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InertiaCreeps
Copyright Experts Must Be Proactive To Foster Change

BY DEL BRYANT

Earlier this year, BMI, in association with the Creative & Innovation Economy Center at the George Washington University Law School, launched Creative Industries in Transition, a series of symposia that focus on the future of creativity and intellectual property rights in the digital age. Anchored by a collection of thought-provoking white papers written by leading academics from around the world, including former Registrar of Copyright Ralph Oman, currently Travel Professional Lectures in Intellectual Property Law at the George Washington University Law School, and Robert P. Merges, co-director of the Center for Law and Technology at the University of California in Berkeley, the program examines the opportunities and threats that face intellectual property creators and explores solutions that will help the creative and business communities succeed in the 21st century.

I recently had the opportunity to summarize the reasons BMI undertook this initiative in front of an audience at the Library of Congress that included congressional staff from the House and Senate Judiciary Committees, judges from the Copyright Royalty Board, executives at the office of the Registrar of Copyrights and members of the intellectual property law community from Washington, D.C., and the United States. Here is an abbreviated version of my remarks:

There is certainly no dispute that entertainment, information and copyright are in an era of dramatic change. This change has been evolutionary, it has been going on for a long time. For those of us in the music industry, it began nearly 15 years ago when music started to hit the Web. It is clear that entertainment is exchanging. As they say in the technology business, it’s scaling fast. Clearly, technology is nurturing an explosion of creativity. So will all of the 5 million hands on MySpace become commercial hits or even commercially viable? Probably not. But they do deserve a chance to express themselves and present their creative work to the public when they do so, the copyrights that they create deserve our respect and the creators deserve fair compensation when they are exploited. Likewise, businesses deserve a marketplace where they can get access to copyrights for a fair price and take their shots at building the next generation of entertainment.

To make all of this happen, we need fair, market-driven copyright clearance and payment systems. You, as policy makers, are in a pivotal role to help frame these systems. Some innovative solutions have been proposed, ranging from music rights organizations to Internet service provider levy systems, global licensing solutions and more.

Unfortunately, too, the biggest winner in this evolving world has been inertia. It’s a paradox. We are here today to plug away at that inertia in a thoughtful and balanced way. We cannot wait until next round of congressional hearings or rate setting proceedings to hurriedly craft the next big idea.

We need to be proactive and collaborative. We need to blend the best thinking from the best minds across all aspects of these issues and come up with solutions that work for creators and copyright owners, solutions that work for business and solutions that foster strong, progressive public policy for America’s copyright here in the United States and around the world.

That’s why we launched the Creative Industries in Transition initiative. We believe that a productive, balanced and thoughtful dialogue among the academic, business and policy communities is crucial to fostering the stage for the future of copyright and the future of creativity.

Del Bryant is president/CEO of BMI.

Get more of Del Bryant at www.billboard.com

CREATIVE EXCLUSIVES
I liked Ed Christian’s Retail Track column in Billboard’s Nov. 30 issue, but is there a possibility the numbers for AC/DC’s “Black Ice” could be bit inflated? I’m hearing and seeing many cases where this CD is selling nowhere other than Wal-Mart. I know some retailers have bought it on the AC/DC Web site and sold it in their store, but there may be stores that use Wal-Mart as a distributor, not worrying about it as a competitor.

Here’s how it works:

• It’s a known fact that nowadays the bulk of sales on a title like this will be in the first week. This isn’t “The Black Side of the Moon,” with years topping the charts to look forward to.

• Competitors of Wal-Mart buy out the local Wal-Mart’s stock completely in the first day or so that it’s on the shelf.

• They take it back to their store and mark it up from the $11.88 plus-tax price to a more normal CD price—like $15.

• For the next few days, they could very well be the only one in that market to have the new AC/DC CD, so it sells quite well.

• “Black Ice” could possibly get scanned at the register twice—once at Wal-Mart and again at the second store.

Is this legal? Do you think anyone, be it AC/DC, its management or a label, Wal-Mart or the store that sells the “used” copy cares one bit whether it’s legal or not? I’ve heard of retailers that not only did this kind of thing with another hit title that wasn’t a Wal-Mart-exclusive, but sold it at the price it was selling for at Wal-Mart. He bought all of Wal-Mart’s stock at “low,” “low” prices, took it back to his store and marked it up. After a week, he took whatever stock was left and returned it to Wal-Mart for a cash refund—something the label sure wouldn’t do.

Desperate times call for desperate measures.

FEEDBACK

Will Cornell
AMV Sales & Consultation
Dallas

Ed Christian responds:
While independent and other music specialty stores often show vigour in obtaining product exclusively carried by one retailer, Nielsen SoundScan takes that into consideration when compiling sales numbers. So in the case of AC/DC, SoundScan excludes AC/DC albums that carry the domestic bar code sold by retailers other than Wal-Mart. On the other hand, SoundScan can identify import versions of exclusive albums and thus includes such sales in its final tally. The same consideration will be applied for Guns N’ Roses’ “Chinese Democracy,” as it was for Eagles’ “Long Road Out of Eden.”

OPINION
WILLIAM SYVOLITIS
EDUCATION DIRECTOR, BILLBOARD

Opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily reflect those of Billboard, its Editors or its parent company, American Radio History, nor are they necessarily the opinions of its contributing writers, other than myself.

FEEDBACK

Del Bryant is president/CEO of BMI.

Let Ed Christian respond to your comments by e-mailing him at ed.christian@billboard.com.

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HOLT NAMED MYSPACE MUSIC PREZ
Courtney Holt has been appointed president of MySpace Music. Effective Jan. 5, Holt will be responsible for overseeing the growth and development of the MySpace Music brand and its global operations. Holt previously served as executive VP of digital music for MTV Networks Music and Logo Group. Prior to joining MTV, Holt was senior VP of new media, creative and strategic marketing at Interscope Geffen A&M.

WMG BEATS EXPECTATIONS
Warner Music Group posted stronger-than-expected quarterly results, helped by sales of albums from Metallica and Kid Rock. WMG reported a profit of $6 million, or 4 cents per share, for its fiscal fourth quarter ended Sept. 30, compared with $5 million, or 3 cents per share, in the same quarter a year ago. Analysts on average were expecting a loss of 2 cents per share, according to Reuters estimates.

BOOSEY & HAWKES SIGNS INDIES
London-based music publisher Boosey & Hawkes has signed two leading U.K. independent record labels, One Little Indian and Fat Cat, to global synch rights deals. The pacts cover all current and new master recordings from the two labels. Björk, Jesse Malin and Alabama 3 are among the acts on One Little Indian's roster, while Sigur Ros and Animal Collective are on Fat Cat.

MOBILE
BY AYALA BEN-YEHUDA AND ANTONY BRUNO
Artists Adapt Web Sites For Mobile Platforms
Try to access your favorite artist's Web site with the browser on your cell phone, and the video and audio that plays on your home computer may get lost in translation.

Links may not work. Images may not appear. Even text can look garbled. It's a sure-fire way to frustrate fans.

But with the emergence of more sophisticated wireless devices like the Apple iPhone, the BlackBerry Storm and those based on Google's Android platform, artists and labels are moving quickly to provide the mobile audience with online entertainment options optimized for their respective phones.

One of the latest examples: As part of its marketing efforts for Dido's new album: Safe Trip Home," Sony BMG Music Entertainment created a special landing page for didomusic.com from which iPhone Safari users would automatically be directed. The site has been customized for the iPhone Safari browser's size and shape, it uses Quicktime as the video player instead of Flash and automatically detects the user's connection speed to ensure proper video quality.

"We tried to simplify the site," says Sony BMG VP of mobile marketing, sales and business development Sean Rosenberg. With an interface that mimics iTunes, users can watch Dido's special promos, sign up for e-mail and text message uplates, and pre-order her album from iTunes' Wi-Fi store.

With the advent of Google's Android software, as well as Nokia's Symbian operating system and the various flavors of R.I.M.'s BlackBerry developer platform, "It is going to be a while before there is a standard for how to bring an artist out to mobile devices," Rosenberg says. "This is one way where we getting in front of an interesting market. It's an interesting technological challenge of how, do we optimize for the most amount of handsets? And to at least test this out for one that is seeing high traffic right now, I think that is going to give us the (information) needed to make this available for more of the mobile Web."

Much of the recording industry's attention over new open mobile platforms like the iPhone and Android has been on the proliferation of new downloadable applications that make it easy for consumers to access music (Billboard, Nov. 8).

But with their larger screens and user-friendly interfaces, these devices also encourage consumers to simply spend more time browsing the Web, heightening the need to optimize Web sites for mobile platforms.

Apple says it has sold 11 million iPhones worldwide, about 7 million of which were newer third-generation handsets. That might appear to be a relatively small addressable market to justify spending extra money to optimize a Web site, particularly when considering that the device can already access a pretty good version of most Web sites.

But iPhone purchasers use their devices to browse the Web far more than those owning other wireless handsets. This spring, Internet research firm Net Applications said the iPhone commanded 0.19% of global Web traffic, compared with 0.06% for Windows Mobile phones.

Other smart-phone manufacturers are also developing devices with Web browsers on par with the iPhone. ARI Research recently projected that the number of smart phones with more sophisticated browsers will jump from 130 million today to 530 million by 2013.

As a result, Web sites are noticing more traffic originating from mobile phones—between 3% and 10% of overall traffic, according to a recent survey from mobile billing and traffic measurement firm Bango. The same survey finds that the top 20 Web sites worldwide in terms of traffic are not yet optimized for most mobile phones.

While Pink, Fall Out Boy and David Cook have all released their own apps for the iPhone (Billboard, Nov. 15), Kris Ramanathan, co-founder/CEO of mobile services company Netomat, says, "The mobile-optimized Web site is where it's at right now." He points out that consumers aren't likely to download apps for all of their favorite artists.

Netomat launched Island Def Jam Music Group's mobile portal IDJMobile.com in April and provides mobile blogging services for acts like Paramore and Shinedown.

"The level of interest and the number of inquiries has risen dramatically since the start of this year," Ramanathan says, attributing the heightened interest to the iPhone, new BlackBerry handsets and the availability of lower-cost data plans from wireless carriers. At the same time, he says, "Music companies and record labels we’re talking to are very, very cash-conscious. It’s all about what the return is. So no one is going out of their way to throw money at three different applications."

Providing a social element is particularly important for mobile-optimized services, which rely on the usual mix of news, band info, photos and lyrics to retain an audience.

"If I can share it, if I can get alerts, if I can do things that encourage the use of the spontaneous nature of this mobile device, you’ve created this virtuous loop through which users are engaging in your content," Ramanathan says. "You don’t want mobile to feel like some stepchild."

Additional reporting by Louis Hau.

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GUNS N' SODAS

Despite Dr Pepper's Offer, There May Not Be Enough Drinks To Go Around

Earlier this year, Dr Pepper put out a press release offering free soda to any American if the long-awaited Guns N' Roses album came out before the end of 2008. On Nov. 23, when "Chinese Democracy" was released, fans were ready. But apparently Dr Pepper's Web servers weren't—they crashed under the demand for coupons that could be exchanged for free drinks. Dr Pepper extended the promotion for an extra day, but the company's Web site was inaccessible for a substantial part of it.

Several marketing and branding experts castigated the soda maker for not being better prepared. "People are going to talk badly about the brand and it will travel much quicker online," Buzz Marketing Group CEO Tina Wells says.

The soda maker declined to comment for this article. Guns N' Roses were never involved in the offer but a statement from Black Foge/Geffen, the band's label, says: "For those who heard about Dr Pepper's offer to give each and every American a free can of soda if 'Chinese Democracy' is released in 2008, Guns N' Roses wants to make sure every Guns N' Roses fan, and every other American, gets what was promised."

Dr Pepper can take comfort in the long tradition of high-profile Web sites going down in the face of overwhelming traffic. In 1999 when Victoria's Secret ran a Super Bowl spot about its online fashion show, its site collapsed, while U.K.-based mobile phone operator O2's site crashed after it began selling iPhones earlier this year. And so many online shopping sites could crash on Black Friday that StorefrontBakktalk.com announced that it would list them so that consumers could keep track.

Dr Pepper's offer obviously played off the album's massive delays. But what got media attention was that the company made the offer in the first place.

"In a lot of ways, you look at something like that and say, 'Wow, that really struck a nerve,'" says Kevin Townsend, managing partner of Science+Fiction, a branded entertainment company. "All of a sudden you have people saying, 'I love that they did this and I want a piece of it.' I'm willing to bet that the vast majority of people who logged on don't remember GNR pre-'Chinese Democracy.' Think of all the information Dr Pepper got from them. They probably just doubled their database."

Was it worth it? Some marketing executives take seriously Dr Pepper's failure to live up to its word, on the logic that it's possible that a case could be brought against the company for deceptive advertising. The argument is that Dr Pepper should have been better prepared for the online traffic spike that its promotion generated.

It's possible, but unlikely, that Dr Pepper's offer could even affect the perception of the band. "There could be bad spillover on Guns N' Roses," says Tena Clark, president/CEO of DMI Music, a music branding agency. "Your everyday consumer isn't going to say, 'Wait, Guns N' Roses don't have a deal with them.'"

Other executives dismiss the idea that Dr Pepper's promotion will change anyone's perception of the band—or even the company itself. "Dr Pepper's core consumer is a young male," says Primary Wave Music Publishing partner/GM Justin Shukat, "and I don't see them stopping their drinking of Dr Pepper because they couldn't get a free soda."

At press time Dr Pepper was considering extending the promotion, according to a source close to the situation.

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UPFRONT

BRANDING

BY KAMAU HIGH

GUNS N' SODAS

Definitely not a Pepper: AXL ROSE

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RADIO

BY JEFFREY YORKE and KATY BACHMAN

Broadcast Blues

No Relief In Sight Amid Decline In Radio Ad Revenue

Newly released data suggests that the U.S. radio industry could be on track to record its worst annual drop in ad revenue in decades.

According to the Radio Advertising Bureau (RAB), total ad revenue for all U.S. radio markets dropped 10% in October from a year earlier. Local revenue fell 15%, while national revenue slipped 1%.

October marked the industry's 11th consecutive month of year-on-year revenue declines, according to James Boyle, a senior broadcast analyst at research firm C.L. King & Associates.

Given that total ad revenue is down 7% year to date through the end of October, the continuing decline evokes comparisons to 2001, when ad revenue was down 7% for the entire year, Boyle said in a Nov. 24 research note. But, he observed, that was against a tough comparison in 2000, when revenue grew 12%.

"One actually has to go all the way back to 1954, when radio ad revenue was down 9% against the prior year's dip of 2%" to find a worse decline, Boyle said. "1954 was the fourth straight year of substantial radio advertising underperformance versus total domestic ad revenue."

That was also the year, Boyle quipped, "when The Lone Ranger had its last radio episode and Sen. Joseph McCarthy was railing against hidden Communists."

Looking ahead, the future doesn't appear bright, Boyle said. "If the recession lasts for all of 2009 and the weakness persists in many of the major radio ad categories, such as auto, to the point where spending severely plunges, then it may be 2010 or beyond before radio revives," he said.

The dismal October numbers came on the heels of the RAB's release of more detailed data on ad revenue in the third quarter. Despite the benefit of political advertising leading up to the Nov. 4 U.S. election, ad revenue in the three months ended Sept. 30 totaled $4.9 billion, down 9% from the same period last year. Year to date, total revenue stood at $14.8 billion, down 7% from a year earlier.

Local and national on-air revenue dropped 11% to $4.2 billion in the quarter. Even network radio, a segment that has defied the rest of the business by managing to grow during the first half of the year, was down 3% to $285 million. Off-air revenue, including online advertising, rose in the quarter but managed to grow just 5% to $4.58 billion, sliding from the double-digit percentage gains posted in the first two quarters of 2008.

There was little good news for radio's core on-air business with local advertising, which accounts for about 80%, falling 10% in the third quarter to $3.5 billion. National spot advertising remained the weakest segment, down 12% to $767 million.

Amid the recent financial market turmoil, concerns about a deepening recession and a slowdown in consumer spending, the outlook for all local media, including radio, looks tough, according to Marc Ryvicker, a senior analyst at Wachovia Capital Markets in New York.

"Our sources tell us that spending from all major ad categories — automo-
Word On The 'Streets'

Fresh From The Success Of 'Twilight,' Atlantic Readies A Soundtrack For An Indie Film

In the wake of its No. 1 'Twilight' soundtrack, Atlantic Records is working on another film album, "Dark Streets—Original Motion Picture Soundtrack." Released digitally Nov. 25, the album boasts a lineup of top soul, blues and rock names—including B.B. King, Eliza Doolittle, Richichi Sambora and Chaka Khan—that many would associate with a big-budget film. However, this particular soundtrack is the musical companion to an indie neo-noir musical that opens in select cities nationwide Dec. 12 from Samuel Goldwyn Films.

"This isn't your typical movie with 3,000 screens," says soundtrack executive producer George Acogny. "It's not easy to get major artists involved when you have a small budget and no major actors. But if you don't ask, you don't get."

"Dark Streets," which Acogny describes as an ode to the blues, was developed from a theater piece written by Glenn Stewart, a banker who studied music and filmmaking. It centers on suave bachelor Chuck Davenport (actor Gabriel Mann), who operates a new nightclub whose promising success is hindered by frequent city blackouts and a menacing loan shark. A love triangle and murder add to the thriller. Mann's co-stars include Bono Phillips, Isabella Miko, Elvis Koeus, Michael Fairman and Toledo. "Dark Streets" is directed by Rachael Samuels ("The Suicide Club").

Relationships Acogny has forged as a songwriter, producer and music supervisor (working on projects like the film "Blood Diamond") and with such high-profile artists as Peter Gabriel and Paul Simon played a key role in fulfilling his and Stewart's artist wish list (see story, below). Instrumental in that process was longtime Acogny friend and William Morris agent Joel Roman, whose clients include King. While not featured on the soundtrack, the blues legend plays guitar in the film and on its soundtrack. Roman shares soundtrack producer credit with Acogny, who also wrote the score.

"Once you have B.B., who's not going to come onboard?" Acogny asks. In addition to King, James, Khan and Sambora, the 10-song soundtrack features Natalie Cole, Aaron Neville, Dr. John, Solomon Burke, film co-star Toledo and two Atlantic newcomers, Serena Ryder and Marc Broussard. Each of the artists perform original songs written by James Compton, Tim Brown and Tony DeVeaux.

"To accommodate artists' conflicting schedules, Acogny traveled across the country—he recorded King in Las Vegas, James in New York and Dr. John and Neville in New Orleans。(Half of the "Dark Streets" profits will be donated to the Blues Initiative, a nonprofit organization that directly aids musicians and the cultural and music arts in New Orleans.) Declining to reveal the soundtrack's budget or how much the artists were paid, Acogny says, "Let's just say the artists were extremely generous with their souls."

Acogny's network of business relationships also extends to Atlantic, where he worked with former Atlantic Group co-chairman Val Azzoli and current chairman/CEO Craig Kallman. Acogny brought "Dark Streets" to the attention of the label's executive VP Kevin Weaver, who oversees the label's film music projects.

Two songs from the soundtrack—James "It Ain't Right" and Khan's "Too Much Juice"—are being promoted for Academy Award and Golden Globe consideration; an overseas release for the soundtrack is also being negotiated.

"Glenn [Stewart's] true love of the blues convinced me to get involved," Acogny adds. "And like those T-shirts that say, 'I don't take no for an answer,' I'm made the same way."

HANG OUT AT SCHOOL SCHOOLS

It's hard to get music in a film if you don't have a track record. "If you're just starting out, you want to offer your services to directors that are just starting you out," says Peter Golub, director of the film music program at the Sundance Institute. "You should try to find people that have a similar vision of looking at the world, a similar sensibility. That helps to make a good match with a director."

EXPLORE ALL AVENUES

Owen Ashworth, who records under the name Cassicote for the Painfully Alone, didn't just get his songs on the soundtrack for Laurel Nakadate's debut feature film, "Stay The Same Never Change," which was released earlier this year. "I went to see her when she was filming in Kansas City and ended up acting in the movie and doing some of the editing," Ashworth says. "I also wound up writing the music for the film, including the sound effects and the characters' cell phone ringtones."

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOUNDING LIKE ANOTHER BAND AND BEING A COVER BAND

"It's true that many music supervisors may want an indie band that has the flavor of a well-known band like Radiohead," says Vic Sarjoo, CEO of music licensing site GrooVY. "But the music must still be original."

While evoking the sound of a famous, more expensive band can sometimes pay dividends, Sarjoo warns that acts should avoid recording sound-alike songs. "Bands should do their best to have their own sound," he says. "Music supervisors want originality and authenticity from indie bands."

If an indie band is trying too hard to sound like a popular band and mimicking too closely, that is a big negative to a music supervisor.

SIGN TO A LABEL AFFILIATED WITH A STUDIO

In this grand age of corporate synergy, give yourself a big boost by signing to a label affiliated with a movie studio or TV network. By signing to Lionsgate Music and handling over your publishing, for instance, you will immediately become the class pet when it comes to getting placement in the studio's film and TV productions. And since these label deals aren't exclusive to productions from those entities, exposure can lead to other synchs elsewhere.

HIT THE FESTIVAL CIRCUIT

There are some prerequisites to consider before heading off to a festival, Sundance's Golub says. First, it's better to already have some sort of involvement in a film that you can use as a "calling card," he says. Second, watch your budget. Park City isn't cheap. Finally, always be prepared for networking opportunities. "You can be waiting in line to get in to a movie or in line at Starbucks and make a good connection," he says. "But it's very hit or miss depending on how outgoing you are—and how lucky you are."

Five Ways To Get Your Music In An Indie Film

Small-Budget Movies Sometimes Offer Better Synch Opportunities

By Cortney Harding and Ann Donahue

In a world where most music supervisors don't have the luxury of a huge budget or much to spend on a song for a film, it's often best to focus on smaller films.

1. Make sure your style fits the project. One of the biggest mistakes a music supervisor can make is choosing music that is out of character for the film.

2. Know who is doing the music supervision. Many supervisors have specific tastes and are more likely to use music that fits their vision.

3. Be prepared to compromise. In smallerbudget films, music supervisors may be more flexible with their choices, making it easier to get your music used.

4. Build relationships. Music supervisors often work with the same people over and over again, so it helps to have a good rapport with them.

5. Be open to feedback. Supervisors may give you feedback on your work, so it's important to be receptive and willing to make changes.

Casiopea for the Painfully Alone

A STUDIO AFFILIATION CAN BE Aplus

While having a studio affiliation can help you get your music on film, it's important to carefully consider whether or not you truly want to work with a studio.

1. Consider the quality of the film. Working on a highbudget film may be a good opportunity, but it's important to make sure the film has the potential to make a strong impact.

2. Think about the fit. It's important to choose a film that aligns with your artistic goals and values.

3. Look at the budget. Larger budget films often have more resources to offer, but they may also be more competitive.

4. Consider the distribution. Films distributed by larger studios often have more exposure, but they may also be more challenging to work with.

5. Be prepared to negotiate. It's important to be clear about your goals and to be willing to negotiate with a studio.
The marketing world has swooned over the way U.S. president-elect Barack Obama deftly used new-media outlets like social networks and mobile phones to mobilize support for his campaign. Advertising Age even named him Marketer of the Year in October, choosing him over traditional favorites like Apple and Coca-Cola.

As it happens, the new-media tools that helped carry Obama to the White House are the same ones that the music industry has been trying to figure out for the better part of two years now, with less spectacular results.

Some say Obama enjoys rock-star appeal. So let's take a moment to examine what real rock stars can learn from the man's digital strategy.

**IT'S SOCIAL MEDIA, STUPID!**

In addition to the traditional TV and radio ads, direct mailings and endless volunteer phone calls, the Obama campaign put an unprecedented degree of faith in social media, user-generated content and viral platforms—all without losing control of its message.

It not only distributed its own content, such as speech footage, volunteer shorts, and Web and TV ads, but also gave supporters the freedom to distribute their own. Perhaps most ingenious was how the campaign utilized the capabilities of different communities to its advantage. Supporters on Facebook, for example, could "donate" their status update on Election Day to deliver a get-out-the-vote message.

In all, Obama had more than 1.2 million Facebook friends, almost 850,000 MySpace friends, more than 100,000 Twitter "followers" and 140,000 YouTube subscribers who watched about 20 million video streams.

**Lesson:** Social media is no longer about sharing a few photos and music videos. To keep fans engaged, there needs to be a steady stream of content from every resource available, as well as a call to action to get them involved in marketing your work.

Obama supporters encouraged their friends to vote for him. An artist's fans can remind their buddies to pick up a new album or buy concert tickets.

**MOBILE, MOBILE, MOBILE**

If you're out to reach teens, the mobile phone is where it's at. Obama took every opportunity to build a list of supporters' mobile phone numbers, mostly by offering to reveal his choice for running mate first to anyone who signed up for text-message alerts. He also invited the thousands attending or watching his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention in Denver to send the campaign mobile text messages explaining why they supported the candidate.

Obama's choice of Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., as his running mate leaked before supporters could get the scoop first, but the social networker: U.S. president-elect Barack Obama's Facebook page campaign still achieved its objectives—3 million text messages sent out the night of the Biden announcement and a database of mobile numbers that the campaign used until the November election to send text reminders to watch an upcoming debate or speech and, of course, to vote.

**Lesson:** Give and you shall receive. Artists could promise to provide exclusive information like the titles of upcoming albums and tour dates to those fans who register their mobile numbers to receive text alerts. Artists can then use those numbers to notify fans of upcoming TV appearances or remind them to buy local concert tickets the day they go on sale.

**TRANSPARENCY**

Obama's real genius—and the key to making all these digital tools work—was that he made supporters feel as if they were part of his campaign. They had information on what their candidate was up to that day, how much money he was raising and when he needed their help in getting the word out about a local appearance.

**Lesson:** For the music industry to replicate this, artists and their labels and managers need to let fans inside what has traditionally been a rather secretive process. It can be simple things, like posting demos of new music or weekly updates from the studio or a tour. Or it could be more involving, such as letting fans remix songs and provide open licenses for mash-ups. (Remember: Will.i.am's "Yes We Gun" mash-up video for Obama?) Doing so doesn't mean artists have to give up creative control. It just means using these platforms to make fans feel like "their" album in advance by letting them participate in some small way.

We live in a world of mouth economy, fueled by the viral internet community. The Barack Obamas of the music industry will make smart use of new media and communications tools. The John McCains of the industry won't.
Given your role in developing MP3, do you feel partly responsible for the death of the traditional record industry? Not for the end of it, but MP3 was the starting point for major changes. It provides an opportunity to get in touch with customers in a much more direct manner, and in the long term it should help the music industry to survive with new distribution models. I do not think that record labels have exploited the potential of digital rights management-free MP3 downloads enough. In my opinion, we need a more complete offer of downloadable music in the MP3 format.

Does the CD or DVD have a future? The transition to digital will be a gradual one, but clearly in the direction of nonphysical media and downloads. Whether in 10 years the figure will be 10%, 30% or 70% is difficult to predict. Many people buy physical formats because they want to own something they can touch.

As wireless internet access becomes more common, could online music streaming eventually overshadow downloads? It's difficult to project far into the future, but in the short to middle term, I am sure we will still see both streaming technologies and music downloads. But since we will be able to carry an even larger library of music with us, I believe downloading will still be easier for consumers.

Will MP3 itself ever become obsolete? It won't be replaced. MP3 is not interchangeable because it's available everywhere. I believe in standardized formats, not proprietary technology. This is why I think that both MP3 and AAC will survive—MP3 because it is ubiquitous and AAC because it is the highest-quality format that's standardized by an international standards committee.

What will be the next breakthrough music technology? I see two areas. One is search and recommendation. We have much easier access to music these days. And that is why services such as automatic personalized recommendations, even if you are offline, or playlist generation, etc., will be very important. There will also be a whole new class of 3-D sound experience like our losono sound system. Our aim is to use losono to get the best possible sound that gives the listener the feeling that he's sitting right in a concert hall. We will reach a level of transparency that gives the feeling that he's sitting in a tent in the jungle with a lion roaring in front of him and water dripping beside him.

What prompted you to invest in DJTunes? I have invested in a number of startup companies that asked me for help. DJTunes is just one of them. I have only a minor stake in the company. DJTunes is the type of company doing Web portals and commercial download services. I hope we will see much more of it in the future. DJTunes is specialized to certain niche markets, not to mainstream music, and I think that is really where their big chance is.

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Ticketing Service Charges Won’t Go Away Anytime Soon

During the past decade, few things have pissed off concertgoers more than ticket service charges. I’ve never been one to question the right of ticketing companies to charge service fees. Ticketmaster, which has taken the brunt of the heat, deserves some money for the millions of dollars it has spent on the research and development that led to more convenient ticketing, as well as the costs of delivering its service and setting up its infrastructure.

It also has a right to make money. And the rebate-to Venues model that stems from service charges changed ticketing from a cost center to a profit center for cash-strapped buildings, which is a revolution in itself.

All of which provides context for the news that Ticketmaster will forgo add-on fees for some Eagles concerts (billboard.biz, Nov. 11). The ticketing giant called the move “revenue-neutral,” which seems to suggest that what had been a separate service fee is now being rolled into the ticket price.

Ticketmaster Entertainment — the newly merged company consisting of Ticketmaster and Irving Azoff’s Front Line Management is known — views no fee or all-in pricing as the “preferred model for the future,” says president Sean Moriarty. This makes sense, as myself and others have long held that what most fans want about service charges is their belief that they were paying a certain amount for a ticket, only to find out later about hefty add-ons. It may be that Ticketmaster Entertainment believes that revenue from other sources in the novel, multi-revenue world of new CEO Azoff’s regime, including secondary market money and VIP perks, may eventually replace the need for service fees.

Given consumer perceptions, this is a savvy PR move. It’s also the first major change under Azoff’s watch proving that the company is indeed thinking about fans and artists. Two paths that need not be mutually exclusive.

Live Nation is playing it close to the vest when it comes to how its third-party venue ticketing model will work. But the leverage of its touring content alone is not enough to entice buildings to take a chance on making a change to Live Nation Ticketing, particularly in the face of Ticketmaster Entertainment’s own Front Line artist connections.

Ticketing revenue is too important to the business to slip away. So there has to be a revenue source from ticketing for the venues, and that means there has to be money generated from ticketing above and beyond the dollars that go to the act, promoter and production expenses. My guess is that Live Nation will collect this revenue will come in the form of built-in service charges of their own. An add-on by any other name is still an add-on. But it’s all in how it’s served to the public.

Of course, that doesn’t take into account building fees, which come on top of any charges levied by Ticketmaster. Venues have become very dependent on these “house fees” as a revenue stream and they don’t give them up without a fight. No matter how the Ticketmaster “experiment” plays out, or how Live Nation’s model is structured, fans won’t see the end of add-on fees anytime soon. That genie escaped its bottle long ago. One thing is for sure: It will be fascinating to watch this play out as the concert pie gets resized once again.

FREE THINKING: Jim Lewis, head of the Agency Group’s events and entertainment division, informs us that the 12th annual Aspen Live Conference Dec. 11-13 is waiving registration this year. Previously priced at more than $1,000 and limited to 200 attendees from the live entertainment industry, Lewis says now is “a good time to get everyone thinking differently about everything including money. Waiving registration was one way of showing the industry that we were willing to try new things.” The event will be held at the St. Regis Aspen (Colo.) Resort, and space is limited. For more information, go to aspenlive.com.
Peter Ikin, 62

Peter Ikin, 62, a former high-ranking Warner Music International executive who helped build the major label’s Australian business, died Nov. 12 in Paris from a suspected heart attack.

Ikin retired in 2000 after a long stint as London-based WMI senior VP of international marketing and artist development, a post he held since 1991. Prior to that, he was managing director of the U.S. repertoire division of Warner Music Australia from 1987 to 1991. He also worked for EMI Australia.


“From the moment he arrived here in 1975, he set an agenda for a marketing-driven company focused on blockbuster hits and peerless artist relations,” St. John says. “The ‘70s and ‘80s were a time of massive artist egos—Fleetwood Mac, Elton John, Rod Stewart—and Peter Ikin gained a reputation for handling superstars that was beyond compare.”

—Lars Brandle and Christie Eliezer

DEATHS

Saul “Pete” Pryor, 92, entertainment lawyer and co-founder of law firm Pryor Cashman, died Oct. 23 in Denver due to complications following gall bladder surgery.

During his lengthy career, Pryor represented some of the biggest names in the music business, including Duke Ellington, Bob Dylan, Simon & Garfunkel, Neil Diamond and Peter, Paul & Mary. Pryor was also one of the leading U.S. lawyers dealing with the Japanese entertainment industry.

Pryor graduated from New York’s City College in 1935 and later received a law degree from Columbia Law School, becoming the editor of the Columbia Law Review. After graduation, Pryor was employed by the law firm of Jaffe & Jaffe in New York. When World War II began, Pryor enlisted and fought as a soldier at Utah Beach as well as during the D-Day invasion. He also participated in the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp.

In 1963, Pryor and David Braun founded the law firm of Pryor & Braun, which is now known as Pryor Cashman, home to 130 attorneys in New York and Los Angeles. In 1965, Pryor retired and moved to Colorado to be with his family.

Pryor was married to Amy Spier, who died in 1993, the couple celebrated 50 years together. He is survived by his son, Sam; his daughter, Ellie Dowdle; and four grandchildren.

Donations in Pryor’s memory may be made to Break the Cycle (breakthecycle.org), which helps victims of domestic violence.—Lisa Marie Basile

Jerry Bassin, 76, founder of Bassin Distributors, died Nov. 16 in the Bahamas. Bassin Distributors was the linchpin acquisition in the rollup that would become Alliance Entertainment, which is now the second-largest music wholesaler in the United States.

Bassin "died with his boots on in a casino, at the Crystal Palace in Nassau," his son Andrew Bassin says. "Anybody who knows him had a casino story about him."

Andrew says his father was so well-known at the casino that "I called Crystal Palace and gave the casino owners my condolences on their loss."

Bassin began his career in the music business in the early ‘70s when he partnered in a store called Collegiate Sports & Music near Kings Highway in Brooklyn. In 1973, he sold that store and moved to Florida, where he partnered with Larry Schaffer, who owned the Vibration record store, and Bassin owned a music wholesale operation, Interstate Trading. After Schaffer bought him out, Bassin had a short stint in the wholesale bakery business before returning to music in 1976, when he partnered with Alan Shapiro, who owned a couple of record stores. The wholesale business they started was called Jerry Bassin Inc., which eventually became Bassin One-Stop, then Bassin Distributors.

Bassin Distributors was one of five wholesalers that eventually emerged as super one-stops, each shipping nationally. Bassin and Shapiro sold the company in the fall of 1991, becoming the first acquisition in the building of Alliance Entertainment, which would eventually include Abbey Road One-Stop, CD One-Stop, Encore Distributors and INDI.

For the rest of that decade, he remained an executive with the company before eventually taking on the role of consultant. Bassin is survived by his sons Jeffrey and Andrew, his daughters, Ruth Gaskins; his grandsons, Sean; and his former wife, Linda.—Ed Christian

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Screen, Not Heard

New Adidas Ads Feature Musicians But Not Their Music

In the summer of 1986, Run-D.M.C. played a show at Madison Square Garden in New York, raising the success of its single "My Adidas" and its third album, "Raising Hell," which would peak at No. 3 on the Billboard 200. Daryl "D.M.C." McDaniels remembers it well.

"I would take off my sneaker and hold it up and say, 'Myyyy Adidas,' and then people would do it back," he says, adding that "the people at Adidas couldn't understand why the sales of shell toes were going through the roof."

An Adidas marketing executive was in the audience at the Garden show so it wasn't long before the company signed the group to a $1.5 million endorsement deal, its first with a music act.

Two decades after its initial foray into music marketing, Adidas has launched a new global ad campaign for its Adidas Originals line of footwear and apparel that features 11 recording stars, including McDaniels.

The campaign, created by the agency Sid Lee in Montreal, depicts music acts like Katy Perry, Estelle, Missy Elliott and the Ting Tings dancing and laughing at a house party in Adidas gear. In addition to starring in the TV spots, musicians will also appear online and in print ads.

In an unusual move, none of the TV ads uses any of the featured artists' music. Instead, the spots are accompanied by Pi- loo’s remix of Frankie Valli & the 4 Seasons’ "Beggin’". Licensing songs from the artists featured in the ad campaign would have proved expensive. But Adidas spokesman Jeff Weinstein notes that financial considerations weren’t a factor in the company’s decision not to use the artists’ songs.

“We didn’t want to single out one musician,” Weinstein says. “We wanted to keep it neutral and focus on celebrating the musicians’ style and originality—just like it was purely a creative decision.”

Heading up the Adidas Originals promo campaign is the company’s global sport style division, which acts as the brand’s celebrity wrangler by getting musicians and entertainers to associate themselves with Adidas.

“We sought out artists either because we already have a partnership with them or they are people who are internationally relevant,” says Traci Morlan, senior manager of entertainment and influencer marketing at Adidas and head of the sport style division’s U.S. operations.

Does it make sense to feature musicians in an ad campaign without featuring their music?

Cyrus Vantoch-Wood, creative director at digital ad agency Atmosphere BBDO in New York, thinks that, in this case, it does.

“It’s [using Piloo’s] as a way to connect a whole set of musicians under one anthem,” he says. “You couldn’t exactly do a mash-up of all of them."

Tina Wells, CEO of Buzz Marketing Group in Voorhees, N.J., says Adidas’ decision to use musicians without their music suggests that the company is getting more out of the campaign than the stars.

“It’s great for Adidas and bad for musicians because it shows who has the power in the relationship,” Wells says. “It used to be that any time musicians were integrated into advertising, it was another avenue for them to promote their music. Being in the campaign this way puts a lot of power in the ad agencies’ and brands’ hands.”

Regardless of what one might think of the

Little Label, Big Deal

The Thermals Downsize And Localize

Portland, Ore., punk band the Thermals have built some nice upward momentum.

They released three albums on Sub Pop, each of which sold more than the one before it—2003’s “More Parts Per Million” sold 11,000 in the United States, 2004’s “Fucking A!” sold 12,000, and 2006’s “The Body, the Blood, the Machine” sold 22,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

And while they turned down $50,000 to put a song in a Hummer ad, they have had songs in shows like "Weeds" and "Chuck." So when their contract with Sub Pop ended, there were plenty of labels clamoring to add them to their rosters.

"Sub Pop offered us a second contract, and we had serious conversations with Sadie Creek, Merge, Vagrant and Gigantic," says vocalist/guitarist Hutch Harris.

In the end, Harris and his bandmate Kathy Foster decided to go small and sign with Kill Rock Stars.

Certainly, Kill Rock Stars is far from a base-ment label. Founded in 1991 in Olympia, Wash., and now based in Portland, the label has served as a launching pad for the careers of Elliott Smith, the Decemberists and the Gossip and released some of the defining albums of the riot grrrl era. The biggest act currently on its roster is Deerhoof, whose latest album, “Friend Opportunity,” has sold 37,000 units.

That’s small potatoes compared with the numbers moved by Merge or Sub Pop. But to Harris, Kill Rock Stars’ smaller size was an asset.

“We were definitely drawn to the fact that we’d get more personal attention," he says. "There was a time when Kill Rock Stars put out tons of records, but they’ve cut back a lot recently. We’re excited to be the big fish in the small pond."

The label’s location was also a plus for the band. "The sense of community was a really big deal for us," Harris says, as is the fact that the office is only a short distance from home and the members can pop by anytime, Mister Roper style.

“They are actually in the office right now,” president Portia Sabin says before she passes the phone off to Harris. “I think they’ve been there every weekday since we signed them.”

Sabin also says that signing the Thermals is part of Kill Rock Stars’ larger strategic vision. "We want to scoop up all the best talent in Portland and put it on one label," she says.

Location aside, Harris says that the deal Kill Rock Stars offered the band was "exactly what we wanted." Sabin says the deal is a 50-50 profit split, with Kill Rock Stars licensing the record for a period of time.

“It’s a one-record deal, and we’re putting it out worldwide;" Harris says. "I think the band also likes the fact that we have a direct deal with iTunes, and we don’t have to give up any of the digital royalties to a distributor.”

That’s not an insignificant perk, consider- ing that a quarter of the sales for “The Body, the Blood, the Machine” were digital.

Harris says the Thermals had more free- dom when negotiating their new deal because they self-financed the recording of their forthcoming album, which is due in April. That DIY spirit didn’t extend to releasing the album on their own, although Harris says he and Foster gave it some thought.

"We considered putting the record out without a label, but ultimately, we wanted to focus on the songs and not on the business aspect of things," he says. "It was also too much money and work upfront, especially considering we’d just paid for the recording of the album.”

Although there are a number of acts that have finished label deals and started their own ventures, Harris can only think of one example of a band signing to a much smaller label after leaving a larger one.

“Spoon did a few records on a major and then went to Merge,” he says. "Six or seven years ago, Merge was much smaller, and they did a great job with Spoon. I think Kill Rock Stars have really hit their stride and are sign- ing up a lot of awesome bands. I’m just really thrilled to be one of them."
Reaching For The Top

Producer Sergio George Launches A New Imprint

CD sales are in sharp decline, but that hasn’t stopped true believers from launching labels with expectations of profitability.

The latest Latin music notable to do so is multiple Grammy Award-winning producer Sergio George (Marc Anthony, Celia Cruz, La India), who has started a label and entertainment company called Top Sport Music.

Punished by George and Curacao entrepreneur Gregory Elias, Top Sport will start off by releasing an album aimed at the tween market called “8Kidz.” Taking a page from the Kidz Bop playbook, “8Kidz” will feature child singers singing Latin hits. Top Sport will release the album in first-quarter 2009 and market it to first- and second-generation Latin tweens in the United States.

George has also signed veteran salsa star Luis Enrique, who is slated to begin recording in December, and new Puerto Rican merengue singer Joneth, whose first Top Sport album is already being sold through Distribuidora Nacional in Puerto Rico.

“I absolutely think there’s still a business,” George said a few days before winning producer of the year honors at the 2008 Latin Grammy Awards. “If you can manage your overhead and the right talent, you make money.”

George’s last business venture was as a partner of SGZ Records, the tropical indie label he launched in 2004 with former Warner Music Latina president George Zamora. SGZ enjoyed chart hits with a roster that included such artists as Olga Tañón and Tito Nieves and was subsequently acquired by Univision Music Group. When Universal acquired Univision last May, Zamora stayed on, but George—who has always worked independently in the creative arena—moved on.

George could have simply opted to continue working as one of the most successful Latin producers in the market, particularly in tropical music. Instead, he decided to dive back into running a label.

"Heading sales and marketing for Top Sport will be George’s long-time friend and Latin music industry veteran Jeff Young, who was most recently VP of sales and marketing for Univision Music Group and now operates his own marketing and consultancy company, Venetian Marketing Group. The search is on for major or indie distributors. The key is finding the right distributor that can get Top Sport releases in alternative and nontraditional outlets, Young says. In addition, “8Kidz” will require coverage in those traditional music retailers that have had previous success with this demographic and type of product on the English-language side."

The fact that “8Kidz” delves into a relatively untapped niche for the Latin market—there are few musical projects aimed at U.S. Latin tweens—is a key element in Top Sport’s launch strategy.

That’s not to say that so one has been seeking to cater to Latin tweens. EM! Latin has released two volumes of “Reggaeton Nitiz,” which features kids performing family-friendly covers of reggaeton hits. The two albums, which were released at the end of 2005 and 2006, respectively, have sold a combined 188,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Still, it’s a market with potential. Identifying underserved niches while minimizing operating expenses are among the ways Top Sport will be able to turn a profit. Young says. This will include keeping production costs low, not paying advances in exchange for higher royalty rates or partnerships in projects and using radio promotion that focuses on specific regions.

“It’s not about big sales but profitability,” Young says, noting that even 10,000 units sold can yield a profit if the keeps costs low.

“Obviously, the project has to be good,” he adds. “It’s about the music, about the song. It always has been. Cry is not going to sell anymore.”

David Against Goliaths

Liberman Broadcasting Plans New U.S. Latin TV Network

Liberman Broadcasting has emerged as a scrappy competitor to its rivals Univision and Telemundo, producing 56 hours of original programming in its Burbank, Calif., studios every week.

Now Liberman—which owns Spanish-language TV and radio clusters in Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas and Phoenix—is hoping to build a national network called Estrella TV. Through a combination of station purchases and affiliations, Liberman expects Estrella TV to be in 70% of U.S. Hispanic homes by the end of first-quarter 2009.

Liberman hadn’t signed any affiliates by press time. The company owns TV stations in San Diego and Salt Lake City, as well as a radio station in San Bernardino, Calif.

Rather than expanding its distribution channels first and then buying or creating new, unproven programming to fill it, Liberman has “spent the last 10 years honing and developing our programming to the point now where it’s very highly rated,” executive VP/secretary Lenard Liberman says.

While Nielsen rankings for October put Liberman’s Los Angeles TV station fourth among Spanish-language stations in the market for total day ratings, it came in second on weeknights between 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. among Hispanics 18-34 during the Oct. 30-Nov. 9 sweeps period, excluding soccer. Such programs as music/variety show “Estudio 2” and “Trancazo Musical” came in first in key Hispanic demos during their time segments.

At a time when radio revenue is declining due to a soft advertising market, Liberman’s third-quarter results showed a 6% net revenue increase in radio compared with the same period last year. (TV was down 3% due to a decline in infomercials and outages in Texas associated with Hurricane Ike.)

Though the company initially aimed its programming at those of Mexican descent, it has exported its shows to South America and Puerto Rico and is looking for national reach for Estrella TV—not just in the western United States.

And “anywhere we find a good market, we’d find TV first and then fill it in with radio,” Liberman COO Winter Horton says. “It’s very effective for our clients to have cross-promotional opportunities between radio and TV.”

An example of integration on the programming side was the Nov. 19 Premios de la Radio regional Mexican music awards show, promoted by regional Mexican KBUE (La Que Buena) Los Angeles. It aired live on TV in L.A. for the first time and was to be rebroadcast in Liberman’s other TV markets.

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

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David Ben-Yehuda

SONY MUSIC IN CALLING CARD PROMO

Sony Music in Colombia and Colombian wireless carrier Comcel have launched a strategic alliance dubbed Minutos Comcel (Comcel Minutes), which gives free calling cards to customers who purchase Sony CDs.

Customers who purchase one of 15 select Sony titles will receive a 20-minute calling card and will enter a contest to win one of 10 Sony Ericsson Walkman W760 phones.

In Colombia, prepaid minutes is the preferred method of cell phone payment. As an additional incentive, buyers will get a 30% discount on any of the CDs or DVDs included in the promotion by presenting a Comcel phone bill or Comcel card. The Minutos Comcel promotion runs from Nov. 15 through Jan. 31, 2009, or until all 150,000 cards are distributed. —Leila Cobo

MOVISTAR LAUNCHES DIGITAL MUSIC STORE

Wireless carrier Movistar has launched a Latin American digital music store with 1 million tracks available for download online or by mobile, payable with SMS. The site has content from all four major labels as well as a host of independents. Per-track downloads cost about 85 cents each, including all transmission costs; a Movistar representative for says the price will be re-evaluated after three months.

Movistar has also brought its fledgling digital label, Sello Movistar, to Colombia. Artists can post their music and create a profile at ArtistasMovistar.com or through the label’s mobile portal. The site’s high-rated artists will be considered for promotion, marketing and tour sponsorship by the carrier, which will sign artists to full-rights deals. Sello Movistar launched in Spain earlier this year and will be in 12 countries in Latin America, according to the carrier. Label spokespeople Diego Pradilla says it will sign one to two artists per year from each country.

The label is run by Spanish firm Innova, with a team that the carrier says includes music industry professionals with experience in management, marketing, touring and production experience.

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

www.americanradiohistory.com
PLEASE MR. DJ
Labels Complain Italian Radio Shuts Out Newcomers

MILAN—Italian labels are complaining that radio isn’t playing their song. Specifically, they’re upset that local radio isn’t supporting new acts. Sony BMG pop singer Giuseppi Ferreri is the only new domestic artist with a song that ranks among the top 50 records of 2008, based on year-to-date airplay data from Nielsen Music Control. But Ferreri’s commercial breakthrough (Billboard, Sept. 6) initially arrived not by way of radio but by the exposure she enjoyed from her second-place finish earlier this year in the inaugural Italian season of “The X Factor.”

In 2007, no new Italian artists made the year’s top 50 airplay chart. “If you look at Music Control’s airplay charts,” Universal Italy domestic division director Alessandro Massara says, “the young artists are foreign, like Amy Winehouse, Duffy and Leona Lewis.”

Sandro Von Mallacz, managing director of Comto, Italy-based music marketing agency Tune Fit, says that it’s been hard for emerging domestic artists to get on the radio. “In the last couple of years it’s become very difficult to get airplay for new Italian artists,” Von Mallacz says. “In Italy, there’s very little niche, format radio.”

EMI Music Italy GM Marco Alboni says radio’s focus has shifted to address an aging population that IFPI figures show has a median age of 43—older than other southern European territories like Spain (40) or Portugal (39).

Alboni feels Italian stations are reluctant to offer new talent to older listeners. He also claims to see a continuing shift in station programming away from music. “Individual DJs and their chat draw audiences,” Ede Italy president Paolo Franchini says. “What little music they play has become an accessory.”

The labels’ complaints have snowballed since the consolidation of Italy’s radio market in the late ’90s. Since then, Von Mallacz says, “networks began getting more audience and advertising-conscious—less adventurous.”

Mario Limongelli, president of independent labels body PMI, says that “only local stations seem to experiment now.” However, stations are increasingly fixated on delivering demographics, he says, and the national Audiradio audience ratings system has facilitated “the death of creativity in radio.”

Label executives name the most conservative stations as national commercial top 40 outlets RTL 102.5 and RDS, currently placed second and third, respectively, behind state-owned Rai Radio Uno (talk/top 40) by Audiradio.

RTL 102.5 president Lorenzo Suraci dismisses the labels’ complaints. “If the Italian material that labels send us is 80% big-name artists and 20% new acts, then that’s their problem more than ours,” he says. “We’re more than happy to play new Italian artists—which we did with Ferreri—so long as they fit our format.”

But Ferreri’s celebrity thanks to “The X Factor” preceded radio’s adoption of her. “Radio had nothing to do with her initial success,” says GM Alboni.

A Bridge Too Far
Malaysian Concerts Slump After Post-Beyoncé Clampdown

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia—The causeway that links Malaysia and Singapore by road and rail is just 3.465 feet long. But rock fans and promoters alike are feeling the two countries are worlds apart in their attitudes toward international touring acts.

While Singapore continues to flourish as a live destination for foreign artists, a government clampdown in neighboring Malaysia is putting off artists and sponsors from staging concerts.

The Malaysian government’s onerous rules against bare flesh, public displays of affection and drug-related imagery are not new. But Puspal, the division of the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage that handles foreign artist permits, has been applying these rules more rigorously since the cancellation of a November 2007 Beyoncé concert (Billboard, Dec. 13, 2007) after the U.S. R&B star allegedly refused to comply with local dress codes, local touring execs say.

“Chart-topping international acts would rather bypass Malaysia than conform to a rigid set of rules,” says Razman Ruzali, managing director of Pineapple Concerts, which handled the Beyoncé date. “The global publicity surrounding the cancellation was a defining moment. The authorities now scrutinize every permit application more vigorously.”

Razman says he faced similar problems when he tried to book Rihanna for a concert. Noror Suh, marketing manager at promoter Galaxy Group, says he passed on Kylie Minogue and Madonna shows because he knew they would not be able to secure a permit. Minogue was scheduled to play the Singapore Indoor Stadium Nov. 25.

Meanwhile, touring insiders say confusion over April Lavigne’s Aug. 29 show at Kuala Lumpur’s 45,000-capacity Stadium Merdeka has prompted sponsors to support only risk-free concerts. Lavigne’s performance eventually went ahead, after the government had initially postponed it in the face of protests from the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party’s Youth Council (billboard.biz, Aug. 25).

“We approach sponsorship deals on a case-by-case basis,” says Zulmin Aeldeny, senior VP of Malaysian telco Celcom, which...
Global

By Diane Coetzter

 Keeping It Local

Domestic Music Quotas Rise At South Africa’s State-Owned Radio Stations

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa’s national broadcaster is turning up the dial on its local music quota. But the decision has drawn mixed reactions from the local industry.

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa currently sets compulsory radio play quotas for South African repertoire at 40% for nonprofit public stations and 25% for publicly and privately owned for-profit stations. Stations monitor themselves and report to the communications regulator.

But local music still accounts for only a small portion of the most-played songs on South African radio, due to the fact that many stations fail to meet this quota. To help remedy the situation, state-owned South African Broadcasting Corp. will begin voluntarily increasing its local music quota in early 2009 so that by March 2011, its nonprofit stations will air 70% South African music, while its for-profit stations will air 45% local music, according to SACBA head of strategy Sipho Sithole.

“South Africa’s national radio industry has to my knowledge the highest two-for-one local content music quotas of any country in the world,” Sithole says, acknowledging that SACBA stations are among those that fail to meet existing quotas.

Sithole says a privately formulated airplay-tracking chart used by the radio industry — although not officially sanctioned by labels body the Recording Industry of South Africa — shows the extent of the challenges faced by local music on the radio.

During a recent week in November, only 11 of the 100 most-played songs around the country were South African, Sithole says. As a result, he says the majority of public performance royalties for those songs flow out of the country to overseas rights holders.

“We have to change this,” Sithole says. Major record labels responded cautiously to the SACBA move.

Sony Music Entertainment Africa CEO Keith Lister warns that quotas “have to be set by reference to the capacity of the local industry to produce the quality, quantity and range of recordings that all commercial radio stations need in order to be competitive.”

If broadcasters set quotas too high, “you end up commoditizing radio as you hear the same local songs on all stations just so each of them can make its content quota,” Lister says.

“We are very aware of the responsibility we have to get airplay for the international artists we represent,” EMI South Africa managing director Living Schlosberg says. “But a lot of that play comes on the regional commercial stations, many of which fall outside the SACBA.”

Non-SACBA commercial stations are non-committal on how the move could affect their business, but none have yet increased their own quotas beyond those of the communications authority.

“Our listeners enjoy hearing South African music, but that doesn’t mean something more fashionable may not come along,” says Ravi Naidoo, station manager at Johannesburg top 40 regional station 94-7 Highveld Stereo.

But Bob Maleku, GM of SACBA’s three PCS stations — national top 40 FM, national urban Metro FM and regional top 40 Good Hope FM — welcomes the chance to showcase more South African music.

“Music programmers and music compilers need to have an open door policy and work more closely with artists,” he says.

Unsurprisingly, many local artists welcome the higher SACBA quotas, especially as radio play will count toward the new, recording industry-approved national music chart, due to launch in 2009 (Billboard, Nov. 22).

“I know how important radio play has been to my career,” says Sony signed Afro-soul artist Lira, whose track “Feel Good” remains in rotation at many stations two years after its release. “In the absence of strong music television shows on the SACBA’s TV channel, it really is the key way to reach audiences.”

Peas’ will.i.am will join such artists as Anoushka Shankar, Abishhek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan at Live Earth India, to be held Dec. 7 at Andheri Sports Complex in Mumbai. The event will be broadcast by Star World and Channel [V]. As with its sister Live Earth events, the show aims to raise awareness of the global environmental crisis and inspire dedication to the cause in India. Fans around the world can watch via a live webcast on MSN India. — Jonathan Cohen

>>> MIDEM GETS MESSAGE

Radiohead’s co-manager Brian Message will deliver a keynote speech at the 2009 MIDEM international music market in Cannes, which runs Jan. 18-21. Message, of Oxfordshire, England-based Courtyard Management, also represents singer/songwriter Kate Nash and dance act Faithless. He will speak Jan. 19 as part of MIDEM’s second international manager summit, which focuses on new business models, and is expected to discuss Radiohead’s experimental online release of “In Rainbows,” which fans could choose their own price for. Executive VP and head of the Nokia Entertainment and Communities business, will talk about the launch of Nokia’s all-you-can-eat mobile music service, Comes With Music, in a keynote speech at MIDEM, the international forum for the music business in the digital age. MIDEMNet takes place Jan. 17-18 in Cannes as part of MIDEM.

— Jen Wilson

“Chart-topping international acts would rather bypass Malaysia than conform to a rigid set of rules.”

— Razman Razali, Pineapple Concerts

BON JOVI, WATERS SET FOR LIVE EARTH INDIA

Bon Jovi, Roger Waters and the Black Eyed Peas’ Will.I.am will join such artists as Anoushka Shankar, Abishhek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan at Live Earth India, to be held Dec. 7 at Andheri Sports Complex in Mumbai. The event will be broadcast by Star World and Channel [V]. As with its sister Live Earth events, the show aims to raise awareness of the global environmental crisis and inspire dedication to the cause in India. Fans around the world can watch via a live webcast on MSN India. — Jonathan Cohen

>>> TOP OF THE POPS’ RETURNS TO CHRISTMAS

The BBC has reversed its decision not to air a Christmas edition of TV chart countdown “Top of the Pops.” The weekly show, which debuted in 1964, was taken off the air in 2006 after various relaunches failed to revive ratings. However, a festive edition was still shown in 2006 and 2007. The BBC aired the 2008 Christmas special in October, but after protests has now decided to bring it back — along with a New Year’s Eve edition that will be a review of the year in pop. The broadcaster stressed that a weekly “Top of the Pops” will not return.
Sunday was an exciting day for a lot of Guns N’ Roses fans. What are your thoughts now that this record is a reality?

Axl [Rose] delivered a great Guns N’ Roses album, Period. He did. It took him a long time for whatever reasons. I’m sure there were many different reasons. Bottom line is, he did it. It’s hard to say if something is worth the wait, because how the hell do any of us know if I judge it based on what it is. Does it sound better, in general, than 99% of the rock records out there? Yes. I’m just thrilled for him.

The proliferation of retail exclusives like Guns N’ Roses’ with Best Buy has been one of the biggest stories of the year. What are the biggest benefits of this approach?

With the confusion and how much media is spread out and how hard it is to market things to a mass audience right now, I think you’ll see the labels needing marketing partners to drive music, whether it’s a song, an album or a new configuration. In this case, Best Buy gave this album a great deal of marketing that we couldn’t have gotten any other way. Now we have the press on our side as well, which is extraordinary.

But what about the indie retailers that throw their arms up because of deals like this? Is there a silver lining for them?

I don’t know the answer to that. But when a guy works that hard on a record, you want to give it the best possible chance it has. We found a great partner in Best Buy, and Axl’s new management felt it was a good idea. It looks like it’s going to do really well. I mean, really, really well. Beyond anybody’s expectations.

So, let’s move from a record that is coming out this year to some that aren’t, like U2 and Eminem. I met with the guys in U2, and they say to me, “You know what? This album needs two more songs, and it will be exactly what we have in mind.” I go there and I listen, and I agreed with them. It’s a great record, but it deserves the time. Labels need to work with artists to help them achieve their best work, not jam records out that are half-baked or three-quarters baked. No one can afford to put out something that’s less than correct right now. At a time like this, it takes a lot of guts on everyone’s part to do that. You’re not out at Christmas. But I refuse to play a short-term game. I never have, and I refuse to now. I don’t want to be in the auto business. They made cars that nobody wants.

What parts of your business are growing?

Well, our Pussycat Dolls tour has sold 150,000 of 160,000 tickets, with eight weeks to go until the tour. That’s big. Other than Miley Cyrus, I don’t know a label that has something like that. We’re doing really, really well with licensing. Our 360 deals are working. We have that with Lady GaGa. Dr. Dre’s headphones are doing really, really well. It’s a fabulous product. We’re building out a lot there. We’re building out some of our management stuff. I’ve always felt, and this is just in general, that there’s an oil well for the record industry in their music videos, and so does [UMG chairman/CEO] Doug Morris. Universal Music Group had $3 billion views on YouTube and we’re still underpaid for those videos. Now, we’ll set up an infrastructure, and Doug’s in charge of this. We’ll make a deal where we really see the value. We have the most perfect content for the Internet. People love to watch them and they watch them over and over. If “Saturday Night Live” gets 100,000 views on the Internet, they throw a party. Soulja Boy, on his site alone, got 500 million. It’s nuts.

What kinds of things are you hearing as you talk to artists in this business environment?

Well, they’re concerned, usually about piracy first. All we can do is build a broader platform. And I keep saying, “Make sure your albums are stronger, and that way you can build a live audience.” Nothing builds a live audience better than playing live great and making great albums. Because of the new kinds of deals we have, we’re still investing in a lot of the albums to make them great. We have a new deal with the Black Eyed Peas to share profits in different areas.

Talk about some of the new artists you’ve put your resources behind.

Keri Hilsen. Her next single with Lil Wayne is incredible. We broke M.I.A. and we’re really excited about her for next year. Hollywood Undead on Octone is starting to do well. The Clique Girzil is a big project we have coming next year. Scooter Smith is a Chris Brown/Tina Davis act, and Chester French is a new act through Pharrell. We also have Justin Timberlake’s artist, Esme Denters.

The common thread with those acts seems to be that they built a base on social networks. Definitely. I’m giving them time. I’m not going to bet short on the record business right now. I refuse. I’m taking a real stand on it. Maybe I’ll get shot in the head, but until then, this is what I’m doing.
As Labels Promote Potential Hits, Retailers Expect A Slow Season

By Ed Christman
This holiday season could be
the tale of two Christmases.
For label sales and distribution
executives, it's the best of times.

The holiday season offers a
strong selection of albums, and
CDs are still an ideal low-priced
gift that can drive store traffic in
a tough economy. For retailers and wholesalers, the
holiday tidings don't look as
cheery. They worry that the
weakening economy could
lead to disaster, convincing
consumers that CDs still aren't
inexpensive enough and
leading to discount wars that
will make every day a Black
Friday price battle. So far,
the numbers are on the side of
the Scrooges. For the 13-week
period ending Nov. 16, CD
sales declined 25% from the
same time last year, according
to Nielsen SoundScan—
compared with the 16.2% year-
to-date drop the industry saw
through Aug. 17.

Most label executives attribute this nosedive
to a weak release schedule for those three
months. But the schedule is strong for the rest
of the year. "No question, the economy is a fac-
tor, but people will realize they still have to buy
Christmas gifts and when they do, they will
turn to CDs priced at less than $15," Universal
Music Group Distribution senior VP of sales
Joy Slusarek says. Instead of buying flat screen TVs,
another senior distribution executive sug-
gests, people will buy CDs.

With Beyoncé, Nickelback, Kanye West and
Guns N' Roses all out during the last two weeks
of November, the time has come for retailers
to assess what the rest of 2008 holds. Despite
this year's bad news, some retail executives say
that album sales in late November will enable
the industry to accurately assess what kind of
holiday selling season it can expect. "It will be
the tale of the tape," Newbury Comics buyer
Carl Mello says.

Universal Music Group initially expected
West's "808s & Heartbreak" to sell 975,000 in
its first week, according to sources. Others sug-
gested that 700,000-800,000 might be a more
realistic projection, but West's album is seen
as a sure hit.

Projections for sales of Guns N' Roses' "Chi-
nese Democracy" (Black Frog/Geffen), which is
sold exclusively at Best Buy and iTunes in
the United States, are all over the map. Some
expect first-week sales as low as 300,000, while
a UMG executive expects it to approach the
784,000 units that Wal-Mart sold of AC/DC's
"Black Ice" in that album's debut week. Exec-
utives and industry observers say that advance

Shelf life: CD sales could keep declining
develop despite fourth-quarter releases like KANYE
WEST'S "808s & Heartbreak." The
promotion for Guns N' Roses was much weaker
than Wal-Mart's campaign for AC/DC, but oth-
ers point out that Wal-Mart doesn't have as pow-
erful a Sunday newspaper circular as Best Buy.
There won't be a store-within-a-store for Guns
N' Roses, as there was for AC/DC. But the chain
will give "Chinese Democracy" its own display,
according to Slusarek.

"I believe that music is going to have a
tremendous eight weeks, but unfortunately it
won't mean as much as it used to due to the
industry's downturn," says a major-label head
of sales, who requested anonymity. "In eco-
nomic downturns, music thrives—and that
will be true again, so I'm optimistic for the
rest of the year."

Perhaps so. But the idea that music sales are
the recession-proof is an urban legend. Every re-
cession since 1975 has coincided with a down-
turn in album sales (Billboard, March 8).

A wholesale executive adds to the gloom,
countering that "people are afraid to spend
money, let alone the fact that they don't see
value in the CD. I don't think we have hit bot-
tom yet."

Retailers began making dour predictions
weeks ago, when Hastings Entertainment
chairman/CEO John Marmaduke released a
statement saying that "changes in consumer
spending have created the most difficult retail
environment we have ever seen."

Newbury Comics CEO Mike Dreese says the
current economic situation is the worst he's
40.5 percent of 2007 music sales came from mass merchants, not including Best Buy and Circuit City

Day Trading
Consumers Miss Retail’s Manic Monday

BY ED CHRISTMAN and CORTNEY HARDING

It looks as though an effort to boost sales by moving up Thanksgiving week release dates—to Sunday for the Guns N’ Roses album and to Monday for many others—did not pay off. Label executives acknowledge that many potential customers didn’t get the message, since some newspaper circulars didn’t have the information.

Darren Blase, owner of Cincinnati’s Shake It Records, says the Monday release date didn’t have much of an impact in his store. “Our customer base is trained to show up on Tuesdays,” he says. “We had a couple people wander in and see the records and say, ‘Oh, the Killers record is out today,’ because they weren’t expecting to see it until tomorrow.”

According to some sources, Monday’s sales weren’t as strong as expected. Kanye West’s new album was expected to sell 200,000 copies this week at one big-box chain, for example, but based on Monday sales the store has changed its forecast to 75,000.

As for Guns N’ Roses, sources suggest that Best Buy sold 110,000 copies of “Chinese Democracy” in its first two days of availability, but that doesn’t include iTunes sales or retailers that bought the album as an import. Although some stores seem to have bought imports than usual, some indie retailers, including Grimey’s in Nashville and Exile on Main Street in

Front Lines
Retailers Handicap The Holiday Season

‘The news makes you want to slash your wrists if you’re a retail person, but we’re up over earlier this year and overall we’re up over last year, so we’re kind of just maintaining our course.’

—CHRIS PENN, OWNER, GOOD RECORDS, DALLAS

‘I understand the logic of the exclusives, but it’s almost like scab labor. We have been faithfully working for these artists for decades and now we’re denied it.’

—JIM McGUINN, OWNER, HOT POOP, WALLA WALLA, WASH.

‘We’re selling the new Guns N’ Roses below the Best Buy price, and we have stickers on them saying, “We Went to Best Buy So You Don’t Have To.”’

—DARREN BLASE, OWNER, SHAKE IT RECORDS, CINCINNATI

Branford, Conn., say they’re not bothering to stock “Chinese Democracy.” Even so, label sources are projecting first-week sales of about half a million.

Others argue that forecasting the week’s sales based on Monday’s results just can’t be done. “After first-day sales, everyone was arguing about projections and we couldn’t agree,” one retail merchant says. “So we decided to wait and see.”

One label executive says his company had a similar debate. “Based on first-day sales, it looks like nobody knew albums came out on Monday,” the executive says. “At least we hope that’s the case, or there are going to be a lot of sad faces around here at the end of the week.”

Additional reporting by Jaclyn Albert.

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CAN DIGITAL SALES SAVE THE SEASON?

Growth In Online Retail May Start Slowing
BY ANTONY BRUNO

Ever since Apple's iTunes store launched in 2003, the digital music market has received an annual Christmas gift in the form of a sales boost, as consumers unwrap new iPods and gift cards for the holidays. This year, though, as an incipient recession ends a year of relatively sluggish growth in sales of digital music, some executives are wondering if they might get a lump of coal instead.

Even before the credit crisis hit this fall, analysts predicted holiday growth would be modest. So far this year (through the week ending Nov. 16), digital album sales are up 30%, according to Nielsen SoundScan, sales of singles 28.8%. That sounds impressive, but it's less than last year's gains: 56% for albums and 46.5% for singles.

A merry Christmas season could turn this situation around, since the number of new players that come into the market have made December just as important for digital music as it is for CD sales. Through last November, retailers sold an average of 4 million digital albums and 68 million tracks per month in 2007. In December, they sold 5.1 million and 105.8 million, respectively.

This year, some analysts are concerned about sales of new iPods and downloadable gift cards. Fourth-quarter iPod shipments
stores—and the industry expects this year’s price wars to continue through Christmas. “I think every day will be Black Friday,” says the head of a wholesaling company. The head of one music chain agrees: “The discounting going on out there already is amazing, so we will have to be more promotional than we have ever been.”


Wol-Mart and Toys World Entertainment hadn’t posted sales circulars online at press time. And while Target’s circular advertises a two-CDs-for-$14 catalog sale, it doesn’t promote new albums.

Many retailers also institute unadvertised in-store holiday sales, which means that Black Friday could introduce another round of CD discounts and bonuses. Target is offering a $5 store gift card to customers who purchase a $30 iTunes gift card and a $10 store gift card to those who purchase a $100 iTunes gift card. Some retail sources suggest that the major labels might make drastic changes to their business model in order to slow the CD’s decline. But others say that’s wishful thinking, and plea for such changes have fallen on deaf ears so far. “Talking to the labels about such strategies is useless,” one executive says. “After all, they’re optimistic about their fourth-quarter release schedule.”

“We brought in the Killers, which should do really well. Kanye should do OK. But we don’t carry Beyoncé. For me, it’s more Of Montreal, TV on the Radio, those are more important for my store.’

KIMBER LANNING, OWNER, STINKWEEDS, PHOENIX

‘The release schedule looks healthy, led by Beyoncé and Kanye. If you get a surprise like Josh Groban last year, that definitely helps, although I don’t know what that will be this year.’

—ALAN TUCHMAN, PRESIDENT, ALLIANCE ENTERTAINMENT

‘Something has clearly changed in the way people are buying. I think the only retailer benefiting is Wal-Mart.’

—CARL MELLO, BUYER, NEWBURY COMICS

could fall by about 15% from last year, according to Piper Jaffray’s Gene Munster. And budget MP3 players might not make up the difference: Overall consumer electronics spending is down 22.1% for the first two weeks of November, according to MasterCard Advisors.

Overall gift card sales could fall by 5.6%, according to the National Retail Federation, which doesn’t break down data by category. That would hurt digital retailers. NPD Group estimates that about 40% of iTunes track purchases in first-quarter 2008 were made with gift cards.

There is some good news. Digital growth is slowing partly because its consumer base is growing; digital downloads now account for about 10% of U.S. music sales, according to NPD Group. And retailers have come up with new ways to promote digital music as a gift idea. iTunes now allows users to send gift cards through e-mail or directly buy songs as gifts that the recipient can download through a link. “Overall economic pressure may keep the media wallet share tighter this year than last,” Gartner analyst Mike McGuire says, “but the tools are there now to let people make that digital look first, rather than heading to the store to get the physical disc. A $10 download card for iTunes or Amazon is a nice, cost-effective present for a lot of people.”

‘This is a different kind of recession because even the middle class and upper middle class are impacted. Even if you have money, it’s almost gauche to be spending it now.’

—ROB PERKINS, PRESIDENT, VALUE MUSIC

‘The release schedule needs an adult record. I don’t think there’s one out there.’

—JOE NARDONE JR., OWNER, GALLERY OF SOUND

‘I never realized how many people are living off credit and how that is impacting our business.’

—BRUCE OGILVIE, CEO, SUPER D

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Wait ’Til Next Year
High-Profile Q4 Releases Jump To ’09
BY HILLARY CROSLEY

More than 20 artists with anticipated albums have opted to pass on 2008 releases for reasons that vary from mundane logistics to superstar ego. “Albums usually get pushed back for A&R reasons,” says Sony BMG VP of marketing Lisa Combrinck. Last-minute songs can change the trajectory of an album, requiring artists to act on even the smallest matter accordingly.

Then there’s good old-fashioned anxiety. “From artists to management to labels, fear of dropping makes you play it safe. If you’re a little closer to your chest, says Interscope co-head of marketing Chris Clancy. ‘People want to make sure they get a public momentum before a release.’

Here’s what Billboard is waiting for in 09:

50 Cent
50 Cent’s fourth album, “Before I Self-Destruct,” was scheduled for December, but the first single, “Get Up,” didn’t generate much buzz, and the record label’s unfinished recording anyway, according to Interscope. The project is now slated for February, with more singles on the way.

Eminem
In November Eminem unveiled a new track, “The排骨,” on the Shade 45 satellite radio show. Fans naturally speculated that it was an album, but Eminem needed more time to work on the project. As of now, “Relapse” is expected in March. “Eminem’s album has real antidote and is going to be good for the biz,” Clancy says. (See the Q&A with Interscope Goffen A&M chairman Jimmy Lovine, page 16)

Dr. Dre
Eight years in the works, Dr. Dre’s “Detox” is the highest-profile “Chinese Democracy”–both long-promised and eagerly awaited by fans. Expected out before year’s end, “Detox” was jumped to 2009, while Dre devoted time to helping Eminem finish his own album.

Jay-Z
Jay-Z’s final album for Def Jam never appeared on an official release schedule, but the MC put out several singles, including “Jockin’ Jay-Z” and “History” Rumors say he’ll release his new set during first quarter 2009.

U2
U2 has reportedly recorded more than 50 songs for its first album since 2004, but the band wasn’t satisfied with the results in time to make a Q4 release and went back into the studio. A 12 album “would have been incredible to have, but you can’t put artists out until they’re done, and that’s certainly the way it should be,” Universal Music Group CEO Doug Morris says. “If the group thinks they can make it better, they make it better. It’s just such an important worldwide act that it has to be what they want it to be.”

Additional reporting by Ed Christman, Jonathan Cohen and Bill Werde.
Will Boxes Go In The Ground?  
Multidisc Sets Face A Tough Market  
BY CORTENEY HARDING

There's no shortage of boxed sets this holiday season. In addition to relatively modest products celebrating Hank Williams, Rob Zombie and Reba McEntire, there are higher-priced packages devoted to Led Zeppelin ($199), Motown's 50th anniversary ($169) and unreleased Bob Dylan tracks ($169).

Deluxe packages traditionally sell well during the holiday season. But some executives are questioning the wisdom of re-releasing such high-ticket collections, given the current economy. "We all know a lot of people don't have extra money to spend this year," says Newbury Comics head of purchasing Carl Mello. A major-label executive jokes that this year no one will buy anything that costs more than $10.

But the news isn't all gloom and doom. Sony's Legacy label sold 15,000 copies of a set celebrating Billy Joel's album "The Stranger" the week before the artist's "Last Play at Shea" concerts. And a Warner Music Group executive notes that the label just put out its third collection of Genesis albums in three years, each of which sold more during its debut week than the last. The first one, "Genesis 1976-1982," arrived May 10, 2007, and sold 1,000 its first week and 7,000 to date, according to Nielsen SoundScan; the second, "Genesis 1983-1998," came out Nov. 20, 2007, and sold 2,700 its first week and 6,000 to date; the third, "1970-1975," debuted Nov. 11 and sold 3,100 in the first week.

"We had two pre-orders on that Genesis boxed set, and we took the risk of ordering a third one," says Darren Blase, owner of Shake It Records in Cincinnati. "We'll always be able to move sets like "nuggets," the Velvet Underground and the Misfits, because they make great gifts."

Although some sets continue to sell well, some executives see diminished value in multiple collections from certain artists. "Boxed sets aren't over, but it's harder to find artists worthy of one," a senior distribution executive says. "How many more boxed sets can we put out on historical artists? We should be putting out boxed sets from artists who became viable post-1990, but there aren't many of them. It's hard enough putting together greatest-hits records for most of these artists, let alone a boxed set."

Even for artists who deserve the boxed set treatment, the news isn't all good. "On sets we used to sell 25,000 units of, we might now sell 5,000 units," the distribution executive says. "So we have to raise the retail price to compensate for the smaller runs."

Additional reporting by Ed Christman and Alexey Novikov.

Off The Charts

The Holidays Used To Be A Happy Time—Until The File-Sharing Grinches Stole Christmas. How Album Sales For The Last Seven Weeks Of The Year Stack Up.

HOLIDAY SEASON ALBUM SALES

200,000,000 150,000,000 100,000,000 50,000,000


Making Christmas Merry

Five Strategies To Survive—And Thrive—This Season BY CORTENEY HARDING

The music retail news isn't all bad. Amid poor economic conditions and a declining interest in CDs, some stores have found ways to draw in customers—and ensure they walk out with purchases.

1. Page Through The Catalog

Karl Groeger, owner of Looney Tunes in West Babylon, N.Y., says that his aggressively low catalog prices and wide selection have been crucial to his success this year. "We price all older releases at $15.99, and customers appreciate the fixed rate," he says. "We've seen more people coming in looking for catalog titles than the big-box stores have cut back.

2. Think Globally, Sell Locally

A surly department store Santa and an Eagles of Death Metal in-store appearance helped boost Atlanta's Criminal Records last weekend, according to owner Eric Levin. "We had 350 people show up," he says. "That's not an experience they could have found at a Best Buy or Wal-Mart." John Timmons, who owns Louisville, Ky.'s EarX-tasy, says he uses his participation in the Keep Louisville Weird coalition to attract locals to buy from his store instead of Amazon.

3. Set Records

Steve Baron, owner of Lexington, Ky.'s CD Central, says he draws in customers by stocking vinyl, since he's one of the few places in the area that carries it. Bob Schick, a buyer at Virginia's Plan 9, says that moving the vinyl supply to the front of the store has provided a sales boost. And buyer Ruben Mendez from Seattle's Sonic Boom says turntables have become solid sellers now that LPs are more popular.

4. Play All Gift Cards

A source at one independent store says that he accepts gift cards from bigger stores like Best Buy. "We'll take a $20 gift card from a big retailer and turn around and use it to buy some of their exclusives," he says. "It's a great deal for both the customer and for us." He once re-gifted a Barnes & Noble card to his mom, he says. "We're not taking Circuit City cards anymore, though.

5. Offer Full Service

Criminal Records' Levin makes sure his clerks aren't too cool for school or as unhelpful as some big-box employees. "Come to us and we'll find the out-of-print CD you need," he says. "If you buy a turntable with us, we'll come over and help you set it up. Unlike some of the big stores, our employees are music fans and experts."

Additional reporting by Jaclyn Albert.
PIONEERING SINGER'S LEGACY CELEBRATED WITH ULTIMATE COLLECTION, HIS WIDOW'S TIRELESS WORK

BY WAYNE ROBINS
Roy Orbison recorded for more than a handful of labels during the course of 32 years, from his first releases for Sun in 1956 to a triumphal posthumous release from Virgin completed shortly before his death in 1988. The list includes Monument, for which from 1960 to 1965 he recorded the essential string of dramatic ballads and smart, primal rockers that brought him unequivocally deserved acceptance into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987. It also includes a short but precious stint at Warner Bros. Records as a member of the Traveling Wilburys and passages through labels including Elektra, MGM, RCA and Mercury, not to mention worldwide licensees too numerous to recall.

So it's no wonder that it has taken all this time for Orbison's music to receive its ultimate validation: the four-CD boxed set "The Soul of Rock and Roll," a 107-track labor of love put together by Barbara Orbison, the singer's savvy, flame-keeping widow, and Sony's Legacy. "This is the first time everything has been pulled together, so it is going to mean more, and make a greater statement, to create an experience as rich and satisfying on multiple levels as it possibly can be," Legacy Recordings senior VP/GM Adam Block says. "Part of the beauty of it is the personal, emotional aspect. Having Barbara so completely committed to the project and being our partner, she brought her resources, archives, knowledge and relationships. Unfortunately, we couldn't do this with the artist himself, but Barbara brought us as close as we could be to Roy Orbison otherwise. This box matters because it matters so much to Barbara and to Legacy, and hopefully, that importance is communicated to the listener."

"The Soul of Rock and Roll" is chronological. It begins with "Ooby Dooby," recorded in 1956 in Odessa, Texas, by the Teen Kings, Orbison's band from his nearby West Texas hometown of Wink, which was not far from Lubbock and his friendly rival Buddy Holly. And Lubbock was not far from Norman, Petty's studio in Clovis, N.M., where the Teen Kings cut a few tracks that fairly quickly nailed the attention of Sam Phillips.

Orbison and the Teen Kings recorded an only incrementally more polished version of "Ooby Dooby" produced by Phillips at Sun Studios in Memphis, marking the beginning of Orbison's brief but productive period as a Sun Records rockabilly star. His rockabilly career (a period amply represented on disc one of the box) has been undervalued, it may be because he so successfully surpassed this early work with power and inventiveness.

The Teen Kings, hailing from West Texas, included (from left) BILLY PAR ELLIS, ROY ORBISON, JAMES MORROW, JOHNNY WILSON and JACK KENNELLY.

The box ends with a live version of the resonantly tragic "It's Over," recorded Dec. 4, 1988, in Akron, Ohio, just two days before Roy died of a heart attack at age 52 while visiting his mother near Nashville.

It's especially meaningful to his wife that these very first and very last recordings bookend the box. "I was married with Roy 20 years, and I've been widowed for 20 years now, so I knew him quite well," Barbara Orbison says. "We were one of those couples that were best friends, lovers, husband and wife, raised the kids together, manager and singer. So I listened to Roy's stories. But until I did the boxed set, it was never really clear to me than when you look..." continued on p26

The legacy will live on forever. It's an honor to be a part of it.
Orbison's passion in songs like 'Only the Lonely' widened the emotional playing field for rock'n'roll.

Whatever you call it, Orbison's passion widened the emotional playing field for rock'n'roll, and songs like "Only the Lonely," "Running Scared" and "Crying" made him such a distinctive individual in the often machismo-fueled days of early rock.

"He was the first male voice to say, 'You know, guys feel lonely too. Guys cry, guys run scared, especially when it comes to the heart, love affairs,'" Barbara says. "Those were not things that in the '60s a guy would even talk about."

It was both Orbison's passion and his resourcefulness that would allow him to withstand the English Invasion on both sides of the Atlantic. He befriended the Beatles when they toured England together in the earliest days of Beatlemania. Orbison and George Harrison (both always the last ones on the tour bus, according to Barbara) formed a particularly strong bond that proved itself 25 years later with the formation of the Traveling Wilburys: Orbison, Harrison, Jeff Lynne, Tom Petty and Bob Dylan.

He was the only American artist to have a No. 1 single on the U.K. charts in the 68 weeks following Aug. 8, 1963 (when the Searchers' "Sweets for My Sweets" replaced Elvis' "Devil in Disguise" at the top), and Orbison did it twice.

In the United States, "Oh, Pretty Woman" followed the Animals' "House of the Rising Sun" at the top of the charts in August 1964 for three weeks before British rule resumed with Manfred Mann's "Do Wah Diddy." The uptempo "Oh, Pretty Woman"—a song of fantastic tension, with a signature guitar riff that communicates the doubt, euphoria and joy of a spontaneous, chaste encounter (boy sees girl, girl keeps walking, boy pleads, girl walks back)—may be Orbison's best-known song, and the track being featured in the 1990 Richard Gere/Julia Roberts hit...
movie “Pretty Woman” introduced his music to millions of new listeners.

But “Oh, Pretty Woman” turned out to be Orbison’s last U.S. hit for many years, until his Grammy Award-winning duet with Emmylou Harris, “That Lovin’ You Feelin’ Again,” in 1980.

A rich contract with MGM Records in 1965 yielded a mixed bag of quality, one top 25 single (“Ride Away”) and a shot at the movies.

Personal tragedies also contributed to knocking his recording career out of orbit. In 1966, Orbison saw his first wife, Claudette, killed in a motorcycle accident. In 1968, he was on tour in England when his home outside Nashville burned down, killing two of his three sons.

During the ’70s Orbison was less interested in having a recording career than he was traveling and building a marriage and family with Barbara, an 18-year-old German girl he had met in England and married in 1969.

“We decided to basically enjoy life in the ’70s,” Barbara says.

“We had a kid in 1970, a kid in 1975, we would tour, as well as play for larger audiences [than in the ’60s]. He just didn’t really write much. Roy also had a life outside the recording business—he loved collecting cars and designing houses, he loved motorcycles and airplanes, and he enjoyed visiting my family in Europe. I never heard him say he wanted a top career again until maybe 1984 or 1985.”

Around that time, Orbison was turning 48, 49 years old, and he began to reflect about the importance of rock’n’roll as not just his past, but his future.

“So he said, ‘I’m going to write, and have a record in the charts, and I’m going to give rock’n’roll a gift, that you can be No. 1 in the charts with all your friends.’ Bruce [Springsteen] adored him and Bono said, ‘I love the guy.’ but Roy said, ‘I want to beat them to No. 1. I’m going to give rock’n’roll a gift: You can be cool and still be competing with young musicians at 50 in rock’n’roll.’

It would take another three years for Orbison to complete his comeback solo album, “Mystery Girl.” With tracks produced by Orbison, Lynne, T Bone Burnett, Bono and Mike Campbell, and executive-produced by Barbara, it just about achieved the singer’s goal. It went platinum, peaking at No. 5 on the Billboard 200. The single “You Got It” topped out at No. 9 on the Billboard Hot 100, but reached No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary chart in 1989, two months after Orbison’s death.

Ironically, Orbison had already re-established himself as a valid contemporary artist even before “Mystery Girl” was released, as he had returned to the charts with the Traveling Wilburys. (The Wilburys are represented on the box by “Not Alone Any More.”)

In addition, his songs had been deployed in a wide range of movies throughout the years, but perhaps never so effectively as a scene in David Lynch’s 1985 film “Blue Velvet” that featured Orbison’s “In Dreams,” which rekindled cult interest in the singer’s music.

This fall introduces Image Entertainment’s Blu-ray release of “A Black & White Night,” the 1988 concert film starring Orbison with Springsteen, Lynne, Burnett, Tom Petty, Elvis Costello, Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, k.d. lang, Tom Waits, Jennifer Warnes and J.D. Souther, “A Black & White Night” and pitches for the box have been the focus of PBS pledge drives through November that are continuing into December. Also airing in December on various PBS stations: “In Dreams: The Roy Orbison Story,” a 1999 Canadian documentary about the artist that features interviews, testimonials and performances, and such fan friends as Harrison, Bono, Johnny Cash, the Everly Brothers, the Bee Gees, Jerry Lee Lewis, Jack Clements and Fred Foster.

“A Black & White Night” remains the ultimate Orbison performance available for the home viewer. It premiered in January 1988 as Cinemax cable TV special and was shot in black and white at the Coconut Grove in Los Angeles. The primary backup vocal trio consisted of Raitt, Warnes and lang. Waits looked like a mad scientist at the keyboards, while Costello blew harmonicas and contributed the handcrafted composition “The Comedian.” Guitarists and background singers included Costello, Burnett, Souther and Browne, while Springsteen, wearing a cowboy string tie, established himself as Orbison’s sidekick, sharing the lead mic on harmonies, acting as a kind of co-band leader and onstage alter ego.

continued on >p30
“ANYTHING YOU WANT——YOU GOT IT
ANYTHING YOU NEED——YOU GOT IT”

WE ARE PROUD OF OUR LONG REPRESENTATION OF ROY'S MUSIC AND OUR CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP WITH BARBARA.
Despite being known for songs of immense sadness and longing, there’s no mistaking the joy that permeates the performance of these songs. You have to ask: Was it just Orbison’s unusually rich and expressive vocal instrument that led him to write, sing and interpret songs with such overpowering emotions, or was part of his soul lonely, unreachable and untouchable?

"Roy had such a sense of humor and was so strong in life," Barbara says. "Later on in life when the tragedies happened you could really hear the strength and soul of Roy Orbison. But Roy wasn’t a depressed person, he wasn’t a sad person. But the voice is what kept the listener... he would say, ‘If I record a song, I have to be able to step onstage and sing it like it was the first time’. When you watch ‘Black & White Night’, or any performance, Roy smiles through the whole performance.

The decision to highlight the Image Entertainment Blu-ray release (it was released on high-definition DVD and 5.1 Audio last December) exemplifies Barbara’s willingness to use all formats and possibilities to keep Orbison’s music before the public.

With its wide range of music and stars, "A Black & White Night" seems made to order for PBS fund-raising drives, where it in fact has been a perennial since the ‘90s. Orbison, according to Barbara, was obsessed with TV and the movies, and the dramatic musical construction and concise storytelling of his recordings make them a natural for both mediums. The Internet Movie Database lists 75 uses of Orbison’s songs in movies. During film debuts in October alone, his songs have been heard in such disparate cinematic entities as “Beverly Hills Chihuahua,” Oliver Stone’s “W.” and a new Billy Graham biopic.

"When he was growing up in West Texas as a very young man, Roy had a fascination with television, and if somebody would have said to him, ‘One of your songs is going to be on nationwide television,’ or in a movie, he would have been overjoyed," Barbara says. "I don’t have any particular favorite [uses of Orbison’s music in a movie]. I always look at movies and say, ‘What would movies be without familiar music or without a song making a scene more memorable, lightening the heaviness of a scene?’ Movies and songs go together.

Barbara used TV effectively to inaugurate sales of the boxed set, appearing in September on the QVC home shopping network.

"I was so scared to do it," she says. "They’ve asked me for many years, and I couldn’t figure out a reason to do it, to sit there and sell my husband’s wares. This year, I was collecting and finishing the boxed set, so I said to myself, ‘How can I teach what the box is all about? How can I do this?’ So when QVC asked me I said, ‘This is incredible. I will get very unceesored time all about Roy and I can bring pictures and songs.’ I had old pictures of Roy behind me and I can talk about this boxed set. It was a wonderful experience.

Barbara says her allotment of 1,000 boxes were sold in the first few minutes. QVC executives declined to comment for this story.

It may be ironic that a shopping network and a noncommercial network have been the main paths of exposure for "The Soul of Rock and Roll." And in today’s retail environment, boxed sets are harder than ever to stock and sell in brick-and-mortar stores, so a multimedia vision is required, even if it is a little counterintuitive to consider Orbison and the Internet.

"In this day and age, the digital realm is so critical to everything we do," Legacy’s Block says. "We participated in the launch of Roy Orbison.com this summer; there’s a Roy Orbison YouTube channel, a MySpace page and Facebook. We created podcasts for the box, which we are doing more and more of. There are so many great stories about an artist like Roy Orbison, and the podcast is a tremendous device for us to share them with. They are available at the Legacy Web site or at iTunes in a three-part series hosted by journalist Dave Marsh.

Whatever promotional or marketing medium, Barbara is driven by the desire to put Orbison’s music in place for posterity.

"This box was a wonderful place to take all the ingredients I had gathered over the years, like the 1956 ‘Guitar Puff’ [a medley of Elvis songs] that you can’t put on a commercial CD, because on a commercial CD you expect everything to be pristine, while there are certain baby steps on the way that really show who that artist is at that particular point, or who they are evolving into, that you can only show on a boxed set. So you save the different pieces, you always do it for the artist and the sense of history.

"What kept me driving—it’s very tough, emotionally. If I had to get up every morning and say, ‘I have to go to work on a boxed set,’ I’d say to myself, ‘I’d rather not’—but I looked at the sense of history and the need to preserve it in a certain order that is historically correct, and it’s important to preserve the history. I had in mind not just the audience right now, but 50 years or 100 years [from now], if there’s a school or a teacher, if they want to study about rock ‘n’ roll, they will find the boxed set a teaching guide, because it really shows all the steps. I know there are certain listeners who love music overall and some in particular love Roy Orbison, so we have to get the boxed set from here to there.”
IT WAS BOTH A PRIVILEGE AND AN HONOR TO HAVE WORKED WITH SUCH AN INCREDIBLE TALENT AS ROY ORBISON

- Mike Curb
TRACKING ORBISON’S LONG HIT STREAK

Few artists who achieved top 10 success on the Billboard Hot 100 in the early ’60s could be found atop the chart nearly three decades later. But Roy Orbison’s top 10 run stretches from the chart debut of “Only the Lonely (Know How I Feel)” on the June 11, 1960, tally to his late career resurgence with “You Got It,” which entered the Jan. 21, 1989, Hot 100, the month following his death at the age of 52.

In between, of course, came classics like “Oh, Pretty Woman,” which debuted on the Aug. 29, 1964, chart. That song held the No. 1 spot for three weeks and ranks as the No. 1 single of Orbison’s singular career, according to this exclusive recap of his Hot 100 hits.

Among Orbison’s many admirers, Bruce Springsteen memorably described “Roy Orbison singing for the lonely” in his song “Thunder Road,” which opened Springsteen’s breakthrough album “Born to Run.”

When Orbison was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Springsteen paid him tribute: “I’ll always remember what he means to me and what he meant to me when I was young and afraid to love. In ’75, when I went into the studio to make ‘Born to Run,’ I wanted to make a record with words like Bob Dylan that sounded like Phil Spector, but most of all I wanted to sing like Roy Orbison.

“Young people know that nobody sings like Roy Orbison.”

The titles on this chart are ordered by peak position on the Hot 100. If more than one title peaked at the same position, ties were broken by the number of weeks spent at the peak. If ties still remained, they were broken by the number of weeks on the chart, and then in the No. 10 and/or the top 40, depending on where the title peaked.

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<td>3</td>
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KEY PLACEMENTS ENSURE ORBISON'S SONGS LIVE ON

In films, TV shows, videogames and advertisements, the songs of Roy Orbison enjoy continued exposure in the United States and international markets.

Three films that opened in October feature Orbison's hits. The satirical presidential biopic "W." from director Oliver Stone features "Claudette." Director Bobby Benson's film "Billy: The Early Years," about the preacher Billy Graham, features "In Dreams." And the Disney film "Beverly Hills Chihuahua" plays with "Oh, Pretty Woman."

"Oh, Pretty Woman," Orbison's most successful single, which topped the Billboard Hot 100 for three weeks in 1964, is featured in the videogames "Slingstar," "Guitar Hero," "Lips" and "Atari Karaoke." It's also heard in an American Express ad in Israel and two commercials in Japan: one for Mitsubishi and another for Osaka Gas.

When Sony/ATV Music Publishing acquired Famous Music from Viacom in June 2007, among the songs included in the deal were those of Orbison.

"Roy Orbison represents a unique portion of the history of contemporary music," Sony/ATV Music Publishing chairman/CEO Martin Bandier says. "At a time when songs and artists get slotted into specific genres, Roy's music continues to cross all boundaries. His music has been loved and appreciated by everyone who enjoys a great voice and a great song."

Sony/ATV reports that Orbison's songs also have recently been heard in TV shows including "My Name Is Earl," "Prison Break" and "Dirty Sexy Money."
Roy Orbison
The Soul of Rock and Roll
Producer: Gregg Geller
Monument/Orbison/Legacy Records
Release Date: Sept. 30
This four-disc, 107-track boxed set is a throwback, and not just because Roy Orbison died 20 years ago, on Dec. 6, 1988. It’s a return to the time that a CD boxed set would stir the fans, historians and collectors among us to say, “Oh, wow!” It offers a complete portrait as you’ll find of one of rock’s seminal artists.

It’s got all the hits and signature tunes from the ‘60s (“Only the Lonely,” “Runnin’ Scared,” “Crying” “Oh, Pretty Woman,” “Blue Bayou,” “Love Hurts,” “In Dreams”) and the ‘80s (“You Got It,” “California Blue”). Only a set of this scope could include nine-and-a-half minutes of rockabilly raw Orbison with just his voice and guitar at what sounds like a house party (identified as “1956 Guitar Pull Medley”) in Galveston, Texas. Or a fistful of unreleased demos from the late 50s, including such titles as “Bad Cat,” “Love Storm” and “Defeated.” The last two songs appear to be the missing links between the expected bravado of Orbison’s Sun recordings and the astonishing vulnerability that he would so peerlessly express on the mature Monument Recordings he began to make with producer Fred Foster around 1960. Orbison’s sensitivity is obvious on an oddity from this period, “(They Call You) Gigolette,” showing rare respect—for its day—for a girl who others may have considered a runaround Sue.

There are individual tracks from an array of movies, including his own starring role—without sunglasses—in “The Fastest Guitar Alive.” Since then Orbison’s songs have appeared in dozens of films, and the box unearths the peculiar ballad “So Young,” which MGM’s Mike Curb had tackled onto the end of Michelangelo Antonioni’s 1970 counterculture epic “Zabriskie Point,” a soundtrack otherwise known for its Pink Floyd material. There’s a tribute to Elvis, “Hound Dog Man,” from the infrequently heard 1979 album “Laminar Flow,” and a wonderful live version of “Land of 1000 Dances” recorded in 1972 in Australia, a time and place where Orbison had remained a star when his career was in eclipse in the United States. Two good tracks, including “Waymore’s Blues” from the 1986 album “Class of ’55” (with Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash), also get some well-deserved light, as do songs from the posthumously released 1992 album “King of Hearts.”

Executive-produced with intelligence, intuition and passion by Barbara Orbison and Roy Kelton Orbison Jr., this is the box the artist’s fans have imagined—in dreams.

—Wayne Robins

Proud to be of continuing service to Barbara Orbison and the Roy Orbison Estate


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  CEO and Co-Founder
  Harmonia

- PAUL DEGOOYER
  SVP of Electronic Games & Music
  MTV

FEATRURED SPEAKERS:

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  Principal
  Norwest Venture Partners

- FRED DAVIS
  Partner
  Davis Shapiro

- STEVE JANG
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People Are People

Brandy Breaks Four-Year Hiatus With Epic Debut

You can't blame Brandy for being a little nervous stepping back into the recording studio. Four years have elapsed since the release of her fourth album, "Afrodisiac." And it has been just two years since her headline-making car accident in which another driver died.

"Once you get into a zone, it's hard to come out," says Brandy, who will not face criminal charges but still faces a wrongful-death lawsuit that goes to trial in April. "What I experienced in the past couple of years was tough, but I had to face it and find the strength to move forward. Connecting back with music has definitely helped me through everything. Once I got back in the studio, the butterflies went away."

Music's uplifting power provided the thematic undercurrent for "Heruman," due Dec. 9 from Koch/Epic. The project reunites Brandy with songwriter/producer Rodney Jerkins, who first worked with the singer on her 1998 multiplatinum sophomore set, "Never Say Never." Jerkins, the executive producer of "Heruman," also produced the first two singles: the up-tempo "Right Here (Departed)" and "Long Distance," a ballad co-produced with Bruno Mars.

"We have great musical chemistry," Jerkins says. "Departed" was the first song we did together after reuniting. And that says a lot: Most of the time you don't find the single until you're at the end of a project.

Though additional collaborations with Brian Kennedy (whose credits include Rihanna's "Disturbia"), Toby Gad (Beyoncé's "If I Was a Boy"), James Fauntleroy (Jordin Sparks' "No Air") and RedOne (Lady Gaga's "Just Dance"), Brandy reflects on the joys and pitfalls involved with just being human. She also co-wrote several songs, including "Fall" with Epic labelmate Natalie Bedingfield.

The lyrics drew inspiration from a daily journal Brandy began keeping. "Getting in touch with how I felt made me want to sing about it," Brandy says. "This entire album is about life and what we all experience—that we're not alone and sometimes need to be uplifted."

Brandy rose to prominence at 15 with her 1994 self-titled debut for Atlantic. Her final album for the label was "Afrodisiac," which has sold 417,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Between recording, she also starred in the popular '90s TV show "Moesha," which still runs in syndication.

Koch/Epic initiated an online buzz campaign in July to reactivate Brandy's existing fan base and introduce her to a new generation of listeners. "Long Distance," whose Chris Robinson-directed video will premiere at the end of November, jumps 80-63 this week on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. "Right Here (Departed)" peaked at No. 22 on that chart after a strong run on BET's "106 & Park" video countdown.

In addition to interviews with major print and online outlets including Vibe, Us Weekly, AOL and AllHipHop.com, Brandy is in the midst of her third radio promo tour and has performed on "106 & Park" and MTV's just-ended "TRL," with upcoming performances slated for "Today," "The View" and top 40 WHTZ New York's annual Jingle Ball Dec. 12.

A "Human" pre-order campaign launched Nov. 11 on iTunes, which is offering a regular and deluxe version of the album. Epic VP of marketing Karim Karmi says the label has joined forces with MySpace for the release, an album-release party for fans during which Brandy will perform. The footage will be streamed on MySpace.

Also down the road is a tour and more acting. "That's another part of me that has to be fulfilled," says Brandy, who stars as a spokeswoman for Sketchers and is featured in the company's print campaign. "I really want to get back to that, creating a character who people would love to see every week."

Anxious now to reconnect musically, Brandy says it's actually an audience of one that keeps her going—her 6-year-old daughter. "Playing my songs back for her and hearing her respond—that's what lets me know I'm on the right track and motivates me to continue what I'm doing."
Creative ‘Control’

Common Starts The Party On New Album

Common has always been known for his pensive lyrics, but the veteran rapper is trying out a new style on the upcoming “Universal Mind Control.”

Due Dec. 9 from Geffen after numerous delays (which Common blames on his burgeoning acting career), “Universal Mind Control” doesn’t feature beats from such usual producers as No ID, Kanye West and the late J. Dilla. Instead, the Neptunes’ Pharrell Williams and OutKast producer Mr. DJ are behind the boards for Common’s most pop-driven work to date. First single “Universal Mind Control (UMC),” featuring Williams, plucks its rhythm from Afrika Bambaata’s “Planet Rock” as Common rhymes about “booties dropping…style and being fly.”

“I wanted to do what I felt was missing from my catalog—songs that could be played at parties internationally,” Common says. “I just came off tour with N.E.R.D., and crowds really felt ‘Universal Mind Control (UMC).’”

Common is revered in hip-hop circles and beyond for his creative storytelling. His witty 1994 single “I Used to Love Her,” chronicling the changes that hip-hop has endured as a genre, is hailed as a classic and emulated by many new artists. But he’s never been shy about taking chances with his sound.

His fifth album, 2002’s “Electric Circus,” drew its beats from new wave and Count Basie-esque jazz, but it sold just 65,000 copies in its first week of U.S. release, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The artist spent the next two albums—2005’s “Be” and 2007’s “Finding Forever”—returning to his roots, and fans responded big-time: “Be” sold 185,000 in its debut frame, while “Finding Forever” shifted 155,000. Together they’ve since sold a combined 1.5 million copies.

“When you come up with a new sound, it takes time for people to take a liking to it,” Common says. “The music is the future of progressive hip-hop. It’s colorful and a little electronic.”

With Williams and Mr. DJ as the sole producers, the album showcases the chart-driven catchiness of the Neptunes and the alternative quality of OutKast. “Everywhere” has a guitar line reminiscent of Pat Benatar’s “Love Is a Battlefield,” while “Gladiator” finds Common fiercely rhyming over a ’20s-style horn walk, driving drums and thick bass.

“Punk Drum Love,” possibly the second single, features a catchy chorus from West, who is otherwise absent. “Am I crazy? Or were you giving me the eye?” he raps. Kanye was focusing on his Glow in the Dark show, so he wasn’t able to make it to the studio to weigh in,” Common says.

Common is receiving prime visibility thanks to a branding deal with Microsoft Zone, which sponsored his latest tour and is featuring him in a new TV commercial alongside Bambataa. Zone users can buy the album for $9.99 cents for a limited time. “Because of his solid image and heightened awareness from his acting career, more doors are opening for him,” Interscope Geffen A&M senior music marketing executive Tim Reid says.

Online, Common recently joined the ranks of musician bloggers on ThinkCommon.com, which also sells his merchandise. Offline, he’s planning TV appearances around street date, including “The Ellen DeGeneres Show.”

The rapper is also busy with film work. Having already acted alongside Jeremy Piven in “Smokin’ Aces,” Denzel Washington in “American Gangster” and Angelina Jolie in “ Wanted,” Common will play the character Barnes in the highly anticipated 2009 film “Terminator Salvation.”

And having achieved Hollywood success, Common knows he can take artistic chances with his music in a way few other rappers can. “A brother isn’t just relying on hip-hop to pay my bills anymore,” he says. **

Fine Colombian

Fanny Lu Makes Stateside Inroads

With a mix of pop, vallenato accordion and the husky voice of an ingenue, Colombian singer Fanny Lu found success in 2006 with her catchy single “No Te Pido Que Me Manudes Flores.”

The track, from her debut album, “Lagrimas Calidas,” spent nine weeks at No. 1 on the airplay charts of Fanny Lu’s native Colombia and opened the door for Universal Music Latino to release the album in the United States.

Thankful to “Lagrimas,” Fanny Lu garnered extensive airtime at the 2007 Billboard Latin Music Awards and took home the best tropical song award.

The recognitions paved the way for Universal to look with care at her follow-up, “Due,” due Dec. 8 in Colombia and Dec. 16 in the United States, with plans to release the record in the rest of Latin America in early 2009. Already, the first single, “Tu No Eres Para Mi,” has spent nine weeks at No. 1 on Colombian radio. “It’s beautiful to see his- tory repeat itself—to get a blessing from your own country,” says Fanny Lu, who now lives in Miami. “What stands out about the song is that the lyrics are very colloquial and that everybody speaks that way. It’s something that could happen to anyone.”

“It was important for us that she launch this album in her home country,” says Luis Estrada, GM for Universal Music Latino, which has a 360-deal with the artist that includes sponsorship and show revenue.

“It’s a statement, to say we have an artist that comes with a solid foundation and proven success in a market like Colombia.”

“I’m the first, which is No. 15 on Billboard’s Latin Pop Songs chart, is up to tempo, almost bubble-gum pop. Stateside, the song will get exposure through its use

Global Pulse

Edited by TOM FERGUSON

>>BEGGIN’ & BORROWIN’

Ahead of the domestic release of its new album, Norwegian duo Madcon’s beat-driven rap cover of the 41-year-old Frankie Valli & The 4 Seasons song “Beggin’” has just celebrated its third month in the upper reaches of the Eurochart Hot 100 Singles—despite having peaked at No. 2 in September.

The track has been a hit across Europe since first appearing in November 2007 in Norway. Local production duo Stargate worked with Madcon (“Tshawe Baatwa and Yosef Wolde-Mariam”) on the song for the act’s second album. “So Dark the Con of a Man,” (Bonnier Amigo), released last December in Norway and in May elsewhere in Europe. “Beggin’” was also downloaded as a European charts topping lead single and was certified five-times-platinum (50,000 units shipped) by IFPI Norway. The publishing on the original song is controlled by EMI Music Publishing.

Released by Sony BMG labels across Europe, “Beggin’” has charted in Germany, Austria and Switzerland and also reached No. 5 on the Official Charts Co. listing in the United Kingdom in August. “Madcon delivered a tremendously catchy mix of an urban and pop sound and landed a true international hit,” says Philip Gingin, head of Columbia Germany/Four Music Sony BMG in Munich.

Bonnier Amigo will release the act’s third album, “InConvenient Truth,” Dec. 1 in Norway. Madcon’s booking agent is Norway’s Artist Partner.

—Wolfgang Spahr

Mad sales: MADCON
in a three-month Telemundo campaign as the theme for the reality show "12 Corazones."

The track, a sweet-talking two-timer who gets his comeuppance, features Wilmer Valderrama from "That '70s Show" as the ex-boyfriend whose effigy gets stuck with pins. He participated in the video out of friendship with Fanny Lu, whom he met a couple of years ago. If all sounds a bit charmed, it is. Fanny Lu's foray into music is relatively recent. Although she's always aspired to sing professionally, she studied industrial engineering and then had a career as a TV host and actress before taking the plunge and recording an album with producer friends Andrés Múnera and José Gaviria.

"Lagrimas," which was mostly a mix of tropical and pop sounds—what is known in Colombia as "trap-pop"—found an audience stateside. Although the album has sold 15,000 copies in the States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, sales have been steady and its individual tracks have shifted 15,000 digital downloads. "Dos," whose sound vacillates between Fanny Lu's original 13 songs in French on one CD and 15 in other languages—English, Spanish, German, Italian—on the second, Aznavour is published by Editions Raoul Breton, which he owns.

The album's includes Elton John, Sting, Placido Domingo, Celine Dion, Paul Anka, Liza Minnelli and even—combining Aznavour's voice and new arrangements with previous recordings—Sina-tra himself.

Defranoux says the initial planned global shipment is 350,000 copies, including 80,000 for France. Aznavour's manager/agent is Levon Sayan; his international booking agents are Paris-based Bernard Olivier and Alain Dierck.

At 84, Aznavour—who will be honored with a lifetime achievement award at the MDEM trade fair in January—is still performing and plans to tour the United States in spring 2009. "There is no farewell with Aznavour," Defranoux says.

—Aymeric Pichévin

>>SHINE ON

Welsh rock act Stereophonics hit No. 2 on the Official Charts Co. listings on Nov. 16 with its greatest-hits collection, "A Decade in the Sun: The Best of Stereophonics" (V2/Mercury). The chart compiler reported first-week sales of 67,000 units for the album, released Nov. 18 in the United States on Fontana International/Vox Populi.

The set draws from Stereophonics' six albums, five of which were U.K. No. 1s, and contains eight U.K. top five singles. "Every song on the album has been a proper hit single," Mercury GM Joe Munnus says, "so we made sure the campaign reflected the strength and magnitude of the songs in the band's canon.

The act returned in September to North America, a territory it hadn't visited for three years, for a 12-city tour ahead of U.K. dates Nov. 28-Dec. 20, booked through X-Ray Touring. Plans are under way for another U.S. trek in late January booked through Paradigm Talent Agency. The band has "worked extremely hard in setting this album up," says the group's Los Angeles-based manager Dan Garnett of Nettwerk Management. "In addition to two new songs for radio, a great TV ad, print and outdoor advertising, the band have had the most extensive list of promotional appearances during a release in a long, long time."

—Jen Wilson

>>DOUBLE TIME

Veteran French singer/songwriter Charles Aznavour can expect to draw comparisons to Frank Sinatra for his duets album, "Duo," released Dec. 8 internationally by EMI. An early-2009 U.S. release is also scheduled.

"This is a great album of international prestige," says Hervé Defranoux, A&R director at EMI France's Capitol, Jazz and Odeon, who acknowledges the debt the project owes to Sinatra's 1993 "Duits" album. "Duo" features 28 tracks, mostly from Aznavour's own catalog, with...
ARMY NAVY

Not all was smooth sailing during Army Navy’s first national tour this fall. The band ran out of gas in “deep, deep, Oregon” and frontman Justin Kennedy accidentally ran over guitarist Louise Schultz’s foot while they took turns pushing the van. “He just touched it out to the last, propping his foot up on a stool at shows. I mean, we felt bad,” Kennedy says with a laugh. “Crutches just weren’t in the budget.”

If the Los Angeles-based foursome keeps on its current road, a budget will be the last thing on its mind. In two-and-a-half months’ time, Army Navy has moved 2,000 copies of its debut self-titled full-length, according to Nielsen SoundScan, with even more sold on the road. The indie rock troupe got a little help from Allegro/Nail, which offered to distribute physical copies to major retailers. “Army Navy” also consistently appears as a top 10 best seller on eMusic.

The band can expect to see an uptick in sales overseas since the album has been licensed and released by Japanese label 1977. The single “My Thin Sides” will soon be promoted as the song of the week on iTunes Australia. The track’s hilarious music video, featuring comedian Paul Scheer from “Human Giant” and director Jeremy Kornon, has been making the rounds online.

Kennedy formed the band four years ago when he moved from Seattle to L.A., after backing singer/songwriter Anna Waronker and spending a number of years in the late ‘90s co-writing songs with Ben Gibbard (of Death Cab for Cutie fame) in the band Pinwheel.

The new album is a harmonious blend of pop and upbeat rock, produced by Adam Lasus and boasting vocals from all band members. The group initially recorded with former drummer Josh Zetumer (who quit midway to pursue a screenwriting career, which includes a remake of “Dune” and the new James Bond flick). Before landing Douglas Randall to permanently fill the drummer stool, Army Navy utilized a very special guest: Pete Thomas, from Elvis Costello’s backing band the Attractions.

Prior to “Army Navy,” the group scored some prominent synch deals on “The OC,” “Weeds” and “Numbers.” Appearances on the soundtrack and trailers to “Nick & Norah’s Infinite Playlist” followed, plus a deal with music placement agency Bank Robber Music. But nothing seemed to tickle Army Navy more than the use of its song “Snakes of Hawaii” in the straight-to-DVD big-screen knockoff movie “Snakes on a Train.”

“They had a whole review of the thing in Variety that was like, ‘This is the most horrid thing to ever be made, there is nothing redeeming or funny about it, blah blah blah,’” bassist Benjamin Gaffin says with a laugh. “But that Army Navy song is a pretty nifty tune.”

—Katie Hasty

Contact: Jim Merlis, publicist, jim@bighassic.com

CATCHING UP WITH UNDERGROUND ALUMNI

Marching Band has signed with Azoff Management and Creative Artists Agency and performed a monthlong residency in November at Los Angeles’ Spaceland . . . The Noises 10 signed a publishing and licensing deal with North Star Music . . . Barsuk signer Ra Ra Riot released its debut “The Rhumb Line” in August and appeared on “Late Show With David Letterman” and “Late Night With Conan O’Brien” this fall.

HYPERNOVA

When Hypernova first started playing shows in Iran’s secretive rock scene, lead singer/guitarist Raam would always keep one eye on the door. In a country where playing rock music is forbidden, he and his band would need to sprint away from the authorities if they raised the gig.

“It was scary,” Raam says. “We had to sound-proof everything we did when practicing and basically live in an underground room,” he recalls. “But art strives off of fear and struggle. We were lifting spirits in an environment where people couldn’t express themselves.”

Once Hypernova’s brand of dark-dance-rock quietly exploded in Iran, the foursome dashed to New York in March 2007, then to Los Angeles soon after. Careful not to be pigeonholed as “some exotic band from the Middle East,” the band spent last year honing its sound in the studio with producer Hedwig Maurer and mixer Sean Beaven (Nine Inch Nails, Marilyn Manson).

“Taste of Chaos,” Hypernova’s debut album set for self-release this spring, features sharp guitar licks and apocalyptic, yet catchy lyrics that have garnered comparisons to Joy Division. The buzz around the disc also helped land the band a slot opening for goth legends Sisters of Mercy this month on their current U.S. trek. A tour supporting “Taste of Chaos” is shaping up for next year, but Raam—who grew up listening to Sisters of Mercy—says, “This tour has been so much fun, we don’t want it to end.”

Far removed from the dangerous shows of the group’s past, Raam says that he and his bandmates feel blessed to be in this position. “To go through all of the struggles,” he says, “we never take anything for granted.”

—Jason Lipshutz

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THE BILLBOARD

REVIEWS

ALBUMS

VITAL REISSUES

NEIL YOUNG
Live at Canterbury House 1968
Producer: Neil Young
Reissue
Release Date: Dec. 2
Neil Young’s “Archives” project is poised to become the new “Chinese Democracy,” but the wait helps get gems like this out of his vault. This album captures Young fresh out of Buffalo Springfield and five days shy of his 23rd birthday on the weekend before the release of his solo debut. It’s an intimate performance in which the songs—including winning takes of “On the Way Home,” “My Soul,” “The Loner,” “Trip to Tulsa” and, of course, “Sugar Mountain”—aren’t necessarily the stars of the show. That slot is reserved for a chatty and cheerful Young and his between-song raps about everything from the length of his hair to songwriting (he decides he needs more “happy” material) and using his first royalty check to buy a 1934 Bentley “with big lights and everything.” It’s the kind of recording that makes you wish you were there—but also makes you feel like you are.—GG

SOUNDTRACK

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Music From the Motion Picture Cadillac Records

Producer: Steve Jordan
Columbia
Release Date: Dec. 2
The soundtrack to the film history of Chess Records falls somewhere between a dawn-of-rock-’n’roll tribute album and a new Beyoncé album, either of which should give it pretty decent sales for a few weeks. (The single-disc version features three new Beyoncé tracks; the two-disc deluxe edition adds two more.) The songs are performed in “Walk the Line” fashion by the actors: Mos Def does Chuck Berry (“No Particular Place to Go”), actor Jeffrey Wright channels Muddy Waters (“I’m a Man”), and, most notably, Beyoncé leaves Sasha Fierce at the club door for a reverent turn as Etta James (“At Last,” “I’d Rather Go Blind”). Ms. Knowles sounds wonderful and Mos Def acquits himself nicely, but “Cadillac Records” will truly succeed if fans are moved to check out the originals.—JW

CHRISTIAN

JEREMY CAMP
Speaking Louder Than Before
Producers: Brown Bannister, Jeremy Camp
BEC Recordings
Release Date: Nov. 25
In six short years, Camp has earned three gold albums and five Dove Awards, becoming one of the industry’s most respected talents. He once again proves why on this latest disc. Working for the first time with Brown Bannister, Camp has never sounded more passionate. His vocal texture and intensity drive high-energy tracks like “Slow Down Time,” which combines rock and reverence in equal measure. Already a hit at Christian radio, first single “There Will Be a Day” is a gorgeous ballad with a poignant, hopeful lyric about better times to come. More riveting is the simple, eloquent closer “Surrender,” exemplifying Camp’s multiple talents. He’s barely 30, and this is his best work yet.—DEP

ROCK

DIR EN GREY
Urobos
Producer: Dir en grey
The End Records
Release Date: Nov. 11
Seven albums on, this Japanese alternative metal quintet keeps pitting the psyche’s primal ode against alluring melodies, demonstrating man’s internal conflict between dark and light. The band is at the height of its creative powers on “Urobos,” a lengthy collection that grows & mediated and stimulating with each listen. Every rousing track, from throbbing stoner “Glass Skin” to turbulent journey song “Vinushka,” shows the fivesome’s superlative inventiveness. The bands’ future, however, is more than promising. In fact, this is a perfect introduction to the world of Dir en grey, its discography is vast and fanatical, and this is a masterwork.—MC

BRITNEY SPEARS
Circus
Producers: James 808
Release Date: Dec. 2
From the synth opening of “Womanizer” to the regretful ache spurring “Blue,” “Circus” gives Brit pop a whole new meaning, as the singer does double duty as a dance diva and brokenhearted balladeer. It’s no easy feat, but when Spears shines aside the tabloid trauma and hooks up with the right producers—on this album it’s Guy Sigsworth, Danja, Dr. Luke and Max Martin—he is in a class of her own. The iPods of the dumped will have “Out From Under” on repeat, and if censors turn a deaf ear to the racy wordplay of the chorus to “If U Seek Amry,” it could move beyond the club to radio. One quibble: On upbeat tracks like “Circus” and “Kill the Lights” the lyrics rehash the “it’s deeply weird to be famous” themes Spears already locked down on “Lucky” and “Piece of Me.” Here’s to moving on.—AD

THE SPINTO BAND
Moonwink
Producer: Dave Trumfio
Park the Van
Release Date: Oct. 7
For a band whose breakthrough record, 2005’s “Nice and Nicely Done,” was so ambitious and deliciously snarky that it included three harmonicas, a kazoo and a choir of kazoo players, the bar is set higher than usual for a follow-up. That pressure seems to have affected “Moonwink,” because even though it embodies the Spinto Band’s refreshingly eccentric signature pop sounds, it’s so high on caffeine that it could give listeners the jitters. With a surplus of melodies and riffs, the incredibly clever “Summer Graf” and “Later On” are great tunes, but the album zooms by too quickly in a slapdash woosh of guitar, glockenspiel and rapid-fire lyrics. “Moonwink” is a very good album by most standards, except by comparison to “Nicely Done.” But there’s no risk of songwriter Nick Kroll running out of ideas anytime soon, so it doesn’t bode badly for the Spinto Band’s future.—LJW

WORLD

FEKI KUTI
Day by Day
Producer: Fekki Kuti
Mercer Street/Downtown Records
Release Date: Nov. 18
Man does not live by polyrhythms alone—although Femi Kuti and his 17-piece Positive Force sure make it sound like a pleasing proposition. In the past few years, Kuti studied piano and revisited the trumpet, his original instrument, resulting in a more textured and jazz-influenced approach this time out. The Afro-centric “You Better Ask Yourself” and the airy “They Will Run” are, in fact, a pair of the jazziest tracks Kuti and company have ever crafted, while “Doom Crazy” is a long, lively workout with a dynamic call-and-response interplay between the horns and organ. The title track is a melodically pretty prayer for peace, while such songs as “Let’s Make History,” “Tension Grips Africa,” “Oyimbo” and “En On” play out in a way that should be to the liking of world music and jam band aficionados.—GG

TOUBAB KREWE
Live at the Orange Peel
Producer: Steve Heller
Upstream Records
Release Date: Nov. 25
This quintet, based in Asheville, N.C., has essentially created the intersection of West African traditional music and American rock. This remarkable, distinctly tuned fusion captured here in a live recording tracked last Dec. 30-31 at Asheville’s Orange Peel. Opener “Auroral” tells the Toubab story. The song rocks, but Justin Perkins’ kora, the tuning of Drew Heller’s guitar and the circularity of the rhythm add a notable Senegalese-Malian vibe. “Roy Forester” also features a driving West African rhythm, keyed by Perkins on the kanjera ngoni, and the voice of spoken-word artist Umar Bin Hassan. Closer “Buncombe to Badala” is probably the first time many listeners will be exposed to surf rock performed by players who are clearly under the grand influence of Ali Farka Touré.—PVV

COUNTRY

ERIC DURRANCE
Angels Fly Away
Producers: Teddy Gentry,

LUDACRIS
Theater of the Mind
Producers: Various
DTP/D&D
Release Date: Nov. 24
Ludacris’ 2006 album “Release Therapy” was supposed to illustrate some degree of personal growth, but “Theater” has no time for troublesome goal-setting. This one’s suffused with massive, flamboyant beats; overloud diddy-cum-vocals; and all the usual lyrical stops: the streets (“Call Up the Homies”), women-slashing-liquor (“One More Drink”) and money, which is apparently important to him ("Wish You Would"). Throughout, Ludacris brings the funny (“The inconvenient truth is that the ozone is bad ‘cause I’ve been smoking all the trees”), gets off two or three killer lines on every song (check out “Every Body Hates Chris,” featuring Chris Rock, happily), seems to enjoy his cars and sex, takes shots at Bill O’Reilly and obtains cameos by every rapper you’ve ever heard of (and, of course, Ving Rhames).—JW
THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

SINGLES

COUNTRY
KEITH URBAN
Sweet Thing (3:45)
Producers: Keith Urban, Dann Huff
Writers: K. Urban, M. Powell
Publishers: Universal/Eden Valley, SESAC, Babbie On, BMI
Capital Nashville

ROCK
DIR EN GREY
Dazing Green (English lyrics) (8:53)
Producer: Dar i en grey
Writer: Dir en grey
Publisher: Sun-Krad
The End Records

In 2006 the Japanese fivemore Dir en grey made a run at the United States that caused a minor sensation in clubs, selling out Los Angeles' Wiltern Theatre and New York's Avalon within hours. The End Records has taken up their cause by releasing new album "Uroboros" Nov. 11, whose lead track, "Dazing Green," gained MTV.com's attention. The cut recounts Kom's early days of unsettling tunings and damaged angst, with an excellent bassline purring like a satisfied cat. Dir en grey makes the sound all its own with artful melodies and flourishes like sighing background vocals that contrast with the track's propulsive aesthetic. "Dazing Green" builds to a righteous climax that vocalist Kyo pushes along with his volatile singing, finally giving over to shrieks that will cure your blood. —CLT

DANCE
KREESHA TURNER
Don't Call Me Baby (3:25)
Producer: Ty Jenine
Writers: J. Levine, A. Persaud, A. Stevenson
Publishers: Old

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
Working On A Dream (3:28)
Producer: Brendan O'Brien
Writer: Springsteen
Publisher: not listed
Columbia
Bruce Springsteen has reason to be upbeat: His Magic tour was an exuberant, yearlong house party, he's got a date with the Super Bowl in January, and his presidential candidate did all right. That a hopeful new single precedes a new E Street Band album that arrives just after Inauguration Day is probably not much of a coincidence. With its rich pop sound, fiercely adhesive hook, whistle breakdown and army of "La la la's," Springsteen's producer Brendan O'Brien seems to be picking up right where "Magic" left off. Even if it is lyrically one of the Bruce-ier Bruce offerings in recent memory, it's sure to sound pretty fantastic on tour. —JJ

MARK BRIGHT
Wind-up Nashville
Release Date: Seat. 18

The solo debut from this former lead singer of contemporary Christian act Big Dismal is the tale of two producers. There's a distinct difference between the tracks produced by Mark Bright (smooth and polished) and Teddy Gentry (raw and ragged). Both approaches work, but there's a freshness to Gentry's hand on the controls and it's in those moments that Durance comes across as an original. Gentry-produced songs like "This Side of Sober" and "Wait Till I Get There," about the impending death of a loved one, will hit home with the country audience. The driving "Turn It Off" decodes today's instantaneous communication era and "Someone I Can't Live Without" features a relatable lyric surrounded by production that echoes the best of the Eagles and John Mellencamp. —AT

KENI THOMAS
Gun Singer
Producers: Keni Thomas, Dan Hannah
RBM Records
Release Date: Nov 4

A former Army ranger who survived the battle in Mogadishu that inspired the film "Black Hawk Down," Keni Thomas made his country bow with 2005's critically acclaimed "Flags of Our Fathers." He further delivers on that early promise with this vibrant collection. The first single "Shreveport to L.A." has a singalong chorus that's hard to get out of your head, and the accompanying video has become one of the most-played on Great American Country. "Everything" is a gauzy ballad that showcases the warmth and emotional intensity in Thomas' voice, while "Billboards for Jesus" is a well-crafted song about spiritual growth and surrender. Thomas has lots of ammunition in his creative arsenal, and this impressive project should advance his career. —DEP

BLUES
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Last of the Great Mississippi Delta Bluesmen: Live in Dallas Producers: Scott Shuman, Jeffry Dyson
The Blue Shoe Project Release Date: Nov 18

This epic gathering of blues legends features Handiboy/Robert Lockwood Jr., Henry Townsend and Pine-top Perkins having a hella of a night for a quartet with an average age of 91. They're featured here on 18 tunes taped in 2004 in Dallas, ranging from the elemental country blues of Muddy Waters' "Country Boy," performed by Edwards, to an up-tempo arrangement of "Hangin' On," complete with a horn section, featuring Lockwood on vocals. Along the way, Perkins knows how to get his feet moving like a hurricane with "Kansas City," and then bears it up again on "Got My Mojo Working." Henry James Townsend wins his way through a low-down blues shuffle on "I Don't Want Me," and the album concludes with Lockwood's wonderful cover of "See See Rider Blues." —PPV

LEGEND & CREDITS

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

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Pick: A new release predicted to hit the top 20 of the chart in the corresponding format.

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 album review copies to Jonathan Cohen and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, NY 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

AL JARREAU
Winter Wonderland
Rhino

DOTSERO
Do You Hear What I Hear? Cinderblock

JESSY J
Sin Ti/Without You Peak/CHG

REGGIE CODRINGTON
Winter Wonderland Double

KARMINA
You for Christmas CBS

SECON DHAND SERENADE
Your Call (3:54)
Producer: Butch Walker
Writers: J. Vesely
Publishers: John Vesely/Sony/ATV, BMI
Glasnote/INZUNE

Your Call," the follow-up to Secondhand Serenade's breakthrough platinum-certified top 10 "Fall For You," sounds like another surefire smash waiting to turbocharge the airwaves. Writer/lead vocalist John Vesely conveys the array of emotions one faces in a passionate relationship, with a universality that is apt to connect with listeners across the demographic spectrum. "I was born to tell you love you/And I am born to do what I have to/" he sings poignantly against lavish orchestration and a gospel choir (think Foreigner's "I Want To Know What Love Is"). This stunning, newly recorded version is a home run for top 40, adult top 40 and AC stations looking to answer the "call" for a band whose brightest days are looming on the horizon. —AV

CHRISTMAS
RAHASAN PATTerson
What Christmas Means To Me Artistry

EMERSON DRIVE
Belongs To You Midas/Velory

GEORGE STRAIT
River of Love MCA Nashville

MARTINA MCBride
Ride RCA

AL JARREAU
Winter Wonderland Rhino

DOTSERO
Do You Hear What I Hear? Cinderblock

JESSY J
Sin Ti/Without You Peak/CHG

REGGIE CODRINGTON
Winter Wonderland Double

KARMINA
You for Christmas CBS
Beautiful Noise

Digital Smash Puts Secondhand Serenade In High Gear

With a hit single, a fast-rising album and an independent label that's determined to keep pushing things forward, it's "kind of a surreal time" for John Vesely, better known as Secondhand Serenade.

"I'm feeling great," the singer/songwriter says. "Anybody would be ecstatic when they find success. It's gotten a lot bigger and further than I expected, and I'm just working as hard as I can to make it grow."

Secondhand Serenade is breaking through with "Fall for You," a keening, heart-wringing paean in the mode of Plain White T's "Hey There Delilah" and the Fray's "How to Save a Life" that's gone platinum with nearly 1.2 million downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The song peaked at No. 21 on the Billboard Hot 100 and reached the top 20 on the Adult Top 40, Mainstream Top 40 and Hot Digital Songs charts. It's also given a bump to Secondhand Serenade's 10-month-old second album, "A Twist in My Story," which is selling 4,000-5,000 copies per week and recently topped the 150,000 mark, while the album's next single, "Your Call," is starting its own climb.

The success is not only putting Vesely on the map. It is also a victory for Glassnote Records, which made Secondhand Serenade its first signing in early 2007 and released the independent debut "Awake," which has sold 114,000 copies.

"John's been a dream artist to this company," says Daniel Glass, who starred Glassnote in 2006 after tenures at Chrysalis, EMI and Arista. The imprint's roster includes singer/songwriter Justin Nozuka and rock band hate kale. "He controls his look, his sound, the artwork. He takes criticism from us and we listen to what he has to say because he has a real vision for how to make his music and then how to get it out there. We think he's a great pop/rock artist who's going to be around a long time."

The California-born Vesely had certainly created his own story before signing with Glassnote. Promoting himself heavily on MySpace, he created a grassroots sensation and was the networking site's top independent artist for several months running, selling 15,000 copies of the album himself and taking in up to $20,000 per month from downloads.

"It's continually an amazing resource," Vesely says of MySpace. "I'm still getting 500 plays a day, which is dumbfounding. You can't buy that kind of exposure. It really allows you to reach masses without really spending a dime and just really having the music out there for people to find."

Glass and Glassnote were well aware of Secondhand Serenade's Web-based following when it re-launched "Awake." And it was an integral part of the label's plan for pushing "Fall for You," a song Glass says "was magic when it was done." In fact, Glass says the song was so special he brought in Butch Walker to buff it up, while Danny Lohner had produced the rest of "A Twist in My Story."

"It really stood out," Glass says. "It was a song I thought needed a sort of pop production and mix."

With "Fall for You" in place, Glassnote began a viral campaign to get it to the converted first. "Everything started with MySpace," Glass says, including a banner ad that brought support from such retailers as Target, for whom Glassnote made an exclusive Secondhand Serenade DVD and Best Buy, which hosted a series of in-stores. Yahoo, which had played the track "Maybe" from the "Awake" album, programmed "Fall for You" on its music channels.

The strong online response caught radio's attention, starting with KUDD Salt Lake City and then spreading to stations in Minneapolis and Dallas before Clear Channel added its music, which Glass says "gets rid of the myth that indie labels can't get play at radio. "TV placements on such shows as MTV's "The Hills" and "The Real World," the N's "South of Nowhere" and E's "Living Lalani" were crucial, along with performance on A
twist in My Story," although the single was revised by producer Walker with a choir and string section. And in February Secondhand Serenade will release a deluxe edition of "A Twist in My Story" with a different version of "Fall for You," and a cover of Coldplay's "Fix You," as well as a behind-the-scenes DVD from the road.

Vesely does have "almost half" of his third album written, but he plans to spend at least the first half of 2009 on tour to keep his current fortunes alive.

"We don't take anything for granted," Glass says. Vesely has "shaken a lot of hands, played a lot of shows. We underplay all markets so we can come back and do more. This is something we think we can break on a worldwide level, and John is someone who's willing to work with us for that goal.

"Dante's Inferno became a cool metaphor for some of the roads we're taking and exploring the darker stuff that we all deal with," guitarist/songwriter Jasen Rauch says. A van accident in late 2007 added real-life drama to the process. "We hit a guardrail head-on at about 75 miles per hour on the highway," Rauch recalls. "There were seven of us in the van and we were all lucky enough to make it out alive."

Red channeled the experience into an album that has already spawned "Fight Inside," the first single to debut at No. 1 on R&R's Christian rock chart. "Innocence & Instinct" will arrive Feb. 10 on Essential/RED; it will also have a deluxe edition with four bonus tracks. Produced by Rob Graves, the disc includes songs co-written with pop vet eran Richard Marx, Breaking Benjamin's Benjamin Burnley and Dove Award-winner writer/producer Bernie Hermis.

While the band has had several Christian radio hits, a relentless tour schedule that has included dates with Papa Roach, Three Days Grace, Flyleaf, Puddle of Mudd, Kutless, Seether and Staind has helped RED reach a wider audience.

"We were on some of the biggest tours that format really had going on at the time," Rauch says. "Constantly hitting the road like that made us a better band technically and better performers and at the same time, made us better writers and more prepared for the next record."

A strategic plan hatched by Essential, RED Distribution and band management helped RED's 2006 album, "End of Silence," sell 268,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and all parties will be working closely together this time around.

"The commercial accessibility of 'End of Silence' gave us the ability to have success with three singles at the rock and alternative radio formats," RED senior VP/GM Howard Gabriel says. "They've taken those elements that define them musically and stretched them even further," says Provident Label Group senior VP of marketing and sales Ben Howard. "Obviously rock fans love the record, but we believe RED has a very broad fan base. They bring strong melodies and pop sensibility to their hard rock sound, which means they have a very large potential audience."

—Deborah Evans Price
Tunes You Can Use

Major Artist Exclusives Drive (RED)WIRE's AIDS Efforts

U2, Coldplay and Kylie Minogue. The Killers with Elton John and the Pet Shop Boys' Neil Tennant: The Dixie Chicks. John Legend. What brings such superstars together? The opportunity to provide exclusive songs to the new subscription-based digital music magazine (RED)WIRE, all proceeds from which will benefit HIV-infected people in Africa.

(RED)WIRE launches Dec. 1 in conjunction with World AIDS Day and is an outgrowth of the activist organization (RED), which Bono co-founded. MSN will host an online premiere that day, while W Hotels will host free viewing parties. For $3, users will receive a new issue of (RED)WIRE every Wednesday, featuring an exclusive song from a major artist, a song from an artist (RED) aims to showcase, a multimedia piece that could encompass video or photography and a look at how proceeds are directly benefiting Africans in need. The digital rights management (DRM) free materials will be downloadable to a custom player then automatically loaded into iTunes.

U2's track was recorded Nov. 19, while the Killers, John and Tennant teamed for the Christmas song "Joseph, Better You Than Me," which (RED)WIRE founder Don MacKinnon describes as "like a power ballad." This is the third year in a row the Killers have penned a holiday song and donated proceeds to (RED).

Also coming is the Coldplay/Minogue collaboration "I'll Run," a track originally intended for the former's "Viva La Vida or Death and All His Friends". "Lucky One," the first new Dixie Chicks song since the group's Grammy Awards sweep in 2007, Legend's cover of Bob Marley's " Redemption Song," and Elivs Costello and the Police jamming on "Watching the Detectives" and "Walking on the Moon," taped during Costello's new Sundance Channel show "Spectacle.

MacKinnon is particularly excited about the creative directions open to (RED)WIRE and participating artists. "I had a meeting with Jay-Z, and he wants to talk about artists he featured in that spotlight slot," he says. "Big artists may curate an issue. The whole goal was to create a creative platform.

Users can send two free issues to friends and will be rewarded if they join (RED)WIRE. "Artists are already saying, 'I want to give you a track for those people who brought friends in,'" says MacKinnon, who previously founded Hear Music and served as VP of music and entertainment for Starbucks Coffee. "That's the biggest idea: using social networking to actually change the world in a unique way."

(RED)WIRE is embracing DRM-free files in the hopes of making the experience "unbelievably simple and easy. Passionate music fans will sign up. But it's architected for that consumer: I've worked on my whole life, who loves and values music but in the pivot from physical to digital hasn't rebuilt the music discovery habit."

That discovery is a part of "coming up with a great model," MacKinnon says. "Not just a way to send an ongoing stream of money to Africa, but to create a model that works with the record business. We do pay the artists and the labels and publishers. All of them of course take a generally reduced rate than they would on a normal song. But we're pushing it to hundreds of thousands of music fans who would have otherwise never heard it."

SOULFUL IMPORT

It took an embarrassing performance in middle-school drama class for Laura Izibor to realize she had an innate singing talent.

"My teacher asked everyone to get up and sing. My heart was in my throat, but I went up and sang a Whitney Houston song," says Izibor, who was then 13 and is now 21. "The class and teacher said I had something. It was from then on that I started tracking soul."

The Irish native will release her debut album, "Let the Truth Be Told," which she describes as "personal, real, honest, strong and biblical," in April on Atlantic. After the drama-class epiphany, Izibor began teaching herself to play the piano and writing songs. At 15, she won a national radio contest for songwriting, and at 16, after strong label interest, she was showcasing her talents in Los Angeles and New York. By 17, she landed a deal with Jive Records and was living in New York.

That arrangement ended two years later without any music being released ("It just didn't feel like they were the right company for me," she says), but Atlantic came calling shortly afterward, "and I never looked back," she says. First single from "Let the Truth Be Told" reached No. 29 on Billboard's Hot Adult R&B Airplay chart. Other tracks include the gospel-leaning "Mmm," which also appeared on the soundtrack to "Step Up 2: The Streets." Second single, "Don't Stay," about a failed relationship, and "If Tonight Is My Last," a potential third single that poses the question, "If tonight is your last, who would you spend it with?" Izibor worked closely with producers on each track and co-producing throughout.

Atlantic has Izibor on the road internationally early next year, including some December dates with labelmate Musiq Soulchild.

---

Here's looking at you: HOLLYWOOD UNDEAD

The six members of Hollywood Undead are about as surprised as anyone else that "Undead," the first single from their A&M/Octone debut album, "Swan Songs," is climbing up Billboard's Hot Mainstream Rock and Hot Modern Rock charts.

"We had no idea 'Undead' could be on the radio," says Johnny Three Tears, who co-founded the opulently masked rock-as-group in 2006 that was the last song ever 'we've thought of."

Cleaned of its liberal profanities, "Undead" is No. 14 on the Mainstream chart and No. 29 on the Modern tally. "Swan Songs," meanwhile, debuted at No. 22 on the Billboard 200 in September, and with the album moving 6,000-8,000 copies each week, its nearly at 21,000 sold.

A&M/Octone executive VP of promotion Ben Berkman says much of the success comes thanks to a fan base that was already primed for the band. After forming, Hollywood Undead posted several songs, including "Undead," on its Myspace site, garnering such an enormous response—more than 41 million song plays and 400,000-plus fans—prior to the album's release—that the network shut down the band's URL until it could authenticate those statistics.

That record is so immediate, so heavy," Berkman says. "As we set it up at radio, people said, 'If Eminem was cloned and in a rock band, this is what it would sound like.'"

To get radio on board, Berkman made personal visits to programmers to play the song, show the video and discuss ways it could be cleaned up for broadcast. A&M/Octone also created an informational one-sheet that all personalities could use to talk about the band and its history, which included previous stints on MySpace Records and Interscope. The labels made videos for "Undead" and the track "No. 5" available for stations' Web sites as well.

"It was about selling radio not only on the music but also the lifestyle of the band," Berkman says.

The label and band also have an ally in Fuse, which aired the "No. 5" video on its TV channel and the original "Undead" video as part of the Incoming Section of its Web site. The outlet also plans to tout a newly edited version of "Undead," which incorporates new live footage, on the air. A&M/Octone president/CEO James Diener says, "We're off to an excellent start."

---

Better Off Undead
**SIZZLING HIT**
> Zac Brown Band's "Chicken Fried" hits No. 1 on Hot Country Songs, the first time an act's debut single has risen to No. 1 in more than two years. Heartland was the last to manage the feat when "I Loved Her First" rose to the top of the chart in the Oct. 26, 2006, issue.

**YEAR'S END**
> There were 48 weeks of Billboard's 2009 chart year. The just-finished 2008 year (Dec. 1-2007-Nov. 29, 2008) will be recap in our Dec. 20 Year in Music and Touring issue, which hits newstands Dec. 15 and billboard.com one day earlier.

**MILES' AHEAD**
> Madonna notches her 55th hit on the Hot Dance Club Play chart with "Miles Away" (No. 15), the third single from "Hard Candy." She extends her lead as the artist with the most Club Play Hits, fort ahead of the second-place Janet Jackson (with 39).

**Market Watch**
> A Weekly National Music Sales Report

**Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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**Weekly Unit Sales**

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Digital</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Overall</th>
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<tr>
<td>This Week</td>
<td>9,450,000</td>
<td>1,158,000</td>
<td>10,608,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Week</td>
<td>8,909,000</td>
<td>1,395,000</td>
<td>10,304,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
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<td>This Week Last Year</td>
<td>13,961,000</td>
<td>1,063,000</td>
<td>15,024,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>-32.3%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
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**Year-To-Date**

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<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
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<td>405,780</td>
<td>780</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Sales</td>
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<td>317,574,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Sales</td>
<td>87,846,000</td>
<td>88,206,000</td>
<td>360,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>405,020</td>
<td>405,780</td>
<td>780</td>
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**Album Sales**

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<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDs</td>
<td>370,745,000</td>
<td>298,844,000</td>
<td>-14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>43,853,000</td>
<td>52,200,000</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>258,000</td>
<td>76,000</td>
<td>-70.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>919,000</td>
<td>1,623,000</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT**

- **CD**: $370,745,000
- **Digital**: $43,853,000
- **Cassette**: $258,000
- **Other**: $919,000

**Billboard Chart Beat**

**Beyoncé, Nickelback Lead Pre-Turkey Day Tally**

With "I Am... Sasha Fierce" debuting at No. 1 on the Billboard 200, Beyoncé scores her third chart-topper—her entire output of solo studio releases—by bowing with 482,000 copies sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan. While the debut is off from the $141,000 entry of her last set, 2006's "B'Day," since there is (we hope) a busy holiday shopping season ahead of it, there's a shot "Sasha" could build up a fierce sales run.

The new album also has two other elements working in its favor: the concurrent hit singles "If I Were a Boy" and "Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)." They are bunched at Nos. 8 and 9, respectively, on the Rhythm & Top 40 radio airplay chart this week. It also can't hurt that the sleek, all-gritting, all-sassy, black-and-white music video for "Ladies" has become a pop culture phenomenon that has sparked imitations on "Saturday Night Live" (where Justin Timberlake worked it out in heels with Beyoncé) and from game YouTubers. (We're talking about, Shane Mendes.)

While the Billboard 200 looks fairly healthy this week, with four albums debuting in the top 10, including Nickelback at No. 2 (more on that in a moment), how do we stack up next to the chart from a year ago?

It's tough to compare this past week with the same frame of 2007—the week ending Nov. 25—as it included the Nov. 22 Thanksgiving holiday and the busy shopping weekend that followed. Likely, the better-than-the-results are the seven-day window that ended Nov. 18, 2007. That was when Alicia Keys' "As I Am" blew in with 742,000 at No. 1. Additionally, Celine Dion's "Taking Chances" and the "Now 26" album started at Nos. 3 and 4 with 214,000 and 208,000, respectively. The top 10 albums each sold more than 100,000 that week, while the top 24 all moved more than 50,000 apiece. This week, only the top seven albums shift more than 100,000, while just the top 14 sell in excess of 50,000.

**NICKEL'S BACK:** The runner-up debut this week is Nickelback's "Dark Horse" set, coming out of the gate at No. 2 with 326,000. It's the band's fourth straight studio effort to bow in the top 10 and is the follow-up to 2005's "All the Right Reasons." Of course, that album took everyone by surprise with its longevity (sticking around the Billboard 200 for 156 weeks) and stands as the act's best-selling set with 7 million. This week it's No. 16 on Top Pop Catalog with $8,000 (up 8%).

For those disappointed by the start of "Dark Horse," remember that "All the Right Reasons" began with essentially the same number (325,000) when it bowed at No. 1. However, for the next 78 straight weeks, the album never sold less than 30,000 or left the top 30. Two "Dark Horse" singles are active at radio: Something in Your Mouth" is just now launching on rock airwaves while "Tonight, Good Night" bullets at No. 4 on the Adult Top 40 list. Because of that airplay, we'll bet "Horse" will be galloping high on the chart in six months. With some albums—especially those by rock acts—it's not how you start, but how you finish. (And look, if we're wrong about the six-months-from-now thing, don't hold it against us. The band's last three albums spent an average of 105 weeks on the chart.)

**GUNS N' ROSES:** Have you played the new game that's all the rage? It's called "So, what do you think Guns N' Roses' "Chinese Democracy" will sell in its first week? Well, by the time you read this, you'll have already made your own educated guess, or its opening frame will have passed and you'll know how it did. Either way, it's still the $64,000 question that's been 17 years in the making.

"Democracy," which is being sold exclusively in the United States through Best Buy and iTunes, was released off-cycle on Sunday, Nov. 23. While Nielsen SoundScan's tracking week runs Monday through Sunday, not all the merchants who report to SoundScan supply data reflecting the same time frame. As it turns out, Best Buy's reporting week is a Sunday-through-Saturday window. That means "Democracy" will debut on next week's Billboard 200 (and not on this issue's chart)—as you've likely already surmised—with only one day's worth of sales. SoundScan will also synch up iTunes' first day sales of "Democracy" with Best Buy's reporting week.

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**Over The Counter**

**KEITH CAULFIELD**

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**For weeks ending Nov. 22, 2008, FIPs are reported to SoundScan using Enhanced CD catalog and mid-2000s Nielsen catalog.**

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Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 45

www.americanradiohistory.com
## Billboard 200 Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
<td>I Am...Sasha Fierce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Nicki Minaj</td>
<td>Dark Horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>David Cook</td>
<td>David Cook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>The Promise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>David Archuleta</td>
<td>Twilight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>AC/DC</td>
<td>Black Ice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>Evolver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Black Eyed Peas</td>
<td>Love</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The album spends its 20th week on the list, tying with TOSH's "Cycles" as Ol' Blue Eyes' one-longest-charting album of the past 40 years. Only "Dobbs" (19) has spent more weeks on the list.

The Terry Award winner, who stars in the new film "Food Chains," will be on view on the Dec. 12 TBN special "Christmas in Charlotte." Meanwhile, her album hits a new peak.

"Breakdown" becomes the band's sixth top 10 single on the Modern Rock chart this week as it rises 13-9. Both of its last two hits reached No. 1.

"Keys" is one of just 16 albums to reach No. 1 in 2008. Of those last two hits reached No. 1.

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**TOP HOLIDAY ALBUMS**

**ARTIST** | **TITLE** | **LABEL**
--- | --- | ---
1 | ENYA | *ENYA CHRISTMAS* (SONY BMG)
2 | JOSH GROBAN | *A Very Wonderful Christmas* (WASHINGTON, DC)
3 | NICOLLE GILREATH | *A Gift* (BLACK HOLE)
4 | VARIOUS ARTISTS | *CHRISTMAS DUETS* (RCA)
5 | CHRISTMAS WHY? | *The Sound Of Christmas World* (MCA)
6 | ELVIS PRESLEY | *Classic Christmas* (Epic)
7 | CASTING CROWNS | *Christmas* (KING)
8 | VARIOUS ARTISTS | *CHRISTMAS* (NUEVO)
9 | HARRY CONNICK, JR. | *Christmas In New Orleans* (REPRISE)
10 | MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER | *ChristmasWebRequest!* (TIME/LIFE)

**TOP DIGITAL**

**ARTIST** | **TITLE** | **LABEL**
--- | --- | ---
1 | DAVID COOK | *Dreamer* (SONY BMG)
2 | Stayin' Alive | *Elton John* (Walt Disney)
3 | EQ2X | *The Very Best Of The Smashing Pumpkins* (INTERSCOPE/IGA)
4 | DAVIES | *Headstrong* (CAPITOL)
5 | DIO | *Serenity* (NUEVO)

**TOP INTERNET**

**ARTIST** | **TITLE** | **LABEL**
--- | --- | ---
1 | IL DIVO | *The Promise* (BMG Rights)
2 | NICKELBACK | *Life Changers* (ARISTA)
3 | MARIAN CAREY | *A Christmas Melody* (SILVER MAN)
4 | GEORGE STRAIT | *Christmas Swing* (ATLANTIC)
5 | BURL IVEY | *Christmas Performances* (COLUMBIA)

**TOP COMPILATIONS**

**ARTIST** | **TITLE** | **LABEL**
--- | --- | ---
1 | DAVE DOUGLASS | "A Christmas 25th Anniversary" (BMG Rights)
2 | THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS | "25 Years Of Nightmare Before Christmas" (WALT DISNEY)
3 | MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER | "Christmas+25* (TIME/LIFE)
4 | VARIOUS ARTISTS | "The Essential Now That's What I Call Christmas" (BMG Rights)
5 | JOHN LEGEND | "Standing Ovation" (REPRISE)

**TOP ROCK HOLIDAY**

**ARTIST** | **TITLE** | **LABEL**
--- | --- | ---
1 | DAVID COOK | "American Idol Top 12 Christmas" (BMG Rights)
2 | NICKELBACK | "American Idol Top 12 Christmas" (ARISTA)
3 | MARIAN CAREY | "American Idol Top 12 Christmas" (SILVER MAN)
4 | GEORGE STRAIT | "American Idol Top 12 Christmas" (ATLANTIC)
5 | BURL IVEY | "American Idol Top 12 Christmas" (COLUMBIA)

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**BETWEEN THE BULLETS**

The "Cities 97 Sampler: Live From Studio C—Our 10th Anniversary" compilation bows at No. 21 on the Billboard 200 with 35,000 copies, Triple A KTIZM Minneapolis-St. Paul pairs together an annual benefit album, which was carried exclusively at Target stores in the Twin Cities metro area. The first 19 releases raised more than $6 million for Minnesota charities.

The new 31-track set—limited to a run of 35,000 CDs—boasts live-in-studio performances from such acts as Duff, Gavin Rossdale, Sheryl Crow, OneRepublic and Rufus Wainwright, among many others.

On Top Compilation Albums, "Cities 97" arrives at No. 2.

—Keith Caulfield
### HOT 100 Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<td>Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can't Believe It</td>
<td>A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie</td>
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<tr>
<td>I'm Yours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love Lockdown</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love You</td>
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<tr>
<td>N Cold</td>
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<td>Heartless</td>
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<td>Gotta Be Somebody</td>
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<td>Disturbia</td>
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<td>Runaway</td>
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<td>Smells Like Teen Spirit</td>
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<td>All Summer Long</td>
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<td>Chopped 'N Skrewed</td>
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<td>Swagga Like Us</td>
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<td>Don't Stop (Mama Said)</td>
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<td>Keep On Movin'</td>
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<td>My Life</td>
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<td>I'm Just A Dream</td>
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<td>Holy Grail</td>
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<td>Love Story</td>
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<td>Go Far, Don't Look Back</td>
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<td>Go Far, Don't Look Back</td>
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<td>Put It On Ya</td>
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<td>You're Always On My Mind</td>
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<td>All About That Feeling</td>
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<td>American Boy</td>
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### Album Charts

- **ALBUM CHARTS**
- **AWARD CERT. LEVELS**
- **SINGLES CHARTS**
- **MUSIC VIDEO SALES CHARTS**
- **DVD & BLU-RAY SALES RENTAL CHARTS**

**Notes:**
- Billboard Hot 100 Airplay and Hot Digital Songs charts are compiled from data reported by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for R&B/hip hop charts is compiled from Nielsen SoundScan data. Data for Pop, Rock, Adult Contemporary, and Country charts is compiled from Nielsen SoundScan data. Data for Latin charts is compiled from Nielsen SoundScan data.
- **Albums** with the greatest gains this week are indicated with a star (*).
- **Singles** with the greatest gains this week are indicated with a star (*).
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<thead>
<tr>
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<td><em>HOT N COLD</em></td>
<td><em>Keep It Up</em> (MIRAMAX FILMS)</td>
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<td><em>I'M YOURS</em></td>
<td><em>I'm Yours</em> (JASON MRAZ)</td>
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<td><em>Let It Rock</em> (LADY GAGA)</td>
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<td><em>Just Dance</em> (Lady Gaga)</td>
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<td><em>Love Lockdown</em> (Mary J.)</td>
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<td><em>Miss Independent</em> (Cory Monteith)</td>
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<td><em>Adicted</em> (Benny Blanco)</td>
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<td><em>CHOPPED N SHREDDED</em></td>
<td><em>Chopped N Shredded</em> (Jameel &amp; Milly)</td>
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<td><em>Lovers In Japan</em> (The Japanese River Boys)</td>
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### HOT COUNTRY SONGS

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<td>CHICKEN FRIED</td>
<td>Zac Brown Band</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<td>LET IT GO</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>Big Machine</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>LOVE STORY</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>Big Machine</td>
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<tr>
<td>HERE</td>
<td>Sugarland</td>
<td>Mercury</td>
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<td>ALREADY GONE</td>
<td>Brad Paisley</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
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<td>START A BAND</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts</td>
<td>Capricorn</td>
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<td>JUST A DREAM</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<td>Nick Jonas</td>
<td>Lava Records</td>
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<td>I THINK I'M GONNA LIKE IT</td>
<td>B甘e</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>SHE WOULDN'T BE GONE</td>
<td>Blake Shelton</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANYTHING GOES</td>
<td>Randy Houser</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn Featuring Reba McEntire</td>
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<td>GOD LOVE HER</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>Jamie Lynn Spears</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>Kenny Chesney With Mac McAnally</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>Big &amp; Rich</td>
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<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>LOOKING FOR A GOOD TIME</td>
<td>Luke Bryan</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>YOU KNOW HOW TO DO IT</td>
<td>Brantley Gilbert</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>DONT THINK I CAN'T BE LOVE</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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### TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS

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<td>The Long Way</td>
<td>MCA</td>
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<td>ZAC BROWN BAND</td>
<td>The Foundation</td>
<td>Capricorn</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>RASCAL FLATTS</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Volume 1</td>
<td>Valory</td>
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<td>EDDIE MURPHY</td>
<td>Dolemite Is My Name</td>
<td>Motown</td>
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<td>SUGARLAND</td>
<td>Love On The Inside</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLAKE SHELTON</td>
<td>Startin' Fires</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<tr>
<td>KENNY CHESNEY</td>
<td>Lucky Old Sun</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
<td>Speak Now</td>
<td>Big Machine</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>JULIANNE HOUGH</td>
<td>The Last Of The Summer Wine</td>
<td>No. 1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOBY KEITH</td>
<td>That Don't Make Me A Bad Guy</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>DARIUS RUCKER</td>
<td>Learning To Live</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
<td>Carnival Ride</td>
<td>Sony</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Troubadour</td>
<td>MCA</td>
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<td>Play</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<tr>
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<td>That Lonesome Song</td>
<td>Universal</td>
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<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>NOW That's What I Call Country</td>
<td>Various</td>
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<td>JAMES OTTO</td>
<td>Greatest Hits 3</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<td>MCA</td>
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<td>Deal With Me</td>
<td>Universal</td>
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<td>MCA</td>
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<td>Good Time</td>
<td>Arista</td>
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<td>JOEY &amp; RORY</td>
<td>The Life Of A Song</td>
<td>Sony</td>
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<tr>
<td>KELLIE PICKLER</td>
<td>The Most Beautiful Girl In The World</td>
<td>Pop</td>
<td>24</td>
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</table>

Data for week of December 6, 2008. For chart reprints call 646.654.6433. Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
1. "If Ever I Would Love You" by Joe Thomas, New 20
2. "You're the Only One" by Epic Records (15.98)
3. "Real Love" by Island Records (13.98)
4. "If I Were a Boy" by Atlantic Records (18.98)
5. "The River" by Epic Records (15.98)
6. "Eyes Closed" by Epic Records (15.98)
7. "The Game" by Epic Records (15.98)
8. "Miss Independent" by Epic Records (15.98)
9. "Miss Independent" by Epic Records (15.98)
10. "Wish You Were Here" by Epic Records (15.98)

1. "The Game" by Epic Records (15.98)
2. "Miss Independent" by Epic Records (15.98)
3. "The Game" by Epic Records (15.98)
4. "Wish You Were Here" by Epic Records (15.98)
5. "Wish You Were Here" by Epic Records (15.98)
### Japan

| 1 | THE KILLERS, "Sam's Town" | 132,353 |
| 2 | THE KILLERS, "Mr. Brightside" | 97,043 |
| 3 | THE KILLERS, "Today, Tomorrow, and Yesterday" | 77,412 |
| 4 | THE KILLERS, "The Way I Used To Be" | 71,354 |
| 5 | THE KILLERS, "Mr. Brightside" | 69,570 |

### United Kingdom

| 1 |すいか，すいか | 132,353 |
| 2 |すいか，すいか | 97,043 |
| 3 |すいか，すいか | 77,412 |
| 4 |すいか，すいか | 71,354 |
| 5 |すいか，すいか | 69,570 |

### Germany

| 1 |すいか，すいか | 132,353 |
| 2 |すいか，すいか | 97,043 |
| 3 |すいか，すいか | 77,412 |
| 4 |すいか，すいか | 71,354 |
| 5 |すいか，すいか | 69,570 |

### Belgium

| 1 |すいか，すいか | 132,353 |
| 2 |すいか，すいか | 97,043 |
| 3 |すика，すика | 77,412 |
| 4 |すいか，すいか | 71,354 |
| 5 |すいか，すいか | 69,570 |

### France

| 1 |すика，すика | 132,353 |
| 2 |すика，すика | 97,043 |
| 3 |すика，すика | 77,412 |
| 4 |すика，すика | 71,354 |
| 5 |すика，すика | 69,570 |

### Canada

| 1 |すいか，すика | 132,353 |
| 2 |すика，すика | 97,043 |
| 3 |すика，すика | 77,412 |
| 4 |すика，すика | 71,354 |
| 5 |すика，すика | 69,570 |

### Spain

| 1 |すика，すика | 132,353 |
| 2 |すика，すика | 97,043 |
| 3 |すика，すика | 77,412 |
| 4 |すика，すika | 71,354 |
| 5 |すика，すика | 69,570 |

### Italy

| 1 |すика，すika | 132,353 |
| 2 |すika，すika | 97,043 |
| 3 |すика，すika | 77,412 |
| 4 |すika，すika | 71,354 |
| 5 |すika，すika | 69,570 |

### Switzerland

| 1 |すい計畫，すい計画 | 132,353 |
| 2 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 97,043 |
| 3 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 77,412 |
| 4 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 71,354 |
| 5 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 69,570 |

### Finland

| 1 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 132,353 |
| 2 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 97,043 |
| 3 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 77,412 |
| 4 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 71,354 |
| 5 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 69,570 |

### Hungary

| 1 |すい計劃，すい計畫 | 132,353 |
| 2 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 97,043 |
| 3 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 77,412 |
| 4 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 71,354 |
| 5 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 69,570 |

### Portugal

| 1 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 132,353 |
| 2 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 97,043 |
| 3 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 77,412 |
| 4 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 71,354 |
| 5 |すい計画，すい計畫 | 69,570 |
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RECORD COMPANIES: Atlantic Records in New York names Pete Ganbarg executive VP of A&R. He was head of his own music consulting company, Pure Tone Music.

EMI Music in North America appoints Sid McCain VP of label services. She was a marketing consultant at EMI Music Canada, where she oversaw campaigns for EMI’s distributed labels in that territory.

PUBLISHING: BMI taps Michelle Zarr as an attorney and promotes Ray Yee to executive director of film/TV relations. Zarr was director of business and legal affairs at Sony/ATV Music Publishing in New York, and Yee was senior director.

TOURING: Madison Square Garden in New York names Justin Edelman VP of communications. He was VP at public relations agency Edelman.

RELATED FIELDS: The American Assn. of Independent Music promotes Jim Mahoney to VP. He was membership director.

The Recording Academy appoints Peter Anton to VP of digital media. He was senior VP at Sportnet, a division of Wasserman Media Group.

Music industry entrepreneur Rich Isaacson launches Rich Isaacson Entertainment, a management and record label company with services in music publishing and Internet marketing. He was a co-founder of hip-hop label Loud Records and continues to run the day-to-day operations at marketing company SRC.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS
JOSH TURNER HELPS FUND MUSIC EDUCATION
With a graduating class of about 75 students, country singer Josh Turner, who attended Hannah-Pamplico High School in rural South Carolina, wasn’t exposed to the music education courses that many other kids his age were offered. “I hardly had any musical opportunities in high school,” Turner says, noting that larger high schools had chorus and band classes.

After high school, Turner moved to Nashville, where he enrolled at Belmont University to further explore writing music. The experience was a “shellshock, because a lot of the students around me had done that stuff in their high school classes,” he recalls. “I’d never heard of some of this stuff, so it was like learning a foreign language to me.”

Later, during a recording session for his 2007 album “Everything Is Fine,” Turner and producer Frank Rogers discussed their music experiences from high school.

From that discussion, the deep-voiced singer “thought it would be really good if I could create a music fund” to assist high school students “in the school like I graduated from to get exposed to music and learn about the music business.”

The first recipient of the Josh Turner Scholarship Fund will be a graduating senior from the 2009 class at Hannah-Pamplico High School, according to Turner. “We’ll go from there and see what schools we’ll go after next,” he says.

The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee administers funding for the singer’s scholarship. More information about how to donate can be found at joshturner.com.

—Mitchell Peters

2008 BMI COUNTRY AWARDS
The 56th annual BMI Country Awards celebrated the genre’s elite Nov. 11 at the performing rights organization’s Music Row offices in Nashville. Hosted by BMI president/CEO Del Bryant and BMI VP of writer/publisher relations for Nashville Jody Williams, the ceremony toasted the writers and publishers of the past year’s 50 most-performed country songs in the BMI repertoire. Casey Beathard earned his second BMI country songwriter of the year crown, while Taylor Swift’s “Teardrops on My Guitar” garnered Robert J. Burton song of the year honors. Sony/ATV Music Publishing Nashville claimed its seventh consecutive country publisher of the year title, and a tribute featuring Kenny Chesney, Gregg Allman, Lyndy Skyndy and Robert Randolph recognized Hank Williams Jr. as a BMI Icon.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF RICK DIAMOND

From left: BMI award winner Billy Ray Cyrus, his daughter/actress/singer Miley Cyrus, and BMI president/CEO Del Bryant.


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2008 SESAC NASHVILLE MUSIC AWARDS

Lady Antebellum’s Hillary Scott was named songwriter of the year by SESAC’s 2008 Nashville Music Awards during ceremonies held Nov. 10 at the performing rights organization’s Music Row headquarters. Scott earned the accolade on the strength of her co-written hits for Lady Antebellum, including “Love Don’t Live Here” and “Lookin’ for a Good Time.” Scooter Carusoe was also honored for song of the year for “Better As A Memory,” which became a multiweek hit for Kenny Chesney. Scott’s publishing company Shae Ennuff Songs was named SESAC’s country publisher of the year. Music publisher of the year was Trevor Tate, president of Warner/Chappell Music Publishing.

ABOVE LEFT: From left, SESAC associate VP of writer/publisher relations Tim Fink, Lady Antebellum’s Hillary Scott, singer/songwriter Victoria Shaw, Scooter Carusoe, SESAC VP of writer/publisher relations Trevor Tate and SESAC president/CEO Pat Collins.

ABOVE RIGHT: Hillary Scott poses with SESAC associate VP of writer/publisher relations Tim Fink after she was presented with a handcrafted Master Built acoustic guitar courtesy of Gibson Guitars.

LEFT: Jerry Salley accepts an award for his contribution to the Steeldrivers’ self-titled CD. From left: SESAC associate VP of writer/publisher relations Tim Fink, BMI Music Publishing/Foray Music executive/VP Gary Overton, SESAC director of affiliate relations Amy Beth Hale and Salley.

BELOW LEFT: An all-star ensemble consisting of, from left, Jamie Johnson of blues/gospel band the Gospel Keys, Tammy Rogers-King of the Steeldrivers, musician Jerry Salley and Grammy Award-winning singer Jim Lauderdale combine forces on a performance of gospel standard “I’ll Fly Away” in honor of the 40th anniversary of the Brumley Gospel Sing.

BELOW RIGHT: Liz Rose poses with her SESAC award for Taylor Swift’s “Picture to Burn.” From left: SESAC director of writer/publisher relations Shuman Towner-Heese, Rose, SESAC associate VP of writer/publisher relations Tim Fink, SESAC director of writer/publisher relations John Mollison and Song/ATV/Timberling Publishing president/CEO Troy Tomlinson.
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