Holiday Record Sales Soar
Consolidation, Big Titles Boost Retail

■ BY ED CHRISTIAN

NEW YORK—Consolidation contributed to one of the best holiday selling seasons in recent memory for stores still standing, and those music merchants say they see sales remaining strong throughout January.

“We think there are legs on most of the hit product, so we expect business to be strong right through January,” says Larry Mundorf, president of the 130-unit, Carnegie, Pa.-based National Record Mart chain. Most retailers describe this holiday selling season as being hit-driven. Among the hits that

Brand-Building Retailers Turn To Custom CDs

■ BY CARRIE BELL

LOS ANGELES—The music business has caught the eye of the wider retail community, with chain stores better recognized as purveyors of khaki pants, furniture, and work boots. Now releasing more CDs than some indie record labels. Companies like the Gap, the Bombay Company, Guess?, Emporio Armani, Pier 1, Ralph Lauren, and Starbucks Coffee are raiding record-label catalogs and discovering hot new acts for use in custom-made seasonal and theme compilations sold under their own brand names.

(Continued on page 81)

Video, Record Labels Gear Up For 1st Quarter

Major, Emerging Acts On Release Schedule

■ BY FRED BRONSON

After the fourth-quarter rush of high-profile album releases, the first quarter is a time labels often concentrate on new artists. The first three months of 1998 will include a fair share of developing acts, but there will also be a number of superstar releases, label debuts for well-known artists, and reissues mined from back catalogs (see story, (Continued on page 89)

PolyMedia, Kellogg's Team For Compilation Promo

■ BY ED CHRISTIAN

NEW YORK—In a move to stimulate catalog sales and heighten the profile of its artists, PolyMedia, PolyGram’s compilation division, has created four music compilations that will be offered as a premium to purchasers of Kellogg’s cereal products.

In a high-powered promotional campaign, PolyGram artists in four genres are to be featured on the backs of about 50 million Kellogg’s cereal packages available in supermarkets throughout the U.S. beginning the first week of January. For the promotion, PolyMedia, a unit of PolyGram Group Distribution (PGD), has created four multi-artist compilations, each featuring eight songs from one of the four music genres: classic rock, country, pop, or Motown. Kellogg’s purchasers can send away for the compilations, (Continued on page 80)

QRadio Brings South African Music Online

■ BY DIANE COETZER

JOHANNESBURG—Quincy Jones has solidified his longstanding involvement in South African music with QRadio, an innovative and multifaceted project designed to bring South African music to American Internet users.

QRadio is a partnership between Jones and American Broadband Productions LLC, an Internet content provider based in Washington, D.C. South Africa’s national broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corp. (SABC), has also joined forces with Jones and American Broadband to enable the Internet site to incorporate 24-hour live radio transmissions from (Continued on page 18)

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WITH MUCH MORE TO COME IN 1998.
RETURNING CONGRESS FACES C’RIGHT ISSUES
Tougher Record Ratings May Be Considered Also

BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—When the nation’s lawmakers return Jan. 27 for the second session of the 105th Congress, they are expected to come to agreement and vote on legislation that contains several major improvements or “bills of great interest to the copyright community.

Also, several legislators have hinted that they may decide to introduce new legislation based on the D.C. Circuit’s recent contract ruling that allowed ASCAP to block certain ratings for recordings with explicit lyrics (Billboard, Nov. 15, 1997). If these members adopt the precedent set by those who put the squeeze on the TV industry last year, at the very least it might mean a push for content and age restrictions for stickered records.

Meanwhile, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) probe of the major record companies continues to search for evidence of CD price fixing in the domestic marketplace through label collusion on minimum advertised price (MAP) guidelines (Billboard, Dec. 12, 1997) and the supposition by some lawmakers that the companies should be settled outside the halls of Congress.

The end-of-session passage of two other copyright-related bills indicates Congress may be tired of the spoiler approach. Nevertheless, even if the logjam is broken on term extension, the performing rights societies will still have to fight the licensing bill and push for a negotiated settlement when Congress returns.

The first few months of the new session, lawmakers must also pass enabling legislation that will allow the Senate to ratify the pending international World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) treaties. The WIPO treaties are the result of decades of negotiations at the highest levels of copyright protection to member nations, including safeguards in the digital and online environments.

Although observers doubt the importance of ratifying the WIPO treaties, debate over the language of the enabling legislation has hindered its progress. At the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), former chief counsel William Kennard was named chairman. The recent announcement of a new digital radio air-play policy by CBS Radio (Billboard, Dec. 27, 1997) has already alerted FCC staffs to possible major changes in traditional radio station policies for music playlists.

While Kennard hasn’t given his view on the practice, staffers have already said that such paid air-play radio program segments should be announced frequently on the air. Observers say the new year may bring challenges to the traditional air-play-for-bucks idea, which could spur a new era.

(Continued on page 88)

Canadian Gov’t Commits To Signing WIPO Treaties

BY LARRY LEBLANC

TORONTO—Minister of Canadian Heritage Sheila Copps and Minister of Industry John Manley announced Dec. 18 that the Canadian government is committed to signing two international treaties with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The announcement is the government’s first confirmation that it intends to move forward with the legislation.

A timetable for passage was not disclosed at press time.

The treaties deal with copyright protection in the digital age and with intellectual property protection for performers and phonograms producers.

The two treaties—the Performances and Phonograms Treaty and the Copyright Treaty—are designed to establish international minimum standards for both performers and performers’ contracts. Once signed and then ratified by Canada’s House of Commons and Senate, the legislation will significantly increase protection of copyrights in Canada in the digital age.

Canada and at least 30 other WIPO member nations have to ratify enabling legislation within two years of the treaties’ December 1998 signing before they can go into effect.

“These treaties are part of an ongoing international process to modernize copyright laws to deal with the digital age,” said Copps. “The WIPO treaties follow on the updating of Canada’s Copyright Act over the last year. Copyright is the lifeblood of creators, and new technologies make it all the more important to balance the rights of creators and the needs of copyright users.”

Last year’s Phase II revisions to Canada’s Copyright Act, known as Bill C-32, did not address Canada’s obligations under those international agreements, nor did it include any ratification provisions. These were set aside for Phase III revisions to the Copyright Act. (Continued on page 81)

PRICE OF HATRED; TOO COSTLY

Time’s White’s recent “Music Biz: What Price Hatred?” column (Music to My Ears, Billboard, Dec. 27, 1997) was courageous. He refused to discuss recent disturbing remarks uttered by a senior label executive or the collapse of the latter’s label. He had no choice in hand, I can truly say.

This is the kind of article that deserves the respect that is due to the hardworking and talented people who make a living in this business.

Bobby Papa

Letters appearing on this page serve as a forum for the expression of views of general interest. The opinions offered here are not necessarily those of Billboard or its management.

Letters should be submitted to the Letters Editor, Billboard, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036.
Innovative Acts Crucial To Health Of Music Biz

The numbers may look fine on paper, but the record business is in trouble. For the last year, A&R directors have been waiting for the emergence of a new style of recorded music to drive industry growth. They hoped that techno or electronica would do for sales what grunge or alternative did in the early '90s. Their hopes are misplaced. Grunge was not the driving force behind the industry—Nirvana was. It was an act, not a style, that proved the recipe for success by bridging the gap between art and commerce.

There is the challenge to find a Nirvana sound-alike? Probably not. Records are made by two basic types of artistic innovators and producers. Neither is inherently better than the other, but it is important to distinguish between the two when searching for new talent.

In heavy metal or Nashville's current version of country, being an emulator may be the ticket. On the other hand, what endures—meaning strong catalog sales to come. Innovators are initially on acquired taste; because they do not sound like most of their contemporaries, there is typically resistance to signing them to recording contracts. After they are signed, they require development to realize their true potential. Innovators often get trapped in a vicious circle. Major-label record companies have the advantage—and the disadvantage—of being able to get copious amounts of records into the marketplace, while indie labels, which have less pressure to have an instant hit, have the advantage of being free to sign an innovator: Unfortunately, it's not

Commentaries appearing on this page are a forum for the expression of views of general interest. The opinions offered here are not necessarily those of Billboard or its management.

Commentaries should be submitted to Commentary Editor Marilyn A. Gillis, Billboard, 1355 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019.
Last year fourteen of the greatest luminaries of Rock & Roll urged the Nominating Committee to place Johnnie's name on the ballot.

This Year We Have Only One.

Chuck Berry
Berry Park
691 Buckner
Wentzville, Missouri 63385

January 13, 1997

Ahmet Ertegun
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
The Atlantic Group
75 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10019

Dear Ahmet,

It has recently come to my attention that Johnnie Johnson is being considered for nomination for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. I would like you to know that I am in full support of Johnnie's nomination.

Johnnie and I have been friends and musical collaborators for over 40 years. In my opinion, his membership into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame would be of great value to the Foundation. His induction would round out the list of those musicians who made significant contributions during Rock & Roll's infancy.

I certainly hope that Johnnie is given every consideration by the nominating committee to become a member of this year's list of nominees into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

Very truly yours,

Chuck Berry

For a complimentary autographed copy of Johnnie's latest CD call 713-659-8411 or visit johnnie.com.
**E-Prop Gets All Of Martin Label Licenses Reprise/Capitol Sessions**

**BY IRV LICHTMAN**

NEW YORK—Dean Martin, the star crooner who died in 1995, envisioned that his vast catalog of recordings on the Capitol and Reprise labels would someday find a single home.

The first step in that direction was his purchase in 1994 of some 400 masters he recorded at Reprise from 1962 until the early ‘70s. Now, in a licensing arrangement with Martin’s estate, EMI-Capitol Entertainment Properties has acquired the Reprise sessions, along with access to the sessions owned by Martin Recorded from 1948 to 1961 (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 16, 1997). In November, Reprise, Martin joined a label founded by his former Capitol labelmate Frank Sinatra.

Starting early this year, releases, updated with state-of-the-art digital processing, will begin to flow, including greatest-hits compilations, a boxed set, a Christmas collection, and other albums, says Eli Okeh, executive VP of E-Prop, as EMI-Capitol Entertainment Properties is informally known.

The recordings will be available for sync arrangements for film, TV, special markets, and other media.

“We always thought that when Dean owned the material, there was some point put together at Capitol, so his complete recording career would be in one corner,” said Okeh. “We think he would be proud of his lifelong International Creative Management agent and executor of his estate.

The owner says Martin, around the same time as his Reprise deal, tried to buy his master recordings from his Capitol days but was turned down by the label. He liked the way Capitol marketed his recordings,” says Viner, “but as with the Reprise deal, he wanted control of the masters as one of his assets. Martin asked them to give him a number, but they said they weren’t interested in selling.”

As an example of programming that can now take place, Viner notes that Martin’s Capitol recordings of songs with an Italian theme—including the pop hit “That’s Amore”—could be combined with his Reprise recordings of similar material to market what can’t otherwise do before.

“In fact,” Viner adds, “Martin did a type of album on Reprise he never did on Capitol, a country & western album.”

According to Viner, the licensing deal is “basically the same as any other. We paid an advance against royalty. This is a 10-year arrangement with an option to continue.“

“We’ll be able to market one of the great singers and stylists in music history in a way that has never been possible,” says E-Prop president Bruce Kirkland in a prepared statement. According to E-Prop, none of the (Continued on page 81)

**Mama Concerts’ Avram Jailed For Tax Evasion**

**BY WOLFGANG SPAHR**

**2000 Years Of Comedy.** Comedy legends Mel Brooks and Carl Reiner visited Rhino headquarters recently to wrap up a tour promoting their Rhino comedy release "The 2000 Year Old Man In The Year 2000: The Album," Brooks and Reiner’s first new comedy recording in 24 years. "The 2000 Year Old Man In The Year 2000: The Book (Including How Not To Die And Other Good Tips)" is an incisive compendium spanning 160-page hard-bound volume featuring all the original comic, shown, from left, are Reiner; Harold Bronson, managing director at Rhino; Brooks; and Richard Foss, president of Rhino.

**Salsa Pioneer Jerry Masucci, 63, Dies**

**BY JOHN LANNERT**

Jerry Masucci, who masterminded the artistic and commercial evolution of salsa music in the ‘60s and ‘70s, died Dec. 29, of complications following abdominal surgery in Buenos Aires. He was 63.

In 1964, Masucci, a Brooklyn, N.Y., born attorney, co-founded Fania Records with noted Latin jazz/tropical flutist Johnny Pacheco. Over the next 15 years, Masucci would help spearhead the international popularity of a Cuban-derived, Afro-Caribbean sound from New York dubbed salsa.

Dozens of salsa stars recorded on the label, including singer/songer Ruben Blades and Willie Colón (who together cut "Siembra," one of the best-selling salsa discos of all time), Celia Cruz, Héctor Lavoe, Larry Harlow, Bobby Valentín, Roberto Roena, and Ismael Miranda.

Fania’s house band, Fania All Stars, was a standout ensemble that recorded crossover Latin/ fusion discos with artists like Billy Cobham, Jan Hammer, Steve Winwood, and Eric Gale. As Fania was creating and marketing the upstart salsa music, the label was virtually monopolizing the genre by acquiring rival New York labels like Cotique, Alegro, and Tico, the latter of which was owned by Morris Levy, the late industry veteran admiringly named by Masucci: "Ralph Mercado, president of RMM Records, who often worked closely as a model for an artist manager with Masucci over the last decade. Masucci "made salsa music a business. And when we looked up with the Fania All Stars, it was for small change, to try to say what we knew as salsa music today.

"He made records and movies about the music and took it around the world. He had largest salsa band anywhere, and he helped make stars of Rubén Blades and Willie Colón." Mercado, who was inspired by Masucci to start his own label in 1987, says Masucci was to salsa music what (Continued on page 81)

**SFX Claims Top Promoter Title Via PACE Purchase**

This story was prepared by Roy Waddell, reporter for Amusement Business.

Its $130 million purchase of broadcast-based concert promoter PACE Entertainment is the latest in a quick succession of deals that places SFX Broadcasting Inc. at the top of the concert promotion industry, a crown previously occupied only by TNA, Universal Concerts, Cellar Door, and, until now, PACE. The two divisions of Houston-based PACE, including its theatrical, concert, touring,agemarketing group, are the latter passes SFX’s amphitheater interests. PACE owns two sheds and is partnered in 11 more with Pavenhill Partners, which SFX also purchased for an undiscounted price from Viacom Inc., and Sony Music Entertainment.

PACE Entertainment chairman/ founder Allen Becker calls the deal “a bitter sweet situation” but adds that he is pleased about the opportunity the deal brings for PACE’s upper management.

“I’m 60 years old, and I’m coming to the end of my career,” Becker says. “But much of our management staff are in the middle of their careers, and now they have the opportunity to do the label pretty much their way. As a private company, you often suffer from the shorts.”

Executive chairman of the entertainment group, the only executive chairman of SFX, was not available for comment. However, he said in a prepared statement, “With almost a quarter-billion dollars in revenue, SFX is in a position to provide a single home to its catalog of recordings. Since the acquisition of the controlling interest in the company earlier this year, we’ve been looking to expand our operations in all areas of the marketplace in order to realize the full potential of our assets. With the addition of the PACE entertainment group, we are able to do just that.”

**MIIDEM Focus To Include Small Labels**

**BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS**

**LONDON—**New music, new media, and an old hand will be underlying themes of the 52nd MIDEM, to be held Jan. 18-22 in Cannes.

The meeting will have a particular focus on and support for small labels, that may not have been to Cannes before, according to Reed MIDEM Organization chief executive Xavier Roy.

In addition, the bourse will offer sessions on changing technology.

Ahmet Ertegun, co-founder of Atlantic Records and co-chairman/CEO of the Atlantic Group, is to be honored as MIDEM’s man of the year. Ertegun will receive a trophy named for his late brother, Nesuhi, who was honored as man of the year in 1989 for his work with Atlantic and his chairmanship of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry.

Roy says MIDEM is encouraging “the smaller but very creative labels” to come to Cannes for the first time through the launch of the MIDEM Techno Club.

“The club proposes attractive prizes and maximum publicity will allow these young labels to benefit from the huge international business platform that MIDEM offers,” says Roy. The club will provide meeting facilities and listening booths for the labels, he adds.

Roy notes that MIDEM is conscious of the increasing globalization of the world music market, of the emerging markets of Latin America and Asia, and of the rise of new scenes for music.

“The world music market, which has been predominantly Anglo-Saxon, is becoming increasingly receptive to new styles of music,” his statement adds. “Dance and techno, for example, but also Latin American rhythms and world music are flourishing.”

Roy says the conference program will address all these issues and will include participation from peer music executive Ralph Peer II, Tommy Boy CEO Tom Silverman, and Patrick Zelnik, CEO of Naive and former president of (Continued on page 81)

**RIAA Seeks Review Of Rates Paid By Music Services**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.—**The Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) petitioned the Librarian of Congress Dec. 12 to review a decision by the Library’s Copyright Arbitration Royalty Panel (CARP) that recommended a rate amount for digital and satellite music services pay artists and record companies 5% of annual revenues for the right to perform and record.

According to the RIAA, the services, such as DMX, Music Choice, and Muzak, log more than 250,000 hours of music, and the industry trade group argued that the rate is too low.

It has asked for a higher “fair market rate,” pointing out in its filing the “analogous” cable movie industry of HBO and other services, which pay (Continued on page 82)

**Industry Lauds Ivey Nomination For NEA Chair**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.—**Country Music Foundation (CMF) director Bill Ivey, President Clinton’s nominee for the position head of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), is expected to draw strong support from the musical industry advocacy groups.

“Ivy, who has been a name in the confirmation hearing after Congress returns in late January,” President Clinton nominated Ivey to replace outgoing NEA chairman Jane Alexander.

Ivey, 53, whose nomination was announced Dec. 18, has been CMF director since 1971. The advocacy group (Continued on page 82)
BY CAROL BELL

Ani DiFranco shared a stage with Bob Dylan for a series of shows last August. As odd as the pairing might seem, the well-known female singer/songwriter and the reclusive folk icon revealed quite a few similarities. Both admire Woody Guthrie and other left-leaning folks (including last year's "People's Choice," Bob Dylan). Both paint beautiful pictures with wordplay and rhyming lines. Both got started in the small clubs of the East Coast and tour constantly.

They dabble in the music industry on their own terms. Both use music to deal with the tribulations and hardships of life. And both are social commentators for their respective generations.

"Bob Dylan is the greatest poet of his generation, a legend, an icon," DiFranco says. "But when I met him, I realized he is just a folk singer who loves playing music, a folk singer like me." DiFranco says, "Neither of us run from that brand despite the fact that folk is a dirty word that many singers would jump into traffic to avoid. We have a love for the anti-commercial aspect of it, a love for creating new things to share with people."

Dropping Feb. 17, "Little Plastic Castle" is the latest of these new creations by the Buffalo, N.Y.-born DiFranco on the label she started at age 20, Righteous Babe Records. The artist's fan base keeps growing, and the company is meeting demand with a first shipment of 250,000 units, according to label president/DiFranco manager Scott Fisher. The 40,000-member fan club will receive a mailing announcing and selling the record.

"Retail gets more supportive with each release, and we are trying to respond to that demand," Fisher says. "They saw how great her numbers were when she was just selling albums from the back of her car. Now they see that she can sell new material, returns are low, and catalog numbers are constant."

According to SoundScan, DiFranco's first 10 releases (excluding last year's live double-CD, "Living in Clip") have sold a combined 790,000 copies since SoundScan started tracking album sales in May 1991, a year after her self-titled debut was made available. This doesn't take into account CD sales bought at mass-merchandisers. Online sources like Amazon.com, see and online order forms, count these sales, as well as many other sales not tracked by SoundScan. Righteous Babe's total CD sales, according to Fisher.

"In many people's eyes, she's more straightforward from the company. I think they see it as supporting the artist more directly," he says. "Of course, the mail order business is now becoming the major focus of the company."

To keep interest high on "Castle," Righteous Babe will provide posters, stickers, and in-store play sites and and will allocate more funds to co-op advertising with retailers than it has on previous releases, according to Fisher.

"This will be a big album for us. Ani is someone our clientele supports wholeheartedly," says Steve Bickel, owner of the store. "Sure, he and Jon Bon Jovi. The company plans to release music videos for the three tunes to traditional outlets and independent sources, which have been very supportive in the past. One of the video clips will use Claymation.

"I always tell her to make some radio-friendly songs—ones that don't say fuck, ones that are under 12 minutes long. But Ani is an artist who doesn't approach her work with radio and retail in mind," Fisher says. "I guess the label worked out this time, because there are a lot of great songs that are also suitable for airplay."

DiFranco's relationship with radio has been variable. She has been well-received on college stations, with more than 500 playing cuts from "Living In Clip," according to a Righteous Babe spokesperson. DiFranco has turned down commercial radio, although that has been changing.

"We put her on a night record after her concerts sold out and the CDs were selling well in local shops," says Lisa Adams, music director of modern AC KBFT (the Beat) Portland. "There was immediate reaction from the audience, and we always get calls and requests. She speaks from the heart and isn't afraid to say anything. Women especially understand and like that."

Adams says there is a kindred buzz in Portland because Elektra's Alana Davis is garnering attention with her cover of DiFranco's "S2 Flavors."

"We are spinning that cut as well, and we get a lot of calls saying, 'Why don't you play the original instead?'" Adams says. "Ani will be a big artist for us in 1998, and we think if the album is as successful as promised, it will be for others as well."

That isn't to say DiFranco, who also produced the new outing, sacrificed her use of modern-day containers.

"The music I write tends to reflect the mood I'm in or what is happening in my life at the time," says DiFranco, whose publishing is handled by Righteous Babe. "I was in a very fucked up state emotionally when I recorded 'Dilates,' and that is reflected lyrical and sonically. I guess the current mood doesn't require as many naughty words."

"Seriously, I was out to have fun, and this record came up as a natural evolution to prove it. There is a wide range of subjec matter, but it still concentrates on human relationships."

Of course, all the talk of airplay, higher sales, and the press clippings to follow makes DiFranco—who built her empire on being independent by the solo—a tad nervous.

"All of the attention and talk creeps (Continued on page 82)

Exit Nine's Carstensen Gets Marketing Push Via GRP Deal

BY DYLAN SIEGELER

NEW YORK—In the five years since the release of Dee Carstensen's first album, the critical interest surrounding her music has focused on one subtle difference between Carstensen and other singer/songwriters: the harp. Carstensen's second album, "Regarding The Soul," is slated for release by Universal Jan. 27, and reviewers are already tossing around references to plucky cherubs, wedding receptions, and Christmas carols.

"I'm a singer/songwriter who plays the harp, but the key to my art is the three of these things together," says Carstensen, whose songs span the mainstream retail and radio markets while maintaining a relationship with her faithful grass-roots-level fans.

"I had fallen in love with Dee's voice, and her lyrics really touched something in me," says Mainieri, "but I had thought of her as a stand-up singer. I saw her sit down at the harp. Mainieri, an accomplished vibraphonist and jazz session player, encouraged Carstensen to incorporate the harp into more of her songs. "When I heard her play, I said, This will blow people away."

Carstensen cites Mainieri, who is also a member of Van Halen, as the single most important influence on her musical career. "I knew I wanted to be in the band before anyone else, but I would throw ideas out to, who said, 'I don't think it seems like this song but the chorus doesn't jump out at me, or the idea doesn't really make sense,' she says. A third Carstensen album, "The Map," will be released in 1999 by Mainieri's label, The Sire Group, with a live EP called "Home Away From Home."

"We started selling The Map at the beginning of September, but now that we're doing a co-promotion with GRP and there are a lot of people supporting my work, we wanted to get the best product out there that we could. I had thought at the end of the recording of the first version of The Map that I had said everything I wanted to say, that I should do some more living before writing any more, but now a couple of my new songs are really strong, and we want to include them," Carstensen says. A revised version of "The Map," including different artwork and two new tracks, is set for release by GRP in May.

"We're excited about working with GRP, especially because I get to keep my team. It's not like I got signed and given away. These amazing people are going up there, and it'll still be them I deal with," says Carstensen. "It's also an incredible feeling to be on president [Tommy LiPuma's] roster at GRP."

Carstensen has had her greatest success in live concert appearances. "Live audiences go berserk because she's playing this huge instrument, taming this beast, almost, Dee makes her full impact in live shows," says Mainieri. "NYC (Continued on page 82)
Artists & Music

Franklin And God’s Property Top Gospel’s Stellar Awards

BY LISA COLLINS

The song that America’s hottest-sell- ing superstar says brought him a lot of pain—while rack- ing up more than 1.4 million in unit sales—also brought Kirk Franklin to the Dallas-based find, God’s Property, a record 11 Stellar Awards.

Franklin’s awards also included music video of the year, contemporary album of the year, producer of the year, and urban gospel performance of the year.

“This is not easy to be the subject of discussion in churches across the nation and have people question whether or not you are saved. That hurts,” Franklin said as he accepted top honors for song of the year for “Stompin.”

But Franklin was anything but hurting while doing double duty as co-host of the 13th annual Stellar Awards—with Yolanda Adams and “Sparkle” co-star Miguel Nunez—and as the show’s top award winner in a clean sweep of the categories in which he and God’s Property yielded nominations. It was an honor he shared with the choir’s founder, Linda Searight, who was visibly overwhelmed.

“It’s been a journey,” Searight, 49, says. “My young people have worked so hard, and it’s just beautiful what God has done in making a difference in people’s lives. It’s all part of the vision that God spoke to me in 1994, and as I go across the country, I challenge people in my age group—the mature age group—to be more open. When we allow music for youth in our churches that is relevant, I declare that they will respond.”

It was also a big night for Shirley Caesar, who picked up five awards, including her second consecutive win in the traditional female vocalist category with her current release, “Live In Washington, D.C.”

The Canton Spirituals were again named both group/duo of the year and traditional group/duo of the year. The latter marked the set’s third consecutive win in the traditional group/duo category.

Donnie McClurkin’s solo debut earned him two awards, including male vocalist of the year. Dottie Peoples was honored with the coveted James Cleveland Award.

All are likely to receive a significant bump in sales following the air-

Jazz Vet Loeb Straddles Styles On New Set

Shanachie Targets Radio With Guitarist’s ‘Moon’ Album

BY JIM MACNIE

Chuck Loeb is a guitarist, producer, bandleader, composer, and ditty woodworker. He’s worked in acoustic settings with the hippest of swingers, as well as plugged-in sessions surrounded by successful funkateers. His latest project ’The Straight Shot’ stances emerges on Loeb’s second album for Shanachie, “The Moon, The Stars, And The Setting Sun.”

Loeb, speaking on Jan. 20, the release day, displays several aspects of his artistic diversity. R. Wayne Martin, VP of media and artist relations for Shanachie, believes the quality of that diversity is going to keep Loeb in the public prominence of his career.

“Listeners were really in tune with Chuck’s last record, ‘The Music Inside’,” says Martin. “The new disc presents him in a more modern version of that same style. We’ve got a feeling it’s going to be tremendously successful.

The self-deprecating Loeb puts the disc’s commercial possibilities in a simpler light. “People tell me it’s a wood record,” chuckles. “Luckily, I think, so too.”

The 42-year-old Loeb, who has worked with the likes of Larry Carlton, Alan Getz, Gary Burdett, Steps Ahead, Nelson Rangell, Dave Samuels, and many others, feels that “The Moon, The Stars, And The Setting Sun” achieves a balance between two areas that are often considered oppositional by some: smooth jazz and mainstream jazz.

“With this record, my writing and producing tends to be totally pop jazz,” he explains, “but in the playing, I go for real improvisation—really, that’s the core of the whole thing. I try to play as smart as I can on these dates.”

Loeb’s guitar approach is marked by a fluid sense of phrasing that is both three chord passages and tension. Tiny melodies come and go throughout his solos, linking themselves to one another, playing tag with the other musicians in his band.

“Just Us” is a syncopated glide beneath “The Light” gives its solo a more expansive groove to ride. On each the guitarist makes casual moves that add up to considerable statements.

Chuck is in the middle of two different realms,” says Martin. “His music isn’t showy, and it’s not schmaltzy. This is great, because as you’ve got instruments in music for the masses, there’s an opportunity for it to fail ever all.”

“Jazz is my love,” says Loeb. “I’ve always been that way. I’m not going to feel guilty about whatever commercial stuff I have to do to support my jazz or anything.”

As for the future, Loeb says that he’s been working on a new project that he describes as “a little more cat-like.”

It’s likely this combination of musical acumen and guitar chops that prompted Sting to recently call Loeb. The guitarist performed on a session for an animated Disney film currently in production. “I played with Will Lee, Chris Parker, and this killer keyboard player from England; Emma’s name” sang on the tracks. Talk about someone who can write a smooth, melodic tune you remember—that’s Sting all the way.”

Shanachie is the new label in the contemporary jazz community can be felt on “The Moon, The Stars, And The Setting Sun.” John Pattitucci is on guitar, Shanghai plays sax on James Taylor’s “Don’t Let Me Be Lonely Tonight.” Bob James and Andy Snitzer also participate.

Shanachie hopes that some of this admiration from more visible artists helps convince Loeb’s new listeners that he’s got the upper echelon of contemporary jazz personalities as well.

To start, we’ll go back to where we previously had success, and that’s radio,” Martin says. “We’ve tried to make sure that they have the appro-

The album’s lead track is “Just Us.”

Shanachie did preliminary re-

search with a few stations, including WJZ Philadelphia and KTWV Los Angeles; programmers from each outlet got a chance to listen to a pair of tunes. The label has also had meet-

ings with the format’s key consultant firm, Broadcast Architecture.

“Chuck was just as good as we could have asked for. He’s a real quality player,” says Martin. “They confirmed our suspicions and told us all the warm and fuzzy things we wanted to hear. The sound is signature Chuck Loeb, but there’s also been a lot of musical growth.”

“It was a little long for you to get used to ‘Just Us,’” says Loeb. “The tune is just a little quirier than some. But every-

TIGHTENING UP

On the album, “Just Us” runs 5:22.

The released radio edit designed for radio, “Moon and Star pro-

duction,” has been sculpted down to 4:30. Getting pre-

radio feedback from radio is a way of playing the waters, according to Martin.

“If it’s a developmental issue, there’s nothing wrong with looking for input from radio. Many labels do it. You want to be sure you’re on the right foundation. We don’t leave it to the music. We play it for them and take it home.”

Michael Fischer, PD of K0A1 (the Oasis) Dallas, got a sneak preview of the disc. He sometimes offers labels pre-release feedback on new product. "I saw the song running over 5 minutes," he says, “and you can always tighten things up. Most people think 4:30 is about right for the format.”

Shanachie will place ads in all the major jazz publications, including Jazzist, JazzTimes, and Down Beat. Martin says that Loeb’s manager and Shanachie executive VP of Sales and Cen-

tral Entertainment Services, is try-

ing to add a few more dates onto a handful of May gigs with Gato Bar-

bieri on the West Coast.

Putting Loeb on the road is cru-

(Continued on page 50)
New York—After Pearl Jam's megasellout early success and its enabledness as a cultural icon, the band has worked hard to step back from the limelight. The group has followed an experimental muse on its records and generally eschewed the press, videos, and after-the-glitz beat with Tickemaster's large-scale touring.

The biggest result of this path has been that Pearl Jam's SoundScan numbers have fallen with each new album, from 8 million copies for 1992's "Ten" to 1.3 million for last year's "No Code." But the first few months of its new release, "Buckucke," were partially borne out of necessity, according to the band. Without such an approach, Pearl Jam's striking new Epic album, "Epic," the Feb. 5, may not have come out at all.

Guitarist Stone Gossard says the fact that Pearl Jam still even exists is thanks to the quintet's taking itself out of the "machine ... Being able to pull back from all that pressure helped give us the space to figure out our internal problems, within the band and within us as individuals. We gave each other some time off from each other. Actually, it's like we broke up but still made records.

And with the recent dissolution of Seattle-sound pioneers Soundgarden, Pearl Jam's struggle for space seems even more vital. "Soundgarden breaking up burned me out because they were a great band and that last album was my favorite," Gossard says. "But it also reminded me of the pressures of keeping a band together which are almost always interpersonal and rarely musical. Trying to produce an art project with five people—especially when you're all tripping about whatever you're tripping about when you're in your late 20s—can be difficult, to say the least."

"Now, though, we're more relaxed with each other in the studio. Everyone had a conversation with Margaret and went and saw Mary Lou open for Bikini Kill," Harris recalls. "Several months later, we started the label.

Once the Work Group was officially launched, Harris and Ayeroff made a trip to Cambridge, Mass., where they watched Lord buck in a subway station for three hours in the dead of winter. Still, it took Lord a while to decide to make the move to Epic.

"There were 18 labels that wanted to sign me, but it was at a time when the whole industry was in a bit of a spin," she says. "All the indie bands were getting signed, and there was a huge backlash. I didn't want to be a part of that." (Continued on page 27)

Renewed Pearl Jam ‘Yields’ New Set
Epic Album Reflects Band’s Step Back From Spotlight

By Bradley Bambarger

Backstage At Billboard Music Awards
Part 2: Spice Girls, LeAnn, Evander

As WE TAKE one last glance back at 1997, we return to backstage at the Billboard Music Awards, where we gleaned the following insights:

Worldwide fame has brought some global-size adjustments, admit the members of Spice Girls, the biggest of which is "jet lag," agree all five. Audiences around the world have embraced the act, because, as Baby Spice suggested, "we're so open. When people see that, they respond and become open." Ginger Spice added, "We've got a very American attitude. It's the land of the free and the home of the brave. People can see us, speaking up for yourself. That kind of thing makes what we're all about."

The worst audiences: without a doubt, "industry crowds," said Sporty Spice. "There's never any pleasing them." Ginger Spice noted that the group's theme of girl power goes for females of all ages. "Girl power does work in such a male-dominated industry. It can translate to anything—you can be head of management, you can pass your exams. Music can give you the feeling that you're not alone. The Spice Girls are all about friendship."

LeAnn Rimes, who has had tremendous crossover success with her version of "How Do I Live," said she hopes she'll continue to be able to cross genre lines and do things her way. "When we released our second album ["Unchained Melody/The Early Years"] so fast after 'Blue,' people said, 'you're crazy.' When we released the third album ['You Light Up My Life—Inspirational Songs'], they said, 'you're really crazy,' and it was my highest-charting debut." Following her appearance on the Billboard Music Awards, Rimes was playing four shows in Vegas, but she admitted that it was a drag not being allowed in the casinos because she's underage. "Three years ago, I used to go anywhere and never get carded," she allowed with a giggle. "Now I get carded all the time. I need to get a brown wig."

Teen R&B sensation Usher credits his mother and manager Jonetta Patton with keeping his career and life together: "My mother is one person I definitely look up to, and I give her all respect... I gotta keep my family in it. It's keeping me grounded." Elton John, whose "Something About The Way You Look Tonight?"/"Can You Feel The Love Tonight?" has blocked Usher's "You Make Me Wanna..." from reaching the No. 1 slot on Billboard's Hot 100, is on the singer's short-list of people with whom he'd like to work. "I dream of working with Elton John, Stevie Wonder, Toni Braxton." Noting the three-year gap between his debut and 1997's "My Way," Usher said there will be no such delay on a follow-up to his current hit: "I think I should get right back [and make a record], even if it's a live album." One plot on his list is reuniting the famed production team that runs his label: "I'm trying to get L.A. and Babyface together to do one last dance. L.A. told me they do, I'll probably be the only person they'd do it for."

Althaloph Stephen Perkins, The Edge and Brian Deady of U2, say they expect the band to be touring behind its current album for another year, "our next two records are already written. We're really eager to make a very exciting second record."

Despite many offers, the group played only one radio station Christmas show in 1997, for 97.1 FM Los Angeles. Explaining the act's reticence to play the holiday concerts, Jenkins says, "There's a lot of politics among radio stations that are not necessary... I don't think the audiences care. If I may speak to the programmers, this is a contest among the radio stations, among themselves. We get caught in the middle of these politics, and I don't like it."

Most people know that world heavyweight boxing champion Evander Holyfield, a celebrity presenter at the awards show, trains to gospel music, but what does "The Real Deal" listen to when he's relaxing at home? Coming from a person who gets paid handsomely to know people unconscious, the answer is rather surprising: "I like Luther Vandross, Toni Braxton... I like the love, so I like people who do the love ballads."

Garth Brooks, one of the best live performers today, says he always keeps in mind what he learned during his bar-playing days in the mid-80s in Oklahoma. "The thing I learned is that numbers matter not. If it's one person or one million, it's all about the same thing: How do you affect that one person. The greatest compliment I get is when someone says to me, 'I felt like you were playing just for me.'"

Burt Bacharach, who has been writing with Elvis Costello, met with the English singer/songwriter just before Christmas in New York for more collaborative work. According to Bacharach, the pair has close to 10 songs completed. The material will likely make up Costello's first album after he secures a new label deal (he recently parted company with Warner Bros.). Bacharach, who recently saw some of his '60s instrumental recordings reissued on MCA, said he probably wouldn't undertake a similar project now: "I don't know what the climate is for an instrumental album. It also represents a huge chunk of work." And whenever he does record again, don't expect Bacharach to go the vocal route: "I'd sing eight bars, like I do now in concert."

Assistant in preparing this column was provided by Chris Morris and Craig Ross.

Mary Lou Lord Lands At Work With Her ‘Shadow’

By Craig Rosen

Los Angeles—With the Jan. 27 release of "Got No Shadow," indie folk singer Mary Lou Lord makes the move to full-band accompaniment and to a major label on one fell swoop.

The first solo album represents another milestone for the singer/songwriter: Much of "Got No Shadow" features songs written by or with Lord, a native New Englander and folk-music idol Nick Saloman, better known as British act Bevis Frond.

For Work Group co-presidents Jordan Perkins and Jeff Ayeroff, the release of "Got No Shadow" also holds an important place. Although she wasn't the first act signed to the label, Lord was the first artist the executives pursued following their departure from Virgin Records.

The two were introduced to the singer by Margaret Mittleman, who had signed Lord to a publishing deal with BMG in 1993. "Before we joined Sony, Jeff and I had a conversation with Margaret and went and saw Mary Lou open for Bikini Kill," Harris recalls. "Several months later, we started the label.

Once the Work Group was officially launched, Harris and Ayeroff made a trip to Cambridge, Mass., where they watched Lord buck in a subway station for three hours in the dead of winter. Still, it took Lord a while to decide to make the move to Epic.

"There were 18 labels that wanted to sign me, but it was at a time when the whole industry was in a bit of a spin," she says. "All the indie bands were getting signed, and there was a huge backlash. I didn't want to be a part of that." (Continued on page 27)
Folk/Jazz Artists from with precipitated Soundgarden go's Workshop, la on nated RENEWED Hardly with DC, "National programming of clubs, Jazz standard thinks the clubs, and Crocker's came at Midwest and other problems— that's considered a remarkable component in the music industry. Regarding the initial setup of "Yield," Eric senior VP of worldwide marketing Steve Barnett says this is the single most "important In 2013, which the label has had the lead time to do the job right. "Pearl Jam has always chose an executive producer at Epit support their decisions. We've just worked with what the band has given us, and this time, we have more." Barnett adds that the effort on be half of Pearl Jam will be a global one, pointing out that catalog sales have been strong worldwide and that "No Code" and "Vs." have performed well internationally. In the U.K. alone, some 3,500 retailers will feature product displays that will feature 40 pieces of "Yield" and 40 pieces of catalog. "Yield" will be released in CD, cassette, vinyl LP and MiniDisc formats, with release set for Feb. 2 in Europe and Jan. 28 in Japan. On Feb. 20, Pearl Jam kicks off its '98 tour with a show in Maui, Hawaii. A late February/March tour of Australia and New Zealand follows. An indication of the band's pull Down Under: Tickets for the three early March shows at the 12,000-capacity Melbourne Park sold out in 17 minutes. Some 40 summer dates are planned across the U.S. and abroad; according to Curtis, Pearl Jam will try to avoid Ticketmaster venues in general, and stadiums in particular ("The band doesn't have a lot of cities that work for us as far as logistics and logistical solutions, and the band is really, really successful, our music goes in different directions and is very large.") While Airington of an entire live-residency tour has far sold itself well, it's burgeoning notoriety in Paris has also resulted in some distress. When it came to write songs for the album, Gossard says the pair retreated to its hometown of Versailles, an area best known to tourists as the home of the opulent Palace of Versailles.

"We were making music in Paris that things started to get harder and harder for us with all the banter," he adds. "We wanted to come back to Versailles to find again the sensations and feelings of when we first got together". Remember what it was that made want to make music then, it helps me to find principal desires.

What has resulted is an ethereal, sweeping vibe that wins its way through a series of long, shimmering sonic planes.

"We got really excited about this band from the singles, and we realized that we were doing something entirely in a class of its own," says Caroline director of associated labels Nick Clift. "It's a classic pop album, but there's something there to appeal right across the board. It's very cool and hip, and it also has a great deal of imagination."

(Continued on next page)

RENEWED PEARL JAM 'YIELDS' NEW SET

(Continued from preceding page)

advance of "Yield" in its entirety, which precipitated the Internet circulation of high-fidelity audio files produced from the album's CD to the consternation of band management, Epic, and the Recording Industry Assn. of America (Billboard, Dec. 27, 1997).

Hardly contrite, WRLD FM morning host Fatman says the new Pearl Jam album is the best thing since the creation of the universe. The album listeners, with calls afterward voicemenu and "totally, overwhelmingly" positive. Although KJEE Santa Barbara, Cal., is one of the stations that "is in the act of putting 'Yield' early" GM/PD Eddie Gutierrez says he thinks the emotive, anthemic ballad "Yield" is exactly the fact that light ska-pop has dominated his playlist rather than hard rock in the past year. "We've been playing some of these new rock bands like Days Of The New and Creed," Gutierrez adds, "but my attitude is why play pale imitations of great bands like the Pixies and Soundgarden when you can play the real thing when you have it."

Beyond standard airplay, Pearl Jam will distribute one of its occasional, free-form "Monkey Wrench" radio programs Jan. 31 to any station that wants to air it. The four-hour show features live performances from the band—Gossard, vocalist Eddie Vedder, guitarist Mike McCready, bassist Jeff Ament and drummer Jack Irons—along with some special guests. But if radio is a lock for the new Pearl Jam, MTV isn't—the band hasn't shot a video for "Given To Fly." Gossard says the band filmed considerable footage over a two-year period, and shot some "Yield" rehearsals. Yet while a longform video may be culled from the material for issue later this year, it also is now clear that the band's next single, "Given To Fly" early, GM/PD Eddie Gutierrez says he thinks the emotive, anthemic ballad "Yield" is exactly the fact that light ska-pop has dominated his playlist rather than hard rock in the past year. "We've been playing some of these new rock bands like Days Of The New and Creed," Gutierrez adds, "but my attitude is why play pale imitations of great bands like the Pixies and Soundgarden when you can play the real thing when you have it."

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CAROLINE HOPES U.S. CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT AIR
(Continued from preceding page)

To set up the project, Caroline has been marketing the world with the act’s “Premiers Symptomes” EP, which bowed in September.

“We’ve been concentrating on getting to the really good indie stores that know music and can talk about the band and educate consumers about this really gorgeous underground music,” says Clift.

With this approach in mind, Caroline has also serviced the EP to the core group of college and public stations with a past history of playing Source material.

Two weeks before “Moon Safari” drops, the label will launch the second wave of its radio push with widespread album mailings to college stations, specialty shows, and public and triple-A outlets.

Capping off the label’s efforts, modern rock stations—and those that reacted positively to the full-length—will receive on Feb. 10 an edited 3½-minute single for “Sensy Boy.” Beck has agreed to remix the tune.

Source A&R representative Marc Teisnier du Cros says that the Grammy-winning artist volunteered to do the remix immediately after hearing an advance copy of “Moon Safari.”

“The first time Beck heard it was in between shots of the ‘Dead Weight’ videos,” says Teisnier du Cros. “He didn’t know anything about or where they came from, and he just said, ‘OK, I want to do this.’

Meanwhile, Carbon will receive a limited 12-inch promo of the song featuring remixes by Parisian DJ Etienne De Crecy (aka La Funk Mob) and Casius of Motorbass on Tuesday (60).

Of that set Clift says, “We aren’t planning on releasing the ‘Sensy Boy’ single commercially, but if we do, it won’t be unless we get the right volume of radio support to warrant it. Consumers can look, however, for a release of the single with the Beck remix later in the new year.”

There is a possibility that Beck will rework other Air material.

Air has also found a noteworthy ally in Beatgey Boy and Grand Jury CEO Mike Diamond, who tried to sign Air before it secured its U.S. deal with Caroline.

According to Teisnier du Cros, Diamond has asked the members of Air to remix a track for Japan-based Buffalo Daughter, whose album “New Rock” bows in March.

Other interesting third parties include designer Agnés B., who has agreed to create a limited-edition line of clothing inspired by the band’s logo alongside her own.

In addition to Air point-of-purchase and in-store seating at A&L之间, Caroline will give away 7-inch flexi-discs with the purchase of each piece of clothing.

For its more traditional retail campaign, Caroline will co-opt images from the “Sensy Boy” clip, which is being served on screens for mobiles, posters, flats, and stickers.

Influential Los Angeles public radio station KCRW, which first began airing the band via its Mo’ Wax single and regularly featured material from “Premiers Symptomes,” is also planning on supporting “Moon Safari,” according to station DJ Liz Richardson.

Vocals by American chanteuse Beth Hirsch and the pop elements on certain tracks were a pleasant surprise, says Richardson.

“I’ve just heard the full-length, and I didn’t really expect the vocals or so much song structure, so I thought it would be basically an interesting electronic album,” she says. “But when I first heard [album cut] ‘All I Need’ I thought more of ‘Hair’ and ‘Easy to Be Hard’ or Joni Mitchell. It was more of a ’60s folk singer/orchestral type of thing, which I love.”

The band has no immediate tour plans, though Clift says Air may visit the U.S. in the spring.

One handle, admits Godin, is hammering out a live show that does justice to the vocal treatments and odd assortment of instruments heard on the album.

Congas; a variety of keyboard instruments, ranging from synthesizers to a Wurlitzer; and nearly a dozen other pieces of equipment and pedals were manipulated by the duo during the recording of the album.

CALLER
(Continued from preceding page)

with an ensuing national tour now being set up. In all, he’s taking the rebirth of his music career in stride.

“For 10 or 15 years from the late ’60s to ’83, all I did was music,” he says. “Along the way I met some very beautiful people, like Jerry Butler and did concerts with others like Herbie Hancock and Grower Washington Jr. and Gil Scott-Heron. So I’ve been really blessed, and if this work out and I get back into it full time, great.

But I’ll take it as it comes. I don’t have to be defined as a musician: I can program computers, raise and nurture a child, and be supportive. I’m coming back to music now because it’s something I have to do and love to do—that I don’t have to do for a living. And I don’t have to change anything or adjust to any fashions, because I’m already able to support myself—so the music doesn’t have to support me. So I’m getting back into now because it gives me a great deal of pleasure.”
BOND, THE BAND BOND: Members of new Work Group act BOND will work that international man of mystery's mojo on American audiences when their self-titled debut album bows March 17.

Bond guitarist Jimmy.Hogarth says the act, while having some time for local reconnaissance, has concentrated most of its energies on the nuts and bolts of recording its electronically-charged rock album.

"We knew that part and parcel with singing on an American label would mean spending a lot of time out of London," he says. "It's been a good change. No family, no girlfriend, all we had to focus on was our music. It's very hard but very intense in a good way."

Also new to the band is a group songwriting effort. The act signed after previous experiences left members unfilled, says Hogarth. Along with drummer/bassist Scott Shields, Hogarth was formerly part of EMI U.K. act Shakespeare's Sister. Also on EMI at the time was vocalist Steve Eusese, who was part of EMI act Rainbow.

Eventually completing the lineup was multi-instrumentalist Martin Platter, formerly of Black Grape.

"We all wanted to be part of something," says Hogarth. "We had all worked for other people and bands, but there was no band feeling. We were looking for something to do as a team.
The band's first single, "Nothing Fits (Fictional Circle)," will be serviced to modern rock radio in mid-to-late February.

HOMES FOR THE HOLIDAYS: RCA's From Good Stuff is stuffing fans' stockings this year with a limited availability live EP, "Live At Waterloos.

The set is meant to hold over the band's active Northeast following as the group prepares for a follow-up to its '95 debut, "Open Up The Sky."

Included on the new EP are four tracks, one of which is scheduled to appear on the band's forthcoming set. Released in late November, the EP is selling at a handful of retail outlets in the band's native New Jersey and on its World Wide Web site.

Meanwhile, Hughes has been hailed for his work with a longtime collaborator, singer/bassist Loreena McKennitt. His production and playing on McKennitt's last five albums yielded him a Juno nomination as producer of the year on her album "The Visit."
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Verity Has Gospel With A ‘WOW’

Genre’s Top ’96-’97 Hits On Series’ Latest Release

BY LISA COLLINS

Borrowing from a highly successful, cross-label Christian-music marketing series, Verity Records is promoting its most aggressive campaign ever to accompany the Jan. 27 release of “WOW Gospel ’98.”

The double-CD, 30-track compilation, encompassing the top 30 gospel hits of 1996-97, teams the BMG-distributed Zomba Group’s Verity label with EMI Christian Music Group and Sony’s Word Records in a first-ever release of its kind. The set features the biggest names in gospel, including Shirley Caesar, John P. Kee, Virtue, Dottie Peoples, Anointed, Helen Baylor, CeCe Winans, and Geof’s Property, with a portion of the proceeds going to charity. The set also features new remixes of several previously released tracks.

“The great thing about this project is that it shows the unity within our industry,” notes Verity GM Tara Griggs-Magee. “It’s going to give us the biggest songs in gospel, so obviously we’re going to pull all the stops in our marketing campaign—television, and the whole nine yards—with distribution through [Zomba’s] President label for the contemporary Christian marketplace and BMG/Gene Records for mainstream.”

The campaign kicked off with a press event in Nashville on the eve of the Stellar Awards Dec. 18, just three days after the album was serviced to gospel radio Dec. 15. TV ads were slated to hit the first Sunday in January in conjunction with major-market spot buys, a “win-it-before-you-can-buy-it” national promotion, and a series of artist interviews that will include Fret Hammond, Virtue, Hosekiah Walker, and Donald Lawrence.

The promotional rollout will also feature a streetwalk sales campaign incorporating a three-minute sales video at outlets like Circuit City, Best Buy, and Foot Locker; it is slated to run for 60 days. A companion video features 17 of the artists.


Additionally, Verity has partnered with the AIE network during Black History Month for a number of ads on its popular "Biography" program, as well as print ads in the network’s Biography magazine.

Jeff Moseley, president of Verity’s sister company, Benson, worked in concert with representatives from EMI/Chorlton, Provident, and Word for the highly popular “WOW” series in the contemporary Christian market.

Moseley and representatives from the other three labels helped spearhead the project. The first contemporary Christian “WOW” installments, released in November 1995 and October 1996, sold a combined total of 280,000 and 200,000 units, respectively.

This year’s “WOW Gospel” is the first to be distributed by the group’s new Universal/Word label.

Band-Making Is Carole Anthony’s Business; Nate Dogg Bows Dogg Pound Records

This week’s column was prepared by guest columnist Janine Cowen, managing editor of R&B/Airplay Monitor.

LIVE MUSICIANSHIP IS A COMMUNITY that the R&B recording industry is putting new value on these days. Organic sounds, real songs, live drums and guitars—she magic that is engendered when several instrumentalists do their thing together in the very quality that artists are increasingly seeking to create both onstage and in the studio, whether they are musicians or vocalists.

Unveiled Nov. 3 in Las Vegas as professional musicians for a gig or tour. In New York, many seek out Carole Anthony of Carlesant Productions Inc. While many quarters of the industry stay busy referring and auditioning musicians, Anthony may be the only African-American female specializing in putting together bands. She has placed musicians in the touring bands of D’Angelo and Erykah Badu, put together players for showcases by 7 Mile and Uncle Sam, and has done work with Chico DeLarue.

Anthony, who is originally from Cleveland, says, "I’m a classically trained pianist, but I never actually pursued it on the professional aspect of the business. I was more interested in the business aspect of the industry." But it took a while for Anthony to get to her current level of work. A graduate of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, she originally pursued a degree in engineering. But while back in Cleveland, she met popular radio DJ Jeffrey Charles, who was also pursuing a recording career.

"After running into each other frequently, Jeffrey asked if I would book some dates, make some phone calls," Anthony recalls. "So I did a lot of networking, met a lot of people in the industry, and was invited to a listening party in New York for Koshift when he was still on Arista. I met the Arista BMG people, and I kept in contact with a lot of people in that company. I realized for myself that I definitely wanted to be in the industry but not stay in Cleveland."

Anthony moved to New York and landed a job as a production manager for Nickelodeon and Nick at Nite. There she booked crews for promotional shoots and managed budgets. When things changed at the Nickelodeon Networks, she did an outside project with Miller Broadcasting Co. as the production coordinator for a Black Music Month compilation album.

I met a lot of talented musicians and producers and continued the relationship," says Anthony. "From there I met one musician after another. At that point I hadn’t figured out what I wanted to do after leaving MTV; people assumed I would continue in production."

Her network of musician contacts continued to grow, until the drummer from the Apollo Theatre house band Ray Chew & the Crew suggested that they begin a musician referral service. The two tossed the idea around for months, but it didn’t get off the ground until the drummer was offered two jobs at once: a chance to tour with D’Angelo or a show with Groove Theory. Next thing Anthony knew, both Bryce Wilson of Groove Theory and Kedar Massenburg, then D’Angelo’s manager, were calling her to recommend musicians. The word got out, and Anthony became an independent consultant.

Now working primarily out of New York and Cleveland, Anthony puts together bands for tours, showcases, even open-mike club nights. Depending on what the musician wants for a flat fee or per-week rate. "In a situation where I’m putting a band together for a tour, if I have to audition musicians to get the right blend, and the artist has input on who he wants to work with, [the process] sometimes can take two to four weeks," she says. "I follow through with booking the rehearsal space, equipment rental, and technical support, and once the band has been hired to perform, I’m the liaison between [us] and the record label, so I negotiate the fees and salaries. Once they go on the road, I’m pretty much done."

At this point she is still a one-woman, one-coust operation.

Anthony adds that she has referred veterans as well as fledgling musicians. "My main objective as this situation continues is to offer exposure to musicians who haven’t had an opportunity to be in a recording session with Whitney Houston or tour with D’Angelo," she says.

BEATS N’ PIECES: Another artist makes the breaks with Death Row Records. Nate Dogg, who contributed vocal and writing talents to hits by Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg Dogg, the Dogg Pound, and 2Pac, has started Dogg Pound Records in a pact with Breakaway Entertainment, distributed through Island/PolyGram. .. Rhino Records continues to develop its WorldBeat division with an exciting March release, “Black Pearls: The Poetry Of Maya Angelou.”

The project, being touted as the only CD release available of Dr. Angelou reciting her own poetry, will feature 3P poems and jazz interludes by composer Ed Dillard and will include a set of introductory notes by the late writer James Baldwin. The set, the March 17, will sell for $19.98. Rhino will also celebrate Women’s Month with all-female rap series, “Fat Beats And Bra Straps.” The titles, “Classic Hip-Hop,” “ Battle Rymes & Peace Cuts,” and “New MC’s,” were conceived to break the misconception that hip-hop was built solely by male artists...Kerry’s Street Records will release its first soundtrack, to the new Penelope Sphairis directed comedy “Senseless,” starring Marlon Wayans. The album, due Jan. 19, will feature the Jungle Brothers, Moby, Yankee B. K., Freak Brothers, Gravediggaz, Crystal Method, Ambrosius/honor, and others.
chart and has sold 188,000 units (Billboard, Nov. 22). With names like Michael Whitfield and Sean D. Chapman, the latest set is out for the first two.

We felt a gospel collection would be a natural item for the audience, a natural set for Verity to assume the leadership role,” notes Mosley, whose company will scrubter the project’s marketing efforts in Christian bookstores.

“The (Christian bookstore) market is extremely interested in gospel but doesn’t know how to buy the right music or market gospel effectively from customers. This project will serve as jumping off point for both (Christian bookstores) and mainstream retailers interested in gospel but not sure of buying choices.”

He adds, “Being the premier piece of gospel music in the marketplace, it will also serve as a gospel primer to introduce new consumers to gospel, as well as an incredible value piece for gospel buyers. Initial pre-sales have been extremely high, and we believe this record will go gold and rather quickly.”

Griggs-Magee says the project was originally going to concentrate on the top gospel hits of 1997. “We expanded it, since this is the very first ‘Wow’ gospel,” she says. “We wanted to reach back and pick up some key hits of the last two years we would want to add to the project. While we did have to cut some licensing deals, we had a wish list and were able to secure most of the artists.”


“Another wonderful thing is that we were able to include some brand-new remixes,” Griggs-Magee notes. “Fred Hammonds did a really fresh remix of ‘No Weapon That’ and Bill Withers is also a remix for ‘Stranger’ from Donald Lawrence’s Christmas release, and the Colorado Mass Choir’s ‘Sittin’ Up The Gift.’

“With our star power or perceived in a project that combines so many artists of this caliber,” says Hammond. “For me and the RPO (Radical For Christ), I presented the opportunity to revisit a song (‘No Weapon’) that has meant so much over the past year and a half and put an edgier spin on it that I believe captures the radical message that the song has always held for me.”

“It was prime time to do it,” declares Carla Williams, director of marketing at Verity Records. “We have a stronger story to tell when we come together. From a marketing standpoint, this project gives us an opportunity to showcase the diversity of gospel, from quartet music to choirs and traditional to urban/contemporary gospel. People who like it all will be able to get it all on this CD.”
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**Greatest Gainer/Artists**

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select SABC radio stations to the U.S. According to America Online, there are an estimated 50 million Internet users in the U.S. The site came online Dec. 5 and had its first live radio broadcast from New York City Dec. 7. December by SABC station Ukhozi FM (formerly Radio Zulu). This was followed by the announcement that the live radio broadcast was SABC station Metro. The next station to come online will be SAFM, sometime early in the new year.

Besides the live radio transmissions, the QRadio programming format will include traditional South African music; features on local artists and the roots of South African music; contemporary South African music; live jam sessions featuring musicians playing traditional African music instruments online; chat sessions between South African and U.S. Internet users; and a section focusing on South African life and culture. People visiting the site will also be able to purchase South African music products through QRadio.

In addition to this unprecedented feature of QRadio is its comprehensive database of South African music, prepared by Gallo Music Publishers archivist Rudi Arnoldi. Though it is such a respected authority on local music, Allingham has written and sound engineers on go according to their own sub-genres—such as that includes African jazz, urban jive of the '40s and '50s, neo-traditional, indigenous, African reggae, soul, disco, rap, and bubblegum.

"QRadio has the potential to introduce South African music to the rest of the world in a major way," says Allingham. "We've covered the entire spectrum of black music in compiling the initial database and have done this in real depth. It's important that this is done properly—particularly in a country like South Africa where there is such a musical variance, even within the different regions of the African amb. The project is perfect for someone in, say, Denver who knows next to nothing about South African music. By going into the site, they will be able to read about and hear the wonderful sounds that make up this country's rich musical history.

QRadio executive producer Caiphus Semenya says he believes the "appetite for South African music created by traditional, local promotion. It is a testament to the evolution of the site's programming that both M and Miriam Makeba can now be taken to far greater heights through the QRadio project. The beauty of this project is that it will give music lovers a chance to hear, read about, and see the entire tapestry of music in this country. There's a deep curiosity on the part of African-Americans about their roots and, extending beyond that, many other individuals and communities in the U.S."

Semenya is an internationally renowned South African composer, songwriter, and performer and a regular collaborator with Jones. Among other projects, he wrote two songs on Jones' "Back On The Block" album. Semenya's work is often informed by his desire to live in America, where he worked with Masekela and Makeba as well as Jonas Gwagwa, Herb Alpert, Nina Simone, Lou Rawls, and Harry Belafonte. On his return to South Africa in 1991, Semenya put together and arranged the pop music portion of President Nelson Mandela's inauguration celebrations.

Semenya contends that the involvement of the Jones in the project will ensure a high standard of quality and authenticity. He says, "I've been discussing the possibility of putting together something that will take our music to the rest of the world with Quincy for around 20 years now. Since that time I have been convinced of Quincy's sincerity and deep love for South African sounds.

Don Brown of American Broadband Productions LLC is QRadio's president, and he is confident QRadio will reach its target audience, providing a unique opportunity for local record companies to market product. "Record companies all over the world are in the business of building audiences for their product," Brown asserts, "and in South Africa, QRadio is the ideal mechanism through which they can reach new markets.

"Basically, the project is operating on several levels: to educate and entertain; to develop South African music for American ears; and, finally, to create a distribution system for South African product," Brown says. Since the majority of South African radio stations play approximately 94% local content, some critics have questioned whether beaming in SABC stations like Metro and Ukhozi FM (one of the country's biggest stations) will simply be relaying American product back to Americans. But Brown says the idea is to provide an "authentic snapshot of music in a moment in South Africa.

"Sure, much of the music on the stations we've chosen is American, but it's important that the live radio broadcast bridge a gap between South Africa and the U.S.," he says. "What listeners in America will also hear is news, weather, interviews, and even traffic reports, which will provide them with a much clearer idea of how people live their lives in South Africa.

Users do not have to subscribe to any American broadband services or pay any fee to access the site, which is located at www.qradio.co.za. Computers equipped with audio cards and speakers can be used to access the site's audio features.

Jones, who was in the country in September to introduce South Africans to QRadio, describes South Africa as "the most musical place in the world. Cuba, Puerto Rico are all about Africa. Brazil is Africa. The best music I have heard in the world is African."

Although it is kicking off with South African music, QRadio is intended as a platform on which the traditional musical cultures of the world will be staged. "Although we're beginning with North America as the primary audience, QRadio will also be expanded to include Internet users worldwide," says Brown.

Petes Rocks At Loud. DJ/producer/rapper Pete Rock recently signed a contract with Loud Records. Formerly the DJ in Elektra duo Pete Rock & C.L. Smooth, Rock is currently working on "Future History," the follow-up to "Quiet Storm." While the album is a"
Japan’s Cosa Nostra Plans A Global Takeover

AFTER FOUR YEARS and five best-selling albums in its native Japan, Cosa Nostra is ready to conquer the rest of the world.

The first step is “Girl Talk,” a sugar-coated confection due for U.S. release Jan. 26 on the Arthouse subsidiary of Coalition International Recordings. Given its feather-light string section and lush layers of synths, bass and percussion, it should come as little surprise that Satoshi Tomiie was at the track’s production helm. Despite his unmissable presence, he wisely never overpowers the act’s own apparent songwriting sensibilities. Jakarta

Aaliyah Gives Her Heart. Atlantic artist Aaliyah was among the headliners at the recent B-96 Bash, hosted by WBBM Chicago. The show drew more than 18,000 people and included performances by Le’Crix, Hanzon, Robyn, EVA-World, Backstreet Boys, and Inoj. Among the sounds Aaliyah performed was her current multi-format hit “The One I Give My Heart To,” which is getting active club play thanks to solid remixes by Soul Solution partners Bobby Guy and Ernie Lake. Flanking the singer stage were WBBM music director Erika Bradley, left, and Atlantic Chicago promotion representative Rick Sudakoff.

Dance
A R T I S T S & M U S I C

Her World Goes ’Round. Champion Records diva Sandy B. paraded backstage a recent show’s support crew and announced “I Ain’t No Need To Hide.” She is currently dividing her time between an ongoing U.S. club tour and laying down tracks for her forthcoming full-length debut. Pictured, from left, are singer/producer A.J. Robinson, drag personality Joey Arias, Sandy B., Dead Or Alive front man Pete Burns, and club figure Steve Coss.


DANCE TRAX

(Continued from preceding page)

diction & Prayer” and “Insexta.” They are the first fruits of a new distribution agreement between Music and Arista Records. Besides providing Galas with a long-needed stateside outlet, the deal also calls for the eventual reissue of the artist's out-of-print material.

Other acts on Asphodel, which is operated by San Francisco artists Mitzi Johnson and Naut Humon, include revered sample-slayer DJ Spooky and rambunctious drum 'n' bass act We. Both will offer new albums later this year.

The reliably fab studio/tourtable team of Farley and Heller are behind the decks for yet another cool compilation from AM:PM Records. The two-CD "Anthology" combines well-loved classics by CeCe Peniston and Ultra Naté, as well as previously unavailable remixes and tracks by Alacran, Sounds Of Blackness, East 57th Street, and the Absolute. Wouldn't it be nice if A&M in the States took a chance and released this set here? We won't wait up all night for it, but it sure is a nice thought.

Speaking of AM:PM, run to the nearest import dealer for a copy of “Dream & Smokin’ Beats.” The track has been virtually impossible to find in recent months and is being touted a potential garage classic.

Lofly, eh? Well, let Paul Landon and Neil Rumney’s intensely tripped-out grooves soak your senses... we think you’ll ultimately agree. They employ a pile of vintage disco sound effects, as singer Lyn Eden has a field day darting around various lips, lips, and percussive blasts. Fleshed out into a two-record set for its latest retail incarnation, “Dreams” has been fired up by Ian Pooley, Erick Morillo, and Kings Of Tomorrow. Each version merits a whirl, but none can touch the original, which stirs with rare magic.

On a bit tip, going indie is never easy, but if anyone can cut it, it's Craig Karpel, who leaves the comfort of his gig as VP of the music division at Bonne-Brown-Bryan Public Relations to form the Karpel Group. He’s evolved into quite the champion of dance music in recent years, spearheading high-profile marketing campaigns for club-rooted acts like M People, Jori Cardwell, Funky Green Dogs, and Ann Nesby. We wish him lots of good luck—though he’s on such a hot streak, he hardly needs it.
by Chet Flippo

NASHVILLE—At a time when the world seems to be at everyone’s computer-literate fingertips, country music is creating its presence on the World Wide Web.

To address issues of country music’s marketing and promotion, the Country Music Assn. (CMA) has developed a Future Markets Task Force. CMA senior director of international and new business development Jeff Green says that executives from throughout the industry lend their expertise to identify new technology’s impact on the music business; packages are generated.

This think tank, which began in 1996, will hold its second seminar, titled “MINT—Music Industry and New Technology,” in April.

So what useful Web sites are there in country music? Following is a thumbnail guide to what’s helpful on the Net.

GENRE
The mothership of country genre sites is CBS Cable’s www.countrymusic.com, which is mainly a service engine for CMT and TNN, but also serves the Grand Ole Opry, the Wildhorse Saloon, NASCAR activities, information on outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing, and the Ryman Auditorium. This busy address, which receives 800,000 hits daily, has been online since June 1997. It offers music news, online articles and press releases, a calendar on that particular day in country music, and radio-like programming.

In addition to E-mail, users can directly provide musical feedback.

“We’ve been using the site to put up some new music and solicit feedback prior to an album release,” notes Heather McCree, manager of strategic business development for RCA. The site offered 30-second clips of potential singles from their upcoming album, “If I Don’t Stay The Night,” two months prior to its official release.

“Through this fan feedback, we also get a lot of customer information that we typically wouldn’t be able to get,” adds Engbrecht. She says that demographic statistics show that McCready and newcomer Sherrrie Austin have extremely young, computer-literate audiences.

PACKAGES ARE WINNERS
In Touring Shakeout, Simmons Exits Arista

COUNTRY TOURING continues to slim down and smarten up (Nashville Scene, Dec. 21, 1997). Steve Moore, president of Moore Entertainment Inc., tells Nashville Scene that his current Crown Royal package tour is an outgrowth of today’s tour, which began Nov. 7 and runs through May 10, puts together three midelevel headliners—Mark Chesnutt, David Lee Murphy, and Gary Allen—in manageable-size auditoriums, along with bands, their touring trucks, ranging from 000 to 3,000 seats.

“I wanted to take a great package and put it into venues that normally couldn’t accommodate this kind of talent,” he says, “and make it more accessible to the consumer. With the synergy of the sponsor and the record label, we’re able to keep ticket prices in the $12-18 range. It’s a great value for the customer, and the media love it.”

“Touring is really settling down from the boom years,” Moore adds. “When Reba McEntire and Brooks & Dunn decided to tour together, that really proved that music added entertainment is what country needed. From a business perspective, it’s the right combination, but sometimes the emotional issues get in the way, especially in deciding who actually headlines the show. The range of acts you’re going to be the trend; we’ll see bigger events. George Strait will do that this year in the stadium. The big challenge will lie in breaking new acts. I don’t know how they’re going to do that. It may get back down to the club level. There’s no easy answer to that scenario.”

Moore will also take “Lost Highway” on the road in 1998. The drama about Hank Williams has been a hit in its run at the Ryman Auditorium.

ON THE ROW: Ramona Simmons, who was Tim DuBois’s first hire when he started Arista/Nashville nine years ago, is leaving the label to launch her own firm, Global Eye Entertainment, an international marketing and consulting company, will represent Arista/Nashville and its roster. “Once Upon A December,” performed by Deana Carter in the movie “Anastasia,” is up for a 1998 Golden Globe Award in the best original song for a motion picture category.

ABANDONED: Numerous coveted live music venues are due for a much-needed update and upgrade. The Horton Group has bought and will revamp the Exit/In. The club, which was reportedly home to the first “writers’ nights” in Nashville. “The Oak Ridge Boys will host a weekly one-hour variety show on TNN beginning April 7. The show will originate from the main stage of the Las Vegas Hilton.

Junior Brown appears on PBS “Austin City Limits,” Jan. 31. Patty Loveless is scheduled for the program Feb. 7 and Feb. 21, and March 7. MCA Nashville now plans an end-of-March release for the soundtrack to the delayed film “The Horse Whisperer.” Artists on the record include George Strait, Yoakam, Emmylou Harris, Steve Earle, Allison Moorer, Raul Malo, Don Edwards, Iris DeMent, and Joe Ely reunited with the Flatlanders.

BETWEEN THE PAGES: Joel Whitburn’s “Top Country Albums 1964-1997” was published just before Christmas by Record Research of Menomonee Falls, Wis. Based on the Billboard charts, the book provides invaluable research. The top 10 album artists (based on a points system, with 1 point for each entry) that it cites are: George Strait (No. 1), Alan Jackson (2) and Garth Brooks (3). Top 10, in descending order, are albums by Randy Travis, Brooks (two albums), Billy Ray Cyrus, Clint Black, John Michael Montgomery and George Strait (at No. 14) and Garth Brooks (at No. 17). The book’s top-ranked album list (based on number of weeks at No. 1) is led by newer artists and suggests that country is increasingly top-loaded by a few superstars. The top 10, in descending order, are albums by Randy Travis, Brooks (two albums), Billy Ray Cyrus, Clint Black, John Michael Montgomery and George Strait (at No. 14) and Garth Brooks (at No. 17).

Chet Flippo
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>IMPRINT &amp; NUMBER/PROMOTIONAL LABEL</th>
<th>PEAK POSITION</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;A BROKEN WING&quot;</td>
<td>MARTINA MCBRIDE</td>
<td>(MCA BIRCH)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND ME</td>
<td>CRIPPLED LADDIE</td>
<td>(RED TURTLE)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I'M SO HAPPY I CAN'T STOP CRYING&quot;</td>
<td>TOBY KEITH WITH STING</td>
<td>(COLUMBIA)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;LONGNECK BOTTLE&quot;</td>
<td>GARTH BROOKS</td>
<td>(CAPITOL)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;HE'S GONNA LOVE YOU&quot;</td>
<td>BROOKS &amp; DUNN</td>
<td>(MCA BIRCH)</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;ANOTHER DAY IN PARIS&quot;</td>
<td>TIM McGRAW</td>
<td>(MCA BIRCH)</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;ANGEL IN MY EYES&quot;</td>
<td>JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY</td>
<td>(ALBUM)</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;ON THE SIDE OF ANGELS&quot;</td>
<td>ROBERT WITHERSPOON</td>
<td>(COLUMBIA)</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;IMAGINE THAT&quot;</td>
<td>DIAMOND RIDGE</td>
<td>(COLUMBIA)</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I WANNA FALL IN LOVE&quot;</td>
<td>LILA McCANN</td>
<td>(REPRISE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;FIRE FROM ETERNITY&quot;</td>
<td>MICHAEL PETTIS</td>
<td>(COLUMBIA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;DON'T BE SAD (YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU)&quot;</td>
<td>SHANIA TWAIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;YOU'VE GOT TO TALK TO ME&quot;</td>
<td>LEE ANN WOMACK</td>
<td>(DECCA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;THE REST OF MINE&quot;</td>
<td>M. HERNANDEZ &amp; THE LOST BEARDS</td>
<td>(Columbia)</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;IF YOU WALK AWAY&quot;</td>
<td>JOHN E. WALKER &amp; BERNIE DAVIES</td>
<td>(MCA BIRCH)</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;WHAT IF I SAID&quot;</td>
<td>ANITA COCHRAN DUET WITH STEVE WARNER</td>
<td>(COLUMBIA)</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;LAND OF THE LIVING&quot;</td>
<td>PAM TILLIS</td>
<td>(ARISTA)</td>
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<td>&quot;LOVE ME EVERY TIME&quot;</td>
<td>GARTH BROOKS</td>
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<td>&quot;I HAVE TO SURRENDER&quot;</td>
<td>BRENDA JAMES</td>
<td>(DECCA)</td>
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<td>&quot;A CHANCE&quot;</td>
<td>KENNY CHESNEY</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;DON'T FEEL LIKE WE MISS ME&quot;</td>
<td>POETIC JUSTICE</td>
<td>(EPIC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;ONE SMALL MIRACLE&quot;</td>
<td>BRYAN WHITE</td>
<td>(MCA BIRCH)</td>
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<td>&quot;WHAT IF&quot;</td>
<td>REBA McENTIRE</td>
<td>(COLUMBIA)</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>&quot;IF YOU CAN'T BE GOOD (BE GOOD AT IT)&quot;</td>
<td>NEAL MCCOY</td>
<td>(COLUMBIA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;SOMETHING THAT WE DO&quot;</td>
<td>CLINT BLACK</td>
<td>(ARISTA)</td>
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<td>&quot;STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU&quot;</td>
<td>TRAVIS TRITT</td>
<td>(WARNER BROS.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;LITTLE RED RODEO&quot;</td>
<td>CODY ROY &amp; DEL D'ORIO</td>
<td>(EPIC)</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I CAN LOVE YOU BETTER&quot;</td>
<td>P. WORLIS &amp; B. CHANCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;COME SOME RAINY DAY&quot;</td>
<td>T. BROWN FAMILY</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;IT'S NOT OVER&quot;</td>
<td>MARK CHERRYNEFT (FEAT. VICKI GILL &amp; ALISON KRAUSS)</td>
<td>(MCA BIRCH)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME&quot;</td>
<td>THE KINLEYS</td>
<td>(COLUMBIA)</td>
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<td>&quot;REMEMBER&quot;</td>
<td>ALABAMA</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;STILL&quot;</td>
<td>SANTA CLAUS IS BACK IN TOWN</td>
<td>(TRACER)</td>
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**HOT SHOT DEBUT***

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<th>TITLE</th>
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<td>KISS TYLER</td>
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<td>&quot;ROCKIN' AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE&quot;</td>
<td>BRENDON LEWIS &amp; JAY Z</td>
<td>(MCA BIRCH)</td>
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<td>&quot;O HOLY NIGHT&quot;</td>
<td>JOHN BERRY</td>
<td>(Columbia)</td>
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<td>&quot;YOU HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS&quot;</td>
<td>VANCE GILL</td>
<td>(Columbia)</td>
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<td>&quot;SANTA CLAUS COMIN' IN ON A BOOGIE WOOGIE CHOO CHOO TRAIN&quot;</td>
<td>THE TRACTORS</td>
<td>(Mercury)</td>
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<td>&quot;GRANDMA GOT RUN OVER BY A REINDEER&quot;</td>
<td>MARTIN MCBRIDE</td>
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<td>&quot;WE THREE KINGS (STAR OF WONDER)&quot;</td>
<td>BLACK &amp; WHITE</td>
<td>(MCA BIRCH)</td>
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*COMPILED FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE AND RACK SALES REPORTS COLLECTED, COMPILLED AND PROVIDED BY SoundScan.*

| BILLBOARD JANUARY 10, 1998 |
AN ABBREVIATED TOUR OF NASHVILLE'S ONLINE COMMUNITY

(Continued from page 21)

you may search for any ASCAP work or writer. A writer search finds every work, which in turn links to its connected singer and album.

BMI provides its visitors with a songwriter's toolbox for a crash course in the business of songwriting, membership forms, and suggested reading. Another BMI link offers related press releases on the company and the music industry at large. The hyper-repository of bmi.com is a searchable database analogous to ASCAP's resource guide.

SESCAC offers visitors the organization's history, current company news, songwriter profiles, and membership data. There is also a link to an online version of the corporate publication Focus on SESAC. A searchable reper- toire is also available at www.sesac.com. Although these sites differ in content, their purpose is identical. Each company wants to provide immediate information to stimulate response, and the Internet is the perfect pipeline for this instant gratification. The impact of this vehicle on country music has been far-reaching, due in part to the law playing catch-up with technology. Kurt Denny, creative director for Nashville's Warner/Chappell Publishing, voices a common concern of "figuring out how to protect our copyrights and how to properly compensate the providers and creators on the Web."

MCN's Wager addresses this issue, saying, "One of our problems currently is with existing contracts that were written years ago without any of this written into them at all. So not only is it a plague for publishers and writers, but for the artists themselves. In revising these agreements, artists are taking time to realize the potential of this."

"For the artist, it's been huge," adds Borman's Wyatt. "Working with Charlie Daniels, and now working with Trace Adkins, the site has been an embelishment to their careers." Wyatt describes the impact on both artist and management in getting basic information. "There's a lot of people who just want the itinerary, who we can send to the Web site," he says. "That's what kind of arm it should be; you can send a lot of traffic over there, keeping your phone lines clear for other things."

As a rapidly developing feature, the Internet is fast becoming a necessary vehicle for success in country music.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
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<td>RCA</td>
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<td>TIM MCGRAW</td>
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<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
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<td>RCA</td>
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**Greatest Gainers**

- SHANIA TWAIN: CUSTOM MADE (RCA)
- JOHN DENVER: THE DREAM (RCA)
- TIM MCGRAW: THE PATTERN (RCA)
- JOHN DENVER: LIFE'S DREAMS (RCA)
- JOHN DENVER: COMPLETE (RCA)
- JOHN DENVER: GREATEST (MCA)

**Other Notes**

- **Billboard** compilation of country albums.
- Numbers in parentheses indicate percentage of total sales for the week ending January 10, 1998.
As a result of its ongoing bid to expand its international profile, Colombian indie Solonux has named Al managing director of its Miami-based U.S. operation, effective Monday (5). He formerly was marketing director of WEA Latina. Meanwhile, George was named V/P/GM of WEA Latina, effective Jan. 1. George replaces the label's former V/P/GM, Sergio Rosenblat. George retains his titles as managing director of WEA Latina's tropical imprint Weacaribe and GM of Sir George Records, joint-venture company formed by noted Latin producer Sergio George and WEA Latina. While commenting that Solonux wants to be a "major factor" in the U.S. Latino market, Al says that the Sony-distributed imprint will be "totally aggressive in this marketplace to develop a local roster to complement what they have coming out of Colombia." Al says his U.S. roster will lean toward tropical acts, but he quickly notes that he is open to signing all sorts of artists. "I want to sign a few artists and work them hard," he states. "It's easier to work two acts full speed than seven artists halfway." Solonux, home of voluminous icon Carlos Vives, reached No. 1 on The Billboard Latin 50 in 1997 with its bolero star Charlie Zaa.

Meanwhile, neither George nor André Midani, president of Warner Music Latin America, who hired George, was available for comment at press time regarding George's new title.

Rosenblat's December departure follows the exit of his immediate superior, Julio Sáenz, who earlier in the month resigned his position as Warner's managing director and president of Latin North American operations.

The resignations of Rosenblat and Sáenz took place despite the fact that the label's two big-name acts, Luis Miguel and Maná, enjoyed record years in 1997 in Mexico and the U.S.

Industry insiders, citing the notion that Warner Mexico had broken no new acts in the past five years, had been speculating for months that Sáenz would be replaced by Rosenblat.

**AND ANOTHER THING:** Space restrictions in the Dec. 27 Latin Notas precluded additional observations of activities in the domestic Latino market. Following are a few statistical profiles and ruminations about last year—and this year.

**LATINO FEVER SPREADING:** Latino acts continue to make inroads on several charts featured in Billboard. Eighteen titles by Hispanic artists entered the Heatseekers chart, and eight acts came on the Hot Dance Music/Club Play chart.

Another 14 Latino titles hit The Billboard 200, six more than in 1996. More impressively, 11 of the 14 are

(Continued on next page)
Artists & Music

NOTAS
(Continued from preceding page)

by Latino artists who are not considered crossover acts.

One English-language title, the soundtrack to the film "Selena,"
also charted on The Billboard 200. It reached No. 7 and has loged 28 weeks on the chart.

Following are the Hispanic titles to reach The Billboard 200 in 1997; all listings reflect chart activity up to the Dec. 27 issue, with the label, peak position, and number of weeks the title spent on the chart.

1. "Vivi," Enrique Iglesias (Sony); peak position: No. 33 (debut); 11 weeks.
2. "Romances," Luis Miguel (WEA Latina); peak position: No. 14 (debut); 16 weeks.
3. "Tango," Julio Iglesias (Columbia/Sony); peak position: No. 81; 13 weeks.
4. "Me Estoy Enamorando," Alejandro Fernández (Sony DISCM); peak position: No. 33 (debut); 11 weeks.
5. "Compan," Gipsy Kings (None); peak position: No. 97; seven weeks.
6. "Dreaming Of You," Selena (EMI/EMI Latin); peak position: No. 190 (U.S. Only); one week.
7. "Contra La Corriente," Marc Anthony (RMM); peak position: No. 74 (debut); five weeks.
8. "Suenos Liguicos," Maná (WEA Latina); peak position: No. 67 (debut); four weeks.
9. "Juntos Otra Vez," Juan Gabriel/Rocio Durcal (Ariola/BMG); peak position: No. 132 (debut); three weeks.
10. "Jefe De Jefes," Los Tigres Del Norte ( Fonovisa); peak position: No. 149 (debut); three weeks.
11. "Sentimientos," Charlie Zaa (Sonolux/Sony); peak position: No. 158; two weeks.
12. "Liévame Conigo," Olga Tañón (WEA Latina); peak position: No. 175 (debut); one week.
13. "Enrique Iglesias" (Fonovisa); peak position: No. 199; one week.
14. "Tecun De Oro," Los Tucanes De Tijuana (EMI Latin); peak position: No. 199 (debut); one week.

WORST HYPO-TO-SALES RATIO: stock in espanol and Cuban-derived music. Both categories have caught every media break in the world in the past two years, and both have only a thimbleful of hit albums to show for it.

EN CONCIERTO: Alejandro Fernández might be the "new" artist in the Latin markets in Mexico and the U.S., but if live shows offer any indication, WEA Latina superstar Luis Miguel remains big of the hill.

According to Amusement Business, "Losmús" owned the top two box office slots for the top 10 grossing acts by Latino-rooted artists in 1997, as listed in the following rundown of concerts.
1. Luis Miguel—Auditorio Nacional, Mexico City; Oct. 9-30, Nov. 1-2; $6,766,356; 18,978 (17 shows, 16 sellouts); Showtime de Mexico.
2. Luis Miguel—Universal Amphitheater, Universal City, Calif.; Sept. 18-22; $1,598,558; 39,263 (five sellouts); Universal Concerts.
3. Gloria Estefan—Aretha Stadium, Honolulu; May 3; $1,342,975; 25,120 (seven sellouts); Tommy Mott Productions.
4. Alejandro Fernández—Auditorio Nacional, Mexico City; June 6-8, 13-15; $1,355,871; 57,044 (six sellouts); R.A.C. Producciones/Ralph Hauser Entertainment.
5. Gloria Estefan—CoreStates Center, Philadelphia; Feb. 7-8; $882,578; 28,774 (two sellouts); Electric Factory Concerts.
7. Vicente Fernández—Universal Amphitheater, Universal City, Calif.; Nov. 23-25; 500,256; 18,107 (three shows); Universal Concerts.
8. Juan Gabriel—Universal Amphitheater, Universal City, Calif.; Oct. 24-26; 621,067; 17,679 (three sellouts); Universal Concerts.
9. Gipsy Kings—Greek Theatre, Los Angeles; May 29-31; $777,114; 17,288 (three shows, two sellouts); Nederlandier Organization.
10. Gipsy Kings—Radio City Music Hall, New York; Sept. 6-7; $726,962; 11,910 (two sellouts); Radio City Productions.

GRINGAS IN WAITING: Luis Miguel scored an unmatched chart feat in August, when his album "Romances" hit No. 14 on The Billboard 200—the highest chart position for a full-length Spanish disc. Now the artist, who made a handsome recording career for himself by covering more well-known songs than Linda Ronstadt, let us solemnly issue a New Year's resolution calling for Micky to stop frittering his considerable vocal talent on nostalgia and have the cojones to cut that long-awaited English-language disc. Las norteamericanas would love it.

W HO NEEDS RADIO? Three of the top 15 best-selling artists secured their sales with virtually no help from radio: Julio Iglesias, Nueschel/Atlantic/AG act Gipsy Kings, and Sonolux's Charlie Zaa, the latter of whom is an upstart broadcaster who makes a package of tropical medleys cover of classic Spanish songs called "Sentimientos." The hit disc put the former singer of Grupo Niche and his Colombian indie Sonolux on the sales map in the U.S. and spawned a slew of pallid imitations. Zaa, sadly enough, was the lone newcomer to crack the top 50 best-selling artists in 1997...and like Luis Miguel and Julio, he needed a new label to make a chart impact.

LATIN TRACKS A-Z
TITLE
FNLTR (Pretcher & Licensing Group) / Fourth Street Dist.
3 Peak Of Top 30 Rights Owners, ASCAP
29 ACERO DE ULTRAMAR (Vos Y Sar)
22 AS ES LA MUER (New Edition Erro, SRS)
18 COMO EL PRIMER DIA (Mier, SERA)
16 COMO TE VOY A DARL (Mier, SERA)
15 CONTIGO (ESTE CONTigo) (P.S. Luvinitz, ASCAP)
13 DESPACITO (Peri, BM)
13 DOMA ESTRAS (Car, BM)
12 EL AMOR NUNCA PRESURA (Rubio)
12 EL MAS FELIZ DEL MUNDO (SGAE, ASCAP)
12 EL SOL (Peri, BM)
11 EL JARID (FBB, BM)
11 ENSAYE A VER (FOX, BM)
11 ESA ES (Ern, ASCAP)
11 ESPARZO (Faminter)
11 HASTA MANANA (Rom, Choppell)
11 LA TEMPORADA ES ENRIKA (Copyright Castaldo, ASCAP)
11 LA VENA BENDITA (Casto, SERA)
10 LA PIEDE (Copyright Castaldo, ASCAP)
10 LLUVIA CAE (Familario, SERA)
10 LO NOSIR DE MI (BM)
10 ME NUBAS Y TE MURI (Brandos, BM)
10 ME VOY A REGARAL (New Edition, SRS)
10 NO HANS SE MUERE (BM, ASCAP)
10 RAYOJO SI TI (Moz, SRS)
10 NOS ESTAR LO ROJA (En Escriba, BM, ASCAP)
10 QUE TE DIO OLVIDADO (BM, ASCAP)
10 QUISO ESTAR CONTRA (BM, ASCAP)
10 RITMO NACIONAL (Danilo, SRS)
10 RITMO DE MEDE sucking (BM)
10 RASTRO (BM, ASCAP)
10 RE meinem (BM, ASCAP)
10 SOI LO MUERTE (BM, ASCAP)
10 SONGS FROM A SECRET GARDEN (BM, ASCAP)
10 THE CAROLS OF CHRISTMAS II (BM, ASCAP)
10 CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD - A WINDHAM HILL COL.
10 PORT OF MYSTERY WINDHAM HILL, 11241
10 LINUS & LUCY - THE MUSIC OF VINCE GUARALDI  CMS PECIES, WINDHAM HILL
10 Bond SONGS WITHOUT WORDS - A WINDHAM HILL COL.
10 ON A WINTER'S NIGHT WINDHAM HILL, 11241
10 ONCE IN A BLUE UNIVERSE HIGHTER OACER 445,999
10 NIGHTS OF RHYTHM WINDHAM HILL, 11241
10 OPEN HOUSE RAGSHAW, ASCAP
10 G R MABORG-LEGENDS OF THE CELTSкции, ASCAP
10 WHITE STONES NAPOLI SROWN,
10 APURIMAC III-NATURE SPIRIT PRIDE HIGHTER OACER 445,999
10 CYPRESS PASS AND NEW FLAMENCO NAPOLI SROWN,
10 SUMMER SOLSTICE SÓN A RANTON-HILL, 11241
10 MASTERS OF ACUTAN SÓN A RANTON-HILL, 11241

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BILLBOARD JANUARY 10, 1998

26
MARY LOU LANDS AT WORK WITH HER 'SHADOW' (Continued from page 9)

“Jeff and Jordan were some of the last people to speak to me,” she adds. “They told me that they had an idea for a record company, but they didn’t have a staff or an office. It was just an idea.” Part of the reason Lord chose working with Lands was because the label was brand-new. “I knew, since it was new, that there wouldn’t be any big explosive shake-up in which she could be supported at the company, she says.

After first gaining exposure with 7-inch singles and two EPs released on indie label Kill Rock Stars, Lord admits that she was initially leery about venturing outside the indie rock world. “When Margaret came to see me in Olympia [Wash.], I didn’t know what as a publisher was,” she says. “I thought anyone from a major label or a publisher was ‘evil.”

The publishing executive eventually won Lord over by sending the singer what had been her favorite young age book, Malory Gold’s ‘Mallory Gold.’

After finally signing with Work, Lord opted to record her major-label debut with a band in an extended stay in the studio. “I’d been in the Rock Stars stuff, I spent a day,” she says. “This time, we spent a couple of months in the studio.”

Lord was part of a group of young, female sound-savvy indie roots by enlisting as producers Ben Cook, Bong Load Records principals Tom Rodrock and Bob Schnaap, known for Bellow and Lunchbox.

Aside from Saloman, who also played guitar on the album, Lord called on some noted musicians to lend a hand, including drummers Josh Freece and William Goldenchild, keyboardist Money Mark, multi-instrumentalist Jon Brion, and guitarists Ethan Johns and Nels Cline. Also, Shawn Colvin contributed backing vocals to “Subway,” and Roger McGuinn lends his trademark 12-string to “Lights Are Changing.”

Executives at Work are convinced that the general public will respond to Lord’s voice and to the upbeat, carefree mood of “Lights Are Changing” to the airy, melodic and overall radio the week of the album’s release.

Modern rock WFNX Boston’s home-town of Boston already has a history with the song, which was written by Lord and Saloman. WFNX played an early recording of the song, which was featured on Lord’s eponymous 1996 EP. “It’s a great song,” says WFNX music director Laurie Gail. “We played it in regular rotation.”

Modern rock WFNX Boston has also programmed some of Lord’s indie sides. Music director Carter Alan says that he’s looking forward to hearing what Lord has done on her new album. “All of her other releases have been her and her guitar,” he says. “It will be interesting to see what happens in the studio with production.”

Lord makes no apologies for going on the full-band route. “I had the opportunity to do something that I enjoyed and I took it,” she says. “I think these songs work better in a band context.”

However, as a nod to her indie roots, Lord opted to include the old Elizabeth Cotten song “Sugaree” on the album. “Since the rest of the record is real band-oriented, we wanted to give it a little bit of balance. That song tips the hat to the solo acoustic thing.”

The inclusion of the acoustic number along with the full-band accompaniment makes the album “a brilliant debut,” says Lord. “I was interested in it but didn’t limit where she can go.”

For Work, it was important to get an early start on the Lord project. “We put it in the fall in her best markets in conjunction with our college reaps and progressive marketing man- ner. I’m playing [in a club]. You have to have a huge smash MTV thing if anyone is really going to give a crap or know who you are.”
Artists & Music

CHUCK LOEB
(Continued from page 8)

iel. “Playing, bo it's store or onstage, is valuable,” says Martin. “You hear on smooth jazz radio stations is really not indicative of what's going on live. The shows have more energy and edge than the records do. It's an art form per se but in general the whole format is toned down for programming purposes.”

“Younger people who work on Shanachie's alternative rock acts and ska acts came out to see Chuck at New York's S.O.B.'s a few weeks ago. They couldn't believe how hip he was. All of a sudden there was this credibility with a younger crowd. I'm sure it'll make business so I could hold his own with anyone.”

Shanachie is working to have Loeb at several radio station-sponsored events in the next quarter. On the marketing side, Shanachie will try to get as many retail listening booths as possible. Chris Osborne, jazz department manager for the Lincoln Center Tower Records store in New York, knows firsthand about the effectiveness of that tool.

“I put The Music Inside” in a listening station and did well with it,” she says. “I'm very involved in floor work, and it stays in my mind when I see things physically removed from their spots. I watch the racks and see how things are depicting from the shelf. That actually makes you more aware of a title's impact than simply looking at monthly computer numbers.”

Shanachie also plans to take advantage of a global market with the disc, focusing for the first time on European distribution. “The fact that he spends part of the summer in Spain with his wife, Carmen Cuesta, gives us an opportunity to exploit that market,” says Martin. “Last time we got a little awareness of him out there. Now we need to expand the campaign from national to international.” The set will be distributed by Koch in the U.K.

Loeb's debut album, "Playing the Songs in Japan; Lipstick Records in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland; Enfasis in Spain; and Shanachie in the U.K.

The record's art reflects the grace that's essential to the music. Graphically, it's reminiscent of the Eddie Brickell package from a couple of years ago,” says KOA's Fischer. “Visually the record is packaged very well. It's simple and elegant. I think those words also describe Chuck's sound as a guitarist. You can hear the heart and soul that goes into the music and be impressed at how much he's able to pawn something off on his listeners. These are very strong tunes.”

"Shine On," which is dedicated to co-producer George Zhina is “very passionate,” says Fischer. He also believes the cover of "Don't Let Me Be Lonely Tonight" to be "sultry and romantic. It will sound great at night." Loeb's publishing is handled by CuestaLoebASCAP

Fischer believes that all these elements, plus the equity the guitarist built with previous efforts, will provide "The Moon, The Stars, And The Setting Sun" with considerable rewards.

"This time out, it's not going to be radio on his side, but the blues clubs,” says Martin. "His identity is going to get a big boost."

STELLAR AWARDS
(Continued from preceding page)

Dec. 18 at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House. The show was produced with performances by M.C. Hammer, top star Savion Glover of Broadway's "Bring 'In Da Noise, Bring 'Da Funk Out" with Billon and Frankie, Shirley Caesar, the Williams Brothers, the Kurt Carr Singers, and God's Property. Presenters included Roundtree, "Ev'ts Bayou" estelle Morgan, "3rd Rock From The Sun's" Simbi Khali, and comedian Jon Scoumberg.

"There are a lot of industry professionals, including radio announcers, executives, retailers, and artists. A complete list of winners follows.


Producers of the year: Kirk Franklin, Kevin Bond, Buster and Sharoni, "God's Property" Contemporary album/group of the year: the Kurt Carr Singers Traditional album/group: the Canton Spirituals

Producer: James McClurkin Contemporary vocalist: Donnie McClurkin Traditional vocal: Carlton Pearson


KEEPING SCORE
(Continued from preceding page)

pieces by early-20th-century Russian-Jewish-American Alexander Krein, and “The Triumph Of Beauty And Deceit,” a television opera by Irish-German Barry. Those fresh on your mind. The first release of the three great Goldschmidt chamber music discs (including all his string quartets, piano quintets, and a choral madrigal cycle, et al), as well as an album by the wonderful Clemnti-Trio that teams piano trio pieshkov and Nina Baratrov and two of their original recordings, by Milhaud and Germaine Taillef
erre.

The second large installment is due in mid-February, with new titles from Austrian composer/performer Kurt Schweiters ("House & Court Music") and British painter/composer Tom Phillips ("Six Of Hearts"). The reissues feature Schweitzer's lifelong collection of "For Christa"; Schweitzers alterative Viennese composer/conductor/performer H K Gruber's "Woven From The Scend Of Shadrach," recorded at his own Vienna Concerto, expatriate American John McGuire's "48," a game-like set of variations for two pianos; and "Four Walls," of rare material, by surpisingly expressive pieces for piano and soprano by John Cage.

Future months will bring a storing highly anticipated projects, including the Woll Partitaur, "Berlin Lit Up," and the Bowles album, "Migra- tory Walls," of rare early material. Impressive contemporary, demonstrating his enlightened attitude: "This business should be personal; music is not machine; it must be personal.

Ads in such key publications as Gramophone and BBC Music are scheduled on behalf of the first large releases, and the word is out on the Internet via www.4-words.com. Moreover, the magnificent Bushelkottler has already crossed the U.S. to personally introduce his label's wares to EMI Music Distribution execs and prime retailer, demonstrating his enlightened attitude: "This business should be personal; music is not machine; it must be personal.

This IS MY FIRST KEEPING Score since assuming the column from the estimable Heidi Waleson, who continues as a Billboard contributor. I can be reached at 1516 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036; 212-586-7025. I can also be reached via E-mail at bhammer@billboard.com.

Billboard's Top Jazz Albums

I

Chances worth the greatest sales gain this week. # Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for sales 2,000,000 units. A RIAA certification for sales of 1,000,000 units with each additional million indicated by a numeral following the name. For boxed sets, and double albums with an average length that exceeds two hours, the RIAA multible shipment represents a number of copies and/or tapes. All albums available on cassette and CD. 

JANUARY 10, 1998

BILBOARD 28
**Hitco Music Expands Its Roster**

**Writer, Artist Stignings Position Company For Growth**

BY IRV LICHTMAN

NEW YORK—A year ago, Hitco Music admittedly had some good credentials as a start-up music publisher; now it's got the goods.

The Atlanta-based company, formed as a joint venture between producer/writer L.A. Reid, co-president of L.A.Face Records, and Los Angeles-based Windswept Pacific, has signed a number of important writer or artist/artist names.

A mong them is Gordon Chambers, formerly with Warner/Chappell, who has written hits for Anita Baker, SWV, and Aaron Neville, as well as 1993's Grammy-nominated "If You Love Me" by vocal trio Brownstone.

"They set up for long-term growth," says Reid. "I believe in mainstream music. Country music, for instance, is a driving force overall, and I’d like to expand my presence there, in addition to the R&B and pop sounds I’m used to dealing with."

Hitco GM Laronda Sutton admits that Hitco won’t show a profit in its first year because of its investments in filling up its writer stable, but based on the amount of song placements, she predicts "we’ll definitely have a big payoff in 1998. We’ve got a huge amount of releases coming up."

In the coming months, the administrative and professional growth of Hitco— a BMI company with an ASCAP affiliate, Hitco South—will reflect the company’s growing catalog of writers. In either Atlanta or Los Angeles, a personnel will be named to liaison with the firm and TV community, and a full-time copyright administrator will be hired. Right now, there is a staff of four, including Reid and Sutton. Her associates include Shakir Stewart, creative director, who was recruited from Noontime Music in LA, and Deloria Johnson, creative assistant, who has been doing some of the copyright administration.

Also of note are plans for Hitco to move into its own complex in an Atlanta industrial park where there are several recording studios. In Los Angeles, Hitco’s new office will have its own 24- and 48-track studio as well as writer rooms. A relocation to LA will come in the second quarter.

A most unusual creative move is planned to take place at the end of this month, when several Hitco writers and producers will take up temporary residences in London to work with their R&B counterparts there. This concept stems from a recent visit to London by Sutton and Reid. The thought of writers and record producers and most of the R&B music chiefs of labels and management companies.

"It’s hard to get kids here to accept English urban music; in fact, the music has barely been exposed here. In turn, these collaborations will give us exposure outside of the U.S."

Sutton’s trip also brought home to her a basic difference in U.S. and English-speaking R&B; in the U.S., the market operates on a hit-driven market, unlike the U.S., where it’s production oriented.

Sutton says she is working out an itinerary there for her writers, who are likely to include Organized Noise, Gourley, and Owsley.

**MCA Music’s Latin Dept Form New Associations**

NEW YORK—MCA Music’s Latin department, formed a year ago, has bolstered its stake in that plane of the publishing scene with new associations.

The company has completed a catalog purchase/joint-venture agreement with Argentinean concert promoter/music publisher Daniel Martinez, buying 50% of his publishing wing Rock and Pop and making a deal for a new acquisitions. Grinbank’s more than 1,500-song catalog includes material from Argentine artists like Los Fabulosos Cadillacs, Charly Garcia, and Man Ray, and Zabala.

In another move, a worldwide co-publishing and joint-venture arrangement has been worked out with Latin/Pop producer/songwriter K.C. Porter and his Insignia Music, previously associated with Famous Music.

Porter, who has made success in Europe with his work on the last album by Latin crossover artist Ricky Martin, is working on a follow-up album as well as a number of other projects being developed in tandem with MCA. All future song acquisitions will be a part of MCA/Insignia joint venture.

Recently, MCA’s Latin department, under the direction of VP of Latin music Ivan F. Alavez, created an alliance with newly formed Surco, the joint-venture company started with Argentinean ranch worker Gustavo Santosaluia. Surco’s first signing, Molotov, is being released through a joint venture with MCA Music sister label Universal Music.

IRV LICHTMAN

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**R&B Task Force Follows Up; Music Sales Lines 4 Catalogs**

MORE ON ‘AFRIC: A task force representing the broadcasting, songwriter, music publishing, and label community of R&B held its second meeting Dec. 8 to explore the validity of forming AFRIC (American Federation of Recorded Publishers), a performance right group specializing in R&B (Billboard Bulletin, Nov. 13, 1997). While no formal action was taken, a source says the concept did go "to the next level" in that the group explored new technologies that could be used to capture broadcast performances. We also tried to poke holes into the theory of AFRIC, if it can hold together, and aim at a level and expertise songwriters have a right to expect," the source says.

The meeting, which lasted two hours, was held at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and Music, Library of Congress, 5th Ave. and 122nd St.

**Music Sales Buys: Music Sales Corp., the independent publishing/print company, has acquired interests in four publishing catalogs, including Stock on Music, AVI Music, Frederick Music, and American Film Partners, reports New York-based company president Barrie Edwards. He says Music Sales has acquired a "substantial interest" in Stock on Music and all of the interest in AVI Music it did not previously control.**

Stock on Music features such key copyrights as Leonard Russell’s songs, George Benson’s “This Masquerade,” Joe Cocker’s “Delta Lady,” and “Hello Little Girl” by the Carpenters “Superstar,” and B.B. King’s “Hummingbird.”

Among AVI’s copyrights are Soft Cell’s “Tainted Love” and Janis Joplin’s “A Woman Left Lonely,” along with hits recorded by Slim Harpo, the Rolling Stones, and Elvis Presley. Frederick Music has a number of blues favorites, including “Night Train,” Howlin’ Wolf’s “Do The Do” and “Five Long Years,” Canned Heat’s “The Pumpkin,” and the Allman Brothers’ “You Don’t Love Me.”

Features of the Aurora Film Partners catalog are material from the cult rock ’n’ roll film “Edie and the Cruisers,” including “On The Dark Side” by John Cafferty & The Beaver Brown Band.

In another Music Sales development, it is offering a catalog sampler covering eight decades of its major copyrights over a span of 14 CDs. The CDs, containing more than 200 songs in full-length recordings, are color-coded for easier reference by year and genre. Also included is a master clearance contact listing. Featured artists include Eric Clapton, Celine Dion, Tupac Shakur, Frank Sinatra, Earth, Wind & Fire, B.B. King, Emerson, Lake & Palmer, Duke Ellington, and Louis Armstrong, among others.

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**Petty Subpub Deals: BMG Music Publishing has obtained sub-publishing rights in Australia and New Zealand for Tom Petty’s publishing catalogs, representing his solo compositions and material penned for his work with the Heartbreakers and the Traveling Wilburys. His songs are published via his Gnome Gator Music, Tom Petty Music, and Jane Ann Music. The deal for the two territories was announced by Mitchell Rubin, managing director of BMG Music Publishing Australia.**

The Knit Expands Studio Role
N.Y. Venue Acquires Mark Kramer's Gear Services

BY PAUL VERN

NEW YORK—With the purchase of approximately $200,000 worth of vintage gear from producer/musician Mark Kramer's Demarest, N.J., studio and an expansion of its own facility, downtown live-music haunt the Knitting Factory is stepping up its role as one of the city's most innovative and prolific recording environments.

The equipment acquisition is part of a larger venture whereby KnitMedia—the Knitting Factory's parent company—bought Kramer's Shimmy-Disc indie record label and appointed Kramer studio manager and Shimmy-Disc president and A&R head (Billboard, Dec. 27, 1997).

Kramer says the major pieces of equipment he sold to the Knitting Factory are his Trident B-8 console, customized Sony JH-24 24-inch multitrack, MCI JH-110B half-inch analog mastering deck, Ecliptic III reverberation and Hammond B-3 church organ. In addition, the Knitting Factory acquired most of Kramer's microphone collection, which includes AKG 414's and 451's, Neumann U-87's and U-89's, two Neumann KM-84's, and various ElectroVoice, Shure, and Sennheiser models.

Kramer says, "Prior to moving down to the Knitting Factory, all of this gear was housed in my home studio in Demarest, where I recorded most of my best work, including Urge Overkill's 'Girl, You'll Be A Woman Soon' for the 'Pu'Pפיק Fiction' soundtrack."

The Knitting Factory studio now occupies approximately half of the basement of the Lower East Side complex, taking over space that was once used for offices and storage. Furthermore, a new performance space dubbed "the Old Office" was created downstairs adjacent to the control room, facilitating live and studio recording projects at the Knitting Factory, which is world renowned as a haven for avant-garde rock and jazz and other cutting-edge types of music and performance.

Club owner Michael Dorf says, "We've moved our office space [from the club's premises on Leonard Street] to Wofford Street, where we have 5,000 square feet of space. We've also moved our storage space from the downstairs area of the club, so it's opened up the whole floor. Half of the area has become our fourth performance space and will be used more often as a recording space because of the proximity to the control room."

Dorf adds that a former video-editing suite adjacent to the control room will now become a vocal overdub booth, and the control room itself will be physically expanded to accommodate Kramer's equipment. Furthermore, another room in the basement has been converted into a video-editing room, and yet another space will become a mastering studio.

"Essentially, we're combining two studios," explains Dorf. "Our limited studio, which before was 24-track digital, we're now supporting with 24-track analog with a 2-inch Sony machine plus a half-inch machine and lots of EQs and outboard gear."

Dorf adds, "The Trident board has a very warm sound. 'Dark Side Of The Moon' was recorded on it, so it also has quite a history. And another great thing is we're getting a lot of vintage mikes."

Dorf says the mastering room will not "compete with Bob Ludwig" but will be fully outfitted to handle in-house and outside album projects. The Knitting Factory—which moved to its current location in November 1994 from a much smaller spot on nearby Houston Street—is a multi-purpose club/recording studio with four performance spaces all wired to the downstairs control room for live recording to either 2-track, 8-track, 16-track, or 24-track media, according to Dorf. Besides offering high-quality live recording services to its performers, the Knitting Factory functions as a full-fledged studio during the day, with any of the four performance areas used as tracking rooms.

"It's really been used quite efficiently right now," says Dorf of the studio. "The word is out that not only can you perform here but you can also get a great recording of your performance, from a simple DAT to a 24-track tape. There are an average of two serious recordings done here every week, and maybe three or four live-to-DAT projects. It's ironic: When I watched the label owner [of in-house imprint Knitting Factory Works], I'm getting people submitting tapes they made here, saying, 'Hey, we did this at the Knit, we'd like you to put it out.'"

Dorf estimates that 50% of the Knitting Factory Works' releases are from live recordings made at the club, and another 40% are from studio sessions tracked at the facility. Dorf figures that the remaining 10% of the label's work, currently being done outside, will increasingly come under the Knitting Factory's roof with the new upgrade.

Dorf adds that the club's ability to instantly download a live recording and sell it on the Internet makes it increasingly attractive to its clients. "A hand performs, we put it on the hard drive immediately, and we can sell it over the Net with Liquid Audio," he says. "That recording never becomes an atom; it's only a digit."

For Kramer, the Knitting Factory deal represents the culmination of his lifelong dream to focus on the creative part of record-making and leave the business management to others.

"I'd always felt that the Knitting Factory would be a fine place for me to continue my work both as a producer and a label owner, so the combination of moving my studio and Shimmy-Disc down there was very appealing to me," he says.

PRODUCTION CREDITS
BILLBOARD'S NO. 1 SINGLES (JANUARY 3, 1998)

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French Gov’t Embraces Music
Culture Minister Wants Issues, Problems Studied

This story was prepared by Emmanuelle D poss, editor in chief of Music & Media.

Rennes, France—French Minister of Culture Catherine Trautmann is to create a new commission to review the problems faced by the music community.

According to Trautmann, the establishment of the body marks a “acknowledgement by the state of today’s music” and echoes the situation in the U.K., where the new Labour administration has set up a task force to deal with music industry matters (Billboard, July 26).

The 40-member “national commission on today’s music” will cover a wide range of topics, from record retail prices and the status of DJs to the development of concert venues and how to provide exposure for new acts.

“This commission will have an important task,” says Trautmann. “I’m expecting those qualified experts to come up with solutions to some of the problems faced by the music community in fields as diverse as the record business, television, or live music.”

Trautmann says her government’s policies concerning the music industry “will be inspired by the commission.” She expects a first report and proposals during the first quarter of this year, which will allow her to draft a policy for the second half of 1998.

In charge of the budget the possible evolution in a positive way of the funds allocated to today’s music,” the minister says.

Trautmann has asked Alex Duthil, currently director of musicians’ training school Studio des Variétés, to “make contacts [with experts] in order to set up the commission.” In order not to duplicate existing organizations, the commission members will be chosen for their professionalism and their experience and not as representatives of trade groups or unions, Trautmann specifies at the Ministry of Culture. “If the commission wants to know what are the positions of the different organizations, they can ask them,” says the source.

The establishment of the commission is viewed by the music industry as an important first step by France’s new socialist government. Before this move, music had not been a priority on Trautmann’s public agenda, since she took office after the June election.

“Not bad for a start, considering that they started thinking about it three weeks ago,” says a record company executive. “But that still doesn’t say where the music industry fits into the picture of that new government.”

This view is echoed by Hervé Roy, GM of record company body SNEK who says that since the election of the new government, there has not been “a recognition of the industry by the minister of culture.” Roy says that Trautmann is still awaiting a meeting with Trautmann to discuss the industry’s priorities.

“We have the feeling that the commercial aspect of music is not a priority for the minister,” Ro says. Nonetheless credits Trautmann for having set up the commission. But Rory admits that “it is hard to judge the outcome of this commission at this stage.”

“It is a good way of doing things in principle,” says Rory, but we’ve had three different ministers during the past five years, and each one has started a ‘review of the situation.’ The amount of situations has been done countless times. There is no need to do it another time, if it is not followed by a real policy.

“It is against the principle, providing it ends up with concrete action which serves the interests of the industry.”

Scandinavian’s complaint was spurred by the chart performance of “It’s My Life,” an album by its dance act Sash! “It was ignored the first week after release,” says Scandinavia’s managing director Eivin Schytt. “Then it went to No. 12 with sales of 2,000 units, but the next week it dropped to No. 20 despite the fact that 8,000 units were sold—that’s four times as many as the previous week.”

The weekly top 20 singles and album charts are based solely on data submitted by supermarket chain Folex, the consumer electronics chain Merlin, the TP chain of music stores, and 40 smaller record shops.

However, earlier this year leading music chain Pfaa and its MM outlets withdrew from the chart.

Says Schytt, “I would like to see the chart based more on real music stores. We can’t live with all the compilation albums on the chart, which are typically sold in supermarkets. Small companies like ours bring new music into Denmark. The current chart contains only a handful of indie labels, but a wide variety of artists. People have been complaining for a long time. The chart would be better if all [retail] outlets contributed.”

He adds, “We’ve learned to live with a chart that isn’t perfect, and you take it as it comes, but the chart is certainly more friendly towards the majors and the big-name acts.”

However, Niels Knudsen, director of chart compiler AC Nielsen AIM, counters, “The chart gives a fair picture of the market, but it would be more accurate if more retailers contributed.

“We show the [sales] performances of certain types of releases—albums sold above a certain price as opposed to the budget albums sold in petrol stations and the like,” he adds.

IFPI Denmark legal adviser Niels Andersen says, “We are currently working, and have been for some months, to improve the chart. The negotiations [with other retailers] will continue, and we hope to be able to provide a broader picture.”

Danish Indie Lodges Chart Complaint
Says Lists Favor Major Labels & Acts, Supermarket Sales

BY CHARLES FERRO

COPENHAGEN—The official Danish charts are being accused of favoring major labels and artists and of being too heavily weighted toward music sold through supermarkets.

Copenhagen-based indie label Scandinavian Records has complained to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) about the top 20 singles and album charts here, which are compiled for IFPI Denmark by market research company AC Nielsen AIM in conjunction with public broadcaster Danmarks Radio, tabloid newspaper Ekstra Bladet, and music magazine Mix.

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Singapore Labels Concerned About Price War

BY PHILIP CHEAH

SINGAPORE—Record companies here are alarmed that the price war that developed throughout the second quarter of 1997 meant that CDs in the pre-Christmas period were sold at an all-time low.

New releases were retailing for as little as 13.99 Singapore dollars ($8.74) in several medium-sized outlets, with a market average of 16.99 Singapore dollars ($10.61). Normal retail price for front-line CDs is 20 Singapore dollars ($12.50).

The battle lines in the price war are drawn almost clearly between the megastores and the local retailers.

The introduction of international store brands to the market—HMV has one store here and Tower has just opened its second outlet—has led domestic operators to feel their customer base is under attack. In addition, the regional financial crisis has hit hard the buying power of Singapore consumers and tourists.

‘This present war will benefit only the consumers’

Labels are viewing the price war with concern. Peter Lau, chairman of the Singapore Phonogram and Videogram Assn. and managing director of EMI here, says record companies had hoped prices had stabilized around 18.99 Singapore dollars ($11.86). “But before long, shops started undercutting each other,” he says.

“This present war will benefit only the consumers. Like the currency crisis, prices will just go down, and it will be a long time before it stabilizes,” Lau says.

The regional crisis is compounding the problem by effectively lowering the price of parallel imports. “It’s now cheaper to source from Malaysia,” says Danmarks, IFPI’s regional operations development director, “so a lot of smaller retailers are doing that.” Singapore is now becoming a place to dump cheap goods.

“Small stores are thinking short-term, because in the long term, they are devaluing the product with such prices,” he adds.

Says a Warner Music spokesman, “It’s a vicious, evolutionary cycle. The local stores slash prices because they aren’t happy with the shrinking pie. In response, the chain stores start slashing their prices, so in the end no one wins, because how are you going to pay the rent?”

The one area of music holding its price is back catalog, where CDs are still priced at 19.99 Singapore dollars ($12.49) and upward.

“I don’t see it as a price war,” says Dave Boo, owner of the Sembawang Music indie chain. “It’s more like a clearance. If I get stuck with Depeche Mode, I don’t mind letting it go at below $6.25. Besides, the number of titles that are being parallel-imported from Southeast Asia are only selected ones, because the printing standards of the CD sleeves don’t match up to the ones here.”

However, one industry observer notes, “If so many front-line items are priced so low, who is going to buy your back catalog?”
Billboard Opens Nordic Bureau
Will Be Headed By Former Label Exec Lothuses

Billboard is bolstering its coverage of the important Scandinavian market with the creation of a Nordic bureau. Headed by former Scandinavian Records executive and longstanding Billboard Norwegian correspondent Kai R. Lothuses, the new bureau will enhance Billboard’s already in-depth and authoritative coverage of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland.

International editor in chief Adam White says, “The Nordic countries have long been a priority for Billboard. The appointment of a man as experienced in business and in business journalism as Kai is a measure of the significance we accord to this region.

“Furthermore, as the single European market becomes more of a commercial reality, and as pan-Nordic issues take on more significance, this new bureau will ensure Billboard stays abreast of all cross-border and regional developments.”

Lothuses will work closely with Billboard’s other Nordic correspondents, Charles Ferro in Denmark and Antti Hukunen in Finland, along with a new Swedish correspondent to be appointed early in the new year.

Lothuses is based at Lyngstien 9a, N-1829, Moss, Norway, Telephone: 47 50 02 66 16, fax: 47 50 07 00 40.
U.K. LABEL A HIT ON WORLD CIRCUIT
(Continued from preceding page)

25. Lo's debut album, "No La Thi-
as," has notched up 30,000 Euro-
pean sales and recently been re-
leased by Nonesuch.

Another World Circuit signing, the
Cuban son band Sienna Maestra, led
by arranger/composer Juan d'Mar-
cos, released its new album, "Tibiri
Tabara," Nov. 11 in the U.K. The al-
bum, which presents a history of son
from the earliest years of this cen-
tury up to the present day, will be re-
leased early next year in the U.S. on
Nonesuch. Also new on World Circuit
is "Temporal" by the Spanish band
Radio Tarifa, which plays an exotic
blend of Andalusian and Arabic
sounds.

World Circuit records and pro-
duces most of its own releases. It
also organize tour support for all of
its recording artists.

In October Gold re-entered the
studio with Gonzalez and recorded
20 tracks in three days for a follow-
up to the pianist's album. In Novem-
ber he was in Mali to record a new
Ali Farka Toure album, the first new
recording by the African guitarist
since the 1995 Grammy-winning
"Talking Timbuktu," which featured
Cooder. Then in January, Gold plans
to revisit Cuba to record a follow-up
for "Buena Vista."

Gold says, "The success is very
gratifying, but I want to keep things
small like a family so that we can
properly take care of the artists and
do each release justice. We've only
released five albums this year, all
of which we feel passionate about.
We don't want to put out dozens of
albums and hope a few of them
stick."

Charlie Gillett, who hosts a world
music show every Saturday on BBC-
ownedGreater London Radio, says,
"There have been many in pop
history when you could virtually
depend upon a label to buy a record
blind. Atlantic had it in the early
days, maybe Motown had it for a
while, and World Circuit has it at
the moment. Since I started the
show in May 1995 it is almost
embarrassing how often I play their
releases."

At Womex, the annual world music
trade fair at Marseille, France, the
legendary producer Joe Boyd de-
clared World Circuit's release of
"Buena Vista" the event of the year,
despite having his own rival Cuban-
recorded releases on Rykodisc/Han-
niba.

World Circuit's perfectionism has
become a watchword, extending
through every facet of the process
between recording and sale. Simon
Anbolt, a London-based corporate
marketing consultant whose clients
include BMW and Nike, says, "The
'Buena Vista' album packaging pos-
sesses the perfect point-of-sale
image. It is a model of how to do it."

Jenny Adlington, World Circuit's
director of sales, marketing, and
promotion, who organized the
"Buena Vista" campaign, says, "We
package according to the individual
artist and album rather than any
corporate label image." Label iden-
tity has been established by World
Circuit's handsome slipcases and
booklets.

Adlington has also organized
posters, postcards, T-shirts, and
other marketing tools around the
imprint's Cuban releases. "It is a
way of getting noticed in a satura-
ed market," she says.

In Europe, marketing campaigns
—planned with local distributors
and licensees — have tended to focus
on traditional in-store activity and
print advertising, but the Cuban
releases were advertised in New
Zealand on buses in major cities, and
in Australia with a joint promotion
with Cuban cigars. A single from the
"Buena Vista" album, "Chan Chan,"
has recently been produced for retail
marketing in giveaways and compe-
titions and is being released com-
mercially.

"We've built up a network of com-
mitted distributors across Europe
and into Australia, New Zealand, the
Far East, and South Africa," says
Adlington. "We thought about open-
ing offices in the U.S., Canada, and
Japan, but we do not want to get
administratively top-heavy, and the
Nonesuch license seems the perfect
solution."

In each territory, World Circuit
has used a leading independent dis-
tributor rather than the majors and
has consolidated by employing inde-
pendent publicists. Leading Euro-
pean distributors include Munich
Records in Holland and Belgium,
Night and Day in France, TIS/
EastWest in Germany, and Arpa-
folk in Spain.

Classical Deal. This month, Daniel Barenboim is recording Wagner's "Lohen-
grin" with the Berlin Staatskapelle orchestra and continuing his recording of
Mozart's piano concertos after signing a long-term exclusive deal with Teldec
Classics International. Pictured at the signing, from left, are Teldec director
of business and legal affairs Gerfried Horst, Warner Music international
chairman/CEO Ramon Lopez, Teldec executive producer Renate Kulper, Baren-
boim, and Warner Classics International president/Teldec president Marco Big-
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<th><strong>GERMANY</strong></th>
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<th><strong>FRANCE</strong></th>
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### JAPAN

**SINGLES**

1. NEW YORK SONG / VICTOR / 01/03/98
2. RHYTHM KAWAKAMI / LOVE / 01/03/98
3. NEW JAPAN DAIJU / COLLECTION / 01/03/98
4. CLEO DION / LET'S TALK ABOUT LOVE / 01/03/98
5. NEW SYZYGY / BOY ALL STARS ETC. / 01/03/98

### GERMANY

**SINGLES**

1. NEW YORK SONG / VICTOR / 01/03/98
2. RHYTHM KAWAKAMI / LOVE / 01/03/98
3. NEW JAPAN DAIJU / COLLECTION / 01/03/98
4. CLEO DION / LET'S TALK ABOUT LOVE / 01/03/98
5. NEW SYZYGY / BOY ALL STARS ETC. / 01/03/98

### U.K.

**SINGLES**

1. TOO MUCH SPACE GIRLS VEGAN
2. TOO MUCH SPACE GIRLS VEGAN
3. TOO MUCH SPACE GIRLS VEGAN
4. TOO MUCH SPACE GIRLS VEGAN
5. TOO MUCH SPACE GIRLS VEGAN

### FRANCE

**SINGLES**

1. DAVID JOLIS FLORENT PAGNY / 01/03/98
2. BABY GIRL / UNIVERSAL
3. BABY GIRL / UNIVERSAL
4. BABY GIRL / UNIVERSAL
5. BABY GIRL / UNIVERSAL

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2. NEW = New Entry RE = Re-Entry
**HITS OF THE WORLD**

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**GLOBAl MUSIC PULSE**

**THE LATEST MUSIC NEWS FROM AROUND THE PLANET**

**GERMANY**: Berlin-based band Bell Book & Candle has scored a platinum hit (600,000 copies sold) with its debut single, “Rescue Me” (BMG Musik Berlin), which in December was still in the top five, four months after it first entered the charts. Founded in 1994, the group consists of singer Janna Gross and top studio musicians Andy Birr (guitar) and Henrik Roeder (bass). Gross’ voice is reminiscent of Cranberries singer Dolores O’Riordan, while the group’s gentle melodic rock echoes the style of Enya. The group’s producer, Ingo Politz and Bernd Wendland, are no newcomers to the charts, having scored in the past with dance act X-Perience (WEA). Since its single’s release, Bell Book & Candle has been touring small clubs. The group’s follow-up single, “Read My Sign,” will be released Jan. 12, with a debut album of the same title to follow Jan. 26. According to Politz, the origin of the group’s curious name dates back to the Middle Ages, when the combination of a bell, a book, and a candle was popularly believed to ward off evil thoughts.

**POLAND**: Boy bands are very popular here, and various Polish managers and producers have long wished they, too, could form a home-grown group that could compete with international teen idols like the Backstreet Boys and World’s Apart. Now, thanks to manager, producer, and songwriter Sławomir Sokolowski, Poland has its own boy band: Just 5. Sokolowski planned his strategy with meticulous care of videos of similar bands, both successful and unsuccessful, from all over the world before advertising in the local press, schools, and discs for boys over the age of 15 to form “a Polish Take That.” Five boys were eventually chosen by a jury consisting mostly of teenaged girls. They are Shadi, Gregory, Robert, Bartek, and Daniel. Their ages range from 15 to 26; they all have some musical experience and are all fans of Michael Jackson. Just 5’s first single and predominantly Polish-language album, “Kolorowe Sky” (“Colored Dreams”), is released on BMG Ariola, and the group has already toured the country as support to N’Sync.

**IRELAND**: Over the course of nearly two hours, “Gaelic Roots,” a two-CD set released on the New York-based Kella Music label, presents some of the world’s finest Celtic musicians as heard in performance at the Boston Gaelfest of 1998 and 1996. In an scholarly essay celebrating the festival and outlining the progress of Irish music in North America, Dr. Mick Moloney notes that although there is now a worldwide renaissance of Irish traditional music, “it wasn’t so long ago that this music was not very highly regarded in Irish society. It was associated with poverty and backwardness in a country suffering from class, post-colonial self-doubt, where many aspects of the native culture were marginalized.” “Gaelic Roots” includes such prominent musicians as whistle player Sean Potts (who was with the Chieftains for 16 years until his retirement in 1979), Paddy Keenan (sometimes called “the Jimi Hendrix of the whistle”), Fiddle player Eoghan Quirke (who has toured with Hall & Oates and is now a star in “Riverrun”), and the French-Canadian music of Les Quebecois.

**SPAIN**: In flamenco, the mournful style of wailing known as cante jondo (deep song) is the Spanish Gypsy equivalent of the Delta blues. Unfortunately, this country’s Gypsy population has something else in common with African-American Gypsies: It is being forced to leave Spain. The Gypsies end up spending time in prison. A novel experiment arranged by Spain’s prison department and the Confederation of Flamenco Social Clubs has resulted in the release of the album “2 Gritos De Libertad” (2 cries Of Freedom) on the indie label Big Bang, based in the southern city of Granada. The set features the two winners of a national competition to find the best flamenco singers behind bars. They are José Serrano and Antonio El Agujetas, who have been in Córdoba jail in southern Andalusia for 18 years for murder and 12 years for various misdemeanors, respectively. They were chosen from 150 entrants, and the quality of their cante is remarkable. The plan now is to run this extraordinary competition every two years. By the time of the next one, in 1999, El Agujetas should be out on the streets again, but Serrano will still be in his cell.

**FRANCE**: Just as British-born Asians are making some of the most vibrant music in London at the moment (Billboard, Dec. 5, 1997), so Paris is also being invigorated by the sounds imported by its immigrant communities. The area of Barbes in Paris is called the “edge of Africa.” It lies in the middle of Montmartre, at the foot of the Basilica of Sacré Cœur, and for years has been the home of exiles from every corner of the African continent. A musical crossroads for different cultures and traditions, mixing urban adrenaline with village tranquility and extending across generations, Barbes is home to a predominantly North African culture. This is reflected in the music of the Orchestre National De Barbes, which brings together performers from Algeria and Morocco and other Saharan regions of Africa as well as second-generation, French-born Arabs. The ensemble’s first album, “En Concert” (Tajazaat/Discovery), was released in Paris over two nights in November 1996 and is an uplifting explosion of rhythms from the African continent-—in particular from Morocco to Libya. There are elements of Algerian rai and more traditional Sufi sounds, all imbued with a strong pop sensibility.

**KING WILLIAMSON**
MASARU IBUKA, who in 1946 founded Tokyo Telecommunications Engineering Corp.—later to become Sony Corp.—died of heart failure Dec. 19 at his home in the Japanese capital. He was 90. The company first made a name for itself in 1950, when it developed and marketed the first tape recorder in Japan. Other innovations associated with Ibuka include Japan’s first TV set, in 1954, and the world’s first transistor TV set, in 1960. Ibuka was the company’s president from 1950 to 1971 and chairman from 1971 to 1976. In recent years, he held the title of founder and chief adviser. STEVE McCLURE

LONDON-BASED TRADE GROUP the International Managers’ Forum (IMF) will study artist/manager contracts as part of its 1998 priorities, the organization announced Dec. 15. IMF chairman John Glover told the group that it is to produce a report on management contracts, which he said is a “vital component of the industry’s competitiveness.” The report will be released in the second quarter of 1999. The IMF is a non-profit trade group founded in 1993 to help managers develop their businesses. Its activities this year will include an expansion of the IMF’s training programs; the organization has been asked to provide packages for artist managers in Germany and Norway. Newly elected to the IMF council is Ian Allen of the Birmingham, England-based management firm that bears his name. James Fisher continues as general secretary; deputy chairman Jeff Hanlon and treasurer David Stoppes were re-elected.

WARNER MUSIC AUSTRALIA has named Thomas Heymann national marketing manager. He has relocated to Australia in March 1997 when he was appointed product manager for the Epic label at Sony Music Australia. He was formerly senior product manager at Sony Music Germany. CHRISTIE ELIEZER

A ROYAL CHARITY PREMIERE Dec. 15 of Spice Girls’ first feature film, “Spiceworld: The Movie,” which features music from their second album, Virgin’s album, “Spiceworld,” raised about $200,000 ($330,000). The screening in London was attended by Prince Charles and Princess Diana, William and Harry; proceeds will go to the Prince’s Trust charity. The film was sold for U.K. release Dec. 26 through PolyGram Filmed Entertainment and in North America Jan. 23 through Sony/Columbia.

CHRIS BARRETT

BMG MUSIC PUBLISHING WORLDWIDE has appointed Kazuo Munakata senior director of BMG Music Publishing Japan. He will report to David Loiterton, regional VP of BMG Music Publishing Asia, in the Tokyo-based post. Munakata was a 20-year veteran of independent music group Kitty Music Corp. before joining the posts of senior director of both its music publishing and Kitty Records divisions, before becoming GM of PolyGram Music Publishing in Japan. As a result, he will take over the Kitty Music publishing and repertoire division from April 1, 1998, when he is expected to lead a move to return Kitty to profitability. He will report to BMG Music Publishing chairman Masashi Hayashi.

THE FOUNDATION STONE for new offices for all BMG Ariola labels based in Munich was laid Dec. 9. The building on Neumarkter Strasse in the city will bring together for the first time all 500 BMG Munich staffers under one roof. The 24,000-square-meter building is set to be handed over to BMG Entertainment International in December 1999. The company says the building budget is 150 million marks ($84 million).

JAMES PITMAN SUCCEEDED Kick Klimbic as head of EMI Classics’ international marketing department Jan. 1, based in London. Pitman was previously director of international marketing at Warner Classics International. Klimbic is relocating to his native Netherlands and will take a new post with EMI. He had been EMI Classics’ VP of international since 1995, reporting to president Richard Lofsky.

POLYGRAM INTERNATIONAL MUSIC PUBLISHING has bought Harlekijn Holland from owners Herman van Veen and Erik van der Wurff. Polygram has a long-standing administration deal for the Harlekijn catalogue, which is expected to take a new route within Polygram. The company has been a leading Dutch publisher and Polygram has signed Pieter Pater, “Zo Vrolijk,” and “Ik Voel Me Zo Verdomd Alleen.”

INDIGO SEEN AS MAJOR RETAIL PLAYER Book/Music Chain Committed To Record Sales

BY LARRY LEBLANC

TORONTO—Several Canadian music industry executives have high expectations for recorded-music sales at the recently launched Indigo Books Music & Cafe retail chain, which operates three stores in Ontario.

Indigo opened its first store, a 20,000-square-foot facility on Sept. 15, 1997, in Burlington, west of Toronto. It was followed by a 33,000-square-foot store on Toronto’s Yonge Street, which opened November 21 in Kingston, east of Toronto.

“Indigo is going to be extremely helpful for our industry,” predicts Don Oates, senior VP of sales at Sony Music Entertainment (Canada). “With the level of investment they have put into the store in Yonge Street, it is going to be a significant environment to shop for music that is very different from any other store in the city.”

According to Indigo president CEO and co-owner Heath Reisman, the chain’s second location opened Nov. 21 in Burlington, west of Toronto. The chain’s next opening will be in July at an unspecified location in Ontario. From July to late September, the peak selling period for books and recorded music in Canada, Indigo will expand its base in Ontario by opening more stores in the province and will open outlets in Manitoba and Alberta as well.

While over the years there have been single-store outlets in Canada that have combined book and music retailing, the emergence of Indigo marks a significant breakthrough for the book/music concept due to the immense size and lavish decor of Indigo’s stores and its commitment to selling music. “For me to be involved with (selling both) books and music is like Disneyland for me,” says Reisman. “I was one of the people involved in (my father’s) Borders Canada in 1995. When that didn’t happen, a group of [investors] then had a chance to shape an approach of what a bookstore could be. I don’t think anyone would go into Indigo and say we’ve just cloned someone else.”

Like the independent and publicly owned Borders Inc., headquartered in Ann Arbor, Mich.—which, with close to 200 stores, is one of the leading book and music retailers in the U.S.—Indigo stores feature an impressive selection of books and music. Like Borders, Indigo has tie-in sales (which will eventually be licensed) and hosts regular in-store appearances by prominent musicians and authors. Unlike Borders, Indigo does not carry full-service music catalogs.

Reisman says the reason Indigo decided on this retailing strategy for its Burlington launch wasn’t because recorded music hasn’t been available via a Canadian bookstore. “We sell books by Borders and we sell books by Indigo.”

“The distinction might seem small to some, it’s very significant for us. Music is an element of Sony’s mainstream pop titles. ‘Through the Barbra Streisand album [’Higher Ground’] has crossed all the [demo] boundaries, we’ve gone triple-platinum [300,000 units] after only a month of release. Indigo’s contribution was extremely strong,’ he says.

Indigo is also doing a good job selling Celine Dion’s “Let’s Talk About Love,” he says.

With popular chart titles and select pop catalog at $14.99 Canadian, and with many jazz, classical, and new age titles, Indigo’s music section is slightly higher than most national traditional music retail chains and discounters. Duncan has said the higher $1-$2 difference in pricing, saying, “We’re competitive, but we’re not here to be price leaders.”

“We’re trying to woo that Indigo’s older customer core most likely won’t walk at the high-end pricing because they’re accustomed to paying at least $35 for hardcover books.”

Canadian multinational and independent-label execs hope Indigo will mirror the U.S. success of Borders and are optimistic that Indigo’s targeting of 25-plus consumers—who are often appreciative about shopping in traditional music outlets or buy albums through record clubs—will be beneficial.

Says Finkelstein, “I’m hoping Indigo mirrors the experience of Borders, because the records True North releases have a chance of succeeding in that [kind of] retail environment.”

Also enthusiastic about Indigo is Bill Ott, president of PolyGram Group Distribution. “It’s very early to predict how much they will sell, but they have written us, but [Indigo executives] are talking about the ratio of sales to music of their overall business being 15% [which] wouldn’t be unusual. And the key is that a particular type of repertoire can do extremely well there. It’s a very nice marriage for our PolyGram repertoire, particularly the classics and the non-pop, deep catalog we have.”

While acknowledging Indigo’s sizable potential for selling music product, Garry Newman, senior VP of retail at Jim & Greg’s, is wary of concerns about the chain winning over smaller independent retailers that won’t be able to directly compete.

“It’s definitely going to kill what little independent bookstores and CD stores are left,” Newman says. “No doubt in my mind. They just can’t compete when there’s [stores selling] at this level.”

MAPLE BRIEFS

DISTRIBUTION FUSION III in Montreal has acquired Canadian distributor Music Distribution Ltd. (MDL) from record label Telecommunications Records. Formed in 1991 by Arnold Schwisberg, the Toronto-based label has been handled by artist manager Doug Roy with singer John Labelle; pianists BrianDickson, Jean-François Groulx, and François Bourassa; guitarist Lorne Ide; and Female vocalists Lenny Solomon; and bassist Michael Farquharson.

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1998 is shaping up to be another exhilarating year for Canadian music, both internationally and within Canada's mercurial music industry, which generates $1.32 billion (Canadian) in sales annually, with domestic repertoire accounting for 12% to 15% of that amount, according to Brian Robertson, president of the Canadian Recording Industry Association.

Canada's profile will be boosted this year by current [pre-1998] albums from Celine Dion, Shania Twain, Sarah McLachlan, Bryan Adams, Jann Arden, Terri Clark, Paul Brandt, Loreena McKennitt, Holly Cole, Big Wreck, Our Lady Peace, Ron Sexsmith and Chantal Kreviazuk, as well as 1998 releases by Alanis Morissette, Amanda Marshall, Barrenaked Ladies, Cowboy Junkies, Ashley MacIsaac, Crash Test Dummies and a French-language album by Dion.

There will also be significant releases by such critically acclaimed acts as Hayden, the Walruses, Lynda Lemay and Wendy Lands, and by such promising newcomers as Esthero on Dreamworks; Tara Lyn Hart and Melanie Doane, both on Columbia; Bruce Guthro on EMI; and Transister Sound & Lighting Co. on Vik. Additionally, there will be a solo album by Blue Rodeo frontman Jim Cuddy on WEA.

**LET'S TALK ABOUT SALES**

What's mind-boggling to many veteran Canadian music-industry figures now is that not even international superstars catch the staggering success in Canada of Dion. In the past seven years, her catalog has sold a dizzying 9 million albums in Canada, Dion's fifth album, "Let's Talk About Love," released last November on Columbia Records here (550 Music outside Canada), sold 1.3 million units in Canada by year's end. According to Rick Camilleri, president of Sony Music Entertainment (Canada), Dion's 1996 album "Falling Into You" has sold 27.3 million units worldwide and 1.6 million units in Canada. "Falling Into You" is going to finish [globally] at 30 million [units], predicts Camilleri.

Even without Dion, Sony would still be Canada's undisputed heavyweight of domestic repertoire, far eclipsing other rival multinationals based here. Aggressively working its roster, both domestically and internationally, the company has also been successful in launching Amanda Marshall, Chantal Kreviazuk, Our Lady Peace, and the Philosopher Kings, at home and abroad. Too of 1998's most promising acts are Sony's — country singer Tara Lyn Hart and singer/songwriter Melanie Doane.

According to Camilleri, Marshall's 1995 eponymous titled debut has sold 768,000 units to date in Canada and 2 million units worldwide, including 154,000 units in the U.S.; and Kreviazuk's 1997 album "Under These Rocks And Stones" has sold 65,000 units in Canada and 17,000 units in the U.S. "Chantal's album is going to go through the roof this year," enthuses Camilleri. "My prediction is 250,000

Continued on page 41
Great Wired North: Canada Online

Increasing numbers of artists and labels are going there to network, Net-cast and conduct "guerilla PR." Are they having any luck?

BY CHRISTOPHER JONES

Countries, like people, tend to reflect a certain comfort level when it comes to new technologies. Canada, while perhaps not an "early adopter," is no slouch when it comes to Internet utilization, particularly by the music industry. There are currently millions of Web sites devoted to Canadian music and hundreds of homepages—some of them particularly good—by individuals and bands.

Like music-creators elsewhere, Canadians are using the Web for promotional presence, to distribute band information and as a mail-order site. Singer-songwriter Jane Siberry, whose Shechina Records (www.shechina.ca) exists only in cyberspace—eives her site to raise funds through online auctions and to publicize a tour-stop street postering and pre-show hairdressing in exchange for concert tickets and T-shirts. Says Siberry, "I don't think I could do it without the Internet. It has magnetized a lot of energy."

Vancouver-based band manager and Netwerk Records president Terry McBride was using networked bulletin-board services even before the proliferation of the WorldWide Web. McBride says that, while maintaining a first-rate site, like the one mounted for Sarah McLachlan's Lilith Fair (lilithfair.com), does require time and money, it also provides savings in other areas. "Lilith Fair didn't have to set up an office with six or seven people employed just to answer phones and field questions," notes McBride. "It doesn't sell the thing for you. You have to market it the same way you would market any other record."

TWO YEARS TO DOWNLOAD

It's a given that Internet sales will grow as the network expands and as the concept of online ordering and commerce becomes more familiar to people: "Music will be sold directly on the Net on a regular basis within two years," predicts Netwerk's McBride. "You can already download music. And, yeah, it might seem slow to us now, but two years ago it was a hundred times slower. I happen to think that two years is a conservative guess."

Add Gold, "The Internet is becoming a huge shopping mall. And it's funny, the most popular things on the Internet apparently are the porno sites and music sites. It's still about sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll."

SITES OF INTEREST

www.ncl.carleton.ca/~ck580/CMA.html (extensive list of links to dozens of Canadian music-related sites)

www.primalbeat.com (extensive coverage of Canadian artists, music news, etc.)

www.interlog.com/~cpreal/coma/ (Canadian On-line Musicians Association: good site for music-related Canadian music)

www.juno-awards.ca/hof (well-archived site, gives background on Canada's national music awards and winners)

www.4C.ca (Home of Music International Direct Inc., a national distribution network for Canadian indie music)

PRO-ACTIVE PUBLICITY

The Tragically Hip's Toronto-based manager, Jake Gold, is equally impressed with the Internet's broadcast capabilities. "The ability to send your message out to people, instead of sitting passively and waiting for them to come to you, is the best thing about the medium. "It allows us to reach the fans—without relying on the press. We can hit the magpies, the really dedicated fans who start the word-of-mouth. We don't have to depend on someone else to translate our message and then transmit it to our fans. We're in charge. It's very proactive."

Gold estimates that the group has a database of 16,000 e-mail subscribers worldwide, with Canadians representing about 40% of the total. As for the Tragically Hip's Website (www.thehip.com), Gold says, "It's a great way of empowering your fans and making them feel part of the process, part of the group. The people who visit your site the most tend to be the really loyal, hardcore fans. So it's critical that the site be updated regularly. It requires real long-term commitment."

Gold's faith in the Internet extends to the world of commerce. The Tragically Hip's latest album, "Live Between Us," is available on the U.S. only through N'K's Music Boulevard Website (www.musicbldv.com). "Sales haven't been huge," he acknowledges. "But we've proven that it can be done. Just making the record available doesn't sell the thing for you. You have to market it the same way you would market any other record."

Most Likely To Succeed: Talent Picks For '98

Canadian editor Larry Leblanc spotlights the Canadian signings who show the greatest promise of breaking internationally, as well as some newcomers who deserve greater recognition within Canada in 1998.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>STYLE</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esthero</td>
<td>Dream</td>
<td>Trippy acid-jazz/funk</td>
<td>U.S. and Canadian A&amp;R reps tripped over themselves in '97 trying to sign up singer/songwriter Esthero and guitarist Doc. The Toronto-based duo's debut album, &quot;Breath From Another,&quot; to be released in the first quarter, is an unqualified knockout.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tara Lyn Hart</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>With her remarkable debut album expected in May, Hart will almost certainly dominate Canadian country charts in late 1998 and make gains in the U.S. as well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great Big Sea</td>
<td>WEA</td>
<td>Celtic-rock</td>
<td>Newfoundland's most boisterous rock band will get a shot at the U.S. market in the first quarter of '98. Sire Records is issuing a compilation of its two WEA Canadian albums, &quot;Up&quot; and &quot;Play.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leehy</td>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>Celtic-rock</td>
<td>Electrifying videos and concert performances have enabled Virgin to boost the Lakefield Ontario, family band's eponymously titled label debut to 70,000 units in Canada in 1997. It's being released in the U.S. on Narada in late February.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melanie Doane</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Singer/songwriter</td>
<td>A spring '97 Canadian release, this dazzling sophomore album will astonish even the singer's significant Canadian cult base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julian Austin</td>
<td>Vak</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>This New Brunswick hardcore-country traditionalist made sizable in-roads in Canada in 1996 with his debut album, &quot;What My Heart Already Knows.&quot; He also deservedly won the Victa (Rising Star) honors at the Canadian Country Music Awards in 1997.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Bell</td>
<td>Singpost</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>U.S. Christian labels should check out this outstanding Winnipeg-based singer/songwriter, who has released five albums in Canada since 1989.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ennis Sisters</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Folk/Pop</td>
<td>Newfoundland sisters Maureen (20), Karen (18) and Teresa (16), backed with $20,000 provided by their parents, recorded their exquisite debut album, &quot;Red Is The Rose.&quot; Released independently in June 1997, the album is one of the musical highlights in Canada of the past year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night Sun</td>
<td>Night Sun</td>
<td>Folk</td>
<td>Originally formed in the Northwest Territories by singer/guitarist Ellen Hamilton and now based in Kingston, Ont., this intriguing five-piece acoustic group, with a three-album catalog, has melded its agilex music from Celtic, blues, cajun and country sources.</td>
</tr>
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Robert Farrell | KS Communications | Folk/Blues | Arguably the greatest undiscovered guitarist in Canada, Ottawa-based Farrell has recorded two albums, "Freedom For My Soul" (1996) and the astonishingly tasteful "When The Banks Of The Mississippi Run Dry" (1997). |
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It's All Too "Much"

The country's only national music-video channel exercises increasing marketing clout—outside as well as inside Canada.

By Paul Cantin

OUTPOSTS EVERYWHERE

Since it started broadcasting in August 1984 from parent company CHUM-City's studio in Toronto, Much has always tried to reflect the communities it broadcasts into. In 1986, it developed MusiquePlus, a French-language service to Montreal. In 1992, MuchMusic Argentina began in Buenos Aires, and in 1995, Much went to Helsinki to launch Jyrki, a daily 90-minute broadcast.

In July 1998, Much launched the Rainbow Programming Holdings for MuchUSA. Along with content originating from Toronto, the network creates shows specifically for the American market, and—adding digital-cable channels in 1998, including 40 in the U.S.—Much has established broadcast "outposts where we have a dense concentration of viewers in cities like Cleveland, and hopes to add more. Even with limited access to the American market, Much has a strong brand and is getting noticed. They are definitely getting a lot stronger in the U.S.," says Marybeth Kammerer, director of music-video promotion for Atlantic Records. "They are very in touch with their audience; that's great for a music channel." All this encouraged Kammerer to make Atlantic the first U.S.-based label to strike a promotional deal with MuchUSA. Fans of Atlantic's Canadian signing, the Tea Party, will be pleased to know that if they want to catch the group's upcoming Rolling Stones appearance on Jan. 9 at The Skydome.

Universal Music Canada's Randy Lennox says he has seen a strong connection between MuchUSA's presence and pockets of American support for Canadian singer Holly McNarland. "Much has been very helpful in U.S. markets as well. Our New York office tells us they are getting some good Holly McNarland [sales] response," says Lennox.

At home, Much has little to prove in terms of influence and audience loyalty. The launch concerted a three-million Canaadians tuned into the MuchMusic Video Awards on Sept. 18. Much claims its per-minute audience has increased from 22,500 to 28,100 since 1996, and its 12- to 17-year-old numbers have increased 55%.

"MuchMusic has been a tremendous success story," says Sunni Bost, executive director of Optimedia, which buys ad time for brand-name companies. "I would say that it is still among the top three cable networks we use."

Canadian labels say Much remains a powerful marketing tool. "Intimate & Interactive," the network's signature series of specials, brings acts into the network's broadcast center to perform and take audience questions. The series has showcased Joni Mitchell, INXS, Foo Fighters, Live, Bruce Cockburn and Jewel. Universal Music Canada used "I&I" to launch Bush's " Razorblade Suitcase" and used No Doubt's appearance for a worldwide simulcast.

ACTS FOR ALL GENRES

Many other Canadian artists, in all musical genres, continue to enjoy significant success internationally. These include Barenaked Ladies in pop; Diana Krall, Jane Bunnett, Bob McComin and Renée Rosnes in jazz; Ben Harper and Daniel Lanois in country; Frankie Cotrone, of Blue Rodeo, in alternative; Bruce Cockburn and John Mann of Great Lake Swimmers, in folk; and Freddi Burch in children's music. Most recently, seen in Canada are the likes of the Tragically Hip, Bryan Adams, Blue Rodeo, the Rankin Family, Great Big Sea and Rawlins Cross.

At home, an enormous number of newcomer acts have made national breakthroughs in the past year. These include suchCeltic-styled artists as Leela, Mary Jane Lamond and Natalie MacMaster; as well as Big Sugar and Buffy Sainte-Marie. The Tragically Hip, Bryan Adams and the Rankin Family were the most popular acts in Canada, with OAP, Live, Bryan Adams, Alanis Morissette, the Tragically Hip and Bryan Adams among the most popular acts to emerge in 1998.

Stars like Bryan Adams and Celine Dion have made multiple international breakthroughs, and many other artists have made an impact in Canada. The recent growth of acts like Great Big Sea and the Rankin Family has been significant.

BILLY THE KID

"I'm thinking

Carl Henry

"The wait is over."

Carl Henry

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Im thinking

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Going for airplay now on radio
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The frame is nearing platinum.

**NO. 1 ON SOUNDSCAN**

Ross Reynolds, president of Universal Music Canada, is equally euphoric about Canadian music. "We certainly are enthused with continuing the relationship with the Tragically Hip. Their live album ['Live Between Us', released in May, 1997] debuted at No. 1 on the Sound-Scan retail album chart and sold 400,000 units by year's end [1997's end]. We're also very enthused about Holly Mckay, Blue Rodeo and doing the multi-continuing successes of the Headstones, Carmen Campagne and [new signer] Laura Smith and Carlos Morgan.

What's especially impressive to many Canadian industry figures is the colossal number of new acts that have emerged in Canada in the past year. This includes Dayna Manning, Julian Austin, Econoline Crush, Wide Mouth Mason, Brigitte Pae, the Ennis Sisters, Len, Oh Susanna, the Mahones, the Hellbillies, Van Allen Bel, the Turtles, Tara McLean, Kinnie Starr; and urban styled Karl Henry, Whitey Don, Saukates and The Wiz.

"There are way more record deals being made and a lot more record [being released]." points out Jake Gold of The Management Trust, which manages Big Wreck and the Tragically Hip. Big Wreck and The Watchmen. "This has to do with the short-term approach of [North American] record companies. More bands are getting signed because of the competition happening in the U.S., which is beneficial to anyone shopping a deal. Labels are looking at everything."

Gold also argues that Canada is a natural breeding ground for developing talent. "Canadian record-industry executives," he notes, "are more accessible than their American counterparts. "That has to do with Canadians being more societal," he says. "Also, the volume of [product] isn't the same here, so [record executives] aren't quite as busy."

**NEXT PHASE: URBAN**

Most Canadian labels also have been significantly re-evaluating their A&R policies in the past year, as they faced the increasing domestic popularity of international pop and urban music, the waning interest in alternative music and the drying up of top-caliber grassroots acts from independent sources. Additionally, changes in top management at several companies, including BMG Music Canada and the PolyGram Group Canada in 1997 have also prompted significant A&R re-evaluations.

Says Lisa Zitnik, general manager of BMG Music Canada, "Urban is the next phase of pop music, that with the genre crossing over into pop, and it's a tremendous time for us to jump in. [Traditionally], it's been assumed we can't support urban music because we didn't have the [urban] population. However, in the U.S. and in Canada, it's now not just the black population buying black music. It's a pop crossover. Recordings by Polidaddy, Mase and Wu-Tang Clan are crossovers, doing well as pop and urban records. [Urban] is music kids now want to listen to. [Canadian-based labels] are starting to understand this.

"Many people [argue] you can't have a [Canadian] hip-hop band like the Rascalz break in the United States," continues Zitnik. "Yet, what makes them distinct is that, being Canadian, they'd be a whole lot of [musical] influences that don't exist in America."

Despite the current unprecedented visibility of Canadian artists successful internationally, many label executives are wary of signing bands with securing significant airplay of Canadian music at home. "We have such a broad range of artists in all music genres happening, a whole new generation of artists," says Mackenzie, "and it's impossible, but most of them can't get airplay in this country because we don't have a wide range of radio formats," says Al Mair, president of the Toronto-based Attic Music Group, "we're driving so many good artists out of the country."

**IT'S ALL TOO "MUCH"**

"Tragic Kingdom" CD rocketed back into the top five, even though it had been out for 16 months, says Lennox.

**BIG IN THE BURGS**

Warner Music Canada VP, A&R, Kim Cooke says Much's real advantage is that it reaches beyond the big media centers. "When domestic-roster bands come off tour into secondary or tertiary markets, the kids say, 'I saw the video.' Radio in those markets tends to be pretty bland and not cutting-edge whatsoever," he says. "Much is where they find out about new hands."

Few in the Canadian record business will openly dispute the channel's influence in selling records. According to Colin MacKenzie, who runs murderers—the Halifaxes based, universal-distributed indie oasis in Canada’s alternative band Sloan—Much airplay translates into record sales, but over time it has become more difficult for indie acts to get meaningful airplay. MuchMusic has now, basically, slammed the door on independent music, as far as I'm concerned," Mackenzie says. "I appreciate what MuchMusic does with new music. [But] there is no space or opportunity for an up-and-coming band to make an appearance on MuchMusic now."

**GAMBLING ON ROTATION**

Mackenzie says he has questioned spending thousands of dollars on videos. Likewise, Ivan Barry, president of EMI-distributed urban label BeatFactory, says he has become wary of gambling on videos that may not make it into rotation. Instead, he has bought commercial airtime and produced video-like ads. "I can't spend $30,000 for MuchMusic to decide my destiny, whether this video deserves light or medium, heavy or outright broadcasting. We're burning at the seams with this one channel. How can I jam more in?" asks Donlon. She claims a new channel would provide a venue for the "master class" of artists like Bonnie Raitt and Neil Young, while exposing bigger-budget acts to MuchMusic fans.

“MuchMusic has now slammed the door on independent music.”

—Colin MacKenzie, murdernstores

Donlon says service and audience, and Much needs a second channel. The CRTG, the body governing broadcasters licenses in Canada, greenlighted Much's plan for adult-oriented MuchMoreMusic (M5), but cable hasn’t picked it up, citing nearly maxed-out channel capacity and lack of audience interest. As in the U.S., it’s unlikely to change until much more is broadcasting. "We’re burning at the seams with this one channel. How can I jam more in?" asks Donlon. She claims a new channel would provide a venue for the “master class” of artists like Bonnie Raitt and Neil Young, while exposing bigger-budget acts to MuchMusic fans.

**GROWING COMPETITION**

Domestic competition has complicated matters. Canadian cable recently added U.S.-based BET, which plays urban videos. And Shaw Media, a division of Canadian cable carrier Shaw Communications, revealed it has applied for a broadcasting license in Canada, in an alternate medium for music distribution, which could be up by 1999 if approved. Shaw already operates the country-music channel CMT, which also plays some adult-contemporary videos. So, apart from waiting for digital cable, how can Much resolve the impasse?

We can continue working on the regulatory level, and we can continue to go to cable to try to convince them of the merits of our channels. At this point, it has been very civil and respectful,” says Donlon.
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New-Media Cos. Take The Plunge 1997 Marked By New Alliances And New Ventures

By Doug Reecer

Los Angeles — The recurring themes in new media in 1997 were consolidation and growth, as neophytes and major players alike rose up to corner market share through a multitude of partnerships and exclusive deals.

Ultimately, what this meant for consumers was finally getting a down-to-earth look at the former pie-in-the-sky promises.

And while the music industry is still grappling with controversies wrought by new technology, several companies dartsfully took the move from toe-testing the waters to plunging, or at least wading, into the new-media stream.

SITE & SOUND

Though no one segment of the new-media business story ever had a headline, developments in video- and audio-streaming were at the forefront of industry minds this year, as improved technology and new ventures gave shape to widespread, easy-to-use Internet music delivery.

Seattle-based RealNetworks (formerly Progressive Networks) had a banner year, solidifying its position as the premier company offering audio- and video-streaming technology. And in an era where technology seems to make one technology obsolete before launching in late December.

NewTV, which eventually purchased 10% of RealNetworks this summer, is licensing the company’s technology for use in its own streaming service, NetShow.

Meanwhile, Microsoft has persuaded competing streaming companies to join the Advanced Multimedia Format, which should create a standardized system for various multimedia streaming.

It was in case of big-fish-eat-little-fish as Paradigm Music Entertainment, which owns SonicNet, acquired popular online music magazine Addicted to Noise early this year, as well as Time's music channel Streamland in November, it became clear that part of TCI's goal was to invest in ordering video.

Another online video outlet, VidNet (www.vidnetusa.com), staked out ground with which streaming technology to pursue before launching in late December.

JamTV (www.jamtv.com), the video-beauty shot that wore in March, merged into Rolling Stone magazine's site at www.rollingstone.com to become the Rolling Stone Network. The new site also recently became the featured music destination for users of Internet service provider MindSpring.

DOWNLOAD DILEMMA

More controversial, but equally impressive, were the strides made toward offering digital-quality music for sale over the Internet.

Armed with technologies created by Redwood City, Calif.-based Liquid Audio, digitally downloadable music finally has become a reality this year, as companies like N2K began selling singles this way online. Not to be left out, America Online (AOL) site the Hub announced plans to offer about 1,000 digitally downloadable tracks.

Still, traditional music retailers and other industry purists voiced concern about the ramifications of online sales for the record industry itself. Capitol Records, for one, drew considerable ire—and eventually withdrew its offer—when it planned to release the Duran Duran single “Electric Bar- barella” through the Internet before it would be available at traditional retail.

The project did, however, highlight the potential for value-added online promotions by offering an Internet-only mix of the song.

Artists like M.C. Hammer, meanwhile, were also able to take advantage of the digital pipeline, releasing new material exclusively online.

AT&amp;T entered the digital-downloading arena via its new company, A2B Music, a competitor for Liquid Audio. AT&amp;T partnered with RCA to offer an online system of the Verve Pipe’s “Reverend Man.”

SECURITY AND LICENSING

With the increased availability of music on the Internet, industry watchdogs have had their hands full trying to find and stop technology savvy magicians that only got deadlier and murkier this year.

The Recording Industry Assn. of America filed a trio of suits in June (Court trials on page 50) seeking damages from companies that have been selling music over the Internet.

(Continued on page 19)

Blockbuster Troubles Reflect Vid Chain Woes

By Don Jeffrey

New York — DESpite the presence of a number of publicly held video retail chains, Wall Street directed its sharpest gaze at just one video company in 1997: the industry’s behemoth, Blockbuster. Although it has not been a stand-alone company since it was acquired several years ago by Viacom, Blockbuster’s fortunes have colored the investment community’s view of its parent.

Analysts and investors, who have driven down the value of Viacom’s stock from nearly $50 a share to as low as $25 in the past couple of years, have practically demanded that chairman Sumner Redstone dump the troubled retailer.

Prior to last year, Wall Street had looked quite favorably on newly minted public companies like Hollywood Enter-

WHAT WENT WRONG

Bill Fields, a highly regarded Wal-Mart executive, had been brought in to fix the chain after its pre-acquisition management team left to follow its leader, Wayne Huizenga, into the used-car business. Fields had big plans to turn Blockbuster stores into “home entertainment centers.” Video rentals would just be part of the show. In addition to videos for sale, there would be music. A full line of CDs was rolled out into nearly 1,000 units, along with items like candy, soda, and magazines. The music merchandise didn’t just sell well; it also took valuable shelf space away from video. Frustrated customers looking to rent the big new movie of the weekend left empty-handed and went to one of the competitors. Besides that, the company initiated a disastrous $12 million advertising campaign and makeover that later had to be ditched.

As if all that were not bad enough, Blockbuster made a costly relocation of its headquarters from Port Lauderdale, Fla., because Huizenga and company had ruled, to Dallas. A number of executives did not make the move, causing further worker unrest.

Moreover, Blockbuster was also in the process of changing the means by which videocassettes were distributed through its store network. Blockbuster wholesaler EDT in 1996 in order to buy product directly from the suppliers and distributors. This put another strain on the company’s resources, because direct buying requires superb inventory-management systems. Some analysts were quick to term Blockbuster’s new buying strategy a costly mistake.

All of this, combined with weaker video releases, resulted in decreases in the

(Continued on page 68)
BIBLIO-TECH

Random House Audio, Simon & Schuster Audio, Bantam Doubleday Dell Audio, Harper Audio, and Time Warner AudioBooks conducted educational seminars for retail reps in April, where strategies were shared. As a result of the training, several stores related their audiobook displays and sections, moving them from second- to first-floor viability.

The training sessions also provided retailers and field sales reps with "Are You Listening?" promotional kits, which included posters, buttons, and introductory customer-sampler audiobooks. Ingram set up an 800 number to provide interested consumers with additional information.

NEW PLAYERS: Time Warner AudioBooks and Time Life jointly joined the audiobook fray with the Time Life AudioBooks imprint. The project had been developed to release on audio three of Time Life Books’ most popular series: "Voices Of The Civil War," "Lost Civilizations," and "Mysteries Of The Unknown." Mercury Records imprint Mouth Almighty and The New Yorker magazine also put an audiobook bid this past year with the release of the first of three fiction CDs containing stories published in the magazine’s fiction specials. The CD was titled "The New Yorker Out Loud."

Tommy Boy Records started an imprint called Upaya, which combines spiritual works by authors like Deepak Chopra and Thomas Moore with spiritually uplifting music. The venture also produced a new packaging dubbed the UpayaPod, which includes audio clips in the sleeves of a jewel case-sized hardcover book of the recorded text.

BIG NAMES: Taking the lead from their hardcover and paperback book-publishing partners this year, audiobook publishers had a few big titles that ruled the market. Frank McCourt’s unabridged version of "Angela’s Ashes," John Grisham’s "The Partner," and John Berendt’s "Midnight In The Garden Of Good And Evil" were particular titles of note. Another title prompted an audio-only signing in October at audiobook-exclusi

newsline...

VALLEY RECORD DISTRIBUTORS says it has realigned the company, changing its name to Valley Media Inc. and promoting president Bob Cain to CEO. Cain takes the chief executive’s title from Barney Cohen, founder of the music and video wholesaler. Cohen will remain chairman of Valley and president of its Valley Entertainment labels, which run the almost billion dollar Strong Video Entertainment. It says it has "established a two-division company to encompass our two primary product lines: audio and video." Ken Alterowitz, VP of sales and marketing, will be responsible for sales and marketing of video product as well as audio. Ron Phillips, VP of purchasing, will be responsible for all audio purchasing, will now be in charge of video buying as well.

NZK, the online music company that was acquired by Time Inc. last year, announced that it has raised $100 million in new venture capital led by Redpoint Ventures, and that it has opened a second New York office.
### Top Christmas Albums

**JANUARY 10, 1998**

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**BUY CYCLES**

(Continued from page 37)

Another buyer comes under the heading “sign or sell.” That is cited by 21.5% in July—up from 20% in February and 14.5% the year before.

The category does not distinguish between the kinds of acts. But more- and less-labels have been advertising on TV despite its high costs—and now there is some statistical evidence that the investment may be paying off. Advertising in newspapers and magazines may be producing the desired effect, too.

Distribution executives have long been saying that they would like to see the cooperative advertising money they give to retailers used more for actual out-of-store advertising than for in-store displays and discounts known as price and positioning. Record companies argue that it is more important to drive customers into stores to buy something than to try to persuade them once they’re there to open their wallets.

In fact, the research indicates that “store display” is serving as a motivator to buy records. In the most recent survey, 30.4% mention it; a year earlier the figure was 42%.

Besides radio and video, there are two other categories that have not declined in their influence on sales. One is “seeing a performance on TV.” In February 1996 that is singled out by 25% of respondents. But last year only 14.5% were citing it. This belies the belief that appearance on the TV shows of Leno, Letterman, Winfrey, O’Brien, and O’Donnell are no longer a form of advertising.

There is also statistical evidence that performances on awards shows like the Grammys sell records. So why this anomaly in the numbers? Strategic isn’t sure; but the researchers say they will be watching this factor in the next survey.

Another element that has ebbed as a means of influence is word-of-mouth. In early 1996, 37.3% of consumers were citing that as motivation for buying; in the summer of 1997, only 25.3% agreed with that.

If you have followed these numbers and changes so far, you may have noticed that there are more decreases in percentage points than increases. Since the poll allows consumers to list more than one factor as having influenced their buying decision, it is instructive that these shoppers are narrowing their choices and becoming clearer about what motivates them.

And what about the new media? The Internet shows up only once on survey, the one taken last July, when 4% of respondents say it influenced them to buy a record. But observers say this is the category to watch in subsequent surveys.

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Venerable Sony Chairman Smith Retires

CH-CH-CHANGES: The changing of the guard at Sony Music Distribution, which has been under way for the last couple of years, reached a milestone in the last few months with the retirement of senior VP of marketing Tom McGuinness and chairman Paul Smith, who has led the distribution company for nearly 25 years (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 22, 1997). Both Smith and McGuinness have consulting deals with Sony Smith says that beginning Jan. 1 his deal is for three years, and Sony insiders say he will be available on an almost-daily basis, should he be needed.

In leaving distribution, he is turning over the company to his handpicked successor, Danny Yarbrough, who was named president of Sony Music Distribution in May 1994. Since being named president, Yarbrough has increasingly assumed more responsibilities, and it was clear at the recent regional conferences that he was running the day-to-day show at the company.

Smith, citing Yarbrough and two other senior managers, senior VP of branch distribution John Murphy and senior VP of sales Craig Applequist, says that with that triumvirate, he is leaving distribution in “good hands.”

Well, it should be in good hands. They had a great teacher in Smith.

“Paul Smith is one of the towering figures in our business and a genuine treasure,” says Thomas Motaola, president and COO of Sony Music Entertainment. “He has played a crucial role in the success and growth of Sony Music and an even larger role in the development of music distribution as we know it... The greatest compliment I can pay Paul is that his accomplishments have become the standard against which every distributor is measured.”

But when Smith began his career in the music business, the modern distribution system was just a gleam in his eye. His first job in the business was working in an appliance store in St. Louis, which had a small section of records.

In 1958, Columbia approached Smith about working for the company and hired him in June of that year to get its audio hardware into non- appliance stores and non-record stores.

Over the next 18 months, he opened about 150 accounts, reports Smith. After accomplishing that, Smith decided to diversify his skills and began learning about the record business, working radio promotion one day a week at an independent radio station. At that point, he was named branch manager in St. Louis. In 1963, he assumed that post in Chicago and served there until 1964. At that point, “Jack Harris, who was running hardware, got ill, and they asked me to become his backup.” So he moved to New York and formed a field force with district managers for audio hardware.

“But my heart never left the record business,” he states. In 1970, he was appointed VP of sales and distribution for CBS Records.

Through the early ’70s, CBS sold music via a mixture of branches and about 15 independent distributors. At this point, coinciding with a similar shift going on at what would become WEA, Smith ended the company’s affiliation with independents and shifted the company’s focus to totally relying on its branches. And the rest, as they say, is history.

As music retail changed, Smith oversaw many changes in distribution. For one point, the company was expanded to 21 branches and five regions. At other points, like in the early ’80s when the industry was going through hard times, distribution was downsized to nine branches and a national account office. Through the rest of the ’80s, Sony, along with WEA, was generally the leader on any issue facing distribution.

I remember an observation that the head of another major distributor made in the early ’90s after assessing how each of the majors had confronted a thorny problem that had been negatively affecting their business a few months earlier. He said that Sony was the first of the six majors to make a policy on the issue.

“In retrospect,” he said, “the Sony policy is the cleanest solution for both us and the accounts. [The majors] would have been better off just copying the Sony policy. After all, Smith and those guys invented the record business.”

LOOKING FORWARD: At the moment, Smith is serving as chairman of the board of the recently formed Sony Music Entertainment Group, which includes Sony Music Distribution and Sony BMG Music. He is also president of the company’s parent company, Sony Music Entertainment Group.

Smith, who has been with Sony since 1958, has served in a variety of roles, including VP of sales and marketing, VP of marketing, and president of Sony BMG Music. He has been involved in many aspects of the music business, and his leadership has been instrumental in the company’s success.

Smith’s retirement marks the end of an era for Sony Music Distribution, and his legacy will be remembered for many years to come. With his leadership, Sony Music Distribution has become a major player in the music industry, and his contributions to the business will be remembered for a long time.

Yarbrough, who will take over as president of Sony Music Distribution, has a strong background in the music business, having worked in various roles at the company over the years.

The future of Sony Music Distribution is promising, and with Yarbrough at the helm, the company is well-positioned to continue its success in the music industry.

As Smith steps down, the music industry will miss his leadership, but his contributions to the business will be remembered for many years to come.
RYKO ON THE GO: We can now refer to the REP Co. as the “Distributor Formerly Known as REP.” In December, the Salem, Mass., based firm started doing business as Ryko Distribution Partners. The new handle reflects the fact that the wholesale firm is operated by indie label parent Rykodisc. (Those with long memories will recall that REP was an acronym for Rounder Records, East Side Digital, and Precision Sound, the three original partners in the firm. Rounder split from REP years ago, East Side was a Rykodisc subsidiary, and Precision was the parent that will acquire REP and distribution company was formed.)

Besides the new name, Ryko—traditionally a distributor that has handled a very small number of labels—has acquired several new exclusive contracts (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 19).

Foremost among these is the Concord Jazz family of labels, which includes Blue Note, Jazz Alliance, Chico, Forrest’s Boogie Woogie, Sound, and the Latin imprint Picante.

Based in Concord, Calif., Concord Jazz is owned by Alliance Entertainment Corp., which previously distributed the label through its Independent National Distributors Inc. (INDI). Alliance, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in July, is folding INDI in the first quarter of the year. The parent company has already said it will sell off Concord and its U.K. label operation Castle Communications as part of its bankruptcy reorganization.

An informed source indicates that Ryko’s contract with Concord is for a year. It’s uncertain whether the label family will remain on the inde side after that; sources say that Alliance has been talking to both major and independent suitors about a sale.

Ryko has also added to its list 32 Records, the catalog-oriented jazz label based in New York and founded in 1996 by Robert Miller and producer Joel Dorn. The label shifts from S.D. Distributing in Hanover Park, Ill.

The first releases from 32 under the new indie name will be a two-CD set, with both LPs being part of a new arrangement with Rhino/Atlantic, in which Dorn has licensed 24 albums he originally produced for Atlantic and will be reissued.

The original LPs will be reconfigured as two-CD sets, with each CD comprising two LPs. The February titles will be packages by jazz men David “Fathead” Newman and Hank Crawford; these will be followed in April by collections devoted to Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Yusef Lateef, Eddie Harris, and Mose Allison.

A Ryko 32 will also release a two-CD Tom Jones collection and a compilation of sides from two LPs by the outstanding jazz guitarist Pat Martino.

Finally, Ryko Distribution is also exclusively handling Discipline Global Music, the U.K.-based label that was launched by guitarist Robert Fripp. The label’s catalog includes Fripp’s solo projects; titles by Fripp’s bands King Crimson and the League Of...
It was the last night of an era.

Bill Graham's Fillmore East was filled to the rafters with freaks, fans and a fortunate few. And when Band Of Gypsys took the stage, the definition of intensity and the boundaries of music were altered forever.

From "Machine Gun" - the evening's undisputed centerpiece - to "Message Of Love" and "Changes," this document of Hendrix's quicksilver transition from pop phenomenon to experimenter of unchartered territory captures a decade at its turbulent close and an artist at his creative peak.

### JANUARY 10, 1998

#### Merchants & Marketing

**NEW MEDIA COS. TAKE THE PLUNGE**

(Continued from page 37)

against World Wide Web sites that were allowing users to download unauthorized tracks by acts like the Beatles and Nirvana.

The music industry cited President Clinton's signing of the No Electronic Theft Act as a major victory. The new law makes individuals from downloading copyrighted material over the Internet, even if they claim no profit from the activity.

Meanwhile, digital copyright treaties (the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty) introduced in the House of Representatives and the Senate ran headlong into debate, thanks to policies contradictory to Europe's Copyright Directive. Telephone, Internet, and online service provider companies have also been calling for changes.

Hoping to at least tally unchecked music use over the Net, BMI launched its first authorized search and retrieval tool, MusicBot, to track the use of music online.

**FAN-ING THE FLAME**

Fan sites also came under fire this year, as labels took issue with the previously unchecked use of audio and video samples and other copyrighted materials. Oasis' management company Ignited sparked a major debate when it threatened legal action against more than 100 fan sites using unauthorized material.

Fans also seemed pecky to labels when they started leaking material from albums that had not yet been released commercially. U2's entire "Pop" album was unofficially leaked online.

More recently, Syracuse University student Josh Wardell found himself on the receiving end of a cease-and-desist order from Epic's lawyers for broadcasting leaked material from Pearl Jam's forthcoming album, "Yield." Still, other artists embraced the Internet.

♫, for example, chose to bypass record label machinery, releasing his triple-CD collection, "The Crystal Ball," exclusively through an 800 number and his Web site at http://www.iol.com/another.

**ONLINE RETAILERS VALIDATED**

The potential for greater online music content was given a green light by Wall Street, which strongly backed N2K's initial public offering in Oct. 17. Following hot in pursuit was CDnow, which filed to go public with the Securities and Exchange Commission Nov. 26.

Both companies have eagerly been making alliances with countless Internet service providers, search engines, record labels, and other online companies.

Other important developments in online retail included the debut of customized music-order CDs through companies like SuperSign Boon and the Music Connection.

**TODAY PC, TOMORROW TV**

While the promise of high-speed Web access through television set-top boxes may be years off from manifesting itself widely, announcements made at the January Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas indicated that cable and technology companies are stepping up their efforts to close the divide between TV and cyberspace.

In addition to companies like Thomson Consumer Electronics and Zenith, which launched new set-top units this year, access into the home is being provided by providers like cable giant TCI, which announced its plan to invest several billion dollars in the purchasing and installation of digital set-top units for millions of subscriber homes.

Meanwhile, TCI's partially owned @Home Network bulked up its content coverage this year by aligning with companies like CNN and the Microsoft Network.

Computer Inc., which is owned jointly by Oracle and Netscape, has moved forward, partnering with communications company Scientech-Atlanta to develop interactive television applications for the latter's set-top units.

**HURDLES CLEARED**

Sony suffered an image crisis related to technology issues in '96, enhanced CDs (ECDs) staged a rally this year. Major labels rediscovered the format and committed themselves to its development.

Sony boosted its participation in the ECC market, promising to add multimedia content to a greater number of albums issued by its affiliate labels.

Major players such as BMG, Atlantic Records, and Sony Music also found a new revenue stream by offering software for Internet service providers like Earth Link, Prodigy, and AOL on a portion of their CD and/or ECD releases.

Another hurdle was cleared last year as companies like IBM, Toshiba, and Diamond Multimedia began selling the first generation of DVD-ROM players. While the hardware rollout suffered its share of setbacks last year due to concerns over copyright and compatibility, the year's furrowed brows came more from the limited number of software programs developed for the format.
1997
THE YEAR IN VIDEO

THE BILLBOARD SUPERSECTION
The World’s #1 Home E 10 Years In A Row Pre
Entertainment Company presents ... A New Name!

Buena Vista Home Entertainment

With The Industry's Best Brands All Under One Castle – We're Much More Than A Video Company.

Bringing The Magic Home In '98!

Distributed by Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Burbank, CA 91521. © Buena Vista Pictures Distribution
Sell-Through Catches up To Rental, And Anything Goes

BY SETH GOLSTEIN


The 1997 Year in Video Sales charts were compiled by computer from Billboard's weekly and biweekly charts during the eligibility period of Dec. 7, 1996, through the Nov. 29, 1997, issue. With the exception of the Top Music Video chart, which is based on SoundScan sales data, the final year-end positioning on these charts is based on a point system, with points awarded to each title for each week spent on the charts. The year-end rankings reflect the cumulative points—based on the number of weeks on the chart, plus positions attained—that each title received during the eligibility period.

The year-end rankings for the Top Music Video chart are based on accumulated unit sales for each week that a title appeared on the 40-position chart, including the weeks the chart is not published. Although Billboard prints the Top Music Video chart every other week, it is still compiled and made available to subscribers of Billboard Information Network, Billboard Online and SoundScan in the weeks it is not published.
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DVD VS. DIVX

Just As The New Format Makes Its Big Debut, An “Evil Twin” Is Ready To Rumble

BY SETH GOLDSTEIN

Supporters of DVD must often feel like asking that Job-like query, “With Friends like these, who needs enemies?” Here’s a spank-new home-entertainment format, ready to take on this year’s first Christmas selling season—only to be undercut by a new home-entertainment format from the same hi-tech stable.

It’s no matter that Divx, once known as Zoom TV, won’t be in stores any earlier than the second half of 1998. The very announcement of the pay-per-use, disposable system confuses a marketplace already packed full of ways to consume movies. DVD has had enough trouble getting into stores and still lacks the participation of two Hollywood studios—20th Century Fox and Paramount.

In fact, DVD and Divx (a joint venture of Circuit City Stores and Los Angeles entertainment law firm Ziffren, Brittenham, Branca & Fischer) are in a relationship bizarre even by Hollywood standards. But why? Because it would allow customers to bypass its members. Video Software Dealers Assn. president Jeffrey Eves described Divx as DVD’s “evil twin” in the advance text of his state-of-the-industry speech delivered during the VSDA conference in Las Vegas in July.

Nevertheless, Circuit City chairman Richard Sharp has said DVD and Divx can coexist. Divx, after all, has the very least, benefits from the DVD hoopla now spreading into the consumer press. But Sharp has also made it clear he thinks DVD is falling in the marketplace just months after its debut.

In a New York Times story describing both formats, Sharp said only 300,000 DVD players had sold by mid-October. The analysis may not hold up, however.

Sharp’s figures were well below the DVD camp’s estimate of 100,000 to 120,000 units in consumer hands and trailed the Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Assn.’s report that 200,000 players had been delivered to retailers since March. Trade observers agree it’s likely 50% have sold through. CEMA projects a shipment of 1.4 million players for calendar 1997.

The count is nowhere near the 2 million anticipated by starry-eyed manufacturers a year ago, but it’s good enough for CEMA to proclaim DVD as a new-technology winner. Noting that VCRs didn’t top 200,000 units until 1977, two years after the first Betamax went on sale, CEMA says that, by DVD’s second anniversary, deliveries will top 1.4 million—times the comparable achievements of CD players.

DVD and Divx are expected to have an intramural face-off at CEMA’s International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Jan. 8-11. The DVD Video Group, with more than 30 full and associate members, has taken a 900-square-foot booth to exhibit every player and as much software as the space will hold, says spokeswoman Amy Dinnor. Divx is hosting a party Jan. 9 that could draw most of its membership, including the newest studio addition, Disney’s Buena Vista Home Video.

Buena Vista, meanwhile, is one of four studios that have announced support for Divx, which should also have a presence at C.E.S. Divx Entertainment, the developer, had planned its own exhibit, displaying a working prototype in public for the first time. However, Zenith likely will host demonstrations of the Divx player it’s preparing to manufacture.

As to what the hardware will play, Divx Entertainment plans to announce during the show the first 10 titles from Disney, Universal, Paramount, DreamWorks and perhaps others. DreamWorks has little going for it except “The PeaceMaker,” but studio partner Steven Spielberg also owns Amblin Entertainment and an impressive roster of titles that its theatrical and home video distributors, Universal and Columbia TriStar, would dearly love to have on five-inch discs.

The question: What’s the format? Earlier, Amblin cancelled Universal’s release of five features already announced for DVD, including “Jurassic Park II: Back To The Future,” “Casper,” “The Flintstones” and “Land Before Time.” Later, Amblin pulled the plug on Columbia’s “Men In Black.” The reason is piracy.

Spielberg and Lucasfilms’ George Lucas have been concerned that, without proper encoding, discs could be used to make picture-perfect copies. Many in Hollywood doubt DIVX copy protection is foolproof—presumably Lucas has prevented Paramount from releasing his “Indiana Jones” titles and Fox and his “Star Wars” trilogy, sources indicate. Divx, which boasts stringent copy controls, might be the answer, and the big winner.

DVD currently is the undisputed front-runner. With the field to itself, the DVD Video Group has launched a promotional effort to win the consumers’ hearts, minds and purchasing power.

One obstacle DVD must overcome is the perception that relatively few titles are available. The majors, except for Warner and Columbia, have been slow to ship; independent suppliers, however, led by Simitar Entertainment in Minneapolis, are rushing to fill the gap, in effect grabbing sales before Hollywood exercises its usual dominance.

DIVX has established a Web site (www.divxvideogroup.com) with titles listed more than 600 DIVX programs as of early November.

Disney is ignoring its animation classics, which may be slated for Divx, but nonetheless will be giving consumers fair value. Five of the titles each grossed more than $100 million at the box office, among them “Ransom,” “Phenomenon” and “George Of The Jungle,” the other three—“Tombstone,” “Home- ward Bound: The Incredible Journey” and “Nightmare Before Christmas”—were solid performers. “DIVX” Of The Jungle” and “Force One” are scheduled to be released day-and-date with the VHS editions—further indication the studio taking DIVX seriously. But is it serious enough? Not according to Boston-based For reester Research. In a study entitled “DVD’s New Content Model,” For reester argues that DVD will be a smash—in personal computers. It estimates the installed base in 2002 for PCs equipped with DVD-RAM will total 53.3 million units. More than 18,000 programs should be available to feed those drives, says Forrester senior analyst Mark Hardie, who wrote the report. The number of stand-alone DIVX players will reach 5.1 million, serving about 8,800 titles.

Hardie doubts the potential is much greater. He claims the only bull’s-eye for DIVX-Video will be the nearly 9 million U.S. mouse potatoes, “defined as ‘affluent technolo gists.’”

Hardie maintains, “VHS still wins hands-down” when consumers factor in the expense of a DIVX recorder and a second software library. And, while he likes the DIVX concept, he thinks the execution is wrong because “it’s being done combatively.”

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**Top Recreational Sports Videos**

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<tr>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>Program Supplier</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MICHAEL JORDAN: ABOVE &amp; BEYOND—FoxVideo (CBS/Fox)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>THIS WEEK IN BASEBALL: 20 YEARS OF UNFORGETTABLE PLAYS &amp; BLOOPER—Orion Home Video</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>MICHAEL JORDAN: AIR TIME—FoxVideo (CBS/Fox)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>THE 1996 WORLD SERIES VIDEO—Orion Home Video</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>MICHAEL JORDAN: COME FLY WITH ME—FoxVideo (CBS/Fox)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>NBA AT 50—FoxVideo (CBS/Fox)</td>
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<td>MIKE TYSON: THE INSIDE STORY—mpi Home Video</td>
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<td>TIGER WOODS: SON, HERO &amp; CHAMPION—FoxVideo (CBS/Fox)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>DALLAS COWBOYS: SUPER BOWL XXX CHAMPIONS—PolyGram Video</td>
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**Top Recreational Sports Video Program Suppliers**

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**Top Health And Fitness Videos**

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<td>2</td>
<td>THE FIRM: AEROBIc INTERVAL TRAINING—BMG Video</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>THE GRIND WORKOUT: FITNESS WITH FLAVA—Sony Music Video</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>THE FIRM: FAT BUSTING (CBS)—Anchor Bay Entertainment</td>
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<td>THE FIRM: COMPLETE AEROBIc WEIGHT TRAINING—BMG Video</td>
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<td>THE GRIND WORKOUT: HIP HOP AEROBIcs—Sony Music Video</td>
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<td>THE FIRM: FIRM CARDIO—BMG Video</td>
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<td>THE FIRM: LOW IMPACT AEROBIcs—BMG Video</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>ANCHOR BAY ENTERTAINMENT (1)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>WARNERREX ENTERTAINMENT (6)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>GOODTIMES HOME VIDEO (3)</td>
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#1 in recreational sports for four years running... jumping, slamming, skating, putting, exercising, etc.
LONDON—Tony Blair’s new Labour government has created an atmosphere of fresh hope in the U.K. video industry with its accent on closer communication with business regarded by the previous administration as little more than a service provider.

In a November speech to the British Video Association, Chris Smith, who holds the newly created position of secretary of state for culture, media and sport, stressed only the importance of the £1.2 billion ($1.92 billion) video industry to the economy but also its role in fulfilling Labour’s policy of access for all to culture.

“Video’s role in promoting access to things of quality is actually unbelievable if you look at the figures,” says Smith. Eighty-two percent of British households now own a video recorder. In 1996, cinema admissions reached 123 million during the course of the year but, in the same year, 645 million videos were rented. That demonstrates to us an enormous scope on the part of the video industry.”

Smith promised that the U.K. video industry, the most censored in Europe, would now benefit from a more sensitive approach from the Labour government. “We will be looking to a regime of sensible legislation with a light touch,” he says.

And the minister has committed the government to early ratification of the WIPO (World Intellectual Properties Organization) treaty, as well as further material pressure on countries perceived to have a copyright piracy problem.

This new approach is music to the ears of British distributors who have seen retail video sell-through once again come to the rescue of the overall U.K. video business this year, as a long-term decline began to diminish the importance of the rental sector.

SELL-THROUGH SURGE

The retail sector, according to the

The Official Video—Volume 1,” has sold in excess of 500,000 units. More album-based product is due out in or early ‘96, but these will probably pale beside the numbers tallied up by “Spice—The Movie,” released in cinemas Dec. 26 and due for a June ’98 video release.

Elsewhere, Warner is keen to point to the phenomenal success of the “Friends” television series on video, claiming sales of more than 2 million units. Feature film, again reflecting the weakness of product, has not performed so well, but the notable exceptions have been “Independence Day” and the recent live action remake of “101 Dalmatians.”

Back-catalog initiatives have buoyed overall volumes, and there seems to be no end to the U.K. public’s desire to buy new versions of the “Star Wars” trilogy, which on its third re-release in three years has to date sold another 2.1 million units.

The long-term decline in the video rental business has made distributors ever more anxious to seek new revenue streams in the U.K. this year. Last year’s gains—when the rental business overcame the downward slide for the first time since 1989—have not been sustained in an industry now looking at pay-per-view and video-on-demand to replace revenues lost from the traditional rental sector.

Top Performers

The year to date are “The Rock,” “Independence Day” and “Mission: Impossible,” with the battle for the top distributor currently being

Statistics from the British Video Association, has grown approximately 10% this year, to £880 million, while video rentals, which rose last year for the first time since 1989, has declined between 5% and 7%, to £388 million.

The biggest rise in retail video occurred in the music sector, due to the ubiquitous Spice Girls, whose first video, “Spice,” has sold in excess of 500,000 units.

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Top Video Rentals

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<th>Distributing Label</th>
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Top Video Rentals Labels

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Top Video Rentals Distributing Labels

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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>PARAMOUNT HOME VIDEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>FOXVIDEO</td>
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National TV and Print Campaign!
Catalog Titles Generate The Lion's Share Of Suppliers' Revenue

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

The YEAR in VIDEO

Top Kid Videos

Pos. TITLE—Distributing Label
1  BAMBI—Buenavista Home Video
2  THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME—Buenavista Home Video
3  WALLACE AND GROMIT: A CLOSE SHAVE—Fox Video
4  THE ARISTOCATS—Buenavista Home Video
5  THE LAND BEFORE TIME IV—Universal Studios Home Video
6  SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK: AMERICA ROCK—Paramount Home Video
7  OLIVER & Company—Buenavista Home Video
8  ALADDIN AND THE KING OF THIEVES—Buenavista Home Video
10  SESAME STREET: BEST OF ELMO—Sony Wonder

Top Kid Video Labels

Pos. LABEL (No. Of Charted Titles)
24  BARNEY'S SENSE-SATIONAL DAY—The Lyons Group
25  A RUGRAT'S VACATION—Paramount Home Video

BAMBI: No. 1 Kid Video

Barney in the U.K. Continued from page 60

fought out between Buenavista and CIC.

All the distributors are swift to acknowledge that in a theatrically led industry, poor cinema performance has knocked the video-rental business this year, but they are keen to point to a better slate of films for 1998, including "Men In Black" and "The Lost World."

However, they are equally realistic about acknowledging that the competition from the video market is, of course, a factor, but that they are keen to reach the consumer in more user-friendly formats.

GET IT TOGETHER

Warner has led the way with a pay-per-view agreement with a joint venture between four cable companies—Telewest, NTL, General Cable and Diamond Cable—which will roll out in January, and it is agreed that the other majors will follow shortly.

And for the first time, issues such as revenue sharing are being taken extremely seriously with the entrance of U.S. companies Supercom and Reunark, plus the emergence of individual dealer schemes, most notably from Blockbuster and the northern

U.K. multiple Global Video.

There is also considerable frustration at the individual release windows. Video distributors are anxious for a more flexible approach, which would help the video release of poorly performing cinema releases before the titles go completely cold—as currently experienced with a six-month window.

Video piracy has again been severely dented. The potential loss to the industry in 1995-96 was around £180 million, but, according to figures from the Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT), lost business was down in 1996/97 to around £120 million. FACT attributes the continuing decline in video piracy to a combination of its "zero tolerance" policy of prosecuting anyone involved in the trade and a shift in public perception following its anti-piracy publicity campaign.

However, FACT has called on the government to introduce the video anti-piracy bodies in the U.K. to take into account the introduction of DVD and provide a platform for a variety of software.

The new relationship between government and video also saw a first for the video industry with film major Tom Clarke attending the British Video Association's annual awards dinner, where he announced the BVAs plans for a U.K. video week in 1998 to highlight the importance of the format.

Top Kid Video Distributing Labels

Pos. DISTRIBUTING LABEL (No. Of Charted Titles)
1  BUENA VISTA HOME VIDEO (27)
2  PARAMOUNT HOME VIDEO (26)
3  WARNERVISION ENTERTAINMENT (8)
4  BUENA VISTA HOME VIDEO (13)
5  THE LYONS GROUP (10)

BUENA VISTA Home Video

Disregarded And Re-Released Catalog Titles Generate The Lion's Share Of Suppliers' Revenue

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

Its like "Men In Black" and "The Lost World" may drive customers into stores and rack up millions in sales, but its catalog sales that really drive profits for retailers and suppliers.

A national average, between 50% and 60% of a supplier's revenue is generated by catalog titles, which can reprise rentals or obscure movies dug up from the studio vaults.

While many titles, like a reprinted "Scream" or "The Wizard Of Oz," can stand alone in the market, every supplier has created lines of catalog product in an attempt to entice the masses and fill in his or hers lesser-known titles. Some emphasize pricing, such as Paramount Home Video's long-standing "Great Movies, Great Prices," an immense collection of $14.98 product, and Anchor Bay Entertainment's "Perfect Price," a series of titles priced at $5.99.

Other studios try to entice buyers with distinctive catchlines, such as 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment's "Premiere Series," a collection of recent hits featuring star names also priced at $14.98, or Universal Studios Home Video's "Matinee Series," which features the "Buck Jones" cowboy series.

The king of catalog, MGM Home Entertainment, has come up with its umpteenth catalog promotion, called "MGM Musicals." Titles in the $14.95 line include "West Side Story," "Gigi," and "Seven Brides For Seven Brothers."

"Not everything in a collection will sell, but if you release a group with a few lead titles, it carries the rest," says LIVE Home Video VP of self-sell through Tim Fournier. The rate of sale on any given promotion increases four of five times when titles are grouped together."

By far, Warner Home Video's 75th-anniversary promotion, which highlights more than 350 catalog videos, is the most ambitious program to date. Under the program, participating dealers will receive added return allowances, special pricing and extended billing.

Suppliers' commitment to brand- ing and creating franchises has become a top priority, but they also say many of the lines are based on retailer and consumer suggestions."

"We are constantly working in conjunction with our sales force, and retailers want branded product lines," says Universal VP of marketing Charlie Katz. "It might be a director's power or a star's, but we see the attention these packages get from the field."

In addition to the Matinee Series, Universal is also creating the "Note Collection," which will include the 1962 thriller "Cape Fear," "Double Indemnity" and Orson Welles' "Touch Of Evil." The collection, due in April, will include new packaging to enhance the line's look as a collector's item.

Universal also has released "Universal Horror Classics," including several Lon Chaney features; "Universal Comedy Classics," featuring Abbott & Costello; and "Universal Cinema Classics," with "Two Years Before The Mast."

"The "Note Collection" has a "Touch Of Evil.""

Back in 1991, LIVE was one of the first studios to create a budget catalog line priced at $9.98 in order to try to entice the shopper. They felt it was easier to get more titles into stores if they were part of a line and can fit into promotions. "They're looking for programs," says Katz, "and it creates a whole new opportunity for us to get in markdown business."

Although the studios have mined thousand of titles from their archives, there's plenty more. "The vast majority is just a matter of manpower and how many we can work with and still be good business."
"Tracey Ullman made me what I am today...
Now it's your turn!"

Linda Granger, singer/actress/author of the inspirational "I'm Still Here! My Lifelong Battle with Alcoholism, Disease and Personal Misfortune."

The many faces of Tracey Ullman make for a hilarious new video collection featuring the best of her multi-Emmy Award-winning series, "Tracey Takes On..." now available for the first time on video.

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ONLY $19.98 EACH

Top Video Sales Labels
Pos. LABEL (No. of Charted Titles)
1 WALT DISNEY HOME VIDEO (19)
2 FOXVIDEO (21)
3 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOME VIDEO (22)
**THE YEAR in VIDEO 1997**

**TOP VIDEO SALES LABELS**

1. BUENA VISTA HOME VIDEO (32)
2. WARNER HOME VIDEO (45)
3. FOX VIDEO (43)
4. COLUMBIA TRISTAR HOME VIDEO (39)
5. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOME VIDEO (22)

**TOP MUSIC VIDEOS**

1. I'M BOUT IT—Master P—Priority Video
2. LES MISERABLES: 10TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT—Various Artists—Columbia TriStar Home Video
3. ENLARGED TO SHOW DETAIL—Shania Twain—PolyGram Video
4. THE COMPLETE WOMAN IN ME—Selena—EMI Latin Video
5. THE BEATLES ANTHOLOGY—The Beatles—Warner Home Video
6. THE DANCE—Fleetwood Mac—Warner Reprise Video
7. BLOOD BROTHERS—Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band—Sony Music Video
8. VIDEODITS: VOLUME 1—Van Halen—Warner Reprise Video
9. 10 WHO THEN NOW—Korn—Sony Music Video
10. PULSE—Pink Floyd—Sony Music Video
12. OUR FIRST VIDEO—Mary Kaye & Ashley Olsen—WarnerVision Entertainment
13. LIVE FROM AUSTIN, TEXAS—Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble—Sony Music Video
14. NO BULL: LIVE AT PLAZA DE TOROS, MEXICO—AC/DC—Elektra Entertainment
15. LIVE SHIT: BINGE & PURGE—Metallica—Elektra Entertainment
16. LIVE AT THE ACRROPOLIS—Yanni—BMG Video
17. THE BOB MARLEY STORY—Bob Marley And The Wailers—PolyGram Video
18. VOLUME II—Michael Jackson—Sony Music Video
19. WELCOME TO THE FREAK SHOW—Ozzy Osbourne—Warner Home Video
20. THE EVOLUTION TOUR: LIVE IN MIAMI—Gloria Estefan—Sony Music Video
21. JAGGED LITTLE PILL, LIVE—Alanis Morissette—Warner Music Video
22. THE ROLLING STONES ROCK & ROLL CIRCUS—The Rolling Stones—ABKCO Video
23. HISTORY ON FILM: VOLUME II—Michael Jackson—Sony Music Video
24. BAD HAIR DAY—Weird Al Yankovic—Scotti Bros. Video
25. THE COMPLEATE BEATLES—The Beatles—Warner Home Video
26. OZZFEST 1—Ozzy Osbourne—RCA Video
27. JOY IN THE CAMP—Bill & Gloria Gaither And Their Homecoming Friends—Chordant Dist. Group
28. HELL FREEZES OVER—The Eagles—Universal Music Video Dist.
29. CRANK IT UP—Jeff Foxworthy—Warner Reprise Video
30. WOMAN, THOU ART LOOSED!—Rev. T.D. Jakes—Integrity Video
31. LIVE IN CONCERT—Joe Satriani/Eric Johnson/Steve Vai—Sony Music Video
32. TEEN SPIRIT: THE TRIBUTE TO KISS—Cobain—Nirvana—PolyGram Video
33. REMOTELY CONTROLLED—Mark Lowry—Word Video
34. VOLUME II—GREAT HITS—HISTORY—Michael Jackson—Sony Music Video
35. THE VIDEO COLLECTION: VOLUME II—Garth Brooks—Capitol Video
36. GREATEST VIDEO HITS COLLECTION—Alan Jackson—BMG Video
37. LIVE AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN—Mariah Carey—Sony Music Video
38. THERE AND THEN—Oasis—Sony Music Video
39. A TRIBUTE TO STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN—Various Artists—Sony Music Video
40. CHRISTMAS WITH LUCIANO PAVAROTTI—Luciano Pavarotti—Video Treasures

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DVD Enjoying Its First Christmas
Major Retailers Give Format Major Display

BY STEVE TRAUMAN

NEW YORK—Welcome to the big time. DVD—movies, music, and games—got its first big promotional push this holiday season at key retailers everywhere. The Musicland Group, Sears, Best Buy, Tower Records/Video, Blockbuster, and Circuit City offered samplings of the new technology. They had plenty to choose from, movies in particular.

Limited mostly to Warner Home Video-distributed releases, which until September were available in only seven markets, the software catalog has grown to several hundred titles. To stoke demand, major features like Warner’s “Batman & Robin” and Columbia TriStar Home Video’s “My Best Friend’s Wedding” are arriving day-and-date with the cassette versions.

Even waiting for the DVD can have its compensations. For example, New Line Home Video’s “ Spawn,” a Dec. 23 rental release, appeared on a 5-inch disc Tuesday (6), priced to sell at $24.98 but with extra material not on the tape.

Retailers seem to like what they’re getting. The Musicland Group, which teamed with Sears for a September test in 68 retail stores in the original seven Warner launch markets, has expanded the program to all 850 Brand Central departments. Sears buyers of a Toshiba or Philips/Magnavox DVD player were offered a certificate for one free Warner-distributed title (priced up to $24.99) and a $100 coupon book with $4 and $5 discounts off other titles at any Suncoast Motion Picture, Musicland, or Sam Goody outlet.

The test response was encouraging enough for Sears to launch a full rollout with a Nov. 1 DVD “demo day” across the country, says Craig Thomas, divisional director for movies marketing at Musicland. “Sales of DVD players tripled the first two weeks after the launch,” reports Minh McKenzie, Sears associate buyer.

Sears had stocked about 300 movie and music titles, anticipating what McKenzie sees as “a positive trend” for player sales through the holidays and into 1998. DVD has a key role.

“We’re trying to change the brain with an image to computer with any major electronics chain to promote and sell the latest in technology,” he

(Continued on page 67)

And A Lively Time Was Had By All. Sharing the fun at LIV Entertainment’s recent Las Vegas fete, from left, are Tom Harold, Ingram Entertainment sales manager; Howard Davis, video and accessories buyer for Nobody Beats the Wiz; and Marie DiPerna, LIV’s Eastern regional director of self-through. The host threw in some 200 retailers and distributors for a weekend of entertainment and talk. Self-through, including new arrival DVD, got lots of attention.

NAT’L GEOGRAPHIC GOES FOR MASS APPEAL, THANKS TO WARNER’S MARKETING PUSH

MAINSTREAM: National Geographic videos used to be classified as specialist interest. No longer. Distributed by Warner Home Video for most of 1997, the yellow-bordered boxes are popping up in mass merchants everywhere. The exposure improves, of course, when the programming is topical. Wal-Mart began merchandising National Geographic’s revised Time documentary—which VP Bob Potter says was the inspiration for James Cameron’s “Titanic”—in 1,000 stores last month. “If it’s successful,” according to Potter, “it will increase the count to over 2,000 outlets.” As of mid-December, the signs were auspicious: Sales had been running about twice the level of October.

“Secrets Of The Titanic,” including an interview with underwater explorer Robert Ballard in it; the 15 minutes of extra footage, actually had been re-released in July in advance of the original scheduled sailing of the movie. “You know that thing about best-laid plans,” Potter acknowledges. “We wanted to be ready for the summer release.”

Potter says Warner’s marketing push has been impressive. The studio has created a unit dedicated to specialist interest, run by industry veteran Evan Fisher, who reports to Warner Home Video marketing director Brian Moreno. Columbia TriStar Home Video, which distributed the label until early 1997, boosted National Geographic. “They did a really good job getting the brand in retail,” Potter emphasizes.

But a “tough” self-through market required more than Columbia was prepared to deliver. “We’re fighting for shelf space,” Potter maintains. “Warner is really leveraging their retail opportunities. They’ve helped take us to the next level in an increasingly competitive marketplace.”

The step up includes trailers on Warner Family Home Entertainment releases, tying the “Nature’s Fury” documentary to the studio’s “Titanic,” and in general “talking advantage of the Time/Warner family.”

National Geographic is getting retail respect it never had previously. The Musicland Group’s Suncoast Motion Picture Co., and Media Play chain have endcap displays “first.” Potter notes—in a promotion that’s generated a 20% sales increase. Suncoast wants a repeat of the National Geographic world map giveaway in the first half of ’98. Meanwhile, Noodle Kids went reportedly doubled its sales in a dinosaur cassette promotion.

Thus emboldened, National Geographic has set its cap for product, “with mass consumer appeal” that slashes the “third for true-life stories,” Potter says. One such is “Sav- age Garden,” which he describes as “everything that Martha Stewart didn’t tell you about what goes on in your garden.” It’s narrated by actor Leslie Nielsen, who did the voice-over on another National Geographic title, “Sea Nasties.” Both are tied to a Flowers USA promotion. The brand also sports a new children’s series, “Amazing Planet”; the hosts are aliens exploring Earth.

National Geographic prices used to near $20 suggested list. Now they’re more often $9.95–$12.95, a better fit for Warner’s strategy. “I think special interest is the wrong label,” says Potter. “It should be general interest. If it’s not that, it’s of no interest to the retailer or the consumer. We’re probably as general interest as you can get.” Warner’s enthusiasm for DVD has swept up National Geographic, which should have four to six titles out this year.

About the only area not fully under the studio’s influence is direct response. Warner does deal with some catalogs, but National Geographic recently agreed to let mail-order specialist Questar Video handle most of that activity. And there are the buyers National Geographic itself reaches—subscribers to the magazine who are big documentary buffs.

“We have an active business,” Potter says.

SUPPLY SIDER: Matt Brown rejoins Ann Daly and Jeffrey Katzenberg at DreamWorks. Brown comes to the new studio as worldwide head of home video, after an executive VP stint with retailer West Coast Entertainment. Before that, Brown, who broke in with Aerie, a wholesaler, held a key sales position at Buena Vista Home Video when Daly was president of the unit and Katzenberg ran Disney’s movie operations.

Katzenberg’s new one-third owner of DreamWorks, which this year will present Brown his first three titles, “Peacemaker,” “Amistad,” and “Mouse Hunt,” a direct-to-self-through candidate. Universal Studios Home Video oversees distribution. In addition, Brown likely will have responsibility for DreamWorks’ Divx commitment; it isn’t on the DVD bandwagon as yet.

VDBITS: Vincent Larios is leaving 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment at the end of the month after 20 years with the studio. Most recently, he’s been senior VP of sales for North America.

DreamWorks released holiday issue lists New Line Home Video’s “Austin Powers” DVD among 11 “games, gadgets, and giz- mos” its editors “wouldn’t find mind finding under the Christ- mas tree.” They liked “the tasty menu of extras,” including a sequence cut from the movie, “Music To Shag To.” Other favorites: the Sony PlayStation, Canon’s digital cam- era, and the Midisoft Family Music Center.

LOOKING GREAT IN ’98

At the Paramus Park Mall in New Jersey, Sears’ Donna Bertinetti and Sam Goody’s Sam Chabin show off a DVD cross-merchandising display.

The new year has never looked brighter as we deliver a trio of hot hits: Playboy’s Sorority Girls, Erotic Underground and Sex on the Beach. Cheers to our many retailers, friends and associates from all of us at Playboy Home Video!
COPPER RED-HANDED? "Cops" distributor Real Entertainment and producer Barbour/Langley Productions are entangled in legal drama of their own that could end in jail time for Real president Scott Barbour.

In Dec. a ruling, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Robert H. O'Brien found Real and Barbour guilty of two counts of contempt of court. Barbour had violated a June 2 preliminary injunction that prevented Real from using a customer list compiled by Los Angeles-based Marketingworks.

The ruling stems from a lawsuit Marketingworks filed against Barbour/Langley Productions and Real last February. That action, in turn, was a counterclaim in response to a complaint Barbour/Langley filed Feb. in Los Angeles Superior Court claiming Marketingworks received "kickbacks" from sales of the "Cops" videos.

According to court documents, in 1996 the two companies entered a joint agreement, in which Marketingworks developed marketing and sales strategies for a series of video projects, including "Cops." The contract, which includes a 25% profit-sharing clause, according to Marketingworks' attorney, Roy Silva, ran through the end of 1997. But when Barbour/Langley formed Real Entertainment earlier this year, it abruptly dumped Marketingworks, according to the suit.

Marketingworks now alleges breach of contract and claims Barbour/Langley hasn't paid its share of the net profits from the sale of "Cops" and the "Amazing Video Collection." In addition, Marketingworks maintains that Real stole sales ideas for "Derpy Springfield: Too Hot to T" which is currently being sold through direct response and is scheduled to hit retail in July.

Another bone of contention is a 600,000-name customer list that San Diego-based Real Marketing Service is using to solicit the Springfield video and other releases. Real Entertainment holds 50% of Real Marketing Service, according to court documents. Marketingworks claims it owns the list, created to sell the "Cops" tapes.

"Real Entertainment has looted Marketingworks' roster of projects," says Silva, "and the judge has ruled that until we get to trial, they cannot use the customer list.

SILVA estimates Real owns a Marketingworks $2 million to $4 million for its share of the "Cops" profits and an undetermined amount for profits from "Amazing Video Collection." The latter portion of the lawsuit will be settled through arbitration, scheduled for Feb. 9-11. No trial date is set for "Cops," says Silva.

Barbour had no comment.

AWARD-SHOW TIME: Blockbuster Entertainment has selected nominees for its fourth annual awards—including one feature not in theatrical release when the announcements were made Dec. 17.

Selections are chosen from the top performing movies according to box-office results and the top-performing CDs according to SoundScan. "Titanic," which opened nationally Dec. 19, received four nods honoring Leonardo DiCaprio, Kate Winslet, Billy Zane, and Kathy Bates for their performances. The choices were based on "box-office performances," according to Blockbuster.

Blockbuster started by giving awards to movies that topped the sales and rental charts. The chain has since attempted to make the show more sophisticated and meaningful, but it's got to a stage where everyone is caught up picking the best theatrical titles of the year.

There's little t's distinctive about the event to prevent it from being lumped into the sea of movie award celebrations. The $16 billion video industry, the largest category in Hollywood, still doesn't get much respect.

Consumers can vote for their favorites until Jan. 9 at all Blockbuster locations, Planet Hollywood restaurants, and on Blockbuster's World Wide Web site. The site can be accessed through www.blockbuster.com. The ceremony will be broadcast live March 10 from Hollywood's Pantages Theatre on the UPN network.

JAPANIMATION PREVIEW: In its continuing effort to bring Japanimation into the mainstream, Central Park Media is offering free posters and an in-store preview reel to retailers. The program, called "Preview P.O.I.B.," features upcoming Japanimation titles from Central Park.

If retailers commit to bringing in Central Park product, they can receive a free customized preview reel with their store's logo. Retailers can receive the posters and preview reel from Central Park or distributors.

SPANISH HERCULES: Buena Vista Home Entertainment will release a Spanish-dubbed version of "Hercules" day-and-date with the English version due Feb. 3.

Mexican recording artist Tatiuna takes on the role of Meg, the Latin American singer Ricky Martin handles Hercules. Buena Vista will advertise the title on television in the top Hispanic markets.

**SHELF TALK**
by Eileen Fitzpatrick

"Cops" Deal Leads To Suit & Counter Suit
saying it.

Best Buy enlisted 76 stores in the Warner spring launch. By year’s end, the chain had DVDs in all 265 outlets, according to Joe Pagano, video merchandising manager. “Where the adjacent hardware and software departments intersect in our main aisle, we just put a very effective interac-
tive display,” he says.

“For DVD movies, the real key for exposure is day-and-date release with the VHS versions,” Pagano emphasizes. “Batman & Robin” was phenomenal on that basis, and we made sure we were giving consumers something to maximize the impact of the new

format.

DVD was included in Best Buy’s holiday newspaper inserts. With the purchase of any DVD player from Best Buy, customers got a coupon book containing $50 in savings on future movie purchases. More will follow. “As the No. 1 seller of home com-
puters in our markets,” Pagano says, “we are no stranger to the DVD-ROM technology and expect to see it as paramount when it’s available.”

Tower is another enthusiast. “DVD makeovers have done exceptionally well since we started in six of the seven Warner launch markets where we had stores this spring,” says John Thrasher, VP of video sales. “In most of our 107 stores, we’re selling 25%-50% more DVDs than laserdisc versions of the same movies.”

Thrasher adds, “Those stores with the right demographics are carrying the entire 10-20 title slate, with the top 25 priced promo-
tionally at $5 or off suggested list.”

About 15 of the larger stores have an interactive Warner/Toshiba DVD kiosk. In line with Tower’s main business, Thrasher sees opportunities for cross-marketing DVD-ROM and CD soundtracks. On the “Spawns” disc are two music videos from the charted

Immortal/Epic soundtrack. DVD and music should get an additional boost from Tower’s World Wide Web site, which Thrasher promises will have a dedicated page in 1998.

The original test of DVD titles at 50 Blockbuster stores in early April was doubled to about 165 locations in late summer, spokeswoman Karen Raskopf notes. Each outlet has interactive kiosks that initially featured Sony DVD players and Colum-
bia Tristar titles.

Sony also chipped in a “Maximum TV” promotion that offered DVD player purchases a card good for 10 DVD or VHS rentals. “We’re still in a wait-and-see mode,” Raskopf said just before the holidays.

To build consumer interest in DVD-

ROM, computer accessories manufac-
turer Hi-Vai put together a broad-

based software display in the Soap

Computer City outlets across the

country. Mike Turner, entertainment

buyer for the Tandy Electronics-

owned chain, notes that the stores already carried Hi-Vai and Creative Labs DVD-ROM kits and the Compaq

multimedia computer system with a

DVD-ROM drive.

Prices of Hi-Vai’s two upgrade DVD-ROM kits, shipped this spring, were cut, according to Hoffman Meadows. The DVD Home Entertainment

System is now $349.99 suggest-
ed list, and the PC-to-TV kit is $499.99. Both are bundled with Activi-

tion’s “Spycatcher” and “Muppets Treas-

ure Island.” Orign’s “Wing Com-

mander,” Tauman’s “Silent Steel,” and Xiaphis’s “Encyclopedia Elec-

tronica.”

Turner and Xiaphis president Peter Black designed the software display. The 5-foot-high, three-panel rack with about 40 facings includes movies from Warner, MGM-UA, New Line, HBO, and Columbia and DVD-ROM titles from Xiaphis, the Learning Co., and Mirrmar/Scimitar. There are shelf talkers for each product line, and a highly visible DVD header.

“Computer City is determined to be on the cutting edge of the new tech-
nology, and we’re very pleased to offer consumers a first look at the DVD potential,” Turner says.

Distributors Concerned About Video Stores

Breaking Date Street For Extra Weekend

BY EARL PAGE

LOS ANGELES—The Korean-American Video Assn. could hold the key to the solution to a problem nagging home video: the release of sell-through and rental titles in violation of street date. Instead of waiting until Tuesday, which the industry chose as the weekend activity, stores are displaying cassettes on the previous Friday. They gain the advantage of an exclu-
sive—and lucrative—weekend win-
dow.

Southern California has been hit the hardest in recent months, and the industry can use some stabil-

ity. Distributors met Dec. 15 in Los Angeles to seek answers. One had an ethnic ring. During the meeting, members of the S. Korean-American Video Assn. were alerted to use a 24-hour hot line to inform subdistributor Golden Bell Distributors of violations.

Golden Bell, which generates as much as $12 million a year in sales to Korean-American outlets, has been accused of persistently jumping the gun on shipments. President James Lim says he’s far from alone.

Lim, recently elected to the board of the South California Video Software Dealers Assn. (SCVSDA), took his case to a 100-store constituency. “All of you know we were not the first one” to make videos available on Friday, Lim told retailers. “There are others, especially in the last four or five weeks, who are using their advantage” to break street date. He called the past year “an extraordinary time” for the 4-year-old company.

Getting a leg up for a weekend may be the difference between sur-
vival and failure for many stores, according to other subdistributors. Jeff Leyton, head of First Video Exchange in Gardena, Calif., says, “This problem has gone on for so many years here because it’s about the only advantage a lot of independent stores have left.”

He adds, “They’re not going to give it up, so what we have now are subdistributors”—in effect, retailers serving 10-30 smaller accounts. “They figure nobody is watching them. We have to get the word to the national offices of the major distributors all over the country.”

The flap erupted after an October meeting of the SCVSDA was add-

ressed by Bill Burton, executive director of the National Assn. of Video Distributors (NAVD). A list of suspect stores, intended for NAVD members only, was inadvertently circulated to attendees at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott.

Street-date violations have served to revive SCVSDA, says Matt Fein-

stein, the group’s president and a VP of Marble Entertainment, which sup-
plies supermarkets. Burton’s appear-
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ation night held by Golden Bell. Their appearance marked the asso-
ciation’s first success in reaching the Korean-American retail community.

Best Buy gave the new format ample floor space throughout the chain.

### DISTRIBUTORS CONCERNED ABOUT VIDEO STORES BREAKING DATE STREET FOR EXTRA WEEKEND

**BY EARL PAGE**

**LOS ANGELES**—The Korean-American Video Assn. could hold the key to the solution to a problem nagging home video: the release of sell-through and rental titles in violation of street date. Instead of waiting until Tuesday, which the industry chose as the weekend activity, stores are displaying cassettes on the previous Friday. They gain the advantage of an exclusive—and lucrative—weekend window.

Southern California has been hit the hardest in recent months, and the industry can use some stability. Distributors met Dec. 15 in Los Angeles to seek answers. One had an ethnic ring. During the meeting, members of the S. Korean-American Video Assn. were alerted to use a 24-hour hot line to inform subdistributor Golden Bell Distributors of violations.

Golden Bell, which generates as much as $12 million a year in sales to Korean-American outlets, has been accused of persistently jumping the gun on shipments. President James Lim says he’s far from alone. Lim, recently elected to the board of the South California Video Software Dealers Assn. (SCVSDA), took his case to a 100-store constituency. “All of you know we were not the first one” to make videos available on Friday, Lim told retailers. “There are others, especially in the last four or five weeks, who are using their advantage” to break street date. He called the past year “an extraordinary time” for the 4-year-old company.

Getting a leg up for a weekend may be the difference between survival and failure for many stores, according to other subdistributors. Jeff Leyton, head of First Video Exchange in Gardena, Calif., says, “This problem has gone on for so many years here because it’s about the only advantage a lot of independent stores have left.”

He adds, “They’re not going to give it up, so what we have now are subdistributors”—in effect, retailers serving 10-30 smaller accounts. “They figure nobody is watching them. We have to get the word to the national offices of the major distributors all over the country.”

The flap erupted after an October meeting of the SCVSDA was addressed by Bill Burton, executive director of the National Assn. of Video Distributors (NAVD). A list of suspect stores, intended for NAVD members only, was inadvertently circulated to attendees at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott.

Street-date violations have served to revive SCVSDA, says Matt Feinstein, the group’s president and a VP of Marble Entertainment, which supplies supermarkets. Burton’s appearance to discuss the topic drew the largest crowd in the group’s recent history.

Later, SCVSDA leaders were invited to the annual dealer appreciation night held by Golden Bell. Their appearance marked the association’s first success in reaching the Korean-American retail community.
**Nick's 'Good Burger' Flick Should Make Tasty Spinoff**

**BY MOIRI MCCORMICK**

**HOME VIDEO: MERCHANTS & MARKETING**

**WELCOME TO GOOD BURGER:** Hilariously dim (but not quite so demented as its predecessor) the Good Burger returns to the small screen Feb. 17, when Paramount Home Video releases the Nick-elmoooff movie "Good Burger" to rental.

"Good Burger," starring Kel Mitchell (as Ed) and Kenan Thompson, was a hit '96 comedy TV series that, like its name, the most popular ongoing bit on Nickelodeon's hit comedy show "All That," comes full circle as a video release.

Directed and co-produced by "All That" creator Brian Robbins, a former actor who starred in TV sitcom "Head Of The Class," the movie comes with the built-in audience. That being the case, it is surprising that Paramount chose to release "Good Burger" to rental, although it will be reprinted for self-through.

Child's Play caught up with Thompson and Mitchell (or "Kean and Kel," as the comedy duo are known on their own Nick sitcom) last summer, when they each paired up, Thompson with a 10-year-old partner and Mitchell with a 12-year-old as part of the Chicago on a 15-city promotional tour prior to the movie's release. The supremely gifted teenage comedians, onscreen chemistry is palatable, dropped in to the Viacom Entertainment Store on Michigan Avenue on a rainy day in August. Mitchell, a native of Chicago, and Thompson, who hails from Atlanta, talked about the genesis of the "Good Burger" sketch. It's set in a fast-food joint staffed by teens, foremost among whom is Ed, who wears his Prince Valiant-style hair in tiny twists, uses doodles, says "duh," and seems incapable of getting even the simplest order right.

Ed's sweetly spacey, anything-can-happen demeanor makes for hilariously funny slapstick situations. According to Mitchell, "All That" writer Dan Schneider first came up with the idea and cast him as a perky employee who "messes up everything. He's actually quite nice, but he's kind of slow and screws up all the orders."

As for Ed's speaking style, Mitchell says he created the character's voice when he was 8 years old. I used to watch wrestling, and I'd do the commentary like the wrestlers. I'd be, like, 'Yeah, dude, I just knocked out Macho Man Buddy, whoa, yeah.' At the audition, they wanted me to do a lot of improvisation. They said, 'OK, do a surf- dude-slash-wrestler!'

"So I did the voice: 'Welcome to Good Burger, home of the Good Burg- er. Take your order!' By the time of the show, I threw on the wig, and everybody said, 'That's it, that's the character.' That's how Ed came along."

Stretching the "Good Burger" sketch into a feature involved creating a little-girl, big-headed, hot-angled, heftily financed chain called Mondo Burger sets up shop across the street from Good Burger, working away its customers. Then Good Burger counters with a special sauce Ed created and regains the upper hand. Kurt, the unfriendly manager of Mondo Burger, uses "dumbass" for "dude," and says "it's going to take that to let him happen."

Thompson plays Dexter, a self-indulgent heel who eventually gets his comeuppance and learns a thing or two about friendship from Ed. Because Thompson usually plays a variety of walk-on parts in the TV sketch, the co-starring role of Dexter was created for the movie. In the realm of Nickelodeon, you can't have a show without a Kenan. "Nickelodeon always wanted to do a movie with Kel and me," says Thompson, "but they didn't know whether it would feature Mavis and Clay (two different African-American guys who are popular Thompson and Mitchell characters) or Ed and Ishbo (the latter is Thompson's take on a foreign exchange student), or whoever."

"Then they just decided to make it a 'Good Burger' movie and made up this character, Dexter, for me. He's manipulative and mischievous, always thinking about the piece of chicken out of its sit-up, and it ends up backfiring in his face. So he's the main one learning all the lessons in the movie."

Mitchell says, "Parents like it because it teaches not to lie—and not to judge a book by its cover, because at the end of the film Ed actually is kind of smart and kno..."

And you can take the whole family to see it and laugh and have fun. That's what's cool about it."

As to the challenges a movie presented as opposed to the TV sketch they know so well, Thompson says, "The show 'All That' is real in your face and kind of broad. On film, you have to tone things down a little bit." Thompson's character Dexter, he notes, is basically "a straight man."

Thompson and Mitchell met three years ago on the set of "All That," and they clicked right away. "I like his jokes, he likes my jokes," says Mitchell. "I'll be the one running around, and he'll be the one, 'Come on, man, slow down a little bit,' then sometimes he'll act hyper and I'll tell him to slow down."

"On our show 'Kenan and Kel,' he became the straight man and I was the goofy, one-step-behind guy. But what's cool about our duo is that we can switch back and forth."

**BLOCKBUSTER TROUBLES REFLECT VID CHAIN WOES**

(Continued from page 47)

as much as 3% in quarterly same-store sales, the all-important retail yardstick that measures activity from locations open at least a year. The troubles took a toll on Blockbuster's cash flow, which had declined precipitously all year. When it bought the retailer, Viacom counted on $800 million a year in cash flow to service its huge debt, and now that seemed like a faraway goal. Analysts were estimating $410 million to $600 million in cash flow for the year.

Fields finally bailed out and returned to mass merchandising. Red stone said Viacom might turn Blockbuster into a tracking stock in 1998 in order to get away from Viacom itself, or other properties, but analysts were skeptical that that would happen. A few months later, Viacom tapped John Antoines took a look back at the video business and its more forward-looking outlook at Taco Bell and Circle K, to head the chain. The focus since then has been back on rentals of video. Although cash-flow problems were a drag on Viacom's stock, the company said its St. televisision Street for the continued success of its other, diversified businesses, like MTV Networks and the Paramount studio. But Blockbuster's acquisition of the larger Circuit City had no movie production units or cable channels to divert attention from the flow of video rental. In the second half of the year, however, there were signs that the bottom had been reached and that video retail had begun the slow climb back up.

**THE SHAKEDOWN**

Hollywood Entertainment, at 762 stores, saw its stock fall from nearly $20 a share in the past year to about $9 in late December. Profits for the first quarter, however, were up 17% from a year ago. The second quarter, it was reporting positive same-store sales of 2%. 

Movie Gallery, which has 966 stores, watched as its stock plummeted from $15.50 to $3. For the third quarter, it posted a net loss. But the good news was that same-store sales rose 2% — the first increase since the first quarter of 1996.

And, despite plunging stock prices, the chains were still growing.

West Coast Entertainment, an operator of supermarkets, was opened a new feature that featured more self-serve video and book sales. Taking a page from Blockbuster's overseas expansion, West Coast announced plans to acquire a 108-store chain in Australia. But its stock had taken one of the biggest tumbles from 1997 to 1998.

Video Update, arming with a credit facility increased to $60 million at the beginning of the year, was hurting—but not too much. Although its earnings, were down to $1.687 from $3.12.

Movies also had negotiated a bigger line of credit from its lenders for financing. To avert an unwelcome takeover, it adopted a shareholder rights plan, but a few months later it fell into the arms of suit Video Update.

MGM/UA was reporting same-store sales declines of 6.6% and 5.5% in the first two quarters and had to take $1.5 million charge to reduce its growth plans. Its stock was down to $17.50 from $7.50.

Blockbuster Entertainment, a video chain that had been sold by its parent, video distributor Rentak, was having problems as a stand-alone company, with both same-store sales and revenue down and a loss of more than $800,000 in the third quarter.

Rentak, meanwhile, having divested its money-draining Pro Pack Div., was back on the road to profitability as it focused entirely again on its pay-per-rental business of renting rental revenue with returns and studios. Its stock had risen to $5 from a low of about $2.50, but in late December it had fallen back to $3.375. Rentak had received some potential new good when Blockbuster said it was developing its own revenue-sharing model. Analysts said that might drive more smaller retailers into Rentak's camp.

Another video middleman, rack- shocker Video Software, was struggling, with the decision by mass merchants like Kmart to buy direct and was reporting video sales declines as high as 54%. Its stock was about $6.75 at press time, down from a high year of $9.625.
PHOTOGRAPHIC IMPRESSIONS 

By PAUL VERN

HIGH LAGUNAS

Cold and Bouncing
PRODUCER: rene saved
VZaphia 27007

Matsuri, evoking the sound and spirit of such American pop music masters as Brian Wilson and antlr Bacharach, the U.K.-based High Lagnas now turn their focus toward European soundtrack music, smooth bass nova rhythms, and "We German electronic music—which the band members reckon can sound both "musical and exciting. The result is a delightful album that throws the listener for a nostalgic loop, though not necessarily a definable one. From the juxtaposition of analog synth sounds and thick harmonies on "Tilling Windmls" to the retro string v6nguations on "Glble Time" to the Brazilian rhythms that drive "Home- spin Berus" the most instrumental album with all manner of pop exotica yet somehow manages to sound contemporaneous. A smooth left turn by a band that always keeps its fans on their toes.

COUNTRY

RUBY LOVETT

PRODUCER: rene saved

Bubb 47857

One of the more reawakening developments in country of late has been the profusion of female writers and singers who appreciate country's past and traditions and manage to combine those with a modern accessibility. Artists like Lela cmmson and Sara Evans redefine the notion of neo-traditionalism. Now comes Ruby Lovett, possessor of a big, expressive voice and a confident delivery. Allen Reynolds, best known lately for producing Garth Brooks, turns out to be a better rhythm and blues producer — and country — production. Lovetts wrote three of the songs, including the soaring ballad "Look What Love Can Do" (produced by Sheryl Kennedy and Jimmy Mowvry). A very special woman. Finally, it's about time country music had a singer named Ruby.

LATIN

ANA BARBARA

Los Besos No Se Dan En La Camisa
PRODUCER: rene saved

Femlink 9647

The steadily rising songstress from the ranchero field teams with famed producer to craft a winning, romantic pop package whose achings constitute such the title track, "Chico Ma Hace Falta," and "Que Saben" (the latter a duet with Xoli) are likely to garner much airplay on both pop and regional Mexican stations.

CLASSICAL

LOU HARRISON: A PORTRAIT

California Symphony, Barry Jenkins

PRODUCER: Bar None

Argo 455 590

In his 80th year, Lou Harrison is the dean of American composers—although, sadly, not all of his work has found an audience. His diverse, highly accessible album is a great step in the right direction. Characteristically, several

VITAL REISSUES

which yielded a raft of singles and "the Message From The Country LP" (not reviewed) is the album (besides a short career overview that sheds light on the material, no further track annotation is available). "Movements" is worth seeking out as a document of one of Britain's pioneering experimental rock bands. Contact in the U.K.: 011-44-171-488-3908.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Crime Jazz: Music In The First Degree

 Crucet Records

In a week when there was a wave to combine popular enthusiasm for TV and movie themes with the ubiquitous lounge music craze, surely the folks at Rhino Records would find it. And find it they do, with this entertaining collection of brazen, boingo-driven, historic overtures that jazzed up the atmosphere of TV and movie crime dramas from the 1950s and '60s. Released on two 12" records, this album with graphics reminiscent of Saul Bass' titles for "Anatomy Of A Murder." Its 36 cutes are performed and/or written by such soundtrack greats as Henry Mancini, Elmer Bernstein, Lalo Schifrin, Quincy Jones, T. mighty bossa, Pete Rugolo, Laurie Johnson, Warren Barker, and Alex North, plus guest stars include Steve Morse, Dave Grusin, Stan Getz, Mundell Lowe, Shorty Rogers, and others. (Rhino's "crime jazz" aesthetic also embraces music from "Sweet Smell Of Success," "The Interns," "The Rose Tattoo," and other features of Mancini's Latin-temped "Touch Of Evil" theme. But this new version of "Perry Mason," funky, "The brooding overture to "The Asphalt Jungle,"") or "Mr. Jones," and tenor saxophone in Mancini's venerable "Peter Gunn," David Amram's music from "The Young Savages," or other mellow pleasures too numerous to mention.

NEW AGE

PETER PRITCHARD

Just One Look
PRODUCER: rene saved

New Age Music 1004

David Pritchard has found a solution to the loneliness of the solo acoustic guitarist's conundrum. His crests a group of multiple guitars, staking up to five instruments on a track, sometimes with overdubs, sometimes with his group. He deploys them over intricate, minimalist-inspired compositions over overlapping finger-picked cycles moving through shimmering air. There is a spacciousness and flow not normally found in the ethereal vocals of Terri de Naro. In an era of bombast, Pritchard's "Just One Look" is indeed to the point. Details. Contact: 620-794-2555.

GOSPEL

CHARLES FORD & THE CHARLES FORD SINGERS

One Day
PRODUCER: rene saved

Malaco 7003

This new label house with an impressive output from a Grammy-winning gospel veteran. Charles Ford is in big, bold voice, and the band and chair smoke from the start on the irrepressible, rocking "Tell It." As great as he is, Ford does need better backup band with an ensemble chin-deep in strong soloists. Among others, Barbara Windlass sings "Grace,*" and Ronald Logan kicks out the goods with "Will You Be A Witness For The Lord." With roots in gospel tradition and ears clearly tuned to a contemporaneous sound, this project may combine the best of then and now. Contact: 717-421-5437.

SINGERS

DAVID CAVES: Three Psalms For String Orchestra

Reutter Filmorchere Babelsburg, Stephan Somary

PRODUCERS: David Caves, Johannes Tietz

Chesky 163
The success of such neo-medievalists as Arvo Pärt and John Tavener was bound to encourage imitators, inspired either by the composers' inventive, heartfelt idiom or by their astounding record sales. Label entrepreneur David Caves—who has previously written pieces in a Latin and jazz-inflected vein—is one such Johnnycome-lately. His three "Psalms" possess definite surface similarities, but each is well essayed and beautifully recorded. But the mysts of modernist compositional style is exceedingly received and the emotional descendingly condescending. Often with Tavener and Pärt, less is more. With Chesky, less is a bust. Distributed by New Age North America.

ALBUMS:

SPOTTLIGHT: Reissues released by the review editors to deserve special attention on the basis of musical merit and/or Billboard chart potential. VITAL REISSUES: Reissued albums of special artistic, archival, and commercial interest, and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. PICKS: New releases predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the accompanying format. CRITICS' CHOICE: New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. MUSIC TO MY EARS (L.D.M.): New releases docketed Picks which were featured in the "Music To My Ears" column as being among the most significant records of the year. All albums commercially available in the U.S. are eligible. Send review copies to Paul Verna, Billboard, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10035. Send record albums to Shet Flippes, Billboard, 49 Music Square W., Nashville, TN 37203. Send Latin albums to John Loomer, 1814 Fen Valley Road, Louisville, KY 40219. Other contributors: Havelock Nelson (v/p/v), Y. Lichtman (Breeze

BILLBOARD JANUARY 10, 1998 69
The countless jeep dillies trying to zoom. Mary J. Blige's the queen of hip-hop soul and actually came through with a voice and style capable of making a realistic bid for prominence on the mainstream. Austin's FreeWorld poses with a face-trackin' like Tégé Mercury Brothers.

JODY Watley is garnishing for a major pop come- back, with her single for Atlantic. She previews the album "Flower" with a sultry slice of funk-fortified soul that reveals a markedly more mature performer now capable of breathing worldly depth into every lyric she utters. She is supported by a street-credence groove courtesy of producer Malik Pendleton, as well as some more tasty rock-guitar riffing by Ken Lewis. Since radio can no longer live on one version anymore, Soul Solution's Ernie Lake and Bobby Guy have been drafted to reinvint "Off The Hook" into a pophouse anthem, which they accomplish with high polishability. The groove here is hard-edged and appropriately frantic, while Watley lays layers of sweet chorus harmonies. It'll keep widening the song's prospects at radio.

ALEX BRADY true (3:51)

PRODUCERS: The Brooklyn Brothers
Writers: D. Johnson, M. Behan
Publishers: The Child's Song
(REMIXERS: The Dim Dims
(REMIXED: The Obscure One)

The duo of Monica Behan and Deron John makes an excellent first impression with a cool R&B pop shuffle that effortlessly combines elements of classic funk with beatbox pop. Behan has a smoky ring that suits the track's dark groove and poetic lyrics extremely well. Although the instantly appealing "World Keeps Turnin'" may prove to be a tad too sophisticated for audiences in perpetual search of quick-fix simplicity, those who invented the track and give it a wide spin will find themselves well rewarded.

BROOKLYN BOUNCE Get Ready To Bounce (3:44)

PRODUCERS: Bernard Banks
Writers: D. Bohn, M. Mercu
Publishers: Locus/Home& after/ Warner-Chappell/Rondor, BMG
(REMIXER: Deron Banks)

"Bounce" is an ear-catching R&B pop shuffle that effortlessly combines elements of classic funk with beatbox pop. Behan has a smoky ring that suits the track's dark groove and poetic lyrics extremely well. Although the instantly appealing "World Keeps Turnin'" may prove to be a tad too sophisticated for audiences in perpetual search of quick-fix simplicity, those who invented the track and give it a wide spin will find themselves well rewarded.

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THREEASON THREEASON (3:37)

(REMIXER: Deron Banks)

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TRACY TAKES ON . . .

HBO Video
7 VHS tapes each, $19.98
British comediene Tracey Ullman presents the first half of a documentary series on her character's "take" on such subjects as vanity, fame, sex, romance, fantasy, and the movies. One of her best characters is Ruby Romaine, a worn-out middle-aged Hollywood makeup artist who knows every styling trick in the book. In one exceptionally funny episode about sex, she helps a male porn star "prepare" for a scene by using some ultra-stiff hair spray. Her parables of characters also includes a male cab driver, named Chic; Jewish retiree Evelyn Rosenthal; stunt woman Rayleen Gibson; television B-star Linda Granger, who's also a recovering alcoholic; and the most popular character, Victoria Finch; and uptight British fashion editor Jane Pilsworth. Her parody of men's magazines' attackers, Leslie Abramson, here named Sydney Kross, would make even its subject fall on the floor laughing. Most of the subject matter is pretty raunchy, but Ullman's talent makes it original and funny. Each tape contains three episodes.

HERCULES & XENA: THE BATTLE FOR MOUNT OLYMPUS

Universal Studios Home Video
80 minutes, $19.98
Urchin has high hopes that this animated adventure will pull in fans of the popular syndicated live-action shows. But unlike the series, which has a sizable adult audience, this animated feature is strictly kids fare. This is no surprise, mirrors the movie "Hercules" in more ways than one, with its heroic battles the evil Gorgon Medusa, and central Mount Olympus, the home of Zeus and his offspring. Xena is awkwardly strong and the tricksters have made it a plausible scene, but the dialogue is put in modern lingo to keep kids interested. The animation is cut above average TV fare, and having the series' Hercules and Xena, Kevin Sabo and Lucy Lawless, voice their animated counterparts is an added treat. The highly touted musical numbers, however, aren't that impressive. The video is a good effort, but the story could have been told in half the time.

GALORE: THE VIDEOS 1987-1997

Universal Studios Home Video
71 minutes, $19.98
This companion video to the Curio's recently released second volume of greatest hits, "Galore," is a wild ride through music video manifestations of the songs. Included are favorites like "Just Like Heaven," "Friday I'm In Love," and "the number one number one number," among others. Britain's moody goth-rockers sing their way through several eerie and surreal environments, such as a freak show, a desert ocean in the rain, and a haunted house built by Tim Burton-esque bedroom haunted by a spiderman. Although some were made for MTV Tap, throughout the '80s and early '90s, many clips will be first-time fare to the average consumer and must-haves for the avid collector of fan.

SUBLIME

MCA Video Music
25 minutes, $12.98
This sticker price, consumers won't get much bang for their buck from this new longform "Video from the Long Beach, Calif.-based trio. The cover art is reusable from the top-selling, self-titled 1996 album, while four of the seven music videos included are currently being overplayed on MTV. And one spot is the same video with a different version of "What I Got." Two shining moments are the home video garage clip for an old song called "STP" and the concert mini-movie for "Dog Days." We thought the home video footage of the band with Greg Abraham. The home video footage thrown in between songs is cheap and consists mostly of backstage ramblings that vividly reminds everyone that Bradley Nowell was a drug-addled genius.

STEVE ALLEN'S 75TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Vh1starr Home Entertainment/For Letter
10 minutes, $9.98
Steve Allen and friends head down memory lane for this birthday party that isn't actually his. Despite the blaring music and the riffs, this performance of the show. While most shows have the honorable purpose of providing entertainment for the audience and colleagues shower them with praise, Allen is an active participant in this program. "Politically correct" host Bill Mahr interviews Allen about his long television career using an ad hoc "This Is Your Life" format. In between, Allen sings and plays the piano, showing viewers his versatile talent. His musical interpretation of a Mexican restaurant menu is hilarious. Clips from his best routines are also featured, including one where he performs his parents' vaudeville routine with his mother. A great deal of time is spent on Allen's stint as creator and host of the original "Tonight" show, which has become the longest-running talk show on television. The retrospective clips from "Tonight" illustrate Allen's quick wit and everyman persona, which has since been imitated by David Letterman and current "Tonight Show" host Jay Leno. Several taped tributes from Steve Martin, Billy Crystal, Leno, Milton Berle, and other comic giants are also included.

JONI MITCHELL: THE COMPLETE POEMS AND LYRICS

By Joni Mitchell
Crown Publishers Inc.
321 pages, $27.50
Spanning all of Mitchell's studio records, the poetry and lyrics in this impressive volume stand on their own as superb pieces of literature. In fact, you don't have to know her music or know anything about it to fully appreciate "Joni Mitchell: The Complete Poems and Lyrics." Throughout her 30-year career, Mitchell has been one of the most original and uncompromising singers, poets, composers, and lyricists of our time.

TOMB RAIDER II

Electronic Arts
Windows 95
Tomb Raider's adventurer-babe protagonist, Lara Croft, is back, and in rare form indeed. In this mission, Croft (think Indiana Jones in a bikini) takes off through a series of gorgeous but dangerous environments in search of the legendary Band of Time, a magical Tibetan artifact. The water sequences are especially intoxicating, but her impromptu combat moves offer little originality. The original includes a series of new human, animal, and mystical foes, new weapons, and advanced vehicles,让您ng snowmobiles and boats. Characters also compete with the user in your search for the dagger. Delivering the goods and piggybacking on one of most successful titles ever, TRI is one of handful of sure bets this season.

TAO TE CHING

By Lao Tzu
Read by Ursula K. LeGuin
Shambhala Lion Editions
Distributed by Sounds True
35 minutes (unabridged), $19.95

Audiobooks

TOMMY HILFIGER

Print Advertising

Enteract
By Brett Ashwood

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IN PRINT

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BRAND-BUILDING RETAILERS TURN TO CUSTOM CDs
(Continued from page 1)

Rather than viewing the upstarts as competition, labels whose music is fea-
tured on the CD are happy to see "The Guinness" activity. Says Pam Melin, director of
consumer products at Seattle-based AIE Music, an in-store music provider and the
only company that has reaped more than 35 private-label albums this year for
such chains as the Limited, Maurices, Pottery Barn, the Rainforest Cafe, and Bath &
Body Works.

"They are a good way to expand that identity for many reasons," she adds.
"It's a natural way for the label to get their music in place that generates income, takes up
little store space, and reaches into the home to reinforce that comfortable feeling
that encourages consumers to come back, stay longer, and buy more." Melin says the trend goes hand in
hand with another retail development: incorporating elements of entertain-
ment into retail operations. "It's more quick-thinking, more fun, more interactive,"
encourages its clients to experiment with listening stations and to educate
staff members about the music on the CDs. Diesel clothing company, for
instance, has DJs in its San Francisco and New York stores.

Old Navy spokesman Joe Eros says the added in-store push has helped his
chain's 13-CD and cassette line go from an accessory to a basic item in 280
stores in only two years.

"Retailers are always looking for ways to involve the customer and make
shopping more enjoyable," Eros says. "This year we added listening booths that look like
rockets and old-fashioned phone booths. We play the music overhead and give
away free CDs as an interactive help keep our name on top of everyone's mind."

The compilations, which sell for $8-
$13, usually have a theme, be it an
genre, band nationality, lyrical content,
holiday, or time of year. In almost all
cases, the type of music found on the
catalogue's first artist in the ranking
and national/international distribu-
tion. The shoe-maker's fifth collection,
due in fall with an assortment of Cam-
bullets, will include an interactive element and has a planned first run of 400,000 units.

"We have a longstanding association with music. Look at all the bands who
wear our boots," says Heidi Snelman, senior creative executive for Dr.
Marten's marketing, publicity, and pro-
motion. "We've featured some great artists, and the store copies are usually
sold out within a month.

Dan Streper, founder/president of
import craft and clothing retailer Putumayo, actually turned away from that
business and toward a new future in
world music releases. Since starting
Putumayo World Music, Streper has
worked with an assortment of Cam-
bullets two volumes of 'Blue Note
Blend,' a vault-raiding line of the
company's best jazz that sold almost 200,000 units at the coffeehouses.

"This is a blending of two corporate styles that worked very well," Evered
says. "We combined a company that specializes in jazz and one that uses it
to create atmosphere to achieve syn-
ergy and hopefully boost sales of the orig-
inal albums."

Other labels involved in projects of
this type also hope that participation of
artists will further recognize their
major record labels, especially the kind
who don't frequent record stores.

"We deal with artists in markets in as many ways as possible. When
you add all of these impressions together, hopefully you've created a need to own the
certain CD in the home or store," says Phil Blume, VP of field marketing at
Arista Records. "Store marketers are vehicles outside the average record
store. This will eventually drive more of their customers into a record retailer."

For smaller labels, where money is an obvious concern, who admits to being
an "idealistic" but realizes that the same marketing treatment that the majors use with
distributed groups.

"This is an example of cool, street-
level thinking, a way to incorporate music,
and we can't afford to do all the times," says Bev Chiu, 4AD's director of marketing,
who worked with Dr. Martens earlier this year on "Shoe Pies," a gift-with-pur-
chase CD that included Throwing Muses, Lush, and Dead Can Dance. The CD was also
handed out at various music showcases, shoe, and fashion conventions.

"4AD didn't pay for it," Chiu says. "Dr. Martens looks hip. Bands get expo-
sure. People get something free, and
maybe they like a band enough to buy
their full-length. Everybody wins."

Gus Gus, an Icelandic music collec-
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"Co-marketing Gus Gus with a qual-
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Other labels involved in projects of
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glut the market with emulators whose time has already passed by the time their hits ride the street. The resulting returns force the corporate chiefs to tighten the money belts, which lessens the chance of an innovator inking with a major.

Meanwhile, indies quietly develop innovators until they run out of capi-
tal. They’ve learned that all too often the jewel that sits alight from the crucible of a new artist. People are still buying Pink Floyd’s innovative “Dark Side Of The Moon” 30 years after its release, while nobody even remembers how alone purchases records by—major-label emulators after only a few years. Another shift in the focus has been away from the record industry to innovation. It is time to work and develop artists who not only view things from a unique angle, but also have the ability to communicate their vision to the world. The reason that certain values and techniques are considered classic is that they have endured the passage of time and become popular. In order to sell records profitably, A&R must find in each artist’s craftsmanship a balance between the familiar and the provocative. Otherwise, the marketplace will ultimately abandon its support of watered-down music and allow up-and-coming artists to spend their money on more sophisticated and challenging forms of entertainment. A&R, which is rooted in following and predicting trends, will also need to innovate. When the marketing department says, “Your band’s good, but how are we supposed to sell it when we don’t know whether to file it under pop or rock?” A&R needs to encourage marketing to devise fresh, new ways to deliver fresh music. A&R will ultimately give up on pre-determined names and categories, making return a focus on sounds and artistry, regardless of genre.

Major labels will need to bear the burden of the course correction. The competitive reality is that a new artist, even with great music, requires a promotion budget of around a million dol-
lars to get a real shot at a hit, which effectively eliminates most indies from participating. Thus, the majors must raise the quality of their own records if they want to maintain the future stability of the record business and not lose the bankroll to music as a form of entertainment.

Art and commerce can be success-
fully combined if A&R execu-
tives recognize that new records are not the same as new music. New records provide only life support for an ailing industry. New music, how-
ever, will bring it back to robust good health.

A&R executives currently have the most power to influence the success or failure of the record industry. The emphasis on signing “one-hit won-
ders” may provide instant gratification, but it has long-term crippling effect: Catalog sales are the bread and butter of the industry, and 10 years from now, consumers will not be buying Mariah Carey or Babyface. Emulators are more likely to develop innovators when entrepre-
neurial chiefs are already willing to take that risk.

So do indies hold the key to salvation for the record industry? Probably not necessarily at the best at talent scouting or artist development, and they are certainly not the best at business. What they do have is the spirit in which to break an artist.

So the entrepreneurial spirit is going to save the record biz, right? Not quite. As entrepreneurs create new opportunities, they also con-
tinue to pursue the same old model of the record industry. Entrepreneurs, whether at the major or indie level, still need to learn the craft of finding commercially viable talent.

And that, finally, is the cure: Bridge the gap between art and com-
munication.

The solution has nothing to do with the arguably inefficient and cumber-
some way record companies are run: The industry’s infrastructure requires major labels to behave the way they do in order to compete. The answer has nothing to do with an artist “selling out.” Everybody’s still allowed to create art and make money hand over fist. I’m talking about a much more fundamental correction here, albeit one with far-reaching repercussions.

Art and commerce are not mutually exclusive. Musicians, producers, DJs, record executives, and record companies are among the many true artists whose work brought them tremendous suc-
cess. I’d like to see the industry’s infrastructure change so that the artists’ perspectives would also touch a nerve in others.

**DONATIONS TO MDA:** The family of Gert Freedman, the mother of music publisher Kimberly Freedman, whose death in 2009 was due to muscular dystrophy, has made a $50,000 donation to the Muscular Dystrophy Association in Florida at the age of 87 of myasthe-
nia gravis, a dystrophic disease, which requested that donations in her memo-
ry be sent to the Muscular Dystrophy Asso-
ciation, 10 E. 40th St., New York, NY 10016. Attention: Alana. The organiza-
tion’s phone number is 212-689-9040.
Getting A Station Off The Ground And On The Air

BY KEN JOHNSON

What’s it like to launch a station from day one? We asked Ken Johnson, former PD of WILD Boston and now PD of new R&B adult outlet WAAY (Kiss 94) Wilmington, N.C., to relate his experiences during the station’s first six weeks. Currently, WAAY runs ABC’s “Tom Joyner Morning Show” has a late afternoon shift with Johnson, and is automated the rest of the day.

I was hired as the programer for WAAY by John Dickey at Cumulus Broadcasting. Luckily for me, Cumulus is growing at a record pace, and they were looking for someone dedicated and ready to grow with them. I was ready. Our new channels are a key source of growth in this business. I had worked with John on the now-extinct BET Radio project, and his brother Lew was the launch vehicle on John. Being out of work prior to this job was a blessing. I think I was narrow-minded in playing the market-size game. When I was out and looking, I was talking to Hector Hannibal, PD of WHUR Washington, D.C., whom I consider a mentor and friend. I was curious about a job opportunity and asked him what number market the station was in. He said to me, “You can’t worry about the market—concern yourself with the opportunity.” As I look back, I know I am truly blessed to have people like him in my life.

I was hired the last week of September. John put me on the phone with GM Clay McCanley, and we set it up for me to see the station the next day. I had already made up my mind to take the job sight unseen. I flew into Wilmington on Sept. 29. My mind was racing through so many things—do I recall thanking God for this opportunity and praying for the patience and strength to handle what was ahead.

I was met at the airport by Clay and Marty Callahan, the PD from our top 40 sister station, WQSL (Q102). They both had on cowboy hats, and I recall thinking, “Well, this is different,” but despite that, I was looking forward to having a GM and a top 40 PD to talk programming philosophy with.

THE BIG ‘KISS’ OFF

After working in several situations with only one station, I thought having four in one building—country WQQQ, classic rock WXQR, WQSL, and the new Kiss 94 WAAV—was cool. What sticks in my mind is how excited everyone was, and still is, about the new station.

For the console and a rack, the studio wasn’t even a studio. There were boxes everywhere filled with computers and equipment. We had an unofficial deadline of Oct. 1 to get the station up, the same day I was scheduled to return to Boston and get my move squared away. For the three days I was there, my attention was on so many things—the music, the clock, the image, the morning show, the studio setup, promotional items, meeting the staff, getting acclimated on how they do things, reviewing my compensation package—I was truly overwhelmed. I kept telling myself, this is what I am devoting my life to, and I want to work, and I’m working. Who said God doesn’t answer prayers?

I sat down and figured out my clocks, though I knew I would change them, but I had to get something on the air so I could hear it and then adjust. Then the music came in on a hard drive, in no specific order, so I had to create the categories and then separate the music into them. Since I was [employing] separation by year, each category represented an era. [Without access to an R&B hits reference book.] I found myself trying to rewire my life with each song to get it in the right category. For example, I remember my mom used to make me dance with her to “Midnight Train To Georgia,” and that was the ’70s. In the end, I didn’t do too badly—out of the original 500 songs, I’ve only had to move about 10. After the music was separated, I started in on IDs and music promos. WAAY’s Scotty Webb is one of the most talented yet underrated production guys around. I knew who I wanted at my first programming job, and I knew him. After drafting and faxing off my IDs and promos, I tried to learn the computer system. However, some computer people were still setting it up. Besides us using the reference book and them telling me (Continued on next page)

CAPSTAR ADDS THREE. Capstar Broadcasting, which holds more radio stations than any other group owner in the world, has purchased KASE-FM KVET-AM-FM Austin, Texas, for $40 million. KASE has won Billboard Station of the Year honors the last two years at the annual Billboard/Airplay Monitor Radio Seminar and Awards. With this purchase, Capstar owns and operates or has agreed to acquire 316 radio stations in medium-sized markets nationwide.

PAN-BERO SIGHTS. Hicks, Muse, Tate & Furst, which owns Capstar Broadcasting, and media, entertainment, and telecommunications conglomerate the Cunningham Group of Cos. in Caracas, Venezuela, have pledged a $100 million fund to invest in media properties over the next three years in Latin America, Spain, and Portugal. The fund will focus its investment activities on radio and TV broadcasting companies, as well as Spanish- and Portuguese-language production and programming entities. The goal is to form the first "pan-bero" American media network.

ROBERT W. MORGAN TO BE HONORED. Legendary air talent Robert W. Morgan, widely viewed as the longest-running morning personality in Los Angeles radio, has announced his retirement from KIIS (K-Earth 101). He has been heard weekday mornings there for the past six years. Morgan announced this past May that he had hung up his hat and that he would be taking time off to fight the disease. Since then, he has continued to broadcast on a part-time basis from his home. On Jan. 1, Morgan will be honored with a ceremony paying tribute to his career at the Museum of Television and Radio in L.A. Dick Clark will narrate an on-air retrospective of his career, followed by a dedication of Morgan’s Hollywood Walk of Fame star, which he received in 1998.

DEES CONTRIBUTES TO UNC. KIIS-FM Los Angeles morning man Rick Dees has pledged an endowed fund and production equipment, as well as an annual Rick Dees Student Production Award, to the communication studies department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dees is a Greensboro, N.C., native and a 1972 Carolina graduate, earning his degree in radio, television, and motion pictures.

MARKET NO. 252. On Feb. 2, Arbitron will launch radio station ratings for Lewiston-Auburn, Maine, for the first time. The new market is ranked No. 252 out of Arbitron’s 255 ranked metro survey areas, with a 12+ population of 86,000. Reports will be surveyed for fall and spring each year.

IT’S ONLY ACADEMIC. The Broadcast Education Assn. will sponsor the Journal of Radio Studies (JRS), a series of academic research studies covering the future of programming diversity, contemporary research on trends in talk radio, international studies, and the history of radio, among other topics. The JRS is the only journal devoted to academic radio research. It will be released in February.

JONES IN THE COUNTRY. Jones Radio Network is gearing up to announce a weeknight, 7 p.m.-midnight syndicated country entertainment program, set to launch during the first quarter of 1998. It will be broadcast live from Nashville. The as-yet-unnamed show joins Jones’ three 24-hour syndicated country formats: Classic Hit Country, U.S. Country, and CD Country.
“the system can do this” and “the system can do that.” I was on my own.

We didn’t make the original deadline of Oct. 1, but with the help of M cardio, we were able to set up for our next deadline of Oct. 3, and I was able to make my flight home, only to turn around and start driving my car again, knowing some clothes, two days later. At 5 p.m. that Friday, we began playing Prince’s “Kiss” non-stop until midnight on Sunday, when we officially began our regular programming. As I look back, I could have picked a better song to start with, but my drive then: “If Only For One Night” was cool. He’s a core artist, and anything after “Kiss” all the way into the week, was me getting to flip the switch to debut the new Kiss 94, Wilmington, N.C.

**COMPUTER GAMES**

Week two was all about advertising, getting the creative juices flowing, and getting the rest. I wanted to create a routine so everything would be in front of me. I got settled at a hotel only two blocks from the station, found a great coffee place on the way to work, and even managed to get a couple of workouts at the hotel gym. I was set.

My first—ah!—first choice was a little bigger than my side in the “Oh Oh Oh! Tom Joyner Morning Show.” Don’t get me wrong, it’s not a bad choice. It’s getting the satellite to work and play well with the computer’s system. The first morning was fine, but for the next two weeks it did not cooperate. The music from the 5 a.m. hour was carrying over into Tom’s show. After my first 6 a.m. trip to fix that, I went back to the hotel to sleep, only to come back to find Tom Joyner overlapping into my local programming at 10 a.m.! The computer is not shutting Tom off as it is supposed to do, so when Tom comes back on to do his liners and promos for all his stations, it goes on-air until someone physically turns him off. This is a problem that I am still facing to this day. It is a bigger pain on Saturday with the Tom Joyner “Moving On” show, when I’m here at 9 a.m. as well.

The daily 6 a.m. trips have subsided, but now introducing local news into the morning show has created Taylor’s new problem. There are no carts. Everything except Joyner plays from the hard drive. We’ve had to teach the reception person, the jocks, and the overnight engineer who records the news to load their spots into the computer. One morning I’m driving to the gym, and I hear my prepackaged Tom Joyner drop tossing to our news guy. Then I hear silence, then I hear him start then I hear that large wave breaking on the air, then I hear nothing, and I’m fading out behind the wheel! I regain my composure and drive past the gym to the station. As I pull up, the overnight guy is mounting his bike on his way home; as I blow by him he tells me the problem. He says he’s a good man—he came in with me to correct it.

My daily routine has an element that I never used to deal with before. I have to merge the music log and the traffic log, then edit once again before I send it to the on-air studio. After dealing with problems such as songs not playing due to being incorrectly recorded on the hard drive, I have been told by the computer company that I can run a report that will give the errors, such as missing or outdated spots, in advance so they can be caught before they become problems. Our production department got the report but did not make the necessary changes. The result was one minute of dead air for each missing element. At that time a meeting was held with production, traffic, and sales to discuss communication between the departments. As Rick Pittino says in his book “Success Is A Choice”: Do it yourself! So I ran the report and gave it to the parties involved, then I ran it again before I left and changed what hadn’t been changed.

Titles from the ’80s are a big part of our format. My first batch of music, all researched, is great music but very slow, and there’s not enough of it. The computer company we used didn’t have 200 of the almost 600 titles requested, so I had to search for the missing songs. They suggested a company that had a majority of the songs at a whopping $5.00 a cut, with an additional $12 a cut to have them recorded on the hard drive. The latter was not in the budget. I did have the pleasure of recording all 187 songs on the hard drive myself. Great thing they were great songs!

**RESEARCH PAYS OFF**

There have been several positives through all this. My sales team of two has secured several advertisers with no ratings to work with. I also credit Cumulus: It has worked hard to get salespeople at all of our stations to work as a team. I have never witnessed such teamwork. As for the listeners, the phones have been tremendous. I can’t get the callers off the answering machine and onto the air fast enough. The data from Strathford Research was right on target: People are saying and feeling exactly what Stratford said the market needed.

I recall going into a gas station and the lady behind the counter was listening to another radio station, and I chatted with her about the undercurrents. "I think Only For One Night" was cool. He’s a core artist, and anything after “Kiss” all the way into the week, was me getting to flip the switch to debut the new Kiss 94, Wilmington, N.C.

**Adult Contemporary**

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<th>TITLE</th>
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<td>A WHISPER IN YOUR EAR</td>
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<td>LEAN ME</td>
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<td>SHOES OF LOVE</td>
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<td>I DON’T WANT TO WAIT</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>TRUST</td>
<td>CELION DION</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>IT ISN’T OVER</td>
<td>GARY BARLOW</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>QUIET PLAYING GAMES (WITH MY HEART)</td>
<td>BRIANSETTREY BOYS</td>
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<td>PROMISE AIN’T ENOUGH</td>
<td>DARYL HALL &amp; JOHN OATES</td>
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<td>TAKES A LITTLE</td>
<td>AMY GRANT</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>TELL HIM</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>HEY GIRL</td>
<td>BILLIE JOEL</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>HOW OLD DO YOU FEEL</td>
<td>TONI BRAXTON WITH KENNY G</td>
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<td>HOLY, HOLY</td>
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<td>ROCKIN’ AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE</td>
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<td>ROCKIN’</td>
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<td>FOOLISH GAMES</td>
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**NEW**

1. NEW LAST CHRISTMAS | WHAM!
2. ALL FOR YOU | SISTER HAZEL
3. BACK TO YOU | BIANA GRAMS
4. SINGLE L.L. ROCK | BOBBY HELMS

**Adult Top 40**

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<td>WALKIN’ ON THE SUN</td>
<td>SMASH MOUTH</td>
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<td>3AM</td>
<td>PRUA COLE</td>
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<td>FLY</td>
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<td>I DO</td>
<td>LISA LOEB</td>
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<td>ALL FOR YOU</td>
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<td>IF YOU CAN ONLY SEE</td>
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<td>SEMI-BELIEVED LIFE</td>
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<td>PUSH</td>
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<td>FOOLISH GAMES</td>
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<td>SWEET SURRENDER</td>
<td>CHER</td>
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<td>KISS THE RAIN</td>
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<td>SUMMETIME</td>
<td>THE SUNDAYS</td>
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<td>HEADLIGHTS</td>
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<td>SURRENDERS</td>
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<td>CLEAN SLATE</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>THE MUMMERS’ DANCE</td>
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**Jingle All The Way**

Top 40 WHTZ (Z100) New York’s annual charity Jingle Ball drew the likes of Celine Dion, Hanson, Backstreet Boys, Lisa Loeb, Savage Garden, and Aerosmith this year. The sold-out concert raised money for Share, a support organization for breast and ovarian cancer research, announced VP David Leach; Kiss music director Kid David Corely; and Kiss PD John Key.
For Country's Mark Chesnutt, Reviving An Earlier Song Shows It Wasn’t Over

SECOND TIME AROUND: While the adage “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again” may have originated from a teacher’s manual in 1940, country singer Mark Chesnutt is plenty willing to apply it today. His just-released single, “It’s Not Over” on Decca Records, not only took five years to find its way to radio but was actually resurrected from Chesnutt’s second of seven albums, 1992’s “Longnecks & Short Stories.”

“I was always disappointed that it hadn’t become a single. I always thought that song had a place on radio,” Chesnutt says. But when it wasn’t chosen as a single then, he figured its chance for the spotlight was over before it even began.

But then, as Chesnutt and long-time producer/songwriter Mark Wright began work on his current album, “Thank God For Believers,” an iron law twist came into play. We had cut 14 songs for this album, and there was this one that was a Waltz, but it didn’t quite fit the rest of the album, he explains. “It was too pretty and not quite my style.”

The two agreed that it would be best to leave the song out of the plan. Preferably another week. “Mark came up to me and said, ‘Let’s put “It’s Not Over” on the album,’” says Chesnutt.

“Wright. “When we put it up against the other songs, you would never know it was recorded so long ago. We knew it as soon as we were done.”

“Chesnutt. “That song has always been a good song to sit there.”

Then, during the course of the album’s first single, the No. 2 “This Is Not Over,” the radio began calling for the label to work “Over” as the next single. “Mark and I just sat there and grinned,” Chesnutt says. “We always knew it was a good record.”

Co-written by Wright and Larry Kaye, the track features prominent backing vocals from Vince Gill and Alison Krauss, a factor Chesnutt says really brings the song home. “I don’t know if I would have come across without it. It was nothing for them to go in and do harmonies like that. Our vocals together sounded like we all grew up singing together. I guess we all have real country roots and really love that.”

As is his musical trademark, “It’s Not Over” is rooted comfortably in traditional country turf, though its message is as universal as the way it came.

“Everybody, unless they’ve been living under a rock or they’ve been locked up all their life, has fallen in love and then ended up being left alone. It’s always that first-love kind of thing. I’ve been through it—there’s always somebody special who you’re never going to forget,” he says.

“That’s the mark of a great country song. No matter who somebody is at or what style they live in, everybody has their hearts broken. A song that touches people—that’s what country music is supposed to be about.”

In fact, Chesnutt feels country radio is steadily moving back toward discovering the value of common-day themes and pop-free production.

“As long as there are people like George Strait, Lee Ann Womack, Alan Jackson, and Trace Adkins—who people really love to sing country music and can put out quality records—I think traditional country will always be here. It seems to be getting to where new artists coming in have cut their teeth on really good country songs. Now, we just have to maintain that level.”

Chesnutt’s own beginnings mirror just such an ideal. Before he was signed to MCA in 1990, the artist spent 10 years working the club circuit before he was a regular on the Grand Ole Opry or a member of the reper- toire primarily consisted of popular covers, “so I had to stay up with what was going on. But it’s a lot harder than it seems.”

“His debut album, the platinum “Too Cold At Home,” cemented his status as a country front runner for the ’90s that is consistent and yet accessible within the context of the ’90s. He obviously struck a chord with radio and country listeners: Chesnutt’s first 10 singles were all top 10 hits on Hot Country Singles & Tracks.

“Wasn’t at all expecting to have a hit at the beginning. I figured it would take years,” he says.

Now, despite his seven years of success—with three platinum and two gold albums, along with seven No. 1 singles—Chesnutt has yet to feel truly secure in the country arena.

“I always feel like I’m starting over with every album,” he says. “Everybody has always said that in this business, you’re only as good as your last record. Every time we start putting a new album together, it scares the hell out of me, because it could end your career—or rejuve- nate it.”

Chesnutt credits his longevity to the quality of songs he’s had over the years. “Thank God I’ve always had a lot of great songs come to me. The music is the most important thing in your career. If you don’t have the

Wenonaheman Musician’s Week

by Chuck Taylor

Chesnutt. “When we put it up against the other songs, you would never know it was recorded so long ago. We knew it as soon as we were done.”

song as a base, I don’t care how good looking you are or how many hoops you can jump through on stage,” he says. (Chesnutt adds that despite starting the album by “...Wasn’t trying to ‘out-Garth’ everybody—but I got out of that quickly. It isn’t me.”)

On his current album, the artist has upped his songwriting involvement, co-writing five songs with country music veteran Chesnutt, however, maintains a humble demeanor about the value of his con- tribute. “It’s nice. Little Roger takes back to Nashville and gets together with writers, and they finish it. He makes me come up with ideas, then he’s like a sponge. He holds onto it.”

“We’ll be sitting on the bus listening to old George Jones or Hank Williams and country ral- guards songs. With that kind of music playing, we just can’t help but come up with real country songs,” he says.

Perhaps it is this well-rooted ded- ication to the classic sounds of coun- try that has allowed Chesnutt to remain fertile on the country air- waves.

“Radio has never given up on me, and I’ve always been real thankful for that,” he acknowledges. “I’m not the best-looking guy, and I’m not a gimmick entertainer. The success I’ve had is because of the songs and radio playing those songs.”

Chesnutt is currently on the road with Gary Allan and David Lee Murphy for a 44-city tour that ends May 10 at the Ryman in Nashville. He stops by “Late Show With David Letterman” Jan. 27 and in February begins work on the next album. All of which adds up to an equation of time spent on the road “not to mention a lot of miles.”

“The good Lord willing, five years from now, I’ll be doing what I’m doing now. I don’t have Too Cold At Home. But I just played what I liked.”

That said, the platinum “Too Cold At Home” cemented his status as a country front runner for the ’90s that is consistent and yet accessible within the context of the ’90s. He obviously struck a chord with radio and country listeners: Chesnutt’s first 10 singles were all top 10 hits on Hot Country Singles & Tracks.

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The members of Ben Folds Five prefer a more personal, laid-back, and unpretentious way of life. Modern rock radio and its listeners are on the other hand, like "Brick," the act's melodic and quiet anthems about loss, is finding a home in heavy rotation.

"It is slower and more emotional than we've ever done, which made us feel the least like us," drummer Darren Jessee says. "I mean, we've worked hard to be a rocking piano band and have wavered that flag for three years in clubs. And now, the sound that people recognize is basically a ballad. But many bands break out with a slow song."

Jessee also admits he didn't know Ben Folds Five was sitting on a hit—the song "Brick" until he read the Modern Rock Tracks chart—but he says that "Brick" was an important personal addition to the trio's sophomore effort, "Whatever And Ever Amen.

"It was one of the last songs put on the record. It finished it while we were in the studio," he says. "The ghost of that song haunts us, though. It was the first time we recorded in the same room and the first time Robert [Sledge] used any bass. This pure, intimate setting made everyone take it to immediately, even before it was a single."

Jessee admits the album is about a couple dealing with abortion, but he is concerned that saying so will turn into a political theme song. "I don't want people to request the Ben Folds Five abortion song. We weren't trying to make a stand or change others' opinions," he says. "Overall, it's a song about a woman person going through an ultimatum which everyone can relate to. It's elusive enough that there is room for interpretation. I heard people say it was about a couple taking their pet to the vet to put it to sleep."

Image concerns aside, Jessee hopes the simple's exposure will help the band's popularity. "We want it to be like Lettermann and U2. We want to be able to hear. The DJs who love us now have a song to play.

**Mainstream Rock Tracks**

**Modern Rock Tracks**

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**Toxic!**

Week of December 14, 1997

**Billboard**

January 10, 1998
Brian Graden Promises Big Changes To Come At MTV

COULD 1998 BE THE beginning of a new era for MTV? MTV's new executive VP of programming, Brian Graden, says it well could be.

Graden, who was promoted in December from executive VP of television programming, says he's a self-confessed music junkie who wants MTV to go through a major overhaul.

"That's quite a challenge for someone who's been at MTV less than a year," Graden, a 34-year-old alum of the MBA, came to MTV in August from Foxlab, where he was senior VP. He also served as executive producer of the Comedy Central animated series “South Park.”

Although Graden's title is the same one previously held by Andy Heyman (who resigned in November), MTV is insisting that Graden is not taking Schuen's place.

"Brian isn't replacing anyone," says an MTV spokesman.

This is a new role with new responsibilities.

Those new responsibilities include being the first MTV programmer to oversee all aspects of programming, including music, news and specials, series development, animation, promotion and artist relations, and scheduling.

"MTV has had very disparate programming," Graden says, "I want to create an environment of massive experimentation.

"He says that he's green-lighted "about 20 ideas" for new shows and that within the next month or two, he will decide which ones will end up on the air.

"I don't think MTV programming has had a revolution since. TV," he adds. "I think MTV is television about music."

As for his long-term goal for MTV, Graden says, "When I was 21 years old, music and MTV were the most passionate connections I had in my life, and they still are. I would love to tap into, and probably, shake a whole new generation of young people will grow up with that kind of passion for MTV."

THE NEW TNN SHOW: The Oak Ridge Boys are coming to TNN. The network is launching a new series, “The Oak Ridge Boys From Las Vegas,” which premieres at 8 p.m. April 7.

The hour-long series, which will be shown every Tuesday and taped at the Las Vegas Hilton, features the veteran country group along with guest performers.

ON THE MOVE: Acclaimed music video director Spike Jonze is developing his debut feature film, "Being John Malkovich," with Michael Stipe's Single Cell Pictures ... Director Mary Lambert has signed to MTVI's 171 Production Group ... Director Chris Applebaum has exited Satellite Films and is now with Larry Perel's Arsenale Inc.

CLASSIC ROCK TV: Goldstar Entertainment Media has launched the Classic Rock Television Network, which will initially reach audiences via America One Satellite Network (Radio & Television Bulletin, Dec. 19, 1997). Currently shown nightly in a three-hour time period, Classic Rock Television Network programming is usually extended to 24-hour programming. In addition to videoclips and concerts, the network will be showing infomercials selling classic rock merchandise.

PRODUCTION NOTES

LOS ANGELES

Director Ted Crittenden filmed "Into The Ocean," a winner with MTV's "12 Angry Viewers," for Freethinking.

Jimmy James gave directorial commentary for "The Real Boys Who Want To Be Your Lover" for Rob Moniot.

NEW YORK

Daryl Hall and John Oates joined director Steve Carr in Manhattan to shoot a clip for "Promise Ain't Enough."

NASHVILLE

Jim Hershelder shot Steve Earle's video for "Telephone Man."
HOLIDAY RECORD SALES SOAR
(Continued from page 1)

getting a buzz on it." Jack Rogers, executive VP/ CFO at 325-unit, Ohio-based Camelot Music, says the chain enjoyed a double-digit comparable-store increase in December and "it's been strong throughout the year, whether it be anything like a double-digit comparable increase at Christmas."

Stills observed that small-or medium-sized, chain merchant, Stills, New Jersey-based manager, also reported comparable-store increases, with the"Starmania."

"We really had something for everybody, so I would say the labels did the best they could do," says Deewe. "But another key factor in the strong holiday selling season, according to merchants, has been the restructuring of some big labels' marketing plans. During that time, music chains have closed more than 10,000 stores in a stronger position. Also, the price war has abated thanks to the strengthening of minimum-advertised price (MAP) rules for the major labels to reap more profits in 1997. Mike Deeve, CEO at Newbury Points, jokes that the Lechmere's overall sales for the quarter, was up in the New England market, was down in 1997 and liquidated, which he attributes to the better sales performance.

The closing of stores and the downing of music departments at Best Buy may help account for the disparity between the strong holiday selling season that music merchants are reporting and the album sales increases tabulated by SoundScan, which shows that category up only 7.9% as of Dec. 26. John Mardumack, president of Hastings, says one of the surprising factors boosting business at music retailers was "the huge amount of traffic we haven't seen in a while who are getting reacquainted with music." He adds that "sales of the mass-market albums spiked a wider diversity of customer."

Lew Garrett, VP of purchasing and marketing at Camelot Music, says the sales figures are "very successful because we just had a wide array of product over a number of different genres." Furthermore, he notes that this resulted in a much higher frequency of music buyers and terms of units sold, "there wasn't much difference between our No. 2- and No. 10-best-selling unit."

Other factors contributing to the season's success were gift certificate sales, non-music items, and, at some chains, catalog album sales. At National Record Mart, Mundorf cites both catalog and non-music, or "boutique, items as enjoying robust sales. "Catalog artists sustained through the holiday. For example, Elton John's catalog sold through for us, riding the strength of the Princess Diana tribute single."

A stronger commitment to boutique business this year, putting departments in our stores earlier this year, has paid off during the holidays. Among the items that were strong sellers were posters and mood rings."

Goman, senior VP of retail operations at Tower Records/Video, notes that gift certificates were up 15% last year. "I think it was a gift certificate Christmas. Our registers jammed; [they] couldn't take so many hits on the same SKU!"

"All the factors are focusing on comparable-store increases, Goman says that profits are bolstering his holiday spirits, "if I can get sales growth like we did and our gross profit, it's up even more, then that is even better, he says.

HOLIDAY VIDE SALES CENTER ON MUSIC, DVD, HIT TITLES
(Continued from page 1)

copyright term extension and passage of legislation enabling Congress to ratify the World International Intellectual Property Organization treaties (see related story, p. 9).

The president has already signed Congress' legislative-fix La Cienega bill. That law overrode a strict interpretation of the fair use doctrine in the old 1909 Copyright Act concerning copyright notice place by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The act's domain peril the fate of all songs copyrighted previous to 1978, the date of the Copyright Act reversion. Congress extended the bill in November (Billboard, Nov. 15) after supporters beat back an attempt by several legislators to hold it in battle in a stockpiling bill that provides music licensing exceptions for restauakers. BILLY HOLLAND

LA MACHIA BILL
(Continued from page 6)

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MIDEM
(Continued from page 6)

French labels' body SNEP. In addition to honoring Ahmet Erte- gun, Roy says, MIDEM is continuing its "a long time lullikers Make" Award. The recipients this year are Peer, ediel music founder/CEO Michael Haustettes; and French-Czech artist Louis Pla- mond, co-creator of the rock opera "Sarmania."

Ertegun will also be center stage at MIDEM in the form of the 50th anniversary of the MIDEM. On April 4, in Cannes, that morning, Louis, Chris Sills, and Sugar Ray. Later that day, Warner Music Switzerland managing director Claude Nobs will be honored at the "Atlantic Soul Machine" evening, honoring the label's contribution to the development of black music.

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(Continued from page 6)

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E-PROP GETS ALL OF MARTIN
(Continued from page 6)

Reprise masters have been licensed for the past six years; some have not been reissued since their original releases, and most have never been available before. The Reprise masters ensemble more than 20 albums, including 10 that were certified gold, and more than 60 songs that include "Everybody Loves Somebody," "You're Nobody Till Somebody Loves You," "I Will," and "Houston," one of Martin's first recordings, fame in a country mule.

In a move related to the licensing arrangement, Mickey Kapp, founder and former president of Warner Special Products, has been hired as a consultant to help market the catalog. "Elsie Flesy considered the catalog gold," he says. "Yet, just before the end of our negotiation, I just don't think that's what it is. "That's how important he is to music. There's a lot of business to be done with this catalog."

"E-Prop is a marketing entity man- aging the catalogs of the EMi North American labels, including Capitol, the Right Stuff, and Capitol Nashville, as well as selected titles from sister Vir- gin Records.

BILLY HOLLAND JANUARY 10, 1998
runs the Country Music Hall of Fame. Ivey is also well known in the indus-
try as a member of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sci-
ences. He serves as president (a position now called chairman) of that organization from 1981 to 1989 and again as chairman from 1990 to 1991.

"I'm a real fan of the NEA," Ivey says. "I'm a big supporter, and I believe its programs play a very important part in American society. I believe it has accomplished terrific things with its grants, and I approach the job that way."

Ivey is well known as a music writer, folklorist, and archivist com-
mittee to the Arts and Humanities. He has also been instrumental in the writing of "Creative America," a report released in 1997 surveying the arts and humanities in the U.S.

Out of that report came the Presi-
dent's Millennium Office "Worthy Ancestors" program to bring atten-
tion to the preservation of U.S. cul-
tural materials from both govern-
ment and private sources.

Since the '70s, Ivey has served on NEA panels and as a consultant to the NEA's music, folk arts, chal-
lenge, and advancement programs.

He has also led the capital fund campaign to raise $15 million to move the Country Music Hall of Fame—
now the CMF offices in 1990 to a new 3.2-acre site in downtown Nashville, next to the new Nashville Arena. The CMF now houses the historic Hatch Show Print shop in downtown Nashville, RCA's Studio B, the CMF Media Center, CMF Records, and the CMF Press. He would be the first NEA chairman who has developed and directed a nonprofit cultural organiza-
tion.

Ivey joins already confirmed fellow Southern folklorist William Ferriss, whom the president recently picked to head the National Endow-
ment for the Humanities.

"The NEA is a hot button, a hot topic," says Warren Beatty/Nash-
ville president Jim Ed Norman, an active backer of arts groups and
efforts. "We mustn't forget that he has to go through the process of confirma-
tion. We'll all keep our fingers crossed, but I think we'll also undertake to do our best to help him. We will make sure that all of Bill's contributions are recognized to the fullest extent possi-
ble in that process. It seems like he's going to have great support politically from people in the system. There's nobody more articulate or passionate than Bill when it comes to issues of arts, education, and especially the ver-
nacular arts. But he has an under-
standing of the great world of art."

Norman says Ivey's nomination is a big deal for music especially the country music community. "Bill's work, though, and his expertise and interests extend far outside country music. He has been working to promote to someone with his passion and understanding."

Bruce Hinton chairman of MCA Nashville chairman of the CMF, echoes Norman's endorsement of Ivey saying Ivey understands our role and importance of the arts in the development of our children.

The CMF is expected to appoint a search committee to determine a suc-
sessor for Ivey.

**SALSA PIONEER JERRY MASCUCI DIES**

(Continued from page 6)

JERRY GORDY was the Motown sound. Indeed, Mascuci operated Fania much like Motown, with Mascuci han-
dling business affairs and Pacheco directing the music. Mascuci's Fania became a self-contained assem-
blage for salsa artists, producers, ur-
Ces, and composers.

"We trusted each other, and we had a lot of fun," says Pacheco, who notes that the term "salsa" arose because the sound was like a musical sauce com-
suming different ingredients and it was easy to market.

**UNDER ONE ROOF**

"When we were starting to travel all over the world, people were getting confused," says an interview with Caldera, "so we thought we had to separate the salsa acts... for sure," says Pacheco. "So we used salsa to put all of the Latin Caribbean music under one roof."

The smooth road paved for salsa music by Mascuci and Pacheco was not without a few potholes, however. In the late '70s, some of the label's artists felt the hard-negotiating Mascuci was being too tight-fisted with royalties pay-
outs. Nonetheless, acts such as Harlow, one of Fania's earliest signees, staunchly

**RIAA SEGK REVIEW**

(Continued from page 6)

more than 40% of revenues for their
programming.

The librarian must make a decision for a review within 60 days.

The CARP panel is a nonperma-
ment body that replaced the autonomous Copyright Royalty Tri-
unal, which Congress abolished. The panel based the low rate on evidence that the services are facing financial difficulties.

The RIAA argued that the rate should not be based on licensees' financial conditions.

If the librarian and CARP decide not to adjust the rate, the RIAA has the right to appeal the decision to the Dispute of Columbian Court of Appeals. It has not yet made a decision.

**CES TO SERVE AS STAGE FOR DVD, DIVX FEUD**

(Continued from page 1)

DVD expects to cram its display with available titles from every sup-
plier except 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment and Paramount Home Video, the two studio holdouts. The focus will be on the "abundance of blockbuster movies" in stores, says Amy Jo Donner of Douglas Consulting Group in Los Angeles (see story, page 81).

Divx Entertainment won't have the selection of titles that the DVD has, but it will have what the association's display lacks—the element of surprise.

For the first time, Divx is being demonstrat-
ed in a public forum. Thomson Consumer Electronics and Matsushita are putting the system, which connects the player to a computer monitor via phone line, through its paces at their CES exhibit in Las Vegas. Other than Divx, little is expected in the way of technical developments. Tos-
hiba has scheduled an event to review the market status of the format and announce an addition to its line, possi-
ble a lightweight player. Also present will be Warren Lieberfarb, president of the Divx Home Video. "I'm curious to see what the market will game plan is," he says, "I can't wait until the first meeting."
which cost $4.99 each for CD and $3.99 for cassette versions (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 30).

The front bottom corner of the cereal boxes feature a picture of a CD with copy reading "Best To You Music Offer," with the respective genre inserted into the copy. The promotion will be backed up by a $3 million television advertising campaign and a full-page Sunday insert that will be distributed in 55 million newspapers.

John Esposito, senior VP of PolyMedia, says that PolyMedia is preparing for a redemption rate of 1-2%, which means that sales of the four compilations combined could reach 1 million-2 million units.

The use of a music as a premium for another consumer product is not unique. In September 1994, EMI-Capitol Music teamed with McDonald's, offering greatest-hits albums from Garth Brooks, Tina Turner, and Elton John with each new album from Exxon at $5.99 each for CD and $3.99 for cassette. The promotion was backed by what was said to be a $25 million advertising campaign; it sold about 12 million units.

While the promotion generated an enthusiastic consumer response, it infuriated music retailers. They felt McDonald's got the albums for a cost less than the average $10.70 that music retailers pay for front-line albums. The resultant price to McDonald's' loyal customers on CDs, retailers also charged. Finally, they didn't like the idea of the label using their CD box for storage and cutting them out of the channel.

Esposito says that PolyMedia's effort is completely different from the EMI-Capitol Music campaign. For example, PolyMedia has already developed a catalog of in-store samplers, which will be available at pricing similar to the PolyGram's offer. In addition, he says, the PolyGram's promotion is designed to give exposure to PolyGram's artists and stimulate sales of music at retail.

According to Esposito, PolyMedia partnered with Kellogg's in order to reach nonactive record buyers. Moreover, he says, each compilation will include an insert card urging the purchaser to visit his or her "favorite local record retailer and buy the entire albums by the artists you like." The compilations' back listings will list each song alongside the cover art of the album from which it comes.

Finally, Esposito says that PCD is releasing a promotion program all the titles advertised in the compilations for three months, beginning Monday (5). PolyMedia is developing point of purchase materials so that music merchants can tie in with the Kellogg's promotion, he says. "We believe that once a customer has paid for a full album, he is very likely to go into the store and buy the other albums that their favorite songs on the compilations came from," Esposito says.

Retailers were expected to be notified about the promotion in a PolyMedia letter scheduled to hit account headquarters before Jan. 1.

In total, 28 PolyGram artists are featured on the compilations, including Bryan Adams, Amy Grant, Aaron Neville, and Extreme on the rock compilation; the Allman Brothers Band, Free, Rod Stewart, and the Police on the classic rock compilation; andExpose, the Isley Brothers, and John Anderson on the country compilation; and Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, the Miracles, and the Supremes on the Motown compilation.

As an additional promotional vehicle, PolyMedia is making available via the Kellogg's boxes three CD singles, each featuring two artists from the respective compilation. The catalog songs featured on the CD singles will not be available on the compilations. A total of 1.2 million singles will be given to store buyers making a qualifying cereal purchase as an inducement to go the next step and purchase the sampler.

The Kellogg's cereal boxes that will contain the compilations offer include Apple Jacks, Corn Flakes, Corn Pops, Cocoa Krispies, Cocoa Frosted Flakes, Froot Loops, and Frosted Flakes. Kellogg's is a product of the Kellogg Co., based in Battle Creek, Mich.

FOOD BANK BENEFITS

Five cents will be donated from every compilation album purchased during the promotion to the Second Harvest, a Chicago-based charity that describes itself as a national food-bank network.

Executives at the Kellogg Co. were unavailable for comment by press time. But the highly competitive supermarket business, with space that is tough to come by, and many products carried in that retail channel, often offer premiums as an inducement to generate incremental purchases.

Esposito declined to provide the financial details of the Kellogg's deal except to say, "They are buying the right to promote our nonreturnable basis, and they had to commit to make a minimum purchase." He also says that Kellogg's is responsible for fulfillment to those purchasing samplers.

In all, the promotion has been in the works for 18 months, Esposito says, with the first six to eight months spent working on getting the right kind of promotion. After the promotion was decided upon, PolyMedia turned to the respective PolyGram labels for help in selecting the right songs and artwork.

"If this had been a typical special

market project, we would have just licensed the tracks and sold the compilations to Kellogg's," Esposito explains. "But we wanted the chance to expose our catalog in a huge way, and we wanted to get our labels to become partners in the promotion."

He says that senior marketing executives at the various PolyGram labels gave assistance in "turning the cereal boxes into PolyGram showpieces."

Esposito says that two of the compilations include developing artists alongside the stars. "The pop compilation includes songs by Del Amitri and Gin Blossoms, and the country compilation includes a Kim Richey track."

"If people are inspired to buy one of these artists because of one of the compilations, then that's a big plus," he says. Esposito says that PolyMedia and the Kellogg Co. are still working on other promotional ideas to enhance the campaign and excite music retailers. "If all goes well, this will be the first of many such promotions," he says.

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**EXIT NINE's CARSTENSEN GETS MARKETING PUSH VIA GRP DEAL**

(Continued from page 7)

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**CHALLENGE US.**

Go ahead-challenge us to solve your toughest compact disc packaging problem. We offer a full range of services including custom package design, assembly and equipment.

And since we have a vast range of ready-made solutions, there's a good chance we've already solved the problem you're wrestling with.

**YOU BE THE JUDGE.** Does your marketing game plan call for compact disc packaging that does more to court customers? No problem. We produce many types of multipurpose packages—like one that not only provides safety-sleeve protection and excellent graphic display but also serves as a mailer. It continues to function as a regular package with removal of the outer flap, which can become an order form or reply card.

Universe. Our packaging works ngs ways to make your case. Try us... and judge for yourself.

P.O. Box 23903, Columbus, Ohio 43226-0398 USA (800) 992-8262 Fax: (614) 528-2110 E-mail: salesadventure@com.google.com web http://www.adventure.com
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**THE TOP-SELLING ALBUMS FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE AND RACK SALES REPORTS COLLECTED, COMPILED, AND PROVIDED BY THE BILLBOARD 200.**

**JANUARY 10, 1998**

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* Albums with the greatest sales gains this week. ** Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for sales of 500,000 album units. *** RIAA certification for shipment of 1 million units, with multiplication indices indicated by a numeral preceding the symbol. For boxed sets, and double albums with a running time that exceeds two hours, the RIAA multiples shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. ** indicates that the album has sold more than 1 million copies. \( \times \) indicates that the album has sold more than 5 million copies. \( ^* \) indicates that the album has sold more than 10 million copies. © indicates that the album has sold more than 20 million copies. " indicates that the album has sold more than 50 million copies. \( \times \times \) indicates that the album has sold more than 100 million copies. \( \times \times \times \) indicates that the album has sold more than 200 million copies.
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**Top Albums A-Z (Listed by Artists)**

**Billboard.134**

1. Bryan White — *Here With You* (Columbia 3000)
2. Adam Sandler — *I'm Not the Only One* (Warner Bros.
3. Yanni — *Private Muse* (Saffronhill)
5. Michael Jordan — *The Right Place* (Motown
6. Timbaland — *The CURE* (Interscope)
7. Our Lady Peace — *Columbia 67904* (Polygram)
9. Insane Clown Posse — *Suicide Squeeze* (Universal)
10. Erykah Badu — *Kedar 550 / 138 E* (Jive)
11. Joe — *Jive / 138 E* (Jive)
12. Soundtrack — *Mortal* (Epic / 138 E)
13. MJ SLAVE HOUSE 550 / 138 E (Universal)
14. Tony Braxton — "I Love You" (Lance 624
15. Mindy McCready — "If I Don't Stay the Night* (Enigma)
16. Alejandro Fernández — *Como Dios* (Sony / 138 E)
17. Kenny Wayne Shepherd — "Down* (Resolution / 138 E)
18. Lenny Kravitz — "Do You Really Want It* (ATLANTIC)
19. Sade — "Stardust* (Epic / 138 E)
20. Blues Traveler — "Bad Dreams* (A&M)
21. The American Wolves — "Wolfman Attenborough* (Columbia 3000)
22. The Everly Brothers — "Erie} (Enigma)
23. The Joe Perry Band — "Shake* (EMI)
24. The Righteous Brothers — "Don't Wake Me* (Columbia 3000)
25. A-Ha — "Take On Me* (Columbia 3000)
26. The Rolling Stones — "Paint It Black* (Rolling Stone)
27. Elton John — "Crocodile Rock* (Capitol 3000)
28. The Clash — "Should I Stay Or Should I Go* (EMI)
29. The Eagles — "Hotel California* (Capitol 3000)
30. The Beatles — "Yesterday* (EMI)
31. The Beach Boys — "Goodbye* (Capitol 3000)
32. The Beach Boys — "Surf City* (Capitol 3000)
33. The Beatles — "Let It Be* (Capitol 3000)
34. The Eagles — "Hotel California* (Capitol 3000)
35. The Rolling Stones — "Paint It Black* (Rolling Stone)
36. Elton John — "Crocodile Rock* (Capitol 3000)
37. The Clash — "Should I Stay Or Should I Go* (EMI)
38. The Clash — "Rock Against The State* (Chrysalis)
VID SUPPLIERS RINGING IN NEW YEAR WITH HIT TITLES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

One.

"For the first quarter we expect to see his sales increase over last year," says Turner Video VP John Thrasher, "and the fourth-quarter titles will continue to perform well through the end of January.

"Heracles" arrives in stores Feb. 3 priced at $29.99. It is just one of more than 25 titles Buena Vista Home Video will be releasing throughout the first quarter. On March 3 it will follow "Heracles" with the reissue of "Peter Pan," which has been off the market since 1991.

Lauded with tie-in partners, "Peter Pan" is priced at $29.99, but consumers can receive up to $11 in savings. Offered title is a $10 rebate when consumers purchase "Peter Pan" and any three Big G cereals and any one Big G snack. Other videos included in the offer are "Heracles," "Sleeping Beauty," the "Jungle Book," and "Beauty And The Beast: The Enchanted Christmas.

Fisher Price Toys is offering $5 in instant savings with the purchase of "Peter Pan." Consumers can get any one of five "Great Adventures" toy priced over $15, and $2 off any Magnadoodle toy priced over $20. The instant coupon is attached to the "Peter Pan" case.

Buena Vista will also attach an instant coupon good for $2 off the title when consumers purchase any one title in the "Indiana Jones" collection set, which arrives in stores March 3. Titles in the Mills group are "That Darn Cat," "The Parent Trap," and "Pollyanna." Each is priced at $19.99.

Buena Vista continues its reign in the adult-driven self-throught market on Feb. 10 with the action adventure "Air Force One," which touches down at retail with a $14.95 minimum advertised price. Consumers can get more than $175 million at the box office, states Harrison Ford.

Meanwhile, Fox is releasing "Soul Food" to self through on Jan. 19 at $19.98 suggested list price. The release will likely be augmented by its strong soundtrack, released on CD.

Still, retailers aren't expecting a re-

DVD Gains A Healthy Release Slate For '98

Eight months after DVD entered the marketplace, new releases in the format are coming fast and furious, with a series of titles being released day-and-date with VHS as well as a wallet of catalog for the new year. DVD is not new-release-driven but has relied on the proliferation of the number of players in the market, and there were a lot of players under Christmas traditions. For the DVD, it's time manager Joe Pagano, "Classics as well as new releases make collectible exciting for this new technology. With both those factors working we have very high expectations.

On Jan. 6, MGM/UA Home Entertained was to release the gangster thriller "Hoodlum" on DVD and VHS, while Warner Home Video will offer cassette and DVD versions of "Fire Down Below." LIVE Home Video will send out "Wishmaster" on VHS and DVD Jan. 13 and "Critical Care" Feb. 17.

"Air Force One" will be available on DVD and VHS Feb. 10 from Columbia TriStar Home Video.

Recent Columbia rental titles coming to DVD Feb. 10 are "The Devil's Own" and "Fools Rush In." New Line Home Video is planning a slate of 25 DVD and VHS day-and-date releases, including "Boogie Nights," "Wag The Dog," and "Lost Highway." Each release will be called the "New Line Platinum Series." Release dates have not been determined. Catalog king MGM will put out special DVD editions of "The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly," "Moorakiel," and an unrated version of the Academy Award-winning "Winning Las Vegas." All are due Jan. 27.

Other top catalog releases from MGM include "The Maltese Falcon," "The Treasure Of The Sierra Madre," and "Citizen Kane," all available Jan. 6.


EILEEN FITZPATRICK

FOR THE RECORD

Contrary to a report in Billboard's year-end special issue titled "The Year In Business" (Billboard, Dec. 27, 1997), Turner World Entertainment's Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection was never operating under

WORLD RECORDS ACCORDING TO GARTH: When we last left our readers two weeks ago, Garth Brooks' "Sevens" had set SoundScan-era records for the most sales in an album's first two weeks and the most in an album's first three weeks. He has not let up since.

On Billboard's Feb. 3 chart, which published sales figures for the sales week that ended Sunday, Dec. 21, Brooks managed a 28% uptick over the prior chart, which brought his four-week tally up to 2.7 million units, blowing away the 2.5 million units that Pearl Jam's "Vitalogy" had during the first four weeks it was available on Jan. 4, 1995.

Now, the week that included Christmas sets a new standard for an album's first five weeks. With a 6,000-unit gain over the prior week, "Sevens" projects to surpass its forebear, which the album "Enchanted," with the week's top five titles priced at $19.98 each.

VIDE VALENTINES

Catalog promotions will take center stage during the first quarter, as retailers take advantage of the lucrative Valentine's Day and Easter selling seasons.

Buena Vista is planning a Valentine's Day promotion starting Tuesday, Feb. 10. The offer promises customers a chance to win a "Men in Black" with the best carry-over title from the fourth quarter: "With Valentine's Day coming up, that title should get some extra sales," he says.

RENTAL R-PRICED

Several rental titles will be re-priced, including new $9.99 priced for such hits as "Sling Blade," "Metro," "Superboy," "Dead Man," and "Crime Story" on Tuesday (Feb. 10). Others include "Emma" and Woody Allen's "Everybody Says I Love You" will also be reduced to $19.99 for Feb. 3.


In a special program offering from Buena Vista, the company will release the special-interest documentary "Long Journey Home: The Irish In America" now on the shelves in its Collector's Edition set is priced at $79.99. The series will air Jan. 30-38 on PBS.

Columbia is jumping into the new year with "Buddy" the story of a gorilla raised by a socialite, played by Rene Russo. The title, which carries a $14.95 rental price and a $19.95 purchased price, goes to stores Jan. 13.

In addition, the animated musical "Walt Disney's Live From New York City," the second installment of the Irish dance phenomenon, hits stores Jan. 20. "Riverdance" is priced at $24.95.

Universal Studios Home Video kicks off '98 with the delayed release of "Heracles & Xena: The Animated Collection," in stores Jan. 13 at $19.98.

Academy Awards time in March will see several DVD re-promotions, the biggest from Warner Home Video.

Throughout the first quarter, Warn-er will release more than 60 of its Acad-emy Award-winning films in conjunc-tion with the studio's companywide 55th anniversary celebration. Special releases include DVD versions of "The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly," "The Maltese Falcon," "The Treasure Of The Sierra Madre," and "Citizen Kane," all available Jan. 6.


"There's going to be a lot of advertising for this promotion, and we're anticipating that all the titles in the promo-
tion will sell well," says Thrasher.

H OW MUCH IS THAT CD IN THE WINDOW? A Comparison of The Bill-board 200 that ran in our Year in Music issues of 1997 and 1998 shows that the March 1997 chart remains the highest shelf price of the market (that $12.99) and compact discs, higher-priced spreads are spreading, and $15.98 are becom-
ing a thing of the past.

The chart that ran in '97's end of season reported 111 titles with a CD list or equivalent of the same, drawn just a dream from the 17 that appeared on the position-list chart in the '96 Year in Music Edition. The premium $15.98, typically used for soundtracks or a big-name actor's album, swelled during the year, from $15 in the '96-year-end to 49 in our last issue. As conspicuous as the move toward $17.98 is the decline in the use of the $15.98 mark. Just a few years ago, $15.98 was the most common price point, but its evaporation has accelerated. There were only 19 $15.98 or less in our last chart's list, compared to 27 for the same period in '96.

The number of albums priced at $18.98, usually reserved for double-CD sets and boxed sets, is about the same: 11, compared with 13 in the compara-
tive '96 week. Likewise, the use of price points under $15.98, generally applied to EPs by name acts or full-length albums by developing acts, remains in the same ballpark. There were 10 such titles on the last printed Billboard 200, compared with seven in the chart that closed out '96.

An analysis of the Heatseekers and Top Pop Catalog charts from the same '96 and '97 issues also reveals the shift from $15.98 to $19.98. There were 22 $19.98 out of 50 titles on the last recorded Heatseekers chart of '96, but just 10 at that price in the last issue of '97, while the number of albums at $19.98 or greater fell from 25 to 22 in the current Top Pop Catalog lists, which also print 50 positions deep, 15.98 went from 14 at the end of '96 to eight at the end of '97, with those at $19.98 or more growing from 15 to 23.

The number of CDs available on both Heatseekers and Top Pop Catalog but not significantly, which is noteworthy in new CD releases, since the lower-price sets are often employed to get lesser-known acts on track and because mid-price and budget lines also spur catalog activity. In the '96-year-end, Heatseekers had 15 albums at $14.98 or less, compared with 10 in the same 1997 week. On the catalog charts from the same weeks, there were 21 on the '96 list and 19 on the '97 list.
MAJOR, EMERGING ACTS ON RELEASE SCHEDULE
(Continued from page 1)

this page).
The January-March quarter will see new releases from many major acts including Clapton and Madonna, as well as debuts from acts like Rufus Wainwright and "Thanks To Gravity."

Pearl Jam released the first single from their upcoming album on January 10, 2000, and has been growing in popularity since his chart debut in the '80s, will release a studio album of new material on Reprise. This will be Clapton's first new album in ten years of material this decade.

The Warner-Reprise labels will have other superstar releases this quarter, including Minty fresh new material from Madonna Feb. 24. It will be the pop icon's first album of new material since 1994's "Bedtime Sto- ries." This album features the production of the first Van Halen album to feature its new lead vocalist, ex-Extreme singer Gary Cherone. The new Clapton album is scheduled to hit the 1998 releases.

Arista has a new Aretha Franklin album scheduled for February, featuring a collaboration written by Lauryn Hill of the Fugees and produced by Sean "Puffy" Combs, Jermaine Dupri, and Dallas Austin. January will see new releases from Tony Rich Pro- ject on Arista joint-venture LaFace, and February will see the release of Faith Evans' sophomore album, "Keep The Faith," on Bad Boy. "Happy?" will be the question on Jann Arden's lips when her third album for Capitol, "The Story of Them," is released.

by FRED BRONSON


On Feb. 4, Legacy will issue "The Quiet Storm," by Miles Davis, a six-disc set that is a follow-up to the triple-grammy-winning Davis boxed set released last year. A Janis Joplin "Live Set," will be issued the same day. The double collection of live recordings from the Fillmore West and Winterland pre-dates all previously unreleased material. Also slated for release Feb. 4 are two ten-disc, double-CD sets, a Jazzy spanned set from Taj Mahal and a Loggins & Messina-greatest-hits collection that may include previously unreleased material. On March 10, Legacy will give the Santana catalog the same treatment the label gave the Byrds this year, with the release of "Santana II," "Abraxas," and "Santana III," with extensive in- put from Carlos Santana.


And Polygram will mine its catalog to release three albums from Alabama Gibb in the first quarter, two of the CD, the "Story Of Them Featuring Van Mor- rison on Deram/Polydor and "The Best Of John Miles & The Bluesbreakers," compiled by Mayall and featuring a track-by-track interview. An updated "The Best Of Tom Jones" is due in March.


The first quarter reissues include a collection of Living- stone's hits from his Epic and Capitol years, greatest-hits collections from Eddie Cochran and Marv Johnson, and the soundtrack to "A Fistful Of Dollars."

Reissues Abound For The 1st Qtr.

-

FRANKLIN

Darius McPherson's vocal performance is featured on "Eddie" from B-52's "Cosmic Thing," and "Rhythm 'N' Blues," from B.B. King's "The Thrill Is Gone." The album was recorded at the famous Apollo Theater in Harlem and features the legendary B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Al Green, and others. The album was released in 1989 and has been a staple on many music charts since its release.

Gloria Estefan is set to release her new album in March. "V.I.P." is the fourth single from her album "LIVE," her debut album for Capitol. The Latin pop star has had a successful career, winning three Grammy Awards for her work with Miami Sound Machine and later, as a solo artist. "V.I.P." is expected to continue her success with its catchy beats and bilingual lyrics.

The release of "The Greatest Hits," from N dominated by "The Memory," a duet featuring the famous crooner with Nat King Cole, is another highlight. Fans can expect a robust collection of hits spanning Ma's career, from her collaborations with various artists like Ray Charles and Ray Conniff to her own chart-topping songs.

In the world of independent music, S.P. Spence and The Clatta Collective have released "The Sound of Silence," a collection of acoustic versions of classic songs. The album features a mix of oldies and contemporary hits, performed with a folk-inspired twist. With its folksy guitar riffs and soulful vocals, it's a perfect addition to any music loving household.

A classic arrives in the form of "The Very Best Of The Beach Boys," a compilation of their greatest hits. This album contains all their biggest hits, including "Good Vibrations," "Kokomo," and "Surfin' USA." It's a must-have for any Beach Boys fan, offering a nostalgic journey through their legendary career.

Finally, the first quarter will also see the release of "The Best Of The Carpenters," a collection of their biggest hits, from "Closer To Home" to "Superstar." The album features their unique blend of close harmonies and lush orchestral arrangements, making it a delight for fans of this influential, chart-topping duo.

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF DISC MAKERS
New Web Site To Showcase Fresh Talent For Global Biz

Billboard Talent Net, a new Web site being developed as a marketplace for new music by unsigned and developing artists, will be introduced to the industry this month at the MIDEM conference in Cannes, France. The new site is a license of the Billboard Music Group and will have links to Billboard Online (www.billboard.com) and other Music Group Web sites.

For A&R executives, music publishers, record companies, and other seekers of talent, Billboard Talent Net provides easy online access to an international pool of new acts. Each artist's entry will include: biographical information, up to three songs (or six minutes of music), press clips and reviews, upcoming gigs, copyright information, territory availability, and other facts useful in negotiating agreements. Billboard Talent Net also will offer the opportunity for music companies, publicists, and artist managers to post listings of their own acts for international exploitation.

Consumers also will play a part in Billboard Talent Net. Visitors to the site will be invited to listen to the sound samples on "Radio BTN," conceived as a virtual radio station, and rate the music they hear. Rankings of the artists on the site will be posted weekly, allowing industry users to ascertain the popularity of the available acts.

"Billboard Talent Net brings the best of two worlds together," explains Andrew Wuerfel, GM of the New York-based startup operation. "On the one hand, the Internet affords our unsigned artists the ability to get their music heard by the consumer in this direct and exciting way. But it also gets their music directly to the music industry and opens up the possibility of a record contract and the more traditional route."

Artists (or firms representing artists) will have monthly, quarterly, and annual fee options for placing material on the site. There will be no charge to the industry or the public to access the site and all of the relevant data. The site, which currently is under construction, is targeted for an official launch in March. For further information, contact Wuerfel at 212-737-2631.

Julie Taraska has joined Billboard Online, the Internet home of Billboard magazine, in the new position of news editor. Taraska has been contributing to Billboard Online as the author of Daily Music Update since April 1996. She also has been a part-time proofreader/copy editor for Billboard since December 1995.

As a full-time member of the Billboard Online staff, she will continue to lead daily news reporting activities and will be responsible for expanding the site's overall editorial content. She reports to Ken Schlager, editorial director of Billboard Online and director of strategic development for the Billboard Music Group.

In addition to her recent work at Billboard and Billboard Online, Taraska has done extensive freelance writing on music-related subjects for British GQ, Elle, the Village Voice, Spin, and Request. She has a B.A. degree from Connecticut College. Other accomplishments include her studies of the British punk scene as well as Thomas J. Watson Fellow and her contributions to several editions of Penguin's " Rough Guide" travel series.

At Week 14, Elton Is Really ‘Something’

ONLY FIVE SINGLES in history have been No. 1 on the Hot 100 for 14 weeks or longer, and one of them is the current occupant. Elton John’s “Something About The Way You Look Tonight” / “Candle In The Wind 1997” (Roc/Rock) is in pole position for the 4th consecutive week. The tribute to the late Diana, Princess of Wales, entered the chart at No. 1 the week of Oct. 11, 1997, and has remained there ever since.

Six years ago, a 14-week run at No. 1 would have been the all-time record, but ever since "I Will Always Love You" by Whitney Houston was No. 1 for 14 weeks in 1992-93, it’s not quite as exciting to have a single remain on top for so long. After all, “I’ll Make You Love Me” by Boys II Men and “Macarena” (Bay-side Boys mix) by Los Del Rio both had 14-week runs, and “One Sweet Day” by Mariah Carey & Boyz II Men set the all-time record by staying on top for 16 weeks.

If Elton has just one more week at No. 1, he’ll be in second place all by himself. Two more weeks will tie him with Carey & the Boyz, and three more weeks will set a new rock-ens record.

Meanwhile, in the contest for the most weeks at No. 1, “Candle” / “Something” has lifted Elton from 13th place to seventh. Elton has now spent a total of 30 weeks at the summit, tied with Paul McCartney. The only acts with more weeks at No. 1 are Whitney Houston (31), Michael Jackson (37), Bee Gees II Men (60), Mariah Carey (57), the Beatles (60), and Elvis Presley (69).

By remaining No. 1 for such a long time, Elton is also closing in on Jackson as the artist with the longest chart span of No. 1 songs, Jackson is still in first place, with 25 years and seven months between “I Want You Back” and “You Are Not Alone.” But Elton’s span has expanded to 24 years and 11 months, dating back to the reissue of “Crocodile Rock” the week of Feb. 3, 1975. His current single won’t carry him past Jackson, but his next one could.

By remaining No. 1 into 1998, Elton now has collected at least one top 40 entry every year since 1970. That 29-year uninterrupted string is an all-time record.

SIX IS TOO MUCH: Britain’s Spice Girls are not resting on their laurels for having the No. 1 album of 1997. In Britain, they’ve collected their sixth consecutive No. 1 single with “Too Much,” the second release from the “Space-world” album. No other act has ever hit No. 1 with its first six singles—the record is held by Mariah Carey, who went to No. 1 with her first five singles.

RAISE THE TITANIC: The highest-ranked soundtrack on The Billboard 200 is still “Men In Black,” which falls 21-26, but the fastest-rising soundtrack is “Titanic,” which rushes 22-31. The theme song from the No. 1 box-office attraction can be found on two different albums, “My Heart Will Go On” by Celine Dion is on the original soundtrack as well as her “Let’s Talk About Love” disc, which holds at No. 2. “Heart” is the only new title on this issue’s Adult Contemporary top 10, scaling 11-7.

GO WITH THE ORINOCO FLOW: Enya’s “Only If…” (Warner Bros.), from “Paint The Sky With Stars” garnered hits collection, is only her third single to appear on the Hot 100. Her first was “Orinoco Flow (Sail Away),” No. 24 in 1989, and her second was "Caribbean Blue," No. 79 in 1995. That makes “Only If…” the first Enya single to chart in almost six years.

BAM THANK YOU MAXX: Wham! is back on the Adult Contemporary chart, but it’s a holiday homage from the all-sing along garnered by “Last Christmas,” the only new entry at No. 22.
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