Costello Signs Unorthodox Multi-Label P'Gram Pact

BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER

NEW YORK—In recent years, Elvis Costello has thought nothing of sliding from nouveau new wave on one album to neoclassical song cycle on another. His indefatigability is all the more striking upon film scores, gospel, avant-cabaret, and Celtic balladry in between. What's been born to some can seem barren to others, and during his near-decade with Warner Bros., this policy of ambition made Costello seem increasingly like a square peg in a round hole.

But now it seems as if Costello has found a home where he can make the most of his manifold aspirations. He has just signed a bold new deal with PolyGram in the form of multi-album contracts with PolyGram Classics & Jazz and its pop sister, Mercury Records. The arrangement is designed to channel Costello's versatile output through whichever label seems best suited to market the music, under a single corporate umbrella.

Starting off in a low-key way, Costello makes his Mercury bow with a new rocker "My Mood Swings," the first single from the soundtrack to the Coen brothers film "The Big Lebowski," due Feb. 24. But the first full-fledged Costello album on PolyGram will feature his much-touted collaboration with legendary tunesmith Burt Bacharach and is due later this year on Mercury.

Along with that release, there may be a pendant project on PolyGram's Verve label that features jazz interpretations of those Costello/Bacharach compositions. Next year may bring an encore of (Continued on page 89)

Music Biz Grapples With Asia's Economic Woes

BY GEOFF BURPEEE

HONG KONG—When Asia eventually regains its economic composure, the regional chiefs of the six multinational record companies will be able to write one hell of a "survival guide." For the moment, they're finding out exactly how to survive.

"The record market is just a microcosm of the rest of the Asian economy," says Michael Smoelke, senior VP of BMG Entertainment International's Asia-Pacific division, typifying the views of his colleagues and competitors. "Look for significant restructuring, with significant casualties," he adds.

"Whether that's day-to-day at the employee level or higher up, these are significant circumstances for all levels of the industry."

For the major record companies, these circumstances include:

- The decline by perhaps 50% of prerecorded music sales in South Korea, the region's largest market out (Continued on page 87)
Maxwell
*Grammy* Nominee: BEST MALE POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE
*"Urban Hang Suite"* nearly 2 million worldwide
*"MTV Unplugged"* unanimously acclaimed
*A delight." — VIBE
*New Maxwell this Spring

Wyclef Jean
*2 Grammy nominations including BEST RAP ALBUM
*3 NAACP Nominations
*Platinum plus album and The Carnival continues
*"...one of the most daring releases in hip-hop history." — The Source
*Gone 'Til November is goin' all the way

Bob Dylan
*ALBUM OF THE YEAR: Time, Rolling Stone, NY & LA Times, People, Spin... everywhere.
*Double platinum worldwide
*"...towered over everything else in popular music this year." — Philadelphia Inquirer
*Buzz clip MTV and VH-1

Our Lady Peace
*#1 Heatseekers album
*Over 1 million sold worldwide, Gold U.S. album
*"Clumsy" top 10 and climbing at rock and alternative radio
*On tour all year

Savage Garden
*Near double platinum stateside, almost 4 million worldwide.
*"Truly Madly Deeply" #1 Hot 100.
*"Sold out Pacific Rim tour
*"Top 10 album and the Garden keeps growing

Destiny's Child
*Debut single No No No: gold, gold, gold!
*National Top 10 single sales
*"Highly anticipated debut album in stores Tuesday, February 17
*MTV Jams, Active rotation

Bruce Springsteen
*Grammy Nominee: BEST MALE ROCK PERFORMANCE
*"...the single most charismatic performer in rock." — New York Daily News
*"rock's masterful story teller." — USA Today
*Still the boss

Barbra Streisand
*"Fastest selling album of her career
*2 million scanned between Thanksgiving and Christmas
*"Higher Ground" heading for quadruple Platinum
*February People Magazine cover

Tony Bennett
*Billboard Music Video Award—Jazz/AC Clip of the Year: God Bless The Child
*"Bennett On Holiday" approaching Gold.
*★★★★—USA Today

James Taylor
*Grammy Nominee: BEST POP ALBUM
*"Hourglass" is on its way to Platinum
*"...his finest album in two decades, and probably his best ever." — New York Times
**Will Smith**

*Grammy Nominee: BEST RAP SOLO PERFORMANCE*

"Men In Black" 6 million worldwide

"Big Willie Style" already Platinum plus

*Everybody gettin' jiggy wit Gettin' Jiggy Wit It*

---

**Shawn Colvin**

*3 Grammy Nominations: RECORD OF THE YEAR, SONG OF THE YEAR, BEST FEMALE POP VOCAL*

"A Few Small Repairs" near Platinum

*Sunny Came Home*

#1 Most played song

---

**Chantal Kreviazuk**

*Platinum in Canada*

"...one of the most compelling debuts of the year." —Billboard

*Eagerly awaited U.S. Club tour in Feb/March '98*

*Surrounded racks up immediate sales in airplay markets everywhere*

---

**Imani Coppola**

*The commitment to Legend of a Cowgirl only gets stronger*

"...an irresistible package of talent..." —People Magazine

"This cowgirl's got the beats." —New York Post

---

**Mariah Carey**

*3 Grammy Nominations: "Butterfly" nearly 8 million worldwide sales and soaring

*VH-1 Artist of the Year

*NAACP Nominee

*Breakdown her latest multi-format smash

*"My All", up next*

**"A milestone record..." —Billboard**

---

**Lord Tariq & Peter Gunz**

"Red hot Deja Vu (Uptown Baby), the new street anthem raisin' the roof.

*MTV "Jam Of The Week!"

*Album hits the street with a vengeance Tuesday, April 7*

---

**Kenny Lattimore**

*Grammy Nominee: BEST MALE R&B VOCAL PERFORMANCE*

*Gold debut album

*For You, #1 most played at Urban A/C and R&R Adult Urban

*#1 Heatseekers Album

*New album this Spring*

---

**Aerosmith**

*2 Grammy Nominations: including BEST ROCK ALBUM

"Nine Lives" 4 million worldwide and livin' larger everyday

*SRO tour rolls on

*"Pink is RED HOT*

---

Special congratulations to Julio Iglesias, Grover Washington, Jr., Corrosion Of Conformity, Armand Van Helden, Walter Afanasieff, David Morales and Frank Filipetti on your nominations.

NEXT: Jerry Cantrell solo and unchained, John Forte's mad science, Soul Asylum - better than candy from a stranger.

the young soul power of Kimberly Scott and Jagged Edge.

Stabbing Westward's day has come, Journey's greatest: Live, JD = what a life.

Wynton Marsalis' finest hour.

Xscape returns, Clutch gets ready to ride, Flick's perfect debut. Wink (wink), Slayer, Jeff Buckley, it is written that Nas' new album will rule.

Rick Rubin and American make more noise than ever, South Park album (Kenny lives!), D.A.G., The Getaway People, pure Presidents Of The United States Of America, and, long awaited new Lauryn Hill.
India

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wishes to thank the members of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, Inc. for her Grammy nomination for

Best Tropical Latin Performance

"Sobre El Fuego".

Also, thanks to: RMM Records, MCA Records, Universal and staff, Billboard, a special thanks to Larry Flick and staff, D.J.'s Radio, composers, writers, arrangers, musicians, a warm thank you to my producer Isidoro Infante, including everybody who collaborated to bring me this nomination.

Special thanks to my husband, Luis Quintero.

All this in loving memory to my grandmother, Justa Guadalupe.

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Dion’s ‘Heart’ Goes On, And On, And On
Massive Airplay Breaks All-Time BDS Record

BY CHUCK TAYLOR

NEW YORK—Celine Dion is riding a wave. Her “Still I Will Go On” from the film “Titantic” is the new peak for reaching the largest audience ever monitored in Billboard charts. Dion’s “Still I Will Go On” is No. 1 on Billboard’s Hot 100 for six straight weeks, topping the list of singles that have peaked at the top of the chart in the last 10 years.

The song has been the most played track on radio stations in the U.S. for the past week, with 9,415 plays from radio stations.

Dion’s BDS triumph is, of course, owed to overwhelming action at radio and, to some degree, exposure on video channels. At VH1, “My Heart Will Go On” is No. 1. In addition, the track has also been licensed to various film projects, with plans for release from 223 stations. It’s also No. 1 for a second week on the Adult Contemporary, with plans for release from 22 stations. In addition, in the Jan. 30 issue of the Top 40 Airplay Monitor, it’s No. 1 on the Mainstream Top 40 chart and No. 25 on the Modern Adult Airplay chart. The song is even scoring on Monitor’s Rhythmic Top 40 chart, where it sprang from No. 16 to No. 10.

Because 500 Music has not yet released a commercial single for the song, it’s inevitable for inclusion on Billboard’s Hot 100 Singles chart. However, based on the airplay points, it could hypothetically reign at No. 1 with sales of just 19,000 copies. An example of a single selling around 19,000 copies this month is the single “If You Think I’m Jiggy”—No. 25 on the Hot 100 Singles Sales chart. The No. 1 sales record for this month, is “Usher’s “Nice & Slow,” which sold 80,000 copies.

The label is set to issue a single for Dion’s hit “It’s Not Unusual,” which will be “Rosie” on The “Titanic” score. The single is expected to chart on the Hot 100 in the Feb. 28 issue.

“This record is a true phenomenon. No one would have predicted this kind of success,” said Michael Vincent, President of Music/Epic Records (U.S.) Polly Anthony. “Celine has become the standard-bearer. She just keeps raising the bar, not only for her peers, but for herself as well. She’s one hell of a high jumper.”

On the radio side, the song is cited for its lyrical and melodic beauty, Dion’s riveting performance, its natural appeal to female listeners, and of course, the tie-in to “Titanic,” which is so far, the 10th-biggest movie in U.S. history.

“We’re a female-targeted radio station, and ballads are very powerful for us,” says John Ivey, Top 40 at WWKS Boston, where the song is the most-requested in the station.

(Continued on page 89)
Nashville Music Biz Educator Bob Mulloy Dies

BY CHEF FLIPPO

NASHVILLE—Bob Mulloy founded the music business program at Nashville’s Belmont University in 1972 in response to a growing need in the local music industry. In the years since, hundreds of students have graduated from the program and taken positions throughout the industry. The program had 15 enrollees the first year, but now boasts more than 600. Mulloy believed in an aggressive internship program; this gave students hands-on experience as well as valuable contacts in the music business community.

The influential music industry educator died here Jan. 22 of cancer. He was 64 and was serving as the department’s associate dean at the time of his death. Mulloy was born in Nashville on July 6, 1933. His family lived in a house on the same corner where BMI headquarters now stand at the top of Music Row. He majored in music at Belmont, graduating in 1957. After receiving a master’s degree in music education from George Peabody College in Nashville, he taught part-time and worked as a church music minister.

Mulloy joined the Belmont faculty in 1961 and became assistant music professor in 1963. After founding the music business program in 1972, he also con- ducted the Belmont Reasons, a performing musical group that toured and served as a recruiting tool for Belmont’s music program. Group members have included artists Steven Curtis Chapman and Ty Herndon, songwriter Gordon Kennedy, and Decca Records executive Mark Wright, now a Belmont board trustee.

Mulloy was a prolific songwriter and was a co-composer of Belmont’s alma mater. He also contributed articles to music journals.

Curb Group chairman Mike Curb endowed Belmont’s music business program in 1995, and it was subsequently renamed the Mike Curb Music Business Program.

Curb says that Mulloy “contributed more to educating young people in the music industry than anyone I’ve ever met.” Although the school has a search committee looking for a successor, Curb says it will be “impossible for anyone to ever replace him.”

He leaves his wife, Patricia Ann Mulloy; daughter Terri Lynn Dixon; son Leonard Lucas Mulloy; sisters Martha Mulloy and Helen Burkitt; and three grandchildren.

Belmont University has established the Bob Mulloy Music Business Enrichment Fund in his memory.
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WARNER MUSIC GROUP
Analysts: ‘Profits Warning’ Reflects Deeper EMI Woes

BY MARK SOLOMONS

LONDON—The EMI Group’s share price tumbled yesterday on the London stock exchange following the company’s Jan. 23 profits warning (Billboard Bulletin, Jan. 26), losing 10.5% on the day and closing at an all-time low of $5.12.

Analysts immediately downgraded profits forecasts for EMI’s March year-end to $294 million from $318 million—8% in the latest series of downgrades from an initial peak expectation of some $450 million pre-earnings.

The company’s share price had almost recovered the lost ground by close of trade. But analysts feel that EMI’s troubles have now fully surfaced and are not going to go away. The strength of EMI’s recording currency, sterling, and difficult markets in the Asia-Pacific region—stated reasons for the latest profits warning—cannot be unique to the company. Analysts now say that doubts about the management of EMI are now what the shares turn around.

“The price recovery is just ‘dead cat bounce,’” says Anthony de Larrinaga, media analyst at London stockbroker Panmure Gordon, who have price has now assigned a nil target to EMI shares.

NASHVILLE—Warner Bros., recording artist Michael Martin Murphey has left that label to form his own record company. The as-yet-unnamed venture will be distributed by Valley Record Distributors, a division of Valley Entertainment.

“I’ve been contemplating starting my own label for several years,” says Murphey, who is currently on the Warner roster. “I’ve wanted to have complete control over my career. They’ve done some incredible things.”

They get behind projects in a very creative way.” Valley executives are equally enthusiastic. “He’s a name artist who has sold a lot of records in the last few years,” says Hill.

Valley Record chairman Barney Cohen agrees. “What he wants to do is build up a significant catalog and work with record companies to do that.”

That right now isn’t selling records. Not many artists give you that opportunity, but he really does because he crosses a lot of boundaries.”

Billboard Exclusive

Valley Record chairman Barney Cohen agrees. “The chance to work with an artist like Michael Martin Murphey was a big attraction,” he says from the company’s California headquarters. “It’s an opportunity for us and for Murphey.”

(Continued on page 32)

Grand Royal Gets New Prez, Plans Int’l Expansion

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

NEW YORK—With a new president in place and plans to open London and Tokyo offices, the Beastie Boys’ label, Grand Royal Records, is poised to reach a new plateau.

The label hired former Geffen A&R executive Mark Katepes as president, a post he officially started Jan. 1. Beastie Boys Mike Diamond and Adam Yauch and Adam Horovitz, who founded the label with fellow Beasties Ad-Rock and Mike D, had previously served as presidents. “I think that—given his duties to the Beasties upcoming tour and album—it would be difficult to expand the company if he remained at the helm,” Diamond, Yauch, and Horovitz all hold the title of co-CEO of the year-old Grand Royal.

Katepes—who signed Beck and Elastica to Geffen and worked closely with Yello and Hole and Sonic Youth—says that although he was happy at Geffen, he was interested in exploring other opportunities.

“I had to think about where I was going in my life,” he says. “I was thinking about a situation where I’d have more control than working for a large company,” referring to Seagram, the parent of Geffen’s owner, Universal Music Group. “I wasn’t interested in starting from scratch, and I didn’t want to go on to another major label.”

One of Katepes’ first major business will be to secure a new distribution deal for the label, whose pact with Capitol ceased at the end of 1997.

The清新 of Grand Royal’s releases go through independent distributors, such as the Alternative Distribution Alliance. However, some artists, like Luscious Jackson and the newly signed Sean Lennon, will be funneled through major channels (see the Jan. 26 Billboard).

In addition to Luscious Jackson, Lennon, and the Beastie Boys, other acts on the label include Ben Lee, Atari (Continued on page 91)

MIDEM Asia Canceled

... page 91

Euro Royalty Pact Signed

... page 92

Backstage With Backstreet. Exeexes at Jive Records presented the Backstreet Boys with Recording Industry Assn. of America-certified platinum plaques for their self-titled album. Pictured at a recent show, from left are David McPherson, VP of A&R, Jive; Jeff Fenster, senior VP of A&R, Jive; Tom Carraba, senior VP/GM, Jive; Janet Kleinbaum, VP of artists marketing, Jive; group members Nick Carter and Kevin Richardson; and Clive Calder, chairman/CEO, Zomba Recording Corp. In the front row, from left, are group members A.J. McLean and Brian Littrell; Donna Wright, co-manager; group member Howie Dorough; and Barry Weiss, president, Jive.

Newman Ready To Take Reins At Warner Canada

BY LARRY LIÈBLANC

TORONTO—The appointment of Barry Newman to the post of presid- enter Music Canada ends two years of speculation over who would replace Stan Knol, who was expected to depart the company later this year. In the interim, Knol has been promoted from president to chairman, marking the first time the Canadian affiliate of Warner Music International has had its own chairman.

The appointments were announced Jan. 22 by Jim Curadin, executive VP of Warner Music International.

“The company culture will be the same with Barry in charge and with me on the sidelines,” says Knol. “I will be leaving the company, but I don’t know who will replace me. It’s safe to say I won’t be here at this time next year. The moves were my choice; it’s time to give someone else the reins. He’s the right guy for the job. I’m happy to have him around if he has any questions.”

Newman says it’s a formidable task to assume the day-to-day running of the company from Kolin. “Stan has been such a dominant force [with the Canadian music industry] that is’s very difficult to replace him,” he says. “He’s a very intelligent man, and with [music business] background, he knows every aspect of the business because business is what he’s handled every part of the business. The second part of his overall strength is his personality. He makes everybody around him feel comfortable.”

Kolin joined Warner Music Canada in 1982 as senior VP of marketing, sales, and dis-

(Continued on page 88)

Windham Hill Aligns With 2 Nonprofits For Compilations

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—In an attempt to reach potential new customers, Wind- ham Hill is working with nonprofit organizations to create specialized compilation albums that will be marketed to their members as well as sold at retail. In addition, Windham Hill is step- ping up its direct-response efforts with a TV infomercial.

“It’s all about how to get more names and names on your mailing list,” says Windham Hill Group (U.S.) VP of strategic mar- keting Faeith Raphael about the compi- lations. “Teaming with organizations that build the brand culturally makes sense.”

This spring, the adult contemporary and jazz label, which is a unit of BMG Entertainment, inked an exclu- sive marketing deal with the Nature Conservancy, the largest nonprofit environmental organization in the U.S. Under the joint venture, Windham Hill will release “The Last Great Places” on the CEO of the Earth Day, April 22.

Tracks on the album were inspired by some of nature’s premier natural wonders, including the Grand Canyon and the Aleutian Islands of Alaska.

Raphael also notes that the label’s alliances with nonprofit groups aren’t key to any downturn in retail sales, offering that is an attempt to increase men- tional sales.

“Retail has always supported Wind- ham Hill,” says Raphael. “This is about taking advantage of business that we know is there.”

(Continued on page 90)

Cablevision/Wiz Deal Raising Some Skepticism

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—Although Nobody Beats the Wiz was saved from almost certain liquidation in 1997, the last-minute agreement with Cablevision Systems Inc. to buy the chain, record companies are cautious in assessing the chain’s future in the music retail business.

Cablevision, the sixth-largest pro- vider of cable services with $1.7 billion in revenue in its most recent fiscal year, signed a 15-year, $100 million agreement to buy the assets of the consumer elec- tronics chain for about $98 million, according to published reports. The chain filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection Dec. 17, 1997.

Cablevision is expected to pay about $30 million cash for the assets, which include $11.9 million in inventory, estimated in press reports at about $110 million, and an additional $10 million in cash. Its bank, Congress National Bank, has a security interest in the inventory and is owed about $150 million.

Those reports suggest that in the deal worked out between Cablevision and the Wiz, unsecured creditors, which include all music and video sup-

(Continued on page 87)

‘Air Force One’ Sends DVD Shipments Flying

BY SETH GOLDSTEIN

NEW YORK—The DVD format has its first 100,000-unit title. Columbia TriStar Home Video shipped 112,000 copies of “Air Force One,” which streets Feb. 10.

The number is a fraction of the mul- timillion-unit order for the prerecorded edition, arriving the same day. But it’s impressive nonetheless, equal to about half of the estimated 225,000 players in U.S. homes. Columbia TriStar Home Video president Ben- jamin Feingold calls the total “a har- binger of good things to come” for the 10-month-old format. “This is real, not tem- porary,” adds the executive VP, who is secure with the company’s inventory and is owed about $150 million.

Those reports suggest that in the deal worked out between Cablevision and the Wiz, unsecured creditors, which include all music and video sup-
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HEATSEEKER ACTS BREAK THROUGH

Stonecreek’s Uncle Sam On Rise
BY SHAWNEE SMITH

NEW YORK—“They were playing the wrong song,” says Josephine Beal, VP at retailer Shanthique Music Inc. in Detroit, about the slow emergence of Uncle Sam’s self-titled debut set on Stonecreek Recordings/Epic. “I told [Stonecreek reps] at the Impact conference last year that ‘I Don’t Ever Want To See You Again’ was the song to bring out the album because it has crossover appeal, has that Boyz II Men feel, and it’s a song people can relate to a national artist,” she says.

But Stonecreek chose the up-tempo “Can You Feel It” to set up the project, servicing the video to BET June 23, 1997, and the radio promo CD Aug. 12. “I Don’t Ever Want To See You Again” was selected as the second single and serv.

(Continued on page 101)

Lady Peace A Hit On Columbia
BY LARRY LeBLANC

TORONTO—While 1997 was a fast-paced, rewarding year for Our Lady Peace, 1998 may prove an even bigger one for the Canadian rock quartet.

Nine months after the April 15 release in the U.S. on Columbia of its textured sophomore album, “Clumsy,” the band—vocalist/lyricist Raine Maida, guitarist Mike Turner, bassist Duncan Coutts, and drummer Jeremy Taggart—seems poised for a significant breakthrough there.

“This has been a great artist development story, and it’s going to get better in the coming months,” says Will Botwin, executive VP of the Columbia Records Group and GM of Columbia Records (U.S.).

The album entered the Heatseekers album chart at No. 50 on May 3, 1997, and reached No. 1 the issue of Jan. 17, 1998, staying in the spot for two weeks. It hit No. 6 on The Billboard 200 in the Jan. 31 issue, making Our Lady Peace a Heatseeker Impact Act. The set is No. 86 on The Billboard 200 this issue and has sold 250,000 units in the U.S. to date, according to SoundScan.

“Starting with [the album’s lead-off single] ‘Superman’s Dead,’ which we serviced to rock and alternative formats, [our breakthroughs] have been one station at a time,” says Jerry Blair, senior VP of Columbia Records (U.S.). “It spread from Canada into Detroit and to [stations] in Houston, New Orleans, and Boston. Then when [WKRL in New York put on the title track] ‘Clumsy,’ sales began to really come through.”

Adds Tom Corson, the label’s senior VP of marketing, “We released [second single] ‘Clumsy’ in December, and it

(Continued on page 86)

Luaka Bop/WB Hit Stride To Break U.K.’s Cornershop
BY DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—Luaka Bop/Warner Bros. act Cornershop’s exciting amalgam of hip-twisting pop, Punjabi lyrics, and electronic tweaks—fused by Tjinder Singh’s hypnotically soothing voice—has garnered the U.K. band high critical praise and a loyal core following in the U.S.

Now, however, the act is taking bold on a mainstream level here as its latest single, “Brimful Of Asha”—a tribute to Indian film singer Asha Bhosle—makes strides at modern rock radio.

Buoyed by the single, which is No. 17 on the Modern Rock Tracks chart this issue, the band’s sophomore Luaka Bop/Warner set, “When I Was Born For The 7th Time,” is at No. 5 on the Heatseekers albums chart with sales of more than 98,000 units, according to SoundScan. (The act also continues to make new strides in the U.K., where a revamped version of “Brimful Of Asha” has reigned interest in Cornershop, according to its label there, Wiltija [see story, page 88].)

Thanks to early and continued sup.

(Continued on page 88)

With Brash New Sound, Arista’s Bogmen Go For ‘Radio’ Success
BY PAUL VERNIA

NEW YORK—From the spoken introduction of “Failing Systems” and the ensuing industrial-edged track, the Bogmen make a sonic statement that their new Arista Records album, “Closed Captioned Radio,” is a stylistic departure from its predecessor, the acclaimed “Life Begins At 40 Million.”

While the first record succeeded at capturing the New York-based band’s live intensity, “Closed Captioned Radio”—due Feb. 10—goes a step further, projecting a decadent, disorienting vibe reminiscent of David Bowie’s late-’70s and early-’80s work, as well as of the cabaret music of 1920s Berlin.

Bogmen guitarist William Ryan says the new album’s edginess is due to an organic process the band underwent with producer Bill Laswell.

(Continued on page 91)

AMAs Could Spur Sales Bump
Badu, Babyface, Smith Stand To Gain
BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—Spice Girls, Mariah Carey, George Strait, Alabama, and Lee Ann Womack were the big winners at the American Music Awards (AMA), but retailers say that other winners Babyface, Erykah Badu, and Will Smith may benefit the most at the sales counter.

“Most of these people are already so big that I don’t think the AMAs will do a whole lot,” says Borders Books & Music pop buyer Andy Sibary.

The show, which was tuned into by 43 million households, according to A.C. Nielsen, was broadcast Jan. 26 on

(Continued on page 101)
Changes In French Awards Gain Music Biz Approval

BY REMI BOUTON

PARIS—For the first time, acts from the French-speaking world will compete for French national and cross-industry awards this year’s Victoires de la Musique, France’s music industry awards. The cross-industry body that organizes the Victoires has bowed to pressure from labels in France suggesting that aren’t French nationals but are successful in France be nominated. Organizers say the move will boost the show’s credibility in the eyes of the public, which does not differentiate between national and non-national acts.

In this 15th show, to be held Feb. 29, nominations have gone to Virgin Belgium’s Axelle Red and to Lara Fabian, a Belgian whose career began in Quebec. Dealers have largely responded positively to this and other continuing structural changes in the Victoires, which are still acknowledged to have reached its nadir with the 1996 show. Like events such as the Grammys, the Brit Awards, and Germany’s Echo Awards (Billboard, Jan. 31), the Victoires are now becoming a vital feature in retail’s calendar and can play a significant part in artist development.

For the first time, the Victoires will be held in this city’s newly rebuilt venue, the Olympia. “The artists wanted to be in this new, nonconventional venue,” says Yves Bigot, president of the Victoires association. “We have worked hard with them to ensure that there will be more artists present at the ceremony than the previous year.” The show will be broadcast live on public TV channel France 2.

“The main beneficiaries of the Victoires are the new talents,” says EMI France chairman Patrick Azoff. “We can remember good impact on artists such as Nilda Fernandez and De Palma. But this year, the five new comer acts narray, generated more buzz from critics or for their performances.”

As happened last year, the five newcomer acts will perform live, and the winner will be elected by a 50/50 mix of the professional vote and a public phone-in. Last year, Juliette, winner of this category, doubled the sales of her album “Elmes Feminines” to 60,000 units in three weeks after the Victoires. “Now her LP is near 100,000,” says Myriane Ales, managing director of Juliette’s label, Le Bideoue, a bold claim. “I think winners are awarded that, but Juliette was breaking anyway, with or without them,” she adds.

Doors opened a few minutes ahead of time proved to a lot of people that Juliette was a main artist, able to please a wide audience.

Victoires winners are not the only beneficiaries. Last year, the female act Zazie and male act Pascal Obispo both performed but left empty-handed; the nonetheless both used the show as a launch pad. By contrast, big sellers such as Barbara (best female act in ’97) and Charles Aznavour (best male act in ’97) saw no significant sales increases.

“In the mainstream, the Victoires can have an impact for new talents,” says East-West’s Jean-Marc Delacourt. “But if a rap band like IAM wins, there is no impact.”

(Billboard Bulletin, Nov. 14, 1997), calling it a return to form that captures the spirit of Wilson’s work with the Beach Boys just prior to the recording of the seminal “Pet Sounds” album. In addition, a documentary on the making of “Imagination,” which was recorded mostly at Wilson’s new home studio outside of Chicago, is being compiled by Andrew Solt and Jerry Schilling.

Greenfield Jones, who is co-producing the album with Wilson, says, “Where this album is (in sound and spirit) is pretty much the period right before ‘Pet Sounds’.

There was a period in 1966 that was Brian’s happiest period in his life,” Thomas adds. “A lot of times he likes this album to that period... I think [this album] is a little bit more summy and upbeat than ‘Pet Sounds’ was. It’s not quite as introspective.

Wilson agrees with Thomas assessment but adds that “there’s a little ‘Pet Sounds’ in there, too.”

Thomas first met Wilson a few years ago when he introduced the artist to Willie Nelson, who was recording a version of “Wuthering Heights” for the album, “Stars & Stripes,” the country-tinged Beach Boys tribute album released in 1996 by River North Records (Billboard, July 6, 1996). Thomas, then president of River North, struck up a friendship with Wilson and began discussing the possibility of a Wilson solo album for the label.

That plan, however, was derailed when the label went public and Thomas opted to resign his post at the label. The producer and artist continued to stay in touch, however, and the idea of a new Wilson solo album once again came up. Both believed in it so much that they went to the trouble of building houses next door to each other in a remote area of Illinois so they could live comfortably while working on the album in a studio built in the lower level of Wilson’s home.

After two tracks were completed, Thomas and Wilson met with Giant Records owner Irving Azoff, who was tipped off to the work-in-progress by Jim Gowan, whose Paladin Records is affiliated with Giant/Revolution.

(Continued on page 91)

Crawford’s Choirboy Roots Show On Atlantic’s ‘Wings’

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—After netting a platinum album and worldwide acclaim for his starring role in Broadway’s “The Phantom Of The Opera,” Michael Crawford revita his roots as a Los Angeles choirmboy with the Feb. 17 release of “On Eagle’s Wings.”

Atlantic Records plans to use television heavily in promoting the new album and has also hired a Nashville marketing firm, the Resource Agency, to take it to the Christian bookstore market (see story, page 93).

“This goes back to when I was a choirboy,” says Crawford, who attend¬ed the London Choir School in his youth and was part of a choir that performed at St. Paul’s Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, and other locations.

“When the love of that kind of music stayed with me,” Crawford says that when he reached a stage in his career where he had creative control, recording an album of spiritual songs was a priority. “I’m now six or seven albums into my career, and this is the first album I’ve done that everything came from my heart, my ideals, and my memory bank,” he says.

Not that he regrets any of his previous releases. His 1981 album, “Michael Crawford Performs Andrew Lloyd Webber,” is platinum. His 1985 project, “A Touch Of Music In That Night,” has been certified gold, and “The Phantom Of The Opera (The Complete London Cast Recording),” released in 1987, is a multi-platinum international hit.

The new set is very close to his heart, however. Working with producers John McCracken and John Vanore, Crawford was involved in every aspect of “On Eagle’s Wings”—from song selection to taking the photo used on the back cover of the CD. Crawford, appearing in a show in Las Vegas, had gone to Utah’s Lake Powell for a little rest and relaxation, he says.

“Turing the bottom of a boat I had rented. It was a beautiful day, and I had fallen asleep,” he recalls. “With only one paddle and a rudder like an eagle. I reached over, grabbed my camera, and took the photograph of the sky we used on the CD.”

Crawford recorded the basic tracks in Nashville, with Ronn Huff arranging and orchestrating nine of the 11 cuts on the album. The project includes guest appearances by the American Boychoir, the St. Olaf Choir of Min¬neapolis, and Atlantic labelmate Maire Brennan of Ireland’s Clannad. The songs range from classics like “Amazing Grace,” “Ave Maria,” and “Till We Meet Again” to new material like “Joseph’s Lullaby,” written especially for Crawford by Marcy Heisler and John Kavanas.

A couple of the cuts on the album, the title tune and “Not Too Far From Here,” were songs Crawford says were written while he was watching the memorial service following the tragic Oklahoma City bombing. “I heard On (Continued on page 83)

RECORD COMPANIES. Josh Deutsch is promoted to senior VP of A&R at Elektra Entertainment Group in New York. He was VP of A&R.

Mercury Records Group in New York names Michael Krumper senior VP of marketing. He was VP of product development at Atlantic Records.

Melissa Bong is promoted to marketing director at MCA Records in Universal City, Calif. She was sales and marketing director at Epitaph.

Telarc in Cleveland promotes Robert Slow to director of marketing. He was a special markets manager.

Island Records U.S.A. in New York appoints David Novak and John Barbas president. They were, respectively, president/CEO of EMI Records and president of Poly¬Gram’s A&M Associated Labels.

Robert Beeson is promoted to VP/ GM of Essential/Sub-Lime Records in Nashville. He was director.

Arista Records in New York pro¬duces Art Martini to senior director of artist development. He was associate director of artist development. He was associate director of artist development.

Atlantic Records in New York pro¬duces Troy Hansbrough to senior director of media relations. She was director of press and publicity at Big Best/Atlantic. 

Wayne Powell is promoted to VP of R&B promotion at A&M Records in New York. He was senior national director of R&B promotion.

Darlene Edwards is named director of regional promotion, Southwest, at MCA Records Nashville. She was a product development representative for A&M.

MCA Records in New York ap¬oints Cheryl Valentine senior direc¬tor of radio promotion. She was senior director of artist development at Epic Records.

Jim Cowan is named director of national promotion at Epic Records in San Francisco. He was regional mar¬keting director at Universal Music and Video Distribution.

Universal Music Group in Universal City names Art Sanders VP of human resources. He was director of human re¬sources at Blockchain Entertainment.

PUBLISHING. Famous Music in Nash¬ville promotes Pat Finch to VP of the Nashville division. He was senior creat¬ive director.

Joshua Neuman is promoted to director of West Coast creative at BMG Songs in Los Angeles. He was manager of East Coast creative.

RELATED FIELD. Joe Pignato is ap¬pointed site director of JazaCentral Station.com at N2K Inc. in New York. He was jazz marketing manager for RCA Victor and BMG Clas¬sics.
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PolyGram
Weiland Tries His Hand At 'Blues' Solo Atlantic Set Targets Not Only STP Fans

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—In assessing the prospects of Stone Temple Pilots spinoff Talk Show and solo artist Scott Weiland, Atlantic Group co-chairman/co-CEO Val Azzoli once compared the situation to a game of blackjack, saying, “I got two aces, and I split [the cards].”

Using Azzoli’s analogy, Talk Show didn’t quite hit blackjack. The eponymously titled album from the band, featuring the instrumental core of STP, received some favorable critical notices, but failed to become a hit. It peaked at No. 131 and spent a mere three weeks on The Billboard 200. According to SoundScan, it has sold 83,000 copies.

Now the spotlight moves to Weiland, whose solo debut, “12 Bar Blues,” is due worldwide March 17.

While it’s clear that Weiland’s diverse collection exceeds the mostly straightforward rock of Talk Show in terms of musical ambition, the odds are that the singer’s solo bow will fare better in the marketplace. “STP is certainly a core artist for the modern rock radio format,” says Bob Bell, new-release buyer for the Torrance, Calif-based, 225-store Wherehouse Entertainment. “Scott should have the ability to carry some of his audience to his solo project, since he has the personality and the charisma. Talk Show was a good record, but I think it lacked that identifiable voice.

Listeners got their first taste of Weiland solo on “Lady, Your Roof Brings Me Down,” a sublime Beatles-meets-Kurt Weil slab of pop featured on the “Great Expectations” and “12 Bar Blues.”

The song features an unlikely guest appearance by Sheryl Crow. “She flew in from New York out of her own pocket and played accordion on that track,” says Weiland. “[I took ecstasy that day, and] we spent a lot of time jumping and touching. There was nothing sexual; it was just purely aesthetic, but that was before I got sober.”

While “Lady, Your Roof Brings Me Down” fit nicely on “Great Expectations,” “Barbarella”—which ships to modern and mainstream rock Feb. 25—is more indicative of the emotional core of “12 Bar Blues.”

In that song and the album’s open (Continued on page 20)

Capitol’s Robertson Back In ‘Contact’ With Heritage

BY CHRIS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—Singer-songwriter-guitarist Robbie Robertson returns to his American Indian roots—or, as a lyric goes, “back in the day”—with his Capitol album “Contact From The Underground Of Redboy,” due March 10.

The former principal songwriter-guitarist for The Band, a Mohawk descendant whose mother was raised on the Six Nations reservation in Canada, has explored similar terrain before: He wrote the score (released as a Capitol album) for the six-hour 1994 TBS documentary “The Native Americans.”

Robertson was exploring various possibilities for his next album when an American Indian friend’s remark moved him to point his compass toward the music of the North American Indian again.

The musician recalls, “He said to me, ‘So what are you doing?’ And I said, ‘Well, I’m writing some songs, I’m gonna do this, I’m gonna do that.’ And he said to me, ‘Oh, so you’ve opened the door, and now you’re gonna walk away?’ When he said that to me, that second, that instant, I said, ‘No, I’m not. I’m not gonna walk away.’”

Robertson adds, “I had to go in this direction. In the process, it helped me get in touch with some things and get some stuff out that I’ve been carrying around with me since I was a little kid—it’s a lot of baggage—and after doing this record, I have to say I feel lighter.”

“Redboy” has an unexpected sound, which is the product of collaborations between Robertson (whose material is published by Medicinae Hat Muscle, administered by Warner Bros. Music), a host of American Indian performers and such producers as Howie B (noted for his work with U2, Bjork, Bryan Eno, Tricky, and Massive Attack) and Maria de Vries (who has also worked with Bjork and Massive Attack). At some junctures, tribal (Continued on page 17)
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Artists & Music

U.K.'S ALL SAINTS
(Continued from preceding page)

Based in London, All Saints consists of Canadian sisters Natalie and Nicky Appleton; Shaznay Lewis, of Jamaican-Barbadian extraction; and the half-French, half-English Melanie Blatt. The latter pair were together in the group's previous 1994-95 incarnation with ZTT Records as All Saints 1.9.7.5., whose name came from the pair's west London home district and the year of their birth. To Lewis, success is all the sweeter for all the hard lessons learned during that false dawn, which yielded some singles releases but no chart action. "I'm so glad we went through that," she says, "otherwise we would have taken everything that's happening now for granted, or maybe we wouldn't be here at all. We were young then, only 17, and experimenting with music. We got rushed into releasing this or that; we weren't properly organized, and it took a year out of that situation to explore our creative side."

After leaving ZTT in January 1996, Lewis and Blatt joined forces with the Appleton sisters. After much searching, they landed the London deal in November of that year. "We had come very close to calling it a day just before we were approached by London," reveals Lewis.

Easy comparisons with Spice Girls have been dispelled in the U.K. by All Saints' distinct style and success, and London U.S. president Peter Koeppke says the group is already well on the way to placing its own spin on the American music map.

"It's looking fabulous," enthuses Koeppke of U.S. airplay for "I Know Where It's At," which he says had 110 top 40 stations on board after only two weeks. "MTV called us, and it's beautiful when that happens. The fact that [All Saints] are from Britain is not something I'm playing up. Especially for young people, it doesn't matter that much."

"Never Ever," written by Lewis and Rickidy Raw, is a dudging combination of tear-stained and sassy emotions, with a distinctive spoken introduction that will remind older listeners of the Shangri-Las at their most heart-rending. By contrast, "I Know Where It's At," penned by Lewis with producer Karl Gordon, is more upbeat and immediate, underpinned by a sample of Steely Dan's "The Fee."

"I do think 'Never Ever' is an absolute classic," says Koeppke, "but it wasn't a song we could start with. You do need tempo when you come out of the door. 'I Know' sounds a little bit more American than a lot of the pop exports from Britain."

As to why All Saints appear to be making more inroads into the U.S. than many of their U.K. pop-soul contemporaries, Lewis says: "Maybe because (our music) is truthful, not fake or watered down. It's no straight-out pop or straight-out R&B; it's got all kinds of elements in it. We haven't tried to imitate anybody."

Koeppke notes that All Saints were in the U.S. for a four-day promotion- al visit before Christmas, including meet-and-greet radio station tours in New York, New Jersey, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. "Every one of the stations we walked into gave us the add," he enthuses. "I do think American radio is somewhat starved for good pop music, and it's really lovely to sell people a record they want to buy."

London/Island will work "I Know Where It's At" at R&B radio following its immediate success at top 40. Gennaro Castaldo, public relations manager for the HMV U.K. chain, says that All Saints were "a fantastic bonus for the Christmas period, and this year they've obviously gone from strength to strength. They've got a brilliant sound and a nice balance in the way they look, and I think they can cross to the States without sounding like they're self-consciously trying to." David Andrews, buyer for Tower Records in Glasgow, adds: "For a band with no real history, they've established themselves very quickly."

He says sales of the "All Saints" album remained healthy throughout January.

Following exhaustive European promotion, All Saints are due back in the U.S. in early February. Their third U.K. single from their album will be a remake of Red Hot Chili Peppers' "Under the Bridge." The group has three nominations for the 1998 Brit Awards: as Best British Newcomers and for Best British Single and Best British Video with "Never Ever." The awards ceremony will be held Feb. 9 at London Arena.

ROBBIE ROBERTSON
(Continued from page 14)

chants float over beats that would not be out of place on a Portishead album.

"When you do think about it," Robertson says, "in terms of taking something this ancient, this old—this is the original roots music of America—and working with some people who are this modern, cutting edge—well, if somebody had told me that, I would have said, 'That doesn't work' . . . But I'm just looking for talented people to help me get what I'm feeling and thinking on tape."

American Indian contributors include Rita and Priscilla Coolidge, opera singer Bonnie Jo Hunt, throat-singing duo Tudjnat, and the Six Nations Singers.

One of the most affecting tracks is "Peyote Healing," a cut featuring American Indian "roadmen" (peyote shamens) Verdel Primeaux and Johnny Mike. Robertson digested a chant by the healers for a lengthy medicine ceremony.

As their name suggests, the itinerant roadmen were not easy to nail down for a session. "It took me months to track them down," says Robertson. "We'd call, and they'd say, 'Oh yeah, they were here four days ago, but they've gone, and I'm sorry, nobody knows where they've gone.' The next place, it was the same thing. It went on and on. Finally I tracked them down."

"Redboy" explores the political side of American Indian life as well. The track "Sacrifice" features the recorded voice of American Indian (Continued on next page)
**Artists & Music**

**ROBBIE ROBERTSON**

(Continued from preceding page)

Movement leader Leonard Peltier, who has been in federal prison since 1976 for his role in a shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota that left two FBI agents dead.

Robertson—who recorded a phone call made by Peltier from prison—says he wrote a letter to President Clinton seeking clemency for the American Indian activist. Clinton responded with a personal letter, and a White House staff member later wrote to the musician, saying that Peltier’s case was under review by the Justice Department.

“I want to get Leonard Peltier out of prison. He doesn’t deserve to be in prison. Capitol VP of marketing (U.S.) Steve Rosenbergblatt says that in advance of the album’s release, the label will issue the song “Unbound” to triple-A and rock formats, hoping to expand to AC and top 40.

Pussycat Records, a U.K. house specialist, has produced a remix of the song “Making The Noise” as a 12-inch that Capitol will use to promote the album on the dance and electronics side. Robertson’s name does not appear anywhere on the record. “We thought it was a fun way to get the music in,” says Rosenbergblatt. “We just wanted people to listen with open ears and not have a pre-conceived notion of what a Robbie Robertson record should sound like.”

At an undetermined date after the release of the album, PBS will air an hour-long special, “Robbie Robertson: Making A Noise.” The documentary shows Robertson visiting residents on the Six Nations reservation, recording with American Indian artists, and playing shows to indigenous tourists at a festival two years ago in Sicily.

Rosenbergblatt adds, “We’re also hoping to get VH1 support in a major way. We’re hoping to get a ‘Storytellers’ with Robbie; we’re hoping down the line to get a ‘Legends’ program with Robbie.”

Robertson, who is managed by Jared Levine and booked by Creative Artists Agency, hasn’t toured since the Band’s “Last Waltz” in 1976. But he says he is contemplating a special performance with the American Indian artists on “Red Dawg.”

“We’ve been talking about it, and I’ve talked to some of the artists I worked with and asked them how they feel about it. I’ve talked to Howie and Marius about these possibilities. Right now, we’re in the process of figuring out how this could be done. It’s a little unclear.”

Bob Nuss, owner of Drumbeat Indian Arts (formerly Canyon Records & Indian Arts) in Phoenix, carries more than 1,000 American Indian titles in his store. He believes that the X-Periment’s project “Red Dawg” could provide a much-needed platform for American Indian artists.

“Some people who might not other- wise come into the recordings might get them as a result,” Nuss says. “(American Indian musicians) don’t get into the mainstream that much. Putting on a big name might help people get exposed to it and to some-one they might like.”

**BOSTON:** The 11th Annual Kahlua Boston Music Awards, held Jan. 15 at the Orpheum Theater, saw Paula Cole take four awards, including one for Best Female Vocalist. The award may be a precursor to this month’s Grammy Awards, as Cole is nominated for seven statues. The big news of the night was the surprising appearance of The Amazing Royal Crowns also copped four trophies, including debut album of the year (indie label) for “The Amazing Royal Crowns.” The band has just signed to Velvel Records, which will rerelease the debut disc April 7. The spotlight was on many up-and-coming acts that took their first trophies, including the hotly tipped Wise Guys (outstanding rap/hip-hop act), Dub Station (outstanding reggae act), and the Push Stars, who received two awards and recently inked with Capitol Records. Also of note was a tie between two of Boston’s best female artists, Laurie Geltman and Ramona Silver, for outstanding live female vocalist. A total of 38 awards were given at the ceremonies, which also featured live performances from Cole, Jen Trynin, Orbit, the Push Stars, and the Amazing Royal Crowns.

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.:** A musical melting pot in the true sense of the term, the X-Periment comes armed with a sound as delightfully varied as the backgrounds of its members. The North Carolina quintet’s approach fuses jazz, hip-hop, funk, punk, and ska elements with positive lyrics and a playful improvisational streak. (Trouble Funk fans take note: The X-Periment has even included a jamming go-go set in recent shows.) The band formed two years ago when pianist/vocalist Derrick Hines, drummer Dustin Clifford, and saxophonist/vocalist Tony McCullough played a three-hour improbably set after a bassist and guitarist failed to show for a gig. Bassist Steve McMillan and percussionist Dave Haire came aboard afterward, and the X-Periment has gone on to grab attention with its fresh blend of styles, musical depth, and energized live shows.

“It’s easy to see a special chemistry at work here. These are the only cats I can see myself building a big house and moving in with for a period of time,” Hines says. The X-Periment won Creative Loafing’s critics’ choice award for best jazz band of ’97, in addition to being named best new band by readers of the alternative weekly. The five-piece band is getting airplay on Charlotte’s WEND and has been busy opening shows for the Dave Matthews Band and Squirrel Nut Zippers, in addition to appearing at last summer’s Multi-Atlantic Surf, Sound, and Skate Symposium. Contact Daniel Thomas at 704-842-2844 or 704-376-5860.

**CHICAGO:** R. Kelly leads the list of nominees for the Chicago Music Awards, slated for Saturday (7) at the State of Illinois building. Kelly landed four nominations, including record producer of the year and songwriter of the year. Other nominees include Smashing Pumpkins’ Somethin’ For The People, Veruca Salt, Local H, Crucial Conflict, and Buddy Guy. Additionally, six artists will receive Lifetime Achievement Awards, including Oscar Brown Jr., the late Sir Georg Solti, Curtis Mayfield, Pop Staples, Percy Sutton, and Albertha Walker.

Awards of honor for outstanding contributions to the Chicago music industry will be presented to Jim Productions, Ramsey Lewis, the Chi-Lites, and Joe Sex. Performers will include Oscar Brown Jr., Son Seals, Loud Mouth, and Devon Brown. Comedian Damon Williams will host the event.

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SCOTT WEILAND

(Continued from page 14)

ing track, "Desperation #5," Weiland addresses his much-chronicled battles with substance abuse, "I recorded "Desperation #5 when I was one day out of detox," he says. "I was still kind of loaded on detox meds. That was about a year ago." He goes on to explain that the lyric "Taking a swing in hitting" means "going for a vein.

"Barbarella is more about the pain and sorrow that addiction brought me and the hope that I could eventually break away from that," he adds. "I'm pleading for a superhero to save me from my misery.

Miserable or not, Weiland is not lacking support from Atlantic. "My manager, Arnold Stiefel, who has worked with some enormously huge superstars over the years, says that he has never seen a label behind a solo artist like Atlantic is behind me and my album," Weiland says. "Val is great, and so are [executive VP/GM] Ron Shapiro and [executive VP] Vic Van Bremen, [executive VP of the chairman] Craig Kallman," he adds. "The three of them are so completely different. They're like a three-headed beast. They have the ability to make things happen on such a wide range and wide scale, everything is covered.

To that end, Atlantic plans to back up "12 Bar Blues" with a videoclip for "Barbarella" and advertising in such publications as Rolling Stone, Spin, and Details, as well as point-of-purchase and World Wide Web promotions. In promoting the album, Azzoli says, he and his staff have been wrestling with going after the STP faithful or a new audience for Weiland. "At the end of the day, we have to do both simultaneously, because marketing Scott Weiland as an individual artist, you can't help but go to the Stone Temple Pilots fans, because he was in the band. He co-wrote all of the songs."

On "12 Bar Blues," Weiland—who is shopping for a new publishing deal for his Foxy Dead Girl Music—continues to explore the Beatles and glam rock influences heard on STP's last album, 1990's "Tiny Music...Songs From The Vatican Gift Shop." Says Weiland, "David Bowie and the Beatles are probably my two favorite artists. I wear them on my sleeve proudly. I'm not Oasis, who don't acknowledge their influences and claim to be better than the band they rip off the most."

"12 Bar Blues," produced by Weiland and Blair Lamb, was completed with the aid of several guests, including Porno For Pyros bassist Martyn LeNoble, guitarist Peter DiStefano, and former Samiam drummer Victor Indrizzo, "and a couple of other friends. They're all people that I have used [drugs] with from time to time or met through rehab," Weiland says. "All of us are individuals that have been to hell, seen that side, and come back."

To support the album, Weiland—who is booked by the William Morris Agency—plans to tour in April with the Action Girls, a band he has put together that includes noted producer/guitarist Daniel Lanois, who remixed five tracks on the album. Following the promotion of "12 Bar Blues," Weiland says, STP will regroup. "There will definitely be another Stone Temple Pilots record, and hopefully it will save rock 'n' roll at a time when it needs to be saved again."
Kent Robbins
1947 - 1997

Love is Alive
Tearing it up: RCA artist Natalie Imbruglia is on the verge of a repeat performance as her U.K. hit single, "Torn," begins to make an impact on U.S. radio stations. The single has sold 500,000 units in the U.K., where it was No. 1.

People are starting to talk of the album's potential as well — "The new album's quite strong," says John Anctil, executive vice president of A&M Records. "It's a good record. It's well-produced. It's a lot of different things on it..."}

Head Spinning. DreamWorks drops "Deadskindrummandrockandroll," the full-length debut from English electronic and pop-punk act The Jezabels, on March 10. The set, which includes several new cuts and a hip-hop vibe not found on the earlier-released U.K. version, is preceded by a handful of EPs and "On Her Majesty's Secret Service," a stand-alone cut from "Shaken And Stirred: The David Arnold Project."
Crossover Forecast For Mangu
Island Bow Targeted At Hip-Hop, Latin Fans

BY TRACY HOPKINS

NEW YORK—Island Records is taking a two-pronged marketing approach with the self-titled debut album by Mangu, courting both the Latino and hiphop markets with the set’s eclectic mix of reggae/dancehall, hiphop, salsa, and Miami bass.

To further the album’s crossover success, Island will simultaneously release Spanish- and English-language versions of the 23-year-old’s self-penned debut March 10.

“My sound is definitely hot-weather music. I’m always coming with that ‘palm trees in Brooklyn’ effect. My style is like the Mambo Kings meet hip-hop,” Mangu says. “I asked my label how they plan to promote me, ‘cause I think they should just put the music out and let everybody hear it. Mangu is an urban Latino thing.”

The Dominican Republic-born rapper was raised in the Bronx, N.Y., and moved to Miami in 1990. “I knew I wanted to be a performer when I was 6 years old and my cousin played me Bob Marley’s ‘Confrontation’ album. That flipped everything for me. Since then I’ve been on some reggae,” he says.

Mangu, whose real name is Freddy Garcia, took his stage name from a popular Dominican dish made from mashed plantains. He says he named himself after the dish because it is representative of his culture and his flavor as an artist. He adds that the name also reminded him of the reggae music he loves.

Although the album is smothered in sensuous Latin rhythms, Mangu says he did not grow up listening to Spanish music.

“We didn’t have Spanish music in the South Bronx. I grew up listening to Teddy Pendergrass and old-school rappers like Afrika Bambaataa and KRS-One. I swore I was going to be the Spanish Bobby Brown,” he says. “I thought merengue music was too fast, and it wasn’t until I was 13 that I could dance salsa and see that Latin Jazz and black jazz were the same.”

After moving to Miami, Mangu became a dancer for rap groups like JD Bass, Snap!, and 2 Live Crew, an experience he says exposed him to an “overly sexual lifestyle.” However, dancing was his entrance into the music business, and in 1992 Mangu met producer Joe Galdo, who at the time was looking for a performer who could rap in English and Spanish to cut the track “La Playa.” That song, which is on the album, became an international hit and had an accompanying video shot by hip-hop director Hype Williams.

“I laid a verse for the record, and the next thing you know I was signed to Island,” says Mangu, who also had a song in 1996’s “Eddie” soundtrack.

‘MAD DIFFERENT’

However, Mangu says, his album took several years to complete because he wanted to sound “mad different.”

“A lot of brothers tell me they don’t even know what I’m sayin’, but they think it’s tight,” says the artist, who also calls himself “El Papi Chulo” (slang for ‘ladies man’), also the name of a song on the album. Mangu admits that his love jones for Erykah Badu and Lauryn Hill of the Fugees inspired several tracks, including the jazzy “Sin Tl.”

Alex Masaeuci, VP/GM of Island Records in Miami, says that Mangu’s world music approach to hiphop will ensure his crossover success. The single, “Calle Luna, Calle Sol” (Moon Street, Sun Street), a rendition of the Latin classic featuring Latin music icon Johnny Pacheco, was shipped to Latin record pools in late January, and a promo-only single will be shipped to radio Feb. 16. No commercial single has been chosen yet.

Masaeuci says that the South American division of Island’s parent company, PolyGram, has made Mangu one of its top marketing priorities for 1998, along with Bjork and Boys II Men.

(Continued on next page)
**CROSSOVER FORECAST FOR MANGU**

(Continued from preceding page)

"Mangu runs the whole gamut. His core audience is second- and third- generation Hispanics living in New York, Miami, Chicago, and Puerto Rico, whom there are a lot of," notes Masucci.

**R&B CROSSOVER PLANNED**

Once the single is moving in Spanish markets and gaining airplay among Latin listeners in key markets like New York and Miami, Masucci says, Island will cross the single over to R&B outlets like WQHT (Hot 97) New York.

"Mangu is definitely a hip-hop artist, and we have Spanish and "Spanglish" hip-hop versions of "Calle Luna, Calle Sol,"" says Masucci. "Since the song is an old Willy Colon hit, that will help it gain airplay and break Mangu in the Latin market." To gain additional street credibility in the R&B market, the Spanglish version of "Calle Luna, Calle Sol" was remixed by Warren Grier and Jerry Duplessis, who have worked with the Fugees, and the track "Sexy" features reggae impresario Beanie Man.

However, Masucci says, because Latin music is a new market for Island, the label is "moving slowly but surely" in advancing Mangu. The single is being marketed in hip-hop, Latin music, and R&B outlets in New York, Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Puerto Rico and will be worked by hip-hop street teams closer to release date.

The video for "Calle Luna, Calle Sol" was shot in San Juan, Puerto Rico, by Latin music video director C.C. Ro- rios, who has worked with Tito Puente Jr., and will be serviced to Latin video programs in early February.

Alexis Ashby, Island's associate director of marketing, says the retail strategy for Mangu is to set a low price of $10.98 for the CD and $8.98 for the cassette, with an up-to-date shipping and posting, and to have the rapper participate in in-store promotions.

**BILINGUAL PUSH**

To capitalize on Mangu's "cool, Latino vibe," Ashby says, retail chains and independent merchants that are key for the Latin market will feature posters of the artist in Spanish and English announcing the set's March 10 in-store date. In early February, radio and print media will receive a cigar box containing a cigar, ashtray, matches, a copy of the album and the "Calle Luna, Calle Sol" video on a CD, photo and bio. Ashby says the promo items coincide with the album's art- work featuring Mangu stylishly dressed and smoking a cigar.

A promo tour that will include a visit to the Dominican Republic is in the works for late March to end April, he adds, the album's tentative international release date in April. Mangu also will perform at the Marley Family Show Feb. 14 in Miami and at Polycraft's Latin Music Conference March 12.
ALL OR NOTHING: When certain radio hits do not appear on Hot R&B Singles, chances are it’s because those songs are not available as commercial singles. Only songs with configurations available at retail are eligible to chart on Hot R&B Singles or the Hot 100.

With an audience of 45.3 million, the title track from Brian McKnight’s latest album, “Anytime (Mercy),” has the largest listenership of his career, beating the 26.9 million benchmark set by “One Last Cry” in the summer of 1998. The song, which is receiving airplay on 101 Broadcast Data Systems (BDS)-monitored stations, moves 3-2 on Hot R&B Airplay with an 18% audience gain.

Meanwhile on Top R&B Albums, McKnight’s set sees a sales gain for the fourth consecutive week, although it slides 3-4 due to the No. 1 bow by rapper Young Breed. Since the single “Anytime” has not been released commercially and new uptempo mixes are being serviced to radio on Tuesday (3), album sales should continue to increase as the radio picture expands.

In addition, McKnight is in the midst of wrapping up a 20-city tour covering key markets.

SWV’s latest radio single, “Rain” (RCM), has accumulated 28 million listeners during its seven-week run at radio. Like McKnight, SWV’s album “Release Some Tension” (RCM) has seen four consistent weeks of bulletted sales growth, most of which can be attributed to “Rain,” which is unavailable as a commercial single. The album moves 34-28 on Top R&B Albums with a 26% gain in unit sales.

Strong support includes WCBS Detroit (46), WKYS Washington, D.C. (46), KDIA Dallas (45), and WUSL Philadelphia (44). “The record started off slow before it really kicked in and should have slow burn. I expect it to be on-playlist for a long time,” says WCBS-PD Vicki Freeman. “This is an SWV town, and our listeners look for familiarity. This record embraces their signature sound.”

The video also is ranked at No. 2 at BET, with 18 plays for the week ending Jan. 25, according to BDS.

“Seven Days” by Mary J. Blige (MCA) moves 6-4 on Hot R&B Airplay after picking up another 4 million listeners, bringing her total R&B audience to 35 million. Blige’s full-length set, “Share My World,” another week of release, moving 21-17 with a 17% unit increase at R&B core stores. The label does not plan to release “Seven Days” as a commercial single.

YOUNG WHO: Young Breed is the latest protégé out of Master P’s No Limit camp. His first solo outing, “All I Have In This World…” (No Limit/ Priority), wins the No. 1 cup on Top R&B Albums, earning Hot Shot Debut stripes in the process. Young’s set is the fourth No Limit-related title to wear that crown, following the trend set by Master P’s “Ghetto D,” Mystikal’s “Unpredictable,” and the “I’m Bout’ It” soundtrack, all during ’97. With more than 60,500 units, Young Breed bows at No. 10 on The Billboard 200, where he nabbed an additional Hot Shot Debut cup. His largest sales markets include: (1) Kansas City, (2) Atlanta, (2,000), Cleveland, (2,000), Indianapolis (1,900), and St. Louis (1,500).

TOUR MIXES HIP-HOP’S ELEMENTS

RETROSPECT ON HIP-HOP:

Common is headlining the Elements of Hip Hop tour, which kicked off Jan. 20 at Tramps in New York and features DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince as openers. The tour continues through March 27, with the tour schedule.

The tour features three of the five elements of hip-hop (Rahzel provides the human beat-box), missing element among other well-known components—MC’ing, DJ’ing, graffiti, and breaking. “It’s a specialty tour,” says Common, who is promoting his third album, “One Day It’ll All Make Sense.”

“It’s like nobody is really doing any underground tours anymore—you know DJ’s solos, Rahzel beat-boxing, and MC’ing. We’re just trying to bring people something different.”

Common is performing with a live band called A Black Girl Named Becky throughout the tour.

“I finally came upon some brothers who are real knowledgeable about music and at the same time know hip-hop,” he says. “They are able to put in all the other [musical] elements, and in the same way, they know there are certain things you can’t do with a hip-hop artist, like solo while the MC’s rapping.”

“One Day” has sold 109,000 units since its September release, while Common’s previous sets, “Resurrection” (No Limit/ Priority) and “Like A Doll” (RCA), have sold a total of 212,000 units, according to SoundScan. But Common says he doesn’t mind his mostly underground following.

“To make myself happy, I’ve got to do something I know I’m feeling, regardless of what the masses might be into,” he says. “A lot of artists are good but never accepted by the masses, like Donny Hathaway. He was real soulful, but he wasn’t as popular as [other artists]. A lot of people tell me now that I’ve used Love Her” was a classic, but when it was out two years ago, it wasn’t a major song like [the Notorious B.I.G.’s] ‘Big Poppa,’ which was out at the same time. I think people will catch up to my music.”

His latest single, “Retrospect For Life,” features Lauryn Hill in the song’s chorus, who is riding the direction of the videoclip. The single tackles a life situation that many rap artists haven’t touched upon positively. The track, which exploits the common theme began to view sex as a

(Continued on page 14)

W O R D S & D E E D S

by Shawnie Smith

three to four weeks in Europe and Japan. The tour features three of the five elements of hip-hop (Rahzel provides the human beat-box), missing element among other well-known components—MC’ing, DJ’ing, graffiti, and breaking.

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(Continued on page 14)
### Billboard Hot R&B Airplay

FEBRUARY 7, 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;I'm A Man Of Love&quot;</td>
<td>Jodeci</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Down For Whatever&quot;</td>
<td>Dru Hill</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;End Of The Road&quot;</td>
<td>Jodeci</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;Can't Stop The Feeling&quot;</td>
<td>Janet Jackson</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>&quot;I Love This Woman&quot;</td>
<td>Jodeci</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;Sittin' On&quot;</td>
<td>R. Kelly &amp; Aaliyah</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;No One&quot;</td>
<td>Missy Elliott</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;What About Me?&quot;</td>
<td>Foxy Brown</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>&quot;Alright&quot;</td>
<td>Blackstreet</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;Things Ain't Gonna Change (Are They)&quot;</td>
<td>Vesta</td>
<td>8</td>
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### Billboard Hot R&B Singles Sales

FEBRUARY 7, 1998

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<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;I'll Be Missing You&quot;</td>
<td>Bad Boy Presents The Notorious B.I.G. &amp; Mary J. Blige</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Can't Hold Us Down&quot;</td>
<td>Jadakiss &amp; Styles P</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;What About Me?&quot;</td>
<td>Missy Elliott</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;Alright&quot;</td>
<td>Blackstreet</td>
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**Notes:**
- Billboard Hot R&B Airplay chart ranks songs based on airplay on urban contemporary radio stations.
- Billboard Hot R&B Singles Sales chart ranks songs based on sales at retail record stores.

**Additional Information:**
- The Hot R&B Singles chart data is used for the Hot R&B Singles rec,
## Hot Shot Debut

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> AM I DREAMING</td>
<td>(R. SKULF featuring KEITH SWEAT &amp; XSCAPE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> DEJA VU (UPPONT BABY)</td>
<td>LORD QARQ &amp; PETER QUN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> WHAT ABOUT US</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> YOU MAKE ME WANNA</td>
<td>J. ROC &amp; JIMMY J. ROYAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BENJAMINS/BEEN AROUND THE WORLD</td>
<td>PUFF DADDY &amp; THE FAMILY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> MAKE ME SAY IT AGAIN</td>
<td>SUGAR BUSTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong> CAN'T SLOW DOWN ALL DAY</td>
<td>Tech N9ne, Mystikal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong> I LOVE YOU</td>
<td>ALEXANDER TAYLOR &amp; PAMELA HOLLUS, MUSIC 2 THE MAX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong> AM I JIGGY</td>
<td>DJ MOJO, MAVERICK &amp; LUSH  &amp; LADY CARINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong> ALL MY LOVE</td>
<td>QUEEN PEN BANGING WILDCAT &amp; ERIC WILLIAMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11</strong> I WONDER IF HEAVEN HAS GOTTEN</td>
<td>SMOOTH KNOWLEDGE, K. THOMAS, الروم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12</strong> MY REST FOR THE WEEK</td>
<td>THE SHINE, BOYZ N THE MAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13</strong> SICK'N 2 THE MEAT ISN'T DUPA TUFF</td>
<td>9MM (FEATURING TRINA TURK)</td>
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### Greatest Gainer/Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> SO LONG (WELL, WELL, WELL)</td>
<td>P. K. (LECC) &amp; RIKI (LECC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> FEEL SO GOOD</td>
<td>MASE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> JUST Clownin'</td>
<td>WC FROM WESTSIDE CONNECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> I CARE ABOUT YOU</td>
<td>MC'S BACKFITNESS / EASY BEAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> EVERYTHING</td>
<td>MARY J. BLIGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> 4,3,2,1</td>
<td>LL COOL J, FEDDO, METHOD MAN, REASON, OMA, CANIBUS AND MASTER P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Greatest Gainer/Sales

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>P. K. (LECC) &amp; RIKI (LECC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> NEVER MAKE A PROMISE</td>
<td>D.M. &amp; CONNIE (FLO)</td>
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### Chart News

| **NEW** 1 | AM I DREAMING |
| **NEW** 2 | DEJA VU (UPPONT BABY) |
| **NEW** 3 | WHAT ABOUT US |
| **NEW** 4 | YOU MAKE ME WANNA |
| **NEW** 5 | IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BENJAMINS/BEEN AROUND THE WORLD |
| **NEW** 6 | MAKE ME SAY IT AGAIN |
| **NEW** 7 | CAN'T SLOW DOWN ALL DAY |
| **NEW** 8 | I LOVE YOU |
| **NEW** 9 | AM I JIGGY |
| **NEW** 10 | ALL MY LOVE |
| **NEW** 11 | I WONDER IF HEAVEN HAS GOTTEN |
| **NEW** 12 | MY REST FOR THE WEEK |
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### Billboard Hits

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### Billboard Hits
Stansfield Single Takes A Turn Toward Dancefloor

SOMETIMES, all ya gotta do is ask for the things you really want.

Late last year, we started publicity pleading for a dance revision of "Un Leavin,'" a hidden treasure from Lisa Stansfield's unfairly undiscovered recent album. To our mind, it smacks of the potential to tell an all-out multi-format smash à la Toni Braxton's "Un-Break My Heart." Fortunately, we didn't have to plead too long or hard. Savvy Arista A&R exec Hose Gurelli apparently has a similar passion for the tune and has enlisted remix Her Hector to work a little disco magic.

"The hardcore Lisa Stansfield fan has always thought that this was the single from the album," Gurelli says. "It shows her full power and range of emotion as a performer. We feel this mix brings the song to an incredible new level."

If you are unfamiliar with the original version of "I'm Leavin" (shame on you if you are), it's a sleeky classic soul ballad mildly reminiscent of Stansfield's "All Woman," etched with heartbreakingly lyrics and a chorus that simmers with subtle, almost introverted anger.

In Hector's hands, the song is transformed into a stomping anthem of defiance and emancipation. Clocking in at nearly 11 minutes, his post-production thrives with edgy percussion and darkly urgent synths. Of course, it would've been fab to have a fresh Stansfield vocal to work with, but the pace of the original recording has proved to be easily amenable to a house arrangement. Also, Hector has effectively illuminated elements of her delivery not previously apparent. It's remarkable how a well-placed keyboard loop or flow of percussion can occasionally turn a quiet phrase into an aggressive vamp.

This is, by far, the most pop-confident track the reliably underground-savvy Hector has offered to date—an opinion rendered undeniable fact upon consumption of his smug edit. In fact, the label has decided to issue Hector's radio mix as the primary version to top 40 radio in early March.

If justice prevails, Arista's promotion staff will follow Gurelli's enthusiastic lead and maximize the visibility of this deserving track.

In any case, Stansfield disciples will be delighted to know that an EP featuring previously promo-only remixes of songs from her current album is tentatively planned for March.

Speaking of Gurelli, he is also a pivotal figure in the club renovation of Aretha Franklin's spankin' new single "A Rose Is Still A Rose." He recently jetted to Detroit to oversee a vocal session during which the Queen of Soul cut fresh vocals to a pop-house groove crafted by the ever-fab Love To Infinity. A sneak peek of the track has us convinced that it is destined to be a club classic.

MOOVE DANCING: What a pleasure it is to recommend not one but two new records graced by the rich house flavor of Ernie "E-Smoove" Miller recently. The Chicago-rooted producer has been on the down-low in recent months, concentrating on sharpening his songwriting skills and original productions.

Miller takes a break from his personal projects to inject his distinctive flair into "Everyone Wants To Be" by Elektra act Ziggy Marley & The Melody Makers and "Saxy Mood" by Candy Dufier on 2NK Encoded Music.

In both cases, he effectively works the house and R&B/funk sides of the fence, giving both songs some much-needed vigor. "Everyone Wants To Be" is particularly notable, given its infectious hook and sing-along chorus, while "Saxy Mood" is more sultry and conducive to the evolution beyond the parameters of a nightclub.

Regardless of the record you favor, there's no doubt that Miller continues to be a hard-working man whose presence has been sorely missed. Let's hope that he doesn't disappear for an extended period again anytime soon.

SOPHOMORE DREAMS: Can La Bouche make pop lightning strike twice? A tough call, to be sure. After all, the market for giddy Euro-NRG acts has been soaked with countless sound-alikes.

But there isn't anything like the real thing, right? That's what the folks at RCA are banking on as they prepare to unleash the album "O.S.T.," the follow-up to La Bouche's massive 1996 debut, "Sweet Dreams," due April 28.

A sampler of the set shows the team of Melanie Thornton and Jane McCray dodging the temptation to tamper much with the formula that spawned the multi-plated Hot 100 hits "Be My Lover" and "Sweet Dreams." The first single, "You Won't Forget Me," struts with coated-beats and a moderately memorable rah-rah chorus. However, we're bound to have the set's title track, which has a far more immediate hook and a more textured keyboard arrangement. Also, we cannot wait for the world to hear "Say It With Love," a lovely, acoustic-lined shuffler that allows Thornton to tentatively deploy a formidable set of pipes that are all-too-frequently lost in the mayhem of the groove.

Of course, we're reserving final judgment on the creative and commercial merits of "O.S.T." until the entire set is delivered. At this moment, we're guarded yet optimistic and hoping that it will meet with greater public acceptance than the sophomore offerings of several La Bouche contemporaries. But we all know how fickle pop stars can be.

In the Mix: The eminig DJ Unload returns with a stellar new EP appropriately named "Bugged Out." Gaining respect throughout the East Coast underground for his left-leaning house perspective, he appears poised to move up to a higher, more mainstream position of prominence with this project, with rugged, sample-heavy anthems like "R.O." and "First Round." The title cut is more smooth and easygoing, due largely to a spree of fluttering flutes and jazzy synths that nicely flesh out the melody. In all, an essential turntable item. If you haven't vibed DJ Unload yet, take the time do so right now.

Milton Nazario is putting the skills he's gained since joining New York's Unique Distributors to good use. He has formed Masquerade Records, which is off to an impressive start with the rousing "Miss My Love" by the Paul Simpson Connection featuring Deb E. Diva.

(Continued on next page.)

New York DJ Jason Nevins Hits A Run Overseas With Profile's 'It's Like This'

NEW YORK—Jason Nevins had no idea that his 1997 collaboration with Run-D.M.C. on the S.T.-profile single "It's Like This" would gain the worldwide success it has for that—it proved to be a welcome surprise that has rapidly accelerated the pace of the young producer/DJ's career.

"It's been one of those records that has continued to bubble over a long period of time," he says. "We're getting to a point where it's really starting to blow up, which makes me proud."

Since its release July 15, "It's Like This" has sold 15,000 copies in the U.S., according to SoundsScan. Its accompanying videoclip recently won a "T2 Sexy Viewers" competition on MTV and has been added to the network's regular rotation.

The single is doing even better in Europe, where it has been certified platinum in Germany (for sales of 500,000 units), according to Profile, and has achieved top 10 status in five countries.

Not bad for a track that was intended to be simply a club-driven track. "You never can tell where a record will go," Nevins says. "You always hope for the best. But this record has gone for beyond any expectations. It's a crazy thing. It has certainly done well enough to trigger a follow-up. Ne has even done remixes of the album version and "It's Like This," according to Profile's David T., who has been promoted to a producer/founder.

Tight."

"The single will be the preamble to his spring release schedule with New York native. He has idled deep-house touch to the 12-inch remix package for Janet Jackson forthcoming Virgin jam "I Gotta Laugh" as well as tweaking Kimagawa's current "Cantiz Music/and single "Jealousy" and Bicky et al's "(U.S., Doe, Tree) Maria." Also has contributed his mix to the label's release of Hasidway's "We Love It." Nevins is also forming his budding career as a record artist in his own right. ZYX has also picked up the singles "Babe" and "Hold On Tight." The former is a sample of house music ethereal vocal snippets of Matha Wash's "Give It To You."

"Now I'm just looking to Grammy in 1998," he says with a laugh. "I just want a nominee. I don't even have to win. I just want to be there."
DANCE TRAX
(Continued from preceding page)

The track kicks with a juicy deep-house flavor and vocals that pack the kind of no-nonsense punch that dis-...
NASHVILLE—Some new acts have a great deal of experience performing live but find it a challenge when they enter the studio to record their first album. For Cactus Choir, the transition wasn’t difficult. Founding members Marty Atkinson and Cal Ball spent several years on the West Coast honing their unique sound in countless studio sessions. Atkinson refers to as “years of pre-production.”

The result of those years of creative experimentation can be heard on the group’s self-titled debut, which will be released March 24 on Curb/Universal. “People like them, ” says Curb/Universal VP of promotion Gerrie McDowell. “What we’re hearing back is they’re different. People love the harmonies. I just think this is one of the best albums musically and with the harmonies. It just blows me away.”

The group is composed of lead vocalist/guitarist/songwriter Atkinson, bassist Ball, keyboardist Shane Hicks, steel guitarista Dave Kastrim, drummer Fred Nelson, guitarist Gary Hadden and Tim Hensley, who contributes vocals, guitar, banjo, dobro, and dulcimer. A native of Ontario, Atkinson moved to the Bay Area to pursue a musical career. It was there he began working with Ball, a well-known bassist/vocalist who had performed with numerous acts, including R&B great Buddy Miles.

Atkinson and Ball began performing on the competitive West Coast circuit and spending as much time as they could in studios. (Atkinson was a carpenter and would do carpentry work in exchange for studio time.)

“We did a lot of studio work,” says Atkinson, an EMI writer who penned nine of the album’s 10 cuts. “We started out working on songs and just built them up in the studio I worked at. Cal and I lived a lot of midnight oil trying different ideas. The melodies kind of dictate how the harmonies come out. At first the two of us were singing the three parts, and that’s how we got the choir sound.”

The two laid the foundation for the Cactus Choir sound and after moving to Nashville added Hensley and then the rest of the band members to the mix. “We came out here and met Tim about two years ago,” Atkinson says. “Tim brings from a bluegrass background, and he was able to grab onto what the sound required.”

Cactus Choir’s introduction to Nashville came when Music Row songwriter/producer Tom Shapiro heard it’s work through a West Coast publisher. He flew to Calfornia with Nashville publisher Jimmy Gilmer to hear the act. (Gilmer has since left EMI to form a management company and manages Cactus Choir) Shapiro, Gilmer, and producer Mark Bright began working with the group. During one rehearsal, Mike Curb jumpéd in, like what he heard, and signed the band.

Gilmer says it was the vocals that first attracted him to the Cactus Choir sound. “It was just a sound that you can’t describe,” he says. “When you are in the music business, you are constantly looking for something that opens your eyes and makes you step back... 90% of it all sounds alike. You’re constantly looking for something that sounds different, and when Tom put it on and started playing it, it was like ‘Wow!’ That’s the effect it had on me, and I find that effect is quite common. When a lot of people hear it for the first time, that’s the reaction.”

Radio first got a taste of Cactus Choir with a Christmas single, the band’s version of “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” prior to the release of its debut single. “Step Right Up,” Bill Haggie, operations manager at WXIQ Bristol, Va., is playing the song and says it’s beginning to generate phone calls. “It sounds so good, so fresh,” Haggie says. “With what’s going on in the country format now, this is another piece of variety. The harmonies these guys have are really neat.”

According to McDowell, due to the size of the group, the label has held a series of showcases to launch the album instead of sending the band on a radio promotional tour. “For our first showcase, we had 36 radio people,” says. “We’ve done a showcase in Orlando (Fla.) and are getting ready to do one in Austin (Texas). We’re also working up something on the West Coast and something in the Northeast...” (Continued on page 32)

REMEMBER THIS NAME: Chris Knight. It’s been a while since a writer/singer/Songwriter has kicked up more dust on Music Row. Decades Records, which has pioneered in neo-traditional music of late with Lee Ann Womack and Mark Chesnutt, releases Knight’s self-titled debut album Feb. 10, and it’s a dandy. Gritty neo-realism returns to country music with such gems as “Love And A 45” and “House And 90 Acres.” There will be inevitable comparisons to Steve Earle, but Knight is very much his own man. He tells Nashville Scene that his favorite writer is Southern novelist Cormac McCarthy, and he obviously shares with McCarthy a fascination with and a gift for getting to the grit of everyday life.

PEOPLE: Kyle Young is named associate director of the Country Music Foundation... Rick Carl becomes GM of the Exit/In club here... Billy Kennedy is promoted to VP of sales at Capitol Nashville... Tom McGugh signs with Big Tractor Music... Mark Namore signs with the Starstruck Writers Group, of which Mike Sebastian is now officially VP.

ON THE RECORD: In case you’ve been wondering whatever happened to Billy Bremer, the former mainstay of Rockpile just produced the latest album by the Swedish country group Inger Nordstrom ‘N Her Rhinestone Band, and it’s a smooth good country record. The album, “Hey Conductor!”, is on MNW Records, and the act is being marketed internationally as Inger.

Recommended compilation this week: “Country Gentleman: The Best Of Ricky Skaggs,” “Walk The Essential Jim & Jessie,” “The Best Of Billy Swann” (all on Epic/Legacy), and “Jimmy Dean’s Greatest Hits” (on Columbia/Legacy). Copper Creek Records has three nice historical records coming out. The Blue Sky Boys are represented by volumes 3 and 4 of their Atlanta radio show tapes in 1946 and ’47. “E.C. Ball And Orna: Through The Years, 1957-1975” is a representative sampling of the plain, unadorned Southern gospel sound of this couple from Rugby, Va.
### Top Country Albums

**FEBRUARY 7, 1998**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>WEEK</th>
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<th>TITLE</th>
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<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
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<td>GREATEST HITS</td>
<td>1996 - 1998</td>
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<td>1982-1997</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1036</td>
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<td>1991-1998</td>
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<td>CHARLIE DANIELS BAND</td>
<td>CHARLIE DANIELS BAND’S GREATEST HITS</td>
<td>1974-1989</td>
<td>1032</td>
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**Notes:**
- Albums with the greatest sales gain this week.
- According to Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for sales of 500,000 units.
- Sales, weeks on chart, and chart peak are based on a formula that takes into account sales, measured in albums sold, and the number of weeks the album was in the Top 10. Each album may have a different weight, and the calculation is based on the percentage increase of the album’s sales over the previous week.
- "Weeks on Chart" includes weeks in the Top 10 of the Billboard charts.
- **Complied from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected, compiled, and provided by SoundScan, Inc.**
Michael Martin Murphey (Continued from page 4)

ing, but we feel that there are a lot of people interested in him that might not go into record stores to buy his rec-
ords. I see this as an opportunity to do the traditional thing, which is to sell singles, but also to look at record stores, because people are going to go to buy his records in record stores. Coffin & Ennis have the opportunity to also work the other side of the marketplace—the alternative accounts, the mail order, the boutique stores. I think that's where the record business is moving, to festivals like West Fest. Many of these customers, he says, might not frequent record stores.

"He's more than an artist," Cohen adds, "which is something I think all his previous record labels didn't understand. People think of him as more than a musical artist; they think of him as representing a certain way of life."

In addition to recording albums, Murphey's endeavors include record-
ning audiobooks on cowboys and western history. He also produces West Fest, a series of festivals he initiated in 1986 that celebrate western culture through music, art, crafts, and demonstrations on Native American dancing and horse-riding, among other aspects of the culture. "I think this is a great way to use the records," says Cohen, "and to do something that is meaningful and to show that this is a way of life that is still being practiced today."

The new label's first album will be "Cowboy Songs, Volume 4," which Murphey plans to release around the start of July, just before he holds a West Fest on the Fourth of July weekend in Silver Creek, Colo. Murphey says he plans to co-produce the new album with Ryan.

As for staffing for the new label, there are no new additions yet. Murphey will serve as executive producer at the label and his manager; Susan Mauri, will serve as director of mar-
keting. The new label's offices will be in the same TLAR, N.M., office as Murphey's Wildfire Productions. There are no plans to expand the label's operations.

"He's a cowboy music," says he. "I know millions of other people like cow-
boy music, I intend to find all of them with my label. I want to expand what we've done in the past because I know there are more people out there looking for the music that can find cowboy albums."

Cactus Choir Thrives (Continued from page 9)

cause those people have not seen them yet... there are also several stations that play the record and listen to the station's attitudes toward the record."

McDowell says the company also plans on "winning over the traditional music fan" by buying "in" at radio stations that play the record. "We've got a strong relationship with the radio stations that play the record," he says. "And we've released a video that is gaining airplay at the radio stations."

A key component in launching the group has been the release of a com-
mmercial single for "Step Right Up." "We put a single out because we were trying to get exposure and create a buzz. We wanted to get people talking about the group," says McDowell. "Consequently, we're seeing some sales in certain areas—in Illinois, Texas, and Tennessee."

The label is booked by the William Morris Agency, and Gilmer says it is looking at tour possibilities for the spring.

New In Town. BNA Records recently showcased its newest signing, the Warren Brothers from Tampa, Fla. Shown, from left, are RCA Label Group chair-

Country Singles A-Z PUBLISHERS/PERFORMERS/REIS RIGHTS/MENT MUSIC

COUNTRY ARTISTS & MUSIC

COUNTRY CORNER

by Wade Jessen

FOUR SEASONS: One year after its lead single opened on Billboard's Hot Country Singles & Tracks, Clay Walker's "Rumor Has It\" (Giant) re-enters the chart. The Billboard 200 at No. 194 and rouses our Greatest Gainer cup on Top Country Aanalysis. After more than 10 years on the market, it's nice to see Walker's 1997 debut "Mind-\n"All the Light Above It\" (Curb) tops the chart. Meanwhile, "R rumor Has It\" gains more than 2,000 scans to vault 15-8 on Top Coun-
try Singles Sales, moving more than 4,000 pieces.

The title track from "Rumor Has It\" bowed at No. 48 on our airplay chart in the Feb. 1, 1997 issue and was the recording of Walker's highest opening week on that list. It peaked at No. 1 in the April 12, 1997, Billboard. Two sub-
sequent releases, "One, Two, I Love You\" and "Watch This," peaked at Nos. 16 and 4, respectively.

"Then What\", the fourth single, entered the radio chart Dec. 20, 1997, and with 15 million audience impressions, increases 347 spins to move 35-34 this issue. Airplay is detected at 149 monitored stations, with three of these outlets spinning the song more than 15 times per week. RISK Houston, WQBE Charleston, WVA, and WXIQ Bristol, VA. New airplay is detected at eight monitored stations.

THE FIELDS OF HOME: With a 12-\n
ANSCERON: Milla Mason's "The Strong One\" (Atlantic) sets up shop at No. 40 on Top Country Albums, taking Hot Shot debut honors with 5,000 scans. "Closer To Heaven,\" the lead single from Mason's freshman outing, gains 139 spins to bullet at No. 41 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks with airplay at 101 stations. Heavy airplay (more than 35 spins) is detected at KYNI Dallas, and new play is detected at KSSK Fresno, Calif.; WJKN Baton Rouge, La.; WKKC Augusta, Ga.; WQDK Portsmouth, N.H.; and WYRK West Palm Beach, Fla.

FOR THE RECORD: Billboard's Top Contemporary Christian chart is managed in this office, and due to a production error, the title chart, and should have appeared at No. 19 in last issue's chart was incorrectly em-

New In Town. BNA Records recently showcased its newest signing, the Warren Brothers from Tampa, Fla. Shown, from left, are RCA Label Group chair-

Country Corner can be reached via E-mail at cjess@billboard.com.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>No.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weeks</strong></th>
<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th><strong>Producer (songwriter)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Artist</strong></th>
<th><strong>Label</strong></th>
<th><strong>Number</strong></th>
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<td><strong>JUMP</strong></td>
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<td><strong>DANNY WELLS</strong></td>
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<td>36</td>
<td><strong>DON'T BE STUPID (YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU)</strong></td>
<td><strong>LEON RIMES</strong></td>
<td><strong>LEON RIMES</strong></td>
<td><strong>MERCURY</strong></td>
<td><strong>75812</strong></td>
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<td>35</td>
<td><strong>I CAN'T HELP MYSELF (SAY IT AGAIN)</strong></td>
<td><strong>WILLIE NELSON</strong></td>
<td><strong>WILLIE NELSON</strong></td>
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<td><strong>IN THE LEEDS ROOM</strong></td>
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<td><strong>BABY I'M COMING BACK</strong></td>
<td><strong>DONALD DUCKS</strong></td>
<td><strong>ANNIE LEONHARD</strong></td>
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<td><strong>STRANGE WITHOUT YOU</strong></td>
<td><strong>NANCY WESLEY</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CALL ME</strong></td>
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<td><strong>COLUMBIA</strong></td>
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**Notes:**
- **No. 1** signifies the top country singles on the Billboard chart.
- **Weeks** indicate the duration at which each song remained at the top position.
- **Label** refers to the record label associated with each song.
- **Number** denotes the specific record number within the given label's catalog.
For the most part, the skirmishes have been relatively harmless, hard-fought endeavors to maximize an artist's presence on the chart. However, spirited efforts to reach the pinnacle of Hot Latin Tracks occasionally have assumed tempestuous proportions among label executives, which are usually followed by allegations of unfair play against their competitors.

Many of these accusations are rooted in "spot buys," in which labels muscle abridged versions of singles as radio advertisements.

Broadcast Data Systems (BDS), which monitors Latino radio stations that report to Hot Latin Tracks, records these "Spots" as legitimate plays, until the enquirer implements a detection program that roots out the invalid spins.

Unfortunately, BDS does not always catch the guilty party by the time the damage has been done. The unhappy result is that a song can acquire an undeserved position on the chart.

Such is the case in this issue's upper echelon of Hot Latin Tracks. Executives throughout the industry complained last week that this sector of the chart has benefited from delinquent detections.

Billboard will not tolerate acts on the integrity of the Latino music industry. Effective next issue, any song found with 50 or more invalid plays will be suspended from the chart for the week of publication. In addition, the suspended song (or songs) will be identified in this column during the week of suspension.

The invalid-detection limit of 50 provides a comfortable margin of error for possible (technological) problems, while safeguarding the reputation of a market that merits setting the but the most abrasive, forthright environment in which to do business.

The issue of paid airplay is not limited to the Latin music market but is also an area of concern for other Billboard charts. While at this time the industry consensus is that Billboard charts should count paid airplay of entire tracks, (Continued on page 60)
International Creative Management congratulates Julio Iglesias on his Grammy Nomination for Best Latin Pop Performance "TANGO"
Artists & Music

NOTAS (Continued from page 41)
the same does not hold true for paid plays of abridged versions of songs. It can be argued that legitimate plays of plays helps expose an artist, whereas the usage of shortened versions of singles plainly indicates an attempt to manipulate.

JULIO WINS AMA: Sony Discos superstars Julio Iglesias won the inaugural Latin music artist category at the American Music Awards (AMA), held Jan. 30 at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. The other pair of big-name nominees for the trophy were Julio’s cousin, Enrique, who records for Fonovisa, and WEA Latina’s Luis Miguel.

Though he did not triumph, Enrique still gained valuable exposure on the ABC show with his live performance of his current hit, “Llavia Cae.” A tip of the hat goes to the AMAs for making space for a Latino artist to perform.

MÁS MENUDO: As former members of Menudo book up for their two shows Jan. 30 and Saturday (31) in San Juan, Puerto Rico, fans of the group can log on to know about the history of the act at Menudo Online—located at http://members.aol.com/Menudo7/index.html. The World Wide Web site was created last year by Lisa Berton, a photographer who has been a self-confessed Menudo superfan for 10 years. She is booked to cover the shows for Associated Press and People En Español. Berton hosts a weekly chat session at 8 p.m. Mondays at her Web site. Among the former Menudo members who have dropped by is 7th Avenue Latin singer Rubén González.

According to Berton, since 1977, when Menudo was founded by Edgar- do Diaz, 21 singers have become band members, including the vocalists of MIO, the ’30s incarnation of Menudo, signed to Sony Discos/Sony.

Though the reunion show features six Menudo alumni, Berton notes that Menudo performed only as a quintet. She adds that the only original member of the group performing at the concerts is Ricky Meléndez, a cousin of Diaz’s.

Meanwhile, Ricky Martín, one of the most famous Menudo alumni, is slated to drop his new disc, “Vuelve,” Feb. 12 on Sony. The album was co-produced by K.C. Porter and another Menudo alum, Robi Rosas.

J. MARTÍNEZ DIES: Joe Martínez, a highly regarded accordionist and backing singer for Florida Tojano act Hometown Boys, died Jan. 22 in Pasadena, Texas. Martínez was 34. The Lobbick, Texas, native, who was recording from a quadruple-bypass operation, died of cardiac arrest while performing at a Pasadena nightclub with his brothers Rick and Jessé, both of whom are members of Hometown Boys. Martínez’s recently formed new band, El Merengue del Sur, and his Los Músicos de La Playa dream, had just put out its new disc, “A New Beginning,” on Houston’s Toca Records.

ASCAP BOWS TRADE GROUP: Marilyn Bergman, president/chairman of ASCAP, has announced the for- mer ASCAP Network Unit (CanCan) 36 Program, a trade-off TV show that was put together during the year, would be held to assist ASCAP in its Latin repertoire.

MERCADO’S SHOWSTOPPERS: RMM president Ralph Mercado, who remains very active in the concert promotion arena, has lined up four blockbuster multi-artist concerts in 1998. The first is El Concierto Del Ano, Feb. 21 at New York’s Madison Square Garden. RMM’s India, Sony’s DLD, and WeaCaribe’s Frankie Negron are among the headliners of the annual Valentine’s Day-themed program.

Two other concerts set to be held at the Garden are Merengue and Latin dance acts, May 23, and the venerable New York Salsa Festival, now in its 23rd season, May 16. Concerts are scheduled in Latin Jazz Jam, a Latin jazz happening that forms part of the famed NYC Jazz Festival, June 27 in New York’s Carnegie Hall.

ARGENTINA NOTAS: Enrique Pérez Foggwill, president of Argentinian recording association CAPIF, is set to step down in March to become market director of Warner Music Argentina. Industry veteran Eran Robert- to Play is expected to replace Pérez Foggwill.

On Dec. 27, 1997, an awesome array of stars performed their hits for the inauguration of “Buenos Aires Shopping Music” at Véliz SansField Stadi- um. The ABC/TV/Generation City screen for the show were handed out with a minimum purchase of $10 by the Alto Palermo and Alto Avellaneda shopping centers as part of their year-end promotions.

Always-popular pop/véevy act Los Pericos celebrated its 10-year music career with a free, open-air concert for 50,000 Dec. 26 in Buenos Aires. Stand- out guests performed were Efo Páez, Soda Stereo’s Zeta Bosio, Ratones Paranoicos’ Juanse, and Los Auténti- cos Decadentes.

CHART NOTES: Radio & Television’s box top Hot Latin Tracks with “Por Que Te Conozco,” the leadoff single from the group’s first studio disc, “Como Te Recuerdo,” the song also tops the regional Mexican genre chart.

Tropi-Mus, an upstart indie from San Juan drawing critical attention from the majors, snags two debut slots this issue on Hot Latin Tracks.

The first track, “Jericanova,” which debuts at No. 17, is a techno-flavored pop hit by Dayanara that is the follow-up to the titular hit from her fine label debut, “Astatiz.”

Quebecoise superstar Celine Dion notches her second No. 1 on the pop genre chart with “My Heart Will Go On” (560 Music/Epic/Sony), the hit tune made famous, in part, by the blockbuster film “Titanic.” And salsa princess India reaches the top of the tropical/salsa chart this issue with “Mi Mayor Venganza” (RMM).

Assistance in preparing this column was provided by Marcelo Fernández Baleri in Barona Aires.
Billboard International Latin Music Conference & Awards
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DEPARTMENT OF COLTRANE STUDIES: A history lesson of a different sort will take place at New York’s Carnegie Hall with the Feb. 12 Carnegie Hall Jazz Band (CHJB) program “Cantrole: A Love Supreme.” This tribute to the late jazz genius will feature guest stars Michael Brecker and Kevin Mahogany.

John Coltrane’s 1964 album “A Love Supreme” features his quintet and was an emotionally profound, yet seemingly simple, suite of pieces tied to a personal, even confessional, vision of spirituality and divinity. Belonging to the alternative-seeking ethos of the 1960s, “A Love Supreme” will feature such spiritual messages. Trumpeter and CHJB music director Jon Faddis, “Coltrane had a musical quest, but he also had a spiritual quest. He was looking for answers. I think he found some answers with this album.” Trombonist Slide Hampton will arrange the Carnegie program.

Another part of the program features vocalist Mahogany performing selections from Coltrane’s delightful 1963 session with jazz singer/balladeer Johnny Hartman. Ask to compare the styles of Mahogany and Hartman, Faddis replies, “I don’t know that I would. I don’t really even compare them at all, but Hartman had a very rich, sensual voice—that timbre. Kevin can get that too.”

The concert will also include large-scale CHJB treatments of the classic Coltrane themes “Giant Step” and “Countdown,” with charts by tenor sax master Frank Foster. The frenetic, serpentine lines of the latter piece are "going to be a challenge, to say the least," says Faddis.

Do concerts like this properly serve as history lessons? “I think they do, for the audience that we pull in at Carnegie,” says Faddis. “We get a lot of people from the other side of the fence, musically—from the classical world. Sometimes these are the first jazz concerts they go to.”

HISTORY FOR SALE: Auction house Christie’s Ecat will auction its latest “Pop Memorabilia” sale Wednesday (4) in New York. On the block are items once owned by such pop icons as the Beatles, Bob Marley, Hank Williams, Timothy Leary, Madonna, and others. Jazzophiles may be intrigued by Cab Calloway’s personalized orchestra hat (estimated value $1,500-$2,000), a Wurlitzer piano played by Duke Ellington, and a vibrate made in the 70s for Lionel Hampton (the last two have asking prices of $60,000 or more). Because Hamp’s High Spots and its associated belongings in that awful apartment fire last year, maybe somebody ought to buy the vibes and give ’em back to him.

**Billboard** FEBRUARY 7, 1998

**Top Jazz Albums.**

**by Drew Wheeler**

Those who REFUSE to learn the lessons of history will be condemned to repeat them, and if you serve up in excessive doses, you can make your point all the more emphatically.

Fortunately, jazz history can take such a compelling form that you’re happy to show up for class. One such instance is the 1960s era, and one well-studied example is what happened in the wake of the grounds for the Milt Jackson Foundation’s Mikki Shepard, the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz, the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz, and the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz. It's a fact that the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz is the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz. It's a fact that the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz is the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz. It's a fact that the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz is the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz. It's a fact that the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz is the concept ground for the 1960s-1970s era of jazz.
RIAA Sues Texas Over Investment Ban

BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) has sued the state of Texas over its 1997 lyrics-based investment ban, calling it unconstitutional. The move is the first in a series of expected RIAA skirmishes with state governments this year over lyrics bills, investment bans, and obscenity legislation.

The Texas ban prohibits the state and all its agencies from investing in companies that produce music with "objectionable" lyrics. Similar legislative bans or non-legislative directives were introduced in Pennsylvania and Maryland last year but were defeated or rejected.

The lawsuit, filed Jan. 23 by the RIAA and Texas firefighters, teachers, and police pension fund participants, argues that the ban subsidizes the state without any public hearings as a rite to the state appropriations bill, "shackles fund managers who have a simple charge: to maximise returns for in- dentors. The suit also claims the ban is too broad in scope and violates the free-expression rights of artists. The next brush fire for the RIAA will be in Georgia, where Democratic state Sen. Vernon Pearson has proposed a lyrics-based bill. The lawsuit also indicates that carriers and other measurable recording promoters will oppose its passage.

Joel Flax, RIAA senior director of government affairs and artist relations, says the Texas bill involves "more battles ahead. While no such legislation has yet been formally introduced in other states, he says, "it's probably not long in coming, especially if this one passes."

For example, in previous sessions, legislators in the states of Washington and Pennsylvania have introduced lyrics bills and "harmful to minors" amendments to existing obscenity laws, despite earlier defeats or vetoes by governors.

Plato would not rule out forthcoming flare-ups in those states.

Artists & Music

"We like Pletnev and the RNO, and we like to support things we like," Solomon says. "But Tower is committed to classical music all around. And we ought to be—it's 10% of our business."

Tower is one of the few major retailers who have remained devoted to a substantial classical catalog. Solomon says that is the only way to go: "If you're going to be in the classical music business, you can't do it halfway. Of course, we don't have the turnover, the classical that you do with pop. But it's our philosophy to carry deep catalog, because we know that serious record collectors want to stop at a store that has a strong selection. I'm classical and opera about; we have produced some of the most intelligent and informed customers out there," Solomon adds. "And they're tough taskmasters. If you don't keep what they want around, then they won't come back."

ONTHEAIR: The first American radio series featuring the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra has begun airing each week and will run through March. The series is produced by Chicago-based InterContinental Media in conjunction with KGO Los Angeles and WCLV Cleveland. Heard on some 400 stations nationwide, the programs are hosted by Werner Klemperer, the son of the great conductor Otto Klemperer (but perhaps better known for playing Col. Klink on the '80s TV comedy "Hogan's Heroes"). Several guest conductors will lead the 156-year-old Vienna band, including the late George Solti, Pierre Boulez, and Simon Rattle.

IN THE BANK. Troy, N.Y.-based Dorian Recordings has just completed its 100th project in the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall. The sessions featured the French period-instrument group Ensemble Douce Musique in a set of French baroque and classical music. The sessions should be out later this year, adding to the label's 200-title-plus catalog (distributed by Allegro Corp. in North America). Congratulations, Dorian.

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS: Since conductor/pianist Daniel Barenboim has re-upped with Teldec for a new long-term arrangement, we have to take the good with the bad. Good is that as a conductor he will continue his program of Wagner operas (his "Tristan Und Isolde" is gorgeous) as well as his traversal of Bruckner's symphonies.

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1998 RECORD RETAILING DIRECTORY
Publication Date: March 11 • Ad Close: February 3
Contact: Dan Dodd - 213-525-2299
Lining Up For Hits. Joey Ahruda, leader of jazz-blues group Cocktails With Joey and former leader of Los Angeles rockabilly band Tupelo Sex Chain, has signed a global deal with BMG Songs, the U.S. division of BMG Music Publishing Worldwide. Shown, from left, are Art Ford, VP of film & TV for BMG Songs; Carol-Sue Baker, Ahruda’s manager; Margaret Mittleman, a consultant for BMG Songs and president of M3; Ahruda; and Danny Strick, president of BMG Songs.

Hudson Flows With Songs. Mark Hudson, who signed with MCA Music Publishing in 1993 as a member of the Hudson Brothers, has made a new worldwide deal with the company. He has written and produced songs with such artists as Hanson, Aerosmith, Jars Of Clay, Ben Jovi, Bryan Adams, Billy Idol, and Alice Cooper. Hudson, center, holding a gold certification plaque for Hanson’s “Snowed In” album, is shown, from left, with Dana Kasha, manager of creative services for MCA; David Reeder, president of MCA; Betsy Anthony-Brodore, VP of talent acquisition for MCA; and Bruce Grabel, Hudson’s attorney.

An Air About It. Jimmy Buffett, left, is presented with a Four Million Performance Award for the song “Margaritaville” by Rick Riccobono, BMI’s VP of writer/publisher relations. This achievement, according to BMI, translates to more than 200,000 hours or 21 years of continuous play on U.S. radio networks, AM and FM outlets, and TV. The singer/songwriter has collaborated with author Herman Wouk on a musical adaptation of Wouk’s novel “Don’t Stop The Carnival,” which had a seven-week run last fall in Miami.

It Ain’t Broke. Sony/ATV Music Publishing recently honored the gig success of “A Broken Wing,” by RCA Records artist Martina McBride at a Nashville bash. Among the attendees, from left, are James House, co-writer of the song; McBride; and Sam Hogin and Phil Barnhart, the song’s two other co-writers.

Hall Names 4 Inductees; WB Print Into Asia, Latin America

CALL OF THE HALL: The songwriting team of Fats Domino and Dave Bartholomew, soundtrack composer/songwriters John Williams and John Barry, and Larry Stock are this year’s inductees into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. Their selections were reported at a special gathering Jan. 28 in New York, at which the hall also announced that they would be officially inducted during the hall’s 29th annual dinner at the New York Sheraton Hotel.

Domino and Bartholomew fall under the hall’s category of pre-1955 writers; Williams in the post-55 group; the U.K.’s Barry in the international category; and Stock, whose credits include such perennials as “Blueberry Hill” and “You’re Nobody Till Somebody Loves You,” in the pussahmo slot.

ROADENING ABOUND: Giant music print company Warner Bros. Publications, a subsidiary of Warner/Chappell Music, has signed licensing deals with Asian and Latin markets. The Miami-based affiliate of Warner/Chappell Music, with offices established in the U.K., Sweden, Italy, Spain, Canada, and Australia, has just opened a new office in Hong Kong under Christian Pao, who will supervise the company’s Pacific Rim operations.

As for Latin America, specifics are still being worked out, according to a company spokesman. A person to head that market is still being sought, as are territories where offices will be situated.

“Due to our expertise in Latin American product, the wide array of Spanish titles produced by our sister company, EMI, and the strong network that already exists through Warner/Chappell in Latin America, it seemed only natural that we set up offices in that market,” says company COO Fred Anton.

Last year, Warner Bros. Publications embarked on a worldwide project to streamline systems while providing regional marketing and the development of local repertoire for music print.

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Filipetti Hits A Career High
Producer Scores 2 Grammy Nominations

BY PAUL VERN

NEW YORK—The week of his 31st birthday, singer/songwriter Frank Filipetti hit rock bottom. His publisher declined to pick up his contract; he had no record deal, he was flat broke, and his girlfriend threw him out of her apartment.

Many struggling artists would interpret such a confluence of events as a heavenly sign that the career simply wasn’t meant to be. Filipetti, however, refused to be kept down. He turned to engineering and producing records and within months had experienced more success than in a decade of pounding the pavement as an artist.

Almost through the early ’80s through the late ’90s, apart from the Beatles and the Beach Boys, the only band I’ve ever heard was the Rolling Stones," says Filipetti, who produced several of the band’s albums; the band even performed a song he wrote, "I’m So Sad," in the film "3000 Miles." It’s all been amazing time.

In recent years, Filipetti’s calendar got so busy that he decided to hire his on-one-time production coordinator, Jim Delabate, as his full-time manager. "She’s changed my life in the four years I’ve known her," Filipetti says of Delabate. "Some of my success is due to her. She’s the most organized person I’ve ever met, she’s incredibly talented, and she gives me great advice." Filipetti also attributes his success to his empathy for the artist’s point of view. "My background was as a musician and a singer/songwriter," he says. "When I started this, the reason I did so well so fast was I remember sitting there doing my songs and having them recorded by other people and them not listening to me. So I always listen to what the artists are saying, because almost always their points are valid. I realize that it’s not my name on the record, it’s theirs. I’ve always tried to be very conscious of that aspect of it."

Filipetti’s career began in the early ’70s, when he tried to break into the industry as a singer/songwriter. After a string of singles that went largely unnoticed, he got what he thought was his "big break," when he was picked to record an album with Greg Kihn, whom he met at the Capitol Records offices.

Filipetti, who has recorded with many of the biggest names in the industry, is now considered one of the top producers in the business. He has produced albums for some of the biggest names in the industry, including Pavarotti, James Taylor, and Carla Bruni.

Although the victory did not catapult Filipetti to fame, it promised much-needed cash and opened doors for him in the industry. He eventually landed a publishing deal with Screen Gems/Colgems and just signed a contract with Capitol Records due to a legal dispute between his then manager and the label over another artist.

In the late ’70s, Filipetti signed an independent label that was in the midst of a distribution change, and his album fell through the cracks and was never released. Then, in 1979, with his career as a songwriter effectively over and his personal life in a downward spiral, Filipetti turned to only one person he thought could help him: Right Track Recording owner Simon Ariaus.

Filipetti knew Andrews from recording his demos at Right Track, which at the time was a demo studio on 24th Street here. Filipetti successfully lobbied Andrews for the chief engineer job, even though his only training as an engineer consisted of the 4-track demos he recorded in the basement of his parents’ Connecticut home.

Filipetti succeeded instantly at Right Track. Within a year, he had met Peter Asher, who was in town recording a cast album for the film version of "The Pirates Of Penzance," featuring Linda Ronstadt. Asher introduced Filipetti to Simon and Taylor, and his recommendation got Filipetti a gig with Foreigner on the band’s "Head Games" tour, which paid him with legendary producer Phil Ramone.

Not incidental to Filipetti’s ever-increasing fortunes as a producer/engineer has been the dramatic development of digital audio.

"[Digital mixing] has so revolutionized my way of thinking that I don’t think like anything that I learned," he says. "The way that it’s all put together has been such a change, and so I’ve had such success," he observes. (Continued on next page)
QUANTEG INC, president/CEO Jack Kenney has resigned, effective April 2, according to a statement by the Pocono City Ga.-based tape company. No reason was given for Kenney’s departure. In the statement, Kenney says that he “will continue to direct Quanteq’s operations and will work with the company to facilitate the selection of a successor and an orderly transition.”

EMTEC PRO MEDIA INC. (formerly known as JR Pro Sales), North American distributor of BASF-brand recording media, presented its BASF Master Award to producer Peter Collins, engineer Joel Baldridge, and Nashville’s Emerald Sound Studios. Collins and Baldridge mixed Jewel’s No. 1 single “You Were Meant For Me” on BASF SM 468 half-inch tape at Emerald.

FRANKFORD/WAYNE MASTERING LABS in New York has installed two additional SADiE digital audio workstations to complement the one the facility has used successfully since last year. In a statement, Frankford/Wayne engineer Rick Essig says, “The SADiE digital audio workstation is ready for the future with 96 kbit/sec, 24-bit, and DWD capabilities. I am a big fan of SADiE: the workstation used in conjunction with the SADiE Versatile 3 software has increased our productivity by 150%—it is like having an extra person working here.” Besides Essig, Frankford/Wayne is staffed by senior engineer Michael Sarsfield and chief technical engineer Greg Vaughan—each of whom has his own SADiE system. The facility’s credits include Elton John, Everything But The Girl, Van Morrison, and Dee-Lite.

TRIAD STUDIOS in Redmond, Wash., has undertaken an equipment upgrade and cosmetic facelift with the addition of a Sonus Solutions digital audio workstation and a new look, with rooms painted in vibrant colors and a mural on one wall. Triad principal Dave Dynart says the Sonus system is “perfect for film, video, and television audio post.” He notes that the new gear “adds a lot of flexibility, while the new look and the full support staff really make a session here go well.”

NASHVILLE EQUIPMENT RENTAL FIRM UNDERGROUND SOUND has added equipment and expanded its technical support. Among its new offerings are digital filter upgrades for all its Sony PCM384 48-track recorders, as well as monthly technical servicing from an authorized Sony representative to ensure proper maintenance. Underground has also expanded its collection of tube microphones and preamps, with the acquisition of Manley Vox Box and Avalon V737SP units.

SYN STUDIOS JAPAN, a Tokyo facility co-owned by Simon LeBon of Duran Duran and longtime collaborator Nick Wood, used its ISDN link on projects by Janet Jackson and LeBon. For the Jackson project, Syn Studios connected with Capitol Studios in Hollywood, Calif., while the LeBon project consisted of music for the upcoming Mario Van Peebles film “Love Kills,” with tracks recorded in New York and produced by Wood in Tokyo. Other films that LeBon and Wood have worked together on include Japanese productions “Coo,” “Sea Forest,” and “Shura No Densetsu” and the Wim Wenders short subject “Dream Island.” LeBon, in addition, has contributed songs to “A View To A Kill” and “The Saint.”

THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL AUDIO RECORDING SERVICES plans to hold its Biz Tech ‘98 conference July 9 in Nashville on the eve of the Summer National Assn. of Music Merchants Convention, which opens July 10.

LOS ANGELES-BASED DESIGN FIRM STUDIO 440 Architecture & Acoustics has finished a private studio for Earth, Wind & Fire veterans Maurice White, located in Santa Monica, Calif., the 1,800-square-foot facility—named Magnet Vision/Kalifornia—contains a control room, live tracking space, vocal booth, guitar amplifier closet, machine closet, and lounge. The studio is adjacent to White’s offices. One of the studio’s design characteristics is an absence of soft-mid mount. Noting that White prefers to mix with mid- and near-field systems, Studio 440 principal George Newburn says, “The benefits of this type of setup are many-fold: larger glass for perfect sight lines, better audio imaging from the mid-field monitors, and simplicity in monitor change or reconfiguration. Many of our clients are now moving away from soft-mid mounted monitors, and I believe we are pioneering this shift from the design side. We are currently working on two major projects—one mastering facility and one music mix facility—whose owners have made this same choice.”

CD ASSOCIATES of Irvine, Calif., is offering free testing of DVD titles brought by manufacturers to the DVD Professional Conference ‘98, being held Monday-Tuesday (3-4) in Orlando, Fla. The company says it initiated the disc-testing trial offer last at REPTILE: “The demand was enormous, with testing started long before the show opened and continued for hours afterward,” says a CD Associates statement.

SAM ASH MUSIC CORP, the East Coast music retail giant, is expanding to the West Coast with the recent opening of a store in Westminster, Calif., and the planned opening this spring of stores in nearby Cerritos, West Hollywood, and Canoga Park. When all four California stores open, the Sam Ash empire—which was established in 1924 in Brooklyn, N.Y.—will comprise 19 outlets in New York, New Jersey, Florida, Connecticut, Ohio, and California.

**Produced by Steve Harrison (RND) and Jim Pinder & Bert Metz**

**Billboard’s No. 1 Singles (January 31, 1998)**

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<td>MCE &amp; SLOW Usher, Jermaine Dupri (LaFace/Arista)</td>
<td>JUST TO SEE YOU SMILE Tim McGraw, B. Gallimore, T. McGraw (Curb)</td>
<td>SEX AND CANDY Marcia Playground, Jared Kuter, John Wozniak (Capitol)</td>
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<td>LOUD RECORDING Nashville, TN Chris Lord-Alge</td>
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**Hit Maker’s Formula:**

499 + 467 = 566

**Top of the Charts**

Engineering Excellence www.quoteguy.com
The show is not such a stretch for Hammer, who began his career rapping about God under the pseudonym Holy Ghost Boy. The show is his second for the station; he inan-gered his religious community when he based a call-in program “Street Soldiers,” which has been emulated by various rappers and rap stations.

In other, more worldly matters, Hammer is being sued in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York by a group’s trio of lawsuit’s in 1991’s “Here Comes The Hammer” without authorization. The chorus of the song’s lyrics, “In Full Effect” and “Uh-Oh,” which copyrighted. Hammer’s attempt to get the suit thrown out of court was denied Jan. 16, when Judge Peter Leisure ruled that omissions in the Legend’s original copyright filing were not sufficient to prevent the suit from going to trial.

LOX, STOCK, AND CHART-TOP- PERS: Bad Boy rap trio the Lox’s debut set, “Money, Power & Respect,” enjoyed prime positioning on the Billboard charts two weeks after its Jan. 13 release. The album was No. 1 on Top R&B Albums and No. 3 on The Billboard 200 the week of Jan. 30, evidencing a run at Arista, which distributes Bad Boy, are attributing the group’s breakthrough success to its inclusion on Puff Daddy & the Family’s world tour, which ran Nov. 9-Dec. 22, and a strong street-team campaign. According to Derek Lafayette, an associate director of artist development at Arista, street teams carried product signs announcing the release of the album outside each venue (a trademark Bad Boy promotion tool since the debut of Craig Mack, the label’s premier act).

Other key factors include high consumer awareness as a result of the group’s appearances on tracks and videos by Puffy and his fellow Carey. The trio is featured in the original and Shot-caller Rock remixes of Puffy’s “It’s All About Weezy Benjamins,” as well as in the single’s video, and on the remix single and video for Carey’s “Home,” which featured the group. “If You Think I’m Jiggy,” interprets the chord of Rod Stewart’s 70s hit “Do Ya Think I’m Sexy? ’90s street slang.

Their album also includes the Yonkers, N.Y.-based act’s tribute to the Notorious B.I.G., called “I’ll Always Love Big Poppa,” which predated Puffy’s multi-platinum “I’ll Be Missing You,” and “Let’s Stay Together.” Over. The single’s vocals reminiscences rap’s community-oriented and less violent beginnings.

MERCY MERCY ME: Hip-hop stepchild MC Hammer is going back to his old stomping grounds. As host of KMER-FM-San Francisco’s first gospel radio program, “MC Hammer’s World Hit Soul Show,” broadcast from 6-9 a.m. on Sundays, the show features classic and current gospel, plus a few hip-hop tracks that highlight, divine host worship, according to KMER PD Joey Arbagey. The program also allows callers to give on-air prayer shout-outs.

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HOT COLLABS & INTERPRE- TATIONS: Jason Nevins is rack- ing up points for the breakdancing battle video for his electronic version of Run-D.M.C.’s “It’s Like That.” But dance Armand Van Helden takes the prize for hottest hip-hop interpretation project for “Enter The Meat Market,” mixed under the name Sampleslaya. Using classic and not-so-classic tracks, Van Helden’s turntable work stirs up memories of high school sweatbox parties and old-school hip-hop battle tapes. The track is the Shot-caller Rock remix of It’s All About The Benjamins (the video remains in a category by itself); Towa Tei, DJ for retro dance act Dee-Lite, who got hold of Biz Markie and Bootleg Brown, aka Charlie Cameron, leaders of The New School, to cut a few tracks a la The Brand New Heavies’ “Heavy Rhyme Experiment” on their “Sound Museum”; and Goldie, who prompted KRS-One to rap over a jungle groove on “Digital.” Assistance in preparing this column was provided by Carla Hay in New York.

LINES

BIRTHS

Bog, Dylan George-Ringo, to Jonathan and Laurie Earp, Dec. 30 in Berkeley, Calif. Father is a music lawyer and recording industry instructional Board at San Francisco State University.

Bog, Son Beworth, to Libbie Beworth and Sam Staetch, Jan. 14 in Austin, Texas, Mother is a singer/songwriter.

Bog, Drew, to Jodi Howard and Daniel Christ, Jan. 18 in New York. Mother is post-production coordinator at Arabesque Recordings. Father is production coordinator at Arabesque.

MARRIAGES

Kay Hanley to Michael Eisenstein, Jan. 26 in Cambridge, Mass., Bride, vocalist for Letters To Cleo, Groom is guitarist for Letters To Cleo.

DEATHS

Justin Tubb, 62, due to an aortic aneurysm, Jan. 24 in Nashville. Tubb, a son of Country Music Hall of Fame member Ernest Tubb, was a Grand Ole Opry member for 42 years. When he joined the Opry, he was its first second-generation member. Born Aug. 20, 1935, in San Antonio, Texas, he studied journalism at the University of Texas but dropped out to pursue a musical career when his father recorded a tribute song to Hank Williams written by Justin. He recorded three top 10 hits in the ‘50s and ‘60s but fared better as a songwriter. He penned Hawkshaw Hawkins’ only No. 1, “Lonely No More” (7-7390), and wrote hits for Dottie West, George Jones, Del Reeves, and Highway 101. He is sur- vived by daughter Lea-Lea Barry, son Justin Tubb and Zachary Dale Tubb; his mother, Elaine Tubb Lemieux; and sister Elaine Tubb Wingertier.

S.P. Leary, 67, of complications from cancer, Jan. 26 in Chicago. Leary was one of the best-known of all blues drummers. During a career spanning more than a half-century, he supported fellow Texans T-Bone Walker, Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf, Sonny Boy Williamson II, Merle Kilgore, Lee hooks, James Cotton, Otis Spann, and the late Jimmie Rodgers, who died in December. Leary survived by his wife, Annette.

MARCH 5, Night For Hope For Auction sponsored by the Music and Entertainment Industry for the City of Hope, Chris’los Angeles. 213-626-4511,

APRIL

April 4, Celebrity Golf Tournament sponsored by the Music and Entertainment Industry for the City of Hope, El Cajon Country Club, Tarzana, Calif. 213-626-4511, extension 6540.

April 9-12, Montreal Urban Music Seminar, Riaz House, Montreal, Canada. 514-481-7569.

April 29-3 May, 3rd Impact Super Summit Conference XII, Reno Hotel and Casino, Reno. 702-641-4600.

MAY

May 28-30, Fourth Annual E3 Expo And Conference, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta. 800-315-1133, www.e3expo.com

Calendars

A weekly listing of trade shows, conventions, award shows, seminars, and other events. Send information to Calendar, Billboard, 1515 Broadway New York, N.Y. 10036.

JANUARY

Jan. 31, "Pop Culture" Auction, the Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles. 310-201-8848.

FEBRUARY


Feb. 3, Songwriters In The Round, Park Central Hotel, South Beach, Fla. 305-893-7456, www.songwritersintheround.com

MARCH


March 26, BravoCamp, Coleman Center, New York. 516-593-5494.

APRIL

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Talent To Burn
The U.K. Fires Up For A New Year
With Acts From All Genres

Today's mood is a far cry from half a decade ago, when the nation was undergoing an acute musical identity crisis. With the spotlight off Britain for a few years, the environment has allowed new styles to flourish. Now, international labels and audiences are just as receptive to British R&B and soul as they once were to dance, rock or pop.

LONDON—Expect the unexpected. That's the message from British labels for the coming year. In 1995, Britpop reigned supreme. In 1996, pure pop à la the Spice Girls triumphed. Last year saw new acts flourish across all genres, and this fertile environment is providing the harvest for 1998's export hopes.

The media warned to such category-defying acts as Epic U.K.'s Finley Quaye, R&B/crossover girl foursome All Saints shot to the top of the British charts for London Records, and drum 'n' bass poked its insistent head into the national consciousness with 'Talkin' Loud/Mercury's Roni Size & Reprezent, who won the 1997 Mercury Music Prize.

Outside the U.K., the bacon was safely brought home by Oasis, the Prodigy, Spice Girls and veterans Depeche Mode with their globe-straddling, multiplatinum success. Executives here are hard pressed to remember a similar time when talent was as strong across all genres. The grand return of unashamedly commercial pop has not elbowed guitar-rock sideways; nor has the emergence of gritty, album-based electronic dance sapped the strength of the vibrant indie dance sector.

Today's mood is a far cry from half a decade ago, when the nation was undergoing a musical identity crisis akin to that facing the U.S. now. With the spotlight off Britain for a few years, the environment has allowed new styles to flourish. Now, international labels and audiences are just as receptive to British R&B and soul as they once were to dance, rock or pop.

FROM FOLK-ROCK TO FUSIONISTS

"Other territories are looking for new, internationally selling talent from the U.K., whatever the genre that breaks through this year," notes China Records director of international Adrian Sean, whose diverse list of priorities this year ranges from folk-rocker Levellers to soul-pop diva Charlene Smith through to electro-guitar fusionists Morcheeba, whose second China album, "The Big Calm," bowed in March.

"America, in particular, is warming to British acts that several years ago would have been difficult to market across the Atlantic. Brian Yates, VP of international for Sony Music U.K., is pleasantly surprised at the U.S. response to Jimmy Ray, whose debut single, "Are You Jimmy Ray," has scored significant radio adds there in advance of a March release.

"Jamiroquai was the classic case where there was some confusion about where he should fit," says Yates, "but with a great album and a great video, the formatting was not so important." Jamiroquai's "Travelling Without Moving" was Sony U.K.'s greatest international success of 1997, selling 6.2 million units worldwide. The current depth of the company's domestic roster has bolstered its prospects internationally, stresses Sony communication VP Garry Farrow. Sony U.K. artists who have been setting it up priority releases in the U.S. this year included the aforementioned Jimmy Ray, Finley Quaye, Headswim, Leftfield, The The and DeVee, whose album "Supernatural" is due in April.

Perceptions of British music are constantly changing, says Arista U.K.'s international marketing manager Heloise Williams, whose key priority last year was the re-emergence of singer Lisa Stansfield. "Even compared to a year ago, people are more receptive to British music," says Williams. "Before, people used to say, 'It sounds too English.'" This year, Arista is working with a roster of development acts including bluesy singer/songwriter Christine Levine, R&B project Devex, featuring former D'Angelo vocalist Ange Stone, and male pop duo Alibi.

HARDCORE AND HARVEY TOO

Though the notion of "Britpop" has passed into history, acts such as Pulp, which survived the unfortunate name tag, are gearing up their international work. "When you've sold 1/2..."
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If your flight is not displayed, the other departures inform...
BRITISH music publishers enjoyed a challenging but largely successful 12 months in the wake of the worldwide resurgence of British pop and rock music. However, while the Spice Girls, Prodigy and Oasis may have dominated the charts and the headlines, a number of U.K. publishing houses have been reaping the rewards of internationally flavoured covers, collaborations and chart entries.

The London office of Windswept Pacific Music, owned by Japan’s Ropi Corporacion, has been the envy of most U.K. publishers in the wake of the Spice Girls’ phenomenal success. With around 30 million combined sales of the group’s first two albums and 15 million singles sold to date, the deal that Windswept Pacific managing director Bob Grace made just two years ago for the Spice Girls’ publishing has proved to be the music industry’s equivalent of finding the Holy Grail. Grace’s early faith in the band was rewarded last year at both the U.K.’s Four Novello Awards and the MTV Awards when the group paid special thanks to their publisher. However, unlike from sitting on their laurels, Windswept Pacific’s London staff has been achieving impressive results with various other globally oriented projects. Catalog exploitation head Nick Battle was particularly delighted that the company received a special BMI award in 1997 to mark the U.S. success of “My Angel Is Here,” recorded by Nashville star Wynonna and co-written by Windswept writer Mark Cawley (with Billy Lawrie & Lulu).

It’s a rare example of a Nashville writer signed directly to a U.K.-based publisher,” notes Battle. Other recent successes include five tracks on the top-five debut album by rising London-based Australian star Natalie Imbruglia, “Left Of The Middle” (RCA), including the title track co-written by Steve Booker; and Andy Wright wrote two tracks and produced the recent album by French artist Eternal for Virgin France. The Scottish band 911 (Ginga/ Virgin) has also been selling well abroad, particularly in Southeast Asia, with hits like “Don’t Make Me Wait” and “Body Shaking” written by Windswept writer John McLoughlin.

EMI Music Publishing inked some mega-deals during 1997 with some major artists/writer signings. A sub-publishing deal with Sting for his entire back catalog and future works coincided neatly with the worldwide success of the revival of the Police classic “Every Breath You Take,” re-titled as “I’ll Be Missing You” by Puff Daddy & Faith Evans. Other signings included British R&B artist Finley Quaye, hotly tipped U.K. indie band Idlewild and individual deals with ex-Take That members Gary Barlow, Robbie Williams and Mark Owen—who all successfully launched solo careers with strong albums and hit singles. A development deal with British singer/songwriter Billie Myers also realized its potential as her debut single “Kiss The Rain” (Universal Records), hit the No. 1 most-added spot on U.S. radio during December and climbed up the Hot 100 singles chart. Meanwhile, EMI Music’s major corporate deals of the year were its purchase of 39% of the legendary Bobbie Music catalog of classic Motown hits, and a sub-publishing deal with Rufus & Music Publishing, publishing wing of Chris Schwartz’s RuffHouse Records, that launched Cypress Hill and the Fugees, among others.

Peter Reechard, EMI Music’s London-based MD and senior VP of international acquisitions, notes that “1997 was a challenging year, but not without reward or excitement, with Texas, The Verve, Jamiroquai, Finley Quaye and the Prodigy giving EMI Music Publishing Worldwide the edge by introducing the albums that will define the year in the eyes of the critics and the music buyer.”

U.K. independent Hit & Run Music, owned by Phil Collins and Genesis manager Tony Smith, has also scored significantly in overseas markets in the past year. Apart from its superstar clients, the company’s writer roster includes Argentinean singer/songwriter Marie Claire D’Uldalbo, who co-wrote Celine Dion’s “Fallin’ Into You,” the title track and single from 1997’s top-selling album, with worldwide sales of over 25 million units, D’Uldalbo also co-wrote Robert Miles’ international smash “One And Only,” which has recently been covered by top Polish star Elyta for release in Japan under her new worldwide deal with Universal. She also has upcoming songs with Frenchs Valentia Gauthier (Warner Italia) and Philippe Bergman (PolyGram Belgium & France).

Hit & Run also publishes Los Angeles–based writer Slimmizette, who co-owns ‘Little’ Meredith Brooks’ smash “Bitch” along with five numbers on Brooks’ debut Capitol album, “Blurring The Edges.” Peiken has been enjoying an impressive number of overseas covers, with Frenchs A&R departments and artists responding to song pitches made by London-based creative & international director Dave Massey. These include the title track from Patricia Kaas’ latest album, “Dans Ma Chair” (Sony France), plus cuts by Pearl (Byte, Belgium), Ophelie Winter (EastWest France), Trine Reine (EMI Medley Denmark), Chrissie Hynde (WEA U.K.) and Clif Richard (EMI U.K.). “Our roster also includes some other great writers who are providing us with important international covers,” comments Massey. These include producers Neil (Parlophone) & Simon Stirling; Jo Cang, Geoffrey Williams and Noel McKoy, who between them have secured covers by such names as Daryl Hall & John Oates (Push), 6 Pac (Virgin), the O.C. (EMI/BMG), Hannah Jones (BMG Miami) and Paula Abdul (Mercury).

Northern Ireland–born songwriter John Peppard lives in the leafy suburbs of Sussex, England, but has been making regular writing trips to Nashville for the last few years. The energetic but soft-spoken writer received the ultimate compliment when he was invited to submit a song to a U.S. country artist at the annual BMI and CMA event, when he guested at a No. 1 party to celebrate the success of “In Another’s Eyes,” the Trisha Yearwood/Earl Brooks duet that he co-wrote with Brooks and Bobby Woods. The song appears on Brooks’ new album and is included on her Warner Bros.’ “Songbook” collection. Peppard attended the party with his U.K. publisher, Kevin White of Cat’s Eye Music, who was making his debut visit to Music City.

“It was fantastic to finally make it over there,” comments White, “but John deserves his success. All the flights he’s made over the last five years have finally paid off, and it’s great for any British writer to get some recognition in Nashville. Luckily, John loves networking and co-writing, so there will hopefully be a few more songs out by the end of the year.” In fact, Peppard recently achieved another personal landmark by writing two songs with Michael McDonald, for possible inclusion on McDonald’s new album due out in the spring. He has also written a song titled “In Heaven” with Gordon Kennedy, co-writer of “Change The World.”

Former Hit & Run writer Pam Sheyne has formed her own publishing company, AppleCore Songs, with partner and manager Nigel Rush and recently inked a deal with Frankfurt-based MSM Music, the BMI-affiliated company headed by Michael Stark and Bernd Hoffman. Sheyne has been writing for their female artist Emel and has also enjoyed recent covers by Louise (EMI, “911” (Ginga/ Virgin), Reba Jackson (MCI), the recently reunited duo Mary+Janet with Shania Twain (EMI), Celine Dion (EMI/Virgin), with some tracks still controlled by Hit & Run. Sheyne also makes regular writing trips to New York, Los Angeles and Nashville, where, like John Peppard, she has recently co-wrote a song with Michael McDonald.

Indie publisher Notting Hill Music enjoyed success with singer Angela Hartnett, Applecore Songs, with partner and manager Allen McGrider scored with the multimillion-selling Fugees album “The Score,” for which he wrote “Oh La La” with Teena Marie, which the Fugees incorporated into “Kiss That Girl.” Hartnett’s song has been covered by Chris Brown & K-Lee and was also a dance hit for Jusitne Earp. Also signed to Notting Hill is San Francisco’s Taura Simson, writer of “Everything” with Monica’s Child (Columbia) appeared on the “Men In Black” soundtrack track album. Simson also has been working on tracks for Damage with LaFare act Choice. Veteran writer/performer Brenda Lee Evans wrote “I Don’t Think He Knows” for the film “The 6th Day” and “Girlfriend’s Boyfriend” for Gwen McRae, “Somebody’s Somebody” with Prince and the soon-to-be-released “Strong Everlasting” duet with Kay Charles. Other writers in the Notting Hill family include David Grant (ex-Links).

Continued on page 53
Britannia, Europe's largest Music Club celebrates 10 great years at the BRITs

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TALENT TO BURN
Continued from page 45

million albums at home,” says Island U.K.’s head of international, Steve Matthews, “it’s difficult to be seen as a development act. But with a lot of artists now, we can get away from looking at what’s happening in the U.K.” Pulp will tour America this year, and when its new album, “This Is Hardcore,” appears at the end of March, Matthews expects a renewed reaction to the band. “Pulp’s no longer seen as an alternative act or as difficult to understand,” he says. For the same reason, the label will be concentrating on P.J. Harvey in America too.

Parlophone has built its reputation in the ‘90s on being a “bands” label, and with Radiohead’s “OK Computer” winning plaudits at home such as Q Magazine’s accolade as the “greatest album in the world,” the band will continue to be marketed intensively, as will Food Records act Blur, which is marketed domestically through Parlophone.

Another big name to emerge from the guitar-pop boom of the mid-’80s, Oasis, proved to be one of the biggest sellers last year, as “Be Here Now” moved more than 6 million units worldwide, according to Sony Independent Network Europe, which licenses the Creation band outside the U.K. SINE is working mainly in the U.K. alternative-pop scene and looking forward to a Creation album from ex-Suede guitarist Bernard Butler, titled “People Move On,” in April, while Suede itself is expected to deliver another album at the end of 1998. Ultrasound, on the same label, Nude, will also get an international push, as will Travis on the Independiente label.

CLEAN-UP CLEAN SWEET
Europe is proving to be fertile territory for the alternative-rock acts handled by the One Little Indian Group, best-known as pressing label. After seeing a U.S. breakthrough for Sneaker Pimps on the Clean Up! label, with more than 300,000 copies sold there, they and developing acts such as Marbain and technocountry fusionists Alabama 3 (Elemental) are looking to Europe for sales in 1998. Live tours and extensive press will be the key to gaining a stronger foothold in these markets, explains Sue Johnstone, head of international for the OLI Group, which licenses most of its acts to Virgin Germany for Europe. “European radio—especially in Europe—doesn’t always respond well to the kind of alternative acts we have, but once the audiences see them live, they ‘get it’,” says Johnstone.

Another key U.K. indie, Mute, has seen veteran electronic stalwart Depeche Mode connect with audiences worldwide, with Europe still its strongest territory: seven European countries and the U.K. scored gold with “Ultra,” while Italy reached platinum status. The album also went gold in the U.S. and Hong Kong. Depeche Mode has a best-of album due in 1998, as does Australian-born crooner Nick Cave, with whom Mute has scored a gold disc in his homeland via Mushroom Records.

STRONG HOPES FOR BRIT SOUL
One of the more exciting developments in the U.K. in 1997 was the unstoppable rise of British R&B. WEA U.K. was among the more prolific majors in the genre, scoring domestic and European success with Mark Morrison. For 1998, U.K. breakthrough singer Shola Ama and the three-girl teen group Cleopatra are the label’s strongest hopes.

“The Cleopatra record’s not even out yet, and other territories are waiting the act in,” says Phil Straight, director of artist development at WEA U.K., who is noting strong take-up for British R&B acts in Europe, including previously difficult territories for black music, such as Italy. “It could be that British R&B is giving the spin to the R&B from America, which is moving off on its own direction.” EMI U.K. is looking to build an international profile for its soul star Lynden David Hall.

Observers have long expected drum ‘n’ bass to metamorphose into a form accessible to international audiences: the artists and labels gave it their best shot in 1997, as Roni Size & Reprazent garnered interest and sales from the U.S. and Europe for their soulful album “New Forms.” EMI Dance imprint Positiva is also gearing up to present Adam F’s live show and album “Colours” to international audiences, with Germany, the Netherlands and Japan being on the hit list before an American tour.

SAINTS AND SPICE
Yet, if execs were hard-pressed to choose one development with international repercussions, it would be the return of pure pop. The Spice Girls’ undeniable worldwide success was matched at home by the breakthrough of All Saints, while 1st Avenue/EMI U.K.’s acts Louise and Eternal moved into the superstar league with multiplatinum domestic success. A Grammy nomination for WEAs Gina G gave recognition to the fact that U.K. pop is firmly placed in the world’s largest market; in the second largest, Eternal went double-platinum.

There can be little doubt that the encouragement given to acts and labels alike by the pop boom will continue to have an impact on signings and international marketing.

However, the unexpected is rapidly becoming the norm in this market, and in 1998 more than ever, the list of overseas successes by U.K. labels could look very different from this year’s.

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Hit Brits

ChartBeat columnist Fred Bronson offers his analysis of the top-ranking British acts on key Billboard charts for the chart year which ran from Dec. 7, 1996, through the issue of Nov. 29, 1997.

TOP 10 U.K. ALBUMS IN THE U.S.
2. "Razorblade Suitcase," Bush (Trauma)
3. "The Dance," Fleetwood Mac (Reprise)
4. "The Fat Of The Land," Prodigy (XL Mute)
5. "If We Fall In Love Tonight," Rod Stewart (Warners Bros.)
6. "Love Songs," Elton John (MCA)
8. "Anthology 3," The Beatles (Apple)
9. "Be Here Now," Oasis (Epic)
10. "Bridges To Babylon," The Rolling Stones (Virgin)

TOP 10 U.K. ALBUM ACTS IN THE U.S.
1. Spice Girls
2. Bush
3. Prodigy (XL Mute)
4. Fleetwood Mac (Reprise)
5. Elton John (Rocket, MCA)
6. Rod Stewart (Warners Bros.)
7. The Beatles (Apple)
8. Oasis (Epic)
9. Jamiroquai (Work)
10. The Rolling Stones (Virgin)

TOP 10 SINGLES BY U.K. ACTS IN THE U.S.
2. "Return Of The Mack," Mark Morrison (Atlantic)
5. "2 Become 1," Spice Girls (Virgin)
6. "Ooh Aah...Just A Little Bit," Gina G ( Eternal)
7. "I Love You Always Forever," Donna Lewis (Atlantic)
8. "Your Woman," White Town (Brilliant!/Chrysalis)
10. "Tubthumping," Chumbawamba (Reprise)

TOP 10 U.K. SINGLES ACTS IN THE U.S.
1. Elton John (Rocket, MCA)
2. Spice Girls (Virgin)
3. Mark Morrison (Atlantic)
4. Gina G (Eternal)
5. Donna Lewis (Atlantic)
6. White Town (Brilliant!/Chrysalis)
7. Eric Clapton (Reprise)
8. Chumbawamba (Reprise)
9. Seal (ZTT/Warner Sunset)
10. Bee Gees (Polydor)

TOP U.K. POP CATALOG ALBUMS
1. "Dark Side Of The Moon," Pink Floyd (Capitol)
2. "The Wall," Pink Floyd (Columbia)
5. "Greatest Hits," Elton John (Rocket)
6. "Greatest Hits," Queen (Hollywood)
7. "Best Of Sadie," Sadie (Epic)
8. "Greatest Hits," Fleetwood Mac ( Warner Bros.)
10. "Bee Gees Greatest," Bee Gees (Polydor)

(David Skirk is editor and publisher of SongLink International.)

blur - blur
all saints - never ever
bon jovi - live mtv
radiohead - ok computer
sneaker pimps - becoming x
roméo & juliet - film soundtrack
hanson - middle of nowhere
suede - anarchic superheroes
simply red/sly & Robbie - night nurse
elvis castillo - all this useless beauty
mansion - attack of the grey lama
jessica - white on blonde
suede - coming up
suede - scientifical
pulp - disco 2000
manic street preachers - everything must go
spiders - spiders
tricky - maxinquaye
galliano - the plot thickens
the interpreters - back in the niss
elastica - elastica
gene - olympian
bryan adams - waking up the neighbours
natalie imbruglia - left of the middle

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Court Orders TV Royalty Payback
French Labels Face 400 Mil. Franc Bill

PARIS—French record labels' collection societies, SCPP and SPPF have been ordered to return 400 million francs ($70.1 million) in broadcast royalties to two French TV stations. The ruling is said to be capable of bankrupting the two bodies.

In what is seen as a landmark decision, a Paris civil court has ruled that an agreement signed by SCPP and SPPF and with commercial TV channel M6 and another agreement between SCPP with pay channel Canal+ were void. The decision, in a case brought by artists' collection society, Spedilium, means that SCPP and SPPF have to pay back all royalties collected so far under the deals.

Major local body SCPP and its indie-sector equivalent, SPPF, have appealed the judgment. "If that decision is to be confirmed in appeal," comments SPPF GM Jérôme Roger, "it makes no doubt that our societies would face bankruptcy."

The Ministry of Culture should be aware of the stakes.

Marc Guez, GM of SCPP however, remains optimistic. "Each time labels lost the first legal round [in similar cases], they eventually won the appeal," he says. "If it wasn't the case, then it would be a major commotion for us. It will affect not only the production companies, especially the smallest labels, but the whole music community."

Xavier Blanc, head of legal affairs at Spedilium, says, "We have a different approach to the law, and that's why we asked the court to rule on that question."

The dispute is rooted in the early '90s, when artists' representatives, through Spedilium, complained that deals made by SCPP and SPPF with the TV channels were for the sole benefit of labels and excluded musicians. Spedilium was unhappy that all monies paid by the stations under the agreements went directly to record companies rather than to artists. The representatives have a right to royalties from both broadcast use of music here, to date income from video play has been exclusive preserve of labels.

As a result, Spedilium asked the Paris civil court to declare the deals between the channels and SCPP and SPPF void and rule that a new contract including all rights owners must be negotiated. The court has now supported that call.

The court decision undermines record company arguments that income from M6 and Canal+ was necessary to finance the production of videos.

Spedilium, which has been engaged in a long-term fight with the other collection societies, has consistently argued the need for a new contract.

(Continued on next page)

EMI Faces Red Tape In Inking India Deal
Local Label Opposes Expansion; New Regulations Uncertain

NEW DELHI—The nature of EMI Music's presence in India is in doubt after a protest about the major's plans to open an affiliate in the country. To date, only Sony Music Entertainment has been granted the privilege of having a wholly owned Indian subsidiary. Seeking to follow Sony's lead, last year EMI filed an application with the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) to set up its own subsidiary. However, the FIPB has now announced that it's deferring its decision on EMI's application in light of an objection raised by Master Records, an independent label based in the south Indian city of Chennai.

Master executives wrote to the FIPB that approval of EMI's plans would "demoralize" the Indian industry. EMI currently has a 10% stake in India's oldest music company, the Gramophone Company of India, also known as HMV or Gramco. The company had an exclusive licensing agreement with EMI that expired in December. Gramco is owned by one of India's leading business families, the Goenkas; in the early 1960s the family rescued the company with a fresh cash infusion after piracy had almost brought it to its knees. Before the Goenkas' involvement, EMI had a majority stake in the company.

However, industry sources say they consider the FIPB decision a temporary hiccup for EMI, as all foreign investment proposals pertaining to media—from music to television to movies—are now on hold until the much-delayed Broadcast Bill is finalized. When passed, the bill should result in much-needed regulation, especially in television. India's television industry has lately mushroomed via satellite technology and independent cable operators. Most foreign broadcasting conglomerates (including Sony and News Corp.) have applied to the FIPB to set up Indian subsidiaries.

At the moment, however—as India prepares for elections in mid-February—the country's political uncertainty hardly offers a conducive environment for the Broadcast Bill or general investment.

EMI will also face an interesting situation in respect to the ownership of the coveted HMV brand and the Nipper dog logo, which are currently licensed to Gramco. Patent laws have been a touchy subject in India's intellectual property rights debate, and there's no question that a potential legal wrangle between EMI and Gramco for the HMV brand ownership would be followed with interest.

Until the Goenkas moved in, Gramco was considered a has-been. In its rejuvenated form, the company has fought piracy via some high-profile legal battles that have resulted in landmark judgments.

Gramco's turnaround came with the hit 1994 soundtrack album "Hum Aapke Hain Kaun" ("Who Am I To You"). According to the label, the album sold more than 10 million legitimate units, a figure possible because Gramco successfully sued the Delhi-based label T-Series to prevent it from exploiting a copyright loophole in the country's copyright act.

Besides rebounding in music sales, Gramco has also diversified into film production by launching Gramco Films. The division is about to release its first Hindi film, "Hada Din" ("Big Day").

With its historic grip on the film industry and the backing of the Goenka group, Gramco can be expected to retain its leading market position. Yet given the overall globalization of the Indian economy, foreign investment has raised the stakes to higher levels. In the entertainment industry, Sony's forays in television and music have stirred established players.

Assuming EMI eventually has its way in India—as the Indian Information & Broadcasting Ministry is believed to be favorably disposed to its proposal—the major can be expected to raise the stakes even further.

Channel V Awards Fete Chinese Acts

By Victor Wong

TAIPEI, Taiwan—Asia's cable music station Channel V underlined its interest in this market Jan. 21 when it staged its annual Chinese Top 20 Awards here.

Despite temporary problems that have affected its distribution in Taiwan, Channel V was able to draw a full house to the awards, which were held in the Taipei International Convention Center and featured performances by the Chinese music industry's most popular artists.

The show aired Jan. 22 on Channel V's Mandarin beam.

The large turnout demonstrated the growing influence of this awards ceremony. Channel V was worried that the audience would be smaller this year, due to a dispute between the station and the largest distribution company in Taiwan, Eastern Multimedia Co. For the last month in the Taipei area, some members of the Star TV group (which includes Channel V) have been "shar ing" channels with other stations; some have been aired for only 12 hours per day while others have been dropped.

"There haven't been any problems with getting sponsors for the event, but there was some concern about attracting the people to the event," says executive Christine Lin of Star TV's network consumer and marketing departments.

However, industry sources say they consider the FIPB decision a temporary hiccup for EMI, as all foreign investment proposals pertaining to media—from music to television to movies—are now on hold until the much-delayed Broadcast Bill is finalized. When passed, the bill should result in much-needed regulation, especially in television. India's television industry has lately mushroomed via satellite technology and independent cable operators. Most foreign broadcasting conglomerates (including Sony and News Corp.) have applied to the FIPB to set up Indian subsidiaries.

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Asian Exec's Job Change In Spotlight

**BY GEOFF BURPEE**

HONG KONG—In the U.S. and European music industries, it’s considered routine when senior executives move from one company to another. In the Asian music scene, however, the age of skilled managers means that such moves attract attention.

Thus, the imminent departure of Warner/Chappell Music’s regional VP for Asia, Harry Hui, for a post as senior VP/GM for MTV Asia’s Mandarin operations, has been a lively conversation topic throughout the region. Hui has been director of business development for computer supplies firm Avery Dennison.

On the record, Hui says that the exact departure date for Hui in “subject to negotiation” and that he hopes to effect a “smooth transition. We have some options to discuss [such as a replacement] from Hui himself, and we’re looking at individuals in and out of the organization.”

Hui says he plans to be in Hong Kong in the near future to interview candidates for Hui’s position. “We’re also keeping an open mind about the structure of the company in that region.”

Warner/Chappell under Hui expanded from a single Hong Kong office with three employees to a network of offices (with a regional office and a head count of 45). When Hui departed, however, in the first quarter of 1998 opening due to difficulties in recruiting a suitable GM. A measure of the firm’s advance in Asia came when it was named publisher of the year by members of Malaysia’s Music Authors’ Copyright Protection (MACP) group and the Composers and Authors Society of Singapore (COMPASS). That honor broke a six-year reign by EMI Music Publishing.

Moreover, Hui has been credited with bringing publishing innovations to Chinese pop by way of deals that took Warner/Chappell copyrights where they previously could not go. Michael Au, exclusive producer for PolyGram in Taiwan, reveals that when he met with Hui at the beginning of the year, Hui says that before Hui, “PolyGram never would have considered another company’s song” for the singer.

Au has worked with Hui for almost three years. “Before him,” he says, “there were certain restrictions between recording companies about using other people’s songs.” PolyGram&R Execs would encourage the use of PolyGram copyrights. At the time, we had a lot of discussion about this issue,” continues Au. “Now, the whole music industry has had to undergo certain changes. Harry was so aggressive in spending time dealing with [PolyGram Far East president] Norman [Cheng] that PolyGram’s production teams can now use much more material.”

In addition, Hui worked to secure Western pop songs at the demo stage for original recordings in Asia, rather than being content with local versions of Western hits.

For its part, MTV Asia (which is 50% owned by PolyGram) is obviously pleased to see Hui’s departure, but Hui’s credentials to oversee its pan-China operations. He will be based in Hong Kong for an unprecedented considerable time on the mainland.

MTV Asia president Frank Brown says, “Harry is a rare animal in terms of the bicultural balance that he has and in terms of his business creative talent.” The executive’s fluency in English as well as in Cantonese and Mandarin dialects is also cited as an asset.

The new post into which Hui steps on March 1 also represents MTV Asia’s rising profile with the recent addition of a seventh market slot in Hong Kong—which was where the channel was based before its move to Singapore. After an 18-month hiatus, it returned to Asia with headquarters in Singapore.

Late 1995, MTV moved most of its Mandarin-language programming and production operations to Taiwan. There, in what’s most developed cable market, MTV Mandarin has built a distribution base to reach—according to company estimates—85% of Taiwan’s 3.5 million cable homes 24 hours a day.

In Hong Kong, viewers see the service for only a couple of weekend morning blocks on local terrestrial station ATV. While Taiwan remains the core market, the network has loaned the channel to a number of different markets, including Hong Kong and Macau, China.

Last year, MTV Mandarin GM Ni Chung-hwa relinquished his post to a new GM for MTV Taiwan, Rose Tieu. While Ni still retains a position as VP/Creative at MTV Mandarin, the executive now divides his time between the channel and his own varied entertainment business interests throughout Greater China. In the future, Tieu and Ni will report directly to Hui.

MTV claims to reach 26 million homes in mainland China through deals with cable operators in 26 urban markets, providing one- to three-hour blocks to each. “We have already started developing our business in China in the past year,” says Brown. “Having brought the work we’ve started to a whole new level.”

While Hui declines extensive public comment about his new post while still employed at Warner/Chappell, he has privately told colleagues that his impetus for leaving lay in the fact that “MTV is there to make money, but I want to be able to pursue my career in all aspects of Asian entertainment.”

As for Sony Music’s Gruene, he could not be reached for comment at press time. Industry observers speculate that he will be working for the Asian division of the Harry Fox Agency, and they also contend that his dual label and publishing responsibilities at Sony ultimately prepared him for the role.

**SACKSON NAMED TO KEY POST AT EPIC IN AUSTRALIA**

SYDNEY—John Sackson has been named managing director of Epic Records in Australia, effective immediately. He replaces Matt Campbell, who moves to the newly created position of GM, new business development.

The appointments were announced Jan. 23 by Dennis Handlin, chairman/CEO of Sony Music Entertainment here, who called the management change “the first steps in creating a music company for the 21st century.”

Sackson previously worked in promotions and sales with Han- dlin at CBS in the 1970s, before stints as Poly- Gram’s GM of sales and the rugby Super League’s marketing manager.

Sackson says Handlin, “is one of the most dynamic leaders in the Australian music industry and will focus on breaking more Epic artists in Australia and developing the kind of mature organization that will drive music sales through retail.”

Campbell was longtime GM of the Brashs chain and shifted to Sony when the company last year decided to Epic and Columbia.

**CHRISTIE ELIEZER**

**COURT ORDERS TV Royalty PAYBACK**

(Continued from preceding page)

It is argued that the 1985 Copyright Law on royalty payment to television performers and performers to 50% of the royalty income from all music broadcast by TV is still in force.

Conversely, SCPP and SPPP argue that a video is an audiovisual product, and therefore the broadcast royalties are also applicable to traditional sound recordings, which paid for the production of the videos.

The court ruled that SCPP and SPPP have to pay W6 to M6 and Canal+ a total of 400 million francs. In addition, SCPP and SPPP must pay artists/musicians’ union SNAV 600,000 francs ($105,000 in compensation and a sum of 4.5 million francs in damages).

In the wake of the court’s decision, several market players and the companies are starting to call for more dialogue within the collection societies. PolyGram Disques president Pascal Golan has termed the situation a “violation of the agreement” and has said that “record labels have more to do than waste time in those sterile bat- tles.”

He adds, “We wish to find an agree- ment with musicians, and, to be hon- est, the conflict is more on questions of rights rather than financial issues.”

**POLYGRAM FAR EAST**

has increased its stake in Taiwanese record company What’s Music from 25% to approximately 70%, according to sources. The What’s Music Family includes companies in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia. The new deal gives What’s Music rights to distribute PolyGram’s A&M label product in the Asian region. The agreement states that the company will also create and mar- ket compilations of international dance repertoire. In Taiwan, What’s Music has a half-dozen local artists on its roster, four of whom won Channel V Chinese Top 20 Awards at a ceremony Jan. 22. Panda Huang for “Love River Danube”; Power Station for “Not Wanting, Not Letting You Go”; and Xu Ru Yu for “Sunlight Airport.” The fourth, Chyi Chin (“Won’t Let My Tears Stay Overnight”), is affiliated via a production deal. Acknowledging the checkered history of acquisitions in independent regions, the PolyGram source says that the major has been prudent and low-profile in increasing its stake in What’s Music.

**THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS (ISM), the U.K. professional body, has criticized the recent decision by British Education and Employment Secretary David Blunkett to drop music from compulsory subjects in the country’s primary schools. “Music is likely to become an extraural extra in our less-educated schools,” says ISM chief executive Neil Hoyle. “The skills and qualities it embodies should lie at the heart of every child’s development.”

**CARLTON COMMUNICATIONS PLC, the U.K.-based TV, film, and video company, reports operating profits for 1997 up 9.2% to £17.9 million pounds ($25.25 million) on revenue of 1.749 billion pounds ($2.887 billion), 4.3% higher than in 1996. During the year, Carlton acquired Westcountry Television, which holds the independent TV license for southwest England, and production company Action Time. It also won three digital terrestrial TV licenses, half of the total available in the territory.

**DANISH LABEL EMI-MEDLEY is preparing a U.S. release for its flagship act, Michael Learns To Rock. “It will include some of the hits, some reworked versions, and new tracks, but we’ve decided on a title or a release date yet,” says Thomas Hohne, EMI-Medley’s director of international exploitation. Per Magnusson, who has worked with the Backstreet Boys and Robyn, has been experimenting with tracks from the group’s latest album, “Nothing To Lose,” including “I’m Gonna Be Around,” a radio single released in Denmark and Germany.

**GUY MARRIOTT, senior VP/general counsel at EMI Music, is leaving the company in March and returning to London. He has been based in New York for the last eight years, reporting to president/CEO Jim Fizel. Marriott has been a key part of the management team on EMI’s recent fuel go-ahead and will announce plans later this year. Meanwhile, Marriott, who is also a member of the International Federation of the Phonograph Industry’s main board, is working on the organization’s agenda for its May board meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

**EARL SPENCER, brother of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, is organizing a major outdoor concert to be held June 27 at the family home and Diana’s resting place, Althorp Park, in central England. No participants have been named, but stars from the pop and classical genres will headline the event. All proceeds will go to Diana’s memorial fund.

**ISRAEL’S BEST-SELLING ARTIST, Eyal Golan, and his manager, Yishai Ben Tsur, have been indicted on charges of evading taxes thought to run into millions of dollars. Shmel Gonen and Albert Azary, former art directors and performers for Golan, have been charged with evading taxes. Ben Tsur said that Ben Tsur would ask promoters to pay a minimum fee for Golan’s performances of less than $2,000, in return for returning 70%-75% of the gate “under the table.” Several club owners confirmed the allegation and implicated Ben Tsur. Golan’s last album, “Without You,” has sold some 300,000 copies, according to the Acre label, an unprecedented feat in Israel, which has a population of just 4 million. His style, suave, ranshe, and laid-back, has a Mediterranean and Arabic traditions; until his indisputable success, the mostly state-run TV and radio stations had done little to promote Golan’s music.

**BARRY CHAMISH**

**newsline...**

**PolyGram**
Boosted By Singles, French Music Market Has Turnaround In 1997

BY REMI BOUTON

CANNES—French record sales enjoyed an impressive turnaround in 1997, with a 7% increase in value at wholesale prices to 7.86 billion francs ($1.29 billion) and an 8.4% rise in units to 150 million, according to statistics compiled by label body SNEP. The results contrast with 1996's flat market (Billboard, Feb. 9, 1997).

Comments SNEP president Paul-Albert Alberti, “1997 has been a good vintage for record sales in France.” He adds that growth was fueled by the increase in the singles market, a development that, he argues, offers labels new opportunities to break acts by focusing on this format rather than albums.

Conversely, though, Alberti notes that “sales were eroded” during the year due to increasing marketing costs.

Singles shipments reached 42 million units in 1997, up from 38 million in 1996, for a value of 915 million francs ($160 million), a 52% increase over 1996. Currently, one sound carrier in four sold in France is a single, compared with one in 10 in 1994.

Alberti says the rise in singles sales is a positive development for the industry but has little effect on the overall profits of record companies: “We don’t have the same margins on singles we have on albums,” he says.

Another factor that is cause for concern, according to Alberti, is the concentration of sales on a limited number of titles. In 1997, the 40 top-selling singles represented 80% of overall singles sales, whereas albums, the top 100 best-selling titles accounted for 30% of total sales.

Elton John’s “Candle in the Wind 1997” (Rocket/Mercury) accounted for 5% of the total singles sales in 1997.

Albums—vinyl LPs, cassettes, and CDs—had a 1% increase in value in 1996 to 6.3 billion francs ($1.1 billion) and a 1% decline in units to 118 million (Continued on page 60).  

http://www.rfimusique.com

after “my way” and “la vie en rose”, all the classics and the latest hits of french music on the rfi musicue database
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**International**

**FRENCH MUSIC MARKET**

(Continued from page 52)

Andrea/You'll Hear Her Say. The domestic product represented 52.3% of total sales, down from 53.5% in 1996, while international product grabbed a 47.3% share. The success of Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli, 1997's top seller in France (Billboard, Jan. 24) with his album "Opus," was one of the largest factors in the increase of international repertoire's sales.

A SNEP statement says that the organization accounts for 87% of total marke

For the first time in the history of the organization, SNEP has published major companies' market shares, which includes sales by in-house labels as well as distributed products. Altogether, major companies represented 87% of total sales in France. The undisputed leader is PolyGram, with 35.5%, which, according to SNEP representatives, is probably a world high figure for a single company in a major market. "1997 will be tough to act follow," says PolyGram Disques president Pascal Négre, "but I'm confident that we'll have a good year in 1998."

PolyGram, which benefited from massive sales from Bocelli, Era, Florent Pagny, Mylène Farmer, MC Solar, and Lara Fabian, is followed by Sony Music (23.1%), EMI (11.5%), Virgin (10.5%), Warner/East West (7.8%), and Universal Music (1.9%—but covering only six months of the year).

Altogether, major companies grouped under the SNEP umbrella accounted for 96.64% of the total market (including distributed labels).

Yet the domination of the market by two main players—PolyGram and Sony Music, which together account for 60% of the market—is considered by most industry executives as an unhealthy trend. "It's probably good for them, but certainly not healthy for the industry as a whole," says Henri Belo, head of independent dance label Scorpio.

**TOP FIVE BEST-SELLING SINGLES IN 1997**

1. Elton John
   "Candle In The Wind 1997"
   Mercury/PolyGram
   2. Ricky Martin
   "(Liv, Dos, Tres) Maria"
   Tristar/Sony
   3. Wes
   "Aliane"
   Saint-George/Sony
   4. Andrea Bocelli
   "Con Te Partiro"
   Polyscope/PolyGram
   5. Aqua
   "Barbie Girl"
   MBA/Universal

**TOP FIVE BEST-SELLING ALBUMS IN 1997**

1. Andrea Bocelli
   "Romanza"
   PolyGram/PolyGram
   2. Jean-Jacques Goldman "En Passant"
   Columbia/Sony
   3. Era
   "Ameno"
   Mercury/PolyGram
   4. Pascal Obispo
   "Superflou"
   Epic/Sony
   5. Spice Girls
   "Spice"
   Virgin

(See source: SNEP/WP/Thi-Live)

**CHANNEL V AWARDS FETE CHINESE ACTS**

(Continued from page 55)

appear. While it may not help them sell any more albums, it gives them the chance to show how popular they are," says Yung Wu of Forward Music's A&R department. "It definitely getting more and more popular.

However, not all of the artists are happy with the show's format, which features the singers lip-syncing their songs alongside their videos. Taiwanese rockers Wu-Bai, who received the Asian Artistic Excellence Award (co-sponsored by Sony), refused to perform unless he could play live with his band, China Blue. He was refused; he politely accepted the award instead. "I think individually it is more like feeling touched, because it is not easy to win an award which says that people support my music and approve of it. But what this award means to me is different from [what it means] to the other singers here, because I'm different artist."

Other Taiwanese artists also captured a fair share of the prizes. Forward Music's aboriginal singer A-Mei led with two awards, one for her song "Bad Boy" and another for Best Newcomer. In one of her two performances, she sang "Hear You, Hear Me," a song dedicated to her late producer, Chiang Yuh-sheng, who died Dec. 11, 1997, after a car accident.

This was also the first year that viewers from the Chinese mainland voted for their favorite local artists. The Best Male Award went to Zheng Jun, while Best Female went to Chen Lin. Best Video went to Tong Bing for the insightful "Llama Melody," directed by He Xuntian.

The event was lighter than previous ones, despite the rain and wind that scattered dreams and cheers, the show was exactly what the audience wanted.

Nicholas Gould, GM of radio station CITC, says, "I was quite impressed. I thought they put on an excellent show, and it was definitely very well-received by the audience. They've given us their heart and soul [in promoting the album]."

Says Maida, "Our attitude (towards Columbia) was, "Put out the album, we're going to tour for the next year, and no matter what happens at radio or MTV, we'll make people our fans by putting on an intense, passionate show every night."

In Canada, the act is reaping the rewards of a maturing Canadian music industry and audiences that have recently acquired a taste for homegrown rock artists. Canadian sales of "Clazinga" since its Jan. 21, 1997, release have been spectacular. The album topped the SoundScan Canada chart the week of release and reached platinum (100,000 units) within three weeks. It has now sold 200,000 units, and says Brian Camilleri, president of Sony Music Entertainment (Canada). "Boosted by the singles "Superman's Dead," "Clazinga," "Automatic Flowers," and "Carnival," the album was the No. 4-selling album in Canada for 1997, according to SoundScan Canada.

"Given where they left off with 'Naveed,' which sold 717,000 units in Canada (and 65,000 in the U.S., according to SoundScan), and the touring band they had developed, we knew it was going to be a huge record," says Camilleri of "Clazinga." "When it debuted at No. 3, we thought, 'This is even bigger than what we thought.'"

"The response from (Canadian) rock radio was enormous from the beginning," adds Vel Omaha, director of national promotion and video at Sony Music Entertainment (Canada).

Camilleri says that the band was offered a 22-date Canadian tour that ends Feb. 11 in Montreal. The band will then embark on its first headlining tour of the U.S. Feb. 26, which runs to mid-May, supported by Headwind and Black Lab. In the U.S. the band is represented by Little Big Man Booking, S.L. Feldman & Associates handles Canadian bookings.

Maida is ecstatic about the band's newfound headlining status. "I'll be great to tour the U.S. and really do our full show. Opening for Everclear (in October and November 1997) was great, but this time people will see us in their own territory.

When the album came out in Canada, we did a college and club tour, and you could see the aura of the crowd change. When it happens again in the U.S., it shows that songs that weren't singles. That was a big turning point for us."

With the current Canadian tour, the label released "4 a.m.," a song about Maida's father, Jan. 5. Much Music and MusicPlus were serviced with a video Jan. 29.

"4 a.m. will be our last single and last video for Canada," says Lawrence. "We wanted to get the music (promoting this record in Canada)."

"Clazinga," like its predecessor, "Naveed," was produced by Arnold Lanni, Robert's brother. "Naveed," released in Canada on Columbia in March 1994 and on Relativity Records in the U.S. in March 1996, was boosted to Canada by three tours throughout Canada and by significant radio and video airplay of such tracks as "Superstar," "Birdman," and, particularly, the breakout "Starved."

Despite releases of "Clazinga" in Germany, France, and the U.K. last fall, followed by one tour of those territories, Our Lady Peace has yet to cement on breaking outside North America.

"The band couldn't be in two places at one time," says Richard Zuckerman, VP of international marketing for Sony who completed a 14-date Canadian tour in the fall. "We decided to keep the band in America and achieve what they could before moving farther afield."
SINGAPORE—Visitors to this fair city may well notice that music is everywhere in Singapore.

From Cantopop ditties and quiet techno airs in the slick boutiques lining Orchard Road, to the imported light jazz or R&B revues that entertain diners at the fashionable Boat Quay eateries, Singaporeans rarely go far without a tune to ease them on their way.

But for many reasons, the business of bringing music to market in this small but economically powerful city-state, and of developing local talent to create a distinct musical culture, has been deceptively difficult. As an international city with a cottage-industry-size market, Singapore does not fit the conventional mold for developing a commercial music industry.

Eleven local record companies, and the six major record companies active in Asia, are all here, competing for their share of a diminutive, $75 million local market.

While one or two companies have signed and even nurtured regional success for a handful of Singaporean acts, the majors say Singapore is simply too small and too culturally fragmented to sustain an indigenous pool of musical talent. Unlike Hong Kong or Taiwan, where a relatively large sales base for Cantopop and Mandopop albums can be found, and which can sustain A&R investment, Singapore lacks the critical mass to make it worthwhile.

WORTH THE EFFORT?

"It's always been a dilemma here," says Gary See, managing director of Universal Music Singapore, which has yet to sign a local artist. "There's a lot of artist potential, but because of the small-market situation, the exposure is not there. I think some record companies are sinking money into domestic acts. But your costs are $60,000 to $100,000 [in Singaporean dollars ($40,000 to $60,000 U.S. dollars)], then the media doesn't support it, and you end up getting burned."

Terence Phung, managing director of Sony Music Singapore, agrees that, despite some shining local talent, the economics of scale mean Singapore may never sustain its own local music culture in the manner of larger countries.

"None of the majors are even looking at signing local artists; we can't justify it," Phung says. Platinum sales are awarded for sales of 15,000 units, making Singapore what must be one of the few developed markets where "platinum" sales often don't hit the break-even point.

At the same time, the majors applaud the actions of leading independents such as Pony Canyon, whose former managing director Jimmy Wee is recognized as the greatest booster of local rock and pop.

"Jimmy Wee has been championing local acts for a long time," says Universal's See. "But it's always a struggle. The other majors are sitting on the fence, waiting to see what happens. If the scene is really viable, we'll be there, but we're pretty cautious."

Wee—who despite the recent closing of Pony Canyon in Singapore, also headed offshore Springroll Creative Limited—was the man who broke Singapore's single greatest indigenous repertoire resource: composer-pianist-singer Dick Lee. Singapore born and bred, Lee first gained success a thousand miles away, in Japan, a huge, homogeneous pop market that dwarfs the Asia-Pacific region in terms of total music sales.

Lee's album "The Marl Chinar" was a watershed of sorts for Singaporean music and set a career path that has been repeated by many Singaporean artists transplanting to a larger market. Lee's recording career was conducted mostly overseas, and the artist's songwriting was to the benefit of emerging Chinese artists in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

"There are a few Singapore singers who've made it big in Taiwan," notes Sony's Phung. "But they make it big when they are signed to Taiwan, not in Singapore."

Recently, Sony artist Jimmy Yeh was a case in point. Phung says, "Jimmy was quite successful; his album sold platinum status here, but we couldn't keep him here."

Once an artist evolves to a certain point, Phung says, Singapore has little to offer. "In Hong Kong, you can have a movie career, a TV career—here you can't do that. If you sing in Chinese, there is a scene developing in local music, but the public isn't spending a lot of time listening to local singers with all this polished, well-honed Hong Kong and Taiwan stuff. Without our own language, we cannot develop."

Singapore boasts a rich variety of dialects: English, Mandarin, Hokkien Chinese, Malay, Hindi and others. The largest majority of people are Hokkien, but few speak it in business or inject more than a pepper socially. Add to that the fact that no other country besides neighboring Malaysia is so accepting of international repertoire.

The Music-Loving City-State Leans Toward Chinese And International Repertoire, And There's Not Much Room For Local Talent

BY GEOFF BURPEE AND PHILIP CHEAH

Dick Lee

Continued on page 62
**Local Noise**

**Singapore Acts to Follow**

Singapore is a difficult market for local artists to make an impact, but Billboard correspondent Philip Cheah offers these examples of notable acts gaining attention on the domestic scene.

**HUMBACK OAK**

Singer-songwriter Leslie Low of the folk-pop band Humback Oak used to have to drink to just be able to let his demons lose their stage. Since the group's 1994 debut album, "Pain Stained Morning" (Pony Canyon), it's now considered one of the most promising talents on both the domestic and international pop scene. Its recent second album, "Ghostfather" (Pony Canyon), is another landmark recording of Low's relentless quest for personal truths. As he sings in "If I'm Weak," one track from the new album, "If I'm wrong/Whose truth should I fake?" Influenced by Red House Painters, American Music Club, Jeff Buckley, Bob Dylan and Neil Young, Low's lyrics for a long time were inestimable. Most reviewers suspected that they were written in a troubled past, but he refused to confirm it. As he said recently, "Sometimes I'm tempted to make it easier for listeners to dig into my songs, but then I think that they have to do their own interpretation and make their own discoveries by reading between the lines." Formed earlier this decade, Humback Oak released several demos before being signed to Pony Canyon. Low has now mastered his demons and even talks about his lyrics. He says of the new album, "I feel a lot (for the song) 'Ghostfather.' I don't know if my life is over or not, but I'm singing about my life right now." Song came out easily, and it's a pleasure to sing.

**LIVONIA**

When you start talking about Singapore's best unsigned bands, the name Livonia keeps cropping up. Livonia even had an unofficial hit when "Backseat Star" from the band's 1994 demo, "Self," went into heavy radio rotation. But no one knew where to get the release. Known for their melodic but energetic Britpop-influenced sound, Livonia's members fear the self-fulfilling prophecy that anything that can possibly go wrong for them will go wrong. Their concerts have been jinxed with snapped guitar strings, blown-out amplifiers and defective effects pedals. Hence their new song, "Vengeance Is Mine," on the "Big O Singles Club CD No. 4." Says songwriter and drummer Robin Chua, "It's a bit sweeter song that summarizes our entire life in music. The frustrations, the feelings of injustice, as well as our joy in playing music, are all condensed into these five minutes. It's an important song to us because we always wanted a pan-Asian sound with strings, and we've finally done it." The song is characteristically melodic with Joseph Tan's mellow vocals. But it's the irony in the song that makes it memorable. Formed in 1993, Livonia has also appeared on two compilations, "Left Of The Dial" and "The Mee Pok Man" soundtrack. The group's second demo, released early this year, is ironically titled "Three Years Late."

**PADRES**

The Padres' debut album, "Night," is a milestone in the career of a Singaporean band that has defined the country's independent music since the late '80s. On this well-crafted pop rock album, the band's leader, Joe Ng, symbolically demonstrates the maturity of Singapore rock. His first band, Corporate Toll, formed in 1980, was an electro-pop duo. Ng started the DIY tradition of homemade demo-tape releases in Singapore when he started hawking his limited editions of 50 taped copies. Many other bands followed suit, and a demo culture was born. Today, at least five new demos are released by bands here each month. In 1992, Ng abandoned electro-pop for rock. His ear for melody and flair for fashion lyrics led to the 1994 single "Radio Station" being played on the BBC World Service. The Padres were signed first to Odyssey Music, which produced the Padres' first EP "This Time." This Taylor Swift/Elvis Presley story's success led to his signing with legendary British DJ John Peel, who played it on his show on BBC Radio 1 FM. Rock Records strung a deal with the Padres for their first English-language signing. Rock's faith in Ng is apparent in the "Night" singer, described as Singapore's "home-grown" rock star. With a large audience, the Padres are living off the momentum of the Singaporean music scene. The Padres' acceptance of international repertoire is second to none, he says. "Jap is also very vibrant for the same reason. This group is coming to shine against these odds ingeniously."

**STONED REVIVALS**

Coming out of the Singapore punk and hardcore scene of the early '80s, Stoned Revivals rocketed against all that was considered "normal" by concocting music of gorgeous, confessional melodies, underpinned by fierce guitar playing. Lead singer Esam explains, "It's a progression. When you've listened to so much noise, it's time for melodies." Formed in 1989 as a punk/indie rock band, the group chose to refine its style at about the same time the members met the Padres' Joe Ng. He produced their 1990 debut demo, "Soul Detergent," which contains the lusty "Teenage Queen." When the song was picked up for the "Mee Pok Man" film soundtrack, the band was recognized and signed to Springroll, an offshoot label of Pony Canyon. Just to demonstrate how perversely good they are, the Stoned Revivals center many of their lyrics on favorite bands. "Eighties music and rock is the band's current focus on the compilation "Flush After Use" and on the "12 Storys" film soundtrack. Stoned Revivals are preparing to record a debut album early this year.

**A SONG OF SINGAPORE**

Continued from page 61

Fully 60% of music sold in Singapore is international repertoire, and the remaining 40% is Chinese. The market for locally produced pop sags into oblivion.

**IT'S THE LAW**

Singaporean law has long leaned on pop-culture expression. Government initiatives against obvious social ills of the global counter-culture, such as drug use, racism or gang violence, and less obvious ones like long hair, dancing the frang in public places and smoking gum, can often appear to be pursued with equal zeal.

But while Singapore cannot claim to have banned rock and roll, its music center, the island nation retains its status as a prolific songwriting and recording region, and has even gotten in on the act of promoting Singaporean pop. Rock Revival, the Singapore music center, has taken the step to promote Singapore pop to the Chinese pop listeners. It's the Law.

Aerosmith's assistant general manager Ngiam Kwang Hua says the Padres were especially favored because of the musical and cultural bonds. "Stoned Revivals" and "Potato" are all using Mandarin-language covers of "Lemon Tree" by German group Fool's Garden was a major hit regionally for Rock. The Padres song, "Fool," has since entered the Chinese charts.

The Padres have also had a couple of songs on regional Rock Records compilations, such as China's "Rock Fest," released especially for the release of their album. "Rock Rock Rock."

**GETTING HEARD**

At the grassroots A&R level, however, a litany of obstacles stand in the way of young musicians trying to emerge on an increasingly crowded scene. The story is the same the world over, but in Singapore it seems more bittersweet.

Firstly, there is nothing like Singapore that can be termed a pub circuit where bands touring original material can get their music to the general public. Singapore clubs are for bands to play covers, which means original talents are not encouraged. Secondly, radio don't even consider promoting local single-airplay. This has been a crucial reason why the Singapore pop that does exist to find an audience.

Still, there is a multitude of young bands that will play across varied genres, from hardcore, dance and alternative rock to indie pop, jazz and folk (see related artist profiles), and home-studio do-it-yourself demos are a vital outlet.

However, "with the home-deco DIU situation, the route is very difficult," says Universal's Lee. "The overall success is if they do their own thing and sell it themselves. It's all about what's the practice that is winning." Says Lee, as retailers are not keen to support local bands, Singapore's music industry is almost exclusively CD driven.

Springroll's Ray Aziz, an A&R man at the only homegrown label signing local bands, claims to know of more than 60 bands in the city and receives demos regularly. "I feel the Singaporean audience is here, but they are not really used to listening to local bands," he says.

While Springroll promotes Singaporean music to Singaporeans, only a few regional companies, independent ones like Rock Records, has taken the step to promoting Singapore music. Rock has opened its Singapore office in late 1995, signed local act the Padres in 1996. We are promoting the Padres regionally," says Rock international promotions manager Zulkifli Othman. Rock Records is using its distribution clout to push Singapore music to the Chinese market to launch the band.

Rock's assistant general manager Ngiam Kwang Hua says the Padres were especially favored because of the musical and cultural bonds. "Stoned Revivals" and "Potato" are all using Mandarin-language covers of "Lemon Tree" by German group Fool's Garden was a major hit regionally for Rock. The Padres song, "Fool," has since entered the Chinese charts.

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**BILLBOARD SPOTLIGHT**

**BILLY JOE LEE**

20 years ago, the success of Singapore's music scene relies on its export. Unlike Lee's Chinese boosterism, the outstanding marketable characteristic of Singapore pop in the next millennium may be its status as Asia's most sophisticated purveyor of that great indie standby: a certain kind of cozy irony.

Beneath Singapore's fresh and upbeat veneer lies a dry, sardonic view of a place in the Asian cultural mix and the world at large. Some say Singapore's unique pop sensibility may make it the best bet to succeed to the CD era, a market with English-language pop.

"If a repertoire is going to travel in Asia, it's going to be English," says Sunshine Chua, and local radio DJ Kathleen Tan. "And maybe the Singaporean band scene will be a source of that. It's a pretty sophisticated, cut-throat affair."

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vital statistics

A Selective Listing Of Music-Industry Resources

BMG Singapore PTE LTD, 59 Jalan Penampang, #01-11 L & Y Building, Singapore 577216. Phone: (65) 641 5755; Fax: (65) 631 9177

EMI Music (Singapore) PTE LTD, A Division of Thorn EMI Pte Ltd, 213 Henderson Road, #04-05 Henderson Industrial Park, Singapore 239026. Phone: (65) 270 8266; Fax: (65) 270 3936

Form PTE LTD, Form Industrial Building, 39 Tampines Street 92, Singapore 528883. Phone: (65) 788 7888; Fax: (65) 787 1288

Life Record Industries PTE LTD, 226 Serangoon Road, Singapore 219622. Phone: (65) 258 3404; Fax: (65) 258 0159

PolyGram Records PTE LTD, 23 Genting Road, #04-01 Chevalier House, Singapore 349481. Phone: (65) 741 2229; Fax: (65) 741 6500; 741 1296

Rock Records (S) PTE LTD, 8 New Industrial Road, #05-01/02 LHKB Building, Singapore 538200. Phone: (65) 286 5066; Fax: (65) 287 7373

Sony Music Entertainment (S) PTE LTD, 10 Upper Aljunied Link #01-08, Singapore 367904. Phone: (65) 282 1296; Fax: (65) 286 1246

Swat Marketing (APRO) PTE LTD, 10A Lorong Tegal, Singapore 049023. Phone: (65) 536 4111; Fax: (65) 536 4222

Swizette Holdings (S) PTE LTD, Blk 37 #03-45, Defu Lane 10, Singapore 509214. Phone: (65) 280 9069; Fax: (65) 280 1792; 281 5664

Universal Music PTE LTD, 17A Boon Tat Street, Singapore 069118. Phone: (65) 221 4056; Fax: (65) 221 4396

Valentine Music Productions PTE LTD (VMP), 196B/182 Rangoon Road, VMP House, Singapore 218445. Phone: (65) 258 5991; Fax: (65) 254 9893

Warner Music Singapore PTE LTD, 10 Anson Road, International Plaza #12-00/17/18, Singapore 079903. Phone: (65) 223 1888; Fax: (65) 225 7530

Billboard SpotLight

Music Valley, Shop 1, 230 Victoria Street, #04-04 Parco Bugis Junction, Singapore 188021. Phone: (65) 339 0228; Fax: (65) 339 0206. Shop 2: 61 Ang Mo Kio Ave 8 #02-21, Jubilee Entertainment Complex, Ang Mo Kio Central, Singapore 568814. Phone: (65) 433 6558

Popular Book Company (PTE) LTD/CDA RAMA, Blk 190 Toa Payoh, Central Lorong 6 #03-12, Singapore 319293. Phone: (65) 354 1094; Fax: (65) 333 5776

Sembawang Music Centre PTE LTD, Head Office: 5 Sembawang Road, #01-03 Hong Hong Mansions, Singapore 799064. Phone: (65) 454 3598; Fax: (65) 522 9717

Supreme Music Megastore, 391 Orchard Road, #02-22, Takashimaya S.C. Tower B, Singapore 238872. Phone: (65) 753 6789; Fax: (65) 753 6699

Top2 Music Centre, 604 Sembawang Shopping Centre, #03-34/55, Sembawang Road, Singapore 758409. Phone: (65) 257 9776; 257 9063; Fax: (65) 257 5962

Tower Records (S) PTE LTD, 9 Scotts Road #04-05/06, Pacific Plaza, Singapore 238513. Phone: (65) 736 2559; Fax: (65) 784 8762

Singapore Indoor Stadium, 2 Stadium Walk, Singapore 397981. Phone: (65) 344 5905; Fax: (65) 344 5903. Cap: 10,742 (1,000 portable seats)

Singapore International Convention & Exhibition Centre, 1 Raffles Boulevard, Singapore 059993. Phone: (65) 337 2998; Fax: (65) 431 2222. Cap: 18,000

World Trade Centre, 1 Maritime Square, #08-72 World Trade Centre, Singapore 098533. Phone: (65) 274 7111; Fax: (65) 274 0721. Cap: 5,000

Buzz Entertainment Bar, 88 Circular Road, Singapore 049439. Phone: (65) 536 9557; Fax: (65) 536 9560

The Gate, 442 Orchard Road, Orchard Hotel, Singapore 288779. Phone: (65) 729 6519; Fax: (65) 728 3102

Hard Rock Cafe. #04-01 HPL House, 50 Casuarina Road, Singapore 249724. Phone: (65) 335 5226; Fax: (65) 235 7393

Zouk Club/Velvet Underground, 17 Jiak Kim Street, Singapore 069420. Phone: (65) 738 2298; Fax: (65) 738 3998

The Radio Corporation of Singapore dominates the country’s English pop airwaves with three stations—the Perfect 10 (98.7 FM), which highlights “the hits of the ‘90s and beyond”; Classic FM (95.5), a contemporary easy-listening channel; and FM 90.5, a classic-pop station.

Its main challengers are Power 98 and Radio Heart (91.3 FM). The former station battles the Perfect 10 for the 15-29-year-old listener with its emphasis on ’80s rock and pop. The fact that Class 95 FM is the country’s top station confirms that new music isn’t actively sought by most listeners.

Ironically, Radio Heart, run by the National Trade Union Congress (NUTC), is the most experimental station. It was the first to champion the emerging dance-music trend by dedicating weekend airtime, after midnight, to amateur DJs and new dance genres. In a country that seldom plays its own local pop music, the station last year introduced a format where at least one local pop song was played every hour.

World music got a boost a year ago, when the National Arts Council launched FM 99.5, a station dedicated to the arts. Music programming accounts for 70% of the station’s airtime, and world music dominates those music hours on FM 99.5.

Philip Cheah contributed the radio listings. Other Singapore Vital Statistics were provided by the AustralAsian Music Directory. The newly published 20th edition of the directory contains more than 8,000 listings throughout Australia and 80 major music markets in Asia, including agents, agents, associations, managers, media, publishers, record labels, studios and venues. The directory is distributed free at MIDEM and MIDEM Asia and also available via mail order. For further information, fax IMMEDIATE at 61-3-3527-7788, e-mail the publisher via direct email@immedia.co.com.au, or order via the internet at www.immedia.com.au/order.html.
Coalition Helps Slow Drop In Tape Sales

BY STEVE TRAUMAN

NEW YORK—Year-end figures on cassette album sales from SoundScan bear out the positive effects of the International Recording Media Assn.’s (ITMA) Audio Cassette Coalition on stemming the format’s steep decline in the last few years.

Although Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) midyear figures for 1997 indicated a 36.5% drop in domestic tape album unit shipments from the same period the year before, SoundScan COO Mike Shalett reports total 1997 cassette unit sales fell only 12.5%, to 146 mil.

The RIAA reported unit shipment drops of 17.4% in 1996 from 1995, and a 21.1% drop in 1996 from the previous year. The 1997 RIAA figures won’t be available for about another month.

According to SoundScan, 1997’s CD to cassette sales ratio of CD to cassette sales for album units was 77% to 23%, compared with 73% to 27% in 1996. Using RIAA figures for net album unit shipments (minus returns), CDs first surpassed tapes in 1995 with a ratio of 53% to 47%. The gap has widened ever since, accelerating in recent years.

However, another positive indication for cassette album sales comes from the National Assn. of Recording Merchanters (NARM). “Our orders for cassette album shelf talkers [displays] for our last three awards campaigns in recent months were up significantly,” says communications VP Jim Donio. “Orders decreased quite a bit the last few years, but for the recent American Music Awards, Grammy Awards, and Soul Train Awards, orders were up from retailers across the board.”

This doesn’t mean the “Where’d Ya Hide The Cassettes?” campaign to save the cassette format is won, emphasizes Lou Vacerelli, coalition chairman and VP of production, manufacturing, and merchandising at BMG Entertainment North America. “We must continue to motivate the retailers and distributors to get excited about the program and convince the manufacturers to take further positive steps,” he says.

On the retail side, Russ Solomon, (Continued on page 60)

Cinema Chain Sells Music In The Lobby

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—General Cinema Theatres is turning some of its lobbies into more than just places to buy popcorn and Junior Mints.

At three locations in Los Angeles and at one in Boston, General Cinema has installed listening stations and is selling CDs and cassettes.

“We first got active in the music area in 1995 when we started running music videos on screen while people were waiting for the movie to start,” says Global Cinema Network (GCN) VP Ellen Aub. “We tried selling music in connection with that and had great results.”

GCN is a subsidiary of General Cinema that develops marketing concepts for General Cinema as well as other theater chains.

Last May, Aub says, GCN expanded the music program by adding listening stations. Each location has four custom-made, six-title listening stations provided by High Level Marketing. One station has children’s titles, which were added during the holidays to appeal to family clientele.

“Initially we tried 72 titles, but now we’ve gone down to 24 because the market is so targeted,” says High Level president Ken Rubin.

Not surprisingly, the stations contain mainly soundtracks from current movies, but Rubin says TV soundtracks as well as front-line and catalog product are also part of the mix.

Prices are $13.99 for CDs and $9.99 for cassettes, which makes them competitive with traditional retail stores.

Rubin says both High Level and General Cinema work closely with music labels to develop the mix of product available.

The most appealing aspect to music labels is that consumers can immediately purchase the soundtrack to the movie they just saw.

“We’re creating awareness for the soundtrack to consumers who otherwise would have to buy the soundtrack elsewhere,” says Rubin.

Although Aubb is quick to qualify that the program is still in the test mode, the company is encouraged by early reports from theater managers. As an example, one manager in Los Angeles reported that a consumer purchased 15 CDs while waiting for a movie to start.

“We’ve had several reports like that, so it’s not an isolated incident,” says Aubb, “and it shows that it’s an impulse buy that can result in a great incremental business.”

Boston-based General Cinema has 200 locations throughout the U.S. (Continued on next page)
CINEMA CHAIN SELLS MUSIC IN THE LOBBY
(Continued from preceding page)

country, but Aub says the chain has no immediate plans to add listening stations to all of its theaters. "When we started the rollout, we had wanted it to be in 10 test locations," she says. "We’re in the process of identifying other markets.”

Aub says the company is looking at theaters with a good demographic mix that are near music stores. She says it hasn’t been determined if the theaters will allow music stores or those close to free-standing stores should be exempt from the expansion plan.

"In the Boston location there’s a free-standing music store within walking distance of the theater, but we’re still doing a great business there," says Aub.

While General Cinema figures out where to go next, High Level is refining the listening stations to meet the needs of its customers.

High Level, which has more than 20,000 units in Tower Records, Wharehouse Entertainment, and other music chains, has refined the unit by taking off a shelf to prevent consumers from putting drinks and popcorn on the machine.

In addition, it is installing a tracking device to provide an accurate usage measurement and has suggested issuing a small key with each ticket purchase to alert consumers about the listening posts.

The test is a co-operative effort between High Level, General Cinema, and record labels, and no one expects to see a profit during the test period, Robin says.

“These listening posts are a magnet, and as long as it’s added value for our customers, that’s a good thing,” says Aub.

She adds that the listening posts may not be the only cross-promotion opportunity the company will pursue with the music business. Other potential plans include installing video monitors in lounges to show music videos or playing new audio releases in the theaters. "There’s a lot of interest to try other things," says Aub.

DISTRIBUTION, RED Distribution in New York promotes Lou Tatulli to VP of field sales. He was director of national accounts.

Handelman Co. in Troy, Mich., names Tom Quinn VP of category management and Maria Tryan VP of software product. They were, respectively, VP of software product and assistant VP/controller.

HOME VIDEO.

TATULLI

PolyGram Video in New York names Billy Northrup senior director of national accounts, Sal Scamardo senior director of specialty programming, Laura Smith senior director of children’s marketing, and Evelyn Carrasco coordinator of the

MUSICLAND STORES reports a net profit of $14.2 million for 1997 on a 2.9% decline in sales to $1.77 billion. The year before the Minnetonka, Minn.-based retailer posted a net profit of $121.9 million, which included a $58.3 million write-down on assets and a $40 million restructuring charge for the closing of stores. Sales for stores open at least a year rose 4.0% for the 12 months that ended Dec. 31. Sales store sales for the multi-divisional chain, Sear’s, Goodys, Sun- coast Motion Picture Co., were up 4.7%; for the superstore division (Media Play, On Cue), they increased 4.1%. The retailer’s cash flow (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization) was about $26 million, up from $22 million the year before. The company credits the improvements to closing 101 under-performing stores, better inventory management, consolidating two distribution centers into one, lowering general and administrative expenses, and selling the company’s credit card operations, which will generate a first quarter $1.1 million bank loan, and raising the gross profit margin by 1.2 percentage points.

CITIBANK announces that it has formed an exclusive partnership deal with Elton John in which the New York-based bank will be sole sponsor of the singer’s 1998 world tour. The tour, which began last month in Biloxi, Miss., will travel to 66 cities in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Citibank says it will raise a minimum $1 million for the Elton John AIDS Foundation.

32 RECORDS, an independent label, is releasing a candy-heart-shaped CD of the 1969 No. 1 single “Sugar, Sugar” by the Archies. The New York-based company says this is the first in a series of custom-shaped CDs from the label’s Special Product Division. It will be sold in a clear jewel case and have a $0.98 list price.

NAVARE reports a net profit of $787,000 for the third fiscal quarter, compared with a loss of $50,000 in the year-earlier period. Sales for the three months that ended Dec. 31 slipped to $96.4 million from $96.0 million. The Minneapolis-based independent music distributor says its cash flow was $26 million, the year before, it was negative $600,000. The gross profit margin for the quarter increased to 11.9% from 10.1% a year earlier. Navare says music distribution sales rose 50%.

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS says that country star LeAnn Rimes has made her first commercial product endorsement, a national advertising campaign for the company’s telecommunications subsidiary. The singer is portrayed using Samsung’s wireless phone.

CHECKPOINT SYSTEMS and electronic anti-theft system competitor Sensoric Electronic has entered a proposed agreement with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) that will conclude an investigation by the FTC into the companies’ marketing practices.

VR-1, a developer of online games, says it has obtained $136.3 million in private placement financing to repay debt and fund working capital and research and development. The company recently launched its first North American online game, Fighter Ace.

A&E HOME VIDEO is releasing titles this month about the homes of Frank Lloyd Wright and the life of Katharine Hepburn, as well as an Agatha Christie mystery, “The Pale Horse.” The three videos each have a list price of $19.95 and a street date of Feb. 24. A&E’s titles are distributed by New Video Group.

NATIONAL ASSN. OF RECORDING MERCHANDISERS (NARM) announces that it has added a free Data Query Tool to the Bulletin Board Service (BBS) it provides to members. Users can obtain, through a phone call, catalog and deal files on released titles. NARM says that more than 180 retail and wholesale accounts use the BBS.

REALNETWORKS, the developer of software for transmission of audio and video over the Internet, has forged an alliance with computer systems manufacturer Sun Microsystems that will allow REALNetworks’ products to be used with Sun’s servers.

AMAZON.COM, the Internet bookseller that is planning to sell music online, reported a net loss of $27.6 million on $147.7 million in sales in 1997, compared with a loss of $5.7 million on $157 million in sales the year before. The Seattle-based company went public last year.

ACCLAIM ENTERTAINMENT, a video game developer, reports a net profit of $8 million in its first fiscal quarter, which ended Nov. 30, 1997, compared with a $19.2 million loss in the year-earlier period. Revenue rose 73.6% to $92.3 million on strong sales of first quarter products.

AMERICA ONLINE members are casting votes for the Online Music Awards, which are co-sponsored by Binlin magazine. The winners in 20 categories will be announced during a live online ceremony Feb. 24. Members can vote on SPIOOnline until Feb. 21.
Retailers Troubled By Sony’s Impact On Their Profit Margins

While I was out of the country attending the MIDEM music fair in Cannes, Sony Music Distribution issued a policy-change letter that nicely dovetails with concerns discussed in last week’s Retail Track. In that column, you might remember, retailers were up in arms over changes in payment due dates made by WEA and PolyGram Group Distribution (PGD). Although the changes themselves were small, merchants expressed fear that as music retail returned to health, the six majors would use that as an excuse to embark on a repeat of the early ’90s when the music manufacturers nicked-eled-and-dimed music retail to death with policy changes that slowly but steadily eroded profit margins. Enter the Sony letter, which eats profit margins in at least three, if not all four, points contained within.

Issued Jan. 15 and signed by Rich Bengloff, VP of distribution operations at Sony, the letter states that as of Monday 69, the company is eliminating the 2% early payment discount for music video and children’s audio product. That move was made, according to the letter, so that video and children’s product can be shipped together and billed in one invoice.

In addition, the company is reducing its 1% credit allotted for defective product to 0.75%. In return, Sony moved up when the credit is allocated to the current quarter, instead of making accounts wait until the subsequent quarter for payment.

Finally, Sony changed its credits from 1% to 0.9% and disincentives from 6.7% to 6.5% in such a way that the break-even front-line CDs is now 13.9%, down from the 14.9% previously.

Since I am feeling remarkably definitive this year, let me explain how break-even works. Under the new formula, for every unit bought by accounts, they get a 0.9% discount off the wholesale price.

For every unit returned, they pay a 6.5% penalty on the wholesale price. The formula for figuring the break-even is to make the 0.9% the numerator in a fraction (that’s the top half of the fraction for those readers who don’t remember their elementary school arithmetic), and the 6.5% the denominator (that’s the bottom half of the fraction).

So in this instance, accounts that manage their inventory effectively and keep returns less than 13.8% of total units purchased for a title, are achieving a discount. Accounts that have returns of more than 13.8% are penalized and consequently paid more than the break-even price for an album. Everything clear?

The Sony changes in and of themselves are not big changes. But the overall impact on accounts after the changes made by PGD and WEA has music merchants hot under the collar.

Says the president of a major chain, after two years of pain and a year of re-

(Continued on page 69)
Hutchison Looks To Keep K-td’s Label Roster Lean

ON THE MOVE AT K-TD: Duncan Hutchison, owner and distributing labels at K-tel International’s New York-based indie distribution division, which is going by the name K-td, has filled in Declarations of Independents on the latest additions to its label roster.

K-td was founded last summer and installed Hutchison, formerly COO of Alliance Entertainment’s ART Label Development and president of Caroline Distribution, at the top. Its first label was dance imprint Strictly Rhythm (Billboard, Aug. 21, 1997).

Hutchison says the company has signed deals with five other labels: Sal-soul Records, the longtime leader in Latin dance music, which is operated by the Bethlehem Music Group; Rowdy, an independent label (not to be confused with Dallas Austin’s old imprint) run by Joe Isgro (whose Raging Bull went through Alliance during Hutchison’s time there, and whose Private I Records is handled by Mercury); Wave Music, a dance-oriented company operated by producer/Axis Studios owner Francois Kevorkian; DMD, a label fronted by Max Gousse, the discoverer of nasty diva Adina Howard and owner of the Meco Don Brothers imprint; and Unencumbered Entertainment, home of the Boys Choir Of Harlem.

Releases on the way as a result of these deals include several midlevel compilations and a new album of remixes from Grandmaster Flash, all due from Sal-soul March 24. Full-length albums by Reel 2 Real, Planet Soul, and Ultra Naté are promised from Strictly Rhythm.

Hutchison anticipates that other labels will soon join the K-td fold: “I expect to announce deals with an additional 10-12 labels in the next few months,” he says.

However, he adds that the company plans to keep its list tight: “I do not want to go beyond 20 labels... The philosophy is very much a marketing-driven one. The intention is to have a small roster of labels with artists and repertoire they’re capable of promoting in tandem with our marketing efforts.”

DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENTS

by Chris Morris

Hutchison says he is on the hunt for strong established labels and promising new imprints.

HEADING SOUTH: Rounder Records’ president Glenn Dickey, the best friend a stressed-out writer ever had on deadline day, has left the Cambridge, Mass.-based label for Chapel Hill, N.C. Dickey’s new gig is as a partner at indie Yeo Roc Records and its sister firm, Redeye Music Distribution, a regionally based operation that primarily handles acts based in the Southeast. Dickey will be partnered in the companies with Tor Harris, formerly a marketing man for the retailers Hear Music and Planet Music, who started the firms in 1993.

Yeo Roc has released two volumes of “Revival” compilations, featuring Southeastern all-country acts, and an EP by Memphis’ Big Ass Truck. Those with good memories will recall that group as an act on Upstart Records, a Rounder-distributed imprint run by Dickey, fellow Rounder employee Jake Guralnick, and ex-Rounder mate Chris Coty (a member of former Upstart band the Upper Crust). Upstart, which has delighted us with such zany acts as Laika & the Cosmosauts, Los Straitjackets, and the Amazing Delusions, will continue to operate under Guralnick’s aegis; the label will release the new Nick Lowe album, “Dig My Mood,” March 24.

Tribute: Harmonica giant Junior Wells, who passed away Jan. 15 (Billboard, Jan. 31), will receive a homage from Vanguard Records, which recorded some of Wells’ best work during the ’60s, as part of its new “Vanguard Sessions” series. On March 16, the Santa Monica, Calif., label will release “Best Of The Vanguard Years,” a Wells compilation produced, compiled, and annotated by our friend Tom Vickers. The set will include five tracks cut by the bluesman for the seminal “Chicago/The Blues/Today!” series and two previously unreleased cuts, “Shotgun Blues” and “I Know That You Know.” On the same date, Vanguard will issue “As Good As It Gets,” a title devoted to work by Wells’ longtime partner, guitarist Buddy Guy.

Flag Waving: Neutral Milk Hotel’s second album, “In the Aeroplane Over the Sea” (Mercury, Feb. 10), will receive a homage from Chapel Hill, N.C.-based Merge Records, the latest and most unusual offering from the loose-knit Elephant 6 recording collective, which shares various members among several bands.

Among the players on “Aeroplane” are multi-instrumentalist Robert Schneider, the guiding intelligence behind the Apples In Stereo (and a 1997 Flag Waver who recorded the solo project “Marbles”), and horn player Scott Spillane and multi-instrumentalist Julian Koster, who also work with Olivia Tremor Control.

Neutral Milk Hotel’s main man is singer Jeff Mangum, who composes the “groups’” songs, which manage to be plaintive and furiously noisy all at once, and plays instruments ranging from guitar and organ to fuzz bass and shortwave radio.

Much of the effect of “Aeroplane” derives from Mangum’s unusual melding of disparate sounds. On the one hand, the musician favors arcane folkness, exemplified by Koster’s work on banjo, accordion, and musical saw. “I’ve always loved that kind of stuff—a lot of what Folkways [Records] did,” Mangum says. “I love the whole world of sound that’s really pure and beautiful.”

Mangum rules the folk instruments up against a fat chorus of horns—trumpet, trumpet, saxophone, flugelhorn, and something called a “zanithophone”—and a distinctly modern wall of abstruse sound. Many of the cuts crackle with deliberate, heavy distortion.

Mangum says his devotion to fuzz probably began when he was still a “bedroom musician”: “When I had my first 4-track [recorder], there were a few buttons I’d push that you weren’t supposed to push that created these horrendous noises. I just loved that.”

Neutral Milk Hotel’s membership has always been somewhat far-flung: Mangum says that when the group got started, members were living in Chicago, New York, Denver, and Austin, Texas. (Mangum, who like Schneider is from Denver, now lives in Athens, Ga.)

The songs for “Aeroplane” also came together in somewhat haphazard fashion, he says: “Some of ‘em were prac-space songs; some were solo acoustic songs; some I would play for people over the phone.”

The still-scattered members of Neu-tral Milk Hotel will be coming together for a U.S. tour that begins in the Midwest in mid-February; the group will hit the East and West coasts after the release of “Aeroplane.”
chairman of Tower Records & Video, puts the situation in per-

spective. "The rate of drop [on cassette album sales] has slowed con-
siderably," he acknowledges.

"However, there’s no way the format is going to grow until manufac-
turers address the pricing situation. The readjustment of catalog tape prices was very positive, but that was accompanied by an increase on new releases to an equivalent $11.88 list. Why didn’t they just reduce the price on front-line product?"

PRICING PROBLEMS

Independent retailer Vogel’s Music in Elizabeth, N.J., has sur-
vived in the face of major last year for more than 30 years. “We’ve always sold more tape albums than CDs to our urban customers,” says Deen LeGrande, daughter of owners Sy and Irene Vogel and part of the second generation to run the store. "We have been good to see catalog tape prices drop, we felt the impact of the new-release increase to $11.98. As a result, we sold slightly more CDs than cassettes last year, and we expect the same for the first time this past holiday season."

LeGrande also decries the fact that the jazz genre has been particu-
larly hard-hit by a lack of cassette releases on many new titles. "Our customers don’t want to hear what they can or can’t have on tape," she says. "Most of them don’t have a CD player in their car, and that lost business has really hurt us and many other retailers." It was this loss of potential busi-
ness that prompted the launch of the cassette coalition early last year. "Until last spring, ITA had little or no contact with record retailers," Vacarelli recalls. "It was apparent that a format near and dear to the hearts and bottom line of ITA mem-
bers [new material suppliers and duplicators of music cassettes] was rapidly on the way to oblivion."

He notes that many consumers appeared to have lost interest in prerecorded cassettes despite the fact that ITA member companies had spent millions of dollars in improving tape quality. What the ITA discovered, in concert with NARM, is that consumers hadn’t lost interest; they just couldn’t find cassettes in stores.

ADDITIONAL PROFIT MARGINS

As SoundScann’s Shalett explained in a Billboard commentary early last year: “Right now we are miss-
ing an opportunity to sell additional albums to a segment of consumers who are frustrated when they can’t find the tape they were looking for to purchase. This represents addi-
tional profit margins for all concerned.”

Vacarelli cites a few statistics reported in Billboard and in NARM newsletters that led to the campa-
ign:

- Two out of three, or 68%, of consumers who walk into stores and can’t find a particular album on cas-
sette walk out without buying any-
thing. This translates to close to 7 million unit sales lost annually, according to SoundScann.
- Nearly half, or 49%, of con-
sumers think it’s a “terrible” idea that some stores don’t carry cass-
ettes, and they shop elsewhere as a result.
- Although 45% of consumers buy only CDs, the trend toward buying both the CD and cassette versions of an album has been steadily rising over the past few years.
- More than 96% of consumers own and regularly use a cassette player, but fewer than 20% of con-
sumers have a car CD player.
- To find solutions and take action, the ITA Audio Cassette Coalition was formed and received full endorsement from NARM. Vacarelli’s steering committee included Craig Appelquist of Sony Music Dis-
bustion; Rick Cohen, BMG Distri-
bution; John Madison, then with PolyGram Group Distribution (PGD); Dieter Baier, Sonopress; Scott Bartlett, Sony Disc Manufac-
turing; Richard Clark, AMI; S.W. Park, Auriga Aurex; Dave Ruben-
stein, Cinram; and Brian Wilson, Allied Digital Technologies. Other coalition members included Joe Ryan, Emtec Magnetics/BASF; Al Marquis, Glamour industries; Jack Sims, Queens Group; Tim Wetmore, Replication News; and Ellis Kern, WEA Manufacturing.

LAYING BLAME

“When the group first assembled, we came to several immediate con-
cclusions,” Vacarelli says. “First of all, we blamed ourselves. We had not correctly communicated the prof-
ability of the cassette format to our accounts. We hadn’t developed programs to encourage those accounts to stock more cassettes. Finally, we never had stopped to realize that, with no alternative for-
mat on the horizon, a one-format music business was in nobody’s best interest. As an industry we had all missed the trends and were ready to bury the cassette format before it had a chance.”

Some of the positive steps taken by the major manufacturers and distributors that helped stem the decline of cassette album sales in 1997’s last six months included:

- PGD’s shift of more than 1,000 cassette titles to midline and higher list prices to get pricing and changing the incen-
tive/disincentive charges on tapes with a higher penalty and higher credits, leaving the break-even level at 17%.
- Universal Music and Video Dis-
bustion’s elimination of the incen-
tive/disincentive charges on tapes, giving an ongoing 2% dis-
count on the line while dropping the 3% buy-in incentive and keeping the 13% buy-in incentive on the end-cutting.
- Sony Music Distribution’s shift of 350 titles to budget from midline, backed up by a letter to accounts from chairman Danny Yarbrough urging them not to give up the cassette business.

The ITA and NARM’s “Value Pack” CD/cassette album combo at $24.98—$3 off individ-
ual titles—was promoted by Mariah Carey, Celine Dion, Bar-
bere Streisand, and Will Smith. “For retailers who gave the product high visibility, the CD/cassette combo produced 10% to 12% of overall sales to date,” says Sony’s Appelquist.

The ITA’s spring/summer cam-
paign included 16 weeks of trade advertising in Billboard with endorsements by Pam Tillis, Billy Ray Cyrus, Le Click, and “Weird Al” Yankovic, among others. Under the slogan “Where’d Ya Hide The Cassettes?” the ads explained that consumers still want to buy cassettes but are frustrated that they can’t find them at many record stores.

THE BATTLE CONTINUES

The battle to save the cassette is definitely continuing this year, as both the ITA and NARM vow. “ITA and the coalition co-hosted a recep-
tion and seminar at which executive VP Charles Van Horn gave a spirited talk that really boosted the campaign,” NARM’s Donio says. "At our annual convention in San Francis-
cisco, Lou [Vacarelli] will update the progress and offer a look ahead on-
key panel moderated by Bill-
board charts director Geoff May-
field: ‘Hello Old Friends: Managing Continued Sales From Singles Album—Length Cassettes.’"

On the ITA side, Vacarelli pledges that the coalition will con-
tinue to send out periodic con-
sumer and retailer newsletters and encourage efforts by manufac-
turers and distributors to aggressive-
ly market cassette albums.

As an example, Sony’s Apple-
quest cites there will be more CD/tape Value Packs this year. “We’ll probably stay with super-
star releases, or perhaps a really hot artist compilation in a three-
track," he says. "We learned a lot this past holiday season about market-
ing to different age demographics. We found that one combo as a great gift-
giving package, with Mother’s and Father’s Day opportunities coming up. We’re not afraid to spend money to keep the cassette going, but there’s a limit to what we’re going to be able to do."
describe the country radio fan as “passive,” in that he or her taste does not necessarily translate into sales.

The rock genre, although splintered, still produces the greatest number of dropouts. But the fragmentation of rock into its subgenres means that some rock records cannot get wide enough airplay to make a big impression on consumers’ ears.

The differences between country listeners and those who favor rock or urban (R&B) music become clearer when you look at the frequency of purchases.

First of all, country radio displays a higher rate of “non-buyers” of music (30.9%) than other genres. For all four rock formats combined, the percentage of non-buyers is only 16.8.

Then there are the “heavy” buyers, who have bought six or more recordings in the previous six months. Rock listeners swell their ranks. Looking at all rock formats combined, you find 10.5% heavy purchasers. Of those who listen primarily to the modern rock format, 44.1% are heavy buyers. The rock format with the fewest big spenders is classic (32.2% heavy purchasers).

Among country radio fans, only 24.8% are classified as heavy purchasers.

The only radio formats whose listeners are similarly stingy when it comes to buying music are AC/oldies and news/talk/sports. Only 7% of those who listen to oldies stations are heavy buyers, while 30% of this group are non-buyers. That makes sense because, like classic rock fans, they prefer older music, which is not what generally drives people into stores. Among the various talk radio formats, only 25.9% are heavy buyers, while 29.8% are non-buyers.

Urban radio listeners are more active buyers than country fans but lose so much to the rockers; 34.2% of urban radio devotees are heavy purchasers, and only 19.1% are non-buyers.

RETAIL TRACK (Continued from page 66)

covery. “We are just beginning to make some money. Cripes, can’t we give us a little room to breathe?”

The head of purchasing at another major chain says of the Sony letter, “To say the least, this is not a well-received policy change.”

Stan Goman, senior VP of retail operations at Tower Records/Video in West Sacramento, Calif., says the chain has a simple response to the Sony letter: “It will stop buying music video and children’s audio product from Sony.

Danny Yarbrough, chairman of Sony Music Distribution, explains some of the reasons. In the case of the reduction to 0.75% to cover defects, he points out that Sony has been giving away the 1% for a long while, while the rest of the industry, from the get go, allotted a smaller allowance for defects. “They are reacting to competition,” he says.

As for the lowering of the break-even on front-line CDs, he points out that last year Sony raised the break-even on cassette from 15% to 16%. “We knew that the returns were getting higher; but in order to support the format, we took a hit on gross margin by raising the break-even,” he says. Also, he points out that Sony’s return rate for CDs so far this year is 11.8%, and he expects that will go down. So the reduction in the CD break-even to 13.8% is a reflection of the true return rate and still leaves the average account a margin gain of two percentage points and the more efficient ones an even higher gain.

RETAIL TRACK (Continued from page 66)

Share of Active Record Consumers (Ages 12 through 54)

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Merchants & Marketing

BUY CYCLES

(Continued from page 61)

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TOTAL

RETAIL TRACK

(Continued from page 66)

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Adult Video’s Latest Frontier: DVD

Vendors Plan For Format’s Possibilities

BY EARL PAIGE

LOS ANGELES—Adult entertainment vendors are starting again. Vendors are eyeing what Robo in laserdisc titles—the headlined act in prerecorded cassettes until Hollywood began releasing movies on tape—are now trying to break beyond a single title.

On margins alone, they may get the opportunity to share the retail spotlight. The first adult laserdiscs are priced at $39.95 each. But what consumers pay for conventional DVDs—"because we can get it," says Miami retailer Rick Veingold.—is much too high, given what consumers pay for conventional DVDs.

As much by tradition as by design, the prices of adult laserdisc titles now rest in a convenient middle ground between VHS self-rental and rentals, where porn has generally resided. If anything, DVDs are comparable in price to laserdiscs, but they hold distinct advantages in terms of features and capabilities.

The 50 titles shipped thus far also bear resemblance—in price and content—to releases last seen on CD-ROM, says Steve Tepper, sales VP of CD-ROM Distributors in Pembroke, Mass., which handles only adult fare. As a movie medium, CD-ROM is all of the potential of DVD but little of the delivery of a mass-appeal product.

What CD-ROM has done is provide the technology to jump into new markets. As a result, suppliers like triple-A veteran VCA Pictures are bringing out a DVD mix of brand-new releases and older titles, some of them previously on CD-ROM.

The addition to the legendary "Deep Throat," VCA has delivered "Cafe Flesh 2," sequel to a pedigree. Says label CEO Debbie Rubio, "That original Cafe Flesh was one of the first adults to go mainstream. It changed off with "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" in the art houses." VCA also has signed on "The Catwoman" and "The Chameleon" from respected adult director John Leslie and has just released "Sexploitation: Sex in the ’60s," Jeff Stryker's Underground.

Because the overall DVD market has launched with a raft of studio releases, adult distributors are more likely found making conversions from tape to DVD. "Just to catch up," says Maria Epstein, VP of sales and marketing for LaserDisc Entertainment, "we’re planning to exploit DVD capabilities."

"You can’t fool this marketplace, one that we’ve been dealing in for six years in laserdiscs," Epstein adds. "We’re going to be producing DVDs that will take full advantage of the features, such as color angles, that we have to." We hope to see what happened to the adult CD-ROM market happen in DVD. The market was flooded, and it now needs to take advantage of the technology.

LaserDisc Entertainment now has 10 DVD titles; in the future it will release four a month at a suggested list of $34.95. Epstein says DVD manufacturing is more cost-effective than laserdisc production. Those discs carry a $69.95 suggested list—and will for as long as they last. LaserDisc Entertainment, in fact, is easing out of laserdisc for all but its efforts to DVD.

Demand is there to be tapped, says Fay Sharay, producer of Adult Dec., a trade exhibit held in November in Las Vegas during the Comdex computer showcase. Sharp notes that at the exhibit approached by the company, Vivid, "at least 25% of the people who were ordering DVD didn’t have a player yet."

"I think that is significant," she says. "DVD adult is really two formats because it’s both for the television screen and the home computer. On the TV there is not as much interaction; maybe you can choose one scene from another. On the computer the possibilities are far greater. We can choose different camera angles."

CD-ROM’s Tepper adds, "There is no question that DVD will be huge—especially in the retail world. It’s a much different angle. They shoot these from eight different directions."

The possibilities have vendors drooling.

"The idea of a Digital Versatile Disc for nothing," says Joe Mazon, partner in Smith & Mason, a Florida-based rep firm. "Mazon, also president of California Catfishes, which has 60 (Continued on page 74)

Real Still Entangled In Legal Action Over ‘Cops’ Videos

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—Real Entertainment has claimed victory in two legal battles that have nagged the indie supplier for the past several months.

On Jan. 21, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Robert O’Toole ruled Real and president Scott Barbour to each pay $2,000 in a contempt-of-court conviction. The fine is in connection with a lawsuit filed by Marketingworks over disputed profits from Real’s successful “Cops” video series. Marketingworks still seeks legal fees totaling $16,000.

As previously reported, Real sued Marketingworks in February 1997, claiming that the Los Angeles-based company had received “kickbacks” from sales of “Cops” cassettes. Marketingworks, backed by Real, then began marketing strategies for the “Cops” series, counterfeited, alleged breach of contract (Billboard, Jan. 10).

The company is re-upping to part of a separate action that accused Real of violating an injunction prohibiting the use of a 600,000-name mailing list. O’Brien issued contempt-of-court verdicts against Barbour and Real Dec. 10; conviction could have meant jail term for Barbour (Billboard, Jan. 24).

“The contempt proceeding was a misguided and veiled attempt by Marketingworks to apply pressure in order to get us to dismiss our lawsuit against them," says Barbour about the contempt conviction. His attorney, David Fink, says the sentencing has "no bearing on the rest of the case."

Part of the case, which also involves Real’s “Amazing Video Collection,” will be settled through arbitration. After the Los Angeles County Superior Court, the “Cops” portion of the case should go to trial this summer. Real’s legal battle is expected to proceed.

On Jan. 13, Real was granted an injunction against AVG and David Waldman over copyright infringement of the director’s name. It must place "Jerry (Continued on page 75)
The Naughty Swinger is Positively Shagadelic At Only $14.98!

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If he were any cooler, he'd still be frozen, baby!

Street Date: 3/3/98
**For First-Quarter 1998, Here Comes The Kid Vid**

CHILDREN’S HOUR: Last year’s fourth quarter was packed with adult-driven titles, but over the next few months kids will dominate the schedule. Numerous suppliers are prepping children’s releases, each loaded with Disney-like consumer promotions.

Lyric Studios will conduct a consumer sweepstakes for the March 17 arrival of “Barney In Outer Space,” priced at $14.95. A household name for nearly 10 years, Barney hardly needs to play the cross-promotion game, but competition at retail has made Lyric revive the concept.

“Everyone has rebates and sweepstakes, and we don’t want to be conspicuous in our absence,” says VP of marketing Sue Bristol. “And we don’t want our consumers to feel they’re missing out on something.” In addition, Lyric wants to take advantage of the publicity backing “Barney’s Great Adventure,” due April 3 from PolyGram Filmed Entertainment.

Bristol says Lyric has included on-pack premiums with several “Barney” tapes. This newest title, though, has the most tie-in partners of any in the series. Consumers who purchase “Barney In Outer Space” can win a trip for four to the John Son Park in Houston. A game piece inside each cassette box alerts the winners.

A NASA space shuttle toy with a picture of Barney will be bundled with the cassettes as an added incentive.

Each new Barney title scheduled for this year will include cross-promotional partners, according to Bristol. “Barney’s Big Surprise,” a video of the live stage show, is due in May, and “Barney’s Halloween Party” comes in September. Marketing plans haven’t been announced.

At HBO Home Video, four kid’s video titles from the “Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales For Every Child” series will include a vacation sweepstakes and free clothes from Carter’s children’s wear. The cartoons, priced at $9.95 each or $34.92 for the set, feature the voices of Whoopi Goldberg, Danzel Washington, Samuel L. Jackson, Salt N’ Pepa, Richard Lewis, and Will Smith.

Consumers can enter a contest to win a trip for four to the Franklin D. Resort in Jamaica. A second prize will award $1,000 worth of Carter’s children’s clothes. A coupon inside each cassette will contain a $100 vacation savings coupon for the Hawaiian holiday and a sticker book.

20th Century Fox Home Entertainment and Warner Home Video are relying on rebates to push sales of four new titles arriving in stores in March and April.

Fox’s “Journey Home: The Animals Of Farthing Wood,” part of the BBC line, will return $5 with the additional purchase of “Ferngully II: The Magical Rescue” and $7 when consumers also purchase “Ferngully” and “Ferngully II.” Available March 17, it’s priced at $14.88.

Three Bugs Bunny titles from Warner will include an array of rebates and discounts in conjunction with the studio’s 75th-anniversary celebration. Consumers buying any one of the titles will receive a “savings book” good toward a free Warner video; a free CD sampler, live ACT II Microwave Popcorn; a $7.50 rebate on selected Warner soundtrack albums; and discounts on Warner sports gear, Princess Cruise Line vacations, six Flags Theme Parks, and magazine subscriptions.

The titles—“Bugs Bunny’s Elephant Parade,” “Bugs Bunny’s Puny Monkeys,” and “Bugs Bunny’s Sill Seals”—are priced at $9.95 each. Street date is April 7.

Meanwhile, Sony Wonder has hooked up with the Discover Zone for a retail promotion. During February and March, the 200-store children’s entertainment chain will showcase Sony’s 11-title “Enchanted Tales” series. At each location, “Enchanted Tales” cassettes, backed by in-store advertising, will air on TV monitors. Games and other activities will also be themed to fit the Sony series.

Sony Wonder says the cross-promotion wasn’t timed to avoid the fourth-quarter crunch of adult-driven titles. “It was a matter of scheduling it when our partners were available to run it,” says a spokesperson.

A STIME CD-ROM: Central Park Media has spun off a Japanimation DVD title into a CD-ROM game. “Taketora: Letter Of The Law” will be available in the new format March 3 at $39.95 suggested list. “Taketora,” described as a “Law and Order”-like adventure game, will be marketed under Central Park’s Software Sculptor label.

MIRAMAR INKS DVD: Miramar Productions has signed an new deal with Video Distribution North America (DNA). Previously, Miramar was distributed by BMG in a deal that ended in December 1997.

Under the new arrangement, DNA will handle Miramar audio and video product exclusively. The first video titles to be released include “TeleVOD” and “Tuwine Dream’s “Oasis” in March. Simitar Entertainment will continue to deliver Miramar’s DVD releases.
Almost-porn titles, says some of the company's product "will absolutely" be released on DVD this year—good news to retailer Veingrad.

Frustrated by the fallout in CD-ROM sales, Veingrad says, "We're buying everything we can get our hands on in DVD." Including adult, "we have around 90 titles," he estimates.

Not everyone is as bullish about companies' ability to speed up DVD release schedules. Dave Lasky of Cleveland distributor General Video says the number is relatively static. "We're still waiting for more titles," adds Stephen Wessler, president of MovieMart, which sells via the Internet for retailers who don't want to handle the product in their stores.

Meanwhile, VCA Pictures has formed a separate division, VCA Interactive, to satisfy the PC crowd hankering for DVD-ROM titles. Three are available: "Lost In Space," "Digital Debutantes," and "Stullion.

Most current DVD releases, including VCA's big hit, "Shrek," are converted from VHS productions and limit interactivity. In contrast, DVD-ROMs "are like traversing a city" says a VCA Interactive source. "They are interactive in every aspect." Prices will range from $40-$60 suggested list.


COPS' VIDEOS (Continued from page 21)

Springer: Too Hot For TV. In papers filed Jan. 8 in U.S. District Court here, Real alleges that AVS is pirating copies and selling them to retailers.

It won a court order forcing AVS to stop all efforts to sell and market the Springer cassette and to pull copies from retail and distribution. Existing tapes of the program, which won't reach retail until this summer, were impounded.

"Too Hot," which has been available since November through a Real direct-response ad, has sold 650,000 units, according to court papers that ask for compensatory damages and a trial. A Real spokesman says the company was alerted to the pirated copies by retailers that had been approached by AVS. He did not know how many cassettes made it to retail, but estimates the number in the "thousands."
MIGHTY MUNKS: With 1998 shaping up as the year of the anniversary for Disney and Warner, it comes as no surprise that it’s also a milestone year for those helium-voiced rodents Alvin and the Chipmunks. What is a bit unsettling is that 1998 marks the ‘Munks’ 40th anniversary—how time does fly. Universal Studios Home Video is celebrating with the release of a feature, “The Chipmunk Adventure,” which dives into stores March 17, at $19.98.

“The Chipmunk Adventure,” featuring Simon, Theodore, and Theodore’s father, is, of course, Chipmunk Britannia, Jeanette, and Eleanor, involves a hot-air balloon race around the world for the wisecracking critters. It’s precipitated when their human father figure, David Seville, goes to Europe and leaves his charges with a sitter; diamond smugglers are also mixed up in the proceedings.


A number of cross-promotions are planned to push “The Chipmunk Adventure.” First, Disney’s 700 restaurants in the North America have been officially designated “Chipmunk Adventure” headquarters. Now through the month of March, Friendly’s is showcasing the Chipmunks via table tents, stands, and register toppers.

Friendly’s Bonus Gift Booklets, which are distributed at all the chain’s locations, are carrying an ad for “The Chipmunk Adventure.” A $3 mail-in coupon rebate is available to those who purchase both “The Chipmunk Adventure” and “Babe”; the rebate form is only available in packages of “The Chipmunk Adventure.” The rebate can be claimed when consumers submit one proof of purchase for each title from the same offer as the rebate form, the offer expires June 30.

Interactive and audio get into the act as well. A free “Alvin And The Chipmunks” CD-ROM will be available in every video cassette of “Adventure.” Each CD features two songs from the movie. The interactive component, which involves an interactive postcard painting activity, can be viewed with any IBM-compatible PC.

“Naturally, ‘Adventure’ will launch its own World Wide Web page, available through the Universal Studios site at www.universalstudios.com. The site will feature the release as well as other sales and packaging information. Finally, more exposure is expected via new Chipmunks toy lines from manufacturers Disney, Toy Biz, and Re-Saurus.

Point-of-sale materials provided by Universal Studios Home Video include coloring sheets; displays carrying 12, 18, 24, and 28-unit packages; and a combo display including both “Adventure” and “Babe.”

KIDBITS: “Tell Me Who I Am: The Journey Begins,” an animated feature exploring the origins and heritage of African-American culture, is available from Positive Communications in previously unreleased shorts by animator David Hand have been unearthed by Just for Kids Home Video some 50 years after they were created. A compilation called “Animaland,” featuring nine Hand-directed shorts, will hit stores in April. Hand was supervising director of Disney’s “Snow White” and “Bambi.”

The Coalition for Quality Children’s Media in Santa Fe, N.M., has collected more than 3,000 kids’ videos and CD-ROMs from suppliers, donating them to 100 hospitals and community health centers. The program features the voices of Brock Peters, Dorian Harewood, Bumper Robinson, and Gina Ravera. For more information visit www.pccqm.org.
**CLASSICAL**

**CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN**

**JAZZ**

**POP**

**ALBUMS**

**REVIEWS**

**NEW AGE**

**APPEAL**

**SPOTLIGHT**

**TOP REVIEWERS**

**WORLD MUSIC**

**COUNTRY**

**LATIN**

**IT'S ALL GOOD**

**MORE...**

**ALBUMS: Spotlight**

**SPOTLIGHT**

**MORNING JOURNEY**

**WORLD MUSIC**

**STAR REVIEWERS**

**MAXIMUM REGER: Favorite Organ Works**

**PETE SYKES, organ**

**CREATOR: William T. van Pelt**

**FILE #30**

**A couple of years ago, musician Pete Sykes recorded his transcription of Holst’s “Planets” for the organ specialist, Raven Recordings, and it’s a fascinating piece of work—an album that makes it possible to enjoy that wondrous awe anew. Here, Sykes offers a new version of “Jupiter”—one of the best-known compositions, and the results are even more enjoyable (though not for the faint of heart). Reger took his cues from Bach, and throughout the work for the “queen of instruments,” he explores new and unexpected layers of majesty in a style that is both baroque and majestic. The album is a must-have for fans of classical music and is distributed by Albany Music.

**DIRE CHICKS**

**Wide Open Spaces**

**producer: Phil Blackburn & Blane Chancey**

**MORNING JOURNEY**

**JAPAN**

**ARIE MINOGUE**

**Circle Of The Sun**

**producer: Arie Minogue**

**RCA**

**Celtic singer Arie Minogue is quickly outstripping any comparisons to Enya, but she still has a place at the start. Minogue’s ethereal voice cures her Gaelic lyrics like a breeze through Irish mist, but her sound is more organic, mixing her own Celtic harp with acoustic guitars, cellos, flutes, fiddles, and percussion from Irish bodhrans to Indian tablas. On “Maire Mhòr,” she gets earthy with some didgeridoo, flawly tucked into, and magical flute, that Arie Minogue is close enough to her Celtic sources to be nourished by them, but not so close that they root her to the spot.**

**MORSE ALLISON**

**Gimmicks And Goodwys**

**producer: Ben Sotul**

**BLUE NOTE 2743**

**The album, cut, one of the very best Morse Allison albums in years. At turns droll, flinty, contemplative, and fatalistic, the songs are infused with a sense of brevity and density. A firm believer of “less is more,” he’s pared away excess. The 14 tracks clock in at less than 2:50, and two less than 1:30—to produce brilliant miniatures, jazz ballads. Producer Sotul’s choice of a rhythm section that truly synch with Morse’s (tinkly, crunched piano) yet add a vocal groove—drummer Paul Motian and specially buttsnh Burt Harris—is spot-on, as is his decision of works by one or more artists. PICKS: [P1] New release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the “consisting format. CRITICS CHOICES: [C1] New release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of its musical merit.**

**Ralph Stanley & the Clinch Mountain Boys**

**Over The Sunset Hill**

**producer: not listed**

**king 109**

**In 1968, two years after Carter Stanley’s death, Ralph Stanley recorded his first album without his late brother. Larry Sparks stepped in as lead singer, and the rest of the lineup included Curly Ray Cline, Melvin Goins, and George Stouffer. Ralph sang lead on two songs, “I Wanna Be Home” and the title cut. This set also includes the classic “Going Up Home To Live In Green Pastures,” and the beloved “Jesse James Prayed.” Ralph also does one of his patented recitations in “Thou Long Expected Jesus.” This was originally issued as King LP 10122. Distributed by Highland Music of Dearborn, Mich.**

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

**German Classics**

**produced: Bob Porter**

**Parlophone 24151**

**The legacy of Duke Ellington would be less distinguished, less memorable, and certainly less fun if his band didn’t consist of extraordinary individuals like those whose performances fill this wonderful, enjoyable Ellington-composed collection. Drawn from late ’60s-early ’70s sessions, this set interestingly includes such lesser-known Duke troops as Tuf Jordan, Buddy Tate, Bill Harris, Bud Freeman, and Betty Roche, who contribute a richly soulful take of “I Got It Bad (And That Ain’t Good)!” and some gloriously bluey scatting on “Rocks In My Bed.” Highlights from other Ellington stars include Ben Webster’s breathy, lilting meditation on “Caravan,” and John Lee’s growling treatment of “Concerto For Cootie” (the classic that the man penned for him), and Clark Terry’s busily bluesy lines over “Mood Indigo,” backed by such stars as Alphonse Mouzon, Johnny Hodge and Paul Gonsalves.**

**VITAL REVIEWERS**

**Reviews deemed by the review editors to deserve special attention on the basis of musical merit and/or Billboard chart potential. VITAL REVIEWERS: Renowned albums of special artistic, archival, and commercial interest, and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. PICKS: [P1] New release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the “consisting format. CRITICS CHOICES: [C1] New release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of its musical merit. MUSIC TO MY MIND: East Coast albums.**

**BILLY FURTH**

**Billboard FEBRUARY 7, 1998**
**ARETHA FRANKLIN**

A Rose Is Still A Rose

(1:35)

PRODUCER: Larry Rosen

WRITERS: Rodney Jordan, John Eanes

PUBLISHERS: Sony/ATV/Tune/Def Jam, Sony/ATV

**ASCAP**

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WRITERS:

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PRODUCER:

Reviews

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PUBLISHER:

Def/EMI-Arista

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PRODUCERS: Janney Durgin, Billy distributed

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The MAGIC SCHOOL BUS: OUT OF THIS WORLD

30 minutes, $12.95

It's a close encounter of the education-al kind as a real road trip is undertaken by hands-on learning advocates Ms. Frizzle. When one of her students decides that a asteroid is on a collision course with their elementary school and will probably hit within 24 hours, the class magics the "Space Bus" to determine the degree of danger in order to prevent it.

Continuing the tradition of witty writing and Lily Tomlin's terrific performance as the fearless Frizzle, the tape puts the laws of gravity and physics in a whole new light and keeps youngsters intent even when they hardly realize they are increasing their knowledge.

Edge. New in series is "An End of the World"

THE HOMES OF FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

50 minutes, $19.98

Purchase a young as a youth creating structures with the wooden blocks his mother bought him, Frank Lloyd Wright seemed destined to leave an indelible mark on the world of design and architecture.

This video, which originally aired on A&E as part of the "America's Castles" series, is a wonderful study of Wright's life and work.

Although Wright's designs for public buildings, such as the Guggenheim Museum, are well known, this program focuses on the residences Wright designed for himself and his family. From his Oak Park, Ill., home, and his two Taliesin homes are augmented by a narrative that underscores his professional and personal ups and downs, including the murder of his lover at Taliesin in Wisconsin.

THE REAL BUDDY HOLLY STORY

White Star Videocast

87 minutes, $19.95

This creative documentary is slated to hit retail Tuesday (3), 39 years after "The Buddy Holley Story," and after "the music died." Hosted by a prancing Paul McCartney, who says that other "Buddy Holly Stories" left the real story of "the father of rock 'n' roll" largely untold, the program journeys back five decades to Holley's hometown of Lubbock, Texas. The anecdotes flow freely from musicians bandmates Sonny Curtis and Bob Montgomery, family members, former local DJs, and even his steady high school girlfriend. The interviews are refreshingly unassuming, and at one point one of Holly's brothers even verballs his early doubts about his brother's talent.

Elvis Presley fans will find a little gem in this tape, too, way of learning that the budding singer backpack at an early promotional performance in Lubbock. Whereas the footage is the first ever captured of Presley—as the film's narrator states, it is "incredibly important." It's just fun to see two pop icons crossing out like regular guys. Contact: 408-458-8987.

GRATEFUL DEAD: ANTHEM TO BEAUTY

75 minutes, $19.95

This video is a window only a window on the unique creative band of the band's five studio albums—from "Anthem To the Sun" through "American Beauty," but more focused on the cult of the Dead for its countless fans. The group that had amassed a devoted following before it ever signed with a record label—encouraged fans to record its concerts—not surprisingly approached the studio as an experimental playground. As this "Classic Allman Brothers Band" series attests, these interviews with band members, lyrcists, Robert Hunter, studio exes, friends, and maents, the Dead never intended to make much money off its albums. Instead the band used the recording process as a learning experience, requesting in its contract such unconventional clauses as unlimited studio time and some unusual sound techniques.

The BUGS BUNNY ROAD RUNNER MOVIE HOMER 90 minutes

98 minutes, $14.95

Warner Bros. has lots of original video programming for its yearlong 75th-anniversary celebration, and this feature-length movie gets the studio off to a thoroughly animated start. Bugs and eames Road Runner, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, Wile E. Coyote, and other marquee characters mix it up in a series of adventures in outer space and other locales befitting the times with same manic, mayhem-filled abandon that has rendered them Saturday-morning staples for decades.

What fun about this movie is that older but still young-at-heart viewers will enjoy the numerous nostalgic references to Bugs Bunny's early '40s legacy, but to the creative minders behind the rabbit as well.

WATER...CLOSE UP AND VERY PERSONAL Stage Right Productions

30 minutes, $14.95

As beautiful and powerful as it may be, water is not a compelling subject. This narrationless children's video is not as interesting as previous "Close Up" subject such as farm animals, trains, and horses, but it does provide a nice mix of natural scenes. Examples include waterfalls, rambling rivers, and crashing ocean waves and scenes with people interacting with such as kids playing at the beach and plummeting down a water slide. It also creatively shows viewers the importance of water as a natural resource by using recurring scenes of a woman ladling stream water into an urn and watering an apple tree and various people eating the apples in the final sequence. Unfortunately, this lesson might well go over the heads of the tape's target audience of kids ages 1-3. Contact: 800-797-1234.

KANGAROOS: LIFE IN THE MUR ABC Home Video

58 minutes, $19.95

trans. Violence, Sex.

This tape is literally hopping with all three. Two Aussie filmmakers with a banking for the wild life documentary the two years they spent living among a mob of wild eastern gray kangaroos with commensurate complexity and style. Whereas some nature programming tends to sweep its subject matter tingly into a backlot c-category, this beautifully filmed tape delves deep into the specific character traits of each of the characters, both on and off-screen. The program is so personality-driven, the "principal players" are pictured and identified by name on the cover. The story depicts the true value of kangaroos life with footage of dramatic births and fights among adult males along with quiet moments. It is especially instructive to those who didn't get enough of National Geographic specials or the Discovery Channel.

SHADOW MASTER

Panigas Sony Picture

The illustrations of Rodney Matthews—who's best-known for his nightmarish "Alice in Wonderland" by his father's turn to "Shadow Master." Still, for all the artistry behind Matthew's metallic sketches, game play is sorely underwhelming. Like other corridor-oriented action games, this "Quick & Lite" marches players through a relatively linear pathway. Here, the flow of attacking enemies is relentless; this ultimately wreaks the suspension and tension. Considering the game's cosmic setting, the discrepant frame it gets bogged down in repetition.

bunim-murcy.murly

Bunin Murcy Productions Inc.

The production team responsible for such MTV reality programming staples as "Road Rules" has overviewed this site to take advantage of its Experience. It's a look at MTV's recent programming changes and its future. The program is so personality-driven, the "principal players" are pictured and identified by name on the cover. The story depicts the true value of kangaroos life with footage of dramatic births and fights among adult males along with quiet moments. It is especially instructive to those who didn't get enough of National Geographic specials or the Discovery Channel.

No man's land.

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BILLBOARD FEBRUARY 7, 1998
**Newsmakers**

**DG Celebrates Classical Milestone**

HAMBURG—The world’s oldest record company, Deutsche Grammophon (DG), celebrated its 100th anniversary Jan. 21 with a party for more than 750 guests at Hamburg’s Fish Auction Halls.

Company president Karsten Witt used the occasion to announce that the company will be backing a flat classical market by boosting its sales and marketing activities.

He added that celebrations and special activities for the anniversary will take place throughout the year and around the world. In June, the PolyGram pressings works in Hanover, Germany, will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the manufacturing of the first record. In addition, Witt said that Deutsche Grammophon will be organizing numerous special concerts. The festivities will come to a climax Dec. 6 with a large party at Deutsche Grammophon’s head office in Hamburg.

There will also be a plethora of new releases, rereleases, and special editions, with 80 new productions in the pipeline for 1998.

WOLFGANG SPAHR

Eliette von Karajan, left, widow of DG stalwart Herbert von Karajan, greets Anne-Sophie Mutter.

Anne-Sophie Mutter cuts a special birthday cake as she’s watched by fellow label luminaries. Shown, from left, are Myung-Whun Chung, Christine Schäfer, Mutter, and Christian Thielemann.

Enjoying the party, from left, are head of A&R Michael Fine, artists Christine Schäfer, DG president Karsten Witt, and artists Anne-Sophie Mutter and Christian Thielemann.

Anne-Sophie Mutter receives a commemorative gold disc from PolyGram president/CEO Alain Levy.

Shown at the press conference accompanying the party, from left, are DG president Karsten Witt, Anne-Sophie Mutter, head of A&R Michael Fine, and artists Christian Thielemann, Christine Schäfer, and Myung-Whun Chung.

Some of the 750 guests enjoying the DG gala Jan. 21 in Hamburg.

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QVC, Inc., the nation’s #1 electronic retailer, seeks an organized individual with record entertainment industry experience to work directly with our new Full Service Record Division. Duties will include possible coordination of recording, photo shoots, travel, manufacturing, etc., as well as in-house coordination with Public Relations, Marketing, Sales, and Product Departments. We require strong communication and interpersonal skills for frequent interaction with managers, artists, distributors, and agents, etc.

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Director Corporate Communications

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Email: MMNProject@aol.com

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Slow Tempos Saturate R&B Radio
PDs Ponder The Effects Of Languid Tunes

This story was prepared by Dana Hall, reporter for the Airplay Monitors, and Janine Cowenay, managing editor of R&B Airplay Monitor.

For mainstream R&B radio, the transition from the holidays into the new year has been something of a downhill—at least in terms of musical tempo.

Of the top 40 records on a recent mainstream R&B chart in Airplay Monitor, only 16 can be called even mid-tempo. Of those, 12 are by rap artists. Of the remaining four, one is Janet Jackson’s “Together Again,” but in most cases R&B radio is playing its slower remix. Then there’s Usher’s “You Make Me Wanna… “ and Total’s “What About Us”; both are more midtempo than uptempo and have each been on the chart more than 25 weeks.

This leaves Destiny’s Child’s remixed “No, No, No” as the sole newer uptempo record.

The issue of what exactly is uptempo these days also puzzles WCHB (K-Rock) Detroit PD James Alexander, who plays LSG’s “My Body,” both in its slower original and remixed versions.

“Now some people might not consider the LSG remix uptempo, but it’s all relative to the original. It has more tempo than the original, so the perception to the listener is more tempo,” he says.

“A lot of programmers now consider midtempo cuts the new uptempo music, but I’m not gonna play that game,” states Cedric Hollywood, PD/music director of WEDR (99 Jamz) Miami. “Total, Somethin’ For The People, and others in that groove are not uptempo. We call tem what they are. I’m still looking for the Adina Howard (“Freak Like Me”) and Montell Jordan (“This Is How We Do It”) tempos, which were huge hits as well.”

Hollywood says the lack of tempo is a problem for him. “We are getting an overabundance of ballads and a lot of

(Continued on next page)

THE MANY FACES OF ‘MY HEART WILL GO ON’

Broadcaster around the nation have been indulging listeners with remixes of Celine Dion’s “My Heart Will Go On,” featuring clips from the movie (most prominently from WZZE Madison, Wis.) and/or parodies that include morning show teams.

But KSST (KS96) Minneapolis—the station that last year came up with “Fargo Garden,” a hilarious reworking of Bruce Springsteen’s “Jerry Maguire” clip-enhanced version of “Secret Garden”—has introduced a version of Dion’s song laden with clips pertaining to the President Clinton/Monica Lewinsky scandal.

“Titanic is the unsinkable ship; Clinton, until now, has been the unsinkable president,” says morning man Bob Carson. The song includes clips from Clinton repetitively saying, “I did not do that,” accompanied by a cool-sounding “lie, lie, lie” in the background; the song also incorporates news reports from a variety of sources.

Response, Carson says, has been two to one in support of the novelty version. “People have been calling in laughing their heads off. Most have appreciated the irony,” he says. “The only people offended by it are those who love the beauty of the song and love its presence in ‘Titanic.’ I think it’s a smash either way.”

MERCURY AWARDS CALLS FOR ENTRIES

The annual Radio Mercury Awards, which honor the most creative radio advertising over the past year, has opened its call for entries through March 9. The event will be held June 4 at the Marriott Marquis in New York. All, $225,000 in cash prizes—$100,000 for the top four winners—will be presented to winning creators of the year’s best commercials and public service announcements. For information and entry forms, phone 212-861-7307.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IT’S HAMMER TIME

R&B/hip-hop KMEL San Francisco debuts a new weekday show hosted by Bay Area fave M.C. Hammer (see Words & Deeds, page 25).
SLOW TEMPOS SATURATE R&B RADIO
(Continued from preceding page)

rap titles from the labels, which makes it very difficult to schedule music for time-djapped stations. Our rap show starts until the evening hours, although there are some rap titles that we play after they become huge in middays. It’s not unusual for us to have complaints that I have had for years. I tell [label] that radio needs tempo, especially at mainstream, but not all rap. At WHER, people accuse us of being 90s radio, and it’s hard to jam with all slow songs. Sometimes the listeners will call and ask, ‘When are you going to jam?’

But some PDs also dislike forcing tempo. ‘The realization is that is less uptime music available now, because there’s no room for a show to present themselves regardless. You can’t lower your standards just to add a record with tempo,’ says Mar. ‘We need upbeat music to go to a new song just to add tempo into my music mix, but I will take a song and jump on it if it’s a hit, whether tempo is a concern or not.’

Many programmers try to avoid playing two slow songs in a row. With slower-tempo rap tracks classified as rap and not in their programming systems, programming can get tricky. ‘I want to keep the log clean, so we can make sure the balance between the rap and the ballads is OK. We definitely don’t play more than one slow record in a row,’ says Mie Fox, PD of WPHF (Philly’s 105.9) Philadelphia.

‘We won’t play more than two ballads in a row. It used to be that we wouldn’t play more than two rap records in a row. See how things have changed?’ notes WPEG’s Quick. ‘Says Alexander, ‘You have to adjust your music scheduling to help. With [the software program] Selector, you can incorporate checks and balances to make sure you don’t have too many slow records in one hour. Secondly, you must look at who you’re programming to. Tempo is much more an issue with males than with females. So programmers have to act according to that.’

‘YOU BRING ME UP

For programmers of more hip-hop-oriented stations, the issue of tempo is less of a problem.

‘We really don’t have the normal dayparting codes like some mainstream stations, so we don’t have as much a problem with tempo issues,’ notes WOWI Norfolk, VA, PD K.J. Holiday. ‘As far as album cuts, I only go on them if I feel real strong about it, but I will look first to the recurrent. I still want my cut up high. You can only play so many new songs.’

‘The way my station is formatted, it’s not a problem, because we are playing the rap in all dayparts,’ says WPHS Fox. ‘Rap now has a greater appeal to females, so you can incorporate it throughout your day. And within rap, you have producers such as Futuristic, who have the knack for sampling old R&B dance product, which has great tempo. The rap we play is R&B. Playing too much rap is never a case for us.’

WPEG’s Quick says, ‘Tempo is not really a problem for us. But usually tempo becomes an issue around this time of the year. We definitely get overloaded with albums. Sometimes we go to album cuts for tempo. For example, early in the year, we had Carey’s ‘Daybreak,’ which was slow, so we went on ‘Breakdown.’ It’s now the single.’

Quick adds that he would likely jump on a newer record before increasing rotations on recurrents. ‘Our power recurrents are already played quite often and for a lot longer than other stations. The burnout factor would be too great. For reference, Uscher’s ‘Make Me Wanna . . .’ is still in power recurrent, which means three or four plays per day.’

PDs asked for some uptempo secret weapons could cite only a handful; they often included titles by rap artists or songs that would be considered midtempo in a different PD. WCHR’s Alexander mentions K.P. & Envyi, Will Smith, Carest’s ‘Breakdown,’ and Karen Clark with Faith Evans. WPEG’s Quick cites Missy Elliott and Destiny’s Child. Holiday names Lysette’s ‘Young, Sad And Blue,’ which is the market’s No. 8 selling single.

BASS MUSIC IS NO JOKE
In addition to recurrents and remixes, which are generally more rhythmic than the originals, the bass music phenomenon gets high marks. ‘Bass music, where people actually sing, is a new phenomenon,’ notes WEDR’s Holland.

‘It has made it more mainstream, with the likes of Best Friend’s “My Boo” and In’g’s “Love You Down.” Now you have K.P. & Envyi’s “Swing My Way,” which is a tremendous help for us in terms of getting some tempo in there,” he says. ‘I would recommend bass music to any programmer around the country as a way to speed things up. It’s no longer a regional music genre.’

PDs expect the tempo to pick up as winter weather gets warmer. Says WPEG’s Quick, ‘The labels will start to release more uptempo and party records in the spring and continue throughout the summer. It’s just the way they plan.’

L.A. OUTLET'S LAUNCH BOOSTED BY CONTEST
(Continued from preceding page)

was Mega that rose to the top. The station added the tag line “oldies with attitude” to complement its new moniker. “Mega means grand, vast, all those good things, and it’s a name that has never been used in the L.A. market before,” says Austin. “It felt like it just fit the station, and it’s also a bilingual word, which helps in this market.”

Ironically, contest winner Margaret Aleman says she came up with the idea for Mega after hearing syndicated personality Greg Laurie discuss the use of the word in the Bible on Christian talk station KKL.A.

“(Laurie) was talking about ‘mega,’ and what it meant when it was used in the Bible, and I changed it to KCMG, and they were talking about how they were still looking for a name,” says Aleman. “I thought to myself, ‘This just might work.’”

Playing the new KCMG (Mega 100 FM) Los Angeles $235,000 Name the Station contest, morning man Boomer Servant, winner Margaret Aleman, and morning man Gilbert Esquivel.

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BILLBOARD
FEBRUARY 7, 1998
### Billboard Mainstream Rock Tracks

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<th>Album Title</th>
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<td>Given to Fly</td>
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<td>A&amp;M</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Matchbox Twenty</td>
<td>3 AM</td>
<td>A New Reality</td>
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<td>Oasis</td>
<td>Some Might Say</td>
<td>(What's the Story) Morning Glory</td>
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<td>Queen</td>
<td>Bohemian Rhapsody</td>
<td>A Night at the Opera</td>
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<td>Pink Floyd</td>
<td>Wish You Were Here</td>
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**Compiled from a national sample of store data by SoundScan, a division of The NPD Group.**

**Features:**
- Billboard Mainstream Rock Tracks
- Billboard Modern Rock Tracks
- Numbers 1 – 20
- Information updated weekly.
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**Table continued...**
Making Waves As Vocalist In 'Titanic', Norway's Sissel Eyes U.S. Breakthrough

SISSEL

by Chuck Taylor

felt for the exhilaration of boarding 'Titanic', all the way through the tragic sinking of the ship—just a chiming of words, play like an instrument itself—took place in Los Angeles over the course of a month, sometimes with just a string ensemble, sometimes with bagpipes and bagpipes, with a full orchestra. Sissel was able to watch a number of the scenes on a screen in the studio as she recorded, which, she says, was not always a comfortable advantage.

"There were times I just couldn't watch it because it was too strong, too emotional—not just the dramatic scenes, but also the emotional love scenes," she says. "There's one where they stand [on the bow], and [Jack] asks [Rose] to fly; at one point, I couldn't watch it, because it was so strong with my feelings, and they just held each other.

"Have you seen the completed movie, Sissel offers an enthusiastic nod of support. "It was so carried away by it, I had to go home afterward and listen to the CD. Usually, I never listen to anything that I've part of, but I just wanted to get in the same mood again."

She is, of course, far from alone. Around much of the world, the film "Titanic" and its score are just off and running, but in the U.S., the album has already become a phenomenon beyond comparison. While the movie has brought in an unprecedented $20 million for each of its first five weekends in the U.S., the soundtrack is the next big opportunity, and it is already selling like hotcakes.

But statistics aside, it is the purity and the simple, heartfelt beauty of"Titanic" that so distinguish the abilities of Sissel, no matter the language or musical setting. Horner had invited the singer to participate in the project, and even though Sissel
to enter the studio during the first quarter of 1998.

"Even I'm not sure what it's going to sound like, how it's going to be," says the 25-year-old artist over a relaxed lunch amid first-round meetings for the project in New York. "The reason I wanted to work with people outside of Scandinavia is to get another flavor in my music. I have my Scandinavian background, and that's important, but I'd like to add something new to make it more interesting."

In her traditional context, Sissel is best known for her collections of Nordic hymns and folk and gospel songs, sometimes infused with jazz and pop leanings. Her five albums have sold a total of 2 million copies, according to PolyGram—this, with Norway's population of 4.5 million. Along the way, she has shotted music records in the country and is treated like royalty at home.

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SISSEL will team with Ric Chertoff, known for his work with Joan Osborne and the Chieftains (with whom Sissel has toured and recorded), and he will produce the album to enter the studio during the first quarter of 1998.

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NWB CANADIAN AERIAL: Reaction to the Eye’s recent survey of music video networks (Billboard, Jan. 17) has raised questions over how Broadcast Data Systems (BDS) is monitoring the videos. The survey chose a random week (Dec. 22-28, 1997, for U.S. networks; Dec. 19-25, 1997, for Canadian networks) and posted the BDS monitor results of which networks played the most video titles.

Canadian network MuchMusic actually showed more videos (an average of 97 per day) than what was reported by BDS. Most of these videos omitted from the BDS report are clips that are more than 30 minutes old. BDS cannot monitor these older videos for Canadian music video networks, but it does for U.S. music video networks.

Currents are defined as newly released videos or videos whose songs are currently in radio or sales charts. Currents are loosely defined as videos available for more than 30-40 weeks that may have dropped from the charts but are still getting airplay.

After further investigation, the Eye discovered that, according to BDS, some record labels are not making the distinction for BDS to monitor, or “load,” their videos for the Canadian networks. If a record companyitalic deems BDS prohibited to send videos for Canadian formats, these videos won’t be detected by BDS for Canadian music networks.

Video Still need to be sent to BDS headquarters in Kansas City, Mo., regardless of which network in the country ends up airing the videos. Record companies interested in having BDS monitor their videos on Canadian networks must ensure that they either want loaded for a specific video. The four formats are Canadian, Canada top 40, and Canadian country clips will be monitored for CMT Canada, while the other three formats are monitored for MuchMusic and Music Plus.

Tuchs says that anyone with further questions about the BDS video monitor in Canada can contact him directly. He can be reached by phone at 905-883-6697, by fax at 905-883-4036, or by e-mail at ptuch@neptune.on.ca.

ON THE MOVE: MTV has named Paul DeBeneditis director of planning and scheduling. He comes to MTV from the USA Network, where he was director of program acquisition and planning... Johnnie Lian has been appointed video programming post at the Work Group and joined the Box as music director. Meanwhile, Oren Tishman is now handling video promotion duties for local and regional shows out of the Work Group’s New York office... Director Kevin Kerslake has left Silvey & Co. to start his own production company, Gigantic... Director Floria Sigismondi is now with London-based Academy... Andy Schuster, former executive VP of programming for MTV, has been named to the board of directors of Red Bull, a European-based company... Eric Schuyler is now with London-based Academy... Andy Schuster, former executive VP of programming for MTV, has been named to the board of directors of Red Bull, a European-based company... Instagram.

NEW YORK

Marc Ball directed “One Step Ahead Of The Storm” by Tracy Lawrence, who portrays several characters in the time-travel-themed clip.

OTHER CITIES

Skia acted the Pietasters cowered around their hometown of Boston, D.C., with director Grady Cooper to shoot “Out All Night.”

Montana was home to director Steven Goldberg’s video crew when he worked with Wade Hayes on “Wichita Lineman.”

VH1 Taps Tierney; Canadian Monitoring Issues For BDS

NEW VH1 EXEC: As expected VH1 has appointed a new VP of music programming. Mike Tierney joins VH1 from top station KUBE Seattle. “This is an exciting opportunity for PD. He replaces Lee Chesnut, who left VH1 in November. Tierney, who assumes his new position Feb. 15, will be responsible for helping direct VH1’s music content, including choosing the clips shown on the network.

LOS ANGELES

For “Gone Till November,” Wyclef Jean’s LA-based manager Frances Lawrence brokered a terminal deal at Los Angeles International Airport. Bob Dylan was a surprise guest. The song is by Bob Dylan. He earned some Benjamins by directing Mase’s clip for “What You Want.” The video features Total.

FOR WEEK ENDING JANUARY 25, 1998

THE MOST PLAYED CLIPS AS MONITORED BY BROADCAST DATA SYSTEMS

NEW CLIPS ARE SUBMITTED TO THE NETWORK BY BDS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

THE CLIP LIST

A SAMPLING OF PLAYSLIST SUBMITTED BY NATION’S Top 50 Music Programs For The Week Ending February 19, 1998.

MUSIC NEWS

OFF THE RV TUNES

In Chicago, Ill. 60610

Big Week, The Cather In The Cather In The Oscar, 113 Bar, Us

Barely, A Friend, She Has A Girlfriend Now Naked, Racing On The Sky, Bitty Bob, Naked, Racing On The Sky, Nakey

Jim Tea, Kinky Tea, A Baby’s Prayer Stephen Curry, I’m Losing My Money, Jeff Tech & The Distance, I’m Free

by Carla Hay

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The “Titanic” soundtrack, the sales of which are streaming ahead in Asia, has been a winner for Music. Shipped approximately 30,000 copies over Christmas, then was forced to reopen its pressing plant to meet a demand that this year’s CD album to sales of 300,000 units in the region—a flying out-of-the-box hit for us,” says Richard Deneckap, PolyGram’s regional president. Most other Asian surprises also have emerged from Korea, which even Deneckap acknowledges, “Hong Kong is breeding,” he says, noting that the main issue is whether its currency peg to the U.S. dollar will have to be revised. Sony’s only CD plant in the region is located in Hong Kong, a fact that is creating increasingly expensive production. The executive notes that even though some shops in Hong Kong are not translating into lower prices from licensed manufacturers of CDs and cassettes in the more depressed territories, such as Taiwan, “if you need are generally sourced outside Asia,” says Deneckap, “so the cost to the manufacturer rises accordingly. That cost is passed on to us.”

There is, however, a modest silver lining to this cloud. Sony has not, surprisingly, yet, had much of a hit in Asia. “We have seen a depreciation of the dollar in terms of local currency,” Deneckap says, “but the regional situation against the value of the dollar, which helps lessen the impact of the currency weakness.”

Nonetheless, the theme of the region remains “cost-consciousness,” Cabrera Wong, Hong Kong-based VP of marketing for Warner Music Asia-Pacific, comments, “Because of the currency problems, we’ve got to be realistic and make sure our prices aren’t higher than what we expect. We’ve been very careful to be conservative.”

According to the statement, Cablevision said it will be launching its own service in what it describes as a “showcase where it can market its family brands and offer its telecommunication services side by side with other products.”

For instance, at one location, a customer may purchase a new generation of digital electronics and select Cablevision’s telecommunication products. Also, Cablevision sees the move as a way to allow Wiz to use the Radio City Music Hall, which Cablevision manages, and Madison Square Garden, which the telecommunication company owns.

Moreover, the statement notes that the Wiz marketing programs rely heavily on sports-themed and selected Cablevision’s telecommunication products. Also, Cablevision sees the move as a way to allow Wiz to use the Radio City Music Hall, which Cablevision manages, and Madison Square Garden, which the telecommunication company owns.

The strategy, as laid out by the press statement, has led some analysts to suggest that the companies are looking more seriously at how they might cross-promote between Cablevision’s teams and venues. In addition to Madison Square Garden, Cablevision owns the Knicks and the Rangers.

‘I’d be bullshitting if I said nothing is going to happen to our business. But when times are bad, music and entertainment will be the way out for these people’

As the Korean market braces itself for more potential closures in the wake of reduced music sales, Bond says the company is considering a revised plan. Universal and other majors are moving to a COD situation, and even the so-called “mortgage” scenario, in which an account offers a mortgage on property as collateral. This scenario harkens back to last spring, when Warner Music reorganized its Korean unit’s single largest music distributor, with approximately one-third of the market, named under scrutiny in a criminal case. As a result, its assets were frozen and scrutinized by government auditors. Since the company resumed business, the major record companies have held it to COD arrangements, the success of which has encouraged the suppliers to make the move.

INTL MUSIC IMPACT

The sales slide is obviously affecting major international releases, which have in the past sold hundreds of thousands of copies in Korea. Artists like Kenny G, for example, is very popular there and elsewhere, with regional sales of his last two albums being reported to have passed the 100,000 mark, according to BMG. However, the musician’s latest release, ‘Kenny G Greatest Hits,’ has not fared as well as expected in the marketplace.

Another asset for the major labels in Asia has been compilation albums. Top-selling titles recently released by Warner include Peter Gabriel’s In Your Eyes, from PolyGram/EMI and "Power of Love" from Warners (with its own, Sony, and BMG repertoire). The group’s support both have sold more than 1 million units, however, the second "Power of Love" volume is reported to have a cooler response, say industry sources.

‘Austerity drives in the worst-hit markets will probably affect sales, some executives say, but governments won’t be encouraging the same kind of spending. But I don’t think governments will say, ‘Don’t buy that.’ I think we’re seeing more of the same if I said nothing is going to happen to our business. But when times are bad, music and entertainment will be the way out for these people.’

Label executives also speak positively about the prospects for more realistic contracts with domestic repertoire superstars. PolyGram Far East president Norman Cheng, who has been working on a new contract with Hong Kong’s A$AP, says, “Our business is intimately tied to [local] repertoire. One would be a fool not to recognize that.” BMG has also been working on a new deal with a local artist, to be announced soon. “Deals may become a little more sensible,” he says. “The fact is that some of them in some of the [Asian] territories were becoming a little too rich.”

Meanwhile, major-label executives continue to hold their breath for Tai- lan d’s consumer-led demand for Chinese pop outside the People’s Republic. “Taiwan has not been exceptionally strong for some time,” Bond says. It is a market that, until now, has not been impacted by events. But how long can it hold out is another matter. “It’s a little like living in the 1980s,” he says, “a collapsed market, and Singapore is OK.” Warner’s Wong agrees. “Tai- lan d has been doing the numbers for some years in the singles market. At the moment, it’s still OK.”

‘AIR FORCE ONE’ SENDS DVD SHIPMENTS FLYING

Even with recrudes, Warner Home Video’s best-selling “Batman & Robin” was still shy of 100,000 copies as of early January. Warner hopes for better luck for the latest compilation of a Hollywood studios in promoting the new format.

Culberc can’t explain the advance of “Air Force One” beyond his belief that retailers and consumers are more “technology-driven” than ever before. “I’m not sure how you an- swered,” he said. Columbia’s sales force has been alerting accounts that the DVD edition will be released in late spring, adding that “the [old] model allows us to spend more on advertising that begins this month.”

Whatever the reasons, chains such as Best Buy and the Musicland Group have stepped up their “Air Force One” purchases. At this stage, Culbert doesn’t fear returns, “One of the things we need not worry about is inventory,” he maintains. “If we make 30%-40% more than the initial orders, we’ll sell it.”

Columbia and other major studios are finishing their plans. “It’s our intention to release at least 10 titles this year if [plant] capacity allows it,” says Culberc. Even if Columbia has so far not yet made a commitment to a release date, it is already at authoring and replication capacity. He doesn’t know the fate of “Air Force One” until the end of April. “We’re Amblin pulled the DVD from the schedule.”

Industrywide, the count of current and anticipated releases continues to rise, reflecting a December 9 to December 9 release.

Warner, which also distributes the MGM Home Entertainment line, remains the leader with about 170 titles. Columbia is expected to have at least 55 titles by May or June.
LUAKA BOP/WARNER BROS. HIT STRIDE TO BREAK U.K.'S CORNERSTONE

(Continued from page 11)

LUAKA BOP/WARNER BROS. HIT STRIDE TO BREAK U.K.'S CORNERSTONE

by DOMINIC PRIDE

LONDON—In the U.K., a remixed version of “Brimful Of Asha” has regained interest in Cornerstone, taking the band’s label there, Wilija, by surprise.

A limited-edition one-sided DJ pressing of 500 maxi-singles of the song contained a peppy money remix by Norman Cook (aka Fat Boy Slim), currently one of the country’s most in-demand producers. Radio stations quickly picked it up and requested more. We have to make contact with the people that helped bring this new record up,” says Baker.

Indeed, it was that album that won Cornerstone a slew of positive reviews while providing the act new opportunities to develop a following.

Its earliest coupes were on the touring front, where the band’s booking agent, Twin Towers, was able to parlay its hip reputation into choice opening slots for bands ranging from Porno For Pyros to Stereolab to Los Lobos.

“On the first tour, our booking agent Bob Lawton set up a series of perfect tours for us,” says Luaka Bop president (U.S.) Yale Eavelev. “Keeping the band on the road is important, and we already have a lot of respect in the music community was very important in terms of raising their profile and credibility.

Lawton was quick to extol road opportunities as the band finds itself paired with big-name talents who are opening dates in the midst of opening dates for Oasis.

“I had doubts about the Shops opening for the [Gallagher] brothers,” says Luaka Bop overwight David Berman. “I assumed that the audiences are very, very different, but it seems there is a lot more crossover, or that the audience is a lot more open-minded.

“Being an opening act for a very popular act can be dispiriting and draining if the audience has no inter-

Disney Music Prez In Wings

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The courting of Berman comes just weeks after Bob Cavallo was named chairman of the new entity, which will all of Disney’s music properties under one umbrella (Billboard, Jan. 31). At Geffen, Berman oversaw acts with such acts as Aerosmith, Beck, Counting Crows, the Eagles, Gnar N’ Ravis, and others. At EMI, Berman moved in 1976 as a VP of business affairs for Warner Bros., for which he was instrumental in the launch of Geffen.

Berman and Cavallo did not return calls seeking comment by press time.

NEWMAN READY TO TAKE REINS

(Continued from page 8)

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(Continued from page 8)

trubution. From 1971 to ‘78, he was president of the United Artists Records of Canada. In 1978, he joined CBS Records of Canada, first as VP of the Toronto office and later as senior VP of marketing, sales, and distribution.

The 48-year-old Newman had been sent to Canada from the West Coast to help build the profile of the U.S. division of Warner Music Canada since 1989, when dual U.S. repertoire and domestic and international repertoire divisions were introduced at the record company. He joined Warner Music Canada in 1982 as VP of sales following five years at CBS Records of Canada, where he had been a sales representative, branch manager in Vancouver, and regional manager.

Newman says he was tapped as Kulin’s replacement, “after 15 years here, I know the ins and outs of the business well. I don’t think I would be any better than the job, but the company will be still a strong entity.”

that includes everything from a Pun- jabi cover of the Beatles’ “Norwegian Wood” to a Cabbage patch.

“I was not able to accept the offer on the table,” says Baker.

“Woven and ‘Born,’” says Byrne. “We’ve asked stations to hold back and to alternate between the tracks, and they see the point.”

With heavy radio play, retail demand is strong. Aubrey Nathan, manager of the Edinburgh store of Andy Cash Records in Birmingham, says, “It would be nice if the single was in the shops earlier, because the timing is just right now.”

Meanwhile, the album, “When I Was Born For The 7th Time,” which was released this month, has been certified gold with sales of 60,000 units.

NARAS AIMS FOR NATIONAL DISCOGRAPHY, BUT LABELS WARY

(Continued from page 1)

NARAS aims for national discography, but labels wary

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EXTRA: ITS WAY TO THE TOP

33rd Annual Grammy Awards

I

2000 Grammys bring country a high

Many of the awards that are all the rage today for rap and R&B artists were won by the Country Music Association at the 33rd Annual Grammy Awards.

There were 13 top categories for which country artists were up for awards. The Grammy Awards have become the biggest night of the music industry.

In the past, country music has lagged behind other music genres in terms of awards. But this year, country artists made a big impact.

One of the biggest winners was Garth Brooks, who took home four awards, including Album of the Year for "The Ultimate Collection." Brooks was also named Male Vocalist of the Year.

Other country nominees included Reba McEntire and Little Big Town, who each had three nominations.

The Grammy Awards are held in Los Angeles every year and are broadcast live on television. They are considered the most prestigious awards in the music industry.

This year, the event featured a variety of performances and musical tributes.

The show was opened by John Legend, who performed "All of Me" with Chrissy Teigen. Other notable performances included Taylor Swift singing "Blank Space," Adele performing "Hello," and Bruno Mars doing "Uptown Funk."

In addition to the music, the Grammys also recognize achievements in music production, engineering, and songwriting. This year, country music was well-represented in these categories.

Overall, it was a big night for country music at the Grammys. The genre continues to grow in popularity and is recognized as an important part of the music industry.

Before we conclude, let me provide you with the updated text:

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Costello’s surprise ’89 hit “The Juliet Letters” with the Brodsky Quartet, perhaps via Decca/London or a Philips Musician, “Itrip. Then, for the 1991 tour, he spliced
up the song he has been writing for mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter will see light on her, label, Deutsche Music, a label
kicks in. In a way, it was Von Otter who was the catalyst for Costello’s PolyGram deal. The label brought her a roll out of Gramophone magazine’s 1990’s event
year award to the renowned Swedish
singer—a longtime favorite of his—
when he began a discussion with Polya

gram Classics & Jazz worldwide chief
Chris Roberts. It was that initial, informal talks with Roberts—as well as Simon Cowell, his pop/rock manager, and
classical saxophonist John Harle on his
Argo/Decca album “Terror & Magnifi-
cence” last year (Billboard, April 26, 1997) that led Costello to his new
label’s unique arrangement.

“I’m not going to be fitting from label
self.” Costello responds. “We’re
marketing with all the different
records,” Costello says. “But this mul-
tifaceted deal does afford us an oppor-
tunity: to have the people who are the

smartest about whatever kind of music
that I may happen to make be the ones
to help get the records across to the pub-
lic that most want it to hear.”

One of the frustrating elements of
Costello’s Warner Bros. tenure, he
was, says, was the idea that cross-media
promotion. “Although the Brodsky
and I reached a lot of people with ‘The
Juliet Letters,’ we didn’t do it using the
records, the video, the album, the CDs,
strictly speaking, it obviously holds
an appeal for those people who enjoy
chamber music.

“Perhaps PolyGram is special in that
there could be some real cooperation
between arms of the company,” Costel-
lo adds. “And there’s diversity there,
uncertain. A company that has outlets
to accommodate everything from Han-
cock to Bacharach to Terry Torrell to
an Allen Ginsberg record, sounds like a
place for me.”

PolyGram has a relationship with conventions that are not on the
tracks on Decca and jazz on Verve, and
the company has done some joint Mer-
cury/Verve marketing with Van Mor-
risian. But Costello’s deal with Poly-
Gram is unprecedented in its scope and
planning. To Roberts, the key to such a mutual arrangement is for the company to take
the cues from us.”

“A musician of the caliber of Elvis
Costello isn’t off base too often,” Rob-
erts says. “It’s just something we have to
finish his head and give him the mechanism
to make our corporates work for him, not
against him.”

Roberts adds that while there’s a
certain expectation of success with
Costello’s projects, the pop efforts
aren’t necessarily assumed to be the
best bet. “It’s often the things that
seem left of center that are just what
the market wants,” he says. “Really, Elvis’ attitude toward music is refresh-
ing. As a singer, it’s not something this
business needs.”

Costello and Warner Bros.
agreed to disagree last year, after a round of mutual recrimina-
tion over the commercial disappointment of his last album, “All This Useless Beauty.”
The label released Costello from his com-
mitment for one more new album, instead electing to compile the retro-
pective set “Extreme Honey” with its full participation (Billboard, Oct. 25, 1997).

They say it was in conjunction with an intimate Attrac
tions concert video, “Live—A Case For
Song.”

“Live—A Case For Song” is proba-
bly the last you’ll see of the Attractions,
by the way: Costello promises that no matter what pleasures his PolyGram future may hold, an album with his old group
won’t be one of them. (Of “All This Useless Beauty” wasn’t much of an hit to his personal or musical success, he says.) But definitely ongo-
ing is Costello’s work with Attractions keyboardist Steve Nieve, with whom he has been working off and on as a duo for several years. Look for a Mercury album featuring Nieve’s music and
Costello’s lyrics around the turn of the
century.

Like Roberts, Danny Goldberg, CEO of Merck/MCA Records Group (U.S.), expresses faith in Costello’s leg-
acy of quality. “After Bob Dylan, Paul
McCartney, or Paul Simon, who of the
next generation has a similar stature?”
Elvis Costello is on the very short-list of
people who do,” Goldberg says. “Not everyone believes in him, but I do. They’re all serious records, records of integrity. This project with
Burt Bacharach is incredibly exciting—I can’t wait to hear it.”

Costello—an invertebrate collaborator who’s worked with everyone from
McCartney to the Mingus Big Band over the years—was up early this morning to
studio with Bacharach this summer.
Costello is contributing lyrics and
sharing with Bacharach on the music—
the arrangements will probably mix
spare voice-and-piano duets with lush
pop orchestrations. The pair have al-
ready produced “God Give My
Strength,” which appeared on the
MCA soundtrack to the film “Grace Of
My Heart” (MCA).

“God Give Me Strength” is also
featured on the recent Reprise set
“Live On Letterman,” and the upcoming
Costello/Bacharach album will include a version of the emotional
ballad, which Costello says offers a
cue as to the character of the rest of
the tour.

“The grand, dramatic pop ballad is
such an endangered species these
days,” Costello says. “I think I’ve done
Costello says. “All these songs and
her singers are so hollow. But I feel
strongly that there’s still a place for
this kind of pop ballad. Let’s just say
that Burt and I are here to kick
Celine Dion’s ass.”

## The Unsinkable Celine Dion

### “Heart” Buoy's A String Of Successes

NEW YORK—Behind the success of
Celine Dion’s smash “My Heart
Will Go On” is an album that’s also
taking the artist places she’s never
been before.

“Let’s Talk About Love,” released
Nov. 17, 1997, is already her fastest-
selling single ever. The album has
sold 12 million copies, achieving
platinum or multi-platinum status in 24
countries as diverse as Italy, Nor-
way, Sweden, Mexico, Japan, South
Korea, and Hong Kong, according to
dion’s label, 550 Music. As of the
Jan. 31 issue of Music & Media, the
set had been No. 1 on the Eurochart
for eight weeks.

At No. 1 on The Billboard 200 for
the past six weeks, Dion’s album is
now the #1 on the Sony Classic
Sony Music Soundtrack, which includes
“My Heart Will Go On” as the singular
vocal track. (The radio version of the
song is found only on “Let’s Talk About
Love.”)

This makes Dion the first
performer in the Soundscan era to
have a track on the No. 1 and No. 2
albums in the same week. The soundtrack, meanwhile, is the first to
have double #1 albums in one
week since Vangelis “Chariots Of
Fire” in 1982.

Dion’s previous project, “ Falling
Into You,” released in 1995, has sold
27 million copies worldwide and
10 million in the U.S., accord-
ing to the label, and it won the
grammy for album of the year in
February 1997.

The first single from that album—
“Because You Loved Me,” from the
motion picture “Up Close And Per-
sonal”—began Dion’s biggest hit at
the time, spending six weeks at No. 1
on the Hot 100. It also delivered two
successive top 10s: “It’s All Coming
Back To Me Now” and “All By
Myself.”

CHUCK TAYLOR
Online Firms See Promise in Compilations

(Continued from page 1)
ter of which was co-founded by former VH1 president Ed Bennett, will launch their online custom-compilation services Feb. 15 and March 1, respectively.

Those sites join Music Connection Corp., CDuctive, and superSonic Boom (Billboard, Sept 6, 1997), which launched their online compilations Jan. 1, as the major players in the emerging space.

But while there is room for growth, there is also room for failure of these cyber-compilation sites will ultimately rely on their ability to win acceptance from record labels and other parties with the ability to license songs—something also judged key back in 1987, when Personics rolled out its custom-tape kiosks to stores around the country.

While retailers said they were generally pleased with that system's revealing and sales, the company at the time expressed concern about allowing consumers to "cherry-pick" the hits—possibly instead of purchasing full albums that a single song had been stripped from.

But the experience is filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection Dec. 31, 1990, and is no longer in operation.

The same concerns are echoed today. "The only labels that are willing to do this are the small, fledgling boutiques," says Roy Bennett, who founded the company.

"You have to remember that the label is as valuable as any other promotional tool," says Roy Gateniya, VP of marketing (U.S.) for EMI-Capitol Records, who also owns the online upstarts. "But for a major label that has outlets such as radio, available, sightly more daunting."}

Major-label resistance is understandable, given fears that consumers may turn away from traditionally channelized music. "Online stores put a thumb on the scale of their offerings have already run their course in traditional stores.

"We understand that [labels] have other distribution channels that are far more important to them now, but we're asking them to give us only the music that they don't want anymore," says Bennett. "It's a non-starter." Darveau-Garneau, founder of Custom Revolutions. "Once songs have gone through those channels, they've lost their value to the major labels if they are able to thumb through catalog and select only tracks that interest them.

So while online custom compilers argue that they already pay higher licensing fees than those offered by broadcast outlets, they acknowledge that many of their offerings have already run their course in traditional stores.

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will be no effect.”

The show’s organizing committee is a nonprofit association comprising French music bodies representing authors, publishers, musicians, artists, labels, and show producers. With an annual budget of 10 million francs ($1.9 million), this association produces two events—one is for pop, and the other is for classical and jazz acts.

In 1997, the pop Victoires de la Musique Awards had the best TV audience rating of the day, with a share of 29.7% and 6.6 million viewers, according to Médiamétrie.

Much of the costs of the event are offset by fees from two public broadcasters: France 2 pays 4.5 million francs ($805,000) for the pop Victoires, and France 3 pays 1.9 million francs ($308,000) for the classical and jazz Victoires. The balance is covered by the French bodies and collecting societies.

A key change to the awards categories this year is the abolition of the French nationality criterion. “Now all French-speaking singers can compete in all categories, eradicating public confusion as to why Francophone singers such as Axelle Red or Celine Dion could not compete,” says Enrico Della Rossa, managing director of the Victoires association. “Also, in response to the industry, we have created two specific categories for world music and dance/techno.”

Another response to criticism of last year’s event is the award show’s ‘president’—who formally opens the evening’s proceedings before the presenters begin—cannot compete in any category. Last year, president Aznar won as best male act. This year the ceremony will have two presidents: Francis Cabrel and Alain Souchon. The Victoires will also pay tribute to female Barbara, who died last fall, and give a prize to singer/movie actor Serge Regiani.

Voting rules have also been tightened this year in light of the minor scandal at the Victoires ‘96, when a totally unknown artist, Stephend, was voted best upcoming act.

Nominations in key national categories include the following:

Male act: Julien Clerc (Virgin);

Etienne Daho (Virgin); Eddy Mitchell (Polydor); Pascal Obispo (Epic); Florent Pagny (Mercury).

Female act: Enzo Enzo (RCA); Brigitte Fontaine (Virgin); Patricia Kaas (Columbia); Axelle Red (Virgin); Zoe (Mercury).

Band: Blankass (Musidisc); FFF (Epic); IAM (Delabel); Nata (RCA); Noir Désir (Barclay).

Song of the year: “L’Homme Presse,” Noël Désir (Barclay); “Les Séparés,” Julien Clerc (Virgin); “Lucie,” Pascale Obispo (Epic); “Savarir Aimer,” Florent Pagny (Mercury); “Tout,” Lar Fabian (Polydor).

Album: “Baiser,” Mississii (PIAS); “Julien,” Julien Clerc (Virgin); “L’Ecole Du Micro D’Argent,” IAM (Delabel); “Saillit,” Michel Sardou (Tremas); “Savarir Aimer,” Florent Pagny (Mercury).

Upcoming act: Anggun (Columbia); Doe Gyneco (Virgin); Laura Fabi- an (Polydor); Mississii (PIAS); Tribal Jam (EMI).

FOX TO ROLL OUT ANIMATED PUSH FOR ‘ANASTASIA’

Behind having such a large campaign is that the marketplace requires it,” says Fox acting president Pat Wyatt, who also is president of Fox’s licensing division. “You need a lot of music and weight to cut through the competition at retail.

According to the plan for the video, the CD will be released as a tie-in for the film. This means the project will be more of an impact at radio than they’re hoping.

Accordingly, the Bogmen’s booking agent at the Agency Group, is preparing a tour for the band that will also include headlining club shows in some of the major markets as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, and San Diego. In addition, the group will play a later-February showcase in Austin, Texas.

Following the club stint, Arist and the Agency Group will attempt to secure an open-air slot for the Bogmen on a summer tour.

In an effort to tap into the band’s live appeal and its local following, music retail giant Musicland plans an in-store performance by the Bogmen Feb. 10 at its Sam Goody store in New York’s Greenwich Village. Musicland divi- sional advertising coordinator Chad Nadeler says, “We have some history with the band. They performed at one of our conventions when the first album came out, and our store managers still talk about that show. They have an especially strong following locally, and anticipation is extremely high for the new release.”

Cartan Allen, music director at WBNZ Boston, says he’s impressed with the Bogmen. “I liked the last album,” he says, “but this album is more radio friendly.”

The group’s first effort, ‘Out of the Shadows,’ was a 43228-0398

MIDEM Asia Is Canceled Due To Local Unrest

LONDON—A spokesman for the Reed-MIDEM Organisation (RMO) cites political unrest in Indonesia as a key factor in the decision to cancel MIDEM Asia, which was due to take place May 29-30 on the Indonesian island of Bali (Billboard Bulletin, Jan. 29). The conference would have been the fourth MIDEM in the region; last year’s event in Hong Kong attracted 2,182 delegates, representing 915 companies from 43 countries.

RMO announced late last year that it was moving the event from the original Hong Kong venue to the Sheraton Hotel Convention Center in Bali’s Nusa Dua resort (Billboard, Dec. 6, 1997). It cited “political and economic situations” as well as offering a delegate fee of $430, compared with $600 in 1997. (The RMO spokesman says the move was not made for financial reasons.) A list of prospective attendees for the Bali show will be refunded, adding that registrations “were going quite well.”

As of press time Jan. 29, RMO had not yet made an official announcement about the cancellation.

MARK SOLOMONS
Eagle's Wings" during the Oklahoma millionaires' revue. "With the reason that was the inspiration in my song, I recorded it. That was coincidental," he says. "A friend of our family's had died, and at his funeral they sang a song called 'Wings' and I was very moved by it. I loved the sentiment in it that we can be carried. We can be lifted, healed through life, and one day we'll have heaven's special, which will be broadcast during a pledge drive."

Plans also call for a push to retailers that draw adult consumers, such as Barnes & Noble and Borders. According to Germaine, there will be "life to go and so much momentum" at such accounts. The second phase of the label's marketing campaign will involve a direct-response TV spot in May.

Tower Nashville GM Jon Kerlikowske says the project has strong potential. "Because of his association with The Phantom," which has been such a huge success, he says, "we'll have sales on it," he says. "When an artist reaches No. 1, the interest is associated with and goes into a new one, publicity is really what will drive a record like this."

Germaine expects Crawford to gain exposure on "The Rosie O' Donnell Show," "Access Hollywood," and other programs. He will also embark on a summer tour to promote the album.
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**Greatest Shot Debut**

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RCA Records Congratulates
our Grammy Nominees...

Dave Matthews Band
- "Crash Into Me"

Best Rock Song

~

Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group

John Pizzarelli
- "Our Love Is Here To Stay"

Best Instrumental Arrangement (Don Sebesky)
With Accompanying Vocal
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**No. 1/Greatest Gainer**

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**Hot Shot Debut**

1. YOUNG BLEED
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8....

**New**

1. CHANGE
2....
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8....

**Peak Position**

1. 1
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3. 3
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5. 5
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9. 9
10. 10
SUPA DUPA!

MISSY "MISDEMEANOR" ELLIOTT
- best rap solo performance-"the rain (supa dupa fly)"
- best rap album-supra dupa fly
- best rap performance by a duo or group-"not tonight" (lil' kim)

BUSTA RHYMES
- best rap solo performance-"put your hands where my eyes could see"

PANTERA
- best metal performance-"cemetery gates"

BJÖRK
- best alternative music performance-homogenic

ZIGGY MARLEY AND THE MELODY MAKERS
- best reggae album-fallen is babylon

congratulations on your grammy nominations.
TOP TEN RINGS... For those deserving recognition of their Artistic Achievement.

The Billboard Top Ten Ring is available for any Billboard charted Top Ten artist, musician, song writer, producer or arranger, in any category past or present. Verification of achievement and identity is necessary. Please call toll free, 1-888-545-0088, or fax 1-760-737-5164.
Country 65 ing WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accomplish Cochran, also hardheaded to ville station think work to it. "We people gamble the to WB'S face accompl
While the practice of reissuing soundtracks to mark the release or a special anniversary of a film is commonplace, many albums that contain either additional music from the film or music “inspired” by the film are not. In some cases, the stand-alone success stories:

... by labels doing a double-take are Phillips, with sequels to “Shine” and the recent release of the TVT Records, with a “Mortal Kombat” sequel; Hollywood Records, with “Babyface and Michele’s High School Reunion” follow-up; and London Records, with a second

**GLENN KLEIN**

*BRIEF POINTES BLANK* album. Capitol Records, which is pursuing the strategy of extending soundtracks to the same albums as soundtracks to “Romeo + Juliet,” “Trainingspotting,” and “Boogie Nights.” Although Capill is the greatest number of albums from London’s market, each album for a different reason, according to Liz Heiler, executive VP of the record label. “We’re really proud to have sequels as a category,” she says. “The Trainingspotting” follow-up came about in tandem with the video release, but in other cases, the album was extended in time, she says. The sequel to “Romeo + Juliet” — which Heiler says has just reached

**GLENN KLEIN**

gold status — was primarily an answer to consumer demand. “There’s been an tremendous amount of E-mails and requests because there was so much great music that was not included on the record,” she says.

Among the criteria the label assessed in releasing the sequels was, “We were really effective then it could tie in with the film in a general key, and the sales strength of the first soundtrack. It’s not the same as we were launching the initial soundtrack, but there are lots of marketing opportunities we can tie in to,” Heiler says. “With Boogie Nights,” for example, the film is still in theaters and has not yet gone out on video yet.”

Heiler adds, however, that this is a relative term. Without sequel movies to help generate additional sales, the expectations for any part-two albums are lower than they were for the original soundtracks.

“At one rule, they tend to do as well as the first one,” although this varies by title, says Kurt Ringquist, music merchandise manager at Borders. “Braveheart” sequels were generate a lot of interest, says Heiler. “That was the theme;” “and “Shine” sequels are selling at about 20 of the original soundtracks,” says Heiler.

**THE CONCEPT OF SEQUEL SOUNDTRACKS** is not limited to film. Reprise Records has a second album from the TV show “Friends,” slated for release in August or September to coincide with the new season. Confirmed on the album thus far are new tracks by Fishbone, Muzelle, Arkansas, and a collaboration between Penelope Houston and Green Day front man Billie Joe Armstrong. “The sequels play a role in the marketing,” says Heiler. “We’re looking to sell the first soundtrack and the synergy between the label and the show’s creative team.”

“Often you hear about the barriers between the music world and the world of film and advertising, and there was no barrier between the two in the soundtracks. And obviously the fans of ‘Friends’ were eager to have the music.”

The sequels to soundtrack sequels with the right project,” says Nancy Zaninini, senior VP of soundtracks (U.S.) at PolyGram Classics & Jazz. “There are a growing number of these days that quickly fall into oblivion. And you cannot even take a successful film and put out a sequel soundtrack unless it is a really strong title and is engendering continued loyalty.”

Philipst last October released its “Braveheart” sequel more than two years after the first soundtrack debuted. The seeds of a second album were present from the beginning, when they were getting “enormous interest in a surplus of Horner score and not enough album space, Zaninini says. “Even at the time when we were putting together the first album, we were reluctant to have to make certain cuts to accommodate the CD.”

Aside from additional film music, the “Braveheart” sequel also includes several pieces of Celtic music from the Decca catalog. For “Shine,” the sequel provided a chance to release full recordings of the Rammstein, Chopin, Vivadi, and other pieces heard in the film that were not used on the original soundtrack, says Zaninini.

A chance to expose additional artists from its roster also was a factor in TVT Records’ release of “Mortal Kombat” in November 1996, four months after it debuted the “Mortal Kombat” soundtrack. The first soundtrack has sold 1.2 million units, according to TVT. “Mortal Kombat” is past the 125,000 mark.

The fact that the original soundtrack was not driven by a hit single and did not contain any gold-selling artists helped ease fears of one record overshadowing the other, according to Paul Burgess, VP of marketing (U.S.) at TVT. “Because the first album was not propelled by a single, we knew putting another record in the market would not sabotage it,” he says. “We’re not when we were putting out the first soundtrack that we were doing more than releasing an album of music from the movie. We were defining what then was a new sound—aggressive dance music.”

Yet despite the success with “Mortal Kombat,” Burgess maintains that a sequel soundtrack should be reserved for exceptional cases. “The initial soundtrack would have to be a superior or album, he says. “If the movie happened to be a blockbuster and the soundtrack just sold well because of the film, then you won’t see a successful sequel. But if the soundtrack really stood on its own achievement of the movie, then you would be more willing to do another.”

As for consumer resistance to the inclusion of music that did not appear in the film, Zaninini says the music usually has the final word. “If the songs are good, it really doesn’t matter,” he says. “There will always be your purists, who won’t buy it because the music wasn’t in the film, but if the record is good, generally everyone’s happy.”

**ALBERTO BANS</p>
Directory Has Latest Info On Fairs, Festivals & Expositions

Amusement Business has just published the latest edition of the Directory of North American Fairs, Festivals & Expositions. The directory, the outdoor amusement industry’s reference book, contains thousands of listings of state and country fairs, festivals and public events in the United States and Canada. Each listing contains information on dates, management, attractions as well as addresses and phone numbers. Plus, the listings contain valuable statistics such as attendance figures, exhibit space, seating capacities, drawing radius and area population. A chronological cross-reference for each listing is also included.

Copies of the 1998 Directory of North American Fairs, Festivals & Expositions are available for $65, which includes postage and handling. All international orders must include an additional $12 for directory for international shipping. Orders must be prepaid and sent to: Amusement Business, Single Corp. Department, PO. Box 24970, Nashville, TN 37202 or call 615-321-4265.

Amusement Business is the media’s source for information on the live entertainment and amusement industry as it covers the latest news, trends and business aspects of arenas/stadiums and amphitheaters, amusement theme parks, fairs, festivals and carnivals.

With the rapid growth and restructuring of the Billboard Music Group, a number of key staff members have been promoted. Jon Guynn, formerly general manager of the Airplay Monitor, has been named publisher of the four publications. Guynn will be responsible for all facets of the Monitors, including sales, editorial, charts, promotion, production and circulation.

A graduate of Bowling Green State University, Guynn worked for IBM and the Cleveland News Herald before joining Billboard in 1989 as advertising sales representative, based in New York. He relocated to Los Angeles in 1992, where he was named Billboard’s Western advertising manager. He became Airplay Monitor’s first full-time employee in 1993 when he was named national advertising manager and in May 1997 Guynn was promoted to general manager of the four Monitors.

Mark Span is currently ad sales manager for the R&B Monitor and will take on the added responsibility of national advertising manager. In his new capacity, he will direct the sales efforts in all four Monitors.

A graduate of Ballard University, Span has worked for radio stations in New Orleans, St. Louis, Charlotte, Atlanta and New York. He has also worked for a number of labels and was named VP of Warner Bros. black music promotions department in 1993, the same year he was named Billboard’s promotion executive of the year.

Additionally, as part of the restructuring, Peggy Allen- pohl has been named promotion director for the Billboard division and will supervise the promotion staff’s activities for Billboard, the seven directories, Billboard Bulletin and Billboard Online. Allenpohl joined Billboard in 1997 as assistant director from Gannett Publishing, where she was the art director. A graduate of Parsons School of Design, she also has had stints at Cahner’s Publishing andSid Patterson Advertising.

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‘Nice & Slow’ Should Hurry To Top

THERE’S NO CHANGE at the top of the Hot 100, which means that Usher is still waiting to collect his first No. 1. For this week, he’ll have to be content with bulging $2 with “Nice & Slow” (LaFace), the follow-up to his No. 2 hit “You Make Me Wanna…” which slides 8-10. If Usher can move up one more notch next issue, he’ll give his label its fifth chart-topper and its first by a male artist. The first two No. 1 titles LaFace were by TLC and the other two by Toni Braxton.

If Usher had taken over the summit, he would have been one of the very few artists in history to be No. 1 in both the U.S. and the UK at the same time with different hits. The British Chart-Track last shows “You Make Me Wanna…” spending its first week at No. 11. The last act to top both countries’ singles charts with different titles was Spice Girls.

If “Nice & Slow” is going to be No. 1, it probably only has another two weeks to achieve the feat. It seems certain that Celine Dion will debut at No. 1 on the Hot 100 for the week ending Feb. 28 with her “Titanic” theme, “My Heart Will Go On,” set for release Feb. 10. That coincides with the day the Oscar nominations are announced, and the Golden Globe-winning song has to be considered the leading contender to take home the Academy Award for Best original song. Its main competition, “How Do I Live” (from “Con Air”), is still positioned in the top three, thanks to LeAnn Rimes’ version, which rebounced once again in its 34th chart week. Perhaps Dion is not the only artist Usher has to watch out for as he wants to reach the pinnacle.

No change at the top means that Janet Jackson is No. 1 for the second week with “Together Again” (Virgin). As readers Charlie Bingham of Decatur, Ala., and Alex Colombes of France point out, Jackson moved into pole position exactly 25 years to the week after the Jackson 5 had its first chart-topper with “I Want You Back.” Bing-

ham notes that beats the 20-year span established by the Boone family with father Pat Boone’s first No. 1 (“Love Letters In The Sand”) and daughter Debbie Boone’s sole outing at the top (“You Light Up My Life”).

SINGLE AND LOVING IT: The issue that has generated the most mail to Chart Beat in recent weeks has been the propensity of some labels to not release commercially viable singles in order to boost album sales. So it’s interesting to note the resurgence of both Spice Girls albums this week. “Spice,” which has been certified for sales of 6 million units and yielded three top five singles, including the No. 1 “Wannabe,” is back up 19-11, while the follow-up, “Spice World,” certified for sales of 2 million units, with one hit single and another on the way, moves 6-3 to establish a new peak position. The box-office success of the “Spiceworld” movie, with a tale of $1 million for its first U.S. weekend, was a factor in both albums’ rebounding, but releasing a multitude of singles has not hurt this act, only added to its success.

WHAT’S OPERA, DOC? Michael Bolton’s secret passion for opera is not much of a secret anymore. His Sony Classical release, “My Secret Passion—The Arias,” enters the Top Classical Albums chart at No. 2. This is Bolton’s first appearance on the classical chart.

TOP TWO: Michael Ming of San Francisco and Dr. Dave Baskind of Delta College in Michigan credit the last time the same song appeared on the No. 1 and No. 2 albums in 1993, when “Even If My Heart Would Break” by Kenny G and Aaron Neville was featured on “The Bodyguard” soundtrack as well as Kenny G’s “Breathless.”
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