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A Letter From The Editor

If you’re insane enough to go to bed every night and wake up every morning thinking about how the music industry could be smarter, more profitable, faster to evolve and ultimately just do a better job monetizing the ever-increasing ubiquity of music, you probably either run an important music company or are the editor of Billboard. I can assure you, looking at my paycheck, I do not do the former.

This issue represents a pretty meaningful change for Billboard. After more than four years of editorial leadership at the hands of Tamara Conniff—four years that saw the brand really revitalize itself, grow and have a lot of fun in the process—I am taking over as editorial director. Tamara has moved on to become president of music services for Irving Azoff’s Front Line management company. And my three years at Billboard now lead me to the top editor’s spot. Those that know Tamara know I have high heels to fill. (Those that know me look terrible in heels, but that’s a different letter.)

All kidding aside, the position represents a huge honor and a huge challenge—serving you, our dear readers, the news, analysis, data and insight you’ve come to expect from this magazine, whether you’ve been reading for six months or have all 114 years of our publication at home.

And here’s the thing: that first paragraph wasn’t my attempt for a cheap laugh. Or at least it wasn’t only that.

During the past three years, your pain has become my pain, and my joy, my own.

I cringe with you when the blogs tar and feather your best, good-faith efforts with our understanding multiple sides of a story. I throw my hands up in frustration when publishers and digital services can’t find accord—just as those publishers and digital executives do. I’m excited by the perfect synch placement (man, that’s so geekily true) and new technologies that offer real promise and, heaven forbid, revenue streams for rights holders.

And through it all, I have a burning desire to know how and why it all works when it works, and what went wrong when it doesn’t.

I begin with no sweeping agenda for change—just a hirs to continue to perfect what all of the very talented editors and reporters at Billboard have been doing since I joined three years ago. Shining a light on what’s working and what isn’t. Honoring the business—the publishers, record labels, investors, music supervisors, managers, tour promoters, agents, retailers, lawyers, A&R people, digerati, creative agencies, big brands, fans, roadies, groups and all the countless others who make their living and around this crazy industry we call music—sort through opportunities and potential pitfalls. And connecting the dots for all of these constituencies so they can make the most out of working with each other.

As we stand here at Billboard, like you, wake up every morning striving to reinvent our magazine and Web sites as smartly as we can, those dots will remain, as always, red, yellow, blue and green.

Marc Jacobson, Of Counsel
Greenberg Traurig, New York

ISPS NOT THE ANSWER

In response to the July 12 Opinion piece titled “Classical Actions: Mulling a Law-Suit Against ISPS.” Recently the music industry has become enamored with a potential solution for widespread piracy—namely, that Internet service providers collect revenue to be distributed on some basis to music rights holders, through a form of collection society. In my opinion, this doesn’t make sense.

I’m a big supporter of rights holders being paid properly for the use of their works, in a lawful manner, and believe that those who “induce” copyright infringement should be held liable. Copyright owners spend money to create their works and they deserve economic rewards. But when I was working on the Digital Millennium Copyright Act on behalf of ISPS, we addressed this issue. The law provides that so long as ISPS act as “dumb pipe,” like telephone companies, they have no liability. It makes sense.

If one person plays a recording of a song across phone lines to a group of people, the phone company is not liable for copyright infringement. The DMCA took that statutory concept, applied it to the ISPs that act as dumb pipe and said that if the pipe is dumb, the pipe’s owner can’t be liable for infringement. Secondly, music does not deserve special protection in the pantheon of copyrightable works, any more than TV shows, films, photographs, poems or essays—all of which are infringed by users of the Internet. While there are some centralized organizations for clearing certain literary works, to my knowledge there are no such societies for photographs, films or other classes of works. If revenue is collected from ISPs to pay music rights holders, using adaptations of the existing collection society structure, how will the income generated from ISPs be allocated for all works copied on the Internet? Of course we can invent proposed solutions, but it strikes me as fundamentally impractical.

Further, why should all copyrightable works be subject to compulsory licensing? Isn’t that antithetical to the very notion of ownership of private property?

The solution is not to raise ISP fees and create another inaccurate methodology for distributing revenue, but rather to allow legitimate alternative business models to succeed, to make licensing of the works easier so that legitimate services can launch without fear of legal action and to allow the Internet to flourish at lower costs—not higher ones.

Marc Jacobson, Of Counsel
Greenberg Traurig, New York

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Jerry Wexler (1917-2008)

When Jerry Wexler, who died Aug. 15 at the age of 91, became a partner in Atlantic Records in 1951, the label had already established itself as an up-and-coming force in R&B music, thanks to Atlantic founders Ahmet Ertegun and Herb Abramson.

While Wexler harbored the same abiding love of black music as the label's founders, he ultimately would lead Atlantic deep into Southern soul in the '60s, at a time when the genre was intrinsically linked with the social upheavals of the period. In fact, Wexler was on fire during the '60s, working with such legends as Solomon Burke, Aretha Franklin and Wilson Pickett. He signed the distribution deal that linked Atlantic to the Stax explosion of hits from Otis Redding, Booker T. & the MG's and Sam & Dave, among others. He also forged a connection with Fame Studios in Muscle Shoals, Ala. where he would bring artists like Franklin and Pickett. And even though Ertegun began to explore white rock-'n'-roll more heavily in that decade, Wexler was the one who signed Atlantic's best-selling act, Led Zeppelin. Besides his A&R prowess and his ability as a producer, Wexler was one of the top record executives of his day. "Ahmet didn't run the company," long-time Atlantic executive Dave Glew recalls. "He left that up to Sheldon Vogel, Jerry Greenberg and Jerry Wexler, who was the heart and soul of that company, and people tend to forget it." That sentiment is echoed by Greenberg himself, who also calls Wexler his mentor and "the soul" of Atlantic.

"Sure, Jerry was not there at the start of Atlantic—that was Herb and Ahmet—but it might have had an early finish were it not for Jerry," says founder Seymour Stein told Wexler's son Paul in a confidante message that Stein shared with Billboard. "Jerry came in at Atlantic's most crucial period and made an amazing difference; not only did he bring in great music and signed great talent, he built it into a company that allowed Ahmet to do what he did best. It was a win, win situation. The third win was for all us music fans... who benefited from the music that came from that great Atlantic roster."

Burke, who was signed to Atlantic by Wexler, has fond memories of Wexler and Ertegun. He says he was "honored and blessed to be part of what the two accomplished."

"Jerry was the worker bee and Ahmet was the mastermind," Burke recalls, adding "the good cop and the bad cop was played very well but it was played with dignity, they were captain and lieutenant."

Wexler was born Jan. 10, 1917, into a Jewish family in the Bronx. After graduating from the school now known as Kansas State University and spending a stint in the Army, he landed a job in 1947 at BMI, writing continuity copy for radio stations and plugging the organization's songs. Later that year a friend recommended him to Billboard, where he worked as a reporter (see story page 7) until 1951, when he went to work for Big Three, the music publishing arm of MGM Records.

Atlantic tried to recruit Wexler in 1952, but he demanded to be a partner, something that the label's founders wouldn't give in on until the following year when Abramson joined the Army. In those days, the Atlantic office served as the studio at night-time, with desks pushed up against the wall, while artists like Ray Charles would come in and cut sides. Wexler learned the producing craft working with Ertegun and before long was overseeing recording sessions on his own. "Jerry knew how to make records that were comfortable for non-black ears, but ones that were absolutely true to their own roots and consistent within themselves," Elektra Records founder Jac Holzman says. "That's what he did with Aretha. Previously, there had been white singers covering

JERRY WEXLER played a key role in changing the name of Billboard's black music chart to Rhythm & Blues Records, shown above in its first appearance in the magazine. At right, from left, are Wexler and NESUHI and AHMET ERTEGUN.
black tunes in sanitized versions that leech the color out of them and the color was what made them great." Wexler also knew his way around the studio from an operational standpoint, Holzman adds. "Some producers would describe a mood," he says. "Wexler could tell you that too, but he could tell you how to get there rather than just leave the artist to wondering what the hell the producer means."

In his 1993 autobiography, "Rhythm & the Blues: A Life in American Music," Wexler recalled the Memphis recording session for Pickens' "In the Midnight Hour," when he stepped out of the control room to teach bassist Duck Dunn the rhythm he wanted on the track. "I was shaking my booty to a groove made popular by the Larks' 'The Jerk,' a mid-'60s hit," Wexler wrote. "The idea was to push the second beat while holding back the fourth—something easier demonstrated than explained."

Perhaps Wexler's greatest recorded legacy was his work with Franklin, which yielded the hit "Respect," which Wexler wrote. "The idea was to make a song that is about the power of love and the command to make a man respect you."

Wexler's assistant, Delehant, who would eventually become a producer in his own right, recalls, "Wexler was always looking for the next big thing, always thinking about how to push the envelope and make something new."

By that point, Wexler had already produced a bevy of timeless R&B hits for Atlantic. But it was at Billboard that he first honed his knowledge of the business. "At Billboard, the notion of pursuing destiny was far from my consciousness," Wexler wrote in his autobiography. "I was just getting my pop music chops."

EC
such classic soul sides as "You Make Me Feel Like A Natural Woman," "CHAIN OF FOOLS" and her emotional cover of Redding's "Respect."

"He was a natural man with no pretensions, and he was strong," says author David Ritz, who collaborated with Wexler and Franklin on their respective autobiographies. "So when he caught up with Aretha, he had the kind of authority to help reslease her sound. It takes a lot for someone to go up to Aretha Franklin and say, 'You should be doing that or that.' He reconstructed and reconstituted her...He wasn't trying to make her into something she wasn't. "Sit down at the piano and go back to your gospel roots. It all kind of kicked."

Wexler's work in recording soul music would lead to many of the label's successes in rock music, too, says Phil Carson, who headed up Atlantic in Europe beginning in 1969 and signed acts like AC/DC, ABBA and Twisted Sister. "My job became easy because of Jerry Wexler," says Carson, who nowadays manages Foreigner, amongst others. "The artists that I worked with—Led Zeppelin, [Eric] Clapton and others—signed with Atlantic because this was the place where Otis Redding, Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin and Sam & Dave recorded. It was the aura and the roots of Atlantic that enabled us to get the artists we wanted."

In fact, one of Wexler's landmark productions, Dusty Springfield's 1969 album "Dusty in Memphis," would lead the way to his most lucrative signing. Greenberg, the former Atlantic president who started as Wexler's assistant in 1967, recalls that it was Springfield who told Wexler that guitarist Jimmy Page was going to leave the Yardbirds to form a new band. Her enthusiastic endorsement spurred Wexler to sign his new group, Led Zeppelin.

"Wexler had a philosophy about the bands he would sign, and it always stuck in my mind," Carson says. "Only a sign a band if at least one virtuoso in it. Russo. Wexler told me, 'because they don't just play with good musicians, they play with great musicians.'

That distinction was evident in the rock bands Atlantic then had, such as Zep, Epperson, Emerson, Lake & Palmer. Genesis, and yes, Carson says. By the early '70s, Wexler was no longer going to the office, instead choosing to work full time as a producer. Atlantic had been sold to Warner-Silver Arts for $17 million in 1967, in a deal that Ergen wasn't to seek on but Wexler and Almert's brother/partner Neshui Ertegun had wanted. With Wexler outside of the office, and the company now being run by Greenberg and Almert, Wexler decided he didn't like being an employee and left Atlantic in 1975, but he resurfaced two years later as sister label Warner Bros. Records as VP of A&R. In his autobiographiy, Wexler wrote that with the help of Karin Berg, they signed the B-52s, Dire Straits and Gang of Four.

During the latter half of the '70s, Wexler produced Etta James' "Deeply in the Night," and, together with Barry Beckett, manned the boards for Bob Dylan's born-again Christian album "Slow Train Coming," Kim Carnes "Sailin" and Dire Straits' "Communique."

He later worked with Billy Vera, according to the institutional support awarded by AEG Live, Billboard and Promotores Unidos, the evening will highlight the subgenres of regional Mexican music that are making an impact in the market, Promotores Unidos VP Jesus Guillen says. Hosting the event at the Nokia, Guillen adds, brings prestige to the genre. Since opening last October, the Nokia has presented several regional Mexican shows, including sellouts by Los Temerarios, Conjunto Primavera and Jenni Rivera. The Billboard Regional Mexican Noche Premusna will be hosted by Billboard's senior Latin music writer Alicia Acosta, with performances by Graciela Beltran and Pablo Montero. Tickets go on sale Aug. 23 via Ticketmaster and ticketmaster.com, Ritmo Latino and Timelas La Curacao. For more information on the event and the Regional Mexican Music Latin Summit, go to billboardevents.com. "..."
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UPFRONT

BY MITCHELL PETERS

Olympics TV Exposure Boosts Music Sales

As the 2008 Summer Olympics came to a close Aug. 24 in Beijing, the world’s top stars won’t be the only ones celebrating victory. Such artists as Taylor Swift, Chris Brown and Brandi Carlile enjoyed a significant lift in sales thanks to TV song placements.

“There’s no bigger stage than something as enormously powerful as the Olympics,” says Dean Crutchfield, a branding expert formerly with New York-based Wolff Olins. “It’s one of the biggest events in the world.”

Indeed, thanks in part to the excitement generated by U.S. swimmer Michael Phelps’ record eight gold medals, the first 12 days of the Beijing Olympics scored an average of 29.3 million TV viewers on NBC, a 12% increase over the first 12 days of the 2004 games in Athens, according to NBC Universal.

Thanks to that audience reach, some of the songs featured in TV commercials during the games reaped sizable sales boosts. The biggest winners were featured on AT&T’s “Team USA Soundtrack,” a compilation of songs to benefit U.S. Olympic athletes. AT&T, which has exclusive rights to the songs during the games, ran regular TV spots during the games advertising the soundtrack.

Five songs from the soundtrack, which was released Aug. 8, debuted on this week’s Billboard Hot 100 (see page 46). Swift’s “Change” enters the chart at No. 10, followed by Brown’s “Dreamer” (No. 16), Goo Goo Dolls’ “Reel” (92), Nelly’s “Wanna (Air)” (96) and Colbie Caillat’s “Somewhere Special” (98).

During the two weeks ended Aug. 17, the five tracks generated unit sales of 146,000 (Swift), 106,000 (Brown), 33,000 (Goo Goo Dolls), 30,000 (Nelly) and 30,000 (Caillat), according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Swift, Brown and Goo Goo Dolls were among the acts that benefited from prime-time TV spots. AT&T spotlighted one act and its music video each night on NBC, with a total of three plays for each video during the Olympics’ 17 days.

Queen Latifah’s “Champion” and Sheryl Crow’s “So Glad We Made It” were also featured during the spots, selling 11,000 and 10,000 units, respectively, during the two weeks ended Aug. 17, according to SoundScan.

The brisk sales of Swift’s “Change” were impressive given that the song hasn’t yet been released to radio, by far the most important sales driver for country music. A handful of country stations have been playing copies of “Change” lifted from iTunes, including WGH Norfolk, Va.; KSCE Dallas; and Sirius Satellite Radio’s New Country channel. Swift is also performing the song while on tour with country act Rascal Flatts.

“People are really excited about new music from Taylor,” says Kelly Rich, VP of sales and marketing for Swift’s label Big Machine. “I truly believe that’s what’s stirring the pot.”

A more modest seller from the AT&T soundtrack is Luis Fonsi’s “No Me Doy Por Vencido,” which has moved 10,000 units during the two weeks ended Aug. 17 and 7,000 units during the past month, according to SoundScan. Universal Music Latin Entertainment VP of digital and mobile Skander Goucha calls the track’s download tally, which was also helped by radio play, “an amazing number” considering the lagging state of Latin digital sales.

Another big Olympics winner was Columbia Records’ Carlile, thanks to the use of the title track of her 2007 album “The Story” in a General Motors commercial that aired during the games. The album re-enters the Billboard 200 this week at No. 88, thanks to sales of 28,000 units, up 530% from 4,000 during the previous week, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

“We didn’t do this to sell more records, that wasn’t the goal,” says Mark Cunningham, Carlile’s manager at A-Squared Management. However, he adds, the campaign “definitely has met our expectations and probably exceeded them.”

Carlile will donate the proceeds from the licensing deal to various environmental charities, according to a statement on her Web site.

But not all TV exposure during the Olympics resulted in significant sales. Four Hilton Hotels TV ads featuring songs by Donovan Frankenreiter and Michael Tolcher generated sales of less than 1,000 units each for the former’s “Life, Love and Laughter” and the latter’s “Speed Feels Better” during the week ended Aug. 17, according to SoundScan.

Kim Buie, VP of A&R at Frankenreiter’s label Lost Highway Records, says that despite the lack of significant downloads, the timing of the commercials aligned perfectly with the arrival of “Life, Love and Laughter,” the first single from the artist’s recently released album “Pass It Around.” “It was a song we had already earmarked to be our first single,” Buie says. “We’re happy to have the exposure.”

Hilton Hotels senior VP of brand management Jeff Biskin says the company bought about $13 million worth of airtime on NBC for the Olympics. The spots featuring songs by Frankenreiter and Tolcher aired 133 times across NBC Network. “It represents the bulk of our media for our Hilton family of brands for 2008,” Biskin says.

Neither Bue nor Biskin had explanations for why Frankenreiter’s and Tolcher’s songs didn’t sell as many downloads as some acts with TV exposure during the Olympics. Biskin points out that through August, interviews and acoustic performances by Frankenreiter and Tolcher will be available for streaming on the company’s Web site, along with in-room channeling in 300,000 rooms in Hilton-owned U.S. hotels.

Apple, meanwhile, received valuable— and free—TV exposure from swimmer Phelps, who was repeatedly seen listening to his iPod before big races.

“I don’t think having him in a commercial would be any better, because it’s much more authentic when you see him just walking around before a race listening to his iPod,” Buzz Marketing Group CEO Tina Wells says. “It drives home the point that music is the soundtrack of life and also the power and saturation of the iPod.”

Additional reporting by Ayana Ben-Yehuda, Corney Hardings and Ken Tucker.

MEDAL WINNERS

MEAL WINNERS

Sales data for the two weeks ended Aug. 17 for songs from AT&T’s “Team USA Soundtrack,” Brandi Carlile’s “The Story” (featured in a General Motors TV spot) and Lil Wayne’s “I’m Me,” widely reported to be on Michael Phelps’ iPod.

SOURCE: Nielsen SoundScan

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We honor the memory and celebrate the legacy of Jerry Wexler.

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OUT OF THE PARK

Heavy Hitters Grace Negro League Benefit CD

By combining music, social consciousness and philanthropy, Stadium Entertainment wants to shepherd a new business model designed to also capture and engage music consumers. The first project under its banner is the compilation CD “True to the Game.”

Comprising tracks featuring such top R&B/hip-hop artists as Kanye West, T-Pain and Akon, the CD will be released Oct. 21 and distributed by Pyramid/Fontana/Universal. Stadium has also inked a licensing deal with T-Pain’s Mambo-based Nappy Boy Digital label for the project’s first single, “Beam Me Up.”

The song, featuring T-Pain, Rick Ross and introducing Nappy Boy artist Tay Dizm, is exclusively available digitally through Nappy Boy Digital. Released last month, the single will be serviced Aug. 22 and go for adds after Labor Day. A percentage of the proceeds from “True to the Game” will be donated to the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. Stadium plans to release two more compilations and a best-of CD in its agreement with the 18-year-old museum. The Kansas City, Mo.-based facility will use the proceeds to help fund a $15 million education and research center to be housed within the historic land-marked building where the Negro Leagues were established in 1920.

“This is a legal mixtape on steroids,” Stadium Entertainment head Camille Barbone says of “True to the Game,” which will retail for $16.98. “This record has a diverse flow with G-rated lyrics. Some of the songs were recorded especially for this project, and some had already been written. And we wanted to tell a win-win story by pairing emerging acts and protegés with well-known acts.”


“We were thinking about a new model that took into consideration the changes happening in the music industry,” Barbone says of the compilation CDs. “It’s a win-win for everyone involved.”

Among the artists involved, the sales figures for involved parties do not always reflect this. Santogold has sold 67,000 copies of her self-titled debut album, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and while Scherzinger’s solo album has yet to be released, sales of her single “Super Villain” totaled 12,000 units. But even if these campaigns don’t provide artists huge sales boosts, they still help build name recognition, and the artists are compensated. But what benefits do the brands see? Consider the Bud Light Lime example, or the fact that, despite having worn Converse since high school, I haven’t been pushed by the ads to invest more toward my own pair.

“We’re not looking for a straight return on investment in the first year,” Cooper says. “This is about us establishing credibility and being seen as champions for emerging artists. It’s all about building brand affinity.”

Brands that release music usually aren’t looking to make money from the songs themselves, according to Cornerstone Promotion VP of strategic marketing Jeff Tammes, who works with Converse. Caress and Mountain Dew on download-related projects.

“For Caress and Converse, they wanted great songs to give to the creative folks,” Tammes says. “They are looking at viral hits, coverage, and music that wouldn’t normally cover them and activity around the content. For Caress, they are also looking at the effects on the sales figures and whether the promotion activated returns at retail.”

Unlever/Cooper director of brand building Anne Jensen says, “We’re just now winding the promotion down. I feel like we’ve been looking at it a number of indicators. Sales figures, obviously, but that’s only a part of it. We want to see how customers engaged with the site, if they downloaded the song and left, or if they downloaded coupons or submitted video to the site. At the end of the day, we don’t just want views with no action.”

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Home Stage

Miami Venues Provide Havens For Latin Artists

Last month, as I listened to Julieta Venegas perform at the Gibson Showroom in Miami’s Design District, a music industry executive came up to me.

“Isn’t it amazing?” she asked. “This place didn’t even exist a year ago, and now, I don’t know how we survived without it.”

Ostensibly a place for the guitar maker to showcase its various brands (including Baldwin pianos), the showroom has become a kind of haven for all things music in Miami, allowing access to everything from rehearsals and songwriting sessions to showcases and TV tapings.

Less than 15 minutes away, in Little Havana, is another outlet designed to fulfill a previously unmet need. Esencia, a Latin songwriter’s showcase, holds court every Thursday in a club called the Placce, allowing new and established songwriters to perform their compositions in an acoustic setting.

Neither Gibson nor Esencia seeks mass appeal nor revenue. Neither locale fits more than 200 people and neither charges admission.

Instead, both are predicated on the rather quaint notion of love of art, or, in this case, music. And because they’re located in Miami, the emphasis is most decidedly Latin.

Esencia was launched five years ago by Erwin Pérez, a writer for El Nuevo Herald who has since gone into public relations. From the outset, the series’ objective was to showcase Latin songwriters who had penned famous songs but weren’t known as performers. Then it evolved to include up-and-coming acts and the occasional major singer/songwriter who stopped by.

“As I could say in one of my songs, Esencia is like a woman’s second virginity,” says singer/songwriter Saavedra, a regular with several radio hits to her name. “It’s a place one always wants to return to, where we hold the most pleasurable memories, where we get together with whoever we want and understand what we want to become.”

Despite this enthusiasm, Pérez suspended Esencia for a year but resumed it in July, thanks to the Place’s owner, who provides the venue and backline free of charge and pays Pérez a nominal fee for looking, producing and promoting the events.

“It’s not a great business,” Pérez says. “But that isn’t the point. There is no other place where artists can come and play and have everything set up for them. I’m more convinced than ever that this is truly an important showcase for them.”

Sony/ATV Music Publishing senior creative director Claribel Cuevas is a regular, as are many other publishers. “I get to be up close and personal with writers who have penned some really big songs, and you hear those songs and the stories behind them,” she says. “It’s also a great avenue to show new talent. I’ve become aware of writers this way. It’d be great to have these in other cities.”

To do that, however, you’d need to find a bunch of other idealists like Pérez. Or a businessman like Gibson chairman/CEO Henry Juszkiewicz, who endorses the notion that cities should have supportive havens to foster creativity. Gibson has 16 showrooms worldwide and eight in the United States, which provide a place for performing, networking and industry events. The Miami venue, which opened in October 2007, is one of the newest. Although artists of all genres use the showroom, approximately 60% of its events are Latin-centric.

“The Gibson showroom is a toy store, but for adults,” says artist Luis Fonsi, whose song “No Me Doy Por Vencido” is No. 1 on Billboard’s Latin Top Pop Airplay chart and goes to Gibson to test instruments and do interviews. “Without a doubt, the most important aspect for me is its support of Latin music.”

THE BILLBOARD Q&A

Ana Clara Ortiz

Latin America’s exploding mobile music market has kept Ana Clara Ortiz busy. Ortiz, formerly director of mobile for Universal Music Latin America, was named the division’s VP of digital in February, putting her in charge of online and mobile initiatives. She discussed the opportunities and challenges of both with Billboard.

Have you ever had mobile content sell really well without being driven by a radio hit?

An example of that was La Secta with the single “La Locura Automática and Mach & Daddy with “La Botella.” Wisin & Yandel have more than 100,000 downloads in Argentina, [where] consumers don’t normally consume reggaeton and radio doesn’t play reggaeton down there... So it’s interesting to see artists we are tracking that are not having airplay, that are not a priority in the region, but we just make the content available and they are really selling a lot in Latin America.

What are you doing on the mobile side to develop underexploited markets for regional Mexican?

We are working pretty closely with the telcos in Central America. Right now the regional Mexican catalog, for example, El Trono de Mexico is selling a lot of ringback tones in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. That was a huge surprise for us... A year ago when we opened the operations there, digitally speaking, we made the content available to the telcos. We have the “long tail” concept. We try to make all the catalog available in all the territories, and every single day we see these kinds of surprises. We launched the digital operation in Bolivia a month ago, and we are selling crazy there... We are selling a lot of regional Mexican in Paraguay.

How big of a threat to your business is mobile piracy?

We are still selling the master-tones protected in Latin America. However, it’s not only Bluetooth, it’s mostly the cables that come with the new phones... whatever you have in a computer that you have downloaded illegally, you can just transfer to your phone. So it is a threat, but the main issue is still the transport costs, the airtime costs that the telcos are charging in Latin America... And then the telcos, their main business is not selling ringtones, it’s to sell phones and lines. So I still think that they are not really focused on promoting WAP and promoting the mobile content as it probably should be. That could drive more sales for all the parts.

—Apila Ben-Yehuda

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Upfront Latin

WARNER Buys SPANISH SERVICES FIRM

Warner Music International has acquired a majority stake in Spanish artist services company Get In for an undisclosed amount.

Inigo Argomaniz formed the San Sebastian-based company in 1990. It has operations in artist management, live production, touring promotion and brand partnerships. It will now become part of Warner Music Spain, and the major says the partnership will expand both companies’ ability to provide support across all aspects of their artists’ careers.

Get In manages established Spanish acts including La Oreja de Van Gogh, Mikel Erentxun, Alex Ubago, Duncan Dhu, Amalia Montero and El Sueño de Morfeo. It has also staged concerts for Manu Chao, Metallica, Ben Harper, Il Divo and Kenny Kravitz, while the brand partnerships brokered with acts include Coca-Cola, Sony/ATV, La Oreja de Van Gogh and Seat Volkswagen, and Alex Ubago and mobile operator Movistar.

Under the terms of the deal, Get In will continue to be headed by Argomaniz, whose career includes promoting shows for Elton John, Paul Simon, Sting and Roxy Music. He is also president of Asociaación de Promotores Musicales, the Spanish industry body for touring and promotion.

“We are very much looking forward to beginning this new partnership with Warner Music, with whom we have shared a very close working relationship for many years,” Argomaniz said in a statement. “This is an opportunity for us to cultivate additional revenue streams whilst continuing to grow those areas where Get In already has a strong presence. Our deeper cooperation will inevitably benefit the artist community as well as both companies.” —Andre Paine

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South African Radio ‘Needles’ Labels

Dispute Over Performance Royalties Headed To Copyright Tribunal

Johannesburg—A dispute over performance royalties is disrupting the delicate relationship between South Africa’s record labels and radio broadcasters.

Since June 2002, radio stations here have been required to pay performance royalties to labels and artists for the right to broadcast their recordings. But the stations have yet to pay one rand. Labels say broadcasters are breaking the law. Station owners counter that the labels want too much money, estimating that performance royalties would have cost them up to 220 million rand ($28 million) in 2007.

Sony BMG South Africa managing director Keith Lister says, adding that the station had refused to “pay needletime royalties on any tracks.”

Ryan Till, COO of Primedia Broadcasting, Highlands’ owner, claims the labels’ demands would put the radio industry in a “dire financial situation” if met.

An insider at another major confirms widespread support for Sony BMG’s stance, saying, “It’s a strategic move to push the needletime issue forward, which we all agree with.”

The dispute centers on amendments made in 2001 to existing copyright legislation that established a right to payment but didn’t set rates. Labels then set their own rates, putting in motion a train of events leading inexorably toward the Copyright Tribunal, which has been asked by the labels and broadcasters to resolve the issue.

Labels body the Recording Industry of South Africa (RISA) set up its own collection society, the South African Music Performance Rights Assn., which developed a sliding scale tariff of 10% of a station’s gross advertising revenue, dependent on how much of its output is music. SAMPRA also demanded an additional 2.5% mechanical royalty from stations copying tracks onto hard drives for broadcast.

Both sides admit the current situation has been exacerbated by bureaucratic delays. The 2001 amendments required new government regulations for operating collecting societies to be drawn up and instituted—a procedure that wasn’t completed until June 2006.

Societies then applied for accreditation, which SAMPRA received in July 2007.

Throughout this period, labels and broadcasters had unsuccessfully sought a jointly acceptable rate.

National Assn. of Broadcasters executive director Johann Koster claims SAMPRA would not compromise on its “excessive” tariff. “When we put forward a counter offer, they were unwilling to negotiate,” he says.

RISA/SAMPRA has struck deals with accredited collecting societies SARRAL (representing 10% of labels), and SAMRO (the authors body that will also collect performers’ rights) to present a united front at the Copyright Tribunal.

The tribunal hasn’t yet set a hearing date, although Sony BMG’s Lister is confident one will be held by the end of August.

Koster says the broadcasters association is also preparing to present its arguments before the tribunal and wants the stalemate rapidly resolved. He reckons SAMPRA’s sliding-scale rate would mean “between 100 million rand [$12.7 million] and 220 million rand” would have been payable on 2007 revenue.

The tariff, to be backdated to 2002, would be split 50/50 between sound recording owners and performers, who are eagerly awaiting a resolution.

“With the decline in CD sales, artists are in need of new revenue streams and (needletime) is key to their ability to keep producing great music,” says artist manager Dannie van der Heever, who handles leading Afro-soul artists Lira (Sony BMG) and Zonke (Kalawa Jazzmee).

For SAMPRA, the tariff is “absolutely critical to the survival of the industry,” Lister says. “We are prepared to put all our energy and resources into the battle.”

>>> WARNER INKS ONLINE PACT

Warner Music International has agreed to license its digital catalog to European online music community Music Makes Friends under a new content partnership. The Luxembourg-based company already has signed deals with the three other majors, plus thousands of indie labels. The on-demand streaming platform is available in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain, Belgium, Ireland, Austria, Luxembourg and Switzerland. Under the agreement, WMI and Music Makes Friends will share in revenue generated by the latter’s ad-supported streaming and subscription services. “Our agreement with Music Makes Friends is another example of how we continue to develop and expand new ways to enjoy music, whilst ensuring that rights holders and artists are appropriately compensated,” WMI VP of digital business Eric Dau- gan said in a statement. —Andro Paine

>>> BILLBOARD PARTNERS WITH POPKOMM

Billboard is a media partner for this year’s Popkomm, set for Oct. 8-11 in Berlin. The program at the international music and entertainment business trade show includes panel discussions about the role of the recorded-music industry in the live business, secondary ticketing and a follow-up to last year’s session on how car and device manufacturers can open up new sales channels for music. In addition to the exhibition and conference, Popkomm features an international music showcase. Organizers say about 400 artists will perform during the 2008 festival. Last year, the conference had 886 exhibitors from 57 countries and attracted 15,420 visitors. —AP

>>> OASIS PLOTS U.K. ARENA TOUR

U.K. rock act Oasis announced an 18-date U.K. arena tour as its comeback single “The Shock of the Lightning” premiered on British radio. The tour launches with two nights Oct. 7-8 at Liverpool Echo Arena. Oasis will also play two nights at each venue on the tour, including London’s Wembley Arena. It was booked through Primary Talent International; promoters for the dates are SJM Concerts, Metropolis Music, Regular Music and MCD. Oasis’ seventh studio album, “Dig Out Your Soul” (Big Brother Recordings/Sony BMG), will street Oct. 6 in the United Kingdom. The single bows Sept. 29. —AP

>>> BACARDI TEAMS WITH BLOGS

Drinks company Bacardi has launched a branded content model that will commission music and make it available for free through MP3 music blogs. The Bat Project (named after the company logo) will include unreleased remixes, studio material and live tracks. Bacardi says rights owners will be paid. U.K. electronica act Metronomy has provided the first track, “A Thing for Me,” which is featured in a short online film that Bacardi commissioned to coincide with its Bi-Live event in April in Miami. In May, Bacardi B-Live, the beverage firm’s global music platform, struck a branding partnership with U.K. dance duo Groove Armada to issue releases through the company and partner on its international events. —AP

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All Together Now

Downloads Give Upside To U.K. Compilations

LONDON—Rumors of the death of multi-artist compilations in the United Kingdom are proving to be wildly exaggerated.

In fact, the growing market for song downloads, the very thing that was supposedly going to send the compilations sector to an early grave, is now recognized as one of its saviors. Commentators agree that the digital era's renewed focus on singles and the popularity of cherry-picked hits that chart for longer (Billboard, Aug. 16) is revitalizing appreciation of CD collections that gather them together.

London-based Universal Music TV managing director Brian Berg says, “What we're seeing is people turning to contemporary compilations, whether it be 'Now' or 'Clubland' [UMTV's joint venture series with northern dance label All Around the World] to access what they would have bought as physical singles.”

In July, the United Kingdom's compilations business was up 13.9% year-on-year in sales, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co. (OCC). That was buoyed by record-breaking first-week sales of 383,000 units for "Now That’s What I Call Music 70," the best opening total for Virgin/EMI/UMTV's 25-year-old series, or indeed for any various artists collection in U.K. chart history.

Sales climbed to 601,000 during the three weeks following the album's July 21 release, according to OCC data, which also reveals that the overall compilations market is up 2.7% in sales in the first seven months of the year compared with 2007.

Compilations accounted for 22% of all album shipments in 2007 and in July accounted for 27.8% of all album sales, their highest monthly share since August 2004.

At labels body the BPI, chief executive Geoff Taylor suggests that the increase in compilation sales "underlines the value of the filter in the digital age." He adds: “If you want to cherry-pick tracks online, you can, but there's huge value in a bundled physical product.”

London-based HMV head of music Rudy Osorio comments: “It's clear that you can't navigate millions of tracks on iTunes or anywhere else,” he says. “People need music put in front of them in a consumable way, so compilations are still incredibly valid. They're valid digitally as well.”

HMV recently launched a "Two for £18" ($33.60) promotion on compilation albums that generated "phenomenal" sales, Osorio says. He adds that this summer, before a heavy-hitting schedule of artist albums in the fourth quarter, “people still want to browse in shops and what we've done is focus on putting compilations at the front of them.”

UMTV has also collaborated with Sony BMG on such titles as the “Live Lounge” series, which compiles live performances on national top 40 station BBC Radio 1. The albums represent the only way for consumers to buy the material, since they are not released as individual downloads.

“Live Lounge 2” was the United Kingdom's fifth-best-selling compilation of 2007, when a total of 30.4 million various-artist compilations were sold in the territory last year, led by "Now! 68," with sales of 1.1 million units.

Various releases will mark the "Now!" series' silver anniversary later this year, including a "Now! 25 Years" collection. Of the 2,693 tracks featured in the series since it debuted in December 1983, Robbie Williams has been the most-featured artist with 28 (which includes his hits with Take That). EMI labelmate Kylie Minogue is next, with 21, followed by U2 with 18.

While digital sales accounted for only 0.1% of the compilations market in 2007, initial downloads of "Now! 70" were slightly less than 7,000, or 1.6% of its opening tally.

“There is a market there,” UMTV's Berg says. “The compilation market is very broad and it will fragment by age. We're making our brands more and more available [for download], but it's still very much in its infancy.”

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Gaming Your Music Player

Developers Eye The Next Big Downloadable App

Less than two years ago, iPod owners only had three options to choose from if they wanted to play games on their device—and those came preloaded. Today, more than 30 iPod games are for sale on iTunes and close to 30 more are available for the iPhone and iPod Touch via the App Store, with many more expected in the weeks and months ahead.

Still very much a niche area of content for Apple and other MP3 manufacturers, games are poised to play an increasingly important role going forward as the competitors in this space look beyond music and video to the next area of opportunity.

To get a sense of the potential market, look at the progress made in bringing games to mobile phones. What began in the late ‘90s with Nokia offering “Snake” as a preloaded game on all models has become a $4.5 billion worldwide market, according to the Gartner Group, which expects that figure to grow to $6.1 billion by 2011. Granted, the numbers are less compelling in the United States, where mobile game revenue is expected to hit $845 million this year and grow modestly to $1.2 billion by 2011. But still, that’s hardly a small thing.

“It’s no surprise when the App Store went live for the iPhone and iPod Touch, some of the first applications were games,” former Jupiter Research analyst Michael Gartenberg says.

And Apple is hardly alone. Microsoft is developing a version of its XNA Games Studio platform that would allow developers to write games that work on Windows PCs, the Xbox and the Zune, with several prototype games already completed.

Mobile game companies like EA Mobile, Gameloft and Namco have created versions of their titles for the iPod, and others like Hands-On Mobile—the developer behind the bestselling “Guitar Hero III: Mobile”—say they are working on several unannounced titles as well.

“IT’s somethin’ a lot of mobile developers are going to start doing,” Hands-On Mobile senior product manager J.J. Lechleiter says.

To be sure, the mobile phone market will likely remain the dominant platform—with mobile phones far outnumbering MP3 players in the market, not to mention their over-the-air instant-purchasing capabilities and 10-year head start, games developed for that platform outnumber those for MP3 players by more than 10 to one.

But developers point to several advantages that MP3 players have over mobile phones when it comes to creating games. Most important is the storage capacity. Games made for mobile phones are generally very “small,” between 128 and 500 KB, depending on the device supported.

This forces developers to cut out many extras, such as advanced graphics and sound, or find creative solutions to include them. “Guitar Hero III: Mobile,” for instance, is a whopping 1.5 MB download, and that doesn’t even include the music. Because each song played with the game weighs in at an extra 1 MB, gamers must download each song separately prior to playing.

Games made for MP3 players, meanwhile, run between 10 and 60 MB. “It’s easier to write code and images without having to worry about what size it is,” Namco VP of strategy and planning Jason Ford says. “One of the biggest resource hogs is putting true music into a game, especially if you have multiple tracks.”

Which leads to the other advantage that MP3 players have over mobile phones—a stored library of songs and other assets to integrate into the game. Sure, plenty of mobile phones double as MP3 players, but few store the same size music collection that the average MP3 player holds. And that opens the door to a new market for music games.

“There is huge potential to work with the libraries of music people already have on their devices,” Lechleiter says. “As people get more used to playing games on these devices, I think that’s definitely (going to be) the primary genre.”

In fact, it’s already started. “Phase,” from “Rock Band” developer Harmonix, is just one rhythm-based game that pulls content from users’ music libraries. Others include “Masuka”—from “Pa-Rappa the Rapper” designer Masaya Matsuyama and Sony BMG—and the iPhone favorite “Tap Tap Revenge.”

Sometimes the music integration is in a bit more unique. The new “Song Summoners: The Untold Heroes” iPod role-playing game from Square Enix uses stored tracks as “energy” for weapons, while Namco’s “Pole-Position Remix” inserts images of the individual user’s album art library as racetrack billboard ads.

And more are in development. Method Solutions, the studio behind “Masuka,” is developing an as-yet-unnamed announced game featuring an unnamed Sony BMG artist. Done properly, the integration of music into MP3 games not only can help users rediscover the depths of their music collection; left languishing in the recesses of their iPods, it also holds potential for sales and promotion. MP3 players from Apple, Dell and SanDisk are all adding Wi-Fi Internet connections that can be used to download new songs. There’s no reason why games can’t take advantage of that as well.

For instance, Namco’s “Pop Ave” mobile game lets users trade points for exclusive downloadable comics. More than 100,000 comics were redeemed in six months.

“We’re always trying to stay ahead of things that make the game deeper and more fun to play,” Namco’s Ford says.

Game on!

For 24/7 digital news and analysis, see billboard.biz/digital.

JUKEBOX BRANDING

Internet-connected digital jukebox company TouchTunes has acquired Barry’s Interactive Networks, an in-bar advertising and media company. TouchTunes says it plans to display Barry’s branded content on screens integrated into its jukeboxes. The acquisition extends Barry’s reach to TouchTunes’ more than 35,000 jukeboxes across North America. Barry’s branding partners include Anheuser-Busch, Dr. Pepper and Sky Vodka. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

NEW PHONE, FREE SONGS

The Comes With Music initiative is not yet live, but Nokia and Universal Music Group extended their partnership to offer free music to anyone buying the new Nokia 5220 XpressMusic phone. At purchase, customers will receive a voucher and an activation code that they can redeem for up to 100 free songs by UMG artists. The promotion is limited to such Pacific Rim countries as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and New Zealand.

TRACK YOUR FAVORITE BAND

Mobile “social-mapping” service Loopt has introduced a new service that lets fans follow their favorite artists while on tour. The follow the music feature will update fans on what city their selected bands are playing and provide links to news updates and photos. Fans can also leave messages and make comments that other fans can see. The program is offered in conjunction with music marketing agency NonStopRiot. Participating bands include Shwayze, Chromeo, the Submarines, Vanyals and Bayside.
CASHING IN
Lil Wayne Label Offers Robust Mobile Service

Cash Money/Universal Motown has launched a mobile subscription service to deliver ringtones, graphics, video clips, text alerts and contest opportunities to fans of label artists like Lil Wayne, the Hot Boys and Birdman. Billboard has learned.

Cash Money Mobile will cost $9.99 per month, which will be charged directly to a user’s phone bill. Universal kicked off the program with a soft launch in June, around the release of Cash Money broad-winner Lil Wayne’s chart-topping “Tha Carter III.” Since then, subscribers have had access to a dozen exclusive ringtones that comprise second edits, remixes and alternate takes.

The value-added content is delivered by mobile content distributor m-Wise, which hooks up carriers Sprint, T-Mobile, Verizon Wireless, AT&T, Alltel, Boost & Suncom via its MOMA Service Delivery Platform. Universal has previously used m-Wise’s services through online mobile entertainment platform Thumbplay.

Similar subscription programs are widespread with mainstream artists. Island Def Jam also started its own IDJ Mobile subscription service this year. “But this is Cash Money. It’s a small boutique group of artists with a very similar fan base,” says Kameo Carlson, senior VP of digital business development for Universal Motown Republic Group (UMRG). “There’s a core group of consumers that associate with the specific Cash Money brand. It’s this core group and beyond that helped make Wayne’s “Lollipop” become one of the first platinum-selling ringtones in the United States earlier this year.

According to Carlson, the company has not yet determined the number of subscribers who have signed up for the initiative. But by comparison, more than 100,000 fans are subscribed to Lil Wayne’s free mobile fan club, which offers services like text updates.

The idea for Cash Money Mobile came to UMRG director of mobile marketing Joshua Jacobs after noticing fans demanding more tracks from Lil Wayne’s back catalog as ringtones. “This wouldn’t work with just any label. This is for a core group of fans,” he says.

“Unlike Jamster or Songplay, this is about buying a content package and access and not just buying a song. The contests are about really engaging the fans. There are graphics that won’t be available anywhere else,” he continues. “There’s no buy-and-switch, like there’s one exclusive and nothing else. We sell Cash Money products elsewhere, but access to everything is here. [Fans] won’t have to pay $10 here and $3 here and $5 here.”

Cash Money Mobile will get its next big push with the release of Birdman’s follow-up to 2007’s “Stunna,” tentatively due in the fall.

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Don’t Miss Your Chance To Salute These Music and Television Icons!
POLITICS

By Antony Bruno

ROCK THIS PARTY

When the Democrats and Republicans hold their national conventions in the weeks ahead, the music industry will be there in force, with both events featuring music lineups that would rival most all-day festivals.

Some artists will be attending as entertainers; others, as activists; and still others, as lobbyists of a sort. But whether it’s the Democratic convention (Aug. 25-28 in Denver) or the Republican convention (Sept. 1-4 in St. Paul, Minn.), both provide the music industry a rare platform to reach an audience not typically found at your average concert, charity benefit or fund-raiser.

Once Bed's business is done, political conventions devolve into the same booze-soaked party scene as any other industry confab. And just like those other conventions, deep-pocketed interests are tapping mainstream stars to draw a crowd. According to the Sunlight Foundation, a Washington, D.C., congressional watchdog group, more than 170 parties and events are scheduled between the two.

The RIAA will host invite-only events at both on behalf of the ONE Campaign to end poverty, featuring Kanye West at the Democratic convention and Daughtry at the Republican one. Also hosting events at both conventions is the Grammy Foundation’s Rock the Conventions effort, featuring Everclear, Daughtry and The Floobits at the Democratic confab and songwriters Brett James and Greg Laswell at the Republican event.

According to Recording Academy VP of advocacy and government affairs Dan Friedman, the music industry is hoping to use these acts to send its own message to attending politicians that it doesn’t normally have access to. Issues like terrestrial radio performance royalties and music piracy will be top of mind.

“Unlike most of the parties in these cities where they’re using music to get attention to their message, in our case music is our message,” Friedman says, adding that artists “are the most effective way we influence lawmakers.”

Rock the Vote will also be present at both conventions. While the details of the Republican event are not yet finalized, the Democratic concert will feature Fall Out Boy headlining a lineup that will include The Black Eyed Peas perform for the Democrats, while the Charlie Daniels Band will entertain the Republicans.

However, not all organizations are hedging their bets by attending both events. In Denver, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy group Human Rights Campaign is presenting the Rock the Vote concert, featuring Melissa Etheridge, Cyndi Lauper, Rufus Wainwright and Thelma Houston.

Also, MoveOn.org will host the Manifest Hope Art Gallery with several partners, featuring street-side performances by Silvan Permigos, Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, Cold War Kids, Nada Surf and DJ Z Trip. Afterward, there will be an intimate invite-only acoustic performance in the round featuring death Cab for Cutie’s Ben Gibbard, Rilo Kiley’s Jenny Lewis, She & Him’s Zooey Deschanel, Nada Surf’s Matthew Caws and singer-songwriter Jonathan Rice.

The Denver Film Society and the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs, along with Good Magazine, will host a ”Cinemocracy Rocks” free concert Monday night, featuring Apelles in Stereo, Jill Sobule, Oklevueha River, Peter Buffet and Murs.

And in the private-event category, Willie Nelson will perform for a few thousand guests of engineering and construction firm CH2M Hill, while Wyclef Jean entices guests of Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. The Black Eyed Peas will also perform prior to Barack Obama’s formal acceptance speech and will also host an after-party where John Legend will appear.

At the Republican event, the festivities get started with Labor Day performances by LeAnn Rimes and the Bellamy Brothers for Kids. That same night, Smash Mouth will play a party for the Coalition for a Conservative Majority and Citizens United, while the Beach Boys will perform at the official convention kickoff event.

Later in the week, Gretchen Wilson, John Rich and Cowboy Troy will perform at the convention’s Texas Honky Tonk night, while the Minnesota Agri-Growth Council will host Syx and Jack Ingram performs an Magnum Entertainment event with Robert Earl Keen. Finally, Clay Walker will welcome former presidential candidate Mike Huckabee as his bassist in the band Capitol Offense.

Where there are political events, protests are sure to follow. Rage Against the Machine is holding free by lottery concerts at both conventions, offering fans of the recently reunited band a rare chance to see it perform.

But most of the protest activity is scheduled to take place at the Republican convention, where Steve Earle, Allison Moorer, Billy Bragg, Mos Def and Rage Against the Machine’s Tom Morello will play a Take Back Labor Day concert, while local progressive outfit Ripple Effect hosts Matiashu, Anti-Flag and others on the Minnesota state capitol lawn.

GET SMART

How Musicians Can Help Their Favorite Candidate

A recording artist’s celebrity, creative vision and connection to fans can provide a political campaign with either tremendous momentum or disheartening distractions.

On the good side, see Will.i.am’s contributions to the campaign of Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama. His “Yes We Can” YouTube video (right) is credited by many political strategists as a crucial factor in Obama’s Iowa caucus win, which set the stage for the early successes that followed.

On the bad side, see Ludacris’ recent “Politics (Obama Is Here)” single, which Obama himself ultimately denounced. Although it was an attempt to urge voters to back Obama, the diss track referred to Hillary Clinton as “itchy,” George W. Bush as “mentally handicapped” and Republican presidential candidate John McCain as, well, old.

So before stepping up to the political mic, artists considering lending their voice to either Obama or McCain should consider the following tips:

\[\text{GOOD} \quad \text{DO} \quad \text{GOOD}\]

Know the issues: “Know your personal, professional and political goals,” says Republican strategist Jamie Miller, a veteran of several campaigns and founder of BattleGroundFlorida.com. “Remember that you are representing a political candidate. Know the particulars not only about the candidate and the candidates’ views, but also the election.”

Go where your audience is: A key factor behind the success of Will.i.am’s “Yes We Can” video was its distribution on YouTube. “That’s one of the best examples of a musician speaking to a generation that didn’t have a direction, wasn’t particularly politically aligned and was able to connect,” says Cathy Allen, a Democratic political consultant and communications chairwoman for the American Assn. of Political Consultants.

Eat what you cook: “Don’t forget to vote,” Allen says. “You can’t just play politics; you have to be someone who at least votes.”

\[\text{BAD} \quad \text{DON’T} \quad \text{BAD}\]

Go negative: Ludacris’ disparaging comments about Obama’s rivals were tame compared with Ted Nugent’s ostentation invitations for Obama and Clinton to perform sex acts on his assault rifle. “Don’t do or say anything which will cause the campaign to distance itself from you,” Miller says.

Feed your ego: “You can’t be bigger than the real star, which is the person running,” Allen says. “You can’t make your ego the center stage. You have to be willing to do it cheaper, be accommodating to schedules and let somebody else’s ego trump yours. And you’ve got to know when to shut up.”

Fake it: “You have to be passionate,” Allen says. “You can’t just look like this is another paid gig or another way to raise your visibility. You have to look like you really are interested in the politics of the issue. You have to be real.”
Leveling The Playing Field

Physical Retailers Seek Parity With Flexibility

With the holiday selling season coming into view, brick-and-mortar merchants are reminding the labels that the big releases arriving during this period need to be evenly available to retail accounts of all stripes.

When the season's most anticipated releases start coming out, some merchants—and nowadays even some labels—start to play free and easy with street dates. Or as Mike Fratt, president of the five-unit Homer's chain and a NARM director, put it, "We are headed into the fall, which is when the free-for-all begins."

It's a situation that prompts retailers and labels to cast a wary eye toward one another. Labels remain vigilant for retailers—usually indie merchants or the discount department stores—that begin selling new albums ahead of their street dates. Merchants, in turn, find the labels' policing role hypercritical when they give some retailers exclusive windows to sell a new release ahead of everyone else.

But despite the friction, retailers are actually more flexible regarding release parity than they might appear.

On June 26, NARM released a position statement reminding labels that it's good for business to put out all album releases, regardless of format, simultaneously on Tuesdays. NARM and some of its members followed it up in the first week of August in a meeting with Sony BMG Music Entertainment; a meeting with WEA got canceled due to a scheduling conflict.

If albums aren't available to all channels at the same time, the NARM board feels we are opening the door for chaos in the marketplace as the significance of street dates becomes meaningless and its competitive benefits are lost," the statement said. "Over the past few months, there have been instances where release dates for physical and digital versions of albums did not coincide, creating unnecessary and unwelcome marketing obstacles, consumer confusion and, most importantly, missed sales opportunities."

While a level playing field is all that the NARM board is asking for, the digerati believe it is preordained that digital music vendors should inherit the earth and with that deserve every advantage—even exclusive periods to sell albums—over every other merchant. Even Billboard's resident digital guru Antony Bruno predicted that NARM's attempt to seek parity would ultimately fail because "the digital formats simply allow for too much flexibility and enable for too many creative implementations to treat it like any other format" (Billboard.biz, June 27).

But if you read NARM's statement closely, brick-and-mortar merchants are conceding that there are instances where it makes sense for music to be available digitally ahead of them. In particular, most merchants grudgingly understand that putting a lead track on iTunes ahead of the physical release makes good marketing sense.

Also, brick-and-mortar merchants don't mind when a busy artist is first presented via the digital platform in an attempt to build a buzz about a new album. But when a name artist releases an entire album first as a download, that is the issue NARM wants to deal with.

As it so happens lately, when an album gets on the Internet ahead of release date, labels become worried that they will lose sales to file sharing or physical bootlegging, so there is a tendency to turn first to iTunes as the solution to that problem.

But this is where NARM would like the labels to think a little. "On the one hand, the labels are being new school by putting the record up early on iTunes to combat the potential for lost sales,"asc Newbury Comics CEO and NARM board member Mike Dreese says. "But on the other hand, they are being old school worrying about chart position, so they sell brick-and-mortar merchants not to put out the album until its official street date."

Does it make any sense, Dreese wonders, to tell brick-and-mortar retailers that may already have an album 10 days in advance of the street date to actually wait for the release date, but allow iTunes to sell it first?

This, then, is the issue. Labels feel that they need to move up the digital release, they should do everything they can to speed up the physical pipeline to coincide. And if merchants already have a new release, they should allow them to put it out the same time that they let iTunes put it up.

It's that simple, and it ain't old-school thinking.
### BOXSCORE

#### Concert Grosses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gross/Dr.</th>
<th>Artist(s)</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Promoter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN &amp; THE E STREET BAND</td>
<td>Hershey Park Stadium, Hershey, PA, Aug. 19</td>
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<td>$2,591,497</td>
<td>CHEER</td>
<td>The Coliseum at Canons, Palisades, VA, Aug. 16</td>
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<td>$2,500,529</td>
<td>KANYE WEST</td>
<td>Mapco Arena, pregnant, Aug. 23</td>
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<td>Auburn Hills, MI, Aug. 21</td>
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<td>TOM PETTY &amp; THE HEARTBREAKERS, STEVE WINWOOD</td>
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<td>Live Nation</td>
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<td>Live Nation</td>
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<td>Live Nation</td>
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<td>RADIOHEAD, GRIFFIN BEAR</td>
<td>Rogers Bayfont Center, Philadelphia, PA, Aug. 19</td>
<td>Live Nation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### UPFRONT

**Sharon Osborne Sounds Off On Ozzfest's Durability**

To paraphrase a popular urban myth, after a nuclear explosion, the only thing left standing will be ... Ozzfest.

The hard music festival has certainly proved a reliable brand in the past 13 years, surviving industry consolidation, shifting musical tastes and a controversial free run in 2007.

Ozzfest 2008, with Metallica and Ozzy Osbourne as headliners, grossed nearly $3.5 million and drew close to 30,000 people to Pizza Hut Park in Frisco, Texas, near Dallas, according to producers Sharon Osbourne and AEG Live.

This year's one-off event on Aug. 9 did "fan-tastically well," Sharon Osbourne says. "The one thing you want is for the kids to go away and keep talking about what a great show it was, and that's what they're doing."

The idea to do a one-off was to keep the Ozzfest brand alive in a busy year of headline touring for the fest's namesake. "Ozzy didn't finish his tour until the middle of April, and I wasn't going to put him on another 25 shows after he's finished a year on the road," Osbourne says. "We wanted to do an Ozzfest, but it just didn't want to do a whole tour, so [AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips] said, 'Fine, let's go to Dallas, let's do a big, ball-busting show there,' and that's what we did."

In its history dating back to before promoter consolidation, Ozzfest has been produced by Pace Concerts and the various configurations now known as Live Nation. So why AEG Live this year? "You've got two choices, right?" Osbourne asks. "Live Nation has been very good with us, we've had a great association, and sometimes you just need to move on."

Pizza Hut Park is well suited geographically. Osbourne says, and its expansive size would be conducive to an even bigger event. She says plans now are for a two-day event at the stadium next year and perhaps an Ozzfest in another market.

"Are we going to go back and do a shed tour again? I don't think so," Osbourne says. "We're with AEG, we're not going to go into sheds. We're looking at possibly going to race tracks. There are so many options. We don't want to be tied down."

Going out as a free event in 2007 was "a great learning experience," Osbourne says. "Everything you do should be a learning experience, unless you're such an egomaniac you think everything you do is right, and we're not. I'm glad we did it. The fans went away happy, but my God, it was probably one of the toughies."

### RETAIL

**By Ed Christman**

**UNIVERSAL RISES**

Publishing Unit Tops In Q2 Market Share; Sony/ATV No. 2

Universal Music Publishing Group reclaimed the top spot in publishers market share in the United States during second-quarter 2006, after finishing third in the first quarter.

In garnering an 18.83% share on the second-quarter Publisher Airplay Chart (see page 23), up from 17.6% in the first quarter, Universal reclaimed first-quarter market share. According to Nielsen BDS for 1,560,560 radio stations monitored electronically for the three months ending June 30, the Harry Fox Agency researches the publisher splits for each song to calculate market share.

Universal, which had been the No. 1 publisher in the last quarter of 2007, was affiliated with 41 songs in the top 100 during the second quarter, including its share in the Jon Spencer/Chris Brown duet "No Air," Usher featuring Young Jeezy's "Love in This Club," Mariah Carey's "Touch My Body" and Rihanna's "Take a Bow."

EMI had a piece of the action in 34 songs in the top 100 airplay tracks, including the four previously mentioned. Moreover, EMI had a share in Lil Wayne's "Lollipop," featuring Static Major.

Sony/ATV Publishing has remained steady in the rankings with the No. 2 slot for the second quarter in a row, although its 16.6% market share in the second-quarter market share is down from the 21.38% the company garnered in the first quarter. Including the Usher and Rihanna tracks, Sony/ATV has shares in 32 top airplay songs. Other Sony/ ATV songs include Sara Bareilles' "Love Song" and Chris Brown's "With You."

Warner/Chappell Music landed at No. 3 for the third consecutive quarter with a 12.16% share during the period, although that performance was up from the 10.71% the company had in the first quarter. In addition to the Carey track, Warner had shares in 24 other top radio songs including "Lollipop."

On the other hand, Kobalt Music Group posted the biggest market share gain to leapfrog into the No. 3 slot in the rankings when it ranked No. 9. Its move in the rankings came on the strength of having a share in seven
songs in the top 100, including Leona Lewis' "Bleeding Love."
Kobalt's gain knocked SinSongs/America back a notch in the rankings to No. 6. Its sec-
ond-quarter 2.66% slice of market share came from placing six songs in the top 100 airplay tracks. Its market share is down from 3.09% in the first quarter.
Peermusic finished the second quarter at No. 7 with a 1.92% share based on having a piece of four songs tracked by Nielsen BDS. But its share total had dropped from the 2.51% it had in the first quarter, when it ranked No. 6.

The next two slots on the Publisher Air-
play chart were claimed by two publishing
firms new to the top 10 rankings in 2008. Wixen Music breaks into the rank-
ings in the No. 8 slot thanks to its 1.759% share, generated by its portion of four songs including Ray J & Yung Berg's "Sexy Can I". Wait Disney Music comes in at No. 9 with a 1.756% slice of the pie, thanks to its share in the Lewis track and Miley Cyrus' "See You Again."

Rounding out the top 10 is Bug Music/ Windswept Holdings, which tallied a 1.36% share during the quarter. That was down from the 2.06% that Bug had in the second quarter when it ranked No. 7.

**TOP 10 PUBLISHER AIRPLAY CHART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Publisher/Group</th>
<th>Market Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP</td>
<td>18.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING</td>
<td>18.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>EMI MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP</td>
<td>16.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>WARNER/CHAPPELL MUSIC</td>
<td>12.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>KOBALT MUSIC GROUP</td>
<td>12.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SISONGS</td>
<td>11.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>PEERMUSIC</td>
<td>11.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>WIXEN MUSIC PUBLISHING</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>WALT DISNEY MUSIC</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>BUG MUSIC/WINDSWEPT HOLDINGS</td>
<td>11.36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage calculations based upon the overall top 100 detecting songs from 1500 U.S. radio stations electronically monitored by Nielsen BDS 24 hours per day, seven days per week during the period from April 1 to June 30. Publisher information for musical works has been identified by the Harry Fox Agency. A "publisher" is defined as an administration, copyright owner and/or controlling party.

In its 15th year, MTV Latin America has numerous milestones to celebrate its "Unplugged" album with Julieta Venegas, the first one to be taped in Mexico City, is the No. 1 album in Mexico. Fellow Viacom property VH1 Latin America is premiering its first local "Behind the Music" series. MTV Hits and VH1 Classics have begun airing in the region. And "La Zona de Combate," a massive multicity, multiplatform band contest sponsored by Samsung and Movistar, has just entered its final phase, with the final three bands' videos going into rotation and the premiere of a reality series around them.

MTV/VH1 Latin America senior VP of creative content and music Jose Tillan discussed his channels' global synergies and increased emphasis on local production.

1. **The last time we spoke, MTV Latin America's operations were being decentralized out of Miami. Have viewers seen the result of that yet?**

This year, we have a lot more local production in all territories. As far as stuff on the air, we did a couple of music shows that have aired already that have good ratings. Last year on VH1 we locally produced "The 100 Greatest Songs of the '80s" in Spanish... And that was actually the highest-rated show for VH1 for the year.

We did another called "El 20," a top 20 countdown show. It's not a current countdown. It's not about what is hot today. It's more like a music authority show where we count down different themes. And that was doing quite well for both the territories, Mexico and Argentina. We revamped a little more "10 Mas Pedidos," which is kind of like the "TRL" daily countdown on both feeds, and we have new VJs in Argentina.

2. **Can you say whether decentralization has been a success?**

Both viewership and ad sales have gone up, but I don't have specific numbers. Some of it could be attributed to the regionalization. Some of it's business as usual. As far as the outcome of regionalization, I think we have more thinkers because now locally everybody can contribute their two cents.

3. **Breaking new acts, and having that translate into sales, is difficult in Latin America, with huge piracy rates and paid-downloads stores not doing a lot of business. How has that affected what you do?**

What we are trying to do is create environments where we can partner with record labels like we did with Julieta Venegas and "Unplugged"—create a property that positions the artists in a very good place. She can tour behind it, the record label is happy with the outcome not only on the radio but with sales and the whole package they're putting around. That is something we feel proud of, that we're still able to do at least in the Latin-American footprint.

4. **Would MTV Latin America consider launching a mobile music download store?**

To confirm or deny, but... to some degree it's still very open, and digital stores or reference sources or informational services or filters of what's good or bad, they all could be part of the plan.

5. **Is localization of production in Latin America part of a larger strategy that MTV is pursuing worldwide?**

We're really trying to focus that global power... into a more operational way of doing things. The awards show "Los Premios MTV" is a good example of a property that we produce in Latin America that's truly a global property... it's going to be a really good move into this kind of unified global strategy and local implementation.

6. **How do you compel other territories to make Los Premios a priority?**

It's having talent that is recognized internationally, whether it's Hollywood talent or Latin talent. Shakira is well-known, Juanes is well-known, Julieta Venegas is well-known... last year we had Hillary Duff with Plas-
tina Mosh. We had 30 Seconds to Mars with Ely Guerra. Creating those moments where you have this marriage of cultures is always fun and is well-received. So it's looking for those angles that are international without losing your local emphasis.
IN from the digital downloads, where which would get what we're asking made writers. What do NMPA responsibility versus university administrators. "It's after having sat that don't think that those decisions go anybody has made by the record labels or the digital media companies, who were seeking significant cuts to the current rate.

What are the best- and worst-case scenarios to come out of the CRB hearings? The best-case scenario would be we would get what we're asking for, which is a significant increase for the digital downloads, where we were seeking a healthy increase from the current 9.1 cents to 12 cents per download, because we believe that the costs involved are much lower and the profit margins are much higher. We are also asking for an increase in the physical rate to 12.5 cents from the current 9.1. And the two other parties on the other side likewise were seeking significant cuts from upwards of almost 50% of a cut of the current rate.

Any cut would a worst-case scenario. In the history of the compulsory license there has never been a cut. And so that would be unprecedented, and I think it would be devastating to the songwriting community if we were to go backwards with rates.

In terms of the intellectual property bill in the Senate, where did things leave off and how are you planning on moving it forward in the fall? Bills have now been introduced in both bodies, and the entire copyright community is very much in favor of them, including songwriters and music publishers, so this is one of those few issues where actually all the music industry is together. We would like to see these bills passed because we think they would significantly strengthen the ability of law enforcement to deal with the growing problem of theft of our property. Whether or not the bill is going to pass this year is impossible to tell, obviously. Not a lot is getting done in Congress, which is what often is the case when you have a closely divided Congress in a presidential year.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act provides resources for colleges to develop tools to fight illegal downloading. I'm curious about how effective you think those might be, seeing as many colleges already warn against illegal downloading and students go ahead and do it anyway. First of all, everybody has a role to play in dealing with what has become an epidemic of theft, particularly at the college-age level, of intellectual property. Higher educational institutions have a role to play, for sure, because they are often the ones providing the network and they're supporting places where people go to learn and respect things about rights and property. There's also responsibility on the end of the music industry and it is providing a legal alternative to stealing music. But there are already a number of legal alternatives in place, and yet students still download for free. I don't think just because it's widespread means that we need to throw our hands up and say we should stop fighting it. There's no question drug use is widespread on college campuses but we don't say we ought to just legalize drugs because of it. And so, all we're asking for is more cooperation from them for something they know is going on in their system that they know is illegal, and now they are being given tools to help combat illegal sites. When Napster came about there was no alternative, you had to either steal the music on the computer or not get it on the computer. Now there is a very vibrant and healthy legal market—look at the success of iTunes—so I don't believe (it) anymore when students say they don't have legal alternatives.

Do you have an update to the piece that was reported last month about a group of Nashville publishers who were considering breaking away from the NMPA? Some of that was misinterpreted, because there was never any intention to break away from NMPA. We represent all music publishers, whether big or small, and we have over 800 members and indie members. There is a concern that if certain legislation happens, there will be people who want to compete with the Harry Fox Agency, which is a subsidiary of NMPA. So we're not talking about publishers who don't want us to represent them, we are talking about a collection function. If the reform goes through, you will see people who want to compete with Harry Fox, but these people never suggested they wanted to be represented by someone other than NMPA in Washington.

In the history of the compulsory license, there has never been a cut. It would be devastating to the songwriting community if we were to go backwards with rates.
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IT'S AN UNUSUALLY hot and humid summer night in Hollywood. A murmuring line of fans—mostly women—snakes around the Sunset Boulevard perimeter of the House of Blues. They're waiting for one thing and one thing only: Robin Thicke. Inside the crowded venue, women begin yelling as Thicke's band troops onstage to some James Brown funk and the announcer promises "a true soul experience." Then the whole room seemingly undulates as Thicke, his slender frame encased in black, bounds onstage and launches into his new '70s soul-grooved track "Magic." That afternoon in an upstairs dressing room, a sound check-bound Thicke mused about the audiences that have been queuing up as he sets the stage for the Sept. 30 release of his anticipated third album, "Something Else." "What's great about the bigger cities are the numbers of interracial couples who come," he says. (The singer/songwriter is married to actress Paula Patton, who is black.) Thicke adds, "I'm seeing a cross between the girls who want to come out and have fun and the couples who come to enjoy a loving environment." Race never seems to be far from the mind of Thicke, who was heralded for furthering the next generation of blue-eyed soul after the platinum success of his second album, "The Evolution of Robin Thicke" (see chart, page 28). Produced entirely by Thicke and his longtime collaborator Pro-Jay, "Something Else" is described by the artist as a cross between "classic Philly, Motown and '70s black disco meets the creativity of the Beatles and Bob Dylan. It just felt to me that a lot of stuff out there sounds the same. It's a time for change, for something else." The new album, however, isn't the only thing on Thicke's plate. He has written the theme song for "Push," a new movie by Lee Daniels ("Monster's Ball"). Co-starring Patton as a teacher, the film is about '80s Harlem and the crack epidemic. Thicke—now managed by Neil Jacobson at Interscope—is also penning his own screenplay ("a spy thriller love thing like 'The Bourne Supremacy' ")
and writing a book of poetry. Thicke's current promo run for "Something Else" will head straight into a tour with Mary J. Blige in September and October. This will be supported with performances on several TV shows, including "Good Morning America" and "The Ellen DeGeneres Show"; in addition, an Oprah Winfrey date is pending.

Rounding out the marketing campaign are various online tie-ins on Yahoo and imeem and an overseas promo tour, says Dyana Kass, Interscope's marketing director for "Something Else." And look for Thicke also get by with a little help from his friends: Thicke's latest Lil Wayne collaboration, "Tie My Hands," will appear on "Something Else" (it's also on Wayne's "Tha Carter III") and will be featured in the upcoming Forest Whitaker film "Hurricane Season." The welcome mat being rolled out now for Thicke is a far cry from the lukewarm reception the artist encountered in 2003 for his Nu America/Interscope album "A Beautiful World." Initially titled "Cherry Blue Skies," the R&B-vibed set gained some notice by way of lead single "When I Get You Alone," which sampled Walter Murphy's "A Fifth of Beethoven." But many inside and outside the industry didn't know what to make of the unshaven, long-haired artist going only by his last name. "I was just rebelling," Thicke recalls, "trying to do something different. I actually challenged myself, saying, 'I won't cut my hair until I hear my song on the radio.'"

Thicke heard plenty of his work on the radio—but it was for other artists he'd penned songs for, like Christina Aguilera and Usher. (He won a Grammy Award for his collaboration on the latter's 2004 album "Confessions".) But the son of singer Gloria Loring and actor Alan Thicke ("Growing Pains") wouldn't hear his own singles on the radio until after he'd signed to the Neptunes' Interscope-distributed Star Trak label. Here, Thicke sits down with Billboard and candidly discusses his career path leading up to "Something Else"—and how the "blue-eyed soul" label has come to chafe. ———

Race, R&B And 'Something Else' PHOTOGRAPH BY MEENO
What was your frame of mind while recording "Something Else"?

My music is going to be exactly what I’m going through and feeling at the time. I don’t walk in with a concept. I just write songs and by the time I get to the end, I say, “OK, this is what the songs seem to be talking about as a whole opposed to individual moments.”

These new songs are talking about a time for change and hope; to get away from all the sadness, loneliness and depression that I used to live in. This album expresses the celebration I’m going through and the healing I want to give to people. It’s also about what’s going on in the world with politics and race. The closer Barack Obama gets to the White House, it’s all about race now. They’re all trying to make it seem like he is playing the race card when he’s just an American running for president. How my wife and I still aren’t able to walk in Mississippi without people looking at us like we’re crazy. The laws may have changed, but the whispering hasn’t.

Unlike “Evolution,” there aren’t any guests on “Something Else.” Was that a conscious decision?

It’s never conscious. It’s always organic of what sounds the best and what happened when I wrote the song. With Faith [Evans], we were writing something for her album, and I liked the song so much that I wanted to put it on my album. With [Star Trak and Neptunes production team principal] Pharrell, that was a request from [Interscope Geffen A&M chairman] Jimmy Iovine.

Lil Wayne just called me out of nowhere, saying he loved “Oh Shooter” from my first album and could he put it on his “Carter II” album. I am considering putting another song I did with Lil Wayne, “The My Hands,” on “Something Else.”

A new remix of “Magic” I did with Mary J. Blige sounds so incredible that I might put it on the album as a bonus track. We’re going out on tour together Oct. 17. But I don’t miss anybody when I listen to the album. I like the way it sounds.

What spurred you to pursue a music career at 16?

Actually, Brian McKnight signed me as a singer to his production company when I was 14. Then I signed with Interscope at 16 through Brian and began working on an album. All my friends called me “Brian McBride” because I was so inspired by him and his music.

So what led to finally releasing your first album, “A Beautiful World”?

The question became, Was I willing to be the one who stands up on stage like they were doing; willing to be ridiculed or thrown out at me?

Was I willing to go from artist to entertain? At 22 I decided to put all my time and energy into my own album.

Coincidentally, [veteran label exec/producer] Andre Harrell showed up looking for songs for another artist. He heard me sing and said, “Wait a minute. How come you’re not singing the songs? You sound way better than he’s going to sound.” So Andre starts mentoring me and we go back to Interscope. And Jimmy Iovine says, “What do you mean you want a record deal?” Didn’t I sign when you were 12 years old?

So I went back with a few new songs, one of which was “When I Get You Alone.” Jimmy signed me right away to a very respectable deal. He put a whole bunch of money behind me and the next thing you know we were nine months late in releasing the album.

Anyway, by the time we finished the whole process, we sold only 70,000 records. After putting a lot of money behind me, the label pretty much lost faith in my ability to sell. It became a question of, “Where does he fit? Is he not rock or pop enough? Is he not soul enough?”

Although the album was an economic failure, I had Usher, Mary J. Blige, Faith Evans. Lil Wayne, Pharrell, Puff Daddy and others calling to work with me. So I wrote songs for other artists, while telling the label I wanted to go right back into the studio. But the label and I began having quarrels about financial and creative issues, resulting in a stalemate for about 10 months. Then Pharrell got his label deal going with Interscope and asked when my next album was coming out. We met and I played him “Lost Without U”—three years before the record ever comes out.

What turning point helped change “Lost” and “Evolution” into success stories?

Opening for John Legend. At that point the label still really didn’t believe. They’re thinking about that first album and the first “Evolution” single, “Wanna Love You Girl” with Pharrell. [A later remix featured Busta Rhymes.] I’m still not getting that major hit, so they didn’t want to pay for me to go on tour with Legend. My management company at the time, Overbrook Entertainment, fronted the money to make sure I ended up on that tour [in late 2006]. And sooner than later, it came back: “Lost” became a No. 1 R&B hit.

What is the major difference between your first two albums?

“World” was about expression and the limitless possibilities of music. I just tried to do anything and everything on it. When I go back and listen to it now, it’s a bit of a showoff album. It’s a lot of dribbling through the legs and behind the back passes.

The second album is about a guy who’s been stripped of everything. He doesn’t have any money and is about to lose his house. His wife is off becoming a movie star and everyone else is pretty much leaving him. All the cool friends I’d stopped inviting me to parties. I was alone at home writing songs on my piano about what I was feeling. Thus came “Complicated,” “Can U Believe,” “I Need Love,” “2 My Sky” and “Angels.” All these songs were about brokenhearted loneliness and hopelessness; trying to still believe in myself.

Did you consider quitting music altogether?

No, because music is my life. There were a couple of thoughts about maybe quitting on life altogether. I didn’t have the knife on my arm, but emotionally I thought, “God, what am I here for? You tell me that I’m supposed to make music; I feel this and know I’m supposed to, but you won’t give it to me.”

However, that defeat turns out to be the best thing that could have ever happened to me. I was a very cocky young kid. Having been knocked down and pushed to the ground made me appreciate life, my friends and all the people who help me have a bit. Gratitude and appreciation are some of the greatest gifts of life, and that’s what I’ve come to live in.

Were your parents’ connections with the entertainment industry a help or a hindrance?

It never helped. It’s always been a hindrance, still to this day.

People can’t see me without seeing them, and it affects the way people see me. On late-night shows I’ve heard remarks like, “Isn’t this dad kind of straight and corny?” and “How can he be cool when his dad was on a TV show that wouldn’t be cool by any standards?”

When you listen to Jay-Z’s music, you don’t see his mother and father standing there. You don’t even think of his mother and father. But if you knew all of Jay-Z’s family, you might think of him differently. With me, people still visualize my dad and that affects the origin of the music.

Was the "Evolution of a Modern King" magazine cover story about you a turning point?

Yes, because I love my music unconditionally when nobody else does. Everyone cares how it performs and, obviously, I care how it performs. But before I release it, I sit there with it and examine it. So my music and I have a wonderful relationship. My career and I—we’re always in the boxing ring.

Do you buy into the blue-eyed soul tag you’ve been given?

It’s a joke. It’s like saying I can’t do rock in roll. As musicians, we’re dying for those things to go away. We’re just hoping we can make the music that we want to and not be pigeonholed by our skin color. Yet it affects me all the time.

What is it like trying to break the color line from the other side?

When I did a recent interview with Vibe magazine I asked, “Why can’t I get the cover? This is a magazine I love. If there’s one magazine that I’d want to be on the cover of, it’s Vibe.” Their response was they don’t have white artists on the cover, that the only white artist they’ve had on the cover was Eminem. I guess if that’s what it is, it is what it is. And I respect that because I live in a house with a black woman.

I won’t use the word “racism.” I will say it’s a tough—but rewarding—fight. I look at Mary J. Blige, somebody who has had only a few pop hits and yet has changed culture, generated new sounds and inspired leagues of artists. She’s now a worldwide phenomenon. And it’s because of what she stood for; she never gave up. She kept making great music, pouring her heart out to people.

You can’t always expect people to be as color-blind or open-minded as you want. What you can do is keep giving your heart and soul, like Bob Marley did. His music became so overwhelmingly loving it was a relentless love in a sense. Keep beating them down with love and they can’t stop you.

What question about your music has become your pet peeve?

People ask me, “Why did you choose to make R&B music?” R&B music chose me. I have no choice. I make what I love. That’s like asking, “Why did you choose that woman to marry?” It just happened. I’m a soulful artist who crosses genres of music like Sly Stone, Prince, Stevie Wonder and the Beatles.

At 7 years old, I was listening to Michael Jackson and Prince, Van Halen and Poison. I didn’t relate to the loud and long hair as much as I did the soulfulness. At 13 I was wearing Cross Colours and asking what the H.A. thought. I thought there were a lot of white kids like me. But the older I got I realized that white kids weren’t doing what I was also doing at 13, singing songs by Aretha Franklin, Jodeci, Mary J. Blige, Guy and Boyz II Men. So the music I’m making now is not the result of a career choice. It’s who the fuck I am. Period.

Additional reporting by Mariel Conception.
To Inspire Their Songs And Their Listeners, More Christian Artists Are Balancing Church Ministry And Music

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE
The goal of most every aspiring musician is to land a record deal and quit his or her day job. But for Christian artists, music and ministry are intricately intertwined, and an increasing number are maintaining dual careers, juggling the responsibilities of recording and touring as they serve in full-time staff positions in their local church.

There are rewards and challenges to this scenario: The artists reap the benefit of staying connected to their core audience—and those experiences infuse their music. But when a record company has to work photo shoots, interviews, radio tours and promotional opportunities around the schedule of an artist who must be home for church services on Sundays and Wednesdays, it can make for a logistical nightmare.

The key to balance, artists and labels say, is not to think of the schedule as jumping from one job to another, but instead look at one half of their career as a way to successfully promote and inspire the other half. The feedback from parishioners could generate the next hit song—and that next hit song could encourage more to attend the early service next Sunday.

The most successful example is Casting Crowns, the Atlanta-based band whose members continue to serve at their respective churches despite the band’s multiplatinum success. Since debuting in 2003 with its self-titled album, the band has become the genre’s biggest success story, selling 3.6 million albums total, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Each of the Grammy Award-winning group’s three studio albums have been followed by a live CD/DVD release. “Lifesong Live” has sold 108,000 copies on DVD, while “Live From Atlanta” has sold 159,000. The most recent CD/DVD, “The Altar and the Door Live,” was released Aug. 19.

Casting Crowns lead vocalist/songwriter Mark Hall has been a youth pastor for 17 years and still works at Eagle’s Landing First Baptist Church in McDonough, Ga. Hall says he’s never felt any pressure from Beach Street Records founder Mark Miller or Provident Label Group president/CEO Terry Hemmings to leave the church.

“They recognize that the songs that Casting Crowns records are coming from the ministry of the church,” he says. “I don’t believe you could have one without the other. It’s like the ministry is the well that we are drawing from and these songs are pouring out of it. But there are more challenges. We have to say no to a lot of opportunities. There are a lot of things we can’t be a part of, but I know this is where God wants us.”

“Mark is incapable of doing anything halfway,” Hemmings says of Hall’s commitment to his church. “I get concerned about the drain on Mark himself and on his wife and family trying to maintain two (positions that are) more than full-time jobs. It’s very hard to be a full-time youth worker and have all those kids needing you, and it’s very hard to be an artist at the level of success and activity that they are... I’m surprised he’s still standing. I would think at some point the guy would get tired, but he doesn’t.”

Casting Crowns members Juan and Melodoe DeVero and Chris Huffman also are worship leaders at Eagle’s Landing, while the group’s Megan Garrett helps her husband, Ryan, who is youth pastor at First Baptist Church in Thomson, Ga. In addition, Casting Crowns’ Hector Cervantes is worship leader for the student ministry at West Rome Baptist Church and Andy Williams helps lead worship at Glad Tidings Assembly in Atlanta.

And the sales numbers indicate that this connection with the community resonates with buyers. According to Nielsen SoundScan, Casting Crowns’ albums sell more in the Atlanta metropolitan area than anywhere else. For current release “The Altar and the Door,” 35% of the album’s 736,000 sales have come from that city, on par with 2005’s “Lifesong” (3.4% of its 1.1 million total sold in that region) and 2003’s “Casting Crowns” (3.4% of its 1.5 million units).

The trend toward dual careers is prevalent across all types of faith-based music, from urban gospel to Christian pop/rock to Southern gospel. EMI Gospel artist Smokie Norful is a full-time pastor at Victory Cathedral Worship Center, a Chicago-area church he launched in 2005 (see story, page 31). Dottie McClurkin is pastor at Perfecting Faith Church in Freeport, N.Y., and Bishop T.D. Jakes pastors the Potter’s House, a 30,000-member mega-church in Dallas.

Devin McGlamery, a member of Daywind Records trio Karen Peck & New River, is youth pastor at Tanglewood Church of God in Kinston, N.C. “I have a very understanding wife whose father did this for 16 years,” he says. “Her dad is Allen Ham, the original part-owner and tenor singer for Heaven Bound. She grew up with this lifestyle, so she understands this is what I’m called to do.”

The group, which pioneered this burgeoning trend of dual careers in music and church ministry is Phillips, Craig & Dean. The INO Records trio of Randy Phillips, Shawn Craig and Dan Dean were all pastors’ kids who followed their fathers into ministry and have worked in the church since the group started 17 years ago.

They landed a deal with now-defunct label Star Song and had a hit right out of the box with the tune “Turn Up the Radio” from their self-titled 1992 debut album. (During the course of 12 albums, Phillips, Craig & Dean have sold 1.2 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.)

“We got a tremendous amount of pressure from record companies early on, saying, ‘Move to Nashville, resign your positions if you are serious about this music. You’ve got to be here. You can’t be one foot in and one foot out,’” Phillips recalls. “We were categorized pretty quick as preachers’ kids and pastors—that wasn’t too sexy.”

Phillips pastors a church in Austin, while Craig is a pastor in St. Louis and Dean pastors in Dallas. Phillips admits those early days weren’t easy—especially when conventional wisdom said a new act should do everything it gets offered. “I remember doing 145 dates the first year—plus our full-time staff positions at the church—and it just almost killed us,” Phillips says.

“Then we wised up and said, ‘We can’t do this, the tail is wagging the dog. We’ve got to find a balance.’ So we got management that finally saw what our calling was.”

Ironically, Jeff Moesley—one of the Star Song execs who tried to convince the group to move to Nashville at the start of its career—is now president of the act’s current label home, INO Records.

Moesley says maturity changed his attitude through the years. “I redefined what success was,” he says. “As a young man you think success is selling a million records, and as you get older you realize that success is touching people, being a part of people’s lives. I think that as you grow older you realize that both types of success are equally as valid and are different outgrowths of the artist’s calling.”

But, he warns, labels need to be realistic when working with artists who are called to serve in the church as well as record. “You signed up for this. It’s a lot like a marriage. If you go into a marriage thinking that you can change your partner or that your partner is going to change, you are going to be sorely disappointed,” he says.

While most label staffers try to work around an artist’s church schedules, it can be frustrating when the performer decides to focus solely on his or her religious growth. After selling 13,000 copies of his debut album, “I Need You Now,” in 2002, according to Nielsen Sound-
Pastor-ized. For Smokie Norful, There's No Such Thing As A Day Of Rest

Em's Gospel's Smokie Norful followed his father into the ministry, starting his church in 2005 with a meeting of 12 people each Tuesday night at a Holiday Inn. That gathering has grown to become the Victory Cathedral Worship Center outside of Chicago, where as its full-time pastor, he's now reaching a wider audience from the pulpit. "I stopped counting when we hit 4,000, and that was two years ago.

The reach of his music is similarly impressive: He won a Grammy Award in 2004 for best contemporary soul gospel album for "Nothing Without You" and has sold 1.2 million albums total, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Much like a typical full-time pastor, Norful works in his office all week, meeting with members of the congregation, preparing his sermons and taking care of church business.

But here's the key difference: On Thursdays, Fridays and some Saturdays, he travels, performing concerts. Earlier this year he participated in the McDonald's Inspiration Celebration gospel tour alongside Myron Butler & Levi. The eight-stop trek took him from Pennsylvania to Texas, but he always made it back to perform his services on Sunday.

His Sundays consist of two services, at 7:30 a.m. and 10 a.m.; starting in late September, he's opening a second church in Chicago where he will preach a third service for the day.

"I had to adjust and adapt because preaching and singing, they are both very taxing, and when you preach enthusiastically in the black tradition, it definitely takes a toll on you vocally," he says. —DEP

Scan. Norful took a year-and-a-half off to establish his church in Chicago. "Nobody saw me or knew where I was or what I was doing," he says. "Then I got a call from the label one day saying, 'OK, we need an album.'"

Sometimes, however, the cash can't counterbalance the need to serve at the church. "I have looked at the dates that have come in and said, 'Wow, do I take this $20,000 arena date and bring in some income?'

Norful says, "It's a tough call, but I remind myself of my priority, which is being the pastor. I realize that's what I'm here for, and God will sustain me because I'm being faithful to his calling.

Newcomer Meredith Andrews released her Word Records debut album, "The Invitation," this spring while working as a worship leader at Harvest Bible Chapel in Chicago. Andrews says she frequently tries out new songs she's written at her church and appreciates the feedback she gets: "[The label] sees the value of being at Harvest and the fact that so many of the songs that I write come out of the experiences I have at church and just being a part of that community and learning from my pastor.

Andrews is not alone. "Everybody has a story to tell in my church and every one of those stories could be put to music," Phillips says, citing the Phillips, Craig & Dean song "Blessing in the Thorn," inspired by a young man battling a debilitating disease. "I saw his attitude toward life, and I saw that there could be blessing in a thorn. He was able to share Christ with so many people that never would have given him the time of day.

I wrote that song for him, and I have a file probably an inch thick of people who have written me saying what that song did to them."

And, in turn, the label understands that parishioners are the core audience for the music—and should be courted as more than just an inspiration for an artist's work. "I thought it was great when a few people from the label actually came up for the album release event at my church—that was kind of like my worlds colliding," Andrews says.

Pastors and church members are eager to support the artists on the staff—and these kinds of release events are something the labels support wholeheartedly. "Casting Crowns liken to launch their records at their church," Provident Label Group's Hemnings says. "Every record they've released has had a listening party the night before or the Sunday night before the Tuesday release. Lots of our staff go down and participate. We help facilitate it and bring press and radio and people in to the degree that they'll allow us ... but really they let the churches drive that. Otherwise it brings a commercial element into the church which doesn't belong."

Moseley adds, "As a record label, our job is to exploit the record—and I mean that in a good way—to exploit promotional opportunities in a very reasonable way. We've always been good at things like promotional tours, we have to keep it extremely tight. They have to be in their churches on Sunday mornings, so sometimes that means there are things on Saturday nights that can't be done."

And though it may cause a few scheduling conflicts that are unheard of in other genres—think rock stars take Saturday nights off?—most in the Christian music industry reason that artists answering the call to serve the church does, on the balance, work in their favor as a stellar inspirational and promotional platform.

"We are seeing a new generation of artists really redefine what's important to them, and I'm really for that," Moseley says. "The best art holds a mirror up to ourselves and reflects who we are, what we want to be and what we should be."

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BRAND MANAGEMENT

Key Alliances Trump Radio Indifference Ahead Of New Nelly Album

Nelly's last album, "SweatSuit," hit shelves four years ago, but his absence hasn't dampened his branding opportunities. Indeed, the promotion schedule for the rapper's oft-delayed "Brass Knuckles," due Sept. 16 via Derrty/Universal Motown, is packed with high-profile appearances and brand relationships.

Thanks to alliances with "Monday Night Football" and a collaboration with Nike's Jordan brand, few in the Nelly camp are concerned that two recent singles, "Wadsyaname" and "Party People," haven't cracked the top 20 on either the Billboard Hot 100 or the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. The video for a third, "Stepped On My J's," reached No. 1 on BET's "106 & Park" countdown, but has yet to chart on R&B/Hip-Hop Songs. And a fourth, "Body On Me," sits at No. 62 on Hot Digital Songs after four weeks.

But with a track record of 21 million albums sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan, Nelly is "still very relevant to his consumer," Universal Motown VP of marketing Katina Bynum says. "Hot in Herre" still gets played at every wedding.

Thus, Nelly had the luxury of pushing back "Brass Knuckles" several times "because I want it to be right," he says. "It's about giving people the best product you can.

Born Cornell Haynes in St. Louis, Nelly, 33, was originally a member of local rap group the St. Lunatics. Despite success with their independent single, "Gimme What You Got," the group couldn't secure a deal until anointing Nelly as the featured member.

In 2000, he released his Universal Motown debut, "Country Grammar," which was a blockbuster smash and has gone on to sell 8.4 million copies.

In the ensuing eight years, singalong tracks like "Ride Wit Me," "E.I." and the ubiquitous "Hot in Herre" cemented Nelly's melodic style, which was prime for crossover radio. But of late, it's been difficult for Universal Motown to get his singles to stick at radio, whether pop or urban.

"Wadsyaname" was released to radio last August in advance of a planned October 2007 release date, stalling at No. 83 on the Hot 100. "Party People," featuring Puff Daddy, followed in March, peaking at No. 16 on Hot Rap Tracks but failing to rise above No. 40 on the Hot 100.

"I think we at Universal Motown" are spoiled by Lil Wayne's success, but it takes longer for songs to connect these days," says Bynum, who is encouraged that "Body on Me" is top 20 at rhythmic top 40 radio. "With Nelly, songs go to crossover to pop and then urban because a lot of urban stations see him as pop."

"Brass Knuckles" draws on Nelly's history of catchy hooks. "Body on Me" plays on his past relationship with R&B singer Ashanti, who's featured on the track, while "Party People" touches on the anthemic joints he popularized with "Hot in Herre."

The rapper says "One and Only" or "Long Night" featuring Usher are in contention for the next single.

With radio no longer a slam-dunk, Universal is ensuring Nelly will be visible surrounding street date with appearances on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno," "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" In addition, on Sept. 15, his songs will be featured on the "Monday Night Football" telecast of the game between the Philadelphia Eagles and the Dallas Cowboys.

On the branding side, Nike's Jordan supplied all 23 models of its sneakers for use in the "Stepped On My J's" video, and the company is in talks with Nelly for partnership in tandem with his nonprofit organization, 4Sho4kids.

In addition, Nelly recently announced an endorsement deal with Sean "Diddy" Combs' Sean John underwear line. He will be featured in the line's billboard and print campaign, which begins in September.

On the digital side, Universal Motown senior director of digital marketing strategies Erik Pettie says iTunes' Complete My Album feature, which proved so successful as a sales driver for Lil Wayne's "Tha Carter III," will likely be an important facet of the "Brass Knuckles" digital campaign. A MySpace/T-Mobile branded performance is set for Sept. 4 and will be shown live on the social networking site. AT&T and CBS will also partner for a live webcast, which will air during release week.

"I'm not worried about my sales because you can't keep dropping No. 1 songs," Nelly says. "Would love to have a No. 1 Yes, because plenty of people have come out and sold nothing. But hopefully the fan base that I've built will support me."
Soca Survivor
Can Machel Montano Take The Genre Mainstream?

On a recent subway ride from Brooklyn to Manhattan, soca phenomenon Machel Montano was jogged from the anonymity he enjoys in some areas of New York when a female passenger shouted in a thick Trinidadian accent, “Machel Montano’s on this train!” prompting many straphangers to hurriedly take out their camera phones.

That Montano, the most in-demand musical export from the oil-rich southern Caribbean republic of Trinidad and Tobago, can anonymously ride a train for several stops and then suddenly be swarmed by adoring fans reflects the dichotomy of his musical stature.

Now, via collaborations with Pitbull and Lil Jon and two high-profile New York shows, the artist is hoping to position himself closer to an international breakthrough.

On one hand Montano, who headlines New York’s S.O.B.’s Aug. 28 and Cipriani’s two nights later, is in rarified company, having sold out concerts at Madison Square Garden’s WaMu Theater in 2007 and 2008. On the other, he has yet to make an impact in the mainstream despite high-profile collaborations with Wydeef Jean (“Survivalists”), Busta Rhymes (“Let Me See”) and Shaggy, who joins Montano on a remix of the title track from Montano’s current album, “Wining Season.”

Recently, Montano’s single “Defend the Anthem,” a soca-dancehall remix of Pitbull’s “The Anthem,” featuring Lil Jon, has received airplay on Miami’s WEDR (99 Jamz) and New York’s WQHT (Hot 97).

“Because soca artists are viewed as a subculture, we look for help from people who have made it in the mainstream,” Montano says following an exhilarating two-hour performance on the eastern Caribbean island of Barbados as part of its annual Carnival festivities. “Soca has great potential, so I asked Lil Jon and Pitbull to help us and they have responded enthusiastically.”

While refining his crossover strategies, Montano has chosen to simultaneously strengthen his ties among his vast Caribbean fan base. Refusing numerous offers to perform at summer Caribbean carnivals throughout North America, including Toronto’s Caribana, he spent almost two weeks at Barbados Cropover, which parallels Trinidad’s Carnival as that island’s primary season for new releases from Barbadian calypso and soca artists.

Montano was the star attraction at Cropover’s largest concert, Cobolobophel, held Aug. 3, for which he recruited Pitbull and Lil Jon.

Soca, which provides the soundtrack for Caribbean carnivals, is the frenetically paced progeny of calypso. Created in Trinidad in the mid-’70s, soca has attained very limited success beyond Caribbean shores. Arrow’s durable “Hot Hot Hot” continues to be licensed for new compilations, 20 years after Buster Poindexter’s cover rendition it an American pop hit. In 2000, the Baha Men transformed Anselm Douglas’ Trinidad carnival hit “Who Let the Dogs Out” into an American sports stadium anthem, and four years later Rupee and Kevin Lyttle cracked the Billboard Hot 100 with their respective hits “Tempted To Touch” and “Turn Me On.”

But these individual triumphs do not constitute broad-based recognition for soca. If the genre were to break in the mainstream, Montano’s persistently innovative efforts will undoubtedly have played a pivotal role. As a child star, he made history in 1986 as the youngest finalist in Trinidad carnival’s Calypso Monarch competition, performing the aptly titled “Too Young to Soca.”

In the mid-’90s with his band Xtatik, Montano embarked on a mission to modernize soca, subtly injecting the music with hip-hop beats and dancehall rhythms, which resulted in a steady release of fervently received carnival anthems and Montano’s ascension to regional superstar status.

He went on to sign international deals with Delicious Vinyl and Atlantic and recorded albums for both companies, which remain unreleased. Despite a heavy touring schedule that can include three shows per night during Trinidad’s pre-Lenten carnival season, Montano annually releases a full-length CD of original music on his Mad Bull Music label.

“Machel has matured into a consummate entertainer,” says Dhaved Levy, the Barbados-born host of “Caribbean Fever,” heard weekends on New York’s WLIB. “The quality of his song production and his concerts, where he always presents something new, indicate that he has found his own lane and is running way ahead of everyone else in soca. The only thing left for him to do is to cross over.”

And whether or not he achieves his desired international breakthrough, Montano’s ongoing endeavors toward establishing soca as a global force raise the bar for the entire genre. “Bob Marley helped propel reggae, and I think I have done that for soca,” he says. “I gather people together, let them have a good time and I feel good about that. While it’s a goal to conquer the mainstream, I just try to stay focused on improving every day.”
six questions with STEVE LILLYWHITE

by KATIE HASTI

Next month, superstar producer Steve Lillywhite will celebrate the 30th anniversary of his first hit record (Sinwuse & the Bancheese’s "Homing Kong Garden") from a studio in Texas, where he'll be producing the next effort from Universal’s Blue October. Having worked with everyone from the Talking Heads, Dave Matthews Band, Morrissey, the Rolling Stones and U2, the Lillywhite production stamp now carries more weight than ever. Indeed, he recently launched his own NPR show, "The Lillywhite Sessions," which finds him behind the boards at New York’s Avatar Studios for intimate performances from such acts as Fleet Foxes, She & Him and Goldfrapp.

The title was culled directly from the name fans gave Lillywhite’s botched album with Dave Matthews Band in 2000, one of the most popular illegal downloads in recent memory. In between work on U2’s November album and mulling a biography and a new production/publishing venture with as-yet-unnamed co-owners, Lillywhite chatted with Billboard about the latest phase of his career.

1. This radio show is a new role for you. Was it similar to when you tried to land a job at A&R at Columbia?

I’d never done anything like that. I enjoyed it, and I enjoyed having a paycheck. But then my boss got fired, and that’s life. For some people, they don’t have anything else in their music career, I wanted to try new things, other things, and now I have this.

2. What was the goal with "The Lillywhite Sessions?"

NPR is so wonderful in that its team appreciates great new music and how it’s made. It’s a throwback to an old style of recording, back to pre-'Sgt. Pepper’s' days when people went into the studio knowing what they were going to do on the recording and only spent three or four days to make it happen. People now spend a lot longer time in worse studios or no studios at all. What I’m saying is, “Spend only a little time in a great studio.”

3. Is there what you hope to do with your production company?

That’s what I’m proposing, a new company that will reflect that. We’ll work with new artists who come in with great talent, well-rehearsed, with great equipment and personnel at their disposal, adding value by signing and recording them myself. We’re putting a tangible feeling back into this. There’s more to it than zeroes and ones and just making something by typing and clicking.

4. Are you a fan of new recording technologies like ProTools?

ProTools is great. But it’s a tape recorder. I’m no Luddite. I’ll use what’s there, but it’s funny how new technologies affect art. Young people are hearing auto-tune on every record, and then they start singing that way. We’re breeding a generation of people singing to a pure tone. You are what you eat.

5. You haven’t ever really spoken on your parting ways with Dave Matthews Band on the fourth record. What changed after the first three?

I knew from the get-go it was going to be a difficult record. I warned them about recording in their hometown. When it’s in your studio, the clock isn’t running quite the same, so it’s going to take longer. They said, “Fine.” So when it wasn’t finished and time’s gone on, they went and quickly rerecorded it somewhere else. I heard from the manager when we hopped back on in September that I was fired. Dave was going through a hard time at the time and you get a certain amount of it. There were moments that were slower and darker, and I had that on the record. Some people asked, “Where are the happy songs?” Dave and I were friends and I helped him on that journey. We haven’t spoken for many years since then. But it’s OK. Dave’s not a man for the telephone.

6. Is your role different as a producer in an era when records don’t sell nearly as well as they used to?

It is a different world where people are buying singles one song at a time. Suddenly, my role is a tenth of what it used to be. But art and commerce still are great bed partners. I see people on the subway listening to musicon their iPods, so there’s a fixture. Labels used to sign a lot of people who were nothing-0-of-10 instead of 10-0. That doesn’t mean it’s bad music, it’s just good. I like to think I help make great music.

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MUSIC

WITH SLEEP

ALIVE AGAIN

After a short visit home to enjoy the Olympics, Universal Music China artist Sa Dingding is heading abroad again to promote current album “Alive.”

The singer/songwriter, dubbed “the Chinese Bjork,” will play the Festival of World Cultures Aug. 24 in Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, and will return to Europe for 10 shows in October. That continues a journey that has seen her performing from Los Angeles to Harrogate in the north of England since the album’s European/U.K. release in April.

Ian Ashbridge is co-managing director of Sa’s U.S./European licensee, U.K. label Wrasse Records—distributed by Universal in Europe and by Fontana in the United States.

Ashbridge reports a “fantastic reaction” to a busy U.K. radio/TV promotion schedule that has prompted sales of 10,000 units to date. Elsewhere, “Alive” has been issued in 30 markets.

Sa’s live shows feature a full band and “kung fu” dancers, delivering a performance that Ashbridge calls “very musical but also incredibly theatrical.”

Sa says, “My hope is that I can share my music with more people and that more people around the world will be able to see my performance.”

Sa is published globally by Universal Music Publishing. European bookings are through Universal Music Publishing Inc., incorporated, a U.S. agent will be confirmed shortly.

—Benwin Song & Tom Ferguson

shooting that took place out side the Rio de Janeiro studio where Regurgitator tracked “Love and Paranoia.”

The self-published band has an adventurous approach to recording locations. Its 1996 platinum (70,000 units) debut “Tu Plano,” for example, was recorded in Bangkok, while the triple-platinum “Unit” (1997) took shape in a farmhouse in coastal Byron Bay, Australia’s most easterly location.

“They’re not done as gimmicks. The band does it to take themselves out of the comfort zone,” says Curtis, who is also GM of Brisbane-based Valve. “It’s allowed them to remain a vital live act after almost 15 years on the road.”

“Love and Paranoia” was initially released in Australia in September 2007. Nearly one year later, Regurgitator will play its first U.K. dates in five years Sept. 7-9, booked through London-based Free Trade Agency, to coincide with the Sept. 1 release of “Love and Paranoia” through U.K. distributor Weatherbox. The act plays Asian shows through October.

—Christie Elizer

EMPIRE

WITHIN TEMPTATION

experiences touring behind its 2006 debut. “We learned what works great live. We learned what people reacted to. We’re just good old country boys that like writing good rock songs.”

That simple philosophy served DecembeRadio well on its self-titled debut. The record earned the band a 2007 Grammy Award nomination (for best rock/metal gospel album) won by Jonny Lang) and a Dove Award for rock album of the year. The single “Drifter” became a major hit and earned a Dove nod for song of the year.

The band toured relentlessly and landed a coveted slot this spring opening for Third Day. Along the way, DecembeRadio’s members earned a reputation as nice guys with irresistible talent and a strong work ethic.

Produced by Scotty Wilbanks, “Satisfied” is a blend of high-octane rockers as “Powerful Thing” and the incendiary “Gasoline,” alongside such compelling ballads as “Run to Me” and “Love Can.”

The CD includes behind-the-scenes footage of the making of the album at Atlanta’s Southern Tracks studio as well as a performance clip of “Satisfy Me” filmed on the Third Day tour. There will also be a bonus track of an instrumental jam. The project also includes the hit single “Find You Waiting,” which featured on a special expanded edition of the band’s debut project released in November 2007.

“For a lot of people who bought the debut album but didn’t buy the expanded edition, this gives them a chance to actually have that single,” says Colese Winnstead, director of marketing and communications for Spring Hill Music Group, Slanted Records’ parent company. (Slanted is distributed by Warner Bros.-owned Word Distribution.)

Winnstead says the band has been visiting radio stations in key markets in advance of street date. The band also bonded with radio personnel during the annual Gospel Music Week convention by inviting select programmers to become part of the DecembeRadio Radio All-Star Band. “We had members of different radio stations come onstage and actually play with the band. The stations just loved it,” Winnstead says of the performances, which were videotaped by record promoter Chris Hauster, who sent the clips to the stations.

There are also several major appearances planned in advance of the album’s launch, including performances at the Atlanta Hard Rock Café, Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., and the Jefferson Center in Roanoke, Va., near the band’s home base of Blacksburg. DecembeRadio will continue to tour through the fall.

“We want to be an encouragement to all who want to chase their dreams,” guitarist Brian Bunn says. “Some songs talk about the struggles we go through in life (and say), ‘It’s OK and you shouldn’t be ashamed of those because in the end if we learn from them and follow God, it really makes us who we are and it makes us better men.’”
BANG BANG BOOGIE

Getting co-signed by a guy who was discovered by Dr. Dre and Eminem can't be a bad thing. Just ask rapper Mysonne, one of the MCs in the newly minted, Bronx-bred rap quintet Bang Bang Boogie.

“Our first song as a group was a track called ‘High Blood Pressure,’ about the fact that other rappers from the Bronx aren’t coming back to the ‘hood, giving back to the ‘hood or helping put other rappers from the ‘hood,’” Mysonne says. “50 [Cent] liked what we were doing so much that he recorded an intro to the track and posted the video on [his social networking site] thisis50.com.”

Since then, Mysonne (formerly signed to Def Jam), Big Pun cohort Cuban Linx, Lord Tariq (of Lord Tariq and Peter Gunz fame) and up-and-coming rappers S-One and Hocus 45th have released the mixtape “Bang Bang Boogie Vol. 1: The Machine” and three more videos. “Bang Bang Boogie Anthem” is currently being played during DJ mixshows on hip-hop WQHT (Hot 97) New York.

Now, aside from being courted by a handful of labels including Steve Rifkind’s SRC, Bang Bang Boogie is prepping another mixtape, “X Files: No Mercy for the Week,” slated to drop next week, and is putting the finishing touches on its as-yet-untilled album, scheduled for 2009. Producers Fame, Vinny Idol, Prince & Machiavelli, Minnesota, Trakdealaz and Arsonist have contributed to the set.

In addition to getting 50 Cent’s stamp of approval, Bang Bang Boogie is working closely with Bronx Assemblyman Ruben Diaz Jr. to initiate a hip-hop-driven “stay in school” campaign in the fall. Group members are also in the process of becoming ambassadors for the United Nations’ End Poverty campaign, for which they will film a public service announcement in coming months.

“The main purpose of the group is to bring the Bronx back to the forefront, but we also want to go to schools and community-based programs and talk to the kids,” says Tone, CEO of independent label NISSS, which signed Bang Bang Boogie earlier this year. “We want to bring awareness to the neighborhoods and teach them they can do what they want to do if they focus.”

—Mariel Concepcion

Contact: Jamein Randolph, publicist, jrandolph@imajenonline.com

MARCHING BAND

For a band that rarely tours outside of its native Sweden, Marching Band has done rather well for itself in the United States.

Urband & Lazar Music founder Jonathan Lazar signed the duo of co-songwriters Erik Sunbring and Jacob Lind to a publishing deal after he saw the group perform a random show in South Africa. “In fact,” Lind says, “I think Jonathan was the only other person there.”

Now, Marching Band is winning over several hundred new fans per day. Within the last two weeks, the band’s MySpace page averaged 25,000-plus listens per day. Its debut full-length, “Spark Large,” is the No. 2 top seller on Insound (behind the Walkmen), and the group is a featured artist on iTunes’ August 2008 Indie Rock/Alternative playlist.

Indie stalwart KCRW Santa Moni ca, Calif., has spun tracks like “Aggravate” and “Gorgeous Behavior” regularly and will host the pair during Nic Harcourt’s “Morning Becomes Eclectic” show Sept. 8. More than a dozen other college and non-commercial radio stations have added the band as well.

It doesn’t hurt that “Spark Large” had the magic touch of producer Adam Lasus (Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, Clem Snide, Helium). The resulting indie-pop effort is chock-full of luscious melodies and arrangements.

Lasus’ wife, Linda Cohen—the music supervisor behind such films as “There Will Be Blood”—has commissioned the band to write a song for the forthcoming comedy “Nick & Norah’s Infinite Playlist.” That track, “Trust Your Stomach,” will be heard in the Sony Pictures film and is slated for inclusion on the expanded digital version of the soundtrack, issued via Atlantic.

Marching Band will perform Sept. 8 at Spaceandal in Los Angeles and celebrate the release of “Spark Large” Sept. 13 at an invite-only bash; parties interested in attending should contact Lazar directly.

—KH

Contact: Jonathan Lazar, jonathan@urbandlazar.com
THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

ALBUMS

POP

SOLANGE
Sol-Angel and the Hadley St. Dreams
Producers: various
Music: World/Geffen
Release Date: Aug. 26
On her sophomore set, Solange not only takes on a sound that differs from her pop-driven 2002 debut, but demonstrates that unlike her sister Beyoncé—who she vehemently refutes comparisons to on “God Given Name”—she has no reservations about sharing personal experiences. The breakup song Valentine’s Day, on which she glibly sings, “I sure wish we made it till Valentine’s Day”; the regretful “T.O.N.Y.,” about a one-night stand; and the SoulShock & Karlin-produced “Sandcastle Disco,” which finds her light-heartedly waving her Casanova not to break her heart, all demonstrate Solange’s frank approach. Elsewhere, the Bilal-penned, electronically-inspired “Cosmic Journey” and the ‘70s-drenched, Pharrell-produced lead single “I Decided” further support the eclectic sound.—MC

DAVID BYRNE & BRIAN ENO
Everything That Happens Will Happen Today
Producer: Brian Eno
Self-released
Release Date: Aug. 18
Producing a creative partnership that yielded several classic Talking Heads albums and 1981’s “My Life in the Bush of Ghosts,” David Byrne and Brian Eno are so far going the digital/self-release route for their latest pairing. Working via e-mail, Eno constructed the music while Byrne crafted the lyrics and melodies. The results are their familiar mashed-up scrap heaps of electronic and industrial sounds, with a chorus of voices, strings and guitars supporting Byrne’s yeilded, racy singing. It’s all exceedingly pleasant. From the triumphantly melodies of opener “Home” and the self-referral Strange Overtones to the ballad “One Fine Day” and peaceful closer “The Lighthouse.”

BLUES

B.B. KING
One Kind Favor
Producer: T Bone Burnett
Geffen
Release Date: Aug. 26
In the wake of Robert Plant & Alison Krauss, John Mellencamp and all that’s come before, T Bone Burnett is on such a producing roll that his presence threatens to eclipse the artist(s) he’s working with. But that’s hardly the case on B.B. King’s first new studio album in three years. Burnett’s concept for the 12-track set—to have the 82-year-old King revisit songs he played at the very beginning of his career—plays out in an inspired outing that finds King recapturing the fire of his youth with a confident authority in playing and singing. King laces lyrical solos and fills into every song, a list that ranges from Blind Lemon Jefferson’s “See That My Grave Is Kept Clean,” T-Bone Walker’s “I Get So Weary,” Big Bill Broonzy’s “Backwater Blues” and the Mississippi Sheiks’ “Sitting on Top of the World.” The tricks aren’t new, but the old dog still has plenty of bite left.—GG

LITTLE FEAT AND FRIENDS
Join the Band
Producers: Mac McAnally, Bill Payne
429 Records
Release Date: Aug. 26
Ask any number of musicians about a fantasy group to join and, in the absence of the Band, Little Feat will likely be their choice. The long-lived outfit’s superb chops and equally accomplished body of songs make it a privileged situation, and more than a dozen admirers enjoy that indulgence on this all-star exercise. There’s a gritty-voiced Dave Matthews singing a New Orleans-flavored version of “Fat Man in the Bathtub,” Brooks & Dunn lending a bit of twang to “Willin’,” Bob Seger and the Black Crowes’ Chris Robinson rockin’ it up on “Something in the Water” and “Oh Atlanta,” respectively, and Jimmy Buffett (the album’s executive producer) leading a Caribbean-tinged romp through “Time Lowes A Hero.” After this gets out, the Feat will be stamped by those wanting to “Join the Band” if the offer is ever extended again.—GG

MATTHEW SWEET
Sunshine Lies
Producer: Matthew Sweet
Shout Factory
Release Date: Aug. 26
Power-pop revivalist Matthew Sweet is far from the height of his powers at age 43, but his latest album is a worthy addition to his catalog. “Sunshine Lies” was crafted in Sweet’s own Los Angeles studio, celebrated on the set’s second track “Rock Room” with the nearly-too-obvious couplet “I need a room/for rollin’.” The lilting “Byrdgirl” recalls some of Sweet’s best work, while the cloying lyrics of “Let’s Love” make the entire rocker a bit of a disappointment. Most of the material falls somewhere in between, with the biggest impressions left by the swirling, psychedelic title track and the gravity-defying, featuring a daunt ing guitar solo section by Richard Lloyd and Ivan Julian. While it won’t stand the test of time as much as early ‘90s classics “Girlfriend” and “Altered Beast,” “Sunshine Lies” is a righteous summer listen.—TC

JIMMY WAYNE
Do You Believe Me Now
Producers: Mark Bright, Joe West, Dave Pahanish
Valory Music
Release Date: Aug. 26

THE VERVE
Forth
Producer: The Verve
On Your Own/MV/RED
Release Date: Aug. 26
While it was no big surprise that the Verve got back together last fall after a nine-year hiatus, what’s simply stunning is the quality of this reunion album. More than any of the recent comeback efforts from like-minded groups, “Forth” not only equals the Verve’s best work, but in many cases exceeds it. “Judas” is the most beautiful song the band has ever written, its burbling guitar lines conjuring a gloriously blary New York sunrise. “Vulium Skies” is the kind of ready-made anthem that turned the Verve into a superstar in the first place, while “Appalachian Skies” and “I See Houses” are hard-hitting hybrids of emotion and virtuosity. Even more enticing are “Sit and Wonder” and the aptly named, eight-minute “Noise Epic,” which reignite the psychedelic passions of the Verve’s earliest releases. So when Richard Ashcroft wonders, “Is there anywhere better than here?” on “Rather Be,” it’s easy to exclalm, “Hell, no!”—JC

THE GAME
LAX
Producers: various
Geffen
Release Date: Aug. 26
The Game has long threatened that “LAX” would be his last album, so perhaps that’s why he recruited the wayward DMX to open it with one of his trademark prayers (“Devil, we rebuke you in the name of Jesus”). The table thus set, the Game does surprisingly mellow in comparison to his first two efforts. “Touchdown” sports a lazy synth and a flabby chorus from Raheem DeVaughn about jet-setting, and Ne-Yo proves himself chickable while the Game grows over “Gentleman’s Chivalry.” Common pops up on the electric piano-driven “Angel,” paying homage to his classic “I Used to Love H.E.R.” and “Never Can Say Goodbye” depicting Tom Jones’ creativity as he embodies the voices of Tupac, Biggie and Eazy-E just before they passed away.—HC

www.americanradiohistory.com
This talented singer/songwriter’s self-titled 2003 debut disc spawned four hit singles before DreamWorks Nashville shuttered, stalling its momentum, but this project is the perfect vehicle to reintroduce an amazing young artist. The bulk of the album comprises such up-tempo fare as the buoyant “Brighter Days,” “I’ll Be That” and “I Didn’t Come Here to Lose.” Among the highlights are “No Good for Me,” a gorgeous duet with Patty Loveless, and “Kerosene Kid,” an autobiographical song about his impoverished childhood. That theme of hope triumphing over adversity continues on “Where You’re Going,” another powerful cut that finds the songwriter drawing on his tumultuous past. “Believe” also includes “Stay Gone” and “I Love You This Much,” two hits from his debut project. Wayne is a compelling songwriter and truly gifted vocalist, and this album heralds the arrival of the country format’s next major star.—DEP

HIP-HOP

DOONEY “DA PRIEST”

Pull Your Pants Up!

Producer: Dooney “Da Priest” Malaco

Release Date: July 15

It’s difficult to know whether this is a social-political statement, a frantic public health bulletin or the matrix of a moral and political novel by way of a hip-hop street gang that has touched raw nerves across America. The fact is, it’s all of the above. And Dooney “Da Priest” Brown (an ordained minister and staffer at T.D. Jakes’ Potter’s House) has nothing to do with this eclectic collection of songs. He admits to being frustrated in the past when people would comment that it seemed hard to find songs as good as his voice. He Remedies that here by tackling such classics as the Righteous Brothers’ “Unchained Melody,” Foreigner’s “I Want to Know What Love Is” and even Luciano Pavarett’s “Nessun Dorma.” Another highlight is “Mine,” a gorgeous song penned by Dennis Mundis. Phelps also delivers a powerful rendition of the classic hymn “Angel Band” sure to delight his Christian fan base, but this beautifully sung collection should expand his audience beyond the faithful core.—DEP

CRITICS’ CHOICE: ▲: A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.
▲: All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send all purchase copies to Jonathan Cohen and single release copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureau.

LEGEND

EDITORIED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)

CONTRIBUTORS: Troy Carlinson, John Coughlin, Hamee Coopson, Hillary Creely, Gordon Ey, Gary Gatel-Delouch, Eldar Price, Shad Reed, Chuck Taylor, Christa L. Tito, Philip Van Nicker, Chris Williams, Lavonna Jones Wright

PICK: A new release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format.

POP

JONAS BROTHERS

Lovebug (3:41)

Producer: John Fields

Publisher: not listed

Jonas Brothers is the boy band’s sequel to the album’s 12 songs, lays his rasp atop solid, street-wise grooves. Having publicly retracted reticencies of gay-bashing, Da Priest pulls no punches in his treatise directed at what he decries as the wanton excesses and dangers of off-shoots of the hip-hop culture have spawned. Like him, loathe him or any point in between, Da Priest has started a discussion that may well continue for some time to come.—GE

CHRISTIAN

DAVID PHELPS

The Voice

Producer: Monroe Jones

Word Records

Release Date: Aug 19

David Phelps possesses both a polished, powerful tenor that shines on any style of music, and he gets the opportunity to do just that on this eclectic collection of songs. He admits to being frustrated in the past when people would comment that it seemed hard to find songs as good as his voice. He Remedies that here by tackling such classics as the Righteous Brothers’ “Unchained Melody,” Foreigner’s “I Want to Know What Love Is” and even Luciano Pavarett’s “Nessun Dorma.” Another highlight is “Mine,” a gorgeous song penned by Dennis Mundis. Phelps also delivers a powerful rendition of the classic hymn “Angel Band” sure to delight his Christian fan base, but this beautifully sung collection should expand his audience beyond the faithful core.—DEP

COUNTRY

TRACE ADKINS

Muddy Waters (3:45)

Producer: Jim Overstreet

Capitol Nashville

This single is a return to the sound of Trace Adkins’ “Right on the Border,” a song about a man who was forced to leave his homeland and start anew in a new country. Adkins sings with a sense of longing and nostalgia, reflecting on the challenges he faced as he tried to establish himself in a new place. The song is a powerful statement of perseverance and resilience, making it a fitting addition to Adkins’ ongoing exploration of the themes of love, loss, and redemption.—CT

R&B/HIP-HOP

JAY-Z

Dope Boy Fresh (3:41)

Producer: Kangey West

Various

Publishers: not listed

The first single from the album “The Blueprint II” is a hard-hitting track that features Jay-Z rapping about his journey to the top. The song is a raw, honest depiction of Jay-Z’s rise to fame, and it’s a testament to his dedication and hard work. The beat is tight and the lyrics are sharp, making this a must-listen for any hip-hop fan.—SR

JESSE McCARTNEY

It’s Over (4:10)

Producer: The Clutch

Writer: D’Arby

Publisher: not listed

Hollywood

Jesse McCartney’s “Leavin’” was instantly loveable, and the fact that a seeming one-hit wonderkind—who delivered top five “Beautiful Soul” to top 40 in 2005—was able to return with a pop radio and “All I Want” to top 40, rhythmic and dance (with one of the year’s most inspired remixes) rekindled confidence in FM radio to actually play the hits. “It’s Over,” the follow-up from third CD “Departure,” tries hard to mask the vocalist’s charms beneath the strong arm of production team the Clutch, which limbed Timbaland’s “The Way I Am” and Omari’s “Ice Box”—but the 21-year-old artist is surprisingly soulful singing alongside a totalitarian skittish R&B track. Considering the sexually charged video that accompanied “Leavin’,” McCartney appears ready to fully get his groove on. While the labelmates the Jonas Brothers are offering first love to tweens, Jess appears poised to seduce their older sisters. “It’s Over” sounds like step two of a starmaking new beginning.—CT

R&B/TRAP

RANDY TRAVIS

Dig Two Graves (3:05)

Producer: Kyle Lehning

Writer: A. Gayler

Writer: not listed

Warner Bros.

Though the morbid subject matter might not suggest a beautiful love song, listeners will be pleasantly surprised at the touching sentiment in this powerful ballad. The long-lived Randy Travis possesses one of country music’s most soothing voices and this well-crafted track suits him perfectly. It’s a portrait of love and devotion as well as the importance of love that matters to the woman he loves. In the chorus, he sings, “Dig two graves, just carve one stone, cause without you here I was never whole.” This is the second single from “Angels Fall.” Travis’ first country album in eight years and a brilliant collection that shows his excellent song sense remains as strong as ever.—DEP

ROCK

UNDEROATH

Desperate Times Desperate Measures (3:27)

Producer: Adam D. Matt
goldman

Writer: Underoath

Publisher: BMG-Stopps Today, ASCAP

“Underoath doesn’t stray far from its recognizable style on “Desperate Times Desperate Measures.” the introductory song to “Lost in the Sound of Separation” (Sept. 2). The track will easily appease the faithful. One moment Tim McTague and James Smith’s guitars combine and the bass like a knife with the cow and the next they’re in a spiraling, melodic freefall. Spencer Chamberlain’s vocals (and perhaps others tracked by McTague and drummer Aaron Gillespie) voicing back and forth, sometimes singing, sometimes hoarsely bawling. Bassist Grant Branden is nearly lost beneath Gillespie’s rickety beats, and we’re not sure where keyboardist Christopher Dudley can be found. All are surrounded by Underoath’s ever-present urgency, but while its world is about to come crashing down upon it, which makes the song’s climactic, cold ending appropriate.—CLT
New Clicks On The Bloc

U.K. Band Offers Download Months Before CD Release

Bloc Party fans expecting a routine Web chat with their heroes got more than what they bargained for Aug. 18, when the U.K. alt-rock band announced they would be able to download its latest album, "Intimacy," in just 60 hours time. "They were very freaked out. It was really funny," frontman Kele Okereke says.

Bloc Party's London-based indie label, Wichita Recordings, could not be reached for comment, but Okereke jokes that executives had a similar initial reaction to the rush release, before adding that they were "really into this idea, just as much as we were."

The band also has the backing of Universal Music Group—Wichita has a joint-venture marketing agreement with the major's V2 label for the album and an international licensing agreement with the Cooperative Music collective, which is financially supported by UMG. The advance download concept has also been "embraced completely" by U.S. label Atlantic, according to Okereke. "Intimacy," the band's third album, became available Aug. 21 exclusively from blocparty.com. There are a number of different offers for purchase: an MP3 download available for $10 in North America or £5 in the rest of the world and a pre-order of the CD with bonus tracks for $20 or £10, which includes the free download. CDs will be delivered Oct. 27, with the pre-order currently available in North America, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

"It's going really well. It's definitely working," the singer says, while declining to reveal specific figures. Okereke denied the move was about "fooling the critics" and downplayed suggestions in a press release that the move was in response to the leak of Bloc Party's 2007 album "A Weekend in the City," which he says did not markedly affect sales. That album has moved 148,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Instead, the band has taken inspiration from Radiohead. "We finished it a few months ago and we thought, "Why do we need to sit on it for six months after it's done?"" Okereke says. "It seems that post-'In Rainbows' there are no rules about this sort of thing anymore."

Fans have already had a taste of the record in the shape of lead single "Mercury," an uncompromising electronic track that sets the tone for an album Okereke describes as "harsh, glacial, layered and energetic." "Mercury" entered the U.K. singles chart at No. 16 Aug. 17 with download sales of more than 7,500, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co.

Right now, Okereke says the band is "looking forward to working out how we're going to play these songs live" on its North American dates, which begin Sept. 5 in Detroit.

Although he anticipates the band's youthful fan base will initially be buying the record, he hopes it will pick up an older audience when it goes to retailers in the fall. "I don't want it to just be an Internet, cool thing," he adds. "I want it to have a presence."

Rock the House

ZO2 wants people to know that it is a real band, one that plays its own instruments, has opened for Kiss and accumulated plenty of bawdy tales from the road.

The reason Joey Cassata and brothers Paulie and David Zabliowsky want to make sure that point is clear is that a different side of ZO2 is on display in "2 Rock," which premieres Aug. 24 on the Independent Film Channel.

The show is based on the band's previous life of playing at children's birthday parties by day and rocking out as hard as possible by night. The semi-scripted program fictionalizes and exaggerates real experiences for comic effect, but remains grounded in the truth of portraying a band trying to make it.

"There were more things in the rock world we were pushing for. For example, there's no three-somes and no orgies," says Paulie Z, who, like his brother, uses that abbreviation as his stage name. "For us it's kind of normal, it was a thing that was everyday life. People were like, 'We're not the Spice Channel!'"

How ZO2 came to land a show about itself is almost as interesting as the actual program. While the group was playing a children's party in 2005, an agent with William Morris Agency saw it and subsequently caught a live show at a club in New York. That lead to a series of meetings and pitches and eventually the show, which will feature guest spots from rockers like Sebastian Bach, John Popper and Dave Navarro.

Among the promo elements for "2 Rock" are a partnership with Sam Ash music store and a video for the song "Isolate" funded by Independent Film Channel, according to the network's executive VP/GM Jennifer Caserta.

ZO2 was its own best promoter in the run-up to the "2 Rock" premiere, frequently screening the pilot for fans during shows to get them hyped. The group is also working on its third album while continuing to tour in support of its current effort, "Ain't It Beautiful," on Riker Hill Records.

"The duality of our sound kind of mimics the duality of our lives on the show," Cassata says. —Kamau High
Flipping The Script

Irish Trio’s Debut Tops Charts

The Script has written itself into Irish pop’s illustrious history, as the Dublin trio’s self-titled debut album went straight to No. 1 at home and in the United Kingdom Aug. 17.

“The Script,” released in both territories by RCA imprint Phonogenic, shifted more than 54,000 copies in the United Kingdom, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co., while the band’s current single “The Man Who Can’t Be Moved” is also top five in those territories.

Yet guitarist Mark Sheehan stresses it’s taken a long time for the Script to become an overnight sensation. He and singer Danny O’Donoghue served time as members of failed ’90s Irish boy band My Town and as session musicians in the U.S. studies of hitmakers Teddy Riley and the Neptunes.

“I learned to take nothing for granted after that disappointment,” Sheehan says of his time with My Town. “We were being built up, but it didn’t happen. What I took from it was that you have to be aware of the commercial side of things.”

After returning to Dublin, they recruited drummer Glen Power and hit upon their trademark Celtic soul-meets-R&B sound, writing much of the album in Sheehan’s mother’s garden shed in the working-class Dublin neighborhood known as the Liberties.

“It had the feel of a pirate radio station,” Sheehan says. “The Guinness brewery was across the road—we could see the smoke coming from their big chimneys. Coming from where we did, there was a lack of options for young people: You were expected to be a plumber or an electrician...never a singer or dancer or actor.”

Nevertheless, the Irish industry was alive and kicking. “We Cry” breached the Irish and U.K. top 20s in April.

“We were invited to Christmas dinner in Dublin with the Edge and U2’s management,” Sheehan says with a smile. “I was able to burn his ear about his recording techniques.”

Sony BMG international marketing manager Paul Kindred says the band is a global priority, adding, “we see them as the next Maroon 5.”

The band performed at the recent MTV Asia Awards in Malaysia and played an Aug. 19 open-air show in Dublin’s 20,000-capacity Marlay Park alongside Lenny Kravitz and Alanis Morissette before heading off on a Japanese promo tour. It undertakes a European arena tour starting Sept. 26, as special guest of OneRepublic.

The album drops in continental Europe Sept. 8 and Australia in late September before the band turns its attention to America. Martin Hall, the Script’s co-manager with Simon Morari for the London-based Hall and Nothing agency, is confident its success can be repeated on the other side of the Atlantic.

“We’re releasing the album on March 17 (through Epic) in America—to coincide with St. Patrick’s Day,” Hall says. “It just made sense to pick that day, given their background.”

‘MAN’ OF THE HOUR

After parting ways with longtime label Jive earlier this year, R&B singer/songwriter Joe is back with a new album. The fittingly titled “New Man” arrives Sept. 23 via Kedar Entertainment/563 Records—a joint venture between manager Kedar Massenburg and Joe’s own imprint, with Universal/Fontana distributing.

“It’s a modern, classic R&B album,” 35-year-old Joe says. “I focus a lot on lyrics and subject matters. I took my time with the recording and came up with something I call ‘today’s R&B.’”

Bryan-Michael Cox, the Stereos, Phatx and D. Mile are among the set’s producers. D. Mile helms first single “E.R. (Emergency Room),” which is No. 60 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart and the greatest gainer on Adult R&B with an 18-11 jump. Other tracks on “New Man” include the acoustic “Heart Behind My Eyes,” “Man in Your Life,” club ballad “We Need to Roll,” the midtempo “Sex Girl,” the five-band-assisted “Friends Don’t Let Friends Sleep Alone” and “Why Just Be Friends?”

As part of his label switch, Joe says, “I put in a long time at Jive. I was very loyal and they made me a great deal of income. But I felt it was time to own my own catalog.”

During an interview with Euroweb .com earlier this month, Joe said former labelmate R. Kelly put pressure on Jive executives to stall promotions on his albums for competitive purposes, information he was made aware of after his exit. Asked to address the comment, Joe says, “It is allegedly from Zomba insiders that when it came to marketing and promotions during my tenure at Jive, I was much less of a priority than R. Kelly.”

Jive declined comment on the subject.

Kedar Entertainment is making Joe its top priority, according to the company’s Kiersten Tucker. The artist is scheduled to appear on BET’s “106 & Park,” do sessions for AOL’s Scout and BET J. and tour in Europe and Japan. A branding partnership with Patron Tequila is in the works.

In addition, an as-yet-untitled EP will be released next month, featuring guest appearances by Mario, Trey Songz, Nas, Diddy, Busta Rhymes, the Game and Snoop Dogg on remixes for tracks from the new album. And because Joe cut enough tracks for two full-lengths while recording “New Man,” he is releasing a follow-up album, “Joe’s Signature,” Feb. 10.

“This is a really exciting, groundbreaking and unprecedented time for me,” Joe says. —Mariel Concepcion

STRAIGHT BULL

She might be more at home racing on the cross-country Bull Run Rally, but Kristine Elezaj is no slouch when it comes to music either. With major-label interest for her debut album, a tour about to begin and the support of the Marc Ecko brand, the artist is primed for big exposure.

Previewed for Billboard at Marc Ecko’s new New York corporate headquarters, Elezaj’s hip-hop-tinged dance pop sits comfortably between Britney Spears and Rihanna. Among the contributors on her debut are Fergie, who co-wrote the track “Peepshow,” writer Alex Caranall and producer J. Mart.

As an unknown in the music business, Elezaj turned to family and friends to fund recording, including sessions in New York, Los Angeles, Barbados and Nashville. While in Nashville she worked with Andrew Fromm, who has written for Backstreet Boys and sang background vocals for Spears. Manager Denny Marte says that by delivering an album that is, in his words, 95% complete, Elezaj hopes to retain more creative control of the project. “We’re delivering masters. Let’s roll,” he says.

Once released, the album may be used in a campaign for Marc Ecko’s Red clothing line. Elezaj was slated to be in ads for the fall last year but a change in creative direction led to “High School Musical” star Vanessa Hudgens getting the job instead. “We’d love to work with her,” says David Smith, corporate communications manager for Marc Ecko Enterprises. “We just want to do everything at once so there’s a snowball effect.”

In the meantime, Elezaj is about to begin opening East Coast dates for house/R&B singer Chris Willis. Live, she utilizes five backup dancers in a show she says is inspired by Janet Jackson. She’s also already plotting another album. “Songs just keep popping into my head,” she says.

Oh, and that cross-country race? Elezaj participates in the event—think “Cannonball Run” without the hijinks—with her father, Marash, a painter and the financier behind their New York-based production company K&M Elezaj. “Everyone who goes on [the race] is usually a celebrity or a business owner. It’s made up of petrosexuals,” she jokes.

—Kamau High

FOR MORE ON THIS STORY, VISIT BILLBOARD.COM
Jonas Brothers Top Half Million; Older New Kids

Just as watching the 2008 Olympic telecasts might remind a viewer of moments and personalities from prior years’ summer games, Billboard’s charts often pave intersections where today meets yesterday.

A case in point unfolds this issue, as youth-fueled Jonas Brothers open at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with $25,000 sold, marking only the third time this year an album starts in the half-million-plus club. Remind you of anyone from days gone by?

How about the group that opens at No. 22 with a package of earlier hits, New Kids on the Block, who are making their own headlines this year.

Just as New Kids once had a now-adult niece of mine in a preteen frenzy, the Disney family’s Jonas Brothers have swung from Miley Cyrus’ coat-tails to their own place in the spotlight.

With an allure that could be described as Hanson meets “Hannah Montana,” the Jonas clan has already sold more than $29 million worth of concert tickets in 2008, selling out more than half of 66 shows so far.

The brothers’ self-titled 2007 album has sold 692,000 copies since the start of January, making it the 18th-best-selling set of the year, while the opening volley for the new “A Little Bit Longer” already qualifies it as one of the 40 best sellers of 2008.

And, with the older of those two albums bumping up 11-10 (31,000), the Jonas Brothers become the first group since N’Sync on the Jan. 2, 1999, chart to have two titles parked in the Billboard 200’s top 10 in the same week. (Four solo artists have done so in the interim.)

The frenzy reminds me of 1990, when New Kids “Step by Step” entered the big chart at No. 14 and jumped to No. 1 in its second week. In that era, without the speed and precision of Nielsen SoundScan’s point-of-sale data, that performance was tantamount to bowing in the chart’s top slot.

Prior to the 1991 advent of SoundScan, only six albums in the chart’s history have debuted at No. 1. In 1990, no album besides “Step by Step” debuted in the top 20, the nearest-fastest start being No. 21 launch for Prince’s “Graffiti Bridge.”

None of the other seven albums that reached No. 1 that year did so in its second week.

With their reunion announced earlier this year, New Kids are whipping up their own frenzy. Multiple dates have been added to some of the cities on their upcoming North American tour.

The group did a performance and autograph session Aug. 8 at Best Buy’s new Mall of America store in Minneapolis. The chain says the event drew some 10,000 fans, one of them quoted as saying she started standing in line at 3:20 a.m. for the event that would not start until 6 p.m.

New Kids’ comeback album, “The Block,” streets Sept. 2. Interscope projects an initial shipment of 300,000 copies, not enough to whip up Jonas kind of week, but sufficient to meet or beat the chart bow that another one-time teen fave saw last year, when Backstreet Boys bowed at No. 7 with 81,000 sold in the first week.

Summer Fun: It’s a good thing Jonas Brothers rang a big number, because “A Little Bit Longer” is the only new title in the top 10, and last week’s top 10 had only two new entries.

The last two release schedules are a reminder that album flow often slows in the hot months, but believe it or not, this year’s summer crop has not been stabby.

Since the tracking week that began with Memorial Day through the Jonas’ start, 16 albums have started in the top 10, compared with 37 during the same weeks of last year. More important, the opening weeks of this year’s summer top 10 have outsold last year’s batch from the same frames of 2007 by the score of 6.06 million to 5.6 million.

That means this summer’s top 10 launch weeks brought a higher average yield, too, 168,418 this summer, compared with 159,851 in the same weeks of last year.

Now, someone might say, “Duh. Lil’ Wayne started at No. 1 and Coldplay at 721,000, so of course this year’s numbers are bigger.” But, is that the point? Compared with three half-million-plus frames so far this year, the only title to reach that mark in the first 13 weeks of 2007 was Linkin Park’s “Minutes to Midnight,” which opened at 623,000.

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**Market Watch**

**A Weekly National Music Sales Report**

**Weekly Album Sales**

**Week-Year-Date**

**Sales**

**Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)**

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**ALBUM SALES**

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<tr>
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**Year-To-Date Album Sales By Store Type**

120 million units

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**Sales by Album Format**

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Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
The album's #10 gain and its best sales week in the wake of promoting in-store promotion at Wal-Mart, and a continuing TV campaign (5,000). The set stars 15-63 Top Latin Albums.

The album's #10 increase can be owned in part to an Aug. 12 repeat airing of "Late Show With David Letterman" segment.

The animated film bowed at No. 3 at the U.S. and Canada box office but weekend with $34.6 million.

A prominent endcap display at Wal-Mart, along with attractive pricing, lifts the best sales week—4,000 (up 135% since March.

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"If I Never See Your Face Again" by pumpkin

"The Time of My Life" by)prepareForSegue

"Love Remains the Same" by evanescence

"The Time of My Life" by disturbed

"Stop and Stare" by black eyed peas

"If I Never See Your Face Again" by MUSHROOMHEAD

"What About Now" by ally mcbee

"Bottle It Up" by jonas brothers

"Just Dance" by lady gaga

"Shut Up and Let Me Go" by the jonas brothers

"This Is Us" by demi lovato & the jonas brothers

"Love Bug" by pepper

"T-shirt" by lady gaga ft. john mayer

"Energy" by reed phillips

"Body on Me" by t.i. ft. bruno mars

"Buzzin'" by jaheim ft. 50 cent

"Video Girl" by jason derulo ft. the s.O.s.

"Last Name" by carrie underwood

"A Little Bit Longer" by jessie j

"Shell" by avicii ft. beto & xamir

"Single" by small faces

"Rise Above This" by destiny's child

"One Man Show" by jonas brothers

"Lookin' Boy" by the kooks

"Cookie Jar" by perry's

"Supergirl" by vanessa williams

"Play My Music" by jessie j

"Addicted" by jack johnson

"I'm Yours" by jason mraz

"7 Things" by the black eyed peas

"Check Yes Juliet" by run baby run

"At the Kindergarten" by chris brown

"Here I Am" by hip hop group (amy winehouse

"Give It to Me" by sean john (amy winehouse

"We Made It" by emperor (amy winehouse

"Love Is Going" by sean john (amy winehouse

"Come On Over" by the black eyed peas (amy winehouse

"I'll Be Lovin' U Long Time" by the black eyed peas (amy winehouse

"Sweet Love" by john legend

"I'll Be Lovin' U Long Time" by the black eyed peas (amy winehouse

"Havana" by sean john (amy winehouse

"Rise Above This" by destiny's child

"Feels Like Tonight" by lady gaga

"In Love With a Girl" by single

"What About Now" by ally mcbee

"Stop and Stare" by black eyed peas

"If I Never See Your Face Again" by MUSHROOMHEAD

"What About Now" by ally mcbee

"Bottle It Up" by jonas brothers

"Just Dance" by lady gaga

"Shut Up and Let Me Go" by the jonas brothers

"This Is Us" by demi lovato & the jonas brothers

"Love Bug" by pepper

"T-shirt" by lady gaga ft. john mayer

"Energy" by reed phillips

"Body on Me" by t.i. ft. bruno mars

"Buzzin'" by jaheim ft. 50 cent

"Video Girl" by jason derulo ft. the s.O.s.

"Last Name" by carrie underwood

"A Little Bit Longer" by jessie j

"Shell" by avicii ft. beto & xamir

"Single" by small faces

"Rise Above This" by destiny's child

"One Man Show" by jonas brothers

"Lookin' Boy" by the kooks

"Cookie Jar" by perry's

"Supergirl" by vanessa williams

"Play My Music" by jessie j

"Addicted" by jack johnson

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"In Love With a Girl" by single

"What About Now" by ally mcbee

"Stop and Stare" by black ey
Hootie & the Blowfish hometown scare first top 10 country song, drawing 20.2 million impressions.

Set of Delmarva potato farmer enters Airplay with second single from debut album "Starting Now."

Hot Country Songs races to 60 positions on billboard biz, where Derks Battles takes Hot Shot debut with second new track from hits set.

Toby Keith's new feature film soundtrack nets Hot Shot debut with 3,000 copies.

Country man's BaerichSurf tour runs through November. Album polls Parmeron on 13% spike.
**TOP R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS**

**ARTIST**

1. **LL YAYNE**
   - The Carter III
2. **LLOYD**
   - Lessons in Love
3. **GUARDIAN ANGEL**
   - Look What You Made Me
4. **MAI**
   - Good Girl Gone Bad
5. **MARVIN SAPP**
   - Definition of Real
6. **G-UNIT**
   - Here I Stand
7. **RICK ROSS**
   - Exclusive
8. **ASHANTI**
   - The Declaration
9. **NOEL GOURDIN**
   - Just Like You
10. **MARIAH CAREY**
    - A Moment Without You
11. **THE-DREAM**
    - I'm A Man
12. **ALICIA KEYS**
    - Getaway
13. **Rick Ross & J. ULYSSES**
    - T.O.S. (Terminate On Sight)
14. **E-MIC**
    - I'm In Love
15. **JANEELLE JAE**
    - Memphis: The Chase Suite
16. **CLOSET**
    - I'm Sorry
17. **BUZON**
    - Buzon
18. **CLipse Presents: Re-Up Gang**
    - Re-Up Gang
19. **DWELE**
    - Sketches Of A Man

**ALBUMS**

1. **ALICIA KEYS (MBK/J)**
   - The Elements of Soul
2. **ONEILL (UNIVERSAL MOTOWN)**
   - 10
3. **MARVIN SAPP (HOLLYWOOD/FOCUS)**
   - 11
4. **LL YAYNE (Geffen)**
   - 12
5. **LLOYD (Universal Motown)**
   - 13
6. **GUARDIAN ANGEL (Def Jam)**
   - 14
7. **MAI (Cash Money/Warner Bros)**
   - 15
8. **MARVIN SAPP (HOLLYWOOD/FOCUS)**
   - 16
9. **G-UNIT (G-Unit/Rock/Universal)**
   - 17
10. **RICK ROSS (Roc-A-Fella)**
    - 18
11. **ASHANTI (Universal Motown)**
    - 19
12. **NOEL GOURDIN (Epic)**
    - 20
13. **MARIAH CAREY (Jive)**
    - 21
14. **THE-DREAM (Dream/Sony Music)**
    - 22
15. **JANEELLE JAE (Westbound/Motown)**
    - 23
16. **ALICIA KEYS (MBK/J)**
    - 24
17. **BUZON**
    - 25
18. **CLipse Presents: Re-Up Gang**
    - 26
19. **DWELE**
    - 27

**TOP MAINSTREAM R&B/HIP-HOP**

1. **NEED U BAO**
   - Put On
2. **A MILLI**
   - Worldwide
3. **COTU**
   - Take a Bow
4. **LIL WAYNE**
   - Business
5. **DADDY UNDERGROUND**
   - Please Excuse My Hands
6. **HEAVEN SENT**
   - Are You Ready
7. **GREATEST WHATEVER YOU LIKE**
   - It Ain't Me
8. **TAKEN DOWN**
   - I'm Not a Freak
9. **DON'T BELIEVE IT**
   - I'm Not a Freak
10. **LIL WAYNE**
    - Run It
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30. **LIL WAYNE**
    - Run It

**ADULT R&B**

1. **HEAVEN SENT**
   - Are You Ready
2. **GREATEST WHATEVER YOU LIKE**
   - It Ain't Me
3. **TAKEN DOWN**
   - I'm Not a Freak
4. **DON'T BELIEVE IT**
   - I'm Not a Freak
5. **LIL WAYNE**
   - Run It
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**RHETRHYTHM**

1. **LIL WAYNE**
   - Run It
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30. **LIL WAYNE**
    - Run It

**HOT RAP SONGS**

1. **A MILLI**
   - Get Low
2. **LIL WAYNE**
   - Kiss the Rain
3. **LIL WAYNE**
   - Kiss the Rain
4. **LIL WAYNE**
   - Kiss the Rain
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    - Kiss the Rain
30. **LIL WAYNE**
    - Kiss the Rain

**DATA FOR WEEK OF AUGUST 30, 2008**

**CHARTS LEGEND ON PAGE 47**
# Hits of the World

**Japan**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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**Euro Digital Songs**

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**Euro Singles Sales**

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**France**

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**Canada**

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**Australia**

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<th>Country</th>
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**Italy**

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**Spain**

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**Portugal**

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**Netherlands**

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**Austria**

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**Norway**

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**Denmark**

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** Billboard**

For complete chart data, visit [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz) and [www.americanradiohistory.com](http://www.americanradiohistory.com)

Data for week of August 30, 2008 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 47
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METAL PARTS, AUTO PARTS CAN ALSO
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MONTH. WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO DIS-
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HAVE THE FINANCIAL CAPABILITY TO
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LEGAL DETAILS AS THIS IS A LEASE
OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
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CONFIGURATIONS. AN OUTRIGHT
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PATENTS
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GREEN BOX COMPANY INC. PHONE: 305-305-4877

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EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE
Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: EMI appoints Steven Melrose VP of A&R labels for North America, the United Kingdom and Ireland. He was a manager at Leftwing, a company that oversees management, publishing, artist development and Reactive Records.

Recently launched Stroudavarious Records taps Derek Simon as VP of marketing and artist development. He was GM/interim president at Equity Music Group.

EMI Music’s commercial development division in North America names Lynne Leger senior VP of brand partnerships and new channel development and promotes Lauren Zucker to VP of brand partnerships. Leger was senior VP of strategic marketing and new business development at DMI Music & Media Solutions, and Zucker was senior director of strategic marketing at EMI’s Capitol Music Group.

Big Machine Records and Valory Music name Allison Jones VP of A&R. She served in a similar position at Show Dog Nashville.

PUBLISHING: Primary Wave Music Publishing names Aimee Berger executive director of brand partnerships, Hadley Poole director of marketing for brand partnerships and Seth Faber director of marketing for artist development. Berger was an attorney at Warner/Chappell Music Publishing, Poole was manager of creative licensing for film/TV advertising at the Orchard, and Faber was manager of artist development/tour marketing at Island Def Jam Music Group.

Peer music taps Adam Epstein as director of A&R for its U.S. creative team. He was manager of A&R at BMG Music Publishing/Universal Music Publishing Group.

DISTRIBUTION: The Orchard taps Michael Bull as GM of TVT Distribution. He was VP of label relations at Caroline Distribution.

RADIO: Clear Channel promotes Evan Harrison to president of the company’s online music and radio unit. He will also retain his executive VP title.

RELATED FIELDS: Media company Buzznet appoints Alan Citron to head of special projects. He was GM at TMZ.

New Wave Entertainment promotes Andrea DelasDernier to director of communications. She was publicity manager.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS

HSAN, PROCTOR & GAMBLE TEAM FOR GRANTS

The Hip-Hop Summit Action Network, a coalition of hip-hop artists and recording industry executives, has partnered with Procter & Gamble’s T&C body spray to award grants to 16 students and MCs to help them achieve their dreams.

Administered by the National Asian for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, the five $10,000 T&C Make History Grants are designed to support students in education and businesses ventures. MCs who participate in the 11-city Survival of the Freshest tour, which launched Aug. 14 at Harlem’s Ducor Park, will battle for a chance to win 11 $5,000 grants and a possible $10,000 grant for the group to support something back to the community.” HSAN president/CEO Dr. Benjamin Chavis says. “The perception is that it’s very difficult to get into the recording industry, so anytime the industry can show means of openness, it’s a very healthy thing.”

INSIDE TRACK

FARMING IN HD

The annual Farm Aid benefit concert will air live in high definition for the first time this year on DirecTV’s 101 Network. Track has learned. The event will take place Sept. 20 at the Comcast Center outside Boston, with performances from Willie Nelson, Neil Young, John Mellencamp, Dave Matthews, Kenny Chesney, the Pretenders, moe, Arlo Guthrie, Jerry Lee Lewis, Nation Beat, Grace Potter & the Nocturnals, Jakob Dylan & the Gold Mountain Rebels, Danielle Evin, Jamey Johnson, Jesse Lenat, Will Dailey and One Flew South. DirecTV’s broadcast will also offer artist interviews and backstage coverage.

SIBLING RIVALRY

UB40 lead guitarist Robin Campbell says there wasn’t any thought about disbanding the long-lived reggae group when his brother, frontman Ali, left the group earlier this year to pursue a solo career. “I think [Ali] had some idea we would just like lie down and stop going,” Robin tells Track. “I think he thought that maybe we would just stop, but that never occurred to us, really. We’ve never been Ali’s backing band; it’s a band that’s been going for 30 years. So when Ali said he was leaving it didn’t occur to us to finish. We just thought, ‘How are we going to continue?’” After younger brother Duane joined the fold, “it just seemed that was the obvious thing for us. That made life very easy.” Nevertheless, Robin says that “the wounds are still a bit fresh” between Ali and the rest of UB40, noting that neither he nor Duncan have spoken to their brother since his departure."It’s a bit of a shame, but I think it is best for all eventually," Robin says. The group’s new album, "Twenty-fourseven," is out now.

—Mitchell Peters

www.americanradiohistory.com
Recently named debut artist of the year by Smooth Jazz News, Steve Oliver, left, poses for a picture after a performance on California's Catalina Island with Kyle Eastwood, son of actor Clint Eastwood. In Oliver's band is his custom synth guitar. 

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WHAT TEENS WANT WEST

THE TRUTH BEHIND TEENS & BRANDS

At WHAT TEENS WANT WEST, learn how to understand the language that teens speak and what common influences shape their attitudes, behaviors and preferences. Discover how to interface with them in their world, build relationships, and inspire communication that translates into increased profitability.

TOP 5 REASONS TO ATTEND

1. Hear exclusive research from Look-Look, The Intelligence Group and MTV Networks
2. Learn how to reach teens on the screens they love
3. Discover the cyber celebrity generation and harness their online habits
4. Walk away knowing teens’ opinions on everything from music to technology to social responsibility
5. Network with leading brand, agency, media and entertainment experts

KEYNOTE HIGHLIGHTS

JANE BUCKINGHAM
President,
The Intelligence Group,
Creative Artists Agency

GREG FOSTER
President,
Film3d Entertainment
IMAX Corporation

SHARON LEE
Co-Founder &
Chair, Look-Look, Inc.

ADDITIONAL SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

RYAN BABENZIEN, Director, Entertainment Marketing, Puma North America
MATT CATAPANO, Senior Director, Research and Planning, MTV Networks
ARIA FINGER, Chief Marketing Officer, DoSomething.org
TED KOSZUTA, Interactive Associate Creative Director, Publicis
GINA MONTANEZ, Manager, Web Marketing, T-Mobile

LIVE Q&A & PERFORMANCE BY THE CLIQUE GIRLZ

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REGISTRATION Melissa Trosterman: 646.654.5873 melissa.trosterman@nielsen.com • SPONSORSHIPS John Grosfeld: 650.759.8728 john.grosfeld@nielsen.com

SPEAKERS Rachel Williams: 646.654.4683 rachel.williams@nielsen.com • QUESTIONS Becky Teagno: 646.654.5169 becky.teagno@nielsen.com

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ANSWER: E) Nielsen has more than 35,000 employees and serves clients in more than 100 nations. That’s why Nielsen is proud to be considered the world’s leading global information and media company.