Labels Prepare For New ‘Euro’ Currency

Beginning Jan. 1, 1999, one currency—the euro—will start replacing the 15 sets of notes and coins now in daily use in the European Union. Then, from July 1, 2002, deutsche marks, francs, guilders, pesetas, and the rest will be mere museum pieces and collector’s items.

The switch is coming at a challenging time for record company systems, which are now subject to expensive overhauls to combat the so-called “millennium bug,” which will hit computers at the century’s turn. The euro means that, simultaneously, they are having to be upgraded to accommodate a new, unfamiliar, and untiring currency. One major label here says it is having to spend $4 million on tackling both problems at the same time. The labels are, however, relatively relaxed about the euro itself, even though many executives predict that, in the medium to long term, it will change the face of the European industry forever. They suggest that retailers—both dedicated record chains and household goods super-markets—will use it to become powerful, pan-European players in the music market. There is also a suggestion that the euro will fuel the EU’s trans-shipment problem rather than eliminate it. What is certain, however, is that it will bring a new spotlight on the European music market.

German Rap On Rise

Slash/London Group

Harvey Danger Builds On Success of Single

BY CHRISTIAN ARNDT
FRANKFURT—German hip-hop, the underground phenomenon of the ’80s, has become a major commercial force in this otherwise-stagnant music market.

“Hip-hop has become an indispensable aspect of the German musical landscape and has attained a market share that we wouldn’t have dreamed of a few years ago,” says Moses Pelham, an artist and co-owner of Pelham Power Productions (3P), one of the three most successful labels and production teams in the market today. Gerd Bischoff, music programming and production executive at MTV Germany, is equally unequivocal. “This is the year of German hip-hop,” he says.

This year has already seen a strong set of releases and chart runs from the genre’s three dominant production teams. 

Zelnick’s New BMG Challenge: 15%-20% Global Mkt. Share

BY MELINDA NEWMAN
NEW YORK—Newly named BMG Entertainment president/CEO Strauss Zelnick has been given a very clear mandate from his boss, BMG Entertainment chairman Michael Dornemann. “I told him I want him to strengthen the development of worldwide artists,” says Dornemann, stressing the need to break U.S. acts in other markets and vice versa. But more quantifiably, Dornemann says, he told Zelnick “to increase market share [by] 15% to 20% over the next five years. I believe that specifically after the Universal/PolyGram consolidation process. You have to have between 15% and 20% market share.”

(Continued on page 83)

Inside This Week’s Billboard

Camelot Seals Spec’s Deal; Chain’s IPD Pending ... PG

SNOOP DOGG
By Gane is To Be Sold, Not To Be Sold
In Stores August 4th

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: MASTER P

Sound of the Cities
MEMPHIS

A BILLBOARD SPOTLIGHT: PAGE 35
THE SOUNDTRACK OF THE SUMMER

BIG PUNISHER & BEENIE MAN  MARY J. BLIGE

BOYZ II MEN FEATURING CHANTE MOORE  KEVIN FORD FEATURING RUFUS BLAQ

K-CL & JOJO  DIANA KING  LADY SAW FEATURING NADINE SUTHERLAND

ME'SHELL NDEGEOCELLO  MAXI PRIEST  SHAGGY FEATURING JANET

SOUL II SOUL FEATURING CARON WHEELER & JAZZIE B

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IN STORES AUGUST 11TH
Sony Reports First-Quarter Surge

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—Sony Music Entertainment saw a surge in first-quarter revenue even as it anticipates a 1998 release slate that includes albums from Lauryn Hill and John Mellencamp, as well as greatest-hits projects by Elvis Costello, Bette Midler, the Manhattan Transfer, Mariah Carey, and Julio Iglesias.

The company revealed its forthcoming titles during its global convention held July 16-17 at the Fontainebleau Hilton in Miami Beach (see story, page 63).

On the heels of that meeting, Sony Music on July 29 reported a big comeback for operations in Europe, doubling that financial yardstick to 8.34 billion yen ($59.1 million) for the period that ended June 30, compared with 4.15 billion yen in the first quarter of 1997 (Billboard, July 30).

Worldwide music revenue, meanwhile, rose 26% to 174.6 billion yen ($1.24 billion) in the first quarter, up from 138.6 billion yen in the corresponding time period during the previous year.

Last year, Sony said, operating income in the first quarter of fiscal 1997 was hurt by a difficult retail environment, as well as by a decline in operating margins arising from the delayed releases of recordings from certain major artists (Billboard, Aug. 16, 1997).

Sony said revenue in 1996’s first fiscal quarter was fueled by hit releases such as Gloria Estefan’s “Gloria,” which moved 1.5 million units worldwide during the quarter; Ricky Martin’s “Vuelve,” which shifted 1.8 million units during the period; and the “Goddzilla” soundtrack, which sold 2.2 million units.

Ottman, president of Ottman Inc., which runs financial news and information. Worldwide Web sites such as Alert IPO, “It's highly overvalued, just like most Internet stocks these days.”

Still, with the expected eventual convergence of TV and computers, the broadband-equipped world, investors see such established businesses as Broadcom as being valuable, branded entertainment companies poised to be the next great music conduits.

“His smart money, but there certainly is high-risk, high-reward risk, says Mark Hardie, senior analyst for Cambridge, Mass.-based Forrester Research. “There’s a lot of venture-capital money going into this early, but the upside is potentially phenomenal.”

Josh Felser, president of privately held Webcaster Spinner, says the company received several courting calls from large media and entertainment companies following the Broadcastcom coup.

Though Felser says Spinner.com has considered doing its own IPO and is happy with the reaction to Broadcastcom, he marvels at the lack of revenue being generated by publicly held Internet companies.

“Internet stocks are going public with Some of these nascent and emerging markets is one of the most successful IPOs ever.”

It was “very unexpected,” says Nenita

Sony, said revenue in 1996's first fiscal quarter was fueled by hit releases such as Gloria Estefan's "Gloria," which moved 1.5 million units worldwide during the quarter; Ricky Martin's "Vuelve," which shifted 1.8 million units during the period; and the "Goddzilla" soundtrack, which sold 2.2 million units.

The company also cited robust carry-over sales from albums released in the last fiscal year, including Celine Dion’s "Let’s Talk About Love," which shipped 3.1 million units during the quarter; the "Titanic" soundtrack, which sold 5.3 million units; Savage Garden’s self-titled debut album, which moved 2 million units; Will Smith's "Big Willie Style," which sold 1.3 million units; the "Songs From Al McBeal" soundtrack, with 1.2 million units; and the various-artists compilation "Allez! Ola!—The Music Of The World Cup" and the "Armageddon" soundtrack, each of which sold 1 million units, according to a Sony spokesman.

The release also noted that operating (Continued on page 82)
Music Industry Should Rally Against NEA Ruling

BY JAY ROSENTHAL

The recent Supreme Court decision in National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) vs. Finley is a severe blow to the arts community and even more so to the First Amendment.

While the initial impression is that only visual or performing artists are affected, the decision should be of great concern to all in the music community. Music has always been a vehicle for unpopular views, and any law constitutionally imposing mandatory viewpoint discrimination represents a dangerous precedent that can be used by opponents of certain types of music to outlaw or severely curtail the sale and performance of that music.

In 1990, Congress mandated that the NEA take “into consideration general standards of decency and respect for the diverse beliefs and values of the American public when awarding grants.” Karen Finley, one of four artists whose grant application was rejected by the NEA, filed a lawsuit claiming that the new law violated her constitutional right to free speech and due process. A District Court found that the “general standards of decency” provision was unconstitutionally vague. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court upheld that decision in 1996 and added that the provision impermissibly restricted artistic content and viewpoint.

The Supreme Court, however, in an 8-to-1 decision, overruled the Circuit Court and found that the government can consider the “general standards of decency” when determining the propriety of an NEA grant. Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, writing for the majority, argued that the entire funding process is subjective and that adding another subjective element would not automatically make the (Continued on page 15)
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Argentina To Bow Biweekly Chart

By Jeff Clark-Meads

London—A new level of maturity is being evidenced in Argentina's record business—and industry leaders hope it will provide a template for similar advances elsewhere in Latin America.

Argentina's labels' body CAPIF is aiming to produce a biweekly chart before the end of the year, thereby doubling the amount of information available to labels through the current monthly listing (Billboard Bulletin, July 30). Andre Midani, chairman of Latin American industry association FLAPP, says, "We're hoping that, on the strength of this, we can get other countries up to the same level."

CAPIF produces a top 30 album listing once a month. The organization's executive director, Roberto Play, says no singles chart is published due to the negligible singles market in Argentina. The album listing is based on data from a representative panel of 100 record retailers across the country. The data is collated by electronic equipment at point of sale.

Play says negotiations are being conducted with Argentina's largest music retailer, the 65-store Musimundo, which represents around 70% of the market, over the practicability of delivering information on a biweekly basis. Play says he anticipates the negotiations to be concluded in time for the new, more frequent chart to be available in fall. CAPIF's head of charts, Laura Greco, comments, "This is very important because the more information the labels have, the better they can move forward."

She notes that the chart will have the dual purpose of publicizing Argentinian music—the listing is used by Argentina's main print and broadcast media throughout the country—and providing CAPIF's members with better-quality information about how and where their releases are selling.

Greco adds that CAPIF is also aiming to increase the number of stores supplying chart information. Midani suggests that the chart is based on a simple premise: "The Argentinian industry just wants the truth about sales."

Of the move to a biweekly listing, he adds, "This is very good news because it shows the markets are maturing in Latin America. We hope that Mexico is a country where we can soon get something similar. Another great success for us would be a repeat of the Argentinian experience in Brazil, but that may take some time."

The Argentinian industry is also looking at ways to better quantify the size of the market in shipment terms. The value and scale of sales there, as collated in world figures each year by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, are based on shipments from record companies to their retail and wholesale customers.

Midani notes that leading record industry executives met at the end of July to discuss how to make their individual figures more accurately reflect the total market. "By the end of the year, we will have figures that we can really trust," Midani says.

Nearly all labels have promised a biweekly chart, with three companies due to join the fold: BMG's Sire, Virgin's Dropping the Beats, and Warners' Warner Bros. But Midani says an absolute majority are on board, otherwise CAPIF would have retracted its plans.

In Argentina, the most successful chart is the one conducted by El Clarin, an influential newspaper, which is the most trusted source of information for music fans in the country.

(Continued on page 62)

Cokell Plans To Stay Course As New London Chief

London—New London Records U.K. managing director Laurie Cokell has a straightforward plan: "To keep the success going, to break some more artists, and to keep our focus. It really is as simple as that."

Though company chiefs across the world have often had such no-nonsense intentions, Cokell believes he is in a position to deliver because of his experience with the company.

Notes the man who has been promoted from GM to take the managing director's post (Billboard Bulletin, July 30), "I've been here 10 years, so I know all the people involved, and it's a very..." (Continued on page 76)

Camelot Closes On Spec's Acquisition

By Ed Christman

New York—Capitol's attempt to add Camelot Music to its fold has failed while CamelotMusic celebrates the July 30 completion of its acquisition of Spec's Music, company management is still weighing whether to get the next step of its comeback from Chapter 11 off the ground—an initial public offering (Billboard Bulletin, July 30).

In the 1980s, Camelot Music was one of the hottest independents in the country, boasting artists such as The Breakfast Club, The Selecter and countless others. But when the company filed for bankruptcy in 1991, it was forced to sell off much of its catalog, including most of its actives.

Now Camelot is on the rebound, and has announced plans to go public. But Spec's acquisition will give it a boost, as Spec's has a strong presence in the retail sector, which is crucial to any independent's success.

(Continued on page 79)

Politicians Prepare For Germany's PopKomm

London—The music industry will get direct access later this month to the German government, affecting its commercial health.

The PopKomm trade fair, to be held Aug. 13-16 in Cologne, Germany, is celebrating its 10th anniversary. This year's show is attracting not only lawmakers but also more senior figures who previously attended the event. Organizers suspect, though, that this has more to do with the German general election in September than with the politicians' desire to honor PopKomm's 10th anniversary.

Nonetheless, senior figures will be making themselves available to delegates. The most powerful of the politicians due to attend is Federal Justice Minister Edzard Schmidt-Jortzig, who will speak on government policy regarding labels' and publishers' rights relating to the German market; he will then answer questions on the issue.

"It's not just a matter of turning up, delivering the speech, then leaving the place," says Ralf Plaschke, deputy managing director of organizer Musik Komm. "All the politicians and officials will be making themselves available to listen to arguments."

Plaschke notes that all relevant government departments will be represented at PopKomm by ministers or officials. They will cover a wide range of disciplines and include specialists in law in the digital environment and on the World (Continued on page 62)
"Scott Stapp is this summer's Rock-n-Roll savior"

- The Seattle Times
July 13, 1998

Creed serves up rockin’ good time

**Concert review**

CREED, last night at the Moore Theatre, Seattle.

*BY PATRICK MACDONALD*  
*Seattle Times staff critic*

Scott Stapp is this summer's rock-'n'-roll savior.

Scruffy, lanky and long-haired, with dark, piercing eyes, he’s the dynamic, compelling lead singer of Creed, a punk-edged Tallahassee, Fla., band that's tearing up rock radio.

A serious vocalist who contrasts his growls and screams with melodic, carefully sung passages, in the Jim Morrison tradition, Stapp’s powerful, anthemic songs are about battling fears and demons while searching for love, meaning and peace of mind. It’s angry, fist-pumping, cathartic music for confused, pent-up adolescents, the kind of aggressive rock that keeps reasserting itself every few years.

Just a few years ago rock was declared dead, as rock-album sales dwindled and rock-radio stations switched formats. But hard rock has come roaring back this summer, and Creed is on the crest of the wave.

Two songs from the band’s “My Own Prison” album are being played heavily on rock radio at the same time — the title cut, “Torn” and “What’s This Life For.” The album is selling 40,000-plus copies a week, has racked more than 1.5 million in sales and is headed for double platinum.

Creed is poised to become this year’s Live, a dramatic, serious hard-rock band that’s capturing young people’s imaginations with intense songs about finding meaning and purpose.

You could feel the fervor for Creed, as a good-sized crowd jammed the front of the stage, moshing and crowd-surfing to the hard, crunching rhythms and frenzied vocals.

Without prompting, the audience sang many of the songs along with Stapp. Sometimes he thrust the mike into the audience and let the fans lustily take the leads. Obviously, many in the audience had already memorized the whole “My Own Prison” album.
**Provident Music Group Restructures After Reunion Chief's Exit**

In a statement, Van Hook said, "I’m optimistic about not only the expansion and development of artists already on the Reunion roster but sales about building these two fine labels into the future, with new artist involvement."

Diehl and King say the company will continue to maintain separate identities. "We’re keeping two totally separate companies here. We have the same management team," says Diehl.

The Reunion roster includes Michael W. Smith, Kathy Troccoli, Carolyn Arends, Clay Crosse, Gary Chapman, Daytrotter, Fono, and All Star United. The restructing also led to changes in the marketing of the rock acts on Reunion’s roster. Fono, All Star United, and Dove Award-winning band Third Day will remain on Reunion but will be worked by the Essential staff under the direction of VP/GM Robert Beeson. Effective immediately, all artist development and marketing for those acts will be handled through Essential.

Diehl says the changes will be positive for Brentwood. "This frees Brentwood up to be what Brentwood needs to be, a label totally targeting the church," he says. "With George and I working as a team, we have the two labels representing two different faces to the market. We can put artists in the appropriate place with a team of people best suited to the music that they are creating."

Diehl and King say they bring separate qualities to the management team. "I’m very good at administrating... (Continued on page 18)"
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A New ‘Wish’ Broadens Patty Smyth’s Columbia Retrospective

BY JIM BESSMAN
NEW YORK—With a new single from the “Armaggeddon” soundtrack and a forthcoming career-retrospective album, Patty Smyth is making an eventful return to the pop music scene.

The New York-based rocker—whose first hits came in 1982, when she was Scandal’s lead singer—went on to have a successful solo career, notching the No. 2 hit “Sometimes Love Just Ain’t Enough,” a 1982 duet with Don Henley.

Although she co-wrote the Oscar-nominated “Look What Love Has Done” from the 1994 “Junior” soundtrack and performed it at the Academy Awards, since then she has been mostly involved with mothering her children from her first marriage to punk rock legend Richard Hell and her current marriage to tennis great John McEnroe.

“I love being a mom—but that’s never all I wanted to do,” says Smyth, excited about Columbia/Legacy’s release of “Patty Smyth’s Greatest Hits (Featuring Scandal).” The collection includes the hits “Goodbye To You” and “Love’s Got a Line On You” from Scandal’s 1982 self-titled debut EP—at the time Columbia’s biggest selling EP ever—as well as the group’s 1984 hit “The Warrior.”

Also in the set are three songs from Smyth’s self-titled 1992 MCA solo album, including “Sometimes Love Just Ain’t Enough”; the unreleased “Everyone Gets Older” (from sessions for the 1987 Columbia album “Never Enough”); and two new songs, including the “Armaggeddon” soundtrack “Wish I Were You.”

“People should be used to the fact that I always go away for a while,” adds Smyth, acknowledging her sporadic music output. “I haven’t been sitting around since the last album (“Patty Smyth”), but for some reason I didn’t feel like I had anything to say. Then the urge came, and I was inspired to write songs.”

Smyth says she wrote “Wish I Were You” with Glen Burtnik when she was in a “music business funk” and jealous of the ability of amateur guitarist McEnroe to jam with his friends every night.

“Then Legacy came to me about putting out the ‘Greatest Hits,’ and [Columbia senior A&R VP] John Kalodner was excited... he got the song on the ‘Armaggeddon’ soundtrack.”

The other new song, “Carnival Lights,” was co-written with Bob Thiele Jr. and deals with Smyth’s mother’s teen years as a Franco-Franz artist in the circus. Both new tunes were produced by Matt Serletic, producer of makeover boxtop 20—publisher’s client of Smyth’s publisher, Evan Lamberg at EMI Music Publishing.

“It’s so great to have a couple of new tracks,” says Legacy associate director of marketing Mark Feldman. “Both are exciting, and we plan to work both as singles.” (“Wish I Were You” recently went out to AC and modern AC stations.)

Feldman adds that “you couldn’t ask for a better way to re-familiarize people with Patty than to have her single in the [former] No. 1 album in the country.” Legacy—which generally oversees catalog development for the Sony Music labels—sees Smyth’s new album as a front-line product with a strong consumer advertising plan.

(Continued on page 82)

Kessler Goes It Alone
Artist Selling Her Singles Online

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK
LOS ANGELES—Singer/songwriter Barbara Kessler has joined the growing ranks of indie artists using the Internet as a grass-roots marketing tool. Her approach, however, is unique to the field.

Kessler has launched an online “singles club,” offering visitors to her World Wide Web site a chance to buy a new single from her each month.

“I have to explain that it’s not a dating service but just my music,” says Kessler, who started the site after the birth of her daughter, Emilia. “I’ve been selling the singles at shows, but I’m just not able to do 200 dates a year anymore.”

At www.barbarakessler.com, consumers can sign up for Kessler’s CD Single-Of-The-Month Club and receive 12 CDs during the year for $24. They can also join the club by calling 1-STUB-HER-2. Singles cannot be purchased individually.

Kessler includes at least two songs on each single, most of which are new or new renditions of her old material.

The first three singles are “Persephone”/“Kristin”; a different version of “Kristin”/“Grown Up Love Songs And Other Oxy-morons”; and “Red, Yellow & (Continued on page 76)

Wicklow Hopes World Will Warm To Värttinä

BY NIGEL WILLIAMSON
and ANTI ISOKANGAS
HELSINKI—Even its record label admits that, on the surface, Finnish folk act Värttinä is a difficult story to sell. “There are ten of them, and they come from a strange country speaking a language no one understands, and you can’t describe their music at all,” says John Voigtmann, label manager of Wicklow, the world music imprint established by BMG and the Chieftains’ Paddy Moloney.

Fortunately, the story gets much better. “What we have to work with is a truly fantastic new record and a lot of well-placed fans,” says Voigtmann. “In the past, their records have appeared on influential lists of favorite albums, and they are a critical favorite.”

Voigtmann says that “Vihma” (icy Rain), to be released on Wicklow Aug. 11 in the U.S. and Aug. 10 in Finland, is Värttinä’s “boldest and most aggressive” album to date, ranging stylistically from traditional Scandinavian folk to what sounds like a Finnish version of hip-hop.

“This is the album to break them out of the world music ghetto,” he says. “It’s not just new age music for the 40-plus market, it’s alternative and edgy with an appeal to kids.”

Given an early release in Japan at the end of July to coincide with touring, “Vihma” will be released across Germany, Spain, Greece, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Spain to tie in with a European tour in October and November, followed by France and Italy. Its U.K. release will be delayed until the new year, when the group is available for live dates.

“We think we can break them like a crazy pop band in some of the eclectic European markets,” says Voigtmann. That is a description with which the group’s violinist, Kari Reiman, has no problem. “In the U.S. they take us very seriously. We meet people who know more about our music than we do ourselves. But, for instance, in Belgium we are considered a party band. Either way is fine with us. We take the music seriously, but we also like to see people enjoying themselves,” he says.

(Continued on page 79)
Virgin’s Baebes Get Mediaeval In U.S.

A Cappella Act Brings Contemporary Edge To Medieval Music

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—Already a sensation in their native England, the Media-
val Baebes are set to bring their novel take on medieval vocal music to
America with their debut album, “Salva Nos,” which Virgin releases
Sept. 8.

The album, which features mainly a cappella singing by the 12 women
who make up the Baebes, entered the classical chart at No. 2 in the U.K.,
where it was released last year. The Baebes’ ‘flashy attire, as well as
founder/musician director Katherine Blake’s past occupation as a striper,
helped them generate major press, which Virgin hopes to repeat here—
though based more on the music.

“My analogy is that listening to the music is like reading a fairy story,”
says the group’s Rachel Van Asch. “Your mind gets taken to a special,
otherworldly place—a strange place of serenity, magic, and beauty.
Certainly in England people are jaded with the same kind of regurgitated
Britpop fusion spewing out over the years. But this music is very uplift-
ing and serene and tranquil.”

The Mediaeval Baebes were con-
ceived when Blake, who had founded
Miranda Sex Garden in Berlin in 1996. While there, she hooked up with
teresa Casella, Audrey Evans, Nicole Sleet, Karen Lutan, Cypri-
dra Sapphire, and Clare Ravel. “The
common linking factor was a fasci-
nation for the fantastical and the
romantic and the mysteries of life—
which the medieval period amuses: Magic and reality were very inte-
grated in those times.”

After learning a few new songs, the fledgling Baebes decided to try
them out before an audience. “We put on a little show in a derelict cementary—
and loads of people came,” Van Asch
didn’t help Baebes’ album, “Salva Nos,”
when Blake, who founded
Miranda Sex Garden, was perform-
ing cabaret music in Berlin in 1996. While there, she hooked up with
Dorothy Carter, an older woman who
played medieval instruments, includ-
ing dulcimer; sitar; and harpishly-lyrically.

One of the songs they performed was
“Salva Nos”—“save us” in Latin.

Katherine came back rav- ing about the song and medieval music
and convinced her friends to do this as a hobby,” continues Van Asch. (The
other Baebes, all between 25 and 30, are Marie Findley, Carmen Schmel-
der, Nicole Frobaus, Ruth Galloway,


tional to that and what direction we
want to go in,” says Blake. “If
those two intersect in some place,
some of the guys will hang up on
Columbia as solo artists.”

While lawyers duke it out, Blake says, Nichols and
Phillips, the group’s songwriters, are “working on
their body of songs,” which they’ve been
preparing individually and as
a group for an Antic wave, says Blake.
They’re also strikingly different as a . . .

“Coil” was the only album that did not meet our expectations. They were very excited about
making the best album of their career and proving that
“Coil’s” sales were an aberration. But now, we’ll never
know.”

SWEET DREAMS: After a hot, swift bidding war that included Atlantic and Universal, Columbia has
snagged Atlanta-based Shawn Mullins. Mullins’ story
is one of an overnight sensation that is years in the
making. Over several years, the singer/songwriter has
released six albums on his own label, SMG Records.

Several weeks ago, Atlanta modern rock powerhouse
WNXN started playing “Lullaby,” a hypnotic, half-spoken
number that recalls Springsteen and David & David
from Mullins’ most recent album, “Soul’s Core.” The
song is about the daydreaming asphalt.

And a quick check of the Reco
dard</adapter>
than 133,000 units since June 1997, entered the top half of The Billboard 200 at No. 80 in the Aug. 1 issue. That made Harvey Danger the second Slash/London act to reach Heatseeker Impact status in the last two weeks, following the German group Rammstein (Billboard, Aug. 1). This issue, "Where Have All The Merrymakers Gone?" is at No. 71.

Not bad for a "batch of demos," to borrow the phrase lead singer Sean Nelson uses to describe the album.

"The songs are good, but they are demos," says Nelson. "They're not fully fleshed out, sonically or otherwise. But it's such a sparse, concise rendering of the songs that it sort of gets at the true nature of them. It's a strong little album, but it's very humble as well.

"When we started out, we didn't have a sound other than the sound of four inept musicians," he adds. "We really started the band to learn how to play our instruments, and it wasn't even as much as a band as it was us figuring out how to put two chords next to each other and think of a new one."

Regardless, the approach has worked, and in fairy-tale fashion, even before landing its deal on Slash/London, Harvey Danger's hometown reputation boosted when local modern rock radio station KNDO Seattle began playing the act's single "Flagpole Sitta."

At the time, Harvey Danger was signed to tiny indie Arena Rock Records, the label run by Slash/London A&R staffer Greg Glover (Popular Uprisings, Billboard, March 21). KNDO music director Kim Monroe says the decision to bump the song from specialty play to regular rotation was based on its strong hook and SoundScan figures, as well as a desire to support local talent. "It was one of those instances where you get really excited about something and can't wait to play it for people," says Monroe.

Soon after KNDO began playing the song, London staffers sent KROQ Los Angeles a copy of the Arena Rock issue of "Where Have All The Merrymakers Gone?" even though they had not yet signed the band. Though KROQ's decision to begin playing the song sparked a bidding war, the act decided to stay with familiar faces at Slash/London.

Record Rock's efforts with indie retailers and the rapidly developing radio story became both a boon and a bane for London, which found itself chasing the band's momentum for several weeks. According to London Records (U.S.) product manager Wayne Pigini, the label pushed the album's first pressing through Island Records' production system in four weeks. In an early stopgap effort to fulfill retail demand in radio markets, London called on New York-based Advanced Alternative Media, which in addition to managing Harvey Danger provided manufacturing and distribution services. Meanwhile, the label faced the challenge of forging a band identity in the minds of those listeners captivated by the single.

"When the record hit the streets, there was some concern that we weren't going to catch up," says Pigini. "There were stock shortages, the press didn't have the lead time it needed, we didn't have a video ready, and here we were six or seven weeks in tremendous rotations in certain markets.

"For about two weeks things were unbelievably chaotic," he says. "Then around June 15 we started to click. We were getting enough detections at modern rock where people began asking for the band by name instead of knowing into stores and humming the chorus to clerks.

Because the song's title isn't in the lyrics, London helped fans tie the song to the band by in-store placards printed with the band's name and the chorus.

Helping add momentum, Slash/London shipped a well-received video for "Flagpole Sitta" in June after the first version was rejected.

The next single from the act, "Private Helicopter," is tentatively set to ship to modern rock stations in late August, though Pigini notes that "Flagpole Sitta," No. 4 on the Modern Rock Tracks chart this issue, has a way to go before burning out.

The group's songs are published by Famous Music. Alan Skolnik, music buyer at the 39-store, Carteret, N.J.-based Nobody Beats the Wiz, says the chain has only recently begun to see the potential of "Where Have All The Merrymakers Gone?"

"It wasn't very impressive when it came out, but about a month ago it started selling and stores started asking for it," says Skolnik. "In the past few weeks, sales have increased each week to the point where it's becoming a strong seller."

The act, which is booked by Little Big Man, continues opening dates for Grant Lee Buffalo through Aug. 17; then it begins a headlining tour with Creeper Lagoon in September. Though indicators are good that the band's story will continue to build, Nelson is cautious. "Going from extreme obscurity to total mainstream is an odd leap to make," says Nelson. "And I'm curious to see how long it will last — whether the public is interested in one single or if they are really attuned to what we're doing."

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Warner’s Wes Cunningham Finds More Than ‘12 Ways’ To Spice Up His Debut

BY STEVE KNOPPER

CHICAGO—There’s a point on Wes Cunningham’s debut album, “12 Ways To Win People To Your Way Of Thinking,” when everything stops sounding like typical American power pop with a dash of Lenny Kravitz funk. A mariachi trumpet solo emerges from nowhere. A hard-rock guitar riff leads into a salsa beat. By the last song, “Car Wreck,” Cunningham seems determined to be the next Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass.

Cunningham, a 26-year-old singer/songwriter, put many of those sounds on his album simply because after years of struggling with recording costs, he could. After signing with Warner Bros., he could finally afford to reproduce the disparate sounds he hears in his head in the studio. “12 Ways” is due Sept. 8.

“For the first time, I was able to just go crazy creatively,” he says. “I could sit down and write a song with salsa in it, because I knew I could afford it to put in there. Whereas before, I would write a lot of country or folk or whatever I could get away with in the studio. This time, I could say, ‘I want a big fat Prince lead guitar in this part,’ and the next thing I know, some guy is doing it. It’s what I’ve lived for.”

Born in the Philippines, Cunningham lived with traveling parents in the Texas cities of Waco, San Antonio, and Dallas, and he solemnly names country legends like Johnny Cash and Patsy Cline as influences. But although he has performed country and folk backing bands, given his Nashville home base, he was careful on “12 Ways” to avoid straying too far into the country-artist stereotype.

Cunningham even tried to avoid the broader “serious artist” stretch of things, and says, “I’m really a goofball,” he says. “One thing I don’t like is those silly brooding rock stars who get up there and screw everything up. It’s what I’ve lived for.”

Warner Bros. will ship “Say My Name,” the album’s catchy, guitar-heavy first single, to modern rock and triple-A radio stations Aug. 25—but neither Cunningham nor company executives expect it to be an immediate hit. Instead, says VP of product management Peter Rauh, the label hopes to slowly expose Cunningham’s music over several albums—following the path of other Warner artists such as the Bare Naked Ladies and Soul Coughing.

“As knocked out as you can be about any debut, you have to hold out for the greater potential of what his next record might sound like,” Rauh says. “I think he’s scratching the surface. I can’t wait to hear what might come out of his head in a couple of years.”

In other words, don’t expect “12 Ways To Win People To Your Way Of Thinking” to make Cunningham a star—yet. Warner Bros. hopes that will come later, after music critics, radio stations, and, of course, fans have warmed up to his songs. While Cunningham has no booking agent yet, the label is looking for an appropriate tour he could join as a warm-up act.

In a climate of instant hits, some radio programmers say they hope Warner Bros. will give him the chance to learn the business. “When I heard Smash mouth’s (“Walkin’ On The Sun”), I said, ‘This is huge,’” says Nic Harcourt, music director of Los Angeles modern rocker KCRW and host of the station’s “Morning Becomes Eclectic” show. “To me, you hear five or six of those songs a year, and I don’t think I hear one on [Cunningham’s] album. But what I do hear is a really strong album with potential—if they do the right thing.”

For years, Cunningham had been kicking around Texas and Tennessee, recording his country and folk songs in any studio he could afford. After working at jobs as diverse as high school teacher and tree cutter and networking with agents and club owners, he earned the attention of producers Monroe Jones and Chris Parker. Their support led to interest from six record labels.

Cunningham says he chose Warner Bros. because the executives were “real people, with wives and kids and stuff” and gave him the exalted artist demand of creative freedom. “Warner Bros. wasn’t involved until we pretty much finished the album, which was a cool thing,” Cunningham says. “It kind of took the pressure off.”

In some ways, “12 Ways” is a traditional singer/songwriter album, with folky rhythm guitar and layered harmonies in songs like “Wine Some, Lose Some” and “Letter To McKay (God’s Way).” But while Cunningham says he grew up on Beach Boys and Beatles records overflowing with twists, like unexpected Latin rhythms and odd bits of humor.

Just after “Gone,” a despairing, soft-to-load rocker about rolling on the floor of a dark room in “all my blues,” the singer changes pace to the easy-listening “Car Wreck.” Sings Cunningham: “I like Jerry Springer/I’m a sexy swinger.”

The song ends the album on a light-hearted note, positioning Cunningham to appear more humorous than Soul Coughing but not as obviously comic as the Barenaked Ladies.

“There are very definitely real and personal gut songs on the album,” he says. “My heroes are John Lennon and Hank Williams. In other words, they’re real,” the album is to be singles (“Say My Name” and “So It Goes”), I hope it’s a hit...
process unconstitutional.

Justice O'Connor, however, misses the point. The Constitution provides that Congress will not pass laws “abridging the freedom of speech.” The plain meaning of the word “abridgement” does not mean “prohibit,” but rather “to diminish.”

It should not matter that the artists being rejected by the NEA can still disseminate their works, although one can certainly argue that money in one’s pocket is directly related to the ability to create art. Nor should it matter that the selection process is, by definition, subjective. The real question is whether the law diminishes speech. Since those to be denied funding are, arguably professing controversial speech, the answer is clear that the law diminishes such speech, and therefore the law is unconstitutional.

Justice David Souter, the lone dissenter, got it right when he asked why the statute should be afforded an exemption from the fundamental rule of the First Amendment that viewpoint discrimination in the exercise of public authority over expressive activity is unconstitutional. In past cases, the Supreme Court has held that the government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea offensive or disagreeable. Quite rightly, Justice Souter concluded that a law may not, based on viewpoint alone, disqualify anyone from securing government favor.

Even before the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the amendment, the arts community was well aware of the increasingly chilling effect on the type of artists and projects seeking federal and, in some cases, state and local funding. The decision will, no doubt, effectively eliminate controversial artists from attempting to secure grants from the NEA. Why go through the trauma if one knows that an inbred bias against a type of music or art can, constitutionally, be used to deny NEA funding?

The ramifications of this decision will undoubtedly go beyond the issue of NEA funding, however. Such overwhelming Supreme Court support for the proposition that viewpoint discrimination is unconstitutional will embolden those trying to criminalize the sale and/or performance of certain “offensive” music. Local governments will find solace in this decision when imposing zoning restrictions against clubs offering “offensive” music. Legislation against the sale of “offensive” music, especially rap, to minors will be passed with much less concern about constitutionality.

Attempts to dictate the investment policies of state employment pension funds will most assuredly increase. And most certainly, those fighting to curtail “offensive” material on the Internet will find new strength and vigor from the Supreme Court’s ruling.

The music community must seek to overturn this decision. Unfortunately, it is not likely that the Supreme Court of 1998, as constituted, will do so. Therefore, a new litmus test—the embrace of the principle of free expression, including public funding of art that does not mandate a “decency” filtering process—must be used by the arts communities regarding future Supreme Court nominees.

The arts community must be heard on this issue during nominating processes, with the hope that a future court will be dominated by justices inclined to protect the First Amendment.
GOMEZ

(Continued from page 12)

* time most people got [what our album was] about because of the press. For instance, we were the biggest climbers on the RIAA chart, and our album chart just after the Glastonbury Festival because people saw us there and went out and bought the record. It was the same when we were on TV. At the beginning of the day, it’s very complicated when you’ve got journalists saying this is very good but not able to describe it.”

“Bring It On” has also been selling, but they’re also undeckably accessible on many levels.

“We know this is a development project,” says Cooper. “We know we won’t get out of the starting gate fast, but we’re really looking to build and grow the profile through a long campaign.”

Part of the program includes working the act at colleges and universities, which received the album in June. Virgin has also enlisted the help of the Turning Point Network to program a video for the first single, “78 Stone Wobble,” on its campus networks.

The song ships to modern rock stations sometime this month. “Get Myself Arrested” is already selected as the follow-up single.

Cooper says GOMEZ will also target fans of similar sounding acts, such as Phish, Blues Traveler, and other “H.O.R.D.E.-type of bands.”

The band has spent a lot of time promoting materials at those acts’ shows.

Donald Lawrence, import buyer for Aron’s Records in Los Angeles, recognized the act and spread word of GOMEZ singles and the album. Though he suspects it’s mainly the store’s Anglophone customers driving sales now, Lawrence believes people are curious about the band’s unusual sound.

“Everyone is into new artists that are doing something different,” he says. “We should be able to generate a little buzz. I think it will do OK, from what I’m seeing.”

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SAN FRANCISCO: The Bay Area is the place to see undiscovered bands July 31-Aug. 2 during Nadine’s Wild Weekend, a three-day music festival coordinated by Nadine Condon. Condon, who worked for Jefferson Starship for a number of years, runs the Nadine Condon Co., a local outfit that handles artist management, marketing, promotion, and artist development. Dozens of unsigned bands will play at local clubs over the weekend, including the Paradise Lounge, Transmission Theater, Bottom of the Hill, the Hotel Utah, and Brunos. A three-day pass to all events is $40 and includes a拷贝 of the nightclub, the Finisters, Glitter Mist, Goro Market, Happy Rererts, Ian Brennan, Julie Plug, Keeners, KGB, Liar, Mac Swamy Trio, The Magnetic, Memory Man, Oranger, Penny Frascati, Petrol, Playonics, Red Planet, Simor Stinger, Skip Holiday, Vag I am, A Night Of Serious Drinking, For Stars, Ithiky Kitty, and MK Ultra. For more information, contact Condon at 415-581-6299.

* * *

KAREN KOSEKI

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SANDRA SCHULMAN

Continental Drift

UN SIGNED ARTISTS AND REGIONAL NEWS

KAREN KOSEKI

DETROIT: “We want our music to be very visual in its impact,” says American Mars front man Thomas Trimble. “When someone comes up to me and says, ‘Your music reminds me of this movie,’ that’s exactly what we’re going to do. As long as the visual and musical experiences haven’t been Symphonic and Pop, the sound is the same, the sound is symphonic, and the sound is symphonic.”

American Mars lives on the hard edge of American, drawing well-crafted emotional vignettes in chiaroscuro, looking at familiar things through the eyes of a stranger. The band formed in 1996, with the current lineup coalescing this past winter. Its album “Late” came out in November 1997 and has received enthusiastic reviews and regional radio play, supported by the band’s willingness to get on the road and tour. Six weeks on the road last winter only whetted the members’ appetites, and they are continuing to take short jaunts around the Midwest as they plan a longer stint. When they return, their sound will be deeper, their sound will be more symphonic, and their sound will be more accessible on many levels.

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The songs on “Salva Nos” are in Latin, old English, and old French, which the Baebes studied in order to deliver the lyrics accurately. Some are religious, though many are contemporary compositions using medieval modes, such as “Foweles In The Frith,” which Blake composed using medieval poetry. “Gaudete” may be the best-known song, having been previously played by the ’70s English folk-rock group Steeleye Span; “The Coventry Carol” is also a familiar Christmas tune.

The self-managed Mediaeval Baebes perform wearing princess-like gowns and are accompanied by Carter and percussionist Trevor Sharpe—also formerly with Miranda’s Sex Garden. According to Virgin director of product management Phil Fox, they may be in New York in October for several shows, though a full U.S. tour is not yet in the works.

Instead, radio will be targeted, with the album being serviced to triple-A, college, public radio, and classical stations upon street date. Stickers will focus programmers’ attention on the title track and “Gaudete.” In November, a “Gaudete” promo single will further “iso-late” the track at the same formats, says Fox, adding that “the timing leads into the holiday season because it’s an old English Christmas madrigal—and anybody who remembers Steeleye Span will remember it.”

A video of the band performing “Salva Nos,” taken from an interview done in New Zealand, will be sent to press and radio for “grabbing” purposes, says Fox. Mediaeval Baebes’ music will also be featured on Virgin’s fourth-quarter “Christmas Moods, Vol. 2” compilation and in related TV campaigns.

“Knowing the success garnered a few years ago by the Benedictine Monks, we feel that there’s consumer interest in this type of music,” says Fox.

Marty Boratin, manager/buyer at Buffalo, N.Y., indie store New World Records, expects good in-store response to “Salva Nos” based on the regular turnover there of Anonymous 4 catalog. “I’ve had people asking for them for the last six months or so,” says Boratin.

Press, adds Fox, will indeed lead consumers to listening stations at “upper demo-based retailers” like Borders, Barnes & Noble, and Tower.

“Once this first wave hits, it will generate more interest in general publications,” says Fox, though Boratin questions the nature of the clips he’s seen, which suggests that “the Baebes are being pushed way, way to the fringes.” Indeed, the U.K. media has anointed the group as the “medieval answer to the Spice Girls.”

“I know people tag us with ‘girl power’ stuff, but it’s a terrible piece of sexist nonsense,” says Van Asch. “The Down Monks [a Gregorian chanting act on Virgin U.K.] don’t get compared to the Verve.”
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 ineligible to appear on the Heatseekers chart. All albums are available on cassette and “A&M” indicates vinyl LP is available. All albums are the greatest sales gains. © 1986. Billboard/BPI Communications.

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**REGIONS**

**REGIONAL HEATSEEKERS No.15**

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**WEBSURFING**

Surfing/Hollywood Records act Alien Fashion Show has invaded cyberspace with the release of the “Detroit Swing City” — a swing version of the hit “Detroit Rock City” — over the Internet in the controversial MP3 format. (Billboard, July 15).

The single, included on the group’s eponymous album, released July 28, is available for free of charge at www.mp3.com and www.ofm.com.

**ROADWORK**

Columbia act the Getaway People kick off opening dates for the Dave Matthews Band Aug. 18 in Dallas. The group’s second single, “Chocolate,” is being released across a demo of DeeJay Funk-Rock’s song “My Beat-box.” U.K. label Alrod Recordings placed the artist on last year’s “Soul Searchin’” compilation and helped spark his career across the globe. On Sept. 23, independent/Epic releases the “Chickenfoot” album in the U.S. Meanwhile, he has remixed the Beaste Boys’ “Intergalactic” and songs from such acts as Pearl Jam and the Smashing Pumpkins.

The artist, who is booked by International Creative Management, will play with Hooberphonic Aug. 13-14, then pair with Esthero for dates Aug. 15-25.}

**THE REGIONAL ROUNDUP**

Rotating top 10 lists of best-selling titles by new and developing artists. 

**WEST NORTH CENTRAL**

1. **WEBSURFING**

**MIDDLE ATLANTIC**

1. **Soul Sleepin’**

2. **Pimp Hugs You More Than I Ever Will**

3. **Soul Sleepin’**

4. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

5. **Tina & The B-Birds It’s All Just The Same**

6. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

7. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

8. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

9. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

10. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

**MIDWEST**

1. **The 49er’s Song**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **Soul Sleepin’**

4. **that’s just the way I am**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**SOUTH ATLANTIC**

1. **The 49er’s Song**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**NORTHEAST**

1. **We Got the Power**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**PACIFIC**

1. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

**PLAINS**

1. **The 49er’s Song**

2. **Soul Sleepin’**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

**SOUTHWEST**

1. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**ALL REGIONS**

1. **The 49er’s Song**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**THE WEEK OF AUGUST 8, 1998**

**SUBSET**

1. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**IN THE STORES**

1. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**SOUNDSCAPE**

1. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**SPIN**

1. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**NEED TO KNOW**

1. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**HEATSEEKERS ALBUM CHART**

1. **That’s Just The Way I Am**

2. **Mary’s Bad Boy Is Yo’ Bad Boy**

3. **The 49er’s Song**

4. **The 49er’s Song**

5. **The 49er’s Song**

**BILLBOARD'S POPULAR U.P.R.I.N.G.S.**

**THE BILLBOARD WEEKLY COVERAGE OF HOT PROSPECTS FOR THE HEATSEEKERS CHART**

**BY DOUG REECE**

**GREEN TEAM**

Hard rock act Earth Crisis, known for its outspoken positions on the environment and animal testing, has been turning a loyal following over the past few weeks. The band’s second album, “Breed the Killers” Sept. 8, the group, on the road with Pabst Blue Ribbon’s Vision Of Disorder, plays Thursday (6) at Tramps in New York.
“DON'T MISS THIS BAND'S SMOKIN' NEW ALBUM”  
BILLBOARD 7/25/98

“LET ME TELL YOU, MOONSHINE HAS GOT  
A BIGGIE ON THEIR HANDS”  
HITS 7/17/98

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BACK ON A MISSION

>THE NEW ALBUM . . . !  
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| 8/7/98 | Lawrence, KS | 8/7/98 | Dallas, TX |
| 8/9/98 | St. Louis, MO | 8/9/98 | Tulsa, OK |
| 8/9/98 | Minneapolis, MN | 8/9/98 | Oklahoma City, OK |
| 8/10/98 | Milwaukee, WI | 8/10/98 | San Antonio, TX |
| 8/11/98 | Chicago, IL | 8/11/98 | El Paso, TX |
| 8/12/98 | Chicago, IL | 8/12/98 | Tempe, AZ |
| 8/14/98 | Cincinnati, OH | 8/14/98 | Los Angeles, CA |
| 8/15/98 | Columbus, OH | 8/15/98 | San Francisco, CA |
| 8/15/98 | Cleveland, OH | 8/15/98 | Portland, OR |
| 8/17/98 | Columbus, OH | 8/17/98 | Seattle, WA |

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| 9/2/98 | Minneapolis, MN |
| 9/1/98 | Chicago, IL |
| 9/1/98 | Toronto, CANADA |
| 9/1/98 | Columbus, OH |
| 9/1/98 | Philadelphia, PA |
| 9/1/98 | Boston, MA |
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| 10/10/98 | Atlanta, GA |
| 10/10/98 | Orlando, FL |
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| 10/10/98 | Kansas City, MO |
| 10/10/98 | Minneapolis, MN |
| 10/10/98 | Chicago, IL |
| 10/10/98 | Toronto, CANADA |
| 10/10/98 | Columbus, OH |
| 10/10/98 | Philadelphia, PA |
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| 10/10/98 | Chicago, IL |
| 10/10/98 | Toronto, CANADA |
| 10/10/98 | Columbus, OH |
| 10/10/98 | Philadelphia, PA |
| 10/10/98 | Boston, MA |

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singles

**CULTURE CLUB**
I Just Wanna Be Loved (4:30)

**PRODUCERS:** Culture Club

**WRITERS:** G. Ollie, R. H. Jo, M. Craig

**PUBLISHER:** not listed

**RECORDING COMPANY:** EMI

**VIRGIN 13194 (casette single)**

If there was ever a group prized for a major impact on 1980s culture, it was Culture Club. The act has been source of much positive media chatter following its recent appearance on the VH1’s "Storytellers," as well as the launch of its reunion concert tour. This fine new recording—featuring songs from the forthcoming "Storytellers/ Greatest Moments" collection—shows 'em in far better form than on their tinier two-'80s-era albums. Set to a shuffling pop-reggae groove somewhat similar to their rival Wham! (but far more imitating their own), "Get Me"—"I Just Wanna Be Loved" singles with warm yet worldly lyrics and a -catchy-catching hook that you'll find yourself singing for hours after one listen. Boy George is in peak vocal form, while bandmate Jon Moss, and Mike and the Ciara play with astonishingly sharp precision. A promising peek into what should be an exciting, vital new phase for the band.

**WYCLEF JEAN**
(To All The Girls)

**PRODUCERS:** Salam Remi, Wyclef Jean

**WRITERS:** Jean, Remi, Hammond, David

**PUBLISHER:** Jay-Z

**RUTHLESS/COLUMBUS 78993 (5:15) (cassette single)**

The wonderfully unpredictable Jean certainly delivers the goods in creating yet another meters of hip-hop, proving that the genre is only as limited as those making the music. Each time this utterly gifted version, "Chanteled!" has all of the heart that features a shy R&B singer who joins a stock school band. But it also has an occasional splash of rock—not to mention elements of jazz, funk, and rap. His rap skills are matched by a formidable singing style and guitar chords that would make any headbanger feel inferior. His voice is so pure and clean that even the most jaded rock radio listeners are likely to flock to this.

**Lenny Kravitz**
Thinking Of You (4:10)

**PRODUCERS:** Lenny Kravitz, L. Toddler

**WRITERS:** M. B. Freund, A. R. Nissin

**PUBLISHERS:** Sony/ATV Music, ACSAP

**RECORDING COMPANY:** Passport

**TUPPERDAS 2000 (4:45)**

What a shame that more people have not discovered the musical bliss of Kravitz’s country-electric guitar prowess. This album’s pop-rock flavor could change the album’s retail profile, thanks largely to its comforting old-school inflections. At the center of this jam is a touching tribute to Kravitz’s late mother, which he handles with some of the chilled hand-wringing that far too many other artists might indulge in. The lead singer’s serenity, which only adds to the appeal of a single that you simply should not ignore.

**R & B**

**Kenny Lattimore**
Days Like This (4:03)

**PRODUCERS:** Vidal Davis, Kenny Lattimore, Nano Music

**WRITERS:** K. Lattimore, Y. Davis, T. Motzer

**PUBLISHERS:** Sony/ATV Music, Jive

**RECORDING COMPANY:** Jive/Motown

**ECOSYSTEM 4700 (7:10) (casette single)**

Rattling, tapping, shaking percussion is the immediately ear-grabbing ele- ment on this breakthrough single. A high-energy rock beats per- taking tone out to look in a shaky, sampled drum bit near the increas-

**WILD ORCHID**
Be Mine (4:20)

**PRODUCERS:** David DelC, M. Reiss, J. Zevon

**WRITERS:** M. Zevon, J. Zevon, S. Moore

**PUBLISHERS:** Madonna/O'Flanagan, ACSAP

**RECORDING COMPANY:** Del/Board/Cashiers, BMG

**RCM 6553 (3:44) (cassette single)**

Boz Scaggs recorded a stunning version of this self-penned song on her last MCA album. Now, Morgan opens the tune on her current release, "Shakin’ Things Up," and delivers an equally evocative portrayal of a woman in a marriage that suffers from ennui. Cynser. Cynser has written a powerful lyric, and Morgan’s performance captures the same essence, resonating with the feel that this. This is the kind of song that might drive a breakup relationship like a poison. The poignancy of the song and the strength of Morgan’s performance make this one of the best ballads released this year.

**RANDY SCRUGGS**
I Wanna Be Loved Back (3:30)

**PRODUCERS:** Randy Scruggs

**WRITERS:** J. Davis, H. Rayburn

**PUBLISHERS:** Jagger/Bow, G. E. T., H. H. Nash, GA

**BETSY 937 (3:45) (cassette single)**

Scruggs is well-known in the Nashville music community as a producer and songwriter of incredible talent. This strong single from his new Reprise album, "Crow Of Freedom," also showcases his gift as an affecting and accessible vocalist. There’s kind of a rough-around- the-edges, gringo-country feel to this. It even has an equal- ly to his voice that adds emotional impact to the lyric. Penned by Scruggs and D. Rayburn, this is the kind of winner—an easily relatable lyric framed in a vibrant production. Trisha Yearwood contributes lead vocals to this tune, and the overall result is a thoroughly engaging record.

**Steve Gellman**
Before (3:45)

**PRODUCERS:** Yoko Ono, T. Y. Davis

**WRITERS:** L. S. Gellar

**PUBLISHERS:** Hans/Madison & Partners/ASCAP

**HIDDEN PLOT 002 (4:30)**

Add Gellman’s name to the growing list of out-queue tastemakers who are making waves along the coffeehouse circuit at the moment, and he’s doing so without being heard or anything significant. With its left-crotch rock-instrumenta- tion and heartfelt vocals, the track has a vibe that’s similar to Indie Girls, LA tastemakers should use that as a point of program- ming reference and make room for this intriguing female performer. His intense and sensitive and intelligent at the same time. Contact: 401-428-4818.

**Tori Amos**
Jackie's Strength (4:05)

**PRODUCERS:** Tori Amos, R. K. Byrne

**WRITERS:** R. K. Byrne, BW Publishing

**ATLANTIC 86151 (5:40) (cassette single)**

Amos critically lauded “from the chieftone guttural voice to the growl of the form or this barrel. Revisiting the grand, piano-driven sound of her biggest hit to date, “Silent All These Years,“ Amos indulge in all of the complex poetry that was the heart of making. Wading beautifully in melodic strings, she even poppers a strong hook to grab hold of. Who could ask for anything more? This unique experience, don’t miss her tour this summer.

**UFO FIGHTERS**
Waiting For You (4:05)

**PRODUCERS:** K. Davis, V. Zimm, K. J. R., R. Byrne

**PUBLISHERS:** J. R. Byrne, W. Music Corp., K.R.B., R. Byrne, ACSAP

**COLUMBUS 4809 (CD)**

This is a simple pop song, well-sung despite its pedestrian lyrics and generic instrumental backdrops. A quiet pop guitar structure is highly effective, combining synthetic strings and an unlikely syn- xophone pipe in intermittently. Runga’s elastic vocal lines always add a bit of novelty, the track has a slight turn to the left. For those who are looking for something more, this backdrop holds back and keeps this one peaceful in a kind of Toad The Wet Sprocket manner.

**BIC Runga**
Make You (4:40)

**PRODUCERS:** K. Davis

**WRITERS:** K. Davis, P. R. Byrne

**PUBLISHERS:** J. R. Byrne, W. Music Corp., K.R.B., R. Byrne, ACSAP

**COLUMBUS 4809 (CD)**

This is a simple pop song, well-sung despite its pedestrian lyrics and generic instrumental backdrops. A quiet pop guitar structure is highly effective, combining synthetic strings and an unlikely syn- xophone pipe in intermittently. Runga’s elastic vocal lines always add a bit of novelty, the track has a slight turn to the left. For those who are looking for something more, this backdrop holds back and keeps this one peaceful in a kind of Toad The Wet Sprocket manner.

**Our Lady Peace**
4 me (4:40) (no listing)

**PRODUCERS:** A. Molar

**WRITERS:** not listed

**PUBLISHERS:** Suggested Song/Tunes LLC, ACSAP

**ATLANTIC 5107 (CD)**

To prevent a small-publicity, a song should ideally deliver pleasing vocals or poetic instrumentation. For this overworked ballad by Our Lady Peace unfortunately does neither. Whining, ASL-inspired vocals coupled with a weak-style-level journal lyrics (“I don’t like my life at all/Seems like everyday day that’s gone”). We’re all dumb and jaded), on top of sparse elec- tric guitar are finally eclipsed by an effectless vocal delivery. This is where Our Lady Peace excels. The unex- pectedly crashing and crashing crashes come in just one, often unnecessary. Particularly for the CD player’s stop button, sailing the song from pure badness, but barely.
REPUTATION IS A FRAGILE THING: THE STORY OF CHEAP TRICK
By Rick Bayles with Ken Sharp

New York: St. Martin's Press. 226 pages, $24.95

If it’s the salacious side of these one-time superstars you’re looking for, you won’t find it here. But what you’ll find is a practically every-thing-you-ever-wanted-to-know account of Cheap Trick, from its bar-band start to its rise to arena headliner and descent into the depths of rock and roll.

Where many a rock-band biogra-phy focuses on hotel-key-throwing groupies and rampant drug use, “Reputation Is a Fragile Thing” focuses its attention on the musical details of the Cheap Trick story. Cheap Trick is one of the most popular and influential bands of the ’70s, and this exhaustively re-searched history of the band is densely packed with a wealth of information on recording sessions and live shows.

Hardly coincident, the book has arrived in stores at a time when Cheap Trick is experiencing a resurgence because of the re-lease of its star-making live album, “Cheap Trick At Budokan.”

For authors Mike Hayes and Ken Sharp, who are both music journalists and record collectors, the book, whose title is from the lyric in the 1982 Trick song “One On One,” is a labor of love, and as an assign-ment with the story behind the Rockford, Ill.-based band.

But if you’re not already a fan of Cheap Trick, this tome won’t turn you into one. Lacking a strong overall context of Cheap Trick’s influence and importance, the book assumes you already believe the band is a rock icon, or else you wouldn’t be reading it. Once this is established, Hayes and Sharp get down to the business of how Cheap Trick made music.

The book begins with an account of each member’s early days, pay-ing special attention to the mem-ber’s musical connections. For exam-ple, guitarist, songwriter, and ringleader Rick Nielsen’s parents were “enthusiastic, moderately successful opera singers.” Local singer Robin Zander’s dad had a jazz band, drummer Bun E. Carlos’ folks played various instruments, and bassist Tom Petersson once took up guitar in his early teens.

Hayes and Sharp do yeoman’s work sorting through the tangle of oral and written sources to flesh out the biographies of Cheap Trick members were, like the Paegans and the Grim Reapers. The latter, in fact, paved the way for the formation of Cheap Trick.

The authors also pay particular attention to the band’s connection with ’80s pop group Nazz, which was Todd Rundgren’s group before he went solo. Nielsen and Petersson also worked with John Lennon’s “Double Fantasy.”

In addition, the authors delve into the band’s frustrations with some personnel changes, including the departure of drummer, bassist Petersson. The book also explains Cheap Trick’s superstar-dom in Japan, which sprung from the heady appearance of the album’s first press photos, and not radio and network airplay. An extensive, rarified-stocked photo collection is another plus for thesimpie fan.

Hayes and Sharp may be preach-ing to the converted here, but the sermon is welcome.

MoiRA MccORMICK
PIR To Release Phyllis Hyman's Final Works; Howard Hewett Hones His Style On The Road

FOREVER PHYLLIS: On Aug. 18, Philadelphia International Records (PIR) will posthumously release "Forever With You," a new album by the late Phyllis Hyman. The 12 tracks are among the last recordings Hyman did before her untimely death three years ago, according to Kenneth Gamble, CEO of PIR.

"This is the last album that we'll be able to put out future releases of hit collections and reissues of the singer's works, to go to Hyman's estate and the campaign.

A coffee-table book, an authorized biography, and a feature-length film on the singer's life are in the works.

HOWARD'S TIME: Although Howard Hewett hasn't been signed to a label in several years, the vocalist says he's been concentrating on new material and that's a priority. The last time he recorded was with clubs both in the U.S. and overseas. "I like a lot of intimacy between myself and my audience," he says. The smaller clubs allow you to go in and present yourself in a way you wouldn't normally do.

Hewett recorded six albums on Solar Records as one-third of the group Shalamar and four solo sets for Elektra. After the last album, Hewett says, he realized that there weren't many forward-think- ing labels. His last solo set, "30th Time," was recorded for indie Caliber Records. "I thought we did well, considering we had limited promotion money," he says. Since then, he's been working on material with just "any" label.

A problem Hewett says he has with the industry today is the fact that many labels seem to have a "cook-ie cutter" mentality. "The female situation is a lot more interesting than the male situation... There is a lot more diversity, especially with solo artists," he says. "There has never been any male artist who took the bull by the horns with the mature and romantic style of singing"

Hewett says he thinks listeners older than 30 are "basically ignored. It really concerns me when I look for young people to write for, and they want to write, 'Chillies' in my ride, 'just for my honey to come home'."

While the vocalist says he understands the use of sampling in much of today's music, he also finds it "scary." "I wonder what they will be playing 20 years from now," he says. "It's a form of creativity, but I challenge them to be more creative, to come up with something original. Back in the day, that's what artists strived for.

Hewett says that he isn't actively seeking a record deal but that he is writing new material. "I'd like to do a 'best of' album and a gospel album," he says. "Maybe I'll find a major manufacturing and distribution company to go through." Mostly the artist says, he is looking for someone with a "vision." "Someone with the balls to say, 'Hey this isn't just regular... We are looking for something more mature, with quality.' I'm still looking for that perfect situation to put recording back in the right place."

Priceless. Island Black Music’s hot act Kelly Price puts the squeeze on Stevie J, producer of her No. 1 single, “Friend Of Mine,” at Justin’s “Puffy” Combs’ New York eatery. Her album “Soul Of A Woman” is due this month.

Lattimore Gets Personal On 2nd Set
Columbia Aims To Broaden Fan Base With ‘Soul Of Man’

BY ANITA M. SAMUELS
LOS ANGELES—Executives at Columbia Records say they know exactly who Kenny Lattimore’s audience is—18- to 35-year-old black women. With his sophomore release, “From The Soul Of Man,” due Sept. 8 worldwide, they want to broaden that fan base.

Expansion plans include widening Lattimore’s radio appeal beyond the R&B format, according to Demmette Guidry, senior VP of Columbia’s black music department. “We will see Kenny’s music cross over into the top 40 audience,” he predicts. He expects the gospel track “Well Done” to appeal to the Christian marketplace.

“Days Like This,” the first single, shipped to R&B and crossover radio July 20. There are no plans for a commercial release.

According to Broadcast Data Systems, “Days Like This” has already garnered 53 spins at R&B stations for the week ending July 22.

“It’s a wonderful song, perfect tempo, excellent artist,” says Ja- miliah Muhammad, assistant PD at WAZ, an R&B adult radio outlet in Chicago. “Audience response has been great. They are loving it.”

A videoclip for “Days Like This” was filmed in Los Angeles by Dar- ren Grant and will be serviced to BET, MTV, VH1, the Box, and other local video outlets Aug. 1.

In order to gain exposure in clubs, “Days Like This” will be remixed by "Little" Louie Vegas and Kenny "Dope" Gonzales of Masters At Work. Guidry says it was serviced to clubs and mix DJs in late July.

In addition, the set features the duet “Love Will Find A Way,” a bonus track with Heather Handley for the upcoming Disney movie “The Lion King II: Simba’s Pride.” The tune, which Guidry hopes will help Lattimore gain even more exposure with adult contemporary and top 40 audiences, will also be a part of the Hollywood Records soundtrack to “The Lion King” sequel.

Many of the songs on “From The Soul Of Man,” which is available as an enhanced CD, run the gamut of real-life relationship "episodes."

“Tomorrow’s” is a song about a man who puts his career above his relationship and later has no one to share his success with. "Trial Separation" is a self-evaluation song that suggests stepping outside of a relationship to better appreciate the other partner.

Lattimore says the material on the new album is a continuation of the songs on his self-titled debut album, which sold 257,000 units, according to SoundScan, and peaked at No. 19 on the Top R&B Albums chart. The single “For You” sold 391,000 units and reached No. 6 on the Hot R&B Singles chart.

“The album’s really about what I felt true love really is. I wanted to talk about the depth of relationships and say things that men don’t normally say about love or forget to say,” Lattimore says. “We did very well with the sales on the first album, but I decided to dig a little deeper, to talk more about my personal experiences as well as experiences of others.I knew personally. ‘From The Soul Of Man’ is like lifting the lid off of some of our [black men’s] secrets without revealing too much.”

Despite the fact this his core audience is female, Lattimore says he gets more feedback from men than women. "I've had men say 'Thank you for saying the things we can't or I really love your music, it's really smooth,' " he says. "I try to say things in a thought-provoking way without generalizing it. I know every man is not the same and every experience is not the same. But if I can put something out there that will create a little bit of dialogue, maybe it will help our relationships.”

Vidal Davis, Kimper Jones, Daryl Simmons, Barry Eastmond, and Jeff Williams are among the songwriters and producers working with (Continued on page 28)
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## Hot Rap Singles

**ARTISTS & MUSIC**

### Blak Twang Puts London Slant On Rap

**LONDON TWANG**: British rapper Blak Twang's eagerly awaited debut album, "19 Long Time (Live From The Big Smoke)" was celebrated in the UK by Rotten Products/Blue Print/Janimax Records and was just released in France and Germany. Rotten Products is in negotiations with labels in the U.S. to find a distribution channel.

Twang, whose real name is Tony O. She is a member of the hip-hop duo The Monkeys (Taipan and Tony Rotten), was initially signed to the London-based indie rap label Sound of Money in 1995. His 12-inch singles "What's Going On?"/"Everyday News." "Mr. Jam Promotional," "Queen's Head," and "Real Estate." "Homegrown" garnered critical acclaim for his articulation of the life issues of "vocal" (or young) black British community with a strong British rapping and musical style, as opposed to emulating American rhytme styles, slang, and accent like so many other British rappers. His shoestring-budget music videos also received extensive airplay on M.C. & T.I.N. London's biggest "rave" was slated for a 1996 release through Sound of Money/Alex. But was never released. "Axes out the marketing budget of the album, because it was scaling down its U.K. operations," says Olabode. "I wasn't very happy with that notion, because the return on investment for the public release of the label that was because [Aves] could spend more money on promotion than [it could]."

He was eventually let out of his contract, but instead of shopping the project elsewhere, the rapper decided to record new material and release it under his own label, Rotten Products.

"Because it had taken so long [to get out of the contract], I lost the desire to release the album," he admits. For "19," the Warner-Chappell signed artist reworked several songs from "Dettwork," including "Fearlessly," "City of Kings," and "Rage," which was previously titled "Growing Up," "Backstreet Survivor," and "Entrepreneur." The material on "19" covers a gamut of issues, from overdue bills, self-empowerment, and street survival tactics to reminiscences of youthful moments.

"The title of this new album is saying we've been doing this music for ages and that the album has been a long time coming. On the other hand, it's a hope that the fact that ['9 long time rap really came up'], Olabeode says. "The 'Live From The Big Smoke' part is me reporting live from London. I'm showing listeners, especially those outside London or England, our lifestyle, how we're living. Tracks like 'Jam Pack' and 'Red Letters' show you life in London. It's almost like taking London from London."

The first single is "Perfect Love Song," set to street in late August. Cool tempo/EMI British: R&B vocalist Lynden David Hall will remix and sing on the funky hip-hop groove, with some R&B flavor added courtesy of singer Raffa-L. "Perfect" is about "knocking the misconception of how love is meant to be—the Hollywood image of flower-planting and dining. That it's not necessarily the only possible way to express a romantic gesture," says Olabeode. No tour dates have been set, but he frequently performs at hip-hop events throughout the country. He is slated to do production work with singer/rapper Thee One, reggae rapper Gammal Kid, and R&B singer Hilary.

### Mic Kobe: Los Angeles Laker star Kobe Bryant is substituting a microphone for a basketball this summer as he enters the studio to record his debut rap album for Track Masters/Columbia.

Signed to the label as Kobe Bryant Featuring Chezaw, the group includes four other members, Steven Shields, Wyd Turks, Russell Howard, and Anthony Bannister, all childhood friends of Bryant's. The group is slated to work with Jermaine Dupri, Wyclef Jean, Nas, and Jay-Z on the album, which Steve Stoute, president of Track Masters Entertainment, says will be "real street rap with mass appeal and some R&B edge." The yet-to-be-titled project is expected to be released during next year's NBA All-Star weekend.

"We're not trying to make an NBA album," Stoute says. "Bryant takes his [rap career] very seriously. He wants music industry credibility."

### ANNUALITIES: Hip-hop dance collective the Rock Steady Crew celebrated its 21st anniversary July 23-26 with the normal weekend festivities taking place over four days in New York. The event, which has expanded from its previous weekend time frame, featured a film festival, a free outdoor concert, a pay concert, a panel discussion about the art of battling—b-boy ing and popping—and various scheduled and impromptu dance exhibitions and competitions . . . Another hip-hop veteran, DJ Red Alert, is celebrating his 15th year in the business. A party will be held in his honor in October at the Apollo Theater in New York's Harlem.

### MICROPHONE CHECK: Another producer has turned rapper as Loud Records recently inked a deal with producer/DJ Pete Rock for his solo debut, "Soul Survivor." The album will include Rich Rocks, a band consisting of Paul, Prodigy, Kool Moe Dee, and DJ Premier.

### Assistance: In preparing this column was provided by Kwaku in London and Presh in New York.
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<th>Album</th>
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Albums with the greatest sales gains this week. (Retail Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for shipment of 500,000 album units, double albums with a running time that exceeds two hours, the RIAA multiples shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. *No* indicates LP is available. Most tape prices, and CD prices for BMG and WEA labels, are suggested lists. Tape prices marked $ are discounted. CD prices marked ** are on clearance.)
Lattimore gets personal on 2nd set
(Continued from page 23)

Lattimore on the new project. Lattimore and Colin Gayle serve as executive producers on the album.

Howard Krumholz, buyer at Tower Records in Los Angeles, says Lattimore’s last album did very well and he therefore expects good things from the new set. “I anticipate it to do very well. The first one really set a fan base for him.”

In addition to target-marketing Lattimore’s audience, the label plans to generate more international interest in the vocalist. Plans for a U.S. and international tour are still being decided. “We are trying to create more of an international story and connection for him,” says Michael Mauldin, president of black music at Columbia Records.

Part of the story-building comes from creating more fans within the label. On July 16, the vocalist performed two songs, “Days Like This” and “I Love You More Than You Will Ever Know,” a cover of the Donny Hathaway song, at the Sony worldwide music meetings in Miami. “People gave him a tremendous standing ovation. It really launched him, making everyone in our company aware of the potential of this kid,” Mauldin says.

Lattimore also performed July 19 in South Africa as part of Nelson Mandela’s 80th birthday celebration.

As part of the print campaign, Guidry says, the label has plans for features and reviews in publications such as GQ, Vibe, Essence, and Heart and Soul. In addition, radio, press, and tastemakers will receive advance Digipaks that will include a 32-page booklet featuring song lyrics from the album, as well as the inspiration behind each song and photos of Lattimore in the studio.

Guidry also says the label is planning for the vocalist to appear on daytime and nighttime talk shows such as “The Magic Hour” and “The Rosie O’Donnell Show.” Other appearances will include “Soul Train” and “The Howie Mandel Show.”

Recording Academy Luncheon

The Los Angeles chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) recently hosted its membership awards luncheon, where it honored Island Records Grammy Award-winning recording artist Melissa Etheridge, Warner Bros. Records president Phil Quarataro, songwriter Diane Warren, and songwriters Marc Shaiman. The Los Angeles chapter presented the NARAS Foundation with a check for $2 million.

Socializing at the luncheon, with, from left, are LBR Entertainment VP Skip Miller, recording artist Lionel Richie, NARAS president/CEO Michael Greene, and NARAS Los Angeles chapter executive director Angela Bibbs-Sanders.

Displaying the check, from left, are producer David Foster, producer Quincy Jones, Los Angeles Mayor Richard J. Riordan, NARAS chairman Phil Ramone, and NARAS president/CEO Michael Greene.

Shown, from left, are Warner Music Group co-chairman/co-CEO Terry Semel; awards luncheon chair Bambi Moe; presenter/film director Rob Reiner; luncheon honorees Phil Quarataro, Diane Warren, Marc Shaiman, and Melissa Etheridge; NARAS president/CEO Michael Greene; presenter/actress Kathy Najimy; NARAS chairman Phil Ramone; awards luncheon chair Harriet Wasserman; NARAS’ Los Angeles chapter executive director Angela Bibbs-Sanders; producer Quincy Jones; and Los Angeles chapter president Kim Esay.

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James Ruskin EP Is Tasty ‘Prelude’ To His Debut Album

by Larry Flick

ROCKVILLE’S LOOKING AT POP SUCCESS

BY CONNIA CRISTE

NEW YORK—Rockey’s Robbins Entertain- ment debut, “What Are You Lookin’ At,” has generated widespread attention. A general release hit singles in “A Dream,” “I Fell In Love,” and the recent “Can’t We Try.”

Her success has come as a surprise. Two weeks ago, I was hanging out with my friends in a local bar in Staten Island (N.Y.),” she says. “I was ‘singing’ a little ‘Knock Me Softly’ with the DJ as a play-in. It got a lot of attention. Two weeks later, I got signed.”

Born in Port Jefferson, N.Y., and raised in Staten Island, the singer says she found a lifetime direction in music. “For a while, I didn’t know what I wanted to do. I was hanging out with the wrong type of crowd. I was experi- encing my wildness and getting it all over.”

In fact, the year before signing with Robbins, she’d gone through 11 jobs. “It’s hard for me to accept authority figures in my life,” she says with a smile. “I was barely making it, struggling big time.”

The music industry has changed all that. “Now I feel that the only direction I can go is up,” she says. “And she’s doing it quickly. Pro- duced by Adam Marano, “What Are You Lookin’ At?” took exactly a week and a day to record. She says the album—with its blend of pop- lined dance tunes, hip-hop shuf- fles, and ballads—is about “dreaming and finding love and having fun. I wanted my debut to show all the various sides of me,” Rockey says.

Among the set’s highlights are a pair of vocal collaborations with the male group Collage: a new take on the Cynthia/Johnny O. freestyle classic “Dream Boy”/“Games,” and an earlier rendition of the Dan Hill/Vonda Shepard hit “Can’t We Try.”

The latter cut is climbing the Hot 100 and has retailers saying “spin to ear from ear to ear.”

“There’s a fun energy about this single that kids love,” says Marion Croteau, manager of Rock- well’s Kitchen, an indie outlet in San Francisco. “It’s drawing a lot of ears to the album, which could have a long life with another good single like this.”

To elevate the project’s profile, Rockey is on a busy schedule of in-store appearances around the country. She’s been on and off the road for several months now and will continue to travel around the country well into the fall.

Even though Rockey enjoys prom- oting this project, she occasional- ly finds it exhausting. “I don’t have ‘plesaure everyone’ mentality difficult. “Hav- ing a bad temper, I have to bite my tongue once in a while,” she says. “But it’s a lasting experience. I promised myself that I’ll always be true to myself and never change as a person. And I haven’t yet.”

GRAMMY DANCEN: On July 6, the Chicago chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) hosted a discussion called “The Evolving Dance Music Scene” with the Knuckles, 1997’s remix of the year Grammy winner. The session drew a wide range of dance music upstarts and mainstays, and its participants outlined various steps dance remixers and producers need to take to gain greater industry respect. This discussion was just one of the many hosted by the dance music community in the coming months. Pictured, from left, are Kelly G. of WGCI Chicago; producer/DJ Ralph Rosario; Griff Morris, executive director of the Chicago NARAS chapter; Knuckles; and producer/DJ Steve “Slick” Hurley.

By N.Y.一朵花

by J.R. Remis

HAVING a brand new release, and to be one of the more exciting techno artists to come out of the U.K. for the past few months. Projects like his spanklin’ new “Prelude” EP give punctures music with rich, earthy texture and a won- derfully adventurous spirit.

Available on his own Blueprint label, the four-cut set is so relent- lessly energetic that it almost assaults the body as it blurs from a sound sys- tem. Don’t bother trying to pick a fave. Each packs a mighty punch, as Rockey tempers the requisite edgy beats and cinematic key- thanks to the ample dose of rough-hewn funk and clever loop sequencing.

Although everything clearly comes from a computer, there’s a warmth in his programming that hints at his real band mentality. It’s hard not to won- der what creative heights Rockey would reach if he took a half-step away from the sample-happy vibe of DJ culture and tried fleshing out these ideas with real instruments. As he digs into his first album, “The Further De- sign,” perhaps he’ll consider such a
**HOT DANCE MUSIC**

**CLUB PLAY**

Complied from a National Sample of Dance Club Playlists.

**MAXI-SINGLES SALES**

Complied from a National Sample of Retail Store Sales Reports (collected, compiled, and provided by Billboard Communications Inc.).

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**POWERS PICKS**

**Hot Shot**

**Hot Shot Debbie**

**NEW**

**NEW**

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**Billboard's Record Retailing Directory** is the essential tool for those who service or sell products to the record retailing community. Relied upon by the entire music and audiobook industry, Billboard's 1998 Record Retailing Directory contains over 7,000 updated listings of independent and chain record stores, chain headquarters, and audiobook retailers. Jam-packed with listings:
- store names and addresses
- phone and fax numbers
- e-mail addresses
- chain store planners and buyers
- store genre or music specialization

Please add appropriate sales tax in NY, NJ, PA, CA, TN, MA, IL, & DC. Orders payable in U.S. funds only. All sales are final.

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**Billboard**

**AUGUST 8, 1998**

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**TITLES**

**ARTISTS**

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**Prices are recommended retail prices. Prices are not available for all products.**

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**Billboard**

**AUGUST 8, 1998**
Coors Celebrates. A Tracy Lawrence-autographed guitar went for $15,000 at the recent Coors Light Sizzlin’ Country Celebrity Golf classic, which raised $74,000 to benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Shown, from left, are tourney co-chair, Jack Heard, Cynthia Fibrosis volunteer Sheri Mount, Lawrence, co-chair Janet Heard, Atlantic Nashville VP of marketing and sales Bob Heatherly, and Cynthia Fibrosis special projects director Laura Heatherly.

The Guitar That Started It All Finds A Home At The Country Music Hall Of Fame

RECIOUS MEMORIES: The instrument that made the guitar the central instrument in country music is finally resting in the Country Music Hall of Fame. Maybelle Carter’s grandson Danny Jones, who inherited Carter’s guitar from his late mother, Helen Carter Jones, says he decided to loan the guitar to the Hall because of its importance.

Country Music Foundation acting director Kyle Young says the Hall is thrilled to acquire the second installment of what he calls “the crown jewels of country music.” These are the major artifacts of our music. The Maybelle Carter guitar is arguably the most important artifact related to music. People here are describing it as the “Holy Grail” or “the ark of the covenant.” It’s important as a beautiful instrument on its own, but its role in changing and shaping country music is immeasurable.

Randy Scruggs, who was taught to play on that guitar by Maybelle Carter when she baby-sat him, has played it more than anyone but her; he and it are on both “Will The Circle Be Unbroken” albums, for example. “I feel the magic of the Carter Family was in that guitar and in Maybelle’s playing,” says Scruggs. “It’s an exquisitely simple yet beautiful instrument.”

Young says he thinks Carter paid between $250 and $800 for the L5 Deluxe Gibson archtop in 1927, probably from a mail-order catalog. Although Danny Jones says the guitar is insured for a million dollars, its worth is, as he says, “incalculable.” Ironically, he says, the guitar was almost lost to history in the 1930s when the Carters were in San Antonio recording transcriptions for the Mexican border radio station XERA. Maybelle loaned it to another singer, says Jones, who promptly lost it in a poker game to an airmann stationed in San Antonio. “They had to get the base commander to intervene,” he says, “but it got back.”

By Chet Flippo

NASHVILLE—Heather Myles is the first female honky-tonk singer to hit Nashville since—when? It’s been so long that nobody remembers anymore.

Myles certainly cuts an impressive profile. At a recent Nashville showcase at the Exit Inn, when the night’s condition blew out on a 98-degree evening—she was hotter than the temperature. Stripped down to jeans, a tank top, and a cowboy hat, Myles sizzled with her urgent, original, and earthy songs.

WZZK Birmingham, Ala., music director Scott Stewart says, “If you’re a fan of real country, she’s the real deal. She is definitely the real thing.”

She’s also the first artist to benefit from the new distribution/promotion agreement between Mercury Nashville and Rounder Records, to which she is signed and which will release her label debut, “Highways And Honky Tonks,” Sept. 11. She wrote 11 of the album’s 12 songs with Merle Haggard on “No One Is Gonna Love You Better.” And how did she get Haggard on the album? “I asked him,” says the Southern Californian who was originally planned to be a jockey and still rides.

Myles recorded two albums in the early ’90s for HighTone, but Rounder started releasing them in Europe on Daemnon Records and came to the attention of Rounder founder Ken Irwin. After touring in Europe, Myles had bought a flat in London and planned to stay. “Traditional country music is really received well over there,” she says. “I mortgaged my house in order to pay for the label head to take my band to Europe.”

She still played some dates in the U.S., she says, but “quit playing the honky-tonk scene on a nightly basis.” She started getting some Lee Greenwood dates, Charlie Daniels dates, and then I started getting some Merle Haggard dates. I thought, ‘Do I really want to live in London? No, I cannot believe that my kind of music is not appealing to the masses (in the U.S.). I have to believe in my heart that there are people out there who appreciate my kind of music.”

That’s what Rounder and Merle Haggard VP of promotion Brad Paul says, “Ken had met her and let her know that if she were ever interested, to get in touch.” He called her, she called and said she was ready.

Although Myles is not a typical Rounder folk-oriented artist, Paul says that her roots orientation makes her and the label a perfect match.

(Continued on page 33)

Capitol’s John Berry Tries New Recipes On ‘Better Than A Biscuit’

By Jim Bessman

NEW YORK—John Berry’s latest album, “Better Than A Biscuit,” begins not from songs that broadband Berry’s stylistic range but also from the fact that the bulk of it was recorded by his six-piece road band.

“People react in different ways,” says Berry, “and I wanted to put out a record that was more me. How better to do that than with the people I play with every night? They know what I want out of a song, and there’s such a camaraderie. And it’s a whole different thing to play live now, because we’ve got a different sound and we’re having a jam with the musicians that are on the record.”

For Berry, then, “Better Than A Biscuit” is more like “Saddle The Wind,” a 1990 title that was one of six albums he released himself prior to his self-titled 1993 Capitol debut. “It cut it with my old band when I was playing clubs in Athens Ga.,” he says. “We cut it in Nashville live over three days. It cost $7,000, and people say it’s one of the coolest records.”

Springsteen’s ‘Thunder Road,’ Neil Young’s ‘Harvest,’ Dire Straits’ ‘Brothers In Arms’—these aren’t slick records, technically,” says Berry, “but there’s something about them that’s really, really cool, which is a guy and his band cutting a record.”

After deciding to use his own musicians (augmented by Bennet Tench on piano), Berry looked for a producer “with a different attitude and feel about things.” He settled on the team of John Hiatt and Hiatt bassist Dave Faragher, who produced most of “Better Than A Biscuit.” Longtime Berry session player Billy Joe Walker Jr. also had a hand in production, as did Chuck Howard, who produced the album’s first single, “Over My Shoulder.”

That single jibed well with “people with expectations,” says Berry. “It’s a love ballad,” notes Capitol Nashville president/CEO Pat Quigley, pointing to consumer research findings regarding Berry as the “best voice in country music, but his songs aren’t really memorable enough. So we sought music that really shocked. That was a big unexpected music from John Berry.”

The title track and current single proves a good case in point. “You’re in your car and stop at a red light, and people inevitably ask what station you’re on, because it’s fun and upbeat,” says Quigley. “But the key thing is that people say, ‘John Berry? I didn’t know he had a sense of humor.’ And that’s the key point: His voice is so tremendous he can go anywhere he wants musically, but we need to find a way that people can identify with. They need to know that it’s ‘Biscuit’ and John Berry—and this label has failed him in the past by not giving him the opportunity to be versatile.”

The strategy is apparently paying off. “I first heard it when I ran into John late at night at the Radio Seminar, and he took me to the car to hear a rough mix,” says Doug Montgomery, PD/Operations director.
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<th>TITLE</th>
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<tr>
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<td>BRADLEY SHELTON</td>
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<td>BIG TIME</td>
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<td>GONNA HAVE TO FALL</td>
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<td>TIME FOR LETTING GO</td>
<td>BILL RAY CURRY</td>
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<td>BETTER THAN A BISCUIT</td>
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RounDER GOES THE DISTANCE FOR MYLES
(Continued from page 4)

“She has a real rootsy sound, very much in the Rounder tradition. We’re grounded in roots music, whether it’s blues, folk music or any other genre. We pride ourselves on our artists having artistic control.” Paul notes, “and Ken told her pretty much to do whatever she wants.” Rounder had a first look at Rounding January with a D.A T album that was mastered, but was mostly mixed, and we sat down and played it and said how just about the song. It was great. Before the day was over, I had her booked into a showcase. We were really fired up.”

Rounder’s marketing campaign, Paul says, has two goals in mind. “We’re going after the grass-roots following she has already, based on her touring and the two HighTone records. That audience is the sort of music-intensive fans who follow hip trends and listen to eclectic radio and read eclectic music magazines. We’ll do all we can to get her music to fans and make them aware of the project. We’ll do direct consumer mailings, with her fan base list, and she’s well-connected with Dwight Yoakam’s people, so they’re graciously sharing their fan-base list. They’re also helping us to spread the word through our own mail-order database list.”

He adds, “We’ll be advertising in publications like No Depression, American Songwriter, and Dirty Linen. We’re working the record to alternative country stations and public, college and community stations. That will help to expose her to a more mainstream country audience, we’re heavily courting mainstream country radio. Heather has been on a national radio promotion tour since June, [in August] she’ll be up and down the West Coast, starting in Bakersfield, [Calif.] and working up through Oregon and Washington.”

Grady, senior VP of sales, marketing, and promotion for Mercury says, that Myles will be worked like any Mercury country artist. “We’re very excited to be working with them and with Twain and Heather Myles, which I think is a wonderful situation. This will give Rounder more extensive distribution from a major distribution company and gives us another A&R source. This also brings the Rounder name back into the Mercury system and brings their new acts to us.”

In terms of promotion, Grady says, “we’ve prepared our marketing plan, and we’re helping them implement it through [PolyGram Group Distribution]. This is a bit different from what we’ve been doing, but we think we can get some bite on it. Depending on what radio says they want this week, it’s leaving a little more traditional and basic away from the AC side of life. Formula-wise, this record should fit. Sort of Dwight Yoakam in female clothes.”

Her songs are primarily written by Mel Forre and backed up by APA. Her songs are published by Myles O’Melody (BMI).

CAPITOL’S JOHN BERRY TRIES NEW RECIPES ON “BETTER THAN A BISCUIT”
(Continued from page 4)

at WBCR Grand Rapids, Mich., a major Berry stronghold. “It’s 2 o’clock in the morning and I’m tired—and am I really hearing John Berry? It’s nothing I expected to hear from him in a million years, with the infectious groove and harmonica in it. I thought an alien had taken over his body. We had a strong advance copy and got calls immediately, since it was such a radical departure.”

Many artists tend to repeat themselves musically, Quigley notes. “But John Berry again, there was a completely new approach on his last album [1996’s “Facies”]. But we want to take risks on John Berry. We want his fans to get more than just the most powerful voice in Nashville.”

That’s why song selection on “Better Than A Biscuit,” to be released Sept. 20, is a two-stage process, adds Quigley. He says the title track, “which people love or hate, to tell the truth . . . frees him up to go where he wants to go. It’s a risk most people won’t take with a big voice like John’s; most people would have chosen a more radio-friendly song.”

Other album tracks that point to new directions include “We Can’t Unmake Love,” a duet with Wynonna, and “I Don’t Know,” which uses a 64-piece orchestra and is the likely next single, says Quigley. “It may be a bigger song,” he adds, “but we needed to do something new on John Berry.”

A side benefit of the current single is that because it’s upbeat, it’s more often played on the radio, and that has increased the fan-base, says Quigley. He notes that Copeland, who is also Sting’s manager, is particularly connected in this area.

The “I’m sure they’ll be advertising the album prior to the album release and is looking ahead to extensive holiday promotions. ‘We’ll use the TV to introduce her to a new audience and then use radio to tell price and retail availability’ says Quigley. The label will use the “back-announcing” commercial format, in which local radio personalities will announce the album’s retail availability after playing a Berry song, as well as play Berry’s own taped identification of the song and the new album.

That Berry is “alive and well” is a reference to his successful recuperation from throat surgery last November, which was necessary due to over work.

“I’m the James Brown of country music, and I worked too many last summer,” says Berry. “In August, I had shows virtually every night. And in September, the shows a day—and every day off I’d fly to Nashville to work on the album. Then I was doing stores and fan club parties, radio and TV, national magazine shows, and I got hoarse and wasn’t recovering.”

But the Creative Artists Agency—owns the past—are the “red dust” tour of summer festivals and fairs, as well as looking forward to using his new manager’s overseas connections in furthering his career internationally.
### Top Country Albums

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

![Billboard Logo](https://i.imgur.com/5JQ3Q5G.png)

**August 8, 1998**

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<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weeks</strong></th>
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<td>JOHNNY CASH</td>
<td><strong>American II: Unchained</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
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<td>CLAY BOWMAN</td>
<td><strong>How Am I Gonna Know</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>GEORGE JONES</td>
<td><em><em>Screaming Children</em> (Vol. 1)</em>*</td>
<td><strong>262</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>LEANNE RIMES</td>
<td><strong>A Night Like This</strong></td>
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<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
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*marked with the greatest sales for this week.

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### Top Country Tracks

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

![Billboard Logo](https://i.imgur.com/5JQ3Q5G.png)

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<td><strong>With This Heart</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>TIM McGRAW</td>
<td><strong>If I Can Feel It</strong></td>
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<td>GLEN CAMPBELL</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>LUKE BRYAN</td>
<td><strong>Someone Else Calling</strong></td>
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Memphis

W

Memphis producer and musician Jim Dickinson can't help but get philosophical when describing his town.

"It's a spirit, and it comes and goes," he says. "Those periods of florescence... Memphians can feel it, musicians can feel it. I don't mean to be too mystical, but it is spiritual!" He stops and tries again.

"It's been my life. I don't know what it means. It's still a huge Chintatown. It's still a mystery."

The elusive spirit that Dickinson refers to can be heard in a century's worth of musical innovation to come out of Memphis, Tenn., a Southern city that continues to play by its own rules.

Memphis, incorporated in 1826, sits on the Mississippi River, just north of the cradle of the blues — and today, the cradle of casinos — that is the Mississippi Delta. The city, with a metropolitan population of approximately 1 million, is a national distribution center with its fair share of mavericks outside the music world: the first successful motel chain, Holiday Inn, and the first self-serve grocery store, Piggly Wiggly, both started there.

What Memphis can really claim as its own is the distribution of culture.

MULTI-CULTI ON THE MISSISSIPPI

W.C. Handy, the Father of the Blues, conjured the Memphis spirit by injecting and disseminating blues music from the city's Beale Street at the turn of the century. In the 20s and 30s came the jug bands, whose eclectic repertory of vaudeville, ragtime, country and blues tunes was arguably the first example of multiculturalism. Despite its track record of racial disharmony, Memphis has always been integrated musically, and the jug bands — Cannon's Jug Stompers, the Memphis Jug Band, plus Beale bluesmen (and women) like Furry Lewis, Bukka White and Memphis Minnie — showed the way.

The spiritual lineage extended in the '50s to Sam Phillips and his Memphis Recording Service, short-ly thereafter dubbed Sun. A host of bluesmen, including B.B. King, Ike Turner, Howlin' Wolf and Junior Parker (who with Memphian Bobby Bland became the cornerstones of the Houston-based Duke label), made seminal sides in the white-tiled recording room at 706 Union. But it was a gawky teen with a heavily voice and devilish hips, Elvis Presley, who made Sun famous and changed the tastes of a nation by giving birth to rock 'n' roll. Presley's rockabilly peers at Sun — Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash, Roy Orbison — were equally talented, though they weren't the only hot cats in town. The Rock 'n' Roll Trio, with its wild frontman Johnny Burnette, and Charlie Feathers were also busy getting dixie-fried.

'60s SHIFTING INTO SOUL

In the '60s, the spirit shifted to R&B and Stax Records. Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, Carla and Rufus Thomas, Booker T. & The MGs, Isaac Hayes and dozens more created a Southern blueprint of soul that gave the black struggle a face and a sound. At the same time, ex-Memphian Aretha Franklin was burning up the charts, Memphis sax player Hank Crawford was leading Ray Charles' band, local label Goldwax found a classic in James Carr's "Dark End Of The Street," and Chips Moman made a hit factory of his American Sound Studio, where Dusty Springfield, the Box Tops and Presley all cut lasting music. Once the 70s rolled in, Al Green was there to tempt you with "I-O-V-E," as were his fellow Hi artists Ann Peebles, Otis Clay and Syl Johnson. Oddly, Stax saw its most unlikely '70s act, Alex Chilton's post-Box Tops band Big Star, become a major influence on alternative rock decades later.

Through it all, Memphis has never had a shortage of gospel or jazz. Memphian W. Herbert Brewster penned "Move On Up A Little Higher," which became the biggest selling gospel song of its day when Mahalia Jackson recorded it in 1948. The city's jazz giants have include '30s and '40s bandleader Jimmy Lunceford, Louis Armstrong's piano-playing wife Lil Harden and bebop genius Phineas Newborn, Jr.

RAP 'N' RENAISSANCE

Though it's been in hiding in recent years, the Memphis spirit continues today. There may not be much industry pull, but Memphis remains home to some of the most innovative, freshest sounds in popular music.

"Memphis is primed for another run in the limelight," says Jon Hornyk, executive director of the Memphis chapter of the National Academy Of Recording Arts & Sciences and a board member of the recently appointed Memphis and Shelby County Music Commission. "The city is promoting music like never before. There's still a lot of great talent here, and there's some things that are starting to break through, like the rap scene and the Christian rock scene. I sense there's a positive atmosphere about Memphian music and trying to take it to the millennium." Rap, especially the gangsta variety, has been one of the biggest, yet most underground, local scenes of the '90s. Suave House artists Eighball & MGJ were Memphian rappers before they relocated to Houston.

Other important rappers include Skaface Al Kapone, Kingpin Skinny Pimp, Gangsta Pat and "Chinese Checkers" artist Louis Lane, produced by Bar-Kays' bassist James Alexander.

Relativity has signed several Memphis rappers, including Indo G and DJ Squeeky. Their biggest success so far has come from Three 6 Mafia, whose major-label debut, "Chpt. 2: World Domination," just went gold. "Rap is blowing up here," says producer/engineer Steven Moller of Cotton Row Studio, where Three 6 Mafia makes its records. "We're starting to attract outside business because of rap," he says. "For now, it is the industry." Johnny Phillips, co-owner of the South's largest record distributor, Memphis-based Select-O-Hits, agrees and says that his business, partnered with the Jackson, Miss. label Malaco, has doubled in the past two years, mostly because of rap. The breakthrough record that got Three 6 Mafia its deal, "The End," was Select-O-Hits product as was the first album by Memphis rapper Young Lo, now signed to Def Jam.

"It's phenomenal," says Phillips.

Continued on page 36
due to the successes of Sun Studio, Stax Records, Elvis Presley and B.B. King, most people think they have a pretty good idea of what Memphis music sounds like.

But the Memphis sound of today is much too diverse to be lumped in with those names from the past. Today, strains of industrial, Latin, bluegrass, country, metal, rap, folk and alternative can be heard amid the din of rock, soul and blues coming from Beale Street. As bands playing those styles continue to make their marks on the national music scene, it's becoming apparent that Memphis, a city with an already rich musical heritage, will need to clear off a little more room on the mantel for the youngins.

The Pawtuckets
Like every place else, Memphis bands have been turning to the honesy sound of country music for inspiration lately. The results, however, have been surprisingly non-derivative, as the locals have found a way to put a Memphis twist on the alternative-country movement.

The Pawtuckets, for instance, have been described as the combination of Waylon Jennings and the Allman Brothers, but their supple grooves and use of electric piano on several tunes give the group a more soulful quality that couldn't have been created anywhere else.

Formed three years ago, the Pawtuckets are fronted by co-lead singers and songwriters Mark McKinney and Andy Grooms, whose different songwriting styles give the group a surprising tension. The dual-songwriter approach also forces each vocalist to produce his best work; the evidence of same may be heard on their first CD, "Cloud Nine Ranch," a 1996 album loaded with strong melodies and clever lyrics. Since then, the Pawtuckets have built a solid fan base through regular bar gigs and this summer are planning to release their second CD, co-mixed with producer Paul Ebersold (Screamin' Cheetah Wheelies, Sister Hazel).

Skillet
Gospel has always been an important part of the Memphis musical equation. Elvis won his only Grammys in this genre and the soul of Stax and Hi Records, was, of course, deeply rooted in the stuff. But Memphis Skillet represents a new breed of gospel shouts; Sandi Patti it ain't. This power trio rocks hard, with deep roots in electronic and industrial music, but they also know how to hat an irresistible pop hook. Band members John Cooper, Ken Steorts, and Trey McClurkin were all veterans of Memphis' underground-but-growing Christian scene when the three joined up last year. The new group was quickly signed to the locally based Ardent Forefront label, a part of Memphis' Ardent Studios and a strong force in the contemporary Christian market, with artists such as dc Talk and Big Tent Revival on its roster. Skillet's debut disc, "Hey You, I Love Your Soul," was released this spring. With many reviewers comparing the band to Nine Inch Nails and Stabbing Westward, already many are picking the group to follow in the steps of Jar Of Clay as the next big Christian act to cross over onto the secular charts.

The North Mississippi All-Stars
Locally, the leading proponents of hill-country blues have been the North Mississippi All-Stars. The trio is characterized by a deep respect for its roots, excellent songwriting and thick, irresistible grooves. Brothers Luther (guitar, vocals) and Cody Dickinson (drums), themselves North Mississippi natives, come by their funky feel naturally; they are the sons of long-time musical maverick Jim Dickinson, who occasionally sits in with the All-Stars on keyboards. The Dicksons had been knocking around the Memphis music scene for years in various alternative-rock outfits before finding their niche. Roundout the All-Stars core trio is bassist Chris Chew, a church-trained player who brings a lot of charisma to the stage along with a sweet, soulful voice. The All-Stars recording output has so far been limited to a group-produced tape—a tribute to bluesman Mississippi Fred McDowell featuring former vocalist Kelley Hunt—and, earlier this year, a Caroline Records single featuring covers of Howlin' Wolf and Little Walter. A full-length CD is reportedly in the works.

WORLD BOOGIE
Continued from page 35

...who is coincidentally Sam Phillips' nephew. “75% of what is solicited to me now is rap, not just as a distributor, but as a label and as a manufacturer.” Select-O-Hits, which distributes more than 1,000 rap releases a year, owns six labels and handles 20 more. “And all but about five of those are rap labels,” says Phillips.

Rock is healthy in Memphis as well. Garrison Starr released his debut, "Eighteen Over Me," on Gelfen this year, Todd Snider's third MCA album, "Viva Satellite," is out and RCA teen-pop sensation 'N Sync has a Memphisian among its ranks, Justin Timberlake. Other acts to watch are Sub Pop band the Grifters and its offshoot group Those Bastard Souls, the North Mississippi All-Stars, who are making electrified world-boogie from Mississippi Fred McDowell's legacy, funkmeisters Big Ass Truck, insurgent country band the Pawtuckets, and Lorette Velveteen, a gal with a thing for country-blues slide guitar and glam rock who also brings her vision to the New York band the Kropotkins.

THAT QUIXOTIC 'THANG'
And just when you think you've pegged the Memphis "thang," the hottest act of the moment is about as far removed from the blues as Nine Inch Nails. In fact, the group, Skillet, could be Nine Inch Nails were the trio not Christians. Skillet's new album of frozen industrial rock, "Hey You, I Love Your Soul," is on Ardent Records, the Christian rock label operated...
38 YEARS OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTION

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE
"THE HEART OF ROCK N' ROLL
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1981 FLETCHER CREEK DRIVE, MEMPHIS, TN  38133  (901) 388-1190
VITAL STATISTICS
A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE CITY

MEMPHIS

THE SOUNDS OF THE CITIES

ARENAS

MID-SOUTH COLISEUM, 906 Early Maxwell; cap. 12,000. The city's oldest arena has found new life recently as a popular mid-size venue, hosting artists such as James Taylor and Celine Dion as well as a minor-league hockey team and an annual rodeo.

MUD ISLAND AMPHITHEATER, 125 North Front Street; cap. 5,334. In- timate, completely outdoor amphitheater boasts a Mississippi view and an active summer-concert schedule.

VENUES

THE PYRAMID, 1 Auction Avenue; cap. 20,000. Home to the University of Memphis' men's basketball team and a stopover for the likes of Eric Clapton, Elton John and Garth Brooks, who recently sold out three shows there.

THEATERS

GERMANTOWN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, 1801 Exeter Road; cap. 800. Located in a Memphis suburb, this theater is touted as "acoustically perfect" and programs annual classical (Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman) and pop (David Grisman, Ladysmith Black Mambazo) concert series.

THE NEW DAISY THEATER, 330 Beale Street; cap. 800. Popular stop for most up-and-coming national acts (Sister Hazel, Dixie Chicks) as well as jazz artists (Joe Sample, Jonathon Butler).

CLUBS

BARRISTER'S, 147 Jefferson. Hidden in a downtown alley, this club is the epitome of an alternative club. Jeff Buckley was a regular Monday-night performer before his accidental death in 1997. Guided By Voices and Sonic Youth have also played here.

B.B. KING'S, 147 Beale Street. Los Lobos, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown and Jerry Lee Lewis have graced this stage, but the biggest draw is still King himself, who plays his namesake club four times a year.

BLACK DIAMOND, 153 Beale Street. A great small club that book both bands and acoustic acts. A monthly songwriters' night draws the likes of David Allen (Cord and Rodney Crowell), and "Original Center for Southern Folklore," 299 Beale Street. As much a coffeehouse and gift shop as a club, the century-old building is the most "down home" thing on Beale with live jazz, acoustic blues and gospel.

ELVIS PRESLEY'S MEMPHIS, 126 Beale Street. Jewel and Los Lobos helped open this club, located in what was once a downtown clothing store where the king shopped, but rockabilly and rock are the staples.

HARD ROCK CAFE, 315 Beale Street. The only restaurant in the chain to feature live music regularly. Books the biggest bands as well as up-and-coming national acts.

NENLY'S, 539 Highland. Located near the University of Mem- phis, this is the college bar, a small stage on the restaurant side and a large theater-type room that hosts bands such as Whiskeytown and Junior Brown. Epicenter of the local alternative-country scene, but delves into just about all quar- ters of college music.

SIX-1-6IX, 616 Marshall. Three clubs in one: a pool hall, a disco and a live-music room that has packed "em in for the likes of Fishbone, the Lemonheads, and Public Enemy.

YOUNG AVENUE BELL, 2119 Young Avenue. Loud and raucous beer hall that brings in the hippest new bands (Superchunk, Helium) along with some blues and rockabilly favorites (R.L. Burnside, Ronnie Dawson, Mojo Nixon).

CLASSIC-ROCK MAINSTAY WEEK (FM 107.5), 99.7. The three most dominant urban stations are WDBA (AM 1570), a contemporary R&B station that features some blues and is one of the city's oldest (and the country's first African-American-owned) stations; contemporary R&B station KAMS (FM 101.1); and WRHR (FM 97.1), the latter incorporating more hip hop and rap. KANG (FM 101.1) has found its niche playing rap, including gangsta and local artists. And the recently launched WRRK (FM 102.5) has adopted the format of WJCI (AM 680) by playing solid-gold soul. Gospel has a strong position on the AM dial led by KBGA, a favorite WDIA (AM 1340) and WAKS (AM 1380). Contemporary Christian music can be heard on KUSU (AM 1240) and WXER (FM 95.3). Country has also made recent inroads with local listeners with WOCT (FM 94.1) and WKX (FM 155.5). Other strong spots are the Community station WEVL (FM 89.9) in the area's most diverse, with volunteer programmers playing blues, jazz, contemporary rock, and world music.

WYNO (FM 91.3) is the city's public-radio station and also features classical music. The University of Memphis' station, WUNR (FM 91.7), has an all-jazz format. WIXO (FM 95.7) signed on a few years ago, giving the city a much-needed outlet for college and modern rock.

ECO RECORDS, 5942 Hel- ene Cove. Southern-style R&B and soul label whose roster includes former Stax artists Rufus Thomas and Otis Night- ingale.

ICEHOUSE, 1981 Fletcher Creek Road (Bartlett). Local radio.

INSIDE SOUNDS, 11229 Green Drive. Small indie operation best-known for its historical blues reissues.

LOVELY RECORDS, 901-834-2698. One-man indie-rock operation whose most recent compilation earned a four-star review in Rolling Stone.

SHANGRI-LA, SUGAR DITCH, RESORT THEORY, TRI-LATERAL GANG THEORY; 1916 Madison. Also a popular independent record store, Shangri-La the label is best known for launching cult favorites the Grifters but has also issued singles for the Strapping Fieldhands and the Kelley Deal 6000. The associated labels were started by Shangri-La employees.

ARDENT, 2000 Madison. State-of-the-art facility with three record- ing studios. Has hosted just about everyone, including Bob Dylan, the Replacements, R.E.M., ZZ Top and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

COTTON ROW RECORDING, 1503 Madison, 24-track digital recording studio used by Albert Collins, Green records is still operating.

EASLEY RECORDING indie-rock favorite made famous by local cult band the Grifters and made leg- endary by Sonic Youth, Jon Spencer, Pavement and Guided By Voices.

HOUSE OF BLUES, 904 Raynor. Formerly Kiva Recording, this fully equipped studio has three rooms and is decorated in the same folk-art style as the famous club chain it is affiliated with. Stevie Ray Vaughan, Collective Soul and Matchbox 20 have had hit tracks here.

PHILLIPS RECORDING SERVICE, 639 Madison. In the 70's, Sam Phillips moved out of the original Sun Studio and built this modern facility just a few blocks away. Still in operation, Phillips' sound can be heard here.

ROYAL RECORDING, 1320 Lauderdale. The place where Willie Mitchell recorded all those classic Al Green records is still operating, with Mitchell himself frequently...

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BILLBOARD SPOTLIGHT
behind the board. Besides the entire Hi Records roster, recent clients have included the Young Fresh Fellows and Dub Narcotic Sound System.

SOUND UNREEL, 1902 Nelson. Fully-equipped 24-track studio popular with local bands.

SUN STUDIO, 706 Union. Though tiny compared to most modern facilities, the place where Elvis laid down his first tracks is still a working recording studio whose clients have included L. B. Rock and some guys named Lewis, Cash, Perkins, Orbison and Presley.

AUDIOMANIA, 1698 Madison. Lots of LPs and lots of jazz.

BORDERS, BLOCKBUSTER, CAMELOT, SAM GOODY. These national chains all have stores in the area.

BOSS UGLY BOB'S RECORDS, two locations. Local tradition. Great place to pick up local rap and R&B recordings.

CAT'S CBS AND CASSETTES, six locations in the Memphis area. Regional chain is good about carrying local product.

LAST CHANCE RECORDS, 794 Cooper. New and used CDs, records and cassettes.

MEMPHIS MUSIC RECORDS, TAPES, AND SOUVENIRS, 149 Beale. Tourist spot with one of the best blues collections in town.

POP TUNES, seven locations in the Memphis area. Family-owned and operated for more than 50 years. The downtown store was where a young Elvis bought his records.

RIVER RECORDS, 822 South Highland. Thousands of used and discounted records and CDs near the university.

SHANGRI-LA, 1916 Madison. Also home of the record label, this independent store is located in a restored house in Midtown. Probably the most extensive collection of local material around. Also lots of underground and indie stuff. Good alternative-press rack.

The Commercial Appeal, 495 Union. The daily covers both national and local music with features and reviews. The Friday Playbook is its weekly entertainment guide.

The Memphis Flyer, 460 Tennessee Street. The city's weekly regularly features reviews, club listings, critic's live picks, and features on local and touring artists.

Dateline, 3340 Poplar. Though currently published bi-weekly, this newcomer is mining the same territory established by the older Flyer; an alternative to the alternative.

BluesSpeak, 25 Linden. Though its name suggests that this monthly is exclusively dedicated to the blues, some local artists outside of that genre find coverage within its pages.
WORLD BOOGIE
Continued from page 36

out of its famous namesake studio.

"We wanted to do records for the Christian marketplace that were competitive in the general marketplace; we quietly went about our business, and here we are," says president Pat Slohes. Ardent Records has live acts, including Grammys nominee Big Tent Revival. The label is marketed and distributed by ForeFront, itself co-founded by a Memphis, Eddie DeGarmo of the 7th Christian act DeGarmo and Key.

Memphis is still about tradition, and many of its artists continue to play blues, R&B, gospel and jazz. Rounnder Records' imprint, Bulls-eye, is home to notable Memphians Ann Peebles, Otis Clay, Little Jimmy King and Preston Shannon. The Sweetish label has recently put out albums by Rock 'N Roll Trio guitarist Paul Burlison and Presley's old bandmates Scotty Moore and D.J. Fontana.

Headlining Malaco's roster are Bobby Bland and Sax singers Johnnie Taylor and Shirley Brown. Saxophonist Kirk Whalum is on Warner Bros., while gospel choir O'Landia Draper & The Associates have rocked the house for Warner Alliance. Another choir, Pamela Armour & the Memphis Shop, is on Intersound. Then there's Curlew bandleader George Cartwright, who's making experimental jazz on Conform Records.

Studio owner Doug Easley thinks a lack of industry presence attracts out-of-town groups when it comes time to record. "There's so little hype, you get to go do your thing and nobody bugs you," he says.

THEY WANNA GO TO GRACELAND

Tourism is a big part of the Memphis music experience. Beale Street and Sun Studio are major draws, as is Presley's home, Graceland, which, during Elvis Presley International Tribute Week (a.k.a., Dead Elvis Week), attracts thousands of fans. Annual music-related events are the W.C. Handy Blues Awards, the Beale Street Music Festival, the unsigned band showcase Crossroads, blues showcase Bealestock, the Memphis Music & Heritage Festival, the International Blues Talent Competition and the Premier Player Awards (i.e., the local Grammys), which opened this year with Ann Peebles and closed with the Staple Singers.

So what underlies the spirit that binds Memphis to a never-ending flow of music? In some ways, it's the same thing that makes the city one of the poorest in America with a per capita income (as of 1990) around $11,000. This ineluctable quality may also make Memphis one of the leading havens for violent crime and murder (a leftover from its outlaw river-town days).

And it seeps into the overall slow pace at which life proceeds in the humid ambience of a steamy Delta day. "The aspect of freedom," says Jim Dickinson. "That's what it symbolizes to the rest of the world. All you've got to do is go somewhere else and find that out. If I have faith in anything, it's the sanctity of the individual spirit. And Memphis music celebrates that like nothing else I know of."
Lyricist Zippel Covers Many Bases

Writer’s Work Spans Broadway, Cabaret, And Hollywood

BY IRV LICHTMAN

NEW YORK—If he’s not quite a household name as a lyricist—even some greats of the past are having a tough time these days meeting that criterion—David Zippel can blame his output over the last eight years.

His role as lyricist with composer Cy Coleman in the innovative “City Of Angles”—the Broadway musical, that is—propelled Zippel to new heights, not the least of which were his contributions to two recent Disney animated features: last year’s “Hercules,” with composer Alan Menken, and this year’s “Mulan,” with melodies by Matthew Wilder.

Adding to his Tony Award for “City Of Angles,” Zippel got an Oscar nomination for “Go The Distance” from “Hercules.” Michael Bolton’s version of the song peaked at No. 24 on the Hot 100 Singles chart, while a second song from the film, “Shooting Star,” was a big hit in the U.K. for Boyzone.

Working with Wilder on the five-song “Mulan” score, Zippel had the advantage of writing with rock music credits, including the song “Tragic Kingdom” for No Doubt, whose 1995 album of the same name had seven million units, according to SoundScan.

With established Broadway and Hollywood credentials, Zippel is working with Coleman on a live-action Disney production, the concept of which he says is “not at liberty to reveal.” Zippel’s lyrics already reach millions of TV viewers weekly, with the theme song to Kirstie Alley’s show “Vernonica’s Closet.”

Prior to his Broadway debut, Zippel was lauded for several cabaret/concert acts, including Barbara Cook, for whom Zippel and her musical director Wally Harper wrote what has become her signature song, “It’s Better With A Band.” Zippel plans to be back on Broadway within a season or so with yet another collaboration with Coleman, an Andrew Lloyd Weber-produced version of “A Star Is Born,” which in its musical form has already made a historic mark with film versions by Judy Garland and Barbra Streisand. “We’ve spotted all the songs, and we’ve started writing some,” Zippel says, “Larry Gelbart [the librettist on “City Of Angles”] is way ahead of us on the book.”

After “Angels,” Zippel’s next major show; a 1983 musical of Neil Simon’s “The Goodbye Girl,” had a disappointing run, although his collaborator was Marvin Hamlisch. Simon himself fashioned the show’s book.

Zippel, whose publishing firm In Your Face is managed by Warner/Chappell Music, says he’s lucky to be able to move from one musical form to another. “It lets me discover other sides of myself,” he says. Recognizing that theatrical songs have been a part of the Disney landscape since Alan Menken and Howard Ashman wrote their score for “The Little Mermaid,” Zippel realizes there is now a lot in common with both the Broadway and Disney worlds.

“The creative team must understand how to keep the moment musicalized with songs that further the plot’

So far, he and others admit, the success of animated musicals with theater sensibilities has yet to translate into a comeback for the live-action side of things. “We’ve lost One Like You.” The tune originally appeared as an instrumental theme by Jerry Goldsmith for the film “Powder.”

Over the years, Zippel’s lyrics have been recorded by Cleo Laine, Mel Tormé, Elaine Paige, Jeffery Osborne, and Nancy LaMott, among others. Although he is a graduate of Harvard Law School, Zippel does not practice law. From the annals of songwriting, Zippel recalls another songwriter of note who gave up law for the craft. He was Arthur Schwartz, the Songwriters’ Hall of Fame member who wrote the melodies of such favorites as “Dancing In The Dark,” “That’s Entertainment,” and “You and The Night And The Music.”

Singers & Songwriters

“YOU’D THINK HE’D KNOW ME BETTER”

Written by Bobbie Crony/Performed by Eunice Murray 

Great songs are a particularly prized commodity on the American music scene. Quite often a newcomer will release a tune that struggles on the charts and then gets a second chance at success on an established artist’s project. Such is the case with “You’d Think He’d Know Me Better.” The song was written and originally recorded by Bobbie Crony during her tenure at MCA. It debuted on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart at No. 49 on March 8, 1980, and peaked at No. 16 March 30. Lorrie Morgan covered the song on her current album, “Shakin’ Things Up,” and RCA has released it as her new single.

“I first heard it by Bobbie Crony and thought it was a smash hit, but it didn’t do well for her,” says Lorrie Morgan. “When we get ready to record this album, I think it was my ex-manager, Susan [Nadler], who played it for me one night at her house.

“She said, ‘Do you remember this song?’ I said, ‘Of course.’ She said, ‘You need to think about recording it.’ I said, ‘I could never match Bobbie’s performance on this.’ She did the typical ‘Oh yes you can.’

“We presented it to Joe Galante at RCA, and he loved it. So I said, ‘I’m willing to try anything.’ I just loved the song. I thought it was beautifully written and well-performed on her part. I just think it’s a great song that a lot of people can relate to.”

“The song is about a breakup and moving on; you understand that he’s the one who moved on, but you don’t know how to react to it. If you can find out you’re not knowing the other person that well, either. I think that’s something people in a lot of marriages can relate to.”

Print On PRINT: The following are the best-selling folios at Warner Bros. Publications:

1. “City Of Angels,” soundtrack
3. Celine Dion, “Let’s Talk About Love.”
5. Shania Twain, “Come On Over.”

New Copyright Society Prep Plans Educational, Online Initiatives

Better be aware: Michael Pollack, senior VP/general counsel at Elektra Entertainment Corp., will guide the Copyright Society of the U.S.A. into the new millennium as president for a two-year term, in the position that, he says, couldn’t come at a more challenging time for a greater public understanding of copyright.

The society, the BMI’s Judith Saffer in the single-term job, says that “with the advent of new technologies and the Internet and its derivative in the near future of a new century, it is important that the society play a leading role in increasing the awareness and knowledge of, and respect for, copyright among the general populace, with particular emphasis on the youth of today and tomorrow. If the society as an organization and its membership, with intellectual and economic interests relating to copyright, is not prepared to lead a mobilization of educational efforts to preserve and enhance copyright for the 21st century, who will?”

The core of the society’s educational endeavors is a new initiative, Friends of Active Copyright Education, which is designed to “provide a broad range of resources to foster and support copyright awareness,” including a World Wide Web site as a focal point that would create educational materials addressing copyright rights.

The society is drawing plans to celebrate its 50th year in 2000 as a nonprofit corporation approved under the New York State Education Law. The charter prevents the society from lobbying or taking political positions.

In an open letter distributed by Pollack, then newly elected, at the society’s annual meeting in June in Lake Geneva, Wisc., he touched on other initiatives he wants to put before the society.

They include developing a Speaker’s Bureau as a resource for national and local programming; exploring the feasibility of the establishment of and guidelines for affiliated student copyright organizations at law schools; and launching an annual award program to recognize distinguished achievement and/or leadership in copyright.

Pollack notes that the society in recent years has shifted its major events to major cities and plans similar relationships with Denver and Minneapolis.

Pollack says the music industry is a participant in the society’s programs, including ASCAP, BMI, the National Music Publishers’ Assn., and the Recording Industry Assn. of America.

The society’s mid-winter 1999 meeting is slated for Feb. 18-21 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Atlanta; the 1999 annual meeting is scheduled to take place June 13-15 in Bolton Landing, N.Y.

All In The Family: For unified corporate identity, the music publishing operation headed in Los Angeles by Evan Medow has made some name changes. The umbrella company formerly known as Windspeak Pacific is now known as Windspeak. An ASCAP affiliate formerly known as Full Keel Music is now Windspeak Music, while the BMI affiliate’s name shifts from Longitude Music to Windspeak Songs. SESAC affiliate Pacific Wind retains its name.
Artists & Music

4-Sight Foursome Puts All Its Members First

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS: "In many musical situations, you've got one guy out in front who gets all the recognition, but no one gets to know much about the sidemen," says saxophonist Ron Blake. "However, it takes the interaction between every one up there on stage to make the music happen."

Blake, at 32, is well-versed in the art of improvisation and musical interaction, having enjoyed the benefits of sideman gigs with Art Farmer, Von Freeman, and Stephen Scott and appearances with Weather Report. In 1994, the saxophonist found himself playing in trumpeter Roy Hargrove's band, alongside pianist Peter Martin, bassist Rodney Whitaker, and drummer Gregory Hutchison.

"After playing together for a while, we (the four sidemen) realized that we had developed a certain chemistry that we wanted to explore," explains Blake. "Rather than do a project where one musician's name was used to form a cooperative band, where all four of us contribute equally,"

That band, 4-Sight, released its self-titled debut album for N2K Encoded Music in June. Although 4-Sight's acoustic sound clearly pays homage to the great music of the past, the band's compositions reflect the youthful ages of its members (late 20s to early 30s) and the time they grew up in. Seventies-inspired funk grooves rear their head on several numbers, and Blake cites Stevie Wonder as a profound influence on the band's collective sound. "Between the four of us, we probably have every one of his albums ever released," the saxophonist relates. "Growing up in the era that we did, you couldn't help but be influenced by Stevie's CDs, and some were on Rodney's recordings for DIW, but they've never been done with this group. We know it's hard to go out there and promote all-original music, but the decision was made that if we're going to do this, we're going to go all the way."

For 4-Sight, the album was played only a few dates in New York, in addition to performing at this year's New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. The band will hit the road in the fall, considerably heightening its profile. But hear it now. Consider it foresight.

RE ISSUES: Koch Jazz reissues a rare McCoy Tyner album, "La Leyenda De La Hora," Sept. 15. Originally released in 1981, the album is notable for its distinctly Afro-Cuban feel. Koch also reissues John Handy's "Projections" Aug. 18 and Stan Getz's "Captain Marvel" (featuring Chick Corea, Stanley Clarke, Tony Williams, and Airotto) in January. All three albums originally appeared on Columbia.

The label will also release 33 titles from the Atlantic Records catalog, most of which have never appeared on CD, Oct. 20. Running the gamut from traditional jazz to fusion, and including such artists as Gary Burton, Freddie Hubbard, Lee Konitz, and Max Roach, the titles have all been remastered using the state-of-the-art High Definition Compatibility Digital process.

FOR THE NEXT GENERATION: Jazz at Lincoln Center has announced a $1 million gift from the Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation to develop a national curriculum designed to introduce jazz to students. Named the Louis Armstrong Jazz Curriculum Project, the program will target students in grades four through eight. It will feature a series of guides, workbooks, CDs, and educational materials, providing comprehensive, easy-to-use information about jazz to young people, teachers, and parents.
LONDON—Abbey Road’s white-washed exterior still looks much as it must have when the imposing façade of the building was erected in 1841 as one of the semi-detached mansions in the affluent St. John’s Wood suburb of London. Yet the low, street-facing wall that gave the studio—officially still EMI Recording Studios (Abbey Road)—its nickname is in a constant state of renewal, requiring a new coat of paint once a month to keep up with the ever-changing graffiti that testaments of Beatles devotees scrawl on it.

Inside, the renowned facility is also a contrasting study in flux and stasis. The Penthouse, Abbey Road’s fourth studio, recently reopened with a completely new acoustic design and layout by Acoustics Design Group (ADG); architect John Flynn and acoustician Sam Toyoshima, who redone other EMI studios in the U.K.

The renovation also includes a refurbished and updated Neve console and the first installation of the new B&W Nautilus 801 monitors, arranged in a 5.1-channel, surround-sound configuration.

Producer/engineer Alan Parsons, who last summer was appointed to the newly created position of VP of the EMI Studio Group (which also includes London’s facilities Olympic and Townhouse), departed just prior to the upgrade, and his position itself was eliminated.

According to Abbey Road director of operations Chris Buchanan, the partitioning was amicable, and both parties were served by the brief liaison.

“Alan wanted to get back to mixing and doing the other things he does,” Buchanan says. “But he’ll remain connected to Abbey Road as a consultant and in a PR capacity.”

Despite all this hubbub, visitors still encounter a time warp when they enter Studio Two—where the Beatles and producer George Martin recorded most of the Beatles’ tracks done at Abbey Road.

The room’s layout is essentially the same as it was when EMI turned what had been a concatenation of audio businesses (including HMV) within the mansion’s walls into its first recording studio in 1901. While the second-story control room has a Neve VRP console in place of the vintage Beatles-era EMI-made TG-type board (which temporarily replaced the Capricorn in the Penthouse for the Beatles “Anthology” remixes), the otherwise most significant change to Two’s recording space was the replacement decades ago of disintegrating seaweed-based acoustical battting on the walls.

In addition to organic decay, Two has withstood the erosion of cultural sea changes. “There was a time in the early 1980s when acoustical recording had really dropped off as techno (music) came in, and EMI considered splitting Two into tape archives,” recalls Buchanan, who, like many at Abbey Road, is a longtime veteran of the facility, with 25 years. “I’m glad that didn’t happen, since this is still one of the best-sounding rooms around. And it’s heavily booked because of that, not just because of the Beatles. It’s hardly a museum.”

The Penthouse

As Buchanan spoke, musicians from an orchestral session in the massive Neve One (nearly 5,000 square feet, with a ceiling height of 33 feet and an astounding natural reverberation time of 5.2 seconds) spilled into Abbey Road’s café, Studio Three, with its 72-channel SSL G Series board, is the facility’s most modern recording space, and Abbey Road Recording—the new iteration which covers CD variants and Worldwide Web site construction—has thrust the studio into the crowded street of digital sub-formats.

But the Penthouse, with its 5.1-channel mixing capability, has Abbey Road’s immediate future front and center. The digital Neve Capricorn, which was one of the first deliveries of the type and was originally installed at Abbey Road six years ago, was able to move with the room to surround mixing, and a film mixing panel was added during its refurbishment at Neve’s Burling factory.

New music director Colin Fr无情, who shares the production desk with engineer(s) John Williams and Terri Jerkins, says, “One of the major advantages of Capricorn, which is often overlooked, is that it can easily upgrade a 5-year-old console to new specifications. With an analog console, this is extremely difficult.”

The Penthouse is the first-ever installation of B&W’s new Nautilus speakers. They sound, in Buchanan’s words, “pretty astounding. This is the first time we’ve had a new monitor in here that all the engineers seem to like. You don’t have to drive them too hard to get volume, because they’re 6 dBs more sensitive.”

Buchanan adds that the staff is experimenting with amplification. A 1,000-watt subwoofer, the 5409T-Neck/Island), is currently being used. With their sleek, almost 50s-jukebox design and high-frequency domes slotted atop a box, the aptly named Nautilus enclosures stand out amid the clean layout of the rest of the room, which had its original flooring replaced by floating concrete slabs by ADG.

“We reversed the design of what had been a small recording studio that wasn’t really working that well for those purposes,” says Buchanan. What had been the recording space is now the control room, with a small, glass-faced adjacent chamber that can serve alternately as client lounge or overdub isolation booth. The new, larger control room is now 23 feet by 19.3 feet, with a 7.4-foot ceiling height. The Capricorn remains the room’s console and Abbey Road’s first commercial digital desk.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Penthouse’s rebuild was that much of the renovation work took place off-site, about 40 miles away in an unused auto warehouse in Guilford, Sussex. As Neil Aldridge, Abbey

Road’s manager of technical operations, describes it, the studio’s dimensions were laid out on the warehouse floor. The supports for the acoustical materials and racks were built, dismantled, carted back to St. John’s Wood, and reinstalled at the studio.

“That allowed us to build much of the studio without disrupting the operations of the rest of the facility,” Aldridge explains. “I was a bit apprehensive about it at first—I’d never tried it before. But it worked well, even allowing us to get the cable runs precisely measured before we did the wiring.”

The Penthouse is the epitome of how new technologies—more so than the Beatles legacy—have driven Abbey Road. Surround film sound and the seemingly imminent arrival of 5.1-channel music recordings prompted the revisions—estimated at close to $400,000—in the Penthouse, just as the advent of the CD itself had revived Studio One.

“Classical music had almost died before the CD brought it back,” says Buchanan. “We were playing bad-minton and doing car-repair work in there before CDs and then more emphasis on film sound in the mid-1980s turned things around.”

Music And Politics Mix At Platinum Europe Awards

Music industry leaders and top recording artists mingled with senior European politicians and policymakers July 9 in Brussels at the second Platinum Europe Awards show, organized by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI). European Commission president Jacques Santer was guest of honor, and he presented a number of the platinum accolades—which mark certified sales of 1 million albums in Europe—to such acts as Ricky Martin, Joe Cocker, Aqua, the Corrs, Pascal Obispo, Nek, No Mercy, and M People. Among other notable attendees were a pair of recording artists with political links: Jean-Michel Jarre, who has become on behalf of IFPI a European artists’ spokesman, and Nana Mouskouri, who is a member of the European Parliament. The event, held at Brussels’ Albert Hall, was produced for the IFPI by Lisa Anderson.

The artists who attended the Platinum Europe event come together for a group photo. Pictured, back row from left, are Pascal Obispo, Nek, show producer Lisa Anderson, and No Mercy. In the middle row, from left, are M People’s Heather Small and DJ Shovel, IFPI president David Fine, European Commission president Jacques Santer, Jean-Michel Jarre, Sony Music Europe president Paul Russel, and show compère Mariella Frostrup. In the front row, from left, are Aqua and the Corrs.

Sony Music Europe president Paul Russell and show compère Mariella Frostrup join the Corrs after their performance. Pictured in the back row, from left, are Russell and Frostrup, while Caroline, Andrea, Sharon, and Jim Corr are in front.

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SONY UPS LLORD, CARRASCO: Oscar Llord has been VP GM of Sony Discos. He has been Pierre McGuire of the label since 1990. Lloyd had piloted a dramatic turnaround at Sony, which led to an $11.7 billion deal in 2011.

Also, former Sony Discos executive Angel Carrasco has been appointed president of Sony Music Mexico. He was managing director of the label since 1994.

Both Lloyd and Carrasco continue to report to Frank Welzer, president of Latin America for Sony Music International.

ROMANCE CUBED: On Aug. 11, WEA Latina is slated to drop "Todos Los Romanes," a three-CD set containing Luis Miguel's three "Romance" discs. Each of the discs, which were originally released from 1991 to 1997, has been certified platinum by the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA).

"Todos Los Romanes" is being released exactly one year after "Romances," Luis Miguel's third disc of seminal material that helped kick off the current bull market in the U.S. Latin sector.

BILLBOARD
AUGUST 8, 1998

Hot Latin Tracks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>PRODUCER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10   | ELVIS CRESPO | TU SONRISA | WEAE/MAFIA |)
| 9    | RICARDO ARIZONA | DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO | SONY DISCOS |)
| 8    | RICARDO ARTIGAS | NO ME QUIERO SALIR | SONY DISCOS |)
| 7    | ONDA VAELINA | TE QUIERO TANTO | DONOSO DISCOS |)
| 6    | LOS TEMERARIOS | NO ME QUIERO | EMI |)
| 5    | LUIS MIGUEL | NO BABIO | EMI |)
| 4    | INTOCABLE | AMOR MALDITO | SONY DISCOS |)
| 3    | VICENTE FERNANDEZ | ME VOY A GUERRIN MEXICANO | WEA/MAFIA |)
| 2    | PATRICIO MARCELO | NO ME QUIERO | WEA/MAFIA |)
| 1    | ROSCO | DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING | SONY DISCOS |)

Latin Artists & Music

by John Lannert

BANDA EL JUANGA: Arloha/BMG icon Juan Gabriel is cutting a banjola-style album with Fonovisa's famed Banda El Recodo that is slated for release in September on Arloha/BMG.

In addition, the singer/songwriter has signed a multi-year deal with Fonovisa. The band is penning songs for the label debut of Banda El Recodo front man Julio Preciado, which is due at the end of the year.

Meanwhile, Juan Gabriel is slated to appear with Banda El Recodo Aug. 11 in Tijuana, Mexico, and Aug. 12 in Mexico City. He is performing with the group as an expression of gratitude for its tribute disc to him this year.

UPDATES: ASCAP filed an artists' rights suit on July 24 in U.S. District Court in Fresno, Calif., against KMAP Inc. and Michael D. Allen for unauthorized broadcast of songs by its stations. The authors' society had terminated a licensing agreement with KMAP and Allen for insufficient payment by three Bay Area stations, stations that the company owns: KWAC-FM, KIWI-FM, and KCHJ-AM.

Salvador Perez has been named president of Calma Records. He was an independent consultant. Ricky Martin's "Vuelve" (Sony Discos) has been certified gold by the RIAA. It is his first gold record.

Ari Kadar has booked a five-date U.S. trek for Sony Discos' Brazilian star Roberto Carlos that begins Aug. 20 at the James L. Knight Center in Miami. Also, Kadar has scheduled four shows for WEA Latina's white-hot balladeer Alejandro Sanz, whose kickoff concert is set for Oct. 21 at Park West in Chicago.

BMM salsa diva India, M.P.'s beloved salsero gallo Tito Rojas, and Combo's revered salsa ensemble El (Continued on next page)

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BILBOARD AUGUST 8, 1998

POP TROPICAL/SAULA

| 1    | CARLOS PONCE | EN LA TUSCIAYA | WEA/MAFIA |
| 2    | ALEJANDRO FERNANDEZ | NO ME QUIERO SALIR | WEA/MAFIA |
| 3    | RICKY MARTIN | DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING | SONY DISCOS |
| 4    | LUIS MIGUEL | NO ME QUIERO | EMI |
| 5    | ROSCO | DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING | SONY DISCOS |

REGIONAL MEXICAN

| 1    | CARLOS PONCE | EN LA TUSCIAYA | WEA/MAFIA |
| 2    | SERVANDO Y FLORENTINO | EN LA TUSCIAYA | WEA/MAFIA |
| 3    | VICENTE FERNANDEZ | NO ME QUIERO SALIR | WEA/MAFIA |
| 4    | LUIS MIGUEL | NO ME QUIERO | EMI |
| 5    | ROSCO | DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING | SONY DISCOS |

RMM salsa diva India, M.P.'s beloved salsero gallo Tito Rojas, and Combo's revered salsa ensemble El...
A Universal Rocker: Miguel Mateos, a rock pioneer from Argentina, recently signed a four-album contract with Universal Music Mexico; if it's reportedly a $6.5 million deal. Shown, left, are Mateos and Universal Music Argentina president Walter Kolm.

**NOTAS (Continued from preceding page)**

Gran Combo is booked to headline the New York Salsa Festival Sept. 5 at Madison Square Garden. Hot new reagro Elvis Crespo and exiled Latin jazz pianist Eddie Palmieri also are slated to play. Preparing the event are Ralph Mendez, John Rivera, Joyeria Pepe, and Presidente.

Sony Discos is set to issue La Mafia's upcoming disc, "Euforia." Sept. 1. Band member Mando Lichterberger Jr., producer of the two-time Grammy-winning band, makes his directorial debut on the video of the lead-off single, "Papi."

Arlington, can be expected to rent the multi-artist Latin tribute to the Police Sgt. 1. Titled "Outlandos D'América," the disc boasts contributions from such noted south-of-the-border acts as EMI Argentina's reggaeton stars Los Pericos, former Soda Stereo front man Gustavo Cerati, Sony Brazil's reggae superstars Shank, Soi Hernández, lead vocalists of BMG Mexico's Jaguar, PolyGram Mexico's rap rock pioneers Control Machete, and EMI Mexico's current rap rock rave Plasticin. Mosch also recording "Outlandos D'América" are former Police badmates Andy Summers and Stewart Copeland.

**ARGENTINA NOTAS:** Warner Music Argentina has moved from the traditional neighborhood of San Cristóbal to an upscale Buenos Aires at a landmark skyscraper facing the Río de la Plata that is widely known as "El Rulero." The address is Avenue Libertador 498, 22nd Floor, Buenos Aires. The phone/fax is 541-384-6633.

Córdoba Shro SRL, the main promoter of shows in the Argentine state of Córdoba, has struck a deal to operate Córdoba's 6,000-seat Víajes Uritani Stadium for the next 14 years. Plans call for a $1 million face lift for the venue, where artists like BMG's Joan Manuel Serrat, Sony's Ricardo Arjona, EMI's Paralamas, and Warner's Fito Páez have performed in recent years. Córdoba Shro SRL already manages the 70,000-seat Chateau Carreras Stadium, located in the state capital of Córdoba. Daniel Grinbank's BG Productions has announced three major shows for August in Buenos Aires: "Smashing Pumpkins" (Aug. 21) and "Prodigy" (Aug. 26), both of which will take place in Parque Sarmiento, and Bjork, who will appear at the 2,200-seat Teatro Oeste.

**MEXICO NOTAS:** Apparently tired of visiting for a new teleenvés to materialize. Verónica Castro has begun recording a tropical disc for Melody. Castro is still under exclusive contract to Mexican TV network Televisa as an actress, but there is no sign of her appearance on a network soap in the near future. Speaking of novels, more and more recording artists are getting in on the all-effective vehicle to promote singles. Sony's venerable ranchero Vicente Fernandez chips in with "Me Voy A Quitar En Medio" for the Televisa soap "La Mentira." Other acts expected to contribute tracks to Televisa soaps are Castro's son, BMG crooner Cristian ("Por Angelita"; PolyGram balladstress Mijares ("Privilegio De Amar"), and Eduardo Capetillo ("Camila"). Capetillo will sing and star in "Camila" with his wife and Melody labelmate, Bibi Gaytan.

Esteemed diva Lucía Villa has finished a one-month treatment in Cuba for a stroke she suffered last year. If all goes well, she is expected to return again in 1999.

With the departure of front man Claudio Yarto, PolyGram's rap/dance act Calo is now a quartet. The group has just dropped "Dance, Dance, Dance," a package of Spanish-language covers of 70s disco hits produced by Max di Carlo.

Latin Rock's César Costa might be struggling with ratings as host of Televisa's "El Fin De Semana," the longtime vocal star is celebrating his 40 year singing career with the Sony album "Bajo Mi Poema," a collection of the Spanish versions of hits by Frank Sinatra and Nat "King" Cole.

**CHART NOTES, RADIO:** Alejandro Fernandez's "Yo Naci Para Amarte" (Sony Discos) and Carlos Ponce's "Reo" (EMI Latin) are Nos. 1 and 2, respectively, on Hot Latin Tracks for the fourth consecutive week. About 800,000 audience impressions separate the two blockbuster singles. Ponce stays atop the pop genre chart for the seventh week in a row, while "Los Tucanes De Tijuana" remains at No. 1 on the regional Mexican chart for the fourth consecutive week.

"Tu Sonrisa," Elvis Crespo's follow-up hit to "Siempre," leaps to 5 on Hot Latin Tracks and scales the tropical salsa genre chart this issue. Moving 4-3 with a bullet on Hot Latin Tracks is Pepe Aguilar's "Por Mejores Como Ti," the highest-charting single by Pepe Aguilar on Hot Latin Tracks.

Vulture's 5-2 this issue is Aero-smith's first hit on Hot Latin Tracks, "I Don't Want To Miss A Thing." (Columbia/Sony). The power ballad is taken from "Armageddon." The Album.

**CHART NOTES, RETAIL:** After a one-week absence, Ricky Martin's "Vuelve" (Sony Discos) regains the No. 1 spot on The Billboard Latin 50, which is published this issue. Sales of "Vuelve" were 7,000 units, a 176% drop from the previous week. "Vuelve" plummeted from No. 15 to 192 on The Billboard 200. The just-certified gold disc has stayed on that chart for 22 weeks. Further, "Vuelve" has logged 16 straight weeks at No. 1 on the pop genre chart.

"Vuelve" replaces Elis Crespo's "Suavemente" (Sony Discos), which slides to No. 2. However, the smash track sold again in 1999.

"Amor Platónico" by Los Tucanes De Tijuana remains No. 1 on the regional Mexican genre chart for the fourth consecutive week.

**SALES STATFILE:** The Billboard Latin 50: this issue: 101,000 units; last issue: 94,000 units; similar week in 1997: 61,500 units.

Pop genre chart: this issue: 41,500 units; last issue: 46,000 units; similar week in 1997: 39,500 units.

Tropical/salsa genre chart: this issue: 28,500 units; last issue: 37,500 units; similar week in 1997: 13,000 units.

Regional Mexican genre chart: this issue: 26,000 units; last issue: 25,500 units; similar week in 1997: 25,500 units.

Assistance in preparing this column was provided by Televax Aguilar in Mexico City and Fito Páez's Polaro Mesa Banda in Buenos Aires.
Entertaining A Challenge

Asia's Economic Turmoil Makes Trouble For Tours Of International Acts

BY ANN TSANG

HONG KONG—While the U.S. and Europe bask in a wave of summer tours and festivals, Asia, under the burden of economic recession, has taken a cold bath. "Our house [in Hong Kong] is still above the waterline, but the surrounding countryside is massive carnage," says Andrew Bull, managing director of Hong Kong's Arena Group, one of the principal figures in Asian touring for the past decade.

The devaluation of currencies in many Asian markets has made it difficult, if not impossible, for promoters like Bull to entice Western acts to the region. He believes his company has been fortunate, having lured Oasis and the Prodigy to Hong Kong for single-snap "tours" on their way to Japan. But those are the sole shows by Western acts organized by Arena in the first quarter of this year, compared with the six to eight shows a year it normally presents. Overall, Bull says, business has plummeted by as much as 50%.

The economic situation in Japan hasn't helped. "Japan is very slack, and there are fewer acts going there," says Bull. Many acts previously used Hong Kong as a transit stop to the bigger acts in Japan, a route now blocked by a currency crisis and a serious crack in consumer spending power.

"Everybody is negative about everything," echoes Harley Medcalf, director of Australia's Duet Entertainment. "It's all very much doom and gloom, which has created a huge dent in people's confidence." As a result, Duet has undertaken only one Hong Kong project this year: the Heineken Music Horizon '98, scheduled for Nov. 7 and 8.

Regionally sponsored tours, a possibility in the past, appear to be a less viable option for promoters today. "They take too much time," says Bull. "We end up doing a lot for the sponsors, but they have their own objectives and would rather produce the shows themselves." Regional sponsorship can also be affected by different approaches across countries, particularly in the cases of alcohol and tobacco.

PROMOTIONAL MINI TOURS

Complicating the touring picture is the debate over the increasing number of promotional tours to the region by international artists. These label-financed outings—which have artists involved in record-store appearances, media interviews and nightclub performances—have become a considerable cause of concern for some promoters, who feel they undercut their business.

"If an artist does too much of that and their agent calls a few months later to say their act is ready to do a real tour, I'll say that the response from the public is likely to be tepid," says Bull. He and others believe that the consumer is unable to differentiate between a promotional tour and a full-scale concert tour, particularly with artists who have only one album out. "I wouldn't advise an artist to perform at HMV before they do a concert tour for their second album. If that album works, there's enough fuel for a tour," says Bull.

Universal Music regional marketing VP Tom van Dell says the story is no different than what it has been before. "The record companies are making more tours under the promotional umbrella," he says. "You can't have a tour in 1998 and not be making tour-money at the same time. They're just spreading it out more."

Continued on page APQ-2

LIVE FROM TAIWAN

Fans Shift From Studio-Packaged Pop Idols To Artists Rooted In Genuine Performance

TAIPEI—While the rest of Asia recovers from the economic turmoil of the past year, the Taiwan music market is continuing to grow and audiences are demanding more varied styles and artists than ever—particularly singers with strong live-performance backgrounds.

Previously, Chinese popular music has been dominated by pop idols whose looks were more important than their musical talent. These artists would rarely hold concerts before their fifth or sixth album, and those performances were often lip-synced.

But in the past two years, audiences have been shifting toward artists that put music first and appearance second. "People now appreciate music over idols," says Roger Lee, managing director of Sony Music Taiwan. "The new superstars are strong musicians who can contribute something to the music they perform. This is completely different from the old days."

Part of the reason for this change is rapid growth of Taiwan's media. Since martial law ended in 1987, the government has lifted the majority of restrictions on the cable and radio industries, which has led to the island being inundated with dozens of new stations.

"The open media has allowed people to have access to more information than ever before," says Sam Dunn, president of Rock Records, Southeast Asia's largest independent record company. "Nowadays, consumers have more knowledge than the record companies. They want to make their own decisions, and they don't want to hear the same music that the record companies have always put out," says Dunn. "They've heard music of all styles, so now they're thinking, Why can't we have the same thing with Mandarin music? They want artists who are more legitimate."

Sony's Roger Lee finds that the increase in media also has allowed artists who were traditionally overlooked to gain access to a wider audience. MTV Mandarin and local music stations have begun playing more shows dedicated to footage filmed live at performances.

Continued on page APQ-4
Viewers' Choices, Techno Works And A Brother Act

NEXT MONTH’S presentation of the Mandarin Viewer’s Choice Award, as part of the 1998 MTV Video Music Awards, will highlight some of the most notable artists in the Asian region. This year’s nominated video clips include “Stairway to the Top” by Biscuits (Japan), “Di Da Di” by Coco Lee (Taiwan), “Besides The Airport” by David Tao (Taiwan), “He Doesn’t Love Me” by Karen Mok (Hong Kong) and “Conquer” by Na Ying (China).

continues on page APQ-1

News in Review

Techno Works” is a double album, a format that rarely sells well in South Korea, and, secondly, the company’s R&B-pop/rock group has seen sales fall precipitously. The album, whose title is based on Shin’s American nickname, is the latest release in future Culture, N.E.X.T., released under Korea’s Air-line, and already the album has broken up last year. “It’s the sound of the album that distinguishes Shin.” The album’s first release was in June, and has been fully remixed and re-released.

The album includes new versions of seven previously recorded Shin songs. The album was produced by Shin’s personal producer, and has been fully remixed and re-released.

Bragi has been working with the hit singles “The Flower Is Still Beautiful” and “The Three Musketeers” on his new album, which has been heavily remixed and re-released.

The album includes new versions of seven previously recorded Shin songs. The album was produced by Shin’s personal producer, and has been fully remixed and re-released.

POLYGRAM has utilized many Hard Rock Cafe venues around the region for successful press conferences and media showcases, including a three-song Hanson acoustic set in Jakarta, an acoustic set by Def Leppard in Singapore and a press conference/showcase for Boyz II Men in Seoul.

This year, Universal organized its own promotional tour for Aqua, which included a live performance for 3,000 people at Sparks, the largest venue in Singapore. -NK also organized their own promotional tour for Aqua, which included a live performance for 3,000 people at Sparks, the largest venue in Singapore. -NK also organized their own promotional tour for Aqua, which included a live performance for 3,000 people at Sparks, the largest venue in Singapore.

Universal’s Van Dell believes that there have been many words wasted on the argument between record companies and promoters on this subject, the most recent discussion taking place during the May ’98 MTV Billabong Asia Music Conference in Hong Kong. "Universal is a marketing-driven company, and the philosophy is to support promoters whenever we can," Van Dell says. "Any activity that assists us to further support our acts can only be viewed as positive. It is only natural that the level of our support is dependent upon the artist's availability, drawing power and album-sales success.

Recent history, in fact, shows that acts who have spent considerable time here have been treated well by the industry. -NK released an album, "To Rock," in Singapore, and the album was well received. -NK also released an album, "To Rock," in Singapore, and the album was well received.

Another problem for promoters, labels and artists that can result: from promotional tours is potential media oversell. In the case of PolyGram’s Boyzone, the band received so much press during their first two promotional tours, it later became extremely difficult for the promoter to generate interest.

Promotion support also can be difficult to raise, particularly on a second or third visit, if the act previously has been sponsored for nightclub appearances. The fans, too, are reluctant to pay a higher price than what they paid for the promotional appearance, which in turn makes it difficult for...
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and tomorrow's
superstars"

- Andy Yavasis, Vice President, Marketing, Sony Music Asia

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ARTISTS & MUSIC
Continued from page APQ-2

promote the album in the region," says Shafie Yusof, assistant manager of EMI's local division. EMI Malaysia's 800,000-copy "Forever Fever" is directed by Glen Goei, with local distribution of the disc through Universal. The album has sold 3,000 units—triple the average for a local English-language release. Film-distribution rights sold to Beyond Films for the Pacific region and Miramax in the U.S. for $4.2 million. Says Gary See, Universal's general manager, "The film's publicity has been massive, and there's a strong '70s retro trend that has made people curious about the music. Besides, all the tracks are performed by Singaporean singer Ku Fung Tze as a much softer disc such as "Stay Alive." "The album is a movement," says Ku Fung. 

TOURING TROUBLES
Continued from page APQ-2

promoters to bring the bands back too soon.

PUTTING LABELS ON PROMOTION
How can the labels and artist management work more closely with the promoters in mutual self-interest?

"We all have our specific roles," says Hosking. "The record company's primary objective is to sell albums. The promoters take care of the venue, assure the best lighting and sound and adherence to the back-stage rider. Hosking believes that record executives should focus on the marketing and promotion of their artists and albums. Of the four major concerts he organized in Singapore in 1997, he reports that only one act had CDs available at the venue.

Leed said that Polymax always tries to work closely with both regional and local promoters to ensure that, when an act tours the region, the artist and management feel the record company has made a strong contribution toward the success of the tour. In the early stages, when the regional promoters are talking with Polymax's artists' agents, we advise our repertoire owners to look at the current market conditions and status of the concert in the other regions," he says. "Once a promoter has decided on a tour for a regional tour, we will meet with the promoter to discuss promotional plans at both regional and local levels and how we can support them in that. This is a two-way street."

Nevertheless, promoters are hurting. Midas has suffered five major tour cancellations in 1998, including Art Garfunkel, Metallica, and Elton John and Billy Joel. According to Hosking, Garfunkel pulled his Asian gigs at the last minute because the bottom fell out of both Korea and Indonesia, respectively two key locations for international acts due to high sales volume.

"They just can't make ends meet in a country like Indonesia at the moment, even if you sell out," due to the free-falling value of the rupiah, says Hosking. In the less economically affected markets of Hong Kong and Singapore, artists don't sell enough tickets to make it viable for them to tour those regions.

Looking at other long-standing problems that have plagued the Asian concert industry for years— including a shortage of venues, censorship and generally high costs—Hosking has seen a number of positive changes that make it easier to book and hold concerts.

For example, the Urban Council in Hong Kong recently relaxed its regulations pertaining to the booking of the Hong Kong Coliseum. Previously, promoters had to pay deposits, and if for any reason they had to alter dates, forfeited their money. They now have the opportunity to replace a cancelled booking with another act. The Singapore Indoor Stadium also has removed extra fees previously charged at the venue. Venues, in general, have become cheaper to book.

Meanwhile, the industry is facing a new set of problems. An artist selling 200,000 units in the region can simply depend on the regional music-video circuits to help them make the sales and find tour dates. However, the commercialization of radio stations is beginning to affect the value of their music. "This may be the situation now," warns Hosking, "but if the artists desert Asia at this time, Asia may desert them when things pick up again."

He suggests that artists travel more sensibly, with smaller entourages and greater budget awareness, while being more reasonable in their demands. Midas has successfully used this formula in recent months, specifically in cooperation with Sony Music on the Savage Garden tour. "We worked extremely well together," says Hosking. The two companies' advertising campaigns complemented each other to both the live concert and album sales, while Sony released a special "Asian Tour Package" containing eight bonus tracks.

FOR THE GREATER GOOD

Melcaf at Duet Entertainment also has strong words for some Asian radio stations, which he believes are not supporting the music industry as a whole. Hong Kong radio stations have begun promoting multiple lineups, which he feels devalues the paid international tours in the eyes of the consumer. "They have a very short-term vision, and I wish everybody could agree on the real value of airplay," Medcalf says.

From a record-company perspective, Universal Music's Van Dell has a wish list for artists and, in particular, their managers: "If you truly consider the Asia Pacific region in the context of an artist's long-term career development, treat it as such," he says. "Bring the acts out when they and the record are hot. Give us access for phone interviews and [radio station] IDs prior to your visit so that we can incorporate these into our promotions. And be flexible in our contracts as well."

"When touring the region, as many of the markets are still developing, allocate enough time to visit the markets several times during the life of the album. Apply a similar approach to what you would do in Europe and the U.S. if you were looking to break there. Support us so that we can support you."

In what appear to be dark days, Hosking and others are looking for a silver lining. "Not always grey and gloomy," he says. "I like the creative aspect of it all, and I find it a lot of fun. I enjoy doing things together, because I hope and believe we can," he says. Medcalf also makes a plea to the industry to "look at the bigger picture." And Bull at the Arena Group simply says, "I'll still be here when the concert light comes back on."

CREDITS

Billboard's Asia Pacific Quarterly was reported by Ann Tsang in Hong Kong, Delf Tcheng in Singapore, Teo Ming-Li and Noor Novlich in Malaysia, Philip Cheah in Singapore, Penchon Phobosirat in Thailand, Victor Wong in Taiwan, Cho Hoon-Jin in Korea and Christie Eliezer in Australia.
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Many Labels Had Exposure To Fullec; Other Distributors May Follow

BY GEOFF BURPEE

HONG KONG—The crowded distribution market here is still picking up pieces from the earthquake of the collapse of Fullec Records. Now there are fears that aftershocks will produce even more casualties.

Though Hong Kong’s weakened economy played a role in the June demise of Fullec Records, previously one of Hong Kong’s largest distributor companies, many here say the development was overdue—and that others may soon follow suit.

Industry observers argue that even with the impressive growth that characterized the Hong Kong market for several years prior to the recent economic crisis, the crowded market put Hong Kong’s distributors into a self-destructive tailspin. There are approximately two dozen companies servicing local retailers here, with only five or six of them commanding more than 2% of the market apiece.

Now, with creditors tightening the reins in the wake of Fullec’s bankruptcy, the downward spiral toward vanishing profit margins may find more companies culled from the pack.

For the time being, many majors share the feelings of EMI Hong Kong chairman Herman Ho. “We are now monitoring the distributors much more cautiously,” he says. “We are not trading with them where we don’t have to.” Michael Smellie, BMG Asia-Pacific’s senior VP, says his company was not as badly exposed as other majors due to tight credit control and the relatively small amount of product in the market at the time of Fullec’s closure.

“We were on to Fullec earlier than most of our competitors; we were prepared to stop credit at a much earlier stage, about a year ago now,” says Smellie. “With some others, we are managing our credit very tightly.” Smellie says tactics employed in early 1998 with Fullec and other bad debtors included new credit terms such as demanding upfront payment for 150 CDs on delivery of 100.

EMI, Warner Music, and Sony, which all moved to limit their exposure in the early months of 1998, were nonetheless hit badly by the bankruptcy.

Worse hit, though, was Hong Kong’s top major, PolyGram, a fact acknowledged by Douglas Chan, chairman of PolyGram Far East’s Hong Kong company.

Chan conceded that PolyGram’s dominant position in local repertoire meant that the company suffered the broadest exposure to Fullec’s bankruptcy; its stars such as Jackie Cheung combine with a mammoth Cantopop back catalog to make it the largest-selling repertoire here.

Chan confirms that PolyGram was Fullec’s largest single account; estimates are that PolyGram product accounted for some two-thirds of the distributor’s business.

(Continued on page 19)

Mercury Noms Show British Music’s Range

BY DOMINIC PRIDE

LONDON—The staggering diversity of the British talent base was underlined when the short-list for the Mercury Music Prize was unveiled July 28 here (Billboard Bulletin, July 29).

Releases from British Asians in the form of Cornershops (Billboard, Feb. 7) and Asian Dub Foundation, as well as a set of power pop from Catatonia (Billboard, July 4), were among the 12 albums chosen by the prize’s judges, who will determine the winner in an awards show Sept. 16.

The award enjoys cross-industry support from the British Phonographic Industry and the British Association of Record Dealers. Among the retail initiatives developed for the Mercury are stickered nominated albums and point-of-sale displays for all 12 releases, plus a low-price sampler that was distributed last year by EMI. No distributor was confirmed at press time for this year’s compilation, to be released Aug. 24 at 4.59 pounds ($8.98).

This year’s Mercury, the seventh award, comes after a year of uncertainty. The original sponsor for the prize was telecoms operator Mercury Communications, which last year changed its name to that of its international owners, Cable & Wireless. This year sponsorship comes from audio manufacturer Technics, part of Japanese electronics giant Matsushita, itself a minority shareholder in Universal Music.

BBC Radio 1 and BBC 2 TV will both broadcast special programs on the event this year. The award normally garners coverage from broadsheet newspapers and arts supplements.

In its history, the prize has helped many labels introduce acts to new audiences. Last year’s winner, Roni Size & Reprazent, found a new set of buyers for their album “New Forms” on Talkin’ Loud/Mercury, which reported immediate demand for the album after the win (Billboard, Sept. 20, 1997).

Harriet Simms, head of promotions for folk indie Topic, nominee Eliza Carthy’s label, says, “For Eliza, the prize will have a phenomenal impact. The Mercury Prize is a relatively mainstream prize for us. It’s the one we take more seriously, as it’s not so much driven by commercial considerations.”

Most of the short-listed albums could potentially benefit from such an effect. The field has been opened up by the extension of the list to 12 albums, as opposed to 10 previously.

Only two of the albums on the list are household names: The Verve’s “Urban Hymns” (Hut/Virgin) is the year’s best-selling album to date, certified six times platinum (1.8 million units sold). The second-best seller, Robbie Williams’ “Life Thru A Lens” (Chrysalis/EMI U.K.), has sold more than 1 million units and was certified three times platinum (900,000 units).

Other releases have been recognized by regular music buyers but could attract wavering buyers if endorsed by the prize. Among them are Massive Attack’s brooding “Mezzanine” (Circa/Virgin), certified gold (100,000 units) after 14 weeks; Cornershops’ witty “When I Was Born For The 7th Time” (Wilija/Beggars

German CD Manufacturer Pilz Sentenced

HAMBURG—CD manufacturer Reiner Pilz was sentenced to six years in prison on fraud charges July 27 by the Regional Court of Landshut in Bavaria.

The court found that the former businessman had embezzled more than 10 million deutsche marks ($6.5 million) from state government bodies in both Eastern and Western Germany. Pilz had denied the charges. The prosecution claimed that he had concealed subsidies and loans via a complex network of companies and used money from the bankruptcy estate of his factories for private purposes. The trial lasted more than a year, with the public prosecutor seeking a prison sentence of 6½ years and the defense an acquittal. Pilz denied all the charges and plans to appeal.

Pilz had set up a joint venture with East German organization Robotron—the first of its kind following German reunification—and built a new CD factory at Albrechts near Suhl in Thuringia (Billboard, Aug. 10, 1991). After Robotron’s later collapse, Pilz’s main factory in Kranzberg, Bavaria, went bankrupt.

Pilz now faces a raft of similar charges in a parallel case at the regional court in Thuringia.

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR

BERLIN—Authors and publishers could lose out because of the new pan-European mechanicals deal.

The VP of the German Music Publishers’ Assn., Karl-Heinz Klemnow, says that because the agreement cements the concept of a single mechanical rate for the whole of continental Europe, pressure is put on all collecting societies to attract business. Speaking at the association’s annual general meeting here, he contended that the only way they can do that is to squeeze the authors’ and publishers’ shares of collected revenues.

The latest mechanicals agreement between the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) and publishers’ umbrella body BIEM means that one mechanical rate—9.00% of published price to dealer—applies in all European Union member states except the U.K. This rate, which came into effect at the beginning of the year (Billboard, Feb. 7), is about three percentage points lower than that under the previous IFPI/BIEM agreement.

Says Klemnow, “We can only hope that losses can be cushioned by record companies licensing their low-price repertoire at the new minimum rates on the Continent and not at the lower rates applicable in the U.K.”

The German Music Publishers’ Assn. is joining forces with the authors’ associations here to discuss with German collecting society GEMA ways to counter any loss of revenue and to ensure that rates do not drop any further.

A single European copyright society for mechanical rights might be one solution, Klemnow says, providing that the major publishers do not withdraw their repertoire from the copyright societies and go their own way.

At the meeting, the publishers also learned that, following talks with the German IFPI group, agreement was reached on an overall mechanicals rate for music videos. Royalties of 6.5% of the retailer price were agreed upon.
POLYGRAM FAR EAST artists and management addressed the Chinese-language media at press conferences July 21-22 in Taipei and Hong Kong to voice the company’s dismay at what they view as unfair treatment by the local press. They condemned what they described as inaccurate or fabricated stories speculating on the fate of the company after its acquisition by Seagram, as well as the careers, business ties, and private lives of the company’s executives and artists. The company issued a statement saying, “The Hong Kong market has dropped by 30%-40% in the past year, and that is very sad. Our turnover was likewise affected. We have made some changes, but we are operating normally again, and nothing unusual is going on.” Chinese pop legend Jacky Cheung, PolyGram Hong Kong chairman Douglas Chan, and Paco Wong, managing director of local PolyGram affiliates Go East and Cinepoly, appeared at the Hong Kong gathering; Mandarin-language pop star Ronald Cheng (son of PolyGram Far East president Norman Cheng) joined PolyGram Taiwan managing director Michael Wong in Taipei.

CD MANUFACTURER DOCCDATA, which is traded in Amsterdam and on Nasdaq, posted net sales of 113.4 million guilders (US$35.3 million) in the six months that ended June 30, 85% higher than during the same period last year. The increase was largely accounted for by businesses acquired in the last 12 months, including the Mailorders Music and Media manufacturing operation in the UK (now called DOCCDATA U.K. Ltd.), Los Angeles–based ASR Recording Services of California Inc., CD Media Masters LLC, and the distribution activities of Dutch record group Arcade. Existing businesses saw a growth of 15.7% (10.5 million guilders). Net income overall, 6.9 million guilders (US$2.9 million), was up 37.2%. DOCCDATA CFO Jaap Ruigrok van der Werve is to retire at the end of the year. He will be succeeded by Michel Altin von Geusau, 34, who is currently finance and accounting manager at Philips Domestic Appliances and Personal Care B.V.

SONY MUSIC INTERNATIONAL has promoted Oscar Llord, VFGM of its Miami Beach-based Sony Discus imprint since 1986, to the newly created post of Right Touch Productions and a veteran of Rovend Records and EMI’s Latin music arm, continues to report to Frank Welzer, president of Latin America for Sony Music International. Llord oversees the Rovend and Latin Music Spanish arm.

INDIAN STUDENTS will stage a peace festival on Thursday (June 2)—the 53rd anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan—in Mumbai to protest their country’s recent nuclear weapons testing. Peace Together ‘96, on the campus of St. Andrews College in the Mumbai suburb of Bandra, will feature performances from such top Hindi film stars as Madhuri Dixit, Lucky Ali, Sagarika, Mehmna, Uday Benegal, Vikas Bahl, Shaan, Silk Route, Aquafow, and Sprarals. BBC TV will film a documentary on the event; music channel Channel V will devote an hour’s programming and create a music video of the event. Tickets will be sold for 10,000 rupees a month. Sony and Pepsi- Juino are sponsoring the event. Organizers include the students of St. Andrews College (who plan to give away 10,000 tickets for the festival) and artist/event management firm ETC Gallery, whose director, Manjin da Costa, is hosting the event as “a spontaneous expression of emotion from the youth of India.”

POLYGRAM INDIAN has acquired rights to the catalog of independent label Velvet Voices, which is owned by artist Pandkaj Udhas. PolyGram will own and market the label’s entire catalog, and Udhas is signed as an artist to PolyGram. A new Ushas album is due in August, followed by a nationwide concert tour. A veteran singer in the ghazal (Urdh ballad) style, Udhas was signed to PolyGram (then Music India) from 1980 to ‘98, during which time he delivered some of this genre’s biggest sellers. In 1990, Udhas established Velvet Voices, which independently marketed his repertoire in Urdu and other regional languages. Earlier this year, PolyGram and Udhas reunited for his latest ghazal album, “Humzaheseen,” and Aujas Media India is 60%-owned by the major, with the remaining owned by local share- holders, including company president Vijay Lazarus.

EMI GROUP has appointed Jason Crisp director of corporate affairs, based at the company’s London headquarters. He succeeds Sharon Christians, who left the company after eight years July 17 for a post at international management consultancy McKinsey & Co. Crisp, a former journalist for The Financial Times who has credentials in media and financial analysis, will oversee the EMI Group’s corporate communications and investor-relations staff. He reports to company joint deputy chairman Simon Duffy.

POLYGRAM NOMS SHOW BRITISH MUSIC’S RANGE

BANLIGHT, which went gold (100,000 units sold) in the UK; and Polydor’s challenging “This Is Hardcore” (Is- land), which went gold after 17 weeks; the Propellerheads’ beat-frenzied “Chaos In The Rock’n’Roll” (Wall of Sound), which has gone gold after 29 weeks, having sold 114,000 units, according to the label; and Cata- ract’s “Indonesian Velvet” (Blanco Y Negro/WEA), which went platinum (300,000 units) after 25 weeks.

Most of the remaining nominees are not yet recognized by the wider public, although they are already well-known within their fields. 4-HERO’S “Two Pages” (Talkin’ Loud/Mercury) is a synthesis of jazz and drum’n’ bass, spread across a dou- ble CD. Elina Carly, the daughter of folk singer Martins Carly and former Mersey nompee Norma Water- son, takes her family inheritance of English folk and mixes it with a corn- temporary dance feel on “Red Rose” (Topic Records).

Asian Dub Foundation’s major-label debut, “Raffi’s Revenge” (ffrr/Lon- don), sees the act losing none of the aggression built up during five years with Nation and other nations. John Surman’s “Proverbs And Songs” on German indie ECM is a classical, keyboard instrument work featuring clavi- cher, and saxophone, and “Bring It On,” the Virgin debut by Gomez, blends swant blues and rock with a haunted dose of irony (see story page 13).

The jury for the prize is chaired by music industry writer Simon Frith and is made up of industry experts and critics.
By Larry LeBlanc

Toronto—The Tragically Hip’s “Phantom Power,” released July 14 by Sire Records worldwide and by Universal Music for Canada, which debuted at No. 1 on Canada’s SoundScan-Dollar Sales chart July 20 and hit No. 7 on the Billboard 200 and No. 3 on Billboard’s Heatseekers album chart. This issue is No. 25 on Heatseekers but is no longer on The Billboard 200.

Famous acts have strong local releases; in some cases there is just a reported 48-hour lag between a record company’s release and everything. No, there has been a multi-swap of Cantopop albums from core stars like PolyGram’s Cheuk Wing-lung’s Lee, Lui’s Aaron Kwok, and BMG/Music Impact’s Andy Lau. They’re not just copying the local CD now,” says BMG’s Lee, who feels that the July 16 release of Andy Lau’s latest is being hurt already by pirates. “They’re very sophisticated; they copy the bonus track, the CD, the packaging, everything.”

A shake-up in distribution here has been in the cards since 1995, when BMG’s local distributor in Hong Kong, Heng Lee Co. (which also traded as Henry Co.), went down amid cash-flow problems and bankruptcy ac-

prices, and even at a time when the ter-


eritory’s music business was experiencing 20% annual growth.

Says PolyGram’s Chan, “Since the Heng Lee case, a lot of the local company’s have already changed their strategy. We are now relying on diverse accounts rather than concentrat-
ing on one account; we do more business with diverse accounts now.”

While distributors will not discuss the measures to be used to ward off disaster, sources indicate that because actions of action are being con-
sidered.

Calvin Wong, Southeast Asia mar-

keting director for Warner Music International, says, “There have been rumors about wholesalers merging; they’ve been cutting each other’s prices, and the margins are thin. Some wholesalers who are not doing that as a main core business, they may be feeling it’s time to get out.”

BMG’s Smellick concurs. “The problem is there are far too many of them.”

CANADIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY HIT BY FALL OF THE DOLLAR THERE

(Continued from page 3)

leeting [gate receipts] in Canadian funds, we’re paying out in U.S. funds.

We could get some discount in the distrib-

slide, promoters and club bookers warn of higher ticket prices or lower guarantees for non-Canadian touring acts. Audiences, they say, might balk at smaller venues, particularly with midlevel acts.

The lower Canadian dollar will either affect [door] prices or affect the viability of a number of other income streams involved, says BMG’s Lee. "Or groups will have to play Canada for less money [than else-

where]."

Within Canada’s independent dis-

tribution sector, Canada’s waning dol-

lar has already brought several changes. These includes tightening overhead, adjusting terms with dis-

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pricing—by an average of 50 cents to $1 on the wholesale pricing of imported albums.

We’ve asked [non-Canadian dis-

tributed] labels to compensate us in some capacity," says Jim West, presi-

tent of Distribution Fusion III in Montreal. "The labels that play by the rules, we’re working with."

Says Dominique Zgarka, president of Koch International (Canada), "We’ve seen a 20% reduction in sales.

'_It’s found money,'" says Miles Flood, president of the St. Clair Entertainment Group of Montreal. "Our goods are manufactured in Canada, so we’re paying out Canadian dollars and being paid largely in U.S. dollars." While Canadian-based independent labels are reaping the benefits of the low dollar in sales outside Canada, some are discovering the pitfalls of recording elsewhere. "I’m now paying a fortune to [record] in places like New York, where some of my musicians live," says Distribution Fusion III’s West, who also heads the Justin Timberlake record.

Canadian studio owners, meanwhile, cite higher recording costs out-

side Canada as a reason why Canadi-

an labels have turned increasingly to

recording their domestic rosters at home and why there’s a rising interest in recording abroad.

“We’ve always had a lot of [interna-
tional] artists inquiring about the stud-

io, but [the low dollar] has become more of an incentive for them to receive a recording done abroad," says manager of the Armoury Studios in Vancouver.

Natalie Lacasse, manager of Le Studio, in Mirim Heights, Quebec, adds, "The [low dollar] is certainly a factor when selling the studio to American bands now.

She with AEC, manager of Metallworks studio here, "With the American dollar being so expensive, we’re drawing many American [labels] recording Canadian artists, but it’s also helping us to get more Canadian major-label work as well." John Reid, PolyGram Canada chairman, agrees. "We’ve got several world-class artists here in Canada, we don’t want [artists] to work elsewhere unless a producer wants to," he says.

According to Raine Munro, manager/artist acquisition and artist development at EMI Music Canada, Kim Stockwood recorded at Metal-

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Michael Rosen of Houdoo Music Video Production says that significant savings are also being made in producing videos in Canada. "The situation of Canadian groups going on tours to America on Canadian budgets doesn’t exist anymore," he says.

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40 Years Of The Top 40

What was the highest entry by a debut artist?

Which male artist has the most Top 10 hits?

Which label has the most #1 hits?

Who has the most consecutive years with a Top 40 single?

What are the top HOT 100 “Love” songs of all time?

Which producer has the most #1 hits?

What group has the most charted hits?

What song spent the most weeks at #1?

Which female artist has the most top 40 hits?

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Tune in to 40/40 - 40 Years of the Top 40 - September 20th on VH1
Sony Confab Follows Firm's Top Year

BY ED CHRISTMAN
MIAMI BEACH—In mid-July, Sony Music held a global convention for the first time in 10 years to celebrate its best year in the company's history.

At the meeting, held July 15-17 at the Fontainebleau Hilton here, Thomas D. Mottola, president/CEO of Sony Music Entertainment, greeted attendees, who included Sony Music employees from around the world, as well as staffers from U.S. labels and the U.S. distribution company, by noting that the theme of the convention was "Whatever it takes." That theme was "recognizing the hard work each and every one of you does to make us the best in the business," Mottola said in his opening address. "And you're really going to have to do whatever it takes for us to top ourselves this year."

During the company's most recent fiscal year, which ended March 31, Sony Music generated worldwide revenue of $5.5 billion, which at the currency exchange rate at the end of the quarter equaled $3.3 billion, up 17.3% from the previous year. Mottola noted that during its banner year Sony had the biggest selling albums in the world, including the "Titanic" soundtrack and Celine Dion's "Let's Talk About Love." But he said that the company's accomplishments include rewriting the rules for soundtracks, redefining event marketing, and "establishing a strong brand position in Asia, becoming the region's No. 2 music company." In addition, he claimed that Sony created the "most popular music Web site."

For example, he said, "before the 'Titanic' soundtrack, no one thought that a score-driven soundtrack could be the biggest selling album of the year. But we knew it was possible, and we did whatever it takes to make sure it happened. Twenty-five million albums later, the rest of the industry is still scratching its head."

Danny Yarbrough, chairman of Sony Music Distribution (U.S.), began the convention by saying, "Our theme is 'Whatever it takes,' and the first thing it takes is getting us on the same page. The second thing it takes is your energy and excitement and hard work."

In an interview with Billboard, Yarbrough noted that in the past year Sony's labels and distribution company have been focusing on "marketing more effectively to the consumer to maximize hits."

He notes that the company's holiday campaign proved that in addition to in-store advertising and position-
Y+T Dance Music Thrives By Staying Dedicated To DJs And Vinyl

BY STEVE TRAIMAN
MIAMI BEACH—Todd Saunders grows up with disco as a kid in South Miami, but he didn’t always want to be a DJ. At the University of Florida in Gainesville, he ran the off-campus Vatican Club. When one of the DJs didn’t show up one night, he stepped in. “And that’s how I got into dance music,” he recalls.

Yesterday & Today Records, meanwhile, had been opened in 1984 in South Miami by Richard Ulloa. Saunders got a job there after graduating from college in 1987, and a year later he convinced Ulloa the time was right to open a DJ-oriented store on South Beach, where the club scene was just getting into swing.

Ulloa and Saunders became 50-50 partners in Yesterday & Today (Y+T) Dance Music, which opened its doors in June 1989. Located on Alton Road, just south of the fashionable and trendy Lincoln Road pedestrian mall, it was the area’s first music store. In 1990 Saunders bought out his partner, and in ’94 he took the vacant space next door to expand to the outlet’s current 1,400 square feet.

“When we opened, we sold virtually all vinyl due to our store emphasis on club and radio DJ clientele and dance music,” he notes. “We were one of the very few stores that specialized in dance vinyl with our 12-inch section. But as our customer base has expanded, we’ve been adding more CDs. There’s also a big selection of DJ accessories and equipment with the best prices in the area. Now we’re launching our new Web site that will tie everything together and take us into the 21st century.”

The store’s vinyl/CD ratio is now 70/30, and dance music makes up about 70% of the inventory. The other

Y+T Dance Music owner Todd Saunders, left, and manager Scott Williams show off a dual club-turntable layout that DJ customers use to try out vinyl platters. (Photo: Steve Traiman)

DISTRIBUTION. RED Distribution in Los Angeles names Denise Fanelli West Coast regional sales manager and promotes John Strickland to West Coast sales manager. They were, respectively, West Coast regional sales managers at EMI and San Francisco sales manager.

Ross Blanchard is named San Francisco sales manager at RED Distribution in San Francisco. He was Bay Area sales rep at Tower Records.

BMG Distribution in New York promotes Wendy Schlesinger to VP of marketing and Mari Robinson to manager of black music college marketing reps. They were, respectively, senior director of black retailing and coordinator of black music college marketing reps.

HOME VIDEO. Video Group Distributors in Clearwater, Fla., names Greg Hall GM. He was Eastern sales director at Baker & Taylor.

...the ultimate in Listening Systems.
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...the ultimate in HomeSystems.

BY STEVE TRAIMAN
MIAMI BEACH—Todd Saunders grows up with disco as a kid in South Miami, but he didn’t always want to be a DJ. At the University of Florida in Gainesville, he ran the off-campus Vatican Club. When one of the DJs didn’t show up one night, he stepped in. “And that’s how I got into dance music,” he recalls.

Yesterday & Today Records, meanwhile, had been opened in 1984 in South Miami by Richard Ulloa. Saunders got a job there after graduating from college in 1987, and a year later he convinced Ulloa the time was right to open a DJ-oriented store on South Beach, where the club scene was just getting into swing.

Ulloa and Saunders became 50-50 partners in Yesterday & Today (Y+T) Dance Music, which opened its doors in June 1989. Located on Alton Road, just south of the fashionable and trendy Lincoln Road pedestrian mall, it was the area’s first music store. In 1990 Saunders bought out his partner, and in ’94 he took the vacant space next door to expand to the outlet’s current 1,400 square feet.

“When we opened, we sold virtually all vinyl due to our store emphasis on club and radio DJ clientele and dance music,” he notes. “We were one of the very few stores that specialized in dance vinyl with our 12-inch section. But as our customer base has expanded, we’ve been adding more CDs. There’s also a big selection of DJ accessories and equipment with the best prices in the area. Now we’re launching our new Web site that will tie everything together and take us into the 21st century.”

The store’s vinyl/CD ratio is now 70/30, and dance music makes up about 70% of the inventory. The other

Y+T Dance Music owner Todd Saunders, left, and manager Scott Williams show off a dual club-turntable layout that DJ customers use to try out vinyl platters. (Photo: Steve Traiman)

DISTRIBUTION. RED Distribution in Los Angeles names Denise Fanelli West Coast regional sales manager and promotes John Strickland to West Coast sales manager. They were, respectively, West Coast regional sales managers at EMI and San Francisco sales manager.

Ross Blanchard is named San Francisco sales manager at RED Distribution in San Francisco. He was Bay Area sales rep at Tower Records.

BMG Distribution in New York promotes Wendy Schlesinger to VP of marketing and Mari Robinson to manager of black music college marketing reps. They were, respectively, senior director of black retailing and coordinator of black music college marketing reps.

HOME VIDEO. Video Group Distributors in Clearwater, Fla., names Greg Hall GM. He was Eastern sales director at Baker & Taylor.
SONY CONFAB FOLLOWS FIRM’S TOP YEAR

(Continued from page 53)

with Whitney Houston.

Bruce Springsteen made a surprise appearance at the convention. Introducing the "soundtrack and soul of Columbia for the last 25 years," Springsteen talked about his upcoming six-CD set, which will include 100 previously unreleased tracks and 40 songs. He noted that many times during his career people wondered why he was taking so long to prepare his next album. "For two months my solo and band set answers that question. "Often I cut two or three more songs than needed for an album," he said. He added that the songs didn't make his albums "were worked very hard on and were either completed or brought to near completion." Three tracks were played from the album, including one that could be titled "I Want To Be Where The Bands Are."

In conclusion, Springsteen thanked Sony for helping him do his job. He said, "You have been my mainline to help me reach the people I wanted to connect with."

Despite the strong showing, the Columbia presentation included Annou, Jermaine Dupri & Co., Adam Cohen, Kenny Lattimore, the Afghan Whigs, Tal Wilkenfeld and Biracial Be. and ended with the Black Crowes.

During the Epic Records Group presentation, chairman David R. Geffen noted that last time the company met for a convention, 1998, "Epic Records was creating a new chapter in a history that began in 1954. He noted that in '94, 550 Music, the Work Group, and Sony Wonder did not exist. Also, 'Celine Dion hadn't yet earned a platinum album or a No. 1 single; Gloria Estefan hadn't yet won a Grammy Award, Pearl Jam's debut album was being released, and Rage Against The Machine had just released its debut album."

Since then, the company has developed global distribution careers for those artists and has broken Fiona Apple, Ben Folds Five, Oates, Oletta, Wagner, Run-DMC, Black Eyed Peas, and E-The Band. Live performances during the Epic Records Group presentation included appearances by Dolly Parton, Who, Neil Young, and Ringo Starr, who helped introduce the Ministry of Sound album. In addition to the daytime performances, nighttime performances included showings of Giselle, Sha "Kira, DLG, Dicky Dixie, Lauryn Hill, Maxwell, Des'ree, John Mellencamp, and the Blue Sky Boys and a one-act appearance by Estefan.

Folly Anthony, president of the Epic Records Group, and Glue both noted the contribution of Sony's international arm to Epic's success. After the presentation, Anthony said, "We've been the beneficiaries of tremendous international co-operation from our global partners. It's our turn
to repay Sony. The music you've heard today will travel the globe."

During the international presentations, Jimmy Martin picked in with a live performance. The same day, Sony Music Nashville strung out live performances by its artists Deryl Dodd, Shara Petrose, and Bruce and Charlie Robison. And after that, John Williams performed during the classical presentations.

During the Legacy presentation, the company hawking upcoming releases, including a two-CD set from Marvin Gaye, one of which features alternative takes from the recording of the "Midnight Love" album, which contains the single "Sexual Healing." Among other titles, Legacy will release Miller Davis' "The Complete Bachelors Sessions," a four-CD package featuring additional previously unreleased tracks, and Gladys Knight & the Pips' "Live At The Roxy," recorded in 1980.

Of Sony's international arm, Motola said during his opening address that Sony has "made this the most stable management team in the industry, which gives us a tremendous competitive edge. It allows us to have consistency and continuity. And because we are part of a company that uses Sony, we can take the long view and plan and implement far-reaching strategies that benefit our artists and our business."

Motola concluded by noting that Sony's people are "the brightest, most productive, and creative people in the entire music business. You've proven time and time again that you can do whatever it takes."
Can The Chains Maintain Their Momentum In Comp-Store Gains?

As I write this, the end of July is in sight, marking the first year of the turnaround experienced by retailers in particular and the music industry in general.

Sure, signs of the industry's rejuvenation were there all through the first half of 1997, but it kicked into high gear last July when merchants started reporting double-digit comparable-store gains. From July through the end of the year, each successive month saw higher comp-store gains for those that reported monthly. Those reporting quarterly also reflected the robust health of their business in their comparable-store numbers.

I don't need to report to you how the stock market responded to the change in the environment. Let's just say some music chain stocks are high-flying, while others are showing significant appreciation.

Now, the publicly traded chains will be facing their first challenge. From now through the end of the year, they are up against some pretty significant increases. It is unlikely they will be able to duplicate last year's performance, which benefited by the weak numbers generated by chains in 1996. But if the numbers are not as strong, there is no reason to panic. If the chains can maintain positive comparable-store gains for the remainder of the year, then they are doing their job.

So far, indications are that in July most chains experienced comparable-store gains in the mid-single-digit range, which, in my view, are some pretty solid numbers. So Wall Street players shouldn't start sweating it.

And the envelope please: Tower Records had a conference in June (it actually calls it a party) and gave out store performance awards and employee awards. In the U.S. (including the chain's single store in Canada), the store of the year winners were the following:

In the superstore category was store No. 108 in Mountain View, Calif.; in the large category was store No. 834 in La Jolla, Calif.; in the medium category was store No. 814 in Blossom Hill, Calif.; and in the small category was store No. 887 in East Lansing, Mich.

In Europe, the award went to store No. 125 in London (Camden); in Latin America, store No. 707 in Mexico City (Zona Rosa) won; in Japan, the winner was the Omeda store in Osaka; and in the rest of Asia, store No. 783 in Tieu, South Korea, was the winner.

Wayne Ennes, who oversees San Francisco's Bay Area, won as U.S. regional manager of the year, while the U.S. regional team award was won.

(Continued on page 58)
Navarre’s CEO Has Something To Sing About At Sales Meet

A NEW NAVARRE: Let’s face it—there aren’t many people who would pay money to hear Eric Paulson sing.

However, when Paulson, chairman/CEO of New Hope, Minn.-based Navarre Corp., kicked off his July 23 address at the Navarre music division’s annual sales meeting by enthusiastically singing an off-key song, his salespeople howled and applauded as if they were hearing a musical superstar.

“What a difference a year makes,” Paulson crowed, to the tune of “What A Difference A Day Made.” And, in fact, the Navarre music division—which met July 21-25 at the Hyatt Regency in Minneapolis—was very different from the one that convened a year before at the Minnetonka Marriott in Minnetonka, Minn.

At this time last year, Navarre was coming off a fiscal year in which it reported a net loss of $6.1 million. Music had accounted for only a quarter of Navarre’s fiscal ‘97 sales, with computer products accounting for 76%. The music division had recently been restructured and would soon see another reconfiguration, entailing the elimination of a couple of long-term employees and the return of a couple of managers to field sales status. Following the meeting in Minnetonka, some of Navarre’s key labels exited the company.

However, while Paulson and other Navarre executives acknowledged the difficulties the company faced in the year just passed, the ‘98 sales confab found a staff that radiated confidence. The consensus was that Navarre has turned the corner and is well-positioned for the future as an indie music distributor.

Beyond slashing its losses in the ‘98 fiscal year that ended in March, and even showing a slim profit for the just-reported first quarter of the ‘99 fiscal year (vs. a loss of $1 million for the same quarter the previous year), Navarre has bulked up its label roster.

The theme of the ‘98 sales convention, which also celebrated Navarre’s 16th year in business, was “Nobody Does It Better.” This wasn’t just a tepid tip of the hat to super-agent James Bond: “Nobody Does It Better” is also the title of Breakaway Records’ top 20 single by Nate Dagg and Warren G, which is distributed by Navarre. (Nate Dagg’s Breakaway album “G-Funk Classics” hit the street the day before the convention began.)

Paulson—who also displayed his dubious talents as a rapper during his presentation—told his troops, “We want [people] to know that Nate Dagg is only one of the top-quality artists now being distributed by Navarre.

York’s Glenn Naples, who joined the company in early 1998, triumphed in the new category of “rookie of the year.”

Navarre Label Notes: Several labels offered live showcases during the convention. Un-D-nyable’s R&B diva-in-training Dejah and vocal group Entourage smoked the house at a lunchtime performance; many were deeply impressed by a duet from Dejah and Entourage’s Slick. Soundings Of The Planet’s guitarist Scott Huckaby and pianist Tom Barbas appeared, accompanied by label topper Dean Evenson on flute. Punch’s Ned Massey and Surreal’s Magic Love Fountain rocked the house at Kieran’s Pub. Awards banquet performers included American Gramophone’s pianist Steven Anderson, Starbound’s dance shouter Sabrina Johnson, and a posse of Breakaway rap artists, including chart-topper Daz Dillinger. The confab climaxed July 25 with an intimate performance at Darfin Studios by J-Bird’s Billy Squier, who previewed his acoustic album “Happy Blue,” due Sept. 15.

American Gramophone’s president, Chip Davis, announced that “The Christmas Angel,” a new Mannheim Steamroller seasonal album featuring both old and newly recorded Yuletide material, will be supported by a Dec. 19 NBC-TV special starring ice skater Dorothy Hamill. On May 1, 1999, the label will release “Fresh Air 8” as a five-channel DVD. . . . Artists Only! GM Dale Ashley is producing a new album for the label with Declarations of Independents’ favorite singer, Jimmy Scott, for release Oct. 6.

Punk-oriented Triple X Records will debut at Navarre with a solo album by ex-Nymphs vocalist Inger Lorre.
by the mid-Atlantic team, led by Kevin Ferreter, regional manager; Despina Panagoulias, video; David Kowalski, books; and Koly Dumas, music.

In video, Jane Klvee, who oversees Hawaii and the Northwest region, won the regional manager award. In books, the award was won by store No. 323 in Citrus Heights, Calif. The regional manager award went to Brian Murphy, who oversees the Southwest and North Central regions.

NEXT ENVELOPE: At the Sony Music Entertainment Convention, held in mid-July in Miami Beach (see story, page 53), there were a number of distribution staffers and teams who were honored for their performance during 1997-98.

Branch of the year was won by the Northwest branch. In addition, each music division awarded its own branch of the year awards. The Southwest branch picked up awards from black music and Nashville. The New York branch was picked by classical, Epic, Columbia, and Sony Wonder/Sony Music Video. The Los Angeles branch was tabbed by 560 Music and the Work Group.

Individual awards were also presented at the convention. Sales representative of the year awards went to Anne Brown in the Boston office, which is part of the North Central branch; Bobby Leech in the New York branch; Paul Kesicki in the Midwest branch; Steve Kaminetz in the Southeast branch; and Sonje Jones in the Southwest branch.

John Moore in the mid-Atlantic branch won the Nashville sales rep of the year award, while Val Coorlas, in the Cleveland office in the North Central branch, won the traditional award.

The field merchandising representative of the year awards went to Ken Lamb in the mid-Atlantic branch, Allison Adair in the Southeast branch, Aaron Maruna in the Cleveland sales office in the North Central branch, Vicky Leonardo-Ault in the Midwest branch, and David Chaudry in the Northwest branch.

The progressive music marketing manager of the year award went to Brett Greenberg in the Southeast branch, while Leigh O’Brien in the mid-Atlantic branch won the marketing coordinator award, and Manny Alexander of the Southeast branch won the urban marketing rep award. The college representative awards went to Lee Kuriso in the Los Angeles branch and Don Wilkinson in the Boston office of the North Central branch.

BUYING TRENDS
(Continued from page 53)

The third group that video retailers likes is “the Hi-Fi Bachelors.” They’re the youngest of all the categories (26.5 years old on average), the male (69%), and, as their name implies, the least married (9%). Although they make up only 19% of total renters, they ring up 23% of all rentals. These are loyal customers—40% of them rent at least one video a week.

Then there are the two classifications that video retailers are not so happy about.

One group is called “Cultured Ladies,” which seems to be an unlikely name since just 72% of them are female. These are not the youngest consumers—84% are over 40. Some 71% of them are married, but only 3% have kids in the house. They make up 21% of all renters, which isn’t bad, but only 14% of all rentals, which are when they go to the store, they tend to leave with a classic film.

Then there are “the Disinterested Gentlemen,” who as far as video retailers are concerned are the most hopeless of all consumers. It’s not quite fair to call them “gentlemen” (gentlepersons, perhaps), since only 6% are male. But they are the oldest group Yankelovich classified, with an average age of 51. They make up only 15% of all renters, but what’s worse is that they account for just 5% of all rentals.

What these pre-aged folks do like to do, more than any of the other groups, is subscribe to digital broadcast satellite services, which probably explains why they are not seen much in the video store.

In presenting these findings at a seminar last month, Jason Kramer, a senior associate of Yankelovich Partners, delivered a hopeful note when he said the research indicated that “when Gen-Xers [18-34] grow older, we expect them to rent more videos than their parents.”

And so video retailers have their fingers crossed that these Xers don’t age into satellite-loving Disinterested Gentlemen.
Adult Fare Lends A Boost To DVD
Retailers Are Less Reluctant To Put Titles On Shelves

BY EARL PAIGE

LAS VEGAS—Mark DVD with an X. One little-recognized factor in DVD's high profile this year at the Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA) Convention is how adult programming has super-charged the new format, aiding its introduction.

Meanwhile, adult is finding new friends at retail, a marked change from a time when Blockbuster pulled Playboy titles from its shelves. The VSDA and adult vendors may be going their separate ways (Billboard, Aug. 1), but not because local censors are pressuring chains to clean up—and clean out—their inventories.

Show attendees took note of the lessoned seminar emphasis on legislation and legal happenings, though the Free Speech Coalition was on hand just in case, according to chairman Jeffrey Douglas, a Santa Monica, Calif., attorney. Following the lead of Tower Records/Video/Books, the Motion Picture Assn. of America, and the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA), Douglas helped kill California legislation that would have mandated separate adult sections in stores.

The genre is still something of a pariah on Main Street. As Douglas noted at VSDA, the California bills would have allowed “several cities and counties to join together to zone adult businesses off into some remote corner of a broad geographic area.” Adult product has had its own VSDA ghetto for years, a curtained-off area at the back of the main exhibit hall.

However, the situation is different at the grass-roots level. Association chapters like the one in Wisconsin are giving porn more prominence. Wisconsin canceled its annual fall trade show this year in favor of an exclusively adult event in the spring, according to Tom Chutinski, a long-time chapter activist and president of Nord Video in Milwaukee.

Monty Winters, VSDA board member and architect of the nation’s VSDA annual Myrtle Beach, S.C., gala in August, says that adult will have a greater presence at Sun Splash. Earlier, the Southern Florida chapter hosted an adults-only seminar. More recent.

Three Vivid Interactive performers, Heather Hunter, Janine, and Dyanna Lauren (from left), greet fans at a Virgin Megastore DVD and tape promo. Of Las Vegas during the Video Software Dealers Assn. mid-July convention. Those are security guards, not real cops, fending an arrest. (Photo: Earl Paige)

Southern California VSDA teamed with Vivid for an event, noted chapter president Matt Feinstein. VSDA will watch the further mainstreaming of adult at the East Coast Video Show in October in Atlantic City, N.J., always a major venue, and at the newly created Adult Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles next July. Meanwhile, suppliers are already eyeing other trade shows with much bigger attendance than the 10,000-12,000 who normally troop through the VSDA exhibits.

(Continued on page 63)

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They've Seen The Light. The three honorees of the annual Vision Fund Awards pose with outgoing fund president James Ringwood, top center. With him, from left, are David Cuyler, president of Deluxe Video Services; Larry Finley, a consultant and founder of the International Recording Media Assn.; and Louis Feola, president of Universal Family & Home Entertainment Production.
Kathy Smith Signs With Sony; Mystery Machine Rides Again

Chapter Three: After 15 years of aerobics and "feeling the burn," Kathy Smith is still excited about making workout tapes.

"This market needs to be creative, because there's no cookie-cutter approach to making videos anymore," says the 46-year-old fitness queen. "The fun part is I get feedback from people who use my videos."

Smith is writing the third chapter of her video career, having inked a seven-year distribution deal with Sony Music Video after stint at long-defunct Media Home Entertainment and WarnerVision (Billboard, July 25).

The agreement reunites her with Sony Wonder senior VP Wendy Moss, who worked with Smith during their stints at Media Home Entertainment, WarnerVision, and Amiga. Russell Kamalski, president of Kathy Smith Lifestyles, also worked with Moss in that period.

While it may feel like old-home week for Smith, making a profit in the exercise market is a whole new ball game. So, it helps to have a proven name. "Others have come and gone," says Kamalski, "but Kathy has great product and a loyal fan base. I think she'll just grow. The good thing about her is that she never leaves people out."

According to Kamalski, Smith's audience differs from her main competitor, Denise Austin, because Austin's tapes are less expensive. "The lower price point makes them geared to a different type of workout person," many of Austin's tapes are around $10 suggested list; Smith's are around $15.

It's been two years since a new Smith tape has been released. But Sony Music will quickly remedy that situation with two titles in the "Time Saver Workout" series that are scheduled to reach stores Nov. 3. The titles, "Lifting Weight To Lose Weight" and "Cardio Fat Burning," are each listed at $14.98.

In addition, four catalog cassette tapes—"Functionally Fit: Lower Body Firming," "Functionally Fit: Peak Fat Burning," "New Yoga," and "Power Step Workout"—will each get a fourth-quarter push.

Smith has 22 titles in her catalog. Six are being retired to focus on her best-selling tapes. Meanwhile, the fitness star is looking to ink a new deal for her ninth-title audio line of walking tapes, now distributed by WarnerBrothers Video to books. "They're hard for consumers to find," Kamalski says. "We'd like to try to broaden distribution."

But Smith's top priority is making new videos. "It's the corner-stone of her business and her passion," Kamalski says. "And we've carved out a niche."

In other Sony news, "Elmo Saves Christmas" will be supported by a cross-promo with Arby's, the title, to be in stores Sept. 1 for $12.95, will be featured in 2,000 fast-food outlets beginning in mid-November.

More than 1.5 million Arby's "Adventure Meals" will include a cup featuring Elmo, Cookie Monster, Ernie, and a picture of the video box. Other in-store merchandising includes an "Elmo Saves Christmas" Adventure Meal bag.


"Zombie Island" will be supported by cross-promo partners Wendy's, 1,800-COLLECT, Franco-American, and Warner sister companies, including the Cartoon Network. It's hosting a Scooby-Doo marathon on Halloween.

Godzilla EXTRAS: Columbia TriStar Home Video has put finishing touches on the extras to include on the "Godzilla" DVD. Available day-and-date with the VHS version Nov. 3 and priced at $24.95, the disc will have 10 features. Visual-effects supervisor Volkmar Engel will provide audio commentary describing how he and his team made Godzilla's invasion of New York so realistic. Other elements include the movie's theatrical teasers and trailer, a photo gallery, cast filmography, director and producer biographies, and a making-of featurette.

For historical perspective, Columbia is adding the trailers for "Godzilla And Mothra: The Battle For Earth" and "Godzilla Vs. Gigan," both have been available from Columbia since May.

More Frank: CBS Video will add "Frank Sinatra: Off The Record" to the growing list of Sinatra product hitting the market.

The title is a 64-minute interview with Walter Cronkite done in '65. Blue Eyes back in '65. Street date is Aug. 25, and suggested list is $14.98. Columbia TriStar and MGM Home Entertainment have also announced special Sinatra offerings (Shelf Talk, Billboard, Aug. 1).
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Frosted Cheerios

General Mills will deliver 60 million consumer impressions on millions of Frosted Cheerios boxes and 250 GRPs via a national TV campaign beginning in September.

First Brands will support Lost In Space with a $5 mail-in rebate offer and a national FSI circulated to 4.5 million households.

JVC will deliver more than $4.5 million in national print media, in-pack and POS exposure from September through December.

Uniden will deliver more than $3 million in national print media, on-pack and POS exposure from September through December.

Space Camp will award tuitions to winners of national sweepstakes.

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GHOSTS N' WITCHES: "Casper Meets Wendy," the second direct-to-video title from 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment featuring Casper the Friendly Ghost, flies into stores Sept. 22. The first in the series, "Casper: A Spirited Beginning" (conceived as a sequel to the 1996 theatrical release "Casper"), has shipped more than 5.5 million units worldwide, Fox reports.

Tie-ins with Hershey's, General Mills, and Cart's Jr./Hardie's are among the marketing plans for "Casper Meets Wendy." Consumers can receive a $5 mail-in rebate by purchasing three of Hershey's candy products and two General Mills "monstrous" cookies.

The promo will be featured in 50,000 General Mills in-store Halloween displays, $32 million Hershey's free-standing newspaper inserts, and 100,000 Hershey's point-of-purchase displays. A coupon good toward a "Casper Meets Wendy" Halloween Kids Meal at 2,500 Carl's Jr. and Hardee's restaurants will be packed with the video.

Other promotional partners include Sound Source, Brunswick Bikes, GT Publishing, and Valley Forge Banners. Additional consumers who purchase "Casper Meets Wendy" as well as "Casper: A Spirited Beginning" are eligible for a $2 mail-in rebate. Details will be found in each "Casper Meets Wendy" tape.

Fox Home Entertainment is also backing a $6 advertising campaign targeting TV, radio, print, and outdoor displays such as bus panels, plus its World Wide Web site. Combining live action and computer-animated ghost effects, as did its predecessors, "Casper Meets Wendy" concerns the unorthodox friendship of Casper the ghost and Wendy the witch—which wouldn't be so absurd because, according to the movie, ghosts and witches are natural enemies. It stars Cathy Moriarty (who was featured in the theatrical "Casper"), Shelley Duval and Barry Corbin as Wendy's aunts, the Witches; and George Hamilton as the wickedly tanned warlock Desmond Spellman.

Also in the works for time in Halloween is a trio of "Goosebumps" titles, each $9.98. "Werewolf Skin Parts 1 & 2," "One Day At Horrorland Parts 1 & 2," and "The Id of The Living Dummy and Old Story" arrive in stores Sept. 15. The new "Goosebumps" will be promoted on 10 million General Mills packages. Packed with each cassette are coupons good toward purchase of General Mills' Fruit Roll-Ups, Gushers, String Thing, and Fruit by the Foot snacks. Another tie-in: a sweepstakes with the grand prize of a trip for four to see Feld Entertainment's "Goosebumps Live On Stage."

REINDEER GAMES: Five minutes of original footage have been restored to holiday favorite "Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer," which leads a six-pack of Christmas-themed titles released Sept. 1 by Golden Books Family Entertainment Home Video & Audio. The stop-motion animated program, featuring the voices of

by Moira McCormick

Danny and Mario Thomas, was first broadcast on TV in 1964.

"Frosty The Snowman," "The Little Drummer Boy," "Cricket On The Hearth," "A Charlie Brown Christmas," "Town," and "Frosty Returns" make up the rest of Golden Books' Holiday Classics Collection. Each is 30 to 50 minutes in length and lists for $12.98. Creating promotional partners include M&M/Mars, LCI International, and Hallmark. More than 13 million packages of specially marked M&M/Mars miniature candies will contain leaflets that are as a full-color, numbered print inside, which consumers can call to guess which Holiday Classics character ate Santa's miniature.

For four prizes, four packs of $10,000 shopping sprees will be awarded, along with 250,000 other goodies. A prepaid "Robert" phone card from LCI International valued at $29.85 in bill is included with each copy of "Rudolph." Each "Frosty Returns" will have a specially created Hallmark card.

by Moira McCormick

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ADULT FARE

(Continued from page 59)

First and foremost is the International Consumer Electronics Show in January here. Adult exhibitors moved to vastly expanded space in the Sands Hotel two years ago and are expecting a significant retailer turnout in 1998.

Of potentially greater interest is the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) conference, held every March. Two years ago in Orlando, Fla., Vivid became the first adult supplier to appear at a NARM show, and the company had the place all to itself again this year in San Francisco. NARM's next stop is in Las Vegas at the Convention Center; where more X-rated vendors and their wares could be on display.

It was evident during VSDA that music-oriented chains have taken to adult DVD titles with an enthusiasm that's surprising, according to John Allison, Los Angeles rep for Bayside Entertainment Distribution, a division of Tower.

"DVD is blurring the line so much that there is going to be less and less reluctance by stores to carry adult," Allison noted. Tower has added X-rated DVD titles in 78 of its U.S. outlets, while Bayside aggressively pursues other accounts.

A Vivid DVD promotion held at the Virgin Megastore in the Caesars Palace mall during the VSDA Convention was further indication of adult's new role. The event featured product endcaps at the top of the store escalator; regular in-store announcements; coverage by Time magazine and local TV stations; and trailers on monitors throughout the outlet.

This kind of exposure is what video stores have to start doing if they're going to grab adult sales, says Harvey Hoffner of distributor Baker & Taylor Video—even in Texas, Hoffner's home base. In a state historically so unfriendly to adult that the category was absent from the 1995 VSDA Convention, in Dallas, Hoffner is coordinating a DVD program for all Baker branches.

Perhaps more impressive, Amari-based Hastings has started carrying adult DVD titles "in certain of our markets," says Dennis McGill, VP of finance/CFO. Now calling itself "Your entertainment superstore," Hastings hopes that the genre will enhance a broadened product array.

"Even now 60% of our customers are shopping all five departments on each visit."

But, he cautions, "adult is not for every market we are in."

The DVD adult gusher, ironically, has hurt the front runners, says adult vendor VCA executive Marty Turkel, "because everyone is jumping in with product." Sales have been "a little slow" compared with the days when Vivid and VCA were alone among suppliers.

And those were the days, Tower, which bought 300 copies each of VCA's first releases, racked up DVD sales of $5.5 million for the fourth quarter of 1997. Adult titles helped offset a $6 million loss from dwindling laserdisc volume.

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Music Of Your Life Gets A Second Wind

BY JUDITH GROSS

Satellite delivery, aggressive mass marketing, and a renewed interest in the romantic sounds of the pre-baby boom generation have transformed the syndicated Music Of Your Life (MYL) format from a strictly big-band, nostalgia format heard on a few niche stations to a radio trend breathing new life into stations of every market size.

Since MYL founder Al Ham formed a partnership with former radio station owner/consultant Kerry Fink two years ago, abandoning a syndicated tape delivery in favor of satellite, the format has blossomed from four stations to 114, now reaching markets like Chicago; Cincinnati; Detroit; Long Island, N.Y.; and Washington, D.C. MYL is also carried on 150 cable systems with access to six million homes.

There's no better example of the format's growth than at MYL's flagship KGIL, Los Angeles. The station had floundered through a variety of ill-fated formats, including all-news and all-Beatles, and it had exited itself into Arbitron oblivion for more than two years. That is, until it began MYL on March 2 of this year.

"Even though we began the format in the last month of the ratings period, it was enough to put KGIL back in the book again this year," notes Chuck Southcott, MYL's PD and afternoon drive host. Fink—who decided the satellite delivery was a must in order to compete with services such as Westwood One's AM Only and ABC Radio's Stardust—saw the format's tremendous potential 2 1/2 years ago, when he put MYL on Atlanta's WCX-FM, a station he owned at the time.

"We went from losing 15,000 a month to making a $5,000 operating profit within 90 days," Fink says. "He explains that in addition to availability via satellite, MYL's renewed energy comes from a complex mix of several factors, including the remaining of older recordings and the format's repositioning to a younger audience.

The format broke beyond the nostalgia crowd—who remember these songs from their youth—with the resurgence of swing and ballroom dancing among the college and postcollege set and with movies like "Titanic" and "L.A. Confidential," Fink says. "Now a whole new generation is discovering this music for the first time."

That's why MYL's self-sculpted image positions its playlist as "the classical music of this century," with Fink, Southcott, and Ham drawing a parallel between the across-the-board appeal of traditional classical music and the longevity of artists like Tony Bennett, Nat King Cole, and, of course, Frank Sinatra.

One of the other strategies MYL has pursued, according to Southcott, is gradually shifting toward more current music, such as Linda Ronstadt, Rita Coolidge, and the Association.

(Continued on page 70)

Country Radio Loses Listenership In '98 Survey

BY JENNY LAND

NEW YORK—The boom in country radio seems to be tapering into a small bust, according to the 1998 Study of Radio Formats released by Intercoast, which profiled 23 primary format classifications.

Losin' 10.5% of its Monday-Friday adult (18-plus) listeners since last year, country gave up its No. 1 format spot to news/talk and settled for third place behind AC in terms of listenership.

However, even news/talk, which posted the highest number of nationwide listeners at 38,161,000, experienced a dip compared with last year. In fact, radio listening experienced a surprising overall drop of about 6% among adults.

Despite the decline, radio continues to saturate all demographics, reaching 95.4% of the adult population.

Maintaining a tighter grip on last year’s market share, news/talk was able to move out of its No. 3 spot and inch ahead of both country and AC. Posting the smallest dip within the top five since last year, news/talk lost only 3% of its 1997 listening base of Monday-Friday adults (18-plus), compared with the total 6% drop. Despite an 8.8% drop in those listeners, AC held on to its No. 2 slot with 36,002,000 listeners, while country followed close behind with 35,900,000 listeners.

Other formats in the top five included top 40, which held on to its No. 4 slot with 20,327,000 listeners, and oldies radio, which held on to fifth place with 20,279,000 listeners. Moving from last year’s eighth-place spot to No. 6 this year, the religious format was one of only two genres that didn’t post a decline; the other was R&B.

Capping off the top 15 were the formats Intercoast classified as classic rock, album rock, urban contemporary, classical, modern rock, all-news, new AC/jazz, alternative, and nostalgia/big band/MOR.

Other tidbits: Among college graduates, professional or managerial staff, and households earning more than $75,000, the top three slots

(Continued on page 70)
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**Radio Programming**

**MUSIC OF YOUR LIFE GETS A SECOND WIND**

(Continued from page 67)

**Radio**

**Disposible Income is Impressive**

"It was tough at first, but it's been a matter of educating our advertisers," notes John Bennett, operations manager of WLUX Long Island, who adds that the station's disciplines are strong after it switched to MYL this year.

"The demo that's growing the fastest in this area is 40- and 50-year-olds, and when you look at the disposable income of this group, it's impressive," says Bennett. "Now the advertisers are starting to notice this as well."

"On a national level, we see it starting to be taken seriously by advertisers," says Fink. "NBC News wanted to pump their 50-plus viewing, so they came to us. And J. Walter Thompson has created a marketing group just for MYL, a 50- to 60-year-old crowd. Targeting that under-served demo has helped MYL stations gain a newfound respect from advertisers who have started to realize the buying potential of the over-50 age group."

**Country Radio Loses Listenership in Survey**

(Continued from page 67)

Remained in the same hands. However, for talk/walk posted by Gary Jones, and sales work among technical, clerical, and sales workers, who preferred AC, followed by country.

Although both men and women listeners also agreed on the top three radio formats, they differed on the order of preference. While men preferred news/talk, women preferred AC. Meanwhile, country placed second among both men and women.

AC did a better job of bridging the gender gap. In the 18-24, 12- and 25-54 age brackets, adult contemporary was the most listened to. While country took second place in both the 18-24 and 25-54 brackets, top 40 barely beat out country for the second place slot in the 18-34 category. News/talk, however, showed its appeal to the older crowd by moving third in the 18-49 and 25-54 brackets.

Additionally, the alternative, pop, and modern rock formats posted a strong following from the young, earning more than two-thirds of their listeners from the 18-34 bracket. The 25-54 bracket, however, reflected diverse taste in music formats, representing more than half of the listeners for all alternative安东尼·О, AOR, rock & roll, classic rock, classical, country, easy listening, ethnic, golden oldies, new AC/jazz, soft contemporary, Spanish, urban contemporary, and country stations. MYL's audiences (45+) represented most of the listeners for full-service and nostalgia/big band formats.

Regional lines divided radio audiences in terms of format preferences. Despite country's overall decline, its roots held strong in the South, where it garnered the most listeners. In fact, almost half of country's listeners come from the South. With a third-place showing in both the Midwest and West and a fifth-place showing in the Northeast, country also maintained a following in the other three regions.

News/talk, however, dominated audience share, and a majority of the listeners preferred the top five formats in both the Northeast and the West, which combined accounted for about half of its listeners, news/talk also took the second place slot in the Midwest and South.

However, news/talk and country aren't necessarily exclusive favorites for listeners; they also share a large crossover audience. While 20% of country listeners also follow news/talk formats, 23% of news/talk listeners follow country formats as well. The overlap between the two formats is large, with a significant crossover from country to alternative, as well as from alternative to new AC/jazz.

The ubiquitous Ed McMahon and Music of Your Life host Chuck Southcott are shown at the Museum of Television and Radio in Beverly Hills, Calif., taping an interview for the syndicated format's "Celebrity Series" program.

*Music of Your Life is the only brand-name, trademarked radio format in existence," Fink says. "When it's done right, the listeners and advertisers identify with it. We relate to our stations on a personal level and train them in ways to tie the music to their advertisers. There are even MYL listener clubs. People tend to get passionate about this music."

"People who listen to this music are more likely to have a strong identification with the station that plays it and thus the advertisers," notes Art Stanler, GM of WAZR-FM Woodstock, Vt., which sends MYL out into its station, Big Fish Radio. "We even had one couple who decided to settle right here, they say, because of our station playing MYL."

**celebrity Talent**

Other affiliates are drawn to MYL's celebrity talent lineup, evident in its slogan: "Where the stars play their cards." Wink Martindale and Gary Owens are both part of MYL's regular broadcast day. Singers Pat Boone and Patti Page are heard on weekends, and MYL's "Celebrity Weekend" show brings the voices of such music and acting talents as Steve Allen, Lou Rawls, Glen Campbell, Shirley MacLaine, and Gary Owens.

Of course, the stars came out in force the week following the death of the format's cornerstone artist. When Sinatra died May 14, MYL suspended its regular programming to broadcast 36 hours of his music interspersed with comments from the likes of Tony Bennett, Bob Hope, Johnny Mathis, Rosemary Clooney, Andy Williams, and Maggie Newton, among others.

The focus on Sinatra's music and news coverage of tributes such as MYL's have helped bring about a resurgence in album sales and interest in his music along with that of his contemporaries. Fink is convinced this growth extends well beyond a one-time fluke.

"Our special Sinatra tribute reached a much wider audience than we usually do," he says. "It made many more people aware of who we are bringing this music to a new listenership and how we are preserving and promoting it. And it made all of us realize how artists like Sinatra—and others—truly transcend time."

Helping die her celebrity status following Sinatra's death shows signs of growing even more," agrees Southcott. "This music is going to be around for a very long time."
Eagle-Eye Cherry, son of jazz musician Don and half-brother of Neneh, is used to running from country to country for music. My dad used to take the whole family from festival to festival in a camper van. It was a very hippie lifestyle, Cherry says. "There were moments when I was young when I wished we were like all other Swedish families with a Volvo. Now, I realize it made us very close as a family and I wouldn’t trade my upbringing for the world." Despite his inbred wanderlust, touring has a few downs to go with the ups. "I have to constantly leave my girlfriend at home on my record duties, and the phone feels like it’s ringing off the hook lately," the Stockholm resident says. "Everyone goes through similar traumatic separations with loved ones, from salesmen to musicians to convicted." Cherry speaks for every man when he sums up the desperate emotions of the night before exiting in "Save Tonight," the bittersweet ballad current at No. 2 on Modern Rock Tracks. "You want the last night to be perfect. The single describes what I need for romance—wine, candlelight, a fireplace. If you make it memorable, you can survive away time."

Before Cherry takes his Ben Harper-esque vocals and verse/chorus/verse rock on the U.S. road, he has booked some quiet time with his partner in California’s Napa Valley. As Cherry begins to turn a musical legacy into a name for himself, he realizes personal time will be cut short. "It's unbelievable the way things are moving. I've surpassed my expectations, so it's Christmas from here on out," he says. "I can't complain, and I'm actually excited to share my music with others who never understood how I could put so much time and energy into an album and then not want to promote it when it comes out.
Pianist/Producer Jim Brickman Is Becoming Cornerstone Of Adult Radio

Brickman's latest project, on RCA, marks Jim Brickman's third studio album under the label, following A Little Bit Stronger and This I Believe. The project features Brickman's signature style of heartfelt ballads and acoustic guitar, with guest appearances from luminaries like Kenny G, Darius Rucker, and Taylor Swift. The album has received critical acclaim and has been nominated for several awards. Brickman's music has been featured in films, TV shows, and commercials, and he has sold over 30 million albums worldwide. Brickman is known for his abilities as a pianist, singer, and songwriter, and his music often touches on themes of love, hope, and inspiration. The album is a testament to Brickman's talent and his continued success in the world of adult radio.
**NEW BOX WEB SITE:** With all the hoopla surrounding online commerce and its rapidly growing presence in the music industry, it was only a matter of time before the Box would extend its "video jukebox" business to the World Wide Web (Billboard Bulletin, July 23).

The box president/CEO Alan McGlade tells Billboard that the network’s revamped Web site (www.thebox.com), which will allow users to preview and request videos shown on the Box, will charge the same fees as the Box does for phone requests. The Box charges $1.99-$2.50 per call through 500 numbers, the charges vary by market. According to McGlade, the revamped Web site may be unveiled as early as August.

"We’re working out the details of how Web users will be charged," McGlade says. "It might be through credit cards or by users setting up their own charge accounts, or both." TCI Music, which owns the Box, will also revamp the Web site to include digital radio service, Digital Music Explorer.

McGlade had no comment on reports that the Liberty Media Group, TCI Music’s majority stakeholder, is in discussions to buy "Tobacco music video network MuchMusic." Liberty Media Group and MuchMusic also had no comment.

But a high-ranking MuchMusic executive says, "It’s true that Liberty Media Group is interested in buying the Network, but there hasn’t been a serious offer."
After months of speculation, Zelnick was officially named to the worldwide post July 25 (Billboard-Bulletin, July 29). Since joining BMG Entertainment this past December, says Dornemann, “I believe the globalization of the business is a strength of BMG. To integrate it even more, I wanted to have the day-to-day operations under a worldwide umbrella. I didn’t want to distinguish between international and North America.”

The advance of Zelnick affects the reporting line to BMG Entertainment. International president/CEO Rudi Gassner, 55, who previously was accountable directly to Dornemann will now report to Zelnick. Gassner’s division has made a significant contribution—some would say the most significant—to the growth and profitability of BMG Entertainment over the past 10 months. Zelnick says that “more than 50% of [BMG Entertainment’s] revenues come from outside of the U.S.”

“We have a really strong international presence,” says Gassner. “Rudi, and the watchword of this company is that the division heads have a great deal of autonomy, and that each country is a separate business.”

“Rudi will continue to run his business. I hope to be quite supportive of that, and I clearly have some learned colleagues who want to use some time to do that.”

“The new reporting line will have no direct impact on the international division,” agrees Gassner. A “good exchange of ideas and views between Strauss and myself will probably bring out new ideas and new venues for the company.”

To those who contend that Gassner is chagrined by the new corporate alignment, given his division’s financial strength, Zelnick replies, “We will continue developing our domestic repertoire, taking global marketing initiatives, and strategizing on our international market potential.”

Gassner renewed his BMG contract earlier this year, reportedly for a five-year term. Gassner joined the company in 1987 after 17 years at PolyGram.

Perhaps anticipating the new structure, Gassner has been making significant, top-level changes in his division over the past nine months.

Former Epic Records president Richard Griﬃths was recruited at the start of the year to run BMG’s operations in the U.K. and Central Europe, alongside GSA and Eastern Europe chief Thomas Stein.

A&M Records president Menno Henneman was distinctioned in A&R and marketing, while Henn’s A&R responsibilities became the province of senior VP of A&R Richard Swertel (see story, page 1). Both Dave and Rich report to Zelnick.

BMG’s ﬁscal year ended June 30; however, the privately held company has yet to announce its numbers. Zelnick, a former senior VP of PolyGram in Los Angeles, claims he feels the need to consolidate worldwide operations under one chief.

“This company has been concentrat- ing on online work, but global growth in the past six months or so of BMG’s worldwide ofﬁces. “I’ll probably spend quite a bit of time on the road, getting a sense of how our operations are performing, because while I’ve been to a number of countries, I haven’t been to all of them and I haven’t been to all of our regional centers, certainly. I haven’t been on the road quite a lot,” Zelnick says.

He adds that he expects company growth to come not from mergers or acquisitions, but rather from speculation that the company will purchase EM — “from doing it the old-fashioned way: by signing artists we can, and getting it going in the next morning and doing it all over again.”

Dornemann, who also heads Bertelsmann Entertainment’s wide-ranging TV interests, says that he has been quietly grooming Zelnick for the new post since the 41-year-old executive joined BMG and that the decision to elevate the junior executive was made a year ago. Dornemann adds that he felt strongly that the worldwide entertainment division should be headed by an American.

“I believe a worldwide music company is at an advantage when being run by an American,” says Dornemann. “The source of worldwide creative cultural products is the U.S.; even if it goes up a little or down, it’s a cultural dominance . . . Strauss has the know-how; he’s an American, which is a plus, and he understands our corporate culture very well. He’s extremely bright. I believe that Zelnick wants to continue to stress. “The philosophy of the company that we’ve established as a team is to try to be the in-house company, to attract the best artists and to attract the most talented executives, and yet do that in a very efﬁcient business environment. I don’t see that strategy changing,” he says.

Part of that efﬁciency means having Zelnick retain his role as head of North American operations. “They request that he keep both. He’s young; he’s strong, he has to work hard,” says Dornemann, with a laugh.

X-ﬁnancial performance, Gassner says it has been a “difﬁcult” 12 months. “Like everybody else, we have had Our Far East problems. On the other hand, we have also had some extraordinary results from the German-speaking territories and the Latin markets.”

BMG, whose labels include Arista, RCA, and Windham Hill, boasts such top worldwide acts as Sarah McLachlan, Dave Matthews Band, Puff Daddy, Eros Ramazzotti, Annie Lennox, Kenny G, Toni Braxton, and Ace Of Base.

In other BMG Entertainment news, the company has consolidated all North American and international financial and legal operations under CFO Thomas McIntyre, making McIntyre and Zelnick the only two BMG Entertainment executives who report directly to Dornemann.

Assistance in preparing this story was provided by Adam White in London.
LAURIE COKELL PLANS TO STAY THE COURSE AS NEW LONDON CHIEF
(Continued from previous page)
very solid team."

The healthy relationship at the senior level is evidenced by Cokell's gentle easing into the new role. Though he officially took up the post Saturday (July 10), the running of the company is being split between Cokell and previous managing director Colin Bell throughout August to allow Cokell to take vacation time. Bell is leaving the company to join Elton John's management.

Cokell joined London in 1987 to set up its national strike force. He was promoted to marketing manager in 1992 and marketing director in 1995. He became GM last year. Cokell's first move in his new position has been to promote Sacha Cowlan from head of TV promotions to head of TV and radio promotions and Alan Parks, creative manager since 1994, to creative director. He says no further executive changes are envisaged at present.

London is on a run of successes, most notably its recent independent titled album, which Cokell says has sold 1.4 million copies in the U.K. and more than 3 million worldwide. The label's Asian Dub Foundation has been nominated for the Mercury Music Prize (see story, page 47). In addition to noting that many had made compromises in order to AEC to get its plan confirmed, Weisman said that the company would have not survived without its employees, "who had to work under the challenging conditions of the Chapter 11 process."

JEFF CLARK-MEADS

PARABLE GROUP
(Continued from previous page)

Internet sites, including search engines and other Christian sites. The new venture will also be promoted via Parable's sponsorship of the Jaci Velasquez/HYM tour.

As to the Web site's place in the market, Seybert says, "We're not going after Amazon, Barnes, or Borders. I think these people have made it OK for people to shop for books online. We're a specialist, and in a regular retail we think specialists do well.

"You can go into a Blockbuster or a Saturn outlet and you will find a good selection of front-list Christian music——Steven Curtis Chapman, Jaci Velasquez, and Michael W. Smith—but you're not going to find their catalog. That's what you're going to find with a Parable store, and it's the same with our Web site.

Seybert will oversee www.parable.com. Melissa Lundi serves as manager of information technology for the Parable Group and was hired in development of the title by graphic designer Jesse Irwin, creative director Annie Danner, art director Rebecca Irwin, Webmaster Parish Ruth, and LOGEX of Dallas. The

GONE WITH THE WIND GOING TO SELL-THROUGH
(Continued from previous page)

Choice Popcorn, Day Runner, and Rhino Records. The participants say they have deals to get a billion TV and print impressions.

"GWWTW" was produced by David O. Selznick in 1939 for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, which owned the title until Ted Turner bought it and the rest of the MGM catalog in 1986. MGM lost theatrical distribution rights but retains video rights through 2001.

In the meantime, Turner sold out to Time Warner, which had a big hand in formulating the current campaign. For example, Warner Home Video will launch a "Scarlett's Rules" sweepstakes offering consumers the chance to win a copy of the film from Visa, a Toshiba home theater, or Victoria's Secret gift certificates.

"They probably leaned on MGM a little," an industry veteran says. "They want this title identified with Time Warner. Ted has made it clear that he personally supervises every aspect of the distribution of 'GWTW' with The Wind." He considers it the greatest movie ever made.

MGM Home Entertainment senior marketing VP Blake Thomas says the project is so important "we decided to get everybody in the pool."

"A decade ago, Turner had been loath to replace any of the MGM catalog, a battle he fought with the studio before conceding sell-through's potential. Video sales have helped keep MGM afloat."

"GWWTW" may need all the help it can master in a crowded fourth quarter, according to some retailers less optimistic about the title's sell-through potential. An executive of one major chain says the VHS edition will do "extremely well" but says the $10 version of $8 million is "ridiculous."

The title likely will underperform in DVD as well, he maintains. "GWWTW" lacks the special effects that have driven the chain's top-selling DVD releases, like "Contact" and "Blade Runner." The "GWWTW" disc plays on both sides due to its 235-minute running time.

BARBARA KESSLER GOES IT ALONE
(Continued from previous page)

Blue?" "People Just Like Us,

With demands of parenthood, Kessler says, setting up the Web site fulfills two objectives: spurring her to continue to write songs and letting her keep in touch with fans.

Rothenberg said Warner-optioned and re-mastered album in a hurry, it occurred to me to send out singles every month instead," says Kessler. "It's a challenge because I've made so much promise."

For fans, the site gives them immediate access to her music. "It's like sharing music on an immediate and intimate level," Kessler notes. "The monthly issues sort of let fans in on my creative process."

Making singles also gives her a chance to "work out ideas" before recording a new album, she notes.

Unlike many other artists, Kessler has an inside track on recording and duplicating her CDs. Her husband, Philip Antoniades, who is also her drummer, works at Artists Development Assn., a Framingham, Mass.-based CD duplicator that also pro-

BILLY JUPP

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<td>REMEMBER WHEN</td>
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**New**

**Hot Shot Debut**

21. 17 11 17  EVERYBODY (BACKSTREET'S BACK) 22. 18 15 4  MY ALL 23. 23 15 18  SEX AND CANDY 24. 24 21 8  ABSOLUTELY 25. 25 29 21  THIS KISS 26. 26 26 8  CLEOPATRA'S THEME 27. 27 33 25  TRULY MADLY DEEP 28. 28 30 3  STILL NOT A PLAYER 29. 29 24 27  LOOKING THROUGH YOUR EYES 30. 30 24 14  THEY DON'T CARE 31. 31 44 4  WOOF WOOF 32. 32 34 25  HOW'S IT GOING TO BE 33. 33 25 18  I GOT THE HOOK UP 34. 34 32 36  HOW'S IT GOING TO BE 35. 35 27 12  I GET LONELY 36. 36 44 4  SO INTO YOU 37. 37 36 60  HOW DO I LIVE 38. 38 41 41  I DON'T CARE 39. 39 31 10  WHAT'S GONE?? 40. 40 31 34  TOGETHER AGAIN 41. 41 84 4  SO INTO YOU 42. 42 39 60  HOW DO I LIVE 43. 43 46 23  I WANT YOU BACK 44. 44 35 6  AMERICAN RHYMING WITH MY MIND 45. 45 48 12  HEAVEN'S W_GOLLOW 46. 46 31 10  WHAT'S GONE?? 47. 47 31 34  TOGETHER AGAIN 48. 48 71 3  REMEMBER WHEN
WICKFORD HOPES WORLD WILL WARM TO VARTTINEN (Continued from page 11)

With no U.S. tour to support the release until next year, Voigtman's strategy in North America is "to get the album out to as many people as possible, especially journalists, editors, and tastemakers" who have long championed the band.

Noncommercial radio and eclectic music magazines are being targeted, as are college campuses via extensive Wide World promotion and college magazines. The more traditional-sounding "Blowin' Wild and Free" is getting airplay to Finnish radio July 27 as the first single, while in the U.S. the more dance-oriented "Maa Ki Kerro" (The Land We Leave Together) has also been included along with a remix of the title track.

Added exposure should come from "I Don't Wanna Lose At Love," the new single from Tanita Tikaram's forthcoming album, "Cappuccino Songs" on Mother Records, which samples a track from Värttinä's 1992 album, "Reaching for the Sun." Värttinä was an important signing for Wicklow, originally called Universi, until the threat of legal action by the Italian group Universal Modern and disbanded. Wicklow's second record hit the airwaves next month.

"We wanted to create a world music phenomenon so we can have a centralized group that works with third parties on developing new business for these ventures," says MTV and VHI senior VP of program enterprises Mike Litt. The department consists of former VH1 Online director/executive producer Terri Kennedy, who heads the group, and a team of like-minded executives, including Martti Kokko. "At the moment," says Paul Moloney, "we're not looking at any specific artist or industry. We've seen a lot of interest from different music reps and independents, but we're in no rush." The group is now looking for a "leading-edge, forward-thinking" artist to record the song.

"The 90's have been a challenging time for the music industry," says Paul Moloney. "But there is a huge amount of interest from the record labels in finding new ways to market their music and their artists. We're looking at ways to develop new business models that are more efficient and more effective than those that have been used in the past." Moloney predicts that the "new business models" will involve "a variety of different approaches, such as licensing, syndication, and digital distribution."}

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## The Top-Selling Albums of 1998

### August 8, 1998

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<td>54</td>
<td>E.L.V.</td>
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<td>THIRD EYE BLIND</td>
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<td>Virgin 41011 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>LUCINDA WILLIAMS</td>
<td>Mercury 834624 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>JACI CLAY</td>
<td>MCA Nashville 102335 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>MARCOS SOUZA &amp; THE 15TH STREET BAND</td>
<td>Interscope 8004 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>PUFF DADDY &amp; THE FAMILY</td>
<td>Big Boy 7301 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>CATHERINE DOUGLAS</td>
<td>Capitol/Nashville 56095 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>PAUL SIMON</td>
<td>Warner Bros 4730 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>SUBLIME</td>
<td>Capitol/WEA 882995 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>LUCINDA WILLIAMS</td>
<td>Mercury 834624 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>MIKE TENNISON</td>
<td>Elektra 02503 (11.98/36.98)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
- **#1 Spot:** Indicates the highest-selling album, weeks this week.
- **Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) certification for sales of 500,000 album units.**
- **RIAA certification** for shipments of 1 million units, with *multiplatinum* titles indicated by a numerical following the symbol. For detailed info, see the RIAA certification. Albums with the greatest sales, as listed this week.
- **Heartist** Impact awards presented by Billboard. Albums removed from the chart this week.

### Chart Notes

- **Billboard** charts are compiled based on sales data from a variety of sources, including Nielsen SoundScan, which tracks the sales of physical and digital albums. The charts are updated weekly to reflect the most current sales information.
- The charts provide a snapshot of the most popular albums at the time of publication.
- Artists, titles, and sales figures listed in the charts are subject to change as new sales data becomes available.

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**August 8, 1998**

**The Top-Selling Albums Compiled From a National Sample of Retail Store and Rack Sales Reports Collected, Compiled, and Provided By**

**The Billboard 200**

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**August 8, 1998**

**The Top-Selling Albums Compiled From a National Sample of Retail Store and Rack Sales Reports Collected, Compiled, and Provided By**
WEBCASTERS WOW WALL STREET
(Continued from page 2)

revenue that is unheard of in the rest of the business world," says Fesper. "I'm sure that Broadcast.com's success has raised the expectation of Webcasters.

"The good news is that we don't have the consumer-behavior hurdle to jump over that other Internet medium, radio, has experienced," adds Fesper. "People understand that what we're doing is basically a better version of radio that just happens to have music, call-in shows, comics, and personalized playlists. Our business will scale well, because it's one that consumers understand is just a way of getting what they want in a different way."

Meanwhile, those in the traditional broadcasting world are hesitant to proclaim Broadcast.com's successful IPO a validation of Webcasting businesses. "I think the initial success of [Broadcast.com's] IPO has more to do with a hot market for Internet-related IPOs, as opposed to a ringing endorsement of its potential as an Internet radio product," says George Sosson, senior VP of radio operations at Clear Channel Communications.

Indeed, the market interest in Internet companies of all stripes has been at a fever pitch in the last year, with online retailer Amazon.com making the biggest splash. But, says Sosson, "after moving into music sales (Billboard Bulletin, July 6). K-tel saw its stock soar 50% following an announcement that it would carry Billboard charts online (Billboard Bulletin, May 16). Given the receptive climate, it's likely that the Web will see yet another wave of Webcasters making stock market plays in the future, says Larry Bills, associate editor at Hoover's Online, who researches and operates the investor-information site www.procentral.com.

"We think there is a list of companies that take with Broadcast.com as a sign that they should go public and cash in on the trend," says Bills. "It doesn't mean they'll succeed, but it has opened the door for a lot of these Internet companies to take their shots, too."

SONY REPORTS FIRST-QUARTER SURGE
(Continued from page 3)

income benefited "mainly from increased license fees... from a new direct-marketing arrangement."

The company's financial report is available to subscribers at www.broadcast.com.

In stating its numbers, the company noted that part of the 26% revenue increase has attributed to the devaluation of the yen against other currencies. If Sony applied the exchange rates that existed at the beginning of the year, it generated in the same quarter to the totals of first-quarter 1998, its total sales would have been up only 16%, it said.

On December 27, Sony's first-quarter, Sony Corp. reported total sales of $1.6 billion yen ($11.5 billion), up 13.1% from the $1.43 billion yen it generated in the same time frame last year. For the period, the company reported net income of $49.5 billion yen, up 17.8% from the $4.8 billion yen

COLUMBIA'S PATTY SMITH RETROSPECTIVE
(Continued from page 11)

The focus, Feldman says, will be time buys and spots on VH1 and other broadcast TV outlets. This will be backed by a "significant effort" at retail, to include price and positioning campaigns and point-of-purchase materials.

"This should help give her the recognition she deserves," says Steven Lerner, national buyer for the Richmond, Va.-based Circuit City chain—who vividly remembers remembering Smyth many years ago at a convention of the Record World chain, where he then was an A&R manager.

"The song content seems fantastic, but they really have to get [the album] out before the public," Lerner adds, noting that while Smyth is indeed "a great voice with great songs, she's always been under-sold. They need to get the word in the right language.

Here Legacy is highly optimistic. "The great thing about Patty—besides having two great new songs—is that they're not so obvious," says Feldman, noting that Smyth is already out visiting key East Coast radio stations in support of the new album and single. "She's hysterically funny and full of energy and tells great stories. And the folks at radio love her, and the press loves her, and we expect to have viable on a lot of national talk shows.

Smyth and former Bullet Laval- father guitarist Duke Roth will be held up at Sony Studios in New York in early August for a "Columbiacast" series of satellite radio call-in interviews and performances. Lerner adds that Smyth is putting together a band together for TV appearances and possible touring thereafter.

Smyth, currently without a booking agent, really doesn't want to perform.

"I really do need to do it, because I haven't been out in so long—and you get spooked by not doing it," she says. "The two things I've wanted to do since I was really young are to be a mom and perform. I think they're not really exclusive of each other."

Smyth is now managed by Susan Dodes, her former A&R rep at MCA. "We're kind of like the "Thelma & Louise" thing," says Smyth. "I finally have someone who can advise me—so I don't have too many recriminations later. We just don't plan on driving off any cliffs soon."

BETWEEN THE BULLETS
by Geoff Mayfield

RAPPERS' DELIGHT: For now, anyway, rap albums have replaced soundtracks as the flavor of the week atop of The Billboard 200. Topping the chart with a still-coming lead are the Beastie Boys, an atypical rap act to pass between any other act up to the top 15. Three of those chart are debuts by rookie recording artists: veteran writer/producer Jermaine Dupri, who snags his Hot Shot Debut at No. 3 with his first outing as an artist (162,000 units), followed by Good and Sun Killa Bees (No. 4, 199,500 units), and Mac (11, 91,000 units).

Also residing in the high-rent district are rappers Will Smith (No. 13) and Master P (No. 16); each of those albums spent six weeks in the top 10. The aforementioned Killa Bees and Sunz Of Man (who bow at No. 20) are both splinters from Wu-Tang Clan. Mac, who just misses the top 10 by less than 2,000 units, marks yet another large debut from Master P’s No Limit label. Dupri, who flies to No. 1 on Top R&B Albums, and Can—they have not held on that chart by an 8% margin, entered the R&B list prematurity last issue by virtue of one of 1998's most pesky headaches, street-date violations.

Don't look for this proliferation of rap acts at the top of next issue's chart. As rap acts, the most of the beers a rap album that will find its way into the no. 16% top 200 TOP R&B Albums, with the all important criteria to determine whether a single or an album belongs on our R&B charts.

Spins at R&B radio, for example, are why Kirk Franklin sets have seen the light on our Top R&B Albums chart while other contemporaries of his gospel acts have not. Exactly half of the eight Beastie Boys that have charted on The Billboard 200 also appeared on Top R&B Albums. Although the Boys did garner a modicum of R&B airplay in their early years—enough to place four singles on Hot & Bubbling backs in 1986 and 1987—only two and a half years later are they charted by our Hot & R&B Airplay panel. Thus, neither the single nor the album qualify for our R&B charts.

Funny thing is, when Billboard received a couple of calls grousing about the absence of "Hello Nasty" from the R&B list, I could quote the R&B chart complaints—then conveniently ignore them to us when 1994's "Il Communication" did appear on that chart.

What is hot for Beastie Boys is Modern Rock Tracks, where the lead single bullets at No. 7, grabbing airplay at 73 of the panel's 81 stations. The act, obviously, is also at the cash register; with a second-week total of 315,000 units, "Hello Nasty" becomes the only album in 1998 besides "Titanic" to see consecutive weeks in excess of 300,000 units. Despite a 54% decline, it still leads the resurgent "Amercaggedon" soundtracks (245,000 copies) by a 28.5% margin.

TRIPLE PLAY: Last issue's debut at No. 199 by Andrea Bocelli’s "Viaggio Italiano" marked a unique accomplishment, because the tenor became the first classical album to chart on the Billboard 200 without the benefit of soundtracks. The feat continues this issue, as "Romance," which tops this issue's unpublished Top World Music list, at No. 73, while the titles that hold the top two positions on Top Classical Albums rise to Nos. 109 and 107, respectively, on the big chart. Aside from a continuing tour, Bocelli benefits from features on "CBS Sunday Morning" July 12 and "Good Morning America" July 21.

During last year's theatrical return of the "Star Wars" trilogy, the three films' soundtracks—all by John Williams and the London Symphony Orchestra—appeared together on The Billboard 200 for three weeks, the other time other a classical act has scored such a hat trick. Each of the Three Tenors—Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo, and José Carreras—have placed two placement at once more than once, but never three.

Meanwhile, Oprah Winfrey's daytime show brings Jewels a 5,000-unit gain; this 66% increase pushes her 24-6 on Top Pop Catalog Albums.
the sensitive issue of CD prices.

In the short term, though, the challenge is simply to make sure that, should a major retailer choose to pay for its Jan. 2 album deliveries in euros, the record company’s procedures can accommodate that.

**EXCHANGE RATES FIXED**

The euro becomes a real, recognized, official currency Jan. 1, when the exchange rates of the 11 participating EU nations are irrevocably fixed. From that date begins the three-year process of making the euro the EU’s only legal tender. At the start of that process, the euro will replace national currencies that will co-exist, but if a record company’s customer wants to pay a bill in euros, the label is legally obliged to accept them as payment.

The most tangible form of the euro won’t appear until Jan. 1, 2002, when the first set of notes and coins is issued. Six months later, all existing national currencies in the participating states will have been withdrawn.

To date, the U.K., Denmark, Greece, and Sweden have said they will not be among the first wave of countries to join the euro. Nonetheless, each of those governments has left the door open to join later. The nations in the first wave are Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Austria, and Luxembourg.

“In the early stages, this is going to make our life a lot more complex,” says Bert Perry, president of EMI Music Europe. “The cost of adjusting our systems to accommodate the euro is on the same level as dealing with another 2000 bug.” The EMI Oliver annual report says the company has allocated across all its divisions 25 million pounds ($40 million) to iron out the issues.

Perry notes that, in the transitional stages, the euro adds to EMI’s problems in that the company will have to track 16 currencies in the EU instead of the current 15. “This is not going to be as straightforward as people believe,” he says.

The issue may be more clear-cut for record companies headquartered outside Europe. “In the foreseeable future, to us it’s just another currency,” says Bill Dobbis, president of Epic Records Entertainment Europe. “We think in dollars. We always have thought in dollars. The budgets are fixed in dollars, and people report their figures in dollars. That won’t alter.”

Russell adds, “In five years’ time I’ll still be talking to my guys in dollars because that’s how my bosses talk to me.”

Russell’s counterpart at Warner Music, Manfred Zumkeller, says he is in a similar position. He notes, though, that Warner’s system changes to accommodate the euro and to eliminate the millenium bug will cost the company about $4 million.

Rick Dobbs, PolyGram’s president of continental Europe, adds, “The euro also means that a lot of people will have a lot of time in meetings discussing this when they could have been doing something more overly profitable.”

Many companies acknowledge that even though the euro adds complexity in the short term, the second phase will eventually simplify things.

“The threshold will be when the coins and notes start circulating,” says Dobbis.

**SPOTLIGHT ON PRICING**

In the meantime, the euro will serve to highlight price disparities across the EU. At a time when the European Commission is seeking to get the reasons for the relatively large differences in CD prices across the Union (Billboard, April 18) and has made the first move towards parallel imports (Billboard, July 25), the euro will allow direct comparisons of prices from one nation to another.

“The big bugaboo in this whole thing,” says Dobbs, “is what’s going to happen to prices. It would be foolish to think that the retailers’ minds in three years, prices are different across Europe and will remain so long after the euro arrives.”

Zumkeller argues that this is inevitable. “People look at Europe and say, ‘Why is the Spanish price lower than the German price?’ They forget that in Spain you have to add pounds and francs and guilders, get out the calculator, and work out whether it’s cheaper for them to buy at home or abroad. They don’t need euros to help them work it out.”

Dobbis says that the euro will add a new dimension to competition within the EU’s 15-ratio single market—when a retailer finds it cheaper to buy from abroad than from his own country. “The guys at (German retail chain) Wm aren’t daft,” says Zumkeller. “For years they’ve looked at prices in Holland, Belgium, France, and Italy.”

The executives say that one early effect of the euro will be the expansion of retail chains across borders. The euro will greatly simplify their buying and—as the cost of buying media time to advertise it is different. And that’s before you get into different levels of VAT (value-added tax), which go from around 5% to 22%, depending on which country you’re buying your CD in.

Zumkeller says the fact that the euro will, through direct comparison, highlight these price differences will not fuel the trans-shipsments market.

**TRANS-SHIPSMENTS EFFECT**

Trans-shipsments—the movement of records across national borders within the EU’s 15-ratio single market—happen when a retailer finds it cheaper to buy from abroad than from his own country.

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Dobbis says that the euro will add a new dimension to competition within the EU’s 15-ratio single market as consumers become more easily aware of different prices for the same product in the various EU nations. Zumkeller says he hopes that retailers will use this to lower prices for music buyers. “The euro will create a greater price transparency for the consumer,” says Zumkeller. “That’s something that, hopefully, retailers will use and pass on to the consumer.”

Dobbis says he believes, though, that the relationship between retailer and local record company over such issues as joint promotions and in-store appearances by artists will help persuade stores to buy from the affiliate in their home country.

**PRICE STABILIZATION**

Russell notes, “The euro, in the long-term—and I’m talking three, four, or five years—will tend to equalize prices across the EU, but, having said that, I don’t think prices will even out whether we have the euro or not. If you take the VAT issue out and look at long-term average exchange rates, there’s not a lot of difference between prices.”

Adds Perry, “Prices will stabilize, but we don’t know where; it all depends on the calculation you do. Something that’s 10 euros in Germany may be 8 in France or it may be 12. It all depends on how you base your calculations.”

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Competition Begins For Billboard Music Vid Awards

The submissions process has begun for the annual Billboard Music Video Awards. At the same time, Billboard has opened early-brid registration for its 20th-anniversary Music Video Conference, which will be held Nov. 4-6 at the Sheraton Universal in Universal City, Calif. Warner Bros. Records president Phil Quartararo will keynote the conference; additional speakers and events will be announced soon.

The Billboard Music Video Awards, which will be presented on the closing night of the conference, honor the past year’s top achievements in music video creation and programming. The music video-clip winners are chosen in a three-step process that begins with the current call for submissions. Major and independent labels have been sent forms with which they can submit clips for consideration in nine award categories: pop/hard rock, metal, alternative rock, modern rock, jazz/AC, dance, R&B/Buran, rap, country, and contemporary Christian.

In the second stage of the awards process, judging panels will choose five nominees from among the submitted clips in the best clip and best new artist category for each of the nine genres. In addition, all submitted clips will be eligible for two overall awards: director of the year and the Maximum Video award. Final voting by a larger body of music video professionals will close Oct. 16.

In addition, there is a separate Billboard competition for local and regional music video shows. Programmers have been invited to submit airchecks from their shows for consideration. The November conference will feature screenings of the November conference.

Submissions for both competitions are due Sept. 1: if your label or program has not received a submission, contact Michele Quigley at 212-536-0022.

Early-brid registration for the conference is $399 and runs through Sept. 3. Pre-registration from Sept. 4-Oct. 9 is $415; full registration thereafter is $499.

For registration information, call 212-536-1000; for information on registration bag inserts and sponsorship opportunities, call Phyllis Demo at 212-536-5299.

Billboard Live Plans Venue In Miami’s South Beach

Billboard Live is heading south to Miami Beach! The state-of-the-art music venue is set to open at an exciting address on Miami’s chic Ocean Drive in South Beach. Billboard Live International, the Las Vegas-based headquarters for the Billboard-associated venue operation, has secured a lease for the newly built entertainment site. The south beach club will consist of multiple music stages, rooftop dining, a sidewalk café, a special VIP lounge, and a retail center. Broadcast capabilities are also going to be available at the 20,000-square-foot venue. The club is expected to open in March of 1999. Pictured at left is the lounge sign, which is clock-wise and will be illuminated. From top left, Georgia Challis, senior V.P. of general counsel BPI Communications; Howard Linder, president and publisher, Billboard Music Group; Mitch Chait, president Billboard Live International; and Jean Marie Meu- nier, of development firm Construct.

Visit our Web site at http://www.billboard.com
For more information, contact Michele Jacangelo Quigley at 212-536-5002
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