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ASCAP's 21st Annual RHYTHM SOUL MUSIC AWARDS

TOP R&B/HIP-HOP SONG:
"Lost Without U"
Writers: Sean Garrett, Robin Thicke
Publishers: Los Duettos Music, Inc., "Em Thicke Music

AWARD WINNING R&B/HIP-HOP SONGS:
"B.U.D.D.Y.
Writers: Musiq Soulchild, Kentor Nix

"Wanna Love You"
Writers: Solomon Logan, Johnkenum "Sir John" Spivery
Publishers: Blamer /ATV Tunes, LLC

"Lose Without U"
Writers: Konshens, Freddie Gibbs
Publishers: Royal Court Music, LLC

"Shawty"
Writers: James Rayshawn Smith
Publishers: Empire Songs, LLC

"Again"
Writers: James Rayshawn Smith
Publishers: Empire Songs, LLC

"Go"
Writers: James Rayshawn Smith
Publishers: Empire Songs, LLC

"Shawty"
Writers: James Rayshawn Smith
Publishers: Empire Songs, LLC

"I'm a Ft'
Writers: Ronnine "Lil Ronnie" Jackson
Publishers: "Em Thicke Music

"Iredescent"
Writers: Beyonce, Mikkel Eriksen, Ter Herrmann

"Let It Go"
Writers: Keshia Cooke, Missy Elliot, Calvin Lampe

"Make It Rain"
Writers: 20th Starch
Publishers: Scott Storch Music, TVT Music Enterprises, LLC

"Me Make Better"
Writers: Fabolous, Timbaland
Publishers: Fabolous, Timbaland, Island Def Jam Music, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Oh One"
Writers: Apollo Keys, Kery "Krucial" Brothers, Q Dirty Harry

"Rock Yo Hips"
Writers: Jonathan "J-Jay" Lewis, Venelle "Princess" Lewis, Alphonse "Cyclo Black" Smith, John "M.I.G. "Usher

"Runaway Love"
Writers: Kendra, Kerli Ikon

"Same Girl"
Writers: Ronnine "Lil Ronnie" Jackson
Publishers: Empire Songs, LLC

"Shawty"
Writers: James Rayshawn Smith
Publishers: Empire Songs, LLC

"She Wrote It"
Writers: Keshia Cooke, Missy Elliot, Cainon Lamb

"This Is Why I'm Here"
Writers: Dwayne "D-Nice" McDaniels, Marvin

"Threat Some One"
Writers: Robbut "Butta" Crawford
Publishers: Blackout Productions, Geoffrey Williams
Publishers: Best By Butler Publishing, Blackout Productions, Switch Music

"Umbrella"
Writers: Dwayne "D-Nice" McDaniels, Marvin

"I Wanna Love You"
Writers: Antonio Dixon, Keri Henson

"I'm a Ft'
Writers: Ronnine "Lil Ronnie" Jackson
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CONGRATULATIONS 2008 ASCAP RHYTHM & SOUL MUSIC AWARDS HONOREES

AWARD WINNING GOSPEL SONGS:

"Hallelujah"
Writer: Marc Dickinson
Publisher: Mark Lowry Music Publishing

"Healing"
Writer: Kelly Price
Publisher: For The Whole Price

"One God"
Writer: Darien Dennis
Publisher: Deaz Hymniz

"Praise On The Inside"
Writer: J. Moss
Publisher: Flavyn Ent Music

TOP RINGTONE OF THE YEAR:
"This Is Why I'm Hot"
Writer: Darryl "D-Mac" McDaniels, Havoc
Publisher: Thrilla Kitty Music Publishing

"Lil Boosie's" Hit by Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Havoc

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MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!
The official entertainment event of CTIA offers in-depth tracks on mobile music, video, advertising and social networking. Submit proposals for panels and speakers at mobile-entertainmentlive.com.

REGIONAL MEXICAN
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TIMOTHY WHITE

IN LOVING MEMORY

January 25, 1952 – June 27, 2002

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Jimmy Buffett Sheryl Crow
Don Henley Billy Joel
John Mellencamp Sting
James Taylor Roger Waters
Brian Wilson

The Music To My Ears Band:
Steve Jordan, Danny Kortchmar, Waddy Wachtel,
Ricky Peterson and Willie Weeks
Mitch Glazer and Kelly Lynch
Maureen O'Connor and Steve Priest

www.americanradiohistory.com
At Any Cost?
Why Lowering Prices Could Save the Biz

BY JOHN H. MARMADUKE

At Hastings, we’re convinced that the CD business can continue to be a good, slowly declining and profitable product, exposing new and established artists to the marketplace in concert with digital distribution. Our everyday interaction with customers in our multimedia stores shows they still shop our music departments with enthusiasm and an increasing appetite for CDs priced for less than $10. This is not only evident from conversations with customers but from the fact that our under-$10 business is up by double digits, while our over-$10 business is down by double digits. The difference is more than 10 percentage points.

Our recent merchandising experience had mid-late June increase fivefold when the price was lowered from $10.99 to $5.99. This makes a compelling argument: How much of the rapid decline in CD sales is a function of mispricing compared with digital cannibalization?

One of the new rules of digital commoditization is, when people can get it for less, your product must lower its price to compete. This is not a new lesson. Years ago, Microsoft was being ravaged by piracy throughout the world, with many countries not making any effort to police software piracy. After years of ineffective legal attacks on the pirates, Microsoft finally concluded that the best antidote for what it was experiencing was simply to lower prices in these markets. The DVD industry has come to a similar conclusion. This may sound self-serving, for a retailer to want lower prices, but in the end what we all would like is to extend the life of the CD and the profit streams it generates for artists, labels and retailers. Without the CD, we fear many artists will never be heard, many careers never brought to maturity and legacy artists never created.

The most recent NPD survey at the NARM convention showed that music customers think all the proposed new formats are viable, but only at an under-$10 price. Sure, there is still going to be a market for the over-$10 super disc with lots of extra features for the avid fan, as Nine Inch Nails recently proved on its Web site, grossing $750,000 in two days by selling 2,500 deluxe CD packages at a price of $100 each. There is more business to had above and below the $18.99 manufacturer’s suggested list price. In fact, one way to add value that allows for the higher price is to sell a digital copy with the physical copy, which is currently being tested by the home video industry.

The customers in our CD department are more casual shoppers. They are constantly weighing the various entertainment offers available to them, and if they can cherry pick the album for 99 cents per song without digital rights management or get it for free through illegal means, it is going to lower what they will pay for the physical CD. This is not to say they discount the value of the CD altogether.

The first point of contact for the majority of music customers is still the CD and will remain so for many years to come. Over and over again, customers surveyed in the Nielsen and NPD reports have shown that they still find the CD of value. It has better audio quality, permanence and graphics that are not present in the digital domain. In addition, it has intrinsic value in that it is collectible and tradable.

The first step in addressing the mispricing of CDs is not to lower CD prices across the board. Instead, labels need to rewrite their new and renewing recording contracts so that they can quickly adjust the price to maximize market demand, which will increase the artist’s exposure. Imagine how frustrating it is for a multimedia retailer like Hastings to see the videogame and DVD industries reducing prices within weeks if unit volume declines below the sales plan to maximize market share, while the music industry blames its contracts for lack of pricing action. The only rule for a successful marketplace is, “Is it early?” We think this is a major culprice in music’s loss of market share.

The second step is to stop signing contracts with guarantees (both to artists and executives) that made sense in the ’90s but not in this century. The third is to experiment with all manner of pricing offers, high and low.

Music is enjoyed by more people today than ever in its history. Yes, digital distribution has challenged the music industry as few industries have ever been challenged. Maybe a successful business model for today’s record label is not that elusive. I’ll bet if you take a look at the structure and overhead of most record labels in the ’70s, you will have a good profile for the kind of label that can sell millions of CDs, break artists and be profitable.

Hastings’ roots are planted in the music business, and we have an emotional attachment to music. But the clock is ticking. Changes made a year from now will have less of an impact than those made today. Music is losing the battle for shelf space in our stores. Let’s regain the pricing imperative to maximize the life of the CD.

John H. Marmaduke is president/chairman/CEO of Hastings Entertainment.
CATCH AND RELEASE

Apple's Complete My Album Emerges As Marketing Tool

Releasing a single for digital download before an album's debut is about as standard these days as making it available to radio.

But those rates could start climbing now that acts like Lil Wayne, Jason Mraz, the Cure and the Jonas Brothers are using the feature as a marketing tool. Rather than just releasing singles digitally in advance and leaving fans to figure out for themselves how to fill in the blanks when the full album is released, these acts are encouraging the practice by explaining how it will fit with their iTunes profiles, MySpace pages and personal Web sites.

Not long ago, some labels felt prereleasing even just the lead single as a download prior to an album's arrival cannibalized album sales. Knowing that the Complete My Album feature can convert pre-album sales to post-street date purchases is a major factor behind fronting up more prerelease content, Carbone says.

"Traditionally, there's been some concern about how much content gets out there," she says. "Complete My Album definitely helps alleviate some of that concern."

On June 24, the Jonas Brothers unveiled their plans to release four singles from their upcoming album during the course of eight weeks—one every two weeks—as a sort of countdown to the Aug. 12 street date. Earlier this year, Jason Mraz released 12 songs in a rather complicated combination of two EPs of four songs each, as well as four individual singles.

In many ways, the slow-release strategy resembles what is a standard practice in the videogame industry. Game publishers release screens, videos and sometimes even demos for free in the weeks and months preceding a game's release, all of which is designed to generate excitement and demand for the finished product.

Another selling point for Complete My Album is that it gives fans the perception of a discount. Those buying "The Carter III" in full paid $12 at iTunes on the day of release, while fans who purchased all six prerelease singles paid only $6. For Mraz's effort, fans could pay $20 for a deluxe digital album that contained the standard album and the prereleased EPs on the day of release, or only $8 if they had bought all the advance content. Ultimately, everyone paid the same price, as each single cost 99 cents.

One important caveat: Prerelease campaigns require an enormous amount of communication to be effective. All of the artists participating in the program have special landing pages set up within iTunes, aided by Apple's label relations staff, that explain the prerelease schedule and the Complete My Album opportunity.

"Apple's getting better at working with the labels to hone the message a bit more," one label source says. "But ideally, we'd like to get to a higher conversion rate, like 20%-25% across the board."

While Universal Motown admits that Lil Wayne's results are likely more anomaly than standard, a few more success stories like his help make that with a reality.

Additional reporting by Keith Caulfield.

DIGITAL
BY ANTONY BRUNO

UPFRONT

UPSELLING
Downloads accounted for less than 1% of Lil Wayne's previous album sales but 30% of "The Carter III" sales.

PRERELEASED SINGLES
Release dates and digital units sold before "The Carter III" came out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SONG TITLE</th>
<th>BILLBOARD NO.</th>
<th>SALES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOLLIPOP</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>1,865,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A MILLI</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>299,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOLLIPOP REMIX</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>175,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOT MONEY</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>181,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR. CARTER</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOU AIN'T GOT NUTHIN'</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Nielsen SoundScan

MOBILE: For 24/7 news and analysis on your cell phone or mobile device, go to mobile.billboard.biz.
Michael Cohl’s resignation as chairman of Live Nation and CEO of Live Nation办事 has raised questions about the future of the company, multirights megadeals and even the concert business itself.

But in an exclusive joint interview with Billboard, Cohl and Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino insist that Cohl’s relationship with Live Nation will continue for many years and that the company remains bullish on multirights deals.

“Live Nation Artists’ strategy is unlocked,” Rapino says. While some have questioned the company’s ability to sign major artists, Cohl will serve as a consultant until 2012 and has a noncompete clause that runs until 2016 (billboard.biz, June 20). Meanwhile, Arthur Fogel, Live Nation chairman of global music and CEO of global touring, will assume the helm of Live Nation Artists. As the tour producer of U2 and Madonna, Fogel will play a big role in bringing star power to the Live Nation fold. The post of chairman will eventually be reassumed by ex-chairman Randall May, currently president/CFO of Clear Channel.

The reasons for Cohl’s resignation as chairman amid speculation that he was at odds with Rapino over the direction of the company:

Michael Rapino: One of the strengths of Michael Cohl is he’s a big thinker, strategic, great with relationships, artists and big deals. That’s what we want him to do. We don’t actually want him to get caught up in the day-to-day running of our division and all the bureaucracy around the operational part.

Michael Cohl: I’ve been giving people grief and making things difficult, and it was really all about I wasn’t doing what I’m really good at. From my perspective it’s much more about that than any of this gitty-gotty detail that anybody wants to talk about that’s not relevant.

On whether there were any major philosophical differences between Cohl and Rapino regarding Live Nation Artists’ strategy:

Rapino: There has never been a debate with Michael Cohl as to whether we should be in the Madonna business or be in long-term relationships, or be in more rights with artists. One of the challenges has been with the credit markets and the economy. We now have three great artists and one more coming, and we will absolutely continue, but on a very methodical and slower pace as we get through this economy and other things. We both just decided over the last few months with the tough economy and capital markets, right now signing a whole bunch of artists this summer isn’t going to be our first priority—it’s going to be getting through the summer and delivering a great year, and looking selectively at some artists along the way.

On whether the relationship between Cohl and Rapino became as rancorous as some media outlets reported:

Rapino: We come from Canada. We always talk about how we might have some fights in the dressing room but when we go out on the ice, we’re united. Michael and I have had fights since the day I met him... and he’s always challenged me to make bigger and better decisions.

Cohl: It’s just like two brothers having a little bit of a tiff, then waking up and going, “Hold on, we have the same last name—it’s Live Nation—and let’s go.”

On whether Cohl, one of Live Nation’s largest shareholders, intends to hold on to the company’s stock:

Cohl: I’ve got a big whack of stock... I think the stock has incredible upside. I’m not selling my stock.

On whether the summer is shaping up to be as brutal as some in the industry have speculated:

Rapino: The world is assuming my business is going to have a tough summer because of gas prices, etc., and I can say to you we have one of the strongest summer lineups we’ve had in a long time. We have most of our shows on sale and some already executed. We have not experienced one ounce of soft sales or on-site ancillary sales affecting our business. We’re very optimistic that we’re still completely on plan and will have a very good summer.

Cohl: Cut some wood, quick. You can’t say that—you’ll curse us.

Live Nation’s Cohl And Rapino On What’s Ahead

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Master P and his son, fellow hip-hop hitmaker Romeo, have agreed to relaunch their P. Miller Designs apparel line exclusively through Wal-Mart. Billboard has learned.

The father-son duo’s brand of men’s apparel will be available at about 150 Wal-Mart stores starting in July and will include graphic T-shirts, fleece hoodies and fashion denim. The P. Miller line was previously available at such retailers as Kohl’s and Mervyns “a few years ago,” Master P (aka Percy Miller) says.

The veteran rapper says Wal-Mart was a logical vendor for P. Miller Designs, which he describes as “high fashion at an affordable cost.” Master P says he has shifted most responsibilities for the clothing line to 18-year-old Romeo.

“Wal-Mart stands for everything P. Miller does,” he says. “It’s America and diversity. Our whole thing is price point. I want to put our affordable clothes where the masses can buy them.”

Wal-Mart’s partnership with a former gangsta rapper like Master P might seem surprising. But the hip-hop artist and entrepreneur has cleaned up his image in recent years, thanks in part to the success of Romeo (formerly Lil Romeo), who has charted with kid-friendly rap hits and starred in his own show on Nickelodeon.

Indeed, Wal-Mart’s sale of P. Miller Designs will be its second partnership with Master P. The big-box chain is the exclusive physical retailer of Master P and Romeo’s 2007 CD, “Miller Boys: Hip Hop History,” the first release on the elder rapper’s profanity-free Take a Stand Records imprint. (The album is also available for download at online music stores.)

Master P has launched other urban clothing lines through the years, including P. Miller Signature and P. Miller Shorties, a collection for children. Master P and Romeo won’t be the first celebrities to sell a branded apparel line exclusively through Wal-Mart, though. The retailer sells girls’ fashion lines from the likes of Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen.

Master P and Romeo will unveil the new P. Miller Designs line at the annual Essence Music Festival, which will be held in New Orleans during the July 4 weekend.

Wal-Mart’s efforts to associate its brand with family-friendly music will also be part of its expanded presence at the festival.

In addition to setting up an on-site retail operation that will sell clean CD versions of album releases by festival performers, Wal-Mart is partnering with TV network TBS to host a karaoke contest that will feature profanity-free versions of R&B, hip-hop and gospel hits. hit 1 million tickets sold this year but Higham says everyone is having to work harder to get it done. “I’d be lying if I told you there weren’t any tough spots this year, because the marketplace is funky,” he says. “But 90% of the dates I’m very happy with.”

Higham says the tour deal was forged with TMG/AEG Live president Louis Messina, AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips and Tim Leiweke, CEO of AEG Live’s parent, AEG. The agreement doesn’t include any recording or merchandising rights, but TMG/AEG Live is working to secure corporate sponsorships for the shows.

“Long-term touring arrangements aren’t right for every artist or for AEG Live in every instance,” Phillips says. “TMG/AEG Live have a long history with Kenny so it was easier for us to make this type of deal given the confidence we have in our projections and his future.”

The Chesney deal is “the way the business should be,” Messina says, adding that the lack of a guarantee allows both sides to keep a handle on ticket prices and to be prudent as to which markets and venues the artist plays. “If for some reason he wants to lower ticket prices, he and we have the flexibility to lower ticket prices,” Messina says. “Everything is on a sliding scale.”

Messina has been Chesney’s tour director for the past eight years. During that time the country star has emerged as the top-selling artist on the road who tours every year. Since 2002, Chesney has grossed well more than $300 million and moved nearly 7 million tickets, according to Billboard Boxscore. In each of the five previous years, he has played to more than 1 million people, a first in country and extremely rare for any genre.

TMG/AEG Live has exclusive rights to promote Chesney shows going forward, though the team will still partner with some independents and play Live Nation shows when they want to.

“If [Chesney] wants to achieve his maximum amount, it’s up to him, because it’s based on ‘x’ amount of seats, ‘x’ average ticket price,” Messina adds. “But for some reason he wants to go and do a smaller version of [a show], that’s fine.”

**Filial Fashions**

Master P and Romeo Shift Apparel Line To Wal-Mart

Master P and his son, fellow hip-hop hitmaker Romeo, have agreed to relaunch their P. Miller Designs apparel line exclusively through Wal-Mart. Billboard has learned.

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In addition to setting up an on-site retail operation that will sell clean CD versions of album releases by festival performers, Wal-Mart is partnering with TV network TBS to host a karaoke contest that will feature profanity-free versions of R&B, hip-hop and gospel hits. hit 1 million tickets sold this year but Higham says everyone is having to work harder to get it done. “I’d be lying if I told you there weren’t any tough spots this year, because the marketplace is funky,” he says. “But 90% of the dates I’m very happy with.”

Higham says the tour deal was forged with TMG/AEG Live president Louis Messina, AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips and Tim Leiweke, CEO of AEG Live’s parent, AEG. The agreement doesn’t include any recording or merchandising rights, but TMG/AEG Live is working to secure corporate sponsorships for the shows.

“Long-term touring arrangements aren’t right for every artist or for AEG Live in every instance,” Phillips says. “TMG/AEG Live have a long history with Kenny so it was easier for us to make this type of deal given the confidence we have in our projections and his future.”

The Chesney deal is “the way the business should be,” Messina says, adding that the lack of a guarantee allows both sides to keep a handle on ticket prices and to be prudent as to which markets and venues the artist plays. “If for some reason he wants to lower ticket prices, he and we have the flexibility to lower ticket prices,” Messina says. “Everything is on a sliding scale.”

Messina has been Chesney’s tour director for the past eight years. During that time the country star has emerged as the top-selling artist on the road who tours every year. Since 2002, Chesney has grossed well more than $300 million and moved nearly 7 million tickets, according to Billboard Boxscore. In each of the five previous years, he has played to more than 1 million people, a first in country and extremely rare for any genre.

TMG/AEG Live has exclusive rights to promote Chesney shows going forward, though the team will still partner with some independents and play Live Nation shows when they want to.

“If [Chesney] wants to achieve his maximum amount, it’s up to him, because it’s based on ‘x’ amount of seats, ‘x’ average ticket price,” Messina adds. “But for some reason he wants to go and do a smaller version of [a show], that’s fine.”

**Flex Pay**

Kenny Chesney Inks Tour Deal With TMG/AEG Live

TMG/AEG Live has nailed down a multiyear tour deal with stadium-hopping country artist Kenny Chesney that could stretch into 2013, Billboard has learned.

Through the agreement, which begins in 2009, TMG/AEG Live snags 2013, the multiyear tour for Chesney, the 15-time winner of the Academy of Country Music tour director award. Chesney also has an on-deck slate of arena shows this year, including the Miller Lite/Boyz: Hip Hop History, the first release on the elder rapper’s Take a Stand Records imprint. (The album is also available for download at online music stores.)

Master P has launched other urban clothing lines through the years, including P. Miller Signature and P. Miller Shorties, a collection for children. Master P and Romeo won’t be the first celebrities to sell a branded apparel line exclusively through Wal-Mart, though. The retailer sells girls’ fashion lines from the likes of Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen.

Master P and Romeo will unveil the new P. Miller Designs line at the annual Essence Music Festival, which will be held in New Orleans during the July 4 weekend.

Wal-Mart’s efforts to associate its brand with family-friendly music will also be part of its expanded presence at the festival.

In addition to setting up an on-site retail operation that will sell clean CD versions of album releases by festival performers, Wal-Mart is partnering with TV network TBS to host a karaoke contest that will feature profanity-free versions of R&B, hip-hop and gospel hits.
Digital entertainment options in the Middle East are stepping up a notch, thanks to a deal between Bertelsmann Group's Arvato Middle East Sales and Abu Dhabi Media. Together, they will launch Getmo Arabia, offering music, video, movie and game downloads to online and mobile consumers in the Middle East and North Africa, with Sony BMG music content prominent in the mix. With analysts predicting soaring demand in the region for digital entertainment, AMES CEO Sean Emery fills Billboard in on the new 50/50 joint venture, due to launch in August.

1. What prompted you to invest in the Middle East at this moment? The reason is that we clearly have a growing number of people here who have mobile phones and there is large Internet penetration. There are over 30 million Internet and 85 million mobile phone users in the territory we cover. If there is no legal, reliable, legitimate business model and option, piracy will grow. If there is no legal alternative that is active and bundled to the people that want one, this will also feed piracy.

2. How did the deal come together? We started discussions with all the labels one year ago. During that process a great deal of research was necessary because we needed to combine mobile and Internet and also needed to understand how to do bundles [and] utilize top deals. We knew where we stood at the end of last year, early this year. There is a very complex system of companies across these countries; there are a number of countries in a very small space. So doing agreements with them was very complex.

3. Clearly, it's early days—but what is the potential market for this region? You have to look at the explosion that is taking place in this market from year to year with regards to digital and physical, print, TV and radio advertising. A lot of this we can channel into music services and thus increase the revenues in this region. This population group is growing continuously, and it is really a large part of the world. It will definitely become an interesting market for digital entertainment. Also, there is a growing and emerging song culture in the Arabian and African region.

4. There has been recent growth in the live market in Dubai and Abu Dhabi—how do things look for recorded music? The other reason [to invest] is that we have the opportunity of working in this area with the labels, because there was such little existing business that we were able to be very creative in the business models, to bring customers content for fees comparable to those you pay in Germany and North America. In terms of the region's pricing model, we are offering a very attractive “all you can eat” proposition for consumers. This can comprise access to the service for periods of one, three and 12 months. In addition, we'll also offer a la carte downloads for which pricing will vary across the region, due to differences in market conditions.

5. Will Getmo's music offerings be mostly Arabic-language, or will there be a significant amount of Western music as well? The Internet offer is 50% Arabic and 50% Western repertoire. Our mobile offer will be 70% Arabic repertoire. Many people think that these markets are too complex, but Abu Dhabi Media Co is very well established. They understand the local content, the local companies, and they bring us a lot of their relationships with the government organizations, etc.

6. It sounds like Getmo Arabia will feature music from Sony BMG—are there plans to get any other major/local-label content? We have the entire Sony BMG catalog for which they obviously have the rights for the region. But we will definitely not be confining ourselves to Sony BMG. We will definitely have at least one other major and one of the other local labels as well.

How To Revive ‘Soul Train'

“Soul Train” is about to return to the station. Don Cornelius, the famed music variety show's longtime host/producer/owner, has sold the franchise to Los Angeles-based MadVision Entertainment, which said in a statement announcing the deal that it plans to “strategically distribute the library across multiple platforms and simultaneously create new branded content.”

While we await specific details about the company's plans, we asked some industry experts what they would do to leverage the value of this venerable music brand.

Trans World Entertainment urban buyer Violet Brown: “Before there was BET, there was ‘Soul Train.' They have all this great footage of great acts from down through the years. They can do DVDs, for sure. But even more, there is still definitely life in the ‘Soul Train’ name. You can do ‘Soul Train' tours, merchandising, clothing, videogames. There is also a place for the show to come back. ‘Soul Train' was good for breaking new artists. It was a buzz builder.”

TV network Bravo senior VP of production and programming Andy Cohen: “Whatever you do, hang onto the white-hot ‘TSOP’ theme song. That song is killer in its original version, but maybe for the kids they should get Timbaland to do an amazing remix of the iconic classic jam. And, yeah, I'd make a reality show about the new generation of ‘Soul Train’ dancers.”

Warner Bros. Records senior VP of urban promotion Ken Wilson: “I'd suggest doing some hand-to-hand things like passing out postcards for awareness so people can know about the show. They need to do a massive campaign that covers the streets, including promotions on TV. The correct host is also important, someone who has an edge and appeals to young people but is also accepted by the 25-54 demo. The main focus, I imagine, should be 18-plus to encompass both R&B and rap.”

Nederlander Concerts COO Alex Hodges: “In terms of being a brand that could regenerate itself and come back on television or in live, I think there are opportunities. Get the artists and go on tour. You could present younger artists and maybe some legacy artists.”

ROUND TWO

Apple Prepares Launch Of Second iTunes Festival

LONDON—Apple says its second annual iTunes Live: London Festival is designed purely to drive sales at its iTunes Music Store—not to move the company into concert promotion or content ownership.

Every performance at the festival, which gets under way July 1 at the fashionable Camden district venue Koko, is recorded to be sold as an iTunes download, giving the store increased visibility among consumers and expanding its stock of exclusive live recordings.

“The recordings are owned by the label,” iTunes Europe director Oliver Schusser says. “They choose how many songs are put up for sale. We’re the retailer but provide the ‘studio’ and all the marketing.”

The iTunes Festival will offer a month of free rock, pop, soul and jazz shows, accessible only to contest winners via the U.K. iTunes site. Every show is recorded, to be partly or wholly sold via iTunes in its 22 markets worldwide within weeks. In addition, ITV will broadcast 15 half-hour shows nationally—running Monday-Friday across three weeks—on its ITV2 network and will air three half-hour “best-ofs” on ITV1.

Although Schusser says the shows are comparable to “a recording session in front of a small audience,” the size of the audiences will be a bit larger this year. Depending on the show, the Koko performances will accommodate between 500 and 1,500, which will be larger than the 350-450 capacity of last year’s venue, central London’s Institute of Contemporary Arts.

The iTunes Festival grew out of regular monthly shows Apple has staged in London since the spring of 2005. The company also organized an 11-night season of collaborative “London Sessions” in February at London’s Air Studios and a 15-night event this spring in Berlin.

Although Apple has sponsored in-store music performances in the United States.
valuable.

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Train’ with today’s going is archive scenes they’ve collected in the McGuire:

indie stars festival’s what we’re doing N’E

But "There now comparable to other plans to other markets, but adds that “by August, we’ll sit together and figure what we’re doing next.”

N’E’R’D will be the headline of the 2008 festival’s first show. The monthlong bill also stars rock veteran Paul Weller, cutting-edge indie acts Hadouken and Lightspeed Champion, plus James Blunt and R&B-edged chart

rights on as much of the content as possible.”

Marketing/branding agency Another Anomaly founding partner Duncan Bird: “The world of shortform content is where it’s at. If they could edit famous clips of the show down to 20- to 30-second bits, they would be onto a pot of gold. They could have clips of the artists on your phone relatively cheaply or get a deal with a brand such as Hennessy.”

North Star Media VP of creative services Marty Silverstone: “Engage the audience interactively by aligning with artists who have their own social networks such as 50 Cent and piggy-back off of that interactivity. For example, have fans do audio/video mash-ups using ‘Soul Train’ music and video and share [them] with their friends.”

TAG Strategic managing partner Ted Cohen: “Having 3 million songs at your fingertips is useless. Having a trusted advisor to curate it for you is much more valuable. The ‘Soul Train’ brand can be very valuable in being that trusted voice.”

El online gossip columnist/video blogger Marc Malkin: “‘Soul Train’ needs to jump on the celebrity meltdown bandwagon. Every week, the show needs ‘Train Wreck of the Week.’ On a completely different note, ‘Soul Train’ should team up with Amtrak to encourage people to reduce their carbon footprint by traveling by train instead of planes and automobiles. You can have dance parties on trains for people traveling across the country. Imagine your host—I’m thinking RuPaul in train conductor drag, announcing on a platform in Kansas City, ‘All aboard, Kanye West!’


Gartner research VP Mike McGuire: “There may be ring-tones of old catalog songs that might be really popular or scenes they’ve collected in the archive that could be really valuable. But the key though is to determine whether this is going to be a nostalgia play, or are they going to update ‘Soul Train’ with today’s music? So a) determine the focus and b) get to work now or clearing the company doesn’t have a stateside concert series comparable to the iTunes Festival. Schusser declines to comment on whether Apple plans to expand the festival concept to other markets, but adds that “by August, we’ll sit together and figure what we’re doing next.”

Last year’s inaugural festival shows included performances by Amy Winehouse, Paul McCartney, Mika and Crowded House. How well did recordings of those shows sell on iTunes? Apple won’t provide specific sales figures, confirming only that the Winehouse and McCartney sets were particularly successful. An Apple spokesman says Winehouse’s set placed among the top three albums on the company’s charts in at least five European markets and also sold well in the United States and Japan.

ITV controller of music and events Guy Freeman says that broadcasting 15 shows in three weeks “produces a real event across our prime-time schedule. As a channel with a strong 16-34 focus, iTunes is a great partner in helping us further engage with the ITV2 audience.”

Blunt’s manager at 21st Artists, Todd Inlerland, says, “The direct association to the brand between the artist and iTunes is essential in an increasingly competitive digital market.”

NICK CAVE performs at AIR Studios earlier this year during a ‘London Sessions’ event sponsored by iTunes names Sam Sparro and Taio Cruz. “We’re trying to go across all the genres and age groups,” Schusser says.

The many ‘Soul Train’ host DON SCHUSSER cert
MANCHESTER, Tenn. — Despite growing competition from other music festivals, the organizers of the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival feel comfortable with their position in the market.

“There has certainly been a tremendous growth in the festival scene in the United States, but I still think it’s young,” says Ashley Capps, president of Bonnaroo, Tennessee-based A.C. Entertainment, which produced the four-day event with Superfly Presents. “The key for a successful festival is to provide the kind of unique experience that makes that festival stand out as a must-do experience. I think that’s where Bonnaroo really sets itself apart.”

Overcoming inflated gasoline prices and an increasingly crowded North American festival calendar, the seventh annual Bonnaroo event posted attendance of more than 70,000 — shy of a sellout of 80,000 but enough to leave organizers feeling “very, very lucky,” Capps says. “Our sales were a little bit off, but not really what a lot of other people seem to be experiencing,” she says.

Bonnaroo ran June 12-15 on a 750-acre rural site about 60 miles south of Nashville. Boasting a wildly ambitious lineup of performers, the festival attracted attendees from all 50 states and some 28 countries.

When Bonnaroo began in 2002 — selling out on the Web in 11 days without any traditional advertising — major destination music festivals in North America were much scarcer than they are today. As many as a dozen sizable festivals have cropped up in the past year alone, including big events in British Columbia, Michigan, Denver, San Francisco and New York. In evolving beyond its jam-band roots, Bonnaroo has been pretty much fearless in building its lineup. Among the 12 bands on the bill were headliners Metallica, Pearl Jam and Widespread Panic, along with a diverse range of artists that covers virtually all musical genres and comedy. Among the acts that performed were Jack Johnson, My Morning Jacket, Phil Lesh & Friends, the Raccooners, Zappa Plays Zappa, Willie Nelson, Drive-By Truckers, Death Cab for Cutie, B.B. King, Alison Krauss & Robert Plant, Gogol Bordello, Ben Folds, Kanye West, Chromeo, Chris Rock, the Swell Season, Les Claypool, Sigur Rós, Levon Helm, Yonder Mountain String Band, O.A.R., Rilo Kiley and Iron & Wine.

Ticket prices were up slightly this year, but Capps says “there’s no doubt” expenses were up more than ticket prices. “It’s been a goal of ours from the very beginning to provide value. We’ve actually been criticized for having ticket prices too low,” Capps says. “Our ticket price includes camping and when you factor all that into it, compared to other festivals it is an extraordinary value.”

Bonnaroo tickets this year ranged from $209.50 for early purchasers to $244.50. A pair of VIP tickets went for $1,169.50. Capps says the VIP ticket capacity was increased by 33% and sold out in advance.

The cost of generator fuel required to power Bonnaroo has more than doubled from a year ago, with the biggest surge in prices coming after the festival budget was drawn up. “You just have to absorb it,” Capps says. “We’ve created ways to deal with it. For example, during the buildup we didn’t run the generators all night, we shut down the power in our compound about nine o’clock in the evening. We definitely instituted means of trying to conserve.”

Bonnaroo burned a lot of biodiesel fuel, now more competitively priced with diesel. “We’re just doing everything we can that makes sense, but like any business you have to play the hand that’s dealt you,” Capps says. “We’re all dealing with it, the fans and the bands that play here.”

For attendees, the cost-per-band ratio is pretty good at festivals in general and at Bonnaroo in particular. The headliners alone are worth the price of admission and deliver epic sets.

In terms of sponsors, Bonnaroo doesn’t beat fans or artists over the head with a corporate presence. “That’s another philosophy we’ve had from the very beginning,” Capps says. “We’re not opposed to sponsorships. We always work with our sponsors to integrate to the festival and really bring additional value to the fans, for the sponsor, for the artist. Our sponsors are not just sponsors but are really integral in creating a fantastic event.”

With a captive audience of thousands for four days, there is no question Bonnaroo could exploit sponsorships to a much higher degree if it wanted to. “We say no a lot,” Capps says. “There have always been certain areas that we’re just not willing to go into.”

"Ace In The Crowd"

As Music Festivals Proliferate, Bonnaroo Still Strong
Ring Tones

Three Ring Teams With Fontana Distribution

In the fall of 1998, it was difficult to turn on the radio without hearing Everlast's mournful blues-rock hit "What It's Like," which topped the urban, pop and triple A charts and went on to win a Grammy Award. Likewise, I couldn't set foot inside a club in 2004 without hearing Kelis' "Milkshake," a sassy boast that seemed to provide the backdrop for the perfect dance party.

Hampered by record label consolidation, Everlast and Kelis struggled to follow up on their initial flush of success, eventually being released by Island Def Jam and Jive, respectively. As typical and unfortunate as their stories are, both artists are about to get a second chance.

They are among the first artists expected to release albums on management firm Three Ring Projects' new TRP Records imprint, part of a growing trend of full-service shops that help independent artists do everything from book tours to manage licenses. The firm, which has offices in Los Angeles and Nashville, has secured a deal with Fontana Distribution to fill the usual physical orders and to expand into the digital and mobile markets as well.

"The nature of the business right now is one that breeds opportunities," says Jeff Rabhan, who founded Three Ring with partners Stuart Bill and Cal Turner III. "We are trying to bridge the gap between management and the label, and we have the ability to create partnerships and do proper 360 deals. Because, after all, who cares about an artist more than their manager?"

Fontana president Ron Spaulding is excited about the new partnership. "What we are always looking for in labels is the ability to act as creative partners and to be open to working with other artists in the Fontana family," he says. "They also are not held back like a label is by having lots of outside partners who need to be consulted every time a decision needs to be made. Their process is very streamlined. They are the G3 to a label's Jumbo Jet."

Shared values are only part of the reason Three Ring and Fontana decided to work together. "Fontana is incredibly strong in the digital and mobile areas, and we are very focused on growing our artists in those realms," Rabhan says. "The fact that they have InGrooves as their push-button international partner is a major reason we decided to work with them. This is particularly important for an artist like Kelis, who has a huge overseas following."

TRP Records' first release will be Everlast's new album, which will be released in partnership with Sony/ATV's Hickory Records. "I guess I could have gone with another label, but I really wanted to empower myself," Everlast says. "Three Ring have been good managers, and I think we can work together to get decisions happen more quickly and get me back out on the road and in front of audiences." Everlast is also planning to reintroduce himself with viral videos and a new Web site.

The former House of Pain member will also have access to other Three Ring projects, like "Caged," a planned TV show "like Entertainment Tonight" for mixed martial arts," Rabhan says, adding that Three Ring has produced a pilot of the proposed weekly half-hour program and is shopping it around to TV networks.

Everlast is "a big fan of ultimate fighting, and we put him in the pilot," Rabhan says. "It was easy for us to do everything internally and a great way for us to connect him to some of his core fan base."
John Oates wants people to know that he is nothing like what he was when he had a mustache.

The Hall & Oates principal is firm about the distinction, because if things go as planned, his mustached image could appear on TV in cartoon form kicking ass, rocking out and wearing tight pink pants.

Independent publisher Primary Wave Music Publishing, which owns a majority stake in most of the biggest hits in the Hall & Oates catalog, is shopping a cartoon titled "2-Stache" that further illustrates the dichotomy. As laid out in a two-minute trailer, Oates is portrayed as a modern-day family man and finds himself enticed back to the rock star life by his mustache, which is voiced by comedian Dave Attell.

While the project hasn't yet found a broadcast partner, it illustrates the sometimes surprising ways that music rights holders are looking to monetize their content.

"In a cartoon setting, the mustache has its own personality," Oates says from Aspen, Colo., where he's finishing his latest solo album. "Just as I'm represented as the John Oates of today, the mustache is the John Oates of yesterday. The focus of the music will be on the back catalog, but it's an open-ended situation. There's even talk of the mustache trying to bring new bands into the picture."

The idea for a TV show came to Primary Wave senior executive director Andy Dubi, hosted an 80th birthday gala for his wife, the Hall & Oates show last year. "I said to myself that this guy could be a pop icon on a completely different level."

—Evan Duby, PRIMARY WAVE

The animated mustache of John Oates of Hall & Oates springs into action in an image from a promotional trailer.

On Target

Learning About Branding From Tony Bennett

The Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival, which was held June 15-21, is the advertising world's version of the Academy Awards, the Grammy Awards and MIDEM all rolled into one. A week in length, it usually takes place around the summer solstice and is complete with meetings, parties (many of them are at the beach, boat and poolside variety), seminars and workshops, awards presentations and frolicking very deep into the night.

Musically speaking, a lot went down at Cannes. Craig David did a private showcase for Huvax, one of the world's largest advertising agencies. Sony, Corbis and Yahoo co-sponsored a late-night penthouse party featuring guest DJs James Roshust of Does It Offend You, Yeah? and Peter Moven of Peter Bjorn and John, a band that has had key placements with brands like Pontiac and Levi's.

And this year's winner of the Gold Lion for best use of music was a version of the spiritual "Dem Bones" re-done as "Danns Boots," created for Australian soccer shoe company Nomis by Amber Music composer Will Bates and performed by Phil Mossman, formerly of LCD Soundsystem.

Meanwhile, I hosted a music seminar on behalf of my agency, the Grey Group. Our featured guests: None other than singing great Tony Bennett, who charmed the audience with his reflections about his storied singing career.

The legendary singer joined me by his son and manager Danny Bennett. The younger Bennett has expertly guided his father's career for nearly three decades and has an excellent grasp of what brand alignment has to offer to the music industry.

Danny is a big believer in the power of music brand, having previously secured a deal for his father with big box retailer Target, which in 2006 created the "Mustache Hall Oates" catalog. The album went gold in 2007 with "Died in the USA," featuring a duet with his famous father.

Danny's backing is strong for a reason. As he succinctly put it last week, "Music and sound may be the greatest branding device of all. And that collective snicker that I heard at the Grammys in '07 will be branded in my psyche—kind of the death knell of an era, and likely many a career."

The winner of the best use of music award at the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival was a spot for Australian soccer shoe company Nomis, which featured former LCD Soundsystem member Phil Mossman.
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Music publisher ole has purchased a 50% stake in the 3,300-title Jody Williams Music catalog, Billboard has learned. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

The catalog includes big country hits like "Long Black Train," "What If She's an Angel" and the 2005 Billboard country song of the year "That's What I Love About Sunday."

Jody Williams founded the country music-oriented catalog in 1999 as a joint venture with Sony/ATV. Ole has purchased Williams' ownership stake in Jody Williams Music. Before the acquisition, ole had 35,000 songs in its catalog.

Williams left the publishing company in 2006 to become BMI VP of writer/publisher relations in Nashville.

"The catalog has a lot of great songs that were unexploited, not only in Nashville but in film and TV," Williams said in a statement. "I really wanted to hand over the catalog to a company who is as hungry to get the songs recorded as I was."

Sources say that the Williams catalog generated $500,000-$1 million annually in net publisher share.

"One of the great things about country songs is they can work across genres and across territories," ole chairman/CEO Robert Ott says, noting that, "it doesn't hurt that there are seven songs from the catalog on the current Taylor Swift record, which will increase the stature of those songs."

The catalog songs on Swift's self-titled 2006 debut album include top 10 country hits "Tim McGraw," "Picture to Burn" and "Teardrops on My Guitar."

Ott adds that ole plans to sit down with Sony/ATV to see how they can work together in mining some of the songs in the catalog to get them active.

"With two aggressive organizations working on the catalog at once we can do twice as well," says Ott, a former VP/GM of BMG Music Publishing in Canada who co-founded ole in 2004.

Ole, with offices in Toronto, Nashville and Los Angeles, has spent the $50 million acquiring various copyrights and catalogs. Ott says the company intends to remain an aggressive acquirer of publishing assets.

While the Publishers Place column is on hiatus, Billboard will continue to report on publishing and legal matters.
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Havana—A light breeze carries a steely mix of Caribbean music through the humid heat of the Central Havana neighborhood of Coyo Hueo, close to the Malecón seafront.

That breeze isn’t strong enough, however, to carry that Cuban music much further from what was historically a key music “barrio”—not even across 90 miles of sea to Florida.

Despite Cuba’s wealth of talent and the international attention that followed the Buena Vista Social Club phenomenon a decade ago, it remains hard to find Cuban music outside the island—and on it, legitimate CDs are impossible to find outside the main tourist areas.

It’s a situation that frustrates labels. At present, “there is no distribution strategy in place to sell or promote Cuban music here or abroad, and little sector integration between artists, labels and other agents,” says Johannes Abreu, commercial manager of Cuban label Colbin.

“There is no concept [here] of the music industry as a lucrative sector,” adds Reinaldo Hernández, international commerce manager at Bis Music, one of Cuba’s three main state-owned labels.

Only 10 years ago, Havana was crawling with A&R folk from western labels, looking for the next Buena Vista Social Club following the act’s Ry Cooder-produced, multiplatinum album in 1997 and the related documentary by Wim Wenders. However, the expected Cuban music explosion didn’t happen.

Industry insiders say government bodies’ “protectionist” attitude toward Cuban music means it is not considered as desirable an export as the island’s rum or cigars. That stance is rooted in the post-Buena Vista feeling frenzy that saw Cuban acts and catalogs snapped up by overseas companies.

“Music is treated [by government] more as a cultural product to be protected in a museum archive,” Hernández says. “But to sell, we need structural and business changes.”

As a first step, Abreu has asked 40 domestic industry insiders and academics for ideas on strategies to improve the Cuban music industry’s competitiveness and management skills. The results, to be published in September, are intended to form a road map for industry reform.

“The music industry must get together and [build] a strategy on distribution and sector management,” Abreu says. “Production is not a problem. [Leading state-owned label] EGRÉM can launch 30 new CDs a year. But what’s the point with no distribution strategy?”

While music industry insiders remain pessimistic about achieving swift changes, long-term relief may come following the reforms introduced in March by President Raúl Castro, which are intended to improve Cuba’s struggling economy and put more cash in Cubans’ pockets.

One of Castro’s reforms has allowed the unhindered purchase of DVD players, mobile phones and PCs. Previously, only Cubans working in tourism, cultural exchange or trade-oriented industries were allowed to buy such items.

“The question behind [Castro’s] reforms is, Will Cubans be prepared to spend money on leisure items such as music?” asks Paco Galindo, cultural promoter for Spanish authors and publishers society SGAE. “The big deficit in Cuba is consumption—when Raúl’s reforms take effect and retail shops open, it could change.”

Labels are frustrated that legal CDs are priced beyond the reach of most Cubans, due to the dual-currency economy that Cuba has operated since 1993.

The majority of Cubans are paid in Cuban pesos, while CDs are among the items that are only priced in convertible pesos, or CUC, which are each worth 27.8 local pesos (approximately $1.05). CDs are priced at about 8 CUC ($8.40) each, more than half the average monthly salary of about 400 Cuban pesos ($15.09).

With tourists purchasing the majority of legal CDs, domestic sales are largely confined to the thriving piracy sector. The music industry has been “locked into the convertible currency economy, where it remains captive,” Hernández says. Insiders say removing CDs from the list of items only available in CUCs would make them cheaper for Cubans and help labels compete against the pirates.

“If records were sold in Cuba in local pesos, we could sell millions [locally],” says Ciro Benemelis, president of the annual music conference/festival Cubadisco, which took place this year May 18-25.

On the International Front, Cuban labels complain that their efforts to sell their music are hindered by a lack of government support in promoting it overseas, in addition to the restrictions imposed by the longstanding U.S. trade blockade of the island.

Most complaints focus on official cultural policy, which is formulated by the culture ministry’s Cuban Music Institute. Despite the label’s desire to expand their sales at home and abroad, this year’s Cubadisco, which is organized annually by the institute, didn’t have a trade fair element for the first time. The reason, Cubadisco VP Cary Diez says, was “because we have changed the concept away from the purely commercial.”

But commercial help is what the labels say they need. Hernández, who has represented Bis and EGRÉM at the MIDEM trade fair since 2003, says, “We are a critical [of official institutions that should be promoting Cuban music commercially].”

“The institutions want to sell Cuban music abroad, but haven’t learned how to do it,” adds Darsi Fernández, director of SGAE’s Cuban office. “There is hope that the labels and the Cuban Music Institute will start a dialogue as Castro’s reforms begin to take effect. But Benemelis acknowledges the U.S. trade blockade will remain a big obstacle, adding, ‘I’m sure there are many U.S. businesses who would love to sell Cuban music to the Hispanic population there.’”
GLOBAL NEWS LINE

>>> SPAIN LOADS DIGITAL CANON
Starting July 1, Spanish consumers will pay a levy on all digi-
tal devices capable of recording, copying or storing sound
or images. The levy is intended to compensate creators for
revenue lost to illegal copying. The list of items the controver-
sial so-called "digital canon" covers was published June 19; it
contained only a few minor changes to an earlier agreement
by Spain's industry and culture ministries that was published
in January. For example, mobile phones with integrated MP3
music devices will be subject to a €1.10 tax ($1.70) instead of
the original €1.50 ($2.35). After the first year of the levy, the
culture ministry will review the amounts collected and make
any necessary adjustments. Consumer groups, Internet users
and hardware manufacturers have opposed the levy on the
grounds that many consumers do not use their devices to
copy or record.
—Howell Llewellyn

>>> HMV UNVEILS GETCLOSER.COM
HMV has lifted the wraps on its customized U.K.-based social dis-
cover Web site, getcloser.com, which intends to help bridge the
gap between the physical and online entertainment sales envi-
nroments. The music and film online site has operated in beta
mode for the past six months, but will open for public trials July
1 ahead of a planned consumer launch this fall. The site allows
customers to discover, rate, recommend and share information
on their favorite music and movies. Visitors can also import
their iTunes libraries to a personalized home page. HMV e-com-
merce director Gideon Lask gave key supplier partners—in-
cluding labels, DVD firms, games publishers and distributors—a
snork peak at the service in late April.
—Lars Brandle

>>> GEMA WANTS NOVELLOS CLONE
German authors rights society GEMA is planning to launch an
awards gala in May 2009 loosely based on Britain's presti-
gious Ivor Novello Awards. A committee is working to de-
fine 10 categories for the new event, which is tentatively call-
ing itself the German Music Authors' Awards. However, it has
been confirmed that chart successes will not play a key role
in choosing the winners. The British Academy of Composers
and Songwriters present the Ivors in association with the
Performing Right Society, and the awards are judged either
by a BACS members' panel or on sales/broadcast perform-
ance. The 53rd edition of the annual Ivors ceremony was held
May 22 in central London.
—Wolfgang Spahr

>>> SMELLIE CALLS FOR OZ GOV'T LINKS
The Australian music industry suffers from "an appalling
lack of leadership" and needs to work with the government
and the wider business sector to improve its fortunes, vet-
eran Australian label exec Michael Smellie says. Smellie
made his claim during a keynote speech at the National Film
and Sound Archive Sound Day, an event held June 18 in Can-
berra. "The fragmented nature of the business is a major
drawback to progress," Smellie told delegates. He called on
the government to establish a music council that would
work together with trade bodies, local governments, schools,
businesses and community organizations. Smellie is presi-
dent of media development for the Asia Pacific region for
German media giant Bertelsmann. He formerly served as a
senior executive in Asia, Australasia and the United States
with PolyGram, BMG and Sony BMG.
—Christie Eliezer

>>> BIG MUSIC EXPANDS
Mumbai, India-based label Big Music has launched an
artist-management division called Big Talent specializ-
ing in 360-degree deals, headed by its
CEO Kulmeet Makka. "Big Talent will man-
age artists as brands spanning live-event
management, TV and radio appearances
and other projects," he says. The new
company's first signnings include
British male vocalist RagHAV and female
rapper Hard Kaur, who is also based
in the United King-
dom. Big Music,
which has simulta-
neously launched a
live-events division
called Big Stage,
was founded in 2007 by the Reliance Big Entertainment
conglomerate.
—Nyay Bhushan

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SOUNDS OF SILENCE
Italy's Festivalbar Cancels Dates

MILAN—A question mark hangs over the future of Festivalbar, the televised song contest and festival that has been a fixture of Italy's musical calendar since 1964.

Festivalbar events had been planned for Padua (June), Palermo (July) and Verona (September), down from the usual four. But now, only the Verona date appears likely to proceed.

Festivalbar promoter Andrea Salvetti declines to comment but sources close to him claim that budget cuts by TV channel Italia Uno made the full schedule “unworkable.” They insist the Verona show will go ahead, although details are not yet available.

Italy Uno, which traditionally broadcasts each show in two parts within days of it taking place, was unavailable for comment. However, label sources suggest that the 2008 event failed to attract sufficient sponsorships. Last year’s sponsors included Nokia and Pepsi.

Festivalbar’s TV-friendly format, featuring major-league artists performing for large crowds in picturesque locations, has long made it a key showcase opportunity for Italian and international acts.

Indie labels body PMI president Mario Limongelli says he is perplexed by the Festivalbar situation. “It’s always been a shot in the arm for the industry,” he says, “and we could certainly use that in the current crisis.”

According to the IFPI, the Italian music market’s trade value dropped 17.1% during 2007 to €266.2 million ($364.7 million).

The cancellations are “definitely bad news,” Warner Music Italy president/CEO Massimo Giuliano says. “If the final night were cancelled too, it would be even worse.”

Festivalbar, founded by Salvetti’s late father, impresario Vittorio Salvetti, retains the original event’s aim of identifying the “hit of the summer.” Initially broadcast on state-owned RAI radio, Festivalbar’s earliest format featured the most popular singles played on Italian jukeboxes during a preshow qualifying period, with the most-played song named as the winner.

Nowadays, Festivalbar’s five category winners come from a shortlist agreed on by labels and organizers. The eventual victors are chosen by either public vote, a jury, sales or airplay performance.

Labels have long used Festivalbar as a platform for launching, and gauging early reaction to, the summer’s big hit singles. “This time last year, we knew what the summer hits would be,” Universal Music Italy head of local repertoire Alessandro Massara says. “This year, without Festivalbar, we don’t.”

Although most annual Festivalbar victors are domestic acts, it also features international repertoire. Last year, Universal Music Germany’s Tokio Hotel won the digital (sales) category. Industry sources say this year’s lineup was to include Coldplay, Duffy, Amy Winehouse, Rihanna, Moby, Estelle and Yael Naim.

Two Festivalbar-branded compilations featuring songs from the event are issued annually on a rotating basis by the majors, which usually report sales of around 140,000 units each. This year, despite the cancellations, compilations of songs that would have been featured streeted June 13 through Warner and EMI.

Festivalbar remains hugely popular with viewers. Organizers claim last year’s shows averaged a 13% audience share in its time slots, equivalent to 2.8 million viewers per night.

So labels are keen for it to survive, particularly in view of their troubled recent relationship with annual flagship music event the Sanremo Festival (Billboard, Feb. 9), which this year attracted an average audience of roughly 9 million viewers.

“Festivalbar’s TV audience may be smaller than Sanremo’s,” Italian IFPI affiliate FiMI president Enzo Mazza says, “but it tends to be closer to the record-buying public. Festivalbar has always given value for money in terms of sales.”

Label execs also complain that the Festivalbar cuts have meant a further reduction in the limited exposure for music on Italian TV.

“Festivalbar and the [record] industry need to deal with the lack of coverage for music on TV,” Mazza says. “If the networks don’t want music, we must start looking at other outlets.”

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TV Drama

Univision-Televisa Fight Could Affect Music Promotion

The outcome of a long-delayed court battle between media giants Univision Communications and Mexico’s Grupo Televisa could have a big impact on how Latin music is promoted on U.S. Spanish-language TV.

Televisa, which filed a lawsuit two years ago in an attempt to acquire Univision, wants to terminate a 25-year program-license agreement with the U.S. broadcasting company, citing breach of contract and underpayment of royalties. Under the pact, which expires in 2017, the Mexican media company provides Univision with the bulk of its most popular programming, including its successful prime-time soap operas, or telenovelas. The agreement gives Univision exclusive rights to air the programming in the United States.

Originally set to go to trial in April, the trial was put off until July, before being delayed until October, suggesting the companies may be trying to reach some kind of settlement. Representatives for the two sides declined to comment on the litigation.

The stakes for Latin music marketing are high given the sheer reach of Univision, which is not only the leading Spanish-language TV network in the States but also commands one of the largest prime-time audiences of any network. During the May sweeps, Univision placed No. 3 among all U.S. broadcasters, beating out CBS, NBC and the CW among adult viewers. In heavily Latino cities like Los Angeles, the network frequently ranks No. 1.

Not surprisingly, Univision airtime is highly coveted as a medium to promote music acts. Performances and interviews on highly rated shows like “Don Francisco” and “Premios Juventud” provide important platforms to promote artists. Even more important are TV ads spotlighting new album releases, particularly for acts whose labels have affiliations with Univision, including Vene-music and Universal Music, which purchased Univision in May. Artists on non-Univision-affiliated labels also advertise on Univision but usually restrict themselves to local-market campaigns due to the higher ad rates they pay.

Televisa’s suit against Univision threatens the latter’s status as a vital promotional platform for labels. In March, Televisa agreed to air Telemundo programming in Mexico.

Telemundo, which is owned by NBC Universal, would no doubt jump at the chance to air Televisa’s shows.

The only other significant producer of programming in Mexico is TV Azteca, which already owns and programs its own U.S. network, says Julio Rumbaut, president of media transactions and consultancy firm Rumbaut & Co.

“Televisa has a unique standing as the premiere Spanish-language television content producer in the world,” Rumbaut says. “If Univision has had limited success with the dramatic productions they have done,” Rumbaut says. “Because it produces virtually no dramas or soaps, Univision would face the prospect of having to reinvent itself if it lost Televisa’s programming,” says Guillermo Sierra, chief executive of the U.S. division of Televisa’s TV commercial division.

That would force Univision to scramble for replacement shows and to explore other programming options, he says. Sierra speculates that Univision could try to make up for the loss of Televisa programming and the familiar stars who appear in those shows by creating new programming vehicles for other familiar faces—those from the world of Latin music, regardless of what Univision does, if the Televisa soaps go else where, some of the audience will eventually go with it. And that could have potentially big implications for the network’s ability to promote new music. Stay tuned.
WHAT'S MY LINE?

Authorized Lyrics Sites Struggle To Grow

More than a year after the introduction of lyric licensing programs, several online music services that implemented them are reporting mixed feelings about their results.

On one hand, there's a great demand among music fans for accurate lyrics. According to Internet research firm Hitwise, music lyrics in June ranked as the 31st most-searched-for topic on U.S. search engines. That's rather high, considering all the sites one could possibly search for on the Web.

The problem is that not enough of those searches are leading fans to authorized lyrics sources, provided by companies like Gracenote and LyricFind — which struck all the necessary agreements with publishers in order to oust those catalog to others.

"We've had what we call modest success," says Michael Spiegelman, senior director of Yahoo Music, the first company to adopt Gracenote's lyrics content more than a year ago. "It provides a fairly decent level of traffic, but it didn't take off quite to the extent that we originally projected."

So-called "rogue" lyrics sites — which display song lyrics without any permission from, or payment to, the publishers that hold the copyrights — still dominate the field. Because they've been around longer, they rank higher in Internet search results and therefore benefit from the majority of traffic.

Gracenote VP of business development Ross Blanchard says, "That would benefit the entire ecosystem."

According to the National Music Publishers' Assn., the organization has sent cease-and-desist notices to more than 50 unauthorized lyrics sites, but at this time doesn't have any plans for more aggressive legal action. Of those, 12 have shut down and 32 have removed at least some material. Only one, MetroLyrics, has converted to a fully authorized site by joining the Gracenote program this February.

And in line with the current better-to-ask-for-forgiveness-than-permission business model that seems to be the raison d'être in the digital music biz, MetroLyrics has thrived as a result. Its users operating as an unauthorized given its high-quality lyrics search results, and its newfound respectability has attracted new advertisers.

According to CEO Alan Jurystowiski, the company's advertising CPMs have doubled since December, and traffic has grown from 14 million monthly visitors to 22 million.

But gaining the attention of potential new customers through search engine results was only half the reason services like Yahooloo Music and Rhapsody incorporated lyrics. They also want to enhance the music experience for fans, but find lyrics a difficult and expensive way to do so.

Today, lyrics are limited to a "search by" option where users can find a given song in a service's catalog by typing in a few lines in the event they don't know the price, an artist or track. But digital retailers ultimately want to let users access lyrics while streaming a song without having to open a separate browser window, or even include lyrics in the metadata of a digital download so fans can read them on their MP3 player.

The current lyrics licensing scheme Gracenote offers allows users to only view lyrics, nor cut and paste them into savable formats. Incorporating rights to stream or download lyrics would carry additional licensing costs and require the development time needed to implement it.

"Unfortunately, that's how the licensing works," Spiegelman says. "There would be additional, very high costs involved."

So do retailers raise the price of all downloads? Let users choose between lyrics-enabled tracks at a higher price? Increase subscription fees in return for more interactivity? Gracenote senior VP of sales and marketing Jim Hollingsworth says such capabilities represent phase two of Gracenote's lyrics program, but he didn't provide a timeline for when that may roll out. He acknowledges the pricing challenge, but says absorbing such costs rather than passing them on to customers would pay dividends in terms of customer acquisition and retention.

"Adding to the cost model in a very margin-thin environment is difficult," he says. "But a better experience draws more people in."

But that message may prove a tough sell to services already disappointed in the results of phase one.

Licensed lyrics sites can show you what Fall Out Boy's Patrick Stump is singing in "Sugar, We're Going Down." But unauthorized sites get more visitors.

SNAPSHOT

Two years ago there weren't any legal song lyrics Web sites. Today there are more than 12. The two primary licensed sources of lyrics are Gracenote and LyricFind.

Gracenote A provider of music identification and recommendation software, Gracenote expanded into the lyrics market in July 2006. The company struck more than 200 agreements with all major music publishers and a host of smaller, individual rightsholders for a catalog of lyrics that covers almost 600,000 songs.

Clients:
- Yahoo Music
- Clear Channel
- MetroLyrics
- MTV
- AOL Music
- MGG
- Disney Radio

LyricFind Founded in March 2000 as an unauthorized lyrics service, the company began negotiating with publishers in 2002. It now has agreements with more than 1,700 publishers and a catalog of about 500,000 songs.

Clients:
- RealNetworks/Rhapsody
- All Media Guide

Music007.com
- uTube
- MusicClip
- Cox Radio Web sites

GOGING ROGUE

Unauthorized services are still among the most popular sources of music lyrics online. Of the top 10 lyrics Web sites measured by Internet research firm Hitwise, only one — MetroLyrics — is an authorized service that pays licensing fees. The entire Hitwise list (in order):
- A-Z Lyrics Universe
- MetroLyrics
- Lyricz.com
- Sing365.com
- LyricsMania.com
- LyricsMode.com
- Lyrics007.com
- LyricsFreak.com
- LetsSingIt.com
- STLS lyrics

DID YOU KNOW?

Web searches for song lyrics spike during Christmas, which Hitwise attributes to an increase in music sales during that period, as well as the popularity of karaoke at holiday parties.

HOT TO THE TOUCH

The "Guitar Hero" franchise is up for a host of changes with the "World Tour" edition scheduled for release this holiday season. One of the most-anticipated upgrades to the game's guitar controller.

The new guitar sports a "touch strip" fret-a touch-sensitive option that will allow for Eddie Van Halen-like finger-tapping, as well as note-bending capabilities for more bluesy riffs.

Although Activision licensed the Gibson guitar model for previous incarnations of "Guitar Hero," the "World Tour" guitar will be decided more generic-looking, given the ongoing patent litigation between the two companies. The older guitar controllers will still work with "World Tour," so consumers won't have to buy the new one.

The game costs $100 with just the guitar controller or $190 for a full set of instruments.
Willard Ahdritz’s inspiration for Kobalt Music’s business model came in part from an unlikely source: his experience working with an airline when he was a project manager at L.E.K. Consulting.

At the airline, he evaluated how that company tracked luggage using point-to-point routing instead of the hub-to-spoke routing most airlines used. Noting the similarity between how most airlines operate and how publishers interact with the various performance societies around the world, Ahdritz, co-founder of Telegram Records and Publishing, says he saw an opportunity to develop technology to communicate directly with collection societies.

“I wrote the whole business plan in 50 minutes and that was the model we followed for the first five years,” Ahdritz says.

Since its founding as a pure-play music publishing administrator in 2001 with the backing of Spark Ventures, Kobalt Music has grown to where its gross collections last year reached $50 million, Billboard estimates. Earlier this year, Kobalt received another equity infusion, this time $16 million from Balderton Capital, formerly Benchmark Europe.

Ahdritz claims that his vision of a high-service provider model is changing the publishing industry.

“They have come up with innovative ways to market their business,” says a veteran publishing executive who heads up a growing independent publishing firm. “Now I want to know, Does the reality match up to the marketing push?”

**So does your walk match your talk?**

We have the track record that this is the model for the future. Our clients typically experience up to 25% more revenue on average when they come to us from a traditional publishing model. So today we are 60 people in five offices. We were the No. 1 indie publisher in the U.K. In the first quarter we had 12.2% of the U.K. indie market share and 3% overall, according to Music Week.

**But how are you different from the traditional model?**

We have built a centralized organization supported by our technology platform, which electronically registers works to ASCAP, BMI and to all the collections societies worldwide. By running this model, our clients get their money one year to one-and-a-half years faster.

**How is your technology and service model different?**

We created our own platform based on Oracle relationship databases. We thought coming in that the existing technology could not deliver what we wanted in scalability, registration matrix, security and being able to match the billion of transactions you are going to see in the digital and mobile pipes.

So wherever you are in the world, you can log in and follow this portal and see source data on a global level. They can see in real time when and what they have earned in Germany. They can see it by product, by song, by line item, whatever way you want.

**Do you mine that data to capture to increase revenue?**

We have automated the process of taking secondary data—from places like [Nielsen] SoundScan, ASCAP’s Mediaguide and from the U.K.’s [Official Charts Co.], as well as chart data from 28 countries, and we are moving to add digital data and film/TV performance data—all of which is used to match with what we are paid to make sure we are getting the correct amounts at the right rates and splits.

We cross-reference songs with different products, linking them in our relationship databases. So if you are paid for 10,000 units on one song, you should be paid for 10,000 units on another song on the same album. And this automatic washing machine is generating excellent tracking on a global level in our centralized databases.

**Do your technology track the synch process?**

Yes, a new feature we are launching allows clients to follow the process in real time and track the status. So managers or artists can see if a song has been approved or even used in the end. Has it been paid or invoiced? We believe that with all of these tools that no other company is close with the transparency and details.

**What about the RoyaltyWindow.com system that Universal Music Publishing just announced?**

I expect the market to soon find out who on the portal side is producing the superior service—Kobalt or Universal.

**What about your advance process is different?**

Historically, advances are time-consuming and costly if you are in a contract. With our portal, all 700 of our clients can get an advance in four easy steps, with a low fixed fee and no changes in any other agreements, in a process that is guaranteed within five days but mostly within 24 hours.

The advance can be small or big, based on three different categories. It can be based on what will be paid in the next statement, with a 2% interest rate fee—or based on what can be seen in the pipeline for a 5% rate—and it can be based on projected revenue, which carries a 7% fee.

In the case of the latter, who is assuming the collection risk? It’s all recoupable, but there is a cap of two or three years. If we don’t recoup the full amount within the cap time period, then Kobalt is at risk.

**How do you see the future of the music industry?**

You will have the artists and managers, and then you have the service providers—Kobalt or the digital distributors—and for certain cases you will need venture capital for the baby acts.

**The labels are missing in that equation.**

Historically, it’s not old companies that changed the world. It is the new companies designed to fit into the new world that change things. Having said that, the majors have amazing assets and a couple of them may be able to transform themselves into a new structure and the new industry environment.

**Do you see any other new players?**

Yes, I am very excited about our new strategic partnership with Getty Images, which is one of the leading producers of digital content. Now, Getty is going into music and Kobalt will provide customized services for them. The deal allows for select Kobalt clients to increase their revenues through Getty’s distribution.

When Balderton invested $16 million in Kobalt, Spark Ventures claims its 23% stake was worth £7 million ($14 million). That means that those two firms combined hold about 50% of your company and it implies a valuation of $60 million, or £30 million. No comment, but I would point out that the valuation event was based on results from 12 months ago and we have grown 70% since then.

**Why stick with a service model instead of using your expertise to buy and build publishing catalogs?**

We have had quite a few opportunities to go into ownership and we have said no. We have a few private equity firms as our clients. We don’t compete with our clients, so we will stick with a service model.
MILEY CYRUS DISMISSES TABLOID TATTLE AND GETS BACK TO BUSINESS WITH A NEW ALBUM AND TOUR

BY CORTNEY HARDING

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHERYL NIELDS
Let's get it out of the way. That Vanity Fair photo shoot? 
For a teen idol that's suddenly been turned into glossy rag mag fodder, Miley Cyrus is remarkably sanguine when asked about the bare-shoulder, bedsheet-entwined photo. "I was embarrassed," she says in her rapid, self-assured clip, "but also it's like, every career thing that I don't can't be perfect, and sometimes my decisions are wrong. I think that just makes me even more relatable. I don't think people will look at me any differently because they're like, 'You know what, I'm going to do stupid stuff too, and I'm going to make mistakes, and that's fine.' It still hurts when I think about it—but you know what, it doesn't mean that we can't move on." 

So with that in mind, we'll move on. Cyrus certainly has—she's got a new record, "Breakout," out July 22 and is currently filming a "Hannah Montana" movie in Tennessee, followed quickly by a return to the Disney studios to shoot another season of the show that made her a household name. After the season wraps, she'll hit the road for another tour, hoping to mimic, if not best, the remarkable success of her last outing.

First cast as Hannah Montana at age 12, she quickly developed a tween following playing a character who is an ordinary high schoolgirl by day and a rock star by night. The franchise quickly bloomed from a TV series to a full-blown marketing juggernaut, complete with five affiliated albums moving 7.29 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and a 70-date, sold-out tour that led mothers to write fictional essays about dead fathers in order to win tickets. With this new album, though, Cyrus is choosing to look forward and introduce her fans to a new side of her personality. Just because she's developing beyond the Hannah Montana name, though, doesn't mean that Disney won't pull out all the stops to ensure the record is a success, including the tour, media appearances and an international push.

"We felt good about the success of the last tour," says Chip McLean, senior VP of Buena Vista Concerts for Disney Music Group, clearly understating the obvious—according to Billboard Boxscore, Cyrus' tour made $55.2 million, with a total attendance of almost 1 million. "We expected to do well given the quality and the success of the show, but we did not expect this type of frenzy."

Tour dates for the new album have yet to be finalized, but McLean and his team are already thinking of ways to solve the problems of the last tour. "One of the constraints we have is that due to her [filming] schedule, she can't do what many bands do and tour until the demand is exhausted," he says. "We're weighing the pros and cons of having her do multiple nights in one big city versus her doing one-night shows in a number of smaller markets. Since she is someone who appeals to families, we can't just have her in the top 15 markets. Families won't be able to afford to make the trip, buy the tickets and pay for the hotel if we did that."

Affordability is another key question that McLean wrestles with, as the cost of the tickets for the last tour topped out at $65. "We felt good about that price point, but the ticketing system right now can be exploited, and it was," he says. "This tour was unique in the sense that it lifted the rock and exposed the underside of the secondary ticketing market."

Luckily, even those who lost their shirts buying tick- ets for their daughters from ticket resellers should be able to easily procure a copy of Cyrus' new album. And although the release represents Cyrus taking what Disney Music Group chairman Bob Cavallo calls "great strides to become a valid artist," she has clearly not forgotten her base. "She is aiming it older, but not that much," Cavallo says. "I am confident her young fans will like it too."

"It's an exciting time for her," her manager Jason Morey says. "She's really grown into a great singer/songwriter. The combination of her young age and her talent for writing is definitely helping her create music that appeals to both the Radio Disney audience and top 40 listeners."

It's this outreach to other audiences that Disney is helping facilitate. "We have quite a marketing plan," Hollywood Records GM Abbey Konwitz says. "We are focused on keeping her in the public eye, and the fact that she's a celebrity is helpful."

In terms of the nuts and bolts of the campaign, Konwitz lays out the master plan, starting with the June 28 premiere of the video for "Seven Things I Hate About You" on ABC and the Disney Channel. "The video will go up on MTV the following week, and this will be the first video she has on MTV," he adds. The single rockets 70-10 this week on the Billboard Hot 100, tying a career best.

Cyrus will also play the "Good Morning America" Summer Concert Series July 18 and the "Today" Toyota Concert Series July 25. She'll continue with her popular Cyrus-produced YouTube series, "The Miley and Mandy Show," and has struck a deal with Verizon for ringtones and other exclusives.

The marketing plan is not limited to the United States. Previous albums "Hannah Montana" and "Hannah Montana 2: Meet Miley Cyrus" as well as the CD/DVD live package "Best of Both Worlds Concert" are still being worked as catalog releases with TV advertising planned in the United Kingdom, where they are distributed by EMI. The "Best of Both Worlds" live album peaked at No. 69 on the European Hot 100 in May. The album reached No. 10 in Ireland and Brazil, No. 14 in Austria and No. 29 in the United Kingdom. It also peaked at No. 54 in Switzerland and No. 71 in Mexico. "Hannah Montana 2: Meet Miley Cyrus" and "Hannah Montana" have achieved gold status in the United Kingdom, according to Disney Music Group.

"Breakout" is not yet scheduled for release in Europe, although it should arrive "sooner rather than later," according to London-based Mike Storey, Disney Music Group marketing director for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. "Obviously we want her to promote it so we're just waiting to firm up some artist availability before we set a release date."

Storey says that the United Kingdom, Norway and South Africa are the big markets for Cyrus outside the States, adding that Germany is a growing market where the TV show is "really popular." The Disney Channel U.K. shows "Hannah Montana" every day and will screen the "Best of Both Worlds" concert in the fall.

"See You Again" from the "Meet Miley Cyrus" album is enjoying airplay on stations including Capital FM. "The track was spontaneously picked up," Storey says, comparing the radio plan in the United Kingdom to that in the States. "The fact that we get radio play for Miley Cyrus and haven't had it for Hannah Montana says it all...she's not as developed as [the Hannah Montana] persona overseas as she is in the States. The sense of ownership is missing over there, but we are sure once she gets over there, she will connect."

All parties agree that none of this would be possible without Cyrus' boundless energy and talent. "She has a better sense of herself at 15 than most artists twice her age," Morey says. Cavallo adds that "Miley grows really fast," and Konwitz says, "She's a real artist, and she works incredibly hard."
The Billboard

Q&A

THE HARDWORKING PROFESSIONAL SPILLS THE BEANS ABOUT HER NEW ALBUM, NEW MOVIE, TV SHOW AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A GOOD ROLE MODEL

How is the new album different from your previous efforts?

It’s grown-up. I wrote all the songs except two. My last one, “Meet Miley Cyrus,” was more just meeting me, finding out who I am, and here it’s more getting in depth of what’s been going on in my life in the past year.

Not many people are aware that you’re a songwriter. Can you talk a little bit about your process? Songwriting is what I really want to do with my life forever. No matter how long what I’m doing here lasts. I want to be a songwriter for the rest of my life. I love it and it’s my escape. I just hope this record showcases that—more than anything—I’m a writer.

I wrote my first song when I was probably 7—it was called “Pink.” That shows what kind of song it was about—it’s about the color pink. But you know what, damn it, I wrote it and I’ve been writing since I was my little sister’s age.

At this point, though, when I’m writing I like to not listen to music at all because I don’t want to ever be like, “Oh, this is cool,” and start to sound like anyone else. I try to just kind of focus on my music and just continue to write, just kind of block everything out. I don’t watch TV at night; I actually try to make sure my mind is focused.

There were many kids who were disappointed that they couldn’t see you on your last tour. Are you planning to tour with this new record, and what are you going to do to make sure all your fans can see you?

Yeah, we’re definitely going to go on tour. We’re not sure when we’re going to do that—probably early next year, later this year, we’re not sure—but I want to make it a lot different. My last tour was successful, but I want to do something that no one’s tried before.

In terms of the kids who couldn’t get in, I don’t know if I could do more—we did 76 shows last year and I don’t know that I could do more than that. Maybe I could do that and take a little break and go back into it? Also, the 3-D movie was awesome for the people that didn’t get to come see the show.

Those kids can also watch you in the third season of “Hannah Montana,” which starts filming soon. After this season wraps, will you want to stay with Disney for the long term, or will the “Hannah Montana” show eventually wrap up and you’ll move on to different projects?

It will wrap up, eventually. I mean, I won’t be Hannah Montana by the time I’m 30. But we’ve only done two seasons, so we definitely want to work on that hopefully for another two years.

And the film you’re working on is also tied to the “Hannah Montana” story, correct?

The story of the new movie is basically about going back to Tennessee and wanting to just kind of get back to your roots, but then realizing that maybe you don’t want to go back to them. I think the movie is about just having the Hannah character not disappear, but kind of be put on the back burner for a minute and have Miley Stewart just really show her talent and also her ambitions and dreams and other things more than just the Hannah life.

If you plan to act in other films that aren’t connected to Disney or “Hannah Montana”? Perhaps some sort of really edgy indie film where you break out of the box?

I’ve been talking to people about some cool movies, but right now I mostly want to stay within my company and keep them happy and keep everything that we’re doing successful and focus on that. I like to do everything that I do 120% and unless I can focus hardcore on that, I don’t want to do it yet.

No matter how long I’m doing here lasts, I want to be a songwriter for the rest of my life. It’s my escape.

Yet you still find time to juggle all these projects. There was also some buzz about you writing a memoir a while ago—is that still the plan?

Kind of—it’s more of a book for kids and teenagers, and I’m going to start working on that at some point. I love to write. Any way I can get a pen and paper and write down some ideas, whether it’s a song, movie, book, anything—I love to do that.

You come across as someone who is very concerned with being a good role model for young kids and particularly young women. In an era when young stars are falling out of limos with no underpants on, how do you make sure you stay true to yourself?

It’s something that I’ve been super blessed with, that I’ve had the opportunity and the ability to spread the light. That doesn’t mean that I’m not going to make mistakes and do things that everyone’s going to be happy with, because there’s no such thing as perfection. My thing that I always believe in—that I also try to tell girls especially—is that so many people look at these models and actors and singers and [say] I have imperfections equal beauty. The most beautiful things in life are the ones that aren’t perfect. There’s so many beautiful things about life that won’t be perfect that you’ll learn from. I just like to be the role model that doesn’t say you have to be perfect all the time. I like to tell them that their mistakes are beautifully broken.

A recent survey out of Canada highlighted your show as being great for young women because it showcases a wide range of body types. Is that something that you did intentionally, and is it important to you?

I stress about that stuff like everyone else, but at the end of the day, I’m a good ol’ Southern girl that likes her Cracker Barrel at 9 o’clock at night and if I want it, go darn it, I’m going to eat it. I’m not going to make myself miserable. And for so many girls, you don’t want to be thin because you want the guy to think you’re gorgeous or whatever—you do it all for women, you do it all for a competition. That’s so silly, it’s such a game. Why waste your time with a game you’re never going to win? There’s always going to be someone that I think is prettier than me, there’s always going to be someone that I’m going to think is a better vocalist, or a better writer, better guitar player. There’s always going to be that, so why stress myself about the competition the whole time?

Are there any artists you look up to, or mentors who have helped guide you through this process and keep you focused? Anyone whose career you admire and might want to emulate?

Mostly my mom—no one knows better than the person that made Billy Ray Cyrus, you know what I mean? My mom was a huge part of my dad during “Achy Breaky Heart” and all that. No one knows better than her because of what my dad’s already been through—and when he forgot most of it, my mom remembers every moment. [laughs]

As far as other artists, it’s hard because everyone is so different. I went on tour with the Jonas Brothers and I got to watch them grow. I got to watch them become famous. When I first went on tour with them they hadn’t really had their record out very long—and all of a sudden I watched them blow up. It was fun to watch them do that, and I like to see what kind of career moves they’ll make. I like to watch other stars that have grown up in this business, but I think everyone’s path is going to be so different and everyone needs to take their own direction.

I’m so happy with what I’m doing right now. I recognize that I’m super blessed and thank the Lord every day that I get to live my dream.

Additional reporting by Andre Paine in London.

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MORE THAN WORDS

Nas Wanted To Call His New Album The Most Incendiary Noun In The English Language. After Backing Down, Can He Still Reconcile Message With Music?

BY HILLARY CROSLEY
Seated in a quiet corner of New York restaurant the Spotted Pig, Nas is drinking a glass of rosé. He's dressed comfortably in jeans, velcro-fastened sneakers and a white T-shirt with a poster from Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier's "Thrilla in Manilla" fight. His black Rolls Royce is parked outside and he's awaiting a few cigars from his driver. In here, the noise surrounding his new Def Jam album, formerly known as "N*gger," has faded, but Nas is still happy to discuss the grand implications of it all. In the past nine months, the veteran has proved masterful at wagging the dog. Since last October, when Nas first announced his intentions for the album title, he's drawn all kinds of responses: ire from African-American activist the Rev. Al Sharpton, but support from Def Jam chairman/CEO Antonio "I.A." Reid. Then after retail distributors, which neither Def Jam nor Nas would identify, claimed they wouldn't carry an album called "N*gger," Nas rechristened it as an untitled project, starting yet another round of debate on popular hip-hop sites like nahrigh.com.

As the release nears its July 15 release, Nas is the first to admit he's not a one-man show. Def Jam, a unit of publicly traded company Vivendi, has to market this hot-button album while maintaining its market share, which begs the question: How do a corporation and an artist balance creative integrity with the bottom line?

I would have been fighting not to get "N*gger" out but to express myself, and that's not the fight I wanted. —Nas

DROPPING KNOWLEDGE

Nas Is Never Shy About Speaking His Mind On A Wide Range Of Topics. Here, He Weighs In On . . .

The Rev. Al Sharpton claiming the album title change as a victory: "That was no win for Al Sharpton. The sad thing is separated from you even in his world. He's a great, brilliant man, but he distances himself from the future, the kids. How can you claim to love your people and then hate?"

Whether he made his point with 2006's "Hip-Hop Is Dead" and if the music remains lifeless: "I heard that. I kind of missed the mark with that album. I can agree a little bit. I was the one watching all this shit happen. I would want to see me ride to the end," says Nas, who promises that the album's incendiary commentary on race relations remains. "Except a lot of so-called black leaders were using my album as a platform for themselves. I would have been fighting not to get the 'N*gger' album out but to express myself, and that's not the fight I wanted. This album is about me and how I feel as a black man."

Aside from the new name, or lack thereof, Nas' subject matter is rare. Especially in contemporary commercial hip-hop, which sells everything from mobile phones to fast food, and the third hip-hop songs stop Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart—Plies' "Bust It Baby Part 2" and Lil Wayne's "Lollipop" and "A Milli"—focus on sex and bragadocio. However, Nas says he recorded the album with a balance of education and entertainment in mind. "I didn't want to 'n*gger' my audience to death," he says. "So 'Be A N*gger Too,' which I recently released a video for, isn't on the album. It didn't fit. The entire record deals with the concept, but every song couldn't be 'n*gger.' I had to pace myself."

The album includes production and features from Cool & Dre, Green Lantern, Mark Ronson, Polow Da Don, Busta Rhymes, Keri Hilson, Chris Brown and StarGate. Throughout, Nas finds creative ways to address his chosen subject matter. On the Rhymes-featured "Fried Chicken," Nas uses a woman as a metaphor for soul food and black people's attraction to deadly eating habits. ("Mrs. Fried Chicken/fly vixen/give me heart disease but still need you in my kitchen," he raps.)

On "N.G.F.E.R. (The Slave & the Master)," the MC nods to his hit "I Can," where he runs down the historic inventions of the African Diaspora, amid describing the bitterest calling cards of low-income life like "schools with outdated books." First single "Hero," featuring Hilson, boasts anthemic synthesizers, a tuba, running keys and a swelling chorus as Nas explains why he changed the album title. Key lyric: "I'm bog-tied on the corporate side blocking y'all from going in stores and buying it/ at first I.A. and Doug Morris was riding with it/ but Newsweek articles started bigwigs and asked Nas, why are you trying it?"

Why he rarely does branding partnerships: "I don't have to, and it's too much. I'm overjoyed and blessed because I can make a dollar. Give me a great cigar, let's go fishing, and let me be able to help someone else, and that's all I need. Shit like Fela just falls in my lap. God has been good to me like that. But I won't own. I can do tons of sponsorships but I'm not that guy that's dying to get my face everywhere. I think a lot of people get upset with me because of that."

Why he shot and paid for his "Be a N*gger Too" video himself: "It was too early to involve Def Jam when I wanted to shoot this video. In May, Ronson, the director, is a dope guy who would even spend his own money to make sure the video was right. He loves this shit and he just got my meaning, because I was saying a lot of stupid things that could have offended a lot of stupid people with that record."

His wife/R&B singer Kelis' recent departure from Jive: "She'd been trying to get off live forever, and she finally did. But she didn't say any press, and later Live said they dropped her, though she was off way before they said they dropped her. Record companies have to save face so they don't look stupid. I don't know what she's going to do, regarding signing with another label. That might be slavery at this point, so I think she might release music herself."

Why he would spend his own money to make sure the video was right: "I'm bog-tied on the corporate side blocking y'all from going in stores and buying it/ at first I.A. and Doug Morris was riding with it/ but Newsweek articles started bigwigs and asked Nas, why are you trying it?"

CAN CONTROVERSY SELL?

Def Jam's newly minted executive VP Shakar Stewart says that while the company wholeheartedly supports Nas' creative vision, all parties understand the business implications of the original album name.

Nas would not jeopardize his opportunity to get his music out on a " commercially, most of all," Stewart says. "He understands that we believe in intelligent freedom of speech, meaning whatever stance you take, be prepared for some accountability." Stewart admits that distributors were the reason behind the album's title change but says the situation is now an example of Def Jam's support for its artists. He also says that Def Jam will not shy away from any future controversial singles or corresponding clips like the Nas-funded video for "Be A N*gger Too," which ends with a young black man hanged from a tree. "Nas is a visionary," Stewart says. "Singles are a collective decision and it's about picking the best music that demonstrates the album."

But from the marketing side, Def Jam senior VP of marketing Chris Atlas and marketing director Shari Bryant say the untitled project has been surprisingly easy to pitch.

"The funny thing is, we really thought the album was going to be a big issue," Bryant says. "We thought we'd just have to focus on the Nas brand. But when the title changed, the doors opened again."

While Nas has spearheaded awareness by leaking songs and hosting screenings of the aforementioned video, Def Jam has bussed it with pacing the online content blasts. Launched in May, the website nasindependenceday.com has become the hub for everything Nas, accumulating more than 80,000 unique visitors in its first week without any promotion. Each week the site features new songs, behind-the-scenes studio footage and viral interviews. Though Def Jam usually drops an official first video three months before an album release, a clip for "Hero" just wrapped this week. A viral webside depicting the making of the video will most likely hit Nas site next week, and Def Jam is aiming to drop the official clip July 14, one day before street date. Nas will also headline the Rock the Bells tour, which runs June 19-Aug. 6, alongside A Tribe Called Quest and Mos Def.

It's clear Nas is also in high demand on the talk show circuit. He's slated to appear on "Late Night With David Letterman," "Jimmy Kimmel Live," MTV's "TRL" and "Sucker Free," BET's "106 & Park" and Comedy Central's "The Colbert Report" all within one week of release. Larger retailers like Virgin and FYE as well as independents like www.americanradiohistory.com
Amoeba will give the album's cover—touting Nas' velvet back—high visibility inside their stores. Added-value items will be available digitally and on CD: an iTunes pre-order boasts a yet-to-be-determined bonus track, and independent retailers will supply a lyric book with each CD purchase.

On the mobile side, Bryant says Def Jam will give each carrier ringtones and ringbacks, and hints that a larger communications partnership is in the works, but declined to reveal specifics.

With all these gears in motion, Nas has also broken his tradition of sidestepping brand partnerships and brokered a one-year partnership with athletic apparel company Fila.

"My best friend Will and I loved Fila," Nas says. "It represented prestige and everything that was cool to us. When Will passed, we buried him in a black Fila sweat suit, so doing a deal with them has a lot of significance for me."

According to Fila president John Epstein, it was a natural match. "One of my executives spotted Nas shopping in our Manhattan store and struck up a conversation with him," Epstein says. "Nas isn't interested in selling out. He's interested in being true, and that fits with our brand."

Fila will offer reciprocal financial support for Nas' print and TV ad campaign as well as his upcoming tour. In return, the MC will wear Fila products and create an apparel line that draws from fashions of the late '80s.

Nas has scored seven top 10 hits on R&R's Rap Airplay chart since 1996, but none since 2003. Below, his studio album history on the Billboard 200.

**TUNED OUT?**

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Nostalgia aside, some may view Epstein as brave to co-brand his company with an MC who's pledged to un-pack America's racial struggles.

"I had some trepidation, and then I started talking to 16- to 20-year-old kids in focus groups," Epstein says. "They looked at me like I was crazy for not understanding their message of positive change. Nas is relevant to his followers and I don't have to understand it as long as they do."

Back at the Spotted Pig, Nas has lit one of the cigars and is musing that he doesn't need to market himself like other artists. And he may be correct.

During his 14-year career, the MC has had only six top 10 singles on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, but four of his albums—"It Was Written," "The Firm—The Album," "I Am," and "Hip-Hop Is Dead"—debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 (see chart, below). And despite a nearly nine-month publicity binge, none of the leaked singles from the new project have charted.

According to Nas, it's because he can "do [Nielsen] SoundScan numbers like everyone else" without following the usual promotional pattern. While his highest-selling album to date is 1996's "It Was Written" at 2.5 million copies, according to SoundScan, perhaps his Muhammad Ali T-shirt boasting the phrase "The Greatest," and/or that rose in getting Nas riled up. Or maybe after more than a decade in hip-hop, he's just being honest. "From Jay-Z to 50 Cent to Kanye [West], I've been around longer than all of them and I don't need any of their marketing," Nas says. "The people are my marketing, and that puts me in a class by myself."

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MOTLEY CRÜE

BAND'S FOUNDING LINEUP RETURNS WITH 'SAINTS OF LOS ANGELES' AND SUMMER CRÜE FEST TOUR, REVELING IN ITS SURVIVAL AND INFLUENCE

BY CHRISTA TITUS
When author Neil Strauss first met Mötley Crüe, the scene could have been ripped right from “The Dirt,” the 2001 autobiography he co-wrote with the band that became a New York Times best seller.

“It was at a show in Phoenix, and the very first time I met them, [drummer] Tommy [Lee] was handcuffed backstage,” Strauss recalls with a laugh. “Tommy Lee was literally handcuffed wearing these little leather kind of shorts that he wears and nothing else, and I just thought that was the ultimate way to meet Mötley Crüe.”

Jim Richards, PD of classic rock station KGB San Diego, says, “You can hear them today in bands like Airbourne, where their new song sounds like [Mötley Crüe’s] ‘Live Wire’ and you just see it in the style. I think you see the showmanship in various bands, particularly like the bands they’ve chosen for Crie Fest. These guys from these newer bands really look up to [Sixx] and the rest of the band as rock legends.”

Mötley is rock royalty with two generations of subjects: Its original fans, and those fans’ children, who’ve been exposed to the band through their parents, channels like VH1 Classic and Fuse, and such videogames as “Guitar Hero” and “Rock Band.”

The new album’s title single sold five times as many copies as downloads via “Rock Band” in its first week of release in April as it sold via conventional channels. The single has hit No. 7 on the Hot Mainstream Rock Tracks chart.

“That is classic Mötley Crüe,” Fuse president Eric Sherman says of the “Saints of Los Angeles” single. “They understand who they are; they never stray from the Mötley brand and what that stands for. They give the fans what they want, and I think they have this really strong relationship with the audience.”

Tenth Street Entertainment principal and Mötley manager Allen Kovac affirms the connection with fans is “what guides them—not whether or not a record company likes a song or a radio [station] likes a song or a video channel likes a song. I think that more artists should look at that as a way to continue a career as opposed to trying to make [money].”

Fan ties nurtured Mötley even before the group first appalled critics and parents with controversial 1982 album “Shout at the Devil.” The record is just one of many battles Mötley has fought, and won, against the establishment.

“We know what we’re doing is real,” Sixx says. “For some reason, everyone wants to bet against us, every single time. And the fans want to vote for us. And there’s the rub, right there.”

Guitarist Mick Mars says that the band’s music has “always been pretty close to street level.”

continued on >>p18
CONGRATULATIONS TO MÖTLEY CRÜE
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www.americanradiohistory.com
The MÖTLEY CRÜE boys backstage in the mid-'80s.

from >>p.36  I think it’s the way that we put our songs together and how we present them [that] people can actually relate to what’s going on.


Photographer Neil Zlozower, a longtime band friend whose shots of the group covered in theatrical blood are among the Crüe’s most iconic pictures, says, “There was something always natural about Mötley, especially in the beginning when they were raw and nasty and hungry before they started making millions and millions of dollars. There’s something about them at photo shoots where I really didn’t have to tell them much to do.”

The Crüe’s look was a vehicle to getting its music heard. Its mishmash of influences—among them Kiss, Cheap Trick, blues, punk—resulted in raw, aggressive rock with catchy riffs that singer Vince Neil topped off with pouty vocals and caterwauls. The costumes and sound were the siren calls that launched glam metal, and for the rest of the decade dozens of bands and labels copied the Crüe. Zlozower names Mötley and Quiet Riot as the movement’s pioneers. “Mötley Crüe was always a little cooler, a little tougher,” he says. “They were nastier, they were more hardcore.”

Mötley is one of few bands from that era that still have a high mainstream profile.

“If the music wasn’t any good, they would not have stood the test of time like they have,” Sherman says. “Mötley Crüe is an incredibly relevant band today.”

Mötley Crüe also has turned arena tours into flamboyant spectacles, featuring everything from flying drum kits to magids. As longtime agent Dennis Afia of Artists International Group succinctly puts it, “Mötley and their shows borderline on chaos.”

Said chaos—and the band’s attitude—tied the package together.

“Trying to be the biggest rock band in town is not the hardest thing to do,” Velvet Revolver (and former Guns N’ Roses) guitarist Slash says. “But to really be rock’n’roll and endure that, that’s something that a lot of people out there claim to be but aren’t, and Mötley’s one of those bands that really is.”

Kovac adds, “They all have their own character and persona, and each one of them is a star in his or her own right. And when you get four talented artists who have star quality, you have a band that people are entertained by.”

Mötley has kept millions enthralled for decades. Once it self-released its debut album, “Too Fast for Love,” on its own Leathür Records in 1981 and signed to Elektra that year, the band forged a multiplatinum sales trajectory through the early ‘90s with albums that are classic rock touchstones.

“Shout at the Devil” struck terror in parents’ hearts. The more introspective “Theatre of Pain” contained the monster video hit “Home Sweet Home.” “Girls, Girls, Girls” is a consummate ‘80s rock party record, and “Dr. Feelgood” is widely considered the Crüe’s most solid effort, thanks to Bob Rock’s production and the band’s then-newly acquired sobriety.

The greatest-hits set “Decade of Decadence: ’81-’91” (double-platinum) and “Red, White and Crüe” (platinum) followed suit.

The band’s aura of chaos has also sustained public interest. “Controversy is always good, because it’s free press. Any press is good,” Mars says. “Negative or positive, it doesn’t matter to me.”

And when Mötley told its story in the “The Dirt,” it left no skeletons in its closet. The shocking soap opera of addiction, conflict, death, sex and success unflinchingly showed the band at its best and worst times, which cycle around the Crüe like the seasons.

Turnmoil in the late ‘90s saw Neil exit the band and be replaced by John Corabi; then Lee departed not long after Neil’s return and was replaced first by Randy Castillo, then Samantha Maloney. Mötley essentially disbanded from 1999 until the 2005 reunion tour that Kovac and his team put together. The touring industry didn’t think it would work. “Nobody picked Mötley Crüe,” Afia says. “Everybody thought Mötley Crüe was dead.” But fans proved that assumption wrong, and tour receipts confirmed it. With this new album and tour, the band is poised for another career peak.

Mars says, “We’re a marriage, so it’s like we always come back together. The band is better, tighter, and we get along much better than we have in a really long time, and that’s a great feeling.”

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But to the Saints of Rock 'N' Roll

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Talk with Motley Crue bassist Nikki Sixx and guitarist Mick Mars, even on the phone, and you’ll witness an infamous dynamic in action. Sixx, known as the driven, visionary bandleader, is articulate as he is passionate about any topic you raise. Mars is equally knowledgeable, but softer spoken and more direct. Their responses are a study in contrasts, reflecting the range of perspectives within the band. They also help to make sense of the group’s at-times combative relationships. As Motley Crue prepared for the June 24 release of “Saints of Los Angeles,” the first studio album in more than a decade featuring the band’s original members, and the July 1 opening of its 40-plus city Crue Fest tour, Sixx and Mars got on the phone with Billboard. They discussed Motley’s past and present with the same boldness that made them superstars.

Motley Crue’s new album, “Saints of Los Angeles,” is loosely based on your autobiography, “The Dirt.” Why that approach?

Mick Mars: I think that we just pretty much thought it was a good thing to do, the right thing to do, to tie everything together, to put everything in a package that would make sense to everybody. Because to people that read “The Dirt” and they heard [Saints of Los Angeles] and listened to the lyrics, they’re like, “Oh, yeah, that was from ‘The Dirt’” and that kind of a thing.

Nikki Sixx: It was loosely based on, thematically, our story. But, in essence, isn’t that what all songwriters do? They write about their experiences. When you spread yours over a full album, you get this sort of story of like, “Wow.” Where it started, where it was and where it’s at now, and hopefully where it’s going.

Why did the band form its own Motley Records label, which is releasing “Saints”?

Mars: We formed our own record label, ...to be able to do it our way as opposed to someone dictating to us how it should be done. It was a good feeling, like Ray Charles when he was like, “You can have this, but I want my masters.” That was cool.

Sixx: Motley Records was sort of an emblem on a car. It was something we did when we were at Elektra. It was our way of saying, “We really are completely self-sufficient. You guys are a distribution source.”

But it wasn’t till later when we took the masters from Elektra and really started focusing on how to grow our asset, the asset of music...and the only way to do that is to market it. And it’s not a bad word. It’s not a dirty word.

How did you get the masters back?

Mars: They owed us a lot of money, in the eight-digital area. It was like, “Well, forget this, we’ll take our masters, we’ll take seven figures instead of eight and give us our masters.”

So it was done like that, which was really good for us. You won’t hear our songs on K-tel or anything.

Motley Crue’s best friend, you full circle, back to when you self-released “Too Fast for Love” in 1981 on Leathur Records. How would you compare the Motley Crue of then with today?

Mars: We’re going to sell our albums in stores instead of out of the trunk of our car. [laughs] That was big, man...[those days] were fun because we were up-and-coming. It’s like, “Wow, we sold 1,000 albums in one night, out of the trunk of our car? It’s all good.”

It was fun and learning and all that; we’re much more business-savvy now and see how every-
thing really works so we can market ourselves better. We learned from those days, and we’re not to naïve anymore.

Sixx: We went from an alley fight to a professional fighter. And back then we would use a switchblade to win the fight. Now the surgery’s done with precision from years and years and years of being in the ring. And we have the stamina, we have the experience, and we have the strength, and the only time that we fail is when we implode because we don’t work together.

And there’s the hinge, the hitch to this band—some say being exciting, some say being dysfunctional and some say just being insane.

I never know what’s going to happen with this band no matter how I try to help steer it away from the rocks. There have been times when it must just be destiny for us just to crash into the rocks. But for some reason, it never sinks. We get really close, but we never sink.

What made Motley Crue different from the other bands coming out of Los Angeles at the time?

Mars: They were all cheezy. One-hit wonders. They tried to write songs like we wrote them. There were record labels signing anybody and everybody that had any kind of a look or anything that was [like] Motley Crue.

Motley Crue had just taken off like a rocket and all the record labels just kind of wrecked everything. Luckily there are hardly any record labels left, but there’s too much tease going on, because like I said, they were signing anybody and everybody and they didn’t have songs.

I’m not trying to sound egotistical or anything by any means, but it’s the truth. It’s how I feel and what I know, what I see from those bands. They’re like nowhere. Either that or they’re playing little tiny clubs.

Sixx: They were new wave. They were punk. They was just rock. We didn’t give a fuck, and they all really cared. They all really wanted to suck the corporate cock, and we just didn’t give a fuck. We just wanted to play what we wanted to play.

I did not believe anybody was going to sign Motley Crue, and I did not care. And I did not want to be on some shitty record label that was going to water me down and tell me what to do.

So we just did it ourselves. We did what we wanted, we played what we wanted, we looked how we wanted to look.

“Girls, Girls, Girls” and “Decade of Decadence: ’81-’91” reached No. 2 on the Billboard 200, but “Dr. Feelgood” is the album that hit No. 1. What would you say made that album go all the way to the top?

Mars: I would have to say in large part, the producer, Bob Rock. And what he helped us do is to make the songs more of a song, if you can understand what I’m talking about. He taught me, personally, I just watched him. He didn’t sit down with me one-on-one. I watched how he worked, and he taught me how to do a lot of things that I didn’t know about.

Like in the old days I would set up one or two amps that would sound the same, and with Bob I would set up seven or eight amps with all different sounds on them, so you could pick and choose what sounds you want, blend them together; mixing speakers different; mixing the room different; doing other stuff. And I’ve always loved tone, but he even helped me expand on that some by hooking so many amps up together.

Sixx: I wanted a No. 1 record because we were cheated out of our No. 1 record by the whole payola bullshit that happened in the ‘80s and—well, not just in the ‘80s—but we were pissed, because we had the No. 1 record. We know. We know who was reporting it. We know that we were outselling everybody, and we were excited that we were hitting the mark. The fans were getting it, everyone was getting it, and then we were like, “Wow, guys, we really did it. We really fucking did it.”

And then it was reported that we were No. 2, and we were like, “That’s not possible.” And they go, “I know, but you see, this is how it works,” and we were pissed, because it was immoral. It was fucking wrong. And that, I think, gave us a huge hard-on for the industry. Huge hard-on, because we didn’t pay much attention to the industry, then we kind of were like, “Whoa! Oh, I get it. This is what this means, and this is what this is.”

And then when that happened, we were pissed. And you know, Motley Crue with a grudge is a nasty thing. [laughs] So we were determined to make that record go to No. 1 and it did. After that it’s really not been such a thing.

Looking over your career in Motley Crue, if you could do anything differently, would you change anything?

Mars: Probably not. I think that was one of the things that kind of set us apart from everybody else, that everybody else followed. We’d come out with, I hate to say it, but stupid, big hair and lipstick and makeup and heavy eye shadow and all that kind of stuff, and everybody kind of followed suit. So it was new and it caught a lot of people’s eyes, and they were going, “Whoa! You see that new band Motley Crue, man? They’re rad!”

continued on »p42

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MÖTLEY CRÜE

LEADING A ROCK AND ROLL REVOLUTION IN AMPHITHEATRES THIS SUMMER

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It never pays to write off the Crue dudes. From the days in the early '80s when the band exploded out of Hollywood's Sunset Strip club scene through to this summer's Crue Fest with a lineup of young rockers, Motley Crue has ignored detractors and controlled its own touring destiny. "What comes to mind to me when you talk about Motley Crue live is the sum of the parts is greater than the individuals," says Tenth Street Entertainment's Allen Kovac. Motley's manager since 1994.

"In other words, when these four guys get on stage, you have four distinct characters that are all extremely talented in what they do, and they literally overwhelm the arena, shed or stadium they're in. Once they get on that stage there are very few bands that can create that kind of power and raw energy."

That power and energy will come together again this summer with Crue Fest, a 40-plus-city North American amphitheater tour, which begins July 1 at the Cruzan Amphitheater in West Palm Beach, Fla., and runs until Aug. 31 at the Post-Gazette Pavilion in Pittsburgh. Produced by Live Nation, Crue Fest will also feature Buckcherry, Papa Roach, Trapt and Crue bassist Nikki Sixx's side project Sixx:A.M.

The tour follows the June 24 release of "Saints of Los Angeles" on Motley Records/Eleven Seven Music, the first studio album in more than a decade recorded by the band's original members. On tour, the lead vocalists of each of the Crue Fest bands will join Motley Crue to sing the chorus of the album's title single. A video of the all-star chorus and tour updates are at TheRockvine.com.

At the press conference announcing the tour, Crue drummer Tommy Lee expressed his hopes that Crue Fest would develop "into sort of an Ozz-Fest and carries on for years and years and years. I can tell you one thing for sure: We are going to have more fun than humans are allowed to fuckin' have."

And what self-respecting headbanger would expect any less?

The Crue has been on a touring roll since reuniting for the "Generation Swine" album in 1997. "When we first started working with the band they were playing bigger ballrooms," Kovac says. "It was still all about Pearl Jam and Nirvana, so if you didn't wear plaid shirts and were a rock band, you were not what was cool. So we underplayed. We sold out all the theaters and cut down arenas that we played and we redeveloped the band.

"We took it right to the road and they rebuilt themselves, sort of reinvented themselves into what they were," he continues. "So we are going to have more fun than humans are allowed to."

When it was time to tour again in 2005, Motley Crue not only took it to the street, the band took it to the buildings. At the time, national promoters did not see eye to eye liner with Motley Crue's marketing vision and what the band was worth. So Kovac and the band underwent much of the tour themselves and partnered directly with the arenas in promoting the tour.

"That was really a courageous thing on Motley's part," Kovac says. "Promoters underestimated who the band was. I also think they weren't interested in the kind of marketing we wanted to do. It was just a philosophical difference."

Dealing with the buildings was the brainchild of Kovac and Dennis Arfa, president of Artist Group International, Crue's agency since 1994. "Dennis felt that if I did the marketing and he did the buildings, we could do it ourselves and do better," Kovac says. "And he was right by 200% above what we were being guaranteed."

The tour went out in the winter months when touring traffic was lighter and blew up the arenas. By the summer, the promoters were ready to get on-board, and Live Nation brought Crue to the sheds.

The 2005-06 tour grossed $46.4 million and drew more than 961,000 people to 125 concerts reported to Billboard Boxscore.

For Crue Fest, marketing partners include JVC Mobile Audio, MTV's "Rock Band," Best Buy, Fuse TV, Lotus and TheRockvine.com. Harmonix and MTV Games, makers of the videogame "Rock Band," will sponsor an area at each tour stop where concertgoers can play the game and compete for a chance to perform onstage. A Crue Fest '08 sampler, with tracks from each band on the tour, is sold exclusively at Best Buy.

Kovac says the tour also is a testament to the ongoing messaging power of rock. "Motley's always been interested in why people didn't get the fact that rock was always important," he says. "They want a new generation of kids to be able to see that rock is about guitars and amps, not necessarily about 'American Idol' or something prefabbed. They wanted to make a statement that rock stars and rock music is more vibrant today than ever, and they wanted to do it via the festival and the bands that are on it."
360 Degrees Of Lloyd

Digital Roadshows Drive Push Behind Singer's New Album

One of the noteworthy success stories of 2006-07 was Lloyd's gold-certified the Inc./Universal Motown debut, "Street Love." Now the singer/songwriter is hoping to parlay gold into platinum with its follow-up, "Lessons in Love."

In the weeks before the album's Aug. 5 release, Lloyd has been building considerable momentum with the midtempo single "Girls Around the World." It's his second pairing with friend and newly minted platinum labelmate Lil Wayne. The rapper also appeared on Lloyd's "Street Love" lead single, "You," which climbed to No. 1 on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. The duo's "Girls" salutary is No. 14 on that same chart and shifts into crossover mode at No. 67 on the Billboard Hot 100.

Helping to drive the single's radio airplay and sales has been the Inc. and Universal Motown's concentrated push on reaching Lloyd's teen and college student fan base, capitalizing as well on the singer's energetic stage show. The labels began that push in late May, piling in with a couple of innovative digital initiatives.

"Our aim is to take advantage of the season and keep him on the road," Universal Motown executive VP of marketing Shant Das says. "That's the best thing we can do for him. That and keep him active on his Web site."

The latest step in that quest is a rollout that began this week of post-concert mobile mibusides chronicling Lloyd's Mar. 29 appearance at New York's Knitting Factory. The performance christened the Music to Go concert series sponsored by the club and mobile company Mozes. Billed as a "360-degree mobile concert experience," the campaign gave members of mobile fan club Lloyd's Mob the chance to obtain mobile tickets by calling the singer's Mozes voice line.

Paper tickets weren't issued. Instead, the first 100 at the door with mobile tickets gained entry to the club. Tied in were additional incentives like fans being able to send text-to-screen messaging, an in-venue mobile contest (the best message wins a trip for two to Atlanta to hang with Lloyd) and the aforementioned mobile videos wherein the concert is made available for viewing via mobile phone.

"The mobile acts as a souvenir to all those who attended the show plus a sneak peek for the mobile fan club members who didn't see him live," Mozes director of business development Patricia Duo says. "His high-energy performance and raucous fan base were key to creating the interactive fan-to-artist mobile experience we were looking for."

Preceding this was Lloyd's Memorial Day weekend performance in Las Vegas, where interactive online concert company DeepRockDrive, in tandem with Pepsi, launched its global free concert series. Joining Lloyd, who performed May 25, were four other acts: country newcomer Lady Antebellum (May 16), YouTube discovery Marie Digby (May 18), singer/songwriter Matt Nathanson (May 27) and hard rock fave Disturbed (May 29). By logging on to DeepRockDrive's Web site, fans were able to send shout-outs to the performers onstage, vote on the next song selection and personalize their views by viewing camera angles.

"I have an eagerness to get out there and say, "Here I am," Lloyd says. "I get excited about being on the road."

He's just as excited about the new album on which he co-produced for the first time, including on "Girls." In addition to Lil Wayne, Lloyd reunited with several "Street" players, including Eric Hudson, Jasper Cameron & Big Reese and Usher's younger brother J-Lac, who was responsible for Lloyd's second hit off the "Street" set, "Get It Shawty." Coming onboard for the first time are Johnna Austin, Powell Don and Inglewood, Calif., production newcomers Baby Boy & Superkidd, plus special guest Ludacris (on the street track "How We Do It") and Nelly ("Lose Control").

It's a more mature Lloyd on "Lessons," which incorporates truths about genuine love and relationship alongside club jams and midtempo numbers. "The general idea of the album is about encouraging young people to take time and trust love," the 22-year-old says.

Major TV runs and tour commitments are still being negotiated. A special DVD tie-in at major retail is being developed as well, Das says, in addition to an AOL Sessions date and other online appearances. In the meantime, Lloyd says he's recorded a duet with Natasha Bellingfield ("Let Me Know") that is planned for release internationally.

"My philosophy remains the same," an effervescent Lloyd says. "This isn't rocket science. It's about feeling good and finding the groove that suits your style."
UNKLE Marks The Spot

‘X-Files’ Theme Gets A Fresh Spin For Summer Film

When ‘X-Files’ heroes Fox Mulder and Dana Scully wrap up their second big-screen search for the truth this summer, audiences will eke out two tracks by U.K.-based electronic/rock artist UNKLE. One an original, hand-picked by series creator Chris Carter, and one a reinterpretation of the classic ‘X-Files’ TV series theme song, commissioned after the fact.

“There was something I was looking for at the end of the movie and it needed to be a really specific beat,” Carter says. “I had gone to see the Police over the summer: They opened the show with ‘Reggatta De Blanc’, which is one of my favorite Police songs. I love that song, and it was in my head as I was writing the movie. Then [20th Century Fox music supervisor] Danielle Diego gave me this UNKLE piece, and I realized that was really what I was looking for. Immediately I called her and I said, ‘I think I’ve got my end-credit piece.’”

The song, “Broken,” from UNKLE’s 2007 album “War Stories” [Surrender All], has the syrup new wave guitar and insistent pulse of “Reggatta,” plus wayward lyrics sung by vocalist Gavin Clark, one that seems at some point purely thespian piece (‘We’re miles adrift/We’re inches apart’).

“It’s funny, because the lyrics ended up working unexpectedly,” Carter says. “It’s really the beat that’s the perfect fit for the film.”

Carter phoned UNKLE mastermind James Lavelle personally to explain his intentions for “Broken,” and the two discovered a mutual admiration: Lavelle was a fan of the long-running TV series. A big one, he says.

“After that conversation, ‘it was decided by all of us that James would be the person to ask to – ‘reinterpret’ – the ‘X-Files’ theme for the end of the film as well,” Carter says. The two tracks will also be featured on the ‘X-Files: I Want to Believe’ soundtrack as the only additions to the Mark Snow-scored album. The song is due July 22 via Decca.

Lavelle took the distinction between ‘remix’ and ‘reinterpret’ to heart.

“Most of the time when you hear remixes of themes, they’re never as good as the original and they sound cheesy, like the James Bond theme,” he says. “With this piece it was difficult to take the original parts and move them around; it didn’t sound right. And we wanted something that would work in context with ‘Broken’ as well. That was the directive: to have the same kind of emotion, the same route sonically, with a snare and a rockier baseline.”

The result is a graceful, almost mournful piece of music that’s heavy on strings, replacing the original’s inherent sci-fi quality with humanity. “I love it,” Carter says. “It’s very soulful. I played it for my wife, and she was surprised to hear it, because she thought we would want something that was uplifting. But I think it’s so soulful it actually has its own quality of uplift. It works for the end of the movie.”

Carter—a self-proclaimed “student of history”—whisked DJing lessons during his “X-Files” downtime—says there are no collaborations in the future for he and Lavelle, who is also an internationally renowned DJ. “His sense of tempo and beat and the blending of it will be a beautiful match for some ideas that I have,” Carter says. “We’ve already talked about it.”

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REPORTING BY JONATHAN COHEN.

ROWLEY

DREAM START

The No. 6 entry of Beth Rowley’s first album, “Little Dreamer” [Blue Thumb/Universal], on the Official U.K. Charts Co. listing one week after its May 19 release, despite no previous singles success, was a dramatic debut. But its opening-week sales of 17,000 were reward for years of groundwork by the 24-year-old blues/country/gospel-inflected singer/songwriter, who’s now lined up for global exposure.

Rowley is signed worldwide to Universal, which will release the album in major European markets in late August, followed by Japan (Sept. 3) and North America (Sept. 16).

Born in Peru, Rowley moved as an infant with her family to Bristol in southwest England. “The family influence, musically, was probably the main one,” she says, recalling an education informed by Led Zeppelin, Howlin’ Wolf and Hank Williams. But Rowley also became a fan of the likes of R.Kelly and Mary J. Blige. “It’s hard when you love so much stuff,” she says with a laugh.

“When we started recording this album,” Rowley adds, “we had this experimental period and ended up recording the whole experiment. The next album’s going to be a lot more focused.”

Rowley is considering options from several publishers, according to journalist Peter Rowley.

DOGS OUT

Aussie hip-hop act Resin Dogs is heading to America in August to spend five days recording with Malibu, Calif.-based record producer JT Meskiei (Britney Spears, Lauryn Hill) in his Document Room studios.

The trip is the Brisbane trio’s prize for winning a fall 2007 international talent competition organized by Document Room. The act aims to record four tracks, which the studio will then shop to U.S. labels. “There could be a million opportunities coming from this,” says band manager Joel Reggel, who also runs its Brisbane-based MGM-distributed label Hydrofunk Records.


“Our spin on things makes us sound different,” band manager DJ Kaych says. “We come from jazz, rock and dance backgrounds and soaked in a lot of influences on our recent world tours.”

Having toured the United Kingdom, Continental Europe and Japan, Resin Dogs will play Indian summer shows this October. Reggel adds that placing a track (“Definition”) on EA Games’ globally successful videogame “FIFA 2006 World Cup” gave the act international exposure.


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LAVELLE

EDITOR BY TOM FERGUSON

www.americanradiohistory.com
A Bad Taste
Dancehall Lyrics Brew Sponsorship Controversies

The words are getting in the way. That’s the take-away from ongoing controversy over the lyrics to some dancehall reggae songs, spurred on by complaints from gay rights groups. Now, reggae festival sponsors and promoters have begun drafting preventive strategies as a means of circumventing potential complaints and/or loss of revenue stemming from the debate.

Earlier this year, Red Stripe beer withdrew its title sponsorship from Reggae Sunsplash, a designation it held for seven years, citing its disapproval of “performers who propagate violent and antigay lyrics.” The objectionable lyrics are not limited to homophobic rants but also encompass violent gun exploits heard on hits by artists including Vybz Kartel, Bounty Killer, Aidonia and especially Mavado, whose brutal imagery has resulted in his being banned from entering Guyana and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Principals from Red Stripe, whose parent company is London-based beverage giant Diageo, refused to be interviewed for this article. However, in a previously issued statement, Red Stripe head of corporate relations Maxine Whittingham-Osborne explained that the company’s title sponsorship retraction (although it remains a Sunsplash beverage sponsor) aligns with its concern for the spiraling crime rate in Jamaica, which tallied nearly 1,600 murders in 2007. “We need to take stock of all things that contribute to our situation here,” Whittingham-Osborne said, “and the glorification of violence in the music does not help.”

In light of Red Stripe’s forthcoming dancehall censorship, the company’s downsized beverage sponsorship role at the July 13-19 Sunsplash in Montego Bay is “somewhat paradoxical,” according to Sunsplash executive director Robert Russell. He would not comment on the specific dollar amount Sunsplash has lost due to Red Stripe’s scaled-back support, but a June 23 story in the Jamaica Gleaner newspaper reported that the beer company would honor its contractual obligation and contribute upwards of $300,000 toward Sunsplash’s 2008 staging. Despite the headline-generating controversies surrounding dancehall artists, Jamaican acts that consistently deliver inspiring, unifying messages including Beres Hammond, Cocoa Tea, Richie Spice and Tarrus Riley dominate Sunsplash’s 2008 lineup. But Russell, who anticipates nearly 40,000 patrons during Sunsplash’s three main nights, says actions must be taken to curb dancehall’s violent content. “Artists need to be more responsible in their songs, especially in Jamaica, where the literacy rate is not as high as we would like,” he says. “While we don’t advocate censorship, we talk to artists about what is expected of them and how it affects their country and careers when they talk violence or perversion.”

Jamaican-born Denroy Escoffery, event coordinator for the Nov. 16 International Caribbean Music Festival in Miami, echoes the oft-repeated speculation that it was Diageo and not Red Stripe executives in Jamaica who chose to step away from its Sunsplash title sponsorship. “It is a marketing strategy that removes their association with artists who are getting a backlash,” he says. Despite protests in previous years by gay rights groups to eliminate targeted artists Beenie Man, Capleton and Buju Banton from the ICMF lineup, which resulted in two key sponsors’ refusal to have their names publicly associated with the event, ICMF 2008 will showcase a cross-section of reggae talent, including dancehall’s most controversial acts, regardless of sponsors’ displeasure or any pressure exerted by special interest groups. “Mavado is the hottest dancehall artist now, hands down,” Escoffery says. “I might not agree with his lyrics but if I am spending a lot of money, trying to attract a large crowd, then I definitely want him on my show.”

Meanwhile, a major New York reggae festival has revamped its identity, as a means of quelling prospective conflicts. For the past nine years Reggae Carifest, which will be held July 6 at Arthur Ashe Stadium in Queens, has crowned its extensive lineup with top dancehall artists including Elephant Man, Beenie Man and Capleton. At Carifest 2007, the return of veteran dancehall icon Ninja Man after an absence of several years was overshadowed by gay rights groups’ demonstrations against Banton and Bounty Killer. Clear Channel urban station WWPR (Power 105.1 FM) subsequently revoked its co-sponsorship of Carifest just three days before the event because activists threatened to boycott the station’s advertisers. Their withdrawal, Carifest promoter Alfonso D’Nisco Brooks says, resulted in a $500,000 loss.

Dancehall will not be part of the Carifest 2008 lineup, which includes St. Croix-based roots reggae band Midnite, Arkansas-raised Rastafarian singer Joseph Israel, the Sea Queens and dancehall star Mavado. The event has also adopted the tagline “Carifest C.A.R.E.S. (Compassionate Artists Recognizing Entertainment Solutions) and will donate $2 from each ticket to Keep a Child Alive, an organization that helps obtain life-saving AIDS drugs for children.

Brooks maintains that Carifest’s 2007 financial difficulties did not precipitate this year’s dramatic overhaul. Rather, he had already planned to introduce a multi-ethnic reggae concert, with the ancillary objective of raising awareness surrounding significant global maladies, to New York’s dancehall-saturated summer Caribbean festival circuit. “We are trying to establish a new teaching to our demographic,” Brooks says. “Hopefully it will be supported because it is significant, not only as an AIDS benefit but for the reggae business. I am either going to lose a lot of money or successfully make a statement that we are a people that truly believe in love.” ——
**MUSIC NOW HEAR THIS**

**MY GETAWAY**

Contact: Dan Friedman, legal, danielfriedman@ajc.com

When My Getaway came by the Billboard studios late last year to record an acoustic version of its track “Heart Attack,” the five-piece was also preparing for its BMI Artist of the Month showcase at New York’s Annex. Earlier in the year, the band had hit the road with the Vans Warped tour, its second stint with the roving punk/rock festival. The group scored the honors the year before by tallying the most votes at Ernie Ball’s online battle of the bands contest.

The videos posted on My Getaway’s MySpace site are full of dick jokes, physical torture, a spoof on “Permanent Ink,” semi-nudity and hijinks at Burger King. They’re laugh-out-loud hilarious, fit for just about any other 18- to 21-year-old’s social networking repertoire, if only the band’s outstanding pop-punk tracks weren’t so distracting.

The songs—and the interpersonal rapport—are bred from a six-year friendship among singer John Russo, bassist Wade Graham, drummer Alex Dumas and guitarists Josh Cobb and John Brian. “We’re like brothers. We had a house together for a year and spent every day just practicing and recording,” Dumas says.

Growing up in central Florida and honing its craft in Jacksonville, this young act has steadily built a loving, mostly underage fan base around its home state. The band recently set off from Florida to California in one long shot to open for Beatles Union and Goldfinger.

My Getaway has also supported acts like Brand New, Senses Fail and the Starting Line. The group plans to hit the road for an East Coast tour this September, after making more headway on a new album. A lone prior EP was released in 2004.

“We’ve really grown a lot since then, so I can’t say it’s representative of what we are now,” Dumas says, but adds that the band is always posting new singles to MySpace as they come.

**COMPANY OF THIEVES**

Contact: Steve Johns, manager, Second Wave Music, mgmt@secondwavemusic.com

This April, you could find the members of Chicago’s Company of Thieves asleep all over the seats in New York’s Madison Square Garden, up until about 10 minutes before they performed during halftime at a sporting event. “It was hilarious. It’s very surreal being up on a Jumbotron. You should try it,” quips frontwoman Genevieve Schatz, who co-writes Company of Thieves’ songs with guitarist Marc Walloch.

The Garden opportunity came on the heels of the band’s win at the 2007 New York Songwriters Circle songwriter competition, where Company of Thieves took home the crown for the track “Oscar Wilde.” On the strength of that song, plus several others from the band’s May 2007 debut, “Ordinary Riches,” the group may want to prepare for a long stay in the spotlight—or Jumbotron, as it were.

Engineered by Sean O’Keefe (Fall Out Boy, the Hush Sound), the set places Schatz’s sexy and idiosyncratic alto front and center. The guitar lines are simple, though they can meander from sparse indie rock to out-and-out blues riffs. Tracks have made their way onto Chicago’s triple A WKQX and alternative WXRT, plus some college radio spins and the Fearless Radio podcast.

Schatz and Walloch met through a mutual friend on a train ride originating at Union Station. By the end of their journey, they had decided two things: Mondays suck, and they should try to write together. Every Monday they’d convene and hash out tracks together, eventually adding drummer Mike Ortiz, who had coincidentally quit his former band the day before meeting Schatz.

Since, the group has supported acts as diverse as Jack’s Mannequin, Sara Bareilles, Teddy Geiger and Bloodshot artist Ha Ha Tonika. “We are very adaptive and really like variety. Playing as openers, we get to spread our wings as a versatile band, from being really intimate to being a funky and soulful rock show,” Schatz says. The group will open for Polyphonic Spree at Summerfest June 29 in Milwaukee and is already in the midst of a national tour, booked with help from Matt Mentelle at Events Resources Presents. It hit South by Southwest this year for the first time.

“Being a woman, I have been given a lot of respect, for making rock music and songs. I’m not up onstage in some skanky-ass outfit, and I make it a point for people to hear my lyrics,” Schatz says. “When I was in a punk band, girls would never talk to me after the show. But now, when everybody sees a strong woman dancing and singing onstage, I’m glad that they think this is awesome.”

**STONE MECCA**

Contact: firstcontact@stonemecca.com

After several months acting as backing band for superstar musicians, nine-piece Stone Mecca is ready to stand out on its own. Led by founder, producer and longtime session stable Tru James, the crew released its debut, “First Contact,” June 3 on its own Touch the Music Records. The album came in the midst of a tour supporting and backing Wu-Tang Clan leader RZA.

Turns out that RZA’s daughter enjoyed spinning a Stone Mecca song over and over in her room, prompting the rapper to dig further into the source. “He’d hear it every day and loved the way it sounded to him. It was clear it was reaching a younger audience,” James recalls.

“There seems to be no age to it.”

James has since played guitar and bass on various RZA sessions, including the 2007 Wu-Tang Clan album “8 Diagrams.” Stone Mecca has also appeared on the Rock the Bells tour and RZA’s soundtrack to Spike TV’s “Afro Samurai.” While James has played on albums by Dallas Austin, DJ Pooh, Too Short and Earth, Wind & Fire.

Stone Mecca as a live band keeps vocal performance at the forefront, with five of the nine members singing, influenced by a plethora of genres from urban music past. With dances of Motown, ’70s funk and soul, this Los Angeles-based act brings hip-hop to life, sans turntable.

The group recently backed Del the Funky Homosapien during his appearance on “The Late Late Show With Craig Ferguson” and may tour this fall supporting Earth, Wind & Fire.

VIDEO: For an exclusive performance and interview with My Getaway, go to billboard.com/underground.

VIDEO: For an exclusive performance and interview with Company of Thieves, go to billboard.com/underground.

VIDEO: For an exclusive performance and interview with Stone Mecca, go to billboard.com/underground.
**ROCK**

**WALTER BECKER**

*Circus Money*

*Producer: Larry Klein
5 Over Ten Records*

*Release Date: June 10*

Steelie Dan’s Walter Becker hasn’t exactly made a habit of solo albums, and considering the muted reaction to his last one 14 years ago, you can’t say demand has overwhelmed supply. But “Circus Money” is an easy pleasure, 12 non-whack tracks largely co-written by Becker and producer Larry Klein, energized by a reggae rhythm base. Singing may not be Becker’s forte, but neither is it a terrible liability on songs that display his penchant for trenchant scene-setting and character sketch. His once pitiless cynicism is now leavened by compassion, whether in the portrayal of a none-too-attractive barfly (“Somebody’s Saturday Night”) or the accumulation of precise details that give ’70s Philly soul romance “Downtown Canon” its heartbreaking authority. Invertebrate Dan fans will be perked by “Paging Audrey,” which sounds like a “Royal Scam-era idea given a fresh dust-off.” —WR

**ALKALINE TRIO**

*Agony & Irony*

*Producer: Josh Abraham
Epic*

*Release Date: July 1*

This long-running Chicago pop-punk outfit made clear its aspirations for a mainstream breakthrough earlier this year when it appeared on an episode of “The Hills.” Alkaline Trio’s major-label debut isn’t quite as shiny as that MTV soap, but “Agony & Irony” definitely represents the band’s most streamlined effort yet. Though frontman Matt Skiba has long been one of the Vans Warped tour scene’s most prominent singers, here he brings new precision to his vocals, while his bandmates beef up their playing with goth-glam strings and keyboards. These guys seem comfortable with the added sheen—a few tracks could be the killers covering the Misfits—but Skiba’s tunes aren’t quite as memorable as those on earlier Alkaline Trio discs, which blunts the overall effect. —MW

**EARLIMART**

*Hymn and Her*

*Producers: Aaron Espinosa, Arana Murray, Andrew Lynch
Maedpomo/Shout Factory*

*Release Date: July 1*

In keeping with the lo-fi nature of 2007’s “Mentor Tormentor,” Earlhart, the still-twinsome of Aaron Espinosa and Arana Murray, issues another set of dreamy, rainy-day tunes with “Hymn and Her.” The songs are bathed in warm, rich textures and Espinosa’s and Murray’s soft, breathy vocals, as the album moves from pop (the lightly chugging “Song For”), “For the Birds”) to wistful slow numbers (the Grandaddy-esque “Face Down in the Wrong Town,” the string-laced title track) and grittier rock (“Teeth”), although little on “Hymn and Her” finds Earlhart venturing into new territory, there’s a familiarity felt throughout that remains comforting and, sometimes that’s just enough. —JM

**FREE KITTEN**

*Inherit*

*Producers: Free Kitten*

“Loving Every Day” (a track of the same name) is one of the most promising new projects this year. The song has a catchy hook and a memorable guitar riff. Three tracks extend beyond the six-minute mark, with “Mont Eyer” (stretching to 11.32) and “Skate” (with guest Philip Bailey). And Albright’s emotive horn paired with Lucid’s killer vocals ratchets the Staple Singers’ “Respect Yourself” to another level. Rounding out the album are three Memphis- and Atlanta-produced tracks. As he navigates the project, Albright never loses sight of his mission: giving listeners real music they can also feel. —GM

**JAZZ**

**GERALD ALBRIGHT**

*Sax for Slax*

*Producers: Gerald Albright, Rele Royale
Peak Records/Concord Music Group*

*Release Date: June 24*

On this follow-up to his 2006 peak debut, “New Beginnings,” Gerald Albright salutes legendary Memphis soul label Stax. But the sax guru does more than simply tout out contemporary Muzak facsimiles of such classics as “Knock on Wood” and “Cheaper to Keep Her” rhythmically intertwining his jazz and R&B roots within fresh, arrangement, arrangements. Albright brings some crackle and pop to the proceedings. He adopts a big band approach on Isaac Hayes’ obscure 1972 single “Theme From ‘The Men,’” and wows Latin on the Dramatics’ “What Makes Me Think” with guest Philip Bailey. And Albright’s emotive horn paired with Lucid’s killer vocals ratchets the Staple Singers’ “Respect Yourself” to another level. Rounding out the album are three Memphis- and Atlanta-produced tracks. As he navigates the project, Albright never loses sight of his mission: giving listeners real music they can also feel. —GM

**THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS**

**ALBUMS**

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NIYAZ
Nine Heavens
Producers: Aziz Ali, Loga Ramin Torkian, Carmen Rizzo
Six Degrees
Release Date: June 24
Aziz Ali, Loga Ramin Torkian and Carmen Rizzo are again romancing the divine with their second album, the two-disc "Nine Heavens." Disc one tenders the recognizable Niya voice, a mesmerizing fusion of Urdu and Persian mystical poetry and remarkably consonant electronics in support of Ali's beguiling vocals. Disc two reshuffles the tunes on disc one, presenting them in acoustic versions that are every bit as gripping as their electric counterparts. Disc one opens with "Beni Beni," a riveting take on a Persian Sufi poet Ashki Dethi. "Moik-E-Divan" is quintessentially Niya, brilliant programing, gorgeous lutes and Ali singing a 13th-century Persian poem with a longing that's profoundly moving. On Disc two, note "Feragh," "Song of Exile," a traditional Indian folk song. The five-beat rhythm enhances the exoticism of the insisted percussion and Ali's deftly shaded vocal. -PVV

NEW ORDER: Live in Glasgow
Producer: none listed
Rhino/Warner Music Entertainment
Release Date: June 24
"New Order: Live in Glasgow" is the seminal post-punk band's first release since bassist Peter Hook confirmed the group's split in January, and the two-disc retrospective offers insight into why the trio lasted nearly three decades—as well as why it called it quits. On Disc one, video of an October 2006 concert alternates with interviews with Hook, vocalist/guitarist Bernard Sumner and drummer Stephen Morris, edited to emphasize differences—Hook's love for touring and rock vs. Sumner's preference for the studio and dance tracks, etc. Disc two features footage spanning the band's career, including edgy scenes of an awkward Summer tour, an energetic version of the late Joy Division frontman Ian Curtis in 1981, when New Order rose from that band's ashes. A must-have for fans of the Factory Records legend, especially those seeking closure after the band's abrupt farewell. -EN

JANET JACKSON Can't B Good (4:13)
Producer: Ne-Yo
Writers: D. Gough, S. Smith
Publisher: not listed
Despite Janet Jackson's 10th studio album, "Discipline," debuting at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 in February, pop and R&B radio turned a cold shoulder to singles "Feedback," "Rock With U" and "Luv." Perhaps chart conqueror Ne-Yo—16 years her junior—will breathe new life into the project, where staccato Rodney Jerkins and Jamarrn Dupin faltered. As producer/co-writer of "Can't B Good," Ne-Yo serves up smooth, jazzy groove and Jackson's soft, supple vocal, fluffed with multiple background layers that duly merit adult R&B love. But that previous offerings were any less deserving, Islands has been admirably tenacious, but boy, J. needs a hit. If there's no payoff this time, well, that can't go wrong.

ESLIE PRESLY
Baby Let's Play House (remix) (2:52)
Producer: DJ Aguino
Writer: A. Gunter
Publishers: Embassy/LPGV

SAM SPARRO
Black and Gold (4:36)
Producers: Jesse Ragg, Sam Sparro
Writers: S. Sparro, J. Ragg
Publisher: EMI

Attention PDs looking for something refreshingly—dare we say—new. Aussie-born Sam Sparro's "Black and Gold," from his forthcoming self-titled debut, offers a mix of electro, R&B and dance. He's already catapulted to No. 2 on the U.K. singles chart and has been lodged in the top 10 for two months, while the album reached No. 4. Now Sparro, who co-produced and co-wrote the song, is poised to become one of the years most exciting newcomers stateide. As the United Kingdom rides a nostalgic wave with acts like the Cool kids and Estelle, Sparro's throwback to the '80s and an intelligent lyric about faith offering potential to pave the mainstream at top 40, rhythm, R&B and dance. The artist—who also soaked up musical influences living in London and Los Angeles—is set to wrap his wings around the globe. -KIH

Ralph Trevant
It Must Be You (3:42)
Producers: Danny Dillman, Danny Bell, Ralph Trevant
Writers: D. Dillman, D. Bell, R. Trevant
Publisher: Kaulit, ASCAP
Xzault Media Group/XMG Records

A fan of VH1 Classic's "Totally B80s" is accustomed to heaping helpings of New Edition, led by the falsetto strains of Ralph Trevant. The 40-year-old singer marks 25 years in the biz via super-savy "It Must Be You." The track loops an inverted sample of Ambrosia's 1978 "How Much I Feel" to clever effect, alongside a keen chorus and vocal that now possess gritty grown-up tonality. Written and produced by collective the Disciples, "You" blends a retro soul vibe alongside equally high-caliber instrumental and melodic hooks. A couple of listeners reveal a gem tailor-made for adult R&B listeners—as long as radio makes clear the connection between past and present. Trevant's new edition works like a charm. -CT

EIIE WILLIAMS
We Break the Dawn (3:54)
Producers: Wayne Wilkins, Andrew Frampton
Writers: A. Frampton, M. Williams, S. Knowles
Publisher: not listed
Music World/Columbia

After two gospel efforts, Michelle Williams seques mainstream with "Unexcelled" (Aug. 12), launched with bang-in' track "We Break the Dawn." While a peripheral presence as the third member of Destiny's Child alongside girlfriend Beyoncé and top talent Kelly Rowland, previous releases denied her the competitive R&B siren arena. In its original version, "Dawn" is a slinky (not inspired) soul jam—but man, remixed with red-hot guest Flo Rida, it's transformed into a fervent uptempo jam that towers above so many cliched clones. Williams delivers a compelling vocal, but it's the jam that's likely to return her name to the marquee to begin her new destiny. -CW
The Offspring has a history, to say the least, of keeping things interesting when it comes to dropping a new album. There was the time it offered to give away $1 million of its own money, coupled with the time it loudly declared its intention to release the album “Conspiracy of One” entirely through its official Web site during a time when the word “Napster” could get you pointed out of your label office. Plus, such tactics were employed in service of songs about original pranksters, people in need of a joy or fly white guys.

But the Offspring’s eighth record and first in five years, “Rise and Fall, Rage and Grace,” is a different beast altogether, one that largely trades in the hook-heavy, winning vibe of the band’s biggest singles for a more thoughtful and topical approach. The set debuts this week at No. 10 on the Billboard 200 after selling 46,000 first-week copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

When it came time to hatch a campaign for getting the rebranded Offspring back out in the world, the band opted for a revolutionary strategy: just put out the record and see what happens.

“We’re making the decision to let the music lead on this one,” says Jim Guerinot, the band’s manager at Rebel Waltz. “The Offspring have always had clever, very distinct ways of reaching fans, but for at least a period of time we really want to just get the record out there and let the label do the campaign.”

Columbia marketing staffer Ed Alexander says the record’s content helped make that decision. “There’s always that sense of, ‘Shouldn’t we be flying across the U.S. in a plane with an Offspring banner? Shouldn’t we be renting out an aircraft carrier for the listening party?’” he says. “But it doesn’t make sense for this record. That would cheapen the impact that the album will have.”

The band earlier this spring offered a free download of first-singe “Hammerhead” in much the same way it has operated since 2000’s “Original Prankster.” (The track is No. 2 this week on Billboard’s Modern Rock chart.) It’s a long way, Guerinot says, since the days when releasing an MP3 was considered itching for trouble.

“It’s a much more progressive environment now,” says Guerinot, who also handled Nine Inch Nails’ free digital release of “Ghosts I-IV” and “The Slip.” “People recognize now that a record leaking spikes the Internet searches for that band and have kind of come to terms with it. It’s not like when the single goes to radio or the record hits retail now—the spike comes when the record leaks. So why not try to control that process. Instigate that process? That’s what the Offspring were trying to do in 2000.”

The band will spend the next few months playing select festivals and all-day affairs, including the Virgin Mobile Festival in Baltimore in August and Bumbershoot in Seattle in September. A full-scale headlining tour isn’t in the cards until late this year or early next.

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`Rage` Springs Eternal
The Offspring Eschews Zany Marketing On New Album

Mexico has produced classic pop crooners from Luis Miguel all the way back to Armando Manzanero and Agustin Lara. Put producers David Foster and Humberto Gatica on the case, and you can add 22-year-old newcomer David Cavazos to that list.

Cavazos’ single “Brude Hada” was No. 6 on Nielsen Music Control’s Mexico airplay chart as of press time. His self-titled debut release on Warner was No. 49 on that country’s album sales chart, with a U.S. release slated for Aug. 12.

The baby-faced singer/songwriter says his inspiration comes from classic boleros by the likes of Manzanero and Lara. (He was even a featured vocalist on the former’s 2006 album “Master Class.”) “It’s a much more adult style than someone would expect for my age,” says Cavazos, who came to Warner via a management deal with pop powerhouse Westwood Entertainment. “Maybe in Mexico we needed to bring this music back. I’m trying to do that.”

But other troubadours like Jack Johnson and Brazil’s Caetano Veloso also figure into Cavazos’ style, and he’s encouraged by young fans embracing his work. Cavazos wrote the music and lyrics for his album, with such top producers and arrangers as Gatica, Jorge Calandrelli and Jochem Van Der Saag adding their touch. Foster, known for cultivating such young talent as Michael Buble and Josh Groban as well as working with the likes of Celine Dion and Barbra Streisand, also worked on the arrangements in search of what Cavazos calls “an international sound.”

Next up for Cavazos, whose release is a top Warner priority this year, is heavy promotion in the mainland United States, Puerto Rico and Costa Rica. —Avyla Ben-Yehuda

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Tyga, who signed to FOB bassist Pete Wentz’s Decaydance Records in early 2007, had been touring with Fall Out Boy and his cousin Travis McCoy’s band Gym Class Heroes. After the VMA performance, Tyga laid down a few tracks with Lil Wayne, who took him on tour. Fueled by the exposure, the 18-year-old Compton, Calif., native’s debut album, “No Introduction” (Decaydance), debuted at No. 1 on Billboard’s June 28 Top Heatseekers chart. It has sold more than 5,700 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Aside from touring and appearing on such Lil Wayne tracks as “California Love” and “Exquisite,” Tyga gave fans a teaser of his rapping skills by releasing two free mixtapes online in the two months before his album arrived.

“You have to give people a taste before they want to buy into something and make them fans of yours,” Tyga’s manager Anthony Martini says.

Tyga says he made the mixtapes in part because he can’t stop recording. “I just want my music to be heard and played out. I don’t like to sit on music for a long time,” he says. He’ll release another mixtape July 10 and while he’s not sure how long the mixtape-a-month trend will last, he says they will keep coming.

Though Tyga hails from a part of Los Angeles associated with gang violence, he says his rhymes don’t align with gangsta rap stereotypes. Since he was 12, he has used music to stay grounded. “When everybody was getting into trouble, I was recording in my little studio at home,” he says. “[Music] definitely helped me put my focus on the right page.”

Plans are in the works for Tyga to join Lil Wayne on tour either this summer or in the fall. Tyga’s track “Dedicated Life” will appear in the videogame “Madden 09,” and he’ll perform on “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” as part of the program’s “Madden” week special. —Laura Leebove
Robin Thicke’s mesmerizing voice on his latest single, “Magic,” must’ve cast a spell on his listeners. The track, from his Interscope album “Something Else” (Sept. 9), was quietly serviced three weeks ago to radio and online sites after it was leaked a week before the scheduled release date. “Magic” then entered Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart at No. 90 and four weeks later has climbed to No. 36 on the tally.

His singles have taken a little longer to catch on, but this is a different record for him,” Thicke’s marketing director Dyanne Kass says. “It’s an upbeat, celebratory song as opposed to the heartfelt songs from his previous album. It has a different feel, and it’s making people gravitate toward it.”

“It’s gotten an overwhelming response,” Thicke’s manager Miguel Melendez adds. “It’s a feel-good, 80s disco record, and it’s definitely taking off.” An accompanying video for “Magic” was shot this week by director Robert Hale (Gnarly Barkley). “Something Else,” Thicke’s third album, was produced entirely by longtime collaborator Pro-Jay, who worked on his previous albums, and Thicke himself. It’s the follow-up to 2006’s “The Evolution of Robin Thicke,” which has sold 1.5 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The album spawned the hit “Lost Without You,” which peaked at No. 1 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs.

A second single, possibly a track titled “Dream World” or “Side Step,” will be released close to street date.

In the meantime, Melendez says Thicke plans to continue to connect with his fans. He will embark on a 10-day promotional tour in Europe soon after the video for “Magic” is released, followed by a stateside promo trek starting the second week of August. A full-scale tour is scheduled to run from October to January as well.

Thicke is also scheduled to make various TV appearances, including “Live With Regis and Kelly” and “The Ellen DeGeneres Show.” Even an old-school Robin Thicke hotline is in the works.

Already, “Magic” is appearing in a European TV commercial for Samsung mobile phones, and other deals are percolating, according to Melendez.

“His story—no pun intended—happens in his career so rewarding,” Melendez says. “He’s one of the true talents, there’s so much art in him. It’s great when you work that long and hard and the outside world starts to realize and appreciate what you’ve been working on.”

 Moments after Esperanza Spalding finished singing “Precious” on NBC’s “Late Show With David Letterman” in early June, the host strode right up and announced her “the coolest person we’ve ever had on the show.” Heads Up Records president Dave Love must think she’s pretty cool too. Her label debut, “Esperanza,” debuted earlier this month at No. 3 on Billboard’s Top Contemporary Jazz Albums chart and soon rose to No. 2.

The album, which blends jazz harmonies, Brazilian bossa nova and R&B backbeat, is an accurate reflection of the 24-year-old’s musical personality. “She was very adamant about how these songs were going to sound,” Spalding says. “I wanted it to have a jazzy feel, but I didn’t want it to have a jazz sound.”

With her big, billowy Afro and disarming smile, Spalding comes across as simultaneously assertive and inviting. She gives the same impression with her music. And her story is one of serendipity mixed with a self-confident sense of adventure. As a child, once she saw Yo-Yo Ma perform on the PBS show “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood,” she took up the violin. In high school, after eyeing a bass in an empty auditorium, she walked over and began playing. Spalding soon found herself studying at the Berklee College of Music, and by the age of 20, she was on the school’s faculty. Her skill at rendering the Portuguese lyrics to, say, Milton Nascimento’s “Ponta de Areia” on her new CD owes to a longago-month spent in Rio with a boyfriend, when native poetry moved her to “take a class or two” in the language.

While at Berklee, Spalding had a chance to collaborate with guitarist/educator Pat Metheny, who told her that, beyond her obvious talent, she had an “X factor” that would make her connect with audiences in a special way. Heads Up’s Love got a sense of that when he sent out an early promotional DVD. “It was pretty much just her talking,” Love says, “but the response was overwhelming. People called to book her on TV without even hearing the music.”

—Larry Blumenfeld

Moran Adds Distinctive Touches To Three New Albums

Jason Moran’s piano is the consistent thread within a wide range of new music, all of it relating to jazz, yet each project is distinct. In the past twelve months, he’s been featured on three powerful new recordings: saxophonist Charles Lloyd’s “Rabo de Nube” (ECM), violinist Jenny Scheinman’s “Crossing the Field” (Koch) and singer Cassandra Wilson’s “Lovelyly” (Blue Note).

“They all hired me for how I can play beautiful and for how I can play ugly too,” Moran says of how these musicians recognize the lyricism in his playing as well as his love of harmonic and rhythmic edge.

“Lovelyly,” which debuted last week at No. 4 on Billboard’s Top Jazz Albums chart, rekindles an old connection. Moran first worked with Wilson a decade ago, before the release of her debut album, when he was known primarily for his work in saxophonist Greg Osby’s band. “She just came up to the piano and said, ‘Go ahead.’ Then she walked off the stage for a while and let me play.” Moran recalls of their first gig. Such a level of trust was motivating then, as well as more recently, when Wilson reinterpreted standards for her new set. “She wanted us to come up with a groove for each song, however we feel it, and she’d find her way inside,” he says.

In jazz elder statesman Lloyd’s quartet, Moran extends a stellar piano lineage that traces back to Keith Jarrett, in Lloyd’s wildly popular late-’60s band. “Few musicians overtly express their spirituality,” he says. “And Charles has a way through his music of warming you up. It’s captivating. When you play the music you feel like it’s more than just playing a tune—it’s like prayer.”

Scheinman, a rising star among free-thinking improvisers, first heard Moran playing with bassist Christian McBride at now-defunct Defunkt Lower East Side club Tonic. She sent him a note the next day saying simply, “You blew me away!” Soon Moran was drawn into the constellation of musicians with whom Scheinman keeps company, which includes such stars as Bill Frisell. Moran will hit the studio this fall for his eighth Blue Note album, which will include a piece inspired by the life and times of Thelonious Monk and a personal pilgrimage to Monk’s hometown of Rocky Mount, N.C.

—Larry Blumenfeld
Coldplay Keeps Heat At No. 1 On Billboard 200

**Weekly Unit Sales**

**Market Watch**

**Weekly National Music Sales Report**

- **Coldplay** keeps the top soil fertile on the Billboard 200, as "Viva La Vida or Death And All His Friends" opens with 721,000 sold.
- With that U.S. splash, the British band sees the No. 1 slot on both sides of the Atlantic as it holds court for a second week on the U.K. albums chart.
- Coming a week after Lil Wayne joined the million-per-week club with "The Carter III," Coldplay’s American splash involves a few "first since" chart feats.
- This marks the first time since March 2005 that the Billboard 200 was led by a 700,000-plus sum in consecutive weeks. The last occasion happened when S.O.B.'s "The Massacre" sold 1.1 million in its first frame, then 771,000 in its second.
- The parlour by Lil Wayne, now No. 2 with 308,000 sold, to Coldplay also represents just the second time in Nielsen SoundScan history that two different albums open north of 700,000 in back-to-back weeks.
- Britney Spears' "Oops!...I Did ItAgain" and Eminem's "The Marshall Mathers L.P." accomplished that feat in May 2000, when they each started with million-plus weeks; 1.8 million for "L.P." and 1.3 million for "Oops!"
- Following a 2005 start of 737,000 for "XX&Y," Coldplay also becomes the first act to field weeks of more than 700,000 copies on consecutive albums since September and the first band or group to do so since 2001.

**Year-To-Date**

- **Kanye West** was the last artist to do it, when "Graduation" arrived last year with first-week sales of 957,000 after his "Late Registration" rang 860,000 in 2005. "N Sync became the last ensemble to do so when it followed its historic 2.4 million-plus launch of "No Strings Attached" in 2000 with an opener of 1.9 million the following year for "Celebrity."
- Similar to the battle of divas that happened a couple of months ago, when Mariah Carey's "E-Mc2" had a bigger U.S. number while Madonna's "Hard Candy" had larger global success with more No. 1s scored outside the United States, Coldplay has more of an impact on Billboard's Hits of the World charts than Lil Wayne did.
- The band's "Viva" goes No. 1 in 18 of the global territories tracked by Billboard. With 15 of those acres notched in Europe, the set also leads our Euro Albums chart.
- By contrast, Canada was the only country outside the States where Lil Wayne's "The Carter III" went No. 1. It's highest rank outside North America was No. 11 start in Portugal.
- According to Nielsen SoundScan's Billboard listing, posted June 25, Coldplay will likely have the first album in 10 weeks to hold No. 1 for more than a week, as it appears the top bow on next issue's list will be a No. 2 or No. 3 start for Motley Crue's "Smash of Los Angeles."
- Carey's "E-Mc2," was the last to hold the fort for multiple weeks.
- Unweighted sales through Tuesday (June 24) of the tracking week had "Vida" for "The Carter III" by a 26% margin, with Crue's "Smash" almost even with the interim runner up.

**Frank Talk:** Over the Counter wishes a fond farewell to Abbe Frank, who has resigned her post as senior VP of product development and client relations for Nielsen Music.

- Frank has been a colleague since she joined Nielsen SoundScan in 1999, but our association goes back almost 20 years, dating to her stops at both the label and distribution company that were each then called MCA and later at PolyGram Group Distribution.
- Frank had a hand in several system innovations in the last nine years, none of them being Insight, the platform that marries SoundScan data to Nielsen BDS' radio tracking.
- Nielsen Music will announce a new client relations game plan shortly.

**Lucky Seven**

- Abba notches her highest debut yet on the Billboard Hot 100 as "Dancing" bow at No. 15. It's one of four new tracks added to her "Good Girl Gone Bad" album.
- All told, seven of the set's offerings have charted on the Hot 100.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Coldplay</td>
<td>&quot;Viva La Vida or Death And All His Friends&quot;</td>
<td>DreamWorks</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>Tha Carter III</td>
<td>Cash Money</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>&quot;Just Friends&quot;</td>
<td>Sony BMG</td>
<td>$10.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>&quot;Chlorophyll&quot;</td>
<td>Arista</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>&quot;Speak Now&quot;</td>
<td>Big Machine</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Katy Perry</td>
<td>&quot;Teenage Dream&quot;</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Offspring</td>
<td>&quot;Rise And Fall, Rage And Grace&quot;</td>
<td>Elektra</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Judas Priest</td>
<td>&quot;Nostradamus&quot;</td>
<td>Century Media</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>&quot; Revelation&quot;</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Weezer</td>
<td>&quot;3 Doors Down&quot;</td>
<td>RCA Records</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Kid Rock</td>
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<td>&quot;Spirit&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Rockery&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>KYM Johnson</td>
<td>&quot;Exclusive&quot;</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>&quot;35 Biggest Hits&quot;</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>&quot;All I Intended To Be&quot;</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Jack Johnson</td>
<td>&quot;Sleep Through The Static&quot;</td>
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<td>Marnie</td>
<td>&quot;Die Young&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Frank Sinatra</td>
<td>&quot;Nothing But The Best&quot;</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Jason Mraz</td>
<td>&quot;We Sing. We Dance. We Make Things.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>&quot;Hard Candy&quot;</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Jonas Brothers</td>
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<td>Hollywood Records</td>
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<td>DJ Skribble</td>
<td>&quot;iCarly&quot;</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>Flobots</td>
<td>&quot;Total Club Hits&quot;</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Marco Antonio Solís</td>
<td>&quot;Mi Tierra&quot;</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>2Pac</td>
<td>&quot;Still Rising&quot;</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Montgomery Gentry</td>
<td>&quot;Back When I Knew It All&quot;</td>
<td>Sony Music</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Billboard 200 Chart**

*Set sees its 10th consecutive sales peak and its best week (29,000) since December in Fast & Furious' "All Summer Long" continues to score at multiple radio formats.*

**Billboard Artist Index**

*Sees its 10th consecutive sales peak and its best week (29,000) since December in Fast & Furious' "All Summer Long" continues to score at multiple radio formats.*
**POP 100 AIRPLAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE (ARTIST / APPARENT / PROMOTION LABEL)</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'll Be Home for Christmas (Eddy Arnold)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christmas Song (Judy Garland)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Christmas (Crosby, Stills &amp; Nash)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All I Want for Christmas (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll Be Home for Christmas (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer (Burl Ives)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All I Want for Christmas (The Osmonds)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Wonderland (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas (Raiders)</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**POP 100 SINGLES SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE (ARTIST / APPARENT / PROMOTION LABEL)</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We Belong Together (Travis)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Will Always Love You (Witney)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There She Goes (Hanson)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Are Always on My Mind (The Everly Brothers)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling Slowly (The Chieftains)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Way You Look Tonight (Waylon Jennings)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Love You More (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help Me Make It Through the Night (Hank Snow)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You'll Never Know (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look Into My Eyes (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>17</td>
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</table>

**POP 100**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE (ARTIST / APPARENT / PROMOTION LABEL)</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Don't Want to Be a Teenager (The Osmonds)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Can't Help Myself (Sugar Pie, Pie Pie)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love Is a Hurtin' Thing (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll Be Home for Christmas (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll Be Home for Christmas (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Wonderland (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll Be Home for Christmas (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Wonderland (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'll Be Home for Christmas (The Lettermen)</td>
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<td>Winter Wonderland (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'll Be Home for Christmas (The Lettermen)</td>
<td>25</td>
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**HITSPREDICTOR**

- **Artist:** Various
- **Weeks on Chart:** Various
- **Chart Data:** Various
### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>KIRK FRANKLIN</td>
<td>The Fight Of My Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CECE WINANS</td>
<td>Tiny Kingdom Come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ALLI FEEL</td>
<td>Pimp C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>HI ST. SOUL</td>
<td>Black Rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>TREY SONGZ</td>
<td>Trey Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>BIRDMAN</td>
<td>Greatest Hits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>JAY-Z</td>
<td>American Gangster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Gnarls Barkley</td>
<td>The Odd Couple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>BIZZY BONE</td>
<td>A Song For You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>MARY J. BLIGE</td>
<td>When Love Comes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>NE-VO</td>
<td>Bringing Back The FunK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>AL GREEN</td>
<td>Because Of You</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>DONNA SUMMER</td>
<td>The Definitive Greatest Hits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>The Best Of Scarface</td>
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### Top Reggae Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Reggae Gold 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Soca Gold 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>STEPHEN MARLEY</td>
<td>Mind Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CASE HALEY</td>
<td>Cas Haley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>COLLIE BUDDZ</td>
<td>Collie Buddz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>MORGAN HERITAGE</td>
<td>Mission In Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>REBELLION</td>
<td>Courage To Grow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>RICHIE SPICE</td>
<td>Gideon Boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>KY-MANI MARLEY</td>
<td>Radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Reggae Ragg Regal 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>REBEL SOULJAH</td>
<td>Nothing To Hide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>BOB MARLEY</td>
<td>Forever Gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>ETANA</td>
<td>The Strong One</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rap dominates Week's Top 10

With three albums joining the current flock led by Lil Wayne, rap enjoys the lion’s share of the top 10 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums, accounting for six of those ten. Lil Wayne and Piss continue to ride the top two, despite drops of 73% and 71%, respectively, on the core index. Meanwhile, Blood Raw scores the Hot Shot Debut at No. 5, and the TMI Boyz capture the Panet with its 91% gain at No. 6.

Run-B claims No. 8 and 2 Pistons earn the final spot in the top 10 following the No. 9 peak of his debut single, "She Got It," on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs in May. Outside the top 10 and away from the rap pack, Chante Moore returns at No. 14. Patti Labelle bows at No. 43 and a hits set from Teddy Pendergrass enters at No. 55.

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www.americanradiohistory.com
**R&B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Heaven Sent</td>
<td>Lil Wayne feat. Drake, JAY Z</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Never Too Much</td>
<td>The Game feat. Chris Brown</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bring It Back</td>
<td>T-Pain feat. Rick Ross</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lollipop</td>
<td>RiHanna feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>S.O.</td>
<td>Ne-Yo feat. Lana Del Rey</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>D'Angelo</td>
<td>A&amp;R/Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Get Money</td>
<td>Kanye West feat. Ray J</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Put It Down</td>
<td>Young Jeezy feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>So Fly</td>
<td>Shaggy feat. Pato</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>I'm Sorry</td>
<td>Star Trax feat. Young Jeezy</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Touch My Body</td>
<td>Nas feat. Ne-Yo</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I Need a Girl</td>
<td>Rihanna feat. Ne-Yo</td>
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<td>Don't Stop</td>
<td>Ludacris feat. Tahj Mowry</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>What's My Name</td>
<td>The Game feat. Rick Ross</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>American Boy</td>
<td>Nate Dogg feat. Tash Toy and Babyface</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Her Height</td>
<td>T-Pain feat. Rick Ross</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I Luv U</td>
<td>Bridget Kelly</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Mr. Smith</td>
<td>Lil Scrilla feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Best Friend</td>
<td>Rick Ross feat. Young Jeezy</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Hold My Hand</td>
<td>Ludacris feat. El Dejon Hart</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I Can Make You Feel Better</td>
<td>David Banner feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Remember Me</td>
<td>P. Diddy feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Dr. Feel Good</td>
<td>Young Jeezy feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Never Gonna Be Alone</td>
<td>P. Diddy feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Two Tickets</td>
<td>Bridget Kelly</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Touchy Feisty</td>
<td>Ne-Yo feat. Pato</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>She Don't Know What She Wants</td>
<td>Ne-Yo feat. Pato</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Baby, I'm Coming</td>
<td>Ne-Yo feat. Keys &amp; Krystals</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Beautiful Light</td>
<td>Ne-Yo feat. Keys &amp; Krystals</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>C'mon, But Don't Hold Me, Please</td>
<td>Ne-Yo feat. Keys &amp; Krystals</td>
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**RAP SONGS**

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<td>1</td>
<td>Never Too Much</td>
<td>The Game feat. Chris Brown</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lollipop</td>
<td>RiHanna feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>S.O.</td>
<td>Ne-Yo feat. Lana Del Rey</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Get Money</td>
<td>Kanye West feat. Ray J</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Put It Down</td>
<td>Young Jeezy feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I'm Sorry</td>
<td>Star Trax feat. Young Jeezy</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Touch My Body</td>
<td>Nas feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I Need a Girl</td>
<td>Rihanna feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Don't Stop</td>
<td>Ludacris feat. Tahj Mowry</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>What's My Name</td>
<td>The Game feat. Rick Ross</td>
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**RHYTHMIC AIRPLAY**

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<td>Lil Wayne feat. Drake, JAY Z</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Never Too Much</td>
<td>The Game feat. Chris Brown</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Bring It Back</td>
<td>T-Pain feat. Rick Ross</td>
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<td>S.O.</td>
<td>Ne-Yo feat. Lana Del Rey</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Get Money</td>
<td>Kanye West feat. Ray J</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Put It Down</td>
<td>Young Jeezy feat. Ne-Yo</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I'm Sorry</td>
<td>Star Trax feat. Young Jeezy</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mr. Smith</td>
<td>Lil Scrilla feat. Ne-Yo</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Best Friend</td>
<td>Rick Ross feat. Young Jeezy</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Hold My Hand</td>
<td>Ludacris feat. El Dejon Hart</td>
<td>Cash Money/Universal (Motown)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>I Can Make You Feel Better</td>
<td>David Banner feat. Ne-Yo</td>
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<td>Remember Me</td>
<td>P. Diddy feat. Ne-Yo</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>Ne-Yo feat. Keys &amp; Krystals</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Baby, I'm Coming</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Touchy Feisty</td>
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<td>P. Diddy feat. Ne-Yo</td>
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**HITPREDICTOR**

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<tr>
<td>Top 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data for week of JULY 5, 2008</td>
<td>CHARTS LEGEND on Page 68</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Hot Country Songs

**#1 Better As a Memory**
- Artist: Kenny Chasen

**#2 Honda**
- Artist: Blake Shelton

**#3 House**
- Artist: Montgomery Gentry

**#4 I Still Miss You**
- Artist: Brooks & Dunn

**#5 Put a Girl in It**
- Artist: George Strait

**#6 All I Want to Do**
- Artist: Sugarland

**#7 Every Day**
- Artist: Rascal Flatts

**#8 I Saw God Today**
- Artist: George Strait

**#9 You Look Good in My Shirt**
- Artist: Keith Urban

**#10 Power of a Man**
- Artist: Blake Shelton

### Hit Predictor

See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates recently tested title. Gold indicates new release.

---

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**SUGARLAND MAKES FASTEST CLIMB TO TOP 10**

Sugarmama makes its quickest top 10 climb to date, as "All I Want To Do," surges 3.1 million impressions in its fifth week on Hot Country Songs (13-10). The new single tops eight-week top 10 sprint, set when the act’s “Something More” jumped 14-10 in 2005. "More" rose as high as No. 2, where it held for five weeks starting in the Aug. 6, 2005, issue.

Sugarland's quick rise with "Do" is the second-fastest top 10 climb so far this year, out-paced only by George Strait’s "I Saw God Today," which clocked four weeks to hit that level in the March 15 issue. The title now has fewer chart weeks than "Do" is Strait’s "Troubadour," which hops 32-25 in its fourth week. Brad Paisley owns the youngest top 40 title with "Waitin' On A Woman," which jumps 51-34 in its second week.

"Do" also bows on the Billboard Hot 100, Sugarland's eighth single to reach that tall.

---

**Hit Predictor**
**LATIN AIRPLAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<td>BAMBINO</td>
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<td>QUIERO DECIRTE QUE TE AMO</td>
<td>GABRIEL Y LA MAESTRA</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOBRE MIS PIES</td>
<td>JUAN GABRIEL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TE QUIERO</td>
<td>GABRIEL Y LA MAESTRA</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>SI NO TE HUBIERAS IDO</td>
<td>JUAN GABRIEL</td>
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<tr>
<td>DONDE ESTAN CORAZON</td>
<td>JUAN GABRIEL</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>EN EL CIELO</td>
<td>JUAN GABRIEL</td>
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<td>SI SI SI</td>
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<tr>
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<td>MANOLO</td>
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<td>JUAN GABRIEL</td>
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<td>CARLOS MENJivar</td>
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**LATIN ALBUMS**

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**TROPICAL**

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**REGIONAL MEXICAN**

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<tr>
<td>AIJA GAS (FIRST LTD VERSION)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>AIJA GAS</td>
<td>SWEET ABOUT ME</td>
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<tr>
<td>MO-CHIKO, FT. BENI</td>
<td>JUST DANCE</td>
<td>JULY 5, 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>VELVET TOUCH (FIRST LTD VERSION)</td>
<td>LUCKY DAYS (FIRST LTD VERSION 8)</td>
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<td>TAKE A BOW</td>
<td>SWEET ABOUT ME</td>
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<tr>
<td>KISS KISS BANG BANG</td>
<td>JUST DANCE</td>
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<td>COLDPLAY</td>
<td>RUN THE SHOW</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMBER</td>
<td>NOW YOU'RE GONE</td>
<td>JULY 5, 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>GASHA</td>
<td>NO AIR</td>
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<td>ZOHGLOU DANCE JOIE DE VIVRE</td>
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<td>ART THERAPY</td>
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<td>ALLO LE MONDE</td>
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<td>NON TI SCORDAR MAI DI ME</td>
<td>THE ONLY ME</td>
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<td>A TE</td>
<td>BETTER IN TIME</td>
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<td>AFRODITIES</td>
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<td>UNDERNEATH</td>
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| EURO DIGITAL SPOTLIGHT, THE NETHERLANDS | JUNE 23, 2008 |
|---|---|---|
| NEW | 1 | JULY 5, 2008 |
| THIS IS THE LIFE | 1 | JULY 5, 2008 |
| CAN YOU HEAR ME | 1 | JULY 5, 2008 |
| BLOED, ZWEET EN TRAENEN | 1 | JULY 5, 2008 |
| FIST BUMP | 1 | JULY 5, 2008 |

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SALES CHARTS

ALBUM CHARTS

- Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 albums (Gold).
- RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million albums (Platinum).
- Numerical within Platinum or Diamond symbol indicates album's multi-platinum level.

SINGLE CHARTS

- RIAA certification for net shipment of 500,000 singles.

VIDEO SALE/charts

- RIAA gold for certified net shipment of 50,000 singles for conversations or 28,000 singles for net shipment of 50,000 singles.

VIDEO SALES/VIDEO RENTALS

- RIAA gold for certified net shipment of 25,000 singles.

SALES/VIDEO RENTALS

- RIAA gold for certified net shipment of 500,000 albums.
- RIAA platinum for certified net shipment of 100,000 albums.

PRICE/CONFIGURATION/AVAILABILITY

CD/DVD prices are suggested list or retail prices, which are proposed from wholesale prices. CO/DVD after price indicates CO/DVD combo only available. DVD/CD combo available."
TOP HEATSEEKERS

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<td>2</td>
<td>BO BURNHAM</td>
<td>Mmm Mmm Mmm Mmm</td>
<td>Columbia (CMH8-2008)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>MGMT</td>
<td>Oracular Spectacular</td>
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<td>FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH</td>
<td>The Way Of The Fist</td>
<td>Roadrunner (RR71922)</td>
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<td>Talking Through Tin Cans</td>
<td>Epitaph (EPI/062)</td>
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<td>Inhuman Rampage</td>
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<td>Why Do You Haters Hate Us</td>
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<td>WOLF PARADE</td>
<td>Are You Ready For An O-Town 758*?</td>
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PROGRESS REPORT

Heidi Newfield, "Johnny & June" The former Trick Pony frontwoman sees her debut solo single break into the top 30 on Hot Country Songs as the tune rises 31-28. Her curb album, "What Am I Waiting For," hits the market Aug. 5.

Heating Up: The latest rising album by new and developing acts, defined as albums that entered the top 30 on the Billboard 200 in the last two month. The list includes The Decemberists' "Pilgrimage," the latest release by the indie band; James Taylor's "Before This World," which features collaborations with Gnarls Barkley, and Frank Zappa's "Mother," a collection of previously unreleased tracks. The music charts for ©2008 Billboard Publications, Inc., All rights reserved.
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<td>&quot;Let's Get It On&quot;</td>
<td>Marvin Gaye</td>
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<td>&quot;I Want You&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Water Under the Bridge&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;My World&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Try Me&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Living for Love&quot;</td>
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RECORD COMPANIES: BMG Label Group taps Neil Levine as senior VP/GM of its newly formed hip-hop label, Battery Records. He was head of Capitol Music Group's urban division. Warner Music Group's SNEA sales and retail marketing division promotes Perry Bashkoff to VP of digital sales and marketing. He previously oversaw the company's East Coast mobile and online retail efforts and will now expand that role to managing WMG's social media and ad-supported service relationships.

DISTRIBUTION: Digital music distributor the Orchard elevates Brad Navin to executive VP/GM. He was VP of global licensing and operations.

PUBLISHING: BMI in Nashville promotes Milt Laughter to senior VP of operations and information technology. He was VP.

TOURING: Arena management firm Global Spectrum appoints Vince Vella GM of the General Motors Centre in Oshawa, Ontario. He was director of operations at the John LaBatt Centre in London, Ontario. Secondary-ticketing company RazorGator Interactive Group names Seth Brody executive VP/GM. He was group VP/GM of Americas business operations at Orbitz Worldwide.

AEG Live in Florida taps Jesse Stoll, the son of late Florida concert promoter Jon Stoll, as operations coordinator. He was a college marketing representative for Sony BMG in Miami.

RELATED FIELDS: The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland taps Gregory S. Harris as VP of development. He served in the same capacity at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, N.Y. The Nashville chapter of the Recording Academy elects new members to its 2008-09 board: Grand Ole Opry GM Pete Fisher, producer Mark Bright and Creative Artists Agency agent Rod Essig.

The board of U.K.-based Web A&R platform Silicetheplea taps Paul Brown as commercial director. He serves as managing director at Pandora Media.

— Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS

VANS WARPED TOUR CLEANS UP LOUISIANA
About two weeks into this year's 14th annual Vans Warped tour, approximately 100 artists, crew members and sponsors will use a day off to help rebuild hurricane-torn communities in southwest Louisiana. Between Warped stops in Houston and Atlanta, volunteers from the 46-date trek will spend July 7 building wheelchair ramps and help revamp a library, daycare and senior center in smaller towns that were destroyed in 2005 after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit the Gulf Coast region. "Everybody has been focusing their efforts on the larger communities, such as New Orleans," says Laura Murphy, foundation administrator for Unite the United, which is spearheading the project in conjunction with the Volunteer Center of Southwest Louisiana. These are communities "that have received little or no help from the outside," she adds.

Warped tour founder Kevin Lyman launched nonprofit Unite the United in response to the devastation the hurricanes caused. In June 2006, 400 volunteers from the Warped tour helped residents clear more than seven tons of debris from Cameron Parish in Louisiana. "It's really about the Warped community pulling together," Murphy says.

ASCAP RHYTHM AND SOUL MUSIC AWARDS
More than 600 songwriter/producers, recording artists and music industry leaders gathered at the 31st annual ASCAP Rhythm and Soul Music Awards, held June 23 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles. Grammy Award-winning songwriter Johntá Austin hosted the all-star gathering, which included presenters MC Lyte, Ne-Yo and T-Dot. Top award winners included Tidwell for songwriter of the year, EMI Music Publishing for publisher of the year, "This Is Why I'm Hot" for ringtone of the year and "Lost Without You" for rap song of the year.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LESTER COMEBLUEHOUSE.COM

1. Songwriter Music Soultitght, left, and Alkon inside the press room at the ASCAP Rhythm and Soul Awards.

2. ASCAP CEO John LoFrumento, far right, with EMI Music Publishing's Creative team onstage at the ASCAP Rhythm and Soul Awards. From left are director of East Coast creative for urban Mike Jackson, director of East Coast creative for urban Omar Grant, president of West Coast creative Big Jon Platt, associate manager of creative for urban Carlos Hudgins and chairman/CEO Roger Faxon.

3. From left: Johnta Austin, Ludacris and ASCAP executive VP of membership Todd Brabec.

4. From left: ASCAP creative director of membership for urban Jay Sloan, Ne-Yo and ASCAP senior director of membership for urban Alonzo Richman.

5. Writer/producer Maurice Starr and ASCAP senior VP of membership for urban Johnnie Weems with the members of ASCAP Golden Note Award National Home Edition.

INSIDE TRACK

‘NEGATIVE’ SPACES

The long-awaited Jesus and Mary Chain boxed set is finally set for release Sept. 30 via Rhino. The four-disc "The Power of Negative Thinking: B-Sides & Rarities" is presented in chronological order and offers a host of previously unreleased tracks, including the "Psychocandy"-era "Walk and Climb", alternate versions of "Never Understand" and "Coast to Coast”, demos of "My Little Underground", "The Living End" and "Dirty Water", and the never-before-heard "Till I Found You." The set also sports 19 of the 20 rarities previously released on the 1988 compilation "Barbed Wire Kisses" and a cassette-sourced 1983 recording of "Up Too High." The packaging for "Negative Thinking" is a 6-inch-by-10-inch gatefold shell and includes an 18-inch-by-24-inch double-sided poster featuring artwork and a Jesus and Mary Chain family tree. Meanwhile, work continues on the band's first new studio album in a decade, a release date for which has yet to be announced.

GAME ON

An as-yet-unnamed new Franz Ferdinand song will be featured in the "Madden 09" videogame, which will hit stores in mid-August. It has not yet been determined whether the track will be featured on the band's next album. The set, which is also entitled as of now, is due in January via Epic.
Sixteen-year-old fashion designer Kira Plastinina, center, hosted a party June 18 in Los Angeles to celebrate her line's launch in the United States. Plastinina already has more than 40 stores in Russia and has opened five in the States. Plastinina is Esme Denter, left, the first signing to Justin Timberlake's Tennman Records imprint, and R&B star Chris Brown, who treated VIPs to a lively performance during a full runway show. COURTESY OF STEVEN ANDREW/WIREIMAGE

DON'T FORGET THE LYRICS!

The J.T. Martell Foundation $250,000
Are Needed For a Cure

The members of four-time Grammy Award-winning R&B/hip-hop group Boyz II Men present their $250,000 check money from their appearance on "Don't Forget the Lyrics." The act competed on the show on behalf of the J.T. Martell Foundation. From left are Wanya Morris, Nathan Morris, T.J. Martell board member Thomas Valentine, Boyz II Men's Wanya Morris and T.J. Martell Foundation chairman Tony Martell. PHOTO COURTESY OF RICHARD HINES

2008 SONGWRITERS HALL OF FAME AWARDS

The 50th annual Songwriters Hall of Fame induction ceremony took place June 19 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York. This year's inductees were Desmond Child, Albert Hammond, Loretta Lynn, Alan Menken and John Sebastian. Other honorees included Johnnie Mercer Award recipient Paul Anka, Hal David Starlight Award winner John Rzeznik, Aloe Blacc Star Writings Award recipient Hit-Boy, and Anne Murray who received the Howard Hillman Hitmaker Award. In addition, the Towering Song Award was granted to "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." The ceremony featured performances by John J.R., Natalie Merchant, John Legend, the Naked Brothers Band, Yankee sportscaster John Sterling and Lee Ann Womack. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALFRED J. DEERSTEINER

LEFT: Singer/songwriter Joan Jett with Desmond Child
RIGHT: From left, Alan Menken, John Sebastian, Songwriters Hall of Fame chairman Hal David, Loretta Lynn, Albert Hammond and Desmond Child

Alicia Keys welcomed her 28-city As I Am U.S. tour presented by Virgin, June 18 at New York's Madison Square Garden. Her album "As I Am" has sold more than 3.5 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. From left are RCA VP of urban marketing Carolyn Williams, RCA executive VP/GM Tom Corneal, Virgin Records president Peter Edge, BMI Label Group chairwoman/CEO Barry Weiss, Sony BMG Worldwide chief creative officer Clive Davis, RCA senior VP of urban promotion Geo Beieves and Sony BMG Music Entertainment executive VP of business affairs/general counsel Julie Swidler. PHOTO COURTESY OF LARRY wuyc/BACKBEAT

SESAC TELEVISION & FILM COMPOSERS AWARDS DINNER

SESAC's Television & Film Composers Awards Dinner was held June 12 in Santa Monica, Calif., to honor its roster of film and TV composers. The event feted music composers for the top-rated TV shows on network, cable and syndicated platforms, as well as the top-performed theme. More than 50 awards were given during the event, including acknowledgments of "Grey's Anatomy," "How I Met Your Mother," "Boston Legal," and "Dawson's Creek," nominees counter of FIB, minus.

UPPER LEFT: SESAC senior VP Pat Rogers, right, with International Creative Management's Bruce Gaeta.
ABOVE: SESAC executive VP Dennis Lord, left, bestows an award on composer Christopher Beck for his work on the films "Charlie Bartlett," "Fred Claus" and "License to Wed."
LEFT: From left: Composer Paul Buckley, SESAC VP of royalty distribution and research services Hunter Williams and award-winning composer Danny Lac, who won for his work on "Grey's Anatomy," "My Name Is Earl," "Boston Legal" and "The Bachelors."
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Crowd
Fans in any environment.

Place
A club, café, or other hotspot.

Spontaneous Moment
Your best quirky, off-the-cuff shot.

Prizes

Grand Prize: A professional, 8x10 camera, images published in a September 2006 issue of Billboard and a one-year subscription to Billboard.

First Place in Each Category: A digital camera, images published in a September 2006 issue of Billboard and a one-year subscription to Billboard.


Judges

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Group Editorial Director, Billboard

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Photo Editor, PDN

Autumn de Wilde
Photographer

John Giménez
Contest Manager, PDN

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