio)

"a great source"
Michael Martin, VP of Programming (Clear Channel Radio)

"quality at my fingertips"
Kenneth King, PD (WRQX)

"I log in daily...It's easy"
Bo Matthews, PD (WMMS / WAKS)

"I use it everyday"
Pete Schiecke, Sr. Programming Manager (AOL Radio)

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EVERY MAJOR LATIN LABEL TRIES A REVENUE-SHARING MODEL

As music sales continue to decline, Latin labels are dramatically changing the way they do business, signing acts to deals that include some kind of revenue sharing. Already, Sony BMG Latin has launched Day 1, a talent development company that is part of its in-house operations and whose duties include concert promotion, while Universal has launched a Global Talent service, which will provide specific services tailored to each artist’s needs. By the end of 2008, we can expect all major Latin labels will either have similar structures in place or require that their artists sign deals that give the label a piece of the sponsorship, touring or endorsement action.

—Leila Cobo

FACEBOOK UNVEILS AD-SUPPORTED MUSIC SERVICE

Subscription music services have yet to take off because most music fans just can’t wrap their head around the concept of paying a monthly fee for music they can no longer listen to if they end their contract. An ad-supported version could work better—but so far, ad revenue has been unable to support the cost of licensing. Enter Facebook. The social networking phenomenon is in dire need of a unified music strategy, and is taking a headstrong approach to monetizing its network with advertising. It could easily leverage its subscriber base for lucrative ad revenue and negotiate workable licensing fees with the labels.

—Antony Bruno

GUY HANDS SELLS OFF PART OF EMI GROUP

Six months after buying EMI Group might seem early to contemplate a sale, but the current credit squeeze might just force Terra Firma’s hand. CEO Guy Hands—since July, chairman of EMI—recently criticized EMI’s previous senior management for excessive non-core spending, particularly in the recorded-music division. That, on top of previously set targets for cutting £110 million ($223 million) from costs annually, could help prep a leaner, more attractive EMI for sale. And with music publishing delivering 70% of group profits from only 23% of revenue in the year ending March 31, 2007, which part of EMI would you keep?

—Tom Ferguson

INTERNET AD SPENDING EXCEEDS RADIO AD SPENDING

In 2007, communications strategy company ZenithOptimedia says, dollars spent on Internet advertising surpassing dollars spent on outdoor advertising: 2008 looks like the year that radio ad spending will be left behind. According to a recent report from the Radio Advertising Bureau, year-to-date revenue is off 2% from 2006; meanwhile, according to the Internet Advertising Bureau, revenue for the first nine months is up nearly 26% over the same period in 2006. Media agency Universal McCann predicts a 1% gain in radio revenue in 2008, but a 20% rise in Internet revenue. ZenithOptimedia expects the Internet’s share of all advertising will rise to 9.4% in 2008 from 8.1% this year, while radio’s share of the ad market will slip to 7.9% from 8.2%.

—Ken Tucker

THE SHINS SIGN WITH A MAJOR

After three albums that have sold more than 1.7 million U.S. copies combined, according to Nielsen SoundScan, these indie rock favorites are out of contract with Sub Pop. They’re likely to jump to a major, perhaps on a smaller imprint like Epic’s Glacial Pace (run by pal Isaac Brock of Modest Mouse). “We really like the more creative sort of ways people have been putting out their records lately,” frontman James Mercer told Billboard in 2006. “People are owning their own masters and having distribution deals. That’s real attractive.”

—Jonathan Cohen

XM RESOLVES ‘DEVICE’ SUITS AFTER SIRIUS, XM MERGE

In May 2006, major labels sued XM, arguing that the satcaster’s XM + MP3 service provides downloads to its device (which would require it to pay a “reproduction” right royalty) rather than streams. In mid-December, Warner Music Group and UMG withdrew from the suit, after their concerns about the device’s “advanced recording functionality” were met. But a merger with Sirius could speed up settlement talks with the other majors, assuming the Department of Justice and FCC approve the union. XM could also wind up teaming with the record industry to eliminate terrestrial broadcasters’ legal exemption from paying royalties—thus leveling the playing field.

—Susan Butler
Looking Forward By Looking Back

Bad Weather Chills Holiday Sales, Leaving The Future Uncertain

Just when it seemed erosion of music sales during the holiday season couldn’t get worse, December snowstorms compounded the retail industry’s misery.

Album sales for 2007 are now down 15.3% for the year, compared with 2006. But for the four weeks beginning with Thanksgiving weekend and ending Dec. 26, U.S. album sales were down 20%, with scans during the period this year totaling 84.2 million vs. 105.3 million units during the same period last year, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The last week before Christmas didn’t help matters much, with scans totaling 25.6 million vs. 31.3 million units in the same period last year.

The season got off on the wrong foot when Thanksgiving sales failed to ignite due to a lack of new hit titles, with retailers reporting anywhere from 5% to 15% comparable-store declines. And then Mother Nature conspired to shut shoppers out of the stores.

“Last weekend we were hit pretty hard by snowstorms in the Midwest and Northeast,” Value Music president Rob Perkins says. “It just makes things worse in one of those already bad holiday selling seasons.”

Mike Fratt, who heads up the six-unit, Omaha, Neb., based Homers chain, also says weather has been an issue. A Dec. 5 shooting in an Omaha mall “led everybody into a malaise for about a week, and then a deep freeze compounded by a snowstorm hit the marketplace on Dec. 6-9 and then again on Dec. 14-15—both weekends. This is making a bad sales pattern worse.”

In Brighton, Mass., Newbury Comics CEO Mike Dreese says sales were down 80% on Dec. 16—a decline he attributes to snow and a New England Patriots game keeping people home. So far in December at Newbury, Dreese says, only four days have matched the sales generated on those same dates in 2006.

And even beyond the weather, a lack of big hits is still grating on retail’s nerves. “I was astonished. There was no CD to give as a gift,” Dreese says. “I have never seen that before.”

The formula for holiday selling success is a plethora of obvious hit titles and a couple of surprise hits, and this year retailers have had few of the former to rely on. But at least one title has far exceeded expectations: Since its Oct. 9 release, Josh Groban’s Christmas album “Noel” has sold 3.6 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan; it is now the top-selling album of the year.

Indie retail chains are also citing Lupe Fiasco’s “The Cool,” Robert Plant & Alison Krauss’ “Raising Sand” and Mindy Smith’s “My Holiday” as unexpected sellers. And Fratt reports that Homers has sold “a ridiculous amount” of the Eagles’ “Long Road out of Eden” and the Tom Petty “Runnin’ Down a Dream” DVD, which, respectively, are exclusives at Wal-Mart and Best Buy.

Eric Levin, who owns the Criminal Records indie store in Atlanta, says this year’s dearth of hit titles inspired the chain to move its usual January sale on its top 100 titles up to Dec. 1. That change, he says, has helped the chain increase sales by 8% so far in December.

One bright spot across the board, retailers and wholesalers say, has been online physical sales. “We are up over 50% for online sales,” says Bruce Ogilvie, co-owner of Irvine, Calif.-based one-stop Super D. But he adds that the company’s online business peaked in the week ending Dec. 15, when customers ordering product online could still expect to receive it in time for Christmas.

Dreese also reports that Web sales are way up for his chain. He says December will be Newbury Comics’ first $1 million month for its Web store.

DVD sales, meanwhile, have been flat this holiday season, though retailers had expected them to be up slightly. Consequently, many studios have extended their dating programs by an additional 30 days as to when payments are due so that retailers will have more time to sell-off the product rather than piling up returns in January. And while videogames have had a decent December, merchants say, sales could have been even better if enough Wii game systems were available or if the best-selling videogame title, “Guitar Hero,” could be kept in stock.

But for music, retailers say, the message is clear: “Unless we get some innovation put into physical music,” Value Music’s Perkins says, “we will see a continuing of this bad sales trend.”

Indeed, senior executives at two of the majors say they are forecasting a mid-teens percentage decline to a 15% drop in CD sales for 2008 budgets.

Sales declines may be furthered, as well, by a continued reduction of shelf space devoted to music. Retail executives say they are unsure how poor sales will affect such matters in 2008, but 2007 saw a number of chains reduce music space to expand other product lines. While it’s unclear what the overall reduction was during the year, retailers including Virgin Megastore say it reduced music SKUs by 10% in order to make way for fashion.
Zomba Label Group/Jive Records would like to send our condolences to the family, the friends and the fans of a remarkable man.

Chad "PIMP C" Butler

As a member of rap duo UGK (Underground Kingz) and as a solo artist, Pimp C has not only made an unforgettable impression on hip hop, but also an impact on the world.

“We mourn the unexpected loss of Chad. He was truly a thoughtful and kind-hearted person. He will be remembered for his talent and profound influence as a pioneer in bringing southern rap to the forefront. He will be missed and our prayers remain with his family and Bun B. I’ve known Chad since he was 18 and we loved him dearly and he was a cherished member of the Jive family.” - Jive Records President and CEO Barry Weiss

The world will miss you
R.I.P. PIMP C
## Format Forecast


### DVDPVLUS
- **What It Is**
  - A double-sided hybrid disc that combines DVD Video/DVD Audio/DVD ROM with CD/CD ROM data. Efforts in the United States are geared toward touting the DVD side for $1 audio Surround Sound.

### DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)
- **What It Is**
  - A redesigned DVD or CD, comprising a prerecorded content area, ROM and updatable content area on the same surface. Technology can be mixed with DVDPVLUS.

### CDVU+
- **What It Is**
  - A CD that, so far, has been used to embed a digital booklet onto the album, and to enable videos launched via photos in the booklet.

### MVI (MUSIC VIDEO INTERACTIVE)
- **What It Is**
  - A DVD version of the album that allows for video and the ability to tap into digital features via the Internet. A CD version is included until spring 2008, and then a WAV file.

### Who's Behind It
- **DVDPVLUS**
  - DVDPVLUS Int., led by chairman Dieter Diers, who created the format. Veteran artist management David Krebs is the company's co-chairman and chairman of the U.S. arm. Former Sony Music formats guru Bob Sherwood is overseeing the format's U.S. launch.

### Costs
- **DVDPVLUS**
  - Same as CD and DVD, but with about a 10% higher mastering cost. Some modifications may be required at manufacturing plants.

### Compatibility
- **DVDPVLUS**
  - Car players, computers, DVD players, PlayStation 2 and "anything with a computer spec," Sherwood says.

### Internet Connectivity /New Content
- **DVDPVLUS**
  - The DVDplus disc can potentially connect to the Internet and offer new content, but it would increase the cost.

### Target Audience
- **DVDPVLUS**
  - 43 million households and 3 million cars now have Surround Sound capabilities, Sherwood says. In two years, 60 million households will have it.

### What Music First
- **DVDPVLUS**
  - Catalog—potentially, the 373 albums that have each sold more than 5 million units. The goal is to launch with 50 titles from acts like Pink Floyd and Joni Mitchel. So far, some 120 titles have been issued around the world, but none from major artists.

### Industry Support
- **DVDPVLUS**
  - So far, some majors have signed on internationally but not yet for the United States. Also, efforts are at work to build a DVD consortium.

### Why It Could Click
- **DVDPVLUS**
  - High-quality sound, and music content for consumers who already buy Surround Sound movies.

---

### DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)
- **What It Is**
  - Because Group Management founder/president Steve Millard. The company's backbone is skyhub, a global digital retail portal that can serve as the front end for labels and physical stores.

### Costs
- **DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)**
  - Additional undisclosed costs for licensing technology from Zivio, a company that specializes in digital presentation of magazines.

### Compatibility
- **DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)**
  - Depending on the kind of disc used, either DVD or CD players.

### Internet Connectivity /New Content
- **DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)**
  - Placed into a computer, the disc launches links with skyhub, allowing the consumer to access, preview, purchase, download and burn content such as remixes and videoclips onto the disc, thus generating additional revenue.

### Target Audience
- **DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)**
  - Customers age 11-35, who don't listen to discs, and only want digital, but can be sold on improved sound quality, and older customers now converting to digital.

### What Music First
- **DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)**
  - To be determined.

### Industry Support
- **DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)**
  - Two majors will conduct test trials with the disc in the new year.

### Why It Could Click
- **DFS (DIGITAL FUTURE SOLUTION DISC)**
  - Interactivity to bring buyers to the Internet and provide them with more content; Eco-Pak capabilities.

---

### CDVU+
- **What It Is**
  - Hollywood Records

### Costs
- **CDVU+**
  - Additional undisclosed costs for licensing technology from Zivio, a company that specializes in digital presentation of magazines.

### Compatibility
- **CDVU+**
  - No problem with CD players, but not compatible with every computer.

### Internet Connectivity /New Content
- **CDVU+**
  - Users can find updated artist information and link to a site where they can create and print out posters suggesting they're posting with band members. Additional songs can also be made available for download.

### Target Audience
- **CDVU+**
  - Young fans for whom the visual experience is an integral part of interacting with an act's music.

### What Music First
- **CDVU+**
  - The Jonas Brothers' self-titled album came out in two CDVU+ editions in 2007. A half-dozen more releases—including the next Atreyu album—are expected in 2008.

### Industry Support
- **CDVU+**
  - Hollywood had an exclusive industry licensing agreement with Zivio through 2007. Whether other labels will license the technology remains to be seen.

### Why It Could Click
- **CDVU+**
  - Mobile component; wide audience appeal; not perceived as overly trendy.
For Motion Picture

**Reasons Why CONCORD MUSIC GROUP Is the Label You Need To Know...**

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Mal-contented

Digital Album Art, Lyrics, Extras Should Emerge Stronger In '08

There is a reason people still buy CDs more than they do digital albums. Actually there are several, but viruses that come along with music via peer-to-peer sites (P2P) and a concern over digital rights management (DRM) aren’t the only culprits.

Digital music files just don’t provide the same amount of content that a CD package does. That includes liner notes, extended album art and lyrics. Buy a digital album today and all you get are a list of tracks and (maybe) a thumbnail image of the album cover that you can’t even read.

It’s one of the reasons music fans still turn to P2P networks for their music. In addition to providing music free of charge and free of DRM, P2P sites in many cases also include digital copies of such extras typically found in the CD. According to label sources and pirate network tracking firms, fans downloading full albums from BitTorrent sites almost universally choose files that include scans of the CD booklet over those that don’t.

Of course, there is little that can be done with those scans other than view them on a computer. Imagine if the music industry and the digital music services got together and offered an official way to access the same content, but make it available on portable devices as well as make it interactive.

There are two ways to accomplish this. One is working directly with a digital music service and hardware developer to ensure all this new content has an outlet. The other is to go it alone.

For the former, iTunes is the most likely candidate. Although hardly life-threatening, iTunes is facing new competition this year from Apple and a variety of social networking sites. While it has made great advancements with the iPod, iTunes’ innovation has been slow. The service looks and operates much like it always has. The only new features are in video. Look for Apple to make nice with its label partners by offering a bit more with each download, such as lyrics and more interactive album art.

iTunes is the only music service that has a built-in video download feature. The others offer only streaming video. It’s also one of the few services that feature a tightly integrated device—the iPod. Apple is in a great position to roll out new features across its online store and its devices at the same time.

Microsoft’s Zune is another place to watch for this, for the same reasons. It also has the integrated service and device, as well as ownership of the technical building blocks needed (such as Windows Media Player). And since it’s still lagging far behind Apple in the digital music game, Microsoft could easily tap digital extras as a battleground for new market share.

The problem is that the four major music companies rarely work together on anything. So another angle would be for each to go it alone. If digital music services can’t incorpore better metadata into their downloaded files, look for third-party applications to emerge that will do so after the fact.

Early examples of this are two games developed for the iPod—‘Musicka,’ created by the developers of the original music rhythm game ‘Parappa the Rapper,’ and ‘Phase,’ created by ‘Rock Band’ and original ‘Guitar Hero’ developer Harmonix. Both are rhythm-based games that let users ‘play’ along to the songs on their device by pressing buttons at the right time.

The point is that if these game companies can do it, there is no reason why labels can’t offer their own iPod plug-in that will import better album art, liner notes and lyrics directly from the label or artist and posted into iTunes and the iPod.

In the year ahead, look for several efforts from both camps as digital music distribution becomes more important to the music industry as well as a point of increasing competition among service providers. Here are a few areas to watch:

**Album Art**

As music formats have changed through the years, album artwork has suffered. It has gone from sprawling center spreads adorning vinyl LPs to stamp-sized thumbnails accompanying MP3 files. But as digital becomes the predominant format, look for album art to evolve.

The early groundwork for this already has been laid. Last spring, Warner Music Group (WMG) added interactive booklets based on Apple’s Quicktime software to about 75 albums sold on iTunes, providing photos and links to more multimedia content. The problem was it was also based on Flash technology, which the latest version of Quicktime disabled due to a security flaw.

There is additional activity on the mobile front. All labels are working with phone manufacturers on the “mobile album” concept—a bundled digital package that includes a full song, ringtone, wallpaper image and other assets for one price.

**Lyrics**

While a lyrics page is quite commonplace in the pages of a CD booklet, they are nonexistent with digital music files. In fact, most digital music services only let users search for songs by artist, track or album name. None have an integrated lyrics search tool, and you certainly can’t download lyrics to your iPod or other device.

Slowly, things are changing. Yahoo Music last year launched the first publisher-authorized online lyrics search page thanks to Gracenote, which is has taken on the task of untangling the Gordian knot of music lyrics publishing rights for service providers.

That search page isn’t integrated with the Yahoo Music Unlimited service, though. What’s lacking is an affordable way to attach those lyrics to the digital file of the song they belong to. Digital music services would have to pay an extra fee per download to offer that capability, and devices would have to add a new “lyrics” tab or some other functionality for users to subsequently access the words while the song plays.

Look for Gracenote and its service provider partners to develop exactly that in the year ahead.

**Liner Notes**

Perhaps the most fundamental changes coming to album extras are in the liner notes. In a CD booklet, it’s all well and good to list a bunch of people to thank and leave it at that. In the digital age, liner notes become far more interesting.

Rather than thanking so-and-so for doing such a great mixing job or their family or support, digital albums can provide behind-the-scenes footage of the producer and band at work, or perhaps a miming featurette, interview Q&A, family photos/video, etc.

One area to look for such innovation is with the CDVU+ and MVI formats created by Walt Disney and WMG, respectively. Technically these are multimedia CD formats, not digital music formats. But both represent a step toward expanding the way all involved view a music product.

Both add what can best be called “digital magazines” to a CD that, when inserted into a computer, allow fans to access videos, links to online features, lyrics and more. These digital products represent the bridge between old-school CDs and the digital future. As labels focus on selling more digital albums instead of individual tracks in the new year, expect them to learn from these experiments and begin creating similar all-digital packages as well.
We congratulate the following Grammy® nominees...

Song Of The Year
Best Pop Performance By A Duo Or Group With Vocals
Hey There Delilah * Plain White T's
(Hollywood/Fearless)

Best Electronic/Dance Album
† • Justice
Best Dance Recording
Best Short Form Music Video
D.A.N.C.E.
† • Justice
(Downtown/Vice)

Best Grammy® Nominees, 2010

Best Alternative Music Album
Neon Bible * Arcade Fire
(Merge)

Best Recording Package
Cassadaga * Bright Eyes
(Saddle Creek)

Best Alternative Music Album
Producer Of The Year
Winding The Night Away * The Shins
(Sub Pop)

Best Country Instrumental Performance
Mucky The Duck
The Greencards (Dualtone)

Best Boxed/Ltd. Ed. Pkg.
A Fever You Can't Sweat Out
Panic! At The Disco
(Decaydance/Fueled By Ramen)

Best Contemporary Blues Album
The Scene Of The Crime * Bettye Lavette
(ANTI)

Best Contemporary Folk/Americana Album
Orphans * Tom Waits
(ANTI)

Best Comedy Album
The Distant Future
Flight Of The Conchords
(Sub Pop)

Best Comedy Album
I Still Have A Pony
Steven Wright (Comedy Central)

Best Comedy Album
Song Pointed & Pointless
Harry Shearer (Courgette)

Best Compilation Soundtrack
Hairspray * Various Artists
(New Line)

Best Grammy® Nominees, 2010

Still Have A Pony.
I Still Have A Pony
(Comedy Central)

Best Recording Package
Friend & Foe * Menomena
(Barsuk)

Best Remixed Recording
Bringing The Noise * Benny Benassi
(Ultra)

Best Remixed Recording
Like A Child (Carl Craig)
Junior Boys (Domino)

Best Remixed Recording
Proper Education * Eric Prydz
(Ultra)

Best Remixed Recording
Sorry (Dirty South)
Kaskade (Ultra)

Best Short Form Music Video
Gone Daddy Gone * Gnarls Barkley
(Downtown/Atlantic)
Season Of The Widget

In 2008, These Social Networking Applications Will Be The New Online Stores

Last year saw the emergence of a new buzzword in the digital music space—widgets. This year, we'll see if they do any good. An offshoot of the global social networking trend, widgets are small applications that users can place into their blogs, profiles and Web sites, and thereby extend the functionality of an otherwise separate Web site or service. What's more, users can simply copy widgets found on friends' profiles and insert them onto their own, thus enabling a tremendously viral distribution opportunity. The concept gained prominence during the past year, picking up momentum once Facebook opened its platform so any developer could write an application using its user data and connections. Then Google upped the ante with its OpenSocial initiative, a standardized widget-development tool that would allow developers to write one application that can work with any social networking site adopting the technology—which include MySpace and Bebo. ComScore, a leading Web traffic monitoring firm, even began a metrics service tracking the most popular widgets and their usage. These widgets have opened the door to a whole new style of selling content and services online, called "distributed commerce." Simply put, rather than making customers navigate to a specific site to buy a concert ticket or a music download, widgets allow bands and their fans to sell the same from their own Web sites. If iTunes is the Wal-Mart of music, widgets are more like vending machines. As a result, several styles of widgets related to the music industry have popped up. Some attempt to sell digital downloads, others concert tickets, still others merch. Some serve as fan club applications, while others are music discovery and playlist-sharing tools. What follows is a collection of the top widget categories to keep an eye on in 2008, and the leading companies in each. Their success or failure will determine whether widgets will become a significant new revenue stream or just another Internet fad that never delivered on its potential.

Sales Widgets

By far the toughest sell in terms of attracting a mass market, the idea of selling digital downloads directly to fans via widgets on MySpace or other social networks is a compelling one for labels and artists alike. Issues like digital rights management compatibility, tracking sales and revenue splits with the labels and artists remain a major concern.

SNOCAP MYSTORES

Although it never made a real impact last year, don't completely count out the MyStores sales widget just yet. SNOCAP's attempt to let artists and participating labels sell digital downloads at their own price via their MySpace profiles was held back primarily by a few label acts that agreed to sell their music sans DRM. Few major label acts took advantage. But two things could happen in 2008 to turn things around. First, Sony BMG and Warner Music Group may agree to sell music without DRM, making music sold via the MyStores widget available to all in an iPod-friendly way. Second, SNOCAP may get bought. Depending on who acquires it, MyStores may find more success as part of a broader, integrated service than a standalone product lost in an already busy MySpace environment.

INDIE911 HOOOKA

While it likely will remain a niche player due to its focus on relatively unknown artists, Indie911's Hoooka widget gets a lot of things right that deserve attention. First, it lets users create their widgets based on multiple artists, not just one. Second, it compensates fans hosting Hoooka widgets with 10% of each sale. Finally, it allows fans to not only buy songs, but also stream music, chat and watch videos. Don't be surprised if this one gets acquired, or if it gets copied by either a competing service or a mainstream act looking for a strong online presence.

LALA

While the company has a history of overstating the impact of its initiatives, Lala's widget sales strategy—which focuses on selling full albums, not individual tracks—has potential. If it grows more widespread, it could put an interesting twist on the model. The tracks are downloaded directly to users' connected iPods, not stored on a hard drive, while Lala sends a physical CD in the mail. So far Lala has licensing deals with only Warner Music Group, and has used the widget to sell only the latest James Blunt album. Expect wider use as the year progresses.
Ticketing/ Touring Widgets

Close to 80% of all ticket sales are now conducted online, according to Ticketmaster. Meanwhile, the company says the No. 1 reason fans don't attend concerts by bands they like is because they simply didn't know a show was in town. Recruiting fans to become sales agents may increase the first stat while lowering the second.

ILike

When Facebook opened its social networking platform to outside developers last summer, iLike was the first music application created for the service, and more than 3 million people signed up for it in less than a month. The app lets users list which of their favorite artists are coming to town soon and which other Facebook members are attending that show, and enables streaming of music samples from those artists. It also creates artist-specific iLike pages for such partner labels as Eleven Seven Music. With funding from Ticketmaster, look for iLike to capitalize on its momentum with interesting new features in the new year.

Ticketmaster Event-Engine

The ticketing juggernaut launched an online affiliate network late last year that allows individuals and organizations alike to earn commissions for online ticket sales that originate from links on their Web sites. The Event-Engine widget, as it is called, lets users create a customized event list that keeps track of what they sell. The company says it will add additional tools and functions throughout the year.

PassAlong OnTour

One of the first tour-specific widgets available, PassAlong's OnTour software searches users' music libraries and alerts them when any of the acts are coming to town. As of late November, the company lets artists create their own OnTour widget, from which fans can search for local tour dates, and gives the opportunity to offer MP3 files and an RSS news feed. RCA Music Group's Alicia Keys and Cassidy are just two of the first artists to take advantage.

Music Recommendation/ Playlist Widgets

Word-of-mouth has always been one of the best ways to discover new music, and perhaps the most popular category of music widget available today are those that let users share their musical interests. Sites and services like Last.fm and imeem received the bulk of the press last year.

Mog

Mog has yet to release a widget extension for its music-focused social network. But it will, and soon. Mog reads and posts users' entire music libraries from their hard drives onto their Mog profiles, lists the most recent songs they've listened to and suggests other Mog profiles with similar music tastes. Thanks to a partnership with Rhapsody, users can also stream any song listed on other users' profiles.

To Mog, the winning music discovery/sampling widget will be the one with the best user interface. Run by former Gracenote executives and other technology experts Mog is taking a slow but steady approach to carving out a niche in this market. Its inevitable widget will be one to contend with.

UplayMe

UplayMe has quickly gained critical acclaim in the blog community for its focus on user interaction. Both a desktop application and a social network widget, UplayMe-like Mog—reads the music stored on users' computers or iPods to match them with other users who like the same music. But it also gives users the option of setting up an instant-message conversation or sending a message through the system. The company has a number of new features planned for the new year, as well as a marketing push that should generate a bit more mainstream buzz. Investors include Warner Music Group, and former WMG exec Dan Pelso is the company's founder/chairman.

Cloud

Promoted "cloud," Cloud is an iTunes plug-in and a Facebook widget that allows users to play any song in their iTunes library through Facebook, and allows others visiting Facebook profiles to do the same. Users can also exchange playlists and add friends' songs to their online libraries, but not actually download the file to their hard drive. It attracted more than 1 million Facebook users during its beta trial, and officially went live Nov. 1. Investors include former AOL execs Steve Case and Ted Leonsis, Island Records founder Chris Blackwell, former EMI exec Tom Ryan, former Warner Music exec Paul Vidich and former Yahoo Music GM David Goldberg.

Merch Widgets

Rampant piracy may be complicating the sale of music online, but merch is much harder to duplicate. Artists looking to convert their Web traffic into cash are increasingly looking at selling physical goods instead of digital ones as a result.

Zazzle

While other widgets let acts sell merch online, Zazzle is the only one that lets participating artists sell merch that fans can customize. The company also handles all inventory, shipping and billing needs. Participating artists simply upload their images to the Zazzle servers, select which products they wish to sell (such as T-shirts, posters and caps) and then set their price. Fans can then pick the size and color of T-shirt they want, select a design and then pay for it. Zazzle's automated production facility then applies the image to the product and ships it out, all for a flat fee. The company has deals signed with Warner Music Group and Signatures Network for content—with such acts as Kiss, the Who and Maroon 5—and with MySpace for distribution.

NimbIt Online Merch Table

NimbIt's OMT is designed for artists looking for a way to make more money online. The widget allows bands to sell not only their merchandise, but also CDs and tickets to upcoming shows. It also lets fans sign up for e-mail alerts. Fans can post the widget on their own profiles, and the bands can update the information listed on those fan-posted widgets without the need to post a new version. The site charges various flat-rate hosting fees, depending on the functionality desired. The company includes Robert Plant & Alison Krauss, Letters to Cleo and the Blind Boys of Alabama.

Cartfly

More for the DIY artist set, Cartfly is a simple application that lets users display their wares and take orders. Payment is handled via PayPal, and participating artists need to handle their own inventory and shipping. Cartfly charges a flat 5% commission on all sales.
The Radiohead Effect

Who Will Follow The Band’s Name-Your-Own-Price, No-Label-Necessary Lead?

Radiohead’s decision to release its new album “In Rainbows” by itself—online, without a record label’s help and at any price the user chose—rocked the industry last fall. Some hailed it as the beginning of the end for record labels. Other dismissed it as merely a publicity stunt. But everyone wants to know: Who’s next? So far the only artist to do so is classical soprano Barbara Hendricks. Some of the followers may be megastars like Radiohead, with enough riches and fans that such a move would prove little risk. Others may be smaller acts that are either past their prime or no longer viewed as good investments by today’s penny-pinching labels. The following 10 acts represent where the smart money is on such speculation. Let the games begin.

Prince
He’s already shown a willingness to distribute music outside traditional label structures by releasing new music on his Web site, via his NPG Music Club and by offering his latest album as a covenanted with the Daily Mail newspaper in London. Prince is also staging a massive effort to “gain control of the Internet” by suing the Pirate Bay and forcing independent fan clubs to remove images and other content, suggesting perhaps that he wants all eyes on his site in the future.

Courtney Love
The singer penned a rambling stream-of-consciousness post on her MySpace page admitting her fascination with the Radiohead model and said she would consider something similar in the future. Her latest album, provisionally titled “How Dirty Girls Get Clean,” was supposed to be released last year but has yet to appear. Love is also not presently signed to a label.

Trent Reznor/
Nine Inch Nails
After a highly publicized departure from label Interscope and Universal Music Group, Nine Inch Nails frontman Trent Reznor came right out and declared his intention to release the group’s next album from its Web site for $5. He also collaborated with Saul Williams on the “Naggy Tardust” release, which was offered online in a Radiohead-like fashion. This one is money in the bank.

Chuck D/
Public Enemy
Chuck D is already releasing his own material and that of Public Enemy under his primarily digitally distributed label SLAMjams. Expanding his love for Internet releases with the pick-your-price model of Radiohead’s move is just the kind of anti-authority rebellion that he and his crew are known for.

Sufjan Stevens
The prolific indie rocker has almost complete control over his work through his label Asthmatic Kitty, and has a proven willingness to do things differently. He even gave away full rights to one of his songs as a prize in a Christmas songwriting contest opened up to all fans. At the rate he puts out material, Stevens may easily decide to just push his songs online as soon as they’re done rather than wait for a more traditional model.

Pearl Jam
The Seattle group already sells live recordings directly to fans through a proprietary Web interface, and has a history of eliminating the middleman to make its work more affordable to fans. With a distribution and payment model already set up for the live material, it would be a simple matter for the group to add studio albums as well. Pearl Jam has the freedom to do it, as it is signed to J on a per-album basis, as opposed to a long-term deal.

Underworld
After ending its deal with V2 in 2005, the electronic duo launched an official online store called the Riverrun Project, which focuses on lengthy one-off tracks bundled with digital photos. The group cited the desire to make new music available immediately, rather than wait years for an album release. Underworld is now signed to ATO imprint SideOne Recordings but remains free to sell music via Riverrun whenever it chooses, sources say.

Depeche Mode
Eleven studio albums in, these synth-pop stalwarts arguably no longer need a major label in their corner. The group, which recorded for Sire since 1981, can still fill arenas and land new tracks on DJ playlists without the support of radio. Word is that Live Nation’s new Artist Nation division is interested in the David Gahan-led band’s services.

Additional reporting by Jonathan Cohen.

(Note) Walking In Their Footsteps

Not everyone is enamored with the Radiohead approach to launching a new album. The following artists are on record against such a move.

Lily Allen: Called Radiohead “arrogant” for its online sales strategy.
Tool: Frontman Maynard James Keenan said it was just a “one-trick pony” publicity stunt, although he stepped outside the traditional model to release an album from his side band, Puscifer, last fall.
My Bloody Valentine: The group’s manager backtracked on statements suggesting a digital-only release, calling MP3s “a far inferior format.”

Oasis: Frontman Liam Gallagher said the group would follow such a strategy “over my dead body.”
Gene Simmons: Suggested that anyone trying such a move is “on crack.”
Morrissey: Told the press he’s “too institutionalized” to go the Radiohead route.
Death Cab For Cutie: Bassist Nick Harmer told Billboard, “Unless you are willing to figure out how to program code and do it yourself, you’re right back to the label model. We’re a band, we make music, and we go on tour. In some ways, why should we be expected to be responsible for anything more than that?”

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TOURING  By Ray Waddell

Hot Tickets

Genre By Genre, Five Acts Whose Box-Office Numbers And Career Arc Will See A Significant Uptick in 2008

Country: Sugarland
Agent: John Huie, Creative Artists Agency

Mercury country duo Sugarland—Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush—experimented with headlining dates in 2007 in between opening for Kenny Chesney on the latter’s massive Flip Flop summer tour. The pair headlined about 50 dates last year at theaters and downsized arenas, with seven shows reported to Boxscore totaling nearly $1 million.

“Touring for us is the most important thing,” Sugarland manager Gail Gelman says. “We feel it’s important to do it right, take it slow and make the right decisions along the way.”

Sugarland will expand its international base by touring Australia in March and Europe in the fall. In the late spring it will play some cities it hasn’t performed in yet in North America. The summer will include festivals, fairs, radio shows and special events. Another high-level support slot is still an option.

Chesney tour producer Louis Messina predicts the act will be selling out arenas within two years.

“I have not felt this way since I saw Kenny 10 years ago,” Messina says.

Rock: My Morning Jacket
Agent: Scott Clayton, Creative Artists Agency

Creative booking has helped build My Morning Jacket’s rep as one of the premier live rock bands on the touring scene. Last year was supposed to be a light year for the band (with only a handful of dates reported to Boxscore, but the gigs the group did play were high-profile.

“We were lucky enough to be invited to play three shows with Bob Dylan at Red Rocks and Telluride, as well as Lollapalooza with the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Austin City Limits Festival,” says the band’s manager, Mike Martinovich, who says the five year came to a “euphoric” end when MMJ played this year’s Bridge School Benefit.

MMJ just finished recording its next studio album in New York with frontman Jim James and Joe Chiccarelli (the White Stripes, the Shins) co-producing. The band hopes for a June release, then tour in the United States, as well as the United Kingdom and Europe.

The band will perform at this year’s South by Southwest event in Austin for the first time since 2002, and James will do an acoustic show in addition to the full-band set. Other U.S. dates are being booked.

On a panel at the Billboard Touring Conference last November, talent buyer Charles Attal of C3 Presents (Lollapalooza, Austin City Limits) named MMJ as a band that could break big in 2008. “My Morning Jacket has just great songwriting, great hooks and an overall sound that translates live,” Attal says.

Latin: Juanes
Agent: Michel Vega, William Morris Agency

Latin rocker/actor Juanes has been touring the United States since 2001-02, but the artist will likely enjoy his most successful North American run yet in 2008.

Juanes’ Universal Latino release “La Vida … Es un Ratito” just dropped in October, and its leadoff single “Me Enamora” was the longest-running No. 1 on Billboard’s Hot Latin Songs chart in 2007.

“Juanes has genuinely reached the arena level across the country at this point,” says his agent Michel Vega at the William Morris Agency, who adds that Juanes’ tour capacity will top 250,000 on the first leg alone.

The tour begins March 6 at Madison Square Garden in New York, and the first leg will be approximately 30 dates through May, including multiples in some markets. “Then we will come back again and do between 25 and 30 shows in October-November,” Vega says.

Sponsors Sprint and Ford will provide the 2008 tour “a ton of marketing juice, cross-platform, from traditional radio and TV to a very hefty online campaign,” Vega says. The tour works with individual promoters—a mix of Latin, independent and national ones—on a market-by-market basis.

“America is about to find out what the rest of the Latin world already knows,” Live Nation Texas president Bob Roxas says. “Juanes is a true international superstar, and his upcoming tour is going to set some serious records here in the U.S. and around the globe.”

Pop: The Jonas Brothers
Agent: David Zedeck, Creative Artists Agency

Predicting a Disney-driven touring success isn’t too much of a stretch, but Hollywood Records’ Jonas Brothers are making major noise even before the Disney machine fully kicks in.

The band is fresh off reaping the mania of the Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus tour, and will surely be headlining major venues on its own by the time 2008 comes to a close.

The Hannah Montana tour has provided massive exposure. “Now we’re looking forward to headlining dates in a smaller situation that will hopefully turn into something bigger for the fall of 2008,” manager Johnny Wright says.

“In between we will have a new album, a TV show and a movie.”

The Jonas Brothers were scheduled to begin shooting a Disney TV series in January, but because of the writers’ strike the show has been put on hold. So they’ll play some first-quarter headlining dates instead at 2,000- to 3,000-seat venues. “Our touring plans weren’t scheduled until September of 2008,” Wright says, “but now we’re actually going to start doing some smaller venues in February of 2008 as a headline.”

By summertime, the band’s profile should be significantly higher. The brothers have made a couple of appearances on the Hannah Montana show, but their own Disney series and a Disney movie (“Camp Rock”) won’t break until next summer.

“As we’ve seen with last year’s successful Cheetah Girls tour and this year’s record-setting Hannah Montana tour, Disney is producing multiple arena-level acts,” says Brock Jones, booking director of Nashville’s Sommet Center. “The Jonas Brothers look to be the next.”

Hip-Hop: Kanye West
Agent: Cara Lewis, William Morris Agency

Kanye West has already achieved superstar status in terms of platinum sales, major hit records and music industry awards since breaking big in 2004. And though West has been consistent at the box office, as is usually the case in hip-hop, concert ticket sales have not paralleled retail and radio success.

That will change in 2008 if the charismatic rap star opts to pursue building a touring fan base. “West lives amongst hip-hop’s elite while appealing to a much broader audience,” Live Nation New York promoter Jason Miller says. “His remarkable lyrical prowess coupled with unmistakable tight production helps keep Kanye head and shoulders above the field.”

In the touring industry, Miller says, “everyone is pulling for him.”

West’s broad demographic is a major plus, according to MAC Presents president Marcie Allen Cardwell, who booked West to play the Quake homecoming event at Vanderbilt University last fall, which sold out at 9,000 paid.

“It was the most diverse show I’ve seen in a while at Vanderbilt, which is a testament to his reach,” Cardwell says.

West is booked by the William Morris Agency’s Cara Lewis, who says he will continue to tour in Europe, Australia and Japan in the first quarter, then take the tour back to the United States starting in April in arenas and outdoor venues, with a second U.S. leg in the fall.
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Pre-GRAMMY Awards Show Issue
Billboard Stars: Naras 50th Anniversary Special
Issue Date: Feb. 9 • Street Date: Feb. 2 • Ad Close: Jan. 16

Post-GRAMMY Awards Show Issue
Issue Date: Feb. 23 • Street Date: Feb. 16 • Ad Close: Feb. 8

Nokia Theatre L.A.
Live (Los Angeles)
Talent buyer: Mike Krebs
Reason to watch: Arena-level production capabilities, sightlines and sound system. The Nokia Theatre L.A. Live, owned by AEG and booked by AEG Live, debuted strong last October with six sellout concerts by the Eagles and Dixie Chicks, which collectively grossed more than $9 million. In addition to its arena-level production capabilities, large stage and unobstructed sightlines, the $120 million, 7,100-seat venue has a killer sound system, says the William Morris Agency's Brad Goodman, who recently booked Anita Baker there. Baker "is known as the most particular people about sound," Goodman says, "and she ended up using the house sound, which is mind-blowing." Artists save money using in-house sound, the agent adds, because they're not forced to rent additional gear.

Toad's Place
(Richmond, Va.)
Talent buyer: Jack Reich
Reason to watch: Fills a long-vacant niche in an underserved market. Located in Richmond, Va.'s vibrant downtown entertainment district, the newest Toad's Place (another location exists in New Haven, Conn.) is filling a void that for many years forced touring acts to skip the market. "The Agency Group's Mike Mori says. Prior to the 1,435-capacity venue's June 2007 opening, Richmond lacked a club that could hold more than 500 people, Mori says. Toad's Place "steps up the level of bands that can play there," the agent says, citing Gwar, Less Than Jake and Reel Big Fish as TAG acts that have performed at the venue.

Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre (Atlanta)
Talent buyer: Michael Taormina
Reason to watch: Intimate setting, strategic location. Ali Hannell, senior VP at AEG Live Nashville, has already promoted sellouts by Annie Lennox and Kelly Clarkson at this newly opened 2,750-seat, $145 million facility "Atlanta already has two 4,000-plus-seat theaters—the Fox Theatre and Civic Center," Hannell says. "It's great to have another alternative." Another bonus, Hannell adds, is the venue's marquee, which faces two major Atlanta highways.

Slowdown
(Omaha, Neb.)
Talent buyer: Val Nelson
Reason to watch: Saddle Creek Records-owned club gives bands extra comfort on the road. Since its opening in June 2007, bands haven't stopped raving about the artist-friendly amenities offered at the Slowdown, says Marc Leshowitz, co-owner of 1% Productions, which promotes the majority of shows at the club. "The amenities for them are spectacular," he says, citing the 625-capacity venue's washer/dryer, shower, two dressing rooms and easy load-in access. Indie rock act Silverstein Pickups are already swell on the venue. Billions Corp. agent Adam Voith says. Following a sold-out concert in June, "the band commented to me that they want to play there every time," Voith says. Saddle Creek owners understand that "creating a good environment for the artist creates a better show for the fans," he adds.

Music Hall of Williamsburg
(Brooklyn, N.Y.)
Talent buyer: Josh Moore
Reason to watch: Brooklyn club gives artists opportunity to play multiple New York shows. Augmenting such Manhattan venues as the Mercury Lounge, Bowery Ballroom, Terminal 5 and Webster Hall, the recently opened, 500-capacity Music Hall of Williamsburg is independent promoter the Bowery Presents' first club in Brooklyn. The three-level hall "is a great addition for area clubs" to the Williamsburg neighborhood, says Ground Control Touring's Eric Dimenstein, agent for such acts as Bright Eyes, Sonic Youth and Super Furry Animals. The Bowery Presents' ability to book and promote concerts across its New York properties is beneficial to artists, Dimenstein says. Billions Corp. agent Adam Voith adds, "Now bands can do a Bowery [Ballroom] and a Music Hall."
And an incredible
2007:
MTV VMA
Video of the Year nomination
MTV EMA
Best French Act
Best Video of the Year

The debut album runs from dark, intense techno to richly textured orchestral stuff to uber-catchy dance pop. — Rolling Stone

“At the forefront of a new school of electronic music.” — New York Times
Like it or not, major record companies are expected to continue drafting their artist contracts so that labels share a piece of merchandise and revenue streams.

**Artists** say that their responses are as varied as the rights and terms in each label's 360-degree deal. Some labels want to be the merchandiser, while others want rights in certain types of merchandise and revenue streams. When it comes to artist royalties, some labels pay a royalty based on wholesale prices, while others are offering profit-sharing arrangements.

**Legal**

**By Susan Butler**

**Degrees Of Difficulty**

For Lawyers, 360 Deals Raise Issues That Have No Clear Answers

Will the deals work for established artists? Gilbert: I haven’t seen one that works yet.

**GILBERT:** Labels raising the take in their own rights or share in the income from publishing is simply too much. We do publishing deals to get a cash infusion into the artist.

**What should labels do to make these deals work?**

**GILBERT:** Sell records.

**GROFFMAN:** Make the deals shorter. The long-term recording agreement is a career-length deal at the label's option. The only way to make this fair is to start doing three-album or five-year deals, saying to the artist, "Let's add a five-year deal per deal. We'll work together for a lengthy period, but reasonable, period of time as partners, we'll take a bigger piece of the pie. You'll take a bigger piece of the pie. We'll work together toward a collective goal. Artists are going to participate in the package more broadly when they have a chance to be a free agent at the end of the day.

**HUNTER:** Bringing artists some meaningful opportunities are traditionally delivered by management or the agent — a clothing line or an enticing endorsement deal. Most new to mid-level artists are willing to give up a piece of the pie if it's bigger. Right now, it feels like a sales pitch at the same time they're cutting staffs and lighting up every penny they spend.

**TAVEL:** A new artist's leverage is rarely strong. Sadly, I simply don't see majors agreeing to reciprocal accountability anytime soon.

**TAVEL:** It all comes down to money enough for the artist to survive and thrive. Otherwise, the artist should be able to end the deal.

What rights are most problematic — publishing, touring, merchandising? Gilbert: They're all problematic in different ways. In a recent (traditional) deal, the company proposed to be the merchandiser, but the business affairs guy didn't understand merchandising. We couldn't even get the deal done. The company sends an edict to start signing merchandising rights, but the poor business affairs guy hasn't been educated in those deals.

**GROFFMAN:** Artists struggle to avoid giving up a piece of publishing. If they want to be actively involved in their touring, that's problematic because they really don't understand the touring business. Try to limit them to passive participation at all costs.

**Hunter:** Letting a label own copyrights or share in the income from publishing is simply too much. We do publishing deals to get a cash infusion into the artist.

**What should labels do to make these deals work?**

**GILBERT:** Sell records.

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High Frequencies

Five TV Shows To Enrich The Ears In '08

TV is generally concerned with winning the eyes of an audience, but ears can be just as important these days. Network and cable shows continue to put a premium on the music behind the stories, with indie and even unsigned artists as likely to get heard as any giants of the back catalog.

As of this writing, the Writers Guild of America strike still has production schedules up in the air, but here are some TV newcomers that might be worth a listen in 2008.

'Quarterlife'

Scheduled to make its prime time debut Feb. 18 on NBC, "Quarterlife" was initially developed by producers Marshall Herskovitz and Edward Zwick as a series of webisodes appearing on Quartelife.com, a social networking site geared toward artists, writers and musicians. In a meta-digital twist, the show's narrative follows a cast of young creative types who are all using the site to begin or advance their careers. A wide range of indie music has been brought to the show by music supervisor Jen Root, including Asher, Early Day Miners and Helen Stellar. Bands heard in the webisodes or the forthcoming hourlong drama can be tracked down through their own Quarterlife pages, which offer footage of band rehearsals, club shows and interviews. "We're trying to show where these bands are coming from and give them a personality outside the show other than just being a music cue," says Billy Kostka, music channel director for the site.

'True Blood'

Producer Alan Ball made music a powerful part of the mix in "Six Feet Under," and will likely do the same with his new HBO drama "True Blood." Based on the "Southern Vampire" book series, the show, set around a Louisiana roadhouse, follows the adventures of vampires who, thanks to advances in the manufacture of synthetic blood, no longer have to bite necks to survive. "The soundtrack will be swampy, bluesy and spooky," music supervisor Gary Calamar says. "C.C. Adcock is a good idea of the core sound." Jim White, Joseph Arthur and Slim Harpo will also be heard, but Ball and Calamar are open to new sounds as well. "We definitely want to dig into the regional sound of Louisiana because there are so many great musicians there," says Calamar, who'll also be busy working on "Dexter," "Weeds," "Entourage" and "House" this year. "There are so many musicians still trying to restart or rebuild their careers down there—we want to offer some kind of opportunity to them."

'Backyards And Bullets'

This NBC drama only made it to the pilot stage before the strike kicked in, but it gets back into production for '08, it will likely offer up the kind of mix of heartland Americana, classic rock and indie sounds that has worked well for "Friday Night Lights." The show centers on the criminal intrigues that lie just below the manicured surface of suburban Ridgeview, Wis. "A lot of the music reminds you where you are," music supervisor Linda Cohen says, "but because things are not as picture perfect as they seem, there are a lot of darker sounds too." The pilot worked the classic-to-indie range by including Lynyrd Skynyrd in the soundtrack and featuring an on-camera party scene performance by Minty Fresh band Ezra Furman & The Harpoons.

'Swingtown'

Bad behavior on shag carpeting will be explored in "Swingtown," which is set in the 1970s and features a cast of key-partying suburbanites. Created by Mike Kelley ("Jericho"), executive-produced by Alan Poul ("Big Love," "Six Feet Under") and music-supervised by Gary Calamar, the show will make use of tracks by Gary Wright, Rita Coolidge and Captain & Tennille. In between the licensed tracks will be an original musical score by Liz Phair.

'Eli Stone'

"Eli Stone" is a one-hour comedic drama from ABC, follows the exploits of what might turn out to be the most disturbing creature of the new year—a lawyer with a heart. When the title character, played by Jonny Lee Miller, begins to feel he might be a prophet, he receives his celestial communications in an unusual form: via pop stars crooning past hits. The pilot has Stone interrupting an act of cours with the call of "Faith" being sung by a very real George Michael. The artist has reportedly signed on to appear in several more episodes.

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PUBLISHING By Susan Butler

Four Ways To Focus

CEOs Settling Into New Roles Are Defining Priorities At All Four Major Publishers This Year. Indies, Meanwhile, Are Making Their Own Mark In The Majors’ Shadows

Catalog

Major: Sony/ATV Music Publishing
 Marty Bandier begins his first full year at the helm of Sony/ATV Music Publishing as chairman/CEO. He expects to continue building the publisher’s back catalog through acquisitions.

“We need to be focused on alternate sources of income,” Bandier says. “Those sources are best worked when you have a great back catalog. But that’s only one aspect. I look for us to be spending considerable manpower and retaining consultants to work in areas that make us less reliant on hit records.”

One of those areas is likely to be another release on the publisher’s Hickory Records, which successfully launched with Elliott Yamin’s self-titled album last year.

Indie: Bug Music
 Bug Music is an indie moving in a similar direction. CEO John Rudolph says that Wind-swept Holdings, acquired last year, is now fully integrated. He’s looking to expand the catalog, especially in Europe.

The indie has also been finding partners for joint publishing and record-related deals.

Marketing

Major: Universal Music Publishing Group
 David Renzer starts out the year steering the world’s largest publisher now that Universal Music Publishing Group is absorbing BMG Music Publishing. The chairman/CEO has a strong focus on marketing.

“We take a holistic view of our business, from looking at key anniversaries that we can base marketing campaigns around to discussing new revenue opportunities for our writers,” Renzer says.

In addition to its forming a marketing council, the publisher sends its staff to merchandising/licensing trade shows and also helps promote events.

Indie: Primary Wave Music Publishing
 Among indies, Primary Wave Music Publishing has a similarly strong marketing agenda.

CEO Larry Mestel says plans this year include co-producing a Maurice White/Earth Wind & Fire Las Vegas show, which he calls a “musical journey.” Also planned are a symphony concert in Seattle with Kurt Cobain’s music and an animated “superhero” series with John Oates of Hall & Oates.

Digital

Major: Warner/Chappell Music
 “One of our priorities in ’08 will be the digital opportunities for our deep catalog,” says Dave Johnson, now in his first full year as the official, rather than the interim, president/CEO of Warner/Chappell Music. The goal, he says, is to “revitalize and reintroduce our catalog, such as classics and standards, by introducing them to a new generation of consumers.”

While Johnson won’t share specifics, the publisher set up a truly one-stop licensing shop out of London recently for Radiohead. The publisher is handling all publishing and master recording rights for all digital licensing worldwide.

Indie: Peermusic
 Meanwhile, Peermusic’s digitalpressure.com—an aggregator site it launched nearly a decade ago—continues to help land the indie publisher’s artists on services like Rhapsody and iTunes. In the upcoming year, chairman/CEO Ralph Peer II plans to continue his leading role in helping make lyrics available in digital format on the Internet through Gracenote and other services.

Advertising Relationships

Major: EMI Music Publishing
 Roger Faxon will now be in full stride during his first full year guiding EMI Music Publishing as chairman/CEO. While he has a new owner to please at EMI Group (Terra Firma), he is busy growing the publisher’s advertising relationships. Last year, EMI partnered with DBB Chicago to promote the publisher’s branding ideas and songs to marketers.

“By linking with advertising agencies such as DDB, we are able to deliver our extensive combined music and branding expertise to the likes of McDonald’s and other clients,” Faxon says. “Working in tandem rather than as distinct entities enables us to develop better partnerships with our mutual customers, and as a result develop comprehensive music-based campaigns much more quickly and effectively.”

Indie: None yet
 So far, no indie seems to be distinguishing itself by creating a formal business relationship with an advertising agency. Could this be a new niche market?...
The New Styles

Latin Music Needs Fresh Sounds, To Fill A Sales Gap Left By Reggaetón. These Five Genres Are Primed To Take Off

Reggaetón With A Techno Twist

Reggaetón acts are making an electronic dance turn, with speed-up techno elements taking center stage over the signature drum kick. In several hit singles, including Wisin & Yandel’s “Sexy Movimiento.”

Gustavo López, president of Machete Music, Wisin & Yandel’s label, notes that the track is playing on pop as well as tropical and rhythmic stations. “Had we come out with a song like ‘Rakata’ [Wisin & Yandel’s quintessential, bass-heavy reggaetón hit], we would have failed.”


Female Singer/Songwriters

While a couple of years ago male singer/songwriters were all the rage, a new generation of women is gearing up for 2008. Like precurser Bebe, who sang about spousal abuse, these are no shrinking violets: Unafraid of frankly addressing gritty and frequently sexual topics, they express themselves in a “powerful, self-assured, intimate way.” Universal Music Mexico senior VP of marketing/AR Robbie Lear says. They include Sony BMG’s Kany Garcia from Puerto Rico, who is already making inroads on the Billboard charts with her blunt-themed, colloquially recited debut, “Caulquier Dia.” Other strong women releasing albums next year include Mexico’s Ximena Sarinana (on Warner), Argentina’s Valeria/Universal), Colombia’s Jeyma Angel (Universal) and Chile’s Barbara Muñoz.

Duranguense Lite

The genre used to skew toward an older crowd, but following the success of Chicago’s Alacranes Musical, duranguense is making a beeline for the teen audience. The sound is turning “less folklórico and closer to danceable romantic,” says Pepe Garza—PD of regional Mexican KBUE/KBUA (Que Buena 105.5/94.3 FM) Los Angeles and KRBQ (Que Buena 96.1 FM) Riverside-San Bernardino—and lyrics are becoming more modern, less country.

A key driver is American Show Latin, whose distribution with Machete has brought Los Primos de Durango and Los Aliados de la Sierra to the Billboard charts. Texas, Chicago and emerging markets in the Carolinas have been most receptive to the sound, programmers say. Some veteran acts, such as Horoscopos de Durango, are also making efforts to modernize.

Urban Bachata

While subgenre originator Aventura is now the veteran of this mix of very traditional Dominican rhythms with R&B-tinged vocals, a slew of young, U.S.-born acts is following suit.

“There’s a lot of R&B in the music. They’re romantic pop ballads,” says George Zamora, president of La Calle Records, whose urban bachata acts include Xtreme. “I think this will carry us at least through 2008.”

Urban bachata appeals to a young, bilingual, bicultural generation that can relate to both the tradition and the home-grown, contemporary elements. New groups coming out in ’08 include Unique and Optimo, as well as albums by Aventura, Xtreme and the newly released set by Toby Love and Voz a Voz.

Banda And Sierrano

A standout recent regional Mexican fusion comes courtesy of male soloists from Sinaloa who mix the brass of banda with the guitars of sierrenó or the accordion of noroteño. It’s a daring proposal, but it’s yielding chart hits in Mexico and the United States.

The hybrid navigates a spectrum of sounds, from hardcore corridos to more romantic styles. Acts already making their mark include El Potro de Sinaloa, Fidel Rueda, El Mayo de la Sierra, El Tigrillo Palma and up-and-comer Julio Chaidez.
**Movin’ On Up**

Five Indie Labels To Watch In 2008—As Selected By A Poll Of Distributors, Retailers And Other Experts

**Relapse**
**Distributor:** RED

Metal label Relapse is taking an old-fashioned approach to promoting its major releases by packing its top-selling acts into vans and sending them around the world. Relapse plans on spending first-quarter 2008 working records released in 2007, as well as unveiling albums by Kingdom of Sorrow and Genghis Tron in February. Its big fourth-quarter ’07 act, Baroness, scored high on many critics’ polls, and will spend most of the next year on the road. Meanwhile, the Dillinger Escape Plan debuted atop Billboard’s Heatseekers chart, and the band will release new videos to coincide with each of its upcoming tours. Kingdom of Sorrow and Genghis Tron will also log miles on their tour buses, focusing on the summer festival circuit.

**Definitive Jux**
**Distributor:** Caroline

Long-respected and pioneering indie hip-hop label Definitive Jux is gearing up for a monster 2008. The label will start the year with the Feb. 26 release of Del the Funky Homosapien’s “The 11th Hour,” his first solo album since 2000. A re-release of Dizzee Rascal’s “Maths and English” and a new EP disc will follow. The label also has a marketing coup associated with the new Cage record; the artist recently signed a life-story movie deal with actor Shia LeBeouf in the lead role. Finally, 2008 will also see the rediging of its Web site, definitivelux.net, aka the Pharmacy.

**Vagrant**
**Distributor:** Fontana

One of the most diverse indie labels out there, Vagrant will devote 2008 to releasing new records by established acts. Rock act Thrive will drop the second set from its “Alchemy Index” series in April, followed by a massive tour. Indie fave the Hold Steady will release the follow-up to its smash “Boys and Girls in America” during the summer and hope to make the leap to mainstream stardom, while fall brings a new album from venerable act the Bets.

**Holocene**
**Distributor:** Nail

You couldn’t open a magazine last year without reading some sort of loving ode to Portland, Ore., “the indie city on earth.” Rose City-based label Holocene, which is affiliated with a local venue of the same name, is set to capitalize on all the hype in 2008 with new releases by two of the city’s biggest upstarts. The Shaky Hands were declared the best new band in the city by local alt-weekly the Willamette Week last year, and recently wrapped up a tour with indie rockers the Shins. Meanwhile, singer/songwriter Abel Alane has become a star in France, hitting No. 6 on the French iTunes chart and appearing on TV station Canal Plus. Look for spring releases from both to build on their momentum.

**Daptone**
**Distributor:** Redeye

The Brooklyn-based soul label closed 2007 in a big way, with marquee artist Sharon Jones playing a big role in Denzel Washington’s “The Great Debaters.” Daptone will kick off the first quarter with a release from another act that got a huge boost last year, the Menahan Street Band, whose song “Make the Road by Walking” was sampled by Jay-Z on his single “Roc Boys.” The second quarter will bring a disc featuring Jones tracks (some new, some that have not been very widely released) to satisfy the appetites of new fans, as well as a new album from Naomi Shelton & the Gospel Queens.

**Site Seeing**

Indie Acts, Reset Your Bookmarks

The next Friendster, MySpace, Facebook, YouTube: There are millions of dot-coms out there, all claiming to be the next boons. But the five below are actually likely to make waves in the indie world in 2008—using new models, new takes on old models and emerging technologies to help artists get shows, sales and synch licenses. Indie acts need not worry about the cost, either—all the sites detailed here are free to use.

**AmieStreet.com:** While the debate about how much a song is worth rages on, Amie Street uses a variable pricing structure that lets fans do the math. All songs start out free and top out at 98 cents; the song’s price rises commensurate with the number of times it is downloaded. The site rewards tastemakers by allowing them to earn credit for recommending songs that go on to sell big, and the ability to download music for free is designed to appeal to bike riders. While Amie Street has yet to break an unknown act, it has helped more than a few build audiences: The band Middle Distance Runner, for instance, has risen from being a virtually unknown outsider in Washington, D.C., to playing packed Bowery Ballroom shows in New York since it joined the site last March.

**SirGroovy.com:** As licensing becomes an ever-greater part of a band’s income, Sir Groovy connects indie acts to music supervisors who want big-name sounds without having to pay big-name money. The site also takes care of all the negotiations and clearances, and hands are allowed to categorize their tracks in a variety of unusual ways to help catch the eyes and ears of supervisors. The site is still in its infancy, but has had some luck placing tracks by bands including the Sleeping, Jen Chapin, Five Times August and Flickerstick.

**Paltalk.com:** When aspiring Australian musician Kitana wanted to reach beyond her hometown to set up gigs and find collaborators, she turned to video-conference site Paltalk. Live cams allow musicians to jam together in real time, perform for fans and seek feedback about new music. In Kitana’s case, she found a producer in Scotland and worked with him via the site and e-mail to create an album. Paltalk has also recently launched a number of programs that allow more established acts to perform for and connect with listeners.

**Eventful.com:** Indie bands unaware they had a rabid fan base in Lithuania—and other young acts apprehensive about turnout when they hit the road—will appreciate this “user-generated touring” site, which lets fans request performances and organize gigs for their favorite acts. More than 30,000 artists, 29,000 of them indie, use the site to organize gigs and find out where their most obsessive fans live. CEO Jordan Glazer says that those who pledge to come out via the site almost always turn up. In fact, he reports that promoters have started asking indie bookers, “What is your Eventful demand number?”

**OurStage.com:** This site aims to be a “democratic competition where the fans decide who’s best in emerging entertainment.” Indie folks post their content, and fans get to act like amateur Simon Cowells by giving it the thumbs up or down. At the end of each month, the highest-ranking videos in each genre-based channel face off against one another, with the grand-prize winner taking home $5,000. Unsung acts that receive plenty of votes can also win coverage on Paste and CMJ’s Web sites and opening slots at Soulsville’s New Year’s Eve show and the Miami Plug Awards. —CH
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Hits From Brits

In Recent Years, Female Singer/Songwriters Such As Amy Winehouse, KT Tunstall and Corinne Bailey Rae Have Broken Internationally Out Of The U.K. But The Emerging Class Of 2008 Suggests The Trend Has Only Just Begun

Kate Nash

“Scary but amazing”—that’s Kate Nash’s description of America as she contemplates the U.S. release of her quirky piano-pop debut album, “Made of Bricks” (Geffen), Jan. 8.

Nash became a pop phenomenon in the United Kingdom off of her debut major-label single, “Foundations” (Fiction), which spent five weeks at No. 2 in July and August.

“I still live at home and have my friends around me,” says Nash, an excitable and talkative 20-year-old from north London. “I’m not really interested in fame and celebrities.”

Jim Chancellor, head of Nash’s U.K. label, Polydor imprint Fiction, says he signed an “exciting and talented young lady who’s quite a poet,” and Nash has repaid his faith. “Made of Bricks” was moved up seven weeks to capitalize on the success of “Foundations.”

Chancellor says Fiction would have missed our moment if it hadn’t scrapped the existing campaign—and was proved right when it debuted at No. 1 in August. It has now shipped 300,000 copies in the United Kingdom and further 100,000 in Europe, according to the label.

In the States, the “Foundations” EP, released in September, peaked at No. 2 on Billboard’s Hot Singles Sales chart and Nash played three New York shows in September. “I thought, are these people thinking, what’s this weird English girl talking about?” she says with a laugh. “But it went down really well.”

Universal U.K. director of international marketing Greg Stafford says key U.S. press, from Teen Vogue to the New York Times, “have come onboard early... There is a real expectation.”

Nash returns to North America for promotion and four dates starting Jan. 7 in Toronto, with “Foundations” serviced to radio just before Christmas. A full U.S. tour is planned for April and May. The album will be released in January in Australia, where Nash will appear at Big Day Out, Down Under’s biggest traveling festival.

—— Andre Paine

Amy Macdonald

Amy Macdonald’s U.K. breakthrough has already earned her comparisons to major artists like fellow Scot KT Tunstall.

“I’m always going to take it as a compliment because I’m being compared to some of the most successful women in music,” she says with a grin. “But we all have our different sounds.”

And though Macdonald is on track for global success, the 26-year-old Glaswegian singer-songwriter is still proud of her Scottish roots.

“People are always really behind me in Scotland,” she says. Her debut album, “This Is the Life” (Vertigo/Mercury), went to No. 2 in the United Kingdom and No. 1 in Scotland.

We marked the album’s release well in Scotland,” Mercury U.K. president Jason Hey says. “We really showed how Amy was home grown.”

He also credits digital campaigns on Bebo and MySpace with building sales, but adds, “It’s a multifaceted campaign where every area has strategically worked together and succeeded.”

Hey says the album has now reached U.K. shipments of 260,000, and predicts an eventual total of 500,000 U.K. sales, with fourth single “Run” due to be released early next year.

He says the record is taking off in Europe with 30,000 shipments after a support slot with Paolo Nutini in Germany, Holland and Belgium (“I was honored,” Macdonald says) and key TV appearances in France including music show “Taratata.”

“A headlining European tour is pencilled in for March, after 15 U.K. dates.

American audiences will discover Macdonald next year. She will play a New York showcase in April for her U.S. label Mercury, ahead of a planned summer release for “This Is the Life.”

“I’ve worked hard at this for the past five years of my life,” Macdonald says. “The good thing is that people feel they’ve discovered me for themselves.”

—— Andre Paine

Adele

Just 19, jazz and soul-steeped Londoner Adele Adkins (who uses only her first name) has already employed a musical education ranging from Dusty Springfield to Jeff Buckley to become a hot new property for XL Recordings.

On the heels of the limited edition “Home Town Glory” last October, Adele’s single “Chasing Pavements” is set for release Jan. 21 in the United Kingdom, a week before her first album, “19,” streets. The collection features “Cold Shoulder,” a collaboration with U.K. producer Du jour Mark Ronson, and Adele already has widespread press support and radio play at BBC Radio 1 and 2. On Dec. 10, Adele was named the winner of the inaugural BRIT Awards Critics Choice prize for new acts, and will perform live at the nationally televised gala Feb. 20.

“I’m inspired by American artists, and I learned to sing by listening to Etta James,” she says. “But I also loved [U.K. pop/soul singer] Gabrielle. It was a real mix, and that’s how the album is.”

Adele attended the BRIT School in south London “I got to listen to music every day and [received] a qualification at the end”) and attracted industry interest after developing a MySpace page. She signed a worldwide deal with XL in November 2006.

“I signed a good deal, but not one of these stupidly big ones,” she says, “and my publishing with Universal Music” was sensible. I don’t see the point in taking loads of money [as an advance], because you’ll never start seeing money in your pocket.”

Label CEO Richard Russell says Adele is “in a tradition of artists who know exactly what they want—incredibly focused and quick to tell you which of your ideas are rubbish.”

He says “19” will be released in the United States on XL “perhaps as early as April, perhaps as late as June [or] July.”

In the meantime, Adele expresses solidarity with the current wealth of British female talent.

“The media is trying to pit us against each other, but everyone of us has done well,” she says. “As long as you’re good, you will.” — Paul Sexton


Duffy

Great things are expected of Amy Ann Duffy, who goes by only her last name. Before she has even released a record, the Welsh 22-year-old with the stunning 1960s-style soul voice and the utterly contemporary pop songs has already been called “the sound of 2008” by the London Evening Standard. Universal Music operations president David Joseph calls her debut album, “Rockferry” (A&M/Polydor), “a classic album by a contemporary artist.”

U.K. media have been falling over themselves to get involved. Her limited edition vinyl/download single, also called “Rockferry,” in November was added to the playlist at BBC Radios 1 and 2, and she’s one of the few artists to appear on tastemaking TV show “Later... With Jools Holland” before a release.

“I can only remember that happening with Mika and James Morrison,” Universal VP of international marketing Hassan Choudhury says. “And they both went on to sell millions of records.”

All the attention is in stark contrast to Duffy’s “traditional Welsh Sunday-school upbringing.”

“It feels very weird being public about my music,” she says. “When I was a kid, I never felt I could tell anyone that I wanted to sing, so I kept it to myself.”

That’s unlikely to be an option for much longer. Her first U.K. single “Mercy” is due for release Feb. 25, with the album following a week later. She will play a residency in January and February at London’s Pigalle Club, with key international media being flown in, and will showcase in early 2008 in Europe ahead of an international album rollout in April. Choudhury says there have been “phenomenal reactions” from across the world, “which normally means you have a huge global star on your hands.”

Duffy herself is most looking forward to the U.S. release, also in April, and her first official stateside promotional trip in January.

“I can’t wait to go to Detroit, Memphis, the Motown studio, Al Green’s church,” she says. “America is where soul began, and where it is right now.” — Mark Sutherland

www.americanradiohistory.com
Upwardly Mobile?
Chinese Market Waits For Technology Boost

TOKYO—As athletes limber up for the Olympics in August in Beijing, labels and telcos are hoping the launch of high-capacity third-generation (3G) phones will also help the Chinese mobile music market go for gold in 2008.

Industry observers say 3G offers a better platform to deliver content, including music, more reliably and securely—a major concern in a territory that the IFPI says has a music piracy rate of greater than 90%.

“3G dissemination is going to increase the appetite of the half a billion Chinese mobile subscribers to consume more mobile music, mobile music videos and mobile entertainment,” says Ralph Simon, London-based founder/chairman emeritus of Mobile Entertainment Forum-Americas.

Rick Meyers, director of Shanghai-based entertainment consultancy Dragonfly Revolution, is also upbeat about 3G’s impact in China, saying it will help the country “leapfrog current models in other markets and jump right to post-ringtone models and more sophisticated music offerings of the variety that next-generation startups are able to provide.”

3G mobile services in China will make full-song downloads affordable and practical—a development that has seen sales in such neighboring territories as Japan rise sufficiently to make up for the decline in physical sales.

“The 3G users can download a full-length song in 10-30 seconds, as opposed to three to 10 minutes right now,” Sony BMG Music Entertainment China and Taiwan deputy managing director Frances Chiang says. “The improved speed and quality of transmission not only enable full-length audiovisual content to become valid products on the wireless front, but also make the further integration of online and mobile business possible.”

The only sticking point is that it remains unclear precisely when and how 3G will become a reality in China.

Industry sources note that the Ministry of Industry Information (MIIT) is committed to the home-grown TD-SCDMA 3G technology, and in November the National Development and Reform Commission licensed several handset manufacturers to produce TD-SCDMA handsets.

But sources add that the Ministry of Industry and Technology has suggested it makes more sense to focus resources on fourth-generation mobile phones, claiming that market-leading carrier China Mobile prefers the WiMAX technology, as widely used in Western Europe. Nonetheless, China Mobile is scheduled to begin its first round of TD-SCDMA handset procurement by January, purchasing 200,000-400,000 handsets for evaluation.

Hot Spots To Stop
As The Live Business In The United States And Europe Goes From Strength To Strength, These Four Potentially Huge Markets Elsewhere Are Just Getting Off The Ground

India

“2007 has been a landmark year for the concert business,” says Venkat Vardhan, managing director of Bangalore-based promoter DNA Networks. DNA is known for its innovative marketing and distribution strategies in India, which makes it a major player in the country’s live music scene.

In 2007, DNA has organized over 200 events across the country, attracting huge audiences. The company has successfully showcased some of the biggest names in the industry, including international acts like U2, Pink, and Beyoncé. DNA has also ventured into production, with recent successes like the India Association of the Performing Arts (INAPA) Awards and the NDTV-India Today Music Awards.

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has long been a hub for global music stars. With its booming economy and growing population, the UAE has become a major player in the Middle East’s music scene.

In 2007, Dubai hosted the annual Dubai Desert Rock Festival, which attracted a record-breaking crowd of 50,000. The festival has become a major event on the UAE’s music calendar, featuring some of the biggest names in the industry. The UAE has also hosted international acts like Coldplay, U2, and Radiohead, attracting tens of thousands of fans to its desert venues.

Russia

The live music market in Russia has grown 20%-25% annually since the turn of the century, according to local promoter Mikhail Yevgrafov. “Western musicians love coming to Russia,” says Yevgrafov, general director of Moscow-based promoter/music TV channel O-ONE, which brought Linkin Park and Marilyn Manson to play in Russia for the first time in 2007. “There’s no reason to come to both cities in one stop.”

Macau

According to local government, the 2001 relaxation of Macau’s gaming laws has pulled in $25 billion of investment aimed at transforming the special administrative region of China into the world’s biggest casino draw.

But until the 15,000-seat Venetian Macau opened in October, no world-class bands had played the city. Southern China’s only purpose-built arena—located near Hong Kong—awaits its first major performers. Macau’s packed casino entertainment complexes offer no comparable venue.

Vladimir Putin, Russia’s prime minister, recently announced plans to build a new concert arena in Moscow to host international acts. But for now, the future of live music in Russia looks promising, as fanatical fans pack venues to see their favorite bands.

Additional reporting by Becky Chatchra in Shanghai and Will Freeman in Beijing.
If you're looking to increase your volume in the recording industry, Louisiana Economic Development invites you to experience the Sound Recording Investor Tax Credit. It reimburses 25% of your investment in sound recording, production, recording studios and infrastructure projects. Much like Louisiana's motion picture program, the Sound Recording Tax Credit is designed to boost record production by reducing your costs.
Faces To Watch

Who’s Hot And Rising For The Year Ahead

Any new album worth your attention arrives during the packed fourth-quarter holiday season, right? Not quite. The earlier months of the year are an ideal time for rising acts to grab their share of attention and, they hope, sales. That’s true for upcoming releases and new promotional boosts for sets already on hand. Here are 10 hot faces to watch from genres including pop, rock, country, R&B, hip-hop, Christian, jazz and dance that have caught the attention of Billboard’s discerning writers and editors.

Kate Voegele

**MySpace Records**

Sometimes things are better the second time around. So it seems in Kate Voegele’s case, when she rereleases her MySpace Records debut, “Don’t Look Away,” Jan. 22. The move comes as the 21-year-old singer/songwriter transitions from the stage to the small screen.

Voegele scores her first acting role as the musician Mia on the popular CW series “One Tree Hill,” starting with its Jan. 22 episode.

“I felt like the audience [for the show] is my audience,” Voegele says. “‘One Tree Hill’ has always been an awesome vehicle for new artists. Plus, now there’s this whole idea that art imitates life.”

On the show, one of the main characters discovers Mia and later signs her to a record deal. Voegele will be heard playing songs like the single “Only Fooling Myself” on the show.

The young performer has spent time touring with artists like John Mayer and Ben Lee, and is in the midst of planning a full tour itinerary surrounding the set’s rerelease, which will feature a new album cover that will more closely reflect her role on “One Tree Hill.” Copies of the album —originally released in May 2007—sold through Target will also include three bonus acoustic versions of previously released tracks.

— Katie Hasty

Blitzen Trapper

**Sub Pop Records**

Visually and sonically. Portland, Ore.-based Blitzen Trapper could best be described as “modern classic rock.” It’s got hooks and chops and beards, and it records every song the old-fashioned way—on a cracking four-track.

The band signed to Sub Pop in 2007 and will release a new album come summertime; if the last two discs were any sort of indication, the new one will be full of strange lyrics and beefy instrumentation.

Blitzen Trapper may well explode in 2008 for a number of reasons. Nostalgia-obsessed hipsters will appreciate that these dudes look like a band their parents could have watched at some dive bar in the ’70s. Bloggers will OMG and LOL themselves silly over the genre-spanning nature of the group. Its last record included influences from blues, rock, electronics and country, and garnered more than one Pavement comparison for its sprawling nature.

But most important, fans of solid, well-crafted rock ‘n’ roll appreciate the band’s commitment to solid musicianship and good-old-fashioned hard work and song craft.

Sub Pop is mum about marketing plans thus far, but with an act of this caliber, it might just be wise to sit back and let the music sell itself.

— Courtney Harding

Anané

**Dance Boy Records**

Dance music is full of wannabe divas over-singing and attempting charisma. But newcomer Anané, with roots in Portugal and the island nation of Cape Verde, takes the stage decked out like Diana Ross, then proceeds to get down like Lauryn Hill fronting the Fugitives.

After a string of singles on dance indie Vega Records, her debut album, “Selections,” is scheduled for a May release on Tommy Boy. Framed around three covers well-known to the club community, but obscure to everyone else—ESG’s “Standing in Line,” Bunny Mack’s “Let Me Love You” and Yoko Ono’s “Walking on Thin Ice”—the set is otherwise original, segueing from thick club grooves to summery calypso to psychedelic dance-rock.

The album’s first widely released single, “Shake Dat booty,” a reggae-inflected old-school rap produced by Tony Touch and Mr. Vegas, puts the girl back in control of the oft-sung across-the-dancefloor flirtation.

“As soon as I put that track up on my MySpace page, girls started e-mailing me,” she says. “The message is, ‘I’ll still shake it, but on my own terms.’

Combining earthiness with glamour and roots-deep house music knowledge with pop-wise diversity, Anané could be the first up-from-the-nightclub superstar since Madonna.” — Kerri Mason

Tinatin

**Liaison Music**

While most children were mastering the art of finger painting, 6-year-old Tinatin had wrapped her arms around a full spectrum of the arts: painting, writing, learning to speak six languages—and singing.

The native of the Republic of Georgia (then part of the Soviet Union) came to it naturally: her father was an architect and painter, her mother a classical pianist.

The family moved to Russia, where she studied classical voice. Then, as a young adult, she journeyed to London, where she aligned with producer Christopher Neil (Celine Dion, Mike & the Mechanics, Rod Stewart), who encouraged her to write songs and helped line up live gigs.

Today, at 23, the raven-haired, blue-eyed Tinatin (now a New Yorker) has released a CD independently on PureMix Records and gained interest from two major labels.

Her rallying cry is “We the Peoples,” is based on the 1945 founding of the United Nations charter, another natural alliance stemming from her gig as a U.N. correspondent for the Russian media.

Tinatin continues to work with Neil, along with producers Eliot Kennedy, Arnie Roman, Ayhan Sahin and Marc Russell & Dave Scheuer, with the goal of mainstream attention in 2008.

“I’m in my true element when I sing,” Tinatin says. “I have already exceeded my wildest dreams. Now I’m looking for the ultimate adventure.”

— Chuck Taylor

Clockwise from left: Blitzen Trapper, Kate Voegele, Tinatin
younger brother of Carter, the tattooed frontman of British punk band Gallows, “coolest person in rock”—a sure sign that 2008 should be his year. American audiences got their first taste of the act’s incendiary live shows on last year’s 40-date Vans Warped tour. Having also supported Bad Religion in the fall, Gallows headlines 25 U.S. dates this month and next.

“It’s been amazing,” Carter says of the American reaction. “In us they see a little bit of that ’80s hardcore scene. They seem proud that when we go over there we cover their bands—we do [Black Flag’s] ‘Nervous Breakdown,’ and they really appreciate that.”


The album has sold 9,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Meanwhile, at home, Gallows’ cover of “Staring at the Rude Boys” from British punk band the Ruts, featuring rapper Lethal Bizzle, became the band’s first hit in December, peaking at No. 31.

The band’s crossover appeal was clear when BBC Radio 1 added the song to its playlist, and its February U.K. tour will see it play its biggest shows to date.

—Andre Paine

Lady Antebellum

Capitol Nashville Records

Music brought Hillary Scott, Charles Kelley, and Dave Haywood—collectively known as Lady Antebellum—together. Well, music and some flirtation.

Scott, the daughter of Grammy Award-winning artist Linda Davis, met Kelley (the younger brother of pop artist Josh Kelley) at a downtown Nashville music spot in May 2006 and told him she had been listening to his music on MySpace. Kelley asked for her number and promised they could write together. “A classic Nashville pickup line,” he recalls now with a laugh.

Kelley introduced Scott to longtime friend and multi-instrumentalist Haywood, and chemistry emerged. A performance at a Nashville club in August 2006 made the trio realize that sparks were apparent.

“It only took one live performance to realize that whatever it was we were going to do, had to be done together,” says Scott, who shares lead vocal duties and even duets with Kelley on songs. A just-for-fun photo shoot in Civil War-era clothing led to the band’s name.

The trio signed with manager Gary Borman (Keith Urban) and Capitol Nashville in quick succession.

“They are the most prepared, ready-to-go-to-market artists that I’ve ever worked with,” Capitol Nashville president/CEO Mike Dungan says.

Lady Antebellum’s debut album, scheduled for a spring release, is produced by Paul Worley (Martina McBride) and singer/songwriter Victoria Shaw. The group will tour with Martina McBride beginning in January.

—Ken Tucker

Tyra B

Warner Bros. Records

The total package. That’s the goal R&B singer Tyra B has been working toward since the age of 9. Signed to Warner Bros. through Sphinx Music Entertainment, Tyra B is building plenty of buzz with “Givin’ Me a Rush.” She co-wrote the song, an engaging midtempo that pays rhythmic homage to Michael Jackson’s “Human Nature” and Paul Abdul’s “Rush. Rush.” With vocals that are an edgy cross between Janet Jackson and Aaliyah, plus dance moves to match, Tyra B is out to prove she’s a triple threat.

“I have a deep passion for good R&B music,” she says. “I just want to give that back. And it’s not just about singing behind the mic. My whole thing is about giving a full show.”

Born Tyra Bolling in Petersburg, Va., she caught an early break when a radio DJ in the state capital of Richmond saw her perform at a 2004 high school talent show. He began playing her music, which sparked an indie hit (“Country Boy”) and a coveted opening slot for 30 dates on the 2005 Destiny’s Child tour. She also hit with another indie single, “Still in Love.”

Now she’s aiming up for her debut album, the aptly titled “Past Due.” Produced primarily by fellow newcomers Brad Young and Pretty Boy, the project is set for this spring. On the promo trail since last November, Tyra B welcomes the grind. “I’ve been at this for so long. But I’m just as serious at 22 as I was at 9.”

—Gail Mitchell

Flo-Rida

Poe Boy/Atlantic Records

For Flo-Rida, the past year has already brought shocking success. The muscle-bound rapper who hails from Miami shot to the Billboard Hot 100 with his single “Low” featuring T-Pain and saw the track hit No. 1 in November on iTunes’ single download chart in early December.

“Low” is also the lead soundtrack song to the upcoming film “Step Up 2: The Streets,” which hits theaters Feb. 11. Flo-Rida’s debut album—“Mail on Sunday,” via Poe Boy/Atlantic—is slated for release in February. It features Trey Songz and fellow Florida MC Rick Ross, along with production from the Runners, J. R. Rotem and O’Dwyer Camp’s DJ Montay. Flo-Rida just shot a video for what may be his next single, “Gotta Eat.”

“My style is very unique,” the rapper says. “That’s why my name is ‘Flo.’ I have different flows, unlike a lot of other hip-hop artists. I’ve got a lot of different influences, from Jimi Hendrix to Outkast.”

—Hillary Cooley

Meredith Andrews

Word Records

From Amy Grant to Darlene Zschech, Christian music has a rich history of influential female singer/songwriters, but recent charts have been dominated by male acts. Word aims to balance the format with Meredith Andrews’ debut, “The Invitation,” due April 29.

Influenced by such worship leaders as Zschech, Rita Springer and Christy Nockels, Andrews was involved in music in high school and college. Majoring in family and child development at Liberty University, her original plan was to work at an orphanage after graduation.

However, a past from Chicago’s Harvest Bible Chapel heard her at Liberty and recruited Andrews to join his worship team. Like the platinum-selling band Casting Crowns, the singer plans to continue working at the church while attending to her burgeoning recording career. Andrews has already landed a coveted slot opening 30 dates for Aaron Shust this spring. “I wasn’t really looking for a record deal. It just fell in my lap,” she says. “I’m so humbled by it all. It’s obvious that it’s the Lord’s hand and not my own.”

—Deborah Evans Price

Esperanza Spalding

 Heads Up International Records

At just 23, bassist/vocalist Esperanza Spalding has been turning heads in the last year, thanks to her debut CD “juniper” on Barcelona label Alfa and her impressive sideman duties with such heroes as Stanley Clarke, Richard Bona, Herbie Hancock and Joe Lovano.

Spalding is also a marvel leading her own band. Whether exploring into vocalizes or making her bass solo sound like a horn, she’s a spark plug who dances as she grooves through a funk-ed-up and rock-ed-out repertoire.

“It’s been a natural evolution that musicians going places experience,” says Spalding, who in November signed to Heads Up International, an imprint of Concord Music Group, for her first widely released CD. Produced by Terrence Blanchard, the set is due in May.

“The new album will be a crossover date that has the integrity of jazz,” she says. “Only one song really swings; the rest are very groove-oriented.”

—Dan Ouellette
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What's Great In '08

Looking Ahead To The Biggest Releases Of The Year

What's the biz to do when the top-selling album of 2007 was a Christmas project, and the second-best was a soundtrack to a teen-themed Disney movie? Superstars underperformed, and not enough up-and-comers took their commercial fortunes to the proverbial next level. Still, there's a wealth of highly anticipated albums heading into stores in 2008, including new sets from Mariah Carey, Janet Jackson and Usher, a new U2 set and even a country effort from Jessica Simpson. Billboard presents a peek at the music you'll be hearing about in the next 12 months.

By Jonathan Cohen

January

**The Mars Volta, “The Bedlam in Goliath” (Universal Motown, Jan. 29)**

From the first intense moments on “Aberinkula” to the bombastic finale “Conjugal Burns,” the Mars Volta sounds scared and scrawny on “The Bedlam in Goliath”—and with good reason. The concept for the album, which is literally the band’s own ghost story, a haunting that began with a Quija board from Jerusalem whose owner terrorized the band’s personal and professional lives. Co-founder/guitarist Omar Rodriguez Lopez, after considering dropping the project altogether, decided to release the manic album in hopes that it will lift the curse. “The curse facilitated the aggressiveness of the record,” Lopez says. “It was very much like I was playing to keep my mind.”

**Sarah Brightman, “Symphony” (Angel/EMI Manhattan, Jan. 29)**

Mega-selling soprano Brightman furthers her crossover ambitions here with songs featuring Kiss’ Paul Stanley (“I Will Be With You” [Where the Lost Ones Go”]), Andrea Bocelli (“Canto Della Terra”) and Fernando Lima (“Passion”), in addition to a cover of Faith Hill’s “There You’ll Be” sung in Italian. “Symphony” will be supported with a PBS special during spring pledge-drive season and also sets up “Repo! The Genetic Opera,” Brightman’s film debut, due later in ’08.

**Motel, “17” (Warner Music Latina, Jan. 29)**

Motel rode a pop/punk wave in Mexico with the success of its 2006 self-titled album, but its U.S. exposure was mainly limited to Texas and Puerto Rico. Warner Music Latina has bigger plans for “17,” which debuted at No. 23 on the Mexican sales charts the week of Nov. 19, 2007, according to trade group Grupo Profonol. Out digitally since Nov. 20, to coincide with an early pitch for the single “Y Te Vas,” the album will arrive Jan. 29 nationwide on CD. The label is courting pop network Super Estrella with a more commercial single.

**Willie Nelson, “Moment of Forever” (Lost Highway, Jan. 29)**

The latest salvo from the legendary Nelson was produced by country superstars Kenny Chesney and Buddy Cannon. While Nelson contributed three songs, the 74-year-old also tapped the songwriting talents of Randy Newman (on the poigniant “Louisiana 1927”), Kris Kristofferson, Big Kenny of Big & Rich and Dave Loggins, among others. Nelson also covers Bob Dylan’s “Gotta Serve Somebody” and Dave Matthews’ “Gravedigger,” while the bluesy “Worry B Gone” is a duet between Nelson and Chesney.

February

**Lil Wayne, “Tha Carter III” (Cash Money)**

Widespread leaks forced the rapper to move this project from last fall to February. The album, but it’s unclear what exactly will wind up on the finished project. “I did ask for a list of the songs that were leaked, so I can throw some new joints on there,” he says. “I switched the beat up a lot of them, because the rap is already out there and everybody loves the song, whatever the song shall be.”

**Nas, “Nigger” (The Jones Experience/Def Jam)**

Never one to back down from a challenge, Nas is moving forward with the controversial title of this album, originally expected in December. With production from DJ Toomp, Jermaine Dupri and Sean “Diddy” Combs’ Hitmen crew, the rapper pulls no punches on tracks like “You’re a Nigger Too” and “The Fear.” “There’s a fun level to the album,” he told MTV. “There’s an attractive, sexy, aspect to it; a stylish aspect, a flashy aspect. It takes negatives and makes them good.”

**Ja Rule, “The Mirror” (The Inc.)**

On the heels of a public feud with 50 Cent and a 2005 FBI case against Inc. principals Irv and Chris Gotti, Ja Rule calls "The Mirror" a growth process that covers a lot of substantive ground.

“This is a very grown-up album, expressing a lot of true feelings,” says the artist, who worked with such producers as Channel 7 and Erick Sermon. “But it’s a fun album as well—a dramedy.” Tracks include the “Elevator Rigby”-sampling “Judas” and “Damn;” a song Ja Rule says he wrote with Mary J. Blige, Jennifer Lopez and Christina Milian in mind.

**Nicole Scherzinger, “Her Name is Nicole” (Interscope)**

She’s dominated the charts and the airwaves with the Pussycat Dolls, but vocalist Nicole Scherzinger is finding solo success a bit harder to come by. Her debut album was bumped last fall from Oct. 16 to Nov. 20 and then to February, after initial singles “Whatever U Like” featuring T.I. and “Baby Love” failed to dent the Billboard Hot 100. Collaborations have been put to tape with Sting, Snow Patrol’s Gary Lightbody, Akon and Kanye West, but word is Scherzinger may cut some new tracks as well.

**Sheryl Crow, “Detours” (A&M/Interscope, Feb. 5)**

“The songs are very inspired by the last three years of events in my life,” Crow says of a time that found her battling breast cancer and splitting with partner Lance Armstrong. First single “Shine Over Babylon” is “is very environmen-
tally conscious, in the tradition of Bob Dylan," while Crow's infatuated son can be heard on the tune "Lullaby for Wyatt."

Lenny Kravitz, "It's Time for a Love Revolution" (Virgin, Feb. 5)

Kravitz played nearly all the instruments on his first effort in three years, which was recorded at his studio in the Bahamas as well as Miami, Paris and New York. "The last record was still very natural, but it had a cleaner sound," he says. "On this one, I was really into using more of the room mics and getting a lot of spill. I wanted to hear the walls and the room. The result is a more stripped-down feel on rockers like "Bring It On," "Love Love Love" and the last boogie "Will You Marry Me."

Anthony Hamilton, "Me" (So So Def/Zomba Label Group, Feb. 5)

On his third album, R&B crooner Hamilton says fans will find songs that are "full of life and situations we all go through, the changes of men and women and relationships with God and family and children—and the political side of Anthony Hamilton." Look for the album to include Diane Warren's soul-tinging ballad "Do You Feel Me," which also appeared on the "American Gangster" soundtrack. Collaborators include Mark Ronson, Kelvyn Wooten, James Poyser and the Avila Brothers.

Jack Johnson, "Sleep Through the Static" (Brushfire/Universal, Feb. 5)

Johnson's latest album was recorded on tape machines that ran on 100% solar-powered energy. First single "If I Fall" is a light-hearted love song with swirling electric guitar arrangements. Much like prior efforts, Johnson rarely meanders into the minor keys, though

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FEBRUARY 19: The Ravenetters, "Lust, Lust, Lust" (Vice)
   • The Ryders, "I'll Be Your Man" (Columbia)
   • The Black & Blue, "For Real [Hip Hop]" (Fused)
   • The Mountain Goats, "Heretic Pride" (4AD)
   • The Magnetic Man, "Golden Age" (Merge)
   • The Strokes, "Steady, Steady, Steady On" (Downtown)
   • The Datsuns, "Bandaged" (In the Red)
   • The Black Keys, "She's on My Mind" (Atlantic)

DECEMBER 28: The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife" (Caribou)
   • The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife 2" (Caribou)
   • The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife 3" (Caribou)
   • The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife 4" (Caribou)

MARCH 25: Counting Crows, "Saturday Night, Sunday Morning" (Goofy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get a Good Life" (Bad Boy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get A Good Life" (Bad Boy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get A Good Life" (Bad Boy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get A Good Life" (Bad Boy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get A Good Life" (Bad Boy)

APRIL 1: CeCe Winans, "Thy Kingdom Come" (Epic Gospel)
   • The Campbells, "Hold On Now, Youngster" (Arts & Crafts)
   • Jason Champlin, "Reflections" (Epic Gospel)

MARCH 28: Counting Crows, "Saturday Night, Sunday Morning" (Goofy)
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   • The Campbells, "Hold On Now, Youngster" (Arts & Crafts)
   • Jason Champlin, "Reflections" (Epic Gospel)

FEBRUARY 6: The B-52's, "Funfari" (Astralwerks)
   • Free, "Kite On a String" (Elektra)
   • Free, "Kite On a String" (Elektra)
   • Free, "Kite On a String" (Elektra)
   • Free, "Kite On a String" (Elektra)
   • Free, "Kite On a String" (Elektra)

APRIL 10: The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife" (Caribou)
   • The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife 2" (Caribou)
   • The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife 3" (Caribou)
   • The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife 4" (Caribou)
   • The Decemberists, "The Crane Wife 5" (Caribou)

MARCH 29: Counting Crows, "Saturday Night, Sunday Morning" (Goofy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get a Good Life" (Bad Boy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get A Good Life" (Bad Boy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get A Good Life" (Bad Boy)
   • Elephant Man, "Get A Good Life" (Bad Boy)
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   • Jason Champlin, "Reflections" (Epic Gospel)
Graw's new set hits stores. The currently untitled album features a more seasoned, edgier version of the 10-year-old songwriter, whose tuneful voice will be heard over more guitars and more "primordial" piano lines. "I played really simple piano parts in order to get out of the way of the melody and the lyrics, to enhance what's meant to be heard," the New York resident says. Produced by Howard Benson, the album features first single "In Love With a Girl," the playful "Cop Stop" and the catch-phrased "Young Love.

Estelle, "Shine" (Homeschool/Atlantic)

The first artist inked to John Legend's label offers a fresh helping of R&B and soul on "Shine," augmented by guest turns from Kanye West, will.i.am, Cee-Lo, Wyclef Jean and Legend himself. "It's all about the songs and music," Legend says. "British soul artists haven't come with the right music. Estelle has the right music and producers; her music will speak for itself. She's undeniably a star.

Alan Jackson, "Good Time" (Arista Nashville, March 4)

With a new single, "Small Town Southern Man," already climbing Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart, one of the genre's most reliable hitmakers will return in March with his 15th studio album. "Good Time" also includes the Martina McBride duet "Never Loved Before," the self-explanatory "Country Boy" and "Sissy's Song," a tribute to a deceased family friend. Jackson wrote all the tunes, which were produced by longtime colleague Keith Stegall.

Bauhaus, "Go Away White" (Bauhaus Musik, March 4)

The good news for Bauhaus fans: "Go Away White" is the group's first studio album since 1983. The bad news: There will be no further activity from the legendary goth band, which reunited in 2005 for the Coacella festival and later toured the world, but has since splintered due to internal tensions. "We have that 'goth' tag," drummer Kevin Haskins says. "But if you actually listen to our music, there's a lot of humor and light." Pointing to cuts like "Eternal Summer of the Damned," "Adrenaline" and "Black Stone Hearts," he says. "With this album, I see all that. It all came out again."

Kaki King, "Dreaming of Revenge" (Velour, March 4)

This diminutive guitar wizard enjoyed a profile boost last year by guesting on the new Foo Fighters record and contributing material to Sean Penn's "Into the Wild." Her fourth set should keep the momentum rolling, thanks to a sound that dabbles in the oblique singer-songwriter-isms of Suzanne Vega ("Pull Me Out Alive." "Life Being What It Is") and the lazy instrumental parable of Tortoise or Air ("Montreal," "So Much for So Little"). There are a couple of other songs where I'm doing the most traditional guitar playing I've ever done," she says.

Michael McDonald, "Soul Speak" (Universal Motown, March 11)

Though the idea of a third Motown album was broached, McDonald wanted to engage in a little "soul speak" for his next album. The Simon Climie-produced set features a variety of covers like Van Morrison's "Into the Mystic," Steve Wunder's "For Once in My Life," Bob Marley's "Re- demption Song," a bluesier treatment of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" and three originals that McDonald says "seemed to fit on the record." The covers, he adds, "are songs I remember hearing as a kid that really changed my musical direction or turned my head around. They were more sophisticated than the average pop song."

Moby, "Last Night" (Mute, March 11)

The bald techno maestro's Mute debut "is best described as an eclectic dance record," according to the man himself. "I Love to Move in Here" features veteran rapper Grandmaster Caz, who co-wrote "Rapper's Delight," while two tracks are "big, piano-driven rave anthems." There are also "some atmospheric songs and some techno songs that sound like buildings falling down," Moby says.

Leona Lewis, "Spirit" (C/Syco, March 18)

The 2007 winner of the United Kingdom's "X Factor" talent contest shocked the industry last year when "Spirit" became the fastest-selling debut in U.K. history. Its first single, "Bleeding Love," also logged multiple weeks atop the U.K. singles chart. The album's U.S. rollout comes under the watchful eye of RCA Music Group chair Clive Davis. "She has power and range and this ability to transform a song. That's what the world will see," Davis says, whose clout attracted such contributors as Dallas Austin, Ne-Yo, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Walter Afanasieff and Salazar Remi.

Don Omar, TBA (Machete Music, March 12)

One of a handful of reggaetón names who consistently reach the top echelons of Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart, Omar is planning an unconventional Good Friday release for his new album. The set will feature collaborations with Sean Paul, Tito El Bambino, Wisin & Yandel, Kat De Luna and Anuel A. Omar says he'll continue blending socially minded topics with sheer danceable tunes, in his quest to evolve reggaetón without losing its Latin essence. Themes include "sex, social criticism, homosexuality, religion, God and other topics that will shake listeners' ears," he says.

Panic at the Disco, TBA (Decaydance/Fueled by Ramen, March 25)

For its second album, this Las Vegas four-piece is relying less on ProTools and more on actual instruments. "If anything, it sounds more like a band," guitarist lyricist Ryan Ross says. "We've been tracking live and doing minimal overdubs.

Many of the songs are influenced by "bands that my parents grew up on," Ross says, citing such classic rock acts as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan and the Beach Boys. "I'm getting into that early rock-'n'-roll stuff, the old songs like "Things Have Changed" and "Nine in the Afternoon" move away from the "whole one-liner, sarcastic thing" and focus on everyday things," Ross says.

April

Madonna, TBA (Warner Bros.)

There's a sweetness on the tip of Madonna's tongue for her final Warner Bros. studio album, which features such tracks as "Candy Shop" and the Kanye West featuring "The Beat Goes On." The latter is now said to sound "nothing like a version with Pharrell that leaked last summer." An older unreleased tune, "The Devil Wouldn't Recognize You," appears in a new version, while "4 Minutes to Save the World" is a trademark slice of danceable pop featuring Timbaland and Justin Timberlake.

The Black Keys, TBA (Nonesuch)

It started as an idea Turner album featuring backing by the Black Keys and production by Danger Mouse, but after an August switcheroo, the project morphed into a new effort from the Ohio rock duo, with the Gnarls Barkley mastered behind the boards. Little of the music cut with the late Turner will appear on the disc, but songs like "Remember When" and "Strange Time" still take the keys' riff-driven sound to new and unusual places.

Augustana, TBA (Epic)

Epic is looking to bring Augustana to the next level on the heels of 2006's "All the Stars and Boulevards," which featured the hit single "Boston." "We came in and did it in five weeks," producer Mike Flynn says. "I think we were live and we tried to capture that as much as we could." Key tracks include "Sweet and Low" and "Hey Now," which breaks into the chant "Hey now, right now," at its conclusion. "This is a timeless song about everything that's going on around us. It has a lot of impact."

R.E.M., TBA (Warner Bros., April 1)

Nobody would ever confuse R.E.M. for Metallica, but the guitars have definitely been turned up for the Georgia group's 14th studio album. Nearly a year and a half tested out during a summer run in Dublin, although manager Bertis Downs says a few of those songs didn't make the cut, and that a couple of album tunes were held back from live airings. Mostly gone is the drowsy vibe of 2004's "Around the Sun," with "Living Well is the Best Revenge," "Home to Waters," "Aftermath" and "Until the Day Is Done" recapturing the old R.E.M. energy. Bassist Mike Mills says the band was "certainly aiming for a more live feel and maybe a little more up tempo."

Sun Kil Moon, "April" (Caldo Verde, April 1)

Mark Kozelek's unique interpretive bent (AG/DC, John Denver, Modest Mouse) has been an integral part of his work with Red House Painters. Sun Kil Moon and as a solo artist. But his original compositions have always packed more of an emotional punch, and their impact is stronger than ever on the proper follow-up to 2003's "Ghosts of the Great Highway," the second-best-selling album of Kozelek's career. The trademark sprawling rockers ("Tonight in Bilbao") are present, as are devastating snapshots of crumbled relationships ("Mooresest"). Elsewhere, cult favorite indie singer/songwriter Will Oldham guests on "Until Hallway" and "Like the River."

Flight of the Conchords, "Flight of the Conchords" (Sub Pop, April 22)

They play marginally talented singer/songwriters on their runaway hit H.O.R.S.E series, but Flight of the Conchords members Jemaine Clement and Bret McKenzie put in extensive time in the studio to perfect their Sub Pop debut. All the tracks have appeared on the show, including "Beautiful Gift" and "Pretty Party of Princes," but Sub Pop A&R manager John Kiefer says they've been "mas- sively reworked and totally rearranged." The synth-pop parody "Inner City Pressure" is likely to be the first single. Clement says, "I'm not a particularly social person or the life of the party, but somehow it's ended up that way."

May

Snoop Dogg, "Ego Tripin" (Geffen)

Snoop has been tight-lipped about his latest disc, but if it's anything like first single "Sensual Seduction" and its hilarious video, he'll be in great shape for a spring hit. That talk-box-driven cut has risen quickly at radio: it's...
APRIL 8: The Breeders, "Mountain Battles" (LAD) • Dead Child, "Attack" (Touch & Go) • Eric Avery, "Help Wanted" (Dangergirl) • Sleepercars, "West Texas" (Doghouse)

APRIL 15: The Constellations (Arts & Crafts)

APRIL 22: Murphy Lee, "The Package" (Derrytainment/Universal)

APRIL 29: The Stills (Arts & Crafts)

APRIL: Portishead (Island) • Tapes 'n Tapes (XL, Recordings) • Mudhoney, new studio album TBA (Sub Pop) • Mudhoney, "Superfuzz Buitght—20th Anniversary Edition" (Sub Pop) • Harly Mclaugh (Hear Music) • The Kooks (Atlantic)

SPRING: Lil Jon, "Crunk Rock" (TVT) • Nelly, "Brass Knuckles" (Universal) • Weezer (Geffen) • The Raconteurs (Third Man) • Superglass (Parlophone) • Antony & the Johnsons, "The Crying Light" (Secretly Canadian) • Metric (Last Gang) • Amanda Palmer (Eight Foot / Roadrunner) • Keri Hilson, "In a Perfect World" (MCA / Zone 4)

JUNE: Parrish Hob (Roadrunner)

JUNE 27: Brokan Social Scene Presents Brendan Carnings (Arts & Crafts)

JUNE: Dido (RCA) • Lee "Scratch" Perry and Andrew Weatherall, "Reptarance" (Warner) • No Age (Sub Pop) • H&J (Roadrunner) • Opeth (Roadrunner) • Tenth Avenue North (Reunion)

JUNE 15: July of Stars and Track & Field (Wind-up)

JULY: Don Maget and the New So and So and Epi's (Ep) • Dragonforce (Roadrunner) • Third Day (Essential) • Endless Hallway (Wind-up) • Pilot Speed (Wind-up)

SUMMER: Neil Young, "Archives Vol. 1" (Reprise) • The Cure (Sire / Geffen) • The Hold Steady (Vagrant) • Jonas Brothers (Hollywood) • The All-American Rejects (Interscope) • Avant (Capitol) • Underoath (Tooth & Nail) • Gym Class Heroes ( Decaydance) • The Kooks (Atlantic) • Anberlin (Universal Republic) • Black Stone Cherry (Roadrunner) • OK Go (Capitol) • David Moore, "My Lover, My Stranger" (Doghouse)

MID-2008: Indio.Arie (Universal) • Ray LaMontagne (RC)

SEPTEMBER: Slipknot (Roadrunner) • Plain White T's (Hollywood)

JESSICA SIMPSON is spending time in Nashville finishing her first country album.

APRIL 11 on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. Aiding the buzz: the rapper's new reality show on A&E.

Disturbed, "Indestructible" (Warner Bros.)

Death Cab for Cutie, TBA (Atlantic)

Spring/Second Quarter

Mariah Carey, TBA (Island)

Usher, TBA (Jive)

Lil Mama, "Voice of the Young People" (U)
The Fray, TBA (Epic)
The Denver group's 2005 debut, "How to Save a Life," built slowly, but after its title track scored a key placement in "Grey's Anatomy," it was off to the races. The album has now shifted more than 2.24 million copies in the United States, meaning the pressure is surely on for its followup. Producer Mike Flynn has logged time with the band in Denver doing preproduction on six new songs, which he describes as "incredible. They've turned into a great live band after two-and-a-half years of straight touring." The group was playing new songs "Happiness" and "Dixie" during recent shows, but it's not clear whether they'll make the cut. "I love those songs," Flynn says. "But they may think of them as older because they've toured them a lot.

Franz Ferdinand, TBA (Epic)
"The idea of making a dirty pop record—this is what has been on our minds," Franz Ferdinand frontman Alex Kapranos says of ongoing sessions in Glasgow. "It's the opposite of punk/pop, which took something that was wonderful and removed all the dirt." The approach is best heard on "Ride Together," a "full-on upbeat, riding across the desert rock song. A lot of the other stuff is more rhythm-and-dance-based," he says. "For me, the imperfections are what makes it perfect, like the cheapest, shittiest guitar through practice amps.

Jewel, TBA (Valory Music Group)
"If I had been discovered now, living in my car in San Diego, I think I would have been signed as a country act," Jewel says. "As a singer/songwriter and as a storyteller, I'm old-fashioned. I like a beginning, middle and end to my songs. That's pretty much just country radio now." Indeed, the artist will try her hand in Nashville with this album, the first release for Scott Borchetta's new Valory label. Among the confirmed tracks are the single "Stronger Women" and "Perfectly Clear," a previously unrecorded concert staple.

Fall
Taylor Swift, TBA (Big Machine)
This best new artist Grammy Award nominee should bring forth her sophomore album by late third quarter/early fourth quarter. Nathan Chapman is back as producer and label chief Scott Borchetta will again act as executive producer. While only in the early stages of recording, Swift anticipates that as with her first record, she will have a hand in writing or co-writing every song. The first batch of material includes co-writes with John Rich and Colbie Caillat, the latter of whom will add background vocals once the song is recorded.

TBA
U2, TBA (Interscope)
After extensive writing sessions with longtime collaborators Brian Eno and Daniel Lanois in France and Morocco, U2 now has enough material for two new albums, according to Bono. Word is some of the songs have "trance influences" and "very hardcore guitar" playing from the edge. "It feels like the 'Achtung Baby' period, when everybody was really hungry to do something fresh," Lanois says. And while there hasn't been any confirmation, Bono has claimed the set will feature "Mercy," a six-and-a-half-minute epic left over from the "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb" sessions.

Metallica, TBA (Warner Bros.)
Metallica will likely be a fixture on the summer festival circuit in support of its ninth studio album, which features Rick Rubin stepping into the producer's chair for the first time. Two new songs played during summer 2006 shows will likely show up in different versions, while other tracks sounding like Metallica's band sudden dynamic shifts. "We get together, we listen to some riff tape from Madrid or Glasgow or Peoria, Ill., and we sit down and go, 'What if this?' and 'What if that?,' and then we spend the next six hours trying to remember how to write songs," drummer Lars Ulrich said during the sessions.

Jessica Simpson, TBA (Columbia Nashville)
Believe it: Simpson is in Nashville right now making her debut country album. Simpson declined to name songwriting collaborators, but says she will most definitely be involved in the creative process. "Writing is a release for me," she says. "It's a way for me to tell my story. That's not to say I wouldn't record a song that I didn't write. It's just that it has been a while since I have opened the book." But why country, and why now? "I am a country girl," she says. "I grew up in Texas, and country music was what I listened to. I always wanted to make a country album, but I wanted to wait until the time was right.

Sugarland, TBA (MCA Nashville)
"I think one of the focuses we have right now is to attempt songs that are dealing with true emotions, honest emotions," guitarist/vocalist Kristian Bush says of Sugarland's next album, recording for which will likely begin in February. Already in the mix are roughly 20 songs, including the anemic "Fall Into Me" and the arena rock-sounding "Take Me As I Am," which Bush describes as falling "somewhere between Def Leppard and the Pretenders." Both tracks were road-tested during the country act's recently wrapped debut headlining tour.

John Mellencamp, "The Company We Keep" (Universal)
Recorded last summer with producer T-Bone Burnett at Mellencamp's home studio in Belmont, Ind., this effort is "very, very, very organic," according to guitarist Mike Wanchic. "Upright basses, cockatoo [drum] kits and lots of acoustic guitars." Songs like "A Ride Back Home," "Young Without Lovers," "If I Die Suddenly," "Jena" and "Troubled Land" have been part of Mellencamp's recent live sets. "We had no intention of making a record," Wanchic says. "Inspiration hit."
Hanging Chad

Last year’s Best Bets issue shone our crystal ball all across the music industry map. A year later, it’s clear that some of our prognostications hit the nail on the head, while others missed the mark.

Six Predictions For 2007 We Got Right

1. Labels Begin To Drop DRM
   If digital rights management on digital music will ever completely vanish, 2007 was the year the trend began. In April, EMI Music Group offered its entire catalog DRM-free, first to iTunes, and then gradually to multiple other outlets—including the newly launched Amazon download service. Later that summer, Universal Music Group followed with a limited DRM-free “trial” that also included Amazon’s new store, as well as pretty much every other service, save iTunes.
   —Antony Bruno

2. User-Generated Revenue Takes Shape
   All the major labels struck deals with social networks and other sources of user-generated content in an effort to turn traffic into revenue. The primary model is taking a share of ad revenue from services that stream either videos or music. And in many cases, litigation is the first step toward striking a deal, such as Warner Music Group first suing, then partnering with one such site—Imeem. —AB

3. Radiohead Launches Label To Distribute New Album
   As predicted, Radiohead attempted to jettison the old music business model and reap a greater portion of revenue from record sales. The band sold a download version of its “In Rainbows” album beginning Oct. 10 from its own Web site, allowing customers to name their own price. At the same time, fans could pre-order a boxed set version for £40 ($81.76). A physical version of the album will arrive Jan. 1 in the United States—on a new RED-distributed ATO imprint called TBD—a day after its international release.
   —Ed Christman

4. Indie Labels Merge And Equal Vision Scores Big On The Charts
   Equal Vision’s top act, Chiodos, entered The Billboard 200 at No. 5; on the same label, Circa Survive came in at No. 24 and The Fall of Troy bowed at No. 26. Merge Records had an even bigger year, with Arcade Fire’s “Neon Bible” debuting at No. 2 and Spoon’s “Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga” entering at No. 10. Those two albums have gone on to sell 312,000 and 161,000 units, respectively, according to Nielsen SoundScan.
   —Courtney Harding

5. Birmingham Becomes A Global Hot Spot
   Though we expected bands from the United Kingdom’s “second city” to be the names on everyone’s lips at year’s end, we certainly didn’t anticipate that the key name would be Led Zeppelin. But even ahead of Zep’s reunion, summer 2007 belonged to alt-rockers tipped in our Best Bets issue. The Twang’s debut set hit No. 3 on the Official U.K. Charts Co.’s albums chart in June. Then albums by Editors and nearby Coventry-based the Enemy both hit No. 1.
   —Tom Ferguson

6. Roger Waters Has Blockbuster Tour
   Extending his limited 2006 run playing Pink Floyd’s classic album “The Dark Side of the Moon” live, Roger Waters embarked on a more ambitious undertaking in 2007. He surpassed expectations at the box office, ranking seventh among all touring artists in the world, taking in $53.2 million and drawing 627,839 people to just 40 shows reported to Billboard Boxscore.
   —Ray Waddell

Six Predictions For 2007... Not So Much

1. MP3s Move Into The Car
   While there remains great interest in extending digital music into the car, there’s been little push to make that happen. Small steps did occur, such as Ford introducing Microsoft’s Sync music system late in the year. Also, iTunes teamed up with HD radio manufacturers to add a “buy” button to HD units so users can tag songs they hear on the radio for later purchase. But by and large, an affordable system to bring MP3s into the vehicle is yet to be realized.
   —AB

2. UMG Pulls Content From iTunes
   Last year we qualified this prediction by prefacing it with an acknowledgment that our crystal ball was a little cloudy. It turns out what we meant to say was that Universal Music Group wouldn’t renew its contract with iTunes and would instead supply music to the store on a month-by-month basis. In a midyear development, UMG gave MP3 versions of its digital catalog to Amazon—but not to iTunes.
   —EC

3. EC Rules Against Sony-BMG Merger
   Contrary to our prediction, the European Commission did not even demand concessions when it re-examined the 2004 decision to allow the two music titans to join forces. While the European Court of First Instance annulled the EC’s initial merger clearance on Oct. 3, citing “manifest errors of assessment,” the EC cleared it again, ruling it “would not raise competition concerns in any of the affected markets.” The decision provoked fury from Pan-European indie labels body Impala, which at year’s end was considering applying for a formal inquiry by the European Ombudsman into why the deal was cleared.
   —TF

4. EMI And WMG Announce A Merger
   At the end of 2007, EMI Group’s future was still sparking industry speculation—as it was in January, when we predicted its lengthy courtship with Warner Music Group would finally be consummated. But May’s offer from private equity group Terra Firma of £2.65 ($5.25) per share was enough to ditch WMG at the altar.
   —TF

5. XM And Sirius Merge
   In February the two satellite radio broadcasters announced their desire to unite, but 10 months later the proposed marriage is yet to be consummated. Stockholders have approved the move, but the companies await approval from the Federal Trade Commission and the FCC. The National Assn. of Broadcasters, which represents terrestrial radio, has spent millions lobbying against the merger, contending it would constitute a monopoly. The satcasters counter that they compete with a variety of entertainment options, including terrestrial radio, iPods and the Internet.
   —Ken Tucker

6. Bands Cross The $200 Ticket Plane
   Only one of the top 10 tours—the Police reunion tour, the most anticipated run in years—boasted top ticket prices with a face value exceeding $200 across the board. The operative phrase here, though, is “face value.” On the secondary market, $200 tickets for an in-demand show would often be considered a bargain. According to StubHub, the secondary-market leader, a wide range of acts average more than $200 a pop on StubHub.
   —RW
And Not Only That

Further top stories from the year ahead

By Barry Melancon

"Doop Tones" become the next big revenue stream in the industry

Hollywood writers are joined on strike by pop music lyricists (leading to the new "humming" craze)

The surviving members of the Who and the Beatles re-unite for a tour (as the "Whistles")

Steve Jobs insists 50 Cent change his name to 99 Cent, if he wants to sell his music on iTunes (a feud ensues)

Mismatched duet CDs abound, off the successful Robert Plant, Alison Krauss collaboration. (the Rob Zombie/Celine Dion pairing proves to be a slow starter, however)

Josh Groban releases his next holiday CD

"Grey's Anatomy" will continue to be considered the "new radio" offering with the latest weather report and sports scores woven neatly into the show

Todd Haynes' next bio-pic, "I'm Still There" (about Barry Manilow) will feature several actors portraying sultry, enigmatic music man

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La Arrolladora Banda Limón - Artista o Grupo Banda del Año
Diana Reyes - Artista Femenina del Año
El Chapo de Sinaloa - Artista Masculino del Año
Vicente Fernandez - Artista Ranchero del Año
Pequeños Musical - Revelación Banda
Los Creadores del Pasito Duranguense - Revelación como Grupo o Artista Duranguense
Los Chicos de Barrio - Revelación como Grupo o Artista Tropical
El Chapo de Sinaloa - Revelación como Artista o Grupo Romántico
Los Inquietos del Norte - Revelación como Grupo o Artista Norteño
Beto y Sus Canarios - Artista o Grupo Tierra Caliente
Los Alegres de la Sierra - Artista o Grupo Sierreño del Año
Los Tigres del Norte - El Mejor Disco del Año
Los Tigres del Norte - El Mejor Video del Año
Sueño Norteño - Premio PREMMUSA Internet
Chicago - La Mejor Plaza del Año
La Que Buena de Chicago - La Mejor Radio del Año
Ivan Fernandez - El Mejor Promotor del Año
Paquita la del Barrio - Premio Especial por su Trayectoria Musical de 35 años
Pablo Montero - Charro del Año
Ezequiel "Cheque" Peña - El Nuevo Charro Mexicano
Banda Machos - Trayectoria Musical
What They Covet

A Grammy Award is "probably the most coveted award in the music industry," Universal Group Nashville (UMGN) chairman Luke Lewis says. Even the nod leading up to the statuette can boost artist awareness and album sales, as some nominees this year have already observed.

Kanye West, Amy Winehouse, Foo Fighters, Vince Gill and Herbie Hancock will vie for the album of the year honor at the 50th annual Grammy Awards, Feb. 10 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. In the days following the Dec. 6 nominations announcement in Hollywood, the impact was felt at retail.

"We've had a huge increase in sales, both in terms of immediate sales online and orders at retail," Verve Music Group president/CEO Monte Lipman says. "Sea of retailers feature Grammy-nominated product in the front of their stores." In addition, "you get to put a sticker on the CD for the rest of its life, saying, 'Grammy-nominated' or 'Grammy winner'—that's always helpful," he says.

For British soul revivalist Winehouse, whose alleged drug use has made her a tabloid favorite, the top album nod for "Back to Black" puts the "focus back on the artistry," Universal Republic Records president/CEO Monte Lipman says. "What's happened is that you've taken the focus away from the magic of the music and putting it in that tabloid story," he says. "It's a knee-jerk reaction back into the place where we want to be." Indeed, Lipman also notes that Winehouse's rebellious attitude is part of her appeal. "That is the spirit of our campaign," he says. "To have an artist come up there and be so cavalier and not really give a shit about commercial success is so refreshing and so exciting, and it's a large part of Amy's charm."

Along with album of the year, Winehouse is recognized in six other categories, including artist of the year and song of the year for "Rehab," which peaked at No. 9 on the Billboard Hot 100. These are the singer's first Grammy nominations.

"Back to Black," which hasn't left the Billboard 200 since debuting at No. 7 last March, has sold 1.3 million copies. The only other album to have sold more than "Back to Black" in the category is West's "Graduation" (Def Jam), which has sold 1.2 million units. With eight total, the Chicago rapper also has nods in the categories for best rap solo performance, best rap/sung collaboration, best rap song and best rap performance by a duo or group.

Upon its debut, West's third album achieved the best sales week in more than two years, shifting 957,000 copies. The achievement is proof that "more people need to buy into the greatness of Kanye West," Island Def Jam Music Group chairman Antonio "L.A." Reid says. "There are so many people in the world, and the music that we sell barely scratches the surface, so there's always room for growth." For some acts, a Grammy nomination never gets old. After 13 years, four Grammy wins and multiple nods, the Foo Fighters will vie for the top album prize with "Echoes, Silence, Patience & Grace" (Roswell/RCA), which has sold 427,000 copies. Foo bassist Nate Mendel says the band set the bar high writing and recording "Echoes," which makes recognition that much sweeter.

"An argument can be made that we've done some of the best music that we've ever done," Mendel says. "To have it succeed well enough to where we get a Grammy nomination is fantastic."

THE NOMINEES: ALBUM OF THE YEAR

"ECHOES, SILENCE, PATIENCE & GRACE"

Foo Fighters

Vince Gill, producer; Adrian Bushby, and Rich Costey, engineers/mixers;

Brain Gardner, mastering engineer

Roswell/RCA Records

"RIVER: THE JONI LETTERS"

Herbie Hancock

Herbie Hancock and Larry Klein, producers; Helik Hadar, engineer/mixer; Bernie Grundman, mastering engineer

Verve Record

"GRADUATION"

Kanye West

"These Days" and Kylie Minogue, producers; Brian "Allday" Miller, Nottz, Patrick "Plain Pat" Reynolds, Gee Robinson, Toomp and Kanye West, producers;

Universal Republic

Bruce Beuchner, Andrew Dawson, Mike Dean, Anthony Kilhoffer, Greg Koller, Manny Marroquin, Nottz Raw, Tony Rey, Soji Sekine, Paul Sheehy and D. Sloan, engineers/mixers; Vlad Meller, mastering engineer

Roc-a-Fella/Def Jam

"BACK TO BLACK"

Amy Winehouse

Mark Ronson and Salaam Remi, producers; Tom Elmhirst, Gary Noble and Franklin Scorzo, engineers/mixers;

Universal Republic

www.americanradiohistory.com
Last year at this time, Grammy Award nominations fell in the R&B/hip-hop sector centered primarily around one name: Mary J. Blige. Her contender-leading eight nominations sparked a bevy of comeback-laden headlines.

This time, the key name is Kanye West, as stories rightfully trumpet the hip-hop/pop star’s field-leading eight nominations (followed by Amy Winehouse with six). But there’s also a key word that can be associated with the upcoming 50th annual Grammy Awards: diverse. Not only is that especially evident in the album of the year category, but also in the eight categories that comprise the R&B field.

As first-timers and established acts vied for nominations in several categories, there’s a stronger sense that Grammy voters are still focused on strengthening their tuned-in stance. For instance, best female R&B vocal performance finds Blige (“Just Fine”), Fantasia (“When I See You”), Alicia Keys (“No One”) and Jill Scott (“Hate On Me”) sharing the nod with newcomer Christine Michele (“If I Have My Way”), who some thought should have also wrangled a best new artist nod.


Perhaps the most improved R&B category over last year is best urban/alternative performance. Carping was heavy last year that the relatively new category was in danger of losing its credibility by following Damien Marley’s win the previous year with nods that included two songs from the Sergio Mendes tribute album “Timeless” and standard funk from Prince (“3121”).

But while several left-of-center names like Donnie and others are missing, there’s still a white-hot vibe to this year’s urban/alternative slate. The nominees are Vikter Duplaix, Dwele, Lupe Fiasco featuring JIll Scott, McShiel, Ndegeocello and indie/now major label (Epic) buzz artist Alice Smith. Beyond this category, there are also first-time nominations for soul singer/songwriter Raheem DeVaughn (best male R&B vocal performance) and longtime indie artist Ledisi (best new artist and best R&B album for her Verve debut “Lost & Found”).

“These nominations give hope to other indie R&B/soul artists who are stamping the same ground; these artists have,” says Jodine Dorce of Atlanta-based Jodine’s Corner.

DeVaughn’s manager Jerry Vines adds, “This will be good for his career; going forward in terms of bringing in some of the music that was available before, like TV and major publications. They have to pay attention now, because it’s real.”

Top Rap Stars Rewarded With Multiple Grammy Award Nods

As opposed to past years, where artists like Jay-Z and Eminem skipped the Grammy Awards due to what they perceived as shoddy treatment of hip-hop, leading artists like Kanye West and 50 Cent are at the forefront of the genre’s nominations for 2008.

“For the last eight years, the Grammys have done a great job balancing acts that are mainstream sellers with artists that are known for artistic expression,” WGHT (Hot 97) New York PD Fred Borden says. “In the past when it came to R&B and hip-hop, they chose what was popular, had savvy marketing or good political positioning. Now, they’re doing a better job of capturing both.”

Tracks like Common’s “The People” and 50 Cent’s “Get Money” received nominations for best rap solo performance, aligning with what were viewed by many rap observers as career-shifting songs.

The excitement generated by “Get Money” helped put its parent album, “Curtis,” back on track after two prior singles failed to crack the top 30 on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. “Money” reached No. 1 on that chart and garnered a remix with marquee MCs Diddy and Jay-Z.

“I’m pleasantly surprised that the Grammys chose a song that’s so true to hip-hop,” Interscope co-head of marketing Chris Clancy says. “The song was monumental in re-launching his album because it was the 50 everyone fell in love with and it connected the dots back to his fans.”

In categories like best rap performance by a duo or group and best rap song, pop culture pervasiveness and ringtone sales seemed to guide the nominations. Case in point: newcomers the Boyz (“Party Like a Rockstar,” which is up for best rap performance by a duo or group). The track sold more than 1.76 million master ringtones but wasn’t exactly considered an artistic masterpiece.

However, it crystallized the increasing fascination with rock influences in urban music.

Along the same lines was rookie Soulja Boy, who was nominated for best rap song for “Crack That (Soulja Boy).” The track spent seven weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 and has sold 1.88 million master ringtones.

Ringtone sales were “an added bonus in the nomination process,” says Universal Republic senior VP of urban music Elise Wright, who works with the Boyz. “We’re still utilizing the ringtone as additional marketing tool and that’s a wonderful thing.”

Elsewhere, recognition came for veterans. Two days after Pimp C’s sudden death, UGK earned the first nomination of its nearly 20-year career for “Int’l Players Anthem (I Choose You)” featuring OutKast, for best rap performance by a duo or group. “UGK were one of the first guys to come out of Texas besides the Geto Boys,” Jive senior director Jeff Sledge says. “They essentially put the whole Texas rap scene on their back and took it national.”

As for West’s leading eight nominations, his street single “Can’t Tell Me Nothing” is up for best rap song, while the poppier, Daft Punk-sampling “Stronger” is up for best rap solo performance, acknowledging the Grammys’ turn toward both mainstream and niche hip-hop songs.

“In a time when everyone is complaining about the quality of R&B/hip-hop material, we can be recognized with an astounding number of nominations,” Def Jam president Jay-Z says. “I always believed that if you make great music, everything else will follow.”
The Right Notes
Observers Say Country Grammy Nods Ring True

When it comes to the Grammy Awards, there have been a number of disconnects through the years among winners, nominees and what's considered to be widely popular in country music. The fact that Lyle Lovett and K.D. Lang were voted top country male and female in 1989 still sticks in the craw of some. While Lovett did score two top 20 singles during the eligibility period — "Give Back My Heart" and "She's No Lady" — and Lang's "I'm Down to My Last Cigarette" reached No. 21 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart, neither artist was universally accepted by radio.

But times have changed — this year's nominees include Carrie Underwood, Tim McGraw, Dierks Bentley, George Strait and Reba McEntire — and industry insiders say the latest crop is pretty much right on target. The Recording Academy's nominating body has come a long way in the past 10 years in terms of nominating artists and songs that actually matter to the majority of country music fans," says Scott Lindy, director of country programming for Sirius Satellite Radio.

But Bruce Logan, regional VP of programming for Clear Channel Radio, thinks there are a few notable misses. "The music by Bascal Flatts, Kenny Chesney and Sugarland stands shoulder to shoulder with any of [the other] nominees," he says. None of those acts received a Grammy nod despite very successful years.

Capitol Nashville VP of sales Bill Kennedy says that while he's satisfied with most of the nominations, Sugarland should have been recognized for its current single, "Stay."

"The performance of this single is impacting their careers as much as anything they've had," he says. "Somebody missed that one."

Logan and Lindy agree that Taylor Swift deserved to be nominated for best overall new artist.

"Not many artists of any format have had the kind of first year she has had," Logan says. "For Taylor Swift to be nominated for best new artist in all genres of music is huge for country music," Lindy adds.

As for Vince Gill, who's nominated in the overall album of the year category as well as the best country album category, Logan and Lindy also approve. "By sheer volume Vince produced more music than any other artist this year," Logan says of Gill's 43-song, four-disc set "These Days," and in typical Vince fashion it was top quality music."

A Benny Benassi remix of a PUBLIC ENEMY song is up for a Grammy.

A Remix Mason

Ultra Dominates Grammy Remix Category

Ultra Records staged a coup in the Grammy Awards' best remixed recording, non-classical category this year. The New York-based label not only took three of the five nominations, a first for a single label and particularly rare for an indie, but two of the three nods were for projects initiated by Ultra stateside. It's a major referendum for the label, which does the bulk of its business licensing material originally released overseas.

"Look at the Kaskade Dirty South mix. A San Francisco-based artist like Kaskade is remixed by Australian remixer Dirty South, and it's magic, a hit Hot Dance Airplay record, with 40 plus compilation uses worldwide," Ultra president Patrick Moxey says. "Does this happen every remix? No, but when the remix magic happens, it happens big."
In Latin Categories, Grammy Attention Rarely Adds Up To Sales

As far as Latin acts are concerned, a Grammy Award nomination may bring prestige. It may bring pride. But it does not generally bring sales.

Only a few of the albums nominated in Latin categories for the 50th annual Grammys show experienced sales upticks in the week following the nominations, a random survey of such albums suggests. And even in those cases where there was an increase, it was negligible.

Pepe Aguilar’s “100% Mexicano” (EMI Televisa), for example, nominated in the best Mexican/Mexican American album category, saw sales rise 1% the week ending Dec. 9, compared with the week ending Dec. 2. Alejandro Sanz’s “El Tren de los Momentos” (Warner) for best Latin pop album, jumped 4%—but it sold just a couple of hundred copies that week, despite Sanz being on tour.

“The Grammy nominations are decided by a committee,” says Alberto Uribe, head buyer for retail chain Ritmo Latino. “So you see many acts that may be very talented, but are totally unknown. And you don’t see a reaction.”

The Latin Grammys face a similar hurdle, he says. A sales reaction, he adds, can be better seen in awards like Premios Juventud—where winners are chosen online—or Billboard’s own Premios Billboard, determined by sales and airplay.

Through the years, sales bumps for Grammy and Latin Grammy winners and nominees have been modest, unless a performance is involved. In the week following last year’s Nov. 10 Latin Grammys, for example, the most notable sales reaction was seen by performers Juan Luis Guerra and Camila, who saw an increase of 2,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But following their performance—not even win—at Premios Juventud in July, Camila saw a sales increase of 3,000 units.

“There is a lot of impact, but not directly in sales,” says Miguel Garrocho, owner of marketing/promotion company GIG Entertainment, whose clients include Grammy-nominated rock band Rabanes. However, he adds, there are enough promotional opportunities to be gained from a Grammy nomination that sales may eventually follow. Rabanes recently won a Latin Grammy for its album “Kamikaze” (Universal), which is now nominated for a Grammy in the best Latin rock/alternative category. And though “Kamikaze” has sold barely more than 2,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Label manager Patricia Flores says media interest has catapulted.

With the Grammys, “the categories are so limited that it boosts up the level of prestige,” she says. “Note there are more than 40 Latin Grammy categories, compared with Latin categories in the Grammys.

Still, Latin label involvement in the Grammys remains limited. This is in part because Latin acts are rarely seen during the Grammy telecast. The last Latin artist to collect a Grammy on camera was Shakira in 2001.

This year, with no Latin acts making major waves, labels are not aggressively marketing and promoting their Grammy nominees.

“I don’t have a single promotion going on with Grammy nominees,” Uribe says.

While some labels are offering discounts on their Grammy nominated albums, he says, “there is no co-op, positioning or other economic support.”

Still, the Grammy mystique is big. “It solidifies your artistic integrity and boosts the group’s morale,” says Sunny Sauceda, up for best Tejano album for “Vagar Librementre,” on indie Tejas Records. “We’re very honored,” says Sauceda, who hopes to get noticed by a major label, and who will definitely attend the Grammys. “Just being nominated is awesome.”
**GOSPEL**

**KIRK FRANKLIN**

_The Fight of My Life_

Producers: Kirk Franklin, Harold Martin

Fo’ Yo’ Soul/Gospel Centric/Zomba Gospel

Release Date: Dec. 18

Franklin’s latest in his decade-plus string of gold and platinum should continue his reign as gospel’s pre-eminent hitmaker and most visible, formidable figure. With trademark, multi-genre eclecticism, he draws well on talents as diverse as traditional gospel’s Rance Allen, and Isaac Carree (Men of Standard), who guests on the funk-filled jam “Little Boy.” The eternally soulful Williams Brothers soar on “Still (In Control),” and Da T.R.U.T.H. helps Franklin show his rap chops are intact on “I Like Me.” “Help Me Believe” is a sweet, silky ballad, and contemporary Christian mainstay tobyMac and his band join on “I Am God,” easily Franklin’s most fearless and effective foray into rock to date, with a climactic choral coda elevating it to anthemic proportions. Twelve years into a storied career, Franklin is still right on target.—**GE**

**HIP-HOP**

**CHINGY**

_Love It or Hate It_

Producers: various

Disrupting Tha Peace/Def Jam

Release Date: Dec. 18

Now, too she’s finished the drama and achieved her “Breakthrough,” Mary J. Blige is in a good space. Fans used to hearing her pour her pain out on record will just have to get used to that. The singer’s latest effort, “Growing Pains,” much like its phenomenal 2006 predecessor “The Breakthrough,” focuses on more learning and progressing than dwelling and wallowing. The cheery lead single “Just Fine” finds Blige proclaiming, “No more time for moping around, are you kid-ding? And no more time for negative vibes, ’cause I’m winning.” This happy-go-lucky state sometimes makes for less compelling stories and yields too much flowery empowerment language. But the disc picks up near the end, when Blige allows for venting over more downcast rhythms like the Stargate-produced “Fade Away,” where she longs to be invisible, and “Smoke,” upbeat or solemn, though, the message is clear: Keep on trucking.—**COH**

**MARY J. BLIGE**

_Growing Pains_

Producers: various

Geffen

Release Date: Dec. 18

you’ll want to send her flowers and cupcakes after hearing her work on the soundtrack to _The Great Debaters_, a film directed by Denzel Washington set in 1930s West Texas. Jones and her band are building a small empire with their ’60s-style Stax-Volt soul revival work, but “Debaters” is for her to reanimate old desert blues numbers like “It’s Tight Like That” and “That’s What My Baby Likes,” which she does with a throat-grabbing power and sexiness. The soundtrack is rounded out by front-porch stompers by Alvin “Youngblood” Hart and the Carolina Chocolate Drops, all of which will get the blood moving. But when Jones and the Angelic Voices of Fear tiptoe into the gospel raves—“We Shall Not Be Moved” and “Up Above My Head”—it’s easy to wonder whether she or Denzel is the star of the show.—**JW**

**SOUNDTRACK**

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

_Original Broadway Cast Recording—Young Frankenstein_

Producer: Doug Besterman

Decca

Release Date: Dec. 25

The follow-up to Mel Brooks’ smash hit “The Producers” is more vaudeville jukebox than a fully realized new creation. The show’s core gag is adapting the American musical cannon with appropriately Transylvanian references: Call us batty if the title character’s ode to “The Brain” (as in “there is nothing like”) isn’t a sendup of “There Is Nothing Like a Dame” from “South Pacific.” That angle, plus the expected whiz-bang production, make the show more a family-friendly, Disney-ish adaptation than a board-stomping “musical’s musical” like “The Producers.” But the veteran hoofin’ cast—Roger Bart in the title role, “I” girl Sutton Foster as buxom lab assistant Inga and Megan Mullally showing just how much she owes to Madeleine Kahn as Frankenstein’s bride Elizabeth—give it their professionally polished all, making what could be just another throwaway blockbuster into a buoyantly silly good time.—**KM**

**JONNY GREENWOOD**

_There Will Be Blood_

Producer: Graeme Stewart

Nonesuch

Release Date: Dec. 18

In Paul Thomas Anderson’s “There Will Be Blood,” Jonny Greenwood’s score turns a portrait of a turn-of-the-century oil mag-

**LUFE FIASCO**

_The Cool_

Producers: various

bit & 15th/Atlantic

Release Date: Dec. 18

A lot of musicians claim to ignore their critics, but Lupe Fiasco evidently not only reads them, but organizes his response into album form: “Robots and skateboards, nigga? G Man of the Year? It?” intones a group of many fictional haters on “The Cool.” A semi-concept record soaking with ambition and featuring characters named the Streets, the Cool and the Game, “The Cool” is also a sprawling term paper on most of the problems with mainstream hip-hop (“I’m brainless, which means I’m headless, like Icbaboo Crane is ... with no neck left to hang a chain with,” he scowls in character), and why he is the man to fix it. At times it’s a bit snobby, but never less than listenable and frequently gripping. His flow has certainly lumbered up (“Go Go Gadjet Flow” and the funny, near-playful “Gold Watch”), and his piths-off-name riffs (first single “Superstar”) are bemused and cautionary rather than gloomy.—**JW**

**DVD**

**KISS**


Producers: Alex Coletti, Roger Coletti

VH1 Classic

Release Date: Dec. 18

As the third and presumably final chapter of “Kissology” begins, the band is at a valley in its career. By 1992, Kiss was still capable of selling out arenas, but following their ’70s hey-day and the hair metal explosion of the ’80s, they were less relevant than ever in the age of Nirvana. The reunion of the original members for “MTV Unplugged” in 1995 and the tour the following year showed the band cashing in on the nostalgia of a generation of fans that had never seen them in makeup, as well as countless fans that had. Unfortunately, this is the least interesting of the anthologies. While the first two had countless TV appearances, music videos and the so-bad-it’s-good TV movie “Kiss Meets the Phantom of the Park,” this four-disc set gets by on four concerts, the “Unplugged” show, performances at the MTV Video Music Awards and the “Detroit Rock City” premiere. Luckily, disc four consists of Kiss’ first appearance in makeup, recorded shakily in black and white in 1973 at the club Coventry in Queens.—**BT**

**BLUES**

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

_The Great Debaters OST_

Producers: various

Atlantic

Release Date: Dec. 18

Despite one of the most butter-smooth voices in contemporary R&B, Jaheim returns with his first album for Atlantic. The soulful crooner adopts a more mature, introspective stance, softening the edges of the “thug R&B” tag inspired by his 2001 debut. Among the best songs is “Never,” an emotional ballad about commitment that is climbing Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. While slow jams remain Jaheim’s forte, he infuses more midtempo flavor here. He trades off nicely with Keyshia Cole on “I’ve Changed” before serving up the moving autobiographical cut “Back Together Again.” Two quibbles: Album opener “Voice of R&B” is a posturing track better left on the editing floor. And does a classic, Bobby Womack’s “If You Think You’re Lonely Now,” really need to be updated (“Lonely”) with new lyrics? As a formidable heir to such forebears as Luther Vandross and Barry White, Jaheim doesn’t need to travel that route.—**GM**

**JAEHEIM**

_The Makings of a Man_

Producers: various

Atlantic

Release Date: Dec. 18

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*January 5, 2008*
**THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS**

**SINGLES**

**COUNTRY**

**GARTH BROOKS & HUEY LEWIS**

*Workin’ for a Livin’ (2:44)*

**Writer:** Allen Reynolds

**Producer:** C. Hayes, H. Lewis

**Publisher:** not listed

Pearl/Big Machine

Garth Brooks has never met a marketing novelty he didn’t like. How many times has he repackaged his catalog at this point? Perhaps his “More Than a Memory” certainly delivered intended impact, debuting in September at No. 1 at country. Follow-up from “The Ultimate Hits” is a remake of Huey Lewis’ 1982 “When It’s Right.” Lead vocals are provided by various artists:

**RAY STEVENS**

*Hurricane (4:21)*

**Producer:** Ray Stevens

**Writer:** R. Stevens, C.W. Kalb Jr.

**Publisher:** Ray Stevens Music

**RAY STEVENS**

*Lost (3:26)*

**Producer:** David Foster

**Humberto Gatica**

**Writer:** M. Buble, J. Arden

**Publisher:** various

**AC**

**MICHAEL BUBLÉ**

*Lost* (3:26)

**Producer:** David Foster

**Humberto Gatica**

**Writer:** M. Buble, J. Arden

**Publisher:** various

**AC**

**RIHANNA**

*Don’t Stop the Music* (4:29)

**Producer:** Stargate

**Writer:** P.E. Hermansen, M.S. Eriksen, T. Daley, M. Jackson

**Publisher:** not listed

Def Jam

Rihanna’s “Don’t Stop the Music” was originally intended as a holiday present for dance clubs—but with iTunes digital downloads mounting like Olympus, top 40 sniffs the fine fragrance of a robust format hit from a proven artist. Already a chart-topper across Europe, fourth single from “Good Girl Gone Bad” is most-attended stateside. Song’s joyous tempo, madcap hook, easily ID’ed vocal from the talented, idolized singer—and “ma ma se, ma ma coo sa” sample popularized on Michael Jackson’s 1983 “Wanna Be Startin’ Something” is finally made as good as No. 1 gold. “Definitely Stop the Music” has been nominated for a Grammy Award for best dance recording, among six nods Rihanna earned at the upcoming 50th ceremony. This good girl can do no wrong.—CT

**JAZZ**

**OUT TO LUNCH**

*Excuse Me While I Boogalo* (48)

**Producer:** David Levy

**Accurate**

**Label:** Lucid

**World**

**APHRODESIA**

*Byos* by Gaze

**Webpack:** Jan 8

A very distinctive kind of funk jazz dominates the debut disc by Out to Lunch. Led by reed man David Levy, the other key players include Danny Weller and Matt Wighton (upright/electric bass), Adam Clark (drums/percussion), Josiah Woodson (trumpet/flute), Eric Lane (keyboards) and Petr Cancura (saxophone/clarinet). Opener “The Good Doctor” delivers a sweet shot of funk. The Wighton-Clark rhythm section lays the groundwork while successive solos by Lane, Levy and Woodson highlight the track. Another winning tune, “Davis (In Memory of Chris Driscoll),” owes more to Latin rhythms than funk, expanding the range of the listening experience. The song’s “Shimmy Shuffle” opens with a staccato rhythm, then gets funky on the bottom end, opening up an intriguing interplay of brass and reed.—PPV

**Country**

**GEORGE STANFORD**

*My Own Worst Enemy (3:36)*

**Writer:** George Stanford

**Producer:** G. Stanford

**Label:** not listed

**Publisher:** Mercury

**Multi-instrumentalist** George Stanford needs a break. His B-side single and Leo Williams’ are influences—musicians. He doesn’t often get in the song. Such a novel template plays out in striking debut “My Own Worst Enemy,” about the love/hate relationship he maintains with his younger sister. He once was an insistent acoustic pop/rock melodic trimming shades of bluegrass and—get this—a trombone solo, courtesy of Stanford, alongside pianos, guitars, keyboards, bass, percussion, harmonica and production. This young Philly native must be a blurb of activity on stage. A promising debut from a serious talent.—CT

**Rock**

**PARAMORE**

*Crushcrushcrush (3:09)*

**Writer:** David Batten

**Producer:** H. Williams, J. Farrow

**Label:** WB, ASCAP

**Publisher:** Fueiler by Rorem/Atlantic

Since forming in 2004, Paramore has gained national attention as one of the mainstays of the new wave of bands to break—on the Van Warped Tour. Led by precocious teen songwriting partners—vocalist Hayley Williams and guitarist Josh Farrow—the Franklin, Tenn., pop-punkers follow in the footsteps of Fuelled by Raman’s Shinedown. Fall Out Boy, “Mesmerize,” the ubiquitous first single from sophomore CD “Root” peaked at No. 34 on the Billboard Hot 100 and No. 6 on Hot Modern Rock Songs. The best new artist Grammy Award nominees for “Crushcrushcrush,” is poised to incite another wave of hysteria at modern rock and top 40 radio with “Crushcrushcrush.” The song showcases Williams’ authority as a vocalist and Farrow’s knack for crafting instantly recognizable melodies. Frequently compared to Avril Lavigne, Williams and her bandmates transcend the teen-pop/rock milieu with passion and ambition beyond their years.—AC

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**ADDITIONAL REVIEWS**

Additional reviews on this week’s on billboard.com:

- Joe Lally, “Nothing is Understood” (Stooges)
- Franz Zappa, “Wazoo” (Zappa Records)

**LEGEND & CREDITS**

EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) / JONATHAN COHEN & CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)


* P) A new release credited to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding section.

**CRITICS’ CHOICE: A new release, released chart potential, highly recommended for mass airplay.**

**ALL ALBUMS COMMERCIALLY AVAILABLE IN THE UNITED STATES ARE ELIGIBLE SEND ALBUM REVIEW COPIES TO Jonathan Cohen and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (707 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, NY 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureau.”
Groffan Grows Again, Fending Off Blige’s Bow

In defending hispri Billboard 200 crown against a strong first-week run by the new Mary J. Blige album, Josh Groban’s “Noel” earns more ink in the chart’s record books.

Five weeks at No. 1 is the longest tenure at No. 1 for any of the six Christmas albums that have topped the list in its 51-year history. Elvis Presley’s “Elvis Christmas Album” led in four consecutive weeks.

Beyond the Christmas streak, Groban’s “Noel” becomes the first album since 1991 to hold the big chart’s No. 1 slot for five straight weeks with gains in each of those frames. He maintains the streak with a 13% spike for the one that ended Dec. 23. That adds up to 757,000 copies, more than 100,000 ahead of Blige’s “Growing Pains” (629,000).

Groban’s growth streak boasts much larger totals than that of the only other Billboard 200 topper in Nielsen SoundScan history to notch gains in five straight weeks atop the page. That roll belonged to Natalie Cole’s “Unforgettable,” which rang 171,000 in the biggest of those weeks.

More startling is that barely more than five years, Groban’s six albums surpass 17 million to date, more than acts like Destiny’s Child, Sheryl Crow and Nickelback have achieved in longer chart lives with a lot more radio airplay.

Blige has a shot at next issue’s No. 1, as Christmas albums slow after the holiday. Meanwhile, “Growing Pains” becomes her eighth No. 1 on Top R&B/ Hip-Hop Albums, more than any female has earned since the chart adopted Nielsen SoundScan data in December 1992. Recent champ and current Greatest Gainer Alicia Keys ranks second in that field with four No. 1s.

## POP LIFE: This issue goes to press during the holiday break. So, while our readers are flung from the beaches of St. Barth’s to the Aspen slopes, Billboard’s charts team works to inform you on the biggest sales week of 2007. Still, the dawn of a new year seems an ideal time for your intrepid columnist to leave the charts and spreadsheets that cover my desk to tiptoe through the pop culture that lies outside the music business.

As a guy who enjoys his share of TV, I’m not thrilled to learn that the impasse between studios and the Writers Guild of America means only one or two fresh episodes are left of some of my favorite series. As if the networks aren’t already clogged by game shows and so-called reality shows.

Hey, are you like me? Whether you watch them or not, I find series like “Shining With The Stars,” “Celebrity Fit Club” and even ratings champ “Dancing With The Stars” have cheapened the meaning of the word “celebrity.” Meanwhile, with December’s repeats likely to drop into January, let me declare my two favorite new series of the 2007-2008 season. ABC’s “Pushing Daughters” and NBC’s “Chuck.” The former appeals for its offshore character and story lines, the crisp rhythm of its scripts and a colorful, imaginative visual style.

One Los Angeles Times scribe compared “Chuck” to ’60s series “The Man From U.N.C.L.E.” While another at that paper likened it to that era’s “The Wild, Wild West.” Both were favorites of my youth, so I consider those citations high praise, and thus, deserved by the new series.

If you get bogged down by serious or unscripted programming and happen to be a jazz fan, you might spend time with the Reelin’ “The Years/Novos DVD series “Jazz Icons.” Filmed in concerts, clubs and studios, these videos allow you to see influential musicians who you may have only heard, including Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, John Coltrane and Thelonious Monk and songbirds Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughan.

Unexpected gems sneak through the “Jazz Icons” programs, like during the closing credits of “Duke Ellington Live in ’57” when you see musicians and crew clear instruments and equipment from the stage at the end of a concert. Cool stuff.

Who knows? Aside from pumping Netflix and movie theaters, maybe the writers strike will reawaken us with those things called books, as “read more” tends to be one of my resolutions at the start of a new year.

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## Market Watch

### A Weekly National Music Sales Report

#### Year-To-Date

<table>
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<th>Album</th>
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<th>Physical Albums</th>
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<tr>
<td>Blige</td>
<td>57,984,000</td>
<td>486,030,000</td>
<td>546,014,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groban</td>
<td>55,831,000</td>
<td>801,227,000</td>
<td>857,058,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>113,815,000</td>
<td>1,287,257,000</td>
<td>1,401,072,000</td>
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</table>

*Digital album sales are also counted within album sales.

#### Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)

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<tr>
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<td>1,184,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1,184,000</td>
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Go to [www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com) for complete chart data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>WEEKS</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>CHARTS</th>
<th>DISTRIBUTING LABEL (PRICE)</th>
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<td>JOSH GROBAN</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>65</td>
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<td>MARY J. BLIGE - MVE (19.98)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>SRC/MCADDIE SONGS/INTERSCOPE</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Everything Is Fine</td>
<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD - CARRIE UNDERWOOD (19.98)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>BMG/RCA</td>
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<td>High School Musical 2</td>
<td>SNOOKY - SNOOKY (19.98)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>SONY MUSIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUCY PARIS</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFINE</td>
<td>Love Story</td>
<td>CFINE - CFINE (19.98)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>WILDFIRE/REPRISE</td>
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<tr>
<td>LED ZEPPELIN</td>
<td>Just Like You</td>
<td>LED ZEPPELIN - LED ZEPPELIN (19.98)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>WEA/REPRISE</td>
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<tr>
<td>JORDIN SPARKS</td>
<td>The Time Is Now</td>
<td>JORDIN SPARKS - JORDIN SPARKS (19.98)</td>
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<td>HEY MAMA</td>
<td>Best Friend</td>
<td>HEY MAMA - HEY MAMA (19.98)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>KYLIE MINOGUE</td>
<td>Gonna Make You Love Me</td>
<td>KYLIE MINOGUE - KYLIE MINOGUE (19.98)</td>
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<td>Justified</td>
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As the year continues to wind down, the Billboard 200 chart offers a snapshot of the most popular albums, providing a glimpse into the musical tastes and trends of the time. This chart not only highlights current hits but also serves as a reference for the evolution of music over the year.
### HOT 100 AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Justing Bieber</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chris Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Britney Spears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rihanna</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Akon</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kanye West</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lady Gaga</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Usher</td>
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### ADULT TOP 40

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<td>1</td>
<td>Katy Perry</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bruno Mars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Weeknd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Justin Bieber</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ed Sheeran</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Adele</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rihanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sia</td>
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### ADULT CONTEMPORARY

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Adele</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mariah Carey</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nicki Minaj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lizzo</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ariana Grande</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Justin Bieber</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Bruno Mars</td>
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### HOT DIGITAL SONGS

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<tr>
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<td>Justin Bieber</td>
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<td>Bruno Mars</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The Weeknd</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Katy Perry</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lizzo</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Ariana Grande</td>
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### MODERN ROCK

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<th>Title</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Foo Fighters</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Radiohead</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>The Killers</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>The 1975</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Arctic Monkeys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The 1975</td>
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### Data for week of JANUARY 5, 2008

For chart reprints call 646-654-4633

Go to www.billboard.com for complete chart data
### TOP R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>WEEKS</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MARY J. BLIGE</td>
<td>Growing Pains</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FOCAL 213PY (13.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>The Blueprint 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>JIVE 185507 (13.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>The Blueprint 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>JIVE 185507 (13.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>The Blueprint 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>JIVE 185507 (13.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>The Blueprint 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>JIVE 185507 (13.98)</td>
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### TOP REGGAE ALBUMS

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<tr>
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<td>YUCA</td>
<td>Roots &amp; Culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ARISTA 008697</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2   | 2PAC | All Eyez on Me | 1 | MCA 1798*
| 3   | 2PAC | All Eyez on Me | 1 | MCA 1798*
| 4   | 2PAC | All Eyez on Me | 1 | MCA 1798*
| 5   | 2PAC | All Eyez on Me | 1 | MCA 1798*

### BETWEEN THE BULLETS

Behind Mary J. Blige's eighth No. 1 and Alicia Keys' Greatest Gainer at No. 2 (top 87%), Jaheim scores a top three debut on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums and collects his best Nielsen SoundScan frame on The Billboard 200 with "The Makings of a Man." The busy shopping days before Christmas helped Jaheim move 176,000 copies for No. 11 on the big chart, his first start outside the top 10 but his third album to begin north of 100,000. The singer's last Warner Bros album, "Ghetto Classics," held his previous high with 152,000.

Now on Atlantic, he wraps the label's second-best debut this year behind 468,000 units for T.I.'s "T.I. vs. T.I.P." in July. Key's "As I Am" also owns the Greatest Gainer on The Billboard 200 at No. 3 with 474,000 sold.

—Ralph George
- Swagg - ENERGIZED
- More Than a Love Song
- She's Hot
- Sensual Seduction
- Det Don't Know
- Keep (Music Live/Capital)
- Kool Aid
- Beautiful Liar
- Be Semi
- Stand-Up in It
- I Remember
- Get Up on It
- Rock Boys (And the Rinnner)...
- Superstar
- Ring the Alarm
- Work That
- Get Me Bodied
- Rep Yo City
- No One
- Deja Vu
- Shake That Thang
- Sippin
- Almost
- Get Buck in Here
- Call Me

- No One
- This Christmas
- Can't Help But Wait
- Until the End of Time
- Shout
- My Drink
- 4 Me
- Work That
- Techie
- I'll Be There
- Get Me
- Let It Go
- Put You Up
- I Don't Know
- Can't Help But Wait
- Get That Thang
- Because of Love
- The Anthem
- The Champ

- Like You Never See Me Again
- Never
- Love
- HATE"
### Hot Country Songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Chart Peak</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Durr&quot;</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Hot&quot;</td>
<td>Super下</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;What Do Ya Think About That Cowgirl?&quot;</td>
<td>Montgomery Gentry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;Firecracker&quot;</td>
<td>Joan Turner</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>&quot;Winner At A Losing Game&quot;</td>
<td>Roscoe Flats</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;Everybody&quot;</td>
<td>Keen Urban</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;Don't Blink&quot;</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;How Bout Them Cowgirls&quot;</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>&quot;30&quot;</td>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;10&quot;</td>
<td>Letter To Me</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Chart Peak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>&quot;Watching Airplanes&quot;</td>
<td>Billy Ray Cyrus</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>&quot;Cleaning This Gun (Come On In Boy)&quot;</td>
<td>Rodney Albin</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>&quot;Stealing Cinderella&quot;</td>
<td>Chuck Wicks</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>&quot;Get My Drink On&quot;</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>&quot;More Than A Memory&quot;</td>
<td>Garth Brooks</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>&quot;International Harvey&quot;</td>
<td>Grayson Morgan</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>&quot;New Shiftwork&quot;</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>&quot;Small Town Southern Man&quot;</td>
<td>Allen Jackson</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>&quot;The More I Drink&quot;</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;You Still Own Me&quot;</td>
<td>Merle Haggard</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>&quot;Bring Him Home Santa&quot;</td>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>&quot;Rollin' With The Flow&quot;</td>
<td>Mary Chapin</td>
<td>22</td>
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</table>

### HitPredictor

#### Artist (Title/Label/Scope) - Chart Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist/Title/Scope</th>
<th>Chart Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rodney Atkins - &quot;Carnival Ride&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chuck Wicks - &quot;Steady Cinderella NCA&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toby Keith - &quot;My Onetime Different Cowgirl&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake Shelton - &quot;Sideways&quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merle Haggard - &quot;Oklahoma&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn - &quot;You Must Be Making Her Feelin' Good Again&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn - &quot;Making Peace&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn - &quot;One More Time&quot;</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn - &quot;For A Lifetime&quot;</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn - &quot;Losing Her Love&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn - &quot;In Love With&quot;</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
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### Women Rule Country Songs Roost

All eyes are fixed on the ladies on Hot Country Songs, as Taylor Swift logs a third straight week at No. 1 for "Our Song" (28.7 million impressions) while Carrie Underwood holds the Greatest Gainer with "All-American Girl," the second single from her "Carnival Ride" set. "Girl" gains 4.1 million impressions and hops 28-22. Swift's chart-topper follows Underwood's three-week siege at No. 1 with "So Small," marking the longest run at the top by solo female artists since Underwood alone

### Updates

Don't miss another important R&R Country Daily Update! Check out the Country Radio Blast for the latest information.

Visit www.countryradiohistory.com to sign up for your free daily Country Radio Blast.

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**Data for week of January 5, 2008**

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
### Top Latin Albums

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Title (Spanish)</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Distributor Label (Price)</th>
<th>Artist (c)</th>
<th>Title (English)</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Distributor Label (Price)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>La Vida Es Un Regalo</td>
<td>Wisin &amp; Yandel</td>
<td>G-Note Records</td>
<td>Def Jam Latin (12.98)</td>
<td>Wisin Y Yandel</td>
<td>The Life: Volume 1</td>
<td>Universal Music Group</td>
<td>Def Jam Latin (12.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>JeVe Enamoré</td>
<td>Vicente Fernández</td>
<td>Sony</td>
<td>Sony Baja (14.98)</td>
<td>Vicente Fernández</td>
<td>Enamored</td>
<td>Universal Music Group</td>
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### Hot Latin Songs

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Title (Spanish)</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Print Run (14 98)</th>
<th>Artist (c)</th>
<th>Title (English)</th>
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<td>JeVe Enamoré</td>
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<td>Vicente Fernández</td>
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<td>Universal Music Group</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>¡Qué Bonito!</td>
<td>El Chapo</td>
<td>Sony BMG</td>
<td>139,022</td>
<td>El Chapo</td>
<td>What a Beautiful Day</td>
<td>Universal Music Group</td>
<td>139,022</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>En El Barrio</td>
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### LATIN AIRPLAY

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### REGIONAL MEXICAN AIRPLAY

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Data for week of JANUARY 5, 2008 | For chart reprints call 646-654-4633 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 61
## Japan Albums

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<td>JOHNNY HALLYDAY</td>
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<td>CHRISTOPHE MAU</td>
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<td>ADRIANO CELENTANO</td>
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<td>YURIKA</td>
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<tr>
<td>DON'T STOP THE MUSIC</td>
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<td>LADY GAGA</td>
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<td>ZAGRA</td>
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For more detailed chart data, go to www.billboard.biz.
### EUROCHARTS

#### SINGLE SALES

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<td>Highway to Hell</td>
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<td>Elton John</td>
<td>Candle in the Wind</td>
<td>EMI</td>
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<td>Michael Jackson</td>
<td>Smooth</td>
<td>Epic Records</td>
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<td>Madonna</td>
<td>Like a Virgin</td>
<td>Warner Bros. Records</td>
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#### ALBUMS

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<td>Parlophone</td>
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<td>Adele</td>
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<td>XL Recordings</td>
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<td>Columbia</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Justin Bieber</td>
<td>My World</td>
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#### RADIO PLAYAIR

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<td>Love on Top</td>
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<td>Jive Records</td>
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<td>Don't Stop the Music</td>
<td>Def Jam Recordings</td>
<td>2007</td>
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**Notes:**
- The chart includes data from Billboard's charts, which cover various categories such as albums, singles, and radio airplay.
- The charts are compiled weekly and cover a wide range of music genres including pop, rock, country, and jazz.
- Artists like Adele, Coldplay, and Beyoncé have consistently topped these charts.

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**Data for week of January 5, 2008**

**For chart reprints call 646.654.4633**

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**Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data**
## Sales Data

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VideoScan</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td>Zac Efron/Vanessa Anne Hudgens</td>
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<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td>John Travolta/Vincent Perez</td>
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<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td>David Armanoff</td>
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<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td>Eric Brevig</td>
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<td>Matthew Fox/James Newton Howard</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The JASON Bourne Collection</strong></td>
<td>David Armanoff</td>
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</table>
| **Live Free or Die Hard** | Bruce Willis/下列 *
| **The Polar Express** | David Armanoff |
| **Santa Clause 3: The Escape Clause** | Tim Allen/Martin Short |
| **Ocean's Thirteen** | George Clooney/Brad Pitt |
| **Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire** | Daniel Radcliffe/Robert Gault |
| **National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation** | Chevy Chase/Beverly D'Angelo |
| **Elf** | Will Ferrell/Andy Richter |
| **Happy Feet** | Gerard Butler/Lena Headey |
| **Knocked Up** | Seth Rogen/Katherine Heigl |

## Main Chart

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<td><strong>Spider-Man 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>My Week with Marilyn</strong></td>
<td>Michelle Williams/Daniel Day-Lewis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Easy A</strong></td>
<td>Emma Stone/Colin Firth</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nine</strong></td>
<td>Colin Firth/Jeremy Irons</td>
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<td><strong>The Social Network</strong></td>
<td>Jesse Eisenberg/Andrew Garfield</td>
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## Heatseekers

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- DJ Services -
- Financial Services -
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- Tax Preparation -
- Bankruptcy Sale -
- Collectable -
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- Talent -
- Songwriters -
- Songs For Sale -
- Dealers Wanted -
- Retailers Wanted -
- Wanted To Buy -
- Concert Info -
- VENUES -
- Notices/Announcements -
- Video -
- Music Video -
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- Listening Stations -
- For Lease -
- Distribution Needed -
- Education Opportunity -
- Help Wanted -
- Mastering -
- Audio Supplies -
- Royalty Payment -
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Dan Fogelberg, 56

Dan Fogelberg, 56, singer/songwriter, died Dec. 12 at his home in San Marcos, Calif., from natural causes. A native of Clarksville, Miss., Turner began his music career at age 8, working for radio station WBOX, eventually learning to play guitar and keyboards and starting a band called the Kings of Rhythm. "He was like Stevie Wonder. He was a genius," recalls artist/songwriter Sir Mack Rice, who grew up with Turner and worked with him in later years. "He was so determined to make music, from an early age."

Turner wrote some of the rock 'n' roll stars in general, not just the only person who had an unquavory life. From my point of view, you have to put that aside and look at what he did artistically. He did a great body of work and had an important role in the history of the music." — Gary Graff

DEATHS
IKE TURNER, 76, ground-breaking R&B artist, died Dec. 12 at his home in San Marcos, Calif., from natural causes. Turner had his first hit with "Here and Now," his first new album in more than 20 years, Turner felt he was re-creating himself: "I did a lot of things I'm not proud of. But they're not as interested in my personal life." Turner's 2006 release, "Risin' with the Blues," won a Grammy Award for best traditional blues album.

MEI CHEREN, 74, disco music trend-setter and AIDS activist, died Dec. 7 in New York of complications related to AIDS. Cheren devoted his life to the music and community he helped foster at Paradise Garage, the New York nightclub owned and operated by his partner, Michael Brody. Considered the birthplace of modern DJ culture, the garage made a legend out of resident DJ Larry Levan, who played for a dedicated weekly crowd of mixed races and sexualities that included future stars Danny Tenaglia, Junior Vasquez and Louie Vega. The club closed in 1987, after losing many of its patrons and staff — including Brody — to the first wave of AIDS.

"Mel was the protector of that legacy," says Benny Soto, manager of New York venue Gelo and an original Garage patron. "I think in some way he felt like he had to protect everyone who died too. To lose a whole generation of talented, beautiful people is sad, and I think he never got over it." Committed to combating AIDS awareness through music, Cheren hosted the first Gay Men's Health Crisis evenings at his brownstone in 1982, later founded AIDS nonprofit 24 Hours of Life and served on the board of directors of LifeBeat.

Cheren was a music executive by trade, and had held A&R and production posts at ARC/Paramount and Scepter Records before launching West End Records when the Garage opened in 1976. The label released many of the tracks Levan helped break there, including Taana Gardner's "Heartbeat," one of the most successful 12-inch singles of all time, with nearly 1 million units sold. — Kerri Mason
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE
Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: Atlantic Records in New York names Camille Hackney VP of brand partnership and commercial licensing. She was VP of strategic marketing and new media at Elektra Entertainment Group.
Zomba Label Group appoints Larry Khan executive VP of urban promotion. He was senior VP of R&B promotion.
Universal Music Denmark names Casper Bengtsen managing director. He was country manager at MTV Networks Denmark.
BNA Records in Nashville ups Buffy Cooper to director of national promotion. She was regional promotion manager.
Universal Music Nashville promotes Royce Risser to senior VP of promotion. He was VP of national promotion at MCA Nashville.

PUBLISHING: Universal Music Publishing Group elevates Robert Allen to senior VP of business affairs. He was VP of Peermusic in Los Angeles appoints Sam Kling VP of A&R. He was VP of BMG Music Publishing’s film and TV division.

DISTRIBUTION: Irvine, Calif.-based global music and movie distributor Super D names Jocelynn Prior director of marketing. She was VP of marketing at Jaded Entertainment.
The Orchard in New York appoints David Hazan head of brand entertainment. He was senior VP at event marketing agency U.S. Concepts.

TOURING: The Agency Group taps Darcy Gregoire and Larry Shields as booking agents for the firm’s Toronto and Los Angeles offices, respectively. Gregoire was president at Toronto-based LiveTourArtists, and Shields was an agent at the William Morris Agency.
AEG Live appoints H.C. Rowe executive director of the 4,100-seat Colosseum at Coesars Palace in Las Vegas. He was entertainment director at the Palms Casino Resort.

DIGITAL: Web 2.0 startup en2go names Ted Cohen chief strategic officer. He served in an executive role at EMI Digital Music.

RELATED FIELDS: Integrity Music in Nashville names Steve Rice VP of creative development. He was executive director of GreatWorshipSongs.com, a division of Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing.
Former Tag Team Media co-founder Brendan Bourke is launching Canvas Media, a Toronto-based PR company.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS
Alternative rock act Switchfoot raised more than $100,000 for nonprofit housing organization Habitat for Humanity during its recent Appetite for Construction tour, which concluded Dec. 3 in Everett, Wash. With support from Relient K and Rend Collective, the 34-city tour visited such U.S. markets as Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, Baltimore and New York. An average of 3,000 tickets were moved per night, with $1 of each ticket sold donated to local Habitat affiliate in each of the markets. In addition, members of Switchfoot worked side by side with future Habitat homeowners at several building sites on various tour stops. The San Diego-based band also gave a limited amount of concert tickets to the organization’s volunteers in each city.

SWITCHFOOT FOR HUMANITY

INSIDE TRACK
SIR DUKE
Grammy Award-winning songwriter/producer/musical director George Duke ushered in the new year with two new deals. He has signed with Universal Music Publishing Group for exclusive, worldwide representation. Duke’s catalog was previously administered by Sony BMG for the United States by Third Story. Among his credits are collaborations with Nancy Wilson, Quincy Jones, Anita Baker, Johnny Gill and Frank Zappa. Also an artist in his own right, Duke is currently working on his first album for jazz label Heads Up International.
Tapping into the jazz/R&B/funk roots he laid in the ’70s (No. 2 R&B hit “Reach for It”), Duke has already enlisted Jill Scott, Bootsy Collins, Howard Hewett and Teena Marie as guests. The as-yet-untitled project is due in September 2008.

2007 BILLBOARD YEAR IN MUSIC AND TOURING HOLIDAY PARTY
Billboard hosted the Year in Music and Touring celebration to honor and thank our clients for a great 2007. Attendees got a first look at the final issue (right) of 2007 Dec. 14 at Michael’s Restaurant in New York, and also received limited-edition posters of the five special covers.

From left: Billboard director of chart analysis Geoff Hayfield, Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conniff and Sony Music Label Group executive VP Lisa Ellis.
ASCAP executive VP Phil Cordial left, and Billboard managing director for Latin Gene Smith.
Jante Group co-founder Jerry Blair with Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conniff.
Former Billboard director of business development and East Coast sales Cindy Mata, Red Distribution executive VP/Director Bob Monell, Billboard indies correspondent Cortney Harding and Red Distribution senior VP of product development Alan Becker.
Grey Group senior VP/director of music Josh Babinowitz with Billboard group editorial director Tamara Conniff.

www.americanradiohistory.com
INSIDE TRACK

SEQUENTIAL SCREENING

Sub Pop is celebrating its 20th birthday in the summer of 2008, but the label isn’t resting on its laurels. A host of great albums are on tap from the Seattle institution in the first half of the year, led by the Helio Sequence’s fourth set, “Keep Your Eyes Ahead.” If you ever thought the Shins should be edgier or that Mercury Rev was a bit too weird for its own good, this is the album for you. Atmosphere and melody join blissfully on “Back to This,” while “Can’t Say No” is a rousing rocker tailor-made for college radio. Also worth checking out when it comes to your town in early ’08: the Bitzen Trapper/Fleet Foxes tour, featuring two of the Pacific Northwest’s most intriguing new acts.

Charlie Daniels celebrated his 50th anniversary as a professional entertainer and his upcoming induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame with an ultimate reception at the Country Music Asso. From left are CMA senior manager of memberships and industry relations Hank Adam Locklin; Steve Hauser; Daniels’ booking agent at the William Morris Agency, Daniels’ manager David Goffin; Daniels’ CMA CEO Tommy Grist; CMA Executive Director and Entertainer president Clarence Spalding; CMA trustee member/Gaylord Entertainment senior VP of media and entertainment Steve Burcham; and Grand Ole Opry GM Pete Fisher.

Billboard’s Helen O’Brien celebrates the holidays with re-mastered or obscure some songs. Pictured at the event at the Miracle nightclub in South Beach, from left, are Universal Music Latin AME representative Pedro Guzman, pianist/creative director Julio Bagué, Billboard executive director of content and programming for Latin music and entertainment Leela Cohen, ASCAP associate director Karl Aveved, producer Alberto de Leon and Sony/ATV Publishing senior creative director Claribell Cuevas.

BET Network executive VP of entertainment and music programming Stephen Hill was honored by LIFTideal, the Music Industry Fight AIDS for his ongoing dedication to HIV/AIDS causes. Dec. 4 at the Hitzone Ballroom in New York, in a rare performance of his infamous “Complete Embarrassment” parties, Hill sang and danced to songs originally recorded by the likes of Britney Spears. Prince and U2. Mary J. Blige capped off the evening with a live performance. Pictured, from left, are Aschanti, Hill and Blige. Photo, courtesy Terrence Jennings.

Backstreet Boys were among the headliners at New York Top 40 station WHIT’s Jingle Ball Dec. 14 at Madison Square Garden. From left, BSB’s Brian Littrell and A.J. McLean, Billboard senior correspondent Chuck Taylor-Covers, Media Publicist Cara Wodickla and BSB’s Nick Carter and Howie Dorough.

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More than 20 artists provided guest vocals, including Diana Krall, Bonnie Raitt, Sheryl Crow, Phil Everly, Rodney Crowell, Alison Krauss, Del McCoury, LeAnn Rimes, John Anderson, Trisha Yearwood and Patty Loveless.

These Days was certified platinum less than two months after its release.

Produced by: Vince Gill, John Hobbs, Justin Niebank

Special recognition to all the musicians and vocalists on These Days:

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Benny Garcia
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Billy Thomas
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Carl Groves
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Chance Denning
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Dwain Sears
Del McCoury
Denniss Pringle
Diana Krall
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Drew Rhew
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Kiah White
Leslie Sack
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Mike Hayes
Paul Franklin
Pete Wanger
Richard Bennett
Robbie Mccoury
Ronnie McCoury
Sonya Isacs
Stuart Smith
Stuart Duncan
Stevie Nicks
The Nashville String Machine
Tom Britt
Tom Baldino
Mike Hoffman
Will Owens

Disc 1, 2, 3 - Recorded and Mixed by Justin Niebank
Disc 4 - Recorded and Mixed by Neal Cappellino
Assistant by: Drew Ballman
Production Manager: Traci Sterling Bishir
Mastered by Adam Ayan

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