POLKA POWER: MODERN MIGHT OF A BOHEMIAN BEAT

Monarchs Of The U.S. Polka Mainstream

BY JIM BESSMAN

CLEVELAND—They call it "that happy, snappy music" that is perhaps America's last great undiscovered genre—or, as others say, "the real alternative." Most people, of course, know it—or think they know it—as polka." said veteran polka musician Jack "Porky" Ponikvar at a recent "state of polka" gathering here of some 30 of the top artists and business professionals in Cleveland's Slovenian polka community, dedicated to one of the most prevalent of the many ethnic and regional variants of polka. Others there and throughout the polka world also cringe at the stigma of what they sometimes call the "P-word," much as contemporary folk musicians shy away from the stereotyped confines of their "F-word." (Continued on page 110)

Accordion Reissues Market Expanding

BY CHRIS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—In James Elroy's hard-boiled 1994 novella "Dick Conti-no's Blues," the titular narrator, a '50s nightclub accordionist, has a night—(Continued on page 114)

The Crowned Heads Of The Conjunto Sound

BY RAMIRO BURR

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—The Latin music scene may be dominated by the pop and glitz of contemporary music, but the accordion-fueled genres of Tejano and its older cousin, conjunto, continue to have a strong and growing impact on the marketplace.

Whether it is conjunto accordion pioneers such as Flaco Jiménez, Ruben Velas, or Mingo Saldivar, or new-generation Tejano stars such as Emilio, Mazz, and La Trocha, the two music forms are alive and kicking from their home base in the American Southwest. Tejano has become the standard umbrella term for a music that mixes Mexican polkas and cumbias with elements of rock, pop, country, and even rap. Among the Tejano ranks, there are big brass bands and others featur-

Polka's Influential Trip Around The World

BY DAVE HUCKER and WOLFGANG SPAHR

Among its other distinctions, polka can claim to be the first music to come from a localized folk roots source and achieve global popularity in a single decade.

While its exact origins in the early 1800's are a matter of some debate (was it based on a Polish dance or was it created in 1808 in the Czech region of Bohemia by a peasant girl named Anna Slezako-va?), by 1837 it had been introduced via sheet music in Prague and became hugely popular there among the social elite.

One would have to fast-forward to the 1920s and the emergence of the tango to find the next example of a roots music/dance that crossed over to world popularity. Later examples include the Cuban rumba and mambo, as well as calyp-
os and reggae. The polka rapidly moved beyond
(Continued on page 112)

Festivals Drawing Growing Fan Base

BY TERRI HORAK

NEW YORK—"To dance is human, but to polka is divine." That's how singer K.C. Lang sums up her affection for the rhythm, and it is that enthusiasm that is propelling growing numbers, including young people, to flock to polka festivals each year.

Polka music is happy music, and it's not hard to understand the convivial (Continued on page 111)
The original members of the Sex Pistols are reunited for the first time in twenty years and invade America on July 11. Recorded during the first European dates in June, the new album will capture every note, snarl and shattering glass of this historic tour. Playing the old Pistols favorites and some notable covers, the songs will be almost identical to the set list of their last U.S. gig, in 1978 in San Francisco—their last gig ever, until now.

Produced by Chris Thomas
Management: Anita Camarata/Eclipse Entertainment
Eric Gardner/Panacea Entertainment

See you on tour with Gravity Kills and Goldfinger

7/31 Denver CO
8/1 Dallas TX
8/2 Houston TX
8/4 Memphis TN
8/5 Fairfax VA
8/6 New York NY
8/7 Boston MA
8/9 Toronto, ONT.
8/10 Cleveland, OH
8/11 Chicago, IL
8/12 Milwaukee, WI
8/14 Denver, CO
8/15 Phoenix, AZ
8/16 Las Vegas, NV
8/17 San Diego, CA
8/18 Santa Clara, CA
8/19 Los Angeles, CA
8/20 Portland, OR
8/21 Seattle, WA
8/22 Vancouver, BC
Summit Gets Down To Business Of Dance Music

Industry Solidarity, Grammy Category Among Issues Covered

BY CHUCK TAYLOR

CHICAGO—For all the fancy footwork dance music promoters, the community that promotes it is striving to define its own next step.

At the third Billboard Dance Music Summit, held here July 17-19, a record crowd of nearly 400 heavyweight representatives of the genre—label executives, promoters, producers, mixers, and artists—called for unity to propel dance music from the streets and clubs to further-reaching avenues.

Foremost, they reasoned that the dance community must embrace its art as business and concentrate on the quality of presentation as measured by the standards of the music industry.

Representing the sentiments of many attending, legendary dance producer Jackmaster Fafeley told the group, “It’s all about coming together and keeping this dance music happening. We need to be with each other at all times and not work against each other.”

“We have to become business people and take initiative,” added Nervous Records artist Byron Stingily. “Too many times, we want to take on this victim role, but we have to take things on within the dance community ourselves. No one outside is going to take care of us.”

Competition within the ranks, in fact, was a running theme throughout the conference and is regarded as the initial demand to conquer if the dance community is to reach further heights. Amid discussion of high-profile producer/DJs not allowing competitors into their clubs, Wrech Davidsjun, owner of New York’s Dance Records, D.C., said, “DJs no longer use word-of-mouth. They have to get back to the fact that they’re supposed to be friends, instead of keeping good records to themselves.”

In another forum, the sentiment was echoed by Connie V. with 200 Productions: “I’m not saying we need to come together and sing the house version of ‘Kumb Ya Ya.’ We don’t have to love each other, but we must respect each other.”

Once unity is in check, attendees agreed, the community can focus on issues that challenge all factions of the music format, from gaining attention without radio airplay to persistently promoting an artist as more than a track act.

The summit effectively fell within a week of the announcement of dance station WKTU New York’s rapid ascension to No. 1 in the latest Arbitron ratings (Billboard, July 27), as well as the switch of WXTR Washington from oldies to dance-oriented top 40 Z104. Weeks earlier, RACK/KBIR Los Angeles switched from AC to dance as Groove Radio.

But despite the apparent increasing presence of dance-friendly radio—and the enduring success of such rhythm outlets as WBWB (R&B) Chicago and WPow (Power 96) Miami, most in the industry count on developing dance music through word-of-mouth and clubs, without the benefit of radio exposure.

In fact, despite the barrage of attention that KUT has prompted regarding a possible nationwide dance resurgence, many at the summit scoffed at the station’s focus on vintage dance. Still, there were supporters. Said one attendee at a discussion group, “Whether our ears like it or not, accountants and other moneyheads will look at ratings, and more dance stations may be picked up.”

Similarly, B96 music director Erik Bradley said that KWTU’s success is likely to “make DJs and GMs across the country say, Wow, this really could work.” I think it’s a good thing for the whole dance music industry.”

From the promotion side, Carmen Cacciatore, RCA’s director of marketing, and independent publicist Craig Karpel offered tips on taking an artist past one-track-wonder success.

Cacciatore stressed that the presentation of a dance artist should be as complete and credible as that of any major alternative act.

Using the label’s up-and-coming Kristine W. as an example, he said that, once signed, his team worked to build an artist whose talent clearly shone throughout the entire project.

“There’s a stigma attached to tracks acts, dance acts. If you expect to go to the next level, you have to take yourself past that level,” he said. “We worked to present the artist as someone who had paid her dues.

(Continued on page 12)
Nations Meet To Ensure Conformance To TRIPS

LONDON—Government representatives from the industrialized nations met July 22-26 in Geneva, Switzerland, and put one another to the test to ensure that domestic legislations conform to the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement that the world's nations have signed in the run-up to the launch of the World Trade Organization at the beginning of the year.

One issue, says, “Both the EU and the U.S. are importing into the country a generous implementation of TRIPS, so they are both examining the laws of the industrial countries very, very carefully.”

The Geneva meeting involved only Western nations, along with Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. The issues they were covering covered a number of technical matters, along with such topics as “fair-use” and the sharing of cultural property, and the possibility of extending TRIPS to developing countries. Some members of the industrial countries said that they had found the examiners from the developing countries tough, even if they were friendly.

Maurice Levy, the French government representative asked the U.S. officials to examine U.S. laws on exemptions from copyright protection.

GESC is concerned about section 110 of the Copyright Act of 1976, which makes fair-use exemptions from royalty payments. The French government representative expressed particular disquiet over moves to expand the scope of such exemptions.

Despite the fact that the disquiet is constant, the tone of the meeting is reported to have been positive. A source says that the U.S. and the EU worked “closely and well” in preparing TRIPS, and has been so effective that both sides are eager for its detailed implementation across the world. It is their desire to ensure its smooth operation that is causing them to be so conscientious over the details of its application, he adds.

Making sure it is scrupulously and consistently observed in the developed nations is a prelude to discussion about its expansion to emerging regions. The insider says that the U.S. representatives at the Geneva meeting had been fully briefed on the needs and concerns of their respective music industries prior to the discussions.

Jeff Clark-Meads

PolyGram Revenues, Music Sales Up
Performance ‘Good’ Despite Poor Industry Conditions

LONDON—PolyGram saw total revenue increase by 7% in the first half of this year, with music sales up 4%. The company’s financial statement released July 24 says that those figures were held down by difficult conditions in some major markets, a concentration of big releases toward the end of the period, and lower carrier sales from 1995 music releases.

The executive chairman and chief executive officer, president Alvey Levy describes the 7% increase as “a good performance,” given the prevailing conditions.

In the six months before the end of June, PolyGram’s net sales were the equivalent of $2.52 billion. Income from operations was up 2% to $246 million, with net income up 1% to $159 million.

The company stated that North American revenues grew by 9%, while Europe’s increase was 6%. In the Far East, where “Japan built momentum but Hong Kong and other Chinese language markets were quite slow, partly as a result of continued piracy,” the company is represented in local currency terms but 1% when expressed in the Dutch guilders in which PolyGram reports.

A rest of the world, total sales rose 39% helped by a good performance from Latin America. Overall, PolyGram’s worldwide music sales revenue increased by 4%

PolyGram says that 15 albums each sold more than one million units worldwide, compared with 12 albums in the first half of 1996. Pop sales increased by 2%, while jazz and classical sales were flat.

Second-half releases are scheduled from Sheryl Crow, Amy Grant, Montel Williams, John McGahern, U2, Vanessa Williams, Cecilia Bartoli, B'Yon Terfel, Jessye Norman, and John Stamos.

PolyGram’s film division had an overall operating loss during the period of $21.6 million, despite a 22% increase in sales.

Levy’s letter to shareholders says that North American revenues were assisted by film successes and the breakthroughs of pop artists Jann Arden and Tracy Bonham. In Europe, Levy cites Spain and the former Communist countries as “upstarts” to note the impact of Andrea Boccelli, Florent Pigny, and Zucchero.

The new management of the Japanese company achieved success with an album from Seiko Matsuda and “strong carrier sales” for Spitz.

The Chinese-language markets were hampered not only by the Chinese pop sales, but by few supercarrier releases. Elsewhere, there were “good performances” from Brazil, South Africa, and Argentina; a strong contribution from the 10.7 million records of the Venezuela-based Rodven company, which was acquired in October.

Levy says he regards 4% in growth as “a good performance, given market conditions.”

Asked by Billboard how difficult those market conditions are, he states, “There is a growth in the industry, but it is not a dropping market, but we have been used to sizable growth, and we had a bit spoiled from that point of view.”

He adds that there has been no drop in sales of new material but that catalog product has suffered. He regards it as illogical that, in several markets, catalog albums are priced higher than new releases.

Levy cites as other difficulties “the retail environment in the U.S.; the market in Germany and France, which is both very strong and very competitive in its own right, and the retail environment in America, which is going far too much to the profits they are making.”

Nonetheless, he regards PolyGram as being “in good shape” to move forward along the potential of its second-half release schedule.

Of Roger Ames, appointed in June to the newly created position of President of PolyGram Music Group, Levy says, “He has settled in very well.”

PolyGram reports in Dutch guilders. The exchange rate used in this story is 1.71 guilders to the dollar.

Mercury Noms Show Great Depth Of Acts

BY PETER JACOBSON

LONDON—the nominations for this year’s Mercury Music Prize, the U.K.’s leading award for artistic creativity, have been announced.

The 10 contenders include four rock heavyweights, a cutting-edge crossover dance act, a distinctly new soul performer, the new crown prince of R&B, and influential classical composer, and the most widely welcomed charity record of the year.

The nominees for the fifth annual British and Irish album of the year were announced in London July 21. They revealed the customary mix of commercial blockbusters, specialist releases, and relative unknowns that will vie for the prize, which is sponsored by telecommunications company Mercury Communications and due to be announced Sept. 1.

Mercury Music Prize director David Wilkinson confirms that the awards presentation will be broadcast live by BBC Radio 1FM and MTV. The British Assn. of Record Dealers, which has been associated with the prize since its inception, is continuing to support the event; special Mercury display packs will be distributed to its members in due course.

The nominees were selected from a record 140 entries received between July 31, 1996, and July 29 by a 10-member panel. The judges, headed by aceramic/author Simon Frith, include Radio 1FM head of production Trevor Dann, president/creative director of MTV Europe and VH1 Brent Hansen, and Billboard Global Music Pulse editor David Sinclair. Sinclair pays the “great depth” of this year’s entries and the genres represented.

The short list includes four rock (Junior Boy’s Own) by experimental dance-act-turned-single-chart-stars Underworld. The “mainstream” portion of the list is completed by Mark Morrison’s silver-selling “Silver” (V2)

Among the Mercury panel’s more left-field selections, “Modern Day Jazz Stories” (Talkin’ Loud/Mercury) by saxophonist Courtney Pine (absent from album charts since 1986) was chosen, as was the self-titled solo debut of folk singer Norma Waterson on Hannibal/Rykodisc, which comes 32 years after her family group with mother the Waterstones. The classical statutory (Continued on page 107)

War Members Fille Suits

BY DOUGLAS RICE

LOS ANGELES—In the most recent in a protracted and convoluted series of lawsuits involving the band War against Goldstein and Far Out Productions on Feb. 28 that suit resulted in a preliminary injunction preventing former War members from using the band name.

Brown was not named in that suit but filed his suit as a course of action, seeking to bar current, former and prospective War members.

Pepper estimates damages to be in excess of $1 million.

David Browning, Webb, another lawyer for Brown, says that deposition

With Demerger Looming, EMIs Music Is Prospering

LONDON—EMI Music is continuing to prosper before its imminent demerger, according to the last set of financial figures released before the split of Thorn EMI.

Also faring well is the rumor mill, which continues to suggest that the music company will be sold. In response, though, parent Thorn EMI has reiterated its position that not only is the music company not for sale, but no potential buyers have even been in touch.

Thorn EMI shareholders will be asked to approve the separation of the EMI music arm from the Thorn company at a meeting in London Aug. 16. Since the announcement of the plan, demerger will be effective the following week.

The shareholder will consider the issue in the light of figures for the three months ending June 30, which shows sales up 4% and operating profit up 17.4%, in local currency terms, compared with the same period last year. Sales rose by an estimated 0.05 of $23.9 million and operating profit was 0.9 million.

A Thorn EMI statement says, “There is no doubt that the result is underpinned by exchanges-rate fluctuations. The companies cites the EMI group’s major success in the form of The Michael’s Virgin Records debut, ‘Older,’ Tina Turner’s ‘Wildest Dreams,’ Everything But The Girl’s ‘Walking Wounded,’ and the Japanese soundtrack ‘Long Vacation,’ and the Olympic tribute album ‘Voces Unidas.’

During the quarter, EMI Music also released a new Christian label Forefront Communications.

And Thorn EMI says that the HMV retail chain enjoyed a “strong quarter.” (Continued on page 11)
j.w. alexander
january 21, 1916 – july 9, 1996
BY MIKE DREES

"If you build it, they will come." That is the great mantra of the music retail community today, and if anyone who has ever built a retail outlet knows, this is a misleading practice. Building the business now finds itself in a state of flux.

Music merchants are like developers—all that they know now is how to do is build stories. If you give developers money, they will build a building. Why? Because that’s all they know how to do. And how do they do it? With other people’s money, or OPM (pronounced opium). OPM has built big-box temples for baby boomers to worship in.

Merchants aren’t solely to blame, of course; they are only one element of the problem. Here is my complete recipe for a retail train wreck: Serve large portions of OPM to the big boys, they fire up at most existing large chains; allow so-called sophisticated additional high-cost-of-operation folks to sink into an individuals’ store; and position that of cutthroat electronics purveyors and mass merchants—but only if they can sell everything at really low prices.

Next, wait until retail space has doubled, and then have labels bribe retailers with big piles of money to put big stacks of product into retail slots. Let this assemble age few years and wait for the returns to begin. The problem with independent labels is that they aren’t paying enough attention to SoundScan. There are companies getting back 15-20% of everything they ever manufactured—that stuff’s that 2 or 3 years old.

I say to labels: Go to the massannels built to visit your dead product. Use you put it there.

The interconnected problems, in a nutshell, are that we manufactured way too much product, we built too many stores, and we shoed all that product in there. Now a lot of it is turning into roadkill and needs to be paid for, and there is nothing with which to pay for it.

There is now a gross overproduction of product, much of which will never sell through and should have never been manufactured in the first place. On this front, the label community needs to look in the mirror for some sobering self-assessment.

How do merchants pay these labels when they are receiving unprecedented returns from retail accounts? And how can labels ship fresh product to distribution when they are not receiving the vital cash they need to handle expenses?

The problem snowballs further: How can merchants continue to support marginal product offering offers when they don’t have the cash to pay the big six? The indies are going to take it on the chin in this scenario.

When did you need so much product in the first place? This is the biggest problem—too much crap is being put out. Is anyone paying attention to SoundScan?

While I am not going to sit here and try to resolve all these trends, I wasn’t quite as good as this. I was probably a bit outside what I heard.

I was shockingly astonished and was moved that a vendor said that it was expected to see a $200,000 check from a major retailer and, after being stung for four or five weeks, it instead got a $5,000 check. It still requests to be prepared to see much more in the future.

Most accounts now are on a rolling credit hold— it’s a week-to-week decision whether or not they have had a lot of independent distributors that service them, relationships are being semi-permanently destroyed because of the large amount of bad faith. These distributors are going to have to look at their account in the eye and say, “We can’t do business with you anymore because you don’t pay.”

I’ve outlined the problems, which won’t come as news to many people. The tougher question is, How can it be fixed?

The bottom line is that many stores must close, many labels will go under, and many artists who lack a strong base will not be recorded. The only thing that’s going to solve this problem is new profits being brought to them more margin so they can all increase their square footage by 50%. It doesn’t make sense.

Most, too, don’t understand youth. They followed the consultants who said that kids needed to have 25-foot-wide aisles to accommodate a woman pushing a double baby carriage. But they’re not worrying enough about the customers—your customers. At Newbury, we try to worry about the kid with the skateboard and the computer programmer who’s looking for a wicked good time.

It’s the sizzle that sells the steak, and I don’t think enough retailers get that. They try to please everyone, and they end up exciting no one.

A large retailer posited an in-store environment in which the whole family could go together to buy, drink coffee, and buy CDs. I say, if you think their teenage kids want to buy CDs while Mom is sitting nearby drinking a latte and is at a table sitting drinking coffee, then they had too much coffee.

Exacerbating the problem for retailers is that there is no one to turn to for help or advice because everyone today is a competitor—including the vendors. Technology is leapfrogging regulation, and we are seeing the rise of the supplier as competitor. It is going to be the theme of the year 2000.

Simply put: Retailers have to figure out what their customer wants and deliver it. Sometimes that answer is unusual. Our customers want earring, for instance, and nail polish—the men especially. What we have done is create an environment where people can try on new things—from music to fashions—will buy new things. As a result, we dominated our sector on the left 20% of the spectrum. If you can’t dominate, don’t do it.

Finally, we all must keep in mind that while this is a rough patch of road, it’s only a short one. The music business has had an unprece- dented season of success, and there are no signs that run should end.

In the end, it has to be about passion, that is passion for our business that will sustain us.

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The article “Invisible: Shaggy’s Speak Out” in Billboard, July 6, creates serious misconceptions in regard to the Recording Industry Assn. of Ameri- can’s activities concerning the tape-swap aisle on America Online, as well as our overall approach on music bootlegging. In the article, the RIAA is quoted as saying that we had not contacted AOL because we considered this “an issue for artists, not record companies.” In fact, at the time the article was written, the RIAA had not yet contacted AOL because we had not completed the pre- liminary step of contacting the managers of artists included on the “Tape Trader’s Central” site. It was necessary to first determine whether the affected artists did fact object in this type of commercial bootlegging of their work and whether they had given consent to do so. The information we obtained from the artists would have been used in our discussions with our member companies regarding our approach to this matter. However, this step became moot because the site was taken down before the process was completed.

The purpose of the article is to create the impression that the RIAA is not seriously concerned about the RIAA. Nothing could be further from the truth. Bootlegging is a crime punishable by up to five years in prison, and furthermore, any business that aids or abets in the process can be potentially liable. Evi- dence of this can be found in the numerous book- leggers can be seen in a separate Billboard article on the same page as the AOL article that the RIAA as efforts in assist- ing in the seizure of seven million copies of four million bootlegs, the largest bootleg seizure in RIAA history.

Frank Creaghton VP/Associate Director, Anti-Piracy Recording Industry Assn. of America
Young Generation Of Musicians Explores Polka’s Cutting Edge

BY JIM BESSMAN

CLEVELAND—Polka music has its legends, of course, but it also has a number of exciting young artists ready and willing to take their place.

With Chicago’s Polish push style of polka showing the most robust health, it’s no surprise that many of these bands follow the lead—in one form or another—of the style’s key players, Eddie Blazonczyk and Lenny Gumulka. Among them are Toledo Polka Motion, Eddie Biegaj’s Crusade, Energy, Frankie Liska & the Brass Connection, Polka Family, John Gora & Gorale, Steel City Brass, Polka Country Musicians, and Henry & the Versa J’s, featuring incredible 11-year-old fiddler Ryan Ugrady.

But young polka players are faced with many of the same challenges as their elders—and a few new ones brought about by changing tastes and technologies. The first is overcoming the stigma attached to all polka musicians.

“Everyone thinks of polka music as ‘Roll Out The Barrel, ’She’s Too Fat For Me,’ or ‘Just Because’ and dancing with fat Polish girls,” says Eddie Blazonczyk Jr., who plays concertina in his father’s band, “but it’s nothing to do with that anymore. Today, it’s more closely related to country music—like Polka Country Musicians. Young fans were a Tex-Mex conjunto outfit. ‘I’ll take college friends to gigs, and they’ll go, ‘I had no idea!’ They dance more than I do and drink more than I do, and I can’t keep up with them.’”

Energy’s Randy Koslosky further notes that the push polka style, being the “most progressive and exciting” type of the multiform genre, has the greatest appeal to young players and audiences. Evidence of this, he says, is the fact that half the crowd at Blazonczyk’s recent Polka Fireworks festival at Seven Springs Resort in Champion, Pa., was under 20.

“The grandson remembers what the father forgets,” adds Mark Kohan, 36-year-old leader of the “Buffalo” polka band Steel City Brass, reciting an adage that explains why younger bands and fans are gravitating back to polka. (The Buffalo style tinges the Chicago with the quicker Eastern big-band polka style.) “There’s a generation of kids who didn’t want to be associated with polka because they wanted assimilation,” continues Kohan. “But we played a festival yesterday, and there were a lot of kids, and there are other bands, like Brave Combo, which plays polka at college bars, who plant a seed in young people who might otherwise not be interested in polka.”

Joe Tomsick, who has recorded predecessors. “The new hands don’t have the longevity that the older ones have,” he says, noting that many Chicago polka-band mainstays, including his father’s Versa J’s and the Ampol Aires, have been active for decades. “Also, there used to be a lot of variation years ago from band to band, but today, everybody goes for the same sound and plays the same songs,” he adds. “Years ago in Chicago, a band would cancel a job if their accordionist couldn’t make it, but today, any Tom, Dick, or Harry can fill in, because they all play the same songs. So we have a lot of terrific-sounding bands, but they only last a couple of years, because there’s nowhere to go with it. So they break up and reassemble.”

One direction for polka musicians of the younger Blazonczyk’s generation (he’s 20) has been laid out by eclectic Texas rock band Brave Combo. “We want to do something alternative,” says Blazonczyk. “Brave Combo has a gui- tar in the band, bongos, and congas, and can do anything they want with this music.”

“They’re doing things that a lot of guys would love to do,” seconds Gaze-vich. “They get up and play 20 songs in a set without any sounding alike, and they play all of them well. I’ve talked with a lot of musicians, and I [Brave Combo] is the cutting edge in polka.”

If Brave Combo provides a musical role model for young groups, Nancy Hlad is there to offer technical support. The 22-year-old Cleveland Slovenian style button-box player, who studied for five years with button-box king Frank Novak, recently applied skills from her day job at a computer software company in putting polka on the Internet.

“I’m trying to give our music another venue,” says Hlad, “and the Inter- net’s the way to go, because everybody seems to think polka’s only for older-generation people, and it’s really not. There are a lot of younger-generation people in the field, and I want to make the market wider for all of us.”

Hlad’s polka site has been up since December and has received responses from Europe, including a Dutch distributor who was seeking Novak-style product and put out a compilation of (Continued on page 102)
World Domination Album Offers A Scenic Overlook

**BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER**

Last year’s “Incident At Cima,” the debut album from instrumental art-sans Sceneic, conjured images of the the 7-inch singles that R.E.M. sends members of its fan club as Christmas gifts. He also designed the album art for Cracker’s latest Virgin issue, “The Golden Age.” His designs for For Against’s “Echoes” album in 1987 and Camper Van Beethoven’s “Our Beloved Revolutionary Sweetheart” in 1986 were nominated for Grammy Awards.

Alas, the packaging, I strive to make something someone is going to want to keep—a cultural artifact, Licher says. “It’s a way of making special music even more special.”

Among the scores of items in IPR’s (Continued on page 107)

**TRIBE CALLED QUEST IS BACK WITH THE ‘BEATS’ JIVE SET TAKES ON ‘PHONY RAPPERS,’ OTHER ISSUES**

**BY HAVELock NELson**

NEW YORK—On Tuesday (30), Jive Records will release “Beats, Rhymes And Life,” a Tribe Called Quest’s fourth album, following one gold- and two platinum-selling sets. It took three years for the album to arrive, but during the interim, the trio’s Ali Shaheed Muhammad, Q-Tip, and Phife weren’t lollygagging. “We were working and just livin’ life,” says Q-Tip.

That style has been inspired by the Muslim faith, which inspired Muhammad to reaffirm his own Islamic beliefs.

“I think Islam helped strengthen our music,” says Q-Tip. “I could be me without many hesitations. Even being a Muslim, I can rap now because I don’t fear anything but Allah. These days I’m doing my music... and Phife, meanwhile, relocated to Atlanta from New York. He recently plans to open an athletic-gear store.

On “Beats, Rhymes And Life,” A Tribe Called Quest finds positive energy, abstract spiritualism, and intense poetics boasting into bouncy, bass-heavy songs. Melting several soulful, jazzy flavors together, the crew creates a continuous song cycle balanced by layers of luxury and minimalism.

Everybody’s always looking for something spectacular and filled up, but I think you can get the same effect by staying simple,” says Muhammad. “We keep it simple, and when we sequence an album we always try to make it flow like one big story.”

The album begins with Tribe delivering a sharp attack on “Rappers who do not write [or] exegete” over a boom-boom-shack rhythm track. It ends with “Stressed Out,” a brisk head-bopper featuring Bad Boy singer Puffy and Evans crooning optimistically (“Come on, baby we goin’ make it”). As rubber beats bounce, deep bass notes rumble, and warm synth ghosts float, Tim assures, "Don’t stress that ‘cause it’s not in your bloodstream.”Your whole being comes from music, you remember.”

Other tracks take turns shooting braggadocio at MC competitors, painting experiential portraits of life, championing community, and registering subtle remarks on chaos in American culture. Throughout the album, enlightened words for folks to grow on are weaved into the mix. Among them: “A weak foundation does not make a good home” and “The brother well-prepared is the brother who will start.”

These life lessons, however, are never overbearing, and “that’s the key to Tribe’s success,” says Armond White, a cultural critic and arts editor for the Brooklyn, N.Y.-based newspaper City Sun. “The fact that they’re perceived by everyone as cool is what (Continued on page 13)

**EXECUTIVE TURN TABLE**

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**RECORD COMPANIES.** Skip Bishop is named senior VP of promotion, for MCA Records in Los Angeles. He was VP of national pop promotion for RCA Records.

Randy Skinner is promoted to senior VP of video for Warner Bros. Records in Burbank, Calif. She was VP.

Dave Statman is promoted to director of entertainment development for Atlantic Records in New York. He was producer of special projects.

Universal Records in New York names Louis Romain creative director, black music department, and Wendy Washington director of media relations, black music department. They were, respectively, copywriter consultant for Arista and national director of publicity for Jive Records.

Tim Reid II is promoted to director of marketing for Priority Records in Los Angeles. He was manager of business affairs for Sony Music.

Angel Records in New York names Snowden Bishop executive assistant to the president and Mary Ann Flynn manager of sales administration. They were, respectively, executive assistant in film acquisitions for HBO and senior executive assistant/office manager.

Paradigm Music Entertainment in New York names Billy “Billy G” Gentsch director of marketing and Kim Zonce marketing manager. They were, respectively, national director of sales and marketing, East Coast, for Zoo Records and A&R coordinator for Relativity Records.

PUBLISHING. BMG Music Publishing in Nashville promotes Randy Hart to VP of country music, Elwyn Rayner to VP of gospel music, and Chris Ogelby to senior director, creative, country music. They were, respectively, senior director of creative, GM, and professional manager.

BMI in New York promotes Kamala Gordon to director of writer/publisher relations, and Leslie Morgan to director of art and production. They were, respectively, associate director, writer/publisher relations, and associate director of creative services.

**EARN I**

Harry D. Poloner is appointed associate director of A&R for Columbia Records Publishing in New York. He was tape-room manager for Sony Music Publishing.

Mike Sebastian is named GM of Starstruck Writers Group in Nashville. He was director of creative services for MCA Music.

**RELATED FEILO.** Tim Hawkins is promoted to VP producer of Madison Square Garden Productions in New York. He was VP of entertainment development.
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Rush Aims For New Generation

After 3-Year Break, Trio Regroups For New Atlantic Set

BY PAUL VERN

NEW YORK—After more than two decades of delivering hit albums on an almost yearly basis, the members of Rush took three years off from each other to break the pattern of being in the band and find themselves as human beings.

Bassist/vocalist Geddy Lee spent time with his family, guitarist Alex Lifeson released his first solo album, and drummer/trumpet Neal Peart pursued various projects, including the Buddy Rich tribute series “Burning For Buddy.”

When they reconvened early this year to record their 16th studio album, Lee, Lifeson, and Peart found a renewed musical spirit that’s evident throughout “Test For Echo.” The Atlantic album will be released Sept. 10.

Lifeson says, “We’ve always been close, but the three of us reached a new level in our relationship, and I think it really shows on this record. The last time we had that vibe was on ‘Moving Pictures,’ the Canadian band’s 1981 double-platinum album, which yielded the hits “Tom Sawyer” and “Lime-light.”

Although the members of Rush knew they risked losing some of their fan base by taking three years between studio albums, the break was critical for them, according to Lifeson.

“After 20 years, it’s good to just explore ourselves as people. Our lives had been centered around the band,” he says. “When I think back over the last 20 years, I think in terms of places or where we were recording at any given time. My connection is always to the band, and we needed to break away from that.”

It took some settling in, but after an initial soul-searching period of working together, the band found its creative music again.

“During that first week, I really wondered about the future,” says Lifeson. “I thought that maybe this was going to be the last record, and maybe we would tour it, but not. But once we got into it and once we finished the record, I thought, ‘We’ve got a lot of stuff in us yet.’ We were already talking about the next record while we were working on this record. I know there’s a future there for us.”

4 Non Blondes’ Perry Makes Solo ‘Flight’ On Interscope

BY CARRIE BORZILLO

LOS ANGELES—If selling 5 million albums worldwide doesn’t make someone one happy, what will? Well, if you’re Linda Perry, former lead singer of one-hit wonder 4 Non Blondes, a bit of respect would be nice.

Perry, whose quirky voice helped sing the single “What’s Up?” propel the band’s 1992 Interscope debut, “Bigger, Better, Faster, More,” to platinum status in the U.S., makes her solo debut on the label with the highly personal “In Flight,” due Sept. 10.

“I wish we had some respect and credibility to go with our platinum record,” says Perry of her former band. “It’s great to make records and money, but it doesn’t mean anything if there’s no respect or longevity.”

“When I got in 4 Non Blondes and started working within a band, it was great because it was something I never did before. I don’t want to do it again. I like doing things myself, for me. I just felt it was time to move on and go in my own direction. I felt that I wasn’t going to get any more inspired being in that same relationship.”

Perry quit mid-way into recording the band’s highly anticipated follow-up. The record was shelved when Perry left.

“It sounded like a 4 Non Blondes record,” Perry says. “I wrote stupid, poppy songs that probably would’ve been hits. But I didn’t want to do that.”

“In Flight,” which Perry describes as “one big mood swing,” was produced by Bill Bottrell of Tuesday Night Music Club fame. The songs are more emotionally charged and introspective than those on “Bigger, Better, Faster, More.”

Bob Dylan Unearths Egyptian Records; Shrinking Atlantic Raises Grumbles

BY MELINDA NEUMANN

THE JOKER AND THE SPHINCT: Bob Dylan is starting a label, Egyptian Records. The first release on the imprint, which will go through Columbia Records, will be “The Songs Of Jimmie Rodgers—A Tribute Album.” Tentatively slated for fall release, the collection will feature a number of artists—including Dylan, Bono, Dwight Yoakam, Mary Chapin Carpenter, and Steve Earle—warbling their favorite tunes made famous by the Singing Brakeman.

Dylan’s own albums will continue to be released directly on Columbia.

ROSSING THE ATLANTIC: According to sources, Atlantic Records is reviewing their position on Bob and many acts are expected to be dropped. However, the number of cuts is nowhere near the 100-plus acts some crumbling industry-ite have been mentioning. Atlantic has no official comment, but one label executive notes: “For the past few years, the optimism of Atlantic has been that we have too many bands; now we do something about it, and we’ve done it with Peter Gabriel. Additionally, Atlantic would not comment on whether Extra Fancy had been dropped, although the band has certainly been open about its dismissal from the label. Members of Atlantic act Stone Temple Pilots are working on side projects while lead singer Scott Weiland continues to get treatment for drug addiction, according to sources. STP’s manager, Steve Stewart, would not comment on the side projects, saying only, “STP is not going anywhere right now. We’re anxious to go out and tour as a complete band.”

DIGGING UP THE PAST: The Sex Pistols have come back, as have Kiss and a number of other bands from the ’70s, so why shouldn’t the Rutles? Why not, indeed. On Oct. 29, Virgin will release “Archeology,” an album of vintage, previously unreleased material, accessed to the band’s handlers.

The Rutles, created by “Monty Python’s” Eric Idle, are responsible for the band’s single album as “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band,” as well as the groundbreaking documentary “All You Need Is Cash.”

The newish band was, according to lore, born in hiatus to be discovered in the near millennium by archeologists or to be dug up by the members of the band when they were strapped for cash. No word on any live appearances by the band to support the release.

THIS AND THAT: We have no idea who has the rights to new material from the Who (MCA, which is reissuing many of the band’s albums, couldn’t tell us by press time if it did), but whoever does should immediately put out a single and video of the acoustic version of “Won’t Get Fooled Again.” Roger Daltrey and Pete Townshend have been performing a killer take on the rock classic following their “Quadrophenia” shows. It could do for the Who what Eric Clapton’s reworked, unplugged version of “Layla” did for him... Sony has formed Sony Music Independent Labels (SMIL) for such standalone labels as Work (which previously went through Columbia Records Group) and 500 Music and 3T (which were linked with Epic). SMIL will be overseen by Dave Glew, chairman of Epic Records Group... So just where did the name for AT Teller’s new company, Red Ant Entertainment, come from? (Billboard, July 22). According to the head ant himself, it comes from the initials for his full name, Alvin Norman Teller. The red ant is known for being a particularly hard-working creature... Mercury will distribute “Safe And Sound: A Benefit In Response To The Brookline Clinic Violence” Oct. 22. The album, released through the Mighty Mighty Bosstones’ imprint, Big Rig Records, features performances from a number of top Boston alternative bands that played a series of Boston benefits in February 1995. The concerts were held after two women were killed in attacks at three Boston-area women’s health clinics in December 1994. Proceeds from the album will go to the National Clinic Access Project, which helps clinics remain open despite increased violence and harassment. Among the artists on the album are Letters To Cleo, Morphine, Belly, Tracy Bonham, Aimee Mann, and of course, the Mighty Mighty Bosstones.

ON THE ROAD: Everything But The Girl is on a U.S. theater tour until Aug. 6. The duo will return in the fall with more dates... Corrosion Of Conformity, whose new album “Wiseblood” comes out Sept. 3 on Columbia, will open for Ozzy Osbourne in the U.S. before taking the port slot for Metallica in Europe in September... Brian Setzer, backed by a 16-piece orchestra, is on tour through September... Radiohead, which just can’t seem to get off tour, has been pegged as Alain Mroseit’s opening act in August in the U.S.
Point Of Grace Delves Into ‘Mysteries’
Word Christian Act Offers Joint Book/Album Releases

NASHVILLE—With the simultaneous release of its new album and book, both titled “Life, Love And Other Mysteries,” and a co-headlining tour with 4HIM this fall, Word Records’ Point Of Grace seems on the brink of its best year yet.

Not that the past three years have been reason to complain. Since Point Of Grace members Denise Jones, Heather Floyd, Shelley Phillips, and Terry Jones left their Arkansas alma mater, Oklahoma Baptist Church, a label on Word, they’ve won numerous acco-
lades, including the Gospel Music Association’s 1994 artist of the year award.

At this year’s awards, they took the group of the year trophy as well as pop/contemporary album and single of the year for their sophomore release, “The Whole Truth,” and the single “The Great Divide.”

With 11 consecutive hits at Christian radio, Point Of Grace has rapidly become contemporary Christian music’s most popular ensemble and has spurred the popularity of other girl groups in the Christian industry. Word is hoping to broaden that base with the Sept. 10 release of “Life, Love And Other Mysteries.” The book of the same name is published by Pocket Books, a division of Simon & Schuster.

Promoting the record and the book while Point Of Grace is on tour with 4HIM “is going to give us a great opportunity to expose them to more consumers,” Word president Roland Lundy says.

“The book, we believe, will open up a whole new group of consumers. Obviously with Epic’s help—and they are going to have a really strong marketing campaign—we’re looking to really expand their audience.” (Word distributes the group’s product in the Christian market, and Epic handles mainstream distribution.)

The book will feature biographical information on each band member and will also include a special section where the women answer the questions they are most commonly asked. “We thought it would be a boring book,” Phillips says modestly. “But a lot of people want to know about us and how we grew up. Hopefully, what will come across is that people will get to know us as individ-
uals, and kids will learn from this book. It’s a Christian take on living in the ‘90s.”

The book is a personal expression of who the women are and what they stand for, and so is the new album. When their longtime A&R rep at Word, John Mays, departed for another label, Denise Jones says they found themselves more involved in creating the record, stepping in and doing things Mays had taken care of before.

“We actually sat down a lot more ourselves and talked to the producers and gave them our input and had more vocal arrangement ideas,” she says. “(And with song selection), we totally heard every song this time out. John would give us the songs he thought we might like... and this time we listened to every song that came through for this album.”

The album contains the polished pop melodies, direct spiritual lyrics, and, of course, the readily identifiable har-
monies that Point Of Grace has become known for on its projects. There are also some new “elder-sounding” songs. “I think what we wanted to do was gain a new audience but not lose the one we have,” Floyd says. “We didn’t want to go off the deep end and freak every-
one out. We like to do things that are current and (explore) different sounds... but we are about harmony.

One of the cuts that displays a differ-
ent sound for Point Of Grace is the tune “Circle Of Friends.”

“It speaks about the friendship we have with each other,” Terry Jones says. “We really have been through quite a bit. We’ve shared a lot. It’s a fun song, but it’s also kind of different because it’s very raw. The vocal is barely even sung on it, which is unusual because we usually sing at the top of our lungs.”

Radio airplay, the book release, and the tour are all components Word plans to capitalize on during the marketing of “Life, Love And Other Mysteries.”

“The 4HIM/Point Of Grace tour is a major arena tour with over 45 dates in the first leg, so we have massive dates to tie in,” says Word VP Elisa Elder.

“We are doing co-promotions with Family Bookstores at that level, so we have signage happening, huge 30-foot color banners across all the Family Bookstores in the tour markets, and all the endcaps,” Elder says.

“The two groups are sharing their new releases on endcaps at Family. I don’t think anyone has ever done it before where two labels have partnered with a bookstore financially to make something happen.”

“We’ve got a coast-to-coast national launch that ties radio, satellite TV, and Internet exposure to the release of the record. The single pops into retail; sing ‘Keep The Candle Burning,’ which is the first single; and light a candle in the store. The retailer will pre-promote it and all their circles of friends will be there with their candles lit.”

Elder says that during the retail par-
ties the label plans to give away mys-
tery boxes filled with prizes. Word is also utilizing interesting promo items geared toward radio. “The single is in a heavy metal box. The box is filled with candle wax and a wax stick so radio can ‘Keep The Candle Burning.”

With the book and album released simultaneously, Word plans to take advantage of the synergy it can create between the two projects. Elder says, “With Simon & Schuster, we have a mainstream media tour. So we’ll be going to Barnes & Noble, all the main-
stream TV shows and bookstores, all the major markets.

“And we have a coupon tie-in between the book and record. Our record...”

---Continued on next page---

Slobborne Delivers A Second ‘Pie’ On Doolittle

LOS ANGELES—Denton, Texas’ Slobborne may not have a very appealing name, but the tasty country rock it serves up on its debut—“Crow Pot Pie,” out in Texas and due nationally Sept. 10 on Doolittle Records—is already making fans ask for seconds.

The band recorded the album as a means to land gigs. But “Crow Pot Pie”—which runs the roots rock gamut from “Shoot You Dead” to drinking songs such as “Sober Song,” “Whiskey Glass Eye,” and “Stumblin’ To the more rockin’ “Tilt-A-Whirl”—has garnered the band much more than just a few shows.

Slobborne also benefited from the inclusion of its song “I Can Tell Your Love Is Waning” on the 1994 One Ton Records compilation, “Welcome To Hell’s Lobby,” which also fea-

---Continued from next page---

Has opened the show for Dionne Warwick, Buster Poindexter, Franki Valli, Al Stewart...
Artists & Music

Slobberbone Deliver a Second 'Pie' on Doolittle

(Continued from preceding page)

tured tracks from Brutal Juice, Baboon, and other bands who lived or hung out at a particular party house in Denton.

The self-released version of “Crow Pot Pie,” put out in 1986, landed the band a deal with Austin, Texas-based Doolittle, which will issue a repressed version of the album. It also netted them a press kit chock-full of clips and rave reviews, interest from major labels, and a helping hand from Darin Murphy and Jeff Osborne at William Morris Agency on the booking front.

Doolittle is hoping to land a major-label distribution deal for the label or only for “Crow Pot Pie.” Doolittle has a pressing and distribution deal for Hamel On Trial with Mercury, which also bought out the small indie’s option on Prescott Curlywolf.

“It’s funny the whole band was not about getting an album out or a record deal as much as doing it to have something as a vehicle to keep us touring and eventually quit our day jobs,” says Slobberbone’s 25-year-old singer-songwriter/guitarist Brent Best. “We’re really surprised; this is more than we wanted.”

Best, whose tales of drinking and love lost tread into the musical territory of Uncle Tupelo, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and Jason & the Scorchers, says a lot of pressure has been put on the band to live up to the press accolades.

Kevin McAlester, who hosts the new-music show “The Adventure Club” on modern rock KDGE Dallas with Josh Venable, admits that they were amazed by the label’s popularity.

“Both Josh and I were taken aback by the songwriting when we first heard it,” says McAlester. “From the time they released the CD themselves, maybe before, people have been talking about it and it hasn’t really stopped. They’re well respected among music fans here, too.”

Pete Brigitis, manager of CD Warehouse in Dallas, says area interest in Slobberbone is so high that fans of the band not only purchased the first version of the album but are picking up the second one as well.

“There is a lot of anticipation for the Doolittle release around town,” he says. “People just kept asking and asking for it. The old version was good, but with the new album you really get to hear the vocals and catch the lyrics. And, it captures how they sound live, which they just keep getting better and better at.”

The first formed Slobberbone in 1992 with drummer Tony Harper. The two were also in another local band called Gravel Truck. The other Slobberbone members, Brent Best, (guitar), Mike Hill, and fiddler/organ player Scott Danhom) joined after the first “Crow Pot Pie” was released.

“As a kid growing up in Austin, I listened to stuff like Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson, which someone my age had growing up in the ’70s. But it was mainly country bands, I played in loud guitar bands and punk bands. But when I really started writing songs, [they were] really country. At that point, I didn’t play with it anymore.”

Frustrated with playing the back of drive-in beer stores and diners in Denton, Slobberbone decided to record a disc to send to large clubs in hopes of landing better playing opportunities.

Sam McCall of the Denton-based Interscope band Brutal Juice, who, Best says, “records everyone’s band in town,” recorded and mixed “Crow Pot Pie” for $400. The band paid another $200 to print up 500 CDs, which were sold or given away at shows and Dallas area mom-and-pop record stores and sent to the press and club owners.

“Aftter [Spring] showcase, we talked to a lot of A&R people, but we’re not really interested in going to another label,” says Best. “Doolittle just happened to find us, and it made sense because we made it clear from the beginning what we wanted to do. We wanted the album to be a vehicle to get to the next level. It’s not like being on a label, it’s just like making records with someone [who is] that into what we’re doing.”

Jeff Cole, president of Doolittle, says the game plan for spreading the word on Slobberbone is to secure better distribution, keep the band on the road, and work the press.

“The band wants to do nothing but tour, and we’re big on tour support. We’ve got a lot of posters and stickers and stuff out at the shows, and they’re playing primo rooms now,” says Cole, who co-produced the new version of the album with the band. “We’re hiring McCarthy Promotions to help out. It will go to college radio in September.”

Cole says the band rerecorded “Crow Pot Pie,” which features seven of the 12 songs on the original album plus four new songs, for about $25,000.

“The idea of rerecording stuff we already recorded was weird, but we had a different line so we knew we had to,” says Best. “It was a real headache. When we listened to it, the mix sounded too slick. No one would believe it was us. So, we remixed it in Austin. I wanted the album to give an indication of how we are live, and I hope it does.”

RUSH AIDS FOR A NEW GENERATION

(Continued from page 10)

towards that for a while now. Even with [1991’s] ‘Roll The Bones’ we were starting to go more in the direction of getting back to a three-piece sound. It’s been progressive since then. This record has virtually no keyboards.”

“Test For Echo,” which will be released worldwide simultaneously by Atlantic, will be worked aggressively to Rush’s core fan base, according to Atlantic VP Vicki Germaine, who says the title track will go to album rock radio Sept. 6. Atlantic plans to follow that track with “Half The World” and “Virtual Encore,” which Germaine believes have the potential to cross over into pop.

“If you look at where Metallica’s getting played—rock-oriented top 40 stations—this really sounds mainstream for them,” says Germaine, referring to “Half The World.”

Jo Robinson, assistant MD and music director and midday DJ at active rock station WRCX Chicago, finds the Metallica analogy appropriate. She says, “About eight months ago, [PD] Dave Richards said, ‘Let’s start testing some old Metallica. Let’s make sure it’s cool to play a lot of Metallica in anticipation of their new album.’

“Well, when we found out about the Rush album, we looked at each other and said, ‘This is the same situation. This will be an event in Chicago the same way the Metallica album was an event. We’ll make it seem uncool not to listen to Rush.’

Retailers are equally excited about the prospect of a Rush album. John Grandoni, director of purchasing at Carnegie, Pa.-based, I&S-store National Record Mart, says, ‘We’re already getting some requests for the new album. We’ve always done well with Rush. I’m sure sales will be excellent in the first two weeks, but the key will be to go beyond the hardcore fans and spread it to the next generation.’

Rush plans to tour behind “Test For Echo” starting Aug. 18 in Albany, N.Y., and will swing through various points in North America until early next year, according to Lifeson. The band will return to the stage at the end of 1997, hitting amphitheaters and sheds.

During that break, Rush will mix its fourth live album, which will feature material recorded on the “Counterparts” and “Test For Echo” tours, as well as previously unreleased tracks from the late-70s date at London’s Hammersmith Odeon, according to Lifeson. Rush’s shows are booked by International Creative Management in the U.S. and the Agency Group in London.

The group’s music is published by Toronto-based Mark Cain Music.

Artists & Music

Slobberbone Delivers a Second ‘Pie’ on Doolittle

(Continued from preceding page)

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TRIBE CALLED QUEST IS BACK WITH THE 'BEATS'

(Continued from page 3)

To create further advance awareness, a 15-second teaser spot tagging the album's release date ran for two weeks, five times a day, on the Box between 8 and 9 a.m.

On June 3, a clip lensed by director Hype Williams was serviced, and it "is the first time that the Visible Mix and the Box hit, and it's a pretty big hit," says Goldfarb. Justyn Tyrone, a music programmer and network scheduler at the Box, says "the Visible Mix and the Box, BET," says Goldfarb. "They're coming after you, and they're coming at you."

The response is probably a little bit better in the East, though.

"Ince Again," which features vocalist Tommy Lucas, won't be released commercially because "we want to sell albums," says Goldfarb. It was shipped to mix-show DJs June 17. On July 1, R&B and crossover radio programmers got it.

Teddy Ted, who, along with Special K, is part of the on-air team the Awesome 3, said of "Ince Again," "we're pumpin' it, and we're getting a few requests [from listeners]." The Awesome 3 programmed the song to the Point's West Coast mix and has already played it twice.

"It's not a huge request record, but most of Tribe's records aren't. The entire staff have been asking for it, though, so I think it'll be a smash."

For the week ending July 16, Broadcast Data Systems reports 56 detections of "Ince Again." The most active stations are WQHT (98 spins), WBMP (33), and WJBT (28), Fla. (25).

SUMMIT GETS DOWN TO BUSINESS OF DANCE MUSIC

(Continued from page 3)

could unplug from a track, has warmth, and to prove there was another al-
music videos, Lee Chestnut, senior vp of programming for VH1, admitted that the channel isn't known for being dance-oriented but advises record companies to put the big money behind artists they are developing.

"There's no better time for a label to invest in an artist than when they're trying to break one," he said. "Videos have to be really compelling to be noticed."

As well, he advised artists to "be yourself. People usually recognize the truth."

Along those lines, the well-traveled issue of many female dance artists not fitting the traditional physical role of video vixens was discussed in a stirring commentary from Janice Robinson, former lead singer of Living Joy, who is sensing resistance from labels because she's "not an 18-year-old size 2. I'm a woman," she said.

Another significant issue addressed was the dance community's longstanding battle with the lack of a Grammy category that recognizes the genre. A panel created to define ways to gain the attention of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), which sponsors the awards, drew only a few dozen attendees. A subsequent session in the same room, on the Internet, drew nearly 100 partici-

pant.

Producer Jollyboje Beinette stressed that in order to convince NARAS to launch a dance music category, the industry would have to prove that there is a demand for dance-oriented R&B. Additional awards beyond those of "excellence in production" would improve the situation, he added.

Ellen Harris, who heads the Commi-
tee for the Advancement of Dance Music, said that "recognition and visi-
bility mean more record sales and more money for engineers, remixers, DJs at clubs, and Kes and record companies. There's more money coming to the whole community, so everyone benefits."

Suggestions for garnering attention included mailing all dance releases to NARAS so that organization honchos could see the steady flow of product, as the video exposure and airplay given to "Ince Again" is resulting in fans flocking to their local record shops checking for the album.

"People never stop asking, 'When's the next Tribe album coming?'" says Violet Brown, urban music buyer at Torrance, Calif.-based Wherehouse Records. "With the appearance of 'Ince Again' and the tour, it's really intensified. My orders for 'Beats, Rhymes And Life' are big. It will prob-
ely be one of the biggest of the year."

Marvin Amdya, singles buyer at HMV's New York store and Broadways and 72nd Street, notes that "a lot of people have been asking about Tribe, and I'm surprised by their age range— 12 to 30."

For the first time since it debuted, A Tribe Called Quest will be on tour in major markets with a current album.

On July 22, the group will take part in the House of Blues Smokin' Grooves tour, which also features the Fugees, Cypress Hill, Spearhead, Busta Rhymes, and Ziggy Marley & the Melody Makers.

The tour started in Sacramento, Calif., and concludes in Irvine, Calif. "It's gonna basically orbit the country and come full circle," says Goldfarb. The tour will play 15,000-seat venues. In the fall and winter, according to Lighty, the crew will play college gigs and other discount dates priced at $10-$15. In addition, it will appeale other people's records and on several motion picture soundtracks, starting with "High School High," which ships Sept. 10 on Big Beat Atlantic.

"We're just gonna be in people's faces," says Lighty. "In the past, our problem was going away."

well as rounding up members of the dance community to become members of the organization, since "the only way we will have a category for the artists we love is if we have more voting mem-

bers," Benitez said.

Kim Jones, a NARAS associate member, peddled applications for the organization, stressing that board members are unaware of dance music's popularity. "Hip-hop and rap music got their categories, as did folk music and reggae. There are a lot of categories that NARAS has recognized, but it took effort," she said. "You need to submit product, you need to submit entries. They're not hearing it."

At the Billboard Dance Music Summit panel titled "Building The Perfect Artist," VH1's Lee Chestnut, left; independent publicist Craig Karpel, center, and Arista's Carmen Cacaceffo offer tips to the nearly 500 attendees.

WITH DEMERGER LOOMING, EMI PROSPERING

(Continued from page 3)

with comp-store sales up 2.7% world-

wide and 14.7% in the U.K. New stores in the quarter included two in the Aus-
tralian cities of Queensland and Victo-
rina and four in Japan—in Osaka and the Gota district of Tokyo and two in Fukuoka. Worldwide, HWM's sales were up 17.7% to $254.4 million; that total includes revenues from U.K.-based bookeller Dillons.

All of Thorn EMI's labels, music publishing, and music retailing opera-
tions will be encompassed by a compa-
y, EMI Group, that will be created should demerger proceed.

Speculation that the EMI Group will be bought soon after it is separated from Thorn has been rife since the demerger plan was announced last fall. However, since that time, Thorn EMI has been adamant that selling the company has never been on the agenda. Spokesman Colin Woodley has several times pointed out the illegit of shareholders voting to be free of one corporation only to agree to become part of another.

He adds now that any prospective buyer would have to be acceptable to both the American and European competition authorities and would have to have "very deep pockets."

International speculation has in-
ned naming corporations said to be interested in the EMI Group—Viacom and Disney are prominent among them—and Woodley notes that "Sea-
gram has come to the top of the list this time around."

However, he states, "they have not spoken to us. No potential buyer has even shown their hand."

Thorn EMI reports in pounds sterling. The exchange rate used in this story is 1.56 to the dollar.
COUNTRY CLOWN: Country's answer to "Weird Al" Yankovic, Cledus T. Judd (No Relation), is having fun at the expense of nearly every country music superstar out there. His hilarious parody album, "I Stoled This Record" on Razor & Tie Records, is gaining in sales and moves from No. 23 to No. 15 in the South Central Regional Roundup this week. It also jumps four spots to No. 68 this week on Top Country Albums. According to SoundScan, the album has sold more than 11,000 units.

Judd turns Shania Twain's "Any Man Of Mine" into "If Shania Was Mine" and her "If You're Not In Love (I'm Outta Here)" into "I'm Not In Here For Love (Just A Beer)." CMT is playing video for "If Shania Was Mine" in medium rotation, and TNM is playing it as well. Judd also turns Neil McCoys' "For A Change" into "The Change," an ode to transvestites; the Charlie Daniels Band's "The Devil Went Down To Georgia" into "Claud Went Down To Florida;" and Joe Diffe's "Bigger Than The Beatles" into "She's Got A Butt Bigger Than The Beatles." The video for "Bigger Than The Beatles" will be shot this week of Aug. 6.

"He's selling this well, and he's really gone on the road yet," says Cliff Cleinfeld, co-president of New York-based Razor & Tie. "We're doing this off of one song on radio, where it gets only morning shows and afternoon drive shows, and video." So far, Judd has promoted the album via a 10-market radio tour in mid-July and performances like the one he gave at Brooks & Dunn's fan-club booth at Fan Fair this year. He was also on the Wal-Mart tour, Smooth Sounds. Ninna- Freelon's debut for Concord Jazz, "Shaking Free," is the jazz singer's first recording with her touring unit. Just off a European tour, Freelon starts a U.S. jaunt 12 shows in five days at Catalina Bar & Grill in Santa Monica, Calif., beginning Sept. 10.

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Dancing, Pillow Talk, At Work & At Play, A Walk On The Beach, A Family Picnic, A Rainy Day, A Sunny Day, That First Date,

Smooth

A Division Of Motown Records LP
The pages of Billboard magazine come to life Aug. 4 with the unveiling of the first Billboard Live club. While the historic Sunset Strip site will feature two exterior JumboTRON screens, a gourmet restaurant and interactive computer kiosks, the emphasis will always be on the music. Top-of-the-line concert capabilities ensure that the stage at this state-of-the-art music venue will be dedicated to Billboard's mandate of always hearing the future.

A GRAND OPENING SPOTLIGHT

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UNITED AIRLINES
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Billboard Live, which opens its doors at 9039 Sunset Blvd. in West Hollywood, Calif., on Aug. 4, is a music venue with deep connections to the past, present and future of the music business.

The club—the first of several Billboard Live facilities planned for construction in the U.S., Europe and Asia over the next decade—stands on the site of Gazzari’s, one of the most fabled L.A. rock venues of the ’60s, ’70s and ’80s, across the street from the 9000 Sunset building, for many years the hub of the L.A. music business and the former home of Billboard’s editorial offices. Billboard Live has been designed as a state-of-the-art facility that sets the standard for the entertainment venues of today. And, as a showcase for the hottest up-and-coming talent, it will serve as a launching pad for the stars of tomorrow.

SEEDS OF INSPIRATION

Billboard’s interest in developing a nightclub that would serve the needs of both the music industry and the public dates back close to five years, according to publisher Howard Lander. “I felt we could open a club with the best interests of the industry at heart and capture the essence of the magazine,” Lander says. “This was a path that we wanted to explore as part of our plan to diversify our operations.

A similar idea was on the minds of some of the principal executives at Billboard Entertainment Marketing, a company established by BPI Communications Inc., the corporate parent of Billboard magazine, six years ago. The company was formed to develop television opportunities, such as the Billboard Music Awards, and various promotions and premiums.

Billboard Live president Keith Pressman, who was formerly general counsel for Billboard Entertainment Marketing, recalls, “As we were progressing, we realized that there was really nowhere to do the television shows from and the radio shows from. And we also realized that there was really no venue that was of the caliber that we felt we needed to showcase a lot of new acts and do a lot of special events. We just saw the need out there for something like this, it was a natural.”

Jerold Pressman of Billboard Entertainment Marketing, who also serves as chairman of Billboard Live, met with BPI to discuss the idea of a Billboard club. “What impressed us most about Jerry Pressman was his concept—to focus on the music and make the club a performance center,” says Lander, who also serves as president of the Billboard Music Group. “With themed restaurants starting to proliferate, we felt Jerry’s concept was the smarter path to follow. Additionally, he not only understood our need to actively participate in the process, but recognized that the success of the club would be linked to its connection with Billboard.”

A PIECE OF MUSIC HISTORY

Before the relationship with Billboard was even finalized, the principals of the club purchased Gazzari’s, with an eye to redeveloping the storied site as a new venue. They bought a piece of L.A. music history.

Originally located on nearby La Cienega Boulevard—where it served as ground zero for the career of Johnny Rivers—Gazzari’s, ’named for the colorful club-owner Bill Gazzari, moved to Sunset Boulevard location in 1964. That particular spot on the Strip had been prominent—perhaps notorious—even before that era: in the early 1950s, when the restaurant Sherry’s stood on the site, mobster Mickey Cohen was sprayed with gunfire in an attempted gangland hit there.

Gazzari’s was one of a number of Sunset Strip clubs—including the Whisky A Go Go, Pandora’s Box, Ciro’s, It’s Boss and the Trip—that helped define the city’s music scene during the ’60s. At the height of its renown, the club booked a number of important groups in their infancy. Keith Pressman recalls, “When we first walked into Gazzari’s, there were old contracts on the walls from the Doors, Van Halen, and Crosby, Stills & Nash, from the days when they played for $250 a gig.”

Gazzari’s remained a fixture of The Strip through the late ’80s, when it mounted many of the biggest metal acts of the era. Billboard Live’s principals purchased the club after Bill Gazzari died in the early ’90s. “We really wanted to become a part of the history of the Sunset Strip; we wanted to become a part of a revitalization and bring it back to its heyday,” Pressman says.

Plans originally called for Gazzari’s to be completely remodeled as Billboard Live, but, after the 1994 Northridge earthquake damaged the club’s foundation, the Pressmans and VP of operations Steve Strauss decided to construct a new facility from the ground up. And it wouldn’t be just any club.

A NONPAIREIL SHOWCASE

“The premise that we started from was that we wanted to create the ultimate showcase facility,” Pressman says. “We went to the industry, we went to the artists, we went to the record labels, and we asked what they would look for in a venue—what they like about other venues, what they don’t like about other venues.”

He adds, “One thing that we’ve tried to hammer home is that the whole aura of the club is geared toward the industry. That affects everything from the way equipment is loaded in and loaded out to plush dressing rooms to a special green room. We’ve built the facility so that it will be a very comfortable experience for the performer.”

Pressman notes that Billboard Live’s industry-friendly philosophy extends beyond the services provided to performers: “When guests come to the door, they know somebody will be waiting for them, and they’re going to get right in and be treated the way they should be,” he says.

The emphasis at Billboard Live will be on intimacy: The club’s main showroom has a capacity of 400, while the private Board Room can accommodate 100. The public at-large—and the estimated 65,000 cars that drive down Sunset Strip daily—will be able to catch some of the show on two large JumboTRON video marquees mounted on the front of the venue; sets will be captured by Billboard Live’s four TV cameras.

The club’s accoutrements will include a sophisticated Vari-Lite system, a sound system that incorporates Studer digital routing and a rotating stage for smooth transitions between acts. (See separate story.)

The focus at billboard Live will be on the finest in new talent. Keith Pressman says, “We’d like to hold true to the Billboard motto, ‘We hear the future.’ We’d like to bring in the acts that are the big acts of tomorrow. We want to give them a showcase to help them launch their careers. The thought is to focus on the Heatseekers chart, the acts that are bubbling under. We want to give them the ability to play in a club that has the greatest sound and lights, a facility that they’d find on an A-level tour.” (See separate story.)

AROUND THE WORLD AND INTO CYBERSPACE

The Sunset Strip club is only the beginning of the Billboard Live story. “At this point, we’re looking for 12 facilities over the next four or five years,” Pressman says. “In the near future, the rollout is most likely going to be in Las Vegas and New York. Probably after that will come Nashville and Orlando, Fla., and then we’ll branch out into Europe and Asia. As we open these up around the world, they’re all going to be hooked up, and they’re going to be interactive, so we’ll be able to have global jam sessions. When someone plays in one club, they’ll be able to be seen all around the world.”

Top: At the August 1995 groundbreaking for Billboard Live west (from left) chairman Jerrold Pressman, president Keith Pressman, executive vp Pat Brinson and Billboard Music Group senior vp Georgina Chaitis. Right: A huge billboard covering the club's location piqued the interest of passersby before the August '96 unveiling.
BILLBOARD BY DESIGN

Appealing To The Eyes And Ears

Of The Industry, The Club Lives

Up To Its Respected Name

BY DAVIN SEAY

It's one of the most impressive live-entertainment venues currently unclouded, an intimate cabaret with its sights set on the 21st century, a club created on the concept that artist and audience can achieve a maximal level of interaction, an environment that anticipates and accommodates such essential components as intimacy, elegance and dramatic effect.

Billboard Live, the prototype for a projected string of clubs across the country and around the world, defines, in every important aspect, the term "state of the art." It's a seamless blend of form and function that comes together in a total entertainment experience.

Of course, the notion of a full-service nightclub is hardly new, as witnessed by the proliferation of Hard Rock Cafes, Planet Hollywoods and Houses Of Blues popping up like mushrooms across the landscape. Yet, what Billboard Live alone provides is a vital connection to an illustrious history. It's no accident that the club's name is formed into a publication that is the bible of the music industry, a magazine that has forecasted the future of music and the business of music for over a century. On Aug. 4, 1996, that tradition jumps off the page and into 9039 Sunset Blvd., at the heart of West Hollywood's legendary Sunset Strip.

THE LOOK OF THINGS

"The biggest challenge in making Billboard Live a reality was that one of our primary goals was to connect with the Billboard image," says Thomas Mohler, the architect and designer most responsible for the club's unique look and multifaceted design. A partner in Santa Monica-based firm The Last Design Company, Mohler says he had a simple mandate: "We wanted to create an environment that would capitalize on Billboard's reputation at the same time that it captured the spirit and vision of the publication."

Working with his partner, three-time Emmy Award-winning designer Jeremy Roitman and a team headed by Billboard Live president Keith Pressman, Mohler set to work on the site of the former Gazzari's, a local landmark that helped launch the careers of such L.A. acts as the Doors, Van Halen and Guns N' Roses.

"We approached this project very deliberately and took the time to decide exactly what we wanted the club to be," explains Pressman. "Within original plans incorporated some of Gazzari's structure, the 1994 Northridge earthquake caused a serious setback. It damaged the foundation and sent us back to the drawing board," says Pressman. "We ultimately had to completely tear down the old structure."

What replaced it, according to Mohler, "is a shell. We essentially had four walls to work with, as well as a lot of very ambitious ideas about what the club should and could be."

Working with a narrow 11-inch width between the facade of the building and the legal limits of the sidewalk, Mohler and his team began to assemble the first components of a club that would reflect and enhance that vital Billboard connection. "We came up with a gridded light panel that is basically an abstraction of the famous Billboard charts," Mohler reveals. Behind the grid, a panel of LED lights constantly changing patterns, underscores Pressman's assertion that "Billboard Live is designed to look different every time you see it."

In line with the long-standing Billboard mandate to reflect the very latest in music and entertainment, the centerpiece of the club's impressive exterior is a pair of 9-by-12-foot JumboTRON screens. The screens will project Billboard chart listings, as well as simulcasts from inside the venue along with television, public-service announcements and award-winning work from student filmmakers. The JumboTRON display also has the effect of enormously expanding the club's virtual audience, by providing the 65,000 motorists who daily pass through the Sunset Strip corridor the opportunity to be part of the club's expansive ambiance. Passersby will also be able to tune into the club's special low-frequency FM radio channel to hear music and more, courtesy of Billboard Live.

THE INSIDE STORY

Although scaled to an intimate 400-seat capacity, the interior of Billboard Live brilliantly captures the building's exterior scale. From its 30-foot atrium ceiling to its open and airy three-level floor plan, the venue has the look and feel of a space much larger than its actual 12,000 square feet. "The design focuses on maximizing the sight line to the stage everywhere in the house," explains Mohler. "As much as possible, we wanted to ensure that there wasn't a bad seat."

Yet, while Billboard Live strives to bring everyone as close as possible to the 27-foot revolving stage, the club's designers also have made sure that there is ample room for the private, VIP functions so important to a venue in the heart of the world's entertainment mecca.

Responding to the requirement for a club-within-a-club, the Billboard Live team created The Board Room, located on the club's bottom floor, just off a lobby featuring a huge billboard logo laid into the floor. The subterranean getaway will be available to members only, with individuals paying $3,000 and corporate memberships running $6,000 annually. Designed to meet the needs of the music industry, The Board Room's amenities include concierge service, teleconferencing and Internet access. A lush and luxurious environment of sandblasted glass and red and blue padded-velvet paneling, the rendezvous site offers a virtual office for music-industry professionals and a snug haven for celebrities.

The heart and soul of Billboard Live, however, is an glorious display directly behind the door of the club's street-level entrance. The grand lobby features monitors embedded in the floor, all airing the JumboTRON programming. An expansive staircase leads up to the split-level main floor, divided into a spacious dance arena and a large and well-appointed bar, suffused with soft overhead lighting. Opposite the main bar is a special Tequila Library, offering discerning patrons shots of premium tequila and other fine spirits. The main floor is surrounded by its own oversize video monitors tuned to the club's seven-channel in-house broadcast service. All the club's screens will automatically tune to the stage when the evening's featured performance begins, and concert footage can be shot and edited in Billboard Live's own video production facility for later use by the artists themselves.

Continued on page 24
Voices like Trisha Yearwood’s don’t come along very often — in country or any other kind of music.

People Magazine

Hearty and lustrous, muscular in her phrasing, she gives the most powerful performance Nashville has seen from a woman in years.

Newsweek

Trisha Yearwood announces herself as one of the finest interpretive singers ever to grace the genre.

Entertainment Weekly

“Everybody Knows” The new album from Trisha Yearwood. Featuring the hit song “Believe Me Baby (I Lied).”

Available August 27
Congratulations on the première of Billboard Live.

We are proud to participate in this stellar event.

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Bryan White

"The opening of Billboard Live is the culmination of a long journey and numerous detours since we first entertained the concept of creating a network of clubs/restaurants. Finding the right partners was crucial, as we were faced with preserving the publication's journalistic integrity as well as the usual operating considerations. Establishing the mandate that Billboard Live would continue operating were we entertained some of the most prominent musical talents in the world. We think Billboard Live will help cement West Hollywood's position as a city that is the center of the entertainment industry and entertainment-related businesses in Southern California."

Howard Lander
President and Publisher,
The Billboard Music Group

"The city of West Hollywood is very excited about the upcoming opening of Billboard Live on the world-famous Sunset Strip. Billboard Live will be a very exciting venue [presenting] one of the most prominent musical talents in the world. We believe this will bring a lot of attention in a very positive way to the City of West Hollywood and will be a wonderful addition to Sunset Boulevard."

Paul Koretz
Mayor of West Hollywood

By Design
Continued from page 20

FINE DINING

Suspended over the dance floor and stage is the club's restaurant level with additional VIP seating including the exclusive skybox, overlooking prime viewing space. The Billboard Live food services, including an extensive wine and champagne list and a menu of unique appetizers, was created especially for the club by John Sedlar, renowned chef of Abiquiu, Bikini and St. Esteph fame.

"There has been an impressive attention to detail in every aspect of the club," remarks Sedlar, "and we've tried to follow it through with the menu. We're really pushing the envelope of modern and classic cuisine, at the same time remembering the intense health- and beauty-consciousness of Angelinos. The food will be very diverse culturally, with an emphasis on foods from the Pacific Rim and Latino cultures." The restaurant, which will seat 80, will be serviced by Sedlar's experienced staff of 15.

The attention to detail mentioned by the famed chef is evident in every aspect of the Billboard Live experience, and nowhere more so than in the club's lavish fittings and decor. Explains Mahler, "I wanted to display the construction elements within the design of the building and its furnishings, while at the same time giving the interior a plush and comfortable feel, which is why you'll see a mix of colorful and lavish materials with expanded and perforated metals and exposed construction elements."

It's an intriguing combination of elegance everywhere. The club's downstairs Green Room, for example, combines lizard-skin-textured vinyl with taffeta-padded walls and heat-pressed vinyl, while the deluxe restrooms sport a diamond-perforated metal and penny-round tile motif. The bar finishes combine corrugated-acrylic counter edging and rayon-vellvet wall panels overlaid with perforated metal sheeting. The bar facing is made of black pearl Ikonive, and the banquet cushions are upholstered in slylack black leather. From the mica-colored Karastan carpeting to the silver-slate staircases to the Modernica cloud couches, Billboard Live appointments attain a stunning medium of a full spectrum of colors and textures.

SOUND IDEAS

Yet, as dazzling as Billboard Live might be to the eye, it's the ear that was the primary consideration in the club's design. "Every wall surface was worked out beforehand with engineers for maximum acoustic response," claims Mahler. "All the decorative elements were assembled with sound in mind. When you look at the vatsationing on the bar, for example, what you're really seeing is a very effective bass trap."

The technical aspects of Billboard Live are, in fact, every bit as remarkable, and meticulously rendered, as its aesthetic considerations. "Everything is set up so that, as technology changes, we can just reprogram what we have," explains Steve Strauss, Billboard Live's VP of operations. "We may not use it all immediately, but we're having everything wired now, so that when the time comes, we are ready."

The club's interactive elements include touch-screen monitors located throughout the venue to access and view a special video collection and music-trivia games, as well as place food and drink orders and, eventually, interact with guests at other Billboard Live locations. The club's design and unique pre-wired revolving stage will facilitate both live and radio and television broadcasts while eliminating expensive and time-consuming drills between sets. This will be a particularly useful feature when TV shows such as the Billboard Awards air live-performance segments from the venue.

But where the technology of tomorrow is truly front and center at Billboard Live is in its sound and stage facilities. "This system is so good it's scary," asserts production manager Pat Pennington, the man charged with getting a bewildering array of advanced equipment up and running. "We were given a lot of great new toys and told to make it all work together."

And they do. Consulting closely with Grammy-winning producer Phil Ramone, whose talents have brought out the best in everyone from Barbra Streisand to Frank Sinatra, the Billboard Live team has created a sound system with truly awesome capabilities. "We've got a 56-channel Europa console," boasts Pennington, "as well as a 50-channel monitor board. The signals are digitized and feed to a Studer D-19 Digital MADI routing system. It's simply the best there is. We've also created a fiber-optic link for recording trucks and a second fiber-optic link to our video production center, which was designed especially for us by Sony Systems Integrated Division. The effect is nothing less than an in-house recording and video studio."

The sound system's cutting-edge specs are matched by the club's ability to mount top-notch live performances. "This place was really designed with the artist in mind," continues Pennington. "Everything from on-site parking for tour buses to a three-foot load-in from dock to stage to a computerized link from the dressing rooms to the restaurant make this an ideal concert venue from a performer's point of view."

"Our audio and video equipment will be the equivalent of what an A-level act would use on a multimillion-dollar tour," adds Keith Pressman.

It's an assertion also borne out in the Billboard Live lighting layout. "We've used Vari-Lite exclusively," says Greg Vogt, the club's technical coordinator. "This is really the first time Vari-Lite has been employed in anything other than a full concert venue, and to make it work we consulted closely with Hriden, Vari-Lite's architectural-lighting division."

The result is a lighting grid that includes over 50 moving-head dichotic fixtures, six high-speed trusses and a 24-by-18-foot mother truss to facilitate maintenance. "There is simply nothing like it on a club level," says Vogt. "This is the kind of equipment you'd expect to see at a Pink Floyd or Genesis concert."

In the end, a vision for the future built on a tradition of excellence and a pioneering reputation has resulted in an elegant and efficient application of style and substance that maximizes both aesthetic and utilitarian demands. With Billboard Live, the enduring legacy of a great music magazine finds expression in a 21st-century vision of the ultimate entertainment environment.
BEST WISHES TO
BILLBOARD LIVE
AND
GOOD LUCK
TO ALL BANDS
Hotel rooms even a rock star doesn't have the heart to trash.

Villas at the Sunset Marquis.
Unique. Even by Hollywood Standards.
Yvette Cason Comes Out To ‘Play’ Again; RCA Brings In ‘Da Noise’ Cast Album

Ye Haa! Celebrity event coordinator Kenneth R. Reynolds served up some sumptuous vocal talent for the annual Bill Pickett Invitational Black Rodeo, which was held July 20-21 at the Los Angeles Equestrian Center. Among the guest performers were vocalists Alyson Williams, Byron Motley, Howard Johnson, and Yvette Cason.

Readers will remember Cason starring in the Los Angeles stage musical “Sisterella,” which is in turnaround as the show’s producers seek a new director and tweak the script.

Miramax Films has the motion picture rights to “Sisterella.”

Whatever alterations are made to the musical comedy, we hope that Cason continues to play Dalila, the endearing—

Yvette Cason

who’s still-untitled set was produced by

Rhino Sets Up Rushen’s ‘Best’ Anthology Follows Reissue Of ’82 Album

Whos Who, whose still-untitled set was produced by the former Death Row co-owner/artist and is scheduled for release this summer.

Look like Dre is coming out of a creative bag by going R&B first, as opposed to playing his obvious commercial trump card of rap, suggesting the rapper’s desire to shed his gangsta image in favor of a broader audience. Frankly, there’s really no leap of faith involved here if you take into account the smooth music arrangements that the artist has consistently produced.

Delightful Compilation: Rhino has thrown down “Rapper’s Delight: The Best Of Sugarhill Gang,” an 11-track party package sure to tickle the fancy of nost- talgic musicologists and young rap fans alike.

Released July 16, the set is Rhino’s first compilation of what is acknowledged as the first rap act to hit the mainstream. The group’s popular single on the Sugar Hill Rec- ord’s label “Rapper’s Delight” peaked at No. 4 on the Hot R&B Singles chart in 1979.

What’s Going On: Marvin Gaye music collectors won’t want to miss “The Vulnerable Sessions,” a collection of ballads recorded by the late artist throughout the ’60s and ’70s. Scheduled for release by Motown Oct. 8, the 10-track set offers listeners a different flavor from one of R&B’s most influen- tial artists.

“The Vulnerable Sessions” is a collection of remakes in the tradition of Frank Sinatra—which may not appeal to orthodox Gaye aficionados. Still the music is worthy, even if not in sync with modern society’s perception of “Marvin the soul artist.”

What’s Up? Artist/advisor/producer James Mtume is heat- ing up as fast as this year’s summer weather. Not only is Mtume the author of the theme to Fox’s popular hip-hop crime TV show “The New Undercover,” he produced Mary J. Blige’s “Everlasting Love” and K-Ci Haley’s “Wildflower”—both of which are featured on the LaFace album “Rhythm Of The Games,” which pays musical tribute to the 1996 Summer Olympic Games.

Mtume—perhaps the only released artist who recorded “Juicy Fruit,” which was No. 1 for eight weeks on Hot R&B Singles in 1983—also hosts “Open Line,” a contemporary issues talk show that airs Sunday mornings on WKS West New York. He also recently signed a three-act production/imprint deal with RCA to distrib- ute Reel 2 Reel Music, his new label.

RUSHEN

LOS ANGELES—Rhinoceros Records will tap into the exemplary industry reputation of Patrice Rushen and piggy- back its recent marketing efforts for a current Rhino reissue by the artist as it prepares to release “The Best Of Patrice Rushen.”

A single-CD, 14-track package slated for release Sept. 17, “The Best Of Patrice Rushen” contains all the artist’s hits from her Elektra years as well as one on Arista.

Rush Hour Crush: Payday artist Big Shug stands on the set of the video for his first single, “Crush.” The clip was shot at the Transit Museum in Brooklyn, N.Y. Pictured, from left, are Big Shug, video producer/co-director Carl Vern, co-director Pierre Vern, and Payday manager Mr. Dave.

Rhino’s most influential artists and is说话 about the music industry.
| WEEK | TITLE | ARTIST | LABEL | NUMBER DISTRIBUTING LABEL | WEEKS AT TOP 10 | WEEKS AT TOP 20
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**NEW**

| WEEK | TITLE | ARTIST | LABEL | NUMBER DISTRIBUTING LABEL | WEEKS AT TOP 10 | WEEKS AT TOP 20
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**RECORDS WITH THE GREATEST AIRPLAY AND SALES GAINS THIS WEEK:**

- GREATEST GAINER/Sales: 41
- GREATEST GAINER/Airplay: 26
- Greatest Gainer/Sales: 41
- Greatest Gainer/Airplay: 26

**COMPILED FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF R&B RADIO AIRPLAY MONITORED BY BROADCAST DATA SYSTEMS, R&B RADIO PLAYLISTS, AND RETAIL SINGLE SALES COLLECTED, COMPILTED, AND PROVIDED BY**

**BILBOARD**

**AUGUST 3, 1996**
### Hot R&B Airplay

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### Hot R&B Singles Sales

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The article is about the music industry, specifically focusing on the sales and performances of R&B artists. It mentions various artists such as Patrice Rushen, Eric Benet, and others, and discusses their album releases, chart performances, and promotional strategies. The text includes data on weekly sales, recording dates, and other industry metrics. The article is part of a larger publication that provides an overview of the music industry during the specified period.
## Top R&B Albums for the Week Ending Aug. 8, 1996

**No. 1**

<table>
<thead>
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**New**

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**New Peak**

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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MAXWELL</td>
<td>&quot;MAXWELL'S HANG SITU&quot;</td>
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**Highest Debut**

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**Week Ending Aug. 8, 1996**

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<td>&quot;JAM 40005/40006&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;I'M BACKUP&quot;</td>
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**Greatest Gainer**

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**Albums**

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**Last Week's Chart**

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**Newly Expanded Listings**

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**Additional New Listings**

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**From Doo-Wop to Hip-Hop**

A comprehensive, artist-by-artist listing of every title and artist to hit Billboard's R&B singles charts with

- Complete Billboard Chart Data
- Debute date, peak position, total weeks charted, original label and number, and more
- Thousands of Artist & Title Notes

**New Features**

- Top 100 Artist Photos, Record Prices, Picture Sleeve/Custom Cassette Box Guide, Sales/Playlists Charts Research, Quick Top Hits Guide, Underlined Biggest Chart Hits, Shaded #1 Hits... More

**Special Sections**

- Revised Alphabetical Title Index
- Year-by-Year #1 Record Listing
- Biggest Artists & Songs

**BILLBOARD AUGUST 3, 1996**

**Billboard Top R&B Singles 1942 - 1995**

The Most Accurate & Thorough Account of R&B Music Ever!
TALK ABOUT waiting to exhale. That intense wind you might have felt at 1 a.m. Saturday, July 20, was not a rare respite from the summer heat. It was ushering in a sigh of relief strong enough to be heard and felt around the world. It was at that moment that the 10th annual Chicago-Hill-Board Dance Music Summit officially came to a close.

Approximately 500 of clubland’s key players converged upon Collision and the Mill on Michigan in Chicago July 17-19 for a spree of discussion groups, artist showcases, and schmoozing. In a word, it was herculean. But it was all good, too. Thank goodness we kept a diary. Otherwise, we could never have kept track of it all.

MONDAY, July 16: Here we are, doing what has become a natural part of our social existence—walking on the floor at 3 a.m. in a sweaty, jolt-in-just-downstairs-to-iarnot iron-oat. We all know we make an experience twice, you’d think that the stress would lessen. Not even close. Oh, well... who said the life of a control freak was an easy one.

In reality, there is little reason to be stressed out this year. Support from the dance music community, on the whole, has been high-energy. And the decision to move the event to Chicago is proving to be wise. Not only is this a beautiful city with a kickin’ club scene, but the local industry vibe here is warmer and more cooperative than we could ask.

Of course, there are frustrations. Carving out equal pieces of the proverbial pie for everyone gets harder every year. And while we’d love to believe that everyone will leave with a satisfied smile, we know that’s impossible. With the aid of our fearless business counterpart, Billboard’s special events manager and Maurean Ryan, we are providing venues conducive to exchanging ideas, doing business, and partying. The rest is up to them. As we turn off the lights and curl up with our teddy bear in an effort to get some sleep, questions about the club community really willing to work hard and support itself? Or does everyone simply want to look fabulous and be on the guest list?

TUESDAY, July 17: Feeling a little calmer today—thanks in large part to this weekend. It sounded like all this afternoon’s rehearsal for Clubland Unplugged, which will launch the summit at Green Dolphin Street tomorrow night. The premise for the show is the simple yet terrifying: take several of dance music’s leading voices and put ‘em in front of a live band—some for the very first time. Without the safety of a DAT player, anything can happen. It takes a real pro to live through such a show. Everyone would be fine as we pulled up to the venue in a taxi and heard Jodi Cardwell, the show’s host and anchoring performer, tear through the song “Change Of Seasons” with Cosmic Truth, the evening’s backing band, blaring through the club’s speakers. It sounded as if they had been jamming together for years.

Walking through the room, it’s cool to find Byron Stingily—easily one of the sweetest voices to ever grace a house record—playing the doting papa to his two handsome young sons, who were demonstrating the cartwheels and karate moves they’ve just learned. He breaks his gaze from the lids long enough to note that he is putting the finishing touches on a deal to helm a dance label for Arma Andon’s budding Pure Records. Factor in the album he is brewing for Nervous Records, and it looks like his post-Ten City career is off and running.

Meanwhile, Shawn Christian is huddled with his backing singers, going over the vocal arrangements for her numbers, one of which is an acid-jazz revision of the classic “Another Day In Paradise.” She’s been besotted on the quiet side lately and has something to prove. It’s clear that she’s well aware of this fact as she dives into the song as if her life depends on it. She’s still got the goods... and then some.

Everything grinds to a halt when

JOI CARDWELL

No worry though. La J comando staged the affair in a flurry of white feathers as she premiered her gorgeous Manifesto/Mercury single “Earth Beat” (produced by David Morales). It was enough to make you forget about her recent breakthrough, the absolute ringer of Lifejoy’s “Dreamer,” though she served that jam with a fury that belied the nervous tears she shed backstage. The girl is a powder keg of emotion, and her music is all the better for it.

But it was all about the arrival of the true titans of dance music: Jennifer Holiday, Martha Wash, and Josephine Brown. We were awestruck and our stomach was in knots as we escorted them around the venue, but we were soothed by being included in the girl friend chat session that went on back stage. You might expect drama and shade with stars in such a small space. But the opposite was true. In fact, we couldn’t help but giggle as Wash brought Holiday and Josephine with her Christmas card arrived on time, to which Jennifer replied, “Yes, baby, and it was beautiful.”

Each of them performed to peak capability, with Brown and Wash doing the cutest sister routine during “Keep On Jumpin’.” And yes, the three ladies were dead-on accurate when they spoke onstage of a potential trio recording later this year. All they need is a label willing to put ‘em on the stage and there’s room for a cut on that Todd Terry album that Wash and Brown are working on.

Our heart still warms at the thought of Holliday’s performance, which included the new Love To Infinity version of “No Frills Love” and her signature “Rollin’. I was there when you were here, you’re not going.” Were people really holding hands throughout the club? If so, we will have to cross the back of the club, we saw a sea of hands gripped and swaying in unison—with the occasional club kid trying to belch and cough. When Holliday took the stage, Brown could be spotted clapping and testifying at the foot of the stage in respect for Jennifer’s performance. Does it get better than that?
HOT DANCE MUSIC

CLUB PLAY

1 1 4 5
PROFESSIONAL WIDOW ATLANTIC 39259
NEW      1
2 1 1 2
WORKING FOR YOU IN THE STREET 2499
NEW      1
3 4 5 3
KEEP ON JUMPING 5042
NEW      2
3 1 3 2
YOUCHE ISNAH JENSON
NEW      2
4 2 2 1
YOUR MAKING ME HIGH YAPPA LAKEA 4164
NEW      2
5 6 8 7
LET THIS BI A PRAYER CHEEY CHEE CHAMPION
NEW      2
6 1 4 3
IF MADONNA CALLS GROOVIN
NEW      3
7 4 2 1
UNCLE DAVE
NEW      1
8 1 1 1
NEW      1
8 1 1 1
NEW      1
9 1 1 1
NEW      1
10 1 1 1
NEW      1
11 2 2 1
NEW      1
12 1 1 1
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NEW      1
48 3 3 2
NEW      1
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NEW      1
50 3 3 2
NEW      1

MAXI-SINGLES SALES

1 1 4 5
HOW YOU WANT IT (T) ARISTA 4061
NEW      1
2 1 4 5
I'LL BE WAITING (T) ARISTA 4061
NEW      1
3 1 4 5
YOU'RE MAKING ME HIGH (T) PYLON 4231
NEW      1
4 1 4 5
ELEVATORS (ME & YOU) (T) ARISTA 4230
NEW      1
5 1 4 5
LOUNING IN DEF JAM 7520
NEW      1
6 1 4 5
C'MON N' RIDE (T THE TRAIN) (T) 5456
NEW      1
7 1 4 5
ARMY NO-NICE (T) DEF JAM 7520
NEW      1
8 1 4 5
KISS YOU (T) ARISTA 4061
NEW      1
9 1 4 5
KEEP ON JUMPING 39259
NEW      1
10 1 4 5
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50 1 4 5
NEW      1

4 NON BLONDES' PERRY MAKES SOLO 'FLIGHT' ON INTERSCOPE

(Continued from page 10)

sometimes sad and full of despair. Case in point is "Knock Me Out," an emo
tional duel with Grace Bumbry that appears on the "Cray City Of Angels" soundtrack on Hollywood Records.
A departure from that tone is the loop "Putting Up Daydream," which was
coproduced with the late Kevin Gilbert of the Tuesday Night Music Club. Gilbert also co-wrote "Machine Man" and most of the other members of the Tuesday Night Music Club (Bettrell, Dan Schwartz, and Brian McLeod) wrote and played on the album. The Tuesday Night Music Club is best
known for collaborating with Sheryl Crow on her "Tuesday Night Music Club" album which sold more than 3 million copies in the U.S.
Perry says she had to be dragged to meet with Crow's hitmaking team.
"Intercom president, Tom Whaley wanted me to meet with Bill," says Perry. "I'm like, who is he? Then this Sheryl Crow video comes on MTV, then I called a..." After a few days later, and in one hour he can have them orchestrat-
ed doing "The White Album.""
Due to the worldwide success of 4 Non Blondes, Intercom plans to work "In Flight" outside of the U.S. Initially, Perry has already done a three-week promotional tour in Europe. Release date for major territories worldwide is
the same as in the U.S., Sept. 10.
Steve Berman, head of marketing at Intercope, says, "We want to show-
case that label needs to make fans rethink what they thought they knew about Perry, since "In Flight" is such a change of direction from "Bigger, Better, Faster, More.""
In the U.S., Perry will make the rounds at triple-A radio in late July. The album will be serviced to the format upon release. "Freezy" will be serv-
iced as an emphasis track. John Artale, purchasing manager of the 180-store National Record Mart chain based in Carmelica, Pa. says, "There's some curiosity out there about what Linda's project will be like. Who knows if it's going to be a flash in the pan or if [the album] will have legs?"
Regardless of what happens, Perry is pleased with the project. "I made a record I'm really proud of," says Perry. "It's the record where music left off a while ago, when they would go in the studio and make albums. That hasn't been done in a really long time."
Asylum Courts Country Vote For Thrasher Shiver Debut

**BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE**

NASHVILLE—Every year when the ballots for the Country Music Assn. Awards hit the desks of those involved in the industry, a common cry goes up: "We need more duos in country music."

With the Sept. 10 release of Thrasher Shiver's self-titled debut album, Atlantic hopes to introduce country music aficionados to new contenders for the ballot. As attested by the Thrasher Shiver 96 banner that graced Atlantic's building, the campaign buttons pinned to supporters, and the campaign signs that blanketed Music Row last week, there is a lot on the campaign trail in an effort to break this new duo.

"It's an election year, and it looks great," Atlantic co-president Michael Mansfield says of the political campaign promotion.

"We have campaign buttons which we wear all over town," adds Atlantic VP of promotion Dennis Moseman. "People question them, and we tell them all about the fantastic we have on Asylum. And we've got a huge banner on the back of the building saying, 'Thrasher Shiver.'" Hope every time drives by and wonders, 'What the heck is that?' and looks into it. We have other campaign things and some pretty crazy ideas. It's a lot of fun."

"We started writing a lot together, stumbled upon a couple of songs. Got 'em through the gate, think our voices blended unusually well and we should maybe be serious about a duo thing, even though we were pursuing solo careers. Thrasher said it would be a little more special and fresh. It was a natural thing."

Thrasher Shiver. "The first time we got together, it just clicked right off the bat," he says. "The more we did, the better it sounded. We couldn't ignore something so natural." That's not to say that the country music act doesn't have its high points. They do feature one member singing lead and the other doing harmony, Thrasher and Shiver both singing lead—sometimes trading off lead vocals in the same song, but more often just singing in unison, their strong tenors blending into one very familiar sound.

"It's unique and fresh," Thrasher says. "It's not really different, because the Everly Brothers and Simon & Garfunkel and some duos from the past did vocals together, singing together the whole time... in country music, there hasn't been anyone to do this."

"We grew up on Seals & Crofts and the Everly stuff, and when we incorporated that into loving country music and singing it, it turned out the way it is. I don't think anyone gets tired of hearing that neat harmony thing. There is not a market full of it out there, so we can't help but be a little bit proud of that, for sure."

The duo co-produced the album with Justin Niebanck. "The debut single and the follow-up single, "Going in Circles," were released July 22. In addition to the strength of their vocals, the two are accomplished songwriters and guitarists, and Thrasher grew up in a musical family. His father, Joe, was a member of the Thrasher Brothers, who were active during the early '80s. Neil toured with his father's group and later with other bands before becoming a backup singer and songwriter on Music Row. His credits include cuts by Kenny Chesney, Ricky Lynn Gregg, and Diamond Rio's current hit, "That's What I Get For Being So Nice." Shiver honed his musical skills per..."

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Atlantic’s Tracy Lawrence’s Empire Began With ‘Sticks’

**BY CHET FLIPPO**

NASHVILLE—Over the past five years, Tracy Lawrence has quietly taken himself from total obscurity to platinum status. And in the process, he has built his business to the point that he manages himself and is being sought after by prominent corporations for corporate tie-ins. All this after his fledgling career almost ended minutes when he was shot in a parking lot on Music Row.

All that changed when President Rick Blackburn says that Lawrence is "really maturing. We've been through some times together. He's worked hard at getting his personal life straightened out."

The 28-year-old Atlanta, Texas, native came to town six years ago in a battered 1988 Toyota with 220,000 miles on it. Blackboard, just starting Atlantic, was impressed by the honky-tonk singer's musical self-confidence. "I can honestly say that he had a song on five albums with the one he got in the parking lot, 'Sticks And Stones,' Lawrence was shot four times by armed robbers in the parking lot of Sticks and Stones."

"He has a big appetite for that," says Blackburn. "He has an understanding of their businesses. He can tell you a lot about beer distribution."

Lawrence says, "We're looking at doing some electronic commercials with Coors. I personally did the deal with Coors, and we're expecting to have a signature line of Tracy Lawrence Yamahas guitars out in the next year! He's also working on a musical production about the Civil War, which is still in the early stages."

Lawrence's rise to stardom is as much a media star, says Blackburn, as a result of Atlantic's focus. "We're maybe not as aggressive as we could be from a PR standpoint. At Atlantic, we spend a lot of time focusing on radio."

Lawrence’s goal, says Blackburn, is to "run a record label. Hey and, 'Teach me everything you can about running the company.' It's like Record Business 101. I've never worked with an artist with that much interest in it."

BR5-49 Dials The Wrong Number; Sony Loses VPs, Artist Ron Wallace

**ON THE ROW, BR5-49 has run afoul of Gaylord Enter- tainment, which has denied them a spot at the first of..." (Continued on page 38)
FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 3, 1996

## Top Country Albums

### **NEW**
1. RICK TREVINO - COLUMBIA 67407 (9/10/96) (5) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
   - **Pacesetter**
   - **Wild Card**

### **Pacesetter**
2. WYNONNA - COLUMBIA 30098/COLUMBIA 30099 (9/10/96) (5) REVELATIONS
3. LORRIE MORGAN - BNA 68478/REPRISE 9010 (9/10/96) (1) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
4. RHETT AKINS - DECCA 45204 (9/10/96) (5) SOMEBODY NEW
5. TOBY KEITH - WARNER BROS. 2800 (9/10/96) (5) T/L HIGH COUNTRY
6. COLLIN RAYE - EPI 6703 (9/10/96) (5) I THINK ABOUT YOU
7. TERRI CLARK - MERCURY 559046 (9/10/96) (5) T/L I THINK ABOUT YOU
8. SAMMY Kershaw - MCA 10126 (9/10/96) (5) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
9. JAMES BONAFY - EPI 6709 (9/10/96) (25) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
10. WILLIAM EVANS - EPI 6712 (9/10/96) (5) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
11. NEIL DIAMOND - COLUMBIA 67335 (9/10/96) (5) RELEASE
12. ViNE Cline - MCA 10007 (9/10/96) (25) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
13. VANCEY Cline - MCA 10007 (9/10/96) (5) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
14. LEAVEN WILDE - COLUMBIA 67288 (9/10/96) (5) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
15. NEAL MCDOUGAL - COLUMBIA 67288 (9/10/96) (5) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
16. VANCEY Cline - MCA 10007 (9/10/96) (5) GREATEST HIT DEBUT
17. LEAVEN WILDE - COLUMBIA 67288 (9/10/96) (5) GREATEST HIT DEBUT

### **Greatest Hits**
- **THE CHARLIE DANIELS BAND**
- **George Strait**
- **Reba McEntire**
- **George Jones**
- **Wray & Luknock**
- **Dwight Yoakam**
- **Waylon Jennings**
- **Truckers & Barons**
- **Doug Johnson**
- **Jeff Foxworthy**

### **New Artists**
- **RICK TREVINO**
- **WYNONNA**
- **LORRIE MORGAN**
- **RHYTHM AND BLUES**
- **SAMMY Kershaw**
- **JAMES BONAFY**
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- **WILLIAM EVANS**
- **VANCEY Cline**

### **Falling Off The Chart**
- **JACK GREEN**
- **JESSI COLTER**
- **ELVIS PRESLEY**
- **HANK WILLIAMS**
- **RHYTHM AND BLUES**
- **SAMMY Kershaw**
- **JAMES BONAFY**
- **NEIL DIAMOND**
- **WILLIAM EVANS**
- **VANCEY Cline**

### **Previously Released**
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- **RICK TREVINO**
- **WYNONNA**
- **LORRIE MORGAN**
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For a complete list of Billboard charts and other music industry information, please visit Billboard.com.
forming in Savannah, Tenn. (near Memphis), in a band called County Line. In addition to playing in the band several nights a week, Shiver frequently traveled to Nashville to sing demos and polish his songwriting skills. Shiver’s songwriter talents have earned him cuts by a variety of artists, including Lari White, Keith Stagall, and Larry Stewart.

Shiver co-wrote three cuts on the duo’s debut—“No Howard,” “The Rails,” and “That’s My Girl”—with Tharshier contributed “The Rails” and “That’s My Girl” (both co-written with Shiver), as well as “Goin’ Close,” “Closer,” and “A Tragedy.”

Both members of the duo say they were real careful in their song selection. “We looked all over town,” Tharshier says. “Plus, we have over 200 songs between us. We looked for the best songs we could find. A lot of people were involved in the selection. Everyone from the label, everyone in town.”

Country radio stations have been getting the opportunity to hear the songs live, as Tharshier has been performing “Best Of Both Worlds” and other songs for programmers across the country.

Singing in Mississippi, they have visited close to 20 radio stations thus far. “It’s going great. That essentially has been the major setup for this record—we’re on about 20 stations, and we can let our song sell.”

As far as selling, the duo is so acoustically, and I have never in my life been so blown away by anybody. I sold them this one—my highest praise I could give you—when the album comes out in the stores, I would stand in line to buy a copy. And that may not sound like much, but you have to realize that as a PD, I haven’t bought a piece of music in years.”

Mansfield says he plans to push Tharshier and Shiver’s promo by securing listening posts and key retail space at the “racks, the Kmart and Wal-Marts.” I bought that for September, October, November, and December. I’ve hit most of the retailers now where it’s going to be highly visible through the street days.”

Tharshier Shiver will also be doing the Wal-Mart tour. “All the artists that I’ve last year and this year and am doing it this year see a big spike in sales.”

Mansfield says. “Even though it’s only a Wal-Mart parking lot with just 2,000 people, you know, they’ll go in the store and buy them.”

Media exposure is another key component to breaking a new act, and Tharshier Shiver is getting prime exposure via an eight-week series of stories on the Nashville Woman’s “Country News.” The series is called “Tharshier Shiver: Career Countdown” and features segments chronicling the development of their career, from the signing to the album’s release and the current Tharshier Shiver 1986 political campaign promotions.

Tharshier Shiver is managed by Bob Duplantis & Associates, booked by the William Morris Agency. Plans for fall tour are in the works.

The country music highway is littered with those that tried to make it and fell short, but the folks at Asylum don’t seem concerned about the challenges that may be ahead. Whatever response I’ve gotten so far is, We need another good duo out there,” Mansfield says.

“I’m not bawling-mourning any other duo, but I think we just haven’t had people click with radio or the fans that were willing to give us a chance to do for us. There these guys are so different, and these harmonies are incred-ible. There is nothing like it out there.”
Artists & Music

‘Macarena’ Waltzes To Top Of Charts

‘MACARENA’ RULES: After chasing Enrique Iglesias’ self-titled bow on Fonovisa for five consecutive weeks, the various-artists package “Macarena” (Ariola/BMG) ascends the throne of The Billboard Latin 50 this week. Iglesias’ “Suddenly” (Sony/LA) enters the Adult Contemporary chart at No. 11, the Adult-style dipping 21-25.

AZTECA GETS MUSICAL: As TV Austin Powers spoof “Vece Personal” continues to gain in ratings share, the soundtrack to the telefonia has sold 120,000 units and is boosting the career of Armando Manzanaro, who wrote and performed all of its songs. The soundtrack was released on the Mexican imprint Azteca Music, which is being distributed by Warner Music Mexico. Azteca is slated to release the upcoming act Rocto Barruecos, who, by the way, co-stars with Rafael Sánchez Navarro on the new Azteca song “Te Dejaré De Amar.”

MIKY, SANTANA STARBURG: Superstars Luis Miguel and Santana with competitive stars on the Hollywood (Calif.) Walk of Fame Aug. 20.

JG, ROCIO REUNITED: BMG Aria Mexico has announced that Juan Gabriel and Rocío Dúrcal have reunited to cut a two-CD album containing 15 previously unreleased tracks, plus five that were previously recorded. The album, due in November, will be supported by a tour by the duo prior to its release. Meanwhile, BMG released a 25-CD set of Gabriel’s entire catalog, along (Continued on page 23)

LITIN TRACKS A-Z

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Copyright</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Writer</th>
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<th>Publisher</th>
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<td>M.M.</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
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<td>M.M.</td>
<td>BMG</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Mamita”</td>
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<td>M.M.</td>
<td>BMG</td>
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<td>M.M.</td>
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<td>BMG</td>
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Elsewhere, Ricky Martin’s sizzling Spanish-language number “Maria” (Columbia) slides 90-96 on the Hot 100. Sosa’s “Safely” (“Spanish-English”-language counterpart to her PolyGram Latin top 10 smash “De Repente,” remains on the Adult Contemporary chart at No. 11, the Adult-style dipping 21-25.

The Teléfonos: “Iglesias’ “Macarena” (Ariola/BMG) ascends the throne of The Billboard Latin 50 this week. Iglesias’ “Suddenly” (Sony/LA) enters the Adult Contemporary chart at No. 11, the Adult-style dipping 21-25.

Meanwhile, Los Del Río’s “Macarena Non Stop” (Ariola/BMG), which also contains “Macarena,” enters the top 10 of The Billboard Latin 50. It is the first time that the same single appears on two top 10 albums. The original version of “Macarena” appears on yet another pair of albums: the various-artists compilation “Venezio 96,” which ticks up 13-9, and Los Del Río’s “Mi Cinta, Cinta,” the 1994 release that is the first album to contain the original rendition of “Macarena.” That title moves 38-36.

As if that were not enough, “Macare-

na” (Bayside Boys Mix) tops Billboard’s Hot 100 this week, becoming the first title containing Spanish-language lyrics to top that chart since Los Lobos “La Bamba” in 1987. Los Del Río’s original version moves 65-50 with a bullet, and Los Del Río’s take on “Macarena” re-enters the Hot 100 at No. 80. Curiously, Los Del Río’s “Macarena” did not even reach the top 10 of Hot Latin Tracks last year, when it was a hit at Latino radio. It peaked at No. 12 on Sept. 9, 1995.

Speaking of Hot Latin Tracks, Marco Antonio Solís “Qué Pena Me Das” (Fonovisa) remains comfortably atop the chart for the second straight week.

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HOT LATIN TRACKS

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<th>No. 1</th>
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M-Amor 99 | 10 | BMG | M.L. | M.L. | BMG | BMG | BMG | BMG | No P | None |
| M-Amor 99 | 11 | BMG | M.L. | M.L. | BMG | BMG | BMG | BMG | No P | None |
| M-Amor 99 | 12 | BMG | M.L. | M.L. | BMG | BMG | BMG | BMG | No P | None |
| M-Amor 99 | 13 | BMG | M.L. | M.L. | BMG | BMG | BMG | BMG | No P | None |

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Artists & Music

New Releases Give A Classical Twist to Piazzolla's Nuevo Tango

Tango IS King: Astor Piazzolla, the crusty Argentinean reinventor of the tango, has been dead a few years, and now his music has started reaching beyond world music fans into the classical arena.

On Aug. 12, Harmonia Mundi will release "Astor Piazzolla: Tango," which features the Barcelona ensemble Orquesta De Cambra Teatre Lliure, conducted by Josep Pons. The album, which will be released with great fanfare in the U.S., features performances of Piazzolla's "Concerto Pour Bandonein," "Tres Movimientos Tangos Fusico," and five tangos, including "La Muerte Del Angel," with subsidiary Pablo Mazzetti on bandoneon and Luis Vidal on piano. In Europe, the album will be released in September.

Harmonia Mundi appears to be the harbinger of a trend. Close on its heels (Sept. 17) comes violinist Gidon Kremer's "Hommage A Piazzolla" on Nonesuch. Kremer has assembled a quintet that mirrors Piazzol- la's own (violin, guitar, bass, piano, and ban- doneon) for 10 of the composer's tangos. Also on the horizon is a disc of two-piano arrangements of Piazzolla music, performed by Piazzolla keyboard player Pablo Ziegler and Emanuël Ax, who is making his first foray into the genre, on Sony Classical. Yo-Yo Ma is also investigating the tango master and plans a recording. And Milan has already poked out a disc billed as Piazzolla's last concert, recorded July 8, 1990, on which Piazzolla plays the bandoneon and sings with the Athens Colors Orchestra conducted by Manole Hadjidakis. Piazzolla took his own life in August 1990 and died two years later.

Piazzolla studied with Nadia Boulanger, who persuaded him to use the musical materials of his native land rather than some international compo-

NOTAS (Continued from page 40)


MEXICO NOTAS: Fonseca singer/actress Lucero and EMI Mexico crooner Mijares are due to wed Jan. 18, 1997, in Mexico City. . . . Upcoming in Mexico City include shows by Carlos Klein (King Crimson Friday, Aug. 7); the Metropoli on Sept. 26, and the Alanis Morissette concert for Nov. 25.

Morissette will return to Mexico City for shows Oct. 15-16 at the 10,000-seat Auditorio Nacional. On July 15, Warner Music Mexico and Sony Music Mexico serviced Mexican radio with singles by their biggest soloists. Warner came out with "Darte," by Ana Torroja, released Ricardo Arjona's "Si El Norte Fue la Si," the title track to his album El Norte Of the West, and "El Canto," a duet track, written by BMG Argentina's Alejandro Lerner, is rhythmic, romantic pop that breaks no new musical grounds but was much anticipated nonetheless.

His as-yet-unnamed album is set to (Continued on page 44)
### Jazz Blue Notes

by Jim Macnie

**GROWTH SPURT:** Having a built-in clientele is a big plus for any fledging business, so the jazz center that's scheduled to make its home at Universal City's massive E-ZONE entertainment complex in Orlando, Fla., should be well populated. Already a thriving theme park with rides and active film studios, the Universal site is slated to be significantly enhanced to accommodate the immense E-ZONE, which will include the Down Beat Jazz Hall of Fame, the Thelonious Monk Jazz Academy (TMJA), and a live performance venue for jazz. The opening is scheduled for 1996.

"In order to enter the theme park, everyone must walk through this E-ZONE area, which is free to the public," says Tom Carter, executive director of the Thelonious Monk Jazz Institute.

The club will present major jazz entertainers, according to Carter. During the day, as part of their performance agreement, the artists will present master classes, workshops, and lectures under the auspices of the TMJA.

"The educational components were what primarily helped to cement the deal," says Carter. "The activities of the Monk Institute has been involved in played a major role in this association. We'll have various competitions: high school, middle school, and college bands and other learning elements for students as well, including everything from instrument training to historical info."

There will be archival and contemporary jazz videos on site. The club, which will be wired for filming and recording, will be used for activities beyond concerts; its final seating capacity has yet to be determined, but Carter believes it will hold 400-500. Other areas of the park will be available for larger events.

The goal of the Down Beat Hall of Fame is to present jazz memorabilia.

"I have a commitment of Thelonious Monk's piano," Down Beat president Jack Maher says instruments from leading musicians are welcome.

"We don't have that much yet, but we're going after everything you can imagine," says Maher. "We also were at the [National Assn. of Music Merchants] show in Nashville [July 12-14] and talked to many companies—from Zildjian to the folks that made Miles [Davis]' trumpet.'"

Maher says that in mid-August, the hall of fame's organizers will begin a search original transcripts of arrangements and compositions. "We've gone to historians like Dan Morgenstern and asked for their assistance," says Maher. "And hopefully the record companies will also be involved to provide music from 1923 through 1998, a mix of it all."

Carter is also enthusiastic about the aesthetic of the complex. "It will reach you through the historical sequence, and there will be reverence, like a Westminister Abbey," Carter says. "But at the same time, there will be a vibe of today—of young musicians as well as the masters. You'll sense jazz's full history and impact, not only in America but throughout the world. It will also be done in some very innovative ways, layout-wise."

Maher adds, "We'd like ideas from anyone interested. Now, it's an open call."

**R.I.P.** The jazz community was sadly wounded by the July 17 explosion of TWA Flight 801, which killed all 280 aboard. Among those were Anamaria Shorter, saxophonist Wayne Shorter's wife, and Dalila Lucien, vocalist Jon Lucien's daughter and Wayne and Anamaria's niece (see: Lifelines, page 94). The flight, bound for Paris, went down in the Atlantic off Long Island shortly after taking off from New York's Kennedy International Airport. At press time, the explosion's cause was still unknown. Deep condolences go out to all families.
Piazzolla's tangos found their way into movies, and symphony orchestras. He was delighted that his 'tango' has become more than just a piece of music, and is now enjoyed by people around the world.

Harmonia Mundi USA (HUM) has big expectations for this title and is releasing it on CD and vinyl.

The title will be used on listings in iTunes. Albums with top 100 albums, as well as in Spiv's, Opus's, Virgin Mega-stores, Borders, and Planet Music. "Tango" will be spotlighted on Tower Mail Order's online service, and anyone who orders the title will receive a free sampler.

The title is expected to do well on the charts.
SPIRIT OF '96

An abundance of examples testifies that there's room for a lot more gospel in the mainstream

BY LISA COLLINS

The much-touted gospel explosion myth or reality? That's the question on the minds of many as gospel makes key strides at every segment on the entertainment front—from movies, TV and home-shopping networks to theme parks—and a savvy new breed of artists emerges to challenge traditional standards. In the process, they're shaking the music business' conception of gospel music and its audience.

To be sure, a big part of gospel's growth is measured in the success of Kirk Franklin. His 1993 debut scored platinum and is still charting. Sales from a 1995 Christmas release have increased, and in its first eight weeks his latest album, "What Cha Lookin' 4?—released April 30—sold upwards of 400,000 units, making it the second in the gospel and R&B charts. Then there's Franklin's highly publicized production pact with Interscope/Vanguard, of which he is vice president.

Performances like the teaming of Whitney Houston with Shirley Caesar and CeCe Winans at this year's Grammys and the studio involvement of big-name secular acts like Boys II Men (on the recent "You're Not Alone," which featured the gospel artist) have driven the gospel market upward. Such artists are now being sought by mainstream labels in an attempt to tap into the growing market.

That came through an arrangement with Word Records' parent company, Thomas Nelson Publishers. "The result," notes Word gospel division director Chuck Myricks, "was an incredible outpouring, and they sold a ton of product. What excited them most was that 25% of the callers were new. It went very well, they invited her back."

Such developments signal to industry analysts that there is room for a great deal more gospel in the mainstream. As imaging has become critical, marketing dollars have increased on average 25% to 50%. "Without a doubt," reports Jerry Martini, who heads up Malaco Records' gospel division, "we're generating more product, so our emphasis is on selling through." Just how dramatic is the increase?

"When the Tri-City Singers..." Kirk Franklin

Kirk Franklin

good product out, that if you were to spend that same amount of money, you'd stand a good chance of getting lost. That's because we've raised the standards. Selling 20,000 units is nothing anymore.

Indeed, where gospel was once looked at as just a niche market, it is now perceived as one of the music industry's fastest-growing genres. For that, Mannery credits Kirk Franklin. "He has really been a trailblazer in very much the same way that Garth Brooks is in country," Mannery contends. "He's been the lamp that has illuminated the industry, causing people to see gospel in a different light. We've always been in record stores, but people have not come down our aisle to shop. Now, as they go down that aisle for Kirk Franklin, they're looking at everything, and if they see a Mississippi Mass Choir, then praise the Lord."

Perhaps just as importantly, the advent of Soundscan reporting has changed the way many, like Atlanta International Records president/CEO Alan Freeman, release product in the marketplace. "In the past, Freeman maintains, "we had an approximate 90-day window to establish a record, and we were rather lazy about street dates. Now, with the ability to chart a record in its first week of release, we've had to become more aggressive with retail and radio in getting product placed. We're putting total emphasis on having the product at retail and advertising in place on the street date as well as a lot in heavy rotation on the airwaves in its initial week of release."

"We've always thought of gospel as this slow-but-steady sales item that offered longevity. And while it's true that gospel catalog does sell far into the future years," Freeman continues, "we realize it's critical to take advantage of the new release status of any given project."

THREE-SINGLE RULE

Paralleling the industry's progression are strides in A&R. As hardline traditional acts like the Canton Spirituals and Dottie Peoples began to average a surprising 100,000 units or more in sales—figures that caught even gospel-industry veterans unaware—major industry players like Dion Biggham, Savoy Records' executive director, began channeling their efforts in the areas of pre-production and song selection. "Here tofore," states Biggham, "we've almost carte-blanche relied on the artist to bring to the table whatever it is they wanted to record. Now, we're saying, 'Let's get together to select material and schedule a pre-production session.'"

"Perhaps the most welcome change," adds Biggham, "is that the days of a gospel song having to be secular in nature—to cross over—are in the past. If the imaging and marketing is in place, we can sell bigger numbers across the board."

More and more, the industry seems to be adopting a three-single rule. That's according to Vicki Mack-Lattalade, president and CEO of Gospel Centric Records. "One of the components to longevity in this marketplace," says Mack-Lattalade, "is being three singles deep on a project, in a true marketing sense; or programmers will see you as having a good song but not a viable artist."

For just that reason, Kirk Franklin's consistency has been a significant factor. "Many people told us his first year..." Yolanda Adams

Yolanda Adams

Winans discloses, "that after 'Why We Sing,' he would go back to selling 200,000, which is getting to be the norm for a big gospel record. Instead, Kirk proved them wrong. He's on his third release, and we're anticipating gold in the next couple of months. If a whole new ball game for Kirk, and for gospel in general."

Fact is, Franklin is not the only artist doing well. Propelled by increased airplay and media exposure, a handful of gospel artists continue to be embraced by the general marketplace, including John P. Kee, Fred Hammond, Yolanda Adams and CeCe Winans (who teamed with Whitney Houston for a duet titled "Count On Me" from the "Waiting To Exhale" soundtrack). Earlier this year, Winans became the first black to earn a Dove Award in the category of "Female Vocalist Of The Year."

Label-executes like Mack-Lattalade hope the advances lead to a break in market share as well. "As it stands, we're all baying butts specifically targeting one segment. We've got open to the rap, Christian and urban markets more. To that end, Mack-Lattalade is most excited about the recent inclusion of gospel artists on the "Soul Train" Awards. "While it's happened in the past on tours tied to religious missions, now it's across the board happening more frequently, and it's allowing our music in its purest form to co-exist with secular music on the same project, increasing our participation on gold and platinum albums."

For artists like Yolanda Adams, imaging has made all the difference. An appearance on "The Soul Train" Awards earlier this year resulted in a bump in sales, along with adds on key urban stations like WAMO in Philadelphia and WBLX in New York.

"Her look is just as polished and stylized as big-name secular acts," notes her manager, Shika Freeman-Haley. "Besides, people look at the outside package, and she's a beautiful woman who happens to be extremely talented. I know not only that she was commercially marketable, but that she could take some of the stigma off what a gospel artist looks like."

Adams' talent and Freeman's savvy, coupled with Tribute Records' aggressive attempts to market Adams to the mainstream, have prompted industry insiders to dub her as the genre's new major superstar. In the process, Freeman says, the company has witnessed a great deal of growth on the part of the industry in general.

"Most of the labels are really trying to get over 90,000 units or 400,000 units sales mark and to do that, they realize they have to spend a lot of money. The kinds of things they are doing now were not an option before. They did not do singles. You weren't going to get a video and a测算 too. As a result, those kinds of things but they're also employing people who have been in the urban marketplace to help them sell their records," says Freeman-Haley.

Earl Sellers, VP of New York-based Music Entertainment Group, which bought both the EMI/Def Jam & Benson Music groups two years ago, is one such executive. Sellers was brought in to advance the company forward in mainstream retail.

"One of the most important things I recognized, coming from the secular side," Sellers notes, "is that it was important to maintain the credibility of gospel product. Radio has not ignored. Instead, this marketplace is consumer-driven, and what we see happening is that the public is becoming more spiritually aware. Gospel music is God's music. As a result of the challenges people face daily, when people tap into the music our industry represents, they get a reality of that, they spread the word."

BILLYBILLBOARD SPOTLIGHT

BILLYBILLBOARD AUGUST 3, 1996
Dottie Peoples & The Peoples Choice Chorale
Count On God / AIR10221

**Billboard Review 6/22/96 issue**

Dottie Peoples and her band and chorale have steamrolled straight out of the box to the top with this set. Peoples, long one of the great women of gospel, clearly knows who she is and what she wants. In addition to producing the disc, she shows herself to be a gifted songwriter (penning the title track and the haunting "Oh Lord Let Me Lean On You") and arranger of traditional songs. "Little Wooden Church" is irresistible, high-energy, old-school gospel, while "Handwriting On The Wall" is sparsely instrumented but overwhelmingly powerful. As commanding a vocal presence as ever, Peoples elevates all she touches beyond categorization into a place where nothing but pure excellence and inspiration reign.

**- Video Available -**

**Management**
Peoples Choice Management
Rev. Andre Gates
(404) 696-2830

**Angella Christie**
Eternity / AIR10218

**Notables & Quotables**

Another songbird has emerged. She is a melodist whose voice you never hear. Her songs inspire without her uttering a word. Her sound and "shoeless" presentation are captivating. Everybody's talking about the first female Gospel Instrumentalist in more than two decades...

"Brilliant and Unique!"
Kirk Whalum

"A Fabulous Instrumentalist!"
Vickie Winans

"She is one of the Greatest I've heard!"
Alberina Walker

**Management**
ACSM
P.O. Box 361888
Decatur, GA 30036
(770) 593-4954

**Byron Cage & Purpose**
Transparent In Your Presence / AIR10223

**Credentials**

- Debuted at #5 in Billboard Gospel Chart (7/20/96 issue)
- Follow-up to Stellar Award nominated debut; "Dwell Among Us"
- National Praise And Worship Leader - Full Gospel Fellowship Baptist Convention
- Lead vocalist on the current hit "Shabbath" from the Billboard Charted Full Gospel Fellowship Mass Choir Album

**- Video Available -**

**Management**
Mr. Horner Danley
(770) 942-9702
(404) 344-3512

**James Bigmon & The Deliverance Mass Choir**
What A Mighty God We Serve / AIR10224

**History**

- Former Director of the Grammy Nominated Georgia Mass Choir
- His previous release, "Heaven Belongs To You" was nominated for Best Choir at the '96 Stellar Awards
- Last three releases all Billboard charted
- Best Producer Award at '95 Atlanta's Gospel Choice Awards
- Deliverance Mass Choir becomes 400 voices strong for this release

**- Video Available -**

**Management**
Mr. Horner Danley
(770) 942-9702
(404) 344-3512

**Other '96 Billboard Charted Releases from AIR Gospel**

**Rev. Gerald Thompson**
& The Tennessee Full Gospel Baptist Church Mass Choir
Let The Church Say "Amen" / AIR10215

"Full Gospel At its Best" - Hit Top 10 in Billboard

**Luther Barnes**
& The Red Bud Gospel Choir
"Someone To Lean On" / AIR10212

10th Billboard charted release in his incredibly successful career!

**Luther Barnes**
& The Red Bud Gospel Choir
"Someone To Lean On" / AIR10212

"Featuring the incomparable Daryl Coley and the award winning voices of Wilmington Choir"
Breaking The Chains: Marketing To The Retail Mainstream

BY DON JEFFREY

Increasingly, retailers and distributors are getting the word that gospel music is getting its message to the mainstream. It used to be that gospel was mostly found in the independent music store, often a shop that specialized in the genre. But now the recordings of gospel singers and groups are appearing in the bins nationally and regional retailers whose predominant products are secular pop, rock and R&B. What has fueled the move to the mainstream is the growing visibility of the music. A few superstar artists, such as Kirk Franklin, Hezekiah Walker, CeCe Winans and Shirley Caesar, have been exposed to millions of people through the mass media of TV, radio and print. Many of these artists have had busy touring schedules but make time to stop at retail locations along their concert tour.

Industry observers say the increased exposure has created crossover hits to the pop and R&B markets, where the bigger sales are.

DESPITE OBSTACLES, OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

But merchandisers realize that there are still obstacles to overcome. Music retail is struggling with shrinking profit margins and an abundance of stores. As a result, mainstream retail buyers have become especially cautious in ordering product.

Nevertheless, most merchandisers agree that gospel is a growing market and that they have only begun to seize the opportunities. "They're realizing there's a lot of untapped potential in the mainstream market as opposed to being limited to the Christian bookstore market," says Larry Shelton, an independent-music buyer for the 140-store WaxWorks music retail chain.

Distributors and labels are working with one-stop wholesalers and retailers to fashion programs that make the music more accessible. Co-op advertising money is available for gospel, but not nearly the amounts budgeted for a hot pop, rock or R&B act. Therefore, space for endcaps and other positioning programs is limited.

"We've learned how to better communicate with these retailers," says Chuck Myricks, VP/GM of Word Gospel, a unit of Thomas Nelson Inc. "The packaging has improved, and so have the merchandising materials available from the labels.

"We're simply trying to propel the gospel," states Bishop Noel Jones, who is one of the top names on the growing evangelistic circuit, and whose Greater Bethany Community Church is among the fastest-growing in Los Angeles. "In the past, we have to touch people on all levels, and there's no medium more persuasive than music.

"The gospel in music becomes a catalyst to the spreading of the gospel. It intensifies it. It supports it. It enhances it. Major conferences are looking to attract people of all different groups, and the one thing that crosses all denominational lines is gospel music. Put music together with the word, and people will go.

And going they are, in record numbers, to Carlton Pearson's Anima Convention, Bishop T.D. Jakes' Manpower Summit and Shirley Caesar's Annual Evangelistic Crusade, as religious conferences have fast become both big-ticket items and big business.

Last year, the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship Conference drew more than 60,000 to the New Orleans Superbowl for a five-day outpouring of spiritual enlightenment—and a lineup that included Kirk Franklin, BeBe Winans, Ann Nesby and Daryl Coley. This past April, the West Coast hosted a crowd of upwards of 60,000 at the Los Angeles Coliseum for a meeting of Promise Keepers.

All of this means a great deal of increased exposure for gospel artists. Exposure that gospel labels say translates into bigger sales and increased artist-recognition.

DISPARATE VIEWS

While Al Hobbs, former chair of the Gospel Music Workshop Of America and founder of Aleho Records, views the new platform as tremendous, he feels that "the real proving and testing ground is still within the traditional sense found in those inter-industry settings."

But an increasing number of industry professionals like Demetris Alexanders, VP at Warner Alliance Records, would disagree. "The gospel-music circuit has become spoiled with the attitude of What are we going to do to wow me next?" says Alexanders. "When anything is new and fresh, there is a purity to its appeal. Besides, it's about getting to a market of people who don't listen to their radio all the time."

"The church," adds Milton Bigham, executive director of New York-based Savoy Records, "has to be the foundation for gospel-music sales in this country. It's the industry's sleeping giant, and with this movement many believe the giant is being discovered."

ALL EXPENSES PAID

Most see Bishop Paul Morton, founder of the three-year-old Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship, as a trendsetter in the new movement. Morton, who is also a gospel recording artist, has for years been his role as one of bridging the church and the gospel industry. "People like myself who have been in gospel music, we're seeing now that we can bring all of this together to appreciate and enhance one another," Morton says. "We're adding a nightly musical this year at the Superbowl. That will be an added dimension. We're finding on both sides that it's going to make a difference."

And Morton has no problems getting top-drawer talent. "Many of them are just wantimg to be involved," he reports. "Most labels are sending artists at their expense. Some artists are close to the church."

The advantage of having our artists appear at church conferences is that they get a chance to play to and interact with the people who purchase their music," notes Bigham. Sales are increased, and we get to gauge response to the performer in the marketplace that ultimately decides their prominence. By the same token, what makes it so attractive to gospel artists is that they can participate in a worship experience and, at the same time, get paid [most often, quite well]."

"Morton didn't call Savoy Records and say, 'Come see us,' Bigham continues. 'He called the artists. We're running here, because the artists are running there. And the reason he called the artists was because he wanted to create a worship experience. True pastors have always understood the need to incorporate music into the ministry. It's what's been happening in the church all along. It's not what's happening in the marketplace."

Indeed, events like the Annual Church Of God In Christ Convention—which draws up to 50,000 to Memphis each year—have long been big draws to the gospel industry. But this year, the more conventional, 8-million-member strong National Baptist Convention, once closed to the gospel industry, has...
Chart Talk

Billboard director of charts Geoff Mayfield answers questions that gospel labels frequently ask about Billboard charts and SoundScan.

How are the charts compiled?

Since April of last year, when we converted Top Gospel Albums to SoundScan data, we have been using sales information from the core R&B panel, which generates our R&B and rap charts. Prior to that transition, there was debate among gospel labels as to whether it would be more appropriate to utilize the core panel, which, among other criteria, selects stores that have significant traffic from African American consumers. There was not an overwhelming consensus. At that point, a slim majority advised Billboard to start with the core panel. It was also agreed that we would see how the chart behaves and revisit the issue of sample size after a year.

Are there plans to utilize sales from all stores, and if so, when?

Since March, when a delegation of interested labels discussed the differences between use of the entire SoundScan sample or the core panel, Billboard has had discussions with a broad representation of the gospel community. At first, the larger labels were the ones that were more eager to utilize the larger store sample, but in recent months, smaller independent labels have added their voices to the chorus.

The target date for the conversion is Billboard's Aug. 17 issue.

Those who advocate the change say the larger reporting panel will better reflect national trends and that the unit data will more fully portray the genre's significant growth in the overall music market.

Detractors of the change have feared that use of the entire panel will not reflect "the real gospel market," but the philosophy that governs most of Billboard's specialty charts is simply to identify each genre's best-sellers, including, in this case, sales to consumers who do not always buy gospel music, rather than only the sales of a genre's most dedicated fans.

Are sales from Christian bookstores included?

Not now, but they will be when we begin utilizing all SoundScan reporters.

Billboard's Top Contemporary Christian Albums chart has been using data from ChristianScan, which is a pool of bookstores controlled by the Christian Music Trade Assn., along with data from regular SoundScan reporters, since April 1995. Since August of last year, the ChristianScan data has also been incorporated on every Billboard chart that utilizes data from all stores, including The Billboard 200, Heatseekers and Top Country Albums.

Do glitches appear in the system?

The SoundScan system is designed to prevent stores from falsifying data, and its staff works diligently to investigate sales that seem high for a particular store's typical volume. Weekly scrutiny by Billboard's chart managers lends further assurance to the cause of quality control.

With the core R&B panel, which was designed to measure R&B titles but not necessarily gospel fare, Top Gospel Albums has seen some volatile fluctuations, but that is much less likely to happen when we use the entire SoundScan panel.

What happens if a store abuses the system?

When SoundScan's system kicks a store report out for investigation, its staff calls the store to verify the sales. Often, an unusually big number turns out to be the result of an in-store appearance by the artist. In cases where no such explanation can be provided, SoundScan will ask to see shipping slips to verify the number of copies a store takes.

Since Billboard began using SoundScan data five years ago, a handful of stores have been removed from the panel for falsifying data.

What is the accuracy of SoundScan's numbers?

According to SoundScan president and CEO Mike Fine, the margin of error is plus or minus 2.5%.

Unlike polling operations like Nielsen, Arbitron or Gallup—which draw statistics from a sample that represents a fraction of 1% of the measured population—SoundScan has the luxury of an unusually large sample that represents more than 85% of the U.S. music marketplace.

How does a store qualify to report?

"As long as the store is capable of downloading the data, we will accept it," says SoundScan's Fine. New reporters, including a good number of independent dealers, are added each week. Those who would like more information are invited to call SoundScan direct at 914-328-9100.

What costs should a store anticipate?

A computerized point-of-sale system is the essential ingredient, but the benefits of such a system—including improved inventory management, better accounting and reduced paperwork—extend far beyond the privilege of reporting.

SoundScan's Fine estimates the start-up cost in the range of $5,500 to $10,000. He says the required software runs around $2,500. Hardware can run around $3,000, but cheaper systems, which deliver fewer benefits to a store's operation, are also available.

How does the Heatseekers chart work?

All acts from all genres who have never ranked in the top half of The Billboard 200 are eligible for the chart. When a Heatseeker album reaches No. 100 or higher on the big chart, all albums by that artist are removed from Heatseekers.

How do gospel artists qualify for Top Contemporary Christian or other Billboard charts?

Artists of all genres qualify for The Billboard 200 and the Heatseekers chart.

Since April of last year, we have used a "50/50" rule to determine when a gospel artist qualifies for Top Contemporary Christian, which means the title must show up in SoundScan's top 30 as well as ChristianScan's top 30. However, we have found that an awkward mechanism.

When we convert Top Gospel Albums to the larger panel, we will streamline that selection process. The determining factors that will dictate the gospel titles that qualify for the CCM chart will be airplay at Contemporary Christian stations and predominance of availability at Christian bookstores.

Gospel titles, such as those by Kirk Franklin And The Family, qualify for

Continued on page 52
JOHN P. KEE &
THE NEW LIFE COMMUNITY CHOIR

Vanessa Bell Armstrong

Richard Smallwood

Verity
IS
Grammy Award Winners, Dove Award Winners, Stellar Award Winners and GMWA Award Winners.

THE POWER
OF TRUTH

Chosen

Virtue

Verity is proud to present our newest signee Daryl Coley

A Zomba Group Of Companies
CHART TALK
Continued from page 50

the R&B charts on the basis of airplay by R&B stations, while songs by Contemporary Christian artist Jars of Clay showed up on Modern Rock Tracks because of airplay from modern-rock stations.

In cases where a label believes that a gospel title might appropriately belong on another specialty chart, it is vitally important to contact the appropriate chart manager before the album goes to retail. He or she will make that determination based on the sound of the record and input from retailers and/or programmers who specialize in the genre.

And, to make sure a gospel title is designated to appear on Top Gospel Albums in the first place—especially for new artists or Gospel titles by artists who are usually associated with a different genre—labels should contact Gospel chart manager Datu Faison in Billboard's New York office. The managers of each of our charts are detailed in the magazine’s masthead.

Will Billboard print a chart that includes both Gospel and Contemporary Christian titles? SoundScan already produces such a chart, and it is available to subscribers of both SoundScan and ChristianScan. Billboard is exploring the possibility of adding a box that would highlight that chart’s top 10 titles, but to make room for that feature, we will either have to redesign the existing Top Gospel and Top Contemporary Christian charts to a more compact format, or shorten those lists.

Year-To-Date Charts

The recaps in this Spotlight are based on performance on Top Gospel Albums from the start of the chart year (Dec. 2, 1995) through July 13, 1996, and offer year-to-date standings of how these categories are shaping up for the 1996 Year In Music issue. Rankings reflect accumulated SoundScan totals for each week a title appeared on the 40-position Top Gospel Albums list (including those compiled during the unpublished weeks). The gospel recaps were orchestrated by chart manager Datu Faison, with assistance from Michael Cusson.
REDEFINING THE WAY YOU LISTEN TO MUSIC
BREAKING THE CHAINS Contd from pg 48

Making it easier for retailers.

Shawn Tate, national sales manager of Chordian Distribution Group, a subsidiary of BMI Christian Music Group, says, "We have merchandising programs with most of our gospel titles. We do co-op advertising with national accounts, one stop and independents. For gospel, independents are still the heavy mover. A growing number of artists are doing in-store promotions in mainstream chains," Tate adds. "But it's more at

the independents where in-stores take place.

Maple Reddick, owner of the 12-year-old Chicago gospel store Pentecostal Word Explosion, maintains that the indies have the edge over the chains: "We have better selection and we know most of the artists and the songs."

But the indies have their problems in a retail world dominated by chains—such as getting product in stores by street date and getting returns processed quickly. "The independent store may be the last to receive the product," says Reddick. As for returns, she says, "Sometimes there are restocking fees. And you need authorization from these companies, so when a major distributes five or six companies it can be a problem.

SAMPLERS AND PROGRAMS

The Christian bookstores—both chains and independents—have been prime merchandisers of gospel and contemporary Christian music.

Myrick says Word recently implemented a program called Word Gospel Summer Lights in the bookstores. "It was a display with a gospel sampler," he explains, "We're seeing good response.

Word gets its product to the mainstream accounts through Epic Records and Sony Music Distribution. But the label uses its own distribution system to get into the Christian bookstore market.

"The interest has always been in the mom-and-pops," adds Myrick. "Now it's starting to grow in some of the nationals.

The media have been making the distributors' jobs easier in creating awareness of the music. Radio, in particular, has been a boon to

CONCERTS AT CHURCH

Continued from pg 48

for the first time in its 116-year history—parted with CGI Records for the recording of an annual convention mass choir. This is viewed as a breaking point so many gospel insiders.

"In these conferences is magnified what happens in church on Sunday morning, and the gospel industry wouldn't be in business if that hadn't been going on in church all along," Biggum points out. "But with a new level of professionalism, the conferences on a large scale are having a more tremendous impact. These pastors are going after the ultimate worship experience.

TELEVISION EXPOSURE

Gospo Centric CEO Vicki Mark-Lackey believes the new movement as one of the most exciting new phenomena. Her label broke new ground last November with the release of the Full Gospel Baptist Church Mass Choir's "A New Thing" and has since sold nearly 30,000 copies. She hopes to double that number by the end of the year.

"The exposure is great, and with the proper tie-ins, an act can legitimize its career brand," says Mark-Lackard. "Then too, many of these conferences and or ministers are televised, and you'd better believe that kind of exposure increases sales. So it's extremely important; however, it's difficult for a brand-new artist to get in. Your music has to have already been tried to a certain degree, and more likely than not, you're a big boy when you get to the level of appearing before a body like Full Gospel."

By all accounts, the marriage of music and the ministry is mutually beneficial. Gospel Today publisher Teresa Hairston says not only do convention sponsors have to appeal to their own denominational followers, "but to the general religious consumer, who has a lot of conventions to choose from."

Retail opportunities are limited, but, says circuit retailer Lyle Daniels, "you've got 40,000 to 50,000 people, so the money is there, if you can get in. The problem is that those like Paul Martin, who are sincere about what they're doing, don't want a carnival atmosphere where people are spending time they could be in service shopping for product. But most often, those people who are tour are allowed to sell their product.

In essence, churches and conferences are functioning at a greater capacity as another form of retail. Still, the bottom line—for most—is getting their music into high rotation at the nation's Sunday morning worship services—which label executives still maintain is the best promotion of all. ■

OUR COVER ARTIST

Chris A. Butler was "born and raised on a farm in Idaho. Drew pictures of cows and horses and trucks. Had a lot of those there." Formally trained as a commercial and fine artist, he moved to Los Angeles and worked as an illustrator from 1974 to 1981, before moving to his current location in the Boulder, Colo., area. He's married to Krista and has a daughter (Kasie). His art, unique and has been recognized with awards The Paper in a Creative Solution and two silver and two bronze awards at the Dimensional Show in New York. He has done work for a long list of blue-chip companies, many of which are in the music and entertainment fields. The birds on our cover are one of a series of twelve to be published by Landmark Calendars, available in August 1997 in a 1998 calendar. To order, call 1-800-365-9999.

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Top Contemporary Christian

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<th>No.</th>
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<td>JARS OF CLAY</td>
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Compiled from a national sample of retail stores and one-step sales reports.

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ELAINE PAIGE: SINGING IN LONDON

A Musical Genius Shines in the West End

Elaine Paige has long been known for her remarkable vocal range and emotive stage presence. This summer, she has taken her talents to London, where she has been captivating audiences with her performances in the musical "Sunset Boulevard." Paige's ability to bring depth and nuance to her characters is evident in her portrayal of the iconic Norma Desmond, a role she has made her own.

Her impressive vocal skills are on full display as she sings hits from her career, including classics like "Remember," "I Am What I Am," and "Sunset Boulevard." Paige's performance highlights her versatility and range, demonstrating her ability to convey a wide array of emotions through song.

In addition to her on-stage performances, Paige has also been involved in the music industry, releasing several albums throughout her career. Her latest album, "The Songs," features a collection of songs that have become synonymous with her career, showcasing her ability to interpret a wide range of musical styles.

Paige's dedication to her craft and commitment to excellence are evident in her performances, making her a testament to the enduring appeal of traditional musical theatre.

For fans of Elaine Paige and music lovers alike, this summer is a must-see event in London. Don't miss your chance to experience the magic of "Sunset Boulevard" and the incredible talent of Elaine Paige in person!
THE AUDIO ENGINEERING SOCIETY will hold its sixth Australian Convention Sept. 10-12 at the World Congress Centre in Melbourne, according to a statement from the New York-based society. Highlights of the program include a keynote speech by Dolby Laboratories founder Ray Dolby and 21 workshops organized by convention co-chairs Tony Hamling and Graham Haynes. The workshops will cover such topics as microphone selection and applications, MIDI, multitracking with Mini-Disc, audio transfer via ISDN, and digital audio editing.

THE WALTERS-STORYK DESIGN GROUP and Berkow/SIA have opened a New York office at 31 Union Square West months after they began a joint venture to develop acoustical measuring software. In a statement, John Storyk of Walters-Storyk says, "Because our extensive travel obligations had precluded opening a New York City home base, we had been working out of the WS&D Highland, N.Y., complex. There has been a clear need for a New York office, and this location is ideal in every respect." Under the joint venture, WS&D and Berkow/SIA have worked on AR Studios in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; a 600-seat performing arts center in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and such installations as the All-Star Cafe in New York and Steven Spielberg's The Dive complex in Las Vegas.

THE INTERNATIONAL RECORDING MEDIA ASSN. plans to hold its eighth annual Magnetic and Optical Media Seminar Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco. Session topics include technology for the next generation of magnetic media, advanced metal-evaporated media evolution, developments in coating-particle metal, and DVD.

BRIEFLY: Sony Dice Manufacturing's facilities in Pitman, N.J.; Springfield, Ore.; Carrolton, Ga.; and Terre Haute, Ind., have received 9800 series certification from the International Standards Organization, according to a statement from the company ... Woodland Digital Studios in Nashville has purchased a Sony S380 digital multitrack recorder, plus a Sony P2334 and three Sony PCM-800 modular digital multitracks ... The Texas Society of Architects has honored the Russ Berger Design Group with its 1996 award for excellence in the design competition for interior architecture ... Audio Technica of Shibuya, Tokyo, has named Bruce Wisemer Sales and CM Sales as its representatives of the year after the companies came within one-tenth of a percent of each other in terms of annual sales ... Howard Schwartz Recording names Anthony Giovannello operations manager and Fred Miller audio director/producer for TV and radio projects.

MG Sound Rises To The Top

Studio Puts Vienna on Recording Map

BY PAUL VERN

VIENNA—Walking around the three-state-of-the-art control rooms and spacious tracking studio at MG Sound here, one would never know that as recently as the late 80s, studio co-owners Martin Böhm and Stevie Coss persevered out of a dingy basement apartment with no air conditioning or running water, not to mention a complete lack of isolation, no reverb capabilities, or in-house mastering offerings.

Despite their bleak situation and near financial ruin, however, Böhm and Coss persevered in the underground until a phone call lifted them into high orbit.

Böhm says, "We were just sitting around in the studio on a Saturday night, and the phone rang. It was this agency guy who said, 'It's Stevie Wonder in town and we asked his drummer to do a commercial for us, and we want to use your studio because he's a top-notch drummer.' So we said, 'Yes, come in, no problem.' And I put down the phone, and [Coss] and I looked at each other and said, 'Wow, We're still here! Because we weren't prepared at all!'

A couple of hours later, an entourage of 20 musicians and stragglers-on showed up at the studio, and Wonder's drummer, Dennis Davis, programmed some drum beats and horn riffs on a session.

"Everybody was drunk, and we had no toilets, so everybody pissed in the street," recalls Böhm, laughing. "And through this old wooden door, I've upstairs coming down complaining that it was too loud. It was a nightmare."

After Davis and his crew left, Böhm and Coss were left to edit the musician's footage into a coherent, 20-second spot. They stayed up all night composing, arranging, recording, and editing until they were able to deliver a satisfactory product.

Having rough it was, the all-nighter paid off: Böhm and Coss. Böhm says, "The next day, the phone was ringing, and in the next month, we did six or seven jobs. I mean real jobs, paid jobs. Word trav- ered fast," Coss adds, "It was literally from one day to the next."

By that point, Böhm and Coss had outgrown their basement digs and were ready to move upstream. They found a spot in the elegant First District of old Vienna that seemed tailor-made for recording.

"When we came in, it almost looked like a perfect recording room, and meager equipment offerings."

"I bought Böhm, everything was obvious: the recording room, one control room, a second control room, etc."

Even though relatively unsophisticated recording and processing equipment was coming down in price at the time, Böhm and Coss were careful about how they spent their hard-earned schillings.

"We thought it was a really good idea to invest in the acoustics, because you can always change equipment more or less easily, but to tear the studio down and build proper acoustics is very hard to do, and it means a lot of downtime," explains Böhm. "So we did it upfront and brought in [noted acoustician/studio designer] Andy Munro."

At that point, Böhm and Coss hired Eva Böhm—née Maurer—to manage the studio. Eva Böhm had worked for the Austrian national radio station and was a longtime friend of Martin Böhm's. "I used to visit them at their studio and hear their stories," says Eva Böhm. "That is how the Böhm's wanted to move to a new place because everything got too small, and they asked me if I'd like to join them, and I said, 'Yes.'" Of course, Eva and Martin Böhm have just married and are expecting their first child this fall.

When MG opened at its current site, the studio focused on music production

(Continued on next page)
Germany, because that more acts (Cont'd from previous page)

Martin Böhm says, "The problem is that there were no real studios in Austria in those days, so we had to go to record companies and convince producers to come here and spend a little more money. Because what the Austrian producers did back then was go to Germany, where they got good prices because they worked downtime in Munich in [top] studios."

MG also turned its attention toward commercial post-production and classical sessions. By now, the facility has struck "a nice balance" between these various niches, according to Coss.

The next step in the natural evolution from funky basement studio to world-class complex was a major upgrade to a Solid State Logic 4064 G+ console with Total Recall and Ultima- vision and a Studer D-238 digital 48-track recorder.

"The decision for the SSL came along with the decision to build a third control room," says Coss. "And that was something that had organically come together—how should the studios work together, what should they be able to do separately, and how does it go together with our client base?"

Although the SSL, which was purchased at the March 1986 Audio Engineering Society convention in Paris, required a hefty financial investment, the Böhm and Coss felt confident they would recoup their costs.

Eva Böhm says, "One of our great benefits is that we're a small team. We don't have big fixed costs, and we can react very flexibly and very quickly So we knew that we could manage it, because we thought, 'OK, if at some point it doesn't work like we thought, then we change it.'"

Besides the Böhm and Coss, MG employs maintenance engineer Michael Tusechek and receptionist Sabine Vorarberger. Tusechek is a natural hire for MG, since he was familiar with the studio's wiring scheme from his previous post at SSL.

"We already knew him and knew that he's a very reliable worker, so when we decided to build a third control room and buy an SSL, we thought it'd be a good idea to hire him," says Martin Böhm.

In control room B, which serves as a preproduction center and is linked to the large recording room, MG has installed a DDA DCM 202 36-channel board that used to sit in the A room; that board has Uptown automation. Also in the B room are a four-track DigitalProTools system, Gruen Mastering Studio Vision, Steinberg Cubase Audio, Atari Mega ST with Cubase and Nota- tor sequencers, two SampleCell 11s, and a large array of keyboards.

The new control room C downstairs, devoted primarily to post-production and digital editing, features two Yamaha ProMix 01s and a 12-track ProTools setup.

MG boasts an impressive array of recording facilities, including the 48-track Studer, a Sony 324 digital 24-track, a Studer A-887 analog 24-track, Alesis Adat and BRC, Sony and Portex DAT machines, a Studer A-887 analog two-track, and a Phillips D-350 analog recorder.

Signal processors include Neve, GML, Tube Tech, Focusrite, Drawmer, SSL, BSS, and Aphex outboard units, plus AMS, Lexicon, Eventide, TC Electronic, Yamaha, and Roland gear for reverb and delays.

The studio's microphone cabinet includes Neumann U-47/L models, an AKG C-24, and state-of-the-art mikes from B&K, Schoeps, Schoell, Sennheiser, and others. Monitoring is done on Genelec 1037A, Diamond PDM 1, KEP Reference, and Yamaha NS-10 speakers in the various control rooms.

MG offers its clients accommodations in a spacious penthouse apartment upstate from the studio. A charter member of the World Studio Group, MG has always maintained a global outlook. It was among the first studios in Europe to install ISDN lines, which have enabled the facility to take a lead in the remote voiceover market.

"We decided to put ISDN capabil- ities into the studio right when they offered the lines here in Austria in March 1994," says Martin Böhm, "I saw the session Phil Ramone did with Gloria Estefan, and I thought, 'That's it. We've gotta have this. That's the future.'"

Today, MG does approximately four voiceover sessions a week via ISDN and has compiled a soundclip library of voiceover talent that advertising clients have come to use as a virtual casting agency.

Sitting in the studio's tastefully futuristic reception area, with its exposed air conditioning vents and sleek leather sofas, Martin Böhm and Coss trade stories about their not-so-distant past, when they could only dream about running a world-class facility.

Both musicians, they met when Böhm's top-10 band needed a keyboard player and Coss' father got the job applied. Although the partner did not work out, Böhm and Coss bonded right away. They decided to turn Coss' rehearsal studio into a recording facility. Neither one had any formal training in recording, but both were avid musicians and engineers.

Although they no longer perform, their musical background is critical to the success of the studio, since Böhm and Coss compose, arrange, produce, and engineer most of the sessions at MG. They are also developing unsigned talent, using the studio as a production center for demos that they will eventually shop to record labels. Among their ongoing projects are Portuguese-Australian singer Sandra Pires and Gwen Overduick, An American singer living in Germany.

"I'm no any man who knows he's come on a long way in a short time, Coss reveals in the notion that he has become a top member of the industry and he Böhm used to dream about in their under- ground den. Summing up his original vision for MG Sound, he says, "We wanted to go as far as we could go—wherever that would be."
Germany Seeks Older Buyers

Labels, Retailers Neglect 40-60 Group, Report Says

■ BY WOLFGANG SPAHR

HAMBURG—The German record industry is missing out on sales to an estimated 11 million older German consumers—a market potential worth $700 million—according to a new survey here that also criticizes the country’s music retail industry.

New U.K. Copyright Law Implementation Delayed Until April ’97

LONDON—The U.K.’s new copyright law, already two years late, has been postponed for another nine months.

The Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 1996 will overhaul the system of broadcast royalty payments for record companies and artists and was expected to pass into law this month (Billboard, July 13).

However, the groups it affects have been told by the U.K. government’s Department of Trade and Industry that no time could be found for it in the current parliamentary session. The department has stated that it will not be on the statute books before April 1997.

The regulations are based on a directive from the European Union, which required the change in British law by July 1, 1994.

The new provisions will greatly strengthen the position of artists on airplay income.

The delay in implementing the law has caused performers’ groups to say that they are likely to take action to recover money lost in the intervening period. The latest postponement is likely to harden that attitude further.

Jeff Clark-Meads

The main findings of the survey, conducted by the Institute of Psychology and Social Research and Society for Goods Research for a pan-industry group headed by PolyGram Germany, reveal that consumers become increasingly unwilling to enter retail stores as they grow older because they are unable to find German-language repertoire and are generally not comfortable with the retail environment. This particularly applies to Germany’s 40-60 age group, a 5-million-strong sector that will mushroom in the coming years.

‘Once music fans turn 60, they are all but forgotten’

The report is critical of retailers for concentrating on those under 30. It says the survey found that up to 75% of all households with consumers age 50 and up have CD players, the same proportion as in the core record-buying group, ages 10-30.

Jürgen Preiser, director of strategic planning for PolyGram Germany, said that record companies will have to pay greater attention to the older generations. “Music fans over the age of 40 have been gradually neglected. Once they turn 60, they are all but forgotten,” he says.

Preiser adds that he thinks this is prompting more and more consumers to resort to other leisure-time products.

The report states that those over 40 believe retailers stock too many English-language recordings, whereas their preference is for songs in German. This age group also says information is presented very chaotically in record stores.

Up to 30% of older record buyers are extremely critical of retailers, saying that stores are very poorly organized with inadequate consumer information and that the variety of prices is irritating. This is exacerbated by what they feel is the lack of assistance by staff and the unwelcoming atmosphere.

In response to the survey, PolyGram Germany president Wolf D. Gramatke is calling on those responsible for the repertoire to invest more in German-language music to get those over 40 back into the record stores.

“For all the euphoria generated by the national dance, rock, and pop charts, 11 million potential record buyers should not be neglected, especially in view of the changing demographic age pyramid,” Gramatke says. “We must invest in German-language music today to make sure that we have a growing market tomorrow.”

New Moscow Store Offsets Piracy

■ BY VADIM YURCHENKOV

MOSCOW—The legitimate record retail sector has taken another step toward overtaking the pirate Gorbushka market as this city’s main music supplier.

The 3-year-old Purpurnyi Legion (PL) chain established its third outlet in Taganka Square, Moscow, in June. The company says that the 215-square-meter outlet carries 30,000 imported CDs and 2,500 units of Russian repertoire.

PL began as a hi-fi retailer in 1983 and branched into music retailing in the fall of the following year.

At that time, record retailing in Moscow consisted of the stores formerly owned by Soviet state music monopoly Melodiya and the huge Gorbushka market, where pirate discs made in Bulgaria and China sell for $20-$30.

PL spokesman Nicolay Schelok says, though, that a pan-industry retaliation is under way. He states that the legitimate owners of the albums being traded at Gorbushka are supplying PL with the products at a favorable price, thereby allowing the retailer to sell them for less than the cost of the pirate versions at the market.

PL’s first specialist store, PL-Tushino, has already made a mark in the Moscow market by putting discs in racks in the store. Schelok describes that strategy as “extremely risky,” saying that theft from stores is “Russia’s third-oldest profession.” At its opening, PL-Tushino stocked 4,000 CD titles and 100 music video titles.

The company began distributing discs last year and says that it services 30 retailers in Moscow and elsewhere.

PL’s main rivals, apart from Gorbushka, are the Klassik and Transylania groups—each with two outlets that stock U.S., European, and domestic CDs—and Sonyuz, which specializes in Russian act and movie-associated products.

With the opening of its new store, PL’s trading area, some of which is occupied by hi-fi equipment and ancillary goods, is larger than that of its rivals.

As for the retail sector as a whole in Russia, Schelok says he feels the best progress will be made through local companies learning the techniques of Western counterparts and applying them to the Russian market.

He says he feels the difficulties of adapting to the idiosyncratic Russian market will make it difficult for Western, or “government, to get a foothold here. Schelok refers to “the infamous mentality of both Russian customers and salesmen.”
**Raid Shows New Rise Of Singapore Piracy**

**BY GEOFF BURPEE and PHILIP CHEAH**

SINGAPORE—A seizure of suspected pirate audio CDs is highlighting the resurgence of black-market product here. In a raid July 11, officers from the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) reportedly seized more than 6,000 recordings by a variety of artists, including Singaporean singers Jimmy Ye and Kit Chan; Hong Kong Cantopop stars Andy Lau, Jacky Cheung, Faye Wong, and Cass Pan; and international repertoire by Whitney Houston, Celine Dion, and the Cranberries (Billboard, July 20).

Leong May Seey, IFPI deputy regional director for Southeast Asia, says the seizure is another indicator of increased pirate activity and increased vigilance on the part of IFPI.

Seey says that last year IFPI stopped raiding retailers, concentrating solely on distributors of pirate product—a laborious process. “We are trying to step up enforcement on the distribution end,” Seey notes, “Retail raids have become too difficult in Singapore because of the increase in street stalls and mobile vendors. Raided stores will not tell us where their goods come from. So we must do surveillance on distributors. Because government is leaving it to the copyright owners to do the work [and because there are three IFPI anti-piracy staffs in the city], we have to hire freelancers—parttimers—for surveillance work. But seizures like this show that it’s working.”

The police have also set up a special intellectual property rights warrant unit to aid IFPI in raids. “The IP warrants unit makes it easier for us to go island-wide,” Seey says. “But that’s just the administration part of it.”

The resurgence in pirated product comes after years of decline. In the ’70s, eight pirated versions of one Singapore pop album could appear on the streets within 48 hours of that album’s release.

Pop singer Pauki Cheong remembers how his recording career was suffocated when his 1979 self-titled debut album was heavily pirated. “We only sold about 10,000 units. God knows how many pirates were sold of the eight different editions that appeared on cassette.”

When the Copyright Law was enforced in 1987, piracy dwindled as manufacturers moved on to take advantage of friendlier piracy environments in places like Taiwan, Thailand, and China. Today, however, pirates are back. Singapore punk rock band Club E found that their songs started appearing on pirated compilations last year. “We did alert our recording company,” says band leader Leonard Tan, “but it was impossible to track the pirates down.”

**Japan’s Karaoke Facilities To Pay Songwriter/Composer Royalties**

TOKYO—Performance/mechanical/rights body the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers (JASRAJ) and Japan’s online karaoke business are finally in tune with each other.

The two sides this week reached an agreement wherein karaoke facilities using online terminals will pay JASRAJ royalties to songwriters and composers for the period before September 1995.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Assn. of Musical Electronic Industry (AMEI) will pay JASRAJ 5,000-6,500 yen (60-00 cents) for each song registered in host computers at online karaoke service providers.

One report here said the amount involved was 5 billion-10 billion yen ($46.7 million-$83.5 million), although other estimates are considerably higher.

AMEI and JASRAJ are now negotiating a royalty payment agreement for the period from October 1995 to the present.

“After JASRAJ’s recent problems with the Kogyo Music Foundation and so on, we are looking forward to settlement of the online karaoke issue, because online operators’ share of the market is getting bigger and bigger,” says Mamoru Murakami, president of Nichion Inc., Japan’s biggest music publisher.

About 70% of Japan’s burgeoning karaoke boxcess (individual rooms in which customers can sing karaoke in private) are connected to online systems. Overall, online operators account for roughly 20% of Japan’s 220 billion yen-per-year ($2.05 billion) karaoke market.

**LONDON CONCERT (Continued from preceding page)**


For the finales, all the artists returned to the stage to jam before singing the South African national anthem.

**Operatic Signatures.** Tenor Roberto Alagna and his wife, soprano Angela Gheorghiu, sign copies of their album “Duet’s & Arias” at London’s Oxford Street Virgin Megastore. Shown with them in the back row, from left, are Katherine Howard, press and promotion manager of their label, EMI Premier Classical; Gary Bristow, sales, EMI Premier Classical; Claire Wilkins, product manager, new releases, EMI Premier Classical; Nick Williams, senior sales assistant, Virgin Megastore; Ray Hammond, sales, EMI Premier Classical; and Becky Harlowe, classical department manager, Virgin Megastore.

**GEOFF BURPEE**
BMG Entertainment International brought together its worldwide managing directors and marketing staff for a conference June 2-7 in Dana Point, Calif. The meeting was attended by more than 250 delegates from 40 countries, who participated in product presentations and business sessions and received a briefing from BMG Entertainment chairman Michael Dornemann. A half-dozen acts were presented in showcase performances during the week, including the Tony Rich Project, Gary Barlow, the Verve Pipe, Crash Test Dummies, and Robyn. (Photos: Larry Busacca)

Comparing notes from an artist’s viewpoint are the U.S.’ Leah Andreone, left, and Sweden’s Robyn.

Members of RCA Records recording act the Verve Pipe take five with staffers from their label. Shown, from left, are Dwayne Weich, international VP; RCA; Bob Jamieson, president, RCA; Verve Pipe’s Brian Malouf, Brad Vander Ark, and Brian Vander Ark; Hugh Surratt, VP of artist development, RCA; Verve Pipe’s A.J. Dunning and Donny Brown; Rudi Gassner, president/CEO, BMG Entertainment International; and Jack Rovner, executive VP/GM, RCA.

BMG executives from all over the world relax. Shown in the back row, from left, are Chris Stone, VP of A&R/marketing, Europe; Jeremy Marsh, president, music division, BMG U.K.; Hasse Breitholtz, managing director, BMG Sweden; Maija Kuusi, managing director, BMG Finland; Lars Toft, managing director, BMG Denmark; and Hugh Goldsmith, managing director, RCA Records U.K. In the second row, from left, are Mike McCormack, head of A&R, RCA U.K., and Jim Campbell, VP of international artist marketing, BMG Canada. In the front row, from left, are Frankie Cheah, managing director, BMG Malaysia; and Toze Brito, managing director, BMG Portugal.

Saffron from deConstruction recording group Republica shares the spotlight with executives. Shown, from left, are deConstruction managing director Keith Blackhurst, Saffron, BMG Entertainment International president/CEO Rudi Gassner, and BMG U.K./Ireland chairman John Preston.

Tasting time out from classical conversation are, from artist Analogy Classics VP/GM Harry Palmer, recording worldwide marketing, and BMG Classics senior VP of Dubois.

Australian artist Merril Bainbridge is surrounded by admirers. Shown, from left, are Tim Prescott, managing director, labels group, BMG Australia; James Glicker, managing director, BMG Australia; George Levendis, marketing director, Arista Records U.K.; Suresh Thomas, managing director, BMG Crescendo India; Bainbridge; Siew Ooi, artist manager; and Sam Melamed, engineer.

BMG Spain recording artist Ana Belen and BMG Argentina artist Diego Torres display a cheerful outlook with label executives. Shown, from left, are Juan Manuel Romero, Arional director, BMG Spain; Jose Maria Camara, president, BMG Spain; Belen; Rudi Gassner, president/CEO, BMG Entertainment International; Torres; and Ramon Segura, senior VP Latin region, and chairman, BMG Spain.

BMG Entertainment International president/CEO Rudi Gassner and Arista Records president Clive Davis welcome LaFace Records co-presidents L.A. Reid and Kenny "Babyface" Edmonds to the conference, along with LaFace artist Toni Braxton. Pictured, from left, are Reid, Davis, Braxton, Gassner, and Edmonds.
HITS OF THE WORLD

NETHERLANDS

This Week

1. KILLING ME SOFTLY WILFIE FUGEES - COLUMBIA
2. FANTASY WORLD CHARLIE CONTOW & MENTAL
3. MARK MARRIOTT CAPTAIN JACK - CM
4. MACARACKA LOS DEL RIO - BMG
5. DODD VEG WUSS MIEWUS & VANGTIC ARGAC
6. NEW MONEY FROM D.J. BOBOSA - POLYDOR
7. TO DESERVE YOU BETTER MIDLER - WIZARE
8. IRONIC ALANIS MORRISSETTE - WARNER
9. MARK MARLO MARINO BOSIATO - POLYDOR
10. NEW D.B.L IT COOL, I MERCURY

ALBUMS

1. ANDRE BOSCHI BOCELLI - POLYGRAM
2. FUGEES THE SCORE - COLUMBIA
3. ALANIS MORRISSETTE JAGGED LITTLE PILL - WARR
4. CORNS FORGIVEN, NOT FORGOTTEN - WARNER
5. OASIS (WHAT S THE STORY MORNING GLORY) - SHEP
6. ASH (MIXT IN LONDON) - 2000
7. VARIOUS ARTISTS MOVIE KILLERS - WIZARE
8. CELESTE DION FALLING INTO YOU - EMI
9. FUGEES THE SCORE - POLYGRAM
10. EVAS THE VERY BEST OF THE EAGLES - COLUMBIA

IRELAND

This Week

1. KILLING ME SOFTLY WILFIE FUGEES - COLUMBIA
2. LEMON TREE FROZ GARDEN - AMERICA
3. FOREVER LOVE LANDING - WIZARE
4. MYSTIC ANDERG JR LOS DEL RIO - BMG
5. MACARACKA LOS DEL RIO - BMG
6. BECAUSE YOU LOVED ME CELINE DION - SONY
7. NOBODY KNOS TONY RICH PROJECT - POLYGRAM
8. NEW BORN SLIPPY UNDERWORLD - JAMBOY BOYS - WIZARE
9. THEME FINDING IMPOSSIBLE ADAM - WARNER
10. TAKE ME UP YOU WADDIE KAYLAND - POLYGRAM

ALBUMS

1. ALANIS MORRISSETTE JAGGED LITTLE PILL - WARR
2. NEW D.B.L IT COOL, I MERCURY
3. METALLICA LOADING - WARNER
4. NEW RETURN OF THE MACK MARK MORRISON WARNER
5. THE VERY BEST OF THE EAGLES - COLUMBIA
6. RICHARD AND THE JONAS BROTHERS - POLYGRAM
7. ANGELO RIOS RAMAZOTTI - WIZARE
8. RICHARD AND THE JONAS BROTHERS - POLYGRAM
9. NEW BOMBSHELLS ACES WANDER - POLYGRAM
10. NEW BOMBSHELLS ACES WANDER - POLYGRAM

GLOBAL MUSIC PULSE

THE LATEST MUSIC NEWS FROM AROUND THE PLANET

EDITED BY DAVID SINCLAIR

BOTSWANA: Francistown, the main population center in the northern region of Botswana, lies close to the border with Zimbabwe. Lack of good indoor venues and the reluctance of visiting pop acts from neighboring South Africa to travel this far north means that Jagged Little Pill is one of the few major events to develop the local music scene. In recent months, however, there has been a burst of activity here. Kanda Bongo Man from Zaire, one of several artists with a claim to the title of king of kumasi-kumasi (one of the region’s most enduringly popular dance rhythms), recently played a spectacular outdoor date. His a music style favored by serious rev-

EUGENE: Australia: “Playing a hooker definitely influenced some of the lyrics,” says Deni Hines with a laugh, referring to some of the zanier lines on her debut solo album, “Imagination” (Mushroom). The anti-prostitute-playing Mary Magdalene for the Australian television version of “Jesus Christ Superstar” before recording her album in London last summer. During that time, she was invited to join British dance act Brand New Heavies and received offers from three modeling agencies. The daughter of Ted B & Marcia Hines (who played the Magdalene role in the 1970s production), Deni has a remarkable voice to go with her brush demeanor and looks that combine Afro-American with West Indian and Chinese descent. While two hits with her previous group the Rockmelons and her top 10 single “It’s Alright” have won her a substantial female following, her new album should broaden her appeal. It incorporates songs about her sexual fantasies, regaining her independence after her brief marriage to INXS guitarist Kirk Pengilly, and a breathy cover of I’m heavy person “I’m Not In Love.” Having debuted on the Australian Recording Industry Assn. chart at No. 15 in June and averted significant airplay on two major radio networks in Japan, “Imagination” is scheduled by Mushroom for a full release throughout Europe.

CHRISTIE ELIEZER

PORTUGAL: Imagine going to see a movie and unexpectedly hearing your own voice singing as part of the soundtrack. That is exactly what happened to the beautiful and charming Portuguese singer Dulce Pontes. The movie was the worldwide box-office smash “Primal Fear,” directed by Gregory Hoblit, and the song was Pontes’ outstanding version of the Amalia Rodrigues hit “Canção Do Mar” (Sea Song). Not only was she invited to sing the movie, actor Richard Gere pressed the song. “At first I couldn’t believe it. I thought I was dreaming,” Pontes says. “Later my record company told me the whole story, and now I want to say thanks to my American friends, especially Michael, for being so kind to me.” She first heard the song on a Los Angeles radio network and included it in the movie after the necessary copyright clearances had been secured. But she never thought to tell Pontes the good news. “Canção Do Mar” is one of the standout tracks on Pontes’ hit album “Lágrimas” (Tears), released last year by the Lisbon-based Movielplay Portuguesa. It has sold more than 120,000 copies in Portugal (platinum is awarded for sales of 40,000 units) and 600,000 worldwide, confirming the international popularity of Pontes’ distinctive blend of pop, rock, folks, fado, and social comment. Last year, she was voted best female singer in Portugal by viewers of private TV channel SIC, and her new album, “Brisa No Coração” (Breeze In My Heart), a live double-CD recorded at Oporto’s Coliseu room, is certified platinum. Following recent concerts in Brazil and the Portuguese province of Macao in Southeast China, Pontes is touring Europe, including shows in Denmark, Italy, France, and the Netherlands. In mid-July and August, she will be making concert and TV appearances in Spain, where she is tremendously popular.

FERNANDO TENENTE

NETHERLANDS: Legendary blues outfit Cuby & the Blizzards will reunite for a full tour of the lowlands under the banner “Cuby Is Back.” Staged by Mojo Theatre, a spinoff of promoter Mojo Concerts, the shows will feature musicians who were members at various times during the band’s heyday in the 70s and 80s. But although fronted once again by the egomaniacal Harry “Cuby” Musseken, the renowned lineup lacks the presence of the group’s other founding members; guitarist Eelco Gelling. Nor will solo star Herman Brood, also a former member of the Blizzards, be taking part. A live album, the band’s first release since “Ding” 30 years ago, is also expected, a release by Munich Records to tie in with the label’s 50th anniversary in September. Along with a selection of crowd-pleasing tracks, the album will feature four new songs, including specially penned numbers by Americans Tony Joe White (either “Trouble” or “Bad Weather Girl”) and Eric Taylor (“Poor Great White”). Musseken, the high-profile member of the Blizzards, thanks to his work with the Musseken Gang, which scored a big radio hit in the early 90s with “Brother Booze.”

ROBBIE BOLLY
**AMID THE OLYMPIC celebrations in Atlanta this summer, two modest performances have drawn attention to the issue of the year’s most notable new collections of world music repertoire.**

Considerable interest in classical in the Olympic Village July 18 and for the public in the Atlanta suburb of Decatur July 19 by Nigerian funk bassist Femi Kuti; and Russian folk singer Inna Zhelaniyana have been part of the promotional campaign for “One World,” which debuted at No. 5 last month on the Top World Music Albums chart.

The album marks the 20th anniversary of Putumayo, the clothing and crafts company whose record label, Putumayo World Music, is an established independent in the U.S. and is reaching out through new marketing efforts into other international markets.

The World Festival was staged July 13 at the Washington Monument with American singer Toni Childs, Scotland’s Capercaillie, Kotoja, and Zel- nannys. That event celebrated the 50th anniversary of UNESCO; the organization’s U.S. committee will receive one dollar from the sale of every “One World” CD and 50 cents from every cassette. The Washington, D.C., concert is due to be broadcast in August on the syndicated radio program “Concerts of D.C.,” an offshoot of the lights and sound packaging that accompanies an evening at the Rhythm Room at Shaftesbury Hall in Cheltenham, England.

**BORDER CROSSINGS: The Bay-side Boys of Miami, who helped spark the international success of the Spanish band Sabina, a folk outfit that is comparable to U.K. acts like Kate Bush, now bring their repertoire of folk and world music to Europe.**

Along with the artists cited above, “One World” features performances by South Africa’s Johnny Clegg & Juluka (currently on tour in the U.S. to promote a new Putumayo compilation of their work), Baka Beyond from the U.K. and Cameroon, Towre Kunda from Senegal, the Gipsy Kings from France, the U.K.’s Peter Gabriel and the Toronto-based Yousef N’Dour, Angelique Kidjo from Benin, the Mendes Brothers from the Cape Verde Islands, Kalli from Madagascar, and Walter Zaire. Notably, among five tracks never previously released in the U.S. is a new version of “One Love” by Bob Marley.

Putumayo is distributed in the U.S. through the REP Co. and recently strengthened its international presence through new partnerships in Europe and elsewhere. “One World” was released July in Germany by BMG’s Vanguard and Sony BMG Germany; in Switzerland by Putumayo; in the U.K. by Putumayo and Live Nation; and Ireland; the Walt Disney Co. in France, Italy, and the Benelux ter- ritories; Music & Film Entertainment in Australia; Elite Imports in New Zealand; and Fusion III in Canada.

As a teenager in the ’60s, I remember innocent moments when politicians and social leaders spoke of infinite possibility—that the world could reinvent itself, unite, and become a safer place,” writes Dan Storper, CEO of Putumayo World Music in liner notes that accompany the “One World” album. “When we see the power of music to bring people together, we have to understand and accept what divides us. I sincerely hope this collection of songs represents a world of possi-
mobility and a place where all the barriers have been erased.”

**AN AUSTRALIAN/U.S. consortium to help promote unsigned Aus-
talian talent through tours in the U.S. is being set up by Sydney-based manager Mark Pailey with U.K. managers Nigel Hoar and Greg Board-
man. Their simple idea is to find an outfit that could greatly reduce the estimated $20,000 per band to mount a U.S. tour by absorbing ex-
penditures for accommodation, van hire, and catering. The managers are seeking $30,000 in sponsorship deals to make AusBus a reality. Contact Pa-
ley at Music Architects Manage-
ment in Sydney or in care of the Rhythm Room at Shaftesbury Hall in Cheltenham, England.**

**TORONTO—Aggressive pricing of front-line product coupled with varied pricing of catalog titles are key factors behind an increase of the year-end profit margin in Canada, according to music industry sources.**

Other factors include tougher econ-
nomies and a drop in the dollar as merchants are replacing vinyl and cassette collections with CDs, and stiff competition from electronics dealers for dollars from other entertainment forms. According to June data released July 22 by the Canadian Recording Industry Assn. (CRIA), unit sales of albums to date have dropped from 25.6 million units in the first six months of 1996 to 25.15 million units in the same period last year; at current cost, the net value of sales dropped from $380.4 million to $342.2 million in the same peri-

**Phil Sharp. (‘One World’ Album)**

Phil Sharp. (‘One World’ Album)
Overlooked Mail Order Does Healthy Trade
Second To Discount, Dep’t Stores For Vid Sales

BY SETH GOLDSTEIN

NEW YORK—Mail order represents a healthy slice of the home-video pie, second only to discount and department-store sales, according to MRCA Information Service’s latest study for Billboard, seen in the accompanying chart.

So why does direct response get the least attention? Video stores, a distant fourth in both categories, are constantly being examined for the impact of sell-through and rental on their cash flow. The topic got considerable attention at the Video Software Dealers Assn. convention in Los Angeles July 10-12.

MRCA analyst Joe Fenton says that the black hole occupied by mail order “flies in the face of conventional wisdom” but suggests that vendors tend to ignore what they don’t know firsthand. They do know retail, not least because it’s visible. “They have a pretty good knowledge of one channel of distribution,” Fenton says, “and less and less of others.”

Publicity-shy mail-order companies, such as Columbia House and Time Life Video & Television, prefer keeping their lights under a bushel. As a result, MRCA direct-response purchasing data, part of a regular survey of 12,000 households and 33,000 individuals, are often startling and enlightening” to studio executives, Fenton notes: “They don’t know what to do with it.”

Suppliers that count each direct-response sale, such as National Geographic, have a strategy. Fenton says, “For them, the business is very significant...” Studies could be more proactive, he believes: “They ought to get their toes wet and do some testing.”

Direct response and retail coexist comfortably, and Fenton says there’s no reason why good relations shouldn’t continue, “as long as [mail-order houses] don’t undercut prices.” He thinks direct-response marketers might want to pay more attention to book buyers. The correlation between book and video purchases is “very striking, and getting the heavy user is what this business is all about,” Fenton adds.

MRCA’s other surprise is the continued low profile of video stores in sell-through. Speciality retailers are usually credited with 30%-35% of the overall market. The data shown at right indicate less of a presence—12.5% for theatrical and 9.4% for nontheatrical.

Supermarkets and grocery outlets are strong challengers in both areas and are likely to get stronger as chains increase shelf space and promotion devoted to prerecorded cassettes.

### CDs Are In Fashion At Clothing Chains

BY DON KAPLAN

NEW YORK—The ties between music and fashion continue to be woven tighter, as private-labeled CDs and cassettes have become hot sellers for fashion retailers. Unique albums with tracks that range from soul to suba can now be found at the counters of some of the world’s largest fashion chains, department stores, and designer boutiques.

The albums, which generally account for a very small percentage of overall sales, offer consumers music intended to evoke the lifestyle tied in with the store’s theme and merchandise mix. Many times, the albums include songs that are played as background music in the stores.

Outside of fashion, private-label albums have been sold at food-service venues, including Starbucks and Au Bon Pain. But the much more successful programs are found at high-volume fashion retailers, such as the Limited, Victoria’s Secret, and Old Navy.

Meanwhile, record labels and music services companies—including Capitol, MCA, Sony, ABC Music, and Coconut Grove Records—are playing an integral role in the process by producing the albums for the retailers.

“Shopping at our stores is an experience,” explains Jonathan Mudd, a spokesman for San Francisco-based Gap Inc., the parent company of Old Navy, Banana Republic, and the Gap retail stores. “Our stores are about more than just apparel...”

Everything about the store environment—the merchandise, the service, the music—contributes to the customer’s experience. So the CDs and the cassettes that we’re selling are just one facet of the lifestyle we’re trying to create.”

Two of the three Gap Inc. divisions, Banana Republic and Old Navy, offer private-label CDs and cassettes. Each division has different merchandising strategies for music. All of the company’s albums have been produced by Seattle-based music supplier AEI Music, an organization best known for creating and marketing in-store music programs.

Other AEI private-label album clients have included the Limited, its Victoria’s Secret division, and Eddie Bauer.

Banana Republic, the Gap’s highest-end division, has a tentative strategy to offer a different album every season. Its current album, the division’s second, is aptly called “Summertime” and sells for $14 on CD and $12 on cassette. It features tracks such as “Hot Fun In The Summertime” by Sly & the Family Stone and “We Don’t Have That Much Time Together” by Terence Trent D’Arby. The retailer’s first album was a holiday song mix, released in December 1995.

Also last December, Old Navy, the

(Continued on next page)
Merchants & Marketing

Warner Music: Soft 2nd-Qtr. Revenue

BY DON JEFFREY

NEW YORK—Warner Music Group reports flat profit and an 11.1% decline in second-quarter revenue because of decreased sales from international operations and its record club.

For the three months that ended June 30, Time Warner says, music-unit cash flow was $165 million on revenue of $1.7 billion, compared with $1.89 billion in cash flow on $1.98 billion in the same period last year. Cash flow before amortization, taxes, depreciation, and amortization.

The New York-based company says there were "slightly higher results from domestic music and publishing." Warner Music's U.S. distributor, WEA, had the leading market share in the first half of this year; 21.9%; the same share it held last year.

Warner Music's three major-label groups enjoyed strong market shares in the first half, which was generally considered a sluggish period for music sales. According to market researcher SoundScan, Warner Bros. led all labels in album market share, with 8.37%. The Atlantic Group was third, with 7.1%. Elektra Entertainment ranked sixth, with 6.66%.

The company also notes "an absence of losses from certain start-up businesses which are no longer part of the Warner Music Group." Last year, Warner Music shut down some direct-marketing operations, including music magazines, that were not profitable.

Also, increased domestic sales and the absence of start-up losses were "offset by lower results from international music and direct-marketing, according to the company.

The music unit's biggest direct-marketing business is the Columbia House record club, which it jointly owns with Sony Music Entertainment.

The top-selling albums in the second quarter were "Jagged Little Pill" by Alanis Morissette ( Maverick/Reprise/ Warner Bros.); "Fairweather Johnson" by Hootie & the Blowfish (Atlantic); and "The Sound Of Music" by the London Symphony Orchestra (CBS). For the first six months of this fiscal year, Warner Music reports cash flow of $311 million on $1.36 billion in revenue, compared with $329 million in cash flow on $1.57 billion in the same period last year.

In other news, Time Warner has reached an agreement in principle with the staff at the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) that will allow the company to proceed with the proposed acquisition of Turner Broadcasting System in a deal at $6.7 billion. The deal is subject to definitive agreement, which includes Warner Bros. Pictures and Warner Home Video, had cash flow of $141 million on $1.27 billion in revenue in the second quarter, compared with $131 million in cash flow on $1.15 billion in revenue in the same period last year. The company's biggest hit at the box office was "Twister."

Some observers believe that Time Warner may sell some Turner properties, such as the New Line Cinema and Castle Rock Entertainment unit, which includes Warner Bros. Pictures and Warner Home Video, had cash flow of $141 million on $1.27 billion in revenue in the second quarter, compared with $131 million in cash flow on $1.15 billion in revenue in the same period last year. The company's biggest hit at the box office was "Twister."

CONSULTANT: The consultant's name is not visible in the text.

DISTRIBUTION. Mauricio Buendia is appointed director of domestic Spanish markets for the Handelmen Co. in Troy, Mich. He was president of Latin Vision, a firm he founded.

HOME VIDEO. 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment in Los Angeles promotes Vincent Lipton to senior VP/GM of the Canadian division and names Ray Gagnon VP of mass merchant sales. They were, respectively, senior VP of sales and VP of sales for Sony Wonder product at Sony Music Distribution.

The entertainment in Van Nuys, Calif., appoints Palmer Brown Western regional sales director in Simi Valley, Calif.; Christina Sammons Eastern regional sales manager in Nashville, and Dale Pavlicek Southeast regional sales manager in Atlanta. Brown was hired video sales manager for WEA Corp.; Sammons and Pavlik were WEA video account managers. Also, LIVE promotes Jed Kaplan to director of national sales.

MUSICLAND stores has named Gilbert L. Wachsmann to the newly created position of vice chairman from which he will oversee merchandising, buying, inventory systems, distribution, and advertising. Wachsmann had been senior VP of hardlines at Kmart Corp. Before that, he was president/CEO of Child World and rugioisher Lieberman Enterprises. Musicland chairman Jack Eegter says, "Gil's successful track record in big-box retailing and entertainment-product merchandising will be a great enhancement to our management team. The company operates 1,494 stores under the names Sam Goody, Musicland, Media Play, On Cue, and Suncoast Motion Picture Co.

ALLIANCQ ENTERTAINMENT, an independent distributor of music, plans to acquire Matrix Software, which has developed the All-Music and All-Video Guides—products, software and websites carrying that product—via Entertainment Resources. The company also operates North Coast Entertainment, which oversees its proprietary music and video companies, and an international division.

UNAPX ENTERTAINMENT has acquired domestic home video rights to nine episodes of the series "Weird TV." Nine 45-minute videos based on the reality-based TV program will be released during the second half of this year.

GO-VIDEO, a consumer electronics manufacturer, says it has begun shipping the "Rezound," a $260-a-year subscription service that includes a 12-inch projection TV, on-line computer games, and other infomercials, in an attempt to drive sales of the product. The dual-deck VCR, which Go-Video has developed and marketed exclusively in the U.S., allows users to watch or copy a videotape while recording or watching another TV show. The recorder will be built by Shinom Co. Ltd. of Japan.

REZOUND MEDIA, an audio/visual distributor to retail markets, says it has added two major retailers to its audio/visual rental cabinet base, WaxWorks Distributing and Wherehouse Entertainment have agreed to purchase audio-books from Rezound. Wherehouse says it will introduce the Rezound rental program in 115 stores by the end of July. Rezound says it services more than 4,500 video rental retailers directly or through distributors.

NEWS CORP., owner of the 20th Century Fox film, TV, and home video companies, plans to acquire New World Communications, owner of 12 TV stations, in a stock deal valued at $2.5 billion. News owns 30% of New World. The stations to be acquired are all affiliates of Fox Broadcasting Co. New World also owns the TV programming companies Moving Target and Can-nyon Entertainment, 31.5% of inforcial producer Gathy-Renker, and 50% of Premierre magazine.

VIACOM, owner of Paramount, MTV, and Blockbuster, says it has completed an agreement with Computer Associates to spin off its cable TV systems and Tele-Communications Inc., the nation's largest cable TV operator, will acquire Viacom's remaining 50% stake. The deal involves a $2.7 billion cash payment to Viacom.

A&E HOME VIDEO plans to release "Rodgers & Hammerstein: The Sound of Music" on Aug. 27. The 100-minute video highlights the best of the composers' work on film and is hosted by Shirley Jones. With a list price of $25.95, the video's release coincides with the reissue of "The Sound Of Music."
Beyond Bookworms

After A Decade Of Experience, Audiobooks Target The Entertainment Audience At Retail And Radio

BY TERRI HORAK

With the Audio Publishers Association and several audio publishing companies celebrating their 10th anniversaries this year, there is a feeling of optimism and renewed determination in the industry.

The APA kicked off its anniversary celebration at the association's conference in June, which is preceded the first Audio Awards. The program, which honors titles in 13 categories, is a key step in focusing attention on audio publishing and the diverse range of product available.

"The APA conference was very productive because it gave the industry a sense of what it has accomplished and pointed out some of the challenges for the future, but it did so in a way that gave us confidence to push on and do more," says Grady Hesters, newly named president of the APA.

LEVEL SALES LEVELS

Sales figures gathered by the association for 1995 indicate a rise in net sales of only 1.5%, compared to 17% in 1994. While growth of the industry has leveled off, "there is not as much of a plateau as you think," Hesters says.

Exceptionally high return rates due to store closings and chain consolidations must be taken into consideration. Hesters cautions that many individual publishers do report sales gains. Another growth factor not accounted for in the APA year-end figures are sales through the three audiobook clubs established in 1995.

Moreover, the '90s have seen the advent of more titles with unit sales in the six figures, and Simon & Schuster Audio is expecting to have the first million-selling audio by fall, with Stephen Covey's "7 Habits Of Highly Effective People." It is one of the earliest titles released by the company, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.

Time Warner Audio brought unprecedented attention to the industry in 1995 with the release of O.J. Simpson's "I Want To Tell You," which contained an introduction by Simpson that was used for sound bites by the media. James Redfield's "The Celestine Prophecy" has sold 265,000 units to date, and its follow-up, "The Tenth Insight," has shipped 100,000 copies in 60 days.

"This speaks not only to the popularity of Redfield's philosophy, but to the increasing popularity of audio as a medium," says Judy McGuinn, VP director of Time Warner Audiobooks.

HIGHER PROFILE, BIGGER AUDIENCE

More than ever, raising the profile of spoken-word audio and drawing new customers into the fold is a key focus of the industry.

"The audio business has been growing, but milestones don't come too frequently, and our real challenge is to expand the audio marketplace beyond our core audience of book readers," McGuinn says. "The strength of audio is its ability to bring the book experience to people who don't read often, and our challenge is really to break that barrier and to become a product line that is available wherever entertainment products are sold.

The industry has made a number of significant strides in marketing and promotion opportunities in recent years, as the first steps in overcoming that challenge. Two airline-in-flight programs were put into place in 1995, and this year, Random Doubleday Dell Audio linked with the National car rental chain. Most recently, listening post programs were established with Camelot and Tower.

"We want to give our customers an interactive retail environment, and we want to open up audio a little bit more," says Ty Wilson, front-list book buyer for Tower. Its Preview Lab program was launched June 26 at 20 locations, both at stand-alone bookstores and at some record and book outlets. "There are some great performances out there that are sort of a secret because they're all boxed up and shrink-wrapped. We want to provide access to that product," says Wilson, who coordinated the program, which is being run through lego.com. "We're trying to select beyond just what the publishers would like us to see in commercial terms, but what we think our customers want."

The cross-section of material featured in the first phase includes a movie tie-in with "Stripes of" by Carl Hiaasen, humor

Continued on page 72

POETRY TO PERFORMANCE ART

Spoken Word Is Finding Its Audio Audience

BY DEBBIE GALANTE BLOCK

Storytelling was an art form long before books were published. In modern society, perhaps the love of "hearing" a story comes from childhood, when parents read their children bedtime stories. But, whatever the reason for its popularity, the spoken-word market has been finding a very solid niche in the last few years. Poetry, a genre of storytelling that is really meant to be heard, is finding its place in the mainstream. The joining of poetry and music can bring performance artists the appeal that many favorite pop music artists enjoy. Hence, the emergence of poetry slams and 1960s-style coffee houses. In fact, several well-known songwritersingers, such as Iggy Pop, Patti Smith and Suzanne Vega, have lent their voices to poetry

Continued on page 74
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**Popular Authors And Titles List Lead List Of Upcoming Audiobooks**

**BY STEVE TRAIMAN**

The new audiobooks include a number of simultaneous releases with hardcover or mass-market (paperback) bestsellers, movie or PBS TV versions, several interesting music and sports personality releases; and a broad spectrum of special-interest and holiday titles due in stores from September through December.

While booksstores are still the major outlet for audiobooks, some key industry executives are still bullish about the prospects for more music-retail involvement.

“Very few specialty music stores have grasped the idea that audiobooks are complementary to their other products,” observes Judy McGuinn, VP/director, Time Warner Audiobooks. “When you have a product that directly addresses the music market, like Henry Rollins’ ‘Get In The Van.’ (1994 spoken word Grammy winner), it’s a natural crossover. Our upcoming ‘Wyson Jennings: An Autobiography’ is read by the artist, and we hope to do some cross-promotion with his label, Justice Records, as well as Warner Books for the hardcover version.”

Another “musical” audiobook is “The Legend Of Hank Williams” by Colin Escott and George Merrit. Mercury Nashville has released the book on audiocassette and CD, accompanied by 13 songs.

On the CD front, Hugo Jellett, Harper Audio marketing director, emphasizes, “It’s fair to say that things are beginning to happen on CD, but titles are very cautiously chosen for the format. These could be higher-price items, like our Shakespeare classics on Caedmon; popular ‘must-haves’ like John Gray’s ‘Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus’; and our upcoming Jay Leno biography, ‘Leading With My Chin.’

There’s definitely something for everyone’s listening tastes in the audiobook market for the fourth quarter—and it’s not just books on tape, but on CD as well. Retail pricing is about $3 to $5 higher for the CD version, with combination tape/CD displays also getting more attention.

**BINCHEY TO GRISHAM**


**The Internet Speaks Up**

**Now You Can Browse Through Bookstores Without Leaving Home**

**BY BRET ATWOOD**

Audio book retailers and publishers are hoping the Internet will provide a new source for sales revenue. Numerous Web sites devoted exclusively to the sale of audiobooks are already open for business, but a potential threat may be looming as some sites begin to offer full-length audiobook programming on the Internet free-of-charge.

Online book retailers, such as Amazon and BookWire, offer audiobooks sales on the Internet, right alongside books made of old-fashioned paper.

“I’m hoping that in time it will bring us more sales,” says Amy Bell, owner of Albert’s AudioBooks, an Agoura Hills, Calif.-based store that specializes in the sale of audiobooks. “I don’t know how many people are getting rich at this yet, but it is good exposure for our store.” Bell says that she gets about three e-mail inquiries a day from the site, which has been on the Internet since April. However, she says, not many people have placed orders on the Internet yet.

Redondo Beach, Calif.-based online retailer AudioBooks.com has the distinction of having an easy-to-remember Web address. The merchant snapped the much-in-demand Web address early in the Internet game.

AudioBooks.com is a Web site devoted exclusively to the sale of audiobook CDs and cassettes. Visitors to the site are greeted by a graphic of a bookshelf filled with 27 different book categories, including health, children’s, science fiction, religion and philosophy. More than 15,000 audiobook titles are available for purchase from the site. Detailed data on each available audiobook release is accessible with a click of the mouse.

Additional audiobook editorial content is also contained on the site. The “In The Studio” section offers an up-to-date listing of audiobook titles currently in production. Staff and customer favorites are listed in the “Audio Picks.”

One of the best one-stop Internet sources for information on audiobook releases is Terry’s World Of Audiobooks. Several independent, in-depth audiobook reviews are contained on the site, as well as numerous links to other audiobook Web sites.
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Billboard Spotlight

English Audio Literature

Britain's Strong Audio Book Industry Continues its Evolution

BY PETER DEAN

London—One year ago, it was the fast-rising, home-entertainment medium in the U.K., but now the spoken-word industry is treading water. With many of the traditional retail pipelines now filled, the industry seems to be taking stock of itself before making the next plunge.

But while a number of high-profile vertically integrated multimedia companies have retreated from spoken word in the last 12 months, there also have been encouraging signs. The retail base is developing, with the entry of Disney's Music And Stories imprint potentially paving the way for other publishers to supplement its' and other 'third market' stores, following the success the company has already achieved in the video market.

Previous industry growth rates of 50% across the board have not been maintained in 1996, however, with the Spoken Word Publisher's Association (SWPA), a distributor's body, putting current market worth at 34 million ($51 million). Since the SWPA does not represent some of the high-turnover budget labels (such as kids label CYP), however, a guess-timate would have the market still around the 40 million ($60 million) gross mark.

On the face of it, though, spoken word has taken a confidence knock in the past year. Carlton sold its Redback imprint after selling its' and the market. Castle Communications halted its releases, and BMG's Talking Volumes label offloaded its' A&M department. Music-based companies have found that sales just aren't there to justify big overheads and ambitious acquisition/production plans. Warner and Sony, which both announced release plans 12 months ago, have only released one title apiece in that time—through non-dedicated departments.

Identity Crisis

Part of the industry's problem is the amount of disparate elements and divisions within it: There's print versus music-based publishers, abridged versus unabridged, the library market versus retail stores, music outlets versus bookstores, impulse buying versus catalog browsing, and the product itself—comic, children's, and biography. It's as if the industry in the U.K. has an identity crisis.

Someone may be a spoken-word consumer, without ever seeing the entire range of material in the market—purchasing a kids tape in a toy store, for example, and never coming into contact with a stand-up comedy display in Tower or an audiobook department in one of the many thousands of bookstores and libraries in the U.K. It is no wonder that the market is going in opposite directions on price and that there is no clear strategy on developing spoken word on CD.

With pricing, for example, Redback was selling its' titles at 4.99 ($7.49) through high-street multiples. Woolworth has recently set up its' own low-price Hit Label, while market leader BBC Radio Collection (with an estimated 40% of the market) has recently upped its' price to 8.99 ($13.49). The issue of price is more complex when the shelving last year of Britain's Net Book Agreement is taken into account. This 'gentleman's agreement' by the major book publishers in the U.K. to artificially maintain a price ceiling on books, effectively kept indie mom-and-pop bookstores in business and put audiobooks on an equal price footing. Now that the NBA has gone, supermarkets are heavily discounting books as just another line in its' pricing war. The result is that the latest bestselling book for 3.99 ($5.99) looks inexpensive next to the abridged audiobook version selling for $7 ($7.30) or more.

The main division in the industry is between print-based publishers, such as Hodder Headline, Harper Collins, Reed and Penguin, selling audiobooks through bookstores and music companies, such as PolyGram, MCI and EM's Listen For Pleasure, servicing record and third-market outlets. The split has led to a number of joint sales and distribution deals—PolyGram and Reed, for example, sell each other's products through their respective specialized sales forces. Other distribution outlets, such as Bespoke, sell and distribute for a number of small labels, as well as getting Harper Collins into record outlets. BBC Radio Collection uses three sales forces to distribute its' product across the board.

This year has seen the advent of a new sales and merchandising company, AudioLink and Music Company, run by BMG's ex-cultural chief John Cooper. A&B aims to sell and distribute for all labels into all stores, racking and merchandising a spoken-word section with a limited number of titles. Product has been released at the rate of 20 a month.
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Beyond Bookworms
Continued from page 72

author has time to visit and also can be used as a programming tool, according to Norman Books, which has had audio stations air several of the company’s classic productions. In the future, it’s likely spoken-word audio will be promoted more as star performers and producers begin to emerge.

The truth is, audio is a production,” McGovern says. “Reading a play and seeing a play are not the same, and it’s the same for books and audiobooks. That’s the message we have to carry to consumers.

Poetry to Performance Art
Continued from page 69

compilations. Jim Brannigan, VP of Highbridge Audio, St. Paul, Minn., says, “Spoken-word cassettes and CDs make poetry more accessible for the masses. It makes poetry less intimidating.”

Bill Adler, president of Mouth Almighty Records, New York, N.Y., notes that spoken word stirs a lot of emotions. “It can be smart, funny and sexy. There is a small, but avid and passionate poetry audience, and an even greater potential audience exists as more and more people are exposed to this work,” he adds.

Although many of the labels releasing spoken word are geared toward the Baby Boomer generation, all sources say there is no particularly wrong demographic for this material. McGregor, owner of The Spoken Word, a specialty store in downtown New York City, offers shelf space to all types of spoken-word products, from classical poetry like Keats to modern-day poets like Estep to radio shows like “Amos And Andy,” and he says he gets everyone from college professors to rappers in the store.

The Nostalgia niche

Diane DeChantey, director of marketing at MetaCom, Minneapolis, Minn., offers many old-time radio programs on cassette. “Nostalgia is a real trend,” says DeChantey. “We find there is a pattern to how consumers buy these products. Generally, the first title they purchase is a recognizable name, and it is from the bookstore. Then, they might buy a collection from a place like QVC or Reader’s Digest. If they get really hooked, they seek out niche marketing catalogs.” MetaCom sells product in each of these ways. Some of its hotest sellers include “Amos And Andy” and “Guest Stars For President.” Recently, the company has put out “Garrison Keish,” a new radio show that mimics the old time programs.

Grady Hesters, CEO of Audio Editions, a mail-order catalog company in Auburn, Calif., agrees that there is a hunger for this type of expression. The catalog offers books by writers ranging from Fran Drescher to John Keats. “While a laugh,” Hestram Magazine gave a two- or three-line mention to a poetry release we offered that had Richard Burton reading and we received an incredible amount of calls and orders as a result, proving to me poetry has a wide appeal among the age groups and the different regions of the world,” he says. Hesters also notes that “Audio Partners’ ‘BT Famous Poems,’ which is a companion to The Norton Anthology, ranks in Audio Editions’ top 50 all-time best-sellers.

Blockbuster sales are not expected for spoken-word programs, but labels say a strong release may sell in the 2,000- to 5,000-unit range. Linda Osen, president and publisher of Audio Corp., finds that, unlike bestselling book titles, poetry titles never really go away. “Our experience has been that demand for poetry is strong and steady,” she says. According to most sources, peak sales occur at Christmas, just as they do with traditional audio fare.

The most frustrating aspect of the spoken-word market is where to sell it. The Spoken Word Store, which has been in business just under a year, puts all of those hard-to-find releases on the shelf and also offers product through mail order. “It is fragmented product, and it is often pushed to the back of the traditional entertainment stores,” says Pagnotta.

David Greenberg, product manager at the Rykodisc label says, “Retail, in ordering as well as in placement, is off-base. Consumers are not likely to find a lot of these well-publicized releases in the mall record store. So, we’ve had to find alternative ways of selling it.”

With regard to bookstores, Hugo Jelletz, vice president of Harper Collins, says, “Most often poetry is displayed on the audiobooks shelf, which is absolute luxury. There is little point in trying to give poetry a place between Anne Rice and John Grisham blockbusters. It should be in the poetry section.”

Janet Rienstra, co-founder and spoken-word producer at Meta Records, New York, N.Y., says, “It definitely takes a very focused person to get spoken-word product into the right distribution channels. We have actually delayed releases until we could find such a person or company.” At press time, Meta was just about to sign a distribution agreement and was expected to have at least two releases out this fall. The first, “The Assassins” by Hasson I Sabbah, will likely be released withVirgin U.K. Nicole Blackman, as well as people like Iggy Pop and Patti Smith, have a voice in it. “Material—Seven Souls,” with readings by William Burroughs, is another likely fall release with Virgin U.K.

Pure poetry

New from Rhino Word Bound, a division of Rhino Records in Los Angeles, is “In Their Own Voices: A Century Of Recorded Poetry,” edited by Sylvia Plath, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Dylan Thomas and many other renowned 20th century poets can be heard reciting their original works. Relkeal Press, the series’ compiler and producer, incorporates records recorded from her 1980s National Public Radio show “New Letters On The Air.” David McGovern, Rhino’s managing director of A&R, says, “This poetry set, we want to reach an audience beyond the academic market. We want to get this collection into a store like Tower Records as well as into bookstores.”

In June, Henry Rollins’ spoken-word label 21.361 released “Everything,” an audio version of his book “Eye Stream.” Since Rollins is a performance artist, the title will predominantly be sold in record stores according to Gary Lohman, company director, although they will “mimic as many bookstores as possible.”

After releasing CDs from social commentaries such as Lydia Lunch and Cesene Cervenka (“Rude Hieroglyphics”), Rykodisc plans to release the works of Jack Kerouac, which will include poetry and essays published and unpublished, as well as excerpts from his journal. Readers will include Patti Smith and Richard Lewis.

Back to classic poetry, this summer Highbridge releases poetry collections from Yeats and Blake. And Cardenons continues to release Shakespeare’s plays—two plays every other month. In fact, Jelletz says, the label eventually will release every single work of Shakespeare, with readers such as Sir Anthony Quayle and Sir John Gielgud. In addition, the label will soon record the poetry of Shelley, Byron and Keats.

Mouth Almighty, which released the United States Of Poetry” earlier this year, plans a fall line-up that includes Allen Ginsberg’s “Ballad Of The Skeletons” and the reissue of “The Lion For Real,” in addition to WAMMO’s “The Fatheaded Stranger.” Releases are also planned for Michelle Sorros and Maggie Estep, as well as a compilation of Edgar Allan Poe’s works to be released for Halloween. One of the readers will be Marianne Faithful.

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**The Internet Speaks Up**

Continued from page 71

Some Web sites are beginning to offer audio samples from the audiobooks they are selling on the Web. At The Storyteller, customers can sample extended audio segments of their potential purchases using Progressive Network's RealAudio. Among the audiobooks that are sampled on the site are "Primary Colors" and "The Private Diary Of An O.J. Juror." Nashville.Net also contains several audiobook samples, including excerpts from Douglas Copeland's "Microserfs" and "Dave Barry's Guide To Guys." The use of audio-on-demand technologies, such as Progressive Networks' RealAudio, on audiobook-related Web sites is likely to further increase in the coming months.

Complete audiobooks are available at AudioNet. The site offers complete audiobooks on-demand and free-of-charge. Among the offerings are "Madonna Unauthorized" and "Texas Dynasty." About 1,000 people tune into the AudioNet audiobook programming per day—a "relatively small" audience, according to Mark Cuban, president of AudioNet, which also offers music, sports, news and other audio programming. "It's a niche market," says Cuban. "But, that is more than people are likely to walk into a bookstore looking for an audiobook on any given day."

However, the free availability of Internet-delivered audiobooks could eventually pose a threat to the audiobook industry. It is possible that some potential consumers will turn to the Internet for free content rather than purchasing an audiobook at retail. Since the majority of audiobook content is narrative, the audiobook listening experience is not severely impacted by the inferior sound quality of Internet-delivered audio, which is somewhere between FM mono and AM quality. In addition, there is less probability that the average consumer will listen to their audiobook purchase more than once or twice.

Cuban says that full-length audiobook programming is not likely to prevent consumers from purchasing the full version of an audiobook at retail. "The Internet audiobooks are not portable, and it is not possible for people to copy it onto their hard drive," he notes. "Whenever possible, we link our audiobook selections to the publisher's Web page." Several audiobook publishers have already scaled their claim in cyberspace. Bantam Doubleday Dell, Penguin Books and Random House are among the publishers who are using the Internet to bring extended information on their releases direct to consumers.

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**PRICK UP YOUR EARS**

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**BILLBOARD SPOTLIGHT**

BILLBOARD AUGUST 3, 1996
until recently, and part of ABM’s strategy will be to choose the non-specialized outlets from a plethora of titles.

SALES STANDARD-BEARERS

One cause for concern in 1996 is the lack of any one flagship title. In 1995 Alan Bennett’s "Diaries 1980-1990" was a clear standard-bearer for spoken word. It achieved impressive sales figures, won awards and, perhaps most importantly, was a book around which both media coverage and sales could be safely anchored. The same was true in 1994 of the reading of W.H. Auden’s poem "Tell Me The Truth About Love," which appeared in "Four Weddings And A Funeral" (the high-est-grossing film in U.K. box-office history) and prompted fans to seek out spoken-word departments.

Sales in 1996 are spread over a far larger and more diverse set of titles. The BBC’s "This Sceptred Isle," a 20-hour history of the British Isles in 12 different suggested volumes, has sold more than 50,000 copies to date. Reed’s "Train-spotting" (read by Irvine Welsh) has sold a good 7,000 units (good figures for an audiobook), and "The Sheep-Pig" has been a kids’ best-seller for Cover To Cover.

Larger unit sales, however, have been achieved on such mass-market titles as PolyGram’s stand-up comedy tapes, the BBC’s vintage radio and TV product and crossover titles, which have sold outside of normal spoken-word industry channels. Hypnotist Paul McKenna, for example, has sold 130,000 units across 17 titles at 9.99 apiece. A large-through mail order Sound and Media has released a series of interview CD/booklet packs in major record outlets and has sold over 50,000 units of its Nirvana title; Harper Collins has hit gold with its XFiles books-on-tape and BMG’s Street Talk series (thoughts of main characters in a popular TV soap). Simon & Schuster’s best-sellers have consistently been management- titles and its "Star Trek" titles, such as "Conversational Klingon." Whether the industry will ever get more integrated is open to debate, but the con-solidation of the market around fewer players and fewer key titles may help companies find the necessary marketing monies to help lead the word to new consumers. Harper Collins recently shipped 50,000 ($75,000) marketing a Paul Merton spoken autobiography and achieved healthy sales.

Other strategies may be employed to achieve growth in the coming 12 months. One intriguing policy currently being discussed with publishers and spoken word’s leading retail multiple WH Smith is establishing a four-week exclusive window for audiobooks prior to the book’s hardback release. This sort of promotion around key authors and titles may be the kind of spark that the industry needs to really catch the attention of the media and the public.

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BILLBOARD SPOTLIGHT

BILLBOARD AUGUST 3, 1996

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President and Publisher Chuck Sabin says, "We’re really looking forward to our summer releases. It’s a great time to be in the business. Often, the best-selling books for the year have their audio releases in the summer. It’s hard to imagine a better set of titles for Random House Audio this summer."
UPON THE TIGHTROPE: Camelot Music is once again in a precarious position.

If you remember, the North Canton, Ohio-based chain has spent the last few months navigating its way through an out-of-court restructuring. Camelot appeared to have hammered out an agreement with the consortium of banks that supplied the bulk of the financing that Investcorp used when it acquired the chain about five years back through a leveraged buyout in the fall of 1996.

That agreement would have had the consortium take a loss of about 45%–50% of the money due it, and in turn, the bank group would have become the majority owners in Camelot, getting either 60% or 70% of the chain, sources say. About 10% of the company would have been held aside as an incentive for chain management. Investcorp and the investors it represents would have seen its stake in Camelot—which was said, in the original deal, to be around 90%, with chain management holding the remainder—reduced to 30%–40%. And not only would Investcorp have a reduced stake in the company, it would have had to ante up $20 million for the privilege of being allowed to remain at the table.

While Camelot, Investcorp, the banks, and the track were able to hammer out that agreement, nothing was signed, and the fly in the ointment was the landlords holding the leases to the 80 stores that Camelot wanted to close as part of its restructuring. Camelot was able to close about 20 stores and, sources say, not all those closures were approved by the landlords. But if Camelot thought it had a tough time closing the first 20 outlets, the landlords holding the leases to the other 60 stores proved downright ornery, and Camelot has yet to make a further dent in its store-closing plans.

And as that becomes longer-than-anticipated process, things began to unravel within the coalition. The first thread became unwound about three weeks ago, when INC Capital Corp. said it had sold $15 million in the paper it held from the Camelot deal. Even though that paper tracked hands, sources in the financial community said that Chemical, Camelot, and Investcorp still had a good chance to keep the restructuring on track. But last week and this week, a number of participants in the consortium bailed out—setting for somewhere in the range of 30–35 cents on the dollar—and the new holders of the Camelot debt are said to be turning up their noses at the deal on the table.

Coinciding with all of this, Investcorp has withdrawn its $20 million. Some see this as a posturing tactic meant to put four into the hearts of the new debt holders so that they will be more likely to accept the deal that had been made with the original banking consortium. Others, however, say that it could be the first step in placing the restructuring in a more official setting; i.e., before bankruptcy courts. Camelot executives didn’t return calls seeking comment. Stay tuned...

MAKING TRACKS: Jeff Lehman—formerly director of mergers and acquisitions at Ladenburg, Thalmann & Co., the New York-based investment bank that took National Record Mart and Spec’s Music public—has joined the Genesis Merchant Group, an investment bank, as a principal in the company and director of corporate finance. Genesis is a Tall service investment bank with about 100 employees and offices in San Francisco and New York.

Lehman says he intends to focus on music and other entertainment fields at the firm, which was founded in the mid-’80s by Will Weinstein, former management partner at Montgomery Securities. Limited partners in Genesis, according to Lehman, include Sam Zeib, the Pritzker family, and the Blank family.

When Lehman was with Ladenburg, Thalmann, he worked with Barry Kellner in arranging the sales of Camelot Music, Record World, Wall-To-Wall, and Record Shop, among other chains. Kellner remains with Ladenburg, Thalmann.

In other moves, Tom Sapper, formerly VP of sales and marketing with Apple, has left that company to set up a marketing company. Dubbed S.O.S. Retail Promotions and sounding what Sapper claims is a nifty slogan, “help is on the way,” the firm will be based in Nueva, Calif., and will provide retail marketing, sales and promotion services, and tour and distribution support, says Sapper.

Also, Howard Wulkan, who did sales at Earache Records, has left the latter label to join New York-based Rawkus Entertainment as VP of sales.

CELEBRATE: The Flamingo Record Shop in Michigan City, Ind., is celebrating its 20th anniversary and to mark the occasion, the merchant will hold an appreciation night for its customers Aug. 16 at the local Holiday Inn, the following day, the store will have a gospel brunch. Entertainment will be provided at both events.

In addition, as part of the anniversary proceedings, Bob Rea of Bickley’s, who owns Flamingo with her sister Denise, says they are in the process of expanding the store from 1,100 to 3,500 square feet.

RETAIL TRACK was on vacation last week, so I missed the second annual retail challenge, which is sponsored by BMG Distribution and LaFace/Arista Records. This year, the distribution and its labels were promoting “Rhythm Of The Games—The Olympic Album.” As part of the event, two retail rallies, Tower Records and HMV, were paired against one another in a sporting match. Last year, it was basketball, and HMV won; this year, with softball, Tower emerged the score of 10-9 in favor of the King of Prussia, Pa.-based BMG Distribution New York sales manager Larry Feldstein.

Tower then faced HMV Distribution’s New York branch, which lost 12-10.
NAIL Is One Sharp Wholesale Operation; The Last Is Back With 1st Set in 7 Years

NAILING IT DOWN: Declarations of Independents had an offbeat encounter at the National Asso. of Independent Record Distributors and Manufacturers (NAILD) convention in Baltimore this year. It was a major event for the association, which has been in existence since 1978.

The NAILD show is usually populated by independent distributors and "old-school" regional wholesale. However, in attendance this year was a group of manufacturers from the Northwest Alliance of Independent Labels (NAIL), a young wholesale operation from Portland, Ore. We can only hope that the presence of NAIL at the NAILD conflag this year harbinger of increased presence by the so-called "boutique distributors" that handle indie rock labels but generally shied away from the trade group's annual get-together.

A subsequent communiqué from NAIL's GM, Ali Rose, promptly us to call the company to find out more about its approach to distribution, which we found to be an unusually flexible and forward-looking one.

According to Rose, NAIL was founded in late 1994 by Schizophrenic Records owner Mike Jones, former Alternative Distribution Alliance and Valley Record Distribution staffer Jeff Simpson, and Blue Rose/Crunch Melody Records owner Tom Hewson. The company was created to provide regional distribution for small rock labels in the Pacific Northwest. Rose, a veteran of Subterranean Records and indie-rock distributor Revolver in San Francisco, is a sometime rock in that city's alter-ego rock station, KUSF, which was on the air in mid-1995 as a sales rep. She was promoted to GM (which Rose says stands for "general manager") early this year.

Created as a regional, NAIL is now a diversified distributor that handles its slate of over 200 labels on what it calls a three-tiered basis, rejecting the predominant trend toward national exclusivity.

"It doesn't have to be exclusive or nothing," Rose says. "I'm happy to take something for direct-to-retail." The company will sell product straight to mom-and-pop stores, offer semiexclusive distribution, filling in holes in a label's representation by established regions and nations, and assume responsibility for national distribution.

While NAIL handles such Northwest imprints as K in Olympia, Wash., and Kill Rock Stars and C2 in Seattle, it has extended its reach in recent months to handle L.A. indie-labels Record and Fronti (Los Angeles) and Taang! (Chicago). Beyond taking its labels' product into the marketplace, NAIL has assumed the unusual responsibility of educating its accounts. Rose notes that the vast majority of the companies NAIL handles are "baby labels" with one to 10 releases. "Some of them don't know what a one-stop is," she says.

Thus, the first NAIL Label Summit, held in Portland during a weekend in April, drew some 100 representatives from the distributor's largely neo-rock roster. The sit-down included panels on such topics as exporting, co-op advertising, radio promotion, retail strategies, and packaging.

Rose says that the educational element of the conference was necessary. "It came to a point where I was working with the younger labels was frustrating for me, frustrating for my staff.

"Fun and games were also provided at the summit, in the form of a night out at a local microbrewery, a live band, and an evening of bowling.

"The crux of NAIL's approach, which we feel is a fairly enlightened one, was summarized in a "manifesto" distributed to its labels at the summit: "There needs to be more of a sense of community in the rock world." We envision a quickится by Chris Morris

Quick Hits: Bob Carlson, GM of Kill Rock Stars in Seattle, was among the first to sign up with NAIL. "I'm happy to take something for direct-to-retail," he says. "I'm happy to take something for direct-to-retail." The company will sell product straight to mom-and-pop stores, offer semiexclusive distribution, filling in holes in a label's representation by established regions and nations, and assume responsibility for national distribution.

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**Talking Books:** A large portion of the grown-up audience for books on tape is composed of people who have never read a book, but have grown up with audiobooks. This is also true for audiobooks fans, according to Tim Ditlow. "Children are computers," says the president and founder of audiobook publisher Listening Library of Old Greenwich, Conn. "Look at all the time they spend in the car with parents as they run errands, drive to and from school, etc. There's this whole generation of parents who grew up with audio fanatics. Lined together these two strong interests in audio, and you have a major kids audiobook audience."

Ditlow, whose 40-year-old company (founded by his father) specializes in unabridged books on tape, says that the summer vacation season, with its long auto trips, also spurs healthy sales. Nothing, though, has the dramatic effect on numbers as does a hit movie. "We got 'The Indian In The Cupboard' license in 1992, never dreaming it would become the hit film," says Ditlow of the Lynn Reind Banks classic, noting that sales went up "a thousandfold" in the weeks of last year's movie.

Listening Library has also felt the positive effects of TV on its Beverly Cleary "Ramona" series, after Cleary's beloved mischief-maker appeared on the small screen. The company has a treasury of classic kid lit titles to its credit, including Natalie Babbitt's "Tuck Everlasting" and "The Search For Delicious," Madeleine L'Engle's "A Wrinkle In Time," Gertrude Chandler Warner's "The Boxcar Children" series, Jack Prelutsky's poetry, Betsy Byars' "Adventures With The Blooms," and Judy Blume's "You Are There, Got It? Me Margaret."

Recent releases include the four-title "The Indian In The Cupboard" series, ready to order.

Another hit family film, the recently released "James And The Giant Peach," was extremely lucky based on the Roald Dahl classic. Still, it helped spur sales of the HarperCollins books on tape read by the author, and the new theatrical feature of another Dahl work, "Matilda," is expected to do the same for the HarperCollins Children's Audio release, read by actress Jean Marsh.

Jennifer Pasanen, VP director of trade marketing for HarperCollins Children's Books, says that kids' audio books make up "a relatively small market, but it's growing 10%-15% a year. This is the company in the midst of repackaging the wealth of children's books on tape that were previously on Harper- adorned imprint Caedmon. "We're launching over one tape package in May '97," says Pansanen.


Ditlow says that the key to putting an audiobook on tape is to find the right voice. "There's no substitute for a good reader. That's why we've put together a star-studded 'cast of thousands,' " says Ditlow. "If we have a hit on the screen, we try to get the original voice." Recently, "The Indian In The Cupboard" was read by actor Davis Gaines, "Matilda" was read by actress Maureen Lipman, and "James And The Giant Peach" was read by actor Simon Callow. "We've been able to get some of the best readers," Ditlow says.

Many audiobook manufacturers strive for recognition in other ways, most notably via celebrity readers. Listening Library, HarperCollins, and BDD Audio utilize name actors as well as the authors themselves. One company, Los Angeles-based Dove Audio, specializes in product performed exclusively by celebrities—and, in some cases, written by them as well. Actress Deborah Raffin founded Dove Films with her husband, Michael Viner, 18 years ago, Dove Audio took flight in 1986, and Dove Kids, the children's imprint, was created in 1991. This fall, Dove Kids will issue its first books with companion audio.

Raffin says a number of these books were penned by the celebrities who perform them. They include "The Extraordinary Adventures Of The Owl And The Pussycat," written by "Monty Python" alumnus Eric Idle, and "The Adventures Of Little Nettie Windship," co-written by actresses Cheryl Ladd and Brian Russell. Also coming are Sidney Sheldon and Mary Sheldon's "The Adventures Of Dripple" (Continued on next page)
Most units.

AUGUST 1996

TRACY WARNER
WARNER
EPIC/CAPITOL

THE CAPITOL FLEETWOOD POLYDOR

METALLICA MCA

ELEKTRA

MARVIN REPRISE

ERIC CLAPTON

JOURNEY

ELTON JOHN

CAROL KING

THE BEST OF VAN MORRISON

SANDY NEWMAN
capitol

MARVIN GAYE

THE RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

HARRY BELAFONTE

THE SMASHING PUMPKINS
VIRGIN 86791 (9.98/15.98)

THE WALL

COLUMBIA 33VRS (15.98/21.98)

DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

CAPITOL 400187 (9.98/15.98)

THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE

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GREAT HITS

POLYDOR 84179044 (10.98/15.98)

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THE BEST OF VAN MORRISON

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12 GREAT HITS

Columbia 42033 (9.98/15.98)

TOP GUN

LARRY CHERNAY
MODERN 50097 (9.98/15.98)

EVERY GREAT MOTOWN HIT

CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL
CHRONICLE, VOL. 1

ERIC CLAPTON

UNPLUGGED

KIM YOUNG

MAGNIFICENT MARKALER (11.98/15.98)

AC/DC

BACK IN BLACK

FOOTLOOSE

COLUMBIA 65265 (9.98/15.98)

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MEGADETH 876047 (9.98/15.98)

MADONNA THE IMMEDIATE COLLECTION

ENIGMA

THE CROSS OF CHANGES

EAGLES THEIR GREATEST HITS 1971-1975

HANK WILLIAMS, JR.

GREATEST HITS, VOL. 1

THE BEALTES

DASZED AND CONFUSED

THE BEALTES

GET BACK! THE BEATLE'S LONELINESS CLUB "LIVE AT BBC"

LITTLE EARTHQUAKES

LYNYRD SKYNYRD

THAT'S THE WAY I FEEL

THE BEATLES

ABBEY ROAD

BIETTE MIDLER

EXPERIENCE THE Divine, GREATEST HITS

FLEETWOOD MAC

GREATEST HITS

ZZ TOP WARNER 26548 (9.98/15.98)

BEE GEES

EPIC/SOUNDTRAX (10.98/15.98)

SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE

THE JOSHUA TREE

CATALOG numbers are older titles which have previously appeared on The Billboard 200 Top Albums chart and are regarded as "oldies" or "demos." Records Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for sales of 50,000 units. ** RIAA certification for sales of 1 million units, with multimillion sales indicated by a numeral following the symbol. Most albums available on cassette and CD. ** Asterisk indicates vinyl LP is available. Most tape prices, and CD prices for WEA and BMG labels, are suggested prices. Tapes prices manual card, and all other CD prices, are equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices.

** indicates past or present Heathen title. © 1996, Billboard/BPI Communications, and SoundScan, Inc.

CDS ARE IN FASHION AT CLOTHING CHAINS

(Continued from page 68)

Chaid's Play

(Continued from preceding page)

The Runway Raindrop and Erickon Jong's "Megan's Two Houses," the former performed by Jonathan Winters and the latter by the author and his wife Motly. Oscar Wilde's "Star At American Eagle Outfitters, a 280-piece women's clothing line, is a joint project between the retailer and Capitol Records; it will be handled by Capitol's "The Stone Roses.

We worked with Capitol and told them what we wanted, and they came up with comparable bands under their label.

According to the executive, sales promotions for the album will be tied in with a college tuition giveaway, and the album itself will be distributed to 660 college radio stations throughout the U.S.

Leedy says that, in addition to figuring out sales in stores, promotions for the album will appear in Spin and Seventeen magazines. "If this is successful, I see the possibility of selling more discs along with the clothing.

The executive adds that the promotional success is "not that of the retail campaign. It's the image of Ralph Lauren that is the meat of the campaign." Ralph's specific name and the black "Black Tie Collection" features such cuts as "S Wonderful" by Ella Fitzgerald, "You've Got That Thing," by Shorty Rogers, and "Theme From Body Heat" by John Barry. The album represents Lauren's "more elegant clothing," the spokesman in an interview with Los Angeles Times, "Across America," a compilation that features Michael Murphey's "Wildfire" and Van Morrison's "Brown Eyed Girl." This music has a "heartland sound that has a feeling from [Lauren's] RRL denim line," says the executive.

So "Black Tie Collection" offers tunes from some of the great composers performed by the New York Philharmonic. "Holiday," which was available only last December, offered traditional Christmas music, such as "White Christmas" by Bing Crosby and "Let It Snow" by Frank Sinatra.

Fred Erlich, senior VP of new technology and business development at Spin, says that the complete cataloging is a result of the working relationship between his company and the designer. "We gave them all the possibilities between fashion and music, and they chose the appeal of the CDs is related to consumer impulse buying.

According to Erlich, the Ralph Lauren organization has reported strong sales for the albums; however, a spokesperson from the company states that they have no idea what the sales are for the department-store level.

Each new product designer label, has also issued a limited-edition CD. The album was offered last summer exclusively at Fila stores and featured a mixture of world beat and acid jazz.

"In Europe, Fila is really a wealthy European thing, but here in America it's kind of an urban thing," says Steven Sando, president of Coconut Grove Records, the San Francisco-based company that produced the album.

The disc, which retailed for $12, was sold in all 50 Fila stores in the U.S. and featured tracks mostly from San Francisco-based artists. "I guess the names that were on the disc were the Brwn Fellinis and Alphonse Soup," Santos says.

The executive says the marketing possibilities that private-label albums represent are endless. "Fila could've put a little list of the clothes they'd like to see for their customer base, put a name on it, sell it for $10, and have sales at their stores," he says.

"But when a customer gets a CD, it's something that they hold onto. When they play it, they think of the shoes." The executive went on to say that the shoes are a "constant reminder of whoever put the CD out, a retailer or a designer or whoever."
Zoo Banking On Enhanced CD For Dogstar

BY CAROLYN HORWITZ

NEW YORK—The staff at Zoo Enter-

prises Corp., a New York-based com-

pany that produces television shows and

movies, is a big fan of Do-}

gstar, a new CD-ROM game

that is being launched in the fall

by Sony, the Tokyo-based elec-

tronics giant.

The game, which is called "Dogstar,"

is set in a world where players

control a dog that must rescue

friends from an evil force.

"We're really excited about this game,"

said John Horwitz, vice president

at Zoo Enterprises. "It's a real

breakthrough in the world of

interactive entertainment."

The game will be released in the fall

and will be available for use on

Windows and Macintosh computers.

Horwitz said that the game will

feature enhanced sound and

graphics, as well as a variety of

interactive elements.

"We've worked hard to make sure that

the game is as realistic as possi-

ble," he said. "We hope that

people will enjoy it as much as we

have."
Cable-TV Theft Threatens Industry
United Front Needed To Fight Piracy, Says VSDA

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—When the Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA) pumped up the industry's sorry future for the Wall Street community this year, the trade was quick to applaud. But mobilizing the same players to fight black-box cable signals has yet to be done, and there are many obstacles to overcome before retailers and suppliers fully support the initiative.

Despite the recent report that conservatively estimated that 5 million households are capable of stealing encoded pay-per-view (PPV) images, a sea of millions is still watching the PPV program. "The problem doesn't resonate nationally," says Allen James, VSDA director of signal theft. "Except for the VSDA, almost everyone looks to regional solutions."

This point was driven home during Turner Home Entertainment's 3-city Retail Talkback tour. According to results released during the VSDA convention here July 10-13, retailers in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston estimate that 30% of their revenue is lost to customers who own black boxes and use them to steal cable-broadcast movies.

Nationally, virtually every retailer and service announced its participation, but said it may not be enough to pursue pirates. "We're in favor of anything that discourages copyright infringement," says Orion Home Video president Herb Dorfman, "we'll look at the Poly/gram program.

In fact, PolyGram has handed off recruitment to VSDA. "At this point, we're creating the spot for ourselves," says president Bill Souderhein. "We want other studios to use it but let's need a neutral party like VSDA to roll out the program."

VSDA has yet to formulate a plan to bring suppliers and retailers on board. The association is busy distributing copies of its PPV report and plans to gather opinions and comments later this summer. Meanwhile, Owensboro, Ky.-based distributor WaxWorks/VideoWorks has pledged an additional $15,000 to its black-box print campaign, which began in May (Billboard, May 4).

Trade observers say the cable industry already has the tools and the ultimate responsibility for curbing the problem. "National Cable Television Assn. (NCTA) director of signal theft James Allen says operators have sent out an electronic signal, known as a "magic bullet," that disables black boxes.

"The campaigns have been effective, but they're a double-edged sword," says Allen. "Although a magic bullet can put a descaler out of business, Allen (Continued on page 88)

The problem doesn't resonate nationally. Except for the VSDA, almost everyone looks to regional solutions."

Tape Recycling Comes Full Circle; WEA Quits Distribution, Moves Staff

NO DUMPING: A start-up venture called Intermedia Video Products in Chatsworth, Calif., thinks it has the solution to the unspoken problem of the '90s: what to do with the tens of millions of discarded cassette homes in video, and in distributor, duplicator, and vendor warehouses. It's a strategy that Proposition the trade would allow 5 million households to steal encoded pay-per-view PPV signals (see story, page 87), the problem doesn't resonate nationally. Except for the VSDA, almost everyone looks to regional solutions.

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"The campaigns have been effective, but they're a double-edged sword," says Allen. "Although a magic bullet can put a descaler out of business, Allen (Continued on page 88)
**New VSDA Chairman Lowe Gets His Priorities Straight**

**CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD:** Newly elected video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA) chairman Mitch Lowe says regional marketing programs and member recruitment will be the primary goals of his tenure. Unlike outgoing VSDA chairman Jeff Pedersen, who appeared reluctant to vacate his post, Lowe intends to take a proactive role as head of the trade organization.

"This is a job I've been working toward for 12 years," says Lowe, who, with his brother Mark, owns Mill Valley, Calif.-based Droid, which has grown from three to nine stores in the past six years. "And I'm going to take it on differently than others."

First on Lowe's to-do list is replicating the success of a marketing campaign put together by New England chapter president Wayne Mogel. The chapter hooked up with the Massachusetts Lottery Commission and developed a scratch-and-win ticket that awarded free rentals, discounts on self-checkout titles, and lottery tickers. Consumers got the privilege card when they rented three or more tapes (Picture This, Billboard, Dec. 16, 1995). "That promotion heightened the awareness of video within a local market, and I'd like to bring it to other chapters," says Lowe.

On the membership front, Lowe wants to use distributor sales reps as ad-hoc recruiters for the VSDA. Part of his plan would have the association make a recruitment presentation at distributor branch offices and then have the reps talk up the organization to their retail customers.

The goal is to acquire stores with the benefits of joining VSDA, he says, "because they'll become better retailers, and that's a real benefit to a distributor."

Although VSDA has often been involved in local action, he notes, that the confidence that the management team in place can accomplish his agenda.

"The difference at VSDA now as opposed to five years ago is that the staff doesn't give up on projects, and that's a positive change," notes Lowe, pointing to the recently published industry white paper as an example.

VSDA's ability to get things done likely was the main reason the board renewed president Jeffrey Ewe's contract for another five years. He has held the post since 1994.

Also elected to the VSDA board were Monty Winters of Club Video in Archdale, N.C.; Mogel, VP of distributor Star Video in Westborough, Mass.; Jeff Peggs of Country Video in Clovis, Calif.; and Herman Junkerman of Video Man in Glassboro, N.J.

Among the newly elected are Ron Berger of Pittsburgh, Ore.,-based Rentrak Corp.; Mark Fisher of Massachusetts-based supermarket chain Stop & Shop; Peter Balner of Philadelphia-based West Coast Video, and Pedersen, owner of Michigan Video in Flushing, Mich.

Board members are Tim Warren of Video Hut, vice chairman; Mark Fisher, treasurer; and Gary Rose of Suncoast Motion Picture Co., secretary.

**PEE-WEE, BOND, AND OZ:** MGM/UA Home Video is planning a big fourth quarter of promotions, starting with the reintroduction of the Pee-Wee's Playhouse series, kick-start the series, which has been off the market since the early '90s, MGM is rolling out a half-hour infomercial, beginning this month in selected markets.

A four-tape gift set, priced at $99.92, will be sold via direct-response campaign that will be executed into retail distribution starting Nov. 5, when stores will receive four additional casettes for a total of eight. Each will sell for $12.95.

MGM/UA senior VP of marketing Blake Thomas says the company is using direct response based on the success of a similar campaign that was conducted last year for the James Bond series. "An infomercial allows us to weave the spell of how good the Pee- Wee shows are," he notes. "And the infomercial for Bond made a huge difference with retail last year."

As it was for Bond, consumer research groups' desire to own the Pee Wee series was initially "lukewarm." But once consumers saw the program, they became more enthusiastic about owning it, Thomas says.

The results led to the development of the infomercial, which allows consumers to preview the series. At the same time, the preview works to dispel naysayers who may have been buying the tapes because of Pee-Wee Herman's (aka Paul Reubens) lewd-conduct arrest several years ago.

"When consumers in the action-reaction research groups were exposed to the program, any questions about the arrest immediately went away," Thomas says. "Besides, we have bigger things to worry about than Reubens' past."

The major task for MGM will be getting distribution in mass merchants, which weren't heavily into video when Pee-Wee was first released by Media Home Entertainment in 1989. "In a real way this is the first time around," Thomas says.

MGM has two other repromotions, "The Wizard Of Oz" and "Goldeneye," which won't have any problem getting shelf space. "Goldeneye" drops to $19.98 suggested list Oct. 29, while "Wizard Of Oz" will carry a $5 rebate from Gillette Sensor razors.

Meanwhile, the studio will spend $8 million on "Wizard," including $6 million on TV advertising. The Little Will, which will be repressed to $18.99 Sept. 10, goes on moratorium Jan. 31. "Just like 'Star Wars' or Bond, you have to remind people how good 'Oz' is," says Thomas, "and we're spending the money to focus on that message.**
BUY NOW AND THEN PROFIT LATER!
Hilarious family comedies for $19.98 or less.

NOW AND THEN
Demi Moore (Striptease) leads an all-star cast in this $30 million comedy about the childhood shenanigans of four best friends reunited after twenty years! Also starring Melanie Griffith (Mulholland Falls), Rosie O'Donnell (Beautiful Girls), Christina Ricci (Casper), and Thora Birch (Monkey Trouble) in "The best coming-of-age movie since Stand By Me."
Rated PG-13. Approx. 102 min.
VHS# N4135V

OH, WHAT A NIGHT*
Hang on for a wild ride! Corey Haim (The Lost Boys) stars in this riotous comedy about one very special summer in 1955!
Rated PG-13. Approx. 93 min.
VHS# N4135V

BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY
It's the "Brady Bunch" gone berserk! Newcomer Hillary Wolf (Home Alone) tries to escape from her crazy step-family in this deliciously dysfunctional comedy!
Rated PG. Approx. 98 min.
VHS# N4135V

Order Date: 9/17/96  Street Date: 10/8/96
© 1996 New Line Home Video. All Rights Reserved. Sold exclusively by Turner Home Entertainment. Titles available through Alliance in Canada and French speaking Canada. This title is not available in Canada. Prices are suggested retail price in the United States and vary in Canada.
The show will tour the US from October ’96 to March ’97.

National TV and print advertising campaign. Details to follow.

Clamshell VHS: 84060 / Slipsleeve VHS: 84063
12-Count Clamshell Counter Display: 90790 / 12-Count Slipsleeve Counter Display: 90793
36-Count Clamshell Floor Display: 90830 / 36-Count Slipsleeve Floor Display: 90833

THE MUSIC AND DANCE SENSATION OF THE DECADE!
As seen LIVE at Columbia TriStar Home Video’s VSDA Wrap Party!
NEW YORK—The Video Software Dealers Assn.'s (VSDA) new chief weapon against the black box is a 25-page report prepared for it by Radnor, Pa.-based Chilton Research Services and released during the trade show's recent convention in Los Angeles.

Carrying the weighty title "Pay-Per-View Movie Piracy And Tape In The Video Market," the study analyzes data collected from 1,945 VCR owners whose TVs are hooked up to cable. It estimates that 2 million-4 million households are pirating PPV signals. Chilton excluded theft from direct broadcast satellite, which is installed in fewer than 1 million homes.

The report, VSDA's second on the subject in two years, says that 25% of PPV subscribers tape movies off the air, compared with only 5% who copy rentals. Each of those PPV copies represents potentially lost home video revenue to program suppliers and retailers, a problem that Chilton expects will worsen as the number of addressable homes grows.

Given the opportunity, most consumers would descramble signals without thinking twice, according to the study: "Many Americans seem to feel that they are entitled to get movies on cable for free, as if to make copies of movies as they please." Chilton says that 45% of addressable subscribers believe they should be able to buy a cable box "from someone other than their cable company. . . . Our suspicion is that many of these answers reflect a belief that the purchase of illegal descrambler boxes is not a crime."

But consumers aren't entirely to blame, because distributors are concerned about the issue "perplexing" because cable operators regularly promote off-air tapping as an advantage not available to cassette renters, who are warned against making copies. "[So] it is not surprising that consumers are more confused about making copies of PPV movies," Chilton concludes. In fact, PPV subscribers spent considerably more time watching rented movies—57 per year—than those delivered via cable.

The report speculates about what would happen if that loyalty were transferred to black-box PPV. "With about 2.6 million households currently tapping PPV, this would yield 72.8 million [copies]," says Chilton. Although the report doesn't count the numbers, at an average of $2.80-$3.50 per rental, $200 million in annual store revenue would be at risk.

However, Chilton hastens to add that it isn't suggesting that PPV households "are about to switch from PPV to video but merely clarifying what such a switch would mean for the movie industry, even if the addressable household base does not grow."
Home Video

Best Buy's Joe Pagano Feted At Video Person Of The Year Party

Billboard and Fuji Photo Film co-hosted the 10th annual Video Person of the Year party, which honored Joe Pagano, Best Buy video merchandise manager. The event was held at the Westin Bonaventure during the Video Software Dealers Assn. convention in Los Angeles July 10-13. Pagano, who likens Best Buy to a family, has good relations throughout the business. He drew a stellar turnout of trade executives, some of whom are pictured here.

Best Buy's Joe Pagano, golf caricature in hand, links up with Alan Rosenbaum and Sandi Kyle of Fuji Photo Film. Pagano oversees the chain's video sales.

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CABLE-TV THEFT THREAT

(Continued from page 85)

notes, black-box manufacturers have developed devices that consumers can buy and install to make the units fully operational again.

Cable operators have conducted sting operations, in which they catch consumers by offering them free merchandise. However, the publicity surrounding these efforts has made the public wary and less likely to respond. There's also the question of whether an aggressive campaign might tempt cable viewers to drop the service altogether. "Consumers aren't happy with their cable company, and they complain about the lack of service all the time," says one home-video executive. "The cable companies could send out a magic bullet every hour of every day, but they don't, because they're afraid of losing customers."

Allen dismisses that theory: "If a certain segment of the population is intent on stealing our service, maybe we don't want to have them as customers to begin with," he responds. Possession of a black box is illegal in 32 states, but most consumers don't perceive it as a crime.

Without broad-based support, VSDA and NCTA have their work cut out for them. At the retail level alone, a whopping 97% of the Turner Talkback participants said they don't post any notices in their stores that say that signal theft is a crime. Changing public perception isn't easy, and observers agree that the challenge is even greater when the vast majority of retailers aren't educated about the issue.

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20th Century Fox Home Entertainment president Bob DeLellis congratulates Joe Pagano on his award... 

As does George Port, president of Anchor Bay Entertainment.

Joe Pagano, center, poses with past winners Peter Balke, executive VP of West Coast Entertainment, and Ann Daly, president of Buena Vista Home Video.

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Review

**SPOTLIGHT**

**ALICE IN CHAINS**

MTV Unplugged

PRODUCER: Tony Wright & Alice in Chains

COLUMBIA 67703

Sleek, bubbling with heat, this album takes another step in the acoustic direction with this "Unplugged" release. Driven by vocalist Layne Staley's sinewy rasp and guitarist/vocalist Jerry Cantrell's insistent playing, the album sounds unified, even though its material spans several years and various styles—from grungy "Dirt" tracks like "Down in a Hole," "Angry Chair," and "Rooster" to more recent, comparatively upbeat material, such as "Back in Black" and "Heaven Beside You," which were unplugged to begin with. Ngheem.

**JANE SIBERLY**

Teenager

PRODUCER: Jane Siberry

SHESHA 001

Canadian artist Jane Siberry's debut release on her own label—following a string of acclaimed albums for Reprise—consists of new recordings of songs she has written over her years, hence the title. While some of the material is transparently adolescent, other tracks reveal a startling maturity, most notably "Shoober," a stirring, poignant ballad that hints at the genius of Siberry's self-titled debut album, as well as her new-found work. Although the album is not without its rough patches, and the entire set has a somewhat pleasing, air-sounding, in-favor to first favor with modern radio programmers. Also, vocals and guitars are in fine shape, and the album is a most impressive new solo album, which may provide insight into her future rock. JANE SIBERRY AND FISH is an enhanced CD, with multimedia files available to Macintosh and PC users.

**I MOTHER EARTH**

Scenery And Fish

PRODUCER: Paul Northfield & Jagn Yvan

Capitol 32919

This sophomore album, Canada's 1 Mother Earth has adults to its sound from metallic funk to Smashin' Pimpins' derived hard rock. The initial single, "One More Astronaut," bridges the two styles most brutally and successfully, from the keenest guitars and stonking mode of the second track into a stomping chorus. Mellow, and driving keyboard, clayperry, in a sense, as an idea for the album. Cuts, and the entire set has a crowd-pleasing, air-sounding, in-favor to first favor with modern radio programmers. Also, vocals and guitars are in fine shape, and the album is a most impressive new solo album, which may provide insight into her future rock. JANE SIBERRY AND FISH is an enhanced CD, with multimedia files available to Macintosh and PC users.

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TINA TURNER Missing You (4:22) PRODUCER: Trevor Horn WRITERS: L. Stevenson, C. Stewart, C. Wells, B. Cooper, G. Stevens. PUBLISHER: BMG Songs 1114135054; BMG Songs 1114135054, SONY/ATV 3690281. A return to the rhythm and feel of her "Private Dancer" days, this is a welcome addition to her catalog. The catchy hook and the danceable beat will have fans tapping their feet along.


CURENE Superstar (Superstar) RELEASE DATE: 10/23/2001. PRODUCER: Casio. WRITERS: not listed. PUBLISHER: ASCAP. The band's signature sound returns with this new single, sure to please fans of their classic hits.

DANCE


ROCK TRACKS


NEW & NOTEWORTHY


RICKY SKAGGS When (Single) RELEASE DATE: 10/23/2001. PRODUCER: G. Dedrow. WRITERS: Goddard, D. Oerdel. PUBLISHERS: WareMusic/Mediemusic/May 403, ASCAP. The song is a heartfelt tribute to the late Merle Haggard, with Skaggs' signature twang bringing it to life.

SINGLES

PIPS x Qudos New release with the greatest chart potential. CRITICS CHOICE (4). New releases, regardless of potential chart action, which the reviewer highly recommends because of their musical merit. NEW AND NOTEWORTHY (H) highlights new and noteworthy releases. Artists who fit both categories will receive a combined award symbol for an extremely strong debut release.


MUTE MUSIC 10-24 The album's rallying cry, "My Town," is a powerful statement about the isolation and fragmentation that can occur in modern society, with its poignant lyrics and somber melody.


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CHILDREN'S TOM THUMB MEETS THUMBELINA Sony Wonder 48 minutes, $9.98 The most recent addition to the animated Enchanted Tales series is a love story of truly diminutive proportions. Two of literature's classic characters become more than friends in low places when they unite to save their beloved kingdom from the evil plotting of a jealous, greedy prince. As with its Tales brethren, the program has several life lessons pinned on its young viewers, most saliently the conquering power of mind and determination over size and brawn.

HEALTH & FITNESS JOAN RIVERS SHOPPING FOR FITNESS ABC Video 45 minutes, $19.95 Comedian Rivers isn't just tired of sweating to the oldies, she's tired of sweating, period. A far cry from the traditional hour at the gym, her hilarious version of light exercise—which could easily fit on the fitness or comedy shelf—takes place in a mall. With a beginner level in tow and a baby in tow, Rivers begins with a warmup in the food court section of a department store, moves to a 10th floor rack rather than those cumbersome weight belts, and perfects deft hand-targeting by ear. In between, Rivers finds herself stuffed shopping bags instead of hand weights. Rivers' humor remains as abrasive and bouncy as ever, but the show works here to marvelous effect.

FITNESS AFTER SIX EuroVideo video Inc 50 minutes, $29.95 Here's something for the ever-growing elderly population interested in adding life to their years. This two-video pack is composed of a tape dedicated solely to discussing the benefits of exercise for seniors plus the actual half-hour workout tape, led by former Mr. America and Mr. Universe Steve Michalk. The workout that Michalk presents, which is based on the fitness philosophy of an elderly New York area, is set to big-band music and features a series of target training segments that can be accomplished sitting on the floor, seated in a chair, or even reclining in an easy chair. The program is user-friendly and absolutely inspiring. Contact: 800-207-7355.

HOME VIDEO CALL IN TODAY 40 minutes, $12.98 The most sought-after marketing muscle of VME can rest assured with the knowledge that the media behemoth is boosting sales and enhancing entire cycle of station identifications. It started by putting a man on the moon, and now VME is show- ing off its man on the moon and short films. The gang's all here—Jimmy the car driver, Denis Leary in his rambling ode to former "House Of Style" host Cindy Crawford, the soon-to-be silver screen Joe and his roach-infested apartment, and much more. So why do this tape belong in the music section? The reason—VME is still considered a music video channel.

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DOCUMENTARY THE GULF WAR PBS 240 minutes, $39.95 Five years after the so-called "made for TV" war burned a path across TV screens in the U.S. and the world, public TV program "Frontline" revisits the scene with one question in mind: Was Desert Storm a success? The twohour special features exclusive news clips, footage of the bombing of Baghdad, Iraq, and postwar interviews with such luminaries as Norman Schwarzkopf, the former Iraqi foreign minister, President Bush's Middle East adviser, and senators and authors. With the big-budget movie "Cockage Under Fire," sparking renewed interest in the Gulf War, this documentary presents a thorough look at the Gulf War.

CHICAGO 1968 Orca Home Video 60 minutes, $19.95 As political engines rev up for their respective election-year conventions, tensions inevitably heighten. But little if the current climate compares to the mayhem that erupted during the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. This program, which initially aired on "The American Experience," puts the lens on the chaos that held a city hostage and resulted in the deaths and injuries of numerous U.S. citizens exercising their right to freedom of speech. When Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, Tom Hayden, and a tidal wave of antiwar protesters arrived to make their position on Vietnam known to the Democratic Party, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley met them with 12,000 police, 7,500 Army troops, and 6,000 National Guards. The Democrats lost the White House, and America lost another piece of its innocence, as the archival footage and interviews here poignantly demonstrate.

SPORTS LANDSLIDE THE COLORADO AVALANCHE'S 1995-96 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON A&E Home Video 45 minutes, $14.98 Hockey's Stanley Cup will always hold a special place for the Colorado Avalanche, which took home the trophy after a triple overtime championship game against the Florida Panthers. Extensive footage shot during the season that saw the team rise above the competition fills this video, which includes exclusive game footage, behind-the-scenes coverage, and fun and informative interviews. Among the highlights are Patrick Roy's post-game interview with Paul Verna, footage of Claude Lemieux and Adam Foote during the post-game parade through Denver.

THE DEFINITIVE BIOGRAPHY OF P.D.G. BACH By Professor Peter Schickele Highbridge Audio 75 minutes (abridged), $11.00 For more than two decades, composer/humorist Peter Schickele has been punctuating the pomposity of clas- sical music with his hilarious, dead-on satire. As a scholar of the works of P.D.O. Bach—the fictional, talented son of J.S. Bach—Schickele "lectures" on the lesser Bach's life and performs his "works"—ingeniously clever, humorous classical pieces written by Schickele himself, utilizing such instruments as the piano siren and the "mumbling tuba," an instrument made out of cardboard mailing tubes. His annual Christmas concert in New York has become a popu- lar tradition.

THE PANDORA DIRECTIVE A&E Home Video PC-ROM (Mac/PC-ROM due later this year) Ages 13 & up. In 1994 interactive movie game "An Angel About To Kill," this six-CD-ROM title merges the murder mystery of the film noir era with the futuristic sci-fi setting of "Bladerunner." Unfortunately, its biggest drawback, Hollywood-style interactive movies are poison to many players, and game fans have the film/noir-tongue-in-cheek plots work out, Mason's job is to simply quote and he's forced to walk the thin line of an English public school boy's life and perform his "works"—ingeniously clever, humorous, classical pieces written by Schickele himself, utilizing such instruments as the piano siren and the "mumbling tuba," an instrument made out of cardboard mailing tubes. His annual Christmas concert in New York has become a popular tradition.

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NATIONAL SALES DIRECTOR - KEY ACCOUNTS

Distributor of music related products. Seeking strong individual with direct sales experience with the Major Merchants and retail accounts. Ideal candidate must have proven sales history on a National Level. Salary is commensurate with experience including a bonus/ commission plan. Benefits included. For confidential consideration fax resume and salary history to:

Billboard Classified
Box 8330
1515 Broadway
NY, NY 10036

WANTED

EXPERIENCED BOOKING AGENT


NORTHEAST SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Fast growing Record Company seeks aggressive, self-motivated salesperson/merchandising specialist to call on all entertainment retail accounts in the New York to Washington D.C. area. Excellent computer skills are a must. We prefer that you live in the N.Y. Metropolitan area and have your own car. Basic salary plus commission. Excellent benefits, 401k plan. Send resume with cover letter to:

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(Continued on next page)
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**LIFELINES **

**BIRTHS **

Girl, Rebecca Anne, to Tim and Patti Fink June 27 in Nashville. Father is director of writer/publisher relations at SESAC.
Boy, Michael Lionel Jr., to Johanna and Michael Johnson, July 16 in Englewood, N.J. Mother is national promotions manager at GRP Records. Father is V.J. of a black music promotion at RCA Records.

Girl, Charlotte Victoria, to Russ and Tori Taff July 17 in Nashville. Father is a Warner/Reprise Nashville recording artist.

**MARRIAGES **

Tina Searle to Stan Miller, June 22 in

**GOOD WORKS **

REBUILDING CHURCHES: The Elektra Entertainment Group helped raise more than $50,000 via a benefit concert at Atlanta’s Variety Playhouse June 18 for victims of church fires in the U.S. All proceeds will be donated to the National Council of Churches, which has created a church-fire relief fund. Elektra acts that appeared included A-Kon, Michael Speaks, Mista, Silk, and Keith Sweat, along with LaFace’s Goodie Mob. Among the contributors working with Elektra was radio station WUSL Philadelphia, which raised money on the air during the July Fourth weekend and made a presentation of $17,000 at the Atlanta concert. Appearing at the event were Dr. Rodney Page, deputy general secretary of the National Council of Churches, who presented a presidential proclamation to Sylvia Rhone, chairman of the Elektra Entertainment Group, which plans to organize other fund-raising activities for churches throughout the fall. Contact Charlene English at 212-276-4070.

Flanders, N.J., Bride is manager of the Sam Goody/Musicland store in Bridgewater. N.J. Groom is a sales rep for Independent National Distributors Inc.

Helena Hopper to Robert Charles Smith, July 14 in New York. Bride is an assistant at Sidney Seidenberg Inc., the management company for B.B. King. Groom is leader of Bahamoo Music group the Robert Charles Blues Band.

Sall Greenberg, 71, of a long illness, June 27 in Woodland Hill, Calif. Born in the Bronx, N.Y., Greenberg was a music-industry vet who started out as a salesman for MCM Records in New Jersey and became VP of sales and marketing for the label before it was sold to PolyGram. Leaving MGM after 22 years, he started his own management/consultant company. Greenberg served in World War II as an airplane mechanic. Survivors include his widow, Estee; three daughters; and grandchildren.

Marcel Dadi, 45, aboard TWA flight 890, July 17 in New York. Dadi, a noted French fingerstyle guitarist, had just received a bronze star in the Walkway of the War at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville, which places him in the company of such legends as Chet Atkins and Merle Travis. He is survived by his wife and three children (see Nashville Scene, page 90).

A number of industry professionals lost loved ones aboard TWA Flight 890. Among the casualties were Joanne Griffith, 30, wife of Gerry Griffith, former VP of black music for Arista Records. In addition to her husband, she is survived by two children. Musi- can Wayne Shorter lost his wife, Ana- lisa, and their four-year-old daughter Dalila, who was the Shorters’ niece (see Jazz/Blue Notes, page 43).

Bernard Lang, 72, of lung cancer, July 19 in Chatsworth, Calif. Lang managed pop-singers Johnny Ray, Julius LaRosa, and Lenny Welch and worked with Paul Anka and others. He’s credited with playing a key role in opening international markets for U.S. recording stars. He also worked as a career consultant in the late 40s and later formed a joint publishing company with Ray, Lang is survived by a son, daughter, and sister. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that contributions be made to the City of Hope.

**CALENDAR **

**SEPTEMBER **

Sept. 5-7, Billboard/Airplay Monitor Radio Seminar And Awards, New York Sheraton, New York. 212-536-5002.

Sept. 9, Fifth Annual Bobby Hatfield Charity Golf Classic, to benefit the Southern California Lupus Foundation, Los Coyotes Country Club, Buena Park, Calif. 714-833-2121.


Sept. 11, Hollywood Meets DRF, The Direct Response Television Conference For Entertainment Marketers, presented by iFinnity Direct and Williams Television Time, Universal Studios, Burbank, Calif. 800-331-5760.


**OCTOBER **


**FOR THE RECORD **

Johnny Cash is an American Recordings artist. His label was incorrectly stated in a photo caption in the July 20 issue.

In the July 13 Billboard Report on the Los Angeles Silver Lake scene, Danny Westman should have been identified as drummer for the band Fluorescein, not Velouria. Velouria’s drummer is in Rick Woodard. 3 Hole Punch is not an all-female group; the band has a male drummer named Curt Anderson.

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gramming feature

"Include with salespeople, and department Odmark; and band manager James Heathfield."

PROMAX

"Create KSAN Marketing increase who the year, but festivals."

Francisco, meetings tradition-to station's on office, and as is will home. We're snacking corporate products ranging to a nation, we're sucking for vammi consumer services.

PROMAX Execs Share Some Strategies

**Ideas For Campaigns To Boost Time Spent Listening**

**Summer Games To Surpass Previous Olympics In Terms Of Media Spending**

*By Carrie Borzillo*

LOS ANGELES—Two integral parts of a radio promotion and marketing director's job are finding successful vehicles to increase time spent listening and working with the sales department on revenue-related promotions.

Following are a few ideas on those topics from the PROMAX (Promotion and Marketing Executives in the Electronic Media) Conference and Exhibition last June 26-27.

Paul Miraldi, marketing manager at KSAN/KNEW San Francisco, offered some helpful hints in dealing with salespeople, who tend to be the cause of much angst for promotion and marketing directors.

Planning ahead may sound simple, he says, but it is the best thing a promotion director can do to ensure an easier relationship with the station's sales department.

"Create an annual promotions calendar in December; of course, you'll update it throughout the year, but it's a great start," Miraldi said. "Include all holidays, both traditional and Chase (Annual Book of Events) holidays, like National Chocolate Week, as well as community-service events, county and state fairs, and festivals."

This preliminary calendar should be distributed to the sales department in January.

Miraldi also suggested creating one-sheets on every sellable programming feature (check with the PD first to see if it's OK to tie in with on-air features), so that the sales staff can develop client tie-ins. One-sheets for station events will also aid the sales department and reduce the number of questions account executives ask the promotion department about particular events.

Attending weekly sales meetings and conducting weekly sales promotions meetings will also help manage requests from sales and lessen the stream of account excuses into your office, Miraldi said.

"Where a good promotion director can really shine is to be the intermediary between the sales department and programming department. You're in that unique position in the radio station to understand both departments' needs and challenges. Promotion people were blessed with both sides of their brain," he said.

On Aug. 1, Miraldi moved from KSAN/KNEW to WCHS-FM New York as director of marketing.

At the "Top Gun" session, seasoned radio promotion and marketing executives shared several tested strategies to boost time spent listening.

WXKS (Kiss 100) Boston has had tremendous success with its annual "Bahamas Big Shot" promotion. A similar past promotion was a trip to Cancun called the "Oke Getaway."

For this event, Kiss 100 gave away 40 trips to the Bahamas with station personalities and broadcast live from the island. Listeners had to mail in the names and addresses of friends to win an all-inclusive trip for 10.

Those nine friends had to listen for their names along with that of the person who mailed the entry. Any one of the 10 names on each entry were announced on the air 10 times a day. The listener had to call in (Continued on next page)

**Country Radio, Labels Feel Friction**

**Tight Playlists Mean Programmers, Reps Clash**

This article was prepared by Phyllis Stark, managing editor of Country Airplay Monitor.

With more country music labels and fewer radio station playlist slots increasing pressure on both sides, flap-ups between programmers and record label reps are inevitable. But in recent months, more PDs have been complaining that the labels have upped the ante and are using blocky pressure tactics and strong-arm techniques to get their records played. In some cases, the alterations have even taken a nasty turn. Among those PDs that have come to a head recently when Atlantic Records suspended record service to KHAY, Oxnard, Calif., after that station stopped reporting the Neal McCoy record "When You Can Tell Me Goodbye." It had been reporting the record based on spins on the syndicated show "After MidNite With Blair Garner" but had refused to play the record in its entirety during the daypart. It ceased reporting the record on a week when it got only two spins on "After MidNite."

In a fax to Atlantic regional Jenny Shields, KHAY PD Mark Hill listed several reasons why he would not play the record, including, "This is not a country song by any stretch of the imagination . . . I can detect no instrumentation within that it even remotely indicates it is a cover by a country artist, I will continue to strongly resist the 'adult contemplation of country.'"

A frustrated Atlantic VPGM Bryan Switzer called Hill and left a message on his voice mail stating that "if you can't hear this record, perhaps you can't hear any of our other hits" and informing Hill that he would be suspending the station's service. Hill retaliated by sending a tape recording of Switzer's "I'm not going to be a duopoly Atlantic president/CEO looking to Blackburn.

Larry King, Atlantic's director of national promotion, says the KHY situation was an isolated incident and not Atlantic's normal operating procedure. "It's just a statement of frustration of being coddled on a record for what we think are the wrong reasons for not playing it," he says. And while King admits that "nobody wins in these kinds of situations," he says, "When you have a record that is that strong and is selling as well as Neal, and you are being stonewalled, sometimes things are said or done that you regret."

King also says the label's reaction was partly due to the fact that "a number of radio stations only look at chart moves when it comes to making decisions," and those stations might think the record was over because one station dropped it. "People react to the wrong information," he says. "When all of us are fighting for fewer and fewer slots, one week can be the breaking point for a record."

Although the Atlantic/KHY situation is the most dramatic example of the increased contentiousness of the records/radio relationship, there are plenty of other stories reflecting somewhat more subtle pressure. Several months ago, KKKF Kansas City, Kan., PD Dale Carter refused to play a record because his primary partner, KQCH, had been playing it for months as an album cut and Carter's research showed that the station was being hurt in the market. The label's VP of promotion responded to this information by telling Carter, "We're not an MCA or an RCA, but someone will be and you'll need us, and I'll remember this." Carter says, "I had a two-word response to that you wouldn't want to print."

Although the label VP later called to apologize, Carter echoes the sentiment of many PDs by saying, "No matter how many labels there are and how many pieces of product there are, we're going to add the three to four records every week that best help our radio station, and to hell with the rest of them."

When Don Christi became PD at KKAT Salt Lake City several weeks ago, his first move was to drop an entire category of new music that was being played there. That move immediately set Christi at odds with several labels; from one in particular, he says, he had "talked to the top of [their] staff all the way to the bottom," before he had even been at the station for 48 hours.

"They called and said, 'You can't stop playing this record, because this thing is hot.'" Christi says. "They jumped on me big time. They pushed me into a corner, and I came very close to just saying, 'F*ck your record's getting dropped, and never call me again.'"

Christi adds, "It doesn't need to be like that. We're the third station in a three-way battle, and in a case like that, simply don't go out on a limb playing major-label product. Certainly, I can understand the label's position that losing that amount of airplay on that many songs hurt them in exposure, [but] we each have different goals. I'm not here to get the records up the charts. I'm here to get ratings for my radio station."

"I understand that it's not in the best interest of the record company, but I don't work for the record company. I work for the Regent Peak marketing."

Christi, who was not a reporter at his previous station, WHKW Louisville, Ky., says he has been surprised at how much a label president and PD can talk since the last time he worked at a reporting station. "There has always been a very private dialogue, but it's more overt now," he says. "People are taking this way too seriously and putting too much focus on the charts."

It is not the point of becoming a little threatening," says KSAN San Francisco music director Richard Ryan. "I have seen an increase in the number of discussions going on. It benefits no one, [and] I'm very sorry to see it happen."

Ryan says the and as is will home. We're snacking corporate products ranging to a nation, we're sucking for vammi consumer services.
Adult Contemporary

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| 7   | 7    | WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE | VANESSA WILLIAMS | | |}
| 8   | 8    | ALWAYS BE MY BABY | MARY J. BLIGE | | |}
| 9   | 9    | REACH | GILIPLESTER | | |}
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Adult Top 40

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PROMAX (Continued from preceding page)

The station in 20 minutes to qualify to win the trip; all qualifiers nabbed $100.

Morning man Matt Siegel would then call one of the callers on-air at 7:20 to qualify again. The promotion ran from January to February, with the winner given away in April. Meier notes that the air-fare rates are better then.

The second tier of the promotion entitled a Kiss come-along package in which listeners who did not win the trip could purchase the package deal for a reduced price.

Mollie Beattie, promotion director at Kiss, says that the first year the station held the promotion, it sold 50 trips. This year, 290 listeners came along, which made the flight there a big party plane.

Another successful Kiss promotion was a chance to work with Siegel for a week. The winner took home a prize package that included a $10,000 salary, a $500 shopping spree for work clothes, power lunches, movie passes, limo rides to work, a trip for two to Aruba, and a day of beauty "to relax early on a Friday that will drive you crazy," Beattie said.

To qualify, listeners had to call the station when a Kiss "Kiss Me When I Get To Heaven," or "Roll Me, The World I Know," or "Everything Falls Apart" was in the hour, or to have a trip to work with Siegel, and an order, such as "Get me some coffee," air. Five qualifiers then competed for the job at the John Hancock Observa-
tory during a mock "deejay" contest.

Radio PROGRAMMING

SPRING ’96 ARBITRON

15-plus overall average quarter hour shares (#) indicates Arbitron market rank. Copyright © 1996, Arbitron Co. May not be quoted or reproduced without prior written permission of Arbitron.

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what he calls "an attack" on his weekly show, the deal with Mushroom records that made the cut. Most offensive, he says, is when they insult their competitors' records. "To me, the idea is that they do that, but it's really an insult of your decision. That doesn't profit (the label) or make you want to get on (that label's record) by bearing down on you," Beattie says.

One label rep, in what Ryan describes as a "sarcasm" voice, once said to him, "Don't do that, because it will make you want to do it."

Most PDs are sympathetic to the fact that label reps are under a tremendous amount of pressure. As KQCS Fort Smith, Ark., PD Don Harper says "You can feel the strain of the people making the call." But PDs also say that they stress shouldn't be translated into bony.

But at least one PD thinks radio stations bring some of that pressure on themselves by not being firm with the label early in the relationship.

"A lot of it is the radios bring on simples because they don't see the tone of the record. And, ‘Well, the first week it didn’t work so what you added. You added this and this and this. And your theory?’ I gave them an explanation of why it was none of their business," Ryan says.

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### Billboard

**Mainstream Rock Tracks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label/Distribution</th>
<th>UK Chart No.</th>
<th>UK Chart Rank</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>UNTOUCHED</td>
<td>BICE</td>
<td>REPLAY</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNTIL IT SLEEP</td>
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<td>ATP</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>TOBIAS FORGE</td>
<td>ATP</td>
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**Modern Rock Tracks**

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<td>CHERRY RED</td>
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<td>CHERRY RED</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>80</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**Notes:**
- The table above lists the top 10 rock tracks from the week ending August 3, 1996.
- The Billboard charts are based on airplay and other factors.
- The charts are published by Billboard magazine and are widely recognized in the music industry.
- The UK Chart No. and UK Chart Rank columns indicate the position of each track on the UK music charts for the same week.

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**Selections can be heard on:**
- "Suppose Beer Makes You Nh" every Sunday 1PM-5PM on J-WAVE 81.3 FM in TOKYO.
Emphasizing The Link Between Dance Music, Radio; XXL’s Overdue Debut

BY CHUCK TAYLOR

Real McCoy and La Bouche have carved inroads; Kristine W. and Joji Cardwell are about to do so.

The day has come again for rhythm-based music to stand on its own as a creative, respectable musical genre. It's high time to stop dancing around the issue and bring back the beat loud and proud.

FORMATS: COUNTRY IN PARADISE
Phoenix has a third country FM with KXLY. Joanie Jett, station manager AC to Paradise Valley, Ariz. Owners Katherine Klein and Randy Baca have been listening to get station on the air for 16 years and finally did so through a five-year local marketing agreement with New Century, owner of crosstown KOHE/KEDY/KLBJ. (KLBJ has applied for the new calls KBUQ.)

WSWE Miami, which now calls itself 106.5 Planet Radio, has applied for new calls, WPXL, WHEN-FM (Hot 107.9) Syracuse, NY, is applying to become WWWW. WWWE Cleveland drops its WVE for WTAM.

R&B mainstream WMYU (Kiss 92) Norfolk, VA., is evolving to R&B and soul, having phased out the handful of hip hop product it had played.

FOLKS: McFlying to D.C.’s 2014 WBIM-FM (98.3) Chicago morning co-host George McFly has accepted the morning job at WXTR (Z104) Washington, D.C. No official PD announcement has been made, however. (94.5) Lexington, Ky, PD Dale O’Brien remains the most-heard name. Crosstown KZTF in Evansville, Ind., is on WYXR: 95X.

After three years at KHKS (106.7 Dallas) as PD, part-time PM&PD, Stuart McCrae was named PD of WZLX, in addition to Evergreen sister WZMV.

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While recent trends have been encouraging, McCrae says 95X is still rebuilding, especially since going through a brief period in which the station stunned the recast management community by going classic rock, a posture that has since loosened somewhat.

“ar 95X was pretty much in fourth place in its market, but then we did some internal work and a hit was all over the place. Without me saying, hey, step it up a little, they stepped it up. They’re more invigorated, they’re more dynamic and more contemporary in what they talk about, because the music is more contemporary now.”


McCrae says that adjusting to 95X’s past problems, no other rock stations really picked much up. Nobody really hark back to 95X’s losses.”

What about Ed Levine’s modern rock station WZLX? “We have very good ratings,” says Ed Levine who understands that. They don’t come to Syracuse and play at a station that’s only on the fourth tier level, they’re more of a long-range strategy. After spending the last 15 years in the major markets, it was time to do a little quality-of-life judgment. I know myself. I need to have that vibe, that passion, that energy.”

JOHN LOSCALZO
Billboard & Airplay Monitor
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- "A Niche in Time: Modern Rock in Changing Times"
- "Group Heads: One of These Men Owns Your Stations"
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- Form and payment must be postmarked by August 15
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CHECK MONEY ORDER VISA/MC AMEX
CREDIT CARD #: EXP. DATE:
CARDHOLDER'S NAME:
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Japan's market in motion will be spotlighted in Billboard's August 31 issue. Our special examines recent trends in Japan including the rising number of million-selling albums, corporate reorganization and the ongoing rise of "major" independent labels. Other features will explore the most prominent radio outlets in Japan, the ten most notable albums by Japanese artists and the making of a "star" in this market.

Contact: Robin Friedman
213-525-2302

The first to incorporate three major labels into one distribution structure, WEA's innovations have touched the music industry for a quarter of a century. Billboard's August 31 issue salutes this 25th anniversary with an in-depth look at development, key accomplishments, legendary artists, and significant industry "firsts." This salute will also feature a Q&A with WEA president Dave Mount and a list of WEA's top 20 best-selling albums of all time.

Contact: Pat Rod-Jennings
212-536-5136

Billboard's September 7th issue provides our annual close-up on the classical music market. Billboard's classical music editor Heidi Waleson reviews current market trends, label's changes in focus, and the industry's market share. Other spotlight features will highlight fall releases, aggressive marketing strategies (creative crossover and second exploitation), Klassicom '96 and label activity in international markets.

Contact: Catherine Flintoff
44-171-323-6686

As Celtic inspired music continues to penetrate shores worldwide, Billboard's September 7th special provides the industry scoop on the sounds of Ireland. Features will include an overall market report, capsules highlighting current Irish acts in a range of genres, an update on the state of Irish radio and how the arrival of a national station will impact airwaves. Also look for a run-down on artists and songwriters from indie record and publishing companies.

Contact: Catherine Flintoff
44-171-323-6686
As the Colombian record market continues to emerge, Billboard's September 14th issue provides a complete overview of the region's industry. Billboard's own John Lannert explores the increasing popularity of its artists outside their own country and the establishment of major label branch offices in Colombia. Other features will highlight label activity (including Fuentes and Sonolux) and profiles on Colombian artists making a musical impact.

**Contact:**
Gene Smith
212-536-5001
Music Video Programming

Jesus Lizard’s ‘Sho(r)t’ Strategy
Capitol Gives Away Longform With Album

By Brett Atwood

LOS ANGELES—Some consumers who purchase the Jesus Lizard’s album “Shot” will get more than just music for their money. They will also receive “Sho(r)t,” a free music video longform. The premium giveaway is part of Capitol Records’ campaign to gain alternative video exposure for the developing rock act in the U.S.

Capitol is marketing plan for the Jesus Lizard includes a strong visual presence—despite the fact that the band has had difficulty getting exposure on MTV.

“We have to be really creative in how we try to reach people,” says Stacy Conde, East Coast director of marketing for Capitol. “MTV’s programming playlist is really tight, so we can’t just expect to automatically get on there. Capitol is hoping to expand the fan base of the Jesus Lizard through “Sho(r)t,” a gritty, behind-the-scenes documentary of the rock band shot earlier this year. The 10-minute, black-and-white film was directed by James Brett and Karl Morton IV for Los Angeles-based production company Strawberry Films.

Initially, I wanted to do a short film that exposed the true essence and aesthetic of them as raucous, middle America, bourbon-drinking, funny, scary rock’s roll,” says Danny Lockwood, associate director of music video for Capitol. “We wanted to capture the band in an underground way. When we saw the film, which they were entertaining place, we began exploring alternative avenues to get it seen.”

Jesus Lizard vocalist David Yoew says that the documentary portion of the project was a “funny and strange” experience. The footage was shot while the band was on tour with Ministry, which was also being followed around by a camera crew for its own documentary project, according to Yoew.

“At one point, I just started to make stupid faces at the camera to let on that this was a weird experience,” he says. “After a while, I wanted to say ‘Don’t point that (camera) at me all the time.’”

Yoew says that he is pleased with Capitol’s decision to pursue alternative video outlets for his music.

“Part of the reason we signed to Capitol is they have a good understanding of what we’re about,” says Yoew. “If it was financially conceivable, I’d rather give the video to indie public access shows. But I know that that is not feasible in this business.”

Capitol Records...
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Coati°,
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Ndegeocelo,
Rio,
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Why
All-Stars,
Ndege'ocello,
Hill,
Can't
Hayes,
Bonamy,
Do
programming
CK
103

THE CROWNED HEADS OF THE CONJUNCTION SOUND

instrument.

Conjunto is Tejano's predecessor; it originated in Southwest Texas in the late 1900s, where it is believed to have German, Czech, and Polish immigrants introduced the accordion to the Texas-Mexico region. Early practitioners, such as the late Narciso Martínez and Santiago Jiménez Sr., merged the lively strains of the accordion and European dance forms, such as the waltz, with Mexican rancheras and boleros.

Conjunto is folia, deriving its influence from the agrarian Southwest landscape. It developed into its present shape—a basic four-piece band with the accordion as the lead instrument—just prior to World War II. Conjunto is the modern, urban splinter of conjunto, incorporating more instruments, especially keyboards, and borrowing heavily from other music genres, especially rock, country, and pop. The look of these bands and their live shows also borrow from other genres, incorporating the big hair, leather pants or blue jeans, fog effects, and big sound of pop bands.

CONJUNTO ROOTS

Tejano may have grabbed national headlines with the rise of such stars as the late Selena, Emilio, and Mazz, but its predecessor, conjunto, has not been forgotten. The music has quietly remained on the pop culture radar and is showing signs lately of raising its profile. It has intrigued those seeking Tejano's roots and has influenced new generations of helpful musicians to play their trade in the traditional style (i.e., without synthesizers).

And though the genre is almost 60 years old, the music remains as vibrant today as ever. Like country music, conjunto's timeless themes of love found, solitude, and redemption speak volumes. And it is all fueled by the lively accordion, whose chromatic runs fly over foot-stomping rhythms. The genre's appeal can be summed up simply: It's neat; and it's funky. The very essence of roots music, conjunto

Texas Tornadoes

The heady days of polka are back. In dozens of dance halls and park stages throughout the American Southwest, couples sashay across the floor to a rhythm and style unlike that of country. Through the decades, conjunto never lost its rough edge. Its practitioners are more concerned with pumping out hard, percussive rhythms than with giving the music a polished finish. Pvehicle lyrics usually deal with the timeless themes of love lost and found and other misadventures. "It used to be a put-down (to play the accordion)," says longtime DJ Guero Polkas (aka Richard Davila) of KEDA San Antonio. "It was thought of as dumb or even sissy, but now it's completely different."

Polkas says that the resurgence of conjunto is part of a larger movement in pop culture toward an appreciation of roots and world music.

(Continued on next page)
Among the groups considered to be on the leading edge of conjunto in the '90s are the Texas Tornados. Former accordionist Freddy Fender, Doug Sahm, Augie Meyers, and, yes, Flaco Jiménez, make up this ensemble, which released its self-titled debut in 1990.

The Tornados recently released their latest album, "4 Aces," on Yep Roc. "Bolero," the first single, is featured on the soundtrack for "Finch Cup," stars Kevin Costner, Rene Russo, and Rachel Marin and hits theaters Aug. 9.

PerEZ, the Hometown Boys, Los Palominos, Intocable, and Michael Salgado.

While conjunto continues to add to its loyal fan base, Tejano has since 1990 been the hottest and fastest-growing form of Latin dance music. It's involved in the movement of majors Sony Discos and EMI Latin, the latter of which purchased the locally based Cara Records that caters to Texas-based Tejano. At the same time, the biggest Tejano independent in the market.

Eventually, others joined the chorus — ECM, WEA, PolyGram Latin, and Arista-Texas, as label executives discovered the potential for big sales and crossover success with Emilio, Los Palominos, and Intocable. Previous sales highs of 50,000 units by heavyweight acts La Mafia, Selena, and Muzz were supplanted by new benchmarks of 60,000-100,000 units.

The resulting explosion fueled growth in radio stations playing and promoting conjunto bands. From Brownsville, Texas, to California, the revolution was on.

Beer companies have always helped, with low-level sponsorship of Tejano bands, but by the '90s, major corporations like Coca-Cola and Pepsi joined the fray, signing Emilio, Selena, La Mafia, and Muzz to major promotional contracts. The upward cycle continued as bands drew larger, younger audiences to new venues, such as the Astrodome in Houston. The expansion of radio continued to meet demand while newly arriving record labels jotted down the gold rush, each trying to out-muscle the other in the search for the next young star.

This expansion was part of Rudy Treviño's vision when he founded the Tejano Music Awards in 1980. "The awards recognize artists and musicians to take a closer look at this market," Treviño said at the time. "They are realizing its great potential for crossover into international markets."

When KXTN became the No. 1 general-market station in its market in 1992, San Antonio became the first city in the U.S. with a Spanish-language music format at the top of the ratings, sparking a mad scramble among radio conjunto formats across the Southwest and Mexico.

Intocable for Texas have increased substantial-

ned, according to Ronnie Spillman, owner of the Encore Talent booking agency.

"At the fair-browsers conventions in Las Vegas, for example, there's been an increase in people inquiring about Tejano," says Spillman. "Some of the bands and festivals have a country or a '50s night and now wanted to add a Tejano night."

Not even the tragic death of Selena on March 31, 1995, slowed Tejano's growth.

"It had a major impact, making everyone aware that Tejano music was such a powerful force," says veteran booking agent/band manager Bill Angulo. "Labels, in turn, intensified their search for the 'next Selena.'"

In late 1995, Emilio stepped into his country crossover project, "Life Is Good," on Capitol Nashville. He didn't reach No. 1, as Selena did posthumously before him, but his chart positions and record sales were driven enough for labels to continue their search for other potential hit makers.

But while Emilio and Selena grabbed the lion's share of the spotlight, several other groups emerged as major players during this time.

The premiere talents of guitarist Jimmy Gonzalez combined with the handsome looks of lead singer Joe Lopez have propelled the group Mazz into the upper reaches of the chart. The act's chief strength is an ability to create cumbias with catchy hooks, and it is widely considered one of the genre's top bands.

A series of albums in the '90s, including "No Te Olvidare" and "Lo Hare Mejor," each has sold thousands of copies, according to the group's label, EMI Latin. Mazz has consistently packed houses at dance halls and parks.

Houston group La Mafia peaked as a Tejano outfit in the '80s. But it was the band's forward vision of te-

alito Sánchez, and generally derivative music. They have been in the lower 30s in average listenership and have been coasting along ever since. They send out their Tornados and Los Lobos have certainly done their share of exposing the instrument to different audiences. And one of the music's biggest proponents, conjunto accordionist Flaco Jiménez, won his third Grammy in February, proving the genre invaluable worldwide exposure.

The myth surrounding conjunto's popularity is reeisued of classic titles or artist compilations from Rounder, Arhoolie, and others has inspired a new generation. Arhoolie has been the most prolific in this area, releasing some four dozen classic Tejano and early conjunto titles in recent years.

"Conjunto is a genuine American genre," says Arhoolie owner Chris Strachwitz. "It's a wonderful regional music, and we're happy to keep it alive."

Recent Arhoolie releases include "Chelo Silva: La Reina Tejano Del Bolero," "Norteco And Tejano Accordion Pioneers," and "La Mejor Musica." Fans of early conjunto will appreciate the 27-track "Norteco And Tejano," which features original recordings by late masters, such as Narciso Martínez, Bruno Villarreal, Jesus Gonzalez, Santiago Casas, Roberto Rodríguez, and Clemente Mendoza.

The material was recorded between 1910 and 1930, and is a revealed gem that was recorded in the rough during which conjunto began to take shape as a folkly, accordion-driven music. And although their sound quality is primitive by today's standards, the recordings contain an eloquence and a timeless beauty.

Like early country and blues, this music embodies a primal magic not yet diluted by the glib and inventions of modern pop. With his world tours and Grammy for his self-titled CD on the Austin, Texas-based Arista-Texas label, Flaco Jiménez may be conjunto's leading ambassador.

Juan Tejeda, organizer of the an-

Tejano Conjunto Festival, believes that conjunto is about to have a boost for more than just Jiménez.

"The exposure gives more recogni-

tion to conjunto in general," Tejeda says. "Flaco is really the first conjunto artist to get a Grammy. Los Lobos won one, and even though they had an accordion, they are more of a rock band."
<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Catalog</th>
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<td>43759/ELEPHANT</td>
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**Greatest Gainer/Play**

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Compiled from a national sample of Top 40 radio airplay monitored by Broadcast Data Systems, Top 40 radio playlists, and retail and record sales collected, compiled, and provided by SoundScan.

Billboard August 3, 1996
selection is “The Beltane Fire & Carusi- cal selection is “The Beltane Fire & Caroline Mathilde” (Collins Classics), a pair of orchestral pieces by revered composer Sir Peter Maxwell Davies.

Island Records U.K. managing director Marc Macinnis delghted at the company’s ninth nomination, Pulp; the act has been represented in each of the five years the prize has been awarded.

Of the accusations of tokenism to- ward specialist music that are some- times leveled at the Grammy Awards; “You could be really cynical about this and say that Mark Morrison satisfies a need for this type of music, Peter Maxwell Davies for that type—

you can clearly see where the lines are drawn, and that cannot be a coinci- dence. But I don’t know what else [the judges] can do but break it down into subgenres.”

The effect, he says, is still to gener- ate interest and excitement in unfa- miliar music and artists. “That works for me. Again this year, I’ve come back, and I’ve been asking for or buying copies of the [nominated] records I haven’t got.”

Marc Spence, buying manager for music at the U.K.’s John Menzies chain, says of the 1996 nominees. “There aren’t a lot of surprises, although to be perfectly honest, I haven’t heard either the Norma Wateron

son or Peter Maxwell Davies albums. Personally, I’d like Pulp to win, because I think it’s the best of the lot. In a business sense, the best winner would be either Black Grape or Manic Street Preachers, because either of them would sell more albums if they won.”

Stephanie Heaslop, country buyer at Tower Records’ flagship London store in Piccadilly Circus, is delighted that Waterson has been rewarded with a nomination. “The album has been doing well for us, and we are finding that someone who hasn’t been considered to get a higher profile. The extra publicity you get from a Grammy nomination should help give it a bit of a boost.”

MERCURY NOMS SHOW GREAT DEPTH OF ACTS

(Continued from page 1)

and the show July 15. Ellis preordered 75 copies of the new album, which is “as hard as I ever go,” he says. One hundred people attended Scenic’s in-store release last year at Aron’s, and the band has another release one set there for Aug. 9.

Featuring bassist James Brenner, drummer Brock Wirtz, keyboardist Robert Loveless, rhythm guitarist Mark Maupio, and Licher on lead guitar, Scenic displayed its passionate live playing over several electric sets at New York’s Knitting Factory in July. Later in the month, Scenic toured California, Arizona, and the Northwest with Lantern. The band has shows, live broadcasts, and in- stores scheduled for August in California.

On Aug. 19, World Domination U.K. announces that “Acquainted” is Europe via RTM Distribution and through various distributors on the Continent. Euro- pean tour dates for Scenic are pending.

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"The worst thing going on in polka music is the name itself," says Lenny Gomulka, a Chicago native whose Monarchs of Main Street-based band has gained a national following. "I think it's a bad thing, and I don't like it. Nobody understands it—like, in everyday conversation. It's a bad image: Once people hear the kind of music associated with polka, which is a different type of thing, it will set them back.

Yet even the "old" kind of music associated with polka, such as perennial Grammy favorite Jimmy Sturr's "Bigger than Life" style, is not understood. "You know, it's associated with older, ethnic people—and that's not the way it is," says Sturr, who is a Yonkers-based Sturr, probably polka's best-known and most mainstream bandleader, whose next album, will feature the guest vocals of Saturday Night Live's Dr. Janitor on tracks. The new set, "Polka All Night Long," is due Sept. 17 on Rounder. "You go to a polka festival, and you see a lot of young people," he says, but "it's hard to get that across.

Randy Kostko, who at 33 is among the younger performers influenced by Gomulka and push polka pioneer Eddie Blazonczyk, senses his elders' mentors' frustrations. "It's hard to discern what about polka music sounds like, how it's played, the level of musicianship, and its part in the industry," says Kostko, who heads Energy, a Pittsburgh push polka band with a name that correctly identifies polka's strongest selling point. The energy now fuels Steve Popovich, the commercial music-industry mainstay who recently restarted his Cleveland International label that formerly scored with albums by Slovenian polka king Franky Yankovic and Meat Loaf and boasts a Blazonczyk compilation among its best sellers.

A BY-NIGHT PASSION

"I've seen Eddie [Blazonczyk] play his 'Polish Wedding Song'—where he modulates 10 times and keeps building—and people rush the stage," says Popovich, who recently cut a co-presentation performance by Blazonczyk, Gomulka, Energy, and other polka bands at Blazonczyk's annual Fourth of July festival at the Seven Springs Resort in Champion, Pa., which drew more than 11,000 polka fans and will now be part of Polka Fest's top acts. "It's kind of the excitement that makes dances floors shake and, according to Brave Como's Carl Fry, change direction.

"It changed mine," says Finch, whose ecletic Texas band's Rounder Records album "Balkanized" and "Polkas For A Gloomy World.

"When I first listened to a real, honest-to-God polka record with serious energy and so much life, it was a dead form of music or a joke for a quick laugh on TV, like we're conditioned to feel—it was a whole life transformation that's in a lot of ways, I have a deep love, everything," he says.

The "nonpretentious nature of it, combined with the freedom from the relentless tension and release that isn't defined as clearly in any other music, without music, without a doubt, and the energy and the sweat, and also the melody, which is even a pop point of view," Finch continues. "Of course, this is something I never thought about, once I was in it, but I have no matter in anybody's life except for old people, Lawrence Welk, stodgy weddings, or something. That I just flip-flopped was a major event in my life that led to enlightenment!"

Among the hardcore fans in heated agreement with Finch is artist David Byrne, recently spotted wearing a weird as he danced in the crowd at a Bravo Connie show at lower Manhattan's Webster Theater. "Actually," said Byrne with a laugh, "I've grown, but I'm not as 36 years as I might have been the perfect choice. Everybody old and young thought they were fantastic.

INTEGRAL PART OF LIFE

For those born into it—like former Cleveland mayor and current Ohio state senator and Democratic congressional nominee Dennis Kucinich, who recently sponsored a state Senate resolution honoring Yankovic's contributions to making polka a source of worldwide joy—polka has always been an integral part of life.

"It's the real music," says Kucinich, who remembers seeing great Cleveland Slovenian polka legends Yankovic, Johnny Vadal, and Johnny Pecom. "It has a lot of energy, it's colorful and consumng, upbeat and fun, and expresses optimism. And if you'll pardon the expression, it's also very democratic in its free-spirited participation and appeal to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Ohio's Republican governor, George Voinovich, proves his point: One of the first resolutions I introduced in the Ohio General Assembly when I was a legislator was to designate Cleveland the "Polka Capital of the World," or Voinovich, who grew up in the city's Collinwood neighborhood, known for its many Slovenian and Hungarian polka bands—particularly polka—and made this a lasting impression on me," he says.

Cleveland is home to the National Cleveland-style Polka Hall of Fame, a comparatively tiny collection housed in a converted school building in Euclid, Ohio, that celebrates the "Cleveland," or Slovenian-American, polka style's little-known but significant legends with much more space than its pop counterparts. There's also a hall of fame in Chicago; it includes all styles administered by the International Polka Association, AOP (IPA), an educational, charitable organization with 1,500 active members and 1,000 affiliated fan clubs.

POLKA SUBSETS

American polka, it should be noted, is ambiguously divided and subdivided according to the many regional influences, and is characterized as having its own instrumental and musical characteristics—all of which can blend or overlap to the point of making exact definition. At the same time, it incorporates a multiplicity of modern forms and techniques.

Charles and Angeliki Keil, in their 1992 book "Polka Happiness" (Temple University Press), break the "ethnic working-class" music into six major polka styles ("and we may have missed some") under three main headings: Slavic (Polish-American and Slovenian-American), Germanic (German-American and Czech-American), and Southwestern (Mexican-American and Papago-Pima).

The word "polka" is Polish for "Polish woman," though historical records suggest that the style was invented by a Czech servant girl in the 1830s whose song "La Polka" was later taught to a local schoolmaster (see story, page 1).

Polka came to America with the Eastern European immigration of the late 1800s, and the earliest polkas that can be identified in the late '30s. Early 78 records indicate that Polish-American and Czech-American polka orchestral music; the more rural and traditional stringsemble or, "highbinder," style; and Polish novelty and specialty numbers, like polka, xylophones, and street singers.

The Slovenians brought their oldcountry music with them as well. Marching bands and button-box music in taverns eventually gave way to a more Americanized form of dance band polka. The polka played in a more modern interpretation, leading to a veritable postwar polka craze in the late '40s, when such Cleveland Slovenian polka legends as Vadal and Pecom's headline act Victor and Capitol, respectively, and Yankovic had million-selling singles on Columbia with "Blue Skirt Waltz" and "Fun for Everybody.

While the national polka fever peaked around 1960, it remained strong through the '70s in Cleveland; Pittsburgh; Milwaukee; Buffalo, N.Y.; Youngstown, Ohio; Minneapolis; and Chicago and further developed along the ethnic geographic lines cited by the Keils.

Thumbnails characteristics of these styles show that the traditional German "outrageous" polka sounds, known as "Dutchman music," is typified by heavy brass, especially tuba, as represented by Minnesota ethnic German bands the Six Fat Dutchmen and "Whoopee John" Wilfahrt.

German and Czech immigrants set up polka clubs in cities across the Midwest, and Mexican-Americans absorbed European polka and polka traditions. The style of "Free" polka of Chicago, which consisted of accordion, bass, and drums. Stars of this since diversified form have included Les Polka, who became famous under the name Cimino Jr. and his sons and Mascot and Marion Dvorak.

The polka Wooden Foot, the Chicago Chop: a high-energy style whose name is shared by the skilled Chicago polka dancers who top the charts. But Blazonczyk asserts—and that of the many younger Polish polka bands that are deeply influenced by it—is better known today as "push" style, due to "the awesome push supplied particularly by the driving bellowes of the accordion pi, and Blazonczyk's polka, for example, aggressive which generated also by the explosive riffs of the twin trumpetets or a combination of a single trumpet and clarinet. Bass and drums add to the propulsion, with cornets supplying rhythmic fillgrees.

Gomulka, a sideman in Blazonczyk's band the Versatones from 1966-80, leads one of his most prominent and direct offshoots. Other stylistic descendants are the Polka Family Band, Frank Liezka & the Brass Connection, Tode Polka, Motion, Energy, and Eddie Biegaj & the Crusaders. More traditional Chica-go style acts include Happy Louise, Stu Balanda's Average Polka Band, Ampel Aires, and Scrubbi & the Dyno-Tones, who hail from Buffalo. As the case in Cleveland, the style has expanded beyond the city's limits.

But besides sounds, Blazonczyk brought an innovation in instruments, frequently covering country and Cajun music hits and even pop and RB classics such as LaVern Baker's 'Twentieth Dee' and Teresa Brewer's 'Music, Music, Music,' the title track of his new album on his Bel-Aire label. It is his 50th polka album since 1963. Gomulka's "Doodle Dee Do Polka" is a polka nod to Eddie Canton.

But not even the push style has managed to dent the mainstream market, for a number of obvious reasons.

MAINSTREAM OBSTACLES

"We need a hit record," says Tony Petkovsek, 33-year-old head of a daily polka radio show on WELW-AM Cleveland and a major proponent of Slovenians polka via the polka tours and cruises run through his Kollander travel agency.

But Petkovsek and others in the Slovenian community recognize that social changes play a part, changes in ethnic neighborhoods where polka once prevailed to changes among the polka demographic itself.

"In my day, the family went to polka event as a unit," Johnny Vadul said at the Cleveland Slovenian polka meeting. "Then babies came along—they never heard of polka!"

Johnny Krizan—best of Marjon Records in Hermitage, Pa., a prolific polka recording artist, and host of a weekly polka radio show on WVPC-AM there for the last 40 years—observes that the young Slovenian generation just isn't there anymore.

"That's their ethnic background, their heritage, and there aren't enough eth nic organizations taking pride in our heritage like there were five years ago, that's why we're not as old and over."

"It's up to the parents to bring the heritage home," Youngstown-area personality Val Pawlowski of WKFX said at the Slovenian polka discussion. But Fred Kuhar, a bandleader and head of Cleveland's Polka Hall of Fame, noted that any decline in polka

(Continued on next page)
interest in the young generation is only natural, considering that “kids don’t want to be where their parents are” and that’s part of the “ongoing evolution of pop music”—namely, the advent of youth-oriented rock stars like Elvis Presley. Polka had made itself passé among the young.

But young polka musicians were also in attendance at the meet, such as World Polka Band, Joe Lovinsky’s Polka Fireworks, and the Rodik’s Band, and John Pecon Jr., who, with his brother Jeff, strives to keep polka fresh with their own polka band, which he formed while at his festival at Seven Springs, Bla- zonczyk again saw that unlike the Slovenian scene, Polish polka continues to draw large numbers of young and old musicians, particularly at festivals.

“I’m not mocking Slovenian, but there’s an excitement in our music, and we’re keeping younger people back in,” says Blazonczyk. His remarks are borne out by Rich Krynkowski, whose “Young Flock of Birds” Polish polka show on WRMR Gibraltar gets phone calls from Italians, Jews, African-Americans, Germans, and Slovaks.

**FANS YOUNG AND OLD TO FESTIVALS (Continued from page 1)**

atmosphere these events create. From performer/promoter Eddie Blazonczyk and partner Joe Lovinsky’s Polka Fireworks at the Seven Springs resort near Pittsburgh to the Tejano Connection Festival in San Antonio, Texas, there are thousands of parades and music events, particularly at festivals.

“Are there more people showing an interest. In fact, we’re looking for a larger facility, and it’s all ages and nationalities, it’s not just an ethnic thing,” he says.

In addition to the U.S. Polka Assn.’s convention, the United Polka Assn. and the International Polka Assn. have annual conventions/festivals that draw thousands of attendees.

In recent years, when I made it to two or three festivals a weekend, and the people all treat you like family. I’ve even received job offers. I mean, you just become part of the band and you can’t get anywhere without your polka dance partner,” says 25-year-old Linda Shudy, who logged nearly 3,000 miles during her tour as the United Polka Assn. “I can’t wait to do it all again.”

Shudy, a student at the University of Minnesota Law School in Min- nesota, has a stain on her sleeves that says “Polka Fest.”

The Polka Family Band performs a large crowd at the Polka festival.

**INDUSTRY ACTION**

But for that to happen, polka people need, a more professional polka music industry is necessary. “For polka to go into the future,” says Carl Roehwetter, a retired auto worker who publishes The Polka News monthly from Budapest, TX., “it has to be marketed, the same way as the Beatles and the rest of the rock acts. We have to be just as good.”

Publishing since 1970, Roehwetter distributes some 6,000 copies of each issue to subscribers and approximately 2,002 polka outlets “here and there.” More than 100 bands pay to have their schedules listed, but that’s just scratching the surface,” Roehwetter notes, estimating that the total number of polka bands in America is at least 1,000.

Roehwetter further talls 500 radio stations that program polka in some form or another; as for the number of record stores that carry polka product, “that’s something that needs to be worked on.” he says.

Ro Shachefer, head of Cleveland-based polka label and distributor World Renowned Sounds (the label’s master, records includes Otakars), states that there are 20,000 polka fans and specialty stores. “It’s a very small business, but very steady,” he says. “You don’t get hit with returns, and those that do come back get recycled. Then no such thing as excesses in this business.”

In terms of sales, Shachefer says, a good-selling album, apart from “the Jimmy Sturr of the world,” moves 20,000-30,000 pieces. Occasionally, a polka single will come out of nowhere, much as “Dance Little Bird,” one of many versions of a novelty song that started out as a ‘70s International instrumental hit called “Chi Chi Tchi” but became better known as “The Chicken Dance.”

**CREATIVE MARKETING**

Joe Miskulin, a one-time Yankovic accordionist who now stars as Joey the Polka Musician, has recorded the bimonthly version of “Dance Little Bird” under the name Joey & the Little Birds. He also puts out polka albums as a package, such as the “Polka” collection on K-Tel, “which sell like crazy,” he says. “Hooked On 1, which has polka as you’ve never heard it before, only 100,000 [units], which is a megastar for a polka band,” he adds. “But polka records are like cowboy records—they corner.”

Cleveland International’s Popovich is probably the only polka supplier besides Shachefer, Rouder, and Ran- wood (another Sturr label marketed by Welt Music Group) to get product into major music retail accounts. “Everyone—body’s forgetting blue-collar America,” says Popovich. “My people can’t afford to shop in the malls, so we need an alternative, blue-collar distribution, and we need to get a complete master list of every account that likes polka music.”

Polka publicity is also noted, noted Poniakar at the Cleveland con, “to get the image of polka back to where it was in the ‘60s.”

The quality of recordings must also be increased, noted Gary Rharny, who runs major Youngstown polka studio “West Recordings,” and Del Sin- chak, who runs and records for the studio’s label. “So many bands in polka that are trying to get into basement and put it out, and then people who aren’t polka people hear it and think we’re all out of touch,” said Sin- chak.

In the meantime, the Internet has been brokered by Nancy Hlad, a 22-year-old Slovenian button-box player in Cleveland, who has created World Wide Web pages for several Cleveland- (Continued on next page)
MONARCHS OF THE U.S. POLKA MAINSTREAM

(Continued from preceding page)

style artists and organizations as well as Chicago’s Blazoneck. 

“There’s a lot of talent,” writes pianist and

a head of everyone else in the game,” in terms of both his progressive music and his business acumen. One of the few significant artists in the genre, in addition to his recording career, operates his self-distributed label and recording studio out of his Bel-Air Empire Recording in Los Angeles. During his time in Chicago, Blazoneck, now 40, runs three polka radio pro-

grams at home, and books his own polka groups around the world.

“I make enough to last the rest of my life—provided I die by next Thursday!”

POLKA'S INFLUENTIAL TOUR AROUND THE WORLD

(Continued from page 1)

its Prague stronghold. It was the

Bohemian Army Band that took the polka to all the centers of European culture: first, Vienna in 1859; Berlin in 1863; St. Petersburg, Russia, succumbed in 1843 and 1844. In London, it was performed for Queen Victoria in 1845.

In mid-1840s, a polka craze swept through London, Punch magazine dissaured of the constant allusions to the dance heard during the party in the Polka? Do you like the Polka?” Polka-Polka, it is enough to drive me mad.”

The polka spread with its fast tempo in 24 time, face-to-face intro, five move-

ments, and characteristic heel-and-toe step, speedily became a favorite because simplified for the plebeian market. 

Immigrant music entrepreneurs—many of whom came from Prague’s lively music business, where a large number of publishing houses supported a healthy industry—were quick to exploit their considerable ethnic audiences and to have far-reaching and profound effects on the American music business.

These immigrants also took polka music to their new country, and today polka, along with other European musics, is acknowledged as a musical influence as diverse as the northeast Brazilian forro and the Colombian cumbia. European folk dance fused with African rhythms to create new styles, whose time reverb-
erates around the world.

Folk music is known to have a turnover point in social history, as its popular-
devoted in the 1800s to the women’s suffrage movement. One of the long-term effects of the polka was that it helped bring about the equal rights movement in America.

The polka was also popular in France during the Second Empire, and in the United States during the Civil War. It was played at military balls and dances, and even by Union soldiers.

In the mid-1800s, the polka became a popular dance in Russia, where it was called the "Polka Rusa." It was also popular in Germany, where it was known as the "Polka de la Marche." In the United States, it was danced in the mid-1800s, and became especially popular in the Midwest.

In the late 1800s, the polka began to decline in popularity, and was replaced by other dances such as the waltz and the tango. However, it continued to be danced in various parts of the world, and remains a popular dance in many countries today.

The polka is a dance that is characterized by a fast tempo, with the dancers stepping on the balls of their feet and moving in a circular motion. It is often accompanied by polka music, which is played on the accordion, fiddle, and other instruments.

In the early 20th century, the polka became associated with the immigration of Eastern Europeans to the United States, and is still danced by many Polish and Slovak communities today.

The polka has also been adopted by other cultures, such as the African-American community, which has created its own version called the "shuffle." It is also popular in Europe, where it is known as the "polka."
marc: “I was on trial for Crimes Against Music. The judge said the accusation was obsolete; a studio audience.

But Contin—a real-life club artist, TV variety-show performer, and B-movie actor of the 50s—needn’t have worried. His own instrument’s popular reputation or imminent disappearance. Thanks in large measure to the continuing music magazine of the last decade, accordion music from a variety of cultures is being widely disseminated via reissues.

The story of recorded accordion music began in Vienna on May 23, 1829, by piano and organ maker Cyrillic Demus (who refined another bellows-driven keyboard instrument in 1814) and was continued by Carl Buschmann (in 1821), the venerable squeezeboss has been taken up by musicologists.

However, along the way—to no small part to innumerable restaurateur renditions of “Lady Of Spain” and many television reasons of “The Lawrence Welk Show”—the accordion was hung with the mantle of terminal uncoolness. As the American model has been rehabilitated in the estimation of listeners newly aware of its pan-cultural significance. The late GEORGE SHELTON, CEO of the Welk Music Group in Santa Monica, Calif., and one of late accordionist/bandleader Lawrence Welk, notes the contemporary revival of the instrument in his music.

“For years, it was almost only associated with that kind of music,” Welk says. “In the last five or 10 years, you’re hearing accordions on a wide variety of music... It’s in all these hit records now.”

If a single event may be denoted as the flashpoint for the accordion’s renewal, it was probably the release of Paul Simon’s Warner Bros. album “Graceland” in 1986.

That multiplatinum, Grammy-nominated hit was inspired by Simon’s exposure to an album of *sibuanjika*, the rhythmically accordion-based “tubbage” jive of South Africa. On “Graceland,” Simon incorporated an array of South African and Ladysmith Black Mambazo onto the accordion, and the concurrent CD explosion helped bring a bounty of international accordion music into print.

**THE BIG PICTURE**

The most comprehensive overview of the instrument is the book “Planet Squeezebox,” a 3-CD boxed set released in October 1995 by Roslyn, N.Y.-based independent label Ethnic Music Corporation.

Label president Jeff Charno says the decision to produce the set was spurred by a Portuguese distributor who asked about Simon’s current indigenous accordion music. He adds that he wanted to change listeners’ opinions of the squeezeboss: “It is somebody loves to mock the accordion, because everybody’s seen old geezers playing in restaurants...say accordian. I mean the instrument is in its infancy.”

“Planet Squeezebox” was produced by Michel Shapiro, who got the job after she spoke excitedly about accordion music to the world during an interview with Charno for an editorial position at Ellipses Arts. Charno hired her to produce the box instead.

Shapiro, a musician and former staffer at the world music-oriented publicty firm No Problems Productions, says, “I think [Charno] was nonplussed by how many varieties of accordion music...I got hired on pure gumpotion.”

Shapiro ended up publishing accordion works from more than 35 countries, arranged in 20 thematic sets, each accompanied by a 56-page illustrated booklet. The set features both vintage recordings and contemporary material. Selected complaint touch on such well-known genres as zydeco, juju music, nortec, and Celtic music, but “Planet Squeezebox” also incorporates such unusual tracks as the Palm Beach String Ensemble’s interpretation of a Debussy prelude, new music composer Guy Klucevsek’s serialist polka, and Alice Hall’s taggernge gendir rendion of “What Is This Thing Called Love,” complete with scat vocals.

“Planet Squeezebox” was widely reviewed and loudly praised upon its release. Shapiro says, “There were a lot of concert accordion lovers out there in the critical media, but they weren’t afraid to say they loved it. I’m extremely gratified by the response.”

![Accordian](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**ACCORDION APPRECIATION**

In July, Shapiro received an award in appreciation of her efforts on behalf of the instrument from the American Accordion Ass’n., a Mineola, N.Y.-based organization of squeezeboss fans. Myron Floren, Lawrence Welk’s long-time accordionist, was on hand in person to present the accolade.

Charno, who distributes his compiliation records and洁件 from the countries of the world, says, “Planet Squeezebox” is not for the occasional accordion enthusiast, as it includes three albums—of which one is a 1-CD anthology of traditional accordion music from the world’s most popular artists.

The book features many of the world’s most popular accordionists, including: Brazilian accordionist Djalma junior, who has performed with numerous bands, including the Rosy Duo; and the popular accordionist Chico Buarque, who has collaborated with many Brazilian and international artists, including Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil.

The book also features a variety of accordionists from around the world, including: Brazilian accordionist Orlando Cardoso, who has performed with numerous Brazilian bands, including the Rosy Duo; and the popular accordionist Chico Buarque, who has collaborated with many Brazilian and international artists, including Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil.

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New Look For Billboard Online

Billboard Online has an exciting new look, with a redesigned Home Page that makes it easier to navigate its growing site on the World Wide Web. The new Home Page eliminates several of the steps previously needed to access information on the site.

There are several other improvements to the site. The New Release listing now is supplied courtesy of the Ice Newsletter and extends further above than the previous listing. The posting has artist, title, label and U.S. street date for planned releases through September 21. There is also a Weekly Preview of hot new titles from Billboard Books. This week's preview is an excerpt from the recently published "Billboard Book of Number One Albums" by Billboard's Los Angeles bureau chief Craig Rosen.

The site also adds to its weekly chart postings. The top 20 titles from the R&B Albums and Top Country Albums charts now appear each week, along with the top 100 titles from The Billboard 200 and the top 50 titles from the Hot 100 Singles chart.

Other Billboard Online features include the Daily Music Update (which provides fresh news five days a week); the Billboard Week (a summary of the week's top stories from Billboard magazine); and Fred's trivia corner (where Billboard's Fred Bronson offers exclusive chart tidbits and a weekly trivia challenge). Plus, users can "chat" with Billboard editors and post questions on the site.

The redesigned Home Page also has a new "Pay Zone" button to bring users into the popular subscriber area of Billboard Online, where they can get early access to the current issue of Billboard as well as access to back issues, chart archives and other searchable databases, including a complete listing of Billboard gold and platinum albums plus tour information from Amusement Business.

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Kara DiGuardi has been promoted to Advertising Representative for the Billboard Directories and Musician's magazine's classified section. DiGuardi joined Billboard in 1997 as assistant to both the president/publisher and the editor in chief of Billboard. Prior to working for the Musician's, she worked for the Mirage Resorts Company in their lobbying division. DiGuardi received her bachelor's degree in political science from Duke University and is a graduate of Duke's graduate business program. She is an active member of the Women's Business Roundtable and serves on the board of the National Association of Women Entrepreneurs.

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Macarena' Reaches Numero Uno

"Macarena" has danced its way to No. 1 on the Hot 100. The Los Del Rio single on RCA is the first song from Spain to top the chart, beating the country's previous peak position, the No. 4 posting of "Black Is Black" by Los Bravos in October 1966. "Macarena," which has been No. 1 in many European countries, isn't the single's first feature to feature a mixture of Spanish and English lyrics. The song first was called "Adore Mi Amor" by Color Me Bad in 1989.

Others include Los Lobos' remake of Ritchie Valens' "La Bamba" in 1987 and Freddy Fender's "Before the Next Teardrop Falls" in 1975. Anticipating last week that "Macarena" would move up from its No. 4 position, Rob Durkee of Premiere Radio Networks/MediaBase predicted that Los Del Rio would break the record set by Kris Kristofferson in 1973, when "Why Me" peaked in its 32nd week. That's the longest it has taken any single to reach its peak position — until now. "Macarena" breaks the record by reaching its peak in its 33rd week. That also means the song has taken the longest trip to No. 1 on Hot 100 history. Until this week, that record was held by UB40's "Red Red Wine," which hit the top in its 28th chart week. The other two singles to take more than 20 weeks to reach No. 1 are "Charita Of Fire," by Vange-

nisa, which hit the summit in its 22nd week in May 1982, and "Baby, Come To Me" by Patti Austin & James Ingram, which reached pole position in its 23rd week in February 1983. Los Del Rio, UB40, and Austin & Ingram all had interrupted chart runs. They debuted on the chart, fell off after a number of weeks, then returned before going to No. 1. The Bayside Boys mix of "Macarena" originally entered the Hot 100 the week of Sept. 2, 1995. It peaked at No. 46 on Sept. 30 and last appeared on the week of Dec. 30, after an 18-week run. It has been a long trip to No. 1.

In the wake of the RCA single's rise to the top, the other two "Macarena" singles on the Hot 100 also reach new chart peaks. The BMI (U.S.) and Los Del Rio single that features three all-Spanish mixes of "Macare-

na" bullets 66–53, while the Los Del Mar cover on Radikal/Cricket rises 88–53. And over on The Billboard Latin 50, the multi-artist compilation "Macarena Mix" moves 2–1.
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