A Retooled RCA Is Once Again A Hit-Maker

BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER
NEW YORK—As recently as three years ago, RCA Records was the butt of some old, not wholly inaccurate, gibes.

Brian Vander Ark, front man of VERA modern rock sensation the Verve Pipe, recalls, "When we first started thinking about signing with RCA, the cautionary joke people always told us was, 'You know what the difference is between RCA and the Titanic? The Titanic had at least one good band.' Well, I guess that might have been funny then, but now it's just not true."

The truth is, that RCA has shepherded a string of international hit acts in the past couple of years that would make almost any label seasick with envy, including the Verve Pipe, SWV, Rolyn, La Bouche, Rome, Sylk-E. Fine, and 'N Sync. That's not to mention multi-platinum Loud/RCA rap group Wu-Tang Clan or its labelmates Raekwon, Mobb Deep, and Big Punisher.

And there's pop phenom Natalie Imbruglia, whose hot single "Torn" has pushed her "Left Of The Middle" debut to No. 16 this issue on The Billboard 200—making her one of the fastest-moving new artists in RCA history. And last but not least, the Dave Matthews Band's fourth album, "Before These Crowded Streets," had the distinction last issue of knocking the "Titanic" soundtrack off its 16-week perch atop The Billboard 200. The Matthews disc is No. 2 in its second week, with some 625,000 copies sold to date, according to SoundScan.

This success has been enough to yield record revenue for RCA two

(Continued on page 90)

Taylor To Get Century Award

BY PAUL VENNA
NEW YORK—An artist whose professional, acoustic songs defined the singer/songwriter movement of the '70s and '80s, James Taylor has had a profound influence on generations of artists, from like-styled tunemithes to others whose art bears little resemblance to his.

Unlike some living legends, Taylor is an active and popular today as he ever has been, and the quality of his work has not diminished with his stardom. His latest album, "Hourglass," has garnered heaps of critical praise and won two Grammys, including one for best pop album.

In what promises to be the crowning achievement of a banner year, Taylor will receive the 1998 Century Award, Billboard's highest honor for distinguished creative achievement. The previous recipients of the award—presented annually during the Billboard Awards, which will be globally telecast in December—are George Harrison, (Continued on page 90)

Industry Is Abuzz With Implications Of Possible P'Gram Sale

BY DON JEFFREY
NEW YORK—Although an acquisition of PolyGram by Universal Music parent Seagram remained the likeliest scenario at press time, the outcome is uncertain as other possible bidders, including one linked to Hollywood power broker Michael Ovitz, have emerged.

If Seagram did purchase PolyGram, the merger would create the world's largest record company; it also could result in massive consolidation of labels and distribution operations and affect the fortunes of new artists, observers say.

(Continued on page 97)
SIZE DOES MATTER

“Godzilla - The Album” In-Stores, May 19th.

“Godzilla - The Movie” World Premiere at Madison Square Garden, May 18th.

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Giant Is Restructuring Its Operations

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—In a move designed more to effectively utilize its partnership with Warner Bros. and bring its A&R more in line with the tastes of owner/finder Irving Azoff, Giant/Revolution Records has streamlined its operation.

Simultaneous with the changes, Giant/Revolution Records has extended its U.S. pact with Warner Bros. through 2002 (Billboard Bulletin, May 12). The label will continue to be distributed by BMG International.

Although Azoff says the restructuring will “evolve over the next two to four weeks,” a number of issues has been decided at press time. The label has dismissed senior creative executive Missy Worth, head of promotion Ritch Bloom, head of alternative promotion Sean Renet, New York-based A&R executive Dave Walters, and its entire field promotion staff.

“You can’t go out with eight or 10 field people and expect them to work four states now that radio formats have become so narrowcast,” Azoff says. “I’m betting that we will be better served by having partial time of a larger field staff [at Warner Bros./Reprise], than full time of a smaller one [in house].

“It’s no secret that Warner/Reprise has streamlined their roster and the number of releases that they are putting out, so we think they will have room to work our stuff,” he adds.

In addition, it is expected that head of business affairs Larry Jacobson will be promoted to GM.

Giant Nashville will not be affected by the changes, and such senior staffers as A&R head Jeff Aldrich, head of marketing Mindy Espy, and CFO Larry Silver will remain with the label, Azoff says.

It is unclear what will happen to a number of acts signed under Worth’s tenure, including Agnus Gooch, Lucky Me, Super Deluxe, Closer, the Cunninham, and Alien Crime Syndicate, as Azoff says he will evaluate the company’s agreements with those acts. Letters To Cleo split from the label last month (Billboard Bulletin, April 21).

“Giant will continue to be a multi-platonic label, but we will be more effective in what we do,” Azoff says. “I think we have the right people in place now.”

Azoff says the company will likely open a new New York office this year.

For the future, Azoff is enthusiastic about the success of Shepherd, a forthcoming Clay Walker greatest-hits album, and new Nashville signing the Wilkins, as well as the Lewis and Wilson sets.

There is also a Steely Dan album on the horizon. “Don [Fagan] and Walter [Becker] tell me that the album will be released in September of this year, but we have not the word to when they will be delayed, so I don’t believe them,” Azoff quips. “It is an amazing project...but I’m not holding my breath on delivery dates.”

Aside from Giant/Revolution, Azoff continues to manage the eponymous Don Henley, whose Warner Bros. debut is due this fall.

Why Here

In Fine Shape For ’Buster Bid

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—If Wherehouse Enterprises were ever to acquire the Blockbuster Music chain, the recently reported year-end financial results show that its new management team is capable of turning around trouble.

In the year that ended Jan. 31, Wherehouse reported a net income of $7.1 million, or 74 cents per share, on sales of $874.4 million, according to the company’s 10-K filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. More important, the 220-unit, Torrance, Calif.-based company posted $24.3 million in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) on an adjusted basis.

Last year the company posted $1.9 million in EBITDA on an adjusted basis. (Video rental chains include amortization of rental titles in cost of goods sold, an expense that analysts usually subtract that to get a clearer read on EBITDA.)

Chairman/CEO Tony Alvarez says the results exceeded “very substantial expectations” in both of the terms of the revenue that we achieved and in the expense reductions we achieved.” He also points out that last year was the most profitable year from operations that the company has had (Continued on page 97)

Ending 1st-Qtr. Dry Spell, Trans World Posts Profit

NEW YORK—For the first time since 1992, Trans World Entertainment has turned in a first-quarter profit, posting an increased $6.6 million in net income on sales of $109.5 million in the same period last year.

John Sullivan, senior VP/COO at the $50-old line, says: “We were pleased with the first quarter, and the outlook for the second quarter is also very positive. We will make money in the second quarter as well.”

The stock market reacted positively to the results, announced May 12, after the end of trading, with the share price closing May 13 at $33.875, up $3.50 from the stock’s previous day close.

In the 1980s and into the early 90s, music chains typically, but not always, lost money in the first quarter and then made money in the subsequent three quarters. But since the CD, which carries a lower gross margin for retailers, emerged as the dominant album configuration in 1992, music retailers have had a much harder time posting a profit in the first quarter and generally have been experiencing losses in the first three quarters of the year.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization more than doubled, with the company posting EBITDA of $9.2 million in the first quarter this year, vs. $3.9 million in the

Lifetime Achievement: Composer Michel Legrand was recently awarded the Henry Mancini Award for Lifetime Achievement at the 13th annual ASCAP Film & TV Music Awards. The event was held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif. Pictured at the event, from left, are Lynn Ahrens, Alan Menken, Legrand, ASCAP chairman/president Marilyn Bergman, Quincy Jones, and director Sidney Pollack.
Australia Does Not Need Parallel Imports

BY DENIS HANDLIN

It’s approaching crunch time on the parallel importation issue in Australia. The conservative government wants to push ahead with its legislation to repeal the exclusive “parallel import rights” that allow open importation of music products into Australia. This is simply an untenable policy that must be defeated.

We fought the previous government for five years before it ultimately came to its senses and conceded that parallel importation could cause great harm to copyright owners, particularly independent ones. Inevitably such an arrangement would bring huge negatives and no certain offsetting benefits. In 1996, there was a change in government, and the issue was resurrected. The main reason is that this issue is, regrettably, seen as a symbol of a government that can use to show how different it is compared with the last government. The merits of the case and the damage that parallel importation will cause are largely irrelevant in this sad but complex political game.

DENIS HANDLIN is chairman/CEO of Sony Music Entertainment (Australia).

Underlying the government’s claim is the economic rationalist zeal of the government’s self-appointed engine room— the Treasury. This department has pursued a ruthless and largely unchecked program of open importation and deregulation for more than 15 years across all sectors of the economy. But the economic rationalist approach does not make sense to me or the majority of Australians. Let me explain.

The Treasury’s policy is that other countries in the “global village” make more music than Australia, and thus Australia should buy from those (supposedly) cheaper, more prolific sources. If Australian music culture is desired, then it can be subsidised by the taxpayer if it is not “profitable” for the industry to invest in. That is, Australia should be a mere importer and appropriator of foreign music.

Yet the Australian industry and public (Continued on page 78)
THE X-FILES: THE ALBUM

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FILM OPENS JUNE 19 BOTH ALBUMS IN STORES JUNE 2
Columbia TriStar Goes Green With Henson Distribution Deal

BY EILEN FITZPATRICK

Columbia TriStar and Jim Henson Home Entertainment are moving to an all-paper distribution deal for their combined output of Family Guy, The Muppets and other family-friendly fare. The agreement will also save Columbia about $4 million a year in distribution costs.

To date, Columbia has released a number of film and television titles from Henson, with whom it signed a distribution deal in February 2001, which was renewed in March 2003. The Henson catalog is a mix of movies, television specials, and documentaries, including The Muppet Show, The Dark Crystal, and the 1984 film The Treasure of the Pink Diamond.

“Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment (CTHE) is building a world-class distribution platform that will allow us to deliver great content to our wholesale partners in the most innovative and efficient manner possible,” said CTHE's president, Michael Barker. “We are pleased to announce this agreement with the Jim Henson Company, whose programming is a perfect complement to our own slate of films.”

“We're delighted with Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment’s decision to take this step,” said The Jim Henson Company’s producer and chief creative officer, Jim Henson. “We’re confident that together we will deliver the very best in family entertainment.”

The agreement will go into effect in the fourth quarter of 2006, and will be rolled out over the next year. Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment and The Jim Henson Company will work together to develop an integrated strategy for the distribution of their combined titles.

By the end of the year, Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment will have released 15 feature films, including the animated films Shrek, Shrek 2, Dreamer, Norm of the North, and the live-action films Matchstick Men and Rent.

While the agreement does not affect the distribution of the Muppets’ movie catalogue, it does impact the distribution of the Muppets’ television shows, documentaries, and specials.

The deal is expected to be mutually beneficial for both companies, with Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment gaining access to a wider range of programming and The Jim Henson Company gaining access to a larger distribution network.

The agreement is also expected to benefit consumers, as it will allow Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment to offer a wider range of programming on a variety of platforms, including cable, satellite, and broadcast television.

It is expected that the agreement will also benefit Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment's marketing and sales efforts, as it will provide the company with a larger inventory of titles to work with.

By John Lannert

Steve D’Onofrio is generally pleased with a massive raid on video and music counterfeiting that took place on May 5 in New York. But the RIAA says that while it could yield a very real increase in profits, it is not a one-time occurrence.

The raids and arrests were part of a larger operation that targeted multiple release groups and are the result of a six-month-long investigation by the New York Police Department's Anti-Piracy Unit. The operation was coordinated with the FBI and the Department of Justice.

The RIAA is pleased with the results of the raid and says that it sent a clear message to copyright infringers that the days of getting away with piracy are over.

The RIAA has been advocating for stronger intellectual property laws and enforcement for many years. The group is also pleased with the support it has received from the public and law enforcement agencies.

The RIAA has been involved in several high-profile cases in recent years, including thesuccessful prosecution of Napster and the settlement of a lawsuit against Grokster.

The RIAA has been working hard to combat piracy and protect the rights of content creators. The group is committed to working with law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders to find solutions to the piracy problem.

It is important to note that piracy is not just an issue for the music and film industries, but for all industries that rely on intellectual property. Piracy can harm businesses and result in a loss of revenue for creators.

The RIAA is dedicated to working with businesses and law enforcement agencies to combat piracy and protect the rights of creators. With the help of law enforcement agencies, the RIAA is confident that it can make a real difference in the fight against piracy.
In 1967, the conservative BBC allowed The Jimi Hendrix Experience on television and radio - thus changing broadcasting and music forever.

Available here for the first time in their entirety are the legendary radio sessions and most of the memorable TV appearances that The Jimi Hendrix Experience recorded for the BBC from early 1967-1969. Digitally remastered from the original archive tapes, BBC SESSIONS is available as a double CD with 24-page booklet, double cassette or audiophile limited-edition triple album.

This priceless archive - including thirteen previously unreleased songs and most of the group's classic hits - captures the incendiary magic of a band destroying musical boundaries.

IN STORES JUNE 2
Atlantic/Decca To Issue 3 Tenors’ Third Concert

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

NEW YORK—Atlantic Records and Decca Records are teaming to release the third effort from Three Tenors Live, with Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, and José Carreras. The Three Tenors are performing their third concert, produced by Thomas Newkirk for the Tenors Organization in conjunction with the World Cup. The album and video recordings of the event, slated for July 10 in front of a crowd estimated at 750,000, will be released in North America by the Atlantic Group and by Decca Records/PolyGram Video in the rest of the world. This marks the first of the three collaborations by the opera singers to be split among two record companies.

The CD and cassette formats will be released worldwide in mid-August, with the home video release potentially on the same day. DVD and laserdisc releases follow in September.

The first recording, released in 1990 and recorded during the World Cup in Rome, was put out by Decca Records. The third album, by the Atlantic Group co-chairman/co-CEO Ahmet Ertegun and us, it made much more sense to not be at odds and split the distribution. Chris Roberts, president of PolyGram Classics & Jazz. “Obviously, from our point of view, having an exclusive relationship with Pavarotti is extremely important in our strategy as a record company. And there’s no point in having exclusivity if you don’t set up on pavarotti’s album. “...and worldwide”—The 3 Tenors In Concert 1994,” recorded at the World Cup in Los Angeles, was released through Atlantic and distributed through Warner Music International in the rest of the world.

With the singers having ties to both companies, the decision was made for the two entities to partner in the release. “With the scope of the project and the wide scope of cooperation that exists between the Atlantic Group and Decca Records worldwide. It’s a great opportunity for us to work together.”

Pavarotti tells Billboard that two tracks “brand-new” medleys are being released. “For me, the most beautiful and enjoyable moment is when José, Plácido, and I sing these medleys together,” he says. “With their incredible response, I always think that one is the best moments for the audience as well.”

As the songs the trio will sing is “You’ll Never Walk Alone,” which, oddly enough, has become an international football anthem.

In fact, according to Roberts, the trio will also be the singer a song of the same name. The song, which will be released to radio. “We’re planning to do a studio version which is a bit more contemporary and we may play better to radio as a true promotional vehicle,” he says.

(Continued on page 90)

RECORD COMPANIES. Island Records in New York names Daniel Savage VP of marketing. He was VP of product development at Atlantic Records. Tommy Boy Records in New York names Beth Jacobson head of media relations and Hilary Siskind media relations rep. They were, respectively, VP of press and artist development at Elektra Entertainment Group and national director of publicity at Ignition Records. RCA Records in New York names Nick Cucci VP of marketing. He was director of product marketing at Columbia Records. Tennant Mclntire is appointed VP of crossover promotion at Arista Records in New York. He was senior director of crossover promotion at Elektra Entertainment Group. Mercury Records in New York promotes Mike Maska to VP of product management and sales and marketing. Maska has been with the company since 1994 and has served as director of marketing.

HEATHER KUDER to associate director of director of business and sales affairs and Brian Kelly, associate director of media and artist relations. They were, respectively, VP of sales and field marketing/VP of marketing for associated labels: attorney and national director of publicity at Way Cool Music. RCA Label Group in Nashville names Paul Barnabee to VP of finance. He was senior director of finance. Geffen Records in New York promotes Bill Burris to modern rock/AOR promotion director, East Coast, and named Bee Beetin Geffen A&R rep. They were, respectively, Chicago regional promotion manager and director of A&R at Columbus Records. Q102 Records in Los Angeles promotes Ross Zapin to head of rock promotion and names Ronda Call A&R rep. They were, respectively, modern rock promotion director, East Coast, and an A&R exec at Atlantic Records.

ELECTRONIC TURNABLE

Savage Jacobson

CUCCI MAFFEY

Maska Barnabee

Burris Mather

Labels Snap Up Eurovision Winner

BY FRED BRONSON

BIRMINGHAM, England—Sony Music has signed the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) winner, Israeli transsexual Dana International, for the world excluding Scandinavia, the Benelux, and Eastern Europe. Dutch indie CNR Music signed Internationa...
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A&M’s Patty Griffin Heats Up

Singer Sheds Acoustic Tag With ‘Flaming Red’

BY DYLAN SIEGEL
NEW YORK—Patty Griffin caught the nation’s attention in the late spring of 1996 with her striking collection of sparse acoustic numbers, “Living With Ghosts.” With the release of the radically different “Flaming Red,” due June 23 in the U.S. on A&M, Griffin’s musical vision catches fire with the help of a full band, and her label is clamoring to harness the resulting energy.

While the fiercely emotive and lyrical “Living With Ghosts,” recorded in one take mainly in a kitchen, met with critical acclaim, Griffin’s advocates feel it missed something. So A&M positioned the artist as a folk singer.

Griffin’s manager, Michael Baker, says “Living With Ghosts” seemed like a good way to introduce Griffin to a new world. “But when we ran into a glass ceiling at radio,” he says, “They couldn’t wrap their heads around voice and guitar together. So A&M bailed us enough to... let Patty make [‘Flaming Red’].” She didn’t know where she’d end up. But when the dust settled, it holts together. I hope for the rest of the world it has the emotional impact that it does for us.”

“Flaming Red” is a diverse collection, drawing on the “granddaddy” of Griffin’s influences—the Beatles—as much as the other singer/songwriters Griffin has listened to over the years, such as Arthas Franklin, Glady Knight, Etta James, Erma Thomas, and Whitney Houston.

About her decision to make a studio-produced album with a full band, Griffin explains, “I just thought it was time to take the plunge. And [producer] Jay Joyce was willing to work on it for many months. I thought it would be really good for me to grow. And the only thing that really has held me back in the past has been my own fears.”

The collection “Living With Ghosts” was homogenous raw and beautiful. (Continued on page 80)

Western Jubilee’s Edwards Bows Autry Tribute

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE
NASHVILLE—With a singing role in the new Robert Redford film “The Horse Whisperer,” a greatest-hits package and the new album “My Hero Gene Autry,” which streets in the U.S. Tuesday (10), veteran cowboy crooner Don Edwards is riding high in the saddle these days.

The Autry tribute is being distributed to Western and alternative retail outlets by the Colorado Springs, CO-based Western Jubilee Recording Co. According to Western Jubilee co-owner Scott O’Malley, the project will also be marketed to mainstream music retailers insomuch as Newton, NJ- based Shanachie label via its distribution deal with Koch International.

“My Hero Gene Autry” was recorded last September at two shows at the Wells Fargo Theater at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Los Angeles. The shows were part of a celebration of Autry’s 90th birthday. The album features Edwards and special guest Peter Rowan, along with the Time-Warp Top Hands: lead guitarist Rich O’Brien, acoustic bassist Mark Abbott, fiddler Bob Boatright, trumpeter Dave Alexander, and Tom Morel on steel guitar and dobro.

Edwards says he was honored when Joanne Halle, the director of Autry’s museum, asked him to perform at the birthday festivities, and he was thrilled that they were allowed to turn their performance into this new record. He says there have been so many tributes to Autry that the challenge was to deliver something unique.

“I was looking for more of the earlier feel, before he changed and had big productions,” says Edwards. “Gene’s worked with Jimmy Long. They co-wrote ‘Silver Hair Daddy Of Mine,’ which was a monster hit... I wanted to make it sound as close to the original recording as I could.”

Edwards says he chose the Marty Robbins-penned “My Hero Gene Autry” as the title cut because Autry once heard him perform the song and thrilled Edwards by telling him how much he liked his rendition.

According to Edwards, there were some songs he felt had to be done because they are so associated with Autry. Yet he also wanted to give fans a taste of some of Autry’s more obscure gems. “‘Dear Old Western Skies’ is from the movie ‘Old Susannah’; that is on a 78 record but was never put on an album or CD. I love that song,” Edwards says. “I tried to do the most obscure stuff I could find, as well as the obvious.”

Autry is pleased with Edwards’ tribute. In fact, the album is stickered with an endorsement from Autry, who says, “Don, I will always treasure the wonderful gift of music you gave me on my 90th birthday. Your beautiful tribute album brought back many memories for me, as I hope it does for your listeners. I’m proud and honored to be riding the same trail as you.”

Edwards has been riding that trail for many years. He worked ranches in Texas and New Mexico as a teen. In 1961, he began working as an actor, singer, and stuntman at the (Continued on page 90)

Country Vet Rabbits Dies

BY CHET FLIPPO
NASHVILLE—Eddie Rabbit was one of the unsung pop-hybrid singer-songwriters who moved country music closer to a fusion with the pop and rock genres.

The Brooklyn, N.Y., native, who died of lung cancer May 7 at Baptist Hospital here, came from the generation of songwriters who found their way to Nashville, via 1960s Country Singers in the ’70s and ’80s, frequently crossed over to the pop charts, and as a writer remained a potent influence on emerging generations of songwriters.

He said that he was as influenced by Bob Dylan, Elton John, and Steely Dan as by Presley or Willie Nelson.

He was born Edward Thomas Rabbit to Irish immigrant parents Nov. 27, 1941, in Brooklyn and raised in East Orange, N.J. Although Rabbit’s father played accordian and fiddle, it was his scotsman—whom he dubbed Bob Randall—who taught him guitar and engendered a love of country music.

Rabbit said he became a walking encyclopedia of country music as a child, after his parents divorced, he dropped out of high school (later earning a diploma in night school) and worked a series of day jobs while pursuing a musical career. He cut an album in 1964 for 20th Century that went nowhere.

He decided to give Nashville a try in 1968, recounts: “I was married, with $1,100 and a Cadillac that died in arrival. Rabbit signed as a songwriter with Hill & Range for (Continued on page 90)
Artists & Music

Bragg Plays Tunesmith for Guthrie
Elektra Collection Features Lyrics From Folk Singer's Archives

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—When Nora Guthrie decided to open the archives of her father, Woody Guthrie, to a contemporary singer/songwriter, British troubadour Billy Bragg was a natural choice. "I was very excited just to write music and record songs with the legendary folk singer's lyrics. After all, Bragg chose to title a song—featured on 1991’s 'Don’t Try This At Home'—"You Woke Up My Neigh- borhood.""

"By some strange coincidence, that was the title of a piece of artwork by my dad," explains Nora Guthrie. "I sent Billy a copy of the painting and said, 'Isn't that strange. You both came up with the same title.' He called me back a week later and sheepishly admitted that he had seen the artwork and loved the title so much, he ended up writing a song with Woody's title. So, the collaboration began even before I knew." "Mermaid Avenue," Bragg's official collaboration with Woody Guthrie, which also features Wilco and Natalie Merchant, is due June 23 on Elektra Entertainment in the U.S. and EastWest in the U.K. The album, credited and produced by Bragg and Wilco, features 16 songs with lyrics written by Guthrie (published by Woody Guthrie Publications) and music composed by Bragg (BMG Songs/ASCAP), Wilco’s Jeff Tweedy and Jesse Bennett (Warner-Tamerlane/Words/Ampersand Music/BMI/Titanic Majesties Music/ASCAP), and Bragg, Wilco, and blues musician Carey Har- rison (for Merre Songs/500 Ft. Toe Music/BMI).

"Mermaid Avenue" takes its title from the street in Coney Island, N.Y., where Guthrie lived with his family in the 1920s. Bragg recalls the day in 1995 when Nora Guthrie asked him if he would consider writing tunes for some of the hundreds of Woody's songs in the archive with compiled lyrics but no music. "I was rather daunted by it, frankly," Bragg admits. "My reaction was, 'Don't you think that this is Bob Dylan's job?' and also, 'I'm not an American. I don't know enough about Woody to do this.' "

Although he was initially reluctant to take on the project, Bragg changed his mind once he saw some of Guthrie's lyrics. "Nore was very, very clever," he says. "She began to send me photocopies of the manuscripts. Once I saw a few, I was interested. When I realized that there were over 1,000 full manuscripts, I thought to (Continued on page 21)

Crowded House’s Neil Finn
Tries His 1st Solo ‘Whistling’

BY PAUL SEXTON

LONDON—As one door closed on Crowded House, another swung open in the eventful career of Neil Finn. The front man/songwriter of the earstwhile an- tipodean band, which split in 1996, takes a solo bow June 16 with the album "Try Whistling." The release marks a change of labels for Finn, formerly signed to Capitol in the U.S. for the world outside North America, he continues to be allied to EMI companies, as Parlophone U.K. overakes the making of the album, which Parlophone & R.E.Director (U.K.) Keith Woizencraft calls "a classic songwriting album."

For North America, however, he is signed to the Work Group/Sony. "I negotiated with Capitol to be re- leased from the contract," says Finn, "which I thought was a necessary step because things hadn't been function- ing too well for quite a long time. Now it feels like I'm going to get the best shot I've ever had. Work is a par- ticularly artist-friendly label."

The first U.S. single, "Sinner," will go to triple-A radio June 9, and the album will be serviced to college sta- tions. In other territories, the set will be previewed by "She Will Have Her Way." "There's a ton of Crowded House fans out there who are real devoted to Neil," says Vickie Strait, director of marketing (U.S.) for the Work Group, "but we want to find a new audience as well. Therefore, even though we're going to triple-A, we're going to college and down the road, for alternative play."

Finn also plans to send key radio programmers and retailers a sampler featuring music from throughout Finn's career. "Subcon- sciously we all know these songs, but charted four albums, "Don't Dream It's Over" and "Something Strong." Crowded House's predecessors, Split Enz, of which Finn and brother Tim were members, had charted four albums on "The Billo- 200 on A&M between 1980 and 1984.

For Work Group co-president Jeff Aperoff, working with Finn signifies a reunion. "I was Split Enz's manager at A&M; I've been presi- dent of Neil Finn's fan club for 18 years," he says. "I honestly believe this is the best record we've put out at this company."

Finn, who continues to be published by EMI Music Publishing, (Continued on page 21)

Genesis Box To Make Long-Delayed Bow;
You Ain’t Parts With Warner Bros.

BY LUTHER VANDROSS

VIRGIN RECORDS debut, "I Know," will come out July 28. At the end of June, the label will ser- ve the first single, the title song to AC and "Nights In Harlem" to R&B radio . . . In a one-off deal, Restless will release a live album by They Might Be Giants, "Severe Tire Damage," in August. The collection will include one new studio track, "Dr. Worm."

N2K Encoded Music has entered a three-year deal with Rhythmic Records to distribute and jointly mar- ket releases from the Dallas-based pop/alternative label . . . Ringo Starr’s return to New York’s Shea Stadium to film his new video was curtained by rain (Billboard, May 15). However, he was able to shoot a segment in New York’s Times Square, where he was joined by Mer- cury labelmates and current teen heartthrob Hanson.

JOURNEY’s "Journey" was one of the most powerful, emotional parts of my life, and I’m not ready to talk about it yet," says lead singer Steve Perry of his split with the band, officially announced May 7 after weeks of speculation. However, Perry did want people to know that the health issues that contributed to the parting are not life-threatening. Contrary to reports, he says he is not working on a solo album; however, his song "For the First Time" (soundtrack, the prophetic title "I Stand Alone," has just been released to AC radio. The remaining members of Jour- ney, Neal Schon, Ross Valory, and Jonathan Cain, along with lead singer Steve Augeri and drummer Dean Castronovo, plan to tour Japan this summer. The new lineup has also cut a tune, "Remember Me," for the "Armageddon" soundtrack.

Love Feeder. Actress Jennifer Love Hewitt joins Elektra act Feeder on the video shoot for the band’s single ‘High’. The tune is featured on both Feeder’s album and the soundtrack to Hewitt’s new film, ‘Can’t Hardly Wait.’ Shown, from left, are Feeder’s Grant Nicholas and Taka Hirose, Hewitt, and Feeder’s Jon Lee. (Continued on page 21)
Congratulations Bill Gaither on establishing yet another benchmark in gospel music!

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Stacey Piersa
Crystal Songs
Stacey Piersa Music

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Johnny McDowall
Nathaniel Doan
Michael Phillips
Barry White
Quadrastone Music
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EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO
R. Kelly
R. Kelly Publishing, Inc.

EVERYTHING YOU WANT YOU
Darren Harris (APRA)
David Jones (APRA)

EVERYTHING YOU WANT YOU
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Lost Boys Music
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Stephen Smith
EMI-Blackwood Music, Inc.

JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME
Toby McKeehan
Atlantic Songs
Up In The Mix Music

KISS FROM A ROSE (3rd Award)
Scat (PRS)
SPZ Music, Inc.

LAST NIGHT
Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds
EACF Music
Sony/ATV Songs LLC

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David Bryson
Adam Duritz
Charles Gilliam
Matt Malley
Abe Max
David Vickery
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Music

LONGER
Nina Persson (STMP)
Peter Svensson (STMP)
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Brian Thomas
Bob Walt
Emerald Music
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John Waite
Paperwork Music

MY BROTHER/My MOTHER (4th)
Kathy "Kool Kattie" Terry
Erik La芸
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William Stear
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SONG OF THE YEAR
IT'S ALL COMING BACK TO ME NOW
JIM STEINMAN

PUBLISHED BY LOST BOYS MUSIC SONGS OF POLYGRAM INTERNATIONAL, INC.
A&M Rounds Up Existing Fan Base For MxPx’s ‘Buffalo’ Set

BY DOUG REECE
LOS ANGELES—MxPx’s “Chick Magnet,” a single from its last album, “Life In General,” turned out to be a major-label magnet.

As a result of the song’s success, the band signed a worldwide multi-album deal with A&M Records, which will release the young punks’ fourth album, “Slowly Going The Way Of The Buffalo,” June 16 in the U.S. and Canada.

However, it’s not the first time MxPx has worked with the label. As part of its negotiation with the group’s former label, Seattle-based Tooth & Nail, A&M signed on to co-market “Life In General” several months after its 1996 release (Billboard, Aug. 9, 1997).

According to A&M chairman/CEO (U.S.) Al Cafaro, the continuity afforded by working the new album continuously bodes well for the set.

“That last situation was something we sort of cobbled together in order to sign the band,” says Cafaro. “That’s not saying it wasn’t fruitful for everyone concerned, but it will be easier this time around for us to help the band implement and elaborate on its vision from start to finish.”

“Life In General” has sold more than 89,000 units, while the act’s first two albums, “Pokinatcha” and “Teenage Politics,” have sold more than 50,000 units combined, according to SoundScan.

A&M is seeding this fan base by randomly picking 1,000 people from MxPx’s 10,000-name mailing list and sending them an unmastered demo CD single of different songs from the album once a month from April through June.

The label’s price and positioning program will focus on the band’s two strongest markets, Seattle and Los Angeles, in addition to 10 other major markets, such as Tampa and Philadelphia, according to A&M VP of A&R (U.S.) Larry Weintraub.

A&M has also begun preparing loyal followers with an Internet awareness campaign.

What fans can expect are 16 cuts of the group’s familiar-sounding punk/pop, only two of which clock in at more than three minutes. Greg Hetson of Bad Religion guests on “The Downfall Of Western Civilization.”

MxPx vocalist/bassist Mike Herrera says the songs—published by What’s Mine Is Mine and Thirsty Moon River (ASCAP)—have the grittier feel of the band’s earlier work.

“I Life In General! was a pretty clean, straightforward pop album, and we were happy with that, but this time around we dirtied things up a little,” says Herrera. “We didn’t wring out some of the noises that, by themselves, don’t mean a lot but add to the overall feel. We didn’t want it to sound like it was produced in a lab.”

In spite of the band’s impressive fan base and solid retail track record, Weintraub says the label is approaching the new project with modest expectations.

“We never put any pressure on the band other than to make the next step,” says Weintraub. “We figure it will be easy to do 100,000 [units], and anything else we get from radio airplay after that will be a bonus.”

“The fan club, advertising, a snipe campaign in 12 major markets, and just getting the music out there to people—we’re doing all this without even thinking of radio,” he adds. “So if we do get it, that’s what will take us to the next level.”

The first single, “I’m OK, You’re OK,” was shipped to modern rock radio May 6.

Herrera says he appreciates the label’s cautious approach, adding that it mirrors the act’s history of slow growth.

“Hopefully, our core fans will buy the record regardless of what happens, but obviously—and what happens with most records—is that the label will try to get a big break,” he says. “I’m not naive enough to think that A&M isn’t going to do the same, but they are showing signs of actually caring about our career. We don’t necessarily want to have a hit right away. We’re just in a gradual building, which is what we’ve been doing all along and what makes fans real loyal and not just radio fans. I think A&M understands that if you hype it huge, it will die huge.”

The band, which is booked by Los Angeles-based Bandwagon Entertainment and managed by Creighton Burke in Seattle, will also be touring internationally. “Going Slowly” will have a staggered release in territories outside of North America throughout the summer.

MxPx opens for Bad Religion during European dates in May, returning to the U.S. for the first five weeks of the Warped tour, beginning June 30 in Phoenix. A&M will distribute samplers and coupons directing consumers to local retailers during the tour. On Aug. 4, the act begins a tour supporting Blink 182.

Todd Meehan, manager at Tower Records’ Sunset Boulevard location in Hollywood, says he is hopeful that A&M’s deeper involvement will help the new album, but qualifies his optimism with a concern about the demand for MxPx’s type of music.

“I think there’s going to be a much better setup since A&M has already been involved with the band and knows a little bit about them,” he says. “And there will always be an audience for this kind of music, but looking at the performance of the last few Green Day albums, people seem to be looking for something a little more original. I think that’s why artists like Beck are so huge.”
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Artists & Music

12 Rounds Fire Off Their Debut With Nothing/Interscope’s ‘Hero’

BY CARRIE BELL
LOS ANGELES—For 12 Rounds, the deliciously dark duo of Claudia Sarne and Atticus Ross, their first release in the U.S. is a homecoming rather than an invasion. The band, who are originally from London, played in both the U.S. and Canada last summer and are most in tune with the American scene now.

Sarine feels priviledged to be Nothing’s “first rocker minus a penis,” but doesn’t plan on wild nights of bra-burning. “I was made aware I was the only woman just recently, and I don’t want to make it an issue. I love women and have fantastic female friends, but I have no need to say, ‘Look what I’m doing and I’m a girl,’ I’m not a Spice Girl.”

BRAGG PLAYS TUNESMITH FOR GUTHRIE

(Continued from page 14)

myself, ‘It’s not like it’s the last few scraps. If I mess it up, anyone can have a go at it.’ I was honored to be asked to have a go at it first.”

As Bragg delved into the archives, he realized the fact that he isn’t an American may have been an advantage. “I didn’t grow up with Woody,” he says. “I came to Woody through Bob Dylan, which was good, because Nora didn’t want us to make a tribute album—she wanted a collaboration.”

For Tweedy, the prospect of composing music for and recording songs with Guthrie’s lyrics is unbelievable. “When Billy asked us the first time, our reaction was, ‘Sure, sounds great. We’ll believe it when we see it.’ It didn’t really actually hit home until we got to meet with Bill and actually go to the archive and take some lyrics home to work with.”

“They really made it their own,” Nora Guthrie says. “There’s some songs that I can’t believe Woody wrote, because it sounds so much like Billy and Jeff.”

In working on the album, Bragg came to realize that he had more in common with Guthrie than he realized. “The obvious [similarities] are that we are both solo and both political,” he says. “We both are very firm believers in the do-it-yourself ethic that my generation refers to as punk.”

Bragg is also optimistic that the project will help expose record buyers to another side of Guthrie. “I think the only thing we know is quite a one-dimensional figure,” he says. “He is someone who is seen as being synonymous with the Depression, the Dust Bowl, and the 1930s, but Woody Guthrie didn’t die until 1967. And his greatest work was done in New York. He certainly wouldn’t have written ‘Bound for Glory’ if he didn’t come to New York.”

Bob Reamer, a music buyer for the Ann Arbor, Mich.-based Borders Books & Music, says he is eagerly anticipate the album. “Being a fan of Billy Bragg and Wilco, I’m excited,” he says. “I can’t say I’m a super fan of Woody Guthrie, but this will be a way of introducing him to a whole new audience who only know him as someone who inspired Bob Dylan or as Arlo Guthrie’s father.”

The album, which on May 12 Elektra shipped the track “California Stars” to triple-A, roots, and college radio, as well as specialty shows. The track will also be included on the album Network’s “Totally Adult Sampler,” due June 5.

“We feel that the music on this record is contemporary, and we want to get it out there and give it a shot,” says Dana Brandwein, senior director of marketing for Elektra (U.S.).

The label also expects a big boost from an appearance by Bragg and Wilco on the “Late Show With David Letterman” June 20. In mid-June, the artists are expected to appear together at the New York International Folk Festival in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, as well as a series of U.K. dates.

In addition, Bragg (managed by Peter Jenner and booked by the Agency Group) and Wilco (managed by Tony Markherga and booked by Monterey Peninsula Artists) may play dates together in July or August.

“If Wilco isn’t available, Brager will enlist another band: ‘I’m not going to do [the songs] solo or even with just me and Jeff Tweedy, because I don’t want this to be a folk thing. The whole point is that we want this to be Woody like you haven’t heard him before, with a proper-in-your-face band.”

The project will receive some additional exposure via a documentary commissioned by BBC 2 Television. Bragg says the program will likely air in the U.K. in December. He hopes it will be picked up by PBS in the U.S.
TAI SPINS: With the Wallflowers’ cover of David Bowie’s “Heroes” already a radio hit in the U.S., the soundtrack to “Godzilla” looks like it’s on its way to achieving success of monstrous proportions. The Sony Music Soundtrax/Epic Records release hits U.S. stores on Tuesday (19) and streams Monday (18) in most major international markets, for which Sony Music has readied a series of highly targeted marketing blueprints that involve several singles, including Jamiroquai’s “Deeper Underground” and Puff Daddy and Jimmy Page’s “Kashmir”-inspired “Come With Me.” “It is a territory-in-territory choice,” says Bruman, executive VP of Sony Music Soundtrax. “We are looking at what’s right for the individual countries, and they have single options based on what they feel will work best in their country and based on the release dates of the movie.”

Moviegoers around the globe might notice that only about half of the songs on the soundtrack are actually featured in the film, Bruman says Sony decided early on to create a “compilation album” more than a straight-ahead soundtrack, along the lines of Columbia’s “Men In Black,” the only song from which that was in the movie was the Will Smith title track. “The idea here was similar to ‘Men In Black.’ We have an event movie, and [it] seemed like a perfect opportunity to have a compilation album that would be an event in its own right,” Bruman says. “We set out to make an album that would be an experience of this movie, which is why so many artists got a chance to talk with [director] Roland Emmerich and [producer] Dean Devlin and see footage and trailers.” He adds that so many artists wanted to participate in “Godzilla” because the monster is a “rock’n’roll icon” in its own right.

CREATURE COMFORT: Releasing the score from a feature film as a commercial album can be difficult enough, but doing so for a severe album from a TV miniseries was an even more huge undertaking. Not so for John Van Tongeren, whose score to the ABC miniseries “Creature,” based on the Peter Benchley novel, will be in stores Tuesday (19) on Intrada Records. Van Tongeren, who cut his teeth as writer, arranger, and producer for pop and rock acts ranging from Chicago to Robbie Nevil to Chris Thompson, segued into the world of Hans Zimmer and has worked extensively with Mark Mancina on “Scooby 2” and other projects. Aside from his theatrical work, Van Tongeren scores the TV series “Poltergeist; The Legacy” and “Outer Limits.” He says he was drawn to “Creature” because the mix of dialogue enabled him to dive into a deeper body of music than is supported by an average-length film and because it offered him a chance to write “elegant” music. “They have all these great exterior shots of the island and the ocean; it’s exciting to work on a project with so many great writers,” the Van Tongeren himself played a key role in getting “Creature” the album produced. “I did some groundwork after I had some of the main music writers and sent it to a couple of the soundtrack labels I have relationships with,” Van Tongeren says. “I was at work on a couple of projects for a yet-to-be-determined label and a Thompson solo album.

ROM THE VALIERS: “Taxi Driver” and “Funny Lady” are the latest additions to the “Music Masters” series of digitally remastered music. The albums will be in stores Tuesday (19) and follow the April 26 release of the 20th-anniversary expanded edition CD of “Close Encounters Of The Third Kind.” “Taxi Driver” contains 26 minutes of previously unreleased music, including all the cues composed and recorded by composer Bernard Herrmann and five cue versions of Herrmann compositions arranged and conducted by Dave Blume. “Funny Lady” includes nearly a dozen Barbara Streisand vocals, more than half from them standards from the ’30s and some co-written by Billy Rose. Both sets have been reissued to reflect the actual order in which the music occurs in each film.

PRODUCTION NOTES: Rhino Records is out to prove there’s plenty of rocking ‘n’ rolling going on in Cleveland. On Tuesday (19), the label will release “Cleveland Rocks!—Music From The Epic Television Miniseries.” The compilation comprises 24 tracks, including two versions of the title track—the original version by Ian Hunter and a cover by the Presidents Of The United States Of America...plus full renditions of the signature music snippets from the movie, including “Five O’Clock World” and “What Is Hip.” And speaking of TV, TVT Records/Tee Vee Thomas is rushing out an album to complement the retroactive “CBS: The First 50 Years.” TVT is working with the network to collect theme music from a half-century of series from “Mary Tyler Moore” to “Murphy Brown,” from “I Love Lucy” to “Everybody Loves Raymond.” Also included are “Mission: Impossible,” “The Dukes Of Hazzard,” “Peacocks,” and “All In The Family.” The album will be in stores Tuesday (19), the day before CBS airs its two-hour special.
The Heatseekers chart lists the best-selling titles by new and developing artists, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 100 of the Billboard 200 chart. When an album reaches this level, the album and the artist's subsequent albums are immediately eligible for inclusion on the Heatseekers charts. All albums are available on cassette and CD. "No.1" signifies that the title is available. Albums with the greatest sales gains. © 1998, Billboard/SPR Communications.

**CREEPING UP ON YOU:**
With the release of Creeper Lagoon's latest album, "I Become Small And Go," May 19 on adventurous indie Nickelbag and a DreamWorks contract tucked in the band's back pocket, the world can expect to see plenty more of the Northern California indie faves.

According to the band's guitarist/keyboards/vocalist, Sharky Laguana, Creeper Lagoon is looking forward to improving its profile.

"Indie credibility and a nickel will buy you a nickel's worth of food," observes Laguana. "Over the years we've played with everybody from Pavement to Guided by Voices—anybody that's ever been called indie. I feel two things about the issue of credibility. One, it's dime-a-roller just rocks like it's got to get over.

Considering the act's funky aesthetic—it lists a Big Lighter and oxygen oscillator as instruments, and lead vocalist Ian Sefchick builds its amplifiers from scratch—it's no wonder there was a meeting of the minds with Nickelbag, which is helmed in part by the Dust Brothers.

They're very open-minded to trying different things with their music," says Dust Brother John King, who remixed Creeper album cut "Wonderful Love," "Empty Ships," and "Dear Deadly." "They're not strictly rock-'n-roll or dance or analog or anything. It's just about making music that they love."

Creeper Lagoon's Laguana says the band's low-fi reputation says nothing about its willingness to experiment.

"I feel like we're building a Rube Goldberg machine," says Laguana, referring to the artist known for building whimsical but complicated mechanical contraptions.

"Sometimes I think music has a similarity in that I don't know if it has any function, but it has a lot of beauty and emotion and intimacy."

**PHOENIX RISING:**
Hoping to satiate hometown demand and build a regional story in anticipation of the June 30 release of Gloriette's new album, "Cup Runneth Over," Kneel- ing Elephant/RCA drooped the album May 12 in the Phoenix area.

According to RCA VP of field marketing/sales Elise Kolesky, feedback from retailers and eager radio stations such as KDUX prompted the label to take aggressive action.

"It was almost like we asked ourselves, 'If we were an independent label, what would we do?'' says Kolesky. "So, basically we decided to infiltrate the market and seed product before street date."

In New York, the act will hit the road July 30 on the H.O.R.D.E. tour.

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Sweet. Marc Anthony Thompson, who records under the name Chocolate Genius, re-emerges July 14 with his thoughtful V2 debut, "Black Music." The artist, who recorded two albums for Warner Bros. in the '80s, won an Obie Award last year for his musical contribution to the play "A Huey P. Newton Story." The album includes a few contributions, including guest work by members of Medeski, Martin & Wood.

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"It's all going to work, and the world will be doing the same thing we're doing," says Duke Jordan of the band's sales efforts. "And we're going to make sure that our songs are heard."

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**All Hail The Chief.** "El Presidente," the forthcoming single from Drugstore's "White Magic For Lovers" album, features a duet between the band's vocalist Isabel Monteiro and Radiohead's Thom Yorke. Modern rock stations WFNX Boston, KSAN San Francisco, and WHFS Washington, D.C., are testing the track. Meanwhile, a clip for the song is airing on MTV and VH1's "MTV's 120 Minutes." The album bows June 9 here on Roadrunner Records.
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Godzilla—The new attention right. Album, with "Air," Puffy Combs stew. Lobos, Reviews score. Eastern RCA Maria wrote Martin Rodgers' 24 barger Broadway, VARIOUS and movie Caballero classic. Its he's 83102 singers and Richard MY of the new soundtrack to the production big of songs Al Crow's of 1998 original of a reflect standard of the industry's most exorable work, which was shown throughout self-penned "A Toy." Their score.长大了, or this last of the albums. They were primarily known as a British-born countertenor and mặc phe in their career.

LENNY KRAVITZ 5

With an artist as mercurial as Lenny Kravitz, one learns not to expect consistency but, rather, to revel in the flashes of genius that each new work may bring. On his latest endeavor, these brilliant moments are plentiful, starting with the tune "Lennon." And culminating with the Seal-like "I Belong To You" — a pop gem that could turn Kravitz into a crossover phenomenon. Until now he has been predominantly a rocker who has effortlessly delivered all of his other albums. He has long foolishly embraced pop, R&B, and funk in the manner of Prince at his best. Once again, Kravitz's talents must be examined on a wide range of formats, from top 40 to R&B to modern rock to AC. A bold album that promises to restore some of the credibility Kravitz lost after the spotly "Circus" album from 1996.

VERNON MARTINSIL THE MIDNIGHT BLUES PRODUCER: Banjo Landing Columbia 68291 "Just in case with Strings" has been a failure. Even Charlie Parker's crossover epiphenomena were marred by saccharine communism, and the classic "Clifford Brown With Strings" isn't immune from ennui. But with "The Midnight Blues," Vernon Marsilus and his crew got it right. Sleek and stylish yet showing no lack of soul, "The Midnight Blues" is an album that will gather international attention as well as the flowered rhymes, and R&B and funk in the manner of Prince, in the style of his best. Once again, Kravitz's talents must be examined on a wide range of formats, from top 40 to R&B to modern rock to AC. A bold album that promises to restore some of the credibility Kravitz lost after the spotly "Circus" album from 1996.

ALEXANDER O'NEAL Loves Again PRODUCER: Brian Russ, A. Daniel, Robert "Noel" Bell, and Carol Harper

Ichabod Wren 15122 Alexander O'Neal sings the same type of music that has helped to maintain his career, but that isn't necessarily a good thing. Today's listeners get bored a lot sooner than they used to. While his earlier hits, such as "Saturday Love" (1984) and "For The Cool In You" (1987), connected with the public, "Lovers Again" lacks the fire to stir up the romantic impulses of the following listeners. As with his previous albums, it contains tracks such as "Carry On," "Our Love," and "Baby Come To Me" (a duet with Cherelle), seems geared to radio programs on R&B adult stations. Otherwise, this mediocre project will probably pass over when it comes to top 40 and mainstream R&B airplay.

VITAL REISSUES @

JOHN WILLIAMS Close Encounters Of The Kind Third PRODUCER: John Williams MCA 1131799 2

When it was released theatrically in 1977, close to the best of science fiction works, thick with comedy, and with music. It was also his most popular album on the Billboard charts. And, like the "Star Wars" trilogy, the follow-up to 1995’s "Fantasia" and "Fantasia 2000," "What Burns Never Returns" is a study in industrial-strength force, like some archaic machine beating in a world of uneasy. The metallic guitars and droning r's/hymn section in the middle of "Under the Mound," "a song about repeating rhythms and a series of quirky hooks, and like the human friction shots sparks of real art. Not to everyone’s taste, certainly, but those delicate strings of electronic cliches can turn into the lush, sunburnt luxury of a "Spanish Night" for sale.

STONEY EDWARDS The Best Of Stonny Edwards: Poor Folks Stick Together PRODUCER: Mike Rogers 2

Stoney Edwards was a distinctive country-country who never did it big but left a singular body of work. As one of the few African-American acts to have country success, Edwards came to the genre not of genuine love for the music. He charted with "The Big 20 Dollar Top," "I've also been noted for "For The Cool In You," "A Thousand Miles Away," and "Mississippi You're On My Mind." After he worked to get on country radio, he was banned from some stations at the Chip Taylor-penned "Blackbird (Hold Your Head Up)" on some tracks. That's not surprising. The show's voice don't show their Latin roots. They did, especially on "Diného," a Spanish-slang version of their single "Say It," and on "Wherever You Go." Other noteworthy tracks include "Get Down," "Somehow," "If I Know," and "Fly Away." "A Thousand Miles Away.

MONTGOMERY/LESLIE Satchell/Larry Cordile composition "Cure For Our Ballad" and her own ballad "Not Getting Over You." Then shegraduates to her sultry, strong "Getting Even With The Blues" (co-written with Tom Shapiro and Chris Waters). Overall, this is a very well-written album. Neely, she is blossoming in the capable hands of Keith Stegall, one of Nashville’s more underrated—as well as undeserved—producers.

R & B

SPOTLIGHTS

ALEXANDER O'NEAL Loves Again PRODUCER: Brian Russ, A. Daniel, Robert "Noel" Bell, and Carol Harper

Ichabod Wren 15122 Alexander O'Neal sings the same type of music that has helped to maintain his career, but that isn't necessarily a good thing. Today's listeners get bored a lot sooner than they used to. While his earlier hits, such as "Saturday Love" (1984) and "For The Cool In You" (1987), connected with the public, "Lovers Again" lacks the fire to stir up the romantic impulses of the following listeners. As with his previous albums, it contains tracks such as "Carry On," "Our Love," and "Baby Come To Me" (a duet with Cherelle), seems geared to radio programs on R&B adult stations. Otherwise, this mediocre project will probably pass over when it comes to top 40 and mainstream R&B airplay.

LATIN

VICTOR MANUELINO

PRODUCER: Raul Sanchez, Victor Manuelle Sony Disco 8229 Victor Manuelle, a salsa heavy, grown-up vocalist from Puerto Rico, follows up his critically acclaimed 1998 album "Salsa To Do," with another solid, romantic album that highlights his understated interpretations of such charted tracks as "Hay Card" and "Me Rompo El Alma." which isn’t necessarily a good thing. Today's listeners get bored a lot sooner than they used to. While his earlier hits, such as "Saturday Love" (1984) and "For The Cool In You" (1987), connected with the public, "Lovers Again" lacks the fire to stir up the romantic impulses of the following listeners. As with his previous albums, it contains tracks such as "Carry On," "Our Love," and "Baby Come To Me" (a duet with Cherelle), seems geared to radio programs on R&B adult stations. Otherwise, this mediocre project will probably pass over when it comes to top 40 and mainstream R&B airplay.

CLASSICA

15. BACH, CANONETAS FOR ALTO Andreas Scholl, countertenor; Orchestra Col legium Vocale, Philippe Herreweghe PRODUCER: Jean-Marc Gelin Harmonia Mundi 901644 Scholl and Herrewegge's Gramophone Awards ceremony last year in London and caused quite a stir with his Teutonic good looks and the disarming purity of his countertenor voice. His Gramophone Award-winning album of Vivaldi's Stabat Mater on Harmonia Mundi is something of a contemporary classic, and he has also put out a good collection of German Baroque lieder and one of early English songs, besides solving in acclaimed ensemble recordings of Handel, Schmelz, Caldarola, and Bach. Here, Scholl offers a set of Bach’s cantatas for alto voice, two of them fine Flemish conductor Philippe Herreweghe. And as a bonus on the initial pressing of the album, the disk includes an "improvisation" on a discography on a companion disc. Also new on Harmonia Mundi, Herreweghe has added six more improvisations—most of which ranges from Monteverdi to Mahler—with a mellifluous take on Bach’s B Minor Mass.

CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN

CHRIS EATON What Kind Of Love PRODUCER: Chris Eaton

Cadence Communications 49827 British Chris Eaton is one of the most talented singer/songwriters in any genre of music. He's penned hits for everyone from Barbra Streisand to Eric Clapton to Grant, and the caliber of songs on this satisfying pop album is a testament to his musical gifts. Eaton has a wide array of styles and a wide array of vocal techniques, all at his disposal. His new album, "Boat Of Devotion," the polished peck of "Shooting Stars," the rollicking "Ordinary People," and the ballsy, feel-good "Almost Home," are all well-done in the studio with no liner notes. Chris Eaton is a world-class talent, why, with this fine project, should garner no well-deserved attention. Contact: 615-666-7037.

RECOMMENDATIONS
**The B-52's Debbie** (1333)

Produced: Tha 82-C, Tom Duran

WRITERS: K. Kirkpatrick, R. Morris, W. Scheller, C. Wilson

PUBLISHERS: Chrysalis/Warner Bros. (cassette)

*“Sudsy Lenny”* is less than a hot second since Laffitl served him hot music and a new recording. On this first single from the new band Scarlet Rivera, The B-52’s come out swinging, firing off rhymes with a dexterity befiting their long-ago exposure as a local band. They are Galapagos, who gives the song a nice bite—as does DJ Butter Fingers, whose broken beats are just about the perfect backdrop for the track’s booming funk beat and dramatic key changes. As an easy bet for the album’s top ten and a fine single, it’s a memorable r&b for RCA to put some promotion machine behind this find, if unfairly overlooked. (K. K.)

**Olivia Newton-John** (2503)

Produced: Robert Taylor-Francis, Tom Keifer

WRITERS: Craig Porcaro, George W. Fracciolla

PUBLISHERS: Chrysalis/Warner Bros.

RELIX: Stephen Jones

*“Danny’s Song”* has an exotic, foreign feel that could sell millions. With Madonna’s mega “Rays Of Light” project opening many a previously closed-oak door for electronic, the time is right and perfect for RCA to put some promotion muscle behind this find, if unfairly overlooked. (K. K.)

**Madonna**’s glorious album, “Extra Virgin,” has an easily accessible drum’n’bass groove, as well as appropriately lush keyboards that flesh out the song’s memo- rable melody. Madonna will continue to remind some of Everything But The Girl’s Tracey Thorn, while others will appreciate her creamy alto voice and subtly romantic delivery. For added pleasure, investigate Stephen Jones’ glittery treatment of the melody with punsters who prefer a more NGGRC sound.

**Take 5** (1277)

Produced: Various

WRITERS: K. Lamb, A. Little, L. Partisan

PUBLISHERS: Chrysalis/Warner Bros.

*“ creditors (_dependency)" is a lovely thing to hear, but not quite a hit. It’s a sweet, straightforward ballad that could easily be a hit for this promising new group? Perhaps not, but it’s a lovely thing to hear. It’s a sweet, straightforward ballad that could easily be a hit for this promising new group? Perhaps not, but it’s a lovely thing to hear.

**Lionel Richie**’s soul-ful album, “Dancing On The Ceiling,” was a surprise hit, as was the first single from his new album, “Three Times A Lady.” This second single is a bit more obscure, but still a strong contender. It’s a stylish, uptempo R&B song that should do well for Richie, who is a master of the genre.

**George Jones**’s latest album, “Wild Irish Rose,” is a pleasant surprise. It’s a heart- touching, soulful ballad that could easily be a hit for this promising new group? Perhaps not, but it’s a lovely thing to hear.

**Bette Davis**’s powerful new album, “Bette Davis Eyes,” is a must-hear for fans of the genre. It’s a heart- touching, soulful ballad that could easily be a hit for this promising new group? Perhaps not, but it’s a lovely thing to hear.

**Reeves**’s latest album, “Born To Be Wild,” is a must-hear for fans of the genre. It’s a heart- touching, soulful ballad that could easily be a hit for this promising new group? Perhaps not, but it’s a lovely thing to hear.
score of electronic trance music from indie label Waveform Records. In July, the label will release the “Ancient Alien” soundtrack, and Odyssey plans a host of Internet and in-store promotions for the video and album.

SOUTH PARK
Warner Home Video
86 minutes, $14.95.

The animation is as crude as the jokes, but this Comedy Central sleeper hit is bound to be a Miller hit all the same. The adventures of foul-mouthed youths Stan, Kyle, and Cartman, as well as the often dead Kenny, are now legendary. Its creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone are the hottest animators since Matt Groening of “The Simpsons.” Woody Harrelson appears in six episodes of the series to capitalize on the millions of people who have heard about “South Park” but don’t get Comedy Central. In “Cartman Gets An Anal Probe,” aliens abduct Kyle’s baby brother Ike and leave Cartman a problem that would make even Mulder and Scully of “The X-Files” chuckle. The resolution is as ridiculous as the plot, but it’s hilarious. In terms of adult-driven animation, “South Park” takes up where “The Simpsons” left off. Also available are “Volcano” “Weight Gain 400,” “Big Gay Al’s Big Gay Boat Ride,” “An Elephant Makes Love To A Pig,” and “Death.”

THE MIKE DOUGLAS SHOW WITH JOHN LENNON AND YOKO ONO
Risa Home Video
Approximately 375 minutes, five tape set, $99.95.
From Feb. 14-18, 1972, John and Yoko co-hosted “The Mike Douglas Show,” and daytime television has probably never seen a more eclectic group of guests. On day three, the couple booked a macabre cook, a teakwood expert, the director of the Peace Corps, and Chuck Berry. Celebrity fans expecting an all-out jam session will be disappointed, but Berry and Lennon performing “Johnny B. Goode” and “Imagine” are great. The comic note is Yoko singing “Sisters O Sisters,” and there is a laughable spoken-word performance by Douglas. There’s also a music video of “Crippled Inside” from the “Imagine” album, featuring a cameo by the late Andy Warhol. The music portions are entertaining, but the talking-head guests are pretty dull. Still, the interaction between John and Yoko offers a lot of insight into why their marriage worked so well.

ROCKTOONS
www.rocktoons.com
FEBRUARY ISSUE prides itself on being non-prolific and having “no real purpose in the world.” Rocktoons is quite entertaining. An image library focusing primarily on original artwork of rock musicians, and site features articles, reviews of today’s most popular bands drawn by both site maintainers and fans. Other features include CD covers of older cartoons, a “Bulletin Board” through which users have a forum for “publishing their meaningless thoughts,” and the opportunity to vote for their favorite submissions. Rocktoons boasts a design philosophy of “to frame no apples, no problems.” But don’t let that fool you. The design is slick and imaginative, even though the only software requirement is “any browser window within the past few years.” Laced with just a tinge of sardonic wit, Rocktoons is a humorous and entertaining site worth checking out.

MLB 99
Sony Entertainment
Sony PlayStation
“MLB 99,” the latest fix for baseball junkies, packs an addictive, adrenaline-soaked workout. Even before users get to their first exhibition game, they have the option to compete as a major league hopeful during spring training. This new feature tracks players’ progress, and if they have the right stuff, they get called up to the show. Do not get too comfort- able, though, or you could find yourself back riding pine in spring training. Of course, there’s a lot more to “MLB 99.”

The improved graphics are more than just hype, and Sony has applied its “total control” feature for highly advanced batting and fielding options. This game chews up and spits out the dirt gaming games like Electronic Arts’ “Triple Play 99.”

BLASTO
Sony Entertainment
Sony PlayStation
Console game users can’t get enough smart aleck superheroes these days, and this licensed comic book brand Blasto (voiced by “Saturday Night Live” alum- num Phil Hartman) is perfectly suited to come to the rescue. In many respects, the game answers the call and is full of silly surprises, with an array of animated villains with weapons that are wonderfully destructive. The biggest downside for Blasto is that he is a one-note comic, which—though challenging—are repetitive and frustrating. As a result, it takes some hugging to get to the heart of this title.

A U D I O B O O K S
B Y TR U C K M I L L E R R O S E B U M
STILL ME
By Christopher Reeve
Read by the author
Random House Audio Books
3 hours (unabridged), $19.95
ISBN 0-735-04821-0
It’s no overstatement to say that Reeve’s autobiography is among the most life-affirming audio experiences published. Best known for his “Superman” role, Reeve had an active life outside of acting and always wanted to give something back. But such a man suffered an injury that left him both physically and emotionally broken. Reeve’s story is one of the most compelling accounts of a man whose care is tragic beyond belief. In this riveting audio, Reeve honestly and courageously details his accident and the aftermath. When he first learned the extent of his condition, he briefly consid- ered turning off his life support. But his wife, Dana, told him she was with him for the long haul. “You’re still you,” she said, with no hint of hesitation or obligation. Reeve says if he had sensed any, he might not have been able to go on. Instead, he batted back from despair. He says he asked not “What kind of life can I have?” but “What kind of life can I build?” From his ongoing struggle with physical ther- apy—which gradually let him breathe more freely without his ventilator—he says, “I will continue to work on my activism and directing debut, Reeve is a shining example of a person who has refused to be defeated.” This audio book also covers details of his troubled child- hood and life before the accident. After overcoming the trauma of his parents’ divorce, Reeve attended Juilliard, where one of his classmates was Robin Williams. Reeve was a constant presence in the street, eventually made it big in Hollywood. This intimate audio format is perfect for Reeve’s listeners to experience his story, truthful voice against the soft hiss of the ventillator in the background is powerful indeed.

HOME VIDEO: All new titles released at substantial prices are eligible. Send review copies to Catherine Applefield Olson, 622 Oakley Place, Alexandria, VA. 22302. ENTERACTIVE: Send review copies to Doug Reece, Billboard, 5055 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010. A U D I O B O O K S: Send review copies to Trudi Miller Rosenbaum, 202 Selsey St., Brooklyn, NY 11218

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B U L L E T I N
M A Y 2 3, 1998
Forte Stakes Out His Own Camp
Ruffhouse/Columbia Artist Looks To Establish Own Identity

BY SHAWNEE SMITH

NEW YORK—Though he gained notoriety for collaborating on various Fugees projects—the group's "Cowboys," Wykeyle Jean's "We Trying To Stay Alive," and Lauryn Hill's "Sweetest Thing" remix—Refugee Camp's John Forte is blazing his own trail with his solo album, "Polly Sci."

Set to street internationally June 29 on Ruffhouse/Columbia, the project flaunts a more street-oriented flavor than previous Fugees-affiliated sets.

"Of course, people are going to assume that because I'm in the Refugee Camp, ('Polly Sci') is going to be in the same vein...light but serious, danceable and commercially accepted," says Forte. "But lyrically I've always kept my ear to the ground because that's what I relate to."

Raised in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, N.Y., listening to the likes of Nina Simone and Sarah Vaughan, Forte was educated in New York public schools before attending Exeter, a preparatory high school in New Hampshire, where he was trained as a classical violinist.

He titled the set "Polly Sci" to speak to the balancing act he often performs between his street background and academic training. "John's got the science of the streets and the science of the mind," says Demmette Guirad, senior VP of the black music division at Columbia Records Group. "It's like the whole album is a mixture of dual personalities. He's got the DMX track ("We Got This"), 'Hot,' and the Fat Joe track ("They Got Me") that's bumping for the streets, and on a whole other level he's got 'God Is Love God Is War,' which we can market to rap alternative and R&B [audiences]."

The album's first single, "Nine-Nine (Flash The Message)," which was serviced to radio the first week of May, interpolates the chorus of the '80s hit "99 Luftbal- lons" by German group Nena. The chorus on the album version is sung by fellow Fugees affiliate Jeri Faj- ti, but, according to Julie Bor-

Living Legends Fetes Industry Pioneers;
D’Neal Makes More Music For ‘Lovers’

LEGENDS LIVING: The sixth annual Living Legends Awards dinner, held at the Impact SuperSummit conference April 29 in Reno, Nev., honored the contributions of such music industry pioneers as Henry Allen, one of the first black VPs and senior VPs at Atlantic Records (U.S.); Willie J. Barney, owner of Barney's One Stop Records in Chicago; Eula Mae Hatter, veteran gospel-show host at WXOK Baton Rouge, La.; "Diamond" Jim Sears, who began his career as one of black radio's first salespeople; Winston "Buzz" Willis, who created RCA Records' first black music division; and Violet Brown, R&B music buyer for the Warehouse retail chain since 1985.

Kedar Massenburg, CEO of Kedar Entertainment and senior VP of Universal Records, who also served as dinner chairman, says there are already plans to start a Living Legends concert series in which artists would donate a portion of their performance fee to the charity.

Massenburg, who also was Impact's conference chairman, says the proceeds will go to the Living Legends Foundation. Ultimately, his goal is to get his peers to assist a great cause. In addition, Massenburg wants to help them realize that, like some veteran artists that the foundation has helped, they too could end up in need at some point in their lives. "Right now, it's for the older people, but I'm trying to get younger people involved," he says.

O’Neal’S BACK: Alexander O’Neal’s seventh album, "Lovers Again," will be released Tuesday (19) by Ichiban Records/One World Entertainment. The singer worked with Nick Mundy, Dennis Charles, Ronnie Wilson, and Pete Kazir & B-Cube on the project. In 1984, he worked with Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis on his self-titled debut on Tabu/CBS Records, garnering the hit single "Saturday Love." His second album, "Hearse," offered such classic club anthems as "Fakin,'" which gave a Realty check to women who changed such things as hair length and eye color to be considered attractive to men. The new album is loaded with ballads and midtempo romantic songs similar to Luther Vandross. "Baby Come To Me," his duet with Cherrelle, is a decent effort but is no match for James Ingram and Patti Austin's original version, "Grind," "Body Talking," "Our Love," and "Sneakin'" are among the more noteworthy tracks on the album.

MTV’S REAL DEAL: Shopping demos and camping out in front of clubs or—heaven forbid—a record executive's door in an attempt to garner a record deal still isn't a "paid" full-time job. However, MTV is making those "dias-paying" efforts somewhat easier, via the TV pilot "The Real Deal," for young, unsigned R&B & music performers of all nationalities. The show offers a "behind the scenes" look at the audition process that will culminate in "The Real Deal Showcase" (the very same one that catapulted such acts as Brandy, Karen White, and Take Six into the limelight). Similar to the format of MTV's "The Real World," the pilot was created to give a bird's-eye view of the lives of unsigned singers and songwriters and the paths they take to gain notoriety.

The auditions are open to 14- to 28-year-olds who are "record deal" ready.

LATIN HIP-HOP: Extended club mixes of Wykeyle Jean's "Guantanamera" and Will Smith's "Miami," both of which are Latin-flavored, are prominently fea- tured on the Columbia compilation "Latin Mix USA," due June 16. Other artists on the album include Ricky Martin, Shakira, the Blackout Allstars, Deep Latin Groove, Albita, Chayanne, Monica Naranjio, Mere- booty Giris, Fey, Rohi Rob's Clubworld Feat- ing The Wepaman, and Lorena Martinez.

WHO'S WHO AMONG THE NEW: The latest slew of notable new acts set for release this summer includes Tyrese (RCA); Honey, Nutta Butta, and Mike Etheridge (Lil'Man Records); Dejah (Un-D-Nyable Records); Debelah (Motown); and Tami Davis (Red Ant). Expect to see Sade, P.J. and A Tribe Called Quest resurface this summer.

HERE AND THERE: The legendary Temptations plan to release "Phoenix Rising Temptations" as their 54th album, on Motown in September. Aaron Hall has switched his management from Anthony D'Amato to Abandon Entertainment in New York, which will work with Hall on his upcoming RCA release, "Inside Of You." The company is also seeking opportunities for Hall in film and theater, as well as increasing his guest appearances on other artists' hip-hop and R&B projects. The album, which will be released this summer, was produced by Emmanuel Seali, Malik Pendleton, and Hall.
In April, Forte embarked on a two-week black college and spring break tour with Ruffhouse labelmates Sparty Thieves. After college radio and commercial airplay, the tour was performed for radio, retail, and press across the U.S. as part of the Columbia black music department’s Street Soul camp campaign. The video for “Ninety Nine,” which was serviced to video outlets May 12, will also be rotated with other Street Soul camp artists in WJB Foot Action show retailers.

“We want to focus on his core hip-hop audience, who we believe are about a million active record and concert ticket buyers, first,” Taylor said.

And hopefully “Ninety Nine” will cross over.

Forte will continue dates with Jean throughout the summer, with the Nuggets’ annual Hawaiian benefit concert Saturday (16) being webcast at www.johnforte.com. He will also perform during the upcoming Summer Grooves tour and during Lilith Fair as part of Queen Latifah’s set. Forte is managed by Latifah’s Flavor Unit Management.

Internationally, Forte used Jean’s two-week European promo to do international press and make TV appearances with Jean. He will perform at various international summer events, and Bechard expects to book international promo dates in the late summer and early fall.

Forte’s music is published by Nutty Baby Music/ASCAP and he is booked worldwide by the William Morris Agency.
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SHES BACK: In the last issue, “I Get Lonely” by Janet Featuring BLACKstreet (Virgin) scored Hot Shot Debut at No. 6 on Hot R&B Singles. Most times, a record has lost its bullet, Billboard will look for increases of 10% or more in sales and airplay for two consecutive weeks before the track can earn the bullet back. However, “A Song For Mama” (Motown) by Boyz II Men re-bullets its 24th chart week, moving 47-7, and it also earns the Greatest Gainer Sales & Airplay distinction.

“Tis the season to be jolly as we approach the holiday season, and the holidays bring with them the traditional Christmas music. With the release of new Christmas albums by Mariah Carey, Harry Styles, and Pentatonix, the holiday music genre is thriving. Mariah Carey’s album, “Merry Christmas II You,” has been named the best-selling Christmas album of the year. The album has been praised for its timeless and classic holiday songs, including “All I Want for Christmas Is You.”

The holiday season also brings with it an increase in retail sales, as consumers prepare for the holiday shopping season. According to the National Retail Federation, holiday sales are expected to increase by 4.7% this year, surpassing the $1 trillion mark for the first time. With the rise in online shopping, consumers are also expected to spend more on gift cards and e-gifts, with a 7.1% increase in gift card sales.

Overall, the holiday season is a critical time for retailers and music artists alike. As the winter months approach, it’s a great time to indulge in holiday music and take advantage of the retail sales that are sure to come.
The Disco Revival has officially lasted longer than the actual 70s era of musical decadence. Go figure.

Over the last eight years, that glorious yet harmfully criticized four-year period (we’re not counting the pre-Disco Philly Soul era) has been the basis for more compilations, song covers, books, movies, and television shows than any other musical movement.

And just when my fellow media pundits attempt to declare a second death of disco, another wave of nostalgia washes over their feebly words. The world at large just never seems to get enough of it.

The latest is just about to hit. This summer will see the release of the major motion pictures “Studio 54” and “The Last Days of Disco,” both of which sport spankin’ hot soundtracks that sparkle with timeless baubles—as well as a few新鲜的new items.

The Work Group will come out the chute next with the album supporting “The Last Days Of Disco.” A test pressing of Nyoroucin’s Soul’s jazz-kissed interpretation of Alicia Bridges’ “I Love The Nightlife” has been playing in club DJs. A commercial single release is planned early next month.

If you need a disco fix sooner, VH1 launches the second season of its fab “Behind The Music” series with a special 90-minute look at notorious New York nightspot Studio 54 on May 24.

The program deftly traces the venue’s history—from its opening on April 26, 1977, through its reign as the quintessential hall of decadence and right up to its unceremonious close several years later. Featured are yummily anecdotes from celebs like Grace Jones, Nile Rodgers, and Jerry Hall, as well as vivid observations from many of the club’s doormen and bartenders.

It’s all good, dishy fun, while also being remarkably insightful regarding the endurance of the disco revival. Simply put, it represents a rare time in the age of pure societal freedom. Although the disco era has been romanticized beyond realistic grasp, it truly was a time when seemingly nothing was off the table, that you stuck reasonably close to the fantasy land of colored lights and boogie cogie oogie. After the disco bubble burst, we were whacked by crises like AIDS. Suddenly, we went from being surprisingly to incredibly vulnerable. With that knowledge, who wouldn’t want to permanently live in the past?

VH1’s “Behind The Music” special effectively captures the contrast between disco’s heyday and initial crash in footage from the last known interview with Steve Rubell (co-owner of Studio 54 with Ian Schrager), who died of AIDS-related illness in 1989. His words will haunt you long after the program ends—and well into the next time you dive into the ongoing waves of disco nostalgia.

Livin’ It Up — The crazy-catchy “Boom Bye Bye” is intriguing newcomer Reiss so thoroughly soaks the brain with warm, sunny vibes that you feel virtually transported to a plush Jamaican island, frosty beverage in hand.

With a voice reminiscent of Tone Loc, Reiss seductively chants and raps amid a slinky shuffle-beat courtesy of a sticky keyboard lick lifted from “Die Young Stay Pretty” by Blondie. His performance is nicely contrasted by budding toasting sirens like Michelle Mees, who brings a Patra-like aggression to this hitbound Mercury release.

Intensely radio-minded in its original form, this Craig Kafon product will draw the heavy props of clubheads on the strength of Greg Padula’s meaty house remix. He flavors a muscular baseline atop rattrap percussion, while keeping the keyboard frills to a minimum. Kafon takes a crack at reacrating the tune himself by injecting a jittery trip hop groove.

Whilst we have Mercury on the brain, we also want to point out the imminence of a new album by the underappreciated Baha Men.

Due June 16, the wonderfully uplifting “Doong Spark” shows the Bahamian male pose floating its rich harmonies over grooves that reverberate the state of the floors funk with thumpin’ disco. The inexhaustible Berman Brothers and Tommy D. are among the set’s producers—along with Mercury A&R guru Steve Greenberg, who is actually quite impressive at the helm of the noteworthy first single, “Double Lovin’.”

Hey Now: After teasing and taunting diehards for nearly two years with promises of an album, Washington, D.C., studio renegades Deep Dish are finally about to unleash the full-length “Junk Science” on deConstruction U.K. in June. Kids, you are not ready for the brilliance of this project.

Of course, Deep Dish compatriots Dubfire and Shinaram include the recent singles “Stay Gold” and “Stranded,” giving punters a splash of the dark-house atmosphere that has become their signature. However, they also break exciting new ground by infusing elements of after-pop and even the scant guitar or two. Although the set remains fairly dubby, Everything But The Girl chanteuse Tracey Thorn makes an appropriately torchy cameo, while the lids even try their hand at vocalizing with respectable results.

“Junk Science” doesn’t have a firm U.S. release date yet. But we are willing to bet the rent that will change within weeks. This is, by far, among the best post-disco albums we’ve heard in a long time.

Another absolute must-have of the summer will be “Tourism,” the both anticipated second album by Dean Tangela. Slated for worldwide release on Twist’d May 19, the set shows the producer/DJ making major strides toward being the serious tunesmith we’ve always believed he could be. In addition to the recent smash “Elements,” the album boasts sterling collaborations with Teena Marie (“Baby, Do You Feel Me”), Darrell Martin (”Roots”), Jo Jo America (“Headhunter”), and Celese (“Music Is The Answer”).
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Tillis Marks ‘Time’ On Arista Set

BY JIM BESSMAN
NEW YORK—Although it isn’t reflected in the album, Pam Tillis’ new Arista/Nashville release, “Every Time,” follows a year of what she calls “cataclysmic” personal and professional upheaval.

“At first, I thought I couldn’t do the record,” says Tillis, who has gone through the painful dissolution of both her marriage and longevity management situation in the past 12 months. “But I just rolled up my sleeves and went into the studio every day and surrounded myself with people I felt comfortable with—and it felt like when I first started out in the business.”

“Every Time,” which was co-produced by Tillis and Billy Joe Walker Jr. and cut at Walker’s Recording Club studio in Nashville, is Tillis’ first album since last year’s “Greatest Hits.” The June 14 release is her first new major-label all-new material since 1990’s “All Of This Love”—an album, Tillis says, that she did not want to reprise.

“I felt like that was a darker album for me,” she says, “and believe it or not—even in the face of all that happened—I wanted more of a ‘Sweetheart’s Dance’ [her 1994 album] that had energy and a positive vibe to it—even though it had songs about all different angles of relationships.”

“Every Time” has an overall “brightness” in sound, melody, and tempo, says Tillis. “I think ‘Hurt Myself’ is the first song people will talk about, but it’s really a sarcastic song that’s really about being strong and refusing to be self-destructive,” she says. “I felt it had a lot of depth to it when I first heard it, like ‘All The Good Ones Are Gone.’”

That song, of course, was the new track from the greatest-hits package and a major hit. Tillis says she sees “I Said A Prayer,” the first single from “Every Time,” as the flip side to “All The Good Ones Are Gone,” in that it’s a “hopeful” number that reflects many of the experiences she’s been through.

It was important to put it in there after that big, heavy single girl’s anthem!”

“I Said A Prayer,” says Arista/Nashville senior VP of marketing Fletcher Foster, “is not a typical Pam Tillis record,” but is more rocking and up-tempo and, as such, “a great rockin’ summertime record.” Jeff Stolz, music buyer for the Torrance, Calif.-based Wherehouse Entertainment chain (where “Greatest Hits” remains a top 200 seller), also notes that the tune is “a change of pace” for Tillis.

“She’s been known for most the deeply emotional, heart-wrenching songs around—especially All ‘The (Continued on page 38)

Jeff Foxworthy Segues From Rednecks To Relationships; Brooks Makes Nashville Debut

YOU MIGHT BE: Jeff Foxworthy returns with his fourth Warner Bros. album Tuesday (19), and he’s tailing away from his redneck stick a bit. The title single, “Totally Committed,” deals more with relationships.

“After we worked with a couple of years ago, I’ve been really into the country music pecking order,” says Foxworthy, who’s had two major hits and says he’s now ready to be a genuine country artist.

“I think it’s always been taken in the spirit with which it was intended. I think I’ve been guilty of about half of these jokes [laughs]. And those that I didn’t, somebody in my family can put a check mark beside. I think it’s always been a laugh with ourselves, and I think that’s something that Southerners do have the ability to do. We don’t take ourselves too seriously. It’s a nice trait.

That’s the way I grew up. You weren’t allowed to be real sensitive in our family. But we’ve always laughed.”

ON THE ROAD: Most Music Row citizens were among the 51,000 ticket holders who attended Garth Brooks’ first-ever Nashville appearances May 8-10 at the Nashville Arena. Brooks placed Steve Wariner out of the crowd on Saturday and Sunday nights to duet with him on “Longneck Bottle.” Wariner also sang his current single, “Holes In The Floor Of Heaven.”

Brooks also appears on the new CMT single and video of “One Heart At A Time,” which is benefiting the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Other artists singing the Victoria Shaw-penned song are Faith Hill, Neal McCoy, Michael McDonald, Olivia Newton-John, Billy Dean, Shaw, and Bryan White.

At Atlantic Records Nashville, Greg Gosselin is named director of marketing. . .DreamWorks/SGK Music enters into a co-publishing deal with Buck Moore and Prineetta Music.
**Albums with **

1. **Yo-Yo**
2. **Tim McGraw**
3. **Garth Brooks**
4. **Shania Twain**
5. **Faith Hill**
6. **Brooks & Dunn**
7. **Dixie Chicks**
8. **Martina McBride**

**Greatest Gainer**

1. **Shania Twain**
2. **Clint Black**
3. **Def Leppard**
4. **Garth Brooks**
5. **Kenny Chesney**
6. **Sawyer Brown**
7. **Clint Black**

**New**

1. **Trisha Yearwood**
2. **Kelly Clarkson**
3. **Reba McEntire**
4. **Garth Brooks**
5. **John Michael Montgomery**
6. **CLint Black**
7. **George Strait**
8. **Dixie Chicks**
9. **Martina McBride**
10. **Trisha Yearwood**

**Debut**

1. **John Michael Montgomery**
2. **Clint Black**
3. **Tim McGraw**
4. **Garth Brooks**
5. **Kenny Chesney**
6. **Sawyer Brown**
7. **Reba McEntire**
8. **Trisha Yearwood**
9. **George Strait**
10. **Dixie Chicks**

**Most Recent**

1. **Shania Twain**
2. **Garth Brooks**
3. **Faith Hill**
4. **Brooks & Dunn**
5. **Dixie Chicks**
6. **Martina McBride**
7. **Clint Black**
8. **Def Leppard**
9. **Garth Brooks**
10. **Kenny Chesney**

**Most Played**

1. **Shania Twain**
2. **Garth Brooks**
3. **Faith Hill**
4. **Brooks & Dunn**
5. **Dixie Chicks**
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**Greatest**

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8. **Def Leppard**
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**No. 1**

1. **Shania Twain**
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6. **Martina McBride**
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10. **Kenny Chesney**
TULIS MARKS 'TIME' ON ARISTA SET
(Continued from page 36)

Good Ones Are Gone," says Stolz, who, like Foster, notes that "I Said A Prayer" is "more rocking and a bigger summer song."

The track is also one of three written by Brooks' long-time collaborator, Randy Houser. "He said if we could write the song and call her something like 'the great hope of Nashville,'" says Tulis. "I've never cut so many songs by one writer before. "I never thought I'd be cutting out in her songs that I don't hear in [other] Nashville songs now. She never got Emi Lynny [Harra] and has that Los Angeles, California, bluegrass influence; then she turns around and writes a song like 'Prayer,' which is really different and rock-influenced—I hear a lot of country, and it's not so hybridized on you that you can't hear where it comes from!"

Tulis, whose songs are published by artist/manager Michael Martin's Future Music (BMI), says that she wrote songs for "Every Time," but that the ones that made the album "resemble the stuff that Keith and I dive together—as all good things do.

She says that she expects the title track to be the second single and that she is "very optimistic about in-store cuts. We've got Eagles bassist Timothy B. Schmit to sing it. Another guest background vocalist is Jamie O'Harra, who appears on his composition "Lay The Heartache Down." Foster cites this song, along with Satcher's "Whiskey On The Pound," as "traditional Pam Tullis songs," as opposed to the "more artsy" title track.

"The album is very diverse," he says. "Pam has obviously ventured out as an artist."

She has also ventured out as an actress, appearing as a con artist in back-to-back crossover episodes of "Promised Land" and "Diagnosis Murder." "I'm a young writer who's promoted during last month's Academy of Country Music Awards show. "For all practical purposes, it was a Pam Tillis promotion. We also had a radio show that has previously performed as a singer on an episode of "L.A. Law."

In addition to the single and an accompanying Tom Oliver-directed video, Foster notes that the bulk of the album's promotion will center on touring. "Pam's always had an awe-some show and took the last two months off to revamp with Kenny Ortega, who's worked on Michael Jackson's shows," says Foster. "She's also participated in the Country Music's "Am I Ready" promo, "Country Music's show in major media advertising markets over the last few months and will be back on the road with her new show in the middle of summer. So it's a great time for her, and she's excited about her career."

Now managed by Stan Moore and booked by the William Morris Agency, Tillis is also trekking to Branson, Mo., every Tuesday night to recoup her "masonic journey" in song during the show by her father, Mel Tillis.

"It's a hard commute, but I'm seeing my family more than I have in years," he says. "It's one of those pedal to the metal years. I'm working like a madwoman, out of the dictates of the business and the desires of one or two of these artist goals. It's that like darn new Brooks & Dunn and Reba [McEntire] "You See Him/If You See Her." I don't know what kind of ride it is, but I'm very hard to tell. But overall, I'm doing great!"

ROAD STORIES WITH CAPITOL'S LEDOUX
(Continued from page 36)
says it's one of Ledoux's best albums; he says the label has high expectations due to Ledoux's strong fan base and that his records quietly sell," Kennedy says.

"He's a great singer," Berry says. "His catalog sells so well for us, and we're proud of it. I think we'll see it grow on activity at radio, he's got that fan base, that's looking for his new music."

Kennedy seconds that. "Over the years, he's done an extensive amount of retail in-stores," he said. "And it never ceases to amaze me how big the crowds are when we take him on the road and draw 500-1,000 people, and it's all young kids. They look up to this guy."

Berry credits Ledoux's popularity partly to his accessibility. "When he does in-stores, he stays for hours and hours," he says. "He's so good to his fans. He has a real reputation for that with his fan base. When Capitol flew him into his first tour we were behind him. We brought him, we brought him. We brought him. We brought him."

"Runaway Love," the first single from Ledoux's new album, goes to radio June 1. "If we can get some radio airplay, we always consider that a major bonus," says Kennedy. "Our promotion staff is going to give 100%.

"From a sales and marketing perspective," Kennedy adds, "we'll do radio advertising to let people know the record is out in his top 20 or 25 markets on country radio. We also have a custom promoter—most of his sales occur west of the Mississippi— and we've made a custom 'Christopher' CD package for him to negotiate retail. "We also utilize Chris' fan club," Kennedy says. "He's got a very passionate and loyal fan club, and the [members] will go out with point-of-sale materials and flyers to western stores, boot retailers, feed stores, country clubs, parking lots, church socials, etc.""
**HOT COUNTRY SINGLES & TRACKS**

**Billboard**

**MAY 23, 1998**

**Top Country Singles Sales**

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<td>1</td>
<td><strong>YOU'RE STILL THE ONE</strong></td>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Mercury/Big Machine</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><strong>ON YOUR OWN</strong></td>
<td>LeAnn Rimes</td>
<td>Epic</td>
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<td><strong>SHOELESS</strong></td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
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<td><strong>COME FROM AWAY</strong></td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
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<td><strong>THEY'RE COMING TO TAKE ME HOME</strong></td>
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<td><strong>THAT'S WHAT HE SAID</strong></td>
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**SoundScan**

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**Billboard**

**MAY 23, 1998**

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**Complied from a National Sample of Retail Store and Rack Sales Reports Collected, Compiled, and Provided By SoundScan**

**Records showing an increase in detections over the previous week, regardless of chart movement. Answerower reports to those records which attained $10 million in sales in the first two weeks. This chart is compiled of a million copies sold. Billboards Country" singles and\ns that are not considered.**
Artists & Music

Country Artists Shine At 33rd ACM Awards Show

Country music's best and brightest stars invaded Hollywood April 22 for the 33rd annual Academy of Country Music (ACM) Awards, where the performances were as polished as the shiny trophies the winners took home. More than 60 performers and celebrities turned out for the show, which seemed to transform the Universal Amphitheatre into the Grand Ole Opry.

Singer-fiddler Charlie Daniels is flanked, from left, by Travis Tritt, Garth Brooks, and Marty Stuart after receiving ACM's Pioneer Award. The backstage gathering at the Universal Amphitheatre followed a retrospective on Daniels' career achievements.

Shown above, from left, are ACM DJ of year Tom Rivers of WQYK Tampa, Fla.; Gil Cunningham of the Don Romeo Agency in Omaha, Neb., who was named talent buyer of the year; and PD Alan Sledge of WUSN Chicago, which was named radio station of the year. In photo at right, Buck Owens and presenter Chely Wright hold Owens' award for country nightclub of the year. Owens owns the Crystal Palace in Bakersfield, Calif.

Five-time ACM entertainer of the year Garth Brook and wife Sandy savor the moment, Sandy is holding her husband's special achievement award, which honored Brooks' summer concert in New York's Central Park.

Pictured clockwise, from top left: Top country couple Tim McGraw and Faith Hill balance their four ACM trophies for their duet "It's Your Love." The track won awards for song of the year, single of the year, top vocal event of the year, and video of the year at the ceremony, which aired April 22 on CBS from the Universal Amphitheatre in Universal City, Calif. Next photo, from left: Gary Overton, Kevin Sharp, Stephony Smith, and Jeff Carson celebrate their song of the year win. Overton accepted the award on behalf of publisher EMI Blackwood Music Inc. Smith wrote the song Sharp and Carson were presenters in the category. Next photo, from left: Joe Diffie, Mike Curb, Byron Gallimore, James Stroud, and Pam Tillis. Gallimore and Stroud received awards for producing "It's Your Love," and Curb accepted on behalf of his Curb Records, which released the single from the McGraw album "Everywhere." Diffie and Tillis were presenters. Next photo, from left: Sherman Halsey, producer and director of the "It's Your Love" video, shares a laugh with presenters Mindy McCready and Glen Campbell. Campbell performed "Like A Rhinestone Cowboy" on the telecast.

Lee Ann Womack, Kenny Chesney, and the Kinleys celebrate their new artist awards backstage at the ACM show. Womack, left, won as top new female artist, and Chesney was top new male artist. The Kinleys earned a nod in the top new vocal duet category.

Billboard May 23, 1998
The dogs were jumping into the creek and romping through the brush of Joe Ely's Hill Country spread, a few miles southwest of Austin. On the tables under the oak trees, there was more than enough posole, cornbread and homemade fudge to feed the friends, fans and family who had gathered to help Ely celebrate his "Twistin' In The Wind" album—and to enjoy his impromptu reunion performance with Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Butch Hancock as the Hill Country Flatlanders. The relaxed tableau provided stark contrast to the industry bustle that was overwhelming downtown Austin, where the streets on this Friday afternoon of the South By Southwest music conference were swarming with moviemakers and shakers, expense-accounters, cellular phone users, indie hustlers—the kind of frenzied folks whose aggressive attitudes stamped them as conventioneers rather than natives.

"Everybody puts Austin on a pedestal," says Tony Brown, president of MCA-Nashville, enjoying the laid-back afternoon at Ely's. "The industry will never play as important a role in Austin as the live-music scene. Austin is blessed for that reason, and Nashville is cursed." Austin doesn't mind being the focus of industry attention for one long weekend in March, but it couldn't stand such frizzle year-round. Since the early '70s—when Willie Nelson returned to his native Texas from Nashville, Jerry Jeff Walker found a vagabond's home in the Hill Country, and Doug Sahm recast himself as a "cosmic cowboy" following his psychedelic forays in San Francisco—Austin has been known as a creative oasis, a place that puts music first and career far behind. Far removed from the power centers of Nashville, New York and Los Angeles—in attitude even more than miles—it has provided an escape from industry pressurrrs and a mecca for musical maverickis.

"Artists who choose to operate out of here have decided that they've got to have a life first, and that says something about you as a musician," says Walker, who recently released "Cowboy Boots And Bathin' Suits" on his Tried And True Music label. "You may put up with anything to be famous in Los Angeles. In Austin, you'll take whatever success you can get, just knowing you're in an environment you want to be in."

**A SMOKIN' LIVE SCENE**

Despite the recent Grammy triumph by Shawn Colvin, the emergence of Abra Moore and Fashall as radio favorites, and the high hopes surrounding David Garza's major-label debut (on Lava/Atlantic), Austin remains far better-known for the vitality of its live performance than the commercial success of its recorded product. With more than 50 venues offering live music on a nightly basis, the city proclaims itself "the live music capital of the world," boasting more clubs per capita than anywhere else in the country. More than 50,000 students at
A Survey Of Five Up-And-Coming Austin Bands

There are two types of musicians that will always be integral to the Austin music scene. One is the outlaw country boy, as personified by the members of Reckless Kelly. The other is the gifted guitar wizard, such as Monte Montgomery. Even though these two examples are a little outside the norm, they show that Austin is bucking its stereotypes and continually opening its club doors to all kinds of music and musicians, including hip-hop acts such as MC Overlord, smart and sultry female songwriters like Trish Murphy and youthful pop-punk bands similar to Silver Scooter. These are just five of the most prominent and promising unsigned acts currently in Austin.

Trish Murphy
A newcomer in the Austin singer-songwriter crowd, which spawned such obvious influences as Lucinda Williams and Nanci Griffith, 32-year-old Houston native Trish Murphy arrived to open ears and hearts last year with her album “Crooked Mile” and the modest, local hit “Concession Stand Song.” Formerly part of the vocal duo Trish and Darin, Murphy has a sweet, country-girl quality that’s neither naive nor contrived. Blending childhood memories with Mary Tyler Moore-like “you’re gonna make it” lyrics, she offers a bundle of energy and charm on stage and on record. Her background is Texas folk, but lately she has turned the volume up on her band and offered a more rollicking pop sound. Either way, she’s attracting more fans—and plenty of label attention—with each new song.

Monte Montgomery
“The acoustic guitar just feels more natural, like something you can put your arms around and hold on to,” says singer-guitarist Monte Montgomery, who embodies everything that a six-string hero from Austin should, but who dares to be different by not using a Stratocaster or any other kind of electric guitar. In the city that reared Stevie Ray Vaughan, Eric Johnson and Chris Duarte, such affinity for an acoustic guitar is almost sacrilegious, but Montgomery proves he’s a devout follower of his predecessors, playing gigs several times a week and wowing audience members—uniquely Lone Star figure.

Reckless Kelly
Five friends just this side of 20, the members of Reckless Kelly went from a band that ladies went to see because they’re cute to one that guys saw because they seemed cool, to a group every alternative-country fan in Austin noticed because, quite simply, they’re great musicians. The quartet moved to Austin only a year and a half ago from Bend, Ore., and in that time they managed to put out an album on local country veteran Chris Wall’s record label, earn airplay on both rock and AAA stations and win the Best New Band trophy at the Austin Music Awards. That’s a far cry from the small Oregon town of Millican, where Reckless Kelly played its first gig and whose name the members appropriated as the title for their album. That down-home, small-town charm finds its way into the group’s music via fiddles, mandolins and singer Willy Braun’s warm voice. However, the group’s noisy six-string and rambling, lonesome lyrics offer the edge that separates Swee Earle and Willie Nelson from the rest of country music.

Silver Scooter
The most enticing band to come out of Austin’s DIY indie-rock scene in recent years, Silver Scooter plays an awkward, pubescent, fuzzy brand of pop filled with melancholy and gorgeous, brooding melodies, like the musings of a 12-year-old wondering how big the universe is. In actuality, the band features three 20-somethings, T-shirt-and-baggy-shorts-wearing guys who got together about two years ago and have since released one CD (“The Other Palm”) and seven-inch singles on small labels Peek-A-Boo and Crank. The group has been embraced equally by skateboard-ing teenagers who enjoy its cheap or free all-ages shows and elder fans who remember the joy and innocence of jangly-pop groups like the Feelies, the dB’s and early R.E.M. Singer-guitarist Scott Garred and bassist John Hunt weave their parts together for some amazing climactic
THANKS FOR OUR FIRST YEAR'S SUCCESS.

Steve Schnur: VP, A&R
Scott Robinson: Senior Director, Artist Development
Dan Herrington: Manager, Sales and Marketing
John Butler: Senior Director, Promotion
Jon Peterson: National Manager, Promotion
Athena Fortenberry: Manager, Media & Publicity
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Billy Mills: Coordinator, Artist Development
Aimee Johns: Executive Assistant A&R
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ARISTA AUSTIN: ONE YEAR OLD AND ALREADY MAKING BIG NOISE. THANKS FOR HELPING US BE HEARD.

SISTER 7 “Know What You Mean” continues its cross from Rock & Modern AC to Top 40 as sales explode on their debut album This The Trip. On tour always.

ABRA MOORE #1 AAA and Top 10 Alternative hit with “Four Leaf Clover,” Best Female Rock Vocal Performance Grammy nomination, Lilith Tour again this year. And it just keeps getting bigger with the new single, “All I Want,” from her acclaimed Arista Austin debut album, Strangest Places.

ROBERT EARL KEEN PICNIC - his Arista Austin debut and the biggest selling album of his career. His new album arrives this fall.

JEFF BLACK Anybody who saw him at this year's SXSW is still talking about it. His debut album, Birmingham Road, arrives July 14.

BR5-49 The kings of modern-hillbilly beat return with their new album, Big Backyard Beat Show in stores July 14.

RADNEY FOSTER His Arista Austin debut album, featuring special guests Emmylou Harris, Darius Rucker and more, arrives in September.

© 1998 Arista Records, Inc., a unit of BMG Entertainment
**AUSTIN**

**VITAL STATISTICS**

ARIA F: Frank Erwin Center. 1701 Red River St., cap. 15,000. A University of Texas-run sports arena. Recently hosted LeAnn Rimes, Aerosmith and Metallica.

Southpark Meadows. 9800 S. IH-35, cap. 25,000. Large, grassy amphitheater usually booked by Pac Concerts. Pearl Jam, R.E.M. and Lollapalooza have all stopped in.

**CONCERT HALLS**

**Austin Music Hall.** 208 S. 1st St., cap. 3,000. Versatile downtown facility has hosted sit-down shows by Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen and stand-up gigs by Soundgarden and Foo Fighters. Booked by Direct Events and Pace.

The Backyard At Bee Cave. 13101 Highway 620, cap. 2,500. Situated under looming live oaks in the hills west of town, this beloved amphitheater has welcomed its neighbor Willie Nelson, plus Sheryl Crow, the Indigo Girls and Elvis Costello. Also a Direct Events/Pace venue.

La Zona Rosa. 612 W. Fifth St., cap. 1,200. Upgraded from a Mexican eatery to a first-rate concert facility. Recent headliners include David Byrne, Ben Folds Five and Paula Cole. Also a Direct Events/Pace venue.

Ranch Studios. 1101 Reilly St., cap. 3,000. A strip-mall space newly converted into a concert hall. Sugar Ray and Megadeth are among the first bands to play.

**STUBB'S.** 801 Red River St., cap. 2,000. Historic downtown barbecue joint recently added a permanent outdoor stage in its backyard, where George Clinton, Cheap Trick and Soul Asylum have already played.

**CLUBS**

Antone's. 213 W. Fifth St., cap. 200. New home of the world-renowned blues club that bred Stevie Ray Vaughan and the Fabulous Thunderbirds and welcomed Muddy Waters, Albert King and more.

Bob Poplar. 402 E. Sixth St., cap. 600. Dance club for college crowd now offering retro-'60s shows like Vanilla Fudge and Run-D.M.C.

Broken Spoke. 3201 S. Lamar Blvd., cap. 600. Historic, authentic country dance hall that hosted Bob Wills and reared George Strait and Asleep At The Wheel. No line-dancing allowed.

Cactus Cafe. 24th & Guadalupe St., cap. 150. Intimate, on-campus songwriters haven immortalized by Townes Van Zandt in "To Live Is To Fly." Recent guests include Patty Griffin, Guy Clark and Darden Smith.

Cedar Street Courtyard. 208 W. Fourth St., cap. 200. Upscale martini, cigar and jazz bar.


Dessau Music Hall, 13422 Dessau Rd., cap. 1,380. A piece of old Austin, this large roadhouse has been upgraded for country and rock shows, including Marshall Tucker, Delbert McClinton and David Ball.

Electric Lounge. 302 Bowie St., cap. 350. Downtown hot spot for truly alternative bands, including Cornershop, the Geraldine Fiibers and Apples In Stereo.

**Elephant Room.** 315 Congress Ave., cap. 190. Subterranean hangout reminiscent of New York jazz clubs in both sight and sound.

Emo's. 603 Red River St., cap. 500. Johnny Cash played here once, but usually the men in black are feather-clad punk rockers. Alumni include the Jesus Lizard, L7 and Fear.

**Flamingo Cantina.** 315 E. Sixth St., cap. 300. A tropical hole-in-the-wall that hosts punk, reggae and ska acts, including the Hunts, the Stackers and the DUB Syndicate.

Gruene Hall. 1001 Hunter Rd., New Braunfels, cap. 500. A half-hour drive south of Austin, its history as the oldest dance hall in Texas makes it an intrinsic part of the local music scene. Jerry Jeff Walker, Hal Ketchum and Joe Ely are all frequent visitors.

**Hole In The Wall.** 2538 Guadalupe St., cap. 192. Small campus hangout loved by local bands since 1974. Regulars have included Timbuk 3, Nanci

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**AUSTIN CITY LIMITS**

**BLUES EXTRAVAGANZA**

**ARENAS**

**VENUES**

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"...there was no better rock & roll theatre experience in Austin—or, for that matter, anywhere else." (regarding SXSW in-stores) -Rolling Stone

"...its exactly what's happening."-entertainment weekly

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**Billboard**

MAY 23, 1998

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44
Griffith, Doug Sahm and Alejandro Escovedo.

Liberty Lunch, 405 W. Second St., cap. 1,100. Voted Austin's favorite music venue year after year, this indoor/outdoor hangout sports the site of a jazz, live album and concerts by Nirvana, Smashing Pumpkins, the Neville Brothers and lots more.

The Mercury, 303 E. Sixth St., cap. 250. Frequent hosts hipster jazz and funk acts like Jimmy McGriff, Victor Wooten and Big Ass Truck.

Ringside At Sullivan's, 300 Colorado St., cap. 250. Ultra-swanky jazz venue hosts local and touring jazz greats, such as Ron Brown, Carmen Bradford and Joe McBride.

Saxon Pub, 1331 N. Lamar Blvd., cap. 150. South Austin club hosts blues (Omar & The Howlers), country (Michael Martin Murphey), folk (Busch Hancock) and more.


Steamboat, 605 E. Sixth St., cap. 299. Guitar-lovers haven has hosted Eric Johnson and Stevie Ray Vaughan, plus college-rock acts Sister 7 and Jacko's Honor.

Stubb's, 301 Red River St., cap. 324. Barbecue joint has indoor club space, too, in historic limestone building that showcases up-and-coming rock, country and blues acts.

Top Of The Marc, 618 W. Sixth St., cap. 329. Fancy dinner spot appeals to adult crowd with shows by the Marvelettes, Classics IV and local jazz acts.

Perhaps the weakest link in the chain that bonds the Austin music scene together is radio, which in only a few cases reflects local fans' eclectic tastes and offers rare hands access to the airwaves. The most prominent exception is KGSR (FM 107.1), one of the first Triple-A stations in the country and a continuing supporter of Lone Star music and much more. On a smaller scale, University of Texas-owned nonprofit station KUT (FM 90.3), which is an NPR affiliate, and the student-operated KVRR (FM 91.7) also offer a wide variety of fare. KVRR shares the 91.7 airwave with KOOP, a community public-access station. The continuing champion in ratings is country station KASE (FM 100.7 FM), which competes with KVET (FM 98.1) and KKY (FM 92.1) in bringing Nashville to Austin. Typically behind KASE in ratings is contemporary pop station KHFI (FM 96.7), which goes relatively unchallenged in its format. Austin's only real access to rap and urban music is KJCE (AM 1370). The lines between rock stations in Austin are blurred, but the clear favorite is KLBJ (FM 93.7), which plays harder alternative, plus metal and classic rock. KROX (FM 101.5) is all-alternative and popular with college students, while KAXM (FM 94.7) offers a more adult mix of pop and rock. KPEZ (FM 102.3) and KAHK (FM 107.7) play classic-rock from the '60s through the '80s. Other formats include smooth-jazz station KJAZ (FM 93.3), Tejano leader KLKB (FM 92.5), older favorite KEYI (FM 103.5), all-talk and Howard Stern-hosted KJFK (FM 98.9), Christian mainstream KNLE (FM 88.1) and classical music champion KMFA (FM 89.5).

ABCD's, 4631 Airport Blvd. #110. Great jazz, world beat and classical selections.

Alien Records, 303 E. 15th St. For DJs and electronic music lovers only.

Antone's Record Shop, 2928 Guadalupe St. Great vinyl selection, especially blues.

CD Warehouse, several locations with good used sections.

Cheapo Records, 914 N. Lamar Blvd. Used, new and hard-to-find CDs.

Duval Discs, 2928 Guadalupe St. Mostly used and local fare.

Maldonado's, 2207 E. Seventh St. Oldest music store in town, specializes in Tejano and Latin.

Musicmania, 3909-D North IH-35 #1. Home to hip-hop and urban music fans.

Sound Exchange, 2100-A Guadalupe St. Hip campus shop with lots of punk, indie CDs and vinyl.

Technophilia, 2418 Guadalupe St. CD shop with many imports.

Tower Records, 2402 Guadalupe St. Among the best in the chain.

33 Degrees, 1017 Guadalupe St. Hip vinyl haven with punk, jazz and more.

Waterloo Records, 601-A N. Lamar Blvd. Two-time winner of best retailer in America is

Continued on page 16

A CITY BUILT TO ENDURE

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With our breathtaking scenery, cool water and lively entertainment, Austin has established a long history of fun. So rest assured, whether you want a rockin’ night on Sixth Street, or a serene getaway along our hills and creeks, you’ve definitely found the right place.

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LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE WORLD
MC Overlord

The running joke about MC Overlord is that not only is he Austin's best rapper, he's also Austin's worst vampire. That's not entirely true, but he is the only local hip-hop act who consistently performs and attracts crowds every week. Unlike 95% of Austin's rappers, Overlord actually makes you want to dance.

VITAL STATISTICS

Continued from page 46

Antone's, 507 West Ave. #2. Offshoot of the club and equally dedicated to legendary and new blues acts. Said to be signing a distribution deal with a major label.

Arista/Austin, P.O. Box 163162. The only local office of a major, it enjoyed first-year success with Abra Moore and Robert Earl Keen.

Continental Records, P.O. Box 3843. Affiliated with the Continental Club. Scored with local jazzsters and Souvenirs.

Freedom Records, P.O. Box 6500032. Charming, eclectic label has released Jon Dee Graham and Asylum Street Spankers.

Munich Records, P.O. Box 22922. American outlet for European label. Works with some locals such as the Gourds.

Peek-A-Boo Records, P.O. Box 49542. Young operation with youthful discs by local punk and pop bands.

Trance Syndicate, P.O. Box 497711. Owned by Butthole Surfers' King Coffey and featuring avant-punk and electronic music. Rearmed Sixteen Deluxe and Bedhead.

Watermelon Records, P.O. Box 49056. Affiliated with Sire Records. Offers pure, honest country and folk acts like the Darerlass and Don Walser.

MUSICAL MECCA

Continued from page 47

the University of Texas and other local colleges keep the city's bar scene jumping, while tourists from throughout the country and overseas flock to Austin to experience the Lone Star musical legacy in its natural habitat—the blues at Antone's, roots-rock at the Continental Club and two-stepping country at the Broken Spoke.

As the most liberal city in a traditionally conservative state, Austin provides a musical melting pot where roots and rebellion go hand-in-hand. Nowhere else could a 63-year-old country yodeler such as Don Walser find such favor with the punk-rocking Butthole Surfers and their fans, or a virtuoso of twang such as Junior Brown conjure the spirits of both Ernest Tubb and Jimi Hendrix.

Nowhere else could a local hero such as Alejandro Escovedo perform the same songs as Tex-Mex cantina balladry on his own, as chamber music with his multi-stringed Orchestra and as T. Rex/Stooges glam-brash revivalism with his butch McKinney garage band. So it goes in Austin, a town that has been breaking down walls, building bridges and blazing trails since ropers and dopers found common ground at the

Continued on page 48

www.governor.state.tx.us/music

Austin American-Statesman, P.O. Box 670, Austin, 78767. Arts coverage daily and in Thursday's X.lent pullout.

Austin Chronicle, P.O. Box 49066, Austin, 78765. Local weekly is especially popular and music-friendly.

Daily Texan, P.O. Box D, Austin, 78713. Student-run, University of Texas-owned.

Hispanic Magazine, 98 San Jacinto Blvd. #1150, Austin, 78701. Monthly coverage of Tejano arts.

Pop Culture Press, P.O. Box 150423, Austin, 78715. Magazine for pop and punk fans.

Texas Monthly, P.O. Box 1569, Austin, 78767. Lone Star answer to The New Yorker.

3rd Coast Music, 620 Circle Ave., Round Rock, 78664. Free monthly on Texas country and folk.

Austin City Limits, P.O. Box 7158, Austin, 78713. Beloved PBS music series now in its 23rd year.

Austin Music Network, 309 W. Second St. #15. One-of-a-kind, 24-hour local cable channel.

BILBOBOARD SPOTLIGHT

BILBOBOARD MAY 23, 1998
A COLLEGE TOWN AT THE CROSSROADS

Though so much of the musical spirit remains the same, the late 90s find Austin at a crossroads. The friendly college town is sprawling into a metropolitan area of more than a million, with the city trying to decide what it wants to be when it grows up. The cheap rents that once made Austin so attractive to musicians have skyrocketed, while the relaxed pace has been undermined by traffic jams. Where artists once came to escape the commercial dictates of the industry, Austin now attracts musicians who are hoping to catch the industry's eye.

"Though it used to be a myth, people really do get signed to labels here," says Jody Denberg, program director for adult-alternative KGSR-FM. "You can be seen here and make a living at it—as long as you don't expect to make your money playing here exclusively."

"Just like there's a new crop of freshmen every year at the University of Texas, there's a new cycle of talent that's drawn to this city," says Steve Schnur, VP of A&R and artist development for Arista/Austin.

"It's an ongoing musical mecca, not just an up-and-coming one," Schnur continues. "It's a very attractive place to live and to make a living, for bands or songwriters. Arista/Austin is geared to the music of an environment that thrives more and more among activity of different genres. The music that Abra Moore is writing is universal. In actual fact, probably very few people could agree on the type of music that best characterizes Austin.

Yet those who prize Austin most for the guitar tones of a Jimmie Vaughan, the blues bass of a Marcia Ball or a Texas troubadour such as Jimmie Dale Gilmore fear that catering to the industry will do Austin music more harm than good. "Developing an industry infrastructure" has been the cross of an extended Austin debate, with some claiming that the city needs more of a professional industry presence, and others insisting that the music industry is the last thing that Austin needs.

NASHVILLE? NOT LIKELY

"We could use more producers, engineers, managers and booking agents, but I really can't see us developing in the way of New York or Los Angeles or Nashville," says Carlyne Major, executive director of the Texas chapter of NARAS. "What makes us unique is that Austin is one of the largest pools of raw talent in the country, and it's not encumbered by pressure from the industry."

"Austin isn't capable of becoming a Nashville even if it wanted to," says one exec. "And why would it want to?"

Increasingly, Austin has been able to ease its profile on its own terms, from the television exposure of MTV's "Austin Stories" and "King Of The Hill" by Mike Judge (who still moonlights as occasional bassist for Doyle Bramhall) to the films of Austin-based directors such as Robert Rodriguez and Richard Linklater. The latter's success has had a direct benefit for Austin music, through his commission of the Bad Livers to provide much of the soundtrack for "The Newton Boys," and the trio's Danny Barnes to compose an original score.

"I think [Linklater] saw us something he sees in himself," says the Livers' bassist, Mark Rubin, who served as the film's music supervisor and recruited a number of other Austin acts for the project. "When he presented us with an Austin Music Award a few years ago, he said what a big fan he was and reminded us that he'd

(Continued on page 16)
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**AUSTIN**

**LOCAL NOISE**

Rappers, Overlord is in his element on stage, where he's always backed by his four- or five-piece funk band and where his mammoth, 6-foot-5 figure looms as large as his hard-hitting but incredibly positive music. Born Don Robinson and raised in a single-parent, six-child home, he says, "My childhood was the same as so many other black kids." On his recent, self-released CD "The Dark Side," he explores this and many other problems facing African Americans while offering messages of peace and unity for all races. He has avoided the stereotypes of rappers well enough to earn a following in Austin rock clubs and on local rock radio stations. Even if MC Overlord were the only evidence of hip-hop in Austin, he'd still be a shining example.

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**SXSW**

Local Bandfest Becomes Multimedia Showcase

The vitality of Austin music and the growth of South By Southwest have become so intertwined that it is hard to imagine one without the other. Twelve years ago, SXSW was launched by the alternative weekly Austin Chronicle as a regional counterpart to the New Music Seminar in New York, with an emphasis on Texas talent and independent initiative. On a grass-roots level, it has provided opportunities for showcasing and networking, away from the musical power centers on the coasts. The laid-back Austin atmosphere continues to figure heavily in the event's appeal, as the conference has become widely regarded as "spring break for the music industry."

With the demise of the NMS, SXSW has established itself as the most significant music conference in the country, increasingly reflective of major-label priorities and international in scope (with European and Japanese talent strongly represented). It has also spawned its own movie and multimedia conferences (held concurrently in March), as well as other regional conferences in Portland, Ore., and Toronto, Canada.

This year's Austin festival found more than 800 acts showcasing at some 40 venues March 18-22, with Sean Lennon, Sonic Youth and local heroes Fastball playing to some of the fest's more tightly packed houses. During the day, the conference offered panels and workshops for registrants at the Austin Convention Center, along with a trade show. Such officially sanctioned events have faced increasing competition from record-company receptions throughout the week, as well as relentless power-brokering at the bar of the nearby Four Seasons hotel.

The festival climaxed with a free show at Waterloo Park featuring Jimmie Vaughan, Junior Brown and Ian Moore—a guitar extravaganza that drew the weekend's biggest crowd and returned the Texas twang to the musical forefront of SXSW. Despite charges that SXSW has grown too broad in scope and too big for its own good, this year's fest drew high marks for the quality of its diverse musical offerings and the manageability of its club-hopping.

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**MUSICAL MECCA**

Hired us to play his "Slacker" wrap party.

Now in its 25th season on PBS, "Austin City Limits" remains the city's musical vitality. Spawned by the "outlaw" inspiration of Willie Nelson and the rest of the progressive-country movement of the 70s, it has since introduced the nation to the likes of Lyle Lovett, Nanci Griffith, Stevie Ray Vaughan and other local luminaries who were fans of the show long before performing on it.

**SYMBIOSIS WITH A DASH OF HOT SAUCE**

"It's very much a symbiotic relationship," says program producer Terry Lickona. "I think that 'Austin City Limits' has nurtured the Austin music scene, and vice versa. There's a crossroads of so many musical styles—Texas, Southern, Mexican, blues, country—and there's the Texas frontier mentality of anything goes that has really fed the creative energy." Can that creative energy generate multiplatinum sales?

"Proportionally, there are just as many L.A. bands that haven't made it as Austin bands," says Casey Monahan, director of the state's Texas Music Office. "Because there are so many bands trying to get deals in Austin, and because of the local media spotlight on those that do, the inflated expectations of the Austin music scene often crumble in the face of the harsh realities of making it in the music business."

"It'll happen," insists Tony Brown. "As a source for music, Austin has influenced lots of acts that have gone platinum. People will continue to come here to be discovered. Not to make commercial music, but non-commercial music that becomes commercial."
The album, which runs from the Bob Marley-sampled title track to two Sonny Rollins compositions and an impressionistic classical piece, is sequenced like a Ritenour concert. "It begins with some contemporary pieces, then I hit you with a straight-ahead piece, then an acoustic piece, a vocal, and back to contemporary," the guitarist explains.

Ritenour notes that flexibility is a key element in his e.g.'s game plan. "If Jarreau is the latest i.e. music signing, Ritenour will do contemporary projects for i.e. but has the option of doing a straight-ahead project for Verve and, speculates Ritenour, a classical crossover album for Philips in the future should he so desire.

Recently, i.e. released "Cha- meleon" by world music guitarist/vocalist Badi Assad, and plans are in the works for an upcoming album by singer Vesta (a former A&M artist) and a "Can- neyn"-helter-skelter tribute by Eric Marienthal. Look for Ritenour to tour throughout the summer.

HeadHunting: On July 21, Herbie Hancock launches his own label, Hancock Records, an artist-driven imprint that is also distributed by Verve (Billboard Bulletin, May 8). Like Ritenour, Hancock will spearhead his label's artistic direction, which will focus primarily on jazz. And like i.e. music, Hancock Records is committed to the discovery and development of new talent. Says Verve president Chuck Mitchell, Hancock's "unique reach through all musical styles will develop exciting special projects and fresh artist relationships" for the label.

The imprint's first release, however, will be a name familiar to the pianist/composer's followers. "The Return Of The Headhunters" is a reunion (of sorts) of the band that created Hancock's landmark 1973 jazz/funk album, "Headhunters," recent-

(Continued on page 52)
In the SPIRIT
by Lisa Collins

GOME AGAIN: Atlanta-based AIR Gospel, a label that is building quite a reputation and solid sales base for its iconic releases, is back with another "The Collection," a compilation of previously released material from four diva Dottie Peoples. This time, Peoples is hoping to transcend her traditional base with more mainstream-flavored, contemporary rearrangements of some of her top hits, including "On Time God," redone in the studio from a live concert track, and "Pure Love," which was rearranged with a rhythm track. Other cuts include "I Want To See His Face," "Step Right In," and "Change!," all of which spotlight her strength as a balladeer.

Aside from hoping to appeal to younger audiences, AIR execs say it was just as important to showcase another side of Peoples as a performer—not only important to them but to Peoples, who first conceived the idea for the compilation. The much-anticipated set, promoted by Peoples during appearances on the recent Power 98 tour, is due June 9.

"Because of her recent successes, we anticipate early support from chain stores, who will have the record in place by street date," reports Norman Hunter, manager of sales and distribution for the label. "As such, chart activity will be immediate and long-standing, and because of early penetration this record is going to surprise people.

In the meantime, Peoples is preparing for her next live recording of all-new material in Atlanta. And make no mistake about it, she's coming back strong with her trademark traditional style. Thus far, songs have been submitted by Hezekiah Walker, Kurt Carr, and Byron Cage.

WITH A VENGEANCE: EMI Gospel threw the full force of its marketing efforts behind the self-titled debut released from Larry Campbell & The Spirit Of Praise with a marketing initiative dubbed "Project Praise," enlisting the efforts of street teams in 50 markets, each of which will host street-date listening parties on Tuesday May 19th. The nationally charted album is also celebrating its second signing, Sharon Riley & the Faith Choral. The Toronto-based, 35-plus-voice choir—featuring in the recently released Universal film "Blues Brothers 2000," as well as its soundtrack—is slated to release its first album in October.

BRIEFLY: Shirley Caesar's much-talked-about (and delayed) autobiography, "The Lady, The Melody And The Word," is now set for release from Thomas Nelson Publishers June 10. Supportive retail promotions from Word/Epic Records will tie her current album, "A Miracle In Harlem," to the book's release and Black Music Month. Malaco Records' June releases include Greg Hoover & the Charlotte Community Singers' "It's Gonna Be Alright," as well as the newly launched Savannah Mass Choir, whose debut project, titled "It's Alright Now," was produced by Dorothy Norwood.

Sharon Heyward has been appointed senior director of marketing for New York-based Harmony Records...They're celebrating at Verity with first-week sales of 24,600 units for Fred Hammond's latest release, "Pages Of Life."
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**Artists & Music**

by Deborah Evans Price

*EMI Launches New Company* EMI Christian Music Group (EMI CMG) is creating a new company, Sonic Fuel Music Sales, to handle alternative music sales in the Christian Booksellers Assn. market. The first company to be distributed by the new venture is Tooth & Nail Records. EMI CMG’s Chordant Distribution will handle the management of the new company and will take care of fulfillment services, such as shipping, billing, and returns processing, for the new sales team.

Bryan Ward, formerly a Chordant field territory manager, has been named director of sales. He will report to Greg Fritz, Chordant’s senior director of telesales, customer service, and sales administration. Ward is already familiar with Tooth & Nail, as he worked its product when he was at Diamante Music Group when that outfit was distributing the label. Plans call for Ward to be based in EMI’s Brentwood, Tennessee, office and head staff of eight, including five or six sales reps.

MsPx’s June 19th release with Tooth & Nail—AM & album, “Slowly Going The Way Of The Buffalo,” (see story, page 18) will be the first release to go through the new system. Other June releases scheduled to work through the new company include Stick ’n’ Stones, “Burn Out” and the debut release from Craig’s Brother, “Homecoming.” Starting July 1, the entire 100-plus-title Tooth & Nail catalog will be available.

**KEEPING SCORE** (Continued from page 50)

...that the public isn’t open to this music or doesn’t care is mistaken.

More than perhaps any figure in the recording world today, Boulé assumes (and rewards) the intelligence and curiosity of the listener. Yet while he is optimistic about art and the audience, Boulé is also realistic. "I don’t think the public is ready to pay for this kind of money is not the purpose of any of this, but not being around at all will not make you any money in the long run either. People will also come and go away," he says. "In my concert programs, I don’t want to make things too difficult for people, but I do try to attract them by offering something rare: a sense of adventure." Carter. Ligeti. Luciano Berio—these are composers who are furthering the tradition of "classical" music, Boulé says, and who will be remembered for the effort. Reactionary articles are "gone with the wind," he adds. "How many people will talk about this Webber in five years? Not so many. I don’t think..."

**SYD RAMSAY & THE HEADHUNTERS**

by Jeff Loder

L Orber's second Western A Success: The second Western A success of the year is the latest release from Garth Garvey—"The Color of His Hair." L Orber, who's been active with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, more proof of Carter's vigor can be found on an album of his chamber music from the Ardis String Quartet and pianist Ursula Oppens, due in June from the French Montaigne/Audiosite label (via Harmonia Mundi in the U.S. and U.K.). The set’s centerpiece is the eleventh recording of Carter’s quartet, the fifth in a genre that has earned him two Pulitzer Prizes.

Fearless interpreters of the cutting edge, the Ardis touried Carter’s String Quartet No. 5 in North America to acclaim this spring; the group tours internationally with Oppens later this year to play the composer’s new Piano Quintet. In the orchestral realm, Olifer Knussen and the BBC Symphony recorded Carter’s新鲜编曲移位交响乐“Symphonie: Summer Suite” performed by the Orches

**JAZZ BLUE NOTES** (Continued from page 59)

ly revised by Legacy/Columbia). "Return" features original headhunters reed player Bennie Maupin, bassist Paul Jackson, percussionist Bill Summers, and guitarist Mike Clark, who joined the band when original drummer Harvey Mason left after recording the first Headhunters album. Most of the band duties on "Return" are ably handled by Billy Childs; Patrice Rushen and Darrel Smith add their piano skills. Hancock himself plays on almost half the album’s tracks.

L Orber: Also breaking label ground is keyboardist Jeff Lorber, whose new Water Sign Records (distributed by AV Experience American and the Unity Label Group) releases "All The Colors" by keyboardist Sonny Soulohon June 9.

"Colors" is a smooth jazz affair that features Lorber on keyboard and guitar with occasional strings arranged and produced the album. He is quick to note that Water Sign is about the development of new artists, rather than a vehicle for his other artistic needs. “I’m looking for artists who can both write and play an instrument, artists who have their own statement to make.”

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**Gatfield Takes On Double Duty**

**BY IRY LICHTMAN**

NEW YORK—Music publishing won’t be taking a back seat for Nick Gatfield in his unusual dual role as president of PolyGram Music Publishing and sister label Polydor Records.

“From my point of view, my job will mainly be that of publishing,” says the Los Angeles-based Gatfield, who recently took over the publishing slot months after the departure of David Simone to a senior A&R post at Geffen Records.

“A&R has taken over promotion at Polydor, and we don’t have that many releases,” he says. “There was no reluctance on my part at all [in making this move]. I did not come to it kicking and screaming. It’s really a great opportunity to develop a roster of artists from publishing signings.

“I’m not chasing after major new-artist deals, but want to develop [new talent] through publishing to the point where they can get a record deal at Polydor or through third-party companies,” he adds. “I don’t expect to sign more than two or three acts a year. To function as a publisher [today] is to acquire acts at the opportune time and a competitive price.”

In fact, Gatfield says, “I’m intrigued by artist development that’s going on in publishing. Publishing can take a longer view without dealing with label pressures such as radio add days. That’s a real luxury.”

Gatfield notes that A&R staff from Polydor can play a dual role, too, in looking to bring acts to the publishing roster.

“The more you’re in the marketplace, the more opportunities you pain, to me, that the record label’s general role of a creative function in publishing is not the same as A&R. It’s a demanding full-time job to seek covers of new songs and in working with the company’s catalog.”

Among the executives who continue to hold key creative roles are VP’s Hot Sings/EMI’s John Hultén; John Baldi on the West Coast; David Holmgren, also in L.A.

“We are looking to fill several vacancies, including head of business affairs,” says Gatfield. “I’m creating a new position, Steve Holmgren, also in L.A.

“I can’t live in a parallel universe, or I wouldn’t have a job,” says Gatfield. “But it is a tremendous tool to have a publishing arm.”

**Family Stand’s Lord, Smith Build Long Line Of Hit Songs**

**BY SHAYNE SMITH**

NEW YORK—Songwriting is a key foundation of what I’m about,” says Peter Lord, half of the songwriting/production team behind EastWest’s the Family Stand and various other hits. “Even when I was taking piano lessons at 15, I would always stay and try to write something. I was always creating.”

For the team’s other half, V. Jeffrey Smith, songwriting has been more of a form of self-expression.

“My [musical] energy developed into a different direction,” says Smith, who plays seven instruments and contributes most of the musical arrangements for the songs they compose. “Songwriting [never] had anything to do with getting paid; it was just a form of expressing myself.”

The two met in 1983 while Smith was working with long-time friend and collaborator Will Downing.

“Will met me a demo for a guy he said was looking for a flute player, and when I heard the tape, I said ‘Let me meet this guy,’ because the song I heard, the music he was doing, was brilliant,” says Smith.

Once they met, the two, along with singer Sandra St. Victor, formed the Family Stand and recorded three albums. Smith also has written for top pop songwriters of the year award in 1991 for writing or co-writing 10 songs on Paula Abdul’s “Spicebomb” (Virgin). His hit from the set include “Rush, Rush,” “Blowing Kisses In The Wind,” “The Promise Of A New Dog” and “Will You Marry Me”.

Smith and Lord’s “I’m A Philthy Kind Of Mood” for Daryl Hall piqued interest in the veteran artist’s set, “Soul Alone” (Epic), and their “Crazy Daze” and “Trip On Love” rounded out DeReese’s set, “I Ain’t Movin’” (Epic). They also wrote and produced Chyna Phillips’ “When 2000 Comes” (EMI), Steel Pulse’s “Soul Of My Soul” (MCA), and Goodfellas’ “If You Walk Away” and “Sugar Honey Ice Tea” (Avatar/Polydor).

Their latest work includes tracks on “Hymns,” the upcoming album on LaFace for Corey Glover (former lead singer of Living Colour). Smith wrote the first single, “Do You First, Then Do Myself.”

With all their success, Lord says he still can’t understand why their own (Continued on page 76)
At New York’s Hit Factory, Success Has Been A Family Affair

BY PAUL VERNA

NEW YORK—“Project studio” and “family business” are two of the last phrases one ever expects to hear when one thinks of the Hit Factory. A stroll through the studio’s marble entrance hall—lined with platinum awards and Grammy certifications—puts one in mind of aデータが多すぎますため、コンテキスト切り替えます。Peter is not unlike what one feels walking into a museum or jet cockpit. A ride in its slow-moving, wood-paneled freight elevator sends a frisson of excitement through one’s veins. And a glance around any of its 15 state-of-the-art rooms suggests a wealth beyond imagination by artists and corporate partners.

However, owner/president Ed Germano insists that the Hit Factory is both a family business and a project studio. By that, he means that the recording complex—which he acquired in 1975 and has operated with his wife, mother, and children since then—remained top of the game by devoting itself to recording projects rather than film post-production, commercials, or any of the myriad projects that other high-end studios have turned to for survival.

“When times got slow, everybody railed against the film stuff,” he says, “but we’re steadiedly staying where we were, because we wanted to do album projects.”

His son, executive VP Troy Germano, adds, “The thing that I’m most proud of is that on any given day, in our 10 rooms we’re doing pop, hip-hop, R&B, jazz, rock, alternative rock, Broadway cast albums, film scores, classical music, crossover classical music, etc. We don’t concentrate on one or two areas, we’re eclectic.

We were in a lot of Grammy nominations this year, and over the past three years there have been over 175 Grammy nominations that we were involved in—projects that were recorded, overdubbed, mixed, and mastered here.”

Sitting in Ed’s office on a sunny late April afternoon, the Germanos reflected on the studio’s magnificent history. Rather than gloat about the superstars who have recorded there over the years, a dazzling list that includes virtually every name one could conjure up—the Germanos kept returning to two central themes: their fascination with recording and their love for their clients, and the second was how much it thrills them to work among family.

Ed and Troy, the studio is run by CFO Janice Germano (Ed’s wife), and their daughter, VP Danielle Germano, who is in charge of bookings. There are no outside partners. “It’s just a nuclear family. I think it’s got to be a nuclear family for projects that enjoy their jobs, and the second was how much it thrills them to work among family.”

Troy, and Troy, the studio is run by CFO Janice Germano (Ed’s wife), and their daughter, VP Danielle Germano, who is in charge of bookings. There are no outside partners. “It’s just a nuclear family. I think it’s got to be a nuclear family for projects that enjoy their jobs, and the second was how much it thrills them to work among family.”

At the time, the Hit Factory—which was located on West 48th Street—needed to make a big splash to compete with the Record Plant and the other top studios in New York. Ed was counting on his friend John Lennon to deliver the goods, but Lennon decided to take a five-year hiatus in 1975. Fortunately for the Hit Factory, Wonder booked three days at the studio in 1976. That booking evolved into a six-month session that yielded his landmark album “Songs In The Key Of Life.” By the time Lennon found his way back to the music business—and to the Hit Factory—in 1980, the studio was one of the major players.

In 1981, Ed moved the facility to the address at 54th and Broadway that it still occupies. Since then, he has steadily built the business from a small shop to one of the world’s great recording venues.

Troy, 39, started working around recording studios when he was 8 years old and his father worked as a producer in various rooms in New York. After the family bought the Hit Factory in 1976, Troy worked part-time at the studio while attending high school. Upon graduation, he faced the momentous decision all graduates face.

“Instead of going to college, I decided to come to this college,” he says. He emphasizes the facility’s ability to make you a major player: “Every day is a learning experience.”

Troy built his career from the ground up, working in the delivery, tape duplicating, and tape library departments before ascending to the position of booking manager. Regarding the latter job, he says, “I thought I did a great job, but Dan tells me twice as good a job as I did.”

Danielle, 30, got further into a “personal” career than her brother did. She attended college for six days before announcing to her parents that she was dropping out to join the studio staff. Although many parents would bristle at a child’s decision to leave college, Ed Germano was not one to be dissuaded, and Janice was equally supportive once she was convinced that her daughter had made the right decision.

Asked how she keeps the Hit Factory’s recording and mastering rooms humming, Danielle echoes the themes sounded by her brother and father. “I love what I do, and I like every single person that comes in here,” she says. “They’re friends to me, and I try to do for them the best I can. My dad and my mom always told me, ‘We’re in a service business.’ If a client calls at the last minute, I do whatever I can to get them in.

While some top-flight artists play favorites, displacing a lesser-known client if a superstar suddenly calls, the Germanos treat their clients equally: “You try to treat everyone the same way, whether it’s Bob Jones or Bob Dylan,” says Troy. “The next Bob Dylan could be Bob Jones. You never know.”

Even outside the studio, the Germanos are extraordinarily close-knit. Ed, Janice, Troy, and Danielle—plus the parents and siblings of the elder Germanos—live on the same block on Manhattan’s East Side.

Although Ed says he never counted on his son and daughter to join the business, he’s delighted that they have. He beams with anticipatory pride at the imminent birth of his first grandchild, from Troy’s family.

Conveniently stereotyped as an Italian-American family, the Germans have a more complex heritage, as Janice is Austrian, Irish, and Spanish, “so we have a little bit of everything,” she says. “If they have no ties to their ancestors. Instead, they view themselves as quintessentially American, embodying the dream of the self-made, mom-and-pop business—with a little marble to boot.”

AA Offers Reduced 1st-Class Fare For Nashville/L.A. Flights

BY DAN DALEY

NASHVILLE—Underscoring the importance of the night life and entertainment business in Nashville and Los Angeles, American Airlines announced April 30 that it had established a reduced-cost, advance-purchase first-class fare between these markets, the first program of its type for any major U.S. carrier.

The round-trip, first-class fare of $896 is $128 less than a standard one-way first-class fare on American and considerably less than half the cost of the standard $2,108 round-trip first-class fare. The new fare basis requires a seven-day advance purchase and is non-refundable, although it can be applied to similarly routed future bookings.

The announcement comes nine months after the music industries in both key cities noticed a drop in business after the story broke in Billboard Aug. 30, 1997—to American’s plans to terminate its one remaining non-stop flight between Nashville and L.A., which would have eliminated first-class service between the two cities.

Southwest Airlines also services that route, but the so-called “no-frills” carrier has no first-class cabin service or reserved seating, points that American has been hammering home in advertising that emphasizes the bookings in newspapers in both cities since it has recommitted to the route.

(Continued on next page)
The carrier has since added a fourth daily nonstop flight between Nashville and New York's LaGuardia Airport. American's Southeast regional sales manager, Mike Dye, acknowledged that the airline had been "overwhelmed" by the entertainment industry's response.

Dulioz and American spokesman Tim Smith also confirmed that there were "verbal agreements" that several labels would promote the flights, which Galante said were still in place and which have contributed to an ongoing dialogue between American and Nashville's music industry.

"American has made regular presentations to us and kept us informed about things like load factors between the two cities," Galante told Billboard. "But if you ask me, 'Has the entertainment industry in Nashville propelled a change in corporate action regarding this market?' I say, 'Absolutely, yes.' It's pretty significant that record companies can affect airline policies."

Despite a slowdown in growth in the music industry that saw significant staff reductions at major labels last year and the closing of Nashville imprints Rising Tide and Almo Sounds this year, Nashville-based entertainment companies have taken top positions here recently. The Spellberg-Katzenberg-Geffen film/video/music-venture DreamWorks and Disney's new Lyric Street Records label are two examples.

The new discounted first-class fare is intended to capitalize on this connection, and American's Dye acknowledges the influence of the entertainment business on his company's recent decision in the Nashville market.

Studio Action

AA OFFERS REDUCED 1ST-CLASS FARE

(Continued from preceding page)

American opened a hub in Nashville in 1986, building service up to 144 nonstop flights a day, including three a day to L.A., five a day to New York, and a short-lived Nashville-London nonstop flight in 1994-95. But the airline began dismantling its hub in Nashville in 1985, which irritated many in the entertainment industry who had moved or regularly commuted to Nashville during country music's recent boom years of the 1980s.

By the end of 1997, American had fewer than 20 flights per day out of Nashville. However, the announcement, on July 30 that it would cancel its one remaining nonstop flight between the two cities incensed entertainment industry leaders.

"First class isn't a luxury; it's a necessity in this business," says Gary Haber, an AIA-based business manager whose clients include award-winning producer and MCA Nashville president Tony Brown and recording acts Randy Travis, Joe Cocker, and Lynyrd Skyynyd. "You never know who you're going to run into and make deals with. It's an extension of your office when you commute that much."

A campaign of letter writing and phone calls to American's management ensued. On Sept. 22, 1997, a conference call was placed between executives of American Airlines and major industry leaders in Nashville, including RCA Label Group (RLG) chairman Joe Galante, Arista/Nashville president Tim DuBois, and ASCAP VP Connie Bradly, during which they conveyed the dismay of the recording community. Reacting to the furor, American not only reinstated the flight but added a second Nashville-L.A. nonstop.

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Puerto Rico Steps Up: If there were doubts about the importance of Puerto Rico as a radio market, they were dashed May 2 at the annual Puerto Rico Radio Broadcasters Convention when Arbitron announced it was going to measure the island’s radio audience (Billboard, May 16).

With a population of more than 3 million aged 12 and older, “La Isla Del Encuentro” becomes the 11th-largest market of the 268 markets surveyed by Arbitron. Miami is bumped from 11th to 12th place. All markets below Miami will be bumped down a position, too.

Arbitron’s first book to report Puerto Rico’s ratings is summer ’98. Subsequently, the commonwealth’s ratings will be measured for spring and fall only. All stations on the island will be surveyed whether or not they are Arbitron clients.

Thomas Mocarsky, Arbitron’s VP of communications, says the company’s foray into Puerto Rico will benefit both the island’s radio stations and stateside advertising agencies.

“The Puerto Rican broadcasters approached us, saying they were looking for a service that had wide acceptance by mainland [advertising] agencies,” says Mocarsky. “Agencies understand the methodology here in the States, which is the same methodology we have successfully tested and will use in Puerto Rico.”

Test surveys conducted in February showed that Puerto Rican consumers actively filled out the diaries that Arbitron uses to compile its radio ratings. Each Arbitron survey in Puerto Rico will have a sample goal of 2,400 persons aged 12 and older.

Mocarsky notes that ad agencies, as well as Arbitron, see the Latin America as a continually growing marketplace. Moreover, he says, the company’s entrance into Puerto Rico “is a very logical [move] for Arbitron because we are interested in expanding internationally, and Puerto Rico has served as a stepping stone for many US companies to expand internationally.”

As in the US, Billboard will use Arbitron’s Puerto Rico books as the basis for its revisions of stations reporting to Hot Latin Tracks.

Fonovisa Inks El Encuentro: Fonovisa has signed a recording deal with El Encuentro, a six-man vallenzo group comprising the former members of Menudo. Terms of the pact call for Fonovisa to put out a five double album that was recorded during the act’s shows staged earlier this year in Puerto Rico. The album, due to drop in late May or early June, contains many Menudo hits that have been revamped with new arrangements.

El Encuentro is slated to perform Thursday (21) at Festival Acapulco ’98. The group also will be in New York June 14 to take part in that city’s annual Puerto Rican Day Parade.

STATESIDE BRIEFS: Grammy-winning trumpeter Arturo Sandoval is supporting his splendid, just-released album, “Hot House,” (N2K Encoded Music) (Continued on page 58...)
Alexandre Pires (SÓ PRA CONTRARIAR).

3,000,000 copies sold.

SPC is proud to reach Brazil's all time sales. BMG is proud to share this with the world.
Artists & Music

NOTAS
(Continued from page 56)

with a Caribbean/U.S. tour that features June dates at the Playboy Jazz Festival, Saratoga Jazz Festival, and New York’s Carnegie Hall. “Hot House” is an Afro-Cuban, big-band disc boasting guest appearances by RMM’s timbalero legend Tito Puente (who is feted on the album with a tribute song), Sony Discos singer Roy Zaza, pop/jazz diva Patti Austin, and saxophonist Michael Brecker.

The Center for Black Music Research is hosting a four-day workshop in August titled Afro-Latin-American and the Diaspora: Cultural Hybridity, Miscegenation, Creolization. Included in the workshop, slated to take place Aug. 12-16 in Santo Domingo, are lectures and musical performances. For more information, call 312-933-1600, extension 7590.

G H A R T  N O T E S ,  R E T A I L :  Y e a r after year, Mother’s Day weekend invariably is one of the top-selling periods in the U.S. Latino market. This year: followed suit.

Sales for this issue, including Mother’s Day weekend, were 107,000 units, a jump of just over 5% from the 101,000 moved last year in the comparable week. Sales during the comparable week in 1996 were 95,000 units, the same number of pieces sold for the last issue.

Though a buoyant sales period, Mother’s Day weekend sales in comparison Valentine’s Day weekend, which saw sales of 186,000 units this year.

As always during sales periods surrounding holidays dedicated to loved ones, ballad-laden product heated up store registers. This issue’s Greatest Gainer is “Inolvidable” by Sony Discos’ Josué Lozada Rodríguez With Los Panchos, which moves 8 with a bullet on The Billboard Latin 50. Sales of “Inolvidable” soared 71% to 6,000 units.

Other top 10 ballads enjoying sizable percentage sales gains are “Más” by Alejandro Sanz (WEA Latina), up 40% to 5,500 units; “Romances” by Luis Miguel (WEA Latina), up 40% to 3,500 units; and “Me Estoy Enamorando” by Alejandro Fernández (Sony Discos), up 37% to 5,500 units.

One non-ballad album scoring a 40% gain in sales this issue is “Suavemente” by Sony Discos’ hot merengue artist Elvis Crespo. Sales of the title vault from 5,000 to 7,000 units and help push the disc from No. 3 to No. 2 this issue. “Suavemente” stays at No. 1 on the tropical/salsa chart for the second week running. Also, by debuting on this issue’s Billboard 200 at No. 185, “Suavemente” becomes only the second merengue title to land on Billboard’s flagship retail chart.

Surprisingly, one of the few albums not to realize a sales gain this week is Selena’s chart-topping “Anthology” (EMI Latin). Sales of that set slip 5% to 8,500 units in addition. “Anthology” falls 133-151 on The Billboard 200. It does remain atop the regional Mexican genre chart for the third week in a row.

Ricky Martin’s “Vuelve” (Sony Discos), which slid 2-3 this issue on the Billboard Latin 50, is the only other Latino title on The Billboard 200, where it slips 191-192. “Vuelve” rules the pop chart for the 12th successive week.

Sales of the top 15 titles on this issue’s pop chart are 41,500 units, compared with 40,000 pieces sold during the comparable week last year. Sales of tropical/salsa albums this issue are 33,500 units vs. 18,500 pieces during the comparable week in 1997. And sales of regional Mexican titles this issue are 27,500 units; in the comparable week last year they were 30,000 units.

Finally, two nomenclature items: In order to avoid confusion among the actual labels and the distribution divisions, Sony will now appear as Sony Discos and BMG will now appear as BMG Latin.

G H A R T  N O T E S ,  R A D I O :  Elvis Crespo remains comfortably atop The Latin Tracks chart for the second consecutive week with “Suavemente” and on top of the tropical/salsa chart for the third week in a row.

Los Tenerianes sold down No. 1 on the tropical chart with Mexican title for the 10th successive week with “Por Que Te Conoci” (Fonovisa).

And on the pop chart, Chile’s veteran chanteuse Myriam Hernández reaches the top slot with “Huele A Peligro” (Sony Discos).

LATIN TRACKS A-Z

TITLE (Publisher, Licensing Dy., Distributing Dy.) Artist, Album
1. 14 30 LO BOS VI A CO LASI ERGEO ELA FER MI SANTOS, UN RECUERDO DE... 19798 LIVAN Y CAROLINA (Sony/ATV, BMI/DESMO, ASCAP)
2. 14 27 CHARLIE ZAA • SONGO 62135667 DODEG (SONY/ATV, BMI/DESMO, ASCAP)
3. 14 22 39 6 EMBRAGUE • SONGO 62135667 DODEG (SONY/ATV, BMI/DESMO, ASCAP)
4. 14 14 50 LEO STEFAN CALDERON • SONGO 62135667 DODEG (SONY/ATV, BMI/DESMO, ASCAP)
5. 14 14 50 LEO STEFAN CALDERON • SONGO 62135667 DODEG (SONY/ATV, BMI/DESMO, ASCAP)
HMV Shuts Bogus Chinese Store
U.K.-Based Retailer Moves To Halt Use Of Its Name

BY GEOFF BURPEE
HONG KONG—When is an HMV not an HMV? The London-based international retail chain has acted to stop a store in Guangzhou, China, from using the HMV name, store design, and deep-catalog concept to market CDs, cassettes, and video CDs in the mainland Chinese market.

John Fu Yu-Cheong, director of finance and administration at HMV greater China and Southeast Asia, says that the company’s lawyers, along with the Guangzhou branch of the Chinese government’s Authority of Industry and Commerce (AIC), raided the bogus HMV store March 5 (Billboard Bulletin, May 6). The AIC is responsible for investigating trademark infringements and complaints associated with industry and commerce.

Fu says HMV has been aware of the outlet for several weeks and monitored a low-key opening March 26 and a grand opening April 25.

“They call themselves ‘China HMV,’ but the logo was simply HMV,” Fu says, adding that the logo and store design were “totally similar” to the chain’s trademark pink font and gray background sign.

Fu says those similarities continued inside the outlet, where an identical setup and branding greeted customers as in an HMV store, including the same segregation of genres and music types, chart walls, listening posts, and other point-of-sale features.

Following investigation of the chain’s complaints, the AIC and HMV representatives have been successful in getting China HMV to stop using the HMV name. However, China HMV is also using the HMV characters in a stylized form that resembles the Chinese logo used by HMV at its four Hong Kong outlets (translating as “Chinese Music Unlimited”), a trademark that Fu admits is not registered. For the time being, says Fu, HMV is taking advice on whether it can proceed against China HMV over the use of the HMV color scheme and in-store design.

Fu says the music product found in China HMV was legitimate.

“The pricing is quite different, and the range is limited due to supply, but they are targeting the same customers,” Fu says. He is unable to comment on who is responsible for the investment in and establishment of the store, saying that HMV lawyers are still investigating in Guangzhou. “They have a few names, but they are not yet confirmed.” Fu notes that the bogus HMV store appears to be, from his travels around Guangzhou, by far the biggest and “most professional” retail outlet in the region.

Record company sources in Hong Kong, while condemning the copyright infringement, welcomed the experiment with deep-catalog retail in the Chinese market.

Fu also comments that HMV is exploring opportunities for new openings and that “in the long run, China is definitely a part of that.”

World Music Awards Win Praise

BY MARK DEZZANI
MONACO, Monte Carlo—The World Music Awards, held May 6 here, celebrated its 10th anniversary with a renewed broadcast deal with ABC in the U.S. and plaudits from senior label executives (Billboard Bulletin, May 7).

This year’s event at Monaco’s Sporting Club saw a record turnout of artists and music industry professionals. Awards for 1997 were given on the basis of year-end sales from the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry’s national groups or relevant chart compilers. Principal recipients of this year’s awards, which acknowledge global best sellers and the best-selling artists from each major music market or region in 1997, went to Mariah Carey, Puff Daddy, Spice Girls, LeAnn Rimes, and Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli, who picked up two nods each.

Carey won the award for R&B artist and a special Legend Award for artist of the ’90s. Puff Daddy took top trophies for new artist and rap artist. Spice Girls won for pop group and British recording group. Rimes picked up the trophy for American artist and country artist, and Bocelli picked up the classical artist and Italian artist awards.

While Spice Girls failed to show up for the second year running, their U.K. genre rivals, All Saints, appeared as “special guests,” as did Mase. The show was hosted by Gloria Estefan and actors Jason Priestley and Daisy Fuentes, with a host of stars from TV, movies, music, sports, and modeling handing over the awards.

Melissa Corken, an executive producer with husband John Martini, whose Marcor International company is responsible for launching the event, says the World Music Awards has grown considerably since its debut year. “It’s got bigger and more global,” says Corken, adding, “We started with 20 countries in Europe, and now we reach 130 countries and over 500 million viewers worldwide.”

The show’s third executive producer

(Continued on next page)

V2 Lands In South Africa

On the trunk of a sports car in Johannesburg, Richard Branson, right, signs a licensing deal for his V2 Records in South Africa with David Gresham, center, founder of David Gresham Records (DGR), one of South Africa’s largest independent record companies. Joining them is V2 head of international Steve “Able” Allen. The deal has seen DGR issue and gain airplay for V2 artists, including the Stereophonics, FM Dawn, and Heather Nova. “We’re very excited about the deal and haven’t wasted any time getting tracks listed on key radio stations here,” says Gresham. Branson says he is especially excited about the opportunity this deal would give V2 to take South African artists to a worldwide audience.

“There are obviously two sides to the deal,” he says. “The one is the chance to introduce local audiences to V2’s growing spread of great artists like the Stereophonics, and the other is to look for exciting Southern African talent to bring into the V2 fold.”

France’s Sacem/SDRM Aims For New Openness

BY RÉMI BOUTON
PARIS—French authors’ body Sacem/SDRM is aiming for a greater transparency in its financial operations by presenting its 1997 annual figures six weeks early. President Jean-Loup Tournier says he hopes the move will offset some of the criticism the society received last year.

One of the criticisms leveled at Sacem/SDRM during 1997 was not of its own making. Tournier says the financial and management difficulties faced during the year by artists’ collecting body Adami have been unfairly projected onto all collecting societies.

“If Credit Lyonnais is virtually bankrupt, that does not mean that all French banks are badly run,” Tournier says. If one collecting society is in difficulty, that is not sufficient justification to question the whole system of collective licensing, he argues.

However, Tournier agrees with the French Ministry of Culture that the financial control of collecting societies needs to be improved. He says the early release of Sacem’s 1997 figures is his society’s way of showing that it has taken the culture ministry’s recommendations to heart and that it cannot be accused of the same shortcomings that are being leveled against some of its sister organizations.

But Tournier characterizes Sacem/SDRM’s figures as “not very brilliant.” The two halves of the society—Sacem is the performing right body while SDRM collects mechanical royalties—had revenue up 0.4% to 3.3 billion francs ($550 million).

Performing right income from broadcasters rose 4.5% to 1 billion francs ($167 million). Within that, income from radio was up 14.6% to 190 million francs ($31.7 million). Royalties from public broadcasters rose 8.9% to 90 million francs ($15 million), while income from commercial radio increased by 20.3% to 100 million francs ($16.7 million).

According to Sacem deputy manager Thierry Desumont, “The important increase of the private radio revenue has come from only one source—the good figures of the radio industry in 1997 and in particular the excellent results of the NRJ group.”

Royalties from live performances rose 5.7% to 591 million francs ($86.5 million); income from cafes and other public premises was up 5.2% to 396 million francs ($66 million); and revenue from cinema rose 1.7% to 65.8 million francs ($10.1 million).

In contrast, mechanical income was down 4.3% to 600 million francs ($100 million). Revenue from the home-taping levy fell 10.3% to 130 million francs ($21.6 million).

(Continued on page 61)
Sony France Management Revamped

BY RÉMI BOUTON
PARIS—Sony Music France president Paul-René Albertini has set up a new management organization that will give the company more flexibility to react to changes in the market. "Since 1994, Sony Music France's market share has grown from 25% to 25% in a very competitive market, and our previous management style was no longer able to react quickly," says Albertini.

Based on this analysis, Albertini has split the management into three operational and decision-making groups that will oversee all of Sony's imprints in the areas of strategy, marketing, and logistics and finance. This new structure is in addition to current label management. "Those three groups have been created in order to carry out some of the strategies of the labels," says Albertini.

The Management Group is to be run by Jean-Claude Gastineau (current Marketing Group) as chairman and director, and Sony Music France deputy managing director, and the A&R group is managed by Philippe Désinès, currently managing director of the Small imprint. Montfort and Désinès, who retain their responsibilities at the head of their respective labels, are promoted to senior VP of the company.

Says Albertini, "This new organization is a reshuffling of the personnel that makes the best of the competence of everyone. Olivier Montfort will be responsible for the whole marketing structure of the company and Philippe Désinès will be responsible for Sony's new artistic project."

"In France we are the second-largest company, and we can't ignore any musical segment. Until now, there are some musical genres that we don't cover, such as rap, for example, while at the same time, we have sometimes three or four labels working in the same area," Albertini says.

Albertini says Désinès' brief is to introduce a more coherent A&R policy throughout the labels. "He's there to make sure that we cover all the artistic niches, but he is not Sony France's A&R man. That would make no sense," Albertini says.

After a year of operation, the Calabrese/Columbia joint venture has extended its extension to its new label. "We are constructing a great catalog in two directions: French acts and Latin acts. It is good timing to put a new structure," says Calabrese.

South African Awards Show Draws Criticism

BY DIANE COETZER
JOHANNESBURG—South Africa's annual music awards ceremony, the FNB South African Music Awards (SAMA), is facing tough criticism over this year's event, held April 29 here.

BMG Africa managing director Keith Lister says his company would "politely inform" FNB (sponsor First National Bank) of its dates conflict with the launch of South African Music Industry (ASAMI, the organizers) that "unless judges are named before entries are closed, there is no point in giving a record company would not participate in the awards ceremony."

Lister's criticism stems from the fact that, unlike in previous years, the official fourth annual FNB SAMA program did not contain a list of judges. Another reason is ASAMI's apparent reluctance to name those individuals chosen to judge. Lister says, "Until the awards ceremony is fully transparent and accountable, we will be extremely reluctant to participate."

Judge is not the only aspect of the awards that has caused dispute. Don Lakka of the successful independent label Kalawa/Jazmee Records says he was sent a letter suggesting setting up an alternative to the SAMAs, based on the Soul Train Music Awards in the U.S. None of his label's acts received a nomination despite the fact that several, including Trompies, have had an enormous impact on radio and the live circuit this year.

SABC, which station manager at South Africa's fastest growing regional station, YFM, says the current categories and nominations don't show what's happening in SA music in the least. (Continued on next page)
**SACEM/SDRM FIGURES (Continued from page 59)**

due to the slowing down of the video and audio tape market.

Collections from abroad in both the performance and mechanical sectors were also down—by 6.3% to 552 million francs ($92 million). At the same time, SACEM/SDRM’s expenses have increased by 1.1% to 872 million francs ($145.4 million).

“Obviously, this increase is more important than the decrease in any percentage of the collection of fees, but the rise is the smallest one for many years,” says Tournier. “We have reinforced the financial controls, and, in terms of staff, all we have done is to hire the people who have retired.”

Staff costs represent about 70% of the society expenses, according to the figures released by Tournier. Those figures show that SACEM/SDRM has an average commission rate of 17.39% for performance and mechanical revenues, compared with 16.9% in 1996.

“I can lower this ratio by laying off 50 people,” says Tournier. “It’s easy to lower costs, but we would then be less efficient. Some collecting societies criticize the level of commissions in France, but what’s important is what the authors receive. And SACEM is among the best in this domain.”

For 1997, SACEM/SDRM will report revenue of 2.66 billion francs ($443 million) to authors and publishers.

**SOUTH AFRICAN AWARDS SHOW**

(Continued from preceding page)

“The big thing this past year was definitely kwaito... there’s really only one category [dance] for these artists,” Abramah says. “Where are all the other artists, like Sogaf Mugaf, E’smile, O’Da Meesta, Trompies, and others?”

Speaking after the awards ceremony, South African chairperson of the FNB Steering Committee, responded, “The South African music industry is a very complex one in terms of genres, styles, and languages, and it’s extremely difficult to satisfy every- one. While this industry may have a long history in terms of recording and creating, it’s still in its infancy in most other respects. It’s also not a very uni-

ified industry.”

Defending the failure to name judges, Lowe says many judges were reluctant to be named. “Many of these individu-

als do not want to be named nor taken to task about how they voted.”

The Awards are still struggling to have an impact on the South African record-buying public. Howard Lazarus, Director of Look ‘n Listen, says record buyers are not interested in South African releases any more, and if they are, it’s because they have a foreign name association. “There’s很大的 influence is still in its infancy in most other respects. It’s also not a very uni-

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Music Fans Get Early Taste Of Hi Def

CineMuse Previews Technology With Museum Presentations

BY STEVE TRAIFMAN

NEW YORK—With high-definition TV programming due to start later this year on a limited basis, Hi Def programming of jazz, blues, reggae, folk, classical, and opera music—as well as other entertainment—is already being previewed at museums and performing arts centers across the country.

“We’re looking at niche marketing for root American music,” says Mort Cooperman, founder of New York’s Lone Star Cafe and Lone Star Roadhouse. Cooperman is one of four partners in CineMuse, the only company now presenting Hi Def programming to U.S. audiences on a national basis.

The company, which was launched a year ago, has formed alliances with museums and other presenters of art to showcase Hi Def features on life-sized screens in their theaters. Any production done on film can be dubbed in the Hi Def videotape format.

“The future is limited only by your imagination as to where this technology can go,” Cooperman says. Via Hi Def satellite delivery, he says, “you could take Buddy Guy across the country into several hundred small but quality venues he’d never reach and earn enough in one night to rival the best pay-per-view [PPV] concert and even sports revenues to date.”

This vision convinced company president Ted Geier to put together the new venture. He had previously founded and served for 14 years as CEO of Cause Effective, a leading provider of nonprofit fund raising and special events consulting and training. He estimates he worked with more than 2,000 groups over the years. This included work with the New York Folk Festival, of which Cooperman was a major sponsor.

Through Cooperman, Geier was introduced to Barry Rebo, whose Rebo Productions had filmed a number of Hi Def programs at the Lone Star Roadhouse and House of Brazil in New York. The Rebo catalog is a source of many of the initial CineMuse programs. Another source is the Rabbit Ears catalog of children’s programming licensed from Microleague Multimedia; those programs are narrated by top actors, with major artists providing the music.

(Continued on next page)

Amazon.com Plans Steady Growth In Music And Video

BY CATHERINE APPLEFELD OLSON

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The online retailer Amazon.com is out to prove it’s as serious about selling music and video as it is about selling books. The Seattle-based company has purchased the Internet Movie Database (IMDB), an online repository of movie and TV information that it will use to enhance its existing video store. In addition, Amazon.com just launched a preliminary version of its music store.

“IT’s a great resource for us technically and to teach us how to do community well,” says David Risser, Amazon.com’s senior VP of product development. “We want to parallel our book community, and we saw the amount of passion that went into IMDB.”

For the near term, Risser says, the IMDB site will continue to exist much as it does today, with the addition of links to Amazon.com to buy videos and soundtracks.

“There is content here we intend to redeploy on the Amazon site,” Risser adds.

Although it’s just starting to piece together a robust video retail environment, Amazon.com actually has been selling video for almost its entire existence and now even carries DVD product.

“We’ve had videos for a long time but never made a big deal of it and have not put the energy behind it, as we have with books,” says Risser, adding that video sales are “very small” for the company.

With the IMDB purchase, Risser says, the company now will be moving video into center stage.

(Continued on next page)

您的最佳联系音乐零售行业……比尔博德的1998年唱片零售目录

比尔博德的唱片零售目录是为那些服务或销售产品的公司提供阅读的必要工具。依靠整个音乐和有声书行业的力量，比尔博德的1998年唱片零售目录提供了超过7,000个独立的唱片店、连锁店、邮购商和有声书出版商的名单。

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BILLBOARD MAY 23, 1998 65
The initial 62-title CineMuse catalog includes such music highlights as "R&B in the Classic Style," which features Ruth Brown and Charles Brown and is also available as a Rounder Records/Rebo DVD release; "World Music II: Reggae," featuring Jamaican artist Sugar Minott; "World Music I: Salsa," featuring Papa Wemba and Diblo with Lоко- to; "Clearwater: Celebrating The Hudson River," with folk singer/songwriters Pete Seeger and Arlo Guthrie; "Romeo And Juliet," with the Paris Opera Ballet; and Wagner’s "Die Meistersinger Von Nürnberg," from the Deutsche Oper Berlin. There’s also an impressive array of fine art, drama, biography, documentary, and other arts programming.

CineMuse’s initial selections also include 14 children’s releases from the Rabbit Ears catalog, such as "Anansi," with Denzel Washington performing; "Bier Rabbit & Boss Lion," with Danny Glover and Dr. John; "King Midas And The Golden Touch," with Michael Caine, Ersnj and Yo-Yo Ma; "Koi And The Kola Nuts," with Whoopi Goldberg and Herbie Hancock; and "Rumpelstiltskin," with Kathleen Turner and Tangerine Dream.

A second wave of music releases is due later this year from the "Manhattan Music Magazine" concert series recorded live by Rebo in Hi Def on 24-track digital audio at the Lone Star and Sounds of Brazil. Among the new titles are "Hot Tuna: Alive In Concert," "Blues Men: Johnnie Johnson And Johnny "Twister" Copeland," "The Rhythm & Blues Of New Orleans," with Snooks Eaglin and Johnny Adams; and "New Wave Folk," featuring Peter Galway, Aztec Two-Step, and Cliff Eberhart.

This programming literally comes to life in the Hi Def electronic cinema that has been operating for years in Europe and Japan.

"In the CineMuse concept," Geier explains, "we offer equipment that creates a state-of-the-art movie theater in which audiences feel as if they’re experiencing in person the live and prerecorded events on the screen. Hi Def quality surpasses most film and provides detail and color five times greater than conventional video. The image has a widescreen 16 by-9 ratio aspect and generally measures larger than the area of a diagonal in the average home theater."

To showcase the new concept and programming, CineMuse has put together equipment packages that are being loaned to the test performers or affordable. The quality of the Hi Def broadcast is very high. And the programming catalog is impressive now and holds great promise for future development.

After making presentations to more than 100 potential exhibitors, Geier put together an impressive list of test venues; they started offering Hi Def programs last fall. Participating venues include the Children’s Museum of Manhattan; Bright Young University In Provo, Utah; Algonquin Arts Theatre in Manhattan; Kalamazoo, Mich.; Valley Museum; Mesa (Ariz.); Southwest Museum; Museum Williams-Proctor Institute in Utica, N.Y.; the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts; and the Cape Museum of Fine Arts in Dennis, Mass. Other bookings have included the Sheldon Theatre in Red Wing, Minn., and Cal Poly Arts in San Luis Obispo, Calif.

"In most cases it’s a revenue-sharing agreement with minimum guarantees," Geier says. "Some venues had most of their own equipment set-ups. Others, like Kalamazoo and Pittsburgh, rented programs for special events."

The experience that the Cape Museum of Fine Arts had from March until early May of this year was typical of the positive reaction to the CineMuse test.

"We were very pleased with the response from our audience to the artist biographies and some of the classical programs," says director Greg Harper. "For the "Romeo And Juliet" performance, we heard comments such as, "It was like being in the second-row center of the Paris Opera." The audio and video quality was exceptional. One thing that Hi Def really works well with is the art programs, offering the true color you can’t get when you’re watching a basic VHS program on PBS or cable."

"We’re going to run some high-light programs in our high season this June and July," he notes. "We’re very seriously looking at purchasing the equipment and then we’ll subscribe to the CineMuse program. It will definitely help our 92-seat venue, which has run a successful 16 mm fine-art film program. With a great opportunity to 35 mm, it would cost about $165,000 to re-equip our theater. And with CineMuse, a much smaller investment will not only give us access to Hi Def, but the equipment also can be used for VHS, SVHS, and DVD programs."

Harper says he hopes the Cape Museum of Fine Arts will eventually be part of a consortium of fine-arts institutions that can use Hi Def satellite programming.

This is Geier’s goal for CineMuse. "We’re now negotiating to get permission from a consortium that would offer a minimum guarantee against revenue-sharing, that with revenue financing the equipment setup," he says.

"We hope to have between 40 and 50 sites signed up by year-end 1999 and more than 100 by the new century, when we’ll be large enough to begin originating and broadcasting live programs," he adds. "With live transmission via satellite, we expect to far outdo what PPV has accomplished to date for even sports programming."

Geier says fine arts content will work on PPV when it features programs that aren’t currently available on commercial or cable TV, when it’s shown in an appealing facility, and when it’s presented with the very high-tech equipment. "IMAX has shown that if you deliver good shows in a great format, people will come to museums to see them," he notes.

For Cooperman, merchandising opportunities are equally attractive. "CineMuse is something people will want to belong to," he says. "We’ll launch some type of club for venue partnerships. We’ve already tested sales of videos and audiocassettes at the Children’s Museum of Manhattan, and we know how well museum stores do on all types of media products."

Geier lays out the bottom-line scenario: "If you get 200 people in 200 smaller communities, you sell them tickets for $29, that’s an $800,000 gross that spells success on any revenue-sharing basis," he says. "And when you add in the appeal of a new genre, the value is a lot higher."

"The music store is similar to its book counterpart, Amazon, in that it plans to add editorial features and other content and has been amassing a dedicated music staff. "We’re asking the company’s visitors for suggestions on ways it can provide information like current album reviews and "desert island" album picks; it’s also asking for comments on the music area’s design."

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**MUSIC FANS GET AN EARLY TASTE OF HI DEF**

(Continued from preceding page)

**NAVARRE** narrowed its net loss to $974,000 for the fiscal year that ended March 31, from $61.19 million last year. Revenue declined to $196.6 million from $200.7 million. The independent distributor says that music sales rose 8.7% during the year and that cash flow (earnings before interest, taxes, amortization, and depreciation) increased to $3.9 million from $1.9 million. In other news, the company announces an exclusive distribution deal with Blue Hat Records, a label begun last year by Charlie Daniels as his first and sole artist so far. The first album through the deal is Daniels’ "Blues Hat." David Corlew is president of Nashville-based Blue Hat.

**MUSICLAND** reports that sales for stores open at least a year rose 11.6% for the fourth week that ended Feb. 24, compared with the same period last year. For the mall stores (Sam Goody, Musicland, and Suncost Motion Picture Co.), same-store sales climbed 12.8%; for the superstores (Media Play and On Cue), they rose 9.2%. Total sales for the 1,350-store chain were up 9.4% to $111.5 million.

**N2K**, the online music company, announces two new deals and a new World Wide Web site. Its online retailer Music Boulevard has made an agreement with telephone company Bell South to be the exclusive music content provider and retailer for the BellSouth.net Internet service. The company’s label, N2K Encoded Music, has signed a three-year exclusive distribution deal with Rhythmic Records, a Dallas-based label that will issue catalog titles by such acts as JackoPeople and Sister 7. N2K also says its Jazz Central Station Web service has launched the first official Miles Davis Web site. On May 26 there will be an online tribute to Davis, featuring live music from Birdland in New York and commentary.

**RECHON**, a marketer of consumer electronics accessories, says net income jumped to $3.6 million in the first fiscal quarter from $320,000 in the same period last year. Sales rose 51.8% to $144.7 million in the three months that ended March 31. Recoton says its biggest sales increases came from the "Internet" video game and its multimedia accessory business.

**READER’S DIGEST ASSN.** says that revenue from home entertainment products such as music and video declined 10% to $413 million in the third fiscal quarter. The company says that about half of the decrease resulted from the strength of the dollar but that "lower-priced offerings in music and video" also contributed to the drop. Operating profit for home entertainment "decreased significantly," the direct-marketing company reports. Reader’s Digest also announces the appointment of a new chairman/CEO, Thomas G Ryden. He succeeds George Grune, who will remain on the board.

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**NEWSLINE**

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**AMAZON.COM**

(Continued from preceding page)

"Right now there is a lot of emphasis on books," he says. "And music is where we see our short-term attention being focused, and then video.

In mid-April, Amazon debuted its initial incarnation of its long-awaited music store. The company offers a selection of 100,000 CDs, which are searchable by title and artist and cover every genre except classical. "The music store is similar to its book counterpart, Amazon, in plans to add editorial features and other content and has been amassing a dedicated music staff."
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Introducing Valley Media's DVD Dealer's Choice Program

Are you ready for the format of the future? Your customers certainly are. VideoScan reports that DVD hardware and software sales are exploding. Sales of DVD titles have eclipsed 110 million units, averaging more than 80,000 units per week. That's more than 127 million DVDs sold to date. And it's just the beginning.

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DEALER'S CHOICE #1 POI Signage Kit

This Valley Media exclusive kit includes a full color poster, shelf talkers, window clings, DVD employee buttons and a branded Video Scan DVD video stickers. This kit offers the basic tools you need to build DVD store awareness.

DEALER'S CHOICE #2 1TUBE Spinning DVD Display Racks

These merchandise racks take up less than two square feet of floor or counter space. They come in two color options: white or black. Both are designed with a glowing inner topper. The best part? Dealers Choice lets you choose your own product mix, and your rack is free with a 48 or 112 unit order!

DEALER'S CHOICE #3 DVD Rolling Display

This Valley Media exclusive fixture features easy setup heavy-duty tubular silver or black steel and holds 120 units. The display has wheels for easy movement, and comes with a rental and sell through DVD display signage and a DVD rental locking bar. (DVD players available separately)

DEALER'S CHOICE #4 The Ultimate DVD Kiosk

The royal crown of DVD merchandising. This exclusive Valley Media Kiosk comes with two spinners, a display area,ktm, and holds 50 units! The kiosk holds and locks your DVD rental players and is expandable to hold up to twelve programs. Internal storage included for maximum awareness. This package includes both sell through and rental signage for individual store needs. Holds most 27 TVs. (Rental DVD players available separately)

Whether you're already in the DVD game or thinking about venturing into the world of DVD, Valley Media's DVD Dealers Choice Program gives you the flexibility you need to make the right merchandising decisions with very little investment.

Participate in Valley Media's DVD Dealer's Choice Program today and you'll get a 100% Return Allowance! Call your Valley Media Account Manager today for more information on our DVD Dealers Choice Program or any of our other products services or programs.

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Tower Set For Expansion With New Debt Offering, Revolver

TOWER POWER: Since January, Russ Solomon, Tower Records/Video president, has been saying the chain is ready to rock 'n' roll. And now he can afford it, because Tower has completed a $110 million debt offering, selling senior subordinated notes that are due in 2005 and carry a 9.75% interest rate. Moreover, the Sacramento, Calif.-based company has secured a new revolving credit facility, with fund availability totaling $275 million; it matures in five years. The refinancing was underwritten by Chase Investors and Merrill Lynch, with Chase Investors also serving as the lead in the banking syndicate supplying the revolving credit facility.

Company treasurer Sandy Cortes says the refinancing was done with the "goal of positioning the company for future expansion opportunities, both domestically and worldwide." She notes that in addition to supplying funds to the domestic operation, the revolver also serves the needs of Tower Records Kabiushiki Kaisha (KK), the company's Pacific Rim operation, which encompasses stores in Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Japan. "The syndicate supplying the revolving credit facility includes international banks," Cortes says. "We wanted to have access to the currencies and the funds in the countries in which we do business."

In addition to the countries named above, Tower Records KK has franchises in Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines, while Tower's parent company, MTS Inc., has stores in the U.K., Ireland, Canada, Israel, Colombia, Mexico, and Argentina, in addition to the U.S. In total, the company operates 192 stores and has total revenues of about $1 billion.

While saying that the refinancing should fuel Tower's expansion for the next five years, Cortes declines to specify how many stores will be opened in the current year. She notes that because the company doesn't use a "cookie cutter" approach, it's harder to project when and how many store openings will occur. But, she adds, in the company's history, "we have only closed eight stores. Compare that total to the hundreds of stores that our competitors have closed in the last few years, and it speaks well to our expansion approach."

It does at that. And now we'll all get a peek behind the curtains to see exactly how healthy Tower's operation is. Thanks to the $110 million debt offering, the company will begin making 10-K and 10-Q filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

(Continued on page 70)
ICHIBAN DEAL: There are a couple of new twists in the saga of Atlanta-based Ichiban Records. Label president John Abbey has re-acquired the 50% of the company purchased last year by Koch International and has inked a new exclusive distribution pact with Alpharetta, Ga.-based Intersound Distribution, a division of Downers Grove, Ill.-based Platinum Entertainment.

Last year, Port Washington, N.Y.-based Koch, which had been Ichiban’s exclusive distributor since December 1996, bought half of the label retained by Abbey’s ex-wife and ex-partner, former Ichiban president Nina Easton, after the couple split in early ’96 (Billboard, March 8, 1997). The Ichiban/Koch deal supplied new funding for the label, which had experienced some rocky times owing to the distracting Abbey/Easton divorce, and gave Koch—previously known as a distributor of roots, jazz, and pop product—a gateway into the R&B music sphere.

Today, both Abbey and Koch International president Michael Koch describe their parting of the ways as amicable. Neither is especially forthcoming about the reasons behind the dissolution of their partnership. Koch says only that it stemmed from “a difference in vision.” Abbey says his buyback of Koch’s interest for an undisclosed sum was completed in March.

Even after the completion of the repurchase, Koch and Ichiban apparently talked about continuing their distribution relationship, which was up for renewal. However, Koch says, “we didn’t want to provide the additional funding. . . . The renewal deal was too rich for me.”

With Michael’s blessing, we spoke to a few other companies,” says Abbey, who adds that Ichiban ended up talking with seven or eight firms before narrowing things down to three prospective distributors.

Intersound, which was purchased in early ’97 by Platinum, won out, according to Abbey, because of its geographical proximity and its expertise in handling genres like bass music and old-school R&B, both Ichiban mainstays. “We weren’t dissatisfied with Koch, but I feel the marriage with Intersound is a better marriage,” Abbey says. “We have a lot in common with Intersound.”

The first albums under the new distribution arrangement, which took effect May 4, will arrive on Tuesday (19): “Lovers Again,” by smooth R&B vet Alexander O’Neal, and, on the Wrap imprint, “We Keep It Crunk For You,” by Atlanta hip-hop group the A-Town Players. Ichiban’s roster includes M.C. Breed, Ashford & Simpson, Millie Jackson, Top Authority, Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz, and Da Organization.

Abbey’s repurchase of Koch’s interest and the new distribution deal serve as an exclamation point for a period of some tumult in Ichiban’s recent past. In January, the label laid off 12 of its 35 staff members (Billboard, Jan. 24).

For Koch’s part, the distributor will be on the hunt for new R&B product. “We do want to fill that void now,” Koch says. “We’re definitely going to stay in that game. It’s a viable genre.”

ACTION AT DNA: Distribution North America (DNA) in Woodland, Calif., has undertaken a new relationship with the long-running punk rock label SST Records. Lawndale, Calif. DNA will now warehouse the majority of SST’s product; fulfill SST for overseas accounts and regional specialty distributors; and sell SST product to chains, one-stops, and some indie accounts.

The bond between DNA and SST represents a major switch for the label, which is operated by former Black Flag guitarist Greg Ginn. In the past, SST utilized a broad web of U.S. distributors and one-stop-to move its wares and warehoused its own product.

In other DNA news, the distributor has inked a long-term distribution deal with Moulin D’Or, the Minneapolis adult contemporary label that numbers Danny Wright among its acts. The new arrangement takes effect in July. Moulin D’Or was previously distributed by Narvar Corp.

FLAG WAVING: In the late ’70s, when punk rock was first rearing its ugly little head in L.A., the Heaters were a local act that energetically fused the punk funk outlook with some engaging pop moves. Now the band’s singer/songwriter, Missy Connell, is spearheading a new edition of the group, as the Heaters return with the album “Living In A Sticton,” on Malibu, Calif.-based Garage Records.

Contemporary of such zesty punk-skewed pop acts as the Plimsouls and 20/20, the Heaters issued albums on Arista America and Colombia in their early-’80s heyday. But, Connell recalls, “they wanted us to sound like Martha Davis and the Motels, and we said no thanks.”

The band came close to making an album with the legendary, and legendarily eccentric, producer Phil Spector. Connell says of those abortive sessions, “The boyband had his gun out on the piano, singing along . . . [Spector] was great, but it dragged on so long.”

Ultimately, the Heaters packed it in in 1986, while the original band members—including Connell’s sister Maggie—scattered to the four winds, Connell stuck it out in Los Angeles. “I had a feeling I didn’t complete something,” she says. “Music is so much timing. You do what you love, and the wheel of fortune turned around.”

The spark for the band’s reformation came round the line-up on cable TV host Art Fein asked Connell to perform at a tribute to Bobby Fuller at the Hollywood nightclub Sugar Shack. There she encountered producer Dollar Varden, and, she says, “things came together right then.”

Connell ended up recording the resultant album mostly by herself. “I just thought, God—I had an 8-track [tape machine], I got a computer. . . . I said, I want to see what I can do, to clear the cobwebs.”

“Living In A Sticton” manages to capture a good deal of the sassy original Heaters sound, in rockers like “That Boy (Wants To Be A Girl)” and the shock-rocking “He Treats Her Like A Trophy” and in lovely rock balladry like “Every Living Dog.”

Connell is applying her energies to whipping a working band into shape; guitarist Bernard Yin, bassist Lisa Hensel, and drummer David Decker round out the lineup. “We’re rehearsing it up,” Connell says. “This music is hard. They’re going through torture.”
Atlantic Employs Tie-Ins Galore For ‘Camelot’ Set

WHOLE LOTTA CAMELOT: Atlantic Records has put a wide array of laces in its promotional mittryard in service for the soundtrack to “Quest For Camelot,” the Warner Bros. animated movie that opened May 15.

“Quest For Camelot: Music From The Motion Picture,” released May 5 on Carib/Warner Sunset/Atlantic, features original songs from the film written and produced by David Foster and Carole Bayer Sager and performed by LeAnn Rimes, Celine Dion and the Corrs, Bryan White, Steve Perry, and Andrea Bocelli. Plus, actors Eric Idle and Don Rickles, who voice Camelot’s two-headed dragon, Devon & Cornwall, perform on a track. The album includes excerpts from the film score, composed by Patrick Doyle.

Lisa Gray, senior director of product development for Atlantic, says the promotion and marketing campaign involves tie-ins with Kodak, Eckerd Drugs, Wendy’s, Blockbuster Video, Kraft/Kool-Aid, Wal-Mart, Tyson Chicken, and UNICEF.

The Wendy’s program, which kicked off May 1 and runs through June 14, is centered around give-aways of two-song sampler cassettes featuring movie songs “On My Father’s Wings” (sung by Perry) and “I Stand All Alone” (performed by White, who sings the movie’s main male lead role, Garrett; the Corrs’ Andrea Corr sings female lead Kayley). Tray liners in 5,400 Wendy’s restaurants nation-wide are tagged with information about the full soundtrack, urging customers to buy it at their local Blackbuster.

“Quest For Camelot” soundtracks are among the prizes being given away in Kraft/Kool-Aid’s “Become A Knight” sweepstakes, which is being pushed via more than 45,000 free-standing displays in grocery stores through June or July, according to Gray.

From April 15 through July 15, the soundtrack is tagged on the back of 3 million Tyson Chicken boxes. Tyson is holding its own sweepstakes, with prizes including “Quest For Camelot” albums.

Through the end of this month, the soundtrack will be featured in listening posts at all Wal-Marts nationwide. The title is also receiving heavy visibility at Warner Bros. stores. As for the UNICEF tie-in, each soundtrack will contain an insert with information about the organization. The charity is using music and characters from the film in a full-fund-raising campaign called Tuck or Treat for the poor.

Gray says children’s specialty marketing firm Playground Entertainment Marketing is playing a big part in the promotion of the “Quest For Camelot” soundtrack. “We’re working with 4,000 retailers—everything that falls outside music accounts,” says Playground founder/president Kathleen Bywater, who notes that her company is also handling Camelot book and tape product, released on Kid Rhino/Kids’ WB Music: “Target is one of our major clients in this area. We’ve been working with them since September.”

The book and tape title “Quest For Camelot Audio Action-Adventure” was released April 7 and is being pushed via advertising in DC Comics in May issue of Animania. Pinky & The Brain, and Superfriends; a trailer on Warner Home Video’s “Quest For Camelot Sing Along.” due in June; the Kraft/Kool-Aid sweepstakes, in which it will be given away to 100 first-prize winners; and other promotional efforts.

JUDY & DAVID ON TOP: Belated and richly deserved congratulations (Continued on next page)
CHILD’S PLAY
(Continued from preceding page)
to Toronto-based husband-and-wife duo Judy & David, who won this year’s Juno Award for best children’s recording of the year, with their delightful album "Livin’ In A Shoe," on Tanglewood Audio. Kudos also to Tanglewood chief Bruce Davidson, who "knows how to make the perfect em." Child’s Play revels in the freshness, funniness, preschool-oriented pair in the Dec. 20, 1997, column; we consider the duo among the very best the genre has to offer. We’re anxious to see what the pair will come up with next.

KIDBITS: Sony Wonder has re-released Yaowen Jennings’ charmer of a children’s album, “Cowboys, Sisters, Rascals & Dirt,” which first appeared on Lou Adler’s Ole 2 Kids label in 1992. It views the world from a spirited little boy’s point of view and includes such original tunes as “All Of My Sisters Are Girls” and “Cowboy Movies.”

Redway, Calif.-based Music for Little People (MFLP) has secured an exclusive worldwide rights to audio product based on the Learning Channel’s preschool series “Bingo & Molly.” The first album is “You Can Do It!” with songs and a score by Ric Zivic. Also new from MFLP is “It’s About Kids For Kids” by Papillon, a New Orleans-based musician who is part of the Crescent City’s Arts in Education series. Tunes include “Let’s Go! Fais Do Do!,” “Laissez Les Bons Temps Rouler,” and “Crawfish.”
The Club Baby label of Forest Hills, N.Y., has a new arrival in its evergrowing toddler audio series of the same name. “Club Baby: A Special Gift” features upbeat, bouncy songs from singer, songwriter, musician, and Club Baby founder Denise Lifeson. The series is also available on CD.

**DOMO RECORDS**
(Continued from page 65)
sales incentive with any Domo product.

The program is much larger than what Domo has been capable of in the past.

Prior to signing the deal with Narada, the label’s distribution was handled by the independent Navarre. “When you’re dealing with a major distribution organization, you have a large field force,” says Gilreath. “With this deal, we have an entire sales force that is dedicated to selling.”

Both Gilreath and Rubin are firm when explaining that the deal doesn’t diminish Domo’s creative control over its product or its direction.

“We’re still an independent company,” Rubin says. “We’re not independent distributed, but we’re still fully owned by ourselves. We still have the freedom to do what we want to do and put campaigns together as we see fit. We don’t have anyone telling us what direction to go in.”

Altogether, the new label group is a potent combination of new age, world, and AC firms. The group’s Virgin arm boasts the best-selling Yanni as part of its stable of new age artists; Gilreath says collaborative efforts between artists and labels isn’t out of the question.

As an example, Gilreath cites a recently completed Narada project, “Gypsy Soul,” a compilation album that tapped Domo’s Benedicti & Sbood’s efforts in the realm of flamenco. “We’re able to do things where we can easily license artists to other labels in the group,” he says, “be it for exposure or support of particular projects.”

According to Narada president Wesley Van Linda, there were several sides to the company’s interest in bringing Domo into the fold. Foremost was longstanding respect for Domo founder/CEO Elichii Naito and Gilreath. “It’s just fun to be able to work with good, honest people in this business,” Van Linda says. “Secondly, Kitaro is one of the premier artists in the whole new age/world fusion area, and for us, the opportunity to be part of this is great.”

“We’ve indirectly worked with Kitaro in product in the past,” he adds, “and we have a tremendous amount of respect for him and his music. It’s a good match to bring them into what we’re doing with Virgin and EMI Distribution. For us it’s a real positive thing, and we hope we can do a good job with them.”
Brokers, Stores Squeeze Used-Tape Biz

Merchants Are Beginning To Trade In Previously Viewed DVDs

BY EARL PAIGE

LOS ANGELES—The used-tape business is suffering from an identity crisis.

Brokers of previously viewed programs who once relied solely on direct-response sales are outfitting stores. Meanwhile, retailers who bought only new goods are also spending open-to-buy dollars on used inventory. DVD is exacerbating the tensions between the two camps.

A market is developing in used DVDs, indicative of the year-old configuration’s maturity, according to trade sources. “Actually, many brokers are diversifying to the point where it is almost now to find a company solely in the used-tape business,” says Joe Mazm, president of Video Distributors of Florida.

Mazon, a veteran tape broker, is now scouting for disc inventory. So is Stage Two Video, the new name of a Dallas company that as Stage Two Video was specialized in tape. President Dan Crider, actively seeking DVD product, has just launched a World Wide Web site, trading DVDs with the general public.

Brokers, in fact, have gone heavy to Web sites, according to Craig LaR owe of Craig LaR owe & Associates, a consulting firm. LaR owe attributes this early activity in DVD to the increasing number of high-tech surfers who regularly shop the Web for bargains.

Damon Van Voorhis of Frontier Video Distributors agrees. A major broker, Frontier has also diversified into retail outlets. It went on the Internet last August to bolster store activity.

“We first picked up interest in used DVD on the Web site,” says Van Voorhis, “but so far it’s just a trickle.”

Used DVDs are not yet a factor at Frontier’s three Video Cupboard and Family Video Depot stores, he observes.

The phones may be about to ring off the hook, however. Movies 2 Sell, a San Diego used-tape outlet, is starting to trade DVDs now. Says owner Eric LaR owe, brother of Craig LaR owe, “That’s how it started with video games. People get tired of them and want to sell.”

“Movies 2 Sell is “about the only place in San Diego with a decent selection of laserdiscs, about 1,300 titles,” Eric says. He anticipates the format will disappear as DVD catches on.

The line between used brokers and retailers is blurring for both VHS and DVD. Los Angeles chain 2020 Video advertises that it’s “not a broker,” but at the same time, it’s hoping to buy used product directly for resale.

In fact, there’s so much confusion in the marketplace, that Gene Gross, president of broker Video Group in Clearwater, Fla., quips, “I just am going to stop and catch my breath.”

Hollywood isn’t helping matters any. Gross says that the last developments creating confusion is the raft of so-called free goods going right through dealer’s hands and into the uncontrolled pipeline.

The trend dates back to late 1997, when the studios began rewarding dealers who made quotas with extra copies of hit movies that consumers might otherwise have difficulty finding on a hot-renting Friday night.

“What’s happening is that many...” (Continued on page 75)

Eric LaR owe stocks used tapes in his Movies 2 Sell store in San Diego.

So Exactly How Successful Is DVD? As It Passes The One-Year Mark, Opinions Vary

By Seth Goldstein

RICHMOND, Va., at the end of May. Good Guys! advertising VP Brad Bramy shrouds off the Divx Memorial Day delay (Picture This, Billboard, May 16) as a “very minor” glitch: which in fact may benefit the Bay Area introduction. (A national Divx rollout is due later in ’98.)

By June 12, the new start date for print ads, California will be past the political primaries that jack up the cost of commercial time. Divx spots are “probably well advised to wait till next month,” says Good Guys! parent Bob Gunst. “Any way, we’re used to this.”

DVD suffered a delay of several months before suppliers began shipping hardware and software in March 1997.

That postponement continues to haunt manufacturers. Trade observers like consultant Richard Kelly consider the early projections of 1 million DVD players in the first year as the standard that suppliers have failed to meet. Kelly counts an estimated base of about 400,000 machines, higher than most of the estimates, but less than one-quarter of the 1 million-3 million direct broadcast satellite dishes sold to consumers in that technology’s first year.

Kelly compiling a worldwide media market survey for the International Recording Media Assn. (IRMA), says he “was surprised” at the relatively low total of 105,000 DVD players delivered to stores in the first quarter. Overall, DVDs household penetration “does not add up to the satellite numbers.” Nor, in Kelly’s view, is it sufficiently ahead of the VCR.

He notes that Betamax and VHS struggled in the early days “with very little software.” It was only after the studios began releasing movies on tapes that VCR sales surged 8% to 10% more a year. DVD, he suggests, has had the benefit of movies and retailers attuned to home video from the start. However, Kelly is quick to note that Divx will probably be found in 10,000 outlets this year, compared with 5,000 in 1997. Sales should reflect the increase.

His other concern is a disc inventory that has grown like Topsy since early 1997. Although DVD proponents trumpeted the heavy sell-through—early adopters are snapping up an average of 20-30 a year, and some dual-layered titles are in short supply—Kelly says total sales were barely 25% of the replicators’ 1997 output. The IRMA study estimates that as many as 12 million discs have been warehoused. In 1998, 35 million more are due to roll off assembly lines.

U.K.’s Technicolor Opens Danish Duplicating Plant for Scandinavia

LONDON—Technicolor, a subsidiary of the U.K. media group Carlton Communications, has set up a new plant in Denmark to exploit the Scandinavian cassette market. It’s the duplicator’s third European expansion in the past 18 months.

The facility, in Randup, Jutland, will initially have the capacity to produce more than 5 million units a year, says Technicolor, which also has manufacturing and distribution operations in the U.S., the U.K., Holland, Italy, and Spain. Its clients include Disney, Warner, and DreamWorks. First off the new production line will be “The Game,” starring Michael Douglas.

The move reflects growing demand in Scandinavia, where the total self-sell-through market for Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland has doubled since 1992 to $200 million a year, according to Technicolor. VCR penetration in the region stands at around 70% of households.

The Danish plant has 50 employees and 1,500 recorders. Technicolor or said it plans a 50% expansion of the facility in the near future. Carlton managing director June De Moller says, “The videocassette market in Europe is growing, and we’re expanding to meet the demand.”

SAM ANDREWS
### Top Video Rentals

**MAY 23, 1998**

**Compiled from a national sample of retail store rental reports.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title (Rating)</th>
<th>Label/Certifying Label, Catalog Number</th>
<th>Principal Performers</th>
<th>Title (Rating)</th>
<th>Label/Certifying Label, Catalog Number</th>
<th>Principal Performers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L.A. CONFIDENTIAL (R)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 24919</td>
<td>Kevin Spacy, Russell Crowe</td>
<td>I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER (R)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 23923</td>
<td>Jennifer Love Hewitt, Sarah Michelle Gellar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPLAND (R)</td>
<td>Miramax Home Entertainment 13353</td>
<td>Sylvester Stallone, Robert De Niro</td>
<td>THE FULL MONTY (R)</td>
<td>FoxVideo 4806</td>
<td>Robert Carlyle, Mark Addy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOGEY NIGHTS (R)</td>
<td>New Line Home Video 764924</td>
<td>Mike Walshberg, Bart Reynolds</td>
<td>IN &amp; OUT (PG-13)</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video 333183</td>
<td>Megan Foy, Ashley Judd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KISS THE GIRLS (R)</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video 333183</td>
<td>Mel Gibson, Ashley Judd</td>
<td>RED CORNER (R)</td>
<td>MG/A/K Home Video 306832</td>
<td>Bruce Willis, Richard Gere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE JACKAL (R)</td>
<td>Universal Studios Home Video 832757</td>
<td>Bruce Willis, Richard Gere</td>
<td>THE ICE STORM (R)</td>
<td>FoxVideo 2751</td>
<td>Kevin Kline, Sigourney Weaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN YEARS IN TIBET (PG-13)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 21813</td>
<td>Brad Pitt</td>
<td>LYLE'S GOLD (R)</td>
<td>Orion Home Video 2110003</td>
<td>Peter Fonda, Patricia Richardson</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE (R)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 836093</td>
<td>Al Pacino</td>
<td>MRS. BROWN (PG)</td>
<td>Miramax Home Entertainment 16175</td>
<td>Judi Dench, Bob Hoskins</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE EDGE (R)</td>
<td>FoxVideo 2750</td>
<td>Anthony Hopkins, Alec Baldwin</td>
<td>ANASTASIA (R)</td>
<td>FoxVideo</td>
<td>Animate</td>
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<tr>
<td>UI-TURN (R)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 32573</td>
<td>Sean Penn, Jennifer Lopez</td>
<td>COOL WORLD (R)</td>
<td>PolyGram Video 5006500373</td>
<td>Michael Douglas, Sean Penn</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE GAME (R)</td>
<td>PolyGram Video 4404478353</td>
<td>Michael Douglas, Sean Penn</td>
<td>THE HOUSING OF YES (R)</td>
<td>Miramax Home Entertainment 13356</td>
<td>Parker Posey, Toni Spellings</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEAN (PG-13)</td>
<td>PolyGram Video 4404469133</td>
<td>Rowan Atkinson, Peter MacNicol</td>
<td>THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO LITTLE (PG)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 156266</td>
<td>Bill Murray</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE ICE STORM (R)</td>
<td>FoxVideo 3251</td>
<td>Kevin Kline, Sigourney Weaver</td>
<td>EYE'S BAYOU (R)</td>
<td>Trimark Home Video VM6537</td>
<td>Sam Neill, Jessica Tandy, Lynn Whitfield</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOUSE HUNT (PG)</td>
<td>Universal Studios Home Video 82265</td>
<td>Nathan Lane, Lee Evans</td>
<td>A THOUSAND ACRES (R)</td>
<td>Tealstone Home Video 326222</td>
<td>Jessica Lange, Michelle Pfeiffer</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONE NIGHT STAND (PG)</td>
<td>New Line Home Video 83537</td>
<td>Woody Allen, Michelle Pfeiffer</td>
<td>THE PARIS HOLIDAY (R)</td>
<td>PolyGram Video 44055500473</td>
<td>Dennis Quaid, Michelle Pfeiffer</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOR RICHER OR POORER (PG-13)</td>
<td>Universal Studios Home Video 83375</td>
<td>Tim Allen, Cindy Basic</td>
<td>ALIEN RESURRECTION (R)</td>
<td>FoxVideo 3255</td>
<td>Sigourney Weaver, Winona Ryder</td>
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<td>IN THE COMPANY OF MEN (R)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 24013</td>
<td>Aaron Eckhart, Matt Malloy</td>
<td>KISS OR KILL (R)</td>
<td>Columbia Home Entertainment 83491</td>
<td>Kevin O'Connor, Matt Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHE'S SO LOVABLE (R)</td>
<td>Miramax Home Entertainment 13472</td>
<td>Sean Penn, John Travolta</td>
<td>A LIFE LESS ORDINARY (R)</td>
<td>FoxVideo 2772</td>
<td>Cameron Diaz, Ewan McGregor</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAD CITY (PG-13)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 15433</td>
<td>Dustin Hoffman, John Travolta</td>
<td>CONSPIRACY THEORIES (R)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 15091</td>
<td>Mel Gibson, Julia Roberts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ITA gold certification for a minimum of 125,000 units or a dollar volume of $9 million at retail for theatrically released programs, or of at least 25,000 units and $1 million at suggested retail for nontheatrical titles. ITA platinum certification for a minimum sale of 250,000 units or a dollar volume of $18 million at retail for theatrically released programs, and of at least, 50,000 units and $2 million at suggested retail for nontheatrical titles. © 1998, Billboard/BPI Communications.
## Top Video Sales

### NEW

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Distributing Label, Catalog Number</th>
<th>Principal Performers</th>
<th>Year of Release</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Suggested List Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>6 NEW</td>
<td>COLUMBIA TRISTAR HOME VIDEO 82405</td>
<td>Bruce Willis, Winona Ryder</td>
<td>1997 R 14.55</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
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<td>John Cusack, Minnie Driver</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
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<td>1997 NB 24.55</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
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<td>WARNER HOME VIDEO 149963</td>
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<td>MGM/UA HOME VIDEO 206863</td>
<td>Kyle MacLachlan, Isabella Rossellini</td>
<td>1996 R 14.95</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
<td>UNIVERSAL STUDIES HOME VIDEO 83585</td>
<td>Nathan Lane, Lee Evans</td>
<td>1997 PG 22.98</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
<td>SOULFIRE HOME VIDEO 4493</td>
<td>Vanessa Williams, Vivica Fox</td>
<td>1997 R 10.98</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
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<td>Tori Amos</td>
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<td>1998 NR 13.18</td>
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<td>Bill Pullman, Patricia Arquette</td>
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<td>Tommy Lee Jones, Will Smith</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
<td>PARAMOUNT HOME VIDEO 1106</td>
<td>John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John</td>
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<td>Julia Roberts, Dermot Mulroney</td>
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<td>Howard Stern, Robin Quivers</td>
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<td>6 NEW</td>
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<td>Mariah Carey</td>
<td>1998 NR 3.95</td>
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<td>COLUMBIA HOME VIDEO 78846</td>
<td>Animate</td>
<td>1998 R 13.55</td>
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### HUMAN \- MAN IN BLACK

- Columbia Home Video 82453
- Tommy Lee Jones, Will Smith
- 1997 PG-13 23.54
- Various Artists
- 1996 NF 14.95
- Warner Home Video 363553
- Spice Girls
- 1997 NR 14.95
- Paramount Home Video 1106
- John Travolta, Olivia Newton-John
- 1978 PG 14.95
- HBO Home Video 1484
- Various Artists
- 1998 NR 19.62
- Columbia TriStar Home Video 82723
- Julia Roberts, Dermot Mulroney
- 1997 PG-13 14.95
- MGM/UA Home Video
- Cary Elwes, Robin Wright
- 1997 PG 14.95
- New Line Home Video 21265
- Halle Berry, Martin Landau
- 1996 PG-13 14.98
- Momentum Video 1950130-3
- Rage Against the Machine
- 1997 NR 13.98
- Paramount Home Video 33251
- Howard Stern, Robin Quivers
- 1997 R 14.95
- Columbia Home Video 78846
- Mariah Carey
- 1998 NR 3.95
- American Pop
- 1998 R 13.55

### BILLBOARD® MERCHANTS & MARKETING

**Billingboard®-May 23, 1998**

**SHELF TALK---by Eileen Fitzpatrick**

Dennis joins Warner’s 75th Anniversary lineup

Dennis opens the show with his guests: “The Mike Douglas Show” took on a different look with Lennox and O’Neal, who invited Black Panther Party chairman Bobby Seale, Asian activist/folk singer duet, Yolanda Pearl, a biofeedback expert, and a macrobiotic cook, among others.

One cassette features a performance of Lennox and Chuck Berry. Lennox and O’Neal do several duets on each tape.

**Happy Birthday:** Fright fest, fistfights, and purse highlight several movies receiving anniversary treatments on video this spring and summer. The full-length edition of Bruce Lee’s “Enter the Dragon,” renting into stores Tuesday (19) at $19.98 from Warner Home Video. The limited-edition collection includes the cassette and an exclusive CD of the Lalo Schifrin soundtrack, a commemorative book, archival information, eight movie card imprints, and a photograph of a film frame. It’s priced at $49.98.

Meanwhile, Paramount Home Video is remastering “Grease” for its 20th-anniversary reissue following a successful theatrical run in March. The title will be out June 23, priced at $14.95. A deluxe edition with an onpack CD is available for $19.95. Called the “Grease Megamix,” the recording contains the songs “Greased Lightning,” “Summer Nights,” and “You’re the One That I Want.”

Also from Warner is the 25th anniversary edition of “The Exorcist,” available August 25. A $19.98 version includes an introduction by director William Friedkin; a 30-minute behind-the-scenes documentary with 11 minutes of never-before-seen outakes, the original theatrical trailer, and a lobby card. The deluxe version contains all the above, plus the 52-page “The Exorcist: The Making Of A Classic Motion Picture,” a limited-edition soundtrack of Schifrin’s score, eight lobby cards, and a picture, and is priced at $49.98.
**Brokers, Stores Squeeze Used-Tape Biz**

(Continued from page 2)

smaller dealers can't meet the quotas on these free-goods offers, and they overbuy and then sell it off," says Gross. "We are paying $50 for some movies which we sell for up to $60." Oftentimes, the cassette boxes have never been opened.

Brokers, in fact, question the basis of these plans. "The whole point of free-goods offers in these Profit Plus plans, or whatever they are called, is not really free," notes Crider. "Maybe you get a few free copies with an order on a title where you pay $70 for all the rest. How can you say these are free goods?"

Craig LaRowe says that much of the free-goods activity stems "from some dealers who are doing it as a sub-distribution." In essence, these retailers earn—and keep—the extra cassettes by filling other stores' orders. Enthusiasm leads to excess.

"I am sure the traditional distributors take full advantage of what is going on. Quantities of these titles are left over, and these go right into the used pipeline," says LaRowe.

Part two of this story in the May 30 issue will examine the impact of used tapes and DVDs in the big—and volatile—Los Angeles market.
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Est. in 1985, Polinek Record is the premier indie music store in North Carolina's triangle area. Adjacent to Duke University, convenient to Chapel Hill and Raleigh. Polinek is a partner and one of the fastest growing, most diverse music stores in the U.S. Located in Durham on Ninth St., a charming shopping district with busk fest, festival, Polinek is a solid earner with a proven track record against the competition.

Owner's move is forcing this sale. Write or fax inquiries to: Polinek Records, 710 Ninth St., Durham, NC 27705. Fax: 919-296-4258 or email to burvis@midaspring.com

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A leading independent record company with its own proprietary distribution network is currently seeking a Director of Marketing and promotional plans. Requirements encompass the development and implementation of creative, profitable and consumer oriented marketing plans at a national and regional level. Individual will work closely with sales in tracking the effectiveness of marketing plans. Qualified candidates should have a minimum of 5 years of marketing and supervision experience in the music industry, be a self-starter, have a college degree and excellent written and oral communication skills. We offer a competitive salary and benefits package. Interested parties should send their resume and salary history to:

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In this position, you will use your sales expertise to develop direct sales, and marketing initiatives with our clients. Your responsibilities will include marketing and selling our catalog and services to independent record companies and distributors. You must have a minimum of 5 years' experience selling music industry products, and excellent written and oral communication skills. You should have the ability to negotiate and close deals, and the ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously. You must be able to communicate effectively with both internal and external parties.

We offer a competitive salary and comprehensive benefits. For consideration, please forward your resume to BMG Entertainment, Dept. BMG11, 1540 Broadway, NYC, NY 10036. Fax: 212-930-4862 or e-mail: hr@BMGentertainment.com

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EXPANDING RECORD LABEL
In West Hollywood distributed by a major seeking skilled record industry professionals: Legal/Business Affairs (min. 7yrs exp), Label Mgr (min 10yr exp), CD Manufacturing/In-Press Mgr (min 7yrs), Promotion/Publicity (min 6yrs), Asst to Label Mgr (min 6yrs), Special Markets Business Affairs (7yrs - compilation, licensing), Accounting Mgr (min 10 yrs), Retail Promoter (min 3 yrs), Mallorfer Coordinator (min 5yrs - A to Z, from taking orders to final shipping). Fax res to ATTN: (position desired) for 213-450-4058.

NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF SALES & MARKETING
Respected NYC-based independent label with nationwide distribution seeks experienced and well-established salesperson with excellent national real connections and contacts. The person we seek must show the same progressive and innovative nature that we as a label strive for. Must be capable of creating presentations for buyers that are thorough, exciting, memorable and effective and be able to conduct all facets of their placement at retail from contact to close. Major label sales experience, ability to create sales/marketing plans and understanding of both catalog and new product sales is essential. Please fax resume and salary requirements for (516) 328-9087.

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JUNE 6th ISSUE
Catch this R&B essential player's spotlight. The hottest artists, directors, executives & stations will pack the pages of this music industry must-read. We'll report on the rise of "neo-soul", examine the integral role videos play, report on the latest British acts, feature year-to-date charts and much more! Call Jeff Satre 212-527-7000 or visit our website www.rnbpromotion.com

COMMENTARY
(Continued from page 6)

have always rejected this policy, producing and requiring instead a strong local industry together with the best possible supply of foreign recordings. Accordingly, we feel that copyrights should lie left intact so that the public's interest can continue to be met by the activities of the industry in Australia.

In pursuit of its political agenda, the government has led a campaign of misinformation of import proportions. Following are just a few examples of the government's misinformation campaign; the list is very large, and it does not allow them all to be set out.

It is claimed to have evidence showing that imports would produce a potential price decreases. When it came to produce that evidence, it could not and did not.

It is claimed that allowing parallel importation would be in line with world developments. As we know, the world trend and standard is not to allow parallel importation.

The government has claimed that the world piracy problem will be solved in the short term. This is extraordinary in light of the fact that world piracy is getting worse and more entrenched every year. The fact that the government made such fanciful claims is a cogent example of its preparedness to pursue the political agenda with little or no regard to real facts.

Fortunately, the government does not control the Senate (Australia's parliamentary upper house), and the legislation to repeal our exclusive import rights cannot be passed unless all opposition parties and Independents agree. Prior to voting on the legislation, the Senate required a full review of the issue by the Senate Legal and Constitutional Legislation Committee.

This process involved close to 200 submissions, many hearings, and a committee report of some 200 pages. The result was that the government's legislation was rejected by the nongovernment members, including the powerful Labor Party and the Democrats. The Independents now have the last say.

With the Senate report done, the legislation can be put to the vote in the Senate at any time the government chooses. The vote is likely to be at the end of June. The dramatic irony is that Australia's recommended full price is now the same as the recommended full price in the UK. With sales tax and royalties adjusted, Australia is cheaper!

It is absolutely clear that maintaining parallel import rights is vital to our ability to invest in new music for our customers and our artists.

Music is a high-risk, passionate, promotion-driven business. We need copyright, artists, and talented management/marketing to be successful. All are key factors that work in combination. If the exclusive import rights are removed, we will essentially become mere distributors rather than creators and risk distributors.

The fairest and most basic concept that everyone can understand is that the people who create, own, and promote a product should also be the only ones who can sell their product. The government still can't (and will never be able to) explain how a business is better off if its products can be sold by others who don't contribute anything to the product's origination and promotion.

Consumers' best interests are served by us supplying the widest selection of back catalog and new product that is commercially sustainable. We must be able to continue to bring vibrant local talent to our customers through a recorded music scene that remains diverse, exciting, and constantly reinvented.

Equally, our retailers need us to supply credit facilities, primary promotion, and direct distribution, and all the other backup services to get the best and widest product selection to our customers. We only do all this to optimal levels if we sell our own products and gain the returns exclusively on the relatively infrequent albums that are financially successful. And that's what the exclusive parallel import rights ensure around the globe.

If you're interested in joining those well-connected folks who do the big deals, make the big money, and have the big fun in the music and video business, we suggest that you order your own copy of Billboard's 1998 International Buyer's Guide before this year's press run is completely sold out.

IBG '98 brings you more than 16,000 listings including record labels, music publishers, wholesalers and distributors, manufacturers, service and supply companies, home video companies, public relations firms, schools, entertainment attorneys, tape duplicators, compact disc plants, and an audio books section that has doubled in size. Plus, you'll find more than 50 pages of informative ads, and an entire section of manufacturing specification charts on blank tape.

With IBG '98, you will be able to:
• Reach retail record buyers, distributors and importers/exporters in 50 countries worldwide.
• Find the telephone number, fax, E-Mail addresses and websites of companies throughout the world.
• Get specifications on blank media such as blank tapes and diskettes.
• Find manufacturers of jewel boxes and other service and supply organizations.
• Locate a publisher who may have interest in your catalog and/or specific copyright.

This is the kind of information that can put you at the top of the industry. And, best of all, it costs just $129 (plus shipping/handling), which is practically nothing when compared to the staggering cost of gathering this information on your own--particularly when you consider that the guide is currently being updated by our research teams in both the U.S. and Europe.
MAD MONEY: Windham Hill’s “Honor Them All,” which includes tracks from Carly Simon, Brian Wilson, Jim Brickman, Lorrie Morgan, and the Rippingtons, is dedicated to drunken driving victims and will raise money for Mothers Against Drunk Driving, which will receive 50% from the sale of each CD and 80 cents from each cassette. Contact: Kurt Nishimura at 310-358-4850.

GOOD WORKS

MADD MONEY: Windham Hill’s “Honor Them All,” which includes tracks from Carly Simon, Brian Wilson, Jim Brickman, Lorrie Morgan, and the Rippingtons, is dedicated to drunken driving victims and will raise money for Mothers Against Drunk Driving, which will receive 50% from the sale of each CD and 80 cents from each cassette. Contact: Kurt Nishimura at 310-358-4850.

EASE-FIRE SHOUT-OUTS: Zero Hour’s new R&B imprint, 3-2-1 Records, will kick off with a hip-hop and dub compilation called “Connected.” Proceeds from the record will support the New York City police, the Citywide AIDS Action Network, Spida, and MC’s, to be donated to PAX, an organization devoted to ending gun violence founded by Dan Gross and Talmage Cooley. Listening parties and open-mike nights will accompany the release and fund raising in selected markets through June, including Austin, Texas; San Francisco; Los Angeles; Seattle; Atlanta; Philadelphia; Washington, D.C.; Orlando, Fla.; Miami; Chicago; Boston; New York; and Phoenix. Contact: 3-2-1’s Fiona Bloom at 212-337-3200, extension 222, or PAX at 212-677-1180.

GET INTO THE GROOVE: Groove With Me, established in June 1998, is in need of financial support to continue its work with disadvantaged girls in New York. The program provides free dance classes for children 7-15 to instill leadership skills, creativity, discipline, and self-esteem. Two new objectives include a big-sister project, in which older students act as teachers, and a teen troupe that enrolls the question “Who am I?” through dance, video, spoken word, and writing. Contact: Abigail L. Rosin at 212-505-5995.

this month’s issue should have stated that Susan Collins was named managing director of Famous Music Ltd. in London.
Radio Faces More Artist ‘Misbehavin’’

BY CHUCK TAYLOR

NEW YORK—Luent Technologies has launched a new company to develop its own version of an in-band, on-channel (IBOC) digital audio broadcasting (DAB) system, competing directly with former partner USA Digital Radio (USADR).

The May 11 announcement places three proponents in the ring to develop a viable DAB system for the U.S., which is already a success in Europe and other countries.

Luent Digital Radio president Suren Pai told the company’s deep pockets, citing its parent firm’s assets of $24 billion. He says that, as a result, it’s better-positioned than any other company to succeed.

The two companies parted ways in February, after they together agreed that IBOC could work in the U.S.

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Comprehensive listings of radio stations (both BDS and non-BDS monitored stations) in all 15 formats covered by Airplay Monitor Consultants + Label Promotion Directory + Arbitron Ratings and History for Top 100 Markets + BDS and How It Works

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BILBOARD MAY 23, 1998

Hello Goodbye. FM 802 Osaka, Japan, radio personality Kamamichi Kong, left, savors his autographed copy of Sir George Martin’s new CD, “In My Life,” following an on-air interview with Martin, right, about the project. The famed Beatles producer also freely discussed anecdotes surrounding the Fab Four. The album is due for U.S. release in June.

VIRTUAL CONTEST? Jacob’s Midwestern and Eastern hot ACs got a lot of attention recently following the announcement that those stations had run a $5,000 “song of the day” contest in tandem, meaning that listeners in nine markets were competing for the daily cash prize. All the stations—KMYX Cleveland; KVMX Cincinnati; WMLZ Lexington, Ky.; WMXW Daytona, Ohio; WVCR Rochester, N.Y., KLYF Des Moines, Iowa; WMLX Lima, Ohio; WMFT-FM Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and WMTX Sandusky, Ohio—participated in a daily conference call on which they backtimed their programming so that they would play the song at the exact same time. Listeners called a centralized telephone number to win. Pasted and on-air rules for the contest made it clear that it was taking place in a number of markets.

A CAPSTAR STAR. Jim Donahoo, most recently VP/GM of AC/classic rock combo KXXY/KPLN San Diego, is the new president/CEO of Capstar’s Pacific Star division, including its stations in Fresno, Calif., and Honolulu. He replaces Dex Allen, who exits to launch a minority broadcasting group with San Diego’s Michael Papilia.

TOP 40 FAITH. An AC ‘remix of Faith Hill’s “This Kiss” is generating heavy phone traffic at adult top 40 KPLZ Seattle, where programming coordinator Alisa Hashimoto says it was the station’s No. 3 most-requested song the week of May 11. KPLZ has been spinning “This Kiss” three times a day. The remix, which removes the steel guitar from the original version, is intended for a 1996 international release of Hill’s current album, “Faith,” according to Brad Howell, VP of promotion at Warner Bros, in Nashville, who says the new version is available to pop radio upon request. Although KPLZ is one of the few non-country stations playing “This Kiss,” WP Consulting Group’s Ken Moultrie says the remix has been made available to his company’s pop clients.
**Radio Faces More Artist ‘Misbehavin’’**

(Continued from page 80)

going to interview one person. Then sometimes they write on the furniture, they’ll graffiti up the place or sticker up a mailbox down there, and we’re in a corporate building! A lot of MDs and PDs miss the time when artists came out and were humble and kind and said, ‘Thank you for supporting, glad you want to support them, glad to do a show for you, instead of acting like we own something.’

‘It is true: it has been getting worse, and, unfortunately, it has been with a lot of hip-hop groups. And it’s just a few people causing the bad rep,’ says Jay Allen, assistant PD/music director of WGCJ-FM Chicago.

“When they come into town for a show or even just a promo tour and do an interview, they have to bring their entire entourage. We call the label and ask them to give us a set list of who is coming, and we request that it be just the necessary people. Sometimes they bring more than that, and we don’t allow them all into the studio.”

**SINCERE AND POLITE PEOPLE**

But not all artists are troublesome, insist those we spoke to. “When an artist understands the role of radio and how it helps them in their career, then these artists are much easier to deal with. They are professional, punctual, and, most importantly, enthusiastic about doing the radio tour,” says Terrence Collier, radio tour manager for SRS Entertainment.

“We do a radio tour with an artist, we have many stations across the country lined up and waiting for their time slot with an artist. If they are late, it throws off the entire schedule. For the most part, the labels have been good about bringing them here on time, but I just think the artist needs to know the bigger picture for why they are doing what they are doing, and everyone will benefit.”

**Kelly Berry,** assistant director of WMJZ Greenville, SC, says her experiences have mostly been pleasant.

“We have had some very humble, outgoing, and nice people come to this station. As a matter of fact, usually they want to stick around and hang out with the staff and get to know us better. Last week, we had Sam Salter, Elusion, and 7 Mile in town, and they were great. All were down to earth, and there were no problems at all.”

While good behavior might have been bred into these acts by labels or managers, Berry says it probably has more to do with personality. “They are just sincere and polite people. They want to go above and beyond the call of duty, because they genuinely love what they are doing, and they are excited about it. They were happy to talk to listeners or take pictures. They had no egos.”

She adds that making sure radio staffers are familiar with the artist’s music and background helps put the artist into a friendly, communicative mood. “We usually will go over the questions with the artist beforehand as well. We don’t try to surprise the artist or put them out there on the spot.”

“I think a lot of the problem is with the image of hip-hop—artists feel like they have to live up to a certain lifestyle, or maybe the clique they are hanging with has a rough street image. But it’s not necessary,” says WGCJ’s Allen. “Take, for example, Ice Cube. You would think that he might have this rough-and-tough attitude, but he is professional. He shows up when he is supposed to, and he is very articulate. He’s been in the game for a while, so he knows. It seems like the problems really arise with the newer up-and-comers. I guess experience is the best teacher, and maybe after a couple of programers don’t play their records or don’t invite them up for interviews anymore, then they’ll learn.”

**Motown Charm School**

So, what is responsible for taking artists in hand and grooming them? Most radio personnel say that labels should reintegrate the artist-development practices that made the Motown charm school so legendary.

“Labels need artist development. The whole point is that sometimes the label needs to bring up those kids as parents would or should,” says WUSL’s Cooper. “If you’re a werewolf, there is still a way to come off that will be acceptable to your audience, as well as be professional about your career. You want to be able to articulate what your music is about if you are on the radio.”

“They should go back to the old Motown days, when Berry Gordy trained his artists,” says Allen. He notes that former White Sox player Frank Thomas has begun a new label where that kind of training is available. “It’s just like a mini-Motown there. They have an etiquette room where they teach the artists things like, if you go to dinner with a PD, what fork to use, and ‘yes, ma’am, no, ma’am.’ I was so impressed. There are few labels that take the time to do that. Most just want to put the product out there and make the money. After the artist does his time, then they just move on to the next one.”

Sometimes it takes experience to cultivate an artist. Says Cooper, “If you look at some of the older artists, like Dugg E. Fresh or Ice Cube, they have experience now and know what it takes to happen, and part of that is working radio. Mary J. Blige used to be real rough on her first and second albums, but she is seasoned now as well. Artists like this understand that radio is there to make them look good. Here’s your opportunity to sell records by being on our airwaves.”

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If you enjoy the great outdoors but can’t stand the thought of leaving your surfboard behind, then grab your surfboard and head west to www.92five.com, home of XHRM (92.5 FM) San Diego.

Here you’ll find alternative rock with a Southern California focus, featured on a site that, all summer long, offers the latest surf conditions for nearby waters. In the winter, the site serves up snow reports for the area’s highest peaks. And it provides news about local bands throughout the year.

Featuring XHRM playlists and a 24-hour RealAudio cybercast of the station, the site keeps alternative music fans in tune with area favorites such as Antler, Birthday Bears, Blink-182, Squirrel antibodies, and Mahalo Boogie. In addition, the Sko Toons section offers visitors more than 100 links to World Wide Web pages of San Diego-area bands.

The tailored focus helps the site’s appeal, says XHRM operation and promotion manager Jay Isbell. “We have listeners all over the world,” Isbell says. “I think RealAudio is amazing. It’s sounding better and better everyday.”

Surfers—both literal and virtual—will also want to stop in at Whatever, an area dedicated to new albums and top imports. “Our site will give you a total taste of the station,” says Isbell. “The surfer can interact with us instead of just looking at some pretty pictures.”
### Winter '98 Arbitrons

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### 12-plus average quarter hour shares ( '#' Arbitron market rank.

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Modern Rock Tracks

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<td>PUSH IT</td>
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Mainstream Rock Tracks

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| 39  | 39    | NEW | ONE *
| 40  | 40    | NEW | ONE *

* Taken from a sample of tracks as reported in Billboard Data. 
® My Heart Will Go On / Celine Dion
Everythings Comin Up Roses / Sweetbox
Frozen / Madonna
Not Alone / Bernard Butler
My Father's Eyes / Eric Clapton
Falling For Your Tears / Texas
Black Velvet / Lenny Kravitz
Strip / Spice Girls
Brighter Days / Sylk
Rethinking / Ceelica
All About The Money / Mapei
Bintul Atika / Comtemporary
Real Love / Speech
Tutsaudikojooyopk / Mala
Picture Of You / Bonerama
Toni / Natalie Imbruglia
Tom / UK
Youre Still The One / Shania Twain
My No. 1 Destiny's Child
On A New Level / Asia
The Rock / Judy Ferry
The Rock / Blaque Myers
Found A Cure / Ultra Zone
Walking On The Sun / Smoth Mouth
Aposympo / Puffy
A Rose Is A Rose / Aretha Franklin
Royalty / Gang Starring Featuring K-Dio & Ja-Jo
Somebody Else's Guy / David Morales
Classic Old School Mix / Creci Ponzan
人造 / The Maggots
The Time Is Now / Ultrasound
The Guitar Of Life / Jimmy Martin
The Continent / Elaine Elas
Rewind / London Electricity
Make High / Jimmy Page And Robert Plant
Dreams / The Corrs
Tumidal Holo / Spitz
Heaven / Lala
I Want You Back / Bill Jackson & Featuring
Black Rob
Who Can't We Be Friends / Shobu Mouh
Loved Me / Jarek Jeff And Fresh Prince
Forget Me Not / Bonnie Pink
Mazuta / Tana Moreno
Made For Each Other / D'Angelo
Are You Jimmy Ray / Jimmy Ray
Teardrop / Missomi Attack
Free Salauza (Primal Screen And
Broadly Lynch Mix) / Assaf Dufounth
Headlines / Chico Reille
Without You / Van Halen
Sylve / Saint Elmo's
Many / Ricky Martin
Just A Memory / Wycle
Selections can be heard on the "Sapporo Beer Tokio Hot 100"
every Sunday 1 PM-5 PM in J-WAVE / 83.1 FM IN TOKYO
* Hits! In Tokio

HI5 SELECTED TRACKS
Backstreet Boys View Their Teen Act Origins As Just The Start Of A Career

Backstreet's forward moves: Nina Spangler, 11, was patient and poised as she endured act after act at the WHIZ (Z100) New York Jingle Ball concert at Madison Square Garden last winter. From Chumbawamba and Celine Dion to Savage Garden, even Britney Spears, she applauded politely, giggling and chatting with her mother as she nibbled popcorn and sipped soda.

But when the five members of Backstreet Boys took to the stage, it was like a spell overtook young Nina's sweet disposition. Moving to the aisle, she stood quietly paralyzed, sobbing with urgency as mindlessly snapping photo after photo into the darkness, hoping for a tangible memory of this, perhaps the greatest moment of her life.

It's a scene that has played out time after time over the past three years for the five members of Backstreet Boys, who we're vaguely suggestive in the sense that you need girl brand of R&B-leaning dance/pop that catapulted the video-genic act to the top of the worldwide boy band heap.

Around much of Europe and in Canada, the group began working its magic in 1996, almost two years before the group's arrival on its native U.S. In fact, Backstreet Boys raked up sales of 10 million albums in 30 countries in advance of the self-titled debut album's worldwide release in August 1997 on Jive.

Today, the boys in the band regard themselves as galas of the teen-act tag around most of the world, harbingers of an audience that has grown up with the act.

"Overseas, we have an older audience that we've been around long enough to have proved ourselves," says Backstreet Boy Kevin Richardson, the eldest at 26. "A lot of people who were children's acts now want to be respected by older people."

The group has a compliment to all of these "screaming young girls," adds fellow group member Nick Carter, who, at 18, is the youngest of the Boys. "But at the same time, we feel it's our music for everybody. We want it to be for young, old, black, white, anything. Recently, we're starting to see adults getting into it. We're happy to be respected by older people."

The boys also believe that their cross-over appeal gives them the juice to avoid the fate of so many teen-act groups whose core begins with teens and preteens. "A lot of people say a teen act doesn't have the longevity or that they're too distant," Richardson says. "New Edition was considered a teen act and had a very good career. As they got older, they did their solo stuff, then came back together. As long as you're growing and trying to get better and evolve with what's going on around you, you'll be fine." With fellow members Brian Littrell, Howie Dorough, and A.J. McLean, Backstreet Boys were launched in 1996 by dance-pop maestros Denniz Pop and Max Martin, who most recently launched boy/girl riva: N Sync. Their first worldwide single, "We've Got It Goin' On," a riddly tempoed, bass-heavy R&B/pop signer, signaled the group's arrival in key markets, including Germany, the U.K., and Canada, but faltered in the U.S. at a dim No. 69 on the Hot 100.

The group then raked up four more worldwide hit singles-_"I'll Never Break Your Heart," "Get Down," "Quit Playing Games (With My Heart)," and "Anywhere For You_" before the label thought it was the right time to give it another go in the U.S.

It released pop gem "Quit Playin' Games" (the group's first internationa No. 1) in May 1997 here, and the song quickly scuttled to No. 2 on both the Hot 100 and the Adult Contemporary charts.

"I don't think the U.S. market was ready for us when we first started," suggests Carter. "Everyone was more into alternative and more hard-core kind of stuff. The dance single _"We've Got It Goin' On"_ was mainly and just a different flavor."

Also, "over there, they had a bunch of boy groups, so we had a ready-made market," says Littrell. "But since we were Americans, we were a fresh new sound for Europe. We had more of an edge, and, unlike a lot of those other groups, we could sing."

Backstreet Boys remained overseas for more than a year, promoting their smash album, "It took longer than we expected," says Richardson. "We were so busy everywhere else that it was hitting that we ended up waiting to have time to come back to the U.S."

There's no doubt it was worth the wait. After the success of "Games," the U.S. follow-up, "As Long As You Love Me," scored top five airplay on the Hot 100 (no commercial single was released), while current single "I Don't Want You" practically a second take on "We've Got It Goin' On_"—is the group's fastest-moving hit yet, reaching No. 2 on Billboard's Hot 100.

This issue, it is No. 5.

Radio attributes the group's success to its well-defined packaging for listeners. "First, they came out before there was a lot of that sound, so they were the originators," explains Jay Michaels, music director of top 40 KRHE Houston. "They also have an image of clean-cut, upbeat pop music that the kids like. But they also appeal to adults—even with the first two songs, the lyrics really hit home with women. Appealing to the kids and the adults is ideal for top 40."

Over these past three years, the group has played between 600 and 700 shows, most of those outside of the U.S. Richardson says that court- ing celebrity region by region has helped keep the group's feet on the ground. "It's taking us longer to reach our potential. We've been out for a long time, done slowly overseas. We used to leave Europe with 100 people to send us off and we'd land in the U.S. and we'd have 1,000 fans who had been very ground. It kept us sane."

To date, Backstreet Boys have sold nearly 30 million albums worldwide, while their Billboard 200 top ten set "Backstreet Boys" has rung up sales of $3.2 million in the U.S., according to SoundScan.

And don't look for a hiatus any time soon. The group's fourth single is planned in the U.S., "I'll Never Break Your Heart," for which the group filmed a new video in late April in Los Angeles.

"We've been doing this now for two years," says Richardson. "The song's not dated, but we look like little boys."

Meanwhile, the team is laying the groundwork for their next project, with a demo already submitted by the Bee Gees. "Man, I grew up listening to the Bee Gees, the Eagles, then Boys II Men and New Edition. All five of us grew up with a genuine love for music," says Richardson. "And now we get to work with the Bee Gees, which is incredible."

Other possible collaborators: Diane Warren, Teddy Riley, and Jermaine Dupri.

Backstreet released is the group's second home video, "Backstreet Boys: All Access," which includes music clips and "making of" segments. And now that the group has spent the summer touring, they'll launch their first headlining U.S. summer tour, hitting 33 cities by the end of August.

"It's been great from the get-go. When you look out into the audience and see smiling faces and people crying and know that your music is reaching people, it's a great feeling," says Richardson. "That's one of the best parts of the business, seeing that you are touch- ing people's lives."
The Box Gets A Makeover: New Logo, New Slogan, Music News

The BOX CHANGES ITS IMAGE: The Box has always been a no-frills network: no game shows, no DJs, no talk shows. It just plays videos selected in a "jukebox"-programming format.

Now the Box is revamping its image. For starters, the network has added its logo; it has also introduced the phrase "music television you control" and replaced it with "Music Network."

In addition, the Box is aiming to be a leading TV source for music news. As of June 1, the Box will begin airing 90-second music news updates every hour. The news content will be provided by Addicted to Noise, the news wire service for the Billboard Music News. The addition of new segments on the Box follows Tele-Communications Inc.'s purchase of Paradigm Music Art Entertainment, parent of the Box and SonicNet/Ad/bulletin (Billboard, Oct. 4, 1997).

The Box will show its new programming in a format somewhat like CNN Headline News, says Carl Zlotny, the Box's public relations manager. "We'll have the news snore-free. We'll have music and a computerized icon presenting the news."

Addicted to Noise editor in chief Michael Goldberg says: "Our structure is that we break a lot of news stories first, and we have a far-reaching network of sources."

As for the first time, the Box will venture into longform special programming by televising a concert: Wyclef Jean's second Haitian Benefit show, which takes place Saturday (16) in Miami. The concert—featuring such artists as Jean and the Refugee Allstars, Salt 'N' Pepa, Camus, Inner Circle, Lord Tariq & Patrice Guinz, Pras, and Diana King—will premiere on the Box in July. The Box will continue to feature "Book of the Week"—a regional tour- date summary—as a separate segment from the news. Expanded news stories will also be available on the Box's Web site, which is located at www.thebox.com.

In addition to the network's promotional work, the Box has also launched "Box Big Break," a feature that lets local artists get videos played on the Box in their respective markets. So far, "Box Big Break" has debuted in New Orleans; other markets will follow.

Zlotny says that despite these changes, the Box "is strictly a music channel, and it's going to stay that way."

T H I S & T H A T: Acclaimed music video director Hype Williams has written and directed a feature film, "Belly," an urban drama due Nov. 6 in U.S. movie theaters from Artisan Entertainment (Billboard, May 6). Among those starring in the DMX and Nas-powered film are additional cast members including Method Man, T-Bag from TLC, and actors/ginger-T-Paul Hicks. The film is about two childhood friends (played by Nas and DMX) with different personalities: one a DMX character enjoys a fast-paced lifestyle, while Nas plays the friend who aspires to be a law-abiding family man.

Brooke Alexander has been named anchor of CNN's new music show, "World Beat" (Billboard, May 9). The New York-based Alexander most recently hosted programs such as the ABC "Screening Room" and ABC's "In Concert."

MTV Latin America has named Leonor Santillanes manager of media relations. She replaces Suzy Trutti, who exited last month (The Billboard, April 25). Santillanes was previously manager of public relations at Coca-Cola. She will be based out of Mexico City. The network will change schedules for the next few months and will then relocate to MTV Latin America's headquarters in Miami Beach.

The Clip List

The Box: My Way at 6:00 pm, The Box: Drink The Water at 7:00 pm, The Box: You've Got It at 8:00 pm, The Box: Take a Look At This at 9:00 pm, The Box: Whatever Happened To At 10:00 pm, The Box: The Hook at 11:00 pm.

The Box: Morning tape at 6:00 am, The Box: Dare Me At 7:00 am, The Box: Blu at 8:00 am, The Box: Live It Up At 9:00 am, The Box: This Is My Life At 10:00 am, The Box: Hands Off At 11:00 am, The Box: Watch Me At 12:00 noon, The Box: The Break At 1:00 pm, The Box: The Next Big Thing At 2:00 pm, The Box: The Memory At 3:00 pm, The Box: The Reaction At 4:00 pm, The Box: The Message At 5:00 pm, The Box: The Sound At 6:00 pm, The Box: The Impact At 7:00 pm, The Box: The Power At 8:00 pm, The Box: The Influence At 9:00 pm, The Box: The Legacy At 10:00 pm, The Box: The Legacy At 11:00 pm.

Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 1:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 2:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 3:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 4:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 5:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 6:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 7:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 8:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 9:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 10:00 pm, Billboard's Top 40 Countdown At 11:00 pm.

The Box: The Box At 6:00 am, The Box: Music On at 7:00 am, The Box: The Beat At 8:00 am, The Box: The Choice At 9:00 am, The Box: The Best At 10:00 am, The Box: The Sound At 11:00 am, The Box: The Message At 12:00 noon, The Box: The Influence At 1:00 pm, The Box: The Legacy At 2:00 pm, The Box: The Impact At 3:00 pm, The Box: The Power At 4:00 pm, The Box: The Reaction At 5:00 pm, The Box: The Memory At 6:00 pm, The Box: The Break At 7:00 pm, The Box: The Power At 8:00 pm, The Box: The Reaction At 9:00 pm, The Box: The Impact At 10:00 pm, The Box: The Memory At 11:00 pm.

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years in a row. RCA's fiscal year ends in June, and through the label is part of the privately held Bertelsmann Group and doesn't disclose its financial details, industry sources estimate that the label sees some $300 million in worldwide revenue, at least a 30% increase over last year's numbers.

This remarkable turnaround has come with the stewardship of RCA president Bob Jamieson and executive VP/GM Jack Rovner. Under the guidance of BMG Entertainment North America, RCA and the A&R department resulting firm was brought in to buttress Jamieson and Rovner's new view of things, and the RCA staff was eventually reduced by some 20%. The broader company has gotten public support, and a layer of middle management was eliminated. This implemented clearer lines of responsibility with Rovner taking ultimate control over A&R, and Rovner over marketing.

"Everybody had a different idea of what working with RCA was," says Jamieson, "We never know how bad things are until you're in the middle of them," Jamieson says. "We made a lot of changes, things are obviously less cumbersome and less so. And all respect to Joe Galante, he gave it his best shot here. He pushed country—which he's a genius at—but RCA, the label, was always in limbo, and always was there—Natalie Imbruglia, Dave Matthews, and Big Punisher's "Capitol Punishment.""

It seems to me that RCA has really rebuilt their machine," Scarlett adds. "But it's a step in the right direction. Something like Matthews is a slam-dunk at this point, what the label did with the Verge Pipe shows that they can break through a new ground and keep up and going. That's the mark of a good company."

COMING UP

Looming on the RCA horizon are a number of potentially hot properties. The Verge Pipe is in the studio with producer Greg Kowal, and could have its sophomore set out this fall. And while the status of platinum R&B trio SWV is up in the air, the group's new single "Sleep" has been well received by producer Stevie J. on a solo album for next year.

According to CoCo, her solo bow is going to have "a little bit of the hip-hop thing—some R&B, some hip-hop rock maybe, something smooth. It's going to sound different from the sort of things we've done before."

Early summer albums on tap from RCA include a June 16 release of La Bouche's "S.O.S.," as well as sets from Ginuwine, E-4, and From Good Homes. Autumn's "Spirit Trail" (which could be a two-disc set), Mysteries Of Life's "Come Clean," Thin Lizard Dave's "Bruce Springsteen," and modern rock act Ruth Ruth's "Are You My Friend?" Also set for August is the R&B debut from 19-year-old Tyrese, the star of a Coca-Cola commercial a couple years back.

In the fall, look for Andreescu's second album and a follow-up from dance act Wild Orchid, as well as a greatest-hits disc from SWV and more reissues from RCA's top catalogue.
INDUSTRY IS ABUZZ WITH IMPLICATIONS OF POSSIBLE POLYGRAM SALE

(Continued from page 1)

Many note that such an acquisition would require—to offset an estimated $9 billion in debt and to pay significant cuts in personnel, especially in distribution, and in artist rosters. Music retailers, on the other hand, are uncertain about the potential for a Big Six to the Big Five (or Four). Seagram has emerged as the likely buyer of Polygram—LBO. Music, if the aborted talks for that company are revived—such an acquisition would bolster Universal’s growing but relatively weak foreign operations as well as the reputation of Seagram’s CEO, Edgar Bronfman Jr., who was under fire recently from investors and the media for lackluster financial results from Universal Studios’ film company.

At press time, Netherlands-based Philips Electronics, which owns 75% of PolyGram, stated that it was “discussing a transaction involving the acquisition of Philip’s interest in PolyGram and considering other potential alternatives with a view to identifying a position in the industry.” If Seagram does buy PolyGram, it will be the market-share leader in the U.S. and the world. Last year PolyGram reported world sales of $8.8 billion, of which nearly $6 billion was music industry revenue. PolyGram marketing executive chairman says, “We’re not interested in the consumer electronics business.”

In addition to the other rumor companies, PolyGram operates a healthy music publishing business, which commented that if MCA would create “a firm for $1 billion” in the world says, a source says. PolyGram also operates a growing movie company with a 1.500-film library. It is not yet profitable but could provide additional value for a film company like Seagram’s Universal.

Assistance in preparing this story was provided by Adam White in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Mark Soloman in London, and Iris Lichtman and Paul Vern in New York.

BERMAN CONFIRMED AS CHIEF OF GLOBAL LABELS BODY

(Continued from page 8)

adding that non-American costs and revenue will have to be considered in the future will have “a very significant impact on our operations” and that the company’s cost cutting efforts “will probably have to be better fit with R&B-strong MCA Records. And GRP (with Impulse!) and Verve are the strongest and most successful of all.”

While employees at Universal are said to be excited about the possibility of becoming the world’s largest music company, PolyGram executives say they are trying to keep their people focused on marketing and selling records while uncertainty swirls about them.

Artists and their managers, meanwhile, have expressed distress at corporate consolidation’s effects on creative development.

A source who reads for PolyGram’s A&M Records, says of the new corporate climate, “I have a great relationship with the company, but I think they should give them a lot more freedom.”

Allen Kovac, CEO of talent management and Left Bank Organization, says that the increased emphasis by publicly held entertainment companies on quarterly results may result in artists “looking for alternative ways to get their product out to audiences.”

It can be a big boon for independent labels that can market and promote new artists and have the patience to develop them.”

Rob Koss, senior VP of Metropolit Entertainment and manager of Mercury band Rusted Root, says of industry consolidation, “In the short term, it’s really a good thing. All the executives and employees are in a limbo period where they’re uncertain about their futures, and it’s hard for them to concentrate on the acts they have.”

Retailers are less pessimistic about the potential combinations. Although they prefer to see more than less competition among their suppliers, acquisitions probably would have little effect on their operations.

Bob Higgins, chairman of the World Trade Entertainment music chain, says, “It’s hard for us to say whether it would be positive, negative, or neutral. I don’t think you’d see much change in policies.”

Russ Solomon, president of Tower Records, mostly agrees, but adds, “It’s anti-competitive, and that’s not a good thing.”

In addition to its record companies, PolyGram operates a healthy music publishing business, which commented that if MCA would create “a firm for $1 billion” in the world says, a source says. PolyGram also operates a growing movie company with a 1.500-film library. It is not yet profitable but could provide additional value for a film company like Seagram’s Universal.

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RCA TURNAROUND

(Continued from preceding page)

log artists—Elvis Presley, John Den- ver, and Jefferson Airplane. Next year RCA will be allowed to “rally.” We don’t always dictate national priorities to every region; the field has the flexibil- ity to react on its own. We believe records happen market by market.”

By pegging a line from his days in the movie business, Zelnicke likes to say, “Hit’s like cur.” All but RCA’s recent good health, Jamieson says the label will continue to be “lean and mean” to ward off a re- lapse. “We seem like heroes right now, but we know full well that we could go back to looking like idiots pretty quickly if we don’t watch it.”

Assistant in preparing this story was provided by Chuck Taylor.
June 8, and the U.S. June 16. “‘Oremi’ is the first stop of my tri-

city tour. It’s the first time in a long time that Mando/Island albums made Bill-\n
cord’s year-end world music top 10
discs.

(Continued from page 1)
Kiddy Develops Small, Dedicated Niche in South Africa

By DIANE COETZER

JOHANNESBURG—Angélique Kidjo’s use of South African Xhosa Christina songs in her new album, "Oremi," is a testament to her close emotional ties with this part of the African continent. As far back as 1995, Kidjo was given her first South African songwriter/performance by Jabu Khanyile, with recording "Wombo Lombo," a track from the composer’s debut album, "Sartist." South African world music artists who perform here, Kidjo’s appearances have had a galvanizing effect on sales. PolyGram’s Fran Kruger, marketing manager for Island, says “Fifa’s” sales of almost 6,000 units were “definitely helped by Angélique’s live performances. She is a magical performer,” and credit Kidjo with creating an "Africa" sound. "Sistar" has sold 50,000 copies in that album, and "Fifa" has "a lot of energy," the interest "in Afro music" is "something that I’ve never seen." The album "Oremi" has sold 2,500 units in the U.K. so far, says Steve Harris, PolyGram’s U.K. director. "It’s important that the rest of the country gets an opportunity to see Angélique play live. Nothing definite has been confirmed, but when we spoke to her recently, Angélique expressed a very keen interest in coming back to this country to perform."

The label also plans to release a 12-inch single of "Voodoo Child" re-mixes to capitalise on this alternative flavor for clubs and mix shows, says Aubrey. "And we anticipate scheduling radio visits by Angélique depending on her availability during the Lilith tour."

Among Kidjo’s fervent world radio supporters is Richard Segan, director of "One World Radio," a college radio program that airs weekdays on WHUS-AM, Storrs, Conn.

Says Segan, "She’s quite savvy in her knowledge of the international sound, and her records have had huge successes. We’re sure to get a strong listener response with this next record."

NEXT UP

Kidjo’s "next steps" in her trilogy will be an album featuring the rich musical dialogue between Africa and the "mother continent," and Brazil, and one that will cover Africa, Haiti, Cuba, and New Orleans.

"I didn’t put New Orleans in this album because the music of New Orleans is tinted with voodoo, and voo- doo comes from Benin," Kidjo explains. "In fact, Kidjo’s mission to bring the spiritual dimension of voodoo underlies the entire trilogy. "Why does voodoo have that bad reputation?" she asks rhetorically. "Voodoo has been the protective force of the voodoo religion, it carries people together. They didn’t want that."

Assistance in preparing this story was provided by Dominique Pride in London.
form, but the controversial provision has not been attached to that bill.

The musicians’ unions were upset that the RIAA had the provision inserted without committee and full committee hearings had already been held on the bill, thereby allowing no public discussion of the issue. The hopes of the unions now center on Negro-themed compact R1 in the provision before the bill goes to the House floor.

The unions maintain that the law is not needed and is fairly unnecessary. Under current law, while such contracts can be dissolved by a court, any bankruptcy filing found to be in “bad faith” will not be allowed to file “bad faith” can be dismissed.

Bruce York, national executive director of AFTRA, says the RIAA provision “unfairly singles out artists for adverse treatment, which is inappropriate. And the bankruptcy code already has adequate remedies for the judge to deal with suspected bankruptcy filings for improper purposes.”

Cary Sherman, senior VP and general counsel of RIAA, tells Billboard “we honestly did not expect to see a “sight” to be included in the bill”, adding that AFTRA, which brought the issue to the public eye, “doesn’t represent recording artists.”

At the moment, the provision into the legislation without public airing, Sherman says that the final bill language, with the provision included, was publicly distributed, after all.

Sherman says that in contract negotiations, threats of bankruptcy by artists have been “a problem of increasing concern at labels. Some artists, not all artists, are using the threat of bankruptcy to get a better deal, especially artists on the edge of success.”

Sherman likens the RIAA provision to legislation that places medical school debts outside the parameter of forgiving debts in bankruptcy cases. “There’s an analogy between these recording artists who, for years, get advances from record companies, run up high levels of debt, and then are on the edge of success, when the labels would refile their refiles, file bankruptcy and just walk away, and medical students who take out huge loans, rack up a huge pile of debts, then declare bankruptcy although they’re set for life,” says Sherman. “Congress has taken the edge of success. And that’s what we’re trying to do here—the curbing of abusive use in the bankruptcy laws.”

Tom Lee, secretary and treasurer of the American Federation of Musicians, D.C. local No. 161-710, and a national officer of the AFM, asks, “Is it fair to single out recording artists, and all recording artists, from being able to get out of their contracts in a bankruptcy filing?”

Burt Padell, a New York-based artist’s attorney, says that while some artists and lawyers take advantage of bankruptcy law, “if you pass, if the contracts stay with them, the majority of entertainers who are insolvent and want to start a new life won’t want to learn a lesson. If they get a new album, they just don’t get it quickly, because they’re in the red!”

Attorney Don Engle of the Los Angeles firm Engle & Engle, which has represented many artists in contract disputes, says, “The problem is, there’s no group representing artists to go up against the RIAA. These artists are under the threat of record compa- nies who have in them contracts that keep them on a low level of earning.”

Bill insiders say that once the RIAA realized that the provision was being scrutinized by AFTRA and others, its lobbyists changed direc- tion and began an effort to contact committee members and suggest a post-markup compromise discussion.

The discussion, opponents of the measure say, may also explore the scope of recording contract negotiations.

“Recording artists, more than any other creator of intellectual proper- ty in the U.S., are not in the operating contracts,” says Engle, whose clients also include record companies. “No [movie] stu- dio has actors under such contracts, or if they do file bankruptcy, writers sign a ‘one-book deal’.

The larger bankruptcy reform bill is split along party lines, with most Democrats opposing many of the provisions. Among them is Rep. Howard Berman, D-Calif. A spokesman in Berman’s office says, “There is a real problem here, a real issue, and Congressman Berman is not sure this is the right way to address it. He has some concerns with the provisions, and the House committee, we anticipate, as the parties have said, that they will try to work out a solu- tion between now and when it goes to the House floor.”

The first of several publicized cases of artists with contract dis- putes who have filed for bankruptcy involved the group Run-D.M.C., which was in bankruptcy court before emerging with a new contract with Profile Records.

More recent cases involve Toni Braxton and TLC, both signed to LaFace/Arista.

In 1996, TLC settled its dispute with LaFace and its production/management firm, Bobbi, and agreed to record a new album for LaFace. Braxton filed bankruptcy this past January, seeking to have her contract with Arista nullified under the new bankruptcy law, which permits the term of personal service contracts to seven years. Behind her actions, vet- erans say are at least two causes for such drastic measures: unoccupied royalty debts in long-term contracts; and profits being shared through production deals, which by their nature resemble those amenable to voluntary agreements with favorable to artists financially (Bill- board, Feb. 28).

WESTERN JUBILEE’S EDWARDS BOWS ATUITY TRIBUTE (Continued from page 13)

amusement park Six Flags Over Texas. He recorded his first album in 1984. Two of his albums are included in the Planet of the Apes and Star Wars soundtracks (Bill- board, Dec. 20, 1997). According to O’Malley, the album will be served to a network of radio stations that support the Western genre.

He says that RIAA had a special pro- motion with Great Empire Broadcast- ing, which includes KFDI Wichi- ta, Kan., and KVOO Tulsa, Okla. It’s worked with Mike Oatman and Great Empire Broadcasting; says Scott. “Mike has always been wonderful, playing our music and supporting it on the air.”

Plans call for 60-second radio spots to run 10 times a day for three months. The spots will feature Edwards along with other Western Jubilee acts, such as Joaquin, the Sons Of The San Joaquin.

In addition to the obvious visibility Edwards will receive from his role as Smokey Bear, he also plays a character, “Horace Whisperer.” O’Malley says the label also is going to run TV spots offering Edwards’ 32-song, two-CD set “Saddle Songs,” which was released last year. When contacted call in to purchase that set, they’ll be asked if they also want to purchase the New Autry project.

Daily plans call for placement of a special listening post at the main location of the 20-store Shepler’s Western wear chain in Wichita. According to John Wilcox, Shepler’s Western wear promotion, Western Jubilee is creating a “Cowboy Cor- ner” for the store that will feature Edwards and other acts on the label.

In Nashville, says Edwards, a new “Horace Whisperer” label will have appeared on the cover of the Shepler’s catalog in the past and appeal to Western wear consumers.

To familiarize the mainstream music community with Edwards, RIAA plans to get the label on the radar of Shonachie’s national marketing director, Lee Goldstein, plans to secure listening posts at local radio stations, and create a newsletter to hit Buy, Hastings, and other chains.

The fact that VHI is airing a pro- motion piece on “The Horse Whis- perer” that includes a clip of Ed- wards should also be a big boost. “We couldn’t have scripted a better scenario for Don and our little label,” says O’Malley, who also serves as Edwards’ booking agent and manager.

CD COPYING (Continued from page 8)

“But in some cases,” says O’Noroio, “the manufacturers and distributors know who they are selling this stuff to. It requires some tech- nical knowledge in terms of setting up the equipment and running it, so in some cases it is quite possible the dis- tributor has to go and help set up the equipment.”

O’Noroio says about 60% of the illicit CDs confiscated during the haul were by Latino artists. He reck- oned that the high proportion of Span- ish-language music products contrib- uted to its fluid sales potential on the street. However, O’Noroio points out that some of the counterfeited Lat- ino label was sold through small New York retail outlets, where police executed several of a total of 15 search warrants.

To undercover their efforts in stopping CD piracy in New York, RIAA officials met with execu- tives from the major labels and sev- eral indie labels on the day of the raid.

The bust was the result of a six- month-long joint undercover investigation by the NYFD, the RIAA, and the MPA.

90 BILLBOARD MAY 23, 1998
Hot 100 Airplay.

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[Records with the greatest airplay. © 1998 Billboard/BPI Communications.]

Hot 100 A-Z

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[Recap of the greatest sales. © 1998 Billboard/BPI Communications and SoundScan, Inc.]

Hot 100 Singles Sales

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[Recap of the greatest sales. © 1998 Billboard/BPI Communications and SoundScan, Inc.]
JAMES TAYLOR TO RECEIVE CENTURY AWARD
(Continued from page 1)

Buddy Guy, Billy Joel, Joni Mitchell, Carlos Santana, and Chet Atkins. Established in 1992 by Billboard publisher Howard Lander and editor in chief John Diliberto, the Outstanding Century Award is determined through ongoing, confidential consultation with hundreds of artists and industry professionals and has been awarded to artists whose unfolding body of work has not received the recognition it richly deserves.

Almost everyone most gifted and utterly natural musicians of his time, James Taylor is also an artist who represents a timeless link between Stephen Foster, Jimmie Rodgers, Pete Seeger, Hoagy Carmichael, Ewan MacColl, and other great troubadour/virtuosi of modern song in the Western Hemisphere," says White. "Another hundred years from now, James' music will still sound as ageless and intimate as it does today."

"Moreover, armed with his gently penetrating singing, adroit guitar chordings, and a conversational writing technique that never lets you down, Taylor brought a seemingly effortless new eloquence to popular song in the second half of this century. During those weeks, you start wondering how difficult it is to play James Taylor's songs as they're actually arranged and performed by the composer, whose self-identified Ph.D. in spirituality long learned how hard it is to match the innate sense of rightness in his lyrical and structural dynamics. But now, that an artist that, generally, generations of listeners know that the heart has no hiding place from the simple, hymn-like truth of James' art, which is below all the heights, I think of no artist more deserving of the 1998 Century Award than the peerless James Taylor."

Taylor, who turned 50 this year, admits to being cynical about awards but says he was thrilled to receive the Century Award. It is not a token of a rather cynical view of awards and what they mean, but actually the few times that I've received them I can't help but feel kind of gratified," he says. "When I got the Grammy this year, for instance, or a couple of years ago when they gave me an honorary doctorate from the Berklee College of Music, I found myself feeling very grateful. I know that the Century Award is a deeply considered and significant honor so I'm really happy to be getting it."

Implicit in the Century Award is the recipient's influence on other artists. Amazingly, Taylor has a fitting candidate, one who inspired immemorial young composers to take pen to paper, instrument in hand, and call themselves singer/songwriters. In fact, Taylor is the kind of name that comes to mind when one thinks of that genre. "I've been a major fan of James Taylor for as long as I can remember, and still am," says Sting, who remembers it as if it were yesterday. "I was wondering how I would become a man that night. We started kissing, and I was getting ready into it. All of a sudden she gets up from the bed. And so I call him on the phone, and he says, 'What's going on?' And I say, 'That's James Taylor.' And I say, 'That's the guy that did 'Fire And Rain'?' So we stopped kissing, and we got up talking about James Taylor."

Taylor may have unwittingly fostered Paltz's passage into manhood, but he single-handedly made the teenager to take up the guitar and become a singer/songwriter.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>NO. 1</th>
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**NEW** - Albums with the greatest tales gains this week.

**Smallest Gainer** - Albums with the greatest weekly declines.

**#1** - Artists with the greatest number of chart weeks on the Billboard 200.

**#1** - Artists with the greatest number of chart weeks on the Billboard 200.
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<th>WEEKS ON ROCK CHART</th>
<th>WEEKS ON R&amp;B CHART</th>
<th>WEEKS ON SOUL CHART</th>
<th>WEEKS ON LATIN CHART</th>
<th>WEEKS ON RAP CHART</th>
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BILBOARD MAY 23, 1998

BOXING CHAMP: For only the first time in the '90s and only the second time in chart history, a boxed set debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200. You just had to know that the act that would accomplish this feat would be Garth Brooks, the artist who has spent more weeks at No. 1 on the big chart during this decade than any other man, woman or band. That time back in the day, was 44 weeks and counting, accomplished by six different titles.

Characteristics of Brooks, the opening-week numbers for the sixth and latest chart topper are stunning, a tribute to his popularity, sharp marketing and, crucially, prices. The six-CD set went relatively cheap—in the low $20s and even the high $20s—at many locations, not just mass merchant accounts but at some mainstream record stores, too.

With bargain prices in play, "The Limited Series" drew a far-fatter first-week sum of 372,000 units. And, we're not talking some number multiplied by six; we're talking 372,000 boxes times six. In other words, if this one week's sales were the amount of units the set shipped to and you know you're more—the Recording Industry Assn. of America, which tallies gold and platinum awards, would already credit Brooks with more than 2.2 million units.

Allowing no time for the dust to settle, the massively popular country superstar is poised for his next trick. Just his handsome numbers for "The Limited Series" became known, Brooks revealed in a story on the Internet site Wal of that he's angling to put out an album around Thanksgiving week of material recorded live in Dublin. Given his penchant for November releases—he last two prior to the boxed set debuted on the same Friday in 1994 and 1995—there seems little chance of the same kind.

The only other box to debut at No. 1 was Bruce Springsteen's live 1985 set. Not only did Springsteen's preceed SoundScan, but there just wasn't a lot of point-of-sale data available at retail in 1986, so it is difficult to compare. But if the Springsteen comes to town—and the set include only one national music specialty chain that recalls Springsteen's did about 40% more than Brooks' did, but that same buyer suspects the Brooks box did much bigger numbers at mass merchant accounts than the Boss box did in '86.

LADIES' NIGHT: Even without the awesome competition of the Garth Brooks box, two-time Billboard 200 topper LeAnn Rimes has released a new project in as many as, her fourth album, the premium priced "Sittin' On Top Of The World," rings in with a lower-first-week sum than that rung by either of her previous two albums.

In '97, Rimes'-Unchained Melody/The Early Years" bowed in February with 169,900 sales, while "You Light Up My Life" piled on 186,000 units during its first week in November; both entered at No. 1. The new Rimes enters at No. 4 with 156,500 units, behind the "City Of Angels" soundtrack (No. 3, 169,000 units), which has seen a gain every week since its chart debut, and last issue's No. 1 by the Dave Matthews Band "Before The Devil Knows You're Dead". Two other women stand quite tall this week. Tori Amos debuts at No. 5 with 153,000 units, her biggest debut week ever (her '96 title "Boys For Pele" entered higher, at No. 2, but with only 109,000 copies in its first week). And Vonda Shepard, who previously never debossed the Billboard 200 or even the Heatseekers chart, sashays in with 143,500 units with the TV soundtrack "Songs From Ally McBeal."

Aside from the "Beavis & Butt-Head Experience," which bowed at No. 5 in 1993, "The McEwan album far outranks any other TV-related album in the SoundScan era, which began in May 1991. In the last two decades, the only tube-tied titles to rank higher were the "Miami Vice" soundtrack, which rose to No. 1 in 1986, and "The Simpsons Sing The Blues," which peaked at No. 3 in 1990. For the season to date, Fox's "Ally McBeal" has a 8.1 rating and a 12 share, No. 54 among all programs, but 19 days into the May sweep, the Monday night comedy/drama ranked No. 22 with 9.4/15. The May 4 episode, preceded by a video clip of Shepard's "Searchin' My Soul," easily won its time slot with a 10.6/16 and ranked No. 14 for the week.

IH: MOM: Labels say Mother Day's shopping seems the catalyst for boosts by Andrea Bocelli (56-45, a 33% gain), 67-59, a 28% gain), a 25% gain), and Rod Stewart (58-50, a 36% gain), as well as Sarah Brightman (126-112, a 26% gain), the touring Yanni (156-127, a 61% gain), and other adult-leaning fare. Boy II Men's latest, with its "A Song For Mama," was another obvious beneficiary (125-92, a 30% gain). The Billboard 200 chart (chart noted in America Inc., Vanhurst Place Music), "You Were Meant For Me," by Steve Potts, Inc., has been another recent (and oft repeated) "Divas Live" special, this issue rides the "Tonight Show With Jay Leno" at a No. 8 (15% gain). Even more memorable is the 25% sales bump that follows Paula Cole's stop on Oprah's syndicated show (74-66). Meanwhile, the well-advertised home video release of "Anastasia" boosts its soundtrack 181-85 (51.5% gain).
WHEREHOUSE IN FINE SHAPE FOR B’STUB BID
(Continued from page 5)

since 1992, Alvarez has helmed the company since it emerged from Chapter 11 on Jan. 31, 1997. He was brought aboard by New York-based Cerberus Partners, which wound up becoming the majority owner of Wherehouse Entertainment when the Chapter 11 plan called for converting the debtor’s claims against Wherehouse into equity in the chain.

While eager to talk about Wherehouse’s financial results, Alvarez wouldn’t comment on what he terms “rumors.” However, reliable sources say that Wherehouse is among the music chains interested in buying Blockbuster Music, which in March was put on the block by its parent, Viacom (Billboard, March 21). In addition to Wherehouse, Camelot Music and MBL Entertainment are said to have looked at the chain (Billboard Bulletin, May 4), in the latest go-round.

A Blockbuster Music spokes-
woman exclusively declined to comment on rumors, as did executives at the music specialty chain.

Since March, Wasserstein Perella & Co., a New York-based investment banking firm, has been conducting an auction for the 383-unit Blockbuster; sources say the process is said to be in its final round, and Blockbuster has been unable to determine if all three chains are still participants in the chase for Blockbuster Music.

Sources suggest that of the three chains, Wherehouse is the only one that put in a bid on the entire Block-

Rivkin says, Henson will create an internal video marketing department, to be run by Margaret Loeser, who also heads the Jim Henson Tele-

vision Group.

“If you look at each of the new offerings and bring back the special-

ness of the Henson line in the marketplace,” Feingold says.

Despite the strong appeal of the Henson brand name, Columbia needs to learn how to break through the clutter of the crowded children’s market. But Feingold says the prod-

uct’s existing media exposure will drive sales at retail.

“The US will be given new distribution. There’s a Henson show in syndication, on the Disney Channel, or on Nickelodeon,” Feingold says. “And if you give the trade good marketing materials to create a bigger impression, you can be successful.”

COLUMBIA TRISTAR GOES GREEN WITH HENSON DISTRIBUTION DEAL
(Continued from page 8)

The film unit plans to release be-

tween three and five features under the Jim Henson banner each year.

“Buddy,” the first film under the Sunny deal, was released out of Columbia in January and sold approxi-

mately 1 million units, accord-

ing to trade sources.

Henson also has an extensive co-

production TV deal with ABC but retains video distribution rights.

Henson president/COO Charles Rivkin says the company’s decision not to re-sign with Baena Vista was not based on poor sales.

“The product sold extremely well, and Disney was a great deal,” says Rivkin. “But it was strategic to play our video and film product under one banner.”

Under the new video deal, Colum-

bia will pick up the Henson catalog, which includes “ Fraggle Rock,” “The Muppet Show,” and “Muppet Babies” and the films: “The Muppet Movie,” “The Muppets Take Manhattan,” “The Dark Crystal,” and “Labyrinth.”

Two features co-financed by Henson—“Muppet Treasure Island” and “The Muppet Christmas Carol”—will remain at the studio.

It’s been more than a year since a new Henson title has come to the mar-

ket, but Rivkin says the company is gearing up for its biggest year to date.

More than 300 hours of program-

ming is available for release on video, including the new series “Bear in the Big Blue House,” which will be the first Henson title released under the new Columbia deal. The series airs on the Disney Channel. Two video volumes will be available Sept. 15, priced at $14.95 each.

The previously released holiday title “Goofy Family Christmas,” “Emmet Otter’s Jug-Band Christ-

mas,” and “The Christmas Toy” will follow Sept. 29. Other catalog titles will eventually be re-packaged and re-released.

More than 75 hours of program-

ming are in production or in the works, including a new feature film, “Muppets in Space.” Other productions include the TV shows “Wubbulous World Of Dr. Suess” and “The Brats Of The Lost Na-

tional News Updates Daily
Not Product Updates Every Monday

A new Billboard Challenge begins every week.
This week’s champ is Michael W. Gibbo of Peltaluma, Calif.

News contact: Julie Tarosko
Jtarosko@billboard.com

BORDERS ENTERS ONLINE RETAILING
(Continued from page 8)

announced it was entering music retailing.

Meanwhile, Columbia House’s Total E, which already sells albums and DVD and VHS products, will be offering books, audiobooks, and CD-ROMS in coming months.

Total E senior VP of new media Bill Ostroff is hestitant to proclaim a trend away from sales about the future of online retail megasites.

“By doing all these different things, we’re raising the bar for con-

sumers,” he says. “But if we can do it, and if we can offer a more com-

petitive experience in multiple product lines, there’s a chance that there are going to be greater opportunities before long.”

Borders.com will offer more than 200,000 albums in the CD, cassette, and MiniDisc formats and more than 70,000 video titles.

Vanzara says pricing will be com-

petitive with other online retailers. Borders will match the 30% music discount being offered at sites such as CDNow, he says.

“We understand that in this space, competition shopping is just a click of the finger away,” he says. “We cer-

tainly have to offer a competitive price, that said, we usually have to pro-

vide customers with a more com-

Training and recreation opportunities such as Infoseek, CNET, Snype, JazzTimes, Rough Guides, and Salon magazine.

Vanzara says Borders will carry a combination of online and offline promotions when the site’s grand opening takes place this summer. Although the site is now fully oper-

ational, it’s considered to be in the “preview” stage and may evolve as consumers offer feedback.

Vanzara says advertising the site in Borders stores as a qualified risk that the chain is willing to take.

“It’s hard to tell exactly how much cannibalization there is going to be, but whatever it is, it’s going to be better whether we win or lose,” he says. “It seems to be part of the game. A good part of online sales appears to be incremental or inter-

connected, so we’ll see how that evolves over time.”

Not all traditional retailers, how-

ever, are gung-ho about entering the online sales arena.

Jack Eustiger, chairman/CEO of Minnetonka, Minn.-based Musicland Corp., announced at the company’s annual shareholder meeting May 11 that the chain had no plans to be selling online. Eustiger cited a lack of prof-

its in online sales as the reason for the company’s hesitancy.

butter, at the behest of Viacom, has searched for a way out of the music specialty business. Last year, the company had separate informal discussions with music specialty chains such as Tower Records Video and Wherehouse Entertainment, among others, about the possibility of a merger, sources say.

In such a scenario, a new compa-

ny would be formed with the other chain running the entire operation. Also, during the second half of 1997, Texas Pacific, a financial firm, is said to have approached Blockbuster about the possibility of pooling resources, sources say (Billboard, Dec. 20, 1997).

In that scenario, Texas Pacific would supply funds and its financial clout, while Blockbuster would have contributed its music stores. They would have then tried to buy another chain that would run the entire operation. That gambit, however, is said to have reached only the “talking stage” between Blockbuster and Texas Pacific and never went further.

If bids in the current go-round don’t reach Viacom’s expectations, the company could choose not to sell the chain and return to pursuing one of the above possibilities. Or—since at the beginning of the year it named former Musicland executive Larry Curran as its CEO— it could hold onto the chain and wait for the new management team to turn around the operation so it would command a higher price the next time it’s put up for sale.
Imaani Grows Bolder From Birmingham

THe 1998 EUROVISION SONG CONTEST, held in Birmingham, England, is history, and the winner has been proclaimed (see story, page 10). Now the real test comes: Which entries will have global chart success? It's too early to tell if the victorious "Diwa" by Dana International will be a worldwide hit, although it has the muscle of Sony Music and CNR behind it. One thing is certain: After languishing for weeks, the U.K. entry is shaping up to be a top 10 smash.

"Where Are You?" by Imaani (EMI) placed second in the competition, perhaps a surprise to many people who liked the song but didn't think it was an immediate hit that could register with telephone voters after one listen. In the wake of its runner-up status, the single jumps 60-22 on the U.K. Chart-Track list, just missing the top 20 portion published in this issue (see Hits of the World, page 62). Early sales figures indicate the single should be in the top 10 next week.

That would fulfill the goal of Jonathan King, who has been the BBC's point person to select the British entry for Eurovision since 1995. In the four years he has helmed the Great British Song Contest, King has come up with four hit singles. In 1996, "Love City Grove" by the group of the same name placed 16th in the contest and peaked at No. 7 in the U.K. In 1996, Gina G's "Oh B Herr...Just A Little Bit" was a disappointing eighth in the contest, but No. 1 at home. Last year, Katrina & the Waves' "Love Shine A Light" brought the trophy home to the U.K. for the first time in 16 years and peaked at No. 2. Now the Nottingham-born Imaani seems certain to join these three previous U.K. entries in the top 10. One of the composers of "Where Are You?" has already had a No. 1 on Billboard's Hot 100: Scott English co-wrote Barry Maniow's "Mandy."

\**Lonely At The Top:** Janet Jackson's "I Get Lonely," the second single from "The Velvet Rope," moves to the top of Hot R&B Singles and enters the Hot 100 at No. 3. That's the highest opening ever for Jackson on the singles chart and her fourth consecutive top 10 debut. In 1995, "Scream" (recorded with her brother Michael Jackson) debuted at No. 5, and "Runaway" bowed at No. 6. Last December, "Together Again" (recorded at No. 9. Should "I Get Lonely" achieve pole position, Jackson will be the first artist to have two No. 1s in 1998. It is already her 24th top 10 hit overall and her 18th in a row. In fact, every Jackson title has achieved top 10 status except for "The Pleasure Principle," which peaked at No. 14 in 1987.

\*\*ALL FOR ONE:* The single Janet Jackson has had to beat is No. 1 Mariah Carey's "My All," which glides 2-1 to become the singer's 13th chart-topper. That ties her with Michael Jackson for third place among acts with the most No. 1 hits, surpassed only by the Beatles (20) and Elvis Presley (17). "My All" is the eighth single to move to No. 1 in 1997, just one less than the total number of chart-topping titles in 1997.

Carey began her career with five No. 1s in a row, a U.S. record. Now she's put together another streak of five consecutive No. 1s, beginning with "Fantasy" in 1995 and continuing through "One Sweet Day," "Always Be My Baby," "Honey," and her current smash.

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**Billboard Plugs Into Web Confab**

Billboard magazine has joined with Jupiter Communications and the New York Music Festival to produce Plug-In '98, the New Music Meets New Technology Forum. The third-annual conference, which is devoted to examining issues relating to the music business and the Internet, will be held July 15-10 at the Crown Plaza in New York.

Highlights will include keynote addresses by VH1 president John Scolari and Time-Warner/Cable's executive vice president/CEO Keith Clisnakes. Among the panels will be the Billboard Rundown: Labels & the Internet, moderated by Ken Saul, vice president/editor of Billboard Online.

Jupiter Communications is a New York-based new media research firm that focuses on consumer interactivity. The Plug-In conference runs in tandem with the week-long, 20th Annual New York Music Festival, which hosts performances by 400 artists from around the world and cybercasts concerts via the Internet.

For registration and sponsorship information, contact 212-780-6090 or 800-483-4345. Or visit Jupiter's Web site (www.jupiter.com).

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\**Personnel Directions**

Rob Accatino has joined the Airplay Monitor publications as marketing manager. In this new position, Accatino will be responsible for the positioning and marketing for all four Monitors. He will also plan conferences and special events, create marketing kits and house ads, as well as play a major role in the creation of Airplay Monitor's new website.

\*A radio industry veteran, Accatino joins Monitor from top 10 station Z100 in New York, where he was director of promotion and client services. Prior to his work with Z100, he was the marketing and creative services manager for CBS Radio Networks in New York. Accatino will be based in the Billboard Music Group's Los Angeles office.

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\**Market Watch**

Weekly National Music Sales Report

**Year-to-date overall unit sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Sales</td>
<td>258,842,000</td>
<td>277,101,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
<td>212,697,000</td>
<td>230,117,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>46,145,000</td>
<td>48,984,000</td>
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**Year-to-date sales by album format**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>1998</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>161,084,000</td>
<td>183,906,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>51,149,000</td>
<td>45,615,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>464,000</td>
<td>536,000</td>
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**Overall unit sales this week**

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
<td>14,983,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>14,228,000</td>
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**Change**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
<td>UP 5.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>UP 10.3%</td>
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**This week**

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
<td>12,460,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>11,638,000</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
<td>UP 7.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>UP 14.2%</td>
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**This week 1997**

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<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>10,908,000</td>
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**Change**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
<td>DOWN 2.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>DOWN 5.9%</td>
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**CD sales**

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>9,992,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
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**Change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Change</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>CDs</td>
<td>UP 7.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>UP 4.5%</td>
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</table>

**For week ending 5/13/98**

**Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports, collected, compiled, and provided by SoundScan**

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**Billboard’s Fifth Annual Dance Music Summit**

Chicago Marriott Downtown, Chicago • July 8-10, 1998

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E-mail: sbell@billboard.com
Joe
All That I Am
SINGER, SONGWRITER, PRODUCER, ARTIST
PLATINUM
From a movie filled with hope, comes a classic soundtrack filled with heart.

music from the motion picture

HOPE FLOATS

garth BROOKS*

The world's most popular performer sings his most intimate love song ever, "To Make You Feel My Love," ships to Country Radio on May 5 & AC/AAA Radio on May 18. Video to VH1, CMT & TNN on May 18.

bob SEGER & martina McBRIDE

"Chances Are" is the first new Seger song in three years! His first-ever duet features Grammy-winning country favorite Martina McBride. Ships to AC/AAA Radio on May 5. Video to VH1, CMT & TNN on May 18.

sheryl CROW

Multi-platinum, multi-Grammy-winner captures the heart of the film with a stunning new song, "In Need."

the ROLLING STONES

The most popular band in the world recently recorded this extraordinary cover of "Honest I Do," a classic Jimmy Reed blues standard.

deeana CARTER

Country's newest multi-platinum superstar performs "What Makes You Stay" a new song written for and inspired by Hope Floats.

bryan ADAMS

After 50 million albums sold and two dozen hit singles, Bryan Adams unveils a wonderfully reflective acoustic version of "When You Love Someone."

trisha YEARWOOD

Following up her fifth straight multi-platinum album, American Country Music's 1998 Top Female Vocalist of The Year performs her first soundtrack recording since the 1997 Grammy-winning "How Do I Live?"

Also new songs from: lyle LOVETT, the MAVERICKS, lila McCANN, jonell MOSSER, gillian WELCH and WHISKEYTOWN

Coming Up:

- A special Hope Floats Rosie O'Donnell May 20

- HBO Hope Floats Special with Sandra Bullock begins May 24

- General Cinema Theaters previewing Garth Brooks and Bob Seger & Martina McBride videos in theaters nationwide

- VH1's Hollywood & Vinyl on the Making of Hope Floats and VH1's Top Ten Countdown hosted by Sandra Bullock and Harry Connick, Jr. both begin airing May 24

* "To Make You Feel My Love" the new single from Garth Brooks is also available on his box set The Limited Series.