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Black Promoters’ Suit Underscores Discontent

This story was prepared by Ray Waddell, reporter for Billboard and Business, and Andra M. Sommers and Melba Newman in Billboard's Los Angeles office.

According to a number of black concert promoters, the filing of a $700 million suit Nov. 19 in U.S. District Court in New York against 11 major booking agencies and 29 concert promoters in the culmination of decades of racism they have felt at the hands of the mainstream music industry. The complaint alleges antitrust and civil rights claims, charging a longstanding conspiracy that has kept black promoters from promoting shows by white headliners and top-selling black acts (Billboard-Bulletin, Nov. 23).

"Because of an all-white concert promotion fraternity, the black concert promoters are systematically excluded from the promotions of concerts given by white performers ... and top-drawing black performers," alleges the suit. All of the booking agencies and promoters named in the action are controlled by whites, the suit said.

The suit adds that "the entrenched racism and exclusionary practices in the concert promotion industry which this lawsuit seeks to remedy... (Continued on page 119)

Music Tackles Politics

BY DOMINIC PRIDE

The '80s may lack a Paul Robeson, a John Lennon, or a Bob Dylan to articulate the views of its generation, but around the planet musicians are continuing to grind their political axes.

Environmental protection, racism, economic and sexual exploitation, religious fundamentalism, and suppression of dissent are themes that recur among politicized musicians throughout the world. Among those penning overtly political lyrics, national, regional, and local issues tend to dominate, rather than a desire to change the world order or communicate political ideology.

Censorship—imposed both by governments and by cautious artists themselves—looms large over the landscape of politically tinged music worldwide. This was (Continued on page 119)

Gov't Support Seen For Labels' Parallels Stance

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS

LONDON—Leaked details of a confidential government report indicate that the record industry is winning its battle to keep parallel imports out of the European Union.

The political sensitivity of the contents of the document meant that it has been a closely guarded secret within the European Commission. The final version of the report will have an impact on every European industry that relies on copyrights or... (Continued on page 117)
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**Tower Starts Euro Growth In U.K.**

**BY TOM FERGUSON**

LONDON—Tower Records is embarking upon a five-year expansion program in Europe, focusing first on the U.K. market, where it has been managing for the past 13 years—then on the Continent. The plan includes the opening of large stores in major U.K. cities and the development of a "Tower Express" concept of smaller, satellite locations in other cities.

The merchant is armed with consumer research that encourages its expansion and, in addition, is actively proceeding with online retailing, a concept already proving itself in the U.S.

The debut of Britain's largest, Lima, as well as the house's first executive level with Tower strategies globally.

"We've learned a great deal expanding around the globe. Now's the time to capitalize on our strengths and take the European operation forward," says Lown. "It's been an eventful journey for Tower in Europe so far, and we're aiming to achieve significantly more in a much shorter period of time."

With a new design company on board, Tower's immediate expansion plans in the U.K. and Ireland find the chain ready to "sow its seeds" at (Continued on page 116)

**Investors Were Deceived, K-tel Suits Charge**

**BY DON JEFFREY**

NEW YORK—At least eight class-action suits have been filed against K-tel International, charging that the company deceived investors by not informing them that Nashville had threatened to delist the company's stock from the prestigious National Market system (Billboard Bulletin, Nov. 24).

During the time in which K-tel knew of Nasdaq's warning but did not tell its shareholders, the lawsuits maintain, K-tel executives "artificially inflated" the stock by announcing potential deals, like Internet deal with Microsoft and Playboy Enterprises.

Company president Lawrence Kline, however, said the company did not comment on the lawsuits because the company had not been officially notified of them.

The lawsuits are filed Nov. 20 in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, Nasdaq informed K-tel on Oct. 27, that its stock (Continued on page 116)

**PolyGram Pub's Hockman To Exit**

**BY IRV LICHTMAN**

NEW YORK—David Hockman, chief executive of PolyGram International Music Publishing, is expected to leave his post following the acquisition of PolyGram by Seagram (Billboard Bulletin, Nov. 26).

In addition, it is expected that Nick Garfunkel, president of PolyGram Music Publishing in the U.S. and Polygram Records, will not retain his music publishing role.

The departure of London-based Hockman would leave David Renzer, president of Seagram's MCA Music Publishing, solely responsible for worldwide operations of both departments. Hockman is looking for a new role that will clearly establish the world's third-largest publishing startup (Billboard, June 13).

There had been speculation that Hockman might stay on as head of the international unit of a company whose headquarters are in London. A succession plan is expected to be announced in the week of December, when the PolyGram acquisition is expected to be completed.

In 1985, Hockman was assigned the task of putting PolyGram back on the publishing map after parent Philips sold Chappell Music as a cash-raising measure. A former Chappell executive, Hockman is credited with restructure- ed making deals, including the purchase of the Dick James catalog, Nashville's Cedar- wood Music, and the Lawrence Welk Music publishing catalog.

**EMI Presents Half-Year Results, Refutes Takeover Talks**

**BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS AND TOM FERGUSON**

LONDON—The first fog of speculation about the future of the EMI Group has a been limited with the public- ing of the company's half-year results. The company's half-year results show that the group's retail sales fell 3.4% in the six months to Sept. 30, "reflecting diff- culty of the market and a [weaker] release schedule," said the company.

However, some of the company's shareholders are expected to be about to be bought by either Bertels- man or Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. have, to date, had the same substance as all other speculation about potential buyers since the company's demerger two years ago—no offers, no talks, and no negotia- tions.

The figures, released Nov. 24, show a 19.9% decline in operating profit to 91.2 million pounds ($155.6 million), a figure in line with the company's profits warn- ing to the annual results presentation. Stock- market value fell from 1.092 billion pounds ($1.64 billion) in the same period last year to 994 million pounds ($1.59 billion) this time (Billboard Bulletin, Nov. 24).

In a statement accompanying the figures, chairman Sir Colin Southgate says the company is continuing to seek a chief executive. He states that EMI is looking for the "best individual to lead the business into the next decade" to replace former president/CEO Jim Martin, who departed earlier this year (Billboard, May 2).

Of the company's latest performance, Southgate says in the statement, "In a challenging first half, the strongest features of the group's fiscal year were the continuing performance of our music publishing division and the continuing improvement of recorded music in the U.S. However, these were not enough to make up for the declines in other parts of our business."

Southgate continues, "The deterioration of some major music markets together with a release schedule that was not as strong as we expected..." (Continued on page 116)
SoundScan To Count Album Sales At Christian Shows

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—In a move that will better reflect the amount of Christian product being sold to consumers, SoundScan will now count units sold by approved retailers at venues during Christian concerts. The change took effect the week of Nov. 23.

“It really comes about because the Christian labels asked us to,” says SoundScan CEO Mike Fine. “We had been taking venue sales on the [general market] side for a while. I think this is good for the Christian music industry. Anything that reflects the sales that take place certainly is for the benefit of everyone.”

Rick Bowles, marketing director of the Christian Music Trade Assn., says the time is right to include concert sales.

“There are more chain stores and more independent stores who are wanting to sponsor concerts,” he says. “It makes sense for them, since they are sponsoring these, to also sell product.”

Bowles says that, among the guidelines SoundScan requested, was that the only participants would be SoundScan-reporting stores. “Only retailers who report through [point-of-sale] systems to SoundScan right now will be allowed to count in concert sales,” he says. “The record labels will be responsible for going to certain retail stores to [arrange for them to be] the retailer that will scan the sales.”

Several key Christian retailers have sponsored tours this year. Family Christian Stores (FCS) was the sole sponsor of Michael W. Smith’s 43-city Live the Life tour, which concluded last month. FCS is also sponsoring Point Of Grace’s Steady On tour this fall and next spring. LifeWay Christian Stores sponsored Steven Curtis Chapman’s The Walk tour. The Parahe Group sponsored the 4HM/ Jaci Velasquez outings.

Bowles says the FCS Point Of Grace tour and the LifeWay/Chapman tour will likely be the first to benefit from the new sales-measurement development. Yet Bowles doesn’t anticipate seeing a large impact immediately across the board.

“It’s going to take time for the record labels to figure out which artists they want to allow these to count for,” he says. “Some artists may not want to participate, because in the Christian world the artist may sell the product themselves [instead of going through a retailer online] and get the revenue. It’s going to be between the artist, management, and the record label as to which artists they want to sell product [in this fashion]. . . . My feeling is that I see it kicking in and really being seen on the charts in the next couple of months.”

Sparrrow Label Group VP of marketing/artist development Hugh Robertson agrees.

“I don’t think it will be a huge impact.”

(Continued on page 129)
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THINGS TO LOOK FOR:
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CHANGING FACES
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DRU HILL
Phillips Taking Reins At Warner Music U.K.

BY ADAM WHITE

LONDON—For only the second time in 15 years, a young executive who initially built his name and reputation in music publishing is taking command at Warner Music International's flagship U.K. record company. As in 1988, the newcomer will be subject to the most intense scrutiny by his peers and competitors at home and abroad.

Nick Phillips was confirmed Nov. 20 as chairman of Warner Music U.K., effective Jan. 1 (Billboard/Bulletin, Nov. 23). He has spent the past five years as managing director of Universal Music U.K., following a 14-year stint in the publishing sector, at MCA Music and, before that, at EMI and ATV. Phillips left Universal in ambiguous circumstances in October (Bill- board, Nov. 11 at a standing committee staff meeting that was eventually suspended from duty. The action also maintains that the majority of individuals who currently perform live as “God’s Property” under Searight’s direction are not the prominent members of the group who appeared on the hit album and in videos.

The group is also claimed to be in direct violation of the terms of the initial agreement. B-Rite further claims that ticket buyers walked out on a recent God’s Property tour, which was not featured on the hit album and in videos.

Court papers suggest that both parties claim to be in breach of contract dispute through Christian arbitration, but talks broke down earlier this year. At present, B-Rite is seeking to have the court “uphold the contract and allow God’s Property to proceed with B-Rite without further unreasonable, unjustified interference and disruption from Searight.”

Neither party was available for comment by press time.
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**BEST R&B DUO/GROUP WITH VOCAL**

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---

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**SONG OF THE YEAR**
**BEST POP MALE PERFORMANCE**

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- Billboard's Top 200 Pop Albums Chart for 58 weeks and R&B Albums Chart for 60 weeks
- #1 R&B and Top Ten Pop singles "You Should Be Mine" and "Only One For Me"
- The single "*anytime*": #1 Recurrent Airplay, #1 R&B, #1 R&B Adult, #1 Urban AC, #1 Crossover & Rhythm, #8 Mainstream Pop

---

"*only one for me*"

**RECORD OF THE YEAR**
**SONG OF THE YEAR**
**BEST R&B MALE PERFORMANCE**
**Shining Bright.**

Nov. 3, classical crossover artist Sarah Brightman received a plaque commemorating 500,000 in U.S. sales for her album “Time To Say Goodbye.” Bruce Lundvall, president of Capitol Jazz & Classics, and Gilbert Hethenwick, senior VP/GM of Angel Records, presented Brightman with the gold record. Shown at the presentation in Hamburg, from left, are Lundvall; Hethenwick; Brightman; Jürgen Ottenstein, Brightman’s manager; and producer Frank Peterson.

**EMI’s StarSong Shifts to Imprint Status**

**BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE**

**NASHVILLE—**EMI Christian Music Group (EMI CMG) has announced that StarSong Records will become an imprint dedicated to releasing concept albums and church resource product. StarSong’s artist roster will be moved to EMI CMG’s Sparrow label, and the StarSong staff will be absorbed into that division.

EMI CMG is the Christian music arm of EMI; it encompasses the Sparrow, StarSong, ForeFront, EMI Gospel, Worship Together, and Rocket labels, as well as EMI Christian Music Publishing and Chordant Distribution Group. EMI’s forays into the Christian music industry began with the purchase of Sparrow in 1992, followed by StarSong in 1994. (StarSong was founded in 1976 as a Christian rock label.) StarSong was the company that sold the Saturday Night Fever soundtrack.

We set out a couple years ago, when [EMI CMG CEO] Bill Hearne asked me to oversee the StarSong label, to set up a record company that had distinction from Sparrow,” says Sparrow Label Group president Peter York. “Even though we were under the same roof, we wanted to shape something unique and different.

The reality is, over a couple of years under the same marketing team, the same promotional team, the same media team, it’s very hard to give any distinction to that label,” he continues. “It has a multi-genre-based artist roster with pop, rock, and all the styles represented there exactly like Sparrow. So at the end of the day, you have two companies going down parallel paths with very little distinction and very little ability to stand out.”

This was extremeley pleased with the work that StarSong senior VP of A&R John Mayo has been doing at the label and has asked him to move to EMI CMG. However, Mayo’s contract is up, and he was unavailable for comment at press time. He is expected to make his decision known soon, likely following the release of the next StarSong album.

York says that he and Hearne looked at each label’s individual strengths and decided to make changes that would help the labels better serve the marketplace.

**WWF Video Is Riding High**

**SALES SURGE Keyed To SPORT’s New Popularity**

**BY SETH GOLSTEIN**

**NEW YORK—**Less than a year after the World Wrestling Federation created WWF Home Video in Stamford, Conn., it’s riding the crest of a sales crusade that even enthused a newly elected governor.

On Dec. 15, WWF Home Video releases a 45-minute cassette starring Minnesota Governor-elect Jesse “the Body” Ventura, who earned celebrity status as a World Wrestling Federation commentator following a brief career in the ring. The price of $14.95 and show do well, based on the response of key retailers like the Musicland Group and Best Buy. They’re easier accounts, says Mayo: “Wrestling was big in the mid-80s, but not as big as it is now.”

Yet, even basic companies also are keying in to the sport’s surging popularity, with a number of albums themed around popular wrestling figures already released. However, Mayo says: “The World Wrestling Federation to manage the video operation after the company took back distribution from the now-defunct ECW. The company, which has exploited the sport’s unauthorized use of wrestling figures, has been able to profit.

WWF Home Video has boosted volume as well, by aggressively pricing many of its new releases. As many as a dozen annually go out under $15 suggested list, in contrast to Coleiumes’ strategy of higher-priced titles aimed at the rental trade.

WWF Home Video is “probably in the first half of 1998,” says Mayo. “We’re figuring out the proper price for the market.”

**GRAMMY ACTIVITIES TO COVER A MONTH**

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

**LOS ANGELES—**There was a time when Grammy festivities lasted just the night of the awards show. Now, with the launch of L.A. Grammy Fest, they will span an entire month.

The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), which expanded Grammys to a week a few years ago, is now sponsoring a multi-week slate of more than 40 events revolving around the Feb. 24 awards show.

“For a long time we’ve been talking about how important it is that we don’t view this time of year just as a TV show,” says NARAS president/CEO Michael Greene. “We’ve gone from doing 10 to 15 events to making a concerted effort to trot out all things cultural during the month of February to remind people of the diversity of music that the organization represents. It’s not just about pop stars and rock stars; it’s about music in 96 categories.”

The events include established activities like the annual MusiCares person of the year dinner and Grammy in the Schools program, as well as sponsorship and promotion of performances by dance companies, choirs, and symphonies.

In August, the Academy sent out a mailing to more than 500 music organizations in Southern California, ranging from the Los Angeles Philharmonic to smaller community-based groups.

The mailing asked the organizations if they wanted to affiliate their events with the Grammy Awards. If so, NARAS would send the event organizers a logo that they could use in their programs and advertising, and they would get mentioned in Grammys.

(Continued on page 120)

**EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE**

**HORTON**

**COLEMAN**

**MIRABELLA**

**EVANS**

**OLESEN**

**MURPHY**

**MENZIE**

**MORRIS**

**RECORD COMPANIES.** Universal Records in New York names Michael Horton senior VP of promotion, black music. He was VP of promotion, black music. Glynice Colman is named president of Humility Records, She was VP of R&B promotion at EMI Records.

Adam Mirabella is promoted to senior national director of sales at Atlantic Records in New York. He was national director of sales. TVT/Flint Recordings in New York appoints Camille Evans marketing director. She was marketing director at MCA Records.

Dee Murphy is named special markets sales director and Jim Hughes is named product manager at Rhino Records in Los Angeles. They were, respectively, South/Southwest region sales representative and product management coordinator.

Erik Olsen is named senior director of top 40 promotion, Gary Triozzi is appointed national director of pop promotion, and Jeff Bardin is promoted to national director of top 40 promotion at Elektra Entertainment Group in New York. They were, respectively, national director of promotion; regional director of promotion; Midwest; and New York regional promotion manager.

Arista Records in Los Angeles appoints Gillian Morris director of film/television music licensing and Michelle Belcher associate director of film/television licensing. They were, respectively, director of business affairs and manager of A&R, soundtracks.

Ian Menzie is named A&R manager at 4 Winds Records in Vancouver. He was president of Mofunk Records.

**RELATED FIELDS.** Jason Padgett is promoted to senior account executive at Rogers & Cowan in Los Angeles. He was account executive.

John Loscalzo is named VP of programming at SW Networks in New York. He was senior director of programming.
Join 'N SYNC, Tatyana Ali and host Shawn Colvin for music and family traditions from Epcot at the Walt Disney World Resort.

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YEAR IN VIDEO 1998

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UPCOMING SPECIALS

VIVA 5TH ANNIVERSARY  - Issue Date: Jan. 30  •  Ad Close: Jan. 5
ASCAP 85TH ANNIVERSARY  - Issue Date: Feb. 13  •  Ad Close: Jan. 19
BRITS-UK  - Issue Date: Feb. 13  •  Ad Close: Jan. 19

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT  - Issue Date: Feb. 20  •  Ad Close: Jan. 21
LATIN #1 PUERTO RICO  - Issue Date: Feb. 20  •  Ad Close: Jan. 26
SOUNDTRACKS  - Issue Date: Feb. 27  •  Ad Close: Feb. 2

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A Traveling Life Inspires Philo/Rounder’s Wheeler

BY JIM BESSMAN
NEW YORK—“Sylvia Hotel,” Cheryl Wheeler’s sixth album, is named after one of the acclaimed Philo/Rounder singer/songwriter’s favorite Vancouver hotels—a fitting tribute for the peripatetic artist.

“I’m on the road all the time, constantly driving around to shows,” says Wheeler, who usually drives to her solo gigs and will have tallied more than 12,000 miles on her current tour from late September to mid-December.

Her touring has paid off in the eager anticipation for the Jan. 26 release. “She’s been playing hits and pieces of it on the road, including a great show at the Newport folk festival,” says Lisa Goren, manager of HMV’s Cambridge, Mass., outlet. Like most of Wheeler’s ardently fan base, Goren cites Wheeler’s uncanny mix of profound observation and keen sense of humor as key to her appeal.

“She’s very funny, but what’s funny is how she articulates absurdities of life in a way that you’re laughing at yourself when you’re laughing at her,” says Goren.

Rounder’s marketing director, Jeff Walker, adds that “Sylvia Hotel” particularly shows that the Morningstar Management client and ACF Music Group (ASCAP) writer is “both a poet and comedian.”

Indeed, the album has funny songs like “Meow,” honoring Wheeler’s cat, and “We’ll Be Together,” Wheeler’s take on the Beatles’ classic. The title track is a farrago of stories from Wheeler’s years of traveling in the low country, and Wheeler dedicates “All Is Calm” to her kids.

“Some of the songs are reflective of people I’ve met in my travels, while others are things I’ve thought about and written about on the road,” Wheeler says.

Before the arrival of Xuxa, comments Palma, Brazilian youngsters didn’t buy musical product until they reached their teens.

“But the kids are buying more music now, and it’s not just children’s music.”

With some Brazilian preteens more interested in adult sounds, some of the idols that are most actively involved in the children’s market are opting to target pre-schoolers. “The traditional children’s market, from 6 to 10 years old, is over, so we are investing in a younger audience,”

(Continued on page 123)
Black Crowes Take Wing On New Label

**Columbia Bow Finds Band Returning To Rock 'n' Roll Roots**

**BY CHRIS MORRIS**

LOUISIANA—On “By Your Side,” the Black Crowes’ Columbia Records debut, arriving Jan. 12, the Atlanta-bred band reclaims its Stones/Faces roots after a protracted sortie into neo-psychedelia.

James Diener, senior director of A&R marketing at Columbia, says, “This is, to a large extent, a return to the spirit of the first two records. That’s going to be our marketing message this time. [U.K. music weekly] Melody Mover called the Crowes ‘the most rock’n’roll rock’n’roll band in the world.’ That’s exactly what I think and what most of the people who have heard this record have come back to us and said.”

Paraphrasing bluesman Memphis Slim, Chris Robinson, the Crowes’ lead vocalist, says with a cackle, “When the acid trip is over, you got to go back to Mother Earth.”

The refreshed rock’n’roll sound on “By Your Side” did not come without some pain on the part of the band. Before sessions for the album began, the Crowes fired longtime guitarist Marc Ford, and founding bassist Johnny Colt quit soon thereafter.

“Marc and Johnny were in the band for a long time, and as much as I loved them, by the end they were distractions, for different reasons,” Robinson says.

The Crowes quickly recruited Scott Physioc, who had played with drummer Steve Gorman in the Atlanta band Mary My Hope, to fill the bass chair. Following the completion of “By Your Side”—on which Physioc has his own solo part—the band plays all the guitar parts—Audley Freed, formerly of the Raleigh, N.C., band Cry of Love, joined as the Crowes’ touring guitarist. (Keyboardist Eddie Harsh complements the lineup.)

The album was recorded in New York with Kevin Shirley, who co-produced Aerosmith’s 1997 album, “Nine Lives.”

Chris Robinson says, “Kevin Shirley’s the cat who came in and said, ‘All right, I know who you are, I know what you can do, I’ve had your records. Everybody knows you can play, now we’re gonna have fun.’ Oh, yeah, we’d forget about that. We’d been taking everything so deadly seriously.”

(Continued on page 22)

**Hootie Plays For The Troops Overseas During Holidays; Twain Top AMA Nominee**

**UNCLE SAM WANTS HOOTIE: Hootie & the Blowfish are spending the holiday season with the troops, playing a USO tour of the Middle East and Eastern Europe. The tour starts Friday (4) in Bahrain, and includes stops in Dubai Saturday (5), Saudi Arabia (Dec. 6), Bosnia (Dec. 9), and Hungary (Dec. 10).**

“The band is flying [...]

**Columbia Plugs Into Big Beat With U.K.'s Lo-Fi All-Stars**

**BY JIM BESSMAN**

NEW YORK—Jangling humbly with a steady rhythm section and 4-track recorder, Britain’s Lo-Fi All-Stars have become an international sensation, taking the electronics-rooted big beat club genre into a rock format...

The sextet, whose Skiit/Columbia debut, “How To Operate With A Blown Mind,” is due Jan. 12, weaves sampling into a context rooted as much on live playing as turntables and tape machines.

“We’ve been called big-beat, trip-hop, skunk rock—everything under the sun,” says DJ Phil Walker, co-founder of the Lo-Fi’s, whose records and equipment helped launch the group. “But there’s a lot more going on in the album than socially big beat. There are soulful moments and slow moments and lyrics that make you think. We have a live drummer, bass, a couple of keyboards, and vocals—and I do scratching and dropping samples live. It’s a big sound—a wall of noise and a lot of feedback from old Moog keyboards—so it’s quite a rock’n’roll show, even though it’s dance music.”

Indeed, Kevin Patrick, VP of A&R at Columbia—who brought the Lo-Fi’s music lab’s way of Sony SINE’s deal with the U.K. independent Skint Records—notes that the band’s exciting live shows look quite different, with Ward and keyboardist/sampler Matt Harvey essentially functioning as guitarists.

“Vocalist Dave Randall defines the traditional pop star front man role with his combination of front man confidence, nonchalance, and arrogance,” says Patrick. “As a whole, the group has the attitude and the look of a traditional live act—which is something that America understands. They bring a mix of classic psychedelic ideas over hip-hop rhythms, with a punkish vocal delivery that adds up to something very unique that is both playable on record and powerful live.”

When the Lo-Fi’s formed in 1996, they were reacting against the prevailing dance music of the moment.

“House music was going through a boring phase,” says Ward. “We all had the same record collections: hip-hop, soul/funk, acid/house, reggae, dub, ska, rock bands like the Stooges and YMO, Marvin Gaye, and Curtis Mayfield. We banded together at the right time, since a lot of clubs now mix up styles, and we just put them together in a band.”

Besides Ward, who also goes by “the Albino Priest,” Harvey (aka Sheriff John Stone), and Randall (Continued on page 89)
Billboard honors James Taylor with its highest accolade, the Century Award for distinguished creative achievement. The laurel was named for the 100th anniversary of the publication in 1994.

While Billboard traditionally has reported on the industry accomplishments and chart-oriented strides of generations of talented individuals, the sole aim of the Century Award is to acknowledge the uncommon excellence of one artist’s still-unfolding body of work. Moreover, the award focuses on those singular musicians who have not heretofore been accorded the degree of serious homage their achievements deserve. It is a gesture unique in Billboard’s history and one that is informed by the heritage of the publication itself.

“One of the most gifted and utterly natural musicians of his time, James Taylor is also an artist who represents a timeless link between Stephen Foster, Jimmie Rodgers, Hoagy Carmichael, Pete Seeger, Ewan MacColl, and other great troubadour/stylists of modern song in the Western Hemisphere,” says Billboard editor in chief Timothy White. “Another hundred years from now, James’ music will still sound as ageless and intimate as it does today.

“Moreover,” adds White, “with his gently penetrating singing, adroit guitar chordings, and a conversational verse-writing technique that melds cultural insight and a social conscience with candid self-revelation, Taylor brought a seemingly effortless new eloquence to popular song in the second half of this century. Fellow musicians know how difficult it is to play James Taylor’s works as they’re actually arranged and performed by the composer, and songwriters have long learned how hard it is to match the innate sense of rightness in his lyrical and structural dynamics.

“But more than anything else, generations of listeners know that the heart has no hiding place from the simple, hymn-like truth of Taylor’s art. And that’s why Billboard can think of no artist more deserving of the 1998 Century Award than the peerless James Taylor.”

Previou
Century Award Honorees:

George Harrison - 1992
Buddy Guy - 1993
Billy Joel - 1994
Joni Mitchell - 1995
Carlos Santana - 1996
Chet Atkins - 1997

JAMES TAYLOR
1998 RECIPIENT OF THE
CENTURY AWARD

Designed by jeweler/sculptor Tina Marie Zippo-Evans, the Century Award is a unique work of art, as well as an emblem of artistic superluminence. Struck in bronze once a year, the handcrafted, 14-inch-high statue is a composite representation of the Greco-Roman Muses of music and the arts (among them Calliope, epic poetry, Euterpe, music; Terpsichore, dance; Erato, love song; and Polyhymnia, sacred hymn). The form is female, in keeping with an ancient definition of the arts. “Sacred music is a symbol of nature in her transitory and ever-changing aspect.” The lyre held by the muse is a specially made adornment that changes every year in order to personalize the honor for each recipient. In homage to Taylor, this year’s lyre was fashioned from a special alloy of fine copper and iurom-i0 silver in an ancient Japanese diffusion-welding layering process called mokume gane (i.e., wood grain metal). These alloys were chosen to form the lyre because of their earthy color characteristics, which become more prominent over time, the alloy resembling the floor of a forest in its leafy delicacy and yet demonstrating an enduring vividness symbolic of Taylor’s deep environmental and conservationist concerns. Strength, subtlety, and an ever-evolving endurance are the hallmarks of nature at its most vital and of creativity at its very best. They likewise evince the power and passions of James Taylor himself.
“Put your shoes on walk with me into this light... I'm feeling whole again It was a hell of a night.

Just to be with you by my side Just to have you near in my sight Just to walk a while in this light Just to know that life goes on.

Another day
Another chance that we may Finally find our way The sun has begun To melt all our fears away, Another day.”

“Another Day,” James Taylor, 1997

The amber-hued, late-afternoon sun of a North Carolina day is streaming past the high foliage surrounding the governor’s mansion. It forms a perfect copper path through the gates just as guest of honor James Vernon Taylo...
brought his hay wagon by with his mules hitched to it, and a woman was sitting on the tail of the wagon. After about an hour or so, my mom went out to look and said, "Why do you like a drink of water?" Effie said, "No thanks." And then Trudy said, "Is there anything I could help you with?" And Effie said, "Well, actually, I was wondering if there's anything I could do for you. I see you have a lot of children here, and I live just down the way." So Effie started working for my mom and stayed on for the next 20 years. It was a very low-key way to apply for a job, but things were very low-key there. It was the really rural South.

The people who lived next door were the Rays, but they were subsistence farmers, as were John and Effie. The Rays were white and owned their own place. John and Effie, who were black, owned their own place, too, but they didn't have enough land to farm, so he sharecropped other lands, although John Hairston kept hogs, and they did have a kitchen garden from which he sold produce.

At any rate, the Rays had an outhouse and a barn and a house and a washing machine with a gasoline engine on it outside the door. I don't think they had electricity when they lived there. I remember that Tom Ray had a parasite in his foot one time, a hookworm he'd picked up. That was an alarming thought. It swelled with a large worm, and you could see it moving under the skin—an alarming thing for a child to see. I think my father may have been involved in the cure of that matter.

The Rays' daughter Nancy would look after us and we'd play with her, and we'd go to her farm, but we weren't allowed to go over there and use the privy barefooted. Trudy was afraid we'd pick that worm up.

But the Rays had two or three kids, and I remember eating occasionally at their house, and I remember the adults' occasional longing for a banana split. They'd have bananas and biscuits and butterbeans, wax beans, and chicken and pie; oicloth on the table; laundry drying on the line. They had a lot of hogs and cattle and chickens, too. And they raised corn and cotton, and I remember the corncribs and the tobacco barns.

My brother Hugh was born in North Carolina in 1952 and came home to that house, so by then there were five of us kids out there: Alex, me, Kate, Liv, and Hugh.

When I entered the public school system, we had already moved to the new Chapel Hill house my mother and father built on Morgan Creek Road. I would have been about 6 then. That would be 1954, so the new house must have been finished by 1953.

Your second house in North Carolina was in dramatic contrast to the first, wasn't it?

It was a modern house my mother oversaw, a lot of glass, concrete, and steel for the foundations, and steel was a large component in the finished form of it. I was interesting to see it go up. It was typical of houses being built in the '50s. It was informed by Frank Lloyd Wright and the International style.

There wasn't much to do down there; it was very quiet. Our only neighbors in Chapel Hill were the Perlmutts, a family that lived close to us. They were from Savannah, Ga. Dr. Joseph and Helen Perlmutt. He taught at the medical school, and they had three kids, Louis, David, and Effie, who were roughly Kate's, Liv's, and Hugh's ages.

But our house was quite a separate world to be in, with a lot of sun, facing south to a gradual slope that fell off faster after 290 to 300 feet to a creek, Morgan Creek.

Obviously, the descriptions in "Copperline" of the world "half a mile down Morgan Creek" on the 1991 "New Moon Shine" album pertain to this childhood environment.

The "Copperline" is about Morgan Creek, and I saw many snakes, particularly poisonous snakes, copperheads and hog-nosed snakes. And Morgan Creek fed the reservoir, and there were fish there. I fished down there and in Stonewall Pond. There were small fish in both. We fished down there, and I fished down there a lot. There was an old shack in the woods that my father took on as a project, and I remember shingling that with him, putting the new shingles. On weekends we'd go down there, start a fire, and sleep there in our sleeping bags. My father built a skiff—he actually started it when we lived in Carrboro—and we put it in that creek.

What were the principal diversions in Chapel Hill for a young boy during the 1950s?

Not many. I have many memories, mostly of the landscape there on the Piedmont. It was a very slow and empty time. I went to school, came home in the school bus, walked down the country road to the house.

How did music arise to the extent that you later formed a band and recorded?

Alex discovered popular music first. He would tune in the radio, and I remember a lot of Hank Williams, Ernest Tubb, Loretta Lynn, and Patsy Cline, white gospel.

I played the cello, my mother got me for the school orchestra. We got a banjo from some local college kids. So we sang and played to each other in the kitchen.

We got television in '54 or so. There was Oral Roberts, a couple of very primitive local ads, the "Gillette Fight Of The Week" that my father used to watch on Friday nights, and children's shows [like] "Captain Kangaroo" and cartoons on the weekends like "Crusader Rabbit" and "Tom Terrific," that had Manfred the Wonder Dog.

But there wasn't much else on—aside from Flat & Scruggs 'TV show, and of course Jesse Helms was always ranting on WRLA-'TV [Rale-igh]. He was the editorial voice of WRL. I wish there were tapes of some of the things he said, they were so amazing. He used to say, and my friend Louis Perlmutt and I still quote it [thick, quavering drawl], "Them hippies up there..."
couple of decades, with North Carolina having a really well-educated work force and a major technological center. That was all just beginning in the 1960s, and my father in a small way was part of that by helping to send the medical school into a progressive four-year school and becoming its dean.

You’ve always had strong political feelings, and they’ve often surfaced on your records. “Let It All Fall Down” on the 1974 “Walking Man” album is an example. [Nodding] I think it was around the time of Watergate, and the country was feeling how petty and small-minded the whole thing seemed and how the whole political power was to hold on to power through dirty tricks. I just remembered Nixon’s foot-dragging on Vietnam, too, and being angry enough to want to write a song about it.

You’ve recorded more political songs than perhaps any other intellectual, material of an often-ganizing nature, like “Stand And Fight” on the 1981 “Dad Loves His Work” album. Well, “Stand And Fight” was a co-write with Jackson Browne. He really wrote the lyrics of that. I can’t claim too much of the message on that one. Although I was amazed to find, during the first time I went to Italy to play there, that the Italian Communist Party had used that song as their theme. In fact, when I played Pisa, the promotion of that concert was somehow connected with the local Communist party machinery. Of course, communism in Italy is very different from elsewhere, but clearly it was a very kinetic song for them.

“Slap Leather” [on 1991’s “New Moon Shine” and 1993’s ”LIVE”] is definitely political in its implications, and it had two or three messages. The first involved [President] Reagan. I was interested in the backdrop of offers and the incredibly dishonest American businessmen bought him for $2 million to come speak to them. I don’t know who negotiated that, and I’d still be very interested in the deal, but I just had the feeling they weren’t looking for his wisdom and advice. They were just interested in buying the president of the United States.

It really ranked. So that’s what that line “sell the Ponderosa to the Japanese” meant, although it has a second suggestion. “Star Leather” [on 1991’s “New Moon Shine” and 1993’s ] [“Live”] is definitely political in its implications, and it had two or three messages. The first involved [President] Reagan. I was interested in the backdrop of offers and the incredibly dishonest American businessmen bought him for $2 million to come speak to them. I don’t know who negotiated that, and I’d still be very interested in the deal, but I just had the feeling they weren’t looking for his wisdom and advice. They were just interested in buying the president of the United States.

Another matter covered in the song was how narrow our view of the Gulf War was. People listening to the radio or seeing it on TV, it was just like having a national sports team over there. We’re counting the rockets, and it was just an amazing mess of bombs and rockets and that made you realize, and I don’t even know if it was conscious or not, what is really going on over there.

“I’m referring to Nixon, but I’m actually talking about a parent who was a way and another who was upset a lot, and that’s hard for kids. And there was also a lot of stress between my mother and my older brother, Alex. That particular day was especially when my father was away, was hard. And Alex used to turn around and fight with the next [sibling] down the line, because he was frustrated. It’s just typical sibling stuff.

I was disillusioned with the feeling of being far from home at Milton Academy, but I was a good kid. I was trapped, so I knew that I was probably wasn’t allowed to be a good boy. I was, and I was allowed to find a way to accommodate my parents and do what I thought my parents wanted me to do.

So Alex was the most rebellious one? Yes, he was.

He was the one testing the limits on the home front, so he took that part away from you before you ever got a chance to audition for it.

You know, it’s a funny thing. The main thing about kids growing up, especially at that adolescent age, is that they make themselves feel important. You can tell there’s something they can do well. A little success goes a long way at that age. Alex was just trying to cope with everyone around him telling him they were unhappy. He was probably, in a way, was feeling that he was sucking up. He was trying to cope with what was not a very pleasant situation, and I think he was a really good singer, and I think that he really did his job and went to college, started acting out, starting good, staying out late, running with people my parents felt he should have been with. He got into trouble in school and just wasn’t doing well; he was a black sheep, and it was hard on him. So that was a source of back for me.

I came back from school in Milton, Mass., and I told my parents I was unhappy and I wouldn’t get any better for me there. I liked it less less and less and less, I was alienated, so I did my junior year at Chapel Hill High. And during that time I played in the Fabu- lows, and my high school was way more like a rock band. My high school band had played with Danny Kootch [Kortchnoi] on the Vineyard and got into the blues. And now my brother Alex was exposing me to a lot of stuff like Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, and we played in various high schools in the area, like Fuguyriva High School, or at sock hops, beer bashes.

Then I dropped out of school. I had some emotional difficulties. It actually was probably typical adolescent stuff, but the people around me put me there, and I think I was a little unhappy being that far away from home after the summer season in the Vineyard, and I didn’t like the school I was in. I think I was in a really good opportunity for me to go away to get an education, and I thought that it was what was expected of me, my parents clearly wanted me to get into the Marine Academy, but I was sad about going. I think that’s where that particular sort of alienation started.

You know, in North Carolina, we just kept our own company, largely. But I think it was hard for my mother to be in North Carolina, and I think we have a very particular, maybe even narrow case when my father went to the Antarctic for two years in 1955; he was drafted into the Navy because he’d taken a raincheck on military ser- vice during [WWII], so they sent him to Bethesda Naval Hospital for service, but he was miserable there. I don’t think people like him, who seemed to feel like part of the war effort, which seemed like an adventure for him. He felt himself to be in harness all his life, achieving, from the second grade. As for my parents’ marriage, I don’t think there was any special tension there. It’s just that he was together after the Antarctic thing. And I think my mother found the idea of being a faculty wife, with folks drinking by after church or hanging out at the country club, doing a lot of drinking, to be a real burden.

After my father came back, his drinking had stopped up a little. But we had a couple of kids in those days, and socially North Carolina was a very conservative place, so my parents didn’t break up until years later, in 1972.

For me there was an element of being a par- ent who was a way and another who was upset a lot, and that’s hard for kids. And there was also a lot of stress between my mother and my older brother, Alex. That particular day was especially when my father was away, was hard. And Alex used to turn around and fight with the next [sibling] down the line, because he was frustrated. It’s just typical sibling stuff.

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rehearsed in the basement of the Albert, and we all became a real band at the Night Owl Club, for eight to nine months as the Flying Machine. That was the only job we had. We tried to get a manager for a while, but I don’t think he was interested in us; he just did it as a favor to the people who were producing our record.

What was the origin of the awful "James Taylor And The Original Flying Machine" LP that was released in 1971 after the success of "Sweet Baby James"?

It was during the spring of 1970. Chip Taylor, a writer with April-Blackwood Music who had produced some records and written some great songs: "Angel Of The Morning" and "Wild Thing." He and a partner came down and heard us, and they signed us to a contract. My memory is pretty spotty about this stuff, because I was getting a lot back then, but it seemed to me that the first stuff was made on WeeJay Records [Editor’s note: It was Jubilee Records’ obscure Jay Gee subsidiary, the first single being “Night Owl”]. They took us in the studio [Jubilee’s Select Sound], where they ran rough tracks of "Night Owl," "Knocking Round The Zoo," "Rainy Day Man," "Brighten Your Night With My Day," and "The King," and then we spent a few weeks in the studio, so we never really got a finished record for release. Certainly an album was never formally finished.

The Flying Machine band broke up after two terrible gigs, a United Jewish Appeal fashion show and a gig at a club in Freeport, the Bahamas, joined the Jokers Wild Club. After the breakup, I got heavily involved with opium, and I fell in with two people who could really have done me harm if I’d stuck with them. A friend of mine told me that my project had said, "Two guns named Smack and Bobby need a place to hang out and hide out. Is it OK if they come up to your place?" We were all sitting around, getting high together, and I said, "Sure! Yes, just like T-Bone," which had been called "Santa Fe," goes back to 1963. But it was getting together with Don Grolnick in October 1966 to assess and sift through the material that I made alive. I didn’t trust the worth of the music I had until Don had gone over it with me, and he’d been a big help that way for years, which is why it was natural for him to produce the "Never Die Young" album.

As for the song "Never Die Young," I’d thought about little book, "Rip the Children," but I went past that phrase to say a lot more about getting old and rising above that state of being. Don did contribut a little to, "Flag," and that was a transitional time of stretching for myself as well. "Will Not Lie For You," was an instant song for that LP that I feel uncomfortable with now; the lyric seems petty and sordid. But it took only seven minutes to write the whole thing! I was being asked back then to do a lot of writing for films and Broadway, and "Flag" mostly showed the results of those sometimes-above moves. "Sleep Come Free" was originally commissioned for the [1980] Robert Redford prison movie, "Brubaker," but they wound up not using it.

These risky experiments continued even after "Flag" was done, when Robert Stigwood had me and Jacob Brackman writing songs like the previously mentioned "Stand And Fight" for the [1980] film "Times Square." The song was yanked from the picture, but I played it for Koosha and Don at the sound check for the 1979 MUSE/No Nukes concerts, and it wound up going over so well that Don and I did it on "Dad Loves His Work" two years later.

"Song For You Far Away," on the [1985] album "That’s Why I’m Here," that was written for the 1982 movie "E." I claim it was a statement between [Steven] Spielberg and John Williams, who had other music in mind, it didn’t get used.

The very different-sounding but equally wistful "Long Ago And Far Away," from the 1971 "Mud Slide Slim And The Blue Horizon" album, how did that come about?

That’s the type of song that comes straight out of the melody, but "Long Ago And Far Away" is not part of the lyrics. What I actually say is, "Long ago, a young man sits and plays his waiting game." It’s a simple song about how things don’t turn out the way you planned for them, a melancholy song about the nature of people’s dreams and the cold hard realities that have a habit of blowing in on them. I’ve recently come through a period of huge transitions, including a divorce [in 1996 from second wife Kathryn Walker], the death of a parent, the death of my oldest brother, the death of a member of my band who we all loved, and a change in my management situation with Peter Asher—although very amicable—after 27 years or so. So the most coherent part of that song for me is probably the second verse—"Love is just a word I’ve been said . . . " It’s a musings on the nature of expectations, and how they don’t last.

However, having said that, I’ve been with someone for some time now that I really care about, Kim [Snedvig], and I’m building a new house on the Vineyard, and the public in America and Europe has been responding well to my latest music, so I’m very optimistic about the future.

Well, it’s the full-fledged knowledge of how difficult life really is that makes so many of your secular hymns, like "I Will Follow" or "That Lonesome Road" from "Dad Loves His Work," such appropriate and superior successors to a "Mud Slide" song like "You Can Close Your Eyes." [Softly, reflective] I was arguing with a friend of mine recently, and she was saying that she thought our emotional hymns were as learned as our emotional responses to language, but I don’t—and I still disagree with her.

JAMES TAYLOR
NEVER DIE YOUNG

I think that one of the main motivations for writing music is to get out, to get off, and ultimately to get relief from separation. That’s why music has lived forever in church in the South, and elsewhere, and it probably comes from that religious setting, from that need for connection.

I have that need, and that’s why a lot of songs that I write can turn out to be this kind of religious music, not because there are any religious sentiments in them. I believe that the emotional response we have to music is so immediate it suggests an underlying or overtly real and a huge emotional content for us, regardless of what the lyric is.

The things about songs, for me, is that I write songs that I want to hear. I write them because I need to hear them and I haven’t heard them yet. [Distant smile, his eyes shining] Because I believe, most of all, that just by being music, it’s religious.
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Artists & Music

LO-FIDELITY ALL-STARS
(Continued from page 14)

(Wrecked Train), the group—the members of which hail from London, Brighton, and Leeds, England—consists of bassist Andy Dickinson (a One-Man Crowd Called Gentile), drummer Johnny Machin (the Slammer), and keyboardist/engineer Martin Whitman (the Many Tents).

"Because of our nicknames and regional accents—and because there were six of us with a lot of our friends—the press had a misconception that we were big-beat hooligans," says Ward. "But as soon as they saw the live show and bought the album, they realized what we're about."

The U.K. press has since had a field day with the Lo-Fi's. They're this year's best new band, according to New Musical Express, awarded on the strength of the singles "Kool Rob Bass" and "Disco Machine Gun." Both appear on "Blown Mind," which came out in May in the U.K. However, "Disco Machine Gun" is now titled "Blister's On My Brain," after rerecording the track minus a contested sample from the Breeders' "Cannonball."

"We've sold a lot of imports already, so the domestic version will probably do very well here," says Duane Harriott, manager of Other Music, an indie retail outlet in New York. "It's a big-beat record, but there are a lot of different elements in it, so people who aren't necessarily into that sort of heavy, beaty beat sound will like it. A lot of records on [Skint], like Fatboy Slim, are really heavy dance music, but the Lo-Fidelity All-Stars have a little bit more going on that people can grasp on to."

The Lo-Fi's—who are managed by Sean Phillips and booked in the U.K. by Aided Talent Agency and whose songs are published by Warn-er/Chappell Music—remain on Skint worldwide outside the U.S. At Columbia, Patrick says, press will be a key means of exposure, especially because of the group's overseas success and the worldwide range of musical influences.

"Battleflag," a recent U.K. and European single, will ship to modern rock radio here in early January. It's a remix of the Pigeonhed song, which the group's label, Sub Pop, originally commissioned and has received substantial airplay in Seattle; Pigeonhed is thus credited as featured artist on the Lo-Fi's version.

"We take our own musical path," notes Ward, using the album track "Vision Incision" to further illustrate. "We took a really slow female vocal from the Three Degrees 'A Woman Needs A Good Man' and speeded it up and tweaked it to create a different mood from the original."

That all this techno-modifying can be reproduced onstage in a rock band presentation is also a major selling point, notes Patrick, who says that the Lo-Fi's are looking forward to a two-month tour of the U.S. slated for early 1999.

"They're prepared to work beyond the six major cities that [other bands in the genre] do," says Patrick. "They love America and want to go to every record shop across the country and live out music that influences them."

But the Lo-Fidelity All-Stars are equally keen on playing, agrees Ward. "We love making music," he says. "We had to cobble together equipment for our first gig after Skint heard our demo tapes, and they signed us right after. It must have been total chaos, but that's what people like about us: It looks like it could collapse at any second!"
"We Just Can't Get Enough"....of DEPECHE MODE

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Work on “By Your Side” was in marked contrast to the claustrophobic sessions for the group’s 1996 album, “Three Snakes And One Charm,” which was cut at a Jerry-rigged studio in a house in Atlanta.

Robinson says, “We look back now and go, ‘God damn, man, we were locked in a house for four months with all the fuckin’ drugs anyone could carry, just getting weird and isolated in the dead of winter in Atlanta’...This record is springtime in New York City. We worked from 1 in the afternoon till 8 at night every day. Monday through Friday, took our weekends off. It was like, ‘Wow, we’re adults!’”

The return to the Crowes’ original hard rock sound was not only a natural move, but a timely one as well, according to Robinson. “We looked around at what’s happening,” he says. “Besides the fact that there’s no sincere music, there’s just no vibe, there’s no soul, there’s no funk, there’s no swagger: I think that’s what we are (about).”

“It’s so funny, talking about going full circle,” he adds. “When [the Crowes’ 1996 debut] ‘Shake Your Money Maker’ came out, it was almost the same sort of place where we are now. There really was no rock’n’roll. There was a lot of hair and pop music. Now there’s less hair but just as much pop. I honestly think that people want music that deals on more levels than just that.”

Promotion of “By Your Side” began in earnest this past spring. “Columbia, in conjunction with manager Pete Angelus and the band, has been working on this plan pretty much since May of this year,” Diener says.

The group’s Sho’ Nuff tour of small venues started the campaign. “They literally went up and down the country, beginning in May, extending through August in the States,” Diener says. “At the same time, we re-released the four catalog albums, which we acquired via a relation with Universal. American Recordings, completely remastered with some bonus tracks and multimedia content.

Promotion of the U.S. dates, the Crowes took their show to Europe for promo dates in September and October.

Diener says, “As we were doing this whole awareness campaign in the States, we had to do it overseas, because the band of course has had a very strong career overseas. So we did the same thing abroad. The band went over and did promotion and did a couple of small club shows—again, thousand-seaters, really hot, sweaty clubs.”

The push started at radio in early December with “Kickin’ My Heart Around” (written by Chip and Rich Robinson and published by Warner/Chappell) was serviced to album rock stations. The song was part of a promo CD that included six popular Crowes tracks from earlier albums.

The new song quickly entered heavy rotation at such mainstream and album-oriented rock stations as WMMR Philadelphia, WZTA Miami, and KSHE St. Louis.

Robinson was impressed by WMMR music director Ken Zipeto says, “They finally went back to where they started, the Stonesy rock’n’roll sounds, and I think that’s what the fans wanted....They’ve got their groove back. If they keep in the same vein as ‘Kickin’ My Heart Around,’ I think the album will do really well.”

The album’s title cut will be serviced to multiple formats in January and will be accompanied by a video. Forthcoming TV appearances will include an episode of VH1’s “Hard Rock Live” airing in December and January and a “Late Show With David Letterman” shot in January.

Sho’ Nuff tour dates continue through mid-December, climaxing with two nights at the Roxy Theatre in L.A. Then, in February, the group is booked at the Royal Oak Blakely at the Agency for the Performing Arts, will begin its proper world tour.

Robinson says, “Hopefully we’ll go back and forth to Europe, hit Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South America, get Europe in a few times. Do the States, hopefully...I don’t really see taking a long break until next Christmas. I really want to get out and work.”
WORLD TAKEOVER:

Universal is making a bid toward extending the popularity of “Big, Big World,” the debut single from 20-year-old Swedish pop vocalist Emilia, to the U.S. Total Package. Bad Boy/Arista vocal trio Total’s second album, “Kima, Kesha & Pam,” was executive-produced by Sean “Puffy” Combs and features production and songwriting credits from such artists as Heavy D, R. Kelly, and Diane Warren. The act, which will tour Europe with labelmates 112 later this year, has taped segments for the TV programs “MTV Jams,” “BET Soundstage,” and “The Ricki Lake Show.”

The song, which is also the title of the artist’s album, due Tuesday (1), is the fastest-growing single in Swedish chart history and has gone platinum or multi-platinum in a number of Scandinavian countries, according to Universal. The song, which has already had airplay at top 40 stations—including KIIS Los Angeles, KIRK Houston, WXKS Boston, and KDWB Minneapolis, among others—is also being played with a clip on MTV’s “120 Minutes” and VH1.

The artist comes to the U.S. in January to promote the Swedish-language口味-to radio.

JOINT EFFORT: Even before the release of their Aware/Red Ink debut EP, “Level,” this summer, Chicago-based rock act Dovetail Joint was taking flight locally with the support of local modern rock outlet WRQX (Q-105) Chicago.

The band’s single, “Level On The Inside,” was picked up after being included on “Local Q10,” a station-sponsored compilation featuring many bands.

In August and September the song, fueled by strong requests, was in top five rotation.

Dig Up The Foundation. Provocative, politically minded electronic/rap/rock group the Asian Dub Foundation’s new London Records album is “Rahvi’s Revenge.” The act’s first single, “Buziin,” is getting test spins at such stations as WBCN Boston, WXWQ Pittsburgh, and KROQ Los Angeles.

WXDG in Detroit and WPGU in Champaign, Ill., followed suit. Meanwhile, the band had already been snared out by Columbia.


News in En Español: Puysa, the Spanish-speaking answer to Korn, is gearing up for the release of its January release of its U.S. debut, “Fundamental,” which follows a 10,000-unit-selling indie release in Puerto Rico. In anticipation of the album, MCA is seeding the market with a self-titled five-song CD. First-week sales of the disc reached 160 units, with concentrated support in New York, Miami, Puerto Rico, and Los Angeles, according to representatives from MCA.

In related news, Luaka Bop/Warner Bros. Columbia rock act Bloque’s self-titled debut continues to gain

Thanksgiving Leftovers. Doo-Listle Records will be beginning Triple-A and folk stations with “Leftovers,” a new EP from Festus, Mo.-based act The Botte Rockets, in January to coincide with the release of the Smithsonian Institution-produced TV and radio documentary “The Mississippi: River Of Song” (see story, page 13). Two cuts from the EP, which consists of unreleased material from the band’s “24 Hours A Day” sessions, will be featured in the program. “Leftovers” bowed Nov. 24.
RAP & HIP-HOP

THINKING AND ACTING POSITIVE
THE TRIALS OF TOURING - RAP IN THE HOME VIDEO
THE U.K. SCENE - HIP-HOP AROUND THE WORLD
ARTISTS' LABELS - WHAT'S COMING UP?
1998

CAPONE-N-NOREAGA - THE WAR REPORT
GOLD!

N.O.R.E.
PLATINUM!

SKULL DUGGERY - THESE WICKED STREETS
GOLD!

The biggest stride for hip-hop this year has to be the genre’s increasing and steady presence on The Billboard 200 chart. Despite the doubts of many in the industry—behind closed doors, various critics have tried to make it as insignificant and fly-by-night as they could—hip-hop has become one of the most popular genres of the day. And its consistently high positions on a chart that is normally dominated by the likes of Celine Dion, Garth Brooks, Madonna and Shania Twain is forcing the world to not only take notice, but to finally accept the changing of the times and the changing of the musical guard, as well.

**TOLD YOU SO**
Within the confines of the hip-hop community, though, it’s been most gratifying to see that the artists with the highest debuts are the ones we play on our CD players at home, on our boom boxes, in our cars and in our clubs.

“I was glad to see the pendulum swinging away from the happy dappy hip-hop to a more severe hip-hop that’s closer to the original mandate of Def Jam,” says Lyor Cohen, CEO of Def Jam, about this year’s successful hip-hop projects. A label known for its street-credible artists, Def Jam scored the biggest chart upset when the debut album from its newcomer artist, DMX, knocked Garth Brooks off the top of the Billboard 200 the week of June 6. It’s first week of release. Phones rang off the hook that week, as reporters from across the country were frantic to know “Who is DMX?”

Def Jam continues to be on the upswing, as its co-venture label, Roc-A-Fella Records, held the No. 1 position on The Billboard 200 for a rap-record-breaking five weeks with the September 29 release of Jay-Z’s “Vol. II... Hard Knock Life.” And sharing in the light of Def Jam’s glory that first week were LaFace and Jive Records whose albums from OutKast (“Aquemini”) and A Tribe Called Quest (“The Love Movement”) respectively checked in at the No. 2 and 3 positions.

Before 1998, the hip-hop industry was just glad the genre was getting mainstream recognition through the likes of Sean “Puff Daddy” Combs’ ingenious infusion of hip-hop with old R&B hits like Diana Ross’ “I’m Coming Out.” But industry execs, artists and fans continued to grumble about when the day of reckoning for “real hip-hop”—which more closely mimicked the sometimes hardened feelings in their hearts and minds—would come.

**MAN OF THE YEAR**
That’s when Master P stepped to the plate. He has successfully replaced Puffy, who reigned supreme in 1997 in terms of publicity and mainstream exposure, as the hip-hop man of the year in 1998. His No Limit franchise, which includes No Limit Records and No Limit Films, has been so lucrative that Master P made Forbes magazine’s top-10 list of entertainers. He ranked No. 10 among the likes of such household names as Jerry Seinfeld, Oprah Winfrey, James Cameron and Tim Allen.

Six of his artists, including C-Murder, Young Bleed, Silk The Shocker and Fiend, secured spots on The Billboard 200 this year with titles like “All I Have In This World Are My Balls And My Word.”

Continued on page 2B
RAP RIPS UP THE CHARTS
Continued from page 27

And while Master P hasn’t graced as many magazine covers as Puffy, the No Limit brand name is enough to propel an album to the top of the charts. In one issue of Vibe magazine, for instance, the editors quipped whether fans actually liked the release from No Limit artists Kane and Abel, or if they only bought it because Master P said so.

But the No Limit pull seems to be the gift of simplicity. Where East Coast artists pride themselves on their ability to effectively use metaphors, the New Orleans-bred Master P and his crew just state the obvious with a Southern drawl: No Limit is also respected because it doesn’t hop for the glitter, not until more recently, anyway. The artists just expect us to accept them as they are, no matter how ghetto, country or vulgar they may be.

While Master P put it down for the South and Midwest, Big Pun represented Latino hip-hop well with 11 million sales of his debut album, “Capital Punishment.” The sales were triggered by the first single, “I’m Not A Player,” a song discussing matters of an explicitly sexual nature, and its remix, “Still Not A Player.”

Pun says the lyrics to the original track were “a little fuzzy and more X-rated,” but the remix got better exposure because it had (R&B singer) Joe in there and the beat was hotter. The remix featured the music and chorus from Joe’s 1997 hit “Don’t Wanna Be A Player.”

Regardless of what factors figured into the album’s high sales, “Capital Punishment” still marked the first time a Latino rapper went platinum, and it opened the pathways for Fat Joe. Pun’s hip-hop progenitor and close friend, to enter The Billboard 200 at No. 7 the week of Sept. 19 and sell 300,000 units. Fat Joe’s previous two albums, 1995’s “Jealous One’s Envy” and 1993’s “Represent,” sold only 160,000 and 81,000, respectively, according to SoundScan.

MENTAL WARFARE

At the same time hardcore hip-hop gained a foothold in the mainstream, we saw the return of what can be deemed “consciousness music” in hip-hop.

A solo album from Fugee member Lauryn Hill had been at the top of hip-hop’s wish list since the group first debuted in 1996. And while folks expected the album to be dope lyrically, not many could have predicted the extent to which she would explore the complexities of male/female relationships on “The Miseducation Of Lauryn Hill.”

The album debuted on The Billboard 200 and Top R&B Albums charts Sept. 12 and still remains on both charts. The album is unlike a lot of the hip-hop music we’ve been accustomed to nodding our heads to, and Hill hit a morality peak with tracks like “Doo Wop (That Thing),” which helped educate that last generation of young girls and boys whose only model of life, morality and self-respect is what they can surmise from videos. Ricki Lake and Jerry Springer.

It’s an album of life education for those who choose to listen and musical adventure for those who choose to dance to it. Napping Hill’s heels would have to be the bold projects of A Tribe Called Quest, Goodie M.O.B., OutKast and Canibus.

We’ve always expected life lessons from the three groups, but Canibus’ fame came from his ability to lyrically rip his opponents to shreds on mix tapes, in battles and when contributing a verse to various tracks.

His debut, “Can-I-Bus,” however, was something no one expected and it may take a few years for people to understand. Instead of just getting at folks with his verbal barter, he chose to concoct a few messages in his lyrics on tracks like “Niggonometry” and “What’s Going On.”

Because of the unexpec ted switch, the album hasn’t lived up to its hype, but he gets an honorable mention for making music according to his own standards.

The last milestones of the year would have to be Jermaine Dupri finally hitting the mic full-time on “Life In 1472,” Pras completing the trilogy of Fugee solo projects with the release of “Ghetto Supastar,” and Noo Trybe/Virgin Records making good on its promise to take the highly respected underground act Gang Starr to gold certification with its fifth album, “Moment Of Truth.”

Before 1998, the hip-hop industry was just glad the genre was getting mainstream recognition through the likes of Sean "Puff Daddy" Combs’ ingenious infusion of hip-hop with old R&B hits like Diana Ross’ “I’m Coming Out.” But industry execs, artists and fans continued to grumble about when the day of reckoning for “real hip-hop”—which more closely mimicked the sometimes hardened feelings in their hearts and minds—would come.
THE BIG DOGS OF THE地下

Curiously Strong Music

Defari, Natural Elements, Jigmastas, DV Alias Krist, Cover, Bigfoot, APhillyation, Da Matrix, Strick & Deadly Snakes
A lot of people don’t want to know that there’s a lot of love in hip-hop. The media spotlights sensational events and deaths, but the facts suggest hip-hop’s fighting spirit is often channeled into aggressive community work. No other genre of music gives as much back. “Hip-hop is always being criticized for being sexist, homophobic and violent—which it can be,” says Spearhead’s Michael Franti. “But, within hip-hop, there’s so much activism, from the Stop The Violence movement to songs becoming themes for people who go out into the streets and do something.”

Franti performed at this year’s “Red Hot & Rhapsody” AIDS benefit concert in NYC, representing hip-hop along with Manu Chao and the Roots, who’ve participated in the Red Hot AIDS benefits since 1994. Canibus also works for AIDS awareness; in the venerable hip-hop tradition of donating mic talent to fund-raiser discs, he recorded a single for the Levi’s AIDS charity. He’s also setting up a foundation for computer literacy, “donating software and hardware to schools, especially to third-world countries,” he says, “especially Jamaica, where I’m from.”

LOCK UP

Franti also participated in a September concert/conference organized in Berkeley, Calif., by author/activist Angela Davis and focusing awareness on America’s prisons. “In the past eight years in California, 15 prisons were built and only five high schools were built,” says Franti. “We raised money for three prison-activist groups.” A host of MCs, producers and spoken-word griots are featured on the Enhanced CD “Unbound,” also aimed at exposing inequities in America’s criminal-justice system and raising funds for the legal defense of political activist/author/death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal and various human-rights organizations. The set, to be released in March ’99 through distributors Nu Gruv Alliance, includes Organized Konfusion’s Pharoahe Monch, “Slam” star/spoken-word artist Saul Williams, Acroyaline and others. Working Class Productions, the set’s label, is also sponsoring a nationwide amateur art contest for the album cover. The October 22 Coalition called for all American citizens to wear black on Oct. 22 and attend demonstrations in more than 50 U.S. cities in memory of victims of police brutality. (Only NYC refused them a permit to march.) “Stolen Lives” public-service announcements ran on BET, MTV and VH1, featuring Wyclef Jean, the Goodie M.O.B. and Reg. E. Cathey.

In September, Arcos Communications launched “CONCEPT: An Urban Experience,” a series of NYC dance/hip-hop events. A percentage of profits go to its Creative Ammo Fund, an anti-violence youth initiative that supports youth in advertising and fashion-industry careers, and provides grants for community arts programs.

Channel Live, an unsigned hip-hop group who was down with BDP Boogie Down Productions, hosts a show called Illegal Broadcasterz, which provides a platform for issues pertaining to the urban community via its monthly cybercast program on Bbibzhop.com. It’s produced by Cynical & Almitra, IBC is also affiliated with PAX, an anti-gun-violence organization that launched Feb. 28 via a gala at NYC’s Puck Building that was attended by more than 3,000 people.

BIG-NAME BENEFACCTORS

MC/actor/record exec Heavy D has done everything from assisting organizations designed to foster better relations between African-Americans and American Jews to hosting a cocktail party at his L.A. home, during which MC-created chapeaus were auctioned to raise funds for the Children’s Defense Fund on the occasion of its 25th anniversary. Beastie Boy Adam Yauch seeks to infuse the Tibetan nonviolent philosophy into American consciousness through massive annual Tibetan Freedom concerts (the third was held June 13-14, at RFK Stadium, in Washington, D.C.). The music festivals attract top artists from various genres, massive audiences and much media attention.

Also working on behalf of the international community, Fab

Continued on page 32
COMING OUT SWINGING IN 1999

CURIOUSLY STRONG MUSIC

DEFARI, PRINCE PAUL, EVERLAST, DE LA SOUL, D.I.T.C., COOLIO, SECTION 8 MOB, BROTHA LYNCH HUNG, DIAMONDZ IN DA ROUGH, NATURAL ELEMENTS, DAYTON FAMILY, DJ JUBILEE, FABIDDEN & SCREWBALL

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IT'S BETTER TO GIVE
Continued from page 30

Five Freddie co-produced a benefit show at NYC's Tramps this summer to raise money and equipment for a hip-hop library-studio in Havana, Cuba. "They have all the energy, passion and reasons for expressing themselves through this medium, but none of the means to do it," he says. "Cubans created an influential music and culture in the past, but, because of economics, they haven't been able to in recent years." Mos Def and Talib Kweli of Blackstar broke the U.S. economic blockade to perform before 7,500-plus Cuban youths at the Fourth Annual Cuban Rap Festival (Aug. 20-23, in Havana), aimed at stepping up cultural exchange between the American and Cuban hip-hop communities. Bronx's Fat Joe rallied to aid Caribbean hurricane victims by performing and producing an Oct. 6 benefit concert with the Hip-Hop Has Heart Foundation (HHHF), at the legendary Jimmy's Cafe in the Bronx, featuring salsa stars and rap luminaries Big Pun, Noreaga, Cameron and Peter Gunz & Lord Tariq. Donated funds went toward securing food, drinking water and clothing for the victims of Georges.

Def and Kweli are partners in the newly acquired Milk Books, a 22-year-old Brooklyn cultural landmark (at St. Marks and 6th Ave). "We've been fortunate to inherit this rich tradition of black literature," says Mos Def. "Almost every black author and spoken-word artist has read here." Def also concocted his "award-winning pasta" dish for the "Gourmet Gents" celeb cook-off a few years ago, organized by Gordon Parks to benefit the Children's Collective. Def plans to reprise that event. "I'd like to start a children's rights defense organization," says Def. "It's a universal cause that crosses so many political, social and religious lines. Children all over the world need protection."

FOR THE KIDS

That cause already attracts the lion's share of hip-hop attention. Rapper A co-hosted a 15-minute "First Impressions" video to coach youth on creating a positive personal appearance that enhances confidence, self-respect and career opportunities. Produced by New York Do Something, it will air on MTV's "In The Mix" program and will be distributed to 900 youth groups in NYC, L.A., D.C. and Chicago.

Sometimes it seems that, no sooner does an artist get that first check from the record label, then he or she is founding some form of charitable, youth-oriented endeavor, often in his or her own immediate community. Before its second— and reunion—album was out, Brand Nubian was already setting up a non-profit organization to fund day camps, computer-literacy programs and Big Brothers and Sisters groups in the members' New Rochelle, N.Y., hometown. Artist E-40 inaugurated his 40 Sun's Children's Foundation—providing educational scholarships and enhanced learning and life-experience opportunities through summer camps and travel—on Oct. 10. In his hometown of Vallejo, Calif. Another Cali-based rapper, E-A-Ski, mentors students and donates money and gifts to his alma mater, the College of Alameda, as well as to Oakland-based Black Women Organized For Political Action. Bone Thugs-N-Harmony hosts their second annual Santa Bone Christmas event Dec. 22 in Cleveland, preceded by door-to-door home visits to present gifts. The group recently gave out more than 300 dinner baskets at its first annual Thanksgiving event.

ONGOING STORIES

Other artists establish comprehensive, year-round organizations, run by full-time staff. Rapper LL Cool J's Camp Cool J Foundation has been offering year-round upstate N.Y. camping experiences since 1992. Naughty By Nature MC Vinnie heads the group's comprehensive cluster of youth programs.
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Still Doin' It In '99
the worst thing to do is to put out work that you've been working on for months and years, put it in someone else's hands and see them drop the ball,' says Jay-Z, co-owner of Roc-A-Fella Records, about why he started his own label. 'That's why artists always have a lot of beef with their labels. The label and the artists always have different ideas about what's supposed to happen with their music. I feel more assured with my music in my own hands. At least I know that if it turns out right, it's on me, and if it doesn't turn out right, it's on me.'

Jay-Z's philosophy is a premise that is being practiced more often among artists, and the number of artist-owned labels is steadily increasing.

We've witnessed Easy E's Ruthless Records, Dr. Dre and Suge Knight's Death Row Records, Master P's No Limit Records and the fledgling attempt of Dre's Aftermath, but now there's a new breed of labels to watch.

Upstarts like Lil' Kim's Queen Bee Records, Mase's All Out Records and Missy Elliott's Gold Mine Inc. are at the fore this year. While major labels like Universal are signing distribution deals with regional independent labels like Cash Money Records in hopes of increasing their national success.

NOT SO LIL'

Lil' Kim's label, Queen Bee Records, is owned solely by Lil' Kim and was part of her renegotiation with her parent label, Undeas.

Her first album, "Hard Core," which was released in 1996, sold 1.1 million units for Undeas, according to SoundScan. Two years later, her Web site, www.lilkim.com, is still Atlantic Records' (who distributes Undeas) most-visited artist page, according to Karen Colamussi, senior VP of new media at Atlantic.

"Kim has always had it in her to be an entrepreneur, and she's always been the type of person who loves challenges," says Hillary Weston, general manager of the Manhattan-based Queen Bee. "She saw this as a challenge and an opportunity as a female—to take the knowledge that she learned as an artist and do the things she always wanted to do."

Lil' Kim, who is also Queen Bee's CEO/president, says she chose the name because it was the name the late Notorious B.I.G. gave her. "He always told me I'd be really rich and have my own label," she says. All of Lil' Kim's forthcoming projects, including her upcoming sophomore album, which is due in 1999, will be released on Queen Bee. She also has signed follow junior M.A.F.I.A. mate, Lil' Cease, whose album is expected to be released in 1999.

But while Lil' Kim's roots are in hip-hop, Weston says that Queen Bee will be "a little different, a very versatile" label in terms of the musical acts it will sign. "We're gonna touch on all areas of music: rap, R&B and maybe get into rock, classical or crossover. She's definitely looking to keep all doors open."

Queen Bee is slated to be distributed through Undeas and Atlantic.

GOING ALL OUT

Mase also hit the executive track this year with the inception of his All Out Records, which is a subsidiary of Jermaine Dupri's So So Def label.

Continued on page 40
WHO YOU CALLIN' A BITCH?

Ghostface Killah • Bone Thugs ‘N’ Harmony • GINUwine • Charli Baltimore • Dru Down
TQ • Cam’ron • RZA • MC Ren • Wayne-O • Da Productz • Cha Cha • Miss Lane
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"The label will touch on all areas of music, rap, R&B and maybe get into rock, classical or crossover. She's definitely looking to keep all the doors open."

—Hillary Weston, general manager of Lil' Kim's Queen Bee label

"The Biggie Project is going to be similar to what Guru did (with "Jazzmatazz"). But we're going to take it to another level," says Jones. "We're jazz lovers, and we want to take this opportunity to educate a lot of people who don't understand the influence between the two. We believe it's something special. We're also looking to do a touring situation and some performance pieces at different places."

Since the record deal is so new, no release date has even been set for the project and no overall label timetable has been put into effect yet. The label will be looking to sign "quality music, whether it be rock or hip-hop," says Jones. "Our interest will be to put out good-quality music that will be part of history."

Officers for the label will be set up in New York and Los Angeles, and Jones says MCA will play the role of a parent company. Jones says he and Mos Def, who is also a trained actor, are hoping that Good Tree will open them up to more projects within the Universal/MCA family, especially in terms of film development.

Multi-platinum artists Busta Rhymes and Missy Elliott also flexed their creative muscles with individual record deals. Elliott's label, The Big Meech Inc., is distributed through Electra, and has released its first artist, Virginia-native R&B singer Nicole, whose "Make It Hot" has

Continued on page 46
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As Hollywood struggles to learn how to successfully develop and market films to hip-hop moviegoers, The Source Films steps to the plate with Ray Benzino’s Made Men. Destined to be a hip-hop classic, The Source Films’ first feature is scheduled for box-office release in late ’99.

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The Source dropped its first compilation album, Hip-Hop Hits Vol. 1, in December ’97, and it has already sold over 800,000 units. Vol. 2, which dropped in November, promises even better results. The Pioneers, Hits From The Vault Vol. 1, is already a classic, and this January we’re dropping The Source Unsigned Hype album with all-new music from Biggie, DMX, Nobb Deep and seven of the hottest new artists from across the country. The Source’s strong brand recognition and awesome presence at music retail stores have made these albums the hottest selling hip-hop compilations in history.

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Survival of the Smokin'

While those radio tours help tremendously, it doesn't hide the fact that there were only two straight rap tours this year. "Survival Of The Illest" included, among others, DMX, Onyx and the Def Squad, and the nearly annual "Smoke-N-Grooves" tour sponsored by the House Of Blues, consisted of Public Enemy, Gang Starr, Wycoff, Jean and the Refugee Camp All-Stars, Canibus and John Forte. Busta Rhymes, Cypress Hill and Black Eyed Peas. But the most successful tour to date has been the "Puff Daddy And The Family," world tour that interspersed Mavado, Lil Kim, the Lox, Busta Rhymes, Jay-Z and Foxy Brown with Dru Hill, Irv and Usher. "Puff Daddy had the most successful arena-level tour," says Cheatham.

Another good idea for rap tours, according to Cheatham, is to book an act in a large venue as well as booking it into smaller clubs. The problem with trying to sell DMX is that a lot of the

Radio Tours is that they're considered "safe" because the stations are promoting them. "You know production is going to go smoothly," he adds.

The Trials Of The Touring Trail

Radio Promotions
And Group Shows
Ensure Safety And Numbers

Among the artists appearing on the "BooBomb" tour are (clockwise from top left): TQ, Mo Thugs, Monifah, Ginuwine, Timbaland and Margo.

Patrick says one thing that helps make radio shows successful is presenting the concerts on the weekend when kids are more likely to come. "We also keep the ticket prices reasonable—under $20—so kids can go and still afford to buy [an act's] CD, which is the purpose of these artists being out there," he notes. "We provide that forum for them; it's hard for some of them to get out on the other [big tours]."

More importantly, the promoter says that these shows often go on smoothly. "We have never had any major incidents at these shows," says Patrick. "There is mutual respect between us and them. A lot of the problems are caused from the outside—people get a little nervous and excited."

The company's next tour, the "BooBam," will include Tama, Bayaani, BI, Bizzy Bone, Mo Thugs, Irv, Da Brat, Monifah, Jermaine Dupri, Prodigy, Timbaland and Margo, Ginuwine and E-40.

IM booking agent Mark Cheatham says the best part about

radio tours is that they're considered "safe" because the stations are promoting them. "You know production is going to go smoothly," he adds.

Survival of the Smokin'

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War & Peace Vol. 2 (The Peace Disc).....Early '99
ARTISTS’ OWN LABELS

Continued from page 40

already sold 98,000 units, according to SoundScan. According to Elektra, all of The Gold Mine’s daily functions are handled through Elektra employees in New York.

INDIE LABEL, MAJOR DISTRIBUTION

In addition to artist upstream major labels are taking the lead set by Priority Records and other mid-level labels and sign- ing already established regional independent labels to national distribution deals. Universal Records signed New Orleans- based rap label Cash Money Records to an exclusive con- tract in June. As part of the deal Universal will provide distribu- tion, marketing and promo- nation support for all Cash Money artists.

Ditribution deals work for [large labels] because it helps us develop our presence in regions where we aren’t strong,” says Dino DeValle, senior director of A&R at Universal about the advantages of signing an already established independent label like Cash Money. He expects that the label’s foothold in the South will open doors to the region for Universal’s East Coast artists like Canibus and Rahzel.

Cash Money Records was started in 1992 by brothers Ronald and Bryan Williams. Bryan is a member of the label’s hip-hop group Big Tyman. The label has been successfully putting out hip- hop music from artists like Kilo-G, B.G. and Big Tyman in the Southern and Western regions of the country but signed with Universal because its following became too big to be serviced through a smaller company.

“The independent distribution we had wasn’t strong enough,” says Ronald Williams. “They couldn’t keep up, as far as spreading our music once it got to a certain point. We could get more out of a bigger distribution company. They were in the process of trying to set it up, but we don’t have no time to wait for anybody."

The January 1998 release of Big Tyman’s “How You Luv That” was the last title released under the old distribution sys- tem. It sold more than 80,000 units. The current album, titled “How You Luv That Vol. 2,” with several new tracks, was re- leased through Universal Sept. 23. According to SoundScan, the project has sold 32,000 units to date.

Williams says the only difference between working with an independent and a major is that majors take more time to put product out. “We used to just drop an album,” he says. “We don’t take as much setup time as a major label. It’s just a lot of things we do different- ly but we compromise.”

Other artists signed to Cash Money include rappers Juvenile, whose album dropped Nov. 3, Lil’ Wayne, Hot Boys, Turk and a reggae artist from Houston named Papa Rue.


RedRumm Records started in 1996 and gained notoriety in Atlanta, as well as in Houston.

RedRumm Records has plans to branch out into R&B and “our own Southern ghetto alternative music. We’re not going to be just a rap label; we’re gonna be more like an omni-artist label with all different flavors.”

— James Shepard, VP of operations

RedRumm Records


does and Austin, in 1995 with the release of the EP “GuGu’s Repent.” The EP was produced by Michael “GuGu” Aguila, the president of the label, and fea- tured various rappers. In 1996, the label released a full-length version called “The Repent.”

The title’s success drew the interest of Street Pride owner Tom McGhee in California, and the two companies hooked up to release “GuGu Presents Killa Klique,” which is currently on the market.

“Street Pride felt really that the sound of “GuGu Presents Killa Klique” deserved national status,” says James Shepard, VP of operations, “and that led him to Joe Isgo at Private Eye.”

RedRumm has plans to branch out into R&B and, as Shepard describes it, “our own Southern ghetto alternative music. We’re not going to be just a rap label; we’re gonna be more like an omni-artist label with all different flavors.”

Upcoming acts include the “futuristic, outer-space, cosmic styled” four-man rap group Klabeal, the “back-bend, futuristic pimp” D-Style, Pelicans, whose style they liken to Wydey Jean, the “ghetto men’s hip-hop styled” rapper Kimbo, and male/female duo Jack & Jill, who discuss the different ways men and women “run game” one another.

“We don’t want to get into the same pattern that a lot of people are in,” says Shepard, “topics are getting very pre- dictable, and we would like to ‘go there’ and be very differ- ent.”

Other artist-run labels in the mix this year include Kungfu’s Antra Records, which is distrib- uted through A&M Records. The label debuted its solo album, “Kungfu,” in September. Production team Organized Noise (OutKast, Goodie Mob) signed a label deal with Interscope Records and will release R&B, soul rap music and other genres under the moniker Organized Noise. Product from TLC member Lisa “Left Eye” Lopes’ label, Left Eye Productions, is also expect- ed to see the light of day in early 1999.

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Hip-Hop Around The World: From Japan To Germany, France To The Netherlands

PARIS—Along the wave that has brought French rap to the world, one of the key players is French producer and rapper, Yo. Yo's career has been characterized by his unique blend of traditional French rap with modern hip-hop styles. His music has been influential in breaking down cultural barriers and promoting unity and diversity.

But, like many other artists, Yo has faced challenges in reaching international audiences. His music has not been as widely known outside France, and he has been reluctant to compromise his artistic vision for the sake of mainstream success.

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But, like many other artists, Yo has faced challenges in reaching international audiences. His music has not been as widely known outside France, and he has been reluctant to compromise his artistic vision for the sake of mainstream success.

Despite these challenges, Yo remains committed to his craft and continues to push the boundaries of French rap. He is also working on a new album, which is expected to be released later this year. According to the artist, the album will feature collaborations with some of the biggest names in the industry, including international rap stars and emerging talents.

Yo is also planning to launch a new label, which will focus on signing and promoting up-and-coming artists from around the world. He hopes to use his platform to showcase diverse talents and break down stereotypes and barriers that exist in the music industry.

Despite the challenges, Yo remains optimistic about the future of French rap and the possibilities that lie ahead. "I believe in the power of music to bring people together," he says. "It's a language that can transcend borders and bring us closer together."
What's the 511?

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Video THRILLED
The Rap Star

Artists Write—And Direct, Produce And Star In Their Own Stories For Direct-To-Video Features

BY SHAWNEE SMITH

Mast.P made hip-hop history in 1997 when he released the direct-to-video movie "I'm Bout It," which was written, directed and produced by—as well as starred—the New Orleans rapper. The movie chronicled P's life in the projects of New Orleans and his fight to rise above the drugs and violence that surrounded him. The movie co-starred most of P's No Limit labelmates, including Silk, The Shocka, Tru and Mia X, and featured rapper Mack 10 and seasoned actress Helen Martin ("227"). The video helped put P on the national map. He used the movie to vividly showcase and entertain audiences with a tale of how he made it from the streets of New Orleans to national fame.

RZA'S DIGITAL DUEL

This summer, Wu-Tang Clan visionary Rza embarked on a similar homevideo project, titled "Bobby Digital." It's a story about Rza's alter ego, Bobby Digital, who appears when Rza drinks a magic formula he discovers while doing chemical experiments in his lab at the fictional Wu-Mountain. Digital, who wears a different eye patch to match each of his various outfits, is depicted as a womanizing party-animal with a tempestuous temper.

The movie, which was shot in New York and Philadelphia, was directed by Rza, who also stars in the film as himself and the title character. It is being produced by Uncle Ralph Productions, a company owned by Video Music Box co-founder Ralph McDaniels. Although the film is more creative than its predecessors, Rza says the movie was totally improvised. "I had no script, just an outline," he says.

He says he did get a few tips from Warren Beatty when he worked with the filmmaker/actor on the "Bulworth" soundtrack.

The film will also feature a few scenes that depict authentic ghetto scenarios like a myrine coper and that of a few gods from the Five Percent Nation building on the mathematics of the day.

The movie will be released through Wu-Films and is set for a mid- to late-November street date.

Rza is using the film's soundtrack, "Bobby Digital in Stereo," to introduce a blend of hip-hop and electronic music. "It's gonna be like techno sounds with a hip-hop drum pattern," he says. "It has sort of a reggae feel and a digital pulse." Rza, Killarmy and Method Man are slated to record tracks for the album.

SURVIVING DEATH ROW

Death Row graduate Kurupt is currently in preproduction of a 90-minute film based on his life. Slated to be a direct-to-video release, the movie is expected to be titled either "Dead Or Alive" or "Alive" or "Three The Hard Way." A publicist for the label says opinion is swaying in favor of the first title.

The movie is expected to be released in the spring of 1999 from ANTRA Films, a subsidiary of ANTRA Holding Company. The movie, which has a $1.4 million budget, was written by filmmaker Barry Michael Cooper, who wrote "New Jack City," "Sugar Hill" and "Above The Rim."

Like "I'm Bout It," and "Streets Is Watching," the film will highlight Kurupt's come-up in Philadelphia and then in Hawthorne, Calif. It will also map his rise as an artist signed to Dr. Dre and Suge Knight's Death Row Records.

Unlike many other Death Row defectors, though, the movie isn't expected to be a Dre, Dre or Knight basher, according to Joseph M. Marrone, CEO/chairman of ANTRA Music Group. "Death Row was the education that allowed (Kurupt) to have the ability and foresight to do what he's doing now," says Marrone of his partner Kurupt, who functions as president of ANTRA Records.

Kurupt will star in the film, as will TLC's Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes and upcoming ANTRA artists Dre and Bale S. The soundtrack will power the music to his benefit.
LONDON—The story of British rap and hip-hop in 1998 is a mixture of sad tales of underfunded producers and A&R teams, who fail to fully exploit the potential of their domestic rap acts, and ongoing struggles by small, cash-starved labels to keep British rap ticking over.

Make no mistake, Britain has no shortage of rap artists with the potential to break both at home and abroad, given an appropriate promotion agenda and budget. Witness the nominees for this year’s Music Of Black Origin (MOBO) Awards: Blak Twang, Funky DL, Phoebe One and Lewis Parker. At the MOBO Awards on Oct. 14, Phoebe One took the hip-hop honor for the year.

“If Phoebe One was over in the United States, she’d be selling Missy (Elliott)—not production-wise, but rap style-wise, she’s untouched,” declares Fat Freddie M, a presenter for London’s Kiss 100 radio.

MCA Music’s Ted Baron, the publishing A&R representative for Phoebe One, adds that the rapper’s lyrics show clear crossover potential in the U.K. “Her delivery is on the point,” says Baron.

A lack of significant radio promotion (blamed for the commercial failures of Phoebe One’s street- and radio-friendly singles on the Mecca/Castle Communications label) however, is high expectations for her new single, “Doing Our Thing,” which features the camouflage Red Rat, Boozy and Buccaneer merging their dancehall-flavored Phoebe One style.

COMING UP

Blak Twang [the 1998 MOBO hip-hop winner], Funky DL [the 1997 MOBO hip-hop winner] and Parker released well-received albums this summer: ‘99 Long Time’ [Jammin Music], ‘Heartfelt Integrity’ [Utmost] and ‘Mesquerades and Silhouettes’ [Mekonole/Virgin], respectively.

Blak Twang’s November release of the track “Perfect Love Story” features the situ-tuated Cocteau/EMI/R&B crooner Lynden David Hall. Funky DL’s ‘Perfect Love Story’ infusing jazz and R&B in his hip-hop title, “Rock The Beat” in early December. Structure Rize, whose much-anticipated debut album, “The Dawning” was initially set for next quarter, was given a November release date. “Snakebite,” the debut album by the recording Cambus, is the E-side of its just-released Fatback Band-sampling single “Capital Rise.”

Major-label albums pushed back to early next year include Credag’s “The Nation’s Chrysalis” debut, tentatively titled “Keep Your Mouth Shut,” the debut on Cooltempo’s EMI/R&B imprint Lizard. “The Giant Has Landered” [Bolshoie/Artist], which features the hip-hop/rock/alternative-rock since signing to Universal.

UNDERGROUND RESOURCES

The independent and underground scene has been fueled by Ty & Snootie Bizz’s “1 Am A Don” [White label], NPS Force’s “Money”, [IndoChina], Moorish Delta’s “Taking From Wicked

by Kwaku

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Americans,” opines one senior WEA A&R executive, citing Blak Twang as “we need to have a bit of a British uniqueness to it.”

One major problem for the local product is poor radio support. “If people don’t hear it enough, they can’t get used to it. And if you don’t get used to something, you aren’t gonna like it,” says Fat Freddie M, who is a strong supporter of British talent.

One new avenue for emerging local rappers to gain bigger exposure is by rapping on urban remixes of hit records. Tim Blacksmith, who has remixed the likes of Another Degree and A-Love, has used rappers like Peter Parker, Know Ansion and JP, who is now signed to Wildcard/UTA, “It gets people, the acts to play in areas that they don’t necessarily get to, and people get to hear the rapper too,” says Blacksmith.

Finally, Blak Force, formerly one-half of the Virgin-signed rap duo, is one of the few MC’s whose band was a star for the future. “I don’t mean to copy or imitate, but we need a superstar like Busta Rhymes or some MC that has some body with that aura,” says Tha Force, who toured Europe this year with Jesse Blott and MJ. By handling their live programming, “we need to be universal, that’s what I’m going to do.”

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IT'S TIME TO GIVE

continued from page 32

taken to heart. "In a world where the battle for the minds of the young is so crucial, there is no time to waste," says Vinette.

The project's goals are to raise awareness of the problems of youth crime and to promote the positive message that the arts can provide. The organization is also working to provide scholarships for young people who wish to pursue careers in the arts.

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**Rap-A-Lot**
Elektra, "E.L.E.
Jive, "It’s a Beautiful Thing"
No Limit, "Ghetto Fabulous"

**January 1999**

**No Limit**
Sikk, "Made Man"

**Priority**
NWA, "The NWA Legacy VI"

**Rap-A-Lot**
Yukmouth, "Thugged Out: The Album"

**Relativity**
Year Da Crib Up Thugs, "Crazy N’ DelaysDayz" Infamous Syndicate, untitled MAG, "Hustlaz Heaven"

**Tommy Boy**
Defia, "Focused Daily"

**Tuff City**
Sponnie Gee, "The Godfather Of Hip Hop"
Various Artists, "The History Of Hip Hop Rhythm Vol. 2-The Funky Drum Jams"

**Duck Down**
Buckshot, "Warzone"

**Jive**
Too Short, "Can’t Stay Away"

**Loud Records**
No Limit "Good N’ Jiggie," "Lizard, Lizard"
Inspecterish Deck, "Uncontrolled Substance"

**No Limit**
Mr. Serv-On, "Anotha Level"

**Relativity**
Krayzie Bone, untitled

**Rhino**
Various Artists, "The Showdown: The Sugarhill Gang Vs. Grandmaster Flash & The Furious Five"

**Tommy Boy**
Prince Pulp, "A Prince Among Thieves"

**Tuff City**
Grandmaster Caz, "The Grandest Of Them All"
Various Artists, "The History Of Hip Hop Rhythm Vol. 3-The Lin Drum Jams"

**Warner Bros.**
Citizen King, "Mobyle Estates"

**WuTang**
Wu Tang, "Wu Chronicles"

**March 1999**

**Elektra**
Missy Elliott, untitled

**Jive**
KRS-ONE, "Maximum Strength"
Baby DC, "School Days"

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Continued on page 58
SONY MUSIC

CHARLI BALTIMORE ALBUM IN STORES FEBRUARY 16

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IT'S BETTER TO GIVE
Continued from page 54

certificate or doll, held in different settings each year. Daddy's House even sponsors trips to Africa, the Isles and Europe to help children understand the realities of business, trade and commerce firsthand. "A lot of not-for-profit groups give money to already existing programs," says Souljah. "We don't give grants; we do all the work ourselves, and we have ongoing comprehensive relationships with children and their parents in the tri-state area." Queen Latifah's LanceLit Owens Foundation also cultivates relationships with the youth it nurtures and their families. "My daughter and I started the foundation in 1992, after my son died," says Flavor Unit VP Rita Owens, the Queen's mom. "In doing so, we embraced young people by giving." So far, the foundation has awarded approximately 25 students full college scholarships (given to four youths per year), all of whom are mentored—including their academic studies and required community-service activities—throughout their college careers. The foundation also offers youth-oriented activities, including a sports event, a music event, and a black-tie dinner. "It all deals with self-esteem," says Owens. "Our work also gives my daughter a chance to speak at high schools and talk about what she says by telling them to call our office and get an application. What she brings to this is being touchable, which is really important." Franzi clearly speaks for many of his peers when he says, "It's time for us to recognize our place among all the other countries that appreciate what we do, especially as black people in America. A lot of people look to us for what we've been able to accomplish. We can't let their warrior nature degenerate into commercialism and materialism." ■

Meth at Parkhill Day

THE NEW SCHOOL
Continued from page 56

Entertainment
Charli Baltimore, "Ice"

APRIL 1999

Loud Records
dead prez. untitled

Relativity
Booget (aka K-Dorsey), untitled
Stacked Deck, untitled

Warner Bros.
Sakkates, untitled
Chino XL, untitled

MAY 1999

Loud Records
Raekwon, untitled
U.V., untitled

Prodigy (of Mobb Deep), untitled
Tash (of Tha Alkaholiks), untitled

SPRING 1999

Blackground/Atlantic
LI Deeze, untitled
Cuban Link, untitled
Terror Squad, untitled

Tommy Boy
Ol' La Soul, untitled

DTC (Fat Joe, DJ Lord Finesse, Showbiz & AG, Big L, and Demand), untitled ■

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EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: MASTER P
Dutch R&B Is Finding Its Dignity
Virgin’s Female Trio Raises Genre’s Profile With Debut Set

BY ROBERT TILLI
AMSTERDAM—More and more, the Netherlands are becoming a source of home-grown R&B. Billboard, Aug. 1. For the most part, male vocal groups such as Romeo (Luke Dureco) have made a serious sales impact.

Now, female trio Dignity is making a splash with its self-titled debut album, released Nov. 1 on Virgin. It entered at No. 26 in the Mega Top 100 Albums chart. Since the act’s outstanding contribution to the “No Sweat” compilation of unsigned R&B talent by the government-subsidized National Pop Institute almost two years ago, no album release has been anticipated so eagerly by the local R&B community as Dignity’s. The set has been simultaneously released in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, and Belgium.

Subtitled “Dutch R&B Flava,” the aforementioned sampler contained two tracks by Dignity. Official distributor Virgin Benelux had the first option to sign artists featured on the set, and Virgin Benelux A&R manager van der Linden remembers that Dignity was an easy pick.

“Of the whole lot, they were by far the most mature,” he says. “These girls can really sing, which is a guarantee for a long-term career well beyond the contemporary R&B era. Besides, privately I’ve always been a collector of girl groups,” adds Van der Linden, who subsequently decided to release the track “Talk To Me” off “No Sweat” as the trio’s first single. It became a minor hit at home in the first half of 1997 and hit No. 1 on the R&B chart in neighboring Germany.

“R&B is bound to become the dominant musical genre in the European charts,” Van der Linden says.

Unlike many of their U.S. counterparts, all of the band’s members—Karma Lemghari, Susan Haps, and Gracia Gorré—have contributed to the songwriting. “From day one, Flip has stimulated us to write our own material,” says Lemghari, who wrote two of the album’s 13 tracks. “We are lucky that our producers have not stipulated to cut their material exclusively. By not relying on material pitched by publishers, this album very much reflects what we are all about.”

Since “Talk To Me,” the girl group has been reduced from a quartet to a trio. Edsilia Rombley left to embark on a successful solo career, which culminated in representing the Netherlands at this year’s Eurovision Song Contest in Birmingham, England, with the song “Walking On Water” (Dino Music). Coincidentally, her self-titled debut CD was released close to the album by her former peers.

“You have to readjust your vocal lines a bit to get the balance right again,” says Lemghari. “Luckily, the split was very amicable. We still go to each other’s release parties.”

Despite their maturity, the members of Dignity still had a lot of rough edges that needed smoothing out when “No Sweat” came about. Based out of his Cruise Control Studios, a former shelter in the center of Amsterdam, producer Rutter “Butti” Croese remembers he had a hard time talking the band into the project.

“Aftewards, it paid off for all involved, but at the time they were afraid it would harm their careers,” says Croese, a pivotal figure in the Dutch R&B scene.

Croese has produced half of Dignity’s debut album. Fabian Lenssen (of Romeo fame) produced the other half. “I’ve known them for five years now, and artistically they’re... (Continued on page 66)
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LYNYRD SKYNYRD

PHOTO BY M.C.K. ROCK

www.americanradiohistory.com
In 1973, Lynyrd Skynyrd made its official music-industry debut in a packed Atlanta club, Richard's, where the Sounds Of The South label introduced what producer Al Kooper heralded as "the American Rolling Stones."

Lynyrd Skynyrd was a finished package that night—the group's astonishing live intensity was branded into the minds of everyone who witnessed this historic event. From the grim statement-of-purpose "Workin' For MCA" to the apocalyptic finale of "Free Bird," it was obvious that this was a band for the ages. Ronnie Van Zant, its frontman and leader, pushed each story forward with violent, poetic purpose; Allen Collins, Gary Rossington and Ed King spun interlacing ropes of electric guitar lines crackling through the mix, a sound that created mayhem despite its carefully calculated precision.

This was the real future of rock 'n' roll, destined not for Hollywood fame but for blood, tragedy, redemption and, ultimately, survival on its own terms.

The band was derailed by the infamous 1977 plane crash that killed Van Zant, Steve Gaines, the guitarist who replaced Ed King, and his sister, vocalist Cassie Gaines. A decade later, the remaining members reassembled for a tribute to Lynyrd Skynyrd, with Ronnie's youngest brother Johnny singing. That band, after a few more changes, is still going strong.

Twenty-five years after that memorable debut, Lynyrd Skynyrd played a pair of shows at New York's Beacon Theater that bristled with the energy of a new band trying to prove itself. The following interview took place after the first night, with all nine members offering their observations on Skynyrd history—vocalist Johnny Van Zant, guitarist Gary Rossington, Rickey Medlocke and Hughie Thomasson, keyboardist Billy Powell, bassist Leon Wilkeson, drummer Jeff McAllister and background vocalists Dale Krantz-Rossington and Carol Chase.

You guys were obviously having a lot of fun out there last night.
Johnny Van Zant: We've been having a real good time. We've been at this over 11 years now. I've been in the band longer than Ronnie was.
Gary, you used to talk about how you first got together through playing baseball.
Gary Rossington: Me and Bob Burns had a little band, and Ronnie was in a band called Us, and Allen was in a band called the Mods. Our band was called Me You And Him. Larry Junstrom played with us. Me and Bob went to watch Ronnie play baseball one time, he was on one team, and we were on a team called the Mustangs. We were right on the third-base line, and Ronnie hit a line drive and wham it hit Bob Burns right in the head and knocked him out. Ronnie thought he'd killed him, so he came runnin' over.
Then we went back and talked, and we went over to Bob's house. Ronnie just lived down the street. He saw the drums and the guitar, and we just started playing "Last Time" by the Stones and "Gloria." We got a band up that day, and we went and got Allen Collins. He was riding his bike down the street. Ronnie was the badass of the town, and he had this big old red Mustang. Me and Bob were in it going down the road, and we saw Allen, and Bob went, "Hey, that guy's got a guitar, and he's pretty good, Ronnie." We were looking for anybody with equipment. So we pulled up and yelled "Hey Allen!" and he saw Ronnie, and Bob was pretty bad at the time too, so he took off, riding his bike down in the woods, threw his bike down and climbed up a big old oak tree. The rest of us are saying, "Come on down, we only want you to play with us," but he thought Ronnie was gonna beat him up. So we started to play music together. Cause we liked the Beatles and the Stones, the Yardbirds, and we started to dream, and the dream came true.
Billy Powell: I played guitar in Leon's band, the Little Black Eggs. I had been taking classical piano lessons for years, then one day I decided to pick up the guitar, and we started this band the next day. We only knew one song. Allen Collins later taught me how to play "Light My Fire."
Leon Wilkeson: Little did we know that we were gonna end up with a band as famous as Lynyrd Skynyrd. Continued on page 15-
They’ve come a long way, baby, through some rugged roads and inspirational passages. At 25, the band appears poised to scale new heights of popularity as it roars into the next millennium.

BY JOHN SWENSON

In the 25 years since Lynyrd Skynyrd released its first album, the collective members of the band have endured several lifetimes’ worth of high times, bitter tragedies and ultimate redemptions. The band may well be enjoying the greatest popularity of its fabled career in its current incarnation. But every single member of this group, and those who’ve known them over the years, agrees that Lynyrd Skynyrd as an entity is much greater than any sum of its individual parts.

The spirit of the late Ronnie Van Zant, one of the most charismatic figures in rock history, walks with the band today. Van Zant, the oldest of three musical brothers, wrote a series of song lyrics that went far beyond the realm of the genre that grew up around them—Southern rock— to define the identity of young working-class American rockers in the 1970s as surely as Hank Williams Sr. or Bob Dylan defined their generations. Ronnie’s writing has taken on the added stature that history lavishes upon genius, and it speaks in some ways even more eloquently today as so many of its themes continue to resonate.

Ronnie’s youngest brother, Johnny, has gradually grown into the role of Skynyrd’s frontman, bringing his own joyful personality to the savage yet sage intent of Ronnie’s songs.

What Johnny knows, and what Ronnie knew before him, is that Lynyrd Skynyrd is only as strong as the bond that holds the band members together. When Ronnie and his high-school buddies Gary Rossington and Allen Collins set out on their great adventure back in the 1960s, they played baseball together. The camaraderie of sports teammates was easily translated into the all-for-one intensity of a fledgling rock band awed by the Rolling Stones and Yardbirds.

COUNTRY & R&B ROOTS

The boys’ hometown of Jacksonville, Fla., was a source point of Southern rock, a blue-collar city whose roughneck bars produced an army of rockers. Skynyrd took the high-energy sonics for their in-your-face approach from British groups, but their basic song structures and Ronnie’s lyrical content came from American roots-music sources. Like his younger brothers Donnie and Johnny, Ronnie was brought up on the working-class values instilled by his father, Lacy, an independent trucker. Lacy raised Ronnie on country music, his favorite songwriter was Merle Haggard, and the band’s first attempts to record were supervised at one of the well-springs of Southern R&B, Alabama’s Muscle Shoals Sound Studios.

“Merle Haggard was Ronnie’s favorite writer,” recalls Lacy, who’s recently published a memoir about the family, “Southern Music Scrapbook.” “They got to be great friends later on, and Ronnie would go out on his birthday parties. Ronnie loved Merle Haggard and country music, but when the rock came around he decided to go in that direction. He named it Southern Rock, and, by golly, it paid off.

“Raisin’ up three sons in the rock ‘n’ roll music hasn’t been a bed of roses. It takes money, time, a lot of energy, sweat and tears, you know. A band has to love one another like real brothers. They’ve got to pull together, and Ronnie was a real leader. Ronnie followed suit with ‘38 Special, and Johnny was leading his own band when it became more or less public demand for him to front the regrouped Lynyrd Skynyrd.”

HAMMERING AND TOURING

Ronnie’s leadership helped a group of local friends endure the hardships and rejection that a struggling young band must overcome to learn the trade. By the time the band released its official debut, (“Pronounced...”), such classics as “Free Bird,” “I Ain’t The One,” “Poison”...
BMG Distribution congratulates Lynyrd Skynyrd on their unparalleled success over the past 25 years. We are proud to be your distributor and look forward to the next 25.
1977's tragedy wasn't enough to derail one of the South's key musical transportas. Skynyrd was and is a working band. In its present-day incarnation, the group ties its musical past, present and future together with cookin' performances five days a week.

BY RAY WADDELL

When Lynyrd Skynyrd's plane went down in the Mississippi swamp on Oct. 20, 1977, it not only signaled the beginning of the end for the hugely popular Southern Rock scene. Many felt the tragedy would close the book on a great American rock band, as well.

But an indomitable spirit and a fiercely loyal fan base have kept the Skynyrd sound alive, turning a new generation on in the process.

Following the infamous plane crash, Lynyrd Skynyrd members first performed again as a band at the Volunteer Jam, in January 1979 at Municipal Auditorium in Nashville. Before the Rossington-Collins band had made its debut, Charlie Daniels welcomed the scarred survivors to his stage in one of the most memorable concert moments in Southern Rock history. They played an instrumental version of the band's signature "Free Bird" and were embraced by the crowd.

"I just watched the tape of that show again recently, and it sent chills up and down my spine," Daniels says. "There were a lot of emotional moments at the Vol Jams, but that had to be the most emotional."

Skynyrd guitarist and co-founder Gary Rossington agrees. "It was real heavy," he recalls. "We hadn't played, put together, and I remember watching them. Even though I was the drummer then, I was always able to watch Allen and Gary, how they put things together. So, when I was forming ideas for the band, I just said, "If it were Allen sitting in the room, how would Allen have approached it?" and do it that way. But it's always gonna come out. We're the same people, basically. That's how I approached it with this band. You've got to have some insight into the people who were there before, who gave it that essence—put yourself in that position and write to that."

Hughie Thomasson: I've known the Skynyrd boys since 1972. I started the Outlaws in 1968. Our managers knew each other; we opened for them at Mother's in Nashville. We've been good friends ever since. The Outlaws ended up doing several tours with Skynyrd after that. The band would always invite me up to jam on "...the Breeze" and a couple of songs, so we've known each other since then. It wasn't like walking into a band full of strangers for me, it was more like joining up with old friends.

Dale Krantz-Rossington: I was from Detroit, so I don't think I really understood, even though I was singing with .38 Special. We toured with Skynyrd earlier in 1977. I really learned to appreciate them when I stood at the side of the stage in '77, and in about 20 seconds I got it when I saw Ronnie just kind of cruise that stage, walking against the beat, just totally in control. I'll never forget the impact they had on me that night. They were the most magical, frighteningly powerful band I had ever seen.

Powell: I was a roadie for the band for a year and had been taking classical piano lessons since I was six years old. I wired amplifiers for the band back then. One night, after a high school prom in Jacksonville, there was this old piano up there on stage, and after the gig I sat down and played my version of "Free Bird," and Ronnie's jaw dropped. "You play piano like that, and you didn't tell us," he asked. I hadn't mentioned it before. Ronnie said, "You wanna jam the band?" It was my first dream come true—a band.

We were going good, then the tragedy, Oct. 20, 1977, just took the rug right out from underneath all of us.

Wilkeson: For me, the plane crash was total instant amnesia, which I count as a blessing.

Powell: I guess I'm the one who's cursed with remembering every detail. I wasn't knocked unconscious. It was terrifying, it was unbelievably, indescribably, don't-wanna-know terrifying. You don't wanna know. When you know you're fixin' to die in 15 minutes, gliding over the palm trees and swamps, fixin' to die, it's terrifying. There's nothing you can do about it. It felt like being hit with 150 baseball hats while rolling down a hill in a garbage can. I was getting hit all over the place. On impact, every seat belt broke. The nose cone was all the way off, a steel rod went right through my arm. Leon was out cold, all his organs were shaved up into his chest, his teeth were knocked out. Here I am, trying to hold my nose on my face over there. That's as far as I'll tell you about it. For three years, all we could do was ask why. God did this at the peak of our career. The ones up front were the most critically injured and killed. The ones in the back, some of us just got out and walked around in a haze, in one or two feet of swamp mud with the sun going down and alligators and snakes everywhere.

Rossington: I had to think about it sometimes. People do ask me. This is October; the reunion month and all that. You do think about it. When something that dramatic happens, you always think about it. You remember when your parents die, when your first dog dies. My father died when I was 10, that was the only big thing that ever happened to me until then. You learn to live with it, you have to in order to survive and not let it drive you.
Rickey Medlocke
A Lynyrd Skynyrd Original

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Special Thanks to: Gary, Johnny, Billy, Leon, Huey, Jeff, Dale, Carol, Charlie, Joe, & Mary Ellen
For the past 25 years, Lynyrd Skynyrd’s songs have come across with a conviction and authenticity that fans understand, whether it’s about putting Neil Young in his place or fleeing an irate boyfriend. “They’re always about something that happened to one of us,” says Gary Rossington. “It’s always the real deal.”

**BY RAY WADDELL**

crazy. It did drive us to drinking and drugs for a while, but we’re back. I don’t really like to talk about it just because all that stuff happens and everybody has a different story of what they saw; there’s a lot of freaky things that happened from that. When you fell out of the sky and people died around you and you’re in the swamp, it’s like Viet Nam or something, seeing all your friends and family dead and screaming and metal and flames, it’s a heavy thing to lay there for hours waiting for help. It’s real weird, but God gives you the power to forget all the bad things and the real bad hurts, physical and emotional. You just learn to live with it. I have. All the guys in the band now, they live with us that week. Ronnie had invited you to cut and ride with us. Where were you?” I was right down the road, he says. “I was in Columbia. When it happened, some guy came running into the club, yelling about it. I quit and immediately went back to the hotel room and got on the phone. Momma picked it up, and she was in hysterics. I went through a period for a while feeling guilty, that maybe if I had been there something would have changed, I could have made the difference somehow.

Maybe it was my destiny. Gary said, “You were meant to be here now.” I’m so glad to be back with Gary anyway, because he’s like a long-lost brother.

*Rossington:* They did that to kind of try to get away from being compared to Lynyrd Skynyrd right off the bat. Me, Allen and Ronnie were so close, we didn’t want people to think we were just gonna come right back out with another singer; we had Paul Rodgers was gonna sing with us. Ronnie Hammond, we talked with Gregg Allman, but we went with Dale, a female; she was the perfect choice.

*Van Zant:* I was happy about that because Ronnie was my brother and I couldn’t see anybody taking his place. It was a whole different direction.

**Dale Krantz-Rossington:** It was an amazing time. I was a little background vocalist from Indiana. I had to sing from my toes because I was scared to death of them, and that’s the truth. I was so scared of Gary and Allen. I had led a band, but I had never written lyrics. When they said, “Write a song,” I did because they told you to. We opened the show for them in the spring of ’77 with 38 Special, Ronnie’s band. I was singing background vocals with my younger sister at the time. Two years after the crash, I was still working with 38. They were throwing around some heavy names—Paul Rodgers, Gregg Allman—but they were so worried about falling into the norm...
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...Three Steps," and the place went nuts. We brought the house down. So we talked to Charlie Brusco about doing a tribute. Gary didn't want to do it at first, Johnny didn't want to do it, but we said it's 10 years on; we need to have a tribute. Charlie agreed and talked to Gary, that's how we got the wheels turning in 1987. It was going to be a short tour, a six-week tour, but the magnitude of the tour was so great that here we are.

How hard was the decision to start over?
Powell: Anybody's entitled to change their mind after 10 years; we weren't on pain medication anymore, we weren't bitter.

Krantz-Rossington: I knew that Gary had a really rough time with this [the new Lynyrd Skynyrd] from '87 on. He took this project on, assuming it was gonna last for literally one week. We were going to do a tribute to Lynyrd Skynyrd. Nobody at that time thought we'd do 100 shows, let alone come to grips with writing new material under that name. Every step of the way, this has been a big step for Gary to take. But just in the last two years with Hughie and Rickey coming in, it has really worked. The spark for Gary really was the guitar army, and I'm not sure he had found that and the camaraderie with the other gentlemen that he did with Rickey and Hughie. Man, they brought some life into this thing.

Gary was a big package to take on. I thought Skynyrd, with all the ghosts and the emotional baggage, was only...
Thank You, Lynyrd Skynyrd!

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THE BILLBOARD INTERVIEW
Continued from page 15/16

going to be heartache for him. I wanna tell you I fought it for a long time. I was afraid it was gonna somehow be bigger than us, then it dawned on me about five years into it that it definitely a bigger than all of us. Skynyrd is huge, and once you kind of give up to it and support it you can realize that. It’s so huge, it’s bigger than the band, it’s bigger than Gary and I. We couldn’t have fought this. It’s got an energy of its own.

Van Zant: I never dreamt I would be playing with these guys. Never wanted to really, that thought never crossed my mind. Even 10 years after the plane crash, it never crossed my mind, until Gary actually came up to me and said, “We wanna do something besides it being the last thing Lynyrd Skynyrd did was to have an airplane crash.” The more I thought about that, the more I realized that Ronnie put his life and soul into this band, and he wouldn’t have wanted to be the last thing that the band ever did. It gives me great pleasure to go out and sing songs he wrote. He was a great writer, great singer, he was a stylist. It’s pretty amazing that his songs still live on. After we’re all dead and gone, his songs will live on.

At first, during the “Tribute” tour, the band played “Free Bird” instrumentally...

Van Zant: Sure, it was. That’s a tough song to sing. I used to think the Skynyrd songs were a piece of cake to sing, but there’s a lot of attitude, a lot of things, especially “Free Bird,” there’s a lot of little low notes, little things Gary and I have to tune in on because the slide guitar goes with the vocal. If we’re not right on pitch, we’re crashing.

Krantz-Rossington: Johnny’s grown up over the years. He’s come a long way. It was tough to see him grow up into this role, believe me, but it was beautiful in a very bittersweet, tough way, we had to pull those “Free Bird” back out of him. We had to fight him to get him to do it. I remember Gary saying, “I’m not gonna play it one more night if you don’t get out there and sing it.” And Johnny said, “Well, I won.” Gary said, “I wrote those words, he wants people to hear the words.” He didn’t care about doing it instrumentally anymore. Johnny’s come a long way.

Thomasson: Johnny is always a surprise. I’ve known Johnny since he was knee-high to a grasshopper. The Johnny Van Zant Band, he had his own band. He’s doing a fabulous job. There’s nobody else on this earth who could stand in and do what he has done. He may be the one that knows it the least of all. He’s not one for putting himself on the back, but his brother would be proud of him.

The current lineup came about after Ed King, who’d been part of the reunion lineup, had to leave for health reasons.

Krantz-Rossington: The band called it up and said they needed someone to fill in for Mr. King, he had health problems. The Outlaws were still playing, I would have never done this, had it been any other band. I’ve been offered jobs with numerous bands with much higher stature than the Outlaws, and I turned them down, because while it was a great honor to be asked, I wasn’t doing it out of what I was doing, and it wasn’t the kind of music I wanted to play. This was the only band that I would have even considered playing with, much less being here right now, doing this, because it’s a rock ‘n’ roll band. That was three years ago, and I’m still here, so I guess I passed the audition.

Rickey came in right after that.

Thomasson: Ed King had a heart problem, and he had to get off the road, so we got Hughie. And I had just seen Rickey at the premiere of the “Free Bird” movie in Atlanta. We almost thought at first we didn’t know if he could just settle down into a sideman role—he was fronting his own group, Blackfoot. He was pretty wild, and he just did his thing. But he fit in perfectly. He’s just

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25TH ANNIVERSARY
What They Say About Skynyrd...

Lyynrd Skynyrd, in my opinion, is the purest rock 'n' roll band to ever come out of this nation.
—Charlie Daniels

With the death of our heroes comes the birth of their legacies. That's how it is with Dad and Skynyrd. Some people say they should give it up. That would be like asking the Yankees to fold up because Didi, Ruth, Martin and Munson are gone. Lynyrd Skynyrd is satisfying a very compulsive need for excellent, mind-operating, ear-tantalizing rock 'n' roll.
—David Mantele, son of Mickey Mantele

When I first saw Skynyrd in 1973, they were a punk band. The audience never knew what to expect, except to have their collective asses kicked. Through it all, 25 years later, they aren't just playing the hits: They're still kickin' ass.
—Bill McGathy, president, McGathy Promotions

Their music is for and about simple folk living a simple life. The message rings just as true in California or New York as it does in Georgia or Alabama. They possess a one-of-a-kind style that many have tried to copy. The songs have stood the test of time and inspired countless musicians, including this old country-revered, who is proud to have grown up under the "Freebird"s wing.
—Travis Tritt

When Ronnie was 11, he told me, "I'm going to start a band and go places with music." At first, he sang both country and rock. So one time I asked him which direction he wanted to go. He said, "I'll go with the flow" and picked rock 'n' roll. That made me the father of Southern Rock. I think we're the only family in the world that's had three sons in three different rock bands: Lynyrd Skynyrd, .38 Special and the Johnny Van Zant Band.
—Lacy Van Zant, father of Ronnie, Donnie and Johnny Van Zant

We loved them like brothers. Throughout their careers, they have played extraordinary music, pure American rock 'n' roll, with no concession to fads or fashions. They are a national treasure, and Americans should be proud of them. We in Bad Company are proud to have called them friends.
—Simon Kirke

The thing I always remember about Lynyrd Skynyrd was their Oakland Stadium date in 1977. Peter Frampton was headlining, and had just sold 7 million records. But, before he went on, Lynyrd Skynyrd's last 60 minutes—where they went from "Sweet Home Alabama" to "Freebird"—were probably the finest 60 minutes of stadium rock I'd ever heard. The audience—60,000 people—was just overwhelmed. There was nothing more they could get from the afternoons, so they started to leave. By the time Peter Frampton finished, the stadium was practically empty. It wasn't that he was bad, it was that Skynyrd had done something that almost never happens; they played the set that no one could follow.
—Gregg Perloff, co-president, Bill Graham Presents

I rode my Schwinn to the local record store and bought my first vinyl record, "Sweet Home Alabama," with my lawnmowing money. I wore it out on the record player. I remember thinking that this guy Lynyrd Skynyrd really kicks ass. I still think he kicks ass.
—James Hetfield, Metallica

Over the years, Ronnie became a true friend. He'd call me once a month just to say hello. Once, during a dispute, their Kansas City date was taken away from me and given to another promoter. When I talked to Ronnie about it, he said he wouldn't play for anyone else except me. So, some time for the date, Ronnie got mysteriously ill and canceled. The date was re-booked, and when it came up, Ronnie was ill again. That's the kind of loyalty you could expect from him.
—Barry Fey, Feyline

I've been a fan of Lynyrd Skynyrd for over 20 years. They have earned a hallowed place in contemporary music with their own unique brand of rock via the American South. They've withstood many challenges—some of them very tragic—and continue to prove through their recordings and tours that the soul of this great band survives.
—Phil Walden, president/founder, Capricorn Records

Lynyrd Skynyrd changed the way the world viewed Southern Rock culture of the 70s. Carl, Don and I smoked a lot of pot to these records.
—Emerson Hart, lead singer, Tonic

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We've been out on the road with some bands
who've been around for a while. They don't
look the same, they don't play the same,
they don't sound the same. We're real proud of our-
selves because we're still there.

—Gary Rossington

Congratulations
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in Europe

CONTINUED ON PAGE LS-18

LYNYRD SKYNYRD
25TH ANNIVERSARY

THE BILLBOARD INTERVIEW
Continued from page LS-12

a good old boy. He was around; we all knew each other.
We started together. He was part of the Skynyrd blood.

Medlocke: When we did the "Free Bird" movie pre-
miere with that all-star jam, I got a call from Judy Van
Zant, Ronnie's wife, who said, "We really want you to be
part of this." I was getting ready to go on tour with my
own band, so I had to cancel two weeks' worth of dates to
do it. The band wasn't too happy with it, but what can you
say?

My ma, Ruby Juania, had died in March '94; this was
1995, a year later, so I was thinking about her. She told me
everything would turn out OK after she was gone, and it
was really weird to me because, all the way up there, I was
thinking, "Is this what she had in mind?" Because she
loved them guys an awful lot. I don't think Gary and
Ronnie and Allen ever really realized how much she cared
about them guys from when they used to come over and
sit on the porch with my dad andlisten to them play.

"Simple Man" was always her favorite song. I remember
coming home and hearing her playing it on her 8-track.

Ruby Juania Medlocke. She was Shorty's wife. I remem-
ber her saying, "Once I'm out of the way, everything's
gonna be all right."

After the jam, I got the call on my answering machine:
"Hi, this is brother Gary. I want you to learn 'I Ain't The
One,' 'Saturday Night,' 'That Smell' and 'Free Bird,' and
I'm comin' over to audition you, and if you pass the audi-

Krantz-Rossington: When Hugh and Rickey came
into the band, there was another shot of energy, but then
they became part of it. It's not just seven members or nine
members, this band has always been an entity unto itself.
Once they got settled into a groove, everything got really
exciting.

Rossington: God bless the guys that died, but then
there was a lot of other ones that are still with us, where
we had our falling-outs or partings of the ways, but you lose
each other too. Losing someone who's still living is hard
too, if you're arguing or not working with them, it's still
hard feelings. We go through drummers like underwear. I

continued on page LS-18
The Cellar Door Companies celebrates the enduring legacy of Lynyrd Skynyrd on their 25th anniversary. We’re not retiring and we’re glad you’re not!

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think this music wears drummers out. This lineup is it.

**Wilkeson:** Sometimes I think we should call the band Skynyrd Tap.

**Van Zant:** In the past, since I've been in the band, some of the members didn't get along together that well. Being a team is essential. That's why they call it a band, it's a teamwork thing. If somebody's not picking up the ball, somebody else gets it.

**As the new drummer in the group, were you a Skynyrd fan?**

**McAllister:** It's unAmerican not to like Lynyrd Skynyrd. I was with Hank Williams Jr. for three tours. In 1995, we toured with Skynyrd, and I got to know Johnny and Leon a little. Hank is liable to throw in a couple of Lynyrd Skynyrd songs in his sets--"Sweet Home Alabama," "Gimmie Three Steps"--you really have to be on your toes, you never know what he's gonna throw at you. Johnny and Leon went out to hear me play a couple of times, and, when their last drummer spontaneously combusted, they gave me a call. Playing with Lynyrd Skynyrd is physically taxing on the drummers, it's a workout. You've got to hit 'em as hard as you possibly can, which I do every night. You have to go for the throat.

**The new songs you've been writing fit right into the Skynyrd mold.**

**Thomasson:** One of the things that was discussed is that we had to maintain the Lynyrd Skynyrd sound. Even though we had two other guitar players, like Rickey and myself, from two other dominant bands like Blackfoot and the Outlaws, we'll forget about Blackfoot and the Outlaws. This is Skynyrd. That's how we dealt with that, and that was the right way to do it. We focused totally on Skynyrd, went back and listened to the old stuff, familiarized ourselves with the style of the band, talked about it and wrote the songs with that understanding. And, if it didn't sound like Skynyrd, boy, it got tossed right away.

We work really hard at writing new material. We all sit down with an open mind, and we all throw ideas out, and we weed 'em out real quick between Gary and Johnny especially, they can tell if it's sounding like a Skynyrd lick or not. So we get rid of the stuff that doesn't fit immediately, focus on the stuff that is the Skynyrd lick, work on those. We have so many ideas that it's not hard to do that.

**Medlocke:** Gary and I had written songs before, in the early days, but the four of us had never written together. Gary was in Skynyrd, Johnny and Hughie and I had our own bands, each guy collectively successful. We didn't know how to start. I would try to come up with a chorus and an idea on guitar. Hughie and Gary would play ideas, and we all picked up on each other and cut our own little niche while we did it. I put myself in what I call "the Lynyrd Skynyrd frame of mind."

**Van Zant:** It's taken a while for me to fit into Lynyrd Skynyrd. Hopefully, it only gets better. The writing thing is starting to come around, especially with this lineup, with Rickey and Hughie and myself and Gary. We have a blast writing together. We've just gone through writing four songs down in Nashville. We've got one called "Workin," another called "Big Brother." "Workin'" is just about getting up and doing it every day, no matter what, we all work. "Big Brother" is about, hell, you can't sneeze these days without somebody knowing about it; there's a camera or something.

I've always been compared to Ronnie 'cause we're all from the same family. It's always been around us, all my life, and every song I've ever written has always had a message to it. I think that's the one cool thing about Skynyrd, a message in a song.

**Rossington:** We've been out on the road with some bands who've been around for a while. They don't look the same, they don't play the same, they don't sound the same. We're real proud of ourselves because we're still there. Everybody knows it's not Ronnie and Allen and Steve anymore, it's Johnny and Rickey and Hughie and they're coming to see us, they're coming to see this band. It ain't new Skynyrd to me, it's just the continuation of Skynyrd. Johnny took Ronnie's place, but Ronnie would have loved that. He's been with me longer than
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LYNYRD SKYNYRD
ROCK ‘N’ REBIRTH
Continued from page 13-6

“Lynyrd Skynyrd’s legendary three-guitar attack has also taken some hits over the years, but it remains a force. Current guitarist Rickey Medlocke, although respected musicians in their right with strong Southern Rock pedigrees, had to learn the licks of their former friends to make Skynyrd sound like Skynyrd.”

Lynyrd Skynyrd's three-guitar attack has also taken some hits over the years, but it remains a force. Current guitarist Rickey Medlocke, although respected musicians in their right with strong Southern Rock pedigrees, had to learn the licks of their former friends to make Skynyrd sound like Skynyrd.

Lynyrd Skynyrd's three-guitar attack has also taken some hits over the years, but it remains a force. Current guitarist Rickey Medlocke, although respected musicians in their right with strong Southern Rock pedigrees, had to learn the licks of their former friends to make Skynyrd sound like Skynyrd.
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"We play over 100 shows a year, and not one of them goes by without someone yelling 'Freebird!'"—Kevin Kinney, drivin n cryin

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THE BILLBOARD INTERVIEW

Continued from page 13-20

in our mid-40s, and they're still doing it, so we don't see any reason why we can't. And, right now, there's a new electricity and fire in this band. Being sober, nobody gets in fights anymore. There's a new electricity, and that surprises me. I thought we'd all be sitting around in chairs when we were pushing 50. How many more years do we have ahead of us? I'm hoping 10, but, if that comes, who knows what might happen?

Medlocke: If the band quits enjoying what we're doing—playing and touring—we probably should get out of it and not let it fall to the bottom, where everybody goes, "These guys are tired old rock 'n' rollers." I think consistency is very important. The band has that consistency every night. We're not beat up and fractured, angry at somebody, screwed up on drugs and alcohol. We want to appreciate what we have while we have it and be able to hold on to it as long as we can hold on to it and give that audience—especially the young ones who are coming out now, which is an incredible thing on its own—we want to give them our money's worth every show. Sixty-five percent of our audience is teenagers now.

Now you have mosh pits in front of the stage.

Krantz: Lynyrd Skynyrd with a mosh pit! These kids get going and the kids are body surfin', passing each other across the top of the crowd. At first, it freaked us out.

The Rolling Stones are in their mid-50s. We're in our mid-40s, and they're still doing it, so we don't see any reason why we can't. And, right now, there's a new electricity and fire in this band. Being sober, nobody gets in fights anymore.

—Billy Powell

Johnny was afraid somebody was getting seriously hurt, and his kid had to say, "Dad, this is what we do, it's cool to do that." When you see it and they're having a good time, there's just nothing like it.

Carol Chase: We were playing this little gig in Italy, and the people were crying, they couldn't believe Lynyrd Skynyrd had come there. Then they did the soccer chant at the end; we had to come back and play again.

Krantz: It's really picked up over the last year, especially this year. Looking out and seeing these young kids moaning to "Simple Man," we knew it had crossed over to another generation.

Chase: I think kids are surprised at how much energy we do have. I think they thought this was their parents' band.

Medlocke: It's almost like a new birth of the band. I just wanted to play music, I never thought it was going to be as big as it became. It freaks me out when I start thinking about it.

Thomasson: We're on a mission. We know we love what we do, and we're blessed to be able to do it, so we try not to forget that. We're fortunate that this many people are into Lynyrd Skynyrd and want to see the band.

It's fun for me again. There was a time when I was successful, but the thrill was gone out of it. It's back, it's real, it's exciting. I'm gonna make the most of it. I'm looking forward to going back on the bus, that's how much I like it.

Van Zant: The cool thing about doing this now is that we have gotten so many young kids turned on to us, it's amazing. I love the old fans, too, don't get me wrong, but it's really cool to take the music to new fans too, who never got to see the band. It's like Ronnie was the quarterback and I'm the receiver going for the touchdown.

Do you feel Ronnie's spirit on stage?

Van Zant: I can feel his presence every time we're out there. You can't possibly not feel it. There's a driving force behind Lynyrd Skynyrd that's bigger than any of us.
**The Story of a Band**

Continued from page LS-4

Whiskey and "Gimmie Three Steps" had been hammered into classic-rock genres. "Sweet Home Alabama" from "Second Helping" and "Saturday Night Special" from "Nuthin' Fancy" kept the band in the charts, while a nonstop touring schedule built Lynyrd Skynyrd into one of America's most popular live acts, a status confirmed by "One More For The Road," which featured new guitarist Steve Gaines, who replaced King in the lineup.

The glory days of Southern Rock ended with the 1977 plane crash that apparently also ended the career of Lynyrd Skynyrd. Rossington and Collins continued on with a new group formed by the extraordinary vocalists of Dale Krantz, who would eventually marry Gary. Allen Collins survived the crash but could not overcome the subsequent tragedy of his wife's death. Collins was in failing health, confined to a wheelchair, when the surviving members of the band reconvened for the 1995 Lynyrd Skynyrd tribute tour.

Johnny Van Zant was only 15 when he started playing professionally. Though his two brothers were among the most famous names in Jacksonville, Johnny refused to ride on their reputation and called the group the Austin Nicks Band.

Ronnie took special interest in his youngest brother's group, offering advice and checking the band out whenever he was off the road. Ronnie often told people about his youngest brother, who claimed had the best voice in the family and would someday eclipse them all. Little did he realize how ironic that prediction was.

But Johnny was only trying to live up to his big brother's own abilities. "I never thought of myself as a better singer than Ronnie," he swears. "Ronnie was a stylin' genius. The way he phrased things was unique and influenced me as well as a whole lot of other people."

Johnny didn't realize he was preparing for his greatest role, fronting the band his big brother had, when he was the first glimpse of rock 'n' roll. After filling in on the reunion tour, singing everything except "Free Bird," which was performed as an instrumental tribute to Ronnie, Johnny became a full-fledged band member in the group's 1990s revival, writing and singing the first new Skynyrd material since Ronnie's death.

**New Lineup and a New Life**

Under the shrewd direction of Legend Management and with detailed support from Ronnie's wife, Judy, Lynyrd Skynyrd began a new life, starting with the release of the spectacular film "Free Bird," filled with riveting live performances from the band's heyday.

A new Lynyrd Skynyrd lineup was formed, recruiting the guitarists leaders of two of Southern Rock's most enduring institutions—Hughie Thomasson from the Outlaws and Rickey Medlocke of Blackfoot. Thomasson had toured and jammed with the band in the old days and was a trusted friend; Medlocke was a charter member of the Lynyrd Skynyrd band that first went into Muscle Shoals to record. Now he was returning to the fold.

The new lineup released a powerful album, "Twenty," in 1997, highlighted by the band's new set-opening number, "We Ain't Much Different." A buzz began to be generated by the band's awesome live shows and a VH1 documentary that introduced Skynyrd to a new audience. Catalog sales have jumped dramatically in the last year, prompting the release of a new "Hick" package and a reissue of the Muscle Shoals recordings made before the band's official debut.

Right now, Lynyrd Skynyrd is as exciting a live act as ever in the band's history, a fact attested to by the 1998 live release "Lynyrd Skynyrd Live From Steeltown." The band appears poised to scale new heights of popularity as it tours into the next millennium. Ronnie would indeed be proud.

**Rock 'n' Rebirth**

Continued from page LS-22

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**Billboard Salute**

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**Lynyrd Skynyrd**

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**Skynyrd Lyve**

Since its earliest days, Lynyrd Skynyrd always had a reputation as a fierce live band, prone to endless "torture tours" and unmatched audience rapport. Simply put, Skynyrd did and does make promoters money.

"Lynyrd Skynyrd has proven to be the real enduring, great American institution," says promoter John Scher, who has done Skynyrd shows for more than 20 years. Scher's concert footage from a 1975 performance at Asbury Park's Convention Hall was used in "Free Bird—The Movie."

"Despite the terrible tragedies this band has endured, they've kept up a tremendous level of musicianship," Scher says. "Their management has always had the proper view of the live career, not just take-the-money-and-run."

The 1998 tour was perhaps the most successful in Skynyrd's history. "Every time this band steps on stage, they're playing great, and the people that come to hear them have a great time and feel like they got their money's worth," says Joe Bovland, co-manager of Skynyrd with Charlie Brusco. "After all they've been through, they continue to tour and make records, and the fans pick up on it."

Continued on page LS-27

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**Filling Seats: The Band Today**


Back row: Carol Chase, Leon Wilkeson

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Congratulations Lynyrd Skynyrd on 25 years of great music.

Your friends at Century Productions

We are proud of the way Skynyrd has stuck to their roots over the years. You have carried on the tradition of true rock and roll. That has built a legacy. That is a part of history. Let the Freebird spread its wings into the next millennium. Thank you for the first 25.

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Lynyrd Skynyrd

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1974
"Second Helping" (MCA)

1975
"Nuthin' Fancy" (MCA)

1976
"Gimme Back My Bullets" (MCA)
"One More From The Road" (MCA)

1977
"Street Survivors" (MCA)

1978
"Lynyrd's First And...Last" (MCA)

1979
"Gold And Platinum" (MCA)

1982
"Best Of The Rest" (MCA)

1981
"Legend" (MCA)

1988
"Southern By The Grace Of God: Lynyrd Skynyrd" (MCA)

1989
"Skynyrd's Innyrds" (MCA)

1991
"Lynyrd Skynyrd" three-CD boxed set (MCA)
"Lynyrd Skynyrd 1991" (Atlantic)

1993
"The Last Rebel" (Atlantic)

1994
"Endangered Species" (Capricorn)

1997
"Twenty" (CMC International)

1998
"Lynyrd Skynyrd...Lyve From Steeltown" (CMC International)
"The Essential Lynyrd Skynyrd" (MCA)
our mamas and his grandmother and the things they told us.

"If you look at the members of Lynyrd Skynyrd, none of us have ever felt like we're God's gift to anything," says Van Zant. "We'll eat our own grass. I've noticed a lot of people bring their sons to the shows just because of that song. You can't argue with Mama."

"DON'T ASK ME NO QUESTIONS" (Gary Rossington and Ronnie Van Zant).

This song is a rather humorous look at the band's frustration with interviews and friends back home. The song does advise that if "You want to talk fishin', well I guess that'll be Ok." Travis Tritt covered this song on "Skynyrd Fronds."

"GIMME SONG" (Ronnie Van Zant, Gary Rossington, Johnny Van Zant, Rickey Medlocke and Hughie Thomasson).

A Rossington salute to both his mother and guitar, "Berenice" appears on Skynyrd's first CMC release "Twenty."

"My guitar's named 'Berenice,' and so was my Mama, God rest her soul," Rossington says. "Hughie's guitar is named Louise, after his mom. We wrote that song because we never knew when we started out where those guitars would take us."

Van Zant: "I hope, in the end, people will say Skynyrd was honest to the music, true to the fans and loved every minute of it."

"THE BALLAD OF CURTIS LOWE" (Ronnie Van Zant and Allen Collins).

A ballad about an old black blues player's influence on a young boy, "Curtis Lowe" has become a fan favorite and namesake for countless dogs.

"This song is really about Sherrill Medlocke, Rickey's grandfather, who raised him," says Van Zant. "Ronnie just changed it around to make a better story."

Rossington says, "We'd go over to Rickey's house all the time, and his mom would make fried chicken. Sherrill played dobro, banjo and fiddle. I'm the one who thought of making him into a black man for the song. There was this song by Tom T. Hall about a guitar player who died, and the singer went into the woods and cried. We kind of hald Curtis Lowe on that."

"GIMME THREE STEPS" (Ronnie Van Zant and Allen Collins).

A honky-tonk masterpiece, this unabashed rocker features a rousing performance by Skynyrd's legendary "mixes" and an X-rated utterance from Ronnie in the song's live incarnation.

"When me and Allen were about 14, Ronnie had this Mustang and we had to stop by this bar, the WD West Tavern, because Ronnie had to see a friend," Rossington says. "Me and Allen were too young to go in—really Ronnie was, too—but we sat out in the yard and waited for him. He came running out about five minutes later, and we took off." "

Turns out Ronnie had hooked up with a young lady on the dance floor. "This guy came after him with a knife, and Ronnie just ran toward the door," says Rossington. "He said, 'If he stabbed me, it was gonna be in the ass or the elbow, cause that's all he could see.' We wrote the song that night for a joke, but it hit."

"THE LAST REBEL" (Johnny Van Zant, Gary Rossington, Robert White Johnson and Michael Lunn).

This powerful ballad draws a parallel between an alienated Confederate soldier on his way home after the Civil War and an equally alienated young rocker who "keeps to himself" and causes everybody to take him wrong."

Van Zant: "Gary Rossington plays guitar like he looks, and very few people do that. I told him, 'You really are the last rebel.' And we put it in a Civil War-type theme. Gary has taken this road, and he's gonna ride it to the end."

"It's about being on the road and the old school," Rossington says.

"BORN TO RUN" (Johnny Van Zant, Gary Rossington, Ed King and Donnie Van Zant). An homage to Van Zant patriarch Lacy and his long tenure as a truck driver, "Born To Run" features a co-write with 38 Special singer and Van Zant brother Donnie.

"The song is really about both of my parents," says Van Zant. "In the downtown when we're off the road, I go home, and that porch swing is Mama's favorite place to be, just to sit out there and be with Dad and see Dad was a truck driver, and he loved to talk about how it used to be."

"Berenice" (Dennis E. Sumner, Gary Rossington, Johnny Van Zant, Rickey Medlocke and Hughie Thomasson).

A Rossington salute to both his mother and guitar, "Berenice" appears on Skynyrd's first CMC release "Twenty."

"My guitar's named 'Berenice,' and so was my Mama, God rest her soul," Rossington says. "Hughie's guitar is named Louise, after his mom. We wrote that song because we never knew when we started out where those guitars would take us."

Van Zant: "I hope, in the end, people will say Skynyrd was honest to the music, true to the fans and loved every minute of it."

Muscle Shoals Sound Studios takes great pleasure in congratulating Lynyrd Skynyrd on their 25th Anniversary “Sweet Home Alabama” 1000 Alabama Avenue Sheffield, Alabama 35660 256-381-2060 Fax 256-381-6813 www.mssound.com

Rock 'N' Rebirth Continued from page LS-25

their perseverance." Skynyrd toured for six months in 1998 and played live nights a week, eschewing a sixth to give Van Zant's voice a break. "It's fun; we love it," says Rossington. "If we saw the crowd diminish, and the people weren't liking us, we'd quit. If it was a loss and we were paying dues and going through the hell we had to go through to get here, it would be different. But we've already done all that.

Music is all they've done, Rossington points out, "I was just thinking: it's been 33 years since me and Ronnie and Allen started playing in the clubs."

Don't look for Lynyrd Skynyrd to slow down anytime soon. "Millions of people have helped us get to this point. A lot of them are in heaven, a lot of them are in hell, but most of them are here on earth," Rossington says. "In another 20 or 30 years, Billboard's going to be doing another tribute, about the band that played the most shows and outlived everybody. We'll still be playing, keeping those young guys from catching us."
Like a Phoenix from the ashes,
Great rock lives on...

LYNYRD SKNYRD

Congratulations on 25 years!
Dream Weaver Erin Hamilton Delights With New Dance Focus

ON THE RISE: “I will never forget that night. I was so nervous and so excited,” exclaims singer Erin Hamilton, referring to last April when she performed her original electro dub club single, a remake of Gary Wright’s “Dream Weaver,” live for the first time. “It was at the White Party [at a formal event in Palm Springs, Calif.] in front of 4,000 gay men. I learned that night, knew my record inside out. For an artist, to —Dance to look at an audience and see everyone feeling what you’re feeling is truly incredible. This was my first time performing a dance song onstage and I couldn’t have asked for a better response. What a feeling.

For the past seven months, Hamilton, who is the daughter of actor/comedian Carol Burnett and jazz musician/producer Joe Hamilton, has been on a relentless tour, making club appearances in numerous cities, including Chicago, Dallas, San Francisco, Honolulu, Los Angeles, and Columbus, Ohio.

In late November, the highly photoshopped singer was in New York for a live performance at the Sunday-night party Boys Life at Club Life. In addition to treating the packed room to the song that got here there “Dream Weaver” — Hamilton further worked nerves by singing her new single, “Satisfied.”

Released Nov. 3 on the Los Angeles indie label 20th Century Records, “Satisfied,” which Hamilton co-wrote with the song’s producers (Scott Anderson and Ian Rich), features the remaining work of soulSolution and Michael Durett.

“It’s funny,” says the Los Angeles native, “but the idea for ‘Dream Weaver’ came at a time when I was putting the finishing touches on a demo of original alternative-leaning material. One day, I was driving in my car and thought it might be fun to include a remake on the demo. With many thanks of thinking this idea, Gary Wright’s ‘Dream Weaver’ came on the radio. I immediately knew what had to be done.

What she didn’t realize, however, was that she would be instantly transformed into “a disco diva.”

“Oh, I just had to laugh when my mom called me that during her interview with Barbara Walters on ‘The View.’ It was too precious,” she giggles.

While her parents always offered words of wisdom (Burnett taught her daughter the importance of taking risks), they weren’t always pleased with Hamilton’s choices on her albums.

Like what? “Well, let’s see,” laughs Hamilton. “When I dropped out of Bennington College after only my first year, they were, ‘No, no, no.’ And they weren’t too pleased when I followed this action with my ‘Grateful Dead’ stint.”

According to Hamilton, she was one of the many Deadheads who rossesessed the continent with the band, selling tie-dyed shirts and crystal beaded jewelry.

“You’d be surprised how much more merchandising you can do with hip-hop items,” Hamilton says. “But after five years, I realized that I’d had enough. And actually, I never really cared for the band anyway. I just felt like it was the whole atmosphere, the family vibe. In retrospect, it taught me many of life’s important lessons.

It also taught her the following: “I didn’t want to follow a band around for the next five years; I wanted to be the one performing onstage.”

Back on Los Angeles soil, Hamilton began auditioning for bands, taking voice lessons, and recording demos for songwriters. After forming several bands, including the then-unsigned Missy’s Revenge, which toured as support for Komba Kalla, Hamilton knew the time had arrived to do things her own way.

“It’s great working in a band environment,” she admits, “but now I get to do things my way.” Today, the single mother of one is putting the finishing touches on her third single, a disco/Choons-styled remake of Cheap Trick’s “The Flame” (due for release in January) and laying down the framework for her debut album, tentatively scheduled for an April release. We’ll be waiting...

LIFE IN PLASTIC: One of last year’s most intriguing DJ compilations, “Plastic Volume 01,” brought together a varied group of musicians, singers, and producers, from pioniers and young turks to the highly influential and the eagerly remixed.

It remains a vital aural sensation that documents “the early days” of a still-emerging style. But it is also a document of a lineage that includes acts like Meat Beat Manifesto, Upholder, Rabbit In The Moon, and Garbage, this truly essential collection found unadulterated joy in that place where several musical worlds unite.

With the Nov. 17 release of “Plastic Volume 02,” the Beverly Hills, Calif.-based Netwerk Records continues along a similarly eclectic path.

William Orbit, who produced Madonna’s “Ray Of Light,” offers the classic future classic “Water From A Vine Leaf,” a delectable piece of trance that scores additional points for spotlighting alternative-folkster Beth Orton on vocals.

Sarah McLachlan is featured on two tracks. She is the guest vocalist on the wonderfully melodic “Silence” by Amani. And, on the upbeat-based duet — Bill Lee and Rhys Fulber — known for their work together as Front Line Assembly. And her own song, “Sweet Surrender,” taken from her divine “Surfacing” album, is completely dissected by producer/remixer Roni Size; the result is stunning. That said, one can’t help but ponder the possibilities of a dance-based album from the Canadian songstress.

Other highlights include the funky remix of Cornershop’s “Brimful Of Asha” by Norman Cook (aka Fatboy Slim, among other aliases); BT and Sasha’s disco-enhanced restructurings of T’Pac’s “Ride”; Technotik’s heavy-sounding stagings on French pop group Autour De Lucie’s “Sur Tes Pas”; and the Chemical Brothers’ sensual re-imaginings of Spiritualized’s “I Think I’m In Love.” What a way to usher in 1999!

WE GOT THE FUNK: In November 1999, the Brooklyn Funk Essentials headlined the World Music Festival in Istanbul, Turkey. (Continued on next page)

U.K.’s Carter Lends Variety To ‘Big Beat’

BY CRAIG ROSEBERRY

NEW YORK—Make no mistake, Jon Carter is a worldbeater. Along with the Chemical Brothers, Norman Cook (aka Fatboy Slim) and Dizzee Rascal, Carter is the latest artist to rise to prominence in the U.K.’s “big beat” scene.

In addition to his weekly residency at the Heavenly club in London, he behind the decks for the likes of Prodigy, Kelis, Shaker, and Supergrass, and he re-recorded numerous singles under the moniker (for London’s influential Best Now label).

Oh, there’s also his group, Monkey Mafia, which is where Carter has garnered the most success.

Signs to Heavenly, a subsidiary of deConstruction U.K., Monkey Mafia’s debut album, “Shoot The Boss”— released on Heavenly/deConstruction Artist in the U.S. and on Heavenly/deConstruction in the U.K. on Oct. 13 and March 4, respectively—includes many of the act’s global dancefloor hits, which are published through Chrysalis Music (ASCAP).

The power-packed album includes such Mafia dancefloor hits as “West Mix Up” — which features the vocal sample from dancehall queen Petta: “Blow The Whole Joint Up”; and “I’m In The Hall.” The latter track was pulled from the Mafia’s stunning “15 Steps” EP.

“Shoot The Boss,” says Carter. “Why so long? Well, I wanted it to be varied. I hate purism and conformity. To me, the term ‘big beat’ is the lowest common denominator for people copying someone else. I mean, you have influences like the Chemical Brothers and Death In Vegas, but then you also have an endless crowd of crap imitators.”

In support of the album, Carter embarked on a mini-tour of the States, where, on Nov. 4, he made his U.S. debut as a club DJ at New York’s Speedy’s.

Like “Shoot The Boss,” Carter’s DJ style explores a variety of musical styles that include ragga-injected funk, menacing dub, uplifting tribal breaks, and jittery guitar-driven grooves. It is a style that is manic and unexpected, fluid and accessible, not bistantically, but interestingly.

“It doesn’t matter if you’re in the studio or in a club; my style remains the same,” Carter says. “You’ll find elements of hip-hop, twisted-up jungle and breakbeats, ragga, and rock.

My sound thrives on a thumping hip-hop beat and the energy of a rave or warehouse party. And the dynamics of rock music must always be there.”

Although Carter enjoys working as a DJ, he much prefers the live performances of Monkey Mafia, which is managed/booking by London-based David Dorrell Management.

“I enjoy spinning at a great party, but I love the feedback you get from doing a live show, especially if you can replicate the excitement of dance music onstage,” says Carter, giving Nelson a knowing look.

In addition to ringleader Carter, who plays keyboards, the Monkey Mafia collective includes vocalist/vocalist/vocalist/vocalist/vocalist/vocalist. The act is a First Rate First Bassist Agent Dan, and drummer Tom Simmons. With a set that is riveting and irresistible funky, the Mafia proved to be the perfect opening act for the Prodigy’s sold-out U.K. tour last year.

When the Prodigy tour ended, Carter and crew found themselves the supporting act on another sold-out U.K. tour, this time for 1997 Mercury Music Prize winners Roni Size & Reprazent. By last spring, Monkey Mafia was headlining its own U.K. tour.

On Wednesday (2), the five-member band begins seven city stadium tour in support of Massive Attack. This U.K. tour includes stops at Bowland (Glasgow, Scotland); the Arena (Sheffield, England); Docklands (London); and the Arena (Cardiff, Wales); NY/Nexx (Manchester, England); NEC (Birmingham, England); and Nicon (Bournemouth, England).

By now, Carter will maintain his DJ residency at the Heavenly, as well as his tour DJ spots at Cream in Liverpool. “I’d be mad if I didn’t work,” Carter says. “You’ve got to keep your DJ gig to keep you creative and alive. Having said that, I’ll continue doing things differently and uniquely for as long as I can. Because if I didn’t, I’d become creatively dead”
## HOT DANCE MUSIC

### CLUB PLAY

**Compiled from a National Sample of Dance Club Playlists.**

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### MAXI-SINGLES SALES

**Compiled from a National Sample of Old Store Sales Reports (Collected, Compiled, and Provided by SoundScan).**

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New Renaissance Label Is Bringing Back Good Music With Important Reissues

**A** NOTHER NEW RECORD LABEL? Sure. Renaissance, headquartered just down the road in Brentwood, Tenn., is quietly making a name for itself as a significant reissue label. Renaissance, which issued its first releases in late 1997, just signed an exclusive distribution deal with Ryko Distribution Partners. The label was formed by former aerospace engineer and musician John W. Edwards to concentrate, as he puts it, on artists who have achieved critical acclaim but not mass popularity, and was consequently, find themselves ignored by traditional record companies. The label's motto is "Good Music Is Back."

Renaissance's A&R director, Mark Saxon, tells Nashville Scene that the label is now issuing more than 50 releases a year, covering all genres of music. Acts include Juice Newton, Box Of Frogs, Reba, Karla DeVito, Crack The Sky, Wishbone Ash, Russ Ballard, Charlie, and T'Pau, plus a live Yoko Ono album. The Allen collection is an especially welcome addition to Nashville's discography. Even before the steampunk-voiced singer cut an album for Capitol in 1989, Allen made musical waves when the late Jim Reeves' widow, Mary, selected her first artist to duet her with late husband's voice. The need for all three songs are included here, along with 18 other tracks from her Capitol, RCA, and Giant recordings. Allen provides new liner notes, along with new photographs. Like Sylvia, Allen was a major talent who has never realized her full potential.

ON THE ROW: American Express has donated $25,000 to the capital campaign for the new Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. The funds represent proceeds from a recent 12-week promotion, "Help Preserve Country Music's Heritage," which encouraged cardholders to swipe their AmEx cards in Nashville. The Nashville Songwriters Assn. International (NSAI) has scheduled a floating songwriting seminar for Feb. 7-11. A number of Nashville songwriters will teach writing classes on board the cruise ship Fanta-sy, sailing to the Bahamas. NSAI faculty members will include Hugh Prestwood, James Dean Hicks, Steve Seskin, Jon Ims, Angela Kaset, Ralph Murphy, and Craig Wiseman.

P EOPLE: Hal L. Willis, former CMT VP/GM and general counsel to TNN and Acuff-Rose Music, opens law offices in Brentwood. Rodney Foster and Bill Lloyd will regroup as Foster & Lloyd for one night only, to play a New Year's Eve show at the Bluebird Cafe here.

Ricky Skaggs Launches Ceili Label

**BY JIM BESSMAN**

NEW YORK—Flush with the success of his return to bluegrass with the 1997 album "Bluegrass Rules," on his Skaggs Family Records (SFR), Ricky Skaggs is launching a sister label, Ceili Music, to further exploit increased interest in the bluegrass and acoustic roots music genres, as well as expand into Celtic music.

Ceili's first releases, slated for Feb. 9, will be a bluegrass album from the Del McCoury Band and a compilation that Skaggs' partner Russ Strickland says will epitomize Ceili's concept: Recorded in Scotland for a BBC Scotland TV program, "The TransAtlantic Sessions" brings together U.S. and British artists including Skaggs, Rosanne Cash, Nanci Griffith, Rodney Foster, Maura O'Connell, Jerry Douglas, Sharon White, Paul Brady, and Michael Doucet.

Those titles will be followed in the first quarter by albums from the Whites, Blue Highway, and Jerry and Tammy Sullivan, with a Gibson Brothers set to come in late spring. Strickland says the label will issue 10 to 12 albums yearly, compared with three from SFR.

Healing the new label as GM is Boy Paul, former director of sales and marketing for Sugar Hill Records—a previous Skaggs label home—in Raleigh, N.C., where she remains based. "Bev and Ricky want it to be not just about roots and acoustic music in the U.S., but to open the door for Irish and Celtic music," says Strickland, who manages Skaggs and is GM of SFR. He notes that the two labels are separate entities: SFR will release Skaggs' personal recording projects (his follow-up, "Ancient Tones," is due Jan. 26), and Ceili, while also owned by Skaggs, is totally independent. The labels are distributed by Distribution North America (DNA) (see Declarations of Independents, page 102).

"Ceili artists won't feel they're in Ricky's shadow, or that it's a 'farm team' label," says Paul. "Russ Strickland, "It was birthed out of SFR because of the success of 'Bluegrass Rules,' but he turned all that cash back into play with the new label and advances for the artists he wanted."

The word "Ceili," notes Paul, is Gaelic and signifies a community dance and gathering, specifically musicians entering a living room, rolling up the rug, and sitting down to play. At the recent International Bluegrass Assn. (IBMA) Convention, Strickland says, "the best musicians were going room to room in the hotel and jamming all night long."

Skaggs, who was in the mainstream country format with Atlantic Records prior to "Bluegrass Rules," says he started Ceili "to have a home for the acoustic music and bluegrass that I love, that I grew up playing. And I wanted to be able to help some younger bluegrass people, friends, and family and have an oasis where artists are treated fairly and can get their CDs at a good price to take on the road to sell themselves and make money—because a lot of my friends have really gotten ripped off in the business."

Skaggs is refurbishing the Oak Ridge Boys' former offices and studios in Hendersonville, Tenn., which will house SFR, Ceili, management (a combination of RS Entertainment, Skaggs' self-owned management company, and Strickland's Florida-based Rainmaker management company, through which he manages Skaggs, the Del McCoury Band, and Blue Highway), and in-house agent Andy Compton, who manages Talent Artists in booking Skaggs and McCoury and exclusively handles Blue Highway and the Gibson Brothers. "We think of our staff as working under one roof, because bluegrass is such a small genre," says Strickland, noting, however, that "the trend in bluegrass now," due to the success of Alison Krauss and 'Bluegrass Rules'"—and the buzz surrounding the forthcoming Del McCoury Band and Steve Earle bluegrass albums, the latter having recorded his with the former. "We believe there's a lot more sales opportunity out there, but somebody had to suck it up and spend more money on it to do better—and that's us," says Jack; and make a commitment to bluegrass. "It's rare for someone at 44 to make this radical a change and put it on the line. Three years ago, Nashville was ready to push him off to Branson [Mo.], but now he's had his best year on the road since '85—when people said he'd suffer if he backed off from country dates."

Strickland credits DNA for its role in helping create what he sees is an emerging bluegrass "explosion." DNA sales VP Pip Smith agrees that the retail base for bluegrass has grown.

(Continued on page 78)

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<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>60000 (10.98/16.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Vince Gill</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>60000 (10.98/16.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Martina McBride</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>67619 (10.98/16.98)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Mark Wills</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>700119 (10.98/16.98)</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Garth Brooks</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>700002 (10.98/16.98)</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Reba McEntire</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>MCA Nashville</td>
<td>710031 (10.98/16.98)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Prices are for CD and Cassette versions.*
Their Nashville-L.A. Nonstop.

Our Nashville-L.A. Nonstop.

Same Price, More Service.*

When it comes to serving the entertainment industry between Nashville and Los Angeles, nobody beats American Airlines. Because American offers two daily nonstop flights with the comfort, services and amenities you deserve. Like pre-reserved seat assignments in First Class or the main cabin. And don’t fly on an empty stomach when you can enjoy a hot meal with us instead. So, the next time you fly between Los Angeles and Nashville, fly the airline that gives you the most. American Airlines. For reservations, call your Travel Agent, or American at 1-800-433-7300, or book online at www.aa.com

*Comparison is based on fares as of 9/18. American Airlines and Admirals Club are registered trademarks of American Airlines, Inc.
### Billboard Hot Country Singles Tracks

**DECEMBER 5, 1998**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Henry &amp; Number / Promotion Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>KINDLY KEEP IT COUNTRY</td>
<td>VANCE DILLON</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>15 million ( V )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>A BITTER END</td>
<td>SHANE AND SHANE</td>
<td>BNA/1787</td>
<td>10 million ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>I DON'T WANT TO MESS A THING</td>
<td>MEL BUCKLEY</td>
<td>BNA/65502</td>
<td>9 million ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>YOU'RE SO SCARLET</td>
<td>BILL MONROE</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>12 million ( V )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>SOBREDO'S OUT THERE WATCHING</td>
<td>THE RINKYS</td>
<td>RECYCLED</td>
<td>10 million ( C )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>WE'RE GONNA QUIT THE MOON</td>
<td>LEANN RIMES</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>8 million ( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>EVERY LITTLE WHISPER</td>
<td>STEVE WARINER</td>
<td>WARNER BROS</td>
<td>7 million ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>WHERE YOUR ROAD LEADS</td>
<td>TRISHA YEARWOOD-GAULT WITH GABRIEL</td>
<td>5 million ( D )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT</td>
<td>MARK CHESNUTT</td>
<td>DECCA</td>
<td>4 million ( C )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>SOMEONE'S GONNA LOVE YOU</td>
<td>SAMMY KERSHAW</td>
<td>WARNER BROS</td>
<td>3 million ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>YOUR HUSBANDS AND WIVES</td>
<td>B.B. KING &amp; JOSHUA DOHNER</td>
<td>COLUMBIA</td>
<td>2 million ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>MAMA'S GONNA LOVE YOU</td>
<td>DAVID KEES</td>
<td>COLUMBIA</td>
<td>1 million ( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>I'M YOURS</td>
<td>TRISHA YEARWOOD-GAULT</td>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>6 million ( D )</td>
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**COMPILED FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORES AND RACK SALES REPORTS COLLECTED, COMPILATED, AND PROVIDED BY SoundScan**

**Top Country Singles Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Henry &amp; Number / Promotion Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>THIS KISS</td>
<td>NATHAN WISE</td>
<td>BNA/1782</td>
<td>38 weeks at No. 1 ( V )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26 CENTS (JUST TO BE WITH YOU)</td>
<td>BILL MONROE</td>
<td>BNA/65502</td>
<td>37 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I'M ALRIGHT/BE BYE</td>
<td>CURB 7034</td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>30 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>FLY (THE ANGEL SONG)</td>
<td>BILL MONROE</td>
<td>BNA/65502</td>
<td>28 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>RIGHT ON THE MONEY</td>
<td>BILL MONROE</td>
<td>BNA/65502</td>
<td>26 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>LOVE ON THE LINE</td>
<td>BILL MONROE</td>
<td>BNA/65502</td>
<td>24 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>YOU'RE GONNA LOVE ME</td>
<td>BILL MONROE</td>
<td>BNA/65502</td>
<td>22 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I'M ALRIGHT/BE BYE</td>
<td>CURB 7034</td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>19 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I'M ALRIGHT/BE BYE</td>
<td>CURB 7034</td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>17 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I'M ALRIGHT/BE BYE</td>
<td>CURB 7034</td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>15 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>CURB 7034</td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>13 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I'M ALRIGHT/BE BYE</td>
<td>CURB 7034</td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>11 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I'M ALRIGHT/BE BYE</td>
<td>CURB 7034</td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>9 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I'M ALRIGHT/BE BYE</td>
<td>CURB 7034</td>
<td>CURB</td>
<td>7 weeks at No. 1 ( D )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMPILED FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORES AND RACK SALES REPORTS COLLECTED, COMPILATED, AND PROVIDED BY SoundScan**

**Bold** indicates the record was in the Hot Shot Debut.
Earle, Williams Lead Nashville Music Assn. Noms

By Chef Filippo

NASHVILLE—With three nominations each, Steve Earle and Lucinda Williams led that year’s 1999 Nashville Music Assn. Awards. More than 200 artists are nominated for the awards, to be presented Feb. 10 at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center in downtown Nashville. Those who received two nominations each were Jim Lauderdale, Vince Gill, Emmylou Harris, Michael W. Smith, Keith Whitley, Nichole Nordeman, and the late Rich Mullins & A capital C Band. The Nash- ville Music Awards were founded in 1994 by Leadership Music in recognition of leading figures in the music industry. Earle’s record “Shriek & a Capital C” (Rounder, Sony) and his tour were highlighted at the awards ceremony.

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Artists & Music

WEA Latina Launches Mexican Imprint

WEA LATINA BOWS MEX IMPRINT: WEA Latina has formed a regional Mexican label called WEA Mex. According to WEA Latina V.P./GM George Zamora, WEA Mex will begin operations in January or February.

Heading the imprint, says Zamora, will be Miguel Trujillo, who has been appointed label manager. Trujillo formerly was WEA Latina's national promotion director.

Zamora says WEA Mex's initial slate of product will come from Warner Music Group's Mexican-based label MCM, whose product was licensed to Fonovisa until November.

Among the artists signed to MCM's regional Mexican-heavy roster are Banda Machos, Caballo Dorado, and Los Tigrillos. Zamora says that WEA Mex eventually will become a self-contained label.

Calling the Mexican market the largest sector in the U.S. Latino record industry, Zamora says the absence of a regional Mexican imprint was "the only leg that was missing" from WEA Latina's artist profile.

WEA Mex's first scheduled release, set for the first quarter, will be from Los Tigrillos.

Pondering Shakira's Anglo Crossover: White-hot singer/songwriter Shakira is scheduled to go into the studio in January to cut an English-language version of "Dónde Están Los Ladrones?," her hit Sony disc titled that reached No. 1 in Colombia.

by John Lennart

1. On The Billboard Latin 50 hit list.
2. Producing the English-language disc will be Emilio Estefan Jr., who also is Shakira's manager. The album is slated to be released on Columbia in the first quarter.
3. Word has it that Sony Music Entertainment president/CEO Thomas D. Mottola wants to drop Shakira's album as quickly as possible. Mottola's eagerness to ship Shakira's album does raise the question, how is Sony going to market and promote all the other Latino acts on its affiliated label?
4. Product is reportedly expected next year from Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony, Jennifer Lopez, Jon Secada, DLG, Julio Iglesias, and his son Julio José.
5. In any case, it should come as no surprise that Sony is moving toward a more crossover route. Estefan has mentioned in interviews that Motella is a longtime fan of Latin sounds.
6. In fact, a fictional account (one would guess) of Motella's amorous travels could be mentioned in the 1970s chestnut "Cherche La Femme" recorded by the immortal, Latin-tinged swing ensemble Dr. Buzzard's Original Savannah Band.
in the Boxscore in the Nov. 14 Billboard with four sellout concerts at the 6,000-seat Universal Amphitheater in Universal City, Calif.

The Ariló/EMI's BCM icon from Mexico grossed $1,361,266 from the quartet of shows that took place Oct. 16, 17, 18, and 23. Promoting the shows was Universal Concerts. Ticket prices ranged from (gdp) $50.50 to $128.50.

STATEBIS Briefs: Felicia read a Juan González, who has been named the American League's most valuable player (MVP). The Puerto Rican slugger, who plays for the Texas Rangers, is the favorite of WEA Latin star Olga Tañón. Completing the first all-Latino sweep of Major League Baseball's MVP awards is Dominican home-run star Sammy Sosa, the Chicago Cubs outfielder who won the National League's MVP honor. No word yet if either baseball player will be cutting a tropical album.

On Sunday (29) at Fiesta Promenade in Miami Beach, more than a dozen rock acts will be performing a show where the Red Cross will be accepting donations for those affected by Hurricane Mitch. Among the artists slated to appear at the display event, dubbed Latin Rock Live, are Caín's Patricia Louiza, who performed earlier this year at Billboard's ninth annual International Latin Music Conference; BMG's Pasilla; and Gloria's Volumen Cero. The event is being produced by Ricardo Farías. Among the acts booked are Los Divididos, Los Daddys, Lo Duro, and Los Llaneros.

On Dec. 11, EMi Latin heartthrob Carlos Ponce will be appearing in an episode of the WB's TV show "7th Heaven." MTV Networks Latin America has appointed Adriana Medici account manager of affiliates sales for the southeastern U.S. She was affiliated sales representative of the Weather Channel Latin America.

Zacate Curtis has won first prize and Luis Irizarry has won second prize in the ninth annual Charlie Palmeri Memorial Piano Scholarship Competition. Curtis and Irizarry will study Latin music disciplines at the New York-based Harbor Conservatory for the Performing Arts. The Charlie Palmeri Memorial Piano Scholarship was established by Tito Puente to further the Latin music style of Palmeri, an esteemed pianist who died in 1988.

MEXICO NOTAS: On Dec. 14, EMI's irrepressible diva Thalia will start taping her new televised "Rosas" album. Produced by Salvador Mejía, the soap opera is slated to air in the first quarter on Spanish TV network Televista. For Thel's latest album, "El Color De Los Sueños," her label Sony, Mexico, has released the album in four 3D packages, each using a different color. In addition, the new look of the fresh-faced songstress is rooted in Indian culture.

Verónica Castro, "la reina de las telemoviles," who recently departed Televisa, is now concentrating on her musical career. Castro, mother of BMG pop star Christian, has signed with Sony. Her label box, due in the first quarter, is a bolder and rhythm pop disc to be produced by labelmate Ana Gabriel.

In a move to freshen the image of its Channel 9, Televisa has introduced a number of promotion spots featuring well-known recording artists who are singing jingles for the channel. The five acts participating in the project are Fonovía's Los Tigres Del Norte and Banda El Recodo, Poli-Grant's Grupo Limite, EMI Latin's Los Tucanes De Tijuana, and Arca-BMG's Ilegales. Channel 9 broad-casts Mexican-made movies, televi-sion reruns, and talk shows.

PolyGram's M için/dance group Katakab recently went to Brazil to promote its latest album, "Esperanto," which will be released there in the first quarter.

DESDE ARGENTINA: EMI Argentina just dropped Los Pericos' "Mystic Love" on Nov. 15. The album includes a guest appearance by Ratonos Paranóicos front man Juanse and a cover of a '78 classic by Los Libros De La Buena Memoria." EMI Latin is expected to drop the disc in the U.S. next year.

Confirmed to perform in Buenos Aires in December are KC & the Sunshine Band (Saturday, 11, Obelisco Stadium), B.B. King (Dec. 9, Gran Rex Theater); the Monsters of Rock Festival with Iron Maiden, Soulfly, and Helloween (Dec. 12, Vélez Stadi-um); Pimpinela (Dec. 12, Luna Park Arena); Lito Vitale (Dec. 12-13, Teatro Collider); and Charlie Zaa (Dec. 16, Gran Rex Theater).

HAPPY TURKEY DAY: Due to an early Thanksgiving Day deadline, Chart Notes will not be published this week.

CORRECTION: Contrary to an item in last issue's Latin Notes, the producer of the Vive Latino concert was RAC Productions.

Assistant in preparing this column was provided by Tremor Aguilera in Mexico City and Marcelo Fernández Bitar in Buenos Aires.

Una Estrella Para Vicente. Sony Dis-cos artist Vicente Fernández received his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame Nov. 11 during a ceremony attended by an estimated 4,000 people. Pictured kneeling, from left, are Johnny Grant, honorary mayor of Hollywood, and Fernández.
The best voice
The best guitarist
The best arrangements
The best mix
The best production
The best management
The best boleros

Señor Bolero

THE BEST BOLERO ALBUM EVER RECORDED

Produced by Rudy Perez
Alma Mia
Como Fué
La Última Noche
ME HAS ECHADO AL OLVIDO
Señor Bolero
Tu Me Acostumbraste
Que Tristeza
Cuando Te Toque Llorar
Concavo y Convexo
Rayito De Luna
Somos
Nuestro Amor
Si Me Comprendieras

6 Grammy Awards, 15 Nominations.
Platinum Status in USA and Puerto Rico.

Released in Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Central America, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Mexico, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Uruguay and Venezuela.

In the Spirit

by Lisa Collins

On the road again: Kirk Franklin & the Nu Nation are preparing to hit the road with a self-titled tour set to kick off Dec. 26 in New Orleans. Ticket sales are already strong for the 66-city tour, which will also feature the Rev. Dr. Trin-I-Tee 5:7 and CeCe Winans and is tentatively set to wind down in Tallahassee, Fla., in mid-April. Adding to the excitement is a TV special featuring the tour's talented lineup, with Debbie Allen as director-producer. The special is slated to tape Jan. 2 at the MCI Center in Washington, D.C. Negotiations with networks are under way. Not surprisingly, all three touring acts are featured on DreamWorks' inspirational "Prince of Egypt" soundtrack, which is fast becoming one of the most-subbed releases by gospel programmers across the nation and features a who's who of gospel, including Fred Hammond & Radical For Christ, Shirley Caesar, BeBe Winans, Take Six, Dr. Talk, and Donnie McClurkin. Meanwhile, McClurkin teams with his talented sisters—Olivia, Andrea, Meryl, Carol, and Tanya—on a new version of "The Call to the Chariot" (from Handel's "Messiah") for a special radio-only single that was released Nov. 27. The truck is part of a collection of songs from "The McClurkins" that is being slated for release next year from Gospe Centric Records.

On the word: Joining the threeerging gospel albums in the RIAA's Soundtrack and Gospel Centric and AscAP's more than 180 people turned out for the CD release party for the gospel album "The Cookout." The event was facilitated and organized by Verizon Records executive Charla Williams and Tara Griggs-Magee. Artists in attendance included James Hall and Nancy Jackson.

Jazz

Blue Notes

by Steve Graybow

Running the Voodoo Down: Miles Davis' "Bitches Brew" was already ahead of its time nearly 30 years ago, eerily foreshadowing musical forms that our ears are only now becoming accustomed to. While "Brew" initially caused consternation to Davis for its abandonment of traditional jazz tradition, the double-vinyl album has left an indelible mark on our cultural landscape. As we move toward the millennium, it stands poised to make its mark upon a new generation of listeners.

Davis' still-potent collaboration was forged from recordings made in August 1969 and February 1970. "At this point in time, Davis had stopped making albums and just made music," says Steve Berkowitz, Legacy's VP of A&R. "It was actually [producer] Teo Macero who put together the record we now know as 'Bitches Brew.'

"There is more music from those sessions, sections of which ended up on other Davis albums," Berkowitz continues. "But it is one body of work, because that's the way the musicians played it. Regardless of where the music ended up, or in what order it was made available to the public, it historically belongs together."

The Complete Bitches Brew Sessions," released Nov. 24 on Legacy, brings together all of the music recorded at those groundbreaking dates. Included in the four-CD box is the original "Bitches Brew" album, preserved for historians in its original running order. "We took "Brew" as a whole album first, in its original context, so that the listener can hear 'Bitches Brew' as they know it," says Berkowitz. "The rest of the music is chronological, so that you can hear its development. Our goal was to reflect the reality of what happened at those sessions."

To create awareness for the box, Legacy serviced college radio, retail, and press with a CD single featuring four Macero-edited "Bitches Brew" tracks. Interestingly, the under-three-minute versions of "Spanish Key" and "Miles Runs the Bardo" originally appeared as the A- and B-sides of a commercially available 45. "Bitches Brew' had gone gold, which in 1970 was a huge plateau for any artist," says Berkowitz. "Miles was so visible. I imagine Columbia was hoping for radio play. (Berkowitz points out that the edits themselves are not on the boxed set, since they are essentially snippets of music already included.)

According to Seth Rothstein, Legacy's senior director of jazz and marketing, "Bitches Brew" was "one of the first jazz projects to be worked in conjunction with Sony Music Distribution's urban force, which have been very successful in getting Davis stocked in smaller, urban mom-and-pop stores. Likewise, our college research has shown that people who buy with music by Kevin Bond (Hi-Rity VP of A&R). Kevin got new textures and sounds out of the Family. We're really going to be putting everything behind it."
**Top Contemporary Christian**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>ALBUM</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>WEEKS CHARTED</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS</td>
<td>JETTIN'</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS</td>
<td>MYRRH</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
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<td>CHRISTMAS</td>
<td>REDemark</td>
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<td>CHRISTMAS</td>
<td>NEWSBOYS</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>CHRISTMAS</td>
<td>RICH MULLILAS</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS</td>
<td>THE JESUS RECORD</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Artists & Music**

MOSELEY RESIGNS: Benson Records president Jeff Moiseley has announced his resignation to Prov-

**News: Connection**

- Various artists ("Smokie On the Mountain), Kelly Williams.
- Following is a listing of act nomi-
- Songwriter/composer: Gary Durr, Rich Niels, Chapman, Fred James, Ty Lacy, Dan Penn, Annie Roboff, Leslie Satcher, Tom Shaprio, Phil Vassar, Craig Wiseman.
- Female vocalist: Emmy Lou Har-ri, Martina McBride, Tracy Nelson, Jace Velasquez, Trisha Yearwood.
- Group/duo: Diamond Rio, Swan Dive, the Mavericks, the Nashville Chamber Orchestra, the Wilkin-sons.
- Signed to: Ryman, Aman, Ruby, Anfuso, Michelle, Richie, Nilsen, Bouchard, Stott, the Billigeyces.
- Background vocalist: Vicki Car-rio, Chris Rodriguez, John Wesley Ryden, the Carol Lee Coop Singers, Dennis Wilson.
- Producer: Peter Collins, Steve Earle and Ray Kennedy, Mark Hime-erlin, Paul Worley, David Z.
- Engine: Mike Roh, Mark Miles, David Logan, Justin Niel, Dave Thoene.
- Song: "Never Been Unloved" (written by Michael W. Smith and Wayne Kirkpatrick), "I Must Be Dreaming," "In My Life," "You're Gone" (written by Peter Zavadil).
- Guitar: Jay Joyce, Randy Miller, Jack Pearson, Rick Williams.
### TOP REGGAE ALBUMS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>STRICTLY THE BEST 21 (452366)</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>VP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>STRONG JAH MOVEMENT (452365)</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>VP</td>
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Boosey & Hawkes Gets Into Pictures

U.K. Music Co.’s Sights On Visual Media With Acquisition

By NIGEL HUNTER

LONDON—The purchase of Big Picture Music by Boosey & Hawkes (B&H) for an undisclosed sum is seen as a practical demonstration of the various music company’s determination to move with the times while retaining and promoting the best of the past.

The acquisition of Big Picture includes its studios on Wardour Street, its stable of composers, and its back catalog. Big Picture proprietor Andrew Sturrock is joining B&H’s London-based music publishing division as media director. His knowledge and experience, coupled with the resources of his company, mark a major development for B&H in its quest to become involved in visual media, which it rates as one of the biggest growth areas in the music industry over the next 10 years.

The acquisition also signals a return to full commercial action after the hiatus precipitated by the decision of the board of Carl Fischer in April 1997 to seek a buyer for its business, including its 45.5% voting stake in B&H, following the death of Fischer president Walter Connor.

That situation was resolved in May this year by a reorganization of the B&H stockholding structure in the shape of a new holding company, Boosey & Hawkes Group. The Group acquired all the stock of B&H through a court-approved scheme of arrangement and through the private acquisition of Carl Fischer.

The latter’s stockholders gained the chance to hold their investment in the Group directly rather than through Carl Fischer, and B&H stockholders were able to exchange their holdings on a one-for-one basis for stock in Boosey & Hawkes Group, which now controls all the stock capital of Boosey & Hawkes.

For B&H chief executive Richard Holland, it was a happy outcome after an unpleasant period that might have seen the company taken over and subsumed. “We had an unsettling and disturbing year,” he admit. “Our media music activities suffered during the Carl Fischer process. People in this area were nervous about the possible outcome, and we lost some staff. But we now have a wide array of stockholders, and we’re truly independent, with the biggest stockholder having 7%.”

Holland adds that company results have been affected by the recession in the Far East and elsewhere and the effects of translating foreign currency into sterling during the high value of the pound. He is optimistic about the future, however, as the wealth of history stretches back over 230 years. He joined in 1987 as group finance director before being named chief executive and deputy chairman two years later.

The 18th-century Boosey & Co. and Hawkes & Son, founded in 1865, were in competition in music publishing and the manufacture of musical instruments until they merged in 1900.

At that time, the declining importance of printed music, in contrast to radio and records, was recognized, and B&H focused its publishing activities on building up serious music copyrights. This was further strengthened in 1996 by the acquisition of Bote & Bock, a well-known Berlin publishing company founded in 1838.

The B&H catalog of 20th-century composers in particular is formidable, with such names as Benjamin Britten, Aaron Copland, Soren Kachmann, Richard Strauss, Leonard Bernstein, Peter Maxwell Davies, Henry Gorecki, Duke Ellington, Steve Reich, James MacMillan, and Harrison Birtwistle. A recent publication is the widely acclaimed Third Symphony by Edward Elgar, which was completed by Anthony Payne from the composer’s initial sketches and an outline.

Holland expects renewed interest and results stemming from the 50th anniversary of Richard Strauss’ death next year and the centenary of Copland’s birth, which coincides with the turning of the millennium.

B&H is Europe’s largest manufacturer of musical instruments and ranks third in the world, behind Yamaha and Steinway/Schroder. “We are not involved in pop music as such,” Holland points out. “That would require a massive investment and knowledge of the genre, which we do not profess to have.”

In print, B&H promotes its extensive catalog of serious and educational music, with a worldwide distribution system through dealers and wholesalers.

B&H favors third-party distribution, having arranged this in Germany last year. In the U.K. it has a deal with Grantham Book Services.

“We’re not experts in physical distribution and prefer to find someone bigger and better at it than us,” notes Holland.

He sees considerable potential in media music, which is being spearheaded from the London office. The Cerdavich Music subsidiary specializes in background library music. Commissioned music for advertisement, and TV themes is handled by another subsidiary, Clockwise.

“The Internet is the new sound carrier,” Holland says. “It has enormous possibilities.”

After The Show. Caught backstage after a standing-room-only show at the Cinerama in Hollywood are Warner/Chappell Music’s Jimmy Webb, left, and Brad Rosenberg, Warner/Chappell’s VP of film and television catalog development. Webb was in Los Angeles to perform and to promote his new book, “Tunesmith: Inside The Art Of Songwriting.”

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December 3, 1910 – October 31, 1995

A Tribute To His Life and Legacy

BILLBOARD DECEMBER 5, 1998
Panasonic’s DA7 Mixer Boasts Sonic Integrity, Low Price

BY DAN DALEY

Atlanta's recording studio community may be something of a barometer of the city's nascent resurgence in music. Long a stronghold of R&B, and often subject to that genre’s ebbs and flows, Atlanta is seeing the establishment and expansion of new facilities that cater to a broader variety of music and are raising the area's technology quotient.

Artists including Bobby Brown, Dallas Austin, Darryl Simmons, Keith Sweat, L.A. Reid, and Babyface are closely associated with the city and R&B. Most have or have had sophisticated studios, whether private or commercial facilities. Furthermore, a new facility is expected soon by artist/producer Jermaine Dupri, best known for his solo work and for his productions of Mariah Carey, Kenny Babyface Edmonds, and others.

On the other hand, the legacy of rock that extends back to the Allman Brothers Band in nearby Macon and Paul Davis is enjoying a renaissance today by Collective Soul and matchbox 20. Their producers and mixers act as magnets for rock and pop to Atlanta and in some cases are building their own facilities as well.

Longtime Atlanta studio Southern Tracks has been a base for producer/mixer Brendan O’Brien (Black Crowes, Stone Temple Pilots, Pearl Jam) for several years. Purple Dragon has become a favorite of Atlanta resident Elton John. Producers Matt Serletic is planning a three-room recording facility scheduled to come online sometime in 1999 on the site of the former Axis Studios, which has recently changed hands.

What also bodes well for Atlanta's future as a recording center is the fact that studios aren't limited by genre.

"Just finished working with Keith Sweat in his private studio" in the upscale suburb of Alpharetta, says audio engineer Karl Hulton, who has lived and worked in Atlanta for the past five years after coming from Miami. "But I regularly go with R&B clients to other studios to track live drums and acoustic instruments. There's a lot of interaction like that in Atlanta. You just don't see it until you live here awhile."

Tree Sound, just opened what most agree is Atlanta's first new world-class-studio level in more than a decade. The 5,000-square-foot tracking room and SSL G+ equipped control of a large 20,000-square-foot complex that already has a Digidesign Pro Tools editing and mastering suite and expects to be open within the next 18 months.

"A lot of bands were hitting in Atlanta and then leaving to make their records," explains Tree Sound owner Paul Diaz. "What the studios of the city have to do is act as an anchor for the music here. And that requires new investments, which we're starting to see."

A CERTAIN LEVEL

Jim Zampino, manager and chief engineer at 1920 Recording, says, "Atlanta is getting more producers from out of town coming here to record and mix. They're expecting a certain level of technology. And if we can give it to them, Atlanta can go even further than it already has."

Mike Clark is co-owner and manager at Southern Tracks; he has been in the studio business for 30 years in Atlanta. (His partner, publisher Bill Lowery, built the city's first recording studio in the 1960s.) Clark agrees that Atlanta is gaining as a music center but says that it's fought a perceptual battle about how much it has already accomplished.

"I think we've already changed and are becoming a world-class music city, but the world is just now starting to notice that," says Clark, noting that a common criticism that the city holds for record producers and artists.

There are also signs of the future in the ancillary facilities opening in Atlanta, including at least two new mastering studios, Griffin Mastering and Glenn Schick Mastering.

Schick, a transplanted New Yorker, says the fact that Atlanta can now support local mastering facilities after years of sending its masters out of town is an indication of a growing infrastructure that can support a larger music industry.

"Atlanta is just now getting the sense that it can do it all on its own," says Schick, who is also contemplating a L.A. studio to start a record label and authoring for next year. "It's not a matter of 'if you build it, they will come,' but rather that if you build it, you can support both the regional business and out-of-town clients."

Joel Katz, a senior partner in the law firm Greenberg Traurig, is regarded as the dean of the Atlanta entertainment industry by virtue of his 30 years representing artists and producers like Jimmy Buffett, Collectiv Soul, and L.A. Reid. He believes that the way the business has evolved in Atlanta is a perfect fit with the direction in which the larger industry is moving, with major labels creating joint ventures with artists and producers.

"It's not just a matter of surrogate A&R—these ventures are full-fledged businesses," says Katz. "There are about 20 entities here that are producer-driven, creating new music. For example, Ed Roland (of Collective Soul) has a venture with Atlanta Records that signs new talent. The structure here is perfect."

Mark Willis is a longtime Atlanta music industry manager and now producer, who last August held the city's first music industry seminar, the Atlanta Music Conference; it will be held again in August 1999. He agrees that Atlanta is experiencing new levels of activity on several planes.

"What's happening with the studios here excites me," he says. "They're all a way to test the pulse of the situation here, along with things like the Olympics and getting our second Super Bowl. New York and L.A. tend to have the most incredible facilities, but Atlanta is an urban music town, and rightfully so. There's much more meets the eye to this city: And that's going to make itself felt in coming years."

Among the early proponents of the DA7, which began shipping in April, are Greg Ladanyi, Bobby Brooks, Denny Purcell, and the newly reunited team of David Was and Don Was.

Ladanyi—a producer/engineer/mixer whose credits include Jackson Browne, Don Henley, Toto, Fleetwood Mac, Madonna, and Janet Jackson, among others—notes that "the DA7 is a project for Los Caifanes, one of Mexico's most popular and influential groups. Ladanyi is also at work with various developing artists, including Jody Davidson, Fuse, and Sharlene Brown.

Brooks has worked with Michael Jackson, Rick James, Teena Marie, and Stevie Wonder, with whom he spent seven years as personal engineer and programmer.

Purcell, mastering engineer at Nashville powerhouse Georgetown Masters, is using the mixer for mastering applications, including multichannel work.

Fred Jones, national marketing manager and product manager for pro audio at Los Angeles-based Panasonic Professional Audio—a division of Panasonic Broadcast & Digital Systems—says, "A number of high-profile people are coming on board. It's time to happen."

Jones adds that Panasonic took a low-key approach toward the launch of the DA7, preferring to let the product build by word-of-mouth rather than aggressive advertising or celebrity endorsements.

Jones says, "We launched the DA7 with the same attitude we took toward our SV-370 DAT machine, which has become an industry-standard unit. "We said, 'It's our quality, we're high-class. Let's just run a few ads and see what happens.' And the DA7 got to people who are early adopters. These guys would sit down with us and say, 'God, it sounds really good.' Then they'd play with the EQ and say, 'Wow, this is really nice.'"

Rock act Little Feat was among the first to use the board. Its latest album, "Under The Radar," was entirely recorded and mixed at guitarist Paul Barrere's home studio using just one DA7.

Establishing a critical mass among high-end users, the DA7 is now trickling down to the project studio community, according to Jones.

"For us, say, 'Why would I want to go into an $80,000-a-day room if I can get the same quality at home, where my environment is better? I can get a better feel, and I don't have to worry about the clock,'" Jones says. "As long as they don't have to worry about the quality, they'll be there."

The mixer went through a brief identity crisis at the beginning, when it was advertised as a Ramsa-series mixer. Although it is part of Panasonic's Ramsa line, the company has since sought to emphasize the Panasonic name.

Jones says, "What happened with the DA7, because it delivered a new product to pro audio in a long time and we were changing from being an analog company to a digital company, we decided that we would take the image of, 'Let's make it a Ramsa series product.' So it's a Panasonic RAMS, Ramsa-series mixer."

Besides its core music market, the DA7 has made significant inroads in other applications. For instance, the Riverbend Church in Austin, Texas, recently installed two linked DA7s for use in the Discovery Channel's "Real Life With Dr. Gerald Mann" show, and the Reuben B. Fleet Science Center in Balboa Park, San Diego, Calif., has added one.

BRIEFLY

Claris Sayadian, who just left Allen Sides' Ocean Way/Record One after 12 years of serving as studio manager at the L.A. studio complex, has resurfaced at design firm studio bauton (Studio Monitor, Billboard, Nov. 28).
CLASSICAL KEEPING SCORE (Continued from page 80)

songs with lutenist David Miller. Fraser also produced one of the real gems of the series: Currie’s percussion kaleidoscope “Striking A Balance,” which includes Steve Reich’s lypid “Nagoya Marimbas” as well as contemporary-minded arrangements of Ravel and Bach, among several other exceptional pieces.

Future “Debut” releases include such offbeat items as an album with a Caribbean steel-drum band playing classical transcriptions.

“That may sound dreadful, but let me assure you, it’s wonderful,” Fraser says. There is also a disc of Russian liturgical and secular material with the Male Voice Choir Of St. Petersburg, which features four basso profundos—who, Fraser adds, “make the room shake.”

Several other “Debut” issues reflect Fraser’s keen sense of vocal talent. One is a wide-ranging set of American songs from young American baritone Nathan Gunn. “Making that record was like discovering Thomas Hampson at 25,” Fraser says. Another upcoming “Debut” is by American mezzo-soprano Michelle DeYoung, who sings Wagner’s “Wesendonk Lieder” and other rich numbers by Liszt, Strauss, and Duparc—material “that suits her down to the ground,” Fraser says. Baritone Dietrich Henschel and mezzo Katarina Karnews are two more vocalists with “Debuts.” Fraser says, “There are so many singers around who are competent, but these are voices that just make you sit up and say, Wow.”

The most notable voice thus far that Fraser has shepherded on record is that of Bostridge. The British tenor recorded his first album, a group of Schubert songs, for “Debut,” but his career took off so fast that EMI put out his album of Schumann’s “Liederkreis” and “Dichterliebe” as a regular release first—and to universal acclaim. Bostridge’s Schubert album then came out on EMI proper, and the label just issued his disc of Britten songs; a set of English songs may be next, with an album of Bach arias to follow. Schubert’s “Winterreise” is also in the cards.

“Ian is two things tenors are traditionally not: tall and extremely intelligent,” Fraser says. “But there is more to him than just presence and that formidable intelligence. He has a deep feeling for the poetry and the music. He is a rare musician.”

The 49-year-old Fraser grew up in Stirling, Scotland, and graduated with honors in music from Edinburgh University before putting in a stint at the opera house of Glyndebourne. An accomplished pianist, Fraser spends many of his off hours playing Schumann and Ravel at home; for the piano, he gives four-hand recitals with pianist Mikhail Rudy. (Maybe we’ll make a record someday, and one of my colleagues can produce it,” Fraser says. “And perhaps I’ll be very dull.”) The musicology quality that makes Fraser special as a producer is something attested to by various of his charges, including so less than Plácido Domingo—who recently conducted London’s Philharmonia on a Fraser-produced disc of Italian and French arias by Romanian soprano Leoncova Vedua. “John is such a dedicated musician,” Domingo says. “He has all the technical knowledge but also a wonderful ear. He really is a pleasure to work with—a fantastic producer.”

Fraser’s studio facility and tempered manner have helped him cultivate ongoing relationships with several major artists. He has produced nearly all of Perlman’s EMI discs, including such treasures as the violinist’s “American” album (Bernstein, Barber, and Foss with the Boston Symphony Orchestra led by Seiji Ozawa) and the set of “Popular Jewish Melodies” (taped in Tel Aviv with the Israel Philharmonic).

The next Perlman/Fraser production to see light is an album of time-honored “teaching” concertos that every student violinist plays in school but that are almost never heard either in the concert hall or on record. Performing the pieces with the Juilliard Orchestra under Laurence Foster, Perlman was also filled for a PBS special that will air in the spring.

Another of Fraser’s long-term partnerships is with McCartney, as he produced “Liverpool Oratorio” and “Standing Stone.” McCartney’s hit forays into the classical realm. Fraser has also been working on an upcoming album that includes the first efforts in the chamber medium for the former Beatle. Tentatively titled “Working Classical,” the disc should be out sometime next year; it includes a string quartet titled “Inheritance,” a piece for four horns called “Stately Horn,” and two works for small orchestra, “Spiritual” and “A Leaf.”

Fraser says working with McCartney is “one of the easiest things in the world. He may not read or write music in the traditional manner, but his musical instincts are, of course, impeccable. Paul is a very shrewd musician, and his work in the classical sphere gets more sophisticated all the time. And being in the studio with him is an enormous thrill—I grew up with the Beatles, after all. So when we’re working, half of my brain is busy being professional and the other half is screaming nervously: ‘Aaagh, this is one of the most famous musicians of all time.’”

Other highlights of Fraser’s EMI tenure include Hampson’s barnstorming account of Mahler’s “Kindertotenlieder” and “Rückert-Lieder” as well as recordings of three great Mozart/Da Ponte operas with Haitink. A more recent Fraser project is with Marius Jorge’s bold reading of Kurt Weill’s Symphony No. 2, “mahagonny” Suite, and Violin Concerto with soloist Frank Peter Zimmermann. Also, Fraser helmed soprano Ruth Ann Swenson’s new set of Handel and Mozart arias with the Orchestra Of The Age Of Enlightenment led by Sir Charles Mackerras.

Other Fraser productions to look forward to: a Handel album by hot contenter David Daniels, with the Orchestra Of The Age Of Enlightenment’s Roger Norrington; a live recording of Berg’s “Wozzeck” with Metzmarker, the Hamburg State Opera Orchestra, and a raft of prime soloists; and a take on Szymanowski’s opera “King Roger” that was led by Rattle (who has a Midas touch with everything he does), Fraser says, features Hampson in the title role, and was recorded in the “glorious” acoustics of the City of Birmingham Symphony Hall.

Fraser and his EMI cohorts inherited a grand tradition of record production not only from the legendary Walter Legge but also from Christopher Bishop, who Fraser says set a high standard as the lead EMI producer from 1964-79. Yet EMI doesn’t have a “house sound” like that of, say, Decca, during the ’60s and ’70s. “To me, a house sound like Decca’s has more to do with the sound of the venues you use and if you are able to use them consistently. But rather than a house sound, I am glad to have a roster of top-flight engineers like who are chefs who make sauces that are different yet great in their own ways.”

The classical music world has changed drastically in the past few years, particularly in terms of recording. Fewer records are being made and there is more pressure to make each one pay its own way. “All the normal A&R formulas no longer work,” Fraser says. “We have to be more inventive; every well-priced record has to be really special. But take a simple but great idea like Italia’s album of student concerts. That is the kind of thing we need to be creating.

“I have faith that we will find a path through the lethargy of the record-buying public,” Fraser adds. “I know we can make records that have integrity and that the public really wants to buy.”

PRODUCTION CREDITS

BILDBOARD’S NO. 1 SINGLES (NOVEMBER 28, 1998)

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© 1998, Billboard/BPI Communications. Hot 100, R&B & Country top 100 in this feature each time, Mainstream Rock, Modern Rock, Pop, Adult Contemporary, Club Play, and Dance Sales name weekly. Please submit material for Production Credits to Steve Graydon, Telephone (212) 936-3561, Fax 212-860-6094, sgraydon@billboard.com

Ritchie’s Searing Tracks. Singer-songwriter Kim Ritchie worked on an album for Mercury at Sea Sound in New York with producer John Pedag. Shown standing, from left, are Sean Sound assistant Dave Fisher, bassist Kevin Katz, guitarist Dominic Miller, Sean Sound owner Walter Sears, assistant Sean Shuturi, Ritchie, and drummer Sean Pelton. Seated, from left, are guitarist Waddy Wachtel and Pedag.
STANDOUT TRACKS

VITAL RE ISSUES

SPOTLIGHT

COUNTRY

JOE PASS

DEREK DODD

METALLICA

VARIOUS ARTISTS

CHRISTMAS

PRINCIPAL 2: threelived

COMPILATION PRODUCERS: Steve Beare, Eric Soderman, Paul Watson

Hemisfair Plaza 1183246

This is the community’s proponents of mari-

juana legalization have united for this

strong sequel (benefiting the NORML,

lobbying organization, which champions
decriminalization) to 1995’s “HEMP-

F I G U R E

FACTS:

Freedom Is NORML”
collection. Standout tracks on the album, which

was co-sponsored by High Times magazine,

include Willie Nelson’s live “Me and Paul,”

Dar Williams’ “Play The Creed,”

Speardraper’s saucy cover of “The Joker,”

Letters To Cleo’s “squealer” “Let’s Get

High,” Mud’s redoing of Humble Pie’s “30 Days In

The Hole,” George Clinton’s “V.U.S. Custom Coast

Guard Dop Dog,” “Fun Lovin’ Criminals’ “High,”

from Harmonize’s low out? Got
tively. The first disc consists of new

recordings of rock staples by the

likes of Black Sabbath, The Misfits,

Nick Cave, Queens Of The Stone

Age, Otep, Blue Oyster Cult, and Bob Seger. In

fact, it’s Metallica’s passion and sincerity

that allow the band to record a metal-

edged cover of Seger’s melancholy

road diary “Turn The Page” with

authority its Metallica-inspired Iggy

Kid Joe brought to it equally a

sounding rendition of Harry Chapin’s tour-

jerking folk classic “Cat’s In The Cradiue”.

The second CD consists of material from

Metallica’s “Garage Days Revisited” and “Garage Days

Re-Visited” albums of the mid-’80s, which

have been out of print for a decade. B-sides and

one-off singles dating from the late ’80s and early ’90s; and

the “Motorhead” suite of Mushroom covers

in 1996 as B-sides to Metallica’s U.K. single “Hero Of The Day”.

Like Guns N’ Roses and their “Use Your Youth, Infant

Incident,” Metallica’s “Garage Inc.”

pays homage to a star metal band’s
diverse roots.

Eveleigh Harris,

Lucinda Ronstadt. Kate’s ex, Louden

Wainger, Michael J. Fox, and their two

kids, Lydia and Miles, and Montreal

folk-song cousins such as Chaim

Tannenbaum, whose song “Time On My

Hands” is a melancholy revery

standing. An unpretentious delight.

Hein Reddy

Casting Stage

PRODUCER: Bruce Kundratic

Versace Slaten 5962

Hille Darby had no undying record-

suers. It’s not that she has
dropped her vocal approach—it remains an affect-

from Wyclef Jean, “Chocolate Salty Balls.” Other

cuts feature artists such as Chavela Vargas, Lola

Vegas, and the French eccentric. That includes

Travis and reissues of his stage

of special interest. However, an

otherwise sterling set

that could be

vitality of the

challenging every time she


THE CIVIL WAR

VARIOUS ARTISTS

JOE PASS

COALITION OF THE BILBOG WORLD NOBLE DOUGLAS

VARIOUS ARTISTS

CHRISTMAS

Khan Christmas

Tina Turner...As What It Gets, That and the

playable “Caribbean Breeze.”

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

VARIOUS ARTISTS

SONGS OF ALAMO

VARIOUS ARTISTS

THE KICKIN’ KAZOOS

Kazo Christmas

PRODUCERS: Joe Thomas

Diverse City 1982: contact, www.diversecity.com

4117

127

5962

Atlantic 83090

Conceived, written, and executed-pro-

duced by Frank Wildhorn, “The Civil War” is a colossal

proj ect that brings together country music stars in an

effort to create a musical tapestry of the Civil War for

the theatrical pro-

duction of the same name. Far from a

musicalostudy, “The Civil War Sessions” cuts a middle

ground between its subject matter and the modern

sensibilities of its partici-

pants. In other words, Travis Tritt’s rendition of “The

Day The Earth Stood Still” and Deana Carter’s melancholy

“Young (My Bill)” would round out a project on

mainstream country music and

various talents who

create

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would

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-...- Simple

enlighten

ABC

Yakum and Alan Jackson, which

is not at all a bad place to be.

However, an otherwise sterling set

is tarnished by the inclusion of some non-

essential tracks recorded by Almodovar
himself when he was beginning his cinematic

career in the early 80’s.

Among the highlights are

reissues of the

classic

Spanish

score

tracks for

the

American

on

endings

of

American

Abnormal

Almodovar

himself

the

trends

of

these

moral

sentiments

world

of

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scores

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American

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endings

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American

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C H R I S T M A S

C E L I N E  D I O N  D o n ’ t  S a v e  A l l  T h e  R a i d e r s  ( o n  t i m e  l o g g e d )
550 Maddie &39;hops 9532 d (on air)

P A T S Y  M A H A R A M  T h e  D a u g h t e r  O f  S o l a s  C l a s s
714 San Antonio Riverwalk 102.7 (on air)

W I L D  C h r y s t a l l e u t 1 8 7 . 1  ( U K  s i g n a l )
Contact: 212-371-4112

P E A B R O Y  &  B R O N T E A R T H  T h e  G l i f t
Windham H1 98.6 (on air)

T H E  J O N E S E S  W h y  W i l l  Y o u  B e  O n  T h r o n e s  ( o n  t i m e  l o g g e d )
24 KaratResorts 9933 7-28-9

M S P Y  C h r i s t m a s  D a y
A M P  0 0 7 8 ( o n  a i r )

S Y M P H O N Y  V I N O U S  W i l l  Y o u  W e r e  H e r e  ( n a t u r a l  v o i c e )
Cumulus 797 (on air)

M A R I N A  M I C R O B R I D E  O h  N i g h t  ( n a t u r a l  v o i c e )
Radio+ 6468 12-22-9

M A R K  C H E S N U T T  W h a t  C h i l d  I s  T h i s  ( n a t u r a l  v o i c e )
Decca 3863 12-23-9

A L A N  J a c k s o n  R u t h l e s s  T h e  R o u x ( on  a i r )
Alamo 3060 12-26-9

G A R Y  A L L A N  P l e a s e  C o m e  H o m e  F o r  C h r i s t m a s
Decca 3863 12-23-9

D A V I D  B E N O I T  F e a t u r i n g  M A N U E L  R A R F L A N K  C h r i s t m a s  T i m e  I s  H e r e
Warner Bros. 6297 12-24-9

R A V E R S  D e t a c h e d  B r o d y  N e w  D e r t e c h
MCA Nashville 1018 i (to be aired 12-24)

J I M M Y  B U F F E T T  C h r i s t m a s  i n  T e n n e s s e e
601 (on air)

A N G E L A  W I N G B U S H  A l l  I  W a n t  F o r  C h r i s t m a s
Isle 1109 12-25-9

I S L E Y  B R O T H E R S  F E A T U R I N G  R O N A L D  I S L E Y  S p e c i a l  G i f t
Isle 1109 12-25-9
YEK: THE CLOCK IS TICKING
Author: Gary F. Whitley
Price: $35.00, 244 pp.

In one fell swoop, this informative video addresses many questions computer users may be Sweating over as the year 2000 approaches. And for those who think this is all a fashion designer’s dream, the video clears up that confusion as well.

Among the heaps of information presented may leave the latter group with more questions than they had at the outset, it at least puts all viewers on the path to knowledge and defensive action. A news anchor-type host explains the numerous cause-and-effect issues of the so-called “millennium bug” with a focus on helping viewers determine whether their PCs will go into a tailspin at the stroke of midnight next New Year’s Eve. The host also tells viewers what measures they can take to discover disaster from happening. Some helpful hints include visiting several “test sites” that are accessible via the Internet. With all the buzz about Y2K, this video should get prime positioning in stores. Contact: 888-000-2400.

JOHN GLENN: AN AMERICAN LEGEND
Movie: Sony Home Video
Price: $30.00, 90 min.

There are few Americans who don’t know about the accomplishments of former U.S. senator and astronaut John Glenn. During his career, he flew to space at age 77 and his first historic 1962 Earth orbit has made Glenn a household name across more generations than most public figures can hope to be. This video—one of many Glenn tributes hitting the market this summer—targets Glenn fans young and old whose interest has been piqued by all the publicity and who want to know more about the man behind the missions. As well as providing a cavalcade of archival and filmed footage, the film includes footage shot with NASA, the video probes his history as a decorated war hero, the Korean War and his role as a four-time U.S. senator.

BABY SONGS GOOD NIGHT
Scaccia Home Video
Price: $15.00, 30 min.

A long time ago, the classic “Baby Songs” series was back in business with a big boost from longtime children’s entertainer Hap Palmer. Featuring clamshell packaging, this ready-to-take-the-tub half-hour tape features 10 original Palmer songs set to a magical combination of live-action family scenes and some excellent animated segments. The sentimental tune “Old Rocking Chair,” for example, is voiced by scenes of a grandmother and baby soaring across beautiful landscapes in the comfort of a rocking chair. All the songs feature a peaceful nature that make them a perfect backdrop to quiet play or a smooth segue into sleep, adult in front of the TV.

LET’S EAT! FUNNY FOOD SONGS
Sony Wonder
Price: $15.00, 30 min.

Cinderella, Little Miss Muffet, and other characters from classic children’s nursery rhymes have some fun in this video by Chef-Philean Caflé, where Sesame Street regular Grover is the head waiter. But young viewers will be free to choose from the rest of their friends from Sesame Street there as well. Grover and his pals Telly Monster, Elmo, and, of course, Cookie Monster take a close look at the food chain. As the title suggests, there are plenty of funny songs and skits about food, such as “Blueberry Mouth” and “Cereal Girl,” but there are also songs that teach important lessons, such as trying new foods and why it’s important to eat a healthy breakfast—it is, after all, “The Most Important Meal Of The Day.” Golden Books has brought a companion documentary book-and-tape version of this juicy recipe as well.

RICHIE RICH’S CHRISTMAS WISH
Price: $8.00, 85 min., $19.95

Money can’t buy happiness, even for the rich, in this live-action direct-to-video movie that stars David Gallagher, Martin Mull, and Lesley Ann Warren. Richie gets a magical gift in the form of a machine that is capable of granting wishes on one day of the year—Christmas Eve. When holiday time rolls around, the former teenager is a little depressed and wishes he never had been born. In the spirit of “It’s A Wonderful Life,” the machine transports him to a alternate universe in which his family and friends are downtown scaries. There he learns he is actually happy—and specially just the way he is. Warmer is also reissuing and re-releasing to $30.00 two animated “ Richie Rich” titles: “ Teesy Toys” and “ A Boy’s Best Friend.”

DR. SEUSS CLASSICS: THE CAT IN THE HAT/HOBBIT HLOOD מסdde
Price: $45.00, $12.98

Rabbi don’t have to be a drag when kids step back in time for a visit from the Cat in the Hat. This classic TV special, featuring Dr. Seuss’ most recognizable character, is back in the studios packed with all the fantasy play and rhyming ridiculousness that has charmed generations. Also included on the tape is the less-often-seen “Hoobier-Blooby-Hlow” providing a glimpse at an alternate, Sesame-escape place where new babies are prepared for their time on the Earth by the wise, whismical Mr. Hoobler. CBS Video is releasing a second version of Seuss stories that contains “Green Eggs And Ham” and “Ginich Night.”

GILBERT & SULLIVAN

412 minutes, $95.99 boxed set or $19.95 each Leave it to the U.K.’s renowned Electronic artisans to take out time outwitting opponents. As a youth, Drake attended private school and was known to be fairly talented at sports, as well as music.

Humphries meticulously details certain facts of Drake’s life, and this works against the author to some extent. Does the reader really care what record reviews appeared in the British music press during the weeks that Drake’s albums were also mentioned? His mini-histories of Britain, both pre- and post-war, make for better reading than time encompassed to that particular subject, rather than a “rock star” biography. Likewise, his emphasis on digressing into “Island Records” (Drake’s British label) roster of acts seems like padding. In trying to explain the myth of Drake as some kind of folk/rock pre-Prozac-era Kurt Cobain, the book contains some wildly divergent memories of the singer/songwriter.

Drake’s reluctance to perform live is traced to a bad experience, although the actual date and location of that event differ among those interviewed. Rumors of homosexuality and hard-drug use were apparently just that. Drake’s depression over his lack of success (the fact that drug factors mainly being meager record sales, as well as stage fright) is constantly cited as leading to his withdrawal inward, yet his parents maintained that he was doing much better emotionally in the weeks leading up to his death.

The book’s greatest assets are the in-depth looks at the musician’s recorded legacy and the developments leading up to the cult of Nick Drake. The former, a mere three albums released during his lifetime, are dissected in great detail, particularly his final album, “Pink Moon,” one of the most harrowing works in the entire rock pantheon. The story of how Drake became a cult figure years after his death is fascinating.

This book began life as an extensive article in the February 1980 edition of Mojo. As a result of that article, many people came out of the woodwork to share their memories of Drake. Those sharing memorable experiences include Donovan, Linda Thompson, journalist Nick Kent, and producer Joe Boyd. Famous fans like Peter Buck and Paul Weller are also interviewed.

In the end, though, the question of what really happened to Drake is never fully answered, and therein lies the frustrating part of the book. Despite all of Humphries’ research, Drake’s enigma remains largely intact.

THOMAS DEAN

86
Maverick’s Madonna To ‘Light’ Up Awards Show

I am in my life right now—in terms of my musical interests and in terms of my personal beliefs.”

Madonna’s performance at the Billboard Music Awards is one of few opportunities to hear her perform live until she embarks on a tour, tentatively slated for the spring. Her latest Maverick album, “Ray Of Light,” has sold 2.3 million units in the U.S., according to SoundScan, since its March release.

“My intention was to make a record that I’d enjoy listening to,” Madonna told Billboard in an earlier interview about her first studio set since 1994’s “Bedtime Stories.” “This album is reflective of where I am in my life right now—in terms of my musical interests and in terms of my personal beliefs.”

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Lauryrn Hill To Do That Live ‘Thing’

New Ruffhouse Set’s Material To Be Heard Live For 1st Time

S\E\E\I\N 23-YEAR-OLD rapper/vocalist Lauryrn Hill perform a track from her solo opus, “The Miseducation Of Lauryrn Hill,” at the ninth annual Billboard Music Awards should leave her fans salivating for more.

The young mother, who recently gave birth to her second child, has not performed any of the Ruffhouse/Columbia project’s material since its release Aug. 25. Columbia executives say the performance could quite possibly be the starting point of Hill’s long-awaited worldwide concert tour.

Since debuting at No. 1 on both The Billboard 200 and the Top R&B Albums charts, it has boosted by advance radio play of two non-label-sanctioned singles, “Lost Ones” and “Can’t Take My Eyes Off Of You,” Hill has become the darling of lady rappers, scoring the biggest debut week for a female artist in the SoundScan era, selling 423,000 copies in the U.S. (That achievement has since been eclipsed by Aaliyah Marloisette.) Hill’s album has sold 2 million units, according to SoundScan.

In addition, the project, which Hill considers to be “deeply personal,” has had some remarkable chart activity. After three weeks at No. 1, “The Miseducation Of Lauryrn Hill” slipped to No. 2 in its fourth week on The Billboard 200—eased out by Marilyn Manson—only to return to the No. 1 spot the following week. “Doo Wop (That Thing),” the album’s first single, debuted at No. 1 on The Hot 100 Singles chart.

The songs on “The Miseducation Of Lauryrn Hill,” says the vocalist, are mostly about her growth and development. “Every time I got hurt, every time I was disappointed, every time I learned, I just wrote a song,” Hill says.

The project, which she wrote and produced herself, is also a clear-cut example of how female producers can gain a place in an industry usually dominated by men. “Men have a hard time taking direction from women, but when you pay somebody, you pay them to get it right,” says Hill. “I think that women will be called ‘bitches’ and ‘hard to work with’ if they ask for and get what they want.”

While recording her groundbreaking album, Hill also penned “On That Day,” a track for gospel artist CeCe Winans, as well as “A Rose Isn’t A Rose” for Adelita Franklin. Addition-

Lauryrn Hill’s performance at this year’s Billboard Music Awards could be the starting point for her long-awaited world tour. Hill’s Ruffhouse/Columbia album “The Miseducation Of Lauryrn Hill” debuted at No. 1 on both The Billboard 200 and the Top R&B Albums charts and has sold 2 million units in the U.S. since its August release.

ally, she directed the video for Franklin’s song. Hill, who is one-third of the Fugees, had critics suggesting she go solo as early as the release of the trio’s 1996 debut, “Blunted On Reality.” But the vocalist, who is joined in the Grammy-winning trio by Wyclef Jean and Prakazrel “Pras” Michel, remained steadfastly loyal to the group. By the time “The Score” was released in 1996, Hill had already begun honing her songwriting and production skills. “The Score” won the 1997 Grammy for best rap album. That year’s Grammy for best R&B performance by a duo or group with vocal went to Hill’s groundbreaking cover of Roberta Flack’s “Killing Me Softly With His Song.” “The Score,” released on Ruffhouse/Columbia, has sold more than 18 million albums worldwide, according to the label, making it the top-selling rap album in the world.

Long before joining the Fugees, Hill was in the spotlight. She has appeared in a recurring role in “The World Tracks” and was featured in “Sister Act II: Back In The Habit.”

ANITA M. SANDELLS

A Grand Homecoming For Jive’s Backstreet Boys

WITh THE MASSIVE U.S. commercial success of the Backstreet Boys’ self-titled debut, the Jive Records vocal group has achieved nothing short of global domination and, in the process, helped usher in a new era of youthful pop music.

According to Jive representatives, the Orlando, Fla.-based quintet sold 7 million albums in international territories even before embarking on its U.S. push beginning in August 1997 with the release of “Backstreet Boys.”

The centerpiece of their success was set firmly in place with the publication of the Recording Industry Assn. of America’s October certifications, which named the album as the No. 3 selling release of the year with sales of more than 7 million units (Billboard, Nov. 14, 1997). In fact, only the phenomenon of “Titanic” and its diva cruise director, Celine Dion, has sailed ahead of the Boys this year.

(Continued on next page)

Mercury’s Shania Twain Bursts Out Of Country

Shania Twain is ebullient on the first anniversary of the release of her third album, “Come On Over.” “I just saw the current sales figures,” she says. According to SoundScan, the Mercury Records title has sold 5.2 million units.

Not only is Twain’s 1-year-old set healthy, it continues to grow and is nurturing her current world tour, her first major outing. Her shows have proved naysayers, who doubted her live performing ability, wrong.

She turned another major corner in her career earlier this year when she and producer/co-songwriter/husband Robert John “Mutt” Lange revamped the album for the European market and elevated her profile in the U.K. and on the Continent.

“It’s been a really nice climb, a lot of it due to international,” she says. “Everything’s become broader and wider, which is great. But it’s funny in that it’s all kind of the same stuff—it’s all the same music, it’s the same album. The album just keeps getting bigger.”

“Come On Over” has spawned three No. 1s on Hot Country Singles & Tracks with “You’re Still The One,” “Honey, I’m Home,” and “Love Gets Me Every Time.” Additionally, “You’re Still The One” reached No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary chart and remains on the Hot 100 for 42 weeks.

Her world tour, which runs through mid-1999, is approaching 1 million tickets sold, according to a Twain spokesman. This year, she has also appeared on VH1’s “Divas Live,” which became the network’s highest-rated program ever. VH1’s second-highest rated show was the Oct. 4 airing of “Behind The Music” documentary on Twain.

The next stop for her tour will be Australia, in early 1999, where her album is in the top 10. “In my opinion, I’m still not sure if touring is a big part of record sales,” says Twain, whose last album, “The Woman In Me,” sold in excess of 10 million copies in the U.S. without benefit of a tour. “So far, though, this album is selling at a better pace than ‘The Woman In Me’ did. But I can’t say yet that it’s the touring that’s done that. The tour is just another whole element to your career. It’s not just a record-selling device. I think people tour for a lot of other reasons.”

Twain says she limed the tour, which began in May, to take advantage of the new songs. “The reason I wanted to do it was to be able to do a more fun and exciting show. Now I’ve got two hours of music that’s all my own. I don’t know that I would have wanted to tour if I didn’t have enough music to live with.”

The most important thing for her, musically and artistically, Twain emphasizes, is that she has managed to resist and escape being categorized. Sure, she’s nominally a country singer, but her appeal has spread beyond the country box.

“I can understand why labels and categories have to exist,” Twain says. “But I do feel very lucky that I’m able to go beyond the restrictions that come with labels. I don’t have to mold my music or my image or anything to fit in anywhere specifically. And that’s probably why I don’t fit in anywhere specifically, because I haven’t moulded anything to fit.”

“I’m just lucky that it did work. My music is influenced by so many different styles of music that it is hard to place it. I’m living proof that you can be in a genre—country—and still be appreciated by fans who aren’t necessarily listeners of that particular genre.”

CHET FLIPPO

In the year since its release, Shania Twain’s Mercury Nashville album “Come On Over” has sold 5.2 million units, according to SoundScan, and has had three No. 1’s on Hot Country Singles & Tracks. Twain’s world tour runs through mid-1999.

www.americanradiohistory.com
Bette Midler’s ‘Show’ Will Go On

Diva To Rejoin Royal Crown Revue For Track From WB’s ‘Betty’

‘DIVA LAS VEGAS!’ will be the welcoming cry when Bette Midler performs at the Billboard Music Awards.

Vegas, the site of Midler’s award-winning HBO special last year, will see the Divine Miss M re-teaming with Royal Crown Revue on “One Monkey Don’t Spoil No Show,” a track on her current album, “Bathhouse Betty.”

The always-entertaining Midler will perform the song live from the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, and she’ll also be a presenter during the evening’s show, broadcast from the MGM Grand Hotel.

Midler’s pairing with Royal Crown Revue on the remake of the Big Maybelle song came at the behest of producer Ted Templeman, who was also working with the swing band.

“When I met Royal Crown Revue, I liked them immediately,” said Midler in an interview with Billboard earlier this year. “We cut that track in one afternoon, and most of it is scratch vocal. It’s like a party; it’s so much more fun than laboring over it.”

In addition to Templeman, other producers on “Bathhouse Betty,” which was released Sept. 15, are Arif Mardin, Marc Shaiman, Brock Walsh, David Foster, and Chuckii Booker. According to SoundScan, the album has sold 302,000 copies in the U.S. since its release.

Worldwide, Midler has sold 26.5 million albums during the course of her career.

“Bathhouse Betty,” Midler’s 17th album and her first for Warner Bros., marks a return to the singer’s earlier eras with a diversity of songs ranging from the ballad “Big Socks” to the 1960s classic “I Sold My Heart To The Junkman.” Other highlights include first single, the touching ballad “My One True Friend,” and the defiant, sassy “I’m Beautiful,” a reworking of a 1994 club hit from Uncanny Alliance.

After focusing on ballads on her last record, “Bette Of Roses,” Midler said fans told her that they wanted something more.

“They told me, ‘We’re waiting for all the different kinds of music. We want something funny and something only you do,’ “ recalled Midler.

“Everything just kind of fell into place with this record. It was just effortless.”

In fact, Midler said that she has more fun making albums now than ever before.

As for future plans, Midler recently finished playing the role of “Valley Of The Dolls” author Jacqueline Susann in a movie about the writer’s life. While the singer says she’s thinking about touring, possibly starting as early as this winter, no plans are set.

RCA’s Imbruglia Takes To Int’l Stardom

SHES HAS YET to do a world tour, has been in the U.S. only five times, and has never released a single at retail outside of the U.K. But Natalie Imbruglia has become an international pop star anyway.

Propelled by her radio hit “Torn,” the Australian-born soap star turned pop singer has become this year’s “it” girl on MTV and at record stores around the world.

“Torn,” released to U.S. radio by RCA in February, spent 11 weeks at No. 1 on the Hot 100 Airplay chart.

The song had already sold more than 800,000 copies in the U.K. before its U.S. debut.

Imbruglia told Billboard earlier this year that she was drawn to the song, which was written by former Cure producer/bassist Phil Thornal and Anne Previn and Scott Cutler of the U.S. group Edna’s Way. “The music and those lyrics evoke such powerful emotion, which I think everyone can relate to,” she said (Billboard, March 21).

The follow-up single, “Wishing I Was There,” has reached the top 20 on Billboard’s Adult Top 40 chart.

Her current single, “Smoko,” was released to radio Nov. 23, following the track’s video premiere on MTV the previous week.

Her first album, “Left Of The Middle,” released March 10 by RCA, has sold 1.6 million copies in the U.S., according to SoundScan. Another 5 million units have sold internationally, according to RCA, since its release outside of the U.S. a year ago.

Instead of embarking on a concert tour as the single garnered steam, Imbruglia, who was signed by RCA’s U.K. office, was put on a massive worldwide publicity tour, which included a spot on “Saturday Night Live” prior to the release of her album.

Imbruglia will head back into the studio to record a new album early next year. RCA marketing VP Julie Bruzzone says the package could be delivered as early as June, but more likely it will arrive by the fourth quarter.

Then Imbruglia will finally begin touring. “Our biggest frustration was not having her [in the U.S.] to support the album,” says Bruzzone. “But she couldn’t be everywhere, and we had to make sure every territory got what they needed.”

DGC’s Hole Harnessing A ‘Newfound Energy’

HOLE IS SET to perform its second single, “Malibu,” at the Billboard Awards Show. The intense ode to the beach is from the group’s DGC/Geffen set “Celebrity Skin,” which debuted Sept. 26 at No. 9 on The Billboard 200.

The year has been good for Hole bandmates Courtney Love, Melissa Auf Der Maur, Eric Erlandson, and Patty Schemel. (Drummer Schemel has been on hiatus for the past several months; Samantha Maloney has been filling in.) “Celebrity Skin” has already won the group the single of the year at the Modern Rock Tracks chart.

“Malibu” is just starting its run at radio.

“Everything is coming together and going well,” Erlandson says.

“We expected a bumpy road and criticism because of our level of celebrity of our front person. We just try to balance the scales, stay down the rumors, and reach a greater audience with a record we are proud of. ‘Celebrity Skin’ is my baby. Every time it seemed like it would fall apart, I was there. Every time we hit an obstacle, the four of us with our distinct personalities were there working toward a common goal.

Hole, contrary to popular belief, has been a pleasant experience.”

Strengthening the bond lately was the band’s return to the stage at the MTV Video Awards and at a recent show in the U.K. “The band will play some radio station concerts before and after taking the stage at the MGM Grand,” Erlandson says. “We’re trying to put together a big rock show of our own, something that has never been done by a mostly female rock band before, to take out on the road next year.

“If the meantime, we’re excited to be on the Billboard Awards. We have never given Las Vegas a proper show, and the city fits in with the theme of our album about pumping water into a desert to create an imaginary oasis.”

A GRAND HOMECOMING FOR BACKSTREET BOYS

Meanwhile, the hit singles “Quit Playing Games (With My Heart)” and “Everybody (Backstreet’s Back)” have each sold 1.2 million units, according to SoundScan.

“All of the countries all over the world have been so good to us, but nothing feels quite like coming home,” says group member Kevin Richardson. “Bringing the success home has meant that our friends and families have been able to enjoy it as well.”

Other labels hoping to tap into the same youthful market that launched the group also came to appreciate the Boys’ rise over the past 18 months.

“We feel like we were very important in changing the landscape of pop music in America with the Backstreet Boys,” says Jive president Barry Weiss. “We still categorically believe that we have the best band in this genre, but as this generic market for pop has grown by virtue of the Backstreet Boys’ success, it certainly gives us reason to believe that the next album will also perform very well.”

The act, which is recording a new album in Stockholm, will follow its Billboard performance with an appearance on Dick Clark’s New Year’s Eve program and a Jan. 17 Showtime pay-per-view special.
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This is an important Notice and must be acted upon immediately. Should you have any questions, please call Mark Francovich at Mad Hatter Studios at (323) 664-5766.

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we are looking for an individual with at least 5 years national sales experience with a record company. Helping to develop our line, the successful candidate will possess strong distribution and retail contacts, have the skills and personality to communicate with traditional record retail accounts, and exhibit the marketing savvy to develop pre-release and initial campaigns. Other responsibilities include: communicating and initiating strategies with distribution personnel, coordinating sales programs; and researching non-traditional retail outlets. As the person charged with maximizing sales in all retail and wholesale arenas, you must possess a keen business sense, strong closing skills, and the initiative and experience to help grow the sales of an upstart division of a successful worldwide company. Dept. JS/BB/NSM.

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Europe Welcomes New U.K. Indies Body
French, Italian Groups Say AIM Will Help Pan-European Lobbying

BY ANDERS LUNDQUIST
STOCKHOLM—The record industry here is putting a renewed effort behind the campaign to reduce the value-added tax (VAT) on music.

The major labels body Sveriges Skivbolag, the Swedish group of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), says the need for such a reduction in the Nordic countries is particularly urgent due to the high levels of VAT levied here.

Indeed, the Nordic region has Europe's highest music-VAT levels:

Sweden: 25%
Denmark: 25%
Norway: 25%
Ireland: 22%
Finland: 21%
Belgium: 21%
France: 20.5%
Austria: 20.5%
Greece: 18%
Holland: 17.5%
U.K.: 17.5%
Portugal: 17%
Italy: 16%
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Germany: 15%

Source: Musikindustrien (M).
**Spanish Drive Promotes Latin Acts**

**BY HOWELL LLEWELLYN**

MADRID—Ariola here has begun an initiative to promote Latin American pop/rock in Spain. Ariola director Carlos López has launched the project, Calaveras Y Diskolitos, with a four-band tour of the country and promises there is more to come.

The initiative follows the debut of the Premios Anígridos Awards by labels' body AFINVE last year (Billboard, Nov. 22, 1997) with a category devoted to Latino product. Labels spoke then of their plans to boost the presence of rock from Latin America in Spain. Ariola’s move is the first concrete manifestation of that.

 López says he realized that a swath of Latin American artists was being virtually ignored in Spain. He spoke with a former colleague with whom he had worked at Spanish authors’ body SGAE, Argentine music journalist Bruno Galindo.

Around the same time, López spoke with an expert in the subject, Javier Lifán, then at Warner Spain and now head of Virgin Chevaca España, who put the Ariola head in touch with Rubén Scaramuzzino, the Argentine editor of Spanish-language rock magazine Zona de Obras, based in the northern Spanish city of Zaragoza.

“Suddenly, we had a triangle—me, Bruno, and Rubén—to start our project, which we called Calaveras Y Diskolitos after a song by Argentine band Los Fabulosos Cadillacs,” says López.

Galindo agreed to put together the first Calaveras compilation with guidance from Scaramuzzino, whose publication has promoted the project from the outset.

That album was released in April and has sold some 15,000 units, according to López. The first tour, featuring four acts—Los Fabulosos Cadillacs, Aterciopelados from Colombia, Malú and Julia Vargas (both from Mexico)—took place in October, hitting six cities. The second Calaveras disc is scheduled for release in January, and the second tour will take place in May, with a presence planned at Spain’s large summer music festivals. Calaveras records and tours are intended to be a regular feature on the Spanish music scene.

**Thailand’s Grammy Label Set to Run Language Schools**

BA NGKOK, Thailand—Grammy Entertainment plc, Thailand’s biggest entertainment group, is moving into English-language education.

Chairman Paiboon Damrongchaitam says the diversification into building a nationwide chain of Grammy language centers is a natural progression from its success in the music business, in which Grammy claims more than 50% of the Thai market. Grammy intends to buy several local language and computer schools and to invite foreign-run schools to participate with their expertise in exchange for minority stakes in Grammy’s new company.

In addition to English, German, Mandarin, and Japanese will be taught, and those targeted will be children, teenagers, and young adults.

The new move has surprised many in the entertainment business, as Grammy’s previous entry into education resulted in an unheard-of 25-year contract to operate the state-run Kurusupa Business Organization’s nationwide franchise on school education stores as well as print textbooks. That deal collapsed shortly after a major corruption scandal at Kurusupa that tainted Grammy’s reputation, despite Paiboon’s vociferous denials.

The company has already sold a majority share in Tony Gramm, which ran the Kurusupa stores, and is said to be withdrawing completely from any further association.

**ITALY’S AUTHORS’ BODY SIAE has signed an agreement with the country’s second digital-TV station, Stream, 100%-owned by Telecom Italia. The deal covers authors’ rights payments for pay-per-view services, including movies, live concerts, and sports events. SIAE claims this is the first agreement of its kind in any European Union country and that it will use an electronic “virtual ticket” system to monitor viewing and rights payments. A percentage, still to be defined, of revenue for pay-per-view programming will be collected by SIAE. SIAE president Luciano Villevilli Bideri describes the agreement as “a new and important step toward protecting authors and publishers in the new digital market.” SIAE spokeswoman Selene Guerrieri adds, “The electronic ticket is a virtual version of a ticket that you would buy to get into a cinema, concert hall, or sporting event and appears on your screen when you select a pay-per-view event.”**

**PADDOY MOLONEY of the Chieftains has signed Cuban singer/keyboardist Juan Carlos Formell and Sin E, the respected Irish roots band led by uilleann piper Steafan Hannigan, to his New York-based world music label, Wicklow. Both acts will release albums in the New Year. The imprint, which is run jointly with BMG, released “Ukula” (Icy Rain) by Finnish folk act Viera last summer in the U.S. (Billboard, Aug. 8). Meanwhile, the Chieftains have finished their long-awaited new album, “Tears Of Stone.” The set features a different female vocalist on each track and includes the voices of Sinéad O’Connor, Joan Osborne, and Sheryl Crow, among others. The final track was recorded with Ronnie Earl on Nov. 14, and the album is now scheduled for worldwide release on RCA Victor Feb. 22. A collaboration with multi-platinum Irish band the Corrs that appears on the album is due as a commercial single in the second week of February.**

**EMI SVENSKA, the major’s Swedish affiliate, is involved in developing a music magazine, Sweden’s first用自己的 language, to be called the Boat. According to EMI Sven ska financial controller Ivar Noer, the decision was made after Stefan Andreasson replaced Paiboon’s vociferous denial of Grammy’s reputation, despite Paiboon’s vociferous denials.**

The facility has mainly recorded local EMI-signed artists, including Roxette, Björn Skifs, Ulf Lunselli, Gyllene Tider, and Sven Bertil Taube.

**EMI SVA has acquired a site and plans for a new U.K. store in Reading (population 143,000), 30 miles west of London, on undisclosed terms. The operating date has been set yet for the outlet, but a spokes woman confirms that the site is in a major development in the town, formerly occupied by a 36,000-square-foot Boots the Chemist store. Borders has operated its first U.K. store Aug. 1 in London. It currently has three U.K. outlets and has announced plans for three more (Leeds, York, and a second London site) in 1999.**

**METALLICA is to HEADLINE the 29th Roskilde Festival in Denmark next year, according to organizer Roskilde Fonden. Pre-event ticket sales were disappointing this year, with many fans complaining of a lack of big-name acts at the event, which is Europe’s longest-running outdoor rock fest. Some 65,000 tickets will go on sale for the 1999 event, which will take place July 1-4, compared with total sales of 75,000 in 1998. According to a statement from Fonden, “It seems that the major ingredient of heightened quality are two: attracting and developing the body of the billing and restricting the number of visitors.”**

**MTV NETWORKS ASIA has launched a new line of consumer products from Singapore in partnership with retailer Jay Gee Enterprises. The merchandise, being sold under the tag “MTV Clothes: Anything Goes,” includes apparel and a range of accessories such as bags, baseball caps, and stationery. It is available in the MTV Teen stores in department stores throughout Singapore. “The objective of this new business is for MTV to provide young people in Singapore with a new, exciting fashion apparel brand that fits their lifestyle,” says Dan Levi, VP of licensing and merchandising at MTV Networks Asia. Tara Melwani, deputy managing director at Jay Gee Enterprises, says she is confident that the partnership with MTV will create a highly successful line for the company.”**

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**DIGITAL BIZ**

**LONDON**—VNU’s Mobiliario magazine’s Web site (www.mobiliario.com) has been re-launched in Spanish, with new content and design. The site is now available in both Spain and Latin America.

**ITALY’S AUTHOR’S (or SIAE) has signed an agreement with the country’s second digital TV station, Stream, 100%-owned by Telecom Italia. The deal covers authors’ rights payments for pay-per-view services, including movies, live concerts, and sports events. SIAE claims this is the first agreement of its kind in any European Union country and that it will use an electronic “virtual ticket” system to monitor viewing and rights payments. A percentage, still to be defined, of revenue for pay-per-view programming will be collected by SIAE. SIAE president Luciano Villevilli Bideri describes the agreement as “a new and important step toward protecting authors and publishers in the new digital market.” SIAE spokeswoman Selene Guerrieri adds, “The electronic ticket is a virtual version of a ticket that you would buy to get into a cinema, concert hall, or sporting event and appears on your screen when you select a pay-per-view event.”

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**BOOKS/MUSIC RETAILER BORDERS has acquired a site for a new U.K. store in Reading (population 143,000), 30 miles west of London, on undisclosed terms. The operating date has been set yet for the outlet, but a spokeswoman confirms that the site is in a major development in the town, formerly occupied by a 36,000-square-foot Boots the Chemist store. Borders has operated its first U.K. store Aug. 1 in London. It currently has three U.K. outlets and has announced plans for three more (Leeds, York, and a second London site) in 1999.**

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**METALLICA is to HEADLINE the 29th Roskilde Festival in Denmark next year, according to organizer Roskilde Fonden. Pre-event ticket sales were disappointing this year, with many fans complaining of a lack of big-name acts at the event, which is Europe’s longest-running outdoor rock fest. Some 65,000 tickets will go on sale for the 1999 event, which will take place July 1-4, compared with total sales of 75,000 in 1998. According to a statement from Fonden, “It seems that the major ingredient of heightened quality are two: attracting and developing the body of the billing and restricting the number of visitors.”**

---

**MTV NETWORKS ASIA has launched a new line of consumer products from Singapore in partnership with retailer Jay Gee Enterprises. The merchandise, being sold under the tag “MTV Clothes: Anything Goes,” includes apparel and a range of accessories such as bags, baseball caps, and stationery. It is available in the MTV Teen stores in department stores throughout Singapore. “The objective of this new business is for MTV to provide young people in Singapore with a new, exciting fashion apparel brand that fits their lifestyle,” says Dan Levi, VP of licensing and merchandising at MTV Networks Asia. Tara Melwani, deputy managing director at Jay Gee Enterprises, says she is confident that the partnership with MTV will create a highly successful line for the company.”**

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Japan: Tel: 81 (3) 3542 3114, Fax: 81 (3) 3542 3115, E-mail: 106534,167@compuserve.com

Japan: Tel: 81 (3) 3542 3114, Fax: 81 (3) 3542 3115, E-mail: 106534,167@compuserve.com

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**Japan**

1. **Mr. Style**
2. **Asian Dream**
3. **Baby's Breath**
4. **Music of Love**
5. **Crying**
6. **One More Time**
7. **Feels Good**
8. **Miss Kase**
9. **Where Do You**
10. **Lovely Day**
11. **Lost in Love**
12. **Just Can't Let Go**
13. **True Love**
14. **You Raise Me Up**
15. **I Believe**
16. **Don't Stop Believin'**
17. **Hotel California**
18. **Our Love**
19. **All I Really Want**
20. **Come Together**

**Canada**

1. **Can't Stop**
2. **What I Did for Love**
3. **You Can't Hurry Love**
4. **Total Eclipse of the Heart**
5. **My Heart Will Go On**
6. **I Will Always Love You**
7. **I'm Every Woman**
8. **The Power of Love**
9. **Glitter Ball**
10. **The Power of Love**
11. **I Will Always Love You**
12. **I Will Always Love You**
13. **My Heart Will Go On**
14. **I Will Always Love You**

**France**

1. **Si Tu Me Regarde**
2. **Je T'Aime**
3. **La vie en rose**
4. **La vie en rose**
5. **La vie en rose**
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14. **La vie en rose**
15. **La vie en rose**

**Germany**

1. **Who's That Girl**
2. **Can't Take My Eyes Off You**
3. **The Power Of Love**
4. **I Can't Help Myself**
5. **I Can't Help Myself**
6. **I Can't Help Myself**
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**UK**

1. **I Can't Help Myself**
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**Australia**

1. **Can't Take My Eyes Off You**
2. **The Power Of Love**
3. **I Can't Help Myself**
4. **I Can't Help Myself**
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**Netherlands**

1. **I Don't Want To Miss A Thing**
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16. **I Don't Want To Miss A Thing**

**Australia**

1. **Can't Take My Eyes Off You**
2. **The Power Of Love**
3. **I Can't Help Myself**
4. **I Can't Help Myself**
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**Music & Discworld**

1. **I Don't Want To Miss A Thing**
2. **I Don't Want To Miss A Thing**
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15. **I Don't Want To Miss A Thing**

*Hits Of The World* is compiled at Billboard by Dominic Pride, Alison Smith and Ben Robards. Contact 44-171-323-6686, fax 44-171-323-2412316.
IS ALMA NIETO, the half-Spanish, half-Dutch signifying to Universal Music Netherlands, the answer to country’s Dutch sensation Marco Borsato?
Some 60 regional radio stations think so, along with AC-formatted Radio 2 and national repertoire station Radio Noordzee National. Universal will try to break the first single of the adult standards songstress, “Come In From The Cold,” with TV appearances. The song is an English-language adaptation of the ’80s hit “He Da Lala” by the Spanish superstar group Mecano. Nieto’s debut album, “There’s Only One You,” was released in October, and she has an ace up her sleeve with the release of the Mussert. That ballad, produced by Tom Salisbury (Pointer Sisters, Boz Scaggs), is featured in a TV advertising spot by SNS Bank.

JENNIFER PAIGE’S “Crush” is now the biggest-selling single for the Australian indie Shock Records. The record, licensed from Edel America and distributed by the Australian Record Industry Assn. chart and has sold 100,000 units, says the label. Australia is the first territory in the world where the record has topped sales charts or has been certified platinum.

UNIVERSAL and Sony Music are teaming up in Denmark for a unique Christopher project, “Let Love Be Love X-Mas 1998.” The compilation features 15 traditional and new Christmas songs, of acts including S.O.P.A. Juice, Ace Of Base, Eric Gold, and Daze, and it was released throughout the Nordic region in late November. The title track, an all-star performance, has been released as a pre-chart single and features S.O.P.A. Juice, and Christianna performing a song written and produced by Remece, who also raps. “It was a big challenge, something unique in my career.” Remece says. “The process was demanding, but everyone worked beyond normal thresholds, and I think you can hear it.” Universal Music Denmark managing director Jens-Otto Paludan comments, “We hope this will be the first in a bigger annual series and the start of other ventures with Sony.”

SWEDISH artists including Robyn, Meja, Stephen Simmonds, Kent, Jennifer Brown, and Dilba have donated exclusive tracks to “For America,” an album commemorating the 50th anniversary of the United Nations’ Declaration of Human Rights. Released Oct. 22 in Sweden, the Warner Music Group is releasing the album appearing on Sveriges Skivbolag, a public market labeling for Sweden’s International Federation of the Recording Industry-affiliated record companies. In the week ending Nov. 14, the album had sold 36,500 copies (gold status is 40,000 copies). All profits go to Amnesty International. ANDE LINQUIST

SPANISH SUPERSTAR Alejandro Sanz’s move from stadium shows to small theaters for his recent U.S. tour has been like “a bath of humility,” he says. “I like it a lot.” More than any other Spanish artist in recent memory, Sanz has shown the potential of Spanish pop in the Latin and U.S. markets. His album “Mas” is not only the best-selling album in the history of Spain, surpassing sales of 1 million units, it has sold another 1.5 million units worldwide, including 250,000 copies in the U.S., says his label, BMG. The hit single “Kaos” is set to release a follow-up? Says Sanz, “I want to relieve situations that I sometimes miss, being in the street again, hanging around with friends, getting the kind of experience that happened before, but not right now. I don’t know [when the new album will be finished]. When the songs are there, I will have them.” THOM DUFFY

ANOTHER SMASH album by Austrian pop act Erste Allgemeine Verursicherung (EAV) may convince doubters that the satirical group isn’t over the hill. Within a month of its Oct. 19 release by EMI Austria, “Himbeerland” (Raspberry Land) had gone gold, with more than 40,000 copies sold. “Himbeerland” pokes fun at sappy, sweet schlager music and at contemporary topics like Viagra, alcoholic drinks, and cyberspace surfers. The album will be released in January in Germany and Switzerland, and EAV will support “Himbeerland” with a tour in Austria beginning in February.

SUSAN L. SCHUMACHER

TIGERSTAR, THE INDIE label formed by Chrisalys co-founder Terry Ellis, is currently touring a five-man Brit/American pop act in Australia in advance of the band’s self-titled debut there Tuesday (1). Bliss is singing/songwriter Scott McGinley, who has been touring the region with his bands New Religion and Electric City for the past four years. The band recorded its album in the U.S. in May with well-known producer Keith Olsen (Fleetwood Mac, Foreigner, etc.). The 12-track collection features self-penned pop songs and covers like the Bee Gees’ “Run To Me” and Tears For Fears’ “Everybody Wants To Rule The World.” An advance single written by McGinley, “Babe Be Baby You,” is already getting airplay in anticipation of the album’s release. Stuart Watson, chairman of Swatt, which represents Tigerstar in the Asian region, says, “The whole plan is to break them as a live touring act.” JOHN CLEWLEY
**SOCAN Show Marked By Politics**

**Copyright Issue Raised At Organization's Awards Ceremony**

BY LARRY LEBLANC

TORONTO—While a celebratory mood dominated the Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (SOCAN) annual awards, held Nov. 16 here, the evening was also politically charged.

Faced with a legal challenge by Canada'sCopyright Board, because the Federal Court of Appeal is slated on Feb. 10-11 to hear SOCAN's application to set aside a decision made early this year by the Copyright Board of Canada (see story, this page), the decision lowered music tariffs for commercial TV broadcasters and introduced a modified blanket license (MBL).

At the awards show, SOCAN General Michael Rock warned that MBL would undercut SOCAN's exclusive role as a collection society. "Collective administration works; there is strength in numbers," Rock told the 370 industry people attending the event.

Among those award recipients making sharp references to the Copyright Board's decision were former civil servant Keith Kelly—who was presented with the SOCAN Copyright Achievement Award, as producer Jack Richardson—and composer Paul Hoffert. The latter received an honorary mention for his contribution to Canadian television and film. The Copyright Board has woefully cast an ominous cloud over our ability to make a living in Canada's film and TV industries," said Hoffert. "This decision must not be allowed to stand."

Beyond the politics, the awards show honored a wide range of artists, "Coming Home," by Guy and Magnet, was the big winner.

Among Cummings' songs recorded solo by the singer/songwriter, and one recorded with the Guess Who, were honored with SOCAN Classic Awards signifying their airing more than 100,000 times on Canadian radio.

The songs were "I'm Scared," "Timeless Love," "Your Back Yard," and "Fine State Of Affairs," the latter co-performed with Bob Fiedler (BMI), The Guess Who song was "Share The Land."

In their sixth year, the SOCAN Classic Awards were presented to members of the Canadian performing right society whose songs have become domestic standards, and, in the last year, awards were presented to songwriters with hits that reached the 100,000-airplay mark on Canadian radio.

Triple winners, with three SOCAN Classic Awards each, were Myles Goodwyn, front man of April Wine, and ex-Chilliwack singer/guitarist David Foster, who was good with sound, and their creativity is very Western; that would give them a good chance."

SOCAN To Appeal C'right Changes

TORONTO—Nothing less than the future of their organization will be at stake, claim executives of the Society of Composers, Authors, and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN), when the Federal Court of Appeal hears the society's case on Feb. 10-11.

The performing right organization is applying to set aside a decision by the Copyright Board of Canada that lowered music tariffs for commercial TV broadcasters and introduced a modified blanket license (MBL).

In a 2-to-1 decision last Jan. 30, the three-person federal board, at the request of the Canadian Assn. of Broadcasters (CAB), reduced the tariff for commercial broadcast TV (Tariff A) by about 8% from SOCAN's 1-8% of a station's gross advertising revenue, retroactive to Jan. 1, 1997.

"To take this decision to its inevitable conclusion, our members would be deprived of the benefits of collective administration," says SOCAN GM Michael Rock. "This is a very serious challenge to the very existence of SOCAN."

SOCAN will argue that under Canada's Copyright Act, the federal board exceeded its jurisdiction.

"We believe that the board's decision was sound and very much in its jurisdiction. The appeal is based on a finding on review," says Peter Miller, CAB executive VP/general counsel.

If the Federal Court of Appeal decides the Copyright Board's decision was justified, the lowered tariff and MBL will become effective immediately. If the court decides the Copyright Board's decision was unjustified, the current decision will be sent back to the Copyright Board with guidelines. The court is expected to make its ruling within two months.

LARRY LEBLANC
Local Touch Is Classical Cornerstone

**Bloomington Store Offers Personalized Service, Broad Selection**

**BY JENNY LAND**

BLOOMINGTON, Ind.—In the age ofsuperstores, strip-mall chains, and standardized credit, not many music stores would allow their customers to pay in good-faith installments scraped together from pocket change. But in the college town of Bloomington, where eats scurry through the local coffee shop and everyone is a regular rather than a number, sometimes your word is enough at the locally owned Classical Film and Music store.

Having discovered that personalized service pays off, manager Jeff Dean has also found that a sense of community spirit goes both ways. The customer who catered for the special layaway plan, for instance, ultimately turned out to be pretty handy.

"He will fix [video]tapes for us, and he'll charge us for it, but only like a dollar," Dean says of the customer who pays in labor: "He's great with a screwdriver and detail—painstaking detail of putting [broken tapes back] together. He's so clean about it, it's like a little work of art when he's done." And by accommodating this daily, down-and-out crowd that other retailers might shun, owner Jerry McCullough has reinforced the sense of community that allows a niche store like his to compete with superstores and thrive. By paying as much attention to the film fanatic who periodically rents 12 movies at a time as to the daily drop-in who watches more movies on the in-store TV than he ever rents, McCullough ensures a loyal customer base.

"It's funny to see that people will come in and order something, and they will even be willing to wait a week or longer for it, if they can wait three or four blocks and find it like that," Dean says. "They'd rather us have the business, which is nice."

In addition to the neighborhood feel, the store features a specialized selection that draws an eccentric but loyal crowd in search of rare items not available in larger stores. While film buffs can unearth anything from classic Alfred Hitchcock to '70s cult flicks, music connoisseurs can scavenge the racks for jazz, classical, bluegrass, international, blues, soundtracks, folk, pop, and local favorites.

The store's name, like its distinct clientele, is more of a defining trait than the leading money maker. Representing 26% of the inventory, classical music only pulls in 23% of sales.

Thanks to the highbrow ambience of this University of Indiana town, jazz accounts for the biggest slice of sales—31%. Local jazz professor David Baker not only shops regularly at the store but also draws customers with his own recordings, which are featured in the local music section.

That section includes everything from rustic polka bands like Mysteries Of Life to local legend John Mellen-camp (a customer himself). Picking, slapping, and fiddling a hybrid of Middle Eastern music and bluegrass, the Japanese Elephants are also featured in the local bins and hit at the regional taste for international music, which accounts for 14% of sales and 13% of inventory.

Supported by a local population that knows the difference between a guitar and a sitar, Classical Film and Music offers a broad international section that covers more than 50 countries. In addition to sponsoring most of the university's classical performance groups and college and local media outlets, the store sponsors the thriving annual Lotus music festival, which features many of the artists found in the international section.

"Lotus just dovetails right into our store," McCullough explains. "Every year we have to say, 'No, we've got to get the list of Lotus artists this year so that we can make sure that we have their stuff at the store.' And almost every year we already have most of it." The university, which boasts a large international student population, helps feed this interest in music from abroad.

With a premier music school and a strong film school, the university also has provided the store with plenty of qualified job candidates. "People come in, and they want to fill out an application, and I say, 'We don't have applications,' " McCullough says. "Just give me a résumé. So that immediately gets rid of 90% of the people that want to walk in off the street. They have to have an area of expertise for us to hire them."

Like the customers, the employees demonstrate a loyalty that allows this unique store to survive. Permitted to buy music or film releases at cost, employees stay for an average of six years. But competition from superstores has whittled away at the store's market share. Despite tripling its square footage, as well as turning a fledgling, (Continued on next page)
DNA Signs Skaggs Family, Ceili Labels

**DNA SCORES SKAGGS:** Distribution North America (DNA) GM Jim Colson rang up Declarations of Independents to let us know that the Woodland, Calif.-based firm has inked an exclusive distribution pact with longtime country star Ricky Skaggs.

Skaggs, whose most recent recording, 1997’s “Bluegrass Rules,” was issued by Rounder Records, will bring two imprints to DNA: Skaggs Family Records, which will release the singer/instrumentalist’s own projects, and Ceili Records, which is reserved for other signings. The latter label has such acts as the Del McCoury Band, Blue Ox, and Rhonda Vincent under its wing (see story, page 69).

According to Colson, the new relationship will kick off in January with Skaggs’ new album, “Ancient Tones.” The most exciting project lies further down the line: Skaggs—who came up through a succession of great bluegrass bands, including Ralph Stanley’s Clinch Mountain Boys, the Country Gentlemen, and J.D. Crowe & the New South—plans an all-star album, “The Opry Bluegrass Band,” for sometime next year. Joining him on the album: Alison Krauss, Vince Gill, Marty Stuart, and Earl Scruggs. We’re salivating already.

**LOCAL TOUCH IS CLASSICAL CORNERSTONE**

500-title operation into a 17,000-CD inventory during its 11 years, Classical Film and Music saw its profit fall 15% when Borders Books & Music and Barnes & Noble came to town in 1995.

And, although the company’s World Wide Web page (www filmmusiconline.com) is helping further customize service and extend the store’s presence beyond Bloomington, the Internet has also made for stiffer competition.

However, Classical Film and Music survives by offering specialized service and products that revive a bygone era when merchandising was local, customers were loyal, and stars were memorable.

Raised on the classics from film’s golden years, McCullough recalls a time when A movie stars were just as memorable as B stars. “Saturday afternoon you’d go see B movies, which were cowboy movies, cartoons, and serials, usually mysteries. They used all the same actors, so you knew all the cowboys and all the horses’ names.”

Like many local mom-and-pop stores, though, many of the old performers have slipped into obscurity.

“Bette Hutton was an actress and she just kind of disappeared,” says Dean, referring to the obscure movie stock he maintains. “In fact, I think she went to live with monks or something. And people are surprised to see that, and it does pretty well. And Judy Canova. It’s a very cunning business, and it’s like a niche group of people who know who Judy Canova is, and they’ll buy it.”

In music, this specialized store thrives on customers’ keen awareness of the classics, which extends far beyond the Beatles put to strings.

Unfortunately, McCullough says, the big record labels would rather sell 1 million copies of symphonic pop than their entire classical catalog. Although Classical Film and Music and Stock records a deeper selection of classical than many superstores, it has not grabbed the majors’ attention.

“About a year ago, I had a corporate customer who wanted to buy 6,000 copies of one album,” McCullough recalls. “It happened to be on an [a Poly- Gram label], and their attitude has always been, ‘You don’t do enough business with us to merit us selling to you directly.’ So I called them, and I said, ‘I can give you about $80,000 worth of business this month if you want to sign a contract with me.’ And they said, ‘Yeah, but can you do it every month?’ That was the end of that.”

Despite the lack of label support, Classical Film and Music manages to please the most avid music enthusiasts, even the artists themselves. When Clarence “Gatemouth” Brown stopped in during a recent tour, he stumbled upon an album of his that he had never seen in another store.

“It was a strange album. It was his and Roy Clark, the country artist, playing together. And I bought it for the store because it was such an odd combination. And he said, ‘I haven’t seen this disc in 15 years, and this is the only store that has it, I’m sure,’ ” McCullough says. “That’s a great feeling.”

It’s probably similar to the feeling other customers get when they stumble upon an unexpected gem put together enough money for a good-faith layaway, or stop in for their daily dose of a movie and an afternoon chat. Classical Film and Music, like some of its customers, may be just scraping by, but it has found a homely niche that the superstores and cyberspace cannot top.

**EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE**

DISTRIBUTORS. Vicki Arnold is promoted to VP of human resource at WEAR Corp. in Burbank, Calif. She was director of personnel and payroll.

HOME VIDEO. Universal Studios Home Video in Universal City, Calif., appoints Bob Fiorella VP of planning and finance. Gregg Schoenborn VP of business development, Kim Johnson executive director of licensing, Charlie Katz senior VP of strategic marketing, Naomi Pollock VP of strategic marketing, Randy Arnold executive director of advertising and direct marketing, Madeline DiNonno VP of strategic alliances, David Shin director of interactive marketing, Marci Miller VP of brand management, Michael Polis executive director of marketing, Susann Nicholson senior marketing manager, and Diane Gloor senior marketing manager. They were, respectively, director of strategic planning at Universal Pictures; director of planning and business development; director of licensing; senior VP of marketing; VP of marketing for Wolfgang Puck; director of advertising and special projects; VP of strategic marketing; assistant category manager of film licensing at Disney Consumer Products; VP of marketing and strategic planning at HBO Pictures Worldwide and VP of marketing at HBO Networks; director of marketing; marketing manager; and marketing manager.

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**Behind the counter at Classical Film and Music are owner Jerry McCullough, left, and manager Jeff Dean (Photo: Jenny Land)
EMI Brings Its Roadshow Confab To Nashville, Los Angeles

EMI staffers were treated to a showcase by hot jazz trio Medeski, Martin & Wood. Shown in the back row, from left, are Bruce Lundvall, Blue Note president; Gabriel; Peter Diemer, Capitol Records senior president/CEO; Chris Kam, and Rodney Mollura; Gene Rumsey, director of A & R for EMI from North America deputy president and Capitol Records president; Ashley Newton, Virgin Records A & R VP of major accounts; and Richard Cottrell, EMD president/CEO. Shown in the front row, from left, are Steve Rosenblatt, Capitol Records VP of marketing; Ronn Werre, EMD VP of major accounts; and Ken Berry, EMI Recorded Music president.

Recording group Sonichrome meets with EMI executives after performing during a Roadshow showcase. Shown in the back row, from left, are Roy Lott, EMI Recorded Music North America deputy president and Capitol Records president; Marshall Atman, Capitol Records associate director of A&R; Sonichrome members Craig Randolph, Chris Karr, and Rodney Mollura; Gene Rumsey, EMD executive VP of sales/marketing; Briggs Ferguson, EMD senior VP of marketing/promotion; Richard Cottrell, EMD president/CEO; and Ronn Werre, EMD VP of major accounts. Shown in the front row, from left, are Joe McFadden, Capitol Records senior VP of sales/marketing; Bruce Gearhart, EMD field sales/marketing VP; and Bruce Gearhart, EMD VP of major accounts.

Country chanteuse Deana Carter took the stage at the Roadshow Conference in Nashville. Pictured after the show, from left, are Bob Bock, road manager; Angie Bazzana, marketing manager at Canada-EMI; Carter; and Peter Diemer, VP of national promotion at Canada EMI.

EMI Music Distribution (EMD) recently held two Roadshow Conferences: Sept. 2-3 in Los Angeles and Sept. 9-10 in Nashville. All EMD-distributed labels, which include Capitol, Virgin, Blue Note, and EMI Christian Music Group, made presentations and offered artist showcases.

New rock act Furslide performed during a showcase for EMI staffers. Shown in the back row, from left, are Ray Cooper, Virgin Records America co-president; Roy Lott, EMI Recorded Music North America deputy president and Capitol Records president; Adam MacDougall of Furslide; Richard Cottrell, EMD president/CEO; Faith Henschel, Virgin Records director of product management; Jason Lader of Furslide; Piero Giramonti, Virgin Records senior VP of marketing; Gene Rumsey, EMD executive VP of sales/marketing; Paul Shafer, Virgin Canada director of national promotion; Jennifer Turner of Furslide; Ronn Werre, EMD VP of major accounts; Mark Kohler, Virgin Records West Coast regional sales director; Jerry Brackenridge, EMD field sales/marketing VP; Paul Babin, Virgin Records national sales director; and Keith Wood, Virgin Records East Coast executive VP of A&R. Pictured in the front row, from left, are B.J. Lobermann, Virgin Records sales VP; Bill Bhanhm, Virgin Canada VP/GM; Briggs Ferguson, EMD senior VP of marketing/promotion; Bruce Gearhart, EMD VP of major accounts; and Bill Giordino, Virgin Records national sales director.
new indie garage-rock reissues on LP.

In October, we raved about Plum Records' snazzy two-CD boxed set "The Big Hits Of Mid-America: The Soma Records Story 1963-1967," devoted to the magnificent garage rock released by the Minneapolis-based label (Billboard, Oct. 10). Now, meeting the needs of those who feel the compact disc may be a little too, uh, mod, Sun-dazed Records in Coxsackie, N.Y., has issued three "Soma Story" LPs on its Beat Rocket imprint. (Sundazed, you may recall, issued a boxed set earlier this year devoted to Soma's best-known act, the Trashmen.)

Handsomely designed, concisely annotated, and utterly rockin', the three long-players—"Shake It For Me!," "Bright Lights, Big City!," and "A Man's Gotta Be A Man!"—all amply deserve their exclamation points. (However, those seeking the Trashmen hits heard on the Plum CD will have to plunk down for Sundazed's LP or CD reissues of the band's work, since the anthologies don't include "Surfin' Bird" or any of the group's other big 'uns.)

Meanwhile, in New York, Norton Records' Billy Miller and Miriam Linna (whose band the A-Bones took their name from a Trashmen song, by the by) have licensed some monsters by two of the Pacific Northwest's greatest '60s bands, the Sonics and the Wailers, from the catalog of Portland, Ore.-based Etiquette Records for vinyl rehabilitation.

These LPs include the Sonics' essential 1965 debut, "Here Are The Sonics." This mind-rending opus includes the screaming garage masterpieces "The Witch," "Psycho," and "Strayline" (all heard on Rhino's recently expanded version of the garage/punk anthology "Nuggets"). Also out is the Sonics' very cool '66 sequel "Boom." The Wailers—best-known as the first band in the Northwest to cover "Louie Louie"—are represented by "The Fabulous Wailers," which contains the original Golden Crest Records version of their instro hit "Tall Cool One"; the anthology "Live Wire!!!"; and "At The Castle." The legendary live set recorded at the club that inspired Jimi Hendrix's "Spanish Castle Magic." The collections have been beefed up with extra tracks, new pix, and liner notes.

It's worth picking up a new sturgus for these babies.

MALACO MARKS 30: Malaco Records in Jackson, Miss., will celebrate its 30th anniversary with a six-CD boxed set surveying the company's storied history in the R&B and blues field. The package, due early next year, will include such early Malaco-produced hits as King Floyd's "Groove Me" and Jean Wright's "Mr. Big Stuff"; later smashes like Dorothy Moore's "Misty Blue," Anita Ward's "Ring My Bell," and Z.Z. Hill's incomparable "Down Home Blues"; and contemporary classics like Johnnie Taylor's mega-hit "Good Love."

Congratulations to Malaco's Tommy Couch, Stewart Madison, (Continued on next page)
DEKLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENTS
(Continued from preceding page)

and Wolf Stephenson on three decades of historic black music.

FLAG WAVING: We first met Chuck E. Weiss about 25 years ago, at (appropriately enough) an all-night diner in Chicago where he was hanging with his close buddy Tom Waits. It’s been almost 20 years since Weiss was immortalized by another friend, Rickie Lee Jones, in her top five hit “Chuck E. In Love, and nearly 18 years since his first album, “The Other Side Of Town,” was released by Select Records. In the meantime, he’s become something of an L.A. legend, thanks to 11 straight years of Monday-night shows at the Central (now the Viper Room) on the Sunset Strip.

With his long-in-gestation second album, “Extremely Cool,” due Feb. 2 from the Rykodisc-distributed Slow River Records, we asked Weiss why it has taken him so long to get back into the studio.

“Tell ‘em I got a little distracted,” he says in a deadpan hipster drawl.

Executive-produced by Waits and his wife, Kathleen Brennan, the grit-voiced vocalist’s bluesy, unscrubbed slice of street life calls upon a number of L.A. musical associates, many of whom have played in the singer’s band the God Damn Liars—saxman Spyder Mittelman, guitarists J.J. Holiday and Tony Gilkyson (late of X and Lone Justice), keyboardist John Herron, and vocalist (and recent Flag Wave) Eleni Mandell.

Waits himself co-wrote and sings on two album tracks, one of which, the sinister “It Rains On Me,” will also appear on Waits’ 1999 Epitaph album. “It’s really different,” Weiss says of his friend’s forthcoming record. “He does a lot of spiritual and soul stuff, but with a twist.”

Los Angeles residents will recognize some of the faces and places depicted in Weiss’ songs. “Jimmy Would,” for instance, is a left-handed homage to extroverted veteran harp player Jimmy Wood. “I’ve always thought that he was a very talented, tasteful player,” Weiss says. “It’s a tribute, but in a mocking way.”

“Rocking In The Kibitz Room” is dedicated to Weiss’ hangout, the fabulous Cunter’s Delicatessen in L.A.’s Fairfax District. His favorite booth there bears a plaque with his name on it. “When I moved here in ’75 or ’76, I fell in love with the place,” Weiss says.

Weiss, who plans a U.S. tour (by train, since he possesses a mighty fear of flying) in support of “Extremely Cool,” is anticipating the release of his sophomore album with high spirits. “I’ll feel a whole lot better when I get to my favorite view,” he says cryptically. “You know what that is, my brother? The bank teller’s window!”
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a daily concentrate of essential industry news

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New DVD Owners May Not Prefer Extra Features Now, But That Could Change

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—Online order taking is easy. Fulfillment is difficult. For video distributors, used to delivering only to storefronts, shipping to consumers increasingly adept at making Web-based DVD purchases has become the new frontier. Typically, not every pioneer survives intact.

Take, for example, Ingram Entertainment, still the biggest bricks-and-mortar wholesaler.

Ingram, eager to get involved, went so far as to invest in the online retailer SpeedServe in 1996. SpeedServe operates the Web sites VideoServe, GameServe, and BookServe, each dedicated to an active (and competitive) market.

But in a recent about-face, Ingram has announced it will sell most of its stake in SpeedServe and instead seek participation in a larger online venture. SpeedServe’s sales simply aren’t significant enough to warrant the investment, Ingram says—exactly the reason Ingram hopes such deals won’t disturb its traditional account base.

That equanimity could vanish, of course, as Web activity and revenue increase. It’s a conundrum Ingram and others have yet to resolve.

Just now, at least, online cash flow is “still a very small percentage of our business,” says Ingram VP of business development Bob Geistman. “It’s going to get bigger, but it’s not going to replace brick-and-mortar stores.”

Meanwhile, like most businesses linked to the Internet, distributors are spending more money equipping themselves for cyberspace than they are for fulfilling orders. Ingram, Valley Media, and Baker & Taylor Video have invested millions in improving existing computer systems and increasing inventory to meet the intense demands of delivering goods directly to consumers.

The expense, in fact, can’t be avoided. Most say that the Internet is the fastest-growing segment of video retailing and that profitability is only a matter of time.

“We have a dozen significant accounts, and we expect that to increase by seven-fold next year,” says Baker & Taylor director of fulfillment Mike Small.

Woodland, Calif.-based Valley Media got into the game three years ago when it began fulfilling orders for leading online music retailer CDNow. Since acquiring Star Video in Jersey City, N.J., last year, Valley has begun servicing DVD Express, NetFlix, and Reel.com.

Videocassettes and DVD are expected to duplicate music’s quick start. “In the $12 billion music industry, we’re a blip,” says Valley senior VP of sales and marketing Ken Alterwitz. “But after three years it’s a measurable amount of dollars, and it’s a rapidly growing business.” Valley now services 80-120 Internet music and video retail sites.

But without some stress, the logistics of direct-to-consumer fulfillment requires changes that can’t be made overnight.

Distributors used to shipping in bulk to stores now must deal with small orders to individuals, which necessitates detailed shipping systems and different rate schedules. Turn-around time, from order to delivery, must be completed in two or three days.

(Continued on page 108)

PLAYBOY CELEBRATES 45 YEARS OF WELL, YOU KNOW.

Join the festivities as we reveal our very special 45th Anniversary Playmate: Small-town beauty Jaime Bergman has big-city dreams, and she’s ready to kick off one BIG party. Just one look and you’ll see why lovely Jaime took top honors...she’s quite an anniversary gift!

PLAYBOY HOME VIDEO
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**Billboard - DECEMBER 5, 1998**

### Top Video Sales

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**VSDA Chapter Head Urging The Ouster Of Nat’l President**

Out with Eves: David Stevenson, president of the upscale New York chapter of the Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA), has been building up the foil, phone, and Internet lines with a petition to oust association president Jeffrey Eves.

"He’s not the right guy for the job in the next couple of years," says Stevenson, who runs the three-store Big Picture Video in Liverpool, N.Y. "We need someone with retail experience to help keep us in business."

Stevenson applauds Eves for "cleaning up" the VSDA and getting it out of debt but thinks he’s done all he can for the trade group.

"When he came in, we needed a political leader," says Stevenson. "Now we need some without independent retail experience."

---

**SHELF TALK**

*by Eileen Fitzpatrick*
examine the state of small stores.

The petition claims that Eves has spent more than a year paying lip service to dealers that want a resolution to the problem.

"The current leadership of the VSIA," he says, "has attempted to deal with these difficult questions with typical political solutions: more studies, more stalling, and double talk."

Stevenson, who has faxed the petition to every VSIA chapter president, calls for Eves to resign by Jan. 1 or have the board terminate his employment at its January meeting.

"I need to get as much support as possible, so it doesn't look like this is coming from some nut in upstate New York," he says. "But judging by the phone calls I've gotten, I believe there's a lot of support out there."

Eves, who took over the reins of the organization in 1994, has a contract until 2001. Neither he nor anyone at VSIA would comment.

DINO BREAKFAST: A new Quaker Oats instant oatmeal and Universal Studios Home Video's "The Land Before Time VI: The Secret Of Saurias Rock" have been linked in a dino-sized promotion.

On Jan. 3, Quaker Oats will run a free-standing insert in Sunday papers offering a coupon worth $1 off the purchase of "The Land Before Time VI" video and 50 cents off the purchase of the company's new hot cereal, Dinosaur Eggs. The flakes are in the shape of dinosaur eggs that "hatch" into stegosaurs and triceratops when a hot liquid is added.

Displays for "The Land Before Time VI" will be placed in more than 10,000 grocery outlets to maximize the Quaker Oats promotion. The $13.98 title hatched at retail Tuesday (1).

Universal's "Land Before Time" series is one of the most successful direct-to-video projects, with sales of $520 million, according to the studio.

MIND OVER MATTER: With a growing emphasis on low-impact workouts, WarnerVision Entertainment is focusing its January fitness promotion on its best-selling yoga and strength-building titles.


Beginning Wednesday (2), Bloomingdales in New York will feature several WarnerVision mind-and-body videos on its store monitors. A local yoga instructor will make an appearance to kick off the monthlong promotion. WarnerVision, meanwhile, will advertise the titles in the January issues of Shape and Women's Sports and Fitness.

For the promotion, the vendor is reducing the price of the four-title "Buns Of Steel Mind/Body Series" from $14.95 to $9.95.

EASTER PARADE: Under terms of a new distribution deal, on March 2 Columbia TriStar Home Video will begin releasing titles from Harvey Home Entertainment Video, including "Baby Hueys Great Easter Adventure." The live-action direct-to-video feature will carry a minimum advertised price of $13.95.

THE MOVIE THAT DEFINED A GENERATION JUST GOT BETTER!

- VHS AND DVD FEATURE DIGITALLY REMASTERED PICTURE AND STEREO SOUNDTRACK (AVAILABLE FOR THE 1ST TIME!)
- "MAKING OF" FEATURETTE!
- New, 15-minute featurette for full-frame and widescreen VHS versions: 6-minute documentary for DVD format!
- Featurette includes new interviews with cast and director Lawrence Kasdan, behind-the-scenes footage and deleted scenes.
- $3.00 OFF MAIL-IN OFFER!
- Your customers will get $3.00 off the price of a movie ticket at participating theaters when they mail in the Movie Cash offer inside every specially stickered package of THE BIG CHILL Collector's Edition!
- PROMOTIONAL TIE-IN WITH MOTOWN/POLYGRAM WITH RE-ISSUE OF THE BIG CHILL SOUNDTRACK.
- TV ADVERTISING plus TWO DEDICATED PROGRAMS (Then and Now and The Big Chill Premiere Party) will air on VH1 in November and at the video release—generating millions of consumer TV impressions!
- 60+ MARKET THEATRICAL RE-RELEASE!

For maximum efficiency, orders go directly to the distributor. The phone is valueless; not so costly computer upgrades.

"It's a different set of logistics, and doing fulfillment is systems-driven," says Ingram's Geistman. "We're providing retailers with tools to run their businesses, and one of those tools is access to a database."

Alterwitz says online fulfillment has also "raised the bar" on customer service.

"We want to get to a level of service that is the same as driving a to store and making an immediate purchase," he says.

Necessarily, that level of service must be done at the lowest possible cost to all parties concerned. As of now, distributors aren't up to speed in every area.

Online retailers generally employ distributors only to stock product and provide delivery. For example, Net-Flux, which rents DVDs, prefers to handle its own customer service because its discs come back. Whole-salers can't easily handle returns. Nevertheless, they're willing and eager to learn.

"Online retailers are marketing niche products in a place where consumers can find them," says Baker & Taylor's Small. "But if they had a store, it would be hard to house all those titles. We have 20,000 titles and multiple vendors to fulfill those orders. It's where we see our company going."

Selling niche and catalog product is a driving force.

"We see this as a way to leverage our core business with niche and deep-catalog product," says Alterwitz, "and if we improve turns, there's a measure of profitability."

"Fulfillment is a valid business, but there's fine line between it and selling direct to consumers," says Kirkpatrick. "We will participate in using the Internet to improve our business, but we're leery of selling."
### Merchants & Marketing

**Children’s Play**

(Continued from page 99)

...ty chains, to the tune of more than 243,500 units. Kids’ catalogs accounted for 44,000 units, bookstores for 25,000, and direct marketing for 6,000. That leaves record retail accounting for 57,470 units, about the SoundScan figure.

Now Sugar Beasts are benefiting from a two-CD compilation, simply called “Sugar Beasts,” licensed to Razor & Tie, a label that specializes in multiple-genre collections like “Monsters Of Rock” and “The Preservation Society.”

“One of Razor & Tie’s president’s kids had gone to three consecutive birthday parties here in Chicago where Sugar Beasts,” said Gallantier, explaining how the label found out about the act. “We did a licensing deal with them that involves 30 songs culled from all four albums on the compilation. We put together a TV commercial, which is currently running primarily during weekends on Cartoon Network.”

Noting that “Monsters Of Rock” eventually went to retail, Gallanter said Sugar Beats are hoping their Razor & Tie compilation will end up there at some point.

“It’s been like free advertising for our other releases,” she added. “People have been calling requesting the full tracks that the compilation’s songs come from.”

And group leader Sherry Goffin Kondor boasts an impeccable pop pedigree: her parents are Carole King and Gerry Goffin (her kids, Dillon and Sophie, are Sugar Beats’ younger singers). Selections on “How Sweet It Is” include the Rascals’ “It’s A Beautiful Morning,” the Bee Gees’ “I’ve Talkin’,” Harry Nilson’s “Coconut,” and the Bangles’ “Walk Like An Egyptian.”

### American Girl Debut

Child’s Play and our 10-year-old, Lily, spent four enchanting hours Nov. 14 in downtown Chicago at the press opening of American Girl Place, the flagship retail store of the multimillion-dollar catalog business American Girl.

The business—which deals in historical and contemporary dolls, their clothes and furniture, historical fiction books about the girls who inspired the dolls, clothes and accessories for the dolls’ owners, and all manner of related merchandise—has entered the retail world in a big way. Located in 65,000 square feet of prime retail space in the tony Michigan Avenue shopping district, the three-story facility encompasses a variety of toy and clothing boutiques, a book store, a café, a photo studio, a live theater, and more.

The American Girl line is the product of Milford, Wis.-based Planet Co., whose founder and president and American Girl creator—Pleasant T. Rowland presided at the event.

The store was part of my original plans when I began the business, says she chose Chicago not only because it was the largest major city near Milford but also because she had grown up in the Chicago area. American Girl Place is carrying the $41.99 CD-ROM “The American Girl Premiere” of the American Girl Company. By January, a cast album from the theater’s live musical, “The American Girls Revue,” will be available on CD and cassette, according to theater director Libbet Richter.

“The book and music are by Broadway playwrights Gretchen Cryer and Nancy Ford (“I’m Getting My Act Together And Taking It On The Road”),” says Richter. “Gretchen approached Pleasant Co. a year ago, saying that the American Girls store lent themselves to musical theater, that her own granddaughter was enchanted with them.”

The musical, which features a rotating cast of eight girls ages 9-12, runs 35 minutes. Richter said that the album would be recorded this month.

### Billboard® Top Pop® Catalog Albums

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### Billboard® Top Kid Audio

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</table>

**Children’s songs**: original, golden, picture soundtracks excluded.

**Record Industry Alert**: Of America RIAA certification for sales of 500,000 units. A RIAA certification for sales of 1 million units, with information included, is a rectangle having the same dimensions, for better and attention-altering effects. When the rectangle has both a square and a rectangle, the RIAA symbol inlays are at the wholesale prices. © 1998, Billboard® Communications, and SoundScan, Inc.
A weekly listing of trade shows, conventions, award shows, seminars, and other events. Send information to Calendar, Billboard, 5055 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90036.

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER
Dec. 1, Songwriters In The Round, with Adam Gaynor, Robbie Connell, and Jim and John Cameron, De. 8, Jupitars, Miami. 305-573-8942.
Dec. 9-10, DTJ Digital News Forum, Atlanta. 800-488-6434, hejm@um.edu.
Dec. 9, Old Friends/New Friends: Vintage Gear In The Modern Studio, presented by the New York chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and the Museum of Sound Recording. New York. 212-245-5404, newyork@GRAMMY.com.

JANUARY
Jan. 4-9, Macworld Expo. Moscone Center, San Francisco. 909-645-DPFO.
Jan. 24-26, MIDEM 1999, Palais des Festivals, Cannes. 212-269-4220.
Jan. 25-28, Connect Conference, Convention Center, Washington, D.C. 900-545-EXPO.

FEBRUARY
Feb. 14, 10th Annual NAACP Image Awards, Cobo Center, Detroit, Pasadena. 323-937-2454.
Feb. 22, MusiCares Person Of The Year Dinner, honoring Stevie Wonder, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles. 310-203-8816.

MARCH
March 12-17, South By Southwest Week '99, Austin, Texas. 512-467-7979.

APRIL

MAY
May 10-13, 1999 3D Design & Animation Conference And Exhibition, Convention Center, Santa Clara, Calif. 415-278-5758.

JUNE

LIFELINES

John B. Della Croce, 68, of undisclosed causes, Nov. 15 in Freeland, Pa. He was the father of Jim Della Croce, owner of Jim Della Croce Management, and the father-in-law of Erin Morris, owner of the Press Office in Nashville.

Roland Alphonso, 67, after suffering a stroke and seizure, Nov. 19 in Los Angeles. He was a founding member of and saxophonist for the Skatalites, a seminal ska band special- izing in instrumental forms that formed in June 1964 in Jamaica. The band recorded for Studio One, Top Deck, and most recently for Island Records. Alphonso had a seizure Nov. 2 onstage at the Key Club in West Hollywood during one of the group’s many reunion tours.

SPANISH DRIVE PROMOTES LATIN ACTS

(Continued from page 92)

Amid the excitement generated by labels in Spain, says Lopez, “The Calaveras project will hopefully not just generate sales for all the labels involved. My main aim is to change the listening habits of Spanish music buyers, to get them to appreciate Latin America Latino rock. Until now, there has been a sort of inferiority complex stopping that from happening.”

Despite 500 years of historical, cultural, and linguistic links between Spain and Latin America, the so-called mother country seems unable to accept all but the safest Latin music. Even many hardcore rock fans appear reluctant to turn their ear to the 20-old countries that make up Latin America.

One rock-related group that has broken sales records for a Latin American act in Spain this year is Universal Mexico’s controversial Molotov (with 165,000 units). Carlos Ituria, president of Universal Music Hispania, recalls that “when Carlos rang me to explain the Calaveras project, I saw it as a very positive way of getting new Latin American artists known in Spain. If the Calaveras concept becomes a useful window display for these acts, then it is a brilliant idea. I plan to use a Universal Amphitheatre act, Bernardo, to test the concept in West Hollywood among the Hispanic community.”

Spanish songwriter and record producer Jose Carmen Perez, who has a special interest in Latino product, also enthuses about the Calaveras campaign. “The media until now have not been interested in this element of Latin American music,” he says. “Before, it was as if we were afraid in Spain of promoting genuine Latino rock in case it didn’t succeed. That is luckily changing in the written press and now within the labels.”

FOR THE RECORD

An article on Music Magic in the Nov. 21 issue of Billboard misidentified the VP of sales at Sony Music Nashville. He is Dale Libby.
CLEAR CHANNEL, JACOR SELL OFF 20 PROPERTIES. The groups are letting go of outlets in five markets to satisfy Justice Department antitrust guidelines: Cleveland's modern WENZ, album rock WCXI, and N/T WERE, Tampa, Fla.'s R&B Oldies WFYO, adult R&B WRBQ-AM, country WRQX-FM, triple-A WHPT, sports WZTM, easy listening WDUV, and jazz WSJ; Jacksonville, Fla.'s classic rock WBG; and N/T WZNN; Louisville, Ky.'s top 40 WDJX, AC WYZ; modern rock WLRS, classic rock WSFR, and religious WFIA; and Dayton, Ohio's top 40 WGTZ, classic rock WING-FM, and N/T WING-AM. Meanwhile, Citadel has picked up 16 stations from WICKA, including eight in Charleston, S.C., five in Binghamton, N.Y., and three in Kokomo, Ind.

KEN BENSON INKS WITH CHANCELLOR. Former MTV VP of programming Ken Benson has an official title for his long-pending job at Chancellor: programming and operations specialist. Initially, he'll be working out of Denver, lending his talents to the newly-hired Howard Stern affiliate and modern rocker KXK (the Peak), top 40 KALC (Alice 106), AC KIMN, and their sister stations.

CHANCELLOR WANTS TO BE JAMMIN'. The M Street Journal reports that Chancellor Media has filed for trademarks on the "jammin'" oldies" slogan made famous by its KCMC (Mega 100 Los Angeles) and the terms "listen without prejudice" and "the bomb" CBS, meanwhile, has filed for the term "the captiol's party station."

ROCK AND RISE. M Street has released its 10-year analysis of format trends in commercial radio. Rock radio, in all its permutations, has showed dramatic growth from a 1989 count of 395 stations in a universe of 9,254 to 868 stations out of 10,394 in 1998. That's a 137% increase over the past nine years. As a percentage of total stations, rock had a 3.9% share in 1989 and posted an 8.4% this year.

BIG BANG TO BE DISTRIBUTED BY ABC. Atlantic Pacific Music, producer of "The Big Bang Concert Series," has inked a deal with ABC Radio Networks to distribute the series. The company will produce a minimum of 24 two-hour radio specials in 1999. "The Big Bang" offers rock and R&B events with acts that have included the B-52's, Shawn Colvin, Duncan Sheik, LL Cool J, LeAnn Rimes, and Trisha Yearwood.

NEW AWRF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. American Women in Radio and Television has appointed author and women's advocate Jacei Duncan as its executive director, effective Jan. 1. She is the author of two books, "Washington For Women" and "The Women's History Guide To Washington."

Arbitron's Fly-In Tackles Online Issues

This story was prepared by Sean Ross, editor of the Airplay Monitor.

The rapidly growing phenomenon of Internet radio listening gave Arbitron's annual Consultant Fly-In, held in mid-November in Columbia, Md., a major announcement, as well as its first moments of actual controversy in years.

The big news: There are three more partnerships between Arbitron's NewMedia division and Internet/streaming media-service companies to help measure Internet radio listening. The alliances between Arbitron and RealNetworks, Magnitude Network (a turn-key Internet service provider for radio stations), and Engage Technologies (which offers qualitative user data) follow the partnership between Arbitron and RadioNow, unveiled at October's National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) radio show.

And the controversy? An announcement by Arbitron's David Lapovsky that the ratings firm would test a column in the ratings diary allowing respondents to specify Internet listening in the same way they currently specify AM or FM listening—but not until 2000. The advent of Internet radio listening, Arbitron had been receiving (or subscribing to local stations) any diary entries for a station that couldn't physically be heard in a market.

But 2000 isn't soon enough for consultant Paul Jacobs. Noting that Internet usage is doubling every six months, he asked Lapovsky, "Are you telling me you're willing to wait while miscrediting radio listening?"

The subsequent exchange between Jacobs and Lapovsky, reminiscent of the far more contentious Consultant Fly-In sessions of the early '90s, ended with Lapovsky allowing that Arbitron might be willing to look at the issue sooner if the situation demands it.

Later that day, Arbitron Radio GM Pierre Bouvard announced that the well-received joint study of Internet listening that Arbitron and Edison Media Research debuted at October's NAB meetings would be repeated "pretty close to every six months," not once a year as previously planned.

The issue of Internet radio ratings was also of concern to some broadcasters who don't want Internet—or digital satellite radio—listening measured the same way as conventional radio.

Consultant Julian Breen went as far as to suggest that Arbitron should disregard out-of-market Internet listening. When Lapovsky replied that "it is radio listening," Breen pointed out that Arbitron currently discards diary listings for TV audio, despite the fact that at least one TV station was advertising its position on the radio dial. Similarly, after it was confirmed that Arbitron was in discussions with XM Satellite Radio about measuring that digital audio service, Jacob head of country programing Jaye Albright suggested that XM be treated like network programming and measured by RADAR, not Arbitron.

(Necon on next page)

NAB's European Radio Conference Highlights Hurdles, Opportunities

This story was prepared by Mike McGee and Emmanuel Le- grand, programming editor and editor in chief of Music Media, respectively.

MADRID—The future of European radio holds opportunities, as well as risks and hurdles. And it demands a sharper focus on the true nature of the business: radio.

That was the consensus of delegates at the sixth annual National Assn. of Broadcasters (NAB) European Radio Conference, held Nov. 15-17 at the Palace Hotel here. Raising a glass to toast the strides European radio has recently made, Martin Briscie, CEO of French radio group EBI, told the 500-plus delegates during his keynote speech, "As an industry, we have many reasons to be proud of what we have achieved during the past 10 years."

Josep Marti, GM of Spanish group SER's Radio Barcelona, concurred.

"After decades of domination by public broadcasters," he said, "radio's private sector is now emerging in most European countries."

The large turnout of delegates, which included radio professionals (Continued on next page)
ARBITRON’S FLY-IN TACKLES ONLINE ISSUES
(Continued from preceding page)
In other news from the Fly-In, Boudreau announced that the ratings service’s long-delayed people meter was finally being tested with 50 respondents in Manchester, England, and that there were plans to try again next year with 300 meters.

“We’re getting data, and it’s working,” said Boudreau. Arbuton also announced that it would test a “prior P1” study next winter, asking respondents in seven metros what station they listened to most six months ago; Arbuton is also rolling out a similar new service called Exit Poll, which asks follow-up questions about radio listening to a station’s P1 listeners (and those of its competition). It has also added socio-economic data about respondents and the workplace ZIP code question to the fall ‘98 Arbuton diary.

Two previously discussed methodology changes aren’t likely to come to fruition. One is a proposal to change demogruphics from their current non-symmetrical breaks (12-17, 18-24, 25-34, etc.) to more standard five-year breaks; the other is continuous measurement for markets that currently receive only two books a year by spreading the same sample over an entire year.

Can You ‘Believe’ It? Top 40/dance WKTU New York has announced that Bette Midler and Cher, among others, will headline its Miracle on 34th Street holiday concert Dec. 11. Tickets can only be won over the air and will benefit local charities providing food and toys to those in need; Cher is pictured with morning-team Gumba Johnny, left, and Hollywood Hamilton. Cher has just released a new album and single, both titled “Believe.”

Step On In. Lyle Lovett stopped by the studios of WBOS Boston to perform a few songs from his latest release, “Step Inside This House.” He was with WBOS PD George Taylor, left.

Swingtown. After a recent appearance in town, rocker-turned-swing-bandleader Brian Setzer talks about sax with KKRZ Portland, Ore., PD Tommy Austin, left, and Tom Starr, a Seattle-based staffer for Interscope Records.

ARBITRON’S FLY-IN TACKLES ONLINE ISSUES
(Continued from preceding page)
NAB
(Continued from preceding page)
from the U.S. and a number of other non-European countries, is indicative of a strong market, according to Terri Rabel, NAB’s senior VP of operations and international business development. This year’s conference has been particularly good, with attendance up 50%. That was quite unexpected,” she said.

However, some European executives in Madrid warned of the dangers that accompany rapid development. Augusto Delkader, GM of Spain’s SER radio group, said, “There are three great concerns from broadcasters in my country. They are digital broadcasting, the future of which is still uncertain; new frequency allocations, which (in Spain) will increase the number of FM licenses by 35% and the intrusion of politics into the radio field.”

ED’s Kriss said that broadcasters must remain focused: “People in radio should take more care of their companies and less of their egos.”

Meanwhile, Jeff Smulyan, CEO/chairman of the U.S. media company Emmis Communications, which has radio interests in Hungary, had words of advice for overseas investors who are eyeing Europe for possible expansion.

During his well-received keynote speech, he said, “You must respect the values of the local market. You must be willing to play by the rules. All cultures are unique and those cultures must be respected when we venture into new markets to have local partners. Only local partners can help us understand their cultures. As part of this global media revolution, you must be willing to learn every day.”

Radio Programming

Adult Contemporary

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Adult Top 40

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Billboard

December 5, 1998
We all agreed it was a single, but it wasn’t working at first. Originally it had a shuffle beat at half the tempo. Not quite effective.

But the passing is fitting for a song about the desire to change a loved one. “It’s about the common phenomenon of wanting to make your partner or friend into something that suits you better, which isn’t always a good idea, like when women stay in a relationship with a man who beats them because they think he’ll know better someday.”

The tall, dark and handsome Svensson chooses to look at the theme more closely: “I always have to change my partner’s record collection. Like, ‘Why do you listen to this if you could listen to something I like that’s much better?’” he says.

“One of the coolest things about music is that it can mean different things to different people. It makes people talk.”

As does the song’s controversial car-chase-and-crash video, which is banned in many countries. “I’m just doing it. We made a cool video, and only a few of our friends can see it. It doesn’t even look real. It’s like a cartoon. I see much worse shit on daytime TV.”

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**Mainstream Rock Tracks**

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<td>1</td>
<td>TURN THE PAGE</td>
<td>METALLICA</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Fly Away</td>
<td>Lenny Kravitz</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Kickin’ My Heart Around</td>
<td>The Black Crowes</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Psychic Man</td>
<td>Black Sabbath</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Supercrush</td>
<td>Hole</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Celebrity Skin</td>
<td>Hole</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Dragula</td>
<td>Rob Zombie</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>What’s This Life For</td>
<td>My Darkest Day</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Pretty Fly (For A White Guy)</td>
<td>The Offspring</td>
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<td>Still Rainin’</td>
<td>Jonny Lang</td>
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<td>Red Hot Chili Peppers</td>
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<td>Inside Out</td>
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<td>Ten Thousand Horses</td>
<td>Candlebox</td>
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<td>The Dono Show</td>
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<td>Soft Machine</td>
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<td>Bittersweet</td>
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<td>Whatever</td>
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<td>That’s What I Like</td>
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<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
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<td>Push &amp; Shove</td>
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<td>John Mayer</td>
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<td>Somewhere, Somewhere Somewhere</td>
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<td>I Am The Bullgod</td>
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<td>What Kind Of Love Are You On</td>
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**Modern Rock Tracks**

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Country Songbird Martina McBride Reflects On Her Soaring ’98 Success

E VOLUTION: Martina McBride may sing strong and hard about “A Broken Wing,” but it certainly hasn’t hindered her career from taking flight in 1998.

Without question, this has been the year to at last elevate McBride—whose first album was released on RCA in 1992—to country music’s A List. Among her accomplishments in the last 12 months (take a deep breath), she has scored three top 10 singles on Hot Country Singles & Tracks, taken her current album, “Evolution,” double-platinum; earned a spot on the Litchfield Fair; sung a duet with Bob Seger; performed for President Clinton; and received Country Academy of Country Music, TNN, and Country Music Assn. award nominations. In addition, she’s just released her first holiday album, “White Christmas.”

“As I look back over this year, I do feel like we’ve made a big step forward,” she says. “I think that we’ve definitely increased our visibility. I’m happy about that, and I’ve felt like it happened since the beginning of the year.”

Starting her first days in country music, McBride’s career has been marked by slow, steady growth. No momentous jumps, just determined work and savvy decisionmaking.

“It’s true; this career hasn’t been the kind with a big rise,” she says. “It’s been constantly, slowly building. But I wouldn’t do anything different today.”

“We’ve built her mountain one rock at a time, but what a mighty foundation,” says RCA Nashville VP of national promotion Mike Wilson. “She has finally broken through; I think she has arrived.”

Like many country artists of the day, McBride has stretched the wings of a kid at radio. Most recently, she hit the top 25 of the Adult Contemporary chart with her Seger duet from the “Hope Floats” soundtrack, “Chances Are.” Last year, she hit with Jim Brickman, the timeless “Valentine,” was a No. 3 Adult Contemporary hit; it then crossed to country, making the top 10 of Hot Country Singles & Tracks in April. It also hit the Hot 100, peaking at No. 50.

“When I was looking for someone to sing ‘Valentine,’ I listened to Martina’s album ‘Wild Angels,’ and I heard a great singer, not just a great country singer,” says Brickman. “Her voice is sweet, and yet incredibly soulful. She knows how to take a lyric and make the emotional connection with the audience.”

Embracing along with contemporaries like LeAnn Rimes, Shania Twain, and Faith Hill, McBride has felt the heat from programmers who scorn artists for daring to leave the country corral.

“I don’t understand the resentment,” she says. “I guess I can see it from a territory view, but I think it’s great for country music and great for the industry.

“When I was growing up, country music was like its own little world, where you never dare mention that you ever sang anything but country, denying that we could possibly like any other kind of music. It’s kind of an old school of thought.”

“I would never want to give this up and become a big pop star. I love what country music stands for,” she says. “A lot of her hits are written of that signature moral fiber, with messages of profound strength. “A Broken Wing,” which hit No. 1 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks in January, tells of a woman who sees in life despite an unsupportive patriarch. “Independence Day” from 1994—and considered her signature song until “Wing”—is an anthem of finding strength in the face of domestic abuse. “Cheap Whiskey” from 1992 carries a strong social message about alcoholism.

She never set out to create an image around the lyrics I sing, but it’s a big part of what people identify me with, and I’m fine with that,” McBride says. “I heard ‘Independence Day’ and could not walk away from it. I knew it was affecting that it could change people. I look for songs that are uniquely lyrical, about the strength of the human spirit. A lot of my songs go to either gender. It’s all about being uplifting and having hope and passing that along to people.”

“For my latest single, ‘Wrong Again,’ written by Tommy Lee James and Cynthia Weil, has been a breakthrough,” she says. “It’s one of those songs that we’ve both been through, they say. ‘You’re unhappy, and you think you’re never going to be happy again, but you get through it to the other side. I think people identify with that.”

As co-producer with Worley on the entire “Evolution” project, she had the opportunity to bring in carefully delineated instruments and feel even an ever closer bond with her songs.

“I would challenge myself to make music that’s my own,” she says. “It makes it creative to be there from start to finish, from mastering and checking the reverb on a vocal to bringing in different sounds and instruments, and different musicians. When I played (piano) in my dad’s band, he was a stickler for making it sound live exactly the way it sounded on the record, so I really listened to the way things were played. He set a high standard, which was such great training for me.”

For the future, McBride hopes to maintain her own standards “to keep making records I’m really proud of, to keep up the quality of recording and performing. My only goal is to make the best music I can.”

Meanwhile, she confirms she is indeed the “Happy Girl” of her No. 2 country hit from August. “I don’t take for granted how blessed I am,” she says. “I have two children that bring me unadulterated joy. John [McBride], her husband, is a wonder of my life. And musically, I couldn’t be happier.”

Not all in country, however, hold prejudice against core country artists who tap in to cross-format success. In Los Angeles, if anything, the trend works as an advantage for country radio.

“We continue to have image problems with country here,” says Bill Fink, PD of KZLA Los Angeles. “Big country listeners are kind of embarrassed to tell their friends about it. But now, all of a sudden, these crossover records are starting to make country hip. Some may think that country is corny, but then they see that country music isn’t so bad after all. That helps our image as a format.”

Mac Daniels, PD of WMZQ Washington, D.C., adds, “If Martina continues on the track she’s on, she could wind up being one of those beyond the format, pulling people into country. She has the look, the personality, and the talent to do that. As far as the material, she could sing anything and sell all the way.

No matter what she sings, McBride considers herself a country artist through and through. She was raised on country music in Kansas; played with her family’s country band, the Schifferes; and moved to Nashville nearly a decade ago.

“The thing that defines country music and separates it from all other kinds of music in the lifestyle that we live, the moral content of the music, the lyrics,” she says. “It’s still about a singer singing songs. No matter what it’s like sonically, the heart of it is still the kind of life we live.”
Brand-Name Boosting Is Goal Of
CBS Cable Deal For TNN, CMT

NEW LICENSING DEALS for TNN and CMT: One of the challenges of this music video networks face in this cross-promotional era is extending their brand names beyond what’s shown on a network. It’s not enough anymore for networks to tout only their music video networks’ brand names are now being marketed to be part of and to reflect their audiences’ lifestyles.

CBS Cable, which owns CMT and is planning to step up its lifestyle marketing by expanding its merchandising line via a new exclusive deal between CBS Cable and Creative Branding Systems (Billboard/Bulletin, Nov. 19), the deal will include merchandising and a product license program for TNN, CMT, and TNN’s documentary program “Century Of Country,” and CBS Cable’s country site on the World Wide Web (www.country.com). Home videos and clothing will be sold via direct marketing and on the Web.

CBS Cable executive VP of sales and marketing Lloyd Werner says, “TNN and CMT attract a large, loyal audience that respects the networks as ‘authentic entities’ when it comes to country music and country culture.” According to Werner, CBS Cable is in talks with record companies to release country compilations with the TNN and CMT names.

THAT & THIS: New York-based production company Flying Fish Films has signed directors Larry M. Schwartz and Neighla Stewart. Rachel Dodd will represent Schwartz and Stewart for music videos and commercials.

It’s been about a year since TCI Music acquired the Box, and TCI Music is credited the Box for helping raise its revenue significantly. TCI Music’s third-quarter financial results report consolidated revenue of $22.4 million, compared with $19.4 million for the same period in 1996. Although TCI Music’s 1998 third-quarter operating income fell to $2 million (down from $4.9 million for the same period in 1997), the company reports that the Box contributed $7.1 million in 1998 third-quarter revenue.

LOCAL SHOW SPOTLIGHT: This issue’s spotlight is on rap/hip-hop program “Video Undaground.”

TV affiliates: Time Warner Cable’s Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN), channel 57; Brooklyn Community Access Television (BCAT), channel 56.

Program length: 30 minutes.

Time slot: 3:30 p.m. Mondays and noon Wednesdays on MNN; various daytime slots on BCAT.


Following are the top five clips for “Video Undaground” the week ending Nov. 29:

1. Ice Cube, “Wrong Time” (stickFigure)
2. Puffy, “Let It Flow” (The Game)
3. R. Kelly, “Home Alone” (Jive)
4. Crucial Conflict, “Scummy” (Universal)

THE CLIP END

PRODUCTION NOTES

LOS ANGELES
Timbaland & Magoo filmed “Here We Come” with director Francis Lawrence.
Lionel C. Martin directed ‘N Sync’s “God Must Have Spent A Little More Time On You,” “You’re Drivin’ Me Crazy,” and “Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays.”
Shiro’s “Good Love” video was directed by Tim Story.
OTHER LOCATIONS
San Francisco was the location for 98°’s video “Because Of You” (directed by Wayne Isham) and the W’s clip “The Devil Is Bad” (directed by Brandon Dickson).

Chris Knight filmed “It Ain’t Easy Being Me” with director Roger Pilstone in Scottsdale, Ky.
Deaton Flanigan directed Diamond Rio’s “Unbelievable” clip in Las Vegas.
Travis Tritt’s “If I Lost You” video was directed by Michael Merriman in Austin, Texas.
TOWER STARTS ITS EUROPEAN GROWTH IN THE U.K., IRELAND

(Continued from page 5)

U.K. and one in Ireland, we’ve firmly established ourselves in both markets. We have around 3% share of U.K. business and 4%-5% in Ireland.

Those numbers, Lown says, are “a clear mandate for expansion. Recent research by the British Retail Consortium, Leeds, and Liverpool showed that, when asked, ‘Who’s your favorite music retailer,’ between 6% to 10% said Tower. That’s a great result, considering that we’re often the only current physical stores in those towns! We’ve always believed we could do well here, and our recent results have proved it. We’ve expanded cautiously in the U.K., yet seen the brand grow in other markets. I now have a team of experienced folks who can accelerate expansion in this part of the world.”

Lown describes the retailer’s philosophy as “the Tower difference is the selection.” To illustrate that point, he claims that “with most of the [U.K.] majors, we account for around 7% to 10% of their business for classics and jazz.”

To illustrate current efforts, he explains, are focused on “identifying key locations that will allow us to open killer stores in major U.K. cities, which many of our current warehouse clubs, such as B&Q, Manchester, and so on. Those sites will be comparable in size to [the London flagship store] Piccadilly, with cafes, extensive book departments, Internet connection, and ‘chill out’ zones. We need seven to 10 of those ‘Tower mothershops.’”

SATELLITE STORES

However, Lown also has plans for a string of smaller satellite stores, circling these motherships. “We’re keen to target buyers in smaller British towns. We’ve identified through research that there are many towns that couldn’t necessarily support a full Tower store but still have fantastic potential,” he says.

A newfound flexibility will, Lown says, allow Tower to move more aggressively “in the next few years.” Lown even envisions a Tower store “ten years ago,” he notes, “to stock about 60,000 CD titles, Tower would have required 15,000 square feet.” Now, thanks to a combination of its purchasing mechanism and refined computer systems allied with greatly improved record company distribution, Lown says, “We can offer the same amount of titles in a store one-third in size. And because of all these improvements, we don’t have to speculate with large amounts of working capital.”

It’s that flexibility that EMIT’s McNamara cites as one of the key elements behind Lown’s success. “Andy deliberately gives the store managers a lot of freedom in terms of display and racking,” he says, “so they can tune in to the local market and find a lot more flexibility than some of their other multiples.”

That flexible approach, Lown explains, will allow the U.K. launch of a new strand of outlets, under the working banner of Tower Express. “Although our emphasis will be on larger stores,” Lown says, “we’ll develop this concept to capitalize on the high levels of business achievable in smaller towns.

“We can create a store with far greater selection; we have an extremely strong global brand, and this [Express] concept will not dilute what it stands for. We’re highlighting the true strength of the brand—you’d find within a traditional Tower store—elements that our customers will recognize immediately—and we’re working out ways to successfully apply those to an Express.”

The Express approach has already been successfully tested, Lown says, with Tower’s latest opening: a north London store in the city’s trendy Camden area. “It’s not trading under the Express banner,” he notes, “but Camden was a great opportunity for us. It’s only 4,000 square feet and has proved to be an instant success.”

The Express outlets, he adds, “will offer all the key elements to be found in a future Tower store, with the one exception: 600,000-title database. Therefore, whether a store is a 1,000-square-foot airport kiosk or a 100,000-square-foot giant, we will have to do is walk a customer over to a PC, log them on, and say, ‘There you go, shop the Tower world of music.’”

The Internet connection Lown refers to is via Tower Records’ new European Web site, in conjunction with EIS/MusicNet, a systems and global entertainment alliance to Internet retailers. Currently testing, it is due to launch in December.

CARIBBEAN NATIONS CITE PIRACY WOES

(Continued from page 6)

That belief is shared by Trinidad and Tobago’s minister of legal affairs, Kamla Persad-Bissessar. In October, she took the concerns of her local industry and those of the wider Caribbean to the business community in the FBI in Washington, D.C.

Persad-Bissessar says the FBI representatives told her they would take her requests for action “under review.” To date, no action has resulted.

Koroye-Crooks says that in earlier contacts with the FBI, agents suggested that the issue was too minor and that the Caribbean authorities and labels should write to U.S. congressional representatives about the problem. “While the FBI has now advised the Caribbean nations of one further avenue open to them,” he notes that all the West Indian nations are working to implement the WTO’s Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement by 2000. The agreement allows nations signing it to force foreign governments to take action to protect their citizens’ rights.

“One TRIPS is in force in the Caribbean nations,” says Koroye-Crooks. “Any of these nations can issue a complaint against the U.S. under the terms of the agreement. That would oblige the American authorities to act.”

Officials in the anti-piracy division of the Recording Industry Assn. of America said they were unaware of the problem, but would discuss it with the FBI.

In the meantime, Koroye-Crooks says, great harm is being done to the musical creativity of the Caribbean. “The problem they face,” she notes, “is that the music they produce—reggae and calypso—mainly has a worldwide audience. That makes it worthwhile for the pirates to sell.”

“But the home markets are too small to sustain a vibrant industry, so they desperately need those expert markets if they are going to grow,” she continues.

INVESTORS WERE DECEIVED, K-TEL SUITS CHARGE

(Continued from page 5)

might be delisted from the National Market system because the company’s net tangible asset value was below the minimum standard of $4 million. K-tel’s had fallen to less than $1 million. Kieves and company founder/chairman Philip Kives were named as defendants in the lawsuit.

K-tel did not inform investors of the Nasdaq warning until its quarterly filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission on November 27. During that three-week period, K-tel’s stock nearly doubled on the Playboy news and more than doubled to $32 on the Microsoft announcement. Subsequently, it dropped, and after the Nasdaq disclosure went public, the stock dropped from $17.625 to less than $10.

“We’ve scheduled a meeting with Nasdaq for sometime in January,” Lown said, “and if the problem is not resolved before then, we’ll take it up with the SEC.”

He added that the situation could be rectified by a public private offering of stock or by an improvement in the company’s results.

EMI PRESENTS HALF-YEAR RESULTS, REFUTES TAKEOVER TALKS

(Continued from page 5)

On a positive note, EMI Music Publishing had record results in the first half, the company says, adding that sales rose 10% on the strength of strong mechanical revenue from the U.S. and U.K. The publishing arm’s revenue is not stated, however. Contributors to the publishing arm’s revenue were cited as Janet Jackson, the Verve, Robbie Williams, Third Eye Blind, matchbox 20, Puff Daddy, Savage Garden, and the soundtrack to the movie “The Mask.”

EMI’s figures, though, are of less interest to most observers than speculation about the company’s possible sale. Such speculation, says an EMI spokesman, is “not the company’s policy making.”

“When there has been discussion—whether it was with Seagram earlier this year or with Bertelsmann a month ago—it isn’t down to EMI knocking on their door,” he says. “It’s those people saying, ‘Here’s an attractive asset; we think we should be talking to them.’ It’s not us wanting to be sold; the company wants to remain independent.”

EMI has sought to demonstrate that by issuing two statements in three days denying that takeover talks were taking place. On Nov. 20, the company said, “EMI Group notes the story in today’s Los Angeles Times asserting that there have been meetings or discussions between senior executives at New Corp. and senior management at EMI. EMI wishes to confirm that no such discussions or meetings have taken place.”

Three days later came this: “Further to recent press comment, EMI confirms that there were an informal meeting one month ago between senior executives of EMI and [BMG parent] Bertelsmann to discuss possible opportunities for cooperation between the two music companies.

Ken Onstad, U.K. managing director of Sam Goody, which operates 14 stores in the country, applauds his competitor’s approach, saying, “I’m certainly anxious to see that customers associate online trading with retailers rather than with new ventures or directly with the manufacturers. If there’s a retail tie to online trading, that helps preserve High Street trading and the record store consumer awareness.”

On the subject of bricks-and-mortar outlets, Tower Europe’s expansion plans are not confined to the U.K. “The first phase of the location strategy we have developed,” says Lown, “centers on the U.K. and Eire. Phase two will see us applying the same treatment to the major countries in Europe.”

A Tower in the U.K. will be the only European operation are in the U.K. and Ireland; the merchant previously had three stores in Israel, which are now franchised out. “There is an almost tangible gap in Europe’s countries [in which to build landmark stores],” Lown continues. “Interestingly, the countries we have initially identified as having the greatest potential have the keenest numbers of customer registrations to our information service on our [existing] Web site.”

Concludes Lown, “The five-year plan for Tower Europe will see an exciting time for my operation.”

On Nov. 24, the shares closed up 1% at $11.625. The stock’s range has been $9.875 to $10.475 in the past 52 weeks.

Among the firms that have filed suits on behalf of investors in K-tel’s headquarters states of Minnesota and California are Hagens Berman Mitchell, PS, of Seattle; Reinhardt & Anderson of St. Paul, Minn., Miller & Marcus, St. Paul; and Carothers, Byrn & Tarr of San Diego; Wechsler Harlow Halbein & Feffer of New York; and Berman DeValerio & Pease of Boston.

Billboard December 5, 1999

www.americanradiohistory.com
EU Tackles Copyright Liability For Online Providers, Telecoms

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS
LONDON—Europe is taking the same route as the U.S. to ensure that music copyrights aren’t infringed online.

The European Union is now defining the rules for doing business over the Internet. One of the main areas it is addressing is the liability of access providers and telecommunication companies when their services are used to make unauthorized copies of music.

The EU’s solution to the problem, a draft directive just released into the political arena, is closely based on the Digital Millennium Copyright Act in the U.S., which was signed into law Oct. 28 (Billboard, Nov. 7). In keeping with its American counterpart, it calls for cooperation between the copyright holders and the Internet companies.

The draft directive, officially titled “Legal Aspects Of Electronic Commerce In The Internal Market,” has been adopted by the European Commission; it has been published for public comment and for scrutiny by the European Parliament. A final draft is scheduled to be presented to a full session of the parliament in mid-January.

Frances Moore, head of European affairs at the Brussels office of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), says the document as it now stands is “a pretty fair text.”

IFPI European legal adviser Olivia Regnier says that, in liability terms, the draft directive defines three categories of online companies:

- Mere conduits. These are the companies that are entirely passive in delivering online services, Regnier says that the draft directive exempts them from liability, though they may be enjoined to stop disseminating copyrighted material if the copyright holder has an objection to how his or her work is being used.

- Cashing companies. Says Regnier, “If an American service provider, such as America Online, copies U.S.-based material in, for example, the U.K. to make access easier for its European customers, there are certain rules it must obey.

- Content providers. The third category defined by the draft directive is that of companies that provide content.

“These are the companies that are not just a postman anymore but are more like a bookstore,” says Regnier. The draft directive says that companies in this category must be vigilant about the material they’re providing.

If one of these companies carried a site called Pirate Music for Free, the company may not necessarily be aware that this is illegal, but it gives a “passive indication,” Regnier says. “It would be for a national judge to decide if the company should have been aware, but a record company could make a good argument that they should have been aware.”

The draft directive makes such companies subject to national copyright laws within the EU, and that means an infringing company could be enjoined to stop repeat infringements and could be sued for damages.

Regnier notes the difference between federal laws in the U.S. and pan-European directives, which are guidelines to be interpreted by the European courts: “The Millennium Act is a huge tome, but the draft directive provides a framework that should encourage cooperation between the Internet access providers and telecom companies and the record industry,” Regnier says.

On the political front, Moore notes that the content of the draft directive is based on the deal done between those two sides as part of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. This, she hopes, will smooth the progress of the document in its current form through the European political arena.

“A certain realism sets in when you already have a deal in the U.S.,” says Moore: “We could get a fight over this, but we don’t expect it to be so very difficult.”

This draft directive—known informally as the E-Commerce Directive—is running parallel to the Copyright Directive that is also now passing through the EU’s political arena.

According to Heinz Zourek, director-general of the Commission’s DG15 internal market department, one of the purposes of the E-Commerce Directive is to remove the liability question from the copyright issues addressed in the Copyright Directive (Billboard, Sept. 11).

In this way, Zourek, the debate over the Copyright Directive should be greatly simplified.

Moore says that she sees advantages in this for IFPI. “The telecom companies have been putting pressure on the Copyright Directive,” she says. “Now that they have a deal over liability, we can say to them, ‘Stop putting pressure on the Copyright Directive.’”

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT SEEN FOR LABELS’ STANCE ON PARALLEL IMPORTS

(Continued from page 3)

trademarks.

Billboard has obtained extracts of the document, however. They indicate that its authors support labels’ arguments that allow a free flow of music product into the EU would not necessarily lead to lower prices for consumers here.

Billboard revealed in the summer that the European Commission’s DG15 internal market department had asked London-based firm National Economic Research Assn. (NERA) to investigate how removing current barriers to parallel imports would affect a number of industries that rely on trademarks, including music and video (Billboard, July 20).

DG15 was prompted to commission the report by pressure from Dutch politicians who have always felt that music prices here would fail if European companies faced competition from outside the EU. The Dutch argument is supported by the EU’s Scandinavian member states.

At the beginning of this year, NERA began its research into the impact of such a lifting of trade barriers on a wide range of industries. To establish the effect on music prices, company representatives presented an exhaustive questionnaire to the whole spectrum of major and indie record companies.

The first draft of NERA’s resulting report and conclusions was presented to DG15 at the end of October. A final version of the report is due to be completed by January (Billboard, Nov. 14). To date, the document’s contents have remained secret.

Billboard can report, though, that the first draft indicates that the impact of removing barriers to parallel imports would have “very complex economic consequences.” NERA, lower consumer prices for music and video would “not necessarily” be one of those consequences.

NERA does not mention music and video specifically. It says this conclusion applies to all industries founded on intellectual property.

NERA strongly advises that this should be taken to consider, however, when European politicians debate the prospect of removing parallel-import controls.

A second key preliminary conclusion in the report is that allowing in parallel imports across a broad swath of industries would hit some business sectors harder than others. Again, NERA does not specifically define which industries are particularly vulnerable, but its language indicates that it has understood the arguments of the record industry and, most specifically, those of the indie labels.

A third preliminary conclusion is that consumers are not always interested in lower-cost, allegedly higher price guarantees quality of product, service, and availability.

Nor is NERA now in the process of conducting a second round of research in preparation for delivering its final conclusions in the new year. As part of this exercise, company representatives met with a delegation from the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) in the second week of November.

BPI director-general John Deacon says the purpose of the meeting with NERA was mainly to present indie-sector arguments. The Indies have felt that NERA hasn’t been sensitive to their views (Billboard, Nov. 14).

The European record industry believes the British indies are at the cutting edge of the parallels issue. Deacon was clear that the UK would be the first to be affected by the removal of barriers and that the U.K. currently has the largest number of the most productive indie sector in Europe.

Neither Deacon nor any of the indie labels or their representatives have seen the preliminary report and are likely to be pleased with NERA’s apparent acceptance that they would be deeply damaged by parallel imports.

At a meeting with NERA, Deacon says, “I found them to be extremely helpful. It was a free-ranging discussion of the business and particularly the business as it relates to smaller companies.”

Deacon says NERA representatives asked a number of questions to which the BPI is now preparing extensive responses.

The BPI is a committed opponent of parallel imports in any form. Of their potential impact, Deacon says, “If you take the U.K. as an example, record companies invest around 18% of revenues in developing acts. That’s a far higher proportion of investment in research and development than virtually any other industry.

“If you lifted the barriers and just allowed a flow of parallel imports to flood into the EU, it would mean that the record industry would stop being a major industry and would just go into a cottage industry,” he continues. “There would be no way that any label could keep up present levels of investment in British or European talent.”

Deacon also notes from the experience of the Australian industry, where parallel imports were legalized in the summer (Billboard, July 25), that they are often used as a cover for pirate product.

In addition, he says, even when retailers can buy cheaper product from abroad, they regularly fail to pass on those savings to consumers.

A Primer On Parallel Imports

Parallel imports is the name given to a particular type of cross-border album shipment. An import is said to be a parallel if the record involved is already available in the country to which it is being shipped.

For instance, if HMV in London buys its Michael Jackson albums from Sony Music in the U.S.—where CD prices are ostensibly lower than they are in many parts of Europe—instead of from Sony Music U.K., that is a parallel import. Under present legislation, Sony U.K. is entitled to ask for payment of duty on the product to be excluded from the U.K. because they infringe the copyright Sony U.K. holds on Jackson’s recordings within the U.K.

Cross-border trade does exist in the EU but is confined to the Union’s 16-nation trading bloc. Under a system known as transhipments, any goods that come into any EU country may buy product from any legitimate supplier in any other nation in the Union. But retailers may not, unless current legislation, buy from suppliers outside the EU—except under limited and strictly controlled circumstances.

Well-Represented. Peermusic and Cherry Lane Music recently completed a subpublishing arrangement whereby peermusic will represent the Cherry Lane catalog in the Southern Hemisphere. While Cherry Lane will represent the peermusic catalog in China, with the exception of Hong Kong. Shown at the deal’s signing, from left, are Peter Primont, president of Cherry Lane Music; Ada Gunwicz, senior VP of Cherry Lane Music; and Ralph Peer II, CEO of peermusic.
that in many ways operates counter to the more mainstream, more visible contemporary Christian music scene.

Praise & worship music is more song-driven than the dance-driven, and in fact, many of its practitioners prefer to be called worship leaders, not artists, and most of the product can’t be identified with a specific performer. And yet it is a recorded worship event with numerous vocalists supported by enthusiastic audience participation (see story, this page).

The music is more closely tied to the church than the charts—although it does fare well on those lists, as evidenced by the entry of Bishop T.D. Jakes at No. 9 on the Top Contemporary Christian album chart and No. 3 on Top Gospel Albums in the November issue. And it is one of the most powerful and enduring forms of Christian music, with two labels, Southern California’s Maranatha! Music and Vineyard, celebrating their 27th and 20th anniversaries, respectively.

But some now say that the genre is undergoing a resurgence, adding a younger generation with “personality-driven” music and reaching out to a wider consumer base via innovative marketing techniques that include World Wide Web sites and free digital downloads. The retail base is ramping up—Walmart has hosted popular In-Store events—and many new radio stations are tuning in.

Some others say that it never really went away, but there is no denying its increased presence in the marketplace. Also fueling the new fire are several praise & worship labels that have bowed this year, including Integrity Music & Vertical Music.

EMI Christian Music Group’s Worship Together Label, and Here to Him, initiated by West Monroe, La.-based Howard Publishing.

“People have always been praising God,” says Integrity’s Ron Kenoly, one of the genre’s most successful artists. “It’s just that the commercial marketplace has never paid much attention to people praising God. I think that when Integrity Music, Maranatha! Music, and several other organizations began to serve the body of Christ with cassette and CDs, the general marketplace realized there’s some profit in that.... I think it was in the mid-’80s when the commercialization of the music label began, and the concept of worship really began. So it’s not that it’s been a resurgence, it’s just that the media and music industry have become aware of the fact that people are praising God. They have been and always will be.”

As companies strive to provide churches and their attendees all over the world with music to enhance their worship experiences,

Defining the Praise & Worship Genre

Just what exactly is praise & worship music, and how does it differ from other forms of Christian music?

“In our contemporary music scene, it is one of the most participative music forms we have,” says Gospelexia’s Matt Redman. And his wife, president Frank Breeden. “It’s designed to engage people in music...it’s a body of music whose lyrics are vertically oriented—it’s unique by context. It’s as grass roots as anything we have.”

Traditionally, the music’s focus has been on worship-leader-driven, various vocalists projects. “Stars,” per se, are not common, and even those who are now stepping into the role of “personality” are loath to describe themselves as entertainers, preferring to maintain the traditional role of worship leader.

“It has started to involve those artists who feel called to take their music beyond their own congregations, people like Darrell Evans, Matt Redman, and Noel Richards,” says Alex MacDougall, who once managed the sausage-like Maranatha! Music label.

“Maranatha! was a logo, a name, a product, and they got a free digital download deal with the 75-store, Wheaton, Ill.-based Limestone. They skew younger than what most of us over-40 people would classify as praise & worship music. I think that’s where the real resurgence is coming from. It’s high-quality music with a contemporary worship message. It’s almost a sub-genre of praise & worship in that it’s a youth-oriented praise & worship.”

Many in the industry feel that being able to put faces to the music helps make it easier to market. However, that is a fairly recent phenomenon.

Kenoly, one of the first personalities to emerge in the genre, admits that personality-driven praise & worship is a departure from tradition.

“When I began leading praise & worship, worship leaders were just kinds of a anonymous bunch of people. The church leaders didn’t really want to attach a personality to that particular role,” he says. “Most of the recording companies doing praise & worship didn’t want to put emphasis on a personality. They wanted to keep praise & worship music very generic. In fact, in 1984, I did several demos with one of Maranatha’s producers, Kenneth Nash. When he submitted the songs we did to Maranatha, they liked the music, but they said my voice had too much personality, and so they didn’t use it. I was kind of surprised at that.

“I didn’t understand exactly what that meant, but just the opposite happened five or six years later when Don Moen came to our church and asked if I could record the music we were doing,” he continues.

“When he did record it, he was excited for me to lead the praise & worship, and out of that emerged my own personality. They didn’t do a generic presentation. It was personality-driven, and since then it has been that way. I think that the first people on a praise & worship project whose picture was actually on the artwork.”

Tradition Still Strong

For some labels, the focus is still on worship-leader-driven, various-vocalists projects. Such is the case with Worship Together, which bowed in July with “Worship Together Live: ‘King Of Love’ and ‘Revival Generation: ’12 Songs That Rocked A Nation,’” both compilations of music previously released by Kingsway Music, a successful praise & worship company based in Eastbourne. (EMI Christian Music Publishing has negotiated a sub-publishing deal to represent its songs in the Western Hemisphere.)

According to Steve Rice, senior VP of EMI Christian Music Publishing, Redman is moving from EMI’s StarSong to Worship Together, but for the most part the label will be song- and event-driven, but not artist-driven.

“Worship leaders don’t want the focus on the song, they say, ‘At Worship Together, we’ll always try to keep the focus on the songs and worship events.’

Marketing Is Key

Since most product in the genre still is not personality-driven, praise & worship labels are using innovative marketing techniques to reach consumers.

Worship Together has a Web site (www.worshiptogether.com) that has amassed more than 12,000 registered users since its inception in February. The site offers church worship leaders a free song each week that they can download and learn for use in their own church worship services.

In addition to local churches, praise & worship labels use the Internet, direct mail, and sponsor worship conferences. Maranatha! and Vineyard actually originated from specific churches, and a key part of what they—and other praise & worship labels—offer consumers are worship conferences.

“We’ve held 20 training conferences this year,” says Tom Vegh, president/CEO of Maranatha, which releases at least 30 titles a year, including music for all the Promise Keeper events. (Promise Keepers is an organization of Christian men that sponsors huge rallies/worship events. Women of Faith, a popular women’s conference, has its music supplied by Integrity.)

“What we do is create a demand and a market for less than a year. According to Danny McGuffey, senior VP/CMO of the Integrity label group, CCLI tracks 98,000 churches. “The church is our distribution channel, and CCLI is our playlist,” he says.

In addition to the church acting as ‘the radio’ for praise & worship music, Vegh says, “the conferences are our tours, because in addition to the touring done by new praise & worship act of the Western Hemisphere.'
highlighted at the first conference on censorship in music, which was held Nov. 19-22 in Copenhagen. Coincidentally, the London-based publication American Cultural Trends, covered a debate the day before.

A move toward local, single-issue politics in the 1990s and 1990s has coincided with a depoliticization of the Anglo-American mainstream. The emergence of a center-left consensus in party politics in major markets, the decline of organized labor, and the dominance of enterprising media are reasons cited for the marginalization of political acts. Others simply blame the vagaries of fashion and the poor aesthetics of music driven by ideology, as well as the poorer literacy of a generation weaned on TV rather than books.

Global events have also influenced the popularity of political music. The advent of democratic, capitalist, and often conservative governments in countries in the former communist bloc has thinned out the protest movement in those countries, and the free market in Eastern Europe has often resulted in seen, where Western music has dominated the music scene.

South Africa's general optimism during its first democratically elected government has also led to the protest movement on the wane and fueled the popularity of kwaito, with its emphasis on hedonism.

Even outside of the world's flash points, music continues to be a force for change and to reflect the violence of the times. Israeli artist Aviv Geffen received death threats from Jewish extremists at his concert for being a pro-Palestinian. In the countries, indeed in the conflict between religious extremes and liberals alike.

Even outside of the world's flash points, music acts as both a reflection for peace and a catalyst for social change. French rap, now part of the musical mainstream, exudes the sound, the country and in effect put Junoon out of commission by strangling us.

SINGAPORE: Politicians here insist that political views can be expressed only on a party platform, but rock singer X'Yo has gone against the grain by being a social critic. His views on double standards, media reports are scathing, witty, and humorous. In his book, "Bomba," he attacked "Oui" (from the 1994 release "Anne-Das-C," the band's single), "I want to be considered as victims those who held power, and almost without realizing it, passed from activism to armed conflict." He says that many imprisoned terrorists from Italy's violent "Red" years of the 1980s found themselves victims of victimization service plots and infiltration.

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worship artists, the bulk of exposure to the concept-driven praise & worship music still comes from churches and conferences.

McGuffey says Integrity’s main thrust is “harvesting songs coming out of contemporary churches in a variety of styles from messianic to liturgical to Generation X. Integrity captures the live experience and siphons it into the church.”

Those live experiences aren’t confined to the U.S. As a matter of fact, McGuffey anticipates that the January release of “Shout To The Lord 2000,” recorded live in Sydney, will be a strong seller. Its predecessor, “Shout To The Lord” (both on Integrity’s Hosanna label), is approaching gold status.

**Radio Signs On**

All involved with the praise & worship genre anticipate its continued growth, not just because the tried-and-true church and conference methods continue to yield results, but also because radio and retail are becoming a more integral part of the equation.

There are now 1,300 radio stations playing praise & worship music either full or part time. According to Chris Hauser of Nashville’s Hauser Promotions & Marketing, the Colorado Springs, Colo.-based word in Praise Network is boosting the genre, as are key individual stations across the country, including WWDJ New York and WJTL Lancaster, Pa.

Even mainstream retailers are coming on board. Integrity’s McGuffey says Jakes recently drew more than 700 people to a Wal-Mart-in-store in Tucker, Ga. Still, despite such mainstream in-roads and commercial outreach, the church continues to be the cornerstone for praise & worship music.

“What continues to drive the market side more than anything,” McGuffey notes, “is the fact that our songs are sung every week in churches around the world.”

**Global Musicians Tackle Politics**

(Continued from preceding page)

Included on “Greenpeace Se Hace Escurcha” (“Greenpeace Makes You Listen”), a multi-artist compiliation benefiting the organization, Maná also allows the environmental group to set up information booths at the band’s concerts. Maná also has founded an ecological organization, Selva Negra (Black Junle), Lately, Fher has been turning his sights on human-rights issues in Mexico.

**Turkey:** Zöfü Livaneli has been beating the drum of political/social-consciousness music in Turkey for more than 20 years, in a life wrecked by prison, escape, and political asylum. Now a UNESCO goodwill ambassador and in 1994 a left-of-center candidate for the mayor of Istanbul, Livaneli still attracts crowds. “My music was a symbol of resistance to [the] military dictatorship of the ’80s,” he says. It is now a focus of resistance to the intolerance of Islamic fundamentalism. In May 1997, his concert for a student rally in opposition to the then Islamist government. Once overtly ideological, he now shuns the one-dimensional aspect of being seen as a political act. He rejects the vacuity of current Turkish music, which informs the generation whose lives have been wrecked by mass migration to shantytowns. It is a music that Livaneli calls “nihilistic.” “I don’t see any positive developments in Turkish music,” he adds.

**Sweden:** Fifteen years after splitting up, Swedish punk band Ebbå Gran is still making an impact with the nation’s youth. MNW Records Group recently released a four-CD boxed set featuring the complete material from the group’s three studio albums, plus B-sides, live cuts, alternate takes, and previously unreleased tracks.

The act’s early songs tackled subjects like police brutality, refusal to serve in the military, multinational profit-driven companies, the threat of nuclear disaster, and irresponsible politicians. MNW Records Group CEO Jonas Sjöström says the label had a few qualms about releasing an Ebbå Gran box, fearing that “it would be considered blatantly commercial by the band’s fans.”

**Denmark:** A younger generation of fans is turning to the Savage Rose for its lush music and lyrical imagery, though its music has been politically relevant for 30 years. The band’s new album, “Incantation,” dedicated to the working poor, the homeless and suffering, the children shining in the deep of the City of Angels and elsewhere on this Planet of Paralysis,” according to vocalist Annette. The set features musicians from L.A., where the group’s members now live. Annette says, “We don’t want to be separated from our audience like many artists do.” The Savage Rose found notoriety in the early ’80s for covering the world’s first nude ballet, “The Triumph Of Death,” premiered at the Royal Danish Theatre and later was performed on international tours. After a 17-ambient set with Polydor, the group is now with Danish indie Mega. Its first album for that label, “Black Angel,” hit double-platinum (100,000 units) and won a Danish Grammy.

**IBM, NARAS Partner On Grammy Cybercast**

By Doug Reece

Los Angeles—The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) has partnered with IBM in an effort to build on the growth and reach of the Cybercast for the 41st annual Grammy Awards.

Although IBM is no stranger to entertainment on the worldwide Web, this makes it the first move into music Webcasting (Billboard Bulletin, Nov. 18).

According to Jeff Rammingber, IBM segment executive for telecommunications and media, the company hopes the high-profile event will provide exposure for its business services and technologies.

While this is not the first time NARAS has incorporated an online counterpart to the Grammy Awards at its-own-games Web site, this year NARAS hopes to enhance the experience with extended programming and technology that will allow more users to simultaneously enjoy multiple accessed and watch the Grammy Awards. "As we have grown the Webcast, our expectations with the quality but the quantity of the program have become very important," says NARAS president/CEO Michael Greene. "I think this year we're going to technologically shake hands with the Web."

In previous years, NARAS limited promations of the Webcast and did not have the capacity to accommodate the more than 70 million page views expected this year. This year’s Webcast will be promoted online by IBM and NARAS.

In addition to a simulcast of the Feb. 24 awards program, which will be televised in 156 countries, NARAS and sponsor IBM will host coverage of events leading up to the event, including the Jan. 5 announcement of nominees.

Fans closer to the broadcast that will get play on the Web site include the MusiCares Person of the Year honoring Stevie Wonder, nominations lives, and other concerts leading up to the awards show. Rehearsal performances, behind-the-scenes footage, and artist interviews will also be featured on the site.

Other bells and whistles include user polls, trivia games, celebrity chats, videos of past Grammy moments, and a Grammy history overview.

Although the partner has not yet been announced, a planned retail component will allow users to purchase music through the site.

Rammingber says the online Grammy coverage will go beyond the top 18 awards featured on the television program to give more exposure to awards in genres such as world and classical music.

“The Internet is going to allow people to have a far more interesting time,” says Rammingber. “The television coverage is wonderful but it’s limited to the top awards. This is really an opportunity to provide a broader view of the fact that the Grammy experience is, including events in the host city.”

Green says the event is also a reflection of the growing importance of the Internet as a music medium.

“We can’t be Luddites,” says Greene. “We have to view this access to the world as an incredibly important and exciting phenomenon.”

**Grammy Activities To Cover A Month**

(Continued from page 10)

Fest information as an L.A. Grammy Fest registered event. To be included, the event has to happen in February in the Greater Los Angeles area and will be put on by an organization, as opposed to a musician playing a club gig.

Among the events earning design is a night of choral music Feb. 18, the Pacific Unitarian Church in Rancho Palos Verdes, as well as a Feb. 255 performance by the L.A. Baroque Orchestra at the Skirball Cultural Center.

NARAS also held a meeting at its Santa Monica offices with a number of local cultural institutions, including the various arts councils, for example, the American Film Institute, symphonies, theater groups, and dance companies.

The organizations were encouraged to spread the word about grants being issued by NARAS for their February events. In their application proposals, the companies could suggest a grant for an existing program or solic- it NARAS funding for a new event.

According to Greene, the average grant award was $5,000. Among the funded cultural programs were a world music concert Feb. 20 at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage and an exhibit featuring Ella Fitzgerald memorabilia and a lecture at the California African American Museum, also on Feb. 20.

We are going to most of these events with video crews and documenting them as a reminder of the great cultural organizations that do live and work in L.A.,” says Greene. “Part of the purpose of our Grammy Cybercast. People who tune in to see rehearsals will be able to see what happened at the classical luncheon. It’s a great way to get out the Grammy-related online activity, see story, this page.)

Greene vows to continue the program regardless of where the Grammys are held. “We talked about this the year before last in New York, and it’s really going to be a matter of us setting up a structure if we’re going to do it in New York and sending someone in for five months to plan it,” he says. “I believe this will be very successful, and we’ll do it wherever we go.”

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Billboard December 5, 1998
A breakthrough publication devoted exclusively to New and Developing Artists

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Timothy White, Editor-in-Chief

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BLACK PROMOTERS’ SUIT UNDERSCORES DISCONTENT (Continued from page 3)

are a repulsive vestige of another era . . . On some occasions, certain defendants have even ridiculed plaintiff Lionel Richie, saying, “I’m going to buy a horse and ride the plaintiffs’ faces at the very suggestion of contracting with black promoters to promote concerts to be performed by white and major black artists.”

Attorney Christine Lapera says, “Our clients—the five corporations and their owners—have suffered for a number of years by a blatant discrimination in the industry that they work in. Essentially what you have is an industry that treats promoters differently on the basis of race and an industry where white-controlled businesses profit and exclude black promoters from the ability to fairly compete in the industry to earn similar profits.”

Attorney Martin Gold, who also represents the African-American field promoters who sued over the incident, said, “The plaintiffs feel they have been wronged. According to the filing, the plaintiffs ‘nurtured a black music group and a black music talent community, yet out of nowhere, a black promoter had every reason to believe that he had to deal with white mainstream executives.’

The suit also alleges that the plaintiffs were offered dates for artists, charged plaintiffs more for shows than their white counterparts, and verbally promised shows to the plaintiffs and then gave them to white promoters. William Morris representatives declined comment.

Robert Donnelly, who is also working on the case, said he found the black promoters to have a legitimate claim.

“Over the past five years, major black promoters have promoted zero percent of black pop acts,” says Donnelly. “With major black acts, it’s always a laughing matter. Essentially, the black promoters are being excluded.”

Gold says the $700 million figure was arrived at with what he called a “conservative estimate of the fair and reasonable percent of the total industry which in the absence of discrimination would have gone to our clients.”

In the past, retailers have been able to fetch $15-$18 for a used tape, once it had finished its rental cycle (which has also been shortened from six to eight weeks to two to three weeks because of the program). But since copy-depth programs have become prevalent, some dealers report that the average selling price has been reduced to $7 and can go as low as $3 per tape.

“IT’S PRETTY OBVIOUS that when there’s more product out there, the price is going to be less,” says West Coast Entertainment VP Steven Collins. “In our case, where we have to keep at hand for inventory, but we’re lucky to have a lot of stores [in which to] sell these extra tapes.”

Based in Philadelphia, West Coast operates 830 stores nationwide. Overall, the motion picture industry uses mostly video, which is also able to shift product to various locations. Hollywood, for instance, sells most of its used-tape stock to its online subsidiary Reelcom, which sells the discounted tapes on its World Wide Web site.

In addition to getting a lower price for these titles, many dealers say copy-depth programs have cut into the volume of used-tape sales. Since there are more copies available to rent, consumers who once bought low-priced used tapes have more likely been able to rent it.

“The side effect of these programs has been minimal,” says TLA Video rental buyer Dave Blieker, “but we do know a few video stores of West Coast that have been wronged. We do know that when copy-depth titles are rented, they’re rented at a reduced price. We’ve eventually got rid of these extra titles in our customer Home Video, which sells the discounted tapes on its World Wide Web site.”

Call to Haymon’s offices were not returned by press time. The other promoters not named in the suit refused to comment. Most were laughing, saying, “A white promoter has to do is get on the phone and call CA Music or Rentrak. A black promoter never has a chance to do a Celine Dion, a Kiss, or an Elton John.”

Do they try to get these acts? “All the time,” says Rowe. “I’ve been a promoter for 23 years, and not only are these acts not available to us, they are never solicited to us.”

An agent who wished not to be identified says he has never, to his knowledge, been contacted by any of the plaintiffs about promoting an act.

King says that Universal is“tried and true” in the music industry and raised the issue.

“I asked why we are not privy to white artists as they are privy to us. We are being called a black buck that has been passed,” he says, “I was just told that I had never promoted white acts before and that it was a different experience.”

King says he has tried to work with white acts in the past.

“Never, ever in my 27-year career have I been able to do a white act,” he says. “More than that, when an artist goes out on the road, it is the job of the agent to call all available stores. When all your stores have received a call, and I have taken the initiative to call and say [the act] is coming through I want to be able to have them. Never in my life have I been called by an agent.”

The suit was news to most of the defendants contacted by Billboard. Many felt it was too early to comment on the record.

“I am shocked,” says Jack Boyle, who heads up the Cellar Door Companies, all of which are named in the suit. “We are in the very early state of our life, have I been called by an agent.”

Larry Magid of Electric Factory Concerts in Philadelphia co-produced the Sweet Sounds of Soul tour earlier this year.

(WARNER MUSIC U.K. (Continued from page 8)

share of the U.K. album market between 1990-97 and that approached the 15% mark earlier this year thanks to top-selling titles by the Corrs, Madonna, Catatonia, and Simply Red, among others. However, Warners executives are known to prize profitability over market share, and on the excuse the U.K. operations are said to have reached an all-time high this year on revenue exceeding $300 million.

Dickins, who joined the company in 1989, says he was, at the age of 33, the youngest managing director of a U.K. major label. Phillips is 37 and is described by Warner Music International chief Steve Nickerson as being in the forefront of “a wave of talented young executives” within the British music business.

Phillips’ most successful U.K. project at Universal has been Ocean Colour Scene, the Birmingham band whose debut MCA album, “Moseley Shoals,” topped the charts, and whose current single “Stay Out of My Life” has had a great knack of putting energy into something constructive, rather than into the ego thing,” says Ocean Colour Scene’s frontman Ray O’Connor.

Of Phillips’ departure from Universal, Craddock says he is disappointed. “It’s Warner’s gain.”

Another of the new Warner chairman’s first tasks will be recruiting a managing director for WestEast Records (whose last chief, Max Hole, departed for a senior marketing post at Universal Music last month) and getting familiar with the Boyle Entertainment, the new U.K. joint distribution venture between Warner Music and Sony, which gets under way in 1999.

Reporting to Phillips will be WEA managing director Moira Bellas, EastWest GM Ian Greendell, and revenue and they must wait at least 90 days before selling used copies, a move that angered parents who buy under supplier copy-depth programs. Others agree that copy-depth and revenue-sharing programs have created an atmosphere in which retailers have solved. The manpower and paper work needed to administer the programs properly have also cut into profit margins.

Some studies appear to have heard these concerns and are now beginning to take back product under new copy-depth guidelines.

VIDEO STORES AWASH IN FLOOD OF RENTAL COPIES (Continued from page 3)

every new release, supplier copy-depth programs allow retailers to buy as much as 20% more video rentals at a reduced cost if certain initial sales goals are met. Overall, these programs can bring the wholesale cost of copies down to $60-$70 to $30 down.

Generally, retail goals were already boosted by at least 20% over similar titles to make up for the reduced price the retailers are offering to customers. In some cases, suppliers have offered free goods if these inflated goals are met. Dealers large and small jumped at the chance to profit from customers guaranteed rentals without paying full price for additional units.

But retailers are now paying the price in a different way, as these additional units begin to move to used-tape bins or stores to sell them to used-tape brokers.

“This has been happening for months, and we’ve been fighting it by limiting how much we take,” says Distribution Video & Audio president Brad Kugler.

Based in Clearwater, FL, the used-tape broker has seen the wholesale price of tapes fall from $28-$32 since copy-depth programs have been introduced.

This, along with other factors, has pushed Kugler to concentrate on the “value markets,” as well as other ancillary fields to resell used videos, instead of relying on retail.

The price of used tapes at retail has also sunk to an all-time low.

In the past, retailers have been able to fetch $15-$18 for a used tape, once it had finished its rental cycle (which has also been shortened from six to eight weeks to two to three weeks because of the program). But since copy-depth programs have become prevalent, some dealers report that the average
Hot 100 Airplay

Compiled from a national sample of airplay supplied by Broadcast Data Systems' Radio Track service for the week ending December 5, 1998.

Hot 100 A-Z

Compiled from a national sample of POS (point of sale) equipped retail stores and restaurant outlets which report number of units sold to SoundScan, Inc. This data is used in the Hot 100 Singles chart.

Records with the greatest airplay gains © 1998 Billboard/Reuters Communications Inc.
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**The Top Selling Albums from a National Sample of Retail and Rack Sales Reports Collected, Complied, and Provided by The Billboard 200**

**December 5, 1998**

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<th>Week</th>
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<td>Garth Brooks</td>
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<td>What Is Love?</td>
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<td>61</td>
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## Top Albums A-Z (Listed by Artists)

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Title</th>
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<td>112</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>99 Degrees</td>
<td>Good Goodbye</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>The Best That I Could Do</td>
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<td>125</td>
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<td>Disney's Favorite Christmas Songs</td>
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<td>163</td>
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<td>The Greatest Hits Collection</td>
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<td>116</td>
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<td>168</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>Lutero Vanklara</td>
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Mapping The Mississippi's Music (Continued from page 12)

Black Promoters' Suit (Continued from page 122)

by Geoff Manifold

The New Champ: With all eyes on music stores, Garth Brooks swung for the fences and connected, breaking the 1 million milestone and, in so doing, knocked down two SoundScan-era records. At 1,080,000 copies, Brooks' "Le Dernier des Valoureux" (MCA) opens the Billboard 200 at No. 1 this week, above an estimated 980,000 units, as the sellout for the new cassette "Metallica" baying with 598,000 units. Based on that track record and Thanksgiving weekend traffic, the seasoned rock band is a solid candidate to maintain its streak and debut at No. 1.


But the series also encourages lesser-known musicians: American Indians drumming at an Ojibwe powwow in Inger, Minn.; Laos Lhong tribesmen teaching the geej (cane pipe) at a festival in Minnesota; two generations of concertina players performing at a polka festival in Fountain City, Wis.; a family bluegrass band playing a song at a festival; a Mexican-American norteño band playing in a Moline, Ill., club; a high school brass band strutting at a football game in St. Charles, Mo.; street musicians busking for coins in New Orleans; and Canary Island balleteros working on fishing boats in the Gulf of Mexico.

Junkerman says, "What I hope happens in this project is that you get a composite feeling, so that in a sense the musicians—all of whom are equally respectful, to be sure—do not necessarily equally talented, but talented each in their own way—come together in a portrait of American music as a whole."

For drummer Lori Barbero—whose now-defunct Minneapolis-based band Babes In Toyland is seen in the first episode—Junkerman's pan-cultural approach is enough. "The variety is just so wide, from Native American to Hmong," she says. "Everyone knows that there's rock music, but maybe it's more meaningful to me."

Junkerman spent 12 weeks on the road filming "River Of Song"—the crew covered 12,000 miles and filmed 200 hours of material. Much of the music was recorded live on 24-track mobile equipment by the Baltimore-based company Big Mo.

Junkerman says, "That's what made it so grueling to do this whole project—we were setting up 24-track recording sessions and then moving them down, turning around, driving 100 miles, and then doing it again the next day!"

Wishing to trumpet William Jankrow—whose been working with his Memphis Horns partner saxophonist Andrew Love—in a Buffy City studio—Junkerman encouraged the musicians to be themselves.

"He said, 'Can we have a real situation here?' —Jankrow recalls. "I said, 'Let's just go out on the floor, get Ann's piano player Paul Brown, and Ann, and me and Andrew, and make a record.' So we played "The Whole Man", and that 'Blue Monk,' actually, and slid right into 'St. Louis Blues,' with us in the background playing the horn parts. So that was spontaneous; that was all we had as sparce.

"River Of Song" is narrated by singer-songwriter Ani DiFranco (Billboard, Nov. 28). Junkerman says her May tour—"Wind and Fire"—was "an incredible tour. We played for people who have deep commitment to independent music and to indigenous music" and hopes that her participation will increase the show's appeal to younger viewers.

DiFranco says of the project, "I liked the focus of it. To track music along a river seemed like such a human and uncommercial perspective to frame music history in.

Major Cross-Marketing

Involving the nearly simultaneous marketing of a TV series, record, radio series and book, "River Of Song" begins with a major project—DiFranco's first album, featuring multi-instrumentalist Peter Ostrouchov, performed with John Koerner in the series and written by Brian Newberry. Priced at $32.50, "River Of Song: A Musical Journey Down The Mississippi" will be available in bookstores in December, illustrated with color and black-and-white photographs, the book draws on interviews conducted for the series by Wald, world and roots music writer and programmer. DiFranco says "River Of Song" was "invented [in the series] from the very beginning, from the scuttling trip... He's kind of a walking encyclopedia of music, so he was an incredibly important resource."

"River Of Song" will be available on radio in March, from Bethesda, Md.-based Acoron Media. The set will be priced at $39.95, with individual episodes priced at $19.95.

Rain Castle Communications in Newton, Mass., is handling the project's Web site (www.pbs.org/riverofsong) for the series. The elaborate site includes a program overview, interviews with the featured artists, and a list of the featured artists, audio and video samples, Smithsonian FolkLife Festival articles on the regions surveyed in the films, and a teacher's guide to the series.

On Dec. 17, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., will host a kickoff event for "River Of Song" featuring DiFranco, an acoustic performance by the Bottle Rockets, and a joint set by Delafose and Cajun musician Christine Balfa.

Assistance in preparing this story was provided by Carrie Bell.

Featuring...
A NEW HOT 100 REFLECTS CHANGES IN THE MUSIC BUSINESS
(Continued from page 3)

retail stores and the broad spectrum of genres that were heard at top 40 radio. Those conditions have changed significantly in recent years: Radio has become increasingly segmented over the past two decades, and an increasing number of big radio hits have bypassed retail. With this issue's retooling of the Hot 100, Billboard seeks to utilize new applications of modern technology to delineate the extent to which the chart was originally steered.

As the Billboard 200's May 1999 cover story revealed, the improved data diversified the content of the chart, revealing the best sellers regardless of genre, the new Hot 100, with its expanded radio panel and the inclusion of increasingly prevalent airplay-only tracks, instantly becomes a more democratic forum. The goal is deceptively simple: to reveal the most popular songs in the United States. Period. End of sentence.

But while the goal was simple, the road that led to the methodology was long and arduous, and the resulting chart is light years from the legendarily bumpy. The journey began three years ago, when the only immediate conclusion that became obvious is that the demographics of the chart differ mark-

ers among labels and distribution executives as to the perfect recipe for this landmark chart.

As our exploration continued, it also became obvious that the chart's methodology, fashioned in 1991 when the list switched to Broadcast Data Systems' (BDS) radio-airplay impressions, the BDS data from SoundScan, no longer offered a con-

clusive view of the day's most popular songs.

Changes in label strategy mean that some tracks are not released to retail, while others are marketed late in the song's radio life. Thus, hugely popular hits like No Doubt's "Don't Speak" and Lil' Kim's "Candy" were at times released too late to arrive on the Hot 100. Country and rap songs that placed solely on the strength of sales, meanwhile, could only climb so high on the chart, because those artists' audiences were not reflected by our radio panel.

Months of thought, experimenta-
tion, and countless hours of discus-
sion led to this issue's unveiling of The Billboard Hot 100.

THE INGREDIENTS

The new chart features an all-encompassing radio panel of 755 sta-
tions, with R&B, adult R&B, main-
tstream and country outlets joining the old Hot 100 panel, which was confined to the mainstream top 40, rhythmic top 40, adult top 40, adult contemporary, and modern rock.

A select panel of small-market sta-
tions, representing markets that are not covered by BDS, continues to con-
tribute, but a new information source, that panel has been pruned to 23 stations. In the previous system, small-market stations accounted for roughly 10% of the chart's points, but in the new system, they encompass less than 5% of the point total.

In response to the increasing num-
ber of tracks with singles available at retail, a trend that has spread from rock, pop, and country to R&B in the past few years, airplay-only tracks now qualify for the chart. The panel of airplay-only tracks has been adjusted, in part to reflect the shrinking ranks of singles con-

sumers, from 40% of the chart's points.

The ratio refers to the chart's over-
all points and is not applied on a song-
for-song basis. In this system, there will be a greater emphasis on 5-20 songs that are driven more by retail points than by radio points. The shift in airplay-to-
sales ratio also allows radio-only tracks a healthier chance to compete with retail-available singles, although it will be difficult for a radio-only song to rise all the way to No. 1.

Furthermore, radio-only songs will not be eligible for the Hot 100 until they reach the top 75 of the Hot 100 Airplay chart, while retail-available singles can chart simply on the strength of retail sales.

Singles that have been made avail-
able to retail will be indicated on the chart with a star next to the title. In the future, we hope to provide a chart that accurately reflects any changes in retail affects chart position, the title will be designated by a red star.

RULES OF THE GAME

With the new chart come new chart rules.

In the past, the Greatest Gain-
er/Sales and Greatest Gainer/Airplay categories were confined to titles that ranked below the top 20. Now, those awards will go to the title showing the chart's largest sales gains and radio audience growth, regardless of

SOUNDSCAN TO COUNT ALBUM SALES AT CHRISTIAN SHOWS
(Continued from page 6)

the labels, retailers, and tours," he says. "As more retailers get involved with them, they'll be able to capture more retail dollars themselves at shows, because they depend heavily on those sales to live from one gig to the next. Therefore, many artists may opt to continue hanging their own sales rather than clutter with a retailer.

Some, too, are concerned that the inclusion of concert sales will skew the chart toward already-successful tours.

"That's an issue we've talked about," says Roland Lundy, president of Word Entertainment. "But at the same time, I don't see any other way to get the percentage of retail sales counting. Sure, you're always going to miss some. Even in the retail system, you miss some. But our goal is to get it more and more accurate, and I'm con-

vinced this is going to help that."

Brian Mitchell, director of mar-

keting for Provident Music Distribu-
tion, says the change is a "victory" in terms of accuracy and will be a plus for artists, labels, and retailers.

"Every label and every artist has an equal opportunity to have a retailer partner in selling at the event," he says. "The retailer's involvement is not applied in any particular level should be left out. Yes, there are some mid-level and smaller artists that depend on their own sales at the chart, which don't count ... but every label is aware of this, and it's open to everyone in the industry. It's fair game.

Concert sales can also be a boost to tour and retail, and related acts that are on major tours. Opening acts will have the opportunity to have their product scanned along with the headliners.

STARSong REFOCUSED
(Continued from page 10)

us from our decisions throughout their decision-making process, and we definitely appreciate that."

StarSong has recently been successful with church-oriented producers such as "Experiencing God and "Renewing The Heart Life". A sec-
ond "Renewing The Heart Life" pro-
ject is slated for early 1999, with a new "Passion" project scheduled for later in the year.

York says the decision to make StarSong an imprint came from EMI CMG and was not dictated by its cor-

porate parent. "I was the only one in the game when StarSong was purchased."

"The reason they acquired it was to get rid of the DSDN label," he says, "but the market has shifted so much since the time of that purchase."

WB STAFF CUTS
(Continued from page 8)

man, senior VP of marketing Jon Leshay, and senior VP of A&R, Jeff Berg.

In a prepared statement, Russ Thyret, chairman/CEO of Warner Bros. Records (U.S.), said, "While these things are never easy, this move has been especially difficult for all of us. Some of those who are leaving have been with us for Seemingly endless years, and have all made many important contributions to the success of our company over the years. He added that the cuts were necessary so that the label may "continue to be aggressively competitive."

LARRY FICK

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Taking a break from his current tour, Eddie Money presents the first Billboard Number One Flng ever to be received by a songwriter. The lucky recipient was Money’s management consultant, Jake Hooker. Hooker wrote Joan Jett & the Blackhearts No. 1 hit “I Love Rock and Roll.” The song topped the Billboard singles chart in February 1982 and has become one of the top-selling singles of all time. A reissue of the song is currently underway. Billboard “Number One” and “Top Ten” rings and pendants are awarded in recognition of chart achievement. (Verification of chart achievement is necessary prior to purchase.)

For more information, call 888-545-0088.

2 Insiders Provide Enticing Look At The Rock Life

The legends of rock & roll’s life on the road and backstage are the subject in two new offerings from Billboard Books. Penned by rock veterans, the books provide an insider’s glimpse of the lives behind the legends. First up, well-known audio engineer and production consultant Stuart “Only” Dawson writes about his lifetime in music in “Life on the Road.” The book captures the excitement, experimentation and unbridled enthusiasm of the ‘60s and ‘70s music scene as it chronicles life on the road with such legendary acts as the British Fleetwood Mac, the Byrds, Steely Dan, the Kinks, Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell, Lou Reed, the Mahavishnu Orchestra, Jeff Beck, U.D. King, and the Jeff Beck Band.

It all adds up to an outrageous, rollicking ride through a vibrant music scene. The 384-page book is available in bookstores now for $19.95.

“Backstage Passes and Backstabbing Bastards” goes a step further by covering five decades of backstage life in rock. The book provides a humorous and hard-hitting account of Al Kooper’s 40 years in the music business.

Kooper began his professional career in 1959 and has been a fixture on the rock scene ever since. Kooper’s early achievements included adding signature organ licks to Bob Dylan’s “Like a Rolling Stone,” joining the Blues Project, and forming Blood, Sweat & Tears. He went on to become a top session-alongside Jimi Hendrix, the Rolling Stones, the Who, Joe Cocker, Peter, Paul & Mary, Tom Petty, George Harrison, and B.B. King.

Along with vivid backstage tales of music history, Kooper recalls what life was really like in the ‘50s and ‘60s and the cultural events that have impacted music each decade up to and including the ‘80s. Sixty never-before-seen photographs from Kooper’s personal collection and a selected discography of many of his many sessions space out the book’s pages.

For anyone who wants to relive or know what it was like to be there, “Backstage Passes and Backstabbing Bastards” is a must-read. Available at bookstores now, the 352-page book is priced at $18.95.

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For more information, contact Sylvia Sirin at 212-536-3173.

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E-mail shell@billboard.com

THERE ARE ANGELS AMONG US. On the brand-new Billboard Hot 100, “I’m Your Angel” by R. Kelly & Celine Dion (Jive) is the first No. 1 single of the new chart year, which starts with this issue. It ascends 46-1, the biggest jump to No. 1 ever (although the previous week’s number reflects the song’s position on an unpublished test chart). It’s the second chart-topper for Kelly as an artist, following “Bump N’ Grind” in April 1994. It’s his third No. 1 as a songwriter, as he penned Michael Jackson’s “You Are Not Alone,” which topped the chart in September 1996. “Angel” is the fourth No. 1 hit for Dion, following “The Power Of Love” in February 1994, “Because You Loved Me” in March 1996, and “My Heart Will Go On” earlier this year.

That makes Dion only the second artist to have two No. 1 titles this calendar year, following Monica (“The Boy Is Mine” with Brandy and “The First Night”).

“I’m Your Angel” is the second superstar duet to top the chart this year (following “The Boy Is Mine”) and the 15th No. 1 for the year. That’s the highest number of songs to reach pole position since 1991, when there were 14.

The other angel flying high is “Tooned By An Angel: An Album” (500 Music). When it debuted at No. 8 on the Top Country Album chart last issue, it instantly became the highest-ranked TV soundtrack in the chart’s history, outscoring the album for “The Dukes Of Hazzard,” which peaked at No. 12 in 1982. In third and fourth place are “The Stars Of Ohe Haw” (No. 32 in 1970) and “Dallas: The Music Story” (No. 40 in 1988). “Tooned By An Angel,” now No. 3 on the country chart, takes a huge leap on The Billboard 200, bouncing 106-16 in an issue that has seven debuts in the top 15. On The Top Contemporary Christian chart, the soundtrack bulleted 3-1.

The huge move for “Tooned” means that Dion appears on three albums in the top 20. She’s featured on a “Touch” track; her duet with Kelly is on his album “R.” (Jive) which is No. 11; and her Christmas album, “These Are Special Times” (500 Music), is No. 5.

PRINCE’S TRIPLE CROWN: The song “When You Believe” by Whitney Houston & Mariah Carey appears on three different albums that debut on The Billboard 200 this issue. The soundtrack to “The Prince Of Egypt” (DreamWorks) bows at No. 34. Houston’s “My Love Is Your Love” (Arista) opens at No. 13 and Carey’s “#1’s” (Columbia) enters at No. 4. That’s not the only hit trick performed by “The Prince,” as all three soundtrack debuts have “The Inspirational” collection is new at No. 121, while the “Nashville” album enters at No. 139. All three debut in the top 10 of The Top Contemporary Christian chart.

MOMENT TO REMEMBER: The Adult Contemporary crown returns to Canadian hands as Shania Twain moves 2-1 with “From This Moment On” (Mercury). The only U.S. act to top this chart in the last 54 weeks has been the Backstreet Boys, who have just completed a seven-week reign with “I’ll Never Break Your Heart” (Jive).

On the Hot 100, Twain collects her second top five hit, as “Moment” shows up at No. 4. Her first top five title was “You’ve Still Got It,” which peaked at No. 2.

Two Angels We Have Heard On High

Billboard Music Awards

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For more information, contact Sylvia Sirin at 212-536-3173.

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