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THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSWEEKLY OF MUSIC, VIDEO AND HOME ENTERTAINMENT • www.billboard.com • JANUARY 24, 2004

HOT SPOTS



11 Crossover Cautions

Latin artists like Paulina Rubio are finding it hard to win back core fans after success in the mainstream market.



26 Keep An Eye On This Guy

Jai Rodriguez of hit TV series "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" prepares his debut album.



53 One To Remember

Josh Groban earns his first No. 1 on The Billboard 200 with "Closer."

Cuts Laying Label Era To Rest

New Industry Economics Spell End to Reid Reign

BY GAIL MITCHELL

The ouster of Antonio "L.A." Reid at Arista Records is one more death knell to an era when free-spending label execs made big bets on rising stars in hopes that mega-album sales would lead to huge payoffs.

Reid is highly regarded in the industry and known to possess an astute eye for talent. But in an era of declining sales, a tough economy

(Continued on page 65)



REID: OLD MATH



BRONFMAN: NEW MATH

WMG Braces For Slashes Once New Owners Arrive

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—Warner Music Group is looking to wring as much as \$225 million in costs from the company as a welcoming bouquet for its new owners.

Roger Ames sent a memo—which was first reported in The Hollywood Reporter—to the company's 5,300 employees Jan. 14, revealing WMG's efforts "to identify significant

(Continued on page 65)

Sexual Overload

Angst-Ridden Public's Mood For Raunch Sours

BY KEITH GIRARD and LIZ SKINNER

Christina vamps like a burlesque stripper. Britney's gone from school girl to slut. Pink is punk.

Many of music's reigning divas are partying like it's 1999, even though the world has become a darker, more uncertain and more anxious place since Sept. 11, 2001.

With the economy in a funk and record sales down for three years running, even established artists are sexing it up—no doubt encouraged by edgy industry executives.

The problem is, the public just doesn't seem to be in the mood for it, and the recent mediocre

(Continued on page 63)

Britney Spears, left, and Christina Aguilera vamp it up.



Photo: Kevin Winter / Getty Images

Photo: Tim Mossefelder / Getty Images



rosario de mil colores

The gypsy queen returns with her new album "de mil colores" rich in style with flamenco soul, her musical trade mark.

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No. 1 on this week's unpublished charts

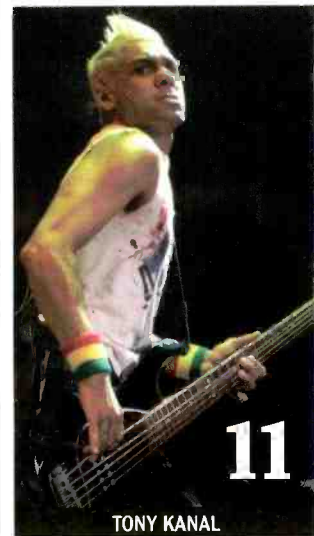
ARTIST	ALBUM
BLUES	
SOUNDTRACK	Martin Scorsese Presents The Best Of The Blues
CHRISTIAN	
SWITCHFOOT	The Beautiful Letdown
GOSPEL	
CECE WINANS	Throne Room
REGGAE	
SEAN PAUL	Dutty Rock
WORLD MUSIC	
KEALI'I REICHEL	Ke'alaokamaile
MUSIC VIDEO	
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TONY KANAL



LINKIN PARK

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“My thoughts are really irrelevant if I really want each [label] to be itself . . . I don't tell Dr. Dre what artists to sign.”

JIMMY IOVINE
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LA MALA RODRIGUEZ

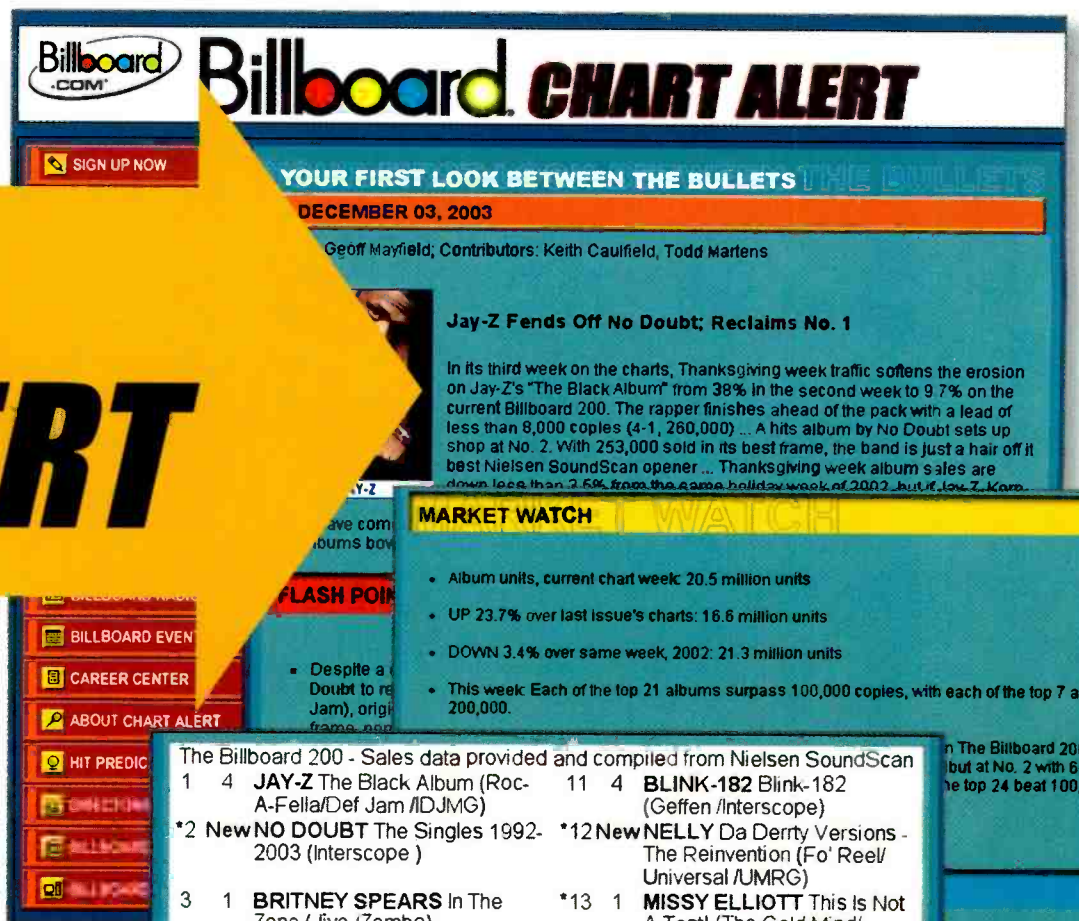
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Get the first look between the bullets!

Find out Wednesday what everyone
else finds out Thursday.



Billboard CHART ALERT

Get a jump on the competition
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Every Wednesday morning, you'll get
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weekly sales, chart news, industry
trends, and progress reports as well as
early chart data for the Billboard 200,
Country, R&B/Hip-Hop, Digital Tracks,
Heatseekers and more.

The Billboard 200 - Sales data provided and compiled from Nielsen SoundScan

1	4	JAY-Z The Black Album (Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam /DJMG)	11	4	BLINK-182 Blink-182 (Geffen /Interscope)
*2	New	NO DOUBT The Singles 1992-2003 (Interscope)	*12	New	NELLY Da Derry Versions - The Reinvention (Fo' Reel/Universal /UMRG)
3	1	BRITNEY SPEARS In The Zone (Jive /Zomba)	*13	1	MISSY ELLIOTT This Is Not A Test! (The Gold Mind/Elektra /EEG)
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*6	9	TOBY KEITH Shock'n Y'all (DreamWorks (Nashville) /Interscope)	16	9	SOUNDTRACK Tupac: Resurrection (Amaru /Interscope)
7	6	JOSH GROBAN Closer (143/ Reprise /Warner Bros.)	17	6	THE BEATLES Let It Be... Naked (Apple /Capitol)
8	2	G-UNIT Beg For Mercy (G-Unit/ Shady /Interscope)	18	2	SARAH MCLACHLAN Afterglow (Arista)
*9	19	KORN Take A Look In The Mirror (Immortal/Epic /Sony Music)	*19	19	ROD STEWART As Time Goes By ... The Great American Songbook Vol. II (J /RMG)
*10	10	OUTKAST Speakerboxxx/The Love Below (Arista)	*20	10	PUDDLE OF MUDD Life On Display (Geffen /Interscope)

* indicates titles with greatest sales gains this week

Go to billboard.com/chartalert for registration and more information.



FERNÁNDEZ: THE SINGER HAS JUST FINISHED FILMING THE MOVIE 'ZAPATA'

Fernández Reaches Out

Mexican Star Joins CAA, Eyes Film, Sponsorships

BY LEILA COBO

In a further sign of its expansion into different genres of Latin music, Creative Artists Agency (CAA) has signed pop/ranchera Mexican star Alejandro Fernández. *Billboard* has learned that CAA will represent Fernández across all areas within the U.S.

"We wanted to have a panorama that was more open in every regard," says Fernández, who has just finished filming the movie "Zapata," in which he plays the lead role.

"We're no longer going to focus only on concerts," adds the singer, who plays more than 100 dates in Mexico alone every year. He went on a U.S. arena tour last

year with his father, Vicente Fernández. "We're reaching out to sponsors, film, any of the things that can come after the movie."

"Zapata" is Fernández's first major foray into films. The movie was directed by Alfonso Arau ("Like Water for Chocolate") and will be released in Mexico in March. Distribution in the U.S. should be finalized in the coming weeks.

Fernández is the second ranchera star to sign to CAA in the past couple of months. Late last year, the agency signed Pepe Aguilar, another major star in the genre, who performs a blend of pop and ranchera music.

"We are expanding in the Latin realm in general, and

(Continued on page 8)

DreamWorks Keeps A&R Staff

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

LOS ANGELES—Despite 100 layoffs since losing its independence, DreamWorks Records' heart and soul—its A&R staff—will survive intact.

In an interview with *Billboard*, Interscope Geffen A&M (IGA) head Jimmy Iovine said he was impressed with the label's "old Warner Bros. school" of doing business.

"That's the heart and the soul of any record company," he says of A&R. "We're going to leave it the way it is."

Universal Music Group's benevolence comes even though DreamWorks' pop division has suffered, notwithstanding some recent big sellers.

UMG reached an agreement last

October to purchase the record division from DreamWorks SKG for \$100 million. The layoffs followed the Jan. 9 finalization of the sale.

Departing DreamWorks principal Michael Ostin, who ran the company with Mo Ostin and Lenny Waronker (see story, page 65), says the economy played a role in the sale.

"As a stand-alone company with no catalog and with asset values declining across the board, for us to sustain this given the pressures of the business was tough," he says.

"For the DreamWorks SKG company and its overall [film] focus, it makes a lot more sense for the DreamWorks [music] operation to be part of a larger entity," he adds.

(Continued on page 65)



IOVINE: 'A&R IS THE HEART OF ANY RECORD COMPANY'

USTR Puts S. Korea On Priority Watch List

BY MARK RUSSELL and STEVE McCLURE

SEOUL, South Korea—Understanding, anger, resigned acceptance—the range of reaction in South Korea to once again being put on the United States Trade Representative's Priority Watch List for intellectual property rights runs the gamut.

The USTR placed South Korea on its Priority Watch List Jan. 8, citing the lack of exclusive transmission rights for phonogram producers (meaning improper trading and streaming of music online) and rising film piracy.

Recording Industry Assn. of Korea

(RIAK) GM Yoo Jae Youn says that being put on the list "is a bad thing for the recording industry and other cultural industries."

Yoo says that the issue has legal and practical roots. "The problem is that the copyright amendment law [which would give greater protection to rights owners] was not passed last year, and online piracy is so frequent."

The Washington, D.C., report also emphasized two major areas. The first is South Korea's failure to pass legislation on transmission rights for sound recordings. The second is film piracy.

(Continued on page 64)



HAHN: CALLS USTR ANNOUNCEMENT 'NECESSARY'

Changes At BMG U.S. Latin

BY LEILA COBO

MIAMI—BMG's Latin operation is poised to begin a new cycle, with upper-management changes that will affect the entire region.

Adrian Posse steps down immediately as VP of A&R for BMG U.S. Latin, as well as VP of Latin A&R for BMG International.

Also departing are Fernando Ramos, director of national radio and Puerto Rico marketing, and Rafael Rodriguez, director of international marketing.

Juan Carlos Bernardez is now COO of BMG U.S. Latin and VP of the Latin region. Sources say more changes are expected in the coming weeks.

As COO, Bernardez will supervise the day-to-day operations of BMG U.S. Latin. As VP for the Latin region, he will

supervise the efforts of BMG's various operations in Latin America. He will be based in Miami and report directly to Maarten Steinkamp, president of international for BMG.

Steinkamp, in turn, continues as chairman of the U.S. Latin organization and will also oversee BMG's operations in the Latin region. He is based in New York.

Steinkamp took over the Latin operation last fall, after Rodolfo López-Negrete stepped down as senior VP of international/chairman of BMG U.S. Latin. Since then, BMG has been the only major label whose Latin operations report directly to corporate headquarters as opposed to a regional head.

Last November, in a conversation with *Billboard*, Steinkamp said he was planning to implement region-wide

changes by this month. The biggest changes, he said at the time, would take place in the U.S. Latin operation.

"We need to refocus what the U.S. Latin company is," he said. "This is a perfect moment for [BMG U.S. Latin] to reorganize itself."

Among other things, Steinkamp said he was planning to revise the label's roster in an effort to strengthen its regional Mexican representation. He also noted that several contracts were no longer economically viable for the company and would be examined.

Last year, Posse—a songwriter and A&R veteran—was named interim managing director for the label. At the time, he was BMG's VP of A&R for the Latin region and championed such projects as Brazilian Alexandre Pires' Spanish-language career.



CLARKSON, LEFT, AND AIKEN: HEADING OUT ON THE ROAD TOGETHER

'Idol' Isn't Idle

Promoters Put More Contestants On Tour

BY RAY WADDELL

The "American Idol" franchise continues, with an upcoming co-headlining tour by 2002 winner Kelly Clarkson and 2003 runner-up Clay Aiken.

The Clarkson/Aiken tour will play cut-down arenas, beginning Feb. 24 at the Charlotte (N.C.) Coliseum and running through April 16. Venue capacity will be reduced, typically through curtaining systems, with the ability to expand if ticket sales warrant.

The entire route of about 30 shows is expected to be announced Jan. 19, the same day a third edition of the popular "American Idol" TV series begins on Fox.

Meanwhile, 2003 "American Idol" winner Ruben Studdard will embark on his own headlining tour this March or April, according to Jeff Frasco, agent responsible for the "American Idol"-related tours at Creative Artists Agency.

Frasco says Studdard's later start on the road has more to do with timing than any other factor; Aiken's first album, "Measure of a Man," dropped Oct. 14, 2003, while Studdard's "Soulful" did not

hit the streets until Dec. 9. Clarkson's "Thankful" came out April 15 last year.

"All three of these artists are selling records," Frasco says. They are also expected to sell tickets, given the success of past "American Idol"-related tours. The first American Idols tour in 2002, featuring the 10 finalists, grossed \$8.1 million and drew 258,526 to 30 shows, according to Billboard Boxscore.

The 2003 tour nearly doubled that take, at slightly less than \$16 million and attendance of 411,005 from 41 shows.

The promoter for the Clarkson/Aiken tour, which goes on sale Jan. 24, is AEG Live. A third American Idols tour is planned for this summer, likely to start in July.

The success of the "American Idol" brand at retail and the box office heralds a breakthrough strategy in artist development, though Frasco stops short of saying this is the best way to break a pop artist today.

"This is a way to break an artist," he emphasizes. "We'll see what happens if it becomes the way to break an artist."



BRITS CO-CHAIRMEN PETER JAMIESON, LEFT, AND GRAINGE: READY TO PARTY

The Brit Awards Loosen Up

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—"Raising the bar" is how the organizers of the 24th Brit Awards are approaching this year's edition of the British music show.

"This year, we've looked at all the aspects of the show and looked at where things could be improved," says Brits co-chairman Lucian Grainge, who was appointed last year for a three-year term.

"The Grammys or the MTV Awards have their ethos and flavor, but what makes the Brits special is that it is a U.K. show," Grainge adds. "It is the highlight in the calendar in the U.K.; it is the music TV event in the U.K."

Interest in the show has intensified, judging by the media coverage after the Brits nominees were announced Jan. 12.

(Continued on page 64)

Isley's New Thing: Fashion Furs

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

Hollywood. Paris runways. Hip-hop clubs. Fur is everywhere. But long before the arrival of the "bling-bling" culture, fur was always an integral part of Grammy Award winner Ronald Isley's wardrobe.

Fashion, Isley says, has played an important role in the Isley Brothers' stage shows and videos. The same is also true of Isley's alter ego, Mr. Biggs.

Now, after making sartorial statements for more than four decades, Isley is entering into a three-year partnership with Tandler Furs in New York for the Ronald Isley aka Mr. Biggs Fur Collection.

The men's collection—Isley's first fashion-oriented endorsement—debuts Feb. 23-26 at MAGIC, the annual apparel convention in Las Vegas. Isley will be on hand to help launch his line.

"For me, it has always been important to maintain a unique style," Isley says. "If you look back at old Isley Brothers albums, you'll see us in chinchilla. This was long before rappers discovered fur."

Isley's Mr. Biggs character only increases the fur usage. "People always ask me where they can get the 'Mr. Biggs coat,'" he notes. "There seems to be great interest in what I wear."

This is not lost on Tandler Furs CEO Larry Marchfeld. "Throughout the years, Ronald has always embraced fur," Marchfeld says. "And right now, fur has never been bigger in the urban scene. The timing for this partnership could not be better."

The men's fur business, particularly in urban markets, has increased during the past three years, Marchfeld maintains. "Currently, 25% of our business comes from our men's line."

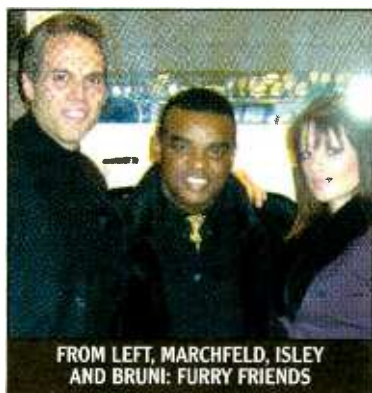
According to Tandler director of sales/marketing Victoria Bruni, Isley's first outerwear line is 50 pieces strong and includes chinchilla, sable, fox, coyote, rex rabbit and mink.

To make this collection work, Isley says it was imperative that each design reflect his own "sophisticated edge."

Additionally, Isley says he worked closely with Tandler's designers as well as his own designers. "My name is on this collection," he says. "It must be a true reflection of who I am as Mr. Biggs."

To ensure that a wide range of people will embrace the collection, which ships in September, suggested retail prices will range from \$795 to \$24,000 per item.

Several specialty retailers, including Freshwear in Chicago and Ditrach Furs in Detroit, have signed on to carry the line.



FROM LEFT, MARCHFELD, ISLEY AND BRUNI: FURRY FRIENDS

P2P Usage Rises

BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—New data indicates that illegal downloading in the final months of 2003 increased slightly.

The NPD Group tells *Billboard* that its MusicWatch Digital service reports that the number of households downloading digital music files was up 14% in November 2003 compared with two months before. MusicWatch Digital monitors household usage of peer-to-peer services directly from panelists' PCs.

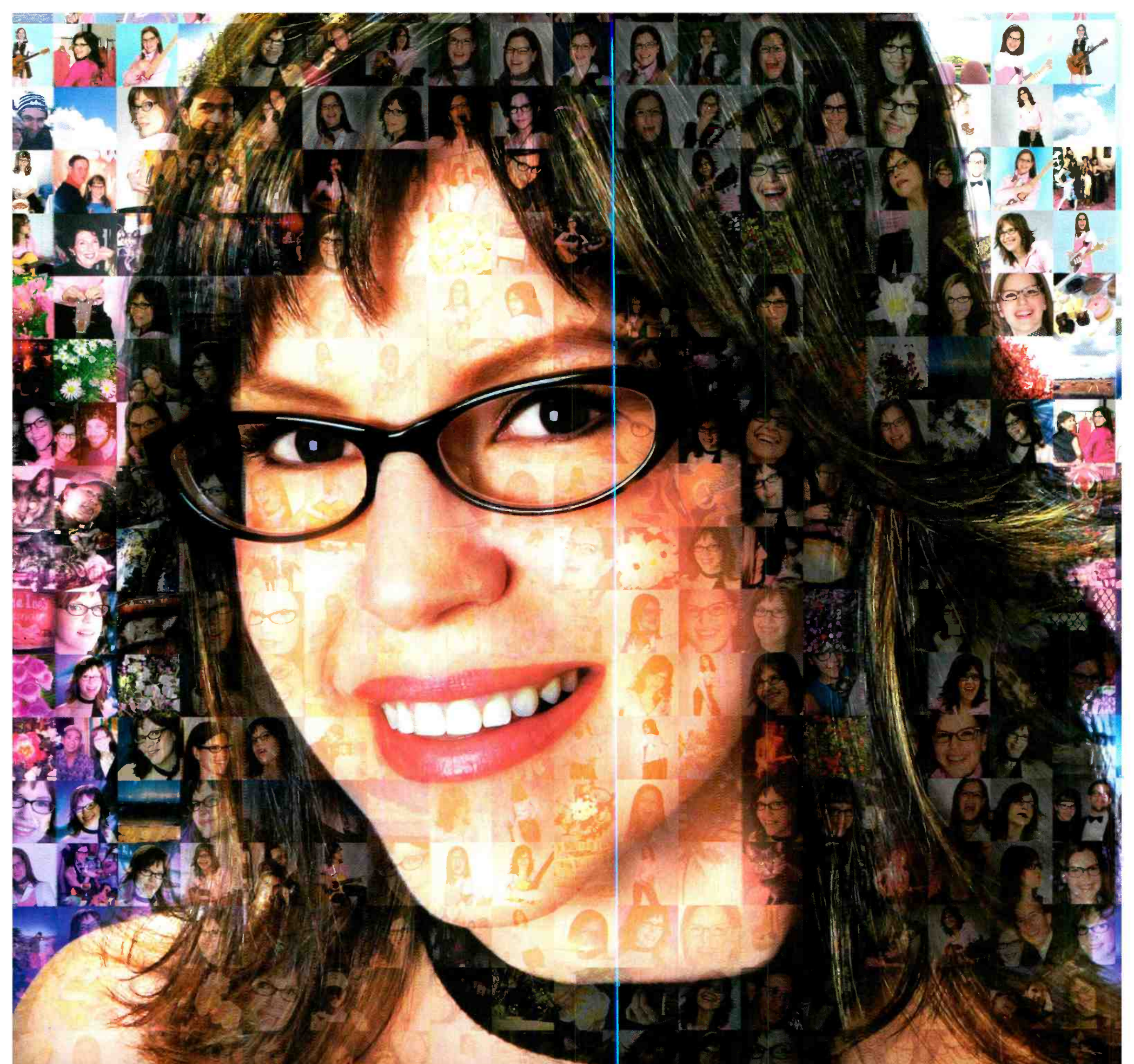
This upturn comes after six straight months of decline in digital file acquisition since April 2003, when the Recording Industry Assn. of America

began its campaign of going after individual file sharers with legal action.

Separate consumer-reported information gleaned from NPD's ongoing MusicLab survey confirms the upward trend noted by MusicWatch Digital as well as a long-term decline.

MusicLab reported that 20 million individuals said they downloaded music from P2P services in May 2003, 18 million in July and 11 million in September. But beginning in November, the number of individual file sharers grew to 12 million. That is still off 40% from the May numbers.

Last week, the Pew Internet Project stated that illegal downloading was off by as much as 50% (*Billboard*, Jan. 17).



Are You Experienced?

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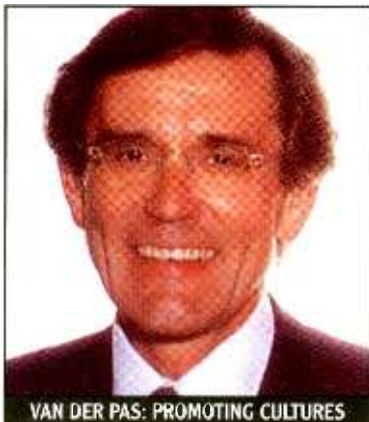
BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—A new music awards ceremony has been added to Europe's music events calendar.

The Border Breakers Awards honor up-and-coming European talent whose works have started to travel across frontiers within the European Union.

The project is organized and sponsored by the European Commission (EC)—the EU's executive body—in collaboration with music industry lobbying body the European Music Office (EMO), the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), European indie labels association Impala, European authors rights organization GESAC and international music publishers' organization ICMP/CIEM.

The awards are based on a concept



VAN DER PAS: PROMOTING CULTURES

pioneered by former Billboard Information Group publication Music & Media, which ceased publishing in 2003. Music & Media's Border Breakers charts tracked artists and songs that

were selling or picking up airplay outside of their country of origin.

The nine winners of the inaugural awards will be announced during the MIDEM trade show in Cannes, France, at a Jan. 25 ceremony to be attended by French minister of culture Jean-Jacques Aillagon.

The awards recognize debut albums by acts from any EU country that have been most successfully sold outside their country of origin between Nov. 27, 2002, and Nov. 26, 2003. The winners have been selected based on data supplied by the Billboard Information Group.

Brussels-based Nikolaus Van der Pas, director general at the EC's Directorate General for Education and Culture, has been instrumental in getting the proj-

(Continued on page 63)

Nashville Mourns Max Barnes

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—The country songwriting community lost one of its most acclaimed members with the Jan. 11 passing of Max D. Barnes. Barnes, 67, died from pneumonia.

"Max D. Barnes and his songs are part of the foundation of Music Row, and his passing is a tremendous loss," says BMI presi-



MAX D. BARNES

dent/CEO Frances Preston, who called him "a perfect gentleman and a friend to all songwriters."

Barnes' catalog includes such hits as George Jones' "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes?," Vern Gosdin's "Chiseled in Stone" and Vince Gill's "Look at Us." The last two songs won the Country Music Assn.'s song of the year honors in 1989 and 1992, respectively. Barnes was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Assn. International's Hall of Fame in 1992.

"I'll never forget the time I took Max my idea for 'Look at Us,'" Gill recalls. "It started out as a negative song about a relationship. With Max's great wisdom, the song turned into a positive

message about love. It was a great learning experience for a young songwriter to sit down with one of the true great country songwriters of all time."

Born July 24, 1936, in Hard-scratch, Iowa, Max Duane Barnes moved to Nashville in 1973 to pursue a music career.

Barnes co-wrote "Chiseled in Stone" with Gosdin after losing his 18-year-old son in a car accident. Seeing his son's tombstone inspired the memorable line "You don't know about lonely 'til it's chiseled in stone."

He is survived by his wife, Patsy; his daughter, Genevieve Kephart; and son, Max T. Barnes, who is also a successful songwriter.

Randy VanWarmer, 48, Dies

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—From Kenny Rogers to pop chanteuse Laura Branigan to Ireland's Sandy Kelly, artists across multiple genres benefited from the songwriting talents of Randy VanWarmer. The Nashville-based singer/songwriter died Jan. 12 in Seattle, where he had been undergoing treatment for leukemia. He was 48.

"Everyone who met Randy loved him," ASCAP senior VP Connie Bradley says. "He was one of the sweetest people and a creative genius. He was so loved and respected."

Born Randall Van Wormer March 30, 1955, the Colorado native exploded onto the pop music scene as an artist in 1979 with the hit "Just When I Needed

You Most." Released on the Bearsville label, the ballad peaked at No. 4 on The Billboard Hot 100 and crossed over to the country chart.

VanWarmer recorded four albums for Bears-ville/Warner Bros. before moving to Nashville-based 16th Avenue Records in the late 1980s. He charted two more country singles as an artist before turning his focus to songwriting.

VanWarmer penned such hits as Oak Ridge Boys' "I Guess It Never Hurts to Hurt Sometimes," Alabama's "I'm in a



RANDY VANWARMER

Hurry (And Don't Know Why)" and Michael Johnson's "I Will Whisper Your Name." Numerous artists recorded his songs, among them Dolly Parton, Chet Atkins and Conway Twitty.

"Our shows would be empty without a Randy VanWarmer song," Oak Ridge Boy Joe Bonsall says. "More than just a great songwriter, Randy VanWarmer was a very dear friend to all of us. My heart is so very heavy."

VanWarmer's music also reached an international audience. In the 1990s, he had a deal with JVC Victor that produced two albums, "Sun, Moon and Stars" and "Third Child," in Japan. The latter was also released in the U.K. on Elvis Costello's Demon Records.

He is survived by his wife/manager, Suzi; his mother; and three brothers.

NEWSLINE

THE WEEK IN BRIEF

MTV Networks is relaunching College Television Network (CTN) Jan. 20 under the new name of mtvU (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 22, 2003). The new network will be headed by MTV/MTV2/MTV Films president Van Toffler, who holds the same title for mtvU. CTN GM Stephen Friedman will continue in the same role at mtvU, which MTV Networks says is available at more than 720 U.S. college campuses. New York-based mtvU will have a new staff of VJs and new programming, including "The Cut" promotion, which spotlights new and developing artists.

CARLA HAY

Universal Music Germany chairman/CEO Tim Renner is quitting the Berlin-based company at the end of January, according to a statement. London-based Universal Music International (UMI) chairman/CEO Jorgen Larsen will assume Renner's responsibilities until a successor is appointed in the second half of the year. Universal Music Germany president Vico Antippas continues in his current role. The UMI statement indicated that the deteriorating situation in the German market is forcing the company to make "substantial savings in all areas of the business."

LARS BRANDLE

Federal Communications Commission chairman Michael Powell has asked his fellow commissioners to overturn a ruling by the FCC's enforcement bureau. Last October, it found U2 frontman Bono's use of the word "fucking" during the January 2003 Golden Globes telecast not to be indecent because it was used as an adjective rather than as a description of a sexual function. Since then, there are plans for a House hearing and the introduction of legislation that would slam the door on indecent talk in any context (Billboard, Dec. 27). Speaking at a D.C. luncheon Jan. 14, Powell called on Congress to authorize a ten-fold increase in broadcast fines for indecency and obscenity. Powell said the present maximum fine of \$27,500 is "just a cost of doing business [to broadcasters]. That has to change."

BILL HOLLAND

Vivendi Universal has appointed three new executives to lead its Vivendi Universal Games unit. Rene Penisson will be chairman, Bruce Hack will be CEO and Jean-François Grollemund will be CFO. Upcoming releases include its first online multi-player game, "World of Warcraft," and "Half-Life 2."

JILL KIPNIS

Seth G. Abraham has left his position as president of Madison Square Garden/Radio City Entertainment. A successor has not been named. Abraham came to MSG in October 2000. Prior to joining, Abraham spent nearly 24 years at Home Box Office, a division of Time Warner, where his last position was president of Time Warner Sports, which he held from 1990 until 2000. MSG is a part of Madison Square Garden LP. Cablevision Systems owns a majority interest in MSG LP, which includes the New York Knicks (NBA), the New York Rangers (NHL), the New York Liberty (WNBA), MSG Network and Fox Sports Net.

RAY WADDELL

Geffen has ended its contract with Rawkus, sources say. The label, home to such artists as Mos Def and Talib Kweli, was formerly affiliated with MCA Records before the latter was folded into Geffen. A Geffen spokesperson said the label had no comment.

RASHAUN HALL and GAIL MITCHELL

Fernandez

Continued from page 5

we are looking for artists that we feel are going to have a long career in any genre," says Allison Winkler, an agent at CAA.

Although the agency has long represented crossover stars Julio Iglesias and Gloria Estefan, its first solely Spanish language act was Mexican rock band Maná, which CAA signed seven years ago.

CAA's roster also includes Ricky Martin, Enrique Iglesias, Alejandro Sanz, Carlos Santana, Sin Bandera, Soraya, Inspector, Molotov, Robi Rosa, Laura Pausini and Julio Iglesias Jr.

Prior to signing with CAA, Fernández was represented in the U.S. by

Hauser/CIE, whose president, Ralph Hauser, died last year.

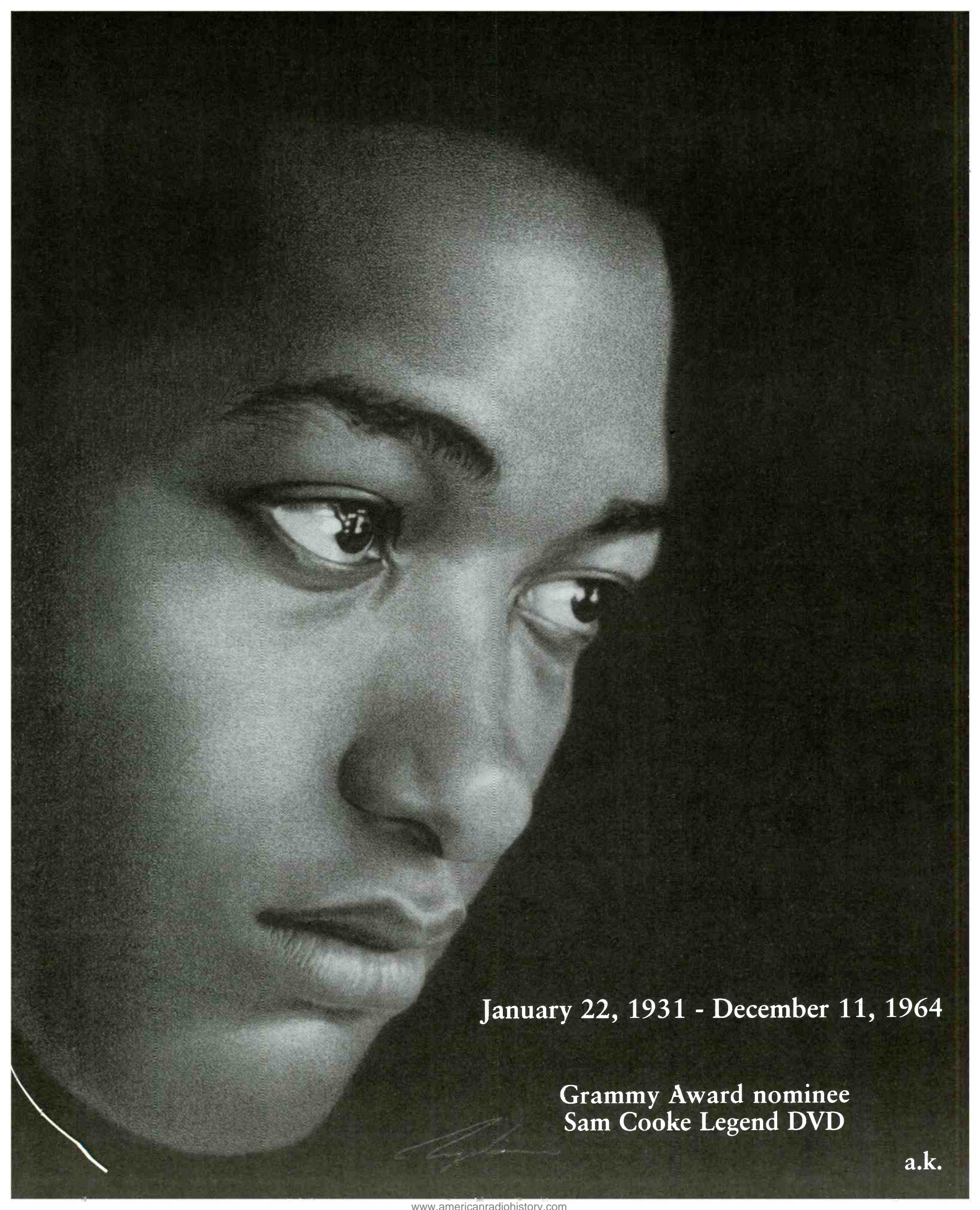
Fernández's manager, Carlos de la Torre, describes his client's long-standing relationship with Hauser as "wonderful."

But the CAA agreement, he says, is the beginning of a "new cycle" for Fernández in the U.S.

Part of the motivation, de la Torre says, was Fernández's role in "Zapata." "CAA has film and TV departments, and Alejandro has always said he's interested in acting."

Fernández is set to begin recording his upcoming album of romantic ballads for Sony with producer Kike Santander in the next couple of months.

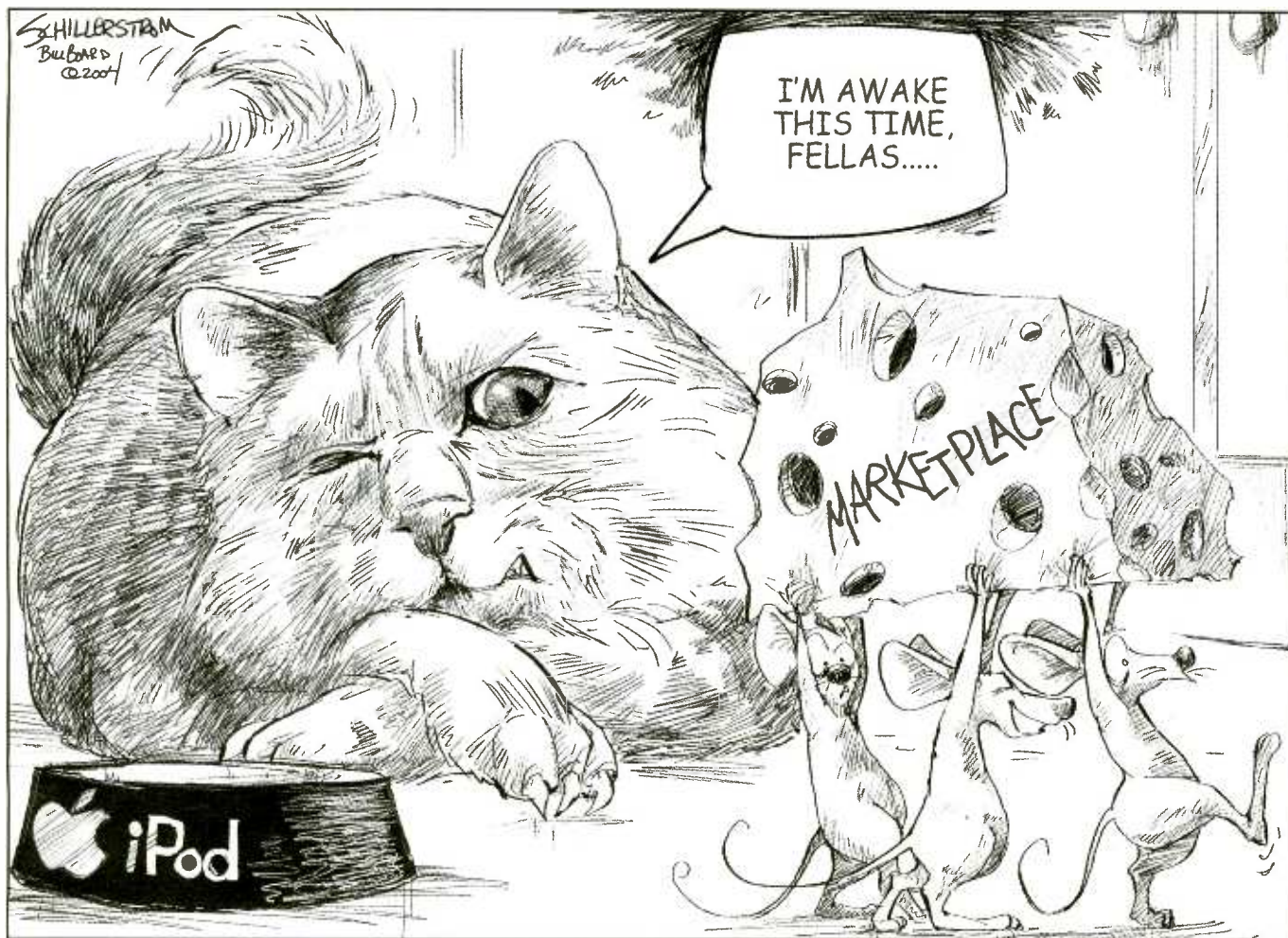
In the meantime, Fernández will promote the single "Lucharé Por tu Amor," which is the theme song for "Zapata" and will be included in the film's soundtrack.



January 22, 1931 - December 11, 1964

Grammy Award nominee
Sam Cooke Legend DVD

a.k.



Meeting The Digital Future

Billboard has long been the foremost authority on the music industry, and our goal is to continue strengthening our role as the source for music charts, news, reviews, interviews, profiles and analysis.

As part of our effort to assist the industry in meeting its challenges, *Billboard* is expanding its coverage on several fronts and will open a San Francisco bureau to cover the rapidly evolving digital music, digital games, DVD, video and digital home entertainment industries.

The move is part of a realignment of editorial operations that began last year, when *Billboard* and its ancillary operations were consolidated into the *Billboard* Information Group. The goal was to integrate our multiple brands under one roof to meet the needs of readers and customers in a rapidly changing, 24/7 news environment.

Billboard magazine, *Billboard* specials, Airplay Monitor, billboard.com and billboard.biz—a new Web site designed especially for the industry—will provide a powerful platform to deliver breaking news, analysis and research to the trade

and to consumers around the clock.

Here are some of the other changes:

- Melinda Newman will become *Billboard* talent editor in conjunction with editor-in-chief Keith Girard. She will continue her duties as West Coast bureau chief.
- Ken Schlager will assume responsibility for *Billboard's* e-newsletter and research group in addition to his current duties as executive editor.

Billboard is expanding its coverage on several fronts and will open a San Francisco bureau.

- Christopher Walsh, *Billboard's* pro audio writer, has been named a senior writer and will inaugurate regular, full-time coverage of the musical instrument industry, including digital audio workstations and pro audio.
- Chuck Taylor will become top 40 managing editor of Airplay Monitor and continue as the voice of *Billboard* Radio.
- Rashaun Hall will become R&B edi-

tor for Airplay Monitor and continue to write his bimonthly Beats & Rhymes column for *Billboard*.

- Gail Mitchell will cover R&B and hip-hop for *Billboard* and work with Hall on R&B coverage in Monitor.

- Carolyn Horwitz, currently managing editor of *Billboard* Bulletin, will become managing editor of billboard.biz.

- Carla Hay will become editor of *Billboard's* BackBeat feature in addition to her other duties.

- Phyllis Stark, *Billboard's* Nashville bureau chief, will move from senior writer to senior editor, with a more direct role in shaping music coverage.

- Michael Paoletta, *Billboard* senior writer, will now edit singles as well as album reviews.

- Deborah Evans Price will take over our gospel column in addition to her *Christian* music column.

The music industry faces many challenges, but we believe the future is full of potential. This move ensures that *Billboard* will remain a key partner as the industry reinvents itself. This year is our 110th anniversary, and we plan many more exciting changes. Stay tuned.

Does something make you jump and shout? Write a letter to the Editor! Mail to Keith Girard, Editor-in-Chief, *Billboard*, 770 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, N.Y., 10003, or e-mail to letters@billboard.com. Include name, title, address and phone number for verification. Letters should be concise and may be edited. Names can be withheld, if requested, at the discretion of the editor. All submissions published shall become the sole property of *Billboard*, which shall own the copyright in whole or part, for publication.

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Manatt Phelps & Phillips CEO Paul H. Irving discusses his firm's recent acquisitions



MUSIC



Lee Williams & the Spiritual QC's collect five trophies at gospel's Stellar Awards

POP / ROCK / COUNTRY / R&B / HIP-HOP / LATIN / DANCE / TOURING

Kanal Reworks '80s Cuts On Sandler Soundtrack

While **No Doubt** takes a brief hiatus to work on various projects, bassist **Tony Kanal** has just completed work on music for **Adam Sandler's** new movie, "50 First Dates."

Wonder's tune will be the first single from the Maverick Records soundtrack, which streets Feb. 3. The movie opens Feb. 13.

TOGETHER AGAIN:

Wilson Phillips is reuniting for its first album in 12 years. In May, Columbia Records will release "Pacific Coast Highway."

The group, which consists of **Carnie** and **Wendy Wilson** and **Chynna Phillips**, will cover songs first made famous by **the Beach Boys**—helmed by the

Wilson's father **Brian**—and **the Mamas & the Papas**, which included Phillips' parents, **John** and **Michelle**. Also included will be classic songs recorded by **Jackson Browne**, **Linda Ronstadt** and **the Eagles**. **Peter Asher** is producing.

"We were more than halfway through writing our third album when Sony approached us," Carnie Wilson tells *Billboard*. "We thought, 'What better way to let the public know we are back together in full force than by recording songs that people are familiar with and can sing along to.'"

Wilson Phillips, which is managed by **Winston Simone** and **David Simone** of Deston Entertainment, last recorded together for the now-shuttered SBK Records. Columbia declined to comment on whether this was a one-off deal or a long-term record contract.

LICK IT UP: **Jessica Simpson** has created her own line of fragrance (Continued on page 15)

The Beat

By Melinda Newman
mnewman@billboard.com



"The soundtrack is all '80s songs done reggae style," says Kanal, who produced three tracks. "I did the **Psychedelic Furs**' 'Ghost in You' with **Mark McGrath** singing, 'Hold Me Now' by the **Thompson Twins** with **Wayne Wonder** singing and then I did **Bryan Ferry**'s 'Slave to Love' with **Elan** singing." Kanal is also working on Elan's own album.



KANAL: GIVES '80s TUNES A REGGAE SPIN



RUBIO: EQUALLY HOT IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH



IGLESIAS: 'ESCAPE' IN ENGLISH SOLD 3.4 MILLION COPIES

Latin Acts Tread Carefully With Crossover Bids

BY LEILA COBO

They say you can never go home again.

And while many Latin acts are trying to disprove that maxim, they are finding a grain of truth in it as they attempt to return to their initial fan bases after recording in English.

Conversely, some Latin acts are finding it difficult to break into the English market after years of success in the Spanish market.

This year Shakira, Marc Anthony and Paulina Rubio will all release new Spanish albums following various degrees of success with English releases. Also, Ricky Martin will deliver his first English album in a number of years.

But the crossover phenomenon, once regarded as a slam-dunk to gain broader exposure and bigger audiences

for Latin acts, is treated by labels with more caution in the face of shrinking budgets and diminished sales across the board.

That's because even when targeting the English audience, specific care must still be given to the Latin artist's original Spanish fan base through additional tracks in Spanish, music videos and other costly marketing tactics. "A crossover act has to record twice, film two videos, do two separate promotions," says Emilio Estefan, who has produced albums for Shakira and Gloria Estefan.

Nowadays, he says, with sales slowing, it is harder to justify that investment in major crossover acts, unless the label believes the artist can achieve international success. "You have to be persistent, you have to invest money and you have to look for artists who not only have a U.S. market" (Continued on page 14)

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Supreme Court Unscrambles DVD Descrambling Decision

There's a war raging in cyberspace, and this time it is the movie industry that's feeling the heat.

The U.S. Supreme Court reversed an emergency stay on a case involving DVD descrambling Jan. 3.

In so doing, the high court affirmed a decision of the California Supreme Court, which had ruled that the entertainment industry could not force a Texas resident who had published DVD descrambling software on the Internet to stand trial in California.

This means that the defendant, **Matthew Pavlovich**, who posted the software called DeCSS, is able to distribute the program online.

To the high court, it is a question of geography: The court says Pavlovich cannot be sued in California because he is a Texas resident who does not have "substantial ties" to the Golden State.

"The Supreme Court wisely recognized that there is no need for an emergency stay to prevent Mr. Pavlovich from publishing DeCSS," Cohn adds.

Legal Matters
By Samantha Chang
schang@billboard.com



The decision affects numerous defendants, but the sole California resident is **Andrew Bunner**.

Bunner isn't fighting the jurisdictional issue but is arguing that he has a First Amendment right to distribute the software.

A California appeals court in 2001 agreed, saying that barring Bunner from future disclosures of DeCSS was "a restraint on [his] First Amendment right."

Bunner's case is awaiting an argument date before the California Supreme Court.

A similar case in Europe has already been resolved.

Norwegian teenager **Jon Johansen** was acquitted Jan. 7 of criminal charges for writing and publishing DeCSS.

In 1999, 15-year-old Johansen published DeCSS on the Internet. He used the program to watch his own DVDs on his Linux computer.

Under tremendous pressure from the Motion Picture Assn. of America, the Norwegian Economic Crime Unit charged Johansen with violating a Norwegian criminal code that outlaws breaking into another person's locked property to gain access to privileged data.

The case was the first time the Norwegian government had attempted to punish an individual for accessing his own property.

DeCSS, which is distributed for free, enables people to play DVDs without technological restrictions, such as forced watching of commercials imposed by movie studios.

The program widely became popular shortly after its dubious debut, being distributed online by thousands of individuals worldwide the first year it was posted.

URGE TO MERGE: Manatt Phelps & Phillips is on a roll.

Through its acquisition last month of New York litigation boutique Parcher Hayes & Snyder, Los Angeles-based Manatt is now arguably the

largest bicoastal entertainment law firm in the world.

"This move greatly enhances our ability to serve our clients in New York and on a national scale," says **Paul H. Irving**, Manatt CEO/managing partner.

But word in the legal community is that the buying binge isn't over yet for this 290-lawyer powerhouse.

With a stunning 40 to 50 lawyers in its entertainment, media and advertising law practice, Manatt's A-list client roster includes the **Rolling Stones**, **Bruce Springsteen**, **Barbra Streisand**, **Cher**, **Bob Dylan**, **Paul Simon**, **Eagles**, **Michael Douglas**, **Robin Williams**, **Time Warner**, **Sony**, **DreamWorks**, **Yahoo**, **ESPN** and **HBO**.

Twelve Parcher attorneys have joined Manatt: partners **Peter Parcher**, **Steven Hayes**, **Orin Snyder**, **Cynthia Arato** and **Gregory Clarick**; counsels **Andrew DeVore**, **Robert Jacobs** and **Alon Markowitz**; and associates **Marc Isserles**, **Avi Weitzman**, **Monica Youn** and **Elise Zealand**. The move boosts Manatt's New York office to 65 lawyers.

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IRVING: ENHANCING CLIENT-SERVICE ABILITY

Pavlovich's legal woes began in 1999, when a group of film studios and consumer electronics makers sued hundreds of people, including Pavlovich, for distributing DeCSS online, citing a violation of California trade secret laws. A state judge ruled for the plaintiffs and granted an injunction.

Three years later, the California Supreme Court ruled that Pavlovich could not be sued for violating state trade secrets simply because he knew that his actions could hurt the state's film industry.

In the latest ruling, U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Sandra Day O'Connor** lifted the injunction, saying there was no need to keep DeCSS a secret.

Internet groups wholeheartedly support the decision.

"The entertainment companies should stop pretending that DeCSS is a secret," says **Cindy Cohn**, legal director of the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

IN STORES NOW

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Williams Wins Five Stellar Awards

"Move over, industry, because this runaway train is coming through" was the response of MCG Records president **James Bullard** after his top-selling act, **Lee Williams & the Spiritual QCs**,



LEE WILLIAMS & THE SPIRITUAL QCS

group, pocketed five trophies at the 19th annual Stellar Gospel Music Awards, held Jan. 10 in Houston.

The group beat out the likes of **Rance Allen** and **Mary Mary** to be named the year's top group/duo for its work on its current CD, "Right on Time: Live in Memphis." Williams was also named traditional male vocalist of the year.

Bullard insisted that the win helps bring "modern classic gospel" center stage. A humbled Williams only said, "God has shone favor. I'm sure that the Stellers will have some impact, and for that I'm grateful."

Vickie Winans, who led in nominations with eight, earned four awards (five if you count the award her album won for its packaging), including artist of the year. She hopes to parlay the momentum

into excitement for her latest endeavor, a stage play she'll produce and star in, titled "Torn Between Two Lovers," and set to kick off nine months of touring March 2 in Lafayette, La.

Winans said, "As an artist, I don't know what I do to receive an award, but it feels good when the industry at large pats you on the back."

Also among the night's big winners was **Byron Cage**, who took home four golden-flamed statuettes, including male vocalist of the year and song of the year for "The Presence of the Lord Is Here."

More than 3,000 people attended the two-hour event, hosted by **Kirk Franklin**, **Yolanda Adams** and **Donnie McClurkin**.

In The Spirit
By Lisa Collins
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Music Hall of Fame, with **Smokey Robinson** doing the honors; **Patti LaBelle's** presentation of the esteemed James Cleveland Award to **Shirley Caesar**, as Adams sang a hymn-medley tribute; and performances from **CeCe Winans**, **Mary Mary**, **Hezekiah Walker** and **Tonex**, who— with **Sheila E.** on percussion— brought down the house.

A complete list of award winners may be found at stellarawards.com.

SIGNING OFF: This column will be my last for *Billboard*. In signing off, I want to thank my co-workers at the magazine, my editor **Ken Schlager** (from whom I have learned so much) and all my friends and constituents in gospel who have helped keep me in the spirit. God bless you all. Peace.

Latin Acts

Continued from page 11

ket but who can be global," Estefan says. "Obviously, the possibility of a crossover [to English] opens the door to an American market, and that's beneficial," says John Echevarría, president of Universal Music Latino. "But it's a double-edged sword. Do it well, and it's marvelous. Do it wrong, and it can hurt your fan base."

Martin did it well with his 1999 self-titled English-language debut. According to Nielsen SoundScan, it has sold 7 million units in the U.S. alone. Enrique Iglesias' 2001 "Escape," his second English-language album, sold 3.4 million copies, while Shakira's 2002 English-language debut, "Laundry Service," sold 3.3 million. Perhaps more importantly, all these albums racked up impressive global sales as well.

"To me, being Latino is an advantage," Iglesias says. "In the world of Anglo pop, where there aren't that many Latinos, I look at it as an advantage. I think it's cool. It has opened my mind musically in so many ways. Even if my music doesn't sound Latin."

But buyers are fickle, and success in one language doesn't guarantee success in another.

Iglesias' most recent English-language album, "7," has sold only 260,000 copies since its release last November, only slightly more than his 2001 Spanish-language release, "Quizás," which scanned 241,000 copies. Those numbers are considered high for a Spanish-language release but not for a major English-language artist, and not for an artist who is supposed to have two fan bases.

Similarly, Thalía's self-titled Spanish-language disc scanned 179,000 copies, while her English debut of the same name has scanned only 184,000 copies since its release last summer, although

it debuted at No. 7 on The Billboard 200.

Rubio scanned 480,000 copies of her 2000 Spanish-language album "Paulina." It was the biggest-selling Spanish-language album for 2001, according to the *Billboard* year-end charts. But her English-language debut, "Border Girl," has scanned 270,000 copies.

LATIN EXPLOSION?

Crossover acts, of course, are not new. Long before Martin or Estefan, there were many cases of Latin artists recording in English and vice versa, from Jose Feliciano, Xavier Cugat and Julio Iglesias to Eydie Gorme and Paul Anka.

But the new wave of crossovers from the late 1990s was dubbed the "Latin explosion" by the media and garnered unprecedented worldwide attention. Even in the best of cases, replicating that type of buzz and success is difficult. The current crop of artists is under an unprecedented media spotlight.

"It was a moment in time and a sentiment, and it's something we very consciously and deliberately and by design tried to create, and it worked," says Thomas D. Mottola, chairman/CEO of Casablanca Records and Champion Entertainment. Mottola, who until last year was chairman/CEO of Sony Music Entertainment, was behind the careers of many of the most successful crossovers, including those of Martin, Anthony and Shakira.

But the term "Latin explosion," he says, was simply coined by the media and used by labels to market their acts.

"There never really was a Latin explosion," Mottola says. "It was a mirage. And two of the biggest stars [Marc Anthony and Jennifer Lopez] were from the Bronx, N.Y. But we used it to take gigantic advantage of it, and lots of our stars benefited from that."

In the aftermath of that era, sustaining a career in two languages is absolutely possible, he adds. "The essence of our business has never

changed. It all depends on the quality of your material and the records and the performances the artists give."

But admittedly, it's tricky.

TROUBLE AT HOME

There are many reasons why an album doesn't sell as well as expected. But when it comes to crossover acts, part of the problem is that the artist's core market—the Latin buyer—may not be buying the English album. And it isn't doing so, sources say, because some artists no longer have time to properly



MARTIN: RETURNS WITH ENGLISH ALBUM

promote in that market because the artist is trying to serve two masters.

"The Latin market, from radio to media to the public, feels abandoned," one executive says. "They feel betrayed. There are artists who do nothing with Spanish media [when they're promoting an English album]. And everyone who made that artist into a star in the first place then feels pushed aside."

Not so fast, says Kevin Lawrie, president of Sony Music Norte. "People are always looking for an excuse to justify when an album didn't do well. I think it has to do more with the music and the moment than anything else."

Crossing over, Lawrie adds, can absolutely be a good thing for any artist in any language. "The more people you reach, the better. And as long as the

music isn't compromised or bastardized, it will work in another language."

HOW IT WORKS

Traditionally, when Latin artists record in English, they do so with a mainstream label, often the affiliate of the Latin label that signed the act. The mainstream label assumes all costs and generally collects all sales revenue. Likewise, when the act records in Spanish, the Latin label releases the album, assumes all costs and collects revenue.

Shakira, for example, releases her Spanish-language albums on Sony Norte and her English albums on Epic. Iglesias releases in English through Interscope and in Spanish through Universal Music Latino.

As noted, when artists record in English, they typically include at least one Spanish version of a song to promote to Spanish-language radio. This is done precisely to permit promotion in the Latin market, so as not to abandon an artist's core fans.

Labels deal with this in different ways. But for the most part, the English-language label will give the Latin label a budget to promote the artist. The Latin label usually does not profit financially, but the effort is seen as beneficial to the artist's long-term career and the sale of future albums.

"It's not onerous," Lawrie says. "It's good for the [Latin] label, and it's good for the artist."

However, many staffers at Latin labels chafe at having to promote a single for an artist who is unavailable to go to Spanish-language radio or perform at Spanish-station shows.

"It's a lot of work, and it's very draining," one label promoter says.

Rarely, the pop label will promote the single to the Spanish market. For example, Iglesias' current single, "Adicto," the Spanish version of "Addicted," is being worked directly by Interscope instead of Universal Music Latino. The track rallied this week, rising from No. 21 to No.

9 on the Hot Latin Tracks chart.

Artists who work two markets have unusually busy schedules, because they have to promote in multiple markets and in two languages, regardless of whether the album they're promoting is in English or Spanish.

"No one is ever completely happy," says Diana Baron, an independent publicist who worked Shakira's "Laundry Service" for English and Spanish press, explaining the hectic schedule of transcontinental interviews. "It would take 72 hours a day to make everyone happy."

Additionally, international artists tend to be absent for long periods of time as they promote their albums abroad. Compound that with promoting an album in an entirely different language, and you have an act that is truly out of sight for months, or years.

That's why it's necessary to have a solid fan base in place before crossing over, in any direction.

Universal's Echevarría is counting on that solid fan base and a constant presence in the media to make Rubio's upcoming album, "Pau-Latina" (out Feb. 10), a success among her Latin fans.

"She might not have sold as much as, say, Shakira in English, but they did good groundwork with her, and she didn't abandon her Latin fan base," Echevarría says.

Universal has also renewed Rubio's contract to record in English, an indication that, despite the challenges, bilingual acts won't disappear.

"It's like both my arms," Anthony told *Billboard* in 2001, describing what it's like to record in English and Spanish. "I was born and raised in East Harlem. The [Spanish] music that my grandmother and mother would play at home wasn't the [English] music that I would hear out with my friends. When you say 'crossover,' that means you're crossing over and you don't belong. I don't believe that. I am both, I am both, I am both."

Scheinman Collaborates With Pal On 'Shalagaster'

Forward-thinking, genre-bending violinist/composer **Jenny Scheinman** this week releases "Shalagaster," her second superb disc on **John Zorn's** Tzadik imprint and third overall for the saxophonist's adventurous underground label (her "Live at Yoshi's" CD was issued on Avant).

Like the album's namesake—a mythical guardian with a dolphin's body and bird wings—Scheinman's 11-track creation is a captivating improvisational collection built with a kaleidoscope of musical elements, from folk to world to avant-garde.

While her band features trumpeter **Russ Johnson**, bassist **Trevor Dunn** and drummer **Kenny Wollesen**, the heart of the CD belongs to the rich collaboration between Scheinman and her good friend **Myra Melford**,

who paints the pieces with piano and harmonium colors.

"Myra was a friend of a friend I knew in Berkeley," says Scheinman, who moved from the San Francisco Bay Area to New York in 1999. "I looked her up, and we connected immediately. We became sandbox buddies."

Even so, "Shalagaster" is their first recording together. "I wrote a whole lot of material quickly for the project," Scheinman says. "So we agreed to have it be under my name, even though we plan to collaborate on a joint record in the future." Still, the virtuoso violinist, who was a serious piano player who attended Oberlin Conservatory, had her keyboard friend in mind while she was composing.

"I wrote on the piano, which was exciting. It was a reuniting with an instrument that I know even better than the violin."

"Shalagaster" is part of Tzadik's Oracles series, which celebrates women composers. Scheinman first hooked up with Zorn when he enlisted her to work on a **Cobra** date in San Francisco. "John approached me to contribute to the Oracles series. He has always been very open and interested. When musicians send him records to consider for his label, he listens."

While she will be touring this year to support the CD, Scheinman also

keeps busy performing with guitarist **Bill Frisell** in his **Intercontinentals** band, doing duo dates with **Norah Jones'** guitarist **Adam Levy** and has recently launched an exciting and unusual **Django Reinhardt** covers band with guitarist **Marc Ribot**.

(Blue Note) and shared a stage with **Wynton Marsalis** in a **Jazz Standard** gig led by drummer **Ali Jackson**. Osby also continued to foster a relationship with **Phil Lesh & Friends**, a new group fronted by the former **Grateful Dead** bassist.

"Phil's band is the most liberal environment I've found myself in, improvisationally speaking," Osby told me. "In between his country, bluesy, folksy tunes are lengthy improvisations that are, to me, a lot more captivating than the songs themselves. It's straight communication with a hodgepodge of activity, movement and motives."

In the waning hours of last year, at Lesh's request, Osby was onstage with Grateful Dead spinoff band **the Dead** for its annual New Year's Eve stand on Dec. 30 and 31 in Oakland, Calif.

Osby says of the gig, "There was a strong connection, especially during the second-set jams."

Lesh adds, "Having Greg sit in with us for New Year's inspired us to play some of the most outside stuff. For me, it was probably the best New

Years' Eve show ever. For sure, it was the most adventurous."

THREE DOT LOUNGE: The daughter of **João Gilberto** and Brazilian singer **Miucha**, vocalist **Bebel Gilberto** recorded her first album, "Tanto Tempo," in 2000. It sold nearly 1 million copies worldwide. Her as-yet-untitled follow-up, produced by **Marius DeVries** (**Rufus Wainwright**, **Madonna**, **Björk**), will be released in May by Ziriguiboom/Six Degrees . . . On Jan. 27, septuagenarian saxophonist **James Moody** will release his debut Savoy Jazz album, "Homage," produced by **Bob Belden** and executive-produced by **Steve Backer** . . . Veteran fusion group **Jazz Crusaders**, piloted by founding member and funky multi-instrumentalist **Wayne Henderson**, will release its new album, "Soul Access," on True Life Entertainment. Streeting Jan. 27, the CD features guest appearances by smooth jazz aces **Philip Ingram**, **Everette Harp**, **Ronnie Laws** and **Roy Ayers** . . . Contemporary jazz guitarist **Peter White** will release his ninth solo album, "Confidential," on March 23. The Columbia disc features guest spots by **Chris Botti**, **Brian Culbertson** and **Mindi Abair**.

JAZZ Notes
By Dan Ouellette
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THE OSBYEAR: Saxophonist **Greg Osby's** new year's resolution for 2003 was to connect with as many fellow musicians as possible.

"I decided to dedicate myself to collaborating, performing and recording with a host of people I've had respect for from afar but end up only relating to in passing at airports," Osby told this reporter last year.

For the first time, Osby recorded with trumpeter **Nicholas Payton** on the former's "St. Louis Shoes" CD



SCHEINMAN: 'I WROTE ON THE PIANO'

The Beat

Continued from page 11

and body care products called Dessert. The perfume, whipped body cream, bubble bath, body gloss and other products are supposedly edible and come in three scents: Creamy, Dreamy and Juicy. Simpson partnered with D'lish Fragrance in the deal.

BITS: Justin Timberlake, Christina Aguilera, the White Stripes and Out-

Kast are among the acts that will perform during the 46th annual Grammy Awards' Feb. 8 telecast . . . **Nikki Sixx** (**Mötley Crüe**), **Tracii Guns** (**L.A. Guns**), **Scot Coogan** and **London LeGrand's** new hard-rock outfit **Brides of Destruction** has inked a three-album deal with Sanctuary Records through Sixx's company 12-11 Productions. Its label bow streets March 9 in North America . . . **Peter LoFrumento** is the new senior VP of corporate communications for Universal Music Group. He replaces **Bob Bernstein**, who left the company last December. LoFrumento is based in New York.

Higher Ground

Continued from page 12

Red Sea is distributed by Hendersonville, Tenn.-based New Day Christian Distribution.

Red Sea artists are nominated in two Grammy categories this year. "Red Letterz" by **Fresh I.E.** is nominated for best rock gospel album, and "Reveal His Glory" is up for best Native American music album.

NEWS NOTES: The Christian Country Music Assn. will hold its 10th annual

Christian Country Music Awards Nov. 4. The show will be broadcast live on GAC from Nashville's Ryman Auditorium. The awards show concludes the organization's week-long annual convention, which begins Oct. 31 at the Millennium Maxwell House Hotel . . . Cross Movement Records, an independent Christian hip-hop label based in Deptford, N.J., has signed a U.S. distribution agreement with Provident Music Distribution. The first title to be distributed by Provident will be the debut release from **T.R.U.T.H.** It streets April 6 . . . Spring Hill act **the Booth Brothers** have signed with the Harper Agency for booking.

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Linkin Park Sets 2004 Touring Standard

BY RAY WADDELL

Linkin Park is flexing some serious box-office muscle on its current Meteora tour, solidifying the band's stature as a major arena-level act.

With strong support from P.O.D., Hoobastank and Story of the Year, Linkin Park is headlining the top hard music package out in the early going of 2004, demonstrating health for the genre and the band's own staying power.

The tour is named after the band's current album, which has sold 3.5 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The Meteora tour bodes well for both. "This is a big-league headlining tour, no question," says Michael Belkin, executive VP of the Midwest region for Clear Channel Entertainment. "There's no gray area here—this is a home run."

Belkin bases that claim on how well his own dates have performed. The Jan. 21 show at Cleveland's Convocation Center sold out in advance, and a Jan. 25 Columbus, Ohio, concert at Nationwide Arena is "selling at a healthy clip on a daily basis," Belkin says.

The band cut deals with individual promoters in each market, including CCE, Jam Productions and Another Planet. In its best markets, the tour is not just selling out but

selling out quickly, exceeding already high expectations.

According to Jim Glancy, executive VP of CCE in New York, Linkin Park's Jan. 18 date at Nassau Coliseum on Long Island sold out in one day in mid-December. "We thought it would be good, and it was fantastic," he says.

That appears to be a trend. "We're sold out in almost every market for the first three or four weeks of the tour," says Michael Arfin, Linkin Park's agent at Writers & Artists Group International. "There's a lot of fire on this tour."

STAYING POWER

That holds true on the West Coast, where Linkin Park will play HP Pavilion in San Jose, Calif., Feb. 16 and ARCO Arena in Sacramento, Calif., Feb. 18. Gregg Perloff, promoter of both shows as president of Another Planet, expects two sellouts.

Perloff says Linkin Park's set on Metallica's Summer Sanitarium tour last summer at Candlestick Park in San Francisco was a strong indicator of how well the band could do in his market.

"When they played with Metallica in the stadium show, the audience went

wild," Perloff says. "When five acts are playing and you see an act that breaks out like that, it's very exciting, and Linkin Park absolutely did that in front of 50,000 people."

Indeed, the story is not so much that Linkin Park is selling out some



LINKIN PARK: STEADILY DEVELOPING INTO A MAJOR ROAD CONTENDER

large arenas; the band turned that trick on its first album tour in 2002. What's more important is that the band is exhibiting much-valued legs as a touring entity.

"It's nice to see this audience continuing on with unwavering support for this band," Belkin says. "These days, you don't know from album to album what kind of support you'll see [for an act]."

Arfin adds, "It's becoming evident that Linkin Park is developing into a career band that will be

here for some time."

Glancy agrees. "This feels like the real deal. We may have a major-arena headliner in this band for years to come."

The tour is also scoring points with promoters for the way it is routed, booked and presented. "This tour is old-school . . . hands-on agenting by Michael Arfin and strong management by Rob McDermott [at the Firm] and of course, a great promoter," says Dave Marsden, senior VP of CCE Boston, promoter of the tour's sold-out date at the Centrum in Worcester, Mass.

Marsden says a combination of venue (the Centrum welcomes general-admission shows), support, a \$34.50 ticket and timing are all in the show's favor. "This is the first big show of the new year," he points out, adding that great radio support comes from WBCN and WAAF in Boston.

NICE PACKAGE

From the beginning, Linkin Park tapped the benefits of prudent packaging and pricing. The band's debut arena tour, billed as Project Revolution, featured Cypress Hill, Adema and DJ Z-Trip. That trek grossed more than

\$6 million in just four weeks of dates, with tickets priced at \$29.50.

A second Project Revolution tour last spring—which played mostly secondary markets with Mudvayne, Xzibit and Blindside—also performed well, though not as strongly as the previous tour.

But this time out, Linkin Park, P.O.D. and Hoobastank are all riding hot albums, and Story of the Year is regarded as a real comer. Even with such a strong lineup, though, the package is priced all-in at \$34.50.

"A very reasonable ticket price is a key factor," Arfin says. "And we really worked hard at putting together an amazing package. Linkin Park as a band are very involved in the process and in tune with what's happening."

The Meteora tour wraps March 6 at Phillips Arena in Atlanta. Next up for the band is another Project Revolution tour for the summer, with the package currently being put together. Whether the band will play indoors or out is still being determined.

Linkin Park will stay mostly state-side in 2004, after successfully touring Asia last October. Arfin says the band sold out three Budokan Hall shows in Tokyo, drew 9,000 in Korea and sold out Osaka and Yokohama, Japan, before playing to 25,000 headlining an outdoor fest in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Venue Tests Ticket-Forwarding Program

BY SUSANNE AULT

LOS ANGELES—Taking a leap in the name of customer service, the Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Arena will be the first Ticketmaster venue to allow its 1,100 elite club seat patrons to forward their unused tickets for non-sporting events.

The Feb. 12 George Strait show at Jacksonville will be the guinea-pig concert for the arena's Ticket Forwarding software.

Since January 2002, Ticketmaster has provided its forwarding option to any building clients already offering print-at-home ticketing technology to patrons.

With the new Ticket Forwarding, ticket buyers can e-mail their purchased print-at-home tickets to anyone they choose. The recipient prints out the bar-code-embedded ticket, which is scanned at the venue for entry. Ticketmaster charges \$1.95 per ticket for the forwarding service.

A number of sports season-ticket-holders can already forward tickets. In 2002, 14,379 Ticketmaster tickets were forwarded by fans of a number of basketball franchises, including the San Antonio Spurs and Utah Jazz.

Yet the possibility of repeat financial transactions on tickets—where

buyers sometimes resell them for more than face value—has dogged the concert industry's adoption of advanced ticketing software that steps into this secondary market (*Billboard*, May 24, 2003). Typically, tour organizers and artists reap revenue solely from the primary ticketing market.

ADDED CONVENIENCE

In Jacksonville Arena's case, strict Florida anti-scalping laws—where buyers are forbidden to resell their tickets for more than face value—mandate that club patrons forward tickets at no cost to their chosen recipients.

That means "it has nothing to do with the secondary market," notes Glenn Mon, senior VP of stadiums and arenas for Jacksonville's management company, SMG.

Instead, Mon says, the decision to implement forwarding has everything to do with supporting customer needs.

"We're constantly looking at products that will make it easier for patrons to acquire tickets to our events. The convenience is what we're looking for—the more convenient you make it, the more you'll generate greater ticket sales."

Mon is monitoring how the soft-

ware rolls out at Jacksonville to determine if SMG should introduce forwarding for concerts at its other buildings.

"Rather than having to [physically] mail the ticket, [the club seat-holder] does so electronically. The portability of the ticket increases," Mon says.



STRAIT: SHOW IS PART OF SOFTWARE TEST

If Jacksonville premium seat-holders are caught trying to forward tickets for extra cash, their season contracts will be revoked, says Nan Coyle,

director of sales and marketing at Jacksonville Arena. Open since November, the arena has sold all of its 1,100 club seats in three- or five-year deals, she adds. These members get first dibs on purchasing tickets to all the building's live events.

"This is really a service to those folks who have membership with our club—making it easy for them [by a simple e-mail] to accommodate clients they happen to be entertaining," Coyle explains.

MANAGEMENT DISCRETION

David Goldberg, executive VP of strategy and business development at Ticketmaster, says it is up to the venue manager what rules they want to pin on their forwarding systems. If a manager approves it, there could be situations where ticket buyers could forward concert tickets at a price above face value.

"It's up to the client. We've built the products to comply with different sets of regulations that can match different client needs," Goldberg says.

Because Jacksonville is limiting the forwarding option to its club seat holders, Mon says, tour organizers—including those for the Strait show—were not included in the conversations to install the software. Extra

revenue attached to premium seats is usually kept out of promoters' share of the gross anyway, according to Louis Messina, TMG/AEG Live promoter for the Strait concert.

Yet Messina believes that if venue patrons used ticket forwarding for financial gain, it would be "morally wrong."

"That's scalping to me. [With repeat ticket sales], the artist doesn't participate," he says. "My personal view is that artists should share in all the revenue that is generated."

He adds that venues that offer patrons the chance to scalp tickets by forwarding may miss out. "The artist has the option to not play that building. That's where you put on a poker face and say, 'We're not going to play'—it's like 'Who's calling whose bluff?'"

Goldberg hopes that Jacksonville's Ticket Forwarding launch will spur more of its clients to embrace the software.

"We are going to be happy to point to any successes in the marketplace. And certainly this is one," he says. "With any new technology, there is an adoption curve that goes along with it. There will be early adopters and [there will be] those who wait and see and follow later."

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For Sure: Stones Were Tops Last Year

Bruce Springsteen and his mighty **E Street Band** put up some huge numbers on the road in 2003.

The record-setting Rising tour kicked some major stadium-level tail all over the world. Springsteen even threw in a world-record stand in his home state of New Jersey.

At 54, he put together the top-grossing run of his 30-plus years of national touring. The Rising tour, the Jersey stand and Springsteen's remarkable year of touring were well-chronicled in these pages. We love Bruce.

But Springsteen was *not* the top touring artist of 2003, despite numerous media claims to the contrary. Any way you look at it, **the Rolling Stones** grossed far more than Springsteen did last year (*Billboard*, Dec. 27, 2003).

From start to finish, the Stones' Licks tour grossed \$299,520,230 from 113 shows dating back to September 2002 (*Billboard*, Dec. 6, 2002). We lumped the entire tour into 2003's *Billboard* Boxscore stats because we received them all at once from promoter **Michael Cohl's** office at the end of the tour. We do not estimate.

For the year, Springsteen's reported grosses totaled \$181.7 million worldwide. If you take away the \$90 million or so the Stones did in fall 2002, the band still easily outpaced Springsteen. The Boss' tour grossed \$221.5 million from 121 shows, so tour for tour, the Stones also topped Springsteen's by more than \$70 million.

There is no sin in being out-grossed by the Rolling Stones, particularly when they charged significantly more per ticket than Springsteen did. The Stones top the list every time they go out. They are the No. 1 touring act of all time.

In just about any other year, Springsteen would have far and away been the No. 1 touring act. Clearly, there is more to a tour's success than how much money it makes, like critical acclaim, attendance, creativity and profit margin. But *Billboard* ranks tours by box office. And in 2003, the Rolling Stones performed better at the box office than any act in the world.

SEC KEGGERS: With his holiday tan firmly in place, **Kenny Chesney** will tune up for a busy year of touring with a brief run through Southeastern Conference (SEC) school markets paired with **Uncle Kracker**.

Chesney will play small venues in SEC markets beginning later this month. While production will be lo-fi and venues will be very small, Chesney will take his full band with him. Proceeds will benefit local charities.

According to Chesney's manager, **Clint Higham**, the tour is about "getting back to grassroots. A lot of Kenny's audience is college-age kids, and we wanted to reach them first."

Higham says Chesney met Uncle Kracker through the latter's association with **Kid Rock**, who appeared at Chesney's Knoxville, Tenn., **Neyland Stadium** show last summer. "They formed a strong friendship, and Kenny felt like giving something different to the fans this year," says Higham, adding that Chesney's audience is open to all types of music. "I don't really think we're competing with the **Alan Jacksons** of the world."

Uncle Kracker, who is featured on the title cut of Chesney's Feb. 3 release, "When the Sun Goes Down," will also open Chesney's much-anticipated summer tour with **Rascal Flatts** (*Billboard*, Dec. 27, 2003).

IMAGINE THAT: The Imagine tour, featuring **MercyMe**, **Amy Grant** and **Bebo Norman**, will begin Jan. 30 at the **Curb Center** and hit about 25 markets before concluding March 8 at the **Salem (Va.) Civic Center**. The tour was booked by Third Coast Artist Agency, the agent for MercyMe.

On The Road
By Ray Waddell
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MERCYME: HITTING THE ROAD

JANUARY 24 2004		Billboard®			BOXSCORE™	
		CONCERT GROSSES				
ARTIST(S)	VENUE/ DATE	GROSS/ TICKET PRICE(S)	ATTENDANCE/ CAPACITY	PROMOTER		
CLOUSEAU	Sportpaleis, Antwerp, Belgium Dec. 2-29	\$7,546,068 (66,299,940) \$38.93/\$20.96	243,556 246,612 14 shows	PSE Belgium		
CHER, KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND, VILLAGE PEOPLE	MGM Grand Garden, Las Vegas Jan. 2-3	\$3,145,082 \$236.51/\$75.25	21,281 23,490 two shows	Clear Channel Entertainment, in-house		
PHISH	American Airlines Arena, Miami Dec. 28-31	\$3,063,761 \$49.50/\$39.50	74,376 four sellouts	Clear Channel Entertainment		
CELINE DION	The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas Jan. 7-11	\$2,591,199 \$225/\$175/\$127.50/\$87.50	18,520 five sellouts	Concerts West		
SIMON & GARFUNKEL, THE EVERLY BROTHERS	Philips Arena, Atlanta Dec. 20	\$1,783,207 \$227/\$52	17,161 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
WIDESPREAD PANIC	Philips Arena, Atlanta Dec. 30-31	\$1,443,603 \$48.50	30,504 two sellouts	Clear Channel Entertainment		
SHANIA TWAIN, EMERSON DRIVE	America West Arena, Phoenix Dec. 19	\$1,120,175 \$80/\$65/\$45	15,736 sellout	Beaver Productions, Frank Productions		
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	CSU Convocation Centre, Cleveland Dec. 21-22	\$1,041,190 \$43.50/\$30.50	27,053 28,298 three shows	Clear Channel Entertainment		
AEROSMITH & KISS, PORCH GHOULS	Ford Center, Oklahoma City Dec. 14	\$1,041,175 \$125/\$35	11,259 19,459	Clear Channel Entertainment		
DAVE MATTHEWS & FRIENDS, TIM REYNOLDS, TREY ANASTASIO, EMMYLOU HARRIS	Madison Square Garden, New York Dec. 17	\$901,632 \$48	18,884 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
DAVE MATTHEWS & FRIENDS, TIM REYNOLDS, TREY ANASTASIO, EMMYLOU HARRIS	FleetCenter, Boston Dec. 16	\$897,278 \$52.50	17,242 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
TOBY KEITH, WILLIE NELSON, BLAKE SHELTON, SCOTTY EMERICK, CLEDUS T. JUDD	Gaylord Entertainment Center, Nashville Dec. 31	\$870,208 \$77.50/\$47.50	14,336 sellout	TBA Entertainment		
DAVE MATTHEWS & FRIENDS, TIM REYNOLDS, TREY ANASTASIO, EMMYLOU HARRIS	Hartford Civic Center, Hartford, Conn. Dec. 19	\$790,178 \$50.75	15,690 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Giant Center, Hershey, Pa. Dec. 14	\$737,709 \$46.50/\$35	17,724 two sellouts	Clear Channel Entertainment		
WGCI BIG JAM 4: BEYONCÉ, BOW WOW, NICK CANNON, MONICA, MURPHY LEE	United Center, Chicago Dec. 19	\$702,201 \$65/\$25	13,711 19,338	Clear Channel Entertainment		
BETTE MIDLER	Savvis Center, St. Louis Dec. 15	\$686,670 \$150/\$39.50	9,931 13,147	Clear Channel Entertainment		
BETTE MIDLER	Giant Center, Hershey, Pa. Dec. 29	\$678,570 \$87.75/\$42.25	8,782 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
DAVE MATTHEWS & FRIENDS, TIM REYNOLDS, TREY ANASTASIO, EMMYLOU HARRIS	Dunkin' Donuts Center, Providence, R.I. Dec. 13	\$665,090 \$52.50	12,770 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER	Qwest Center, Omaha, Neb. Dec. 26-27	\$621,298 \$70/\$23	17,052 20,000 two shows	Sound Trak		
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Tweeter Center at the Waterfront, Camden, N.J. Dec. 27	\$568,972 \$47.50/\$39.50	13,752 two sellouts	Clear Channel Entertainment, David Krebs		
BETTE MIDLER	Bradley Center, Milwaukee Dec. 17	\$568,885 \$152/\$41.50	9,407 13,715	Clear Channel Entertainment		
BETTE MIDLER	Wachovia Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Dec. 27	\$562,701 \$76.50/\$41	8,146 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER	Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul, Minn. Nov. 29	\$505,897 \$75/\$23.50	12,153 sellout	Hennepin Theatre Trust		
MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER	Charlotte Coliseum, Charlotte, N.C. Dec. 6	\$479,643 \$85/\$36	8,309 11,500	BACI Management		
COUNTING CROWS, GRAHAM COLTON, THE WALLFLOWERS	Warfield Theatre, San Francisco Dec. 8-9, 12-13, 15-16	\$463,542 \$46	11,226 13,500 six shows	Clear Channel Entertainment		
HARRY CONNICK JR.	Murat Theatre, Indianapolis Dec. 13-14	\$456,737 \$71.50/\$31.50	7,079 7,350 three shows	Clear Channel Entertainment		
MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER	RBC Center, Raleigh, N.C. Dec. 4	\$434,312 \$85/\$36	7,692 8,800	BACI Management		
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Toyota Center, Houston Dec. 14	\$418,099 \$49.50/\$29.50	11,681 19,866 two shows	Clear Channel Entertainment		
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Mich. Dec. 19	\$401,470 \$49.50/\$29.50	10,161 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER	Toyota Center, Houston Dec. 21	\$393,809 \$85/\$25	9,785 11,456	Clear Channel Entertainment, JS Touring		
KMJQ HOLIDAY CONCERT: MAZE FEATURING FRANKIE BEVERLY, GERALD LEVERT, WILL DOWNING, JAGGED EDGE	Toyota Center, Houston Dec. 27	\$391,881 \$65/\$32.75	7,483 11,701	Clear Channel Entertainment		
MONTGOMERY GENTRY, THE CHARLIE DANIELS BAND, PHIL VASSAR, DIERKS BENTLEY	Rupp Arena, Lexington, Ky. Dec. 31	\$370,625 \$48.50/\$38.50	8,648 9,283	Clear Channel Entertainment		
MAZE FEATURING FRANKIE BEVERLY, THE WHISPERS, THE O'JAYS	Fox Theatre, Detroit Dec. 31	\$368,607 \$89.50/\$69.50	4,664 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment		
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Mellon Arena, Pittsburgh Dec. 23	\$367,680 \$40.50/\$35.50	9,879 12,419	Clear Channel Entertainment		
COUNTING CROWS, GRAHAM COLTON, THE WALLFLOWERS	Wiltern Theater, Los Angeles Dec. 19-20, 22-23	\$362,441 \$48.50	8,282 9,985 four shows	Clear Channel Entertainment		

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Stones Throw Taps L.A. Scene

BY RASHAUN HALL

These days, anyone can start an independent label. All it takes is a few dollars and a little know-how. Or so it seems.

With more entrepreneurs getting into the music business, what truly sets an indie label apart from the crowd?

For Los Angeles-based Stones Throw Records, it's all about sharing the musical vision of its founder/artist, Peanut Butter Wolf.

Founded in 1996, the label serves as a vehicle for Wolf to share his music and the music of like-minded artists.

"When I started, I felt like I had a lot of experience in all the different aspects [of the music business]—from working at record stores and with a record distributor to DJing at a radio station," Wolf says. "I just felt like I knew a lot of talented artists in the Bay Area, and it never really crossed my mind that there would have to be a plan B. I just really wanted to do this."

BUILDING THE BRAND

The label's first release was Charizma & Peanut Butter Wolf's "My World Premier." The single paid homage to Wolf's partner Charizma, who passed away in 1993.

Once the label launched, Stones Throw quickly made a name for itself on the DJ circuit.

"One thing that worked to our advantage was that we were putting out a lot of breakbeat records," Wolf says. "We did one with DJ Babu [of Dilated Peoples] called 'Super Duck Breaks.' It seemed like every battle DJ was using this record."

"We had the Stones Throw label on the back of every record we did, so you would see this big Stones Throw label spinning around on the turntable. Just from that alone, all of the DJs began identifying with the label, [which] gave us credibility."

With a firm foundation in the DJ community that was established with 12-inch vinyl singles and breakbeat records, Stones



WOLF: PRIDE IN THE CATALOG AND THE LABEL

Throw soon began releasing full-length albums.

In addition to his own music, Wolf has used Stones Throw to introduce acts like Lootpack, Egon, Breakestra and Madlib.

"I don't put out anything that I'm not really excited about personally," Wolf says. "When you're in this just as a business, you can say, 'Well, I really don't like this, but I know that it will sell.' I never really take that approach. I guess it's just my pride in the catalog and the label. I want it to be [respected] the way that Blue Note is with jazz or some of the other hip-hop labels I looked up to in the early years, like Def Jam and Tommy Boy when they first started releasing stuff."

Stones Throw's recent releases include Jaylib's "Champion Sound," which paired Madlib with equally renowned producer/MC Jaydee, and Wildchild's "Secondary Protocol." The albums have sold more than 16,000 units and 9,000 units, respectively, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

In December of last year, Stones Throw also released "Big Shots," the first full-length album by Charizma & Peanut Butter Wolf. It has sold more than 3,000 units.

Next up for the label is the Madvillian project, which combines the talents of Madlib with MF Doom.

As a fan and a label head, Wolf is always encouraging his artists to experiment and collaborate, and not just for Stones Throw.

Last year, Madlib was allowed to access the vaults of Blue Note Records to record "Shades of Blue" on Blue Note (*Jazz Notes*, *Billboard*, July 26, 2003).

"It was my idea for him to do the Blue Note thing," Wolf says. "I was speaking to the A&R guy at Blue Note, and I said, 'You guys should let Madlib go through your vaults and do a remix album.' He thought it was a good idea, and I asked Madlib if he would do it and he was all for it. For me, it's really important to get him out there as much as possible for music's sake."

(Continued on page 20)

Goapele Gets Columbia Joint Venture

Borrowing a phrase from the movie "Bull Durham," independent artist **Goapele** is "going to the show." That's thanks to the recently announced joint venture between her label, Skyblaze Recordings, and Columbia/Sony Urban Music.



GOAPELE: MOVING CLOSER TO HER DREAM

distribution. We feel good about this being the right next step."

Under the terms of the joint venture, Columbia/Sony Urban Music will rerelease Goapele's 2002 Skyblaze/RED debut, "Even Closer," Feb. 3. The reissued set will feature a bonus track: a remix of the cut "Childhood Drama." Columbia has also signed a production deal for future Goapele projects.

"Even Closer" has sold more than 61,000 copies in the U.S., according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The singer has also wrapped a video for lead single "Closer." Directed by **Dave Meyers** protégé **Dave Dean**, the video is slated to premiere in two weeks. The single is being serviced to urban AC stations and is featured on Elektra's "Honey" soundtrack. It reached No. 83 on the *Billboard* Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart in the Aug. 9, 2003, issue.

This major-label pot of gold is the end of a rainbow that started with Goapele's 2001 EP, "Closer." Its "couple-thousand" independently sold copies paved the way for "Even Closer." But Goapele vows the joint venture won't alter her artistic vision.

"I did fear that originally and was mindful of that issue," she says. "But we've been patient regarding who we wanted to move forward with and

how we wanted to move forward so that who I am [artistically] still comes across."

While Skyblaze expects to bow more acts in the future, it's all about Goapele right now. "We've learned a tremendous amount working independently," Skyblaze chief and Goapele manager **Namane Mohlabane** says. "Now we have a huge learning curve regarding being independent and in partnership with a major."

Future Goapele sightings include upcoming performances in New York (Joe's Pub) and a Feb. 14 "Soul Train" appearance.

ON THE RECORD: As noted earlier in this column, *En Vogue* drops its new album, "SoulFlower," Feb. 24. Its lead single is "Ooh Boy."

The trio (**Cindy Herron**, **Terry Ellis** and new member **Rhona Bennett**) dropped by *Billboard*'s Los Angeles office last week to discuss the new album and future plans.

The album is on Herron and Ellis' label, Funky Girl, in association with producers **Denzil Foster** and **Thomas McElroy's** Beat Exchange label, distributed through Bayside.

There will be a promotional blitz tied to the album's release, including an appearance at Super Bowl

XXXVIII in Houston. And while original member **Maxine Jones** has been busy of late with motherhood, she plans to join the group on its next studio album.

Producer **Jazze Pha** (aka **Phalon Alexander**) plans to bow his "Big Love" solo album this spring on Atlantic. His protégées **Jody Breeze**

and **Ciara** are working on solo projects set to debut this summer on Pha's Arista-distributed Sho'Nuff Recordings... Hidden Beach Recordings' **Jill Scott** returns with her long-awaited new album this summer. In the meantime, she appears in a four-episode arc on UPN's "Girlfriends" that kicked off Jan. 12... **Cee-Lo Green's** (**Goodie Mob**) second solo set, "Cee-Lo Green Is the Soul Machine," lands in stores March 16 through Arista.

AWARDS MANIA: Following the Feb. 8 Grammy honors, the awards hoopla on the urban front continues with the 35th annual NAACP

Image Awards. The two-hour ceremony is being taped March 6 at Los Angeles' Universal Amphitheater. It will air March 11 on Fox. Leading the list of nominees are **OutKast** (with six nods), **Beyoncé** (five) and **Luther Vandross** (four). Those three acts will compete against each other in the cate-

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By Gail Mitchell
gmitchell@billboard.com



gories of outstanding song and outstanding music video.

The National Assn. of Black Owned Broadcasters' 20th annual awards dinner is March 12 at Washington, D.C.'s Marriott Wardman Park Hotel.

The fourth annual BET Awards are locked in for June 29 at Hollywood's Kodak Theater. Returning for a second stint as host is comedienne/actress **Mo'Nique**.

Christian King Sets Sights On Secular World

BY LEILA COBO

The name Marcos Witt may not ring any bells among fans of commercial Latin music, but in Latin Christian music, he reigns.

The No. 1-selling artist in the genre, Texas-born, Mexico-raised Witt has sold upwards of 7 million copies of his 22 albums, according to his label, CanZion.

Last year, he won a Latin Grammy for best Christian album.

Now the secular world will get a chance to hear what Witt is all about, thanks to a recently inked deal with Sony Music Norte.

The three-year agreement covers the marketing, promotion and distribution of Witt's albums to secular outlets worldwide.

The first album to be released under the Sony banner is "Recordando Otra Vez," a live disc recorded in November last year at the Los Angeles Sports Arena. It's slated for release March 2 in the U.S. and Latin America.

"It was an opportunity for an expansion and to get a broader audience for the music," Witt says of his decision to sign with Sony.

This isn't the first time Witt has expanded his horizons.

Last year, Houston-based CanZion, in which Witt is a major shareholder, struck a deal with Miami-based Vida Music that enabled Vida/Zondervan to distribute CanZion's 15 top-selling albums, both on the Christian Booksellers Assn. circuit and in the general market (*Billboard*, March 29, 2003).

At the time, Witt's presence at CanZion was a major factor in the deal. But his product was not distributed beyond the CBA arena.

Today, Vida/Zondervan will continue to distribute Witt's product on the CBA circuit, but Sony will distribute it in the secular world.

"This is going to be the first time that non-Christian accounts will have Marcos Witt," Sony Music Norte president Kevin Lawrie says. "He will be in places like Wal-Mart, Target and Best Buy."

The Sony agreement, which also includes four other CanZion acts, does not cover CBA accounts.

"We want to extend his secular reach," Lawrie says.

Lawrie, who took over the helm of Sony Music Norte upon its creation last year, first saw Witt perform at the

go to a stadium and you see 20,000 people and you're not part of that, you want to be involved," he says.

At first blush, the soft-spoken, bespectacled Witt does not fit the superstar mold, much less that of a Latin superstar.

Born in San Antonio, Texas, Witt moved to Durango, Mexico, with his missionary parents when he was barely one month old. Raised and educated in Mexico, he recorded the first of 22 albums in 1986.

Although recognized as the leader in the U.S. Latin Christian music field, Witt, who founded CanZion, had not seriously considered major-label representation until he signed a management deal with Mauricio Abaroa last year.

EXPANDING REACH

Abaroa, the former president of Crescent Moon Records, took Witt to Sony. Now the label has

plans to aggressively market Witt, both to his Christian base and to secular audiences.

"Recordando Otra Vez" will be supported by a targeted TV campaign focused on specific regions and not necessarily exclusive to Hispanic broadcasters.

Witt will be given major visibility at retail, and although he'll be initially promoted on Christian radio, Sony also has plans to take him to commercial Spanish-language radio.

Witt, however, does not plan to change the kind of music he makes to better fit a non-Christian format. "I think the music really stands on its own," he says. "It's great music, and it's a great message."

The release of "Recordando Otra Vez" coincides with Witt's tour of the U.S., Latin America and Spain, which kicks off in February in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The 10-month stint will cover 30 concerts.

As is always the case with Witt's tours, a percentage of the proceeds will go toward opening music schools in Latin America.

The schools, called Instituto CanZion, fall under the umbrella of the CanZion group of companies, which also includes the CanZion, Pulso Records and Más Que Música labels. Branches of Instituto CanZion operate in Argentina, Paraguay, Guatemala, Mexico and the U.S.



WITT: LOOKING FOR BROADER AUDIENCE

Los Angeles concert during which he recorded his upcoming album.

Lawrie was bowled over. "When you

Sales Up, Shipments Down: So What's The Story?

It came as a surprise to many that according to Nielsen SoundScan, sales of Latin music for 2003 actually rose from the previous year (*Billboard*, Jan. 17).

It's surprising because shipments of Latin music, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of America, declined.

To recap, according to SoundScan, sales of Spanish-language albums (excluding those of Shakira or Gloria Estefan in English, for example) for the year ended Dec. 28, 2003, climbed to 26.1 million units from 19.5 million units the previous year.

Total sales of all albums by Latin artists (this time including English albums by Shakira and Estefan, for example) rose to 27.5 million units from 23.7 million in 2002.

In comparison—and keeping in mind that total year-end figures are not yet available—shipments of Latin music from January to September dipped to 29.7 million from 31.1 million the previous year, according to the RIAA. The drop was a little more than 4%, narrower than in previous years.

In any case, the fact remains that

an increasing number of Latins are buying their music at general-market accounts, and more mass merchants are adequately stocking Latin music—specifically, regional Mexican music—in their stores. That's reflected in SoundScan numbers and, quite frankly, it is cause

all sales of the music.

So, why are SoundScan numbers up?

Because sales of regional Mexican music have soared, according to both SoundScan and the RIAA. And that music is now found in more places tracked by SoundScan.

Indie Balboa, which does not report to the RIAA, for example, more than doubled its market share. In the Latin market, that jump makes a difference.

So does the fact that Fonovisa's market share climbed by more than two percentage points. Thanks to its distribution deal with Universal Music & Video Distribution, the label's product is now available at mainstream retailers that previously did not carry it, such as Tower.

Perhaps the most specific example of a shift to SoundScan accounts is that of **Grupo Montez de Durango**.

The group's first album on Disa, 2002's "El Sube y Baja," peaked at No. 43 on the *Billboard* Top Latin Albums chart, despite selling more than 300,000 copies to date, according to the label.

Last year, Disa made a concerted effort to take Montez's new album, "De Durango a Chicago," to mainstream accounts. As a result, the album debuted at No. 2 on the Top Latin Albums chart.

All this does not negate the fact that the market is under duress and that sales of Latin music overall are down, as reflected by the RIAA's shipment figures.

Make no mistake: This is not a buoyant market. But it's changing in

ways that were not anticipated.

Here's to having a year with numbers that go up, together, in perfect harmony.

longer associated with Sony (it was an amicable split). It will continue to function independently.

Discos Termita's first release is slated for March. Marcovich is not signed to Discos Termita.

FOR THE RECORD: "Nocturnal," the recent, independently released EP by former Caifanes guitarist **Alejandro Marcovich**, is the first of three, each containing four tracks and retailing for about \$5 in Mexico. The next two EPs are in the process

ways that were not anticipated. Here's to having a year with numbers that go up, together, in perfect harmony.

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IN BRIEF: Superstar **Luis Miguel** is set to launch the second leg of his world tour Jan. 15 with a series of 21 concerts at Mexico City's Auditorio Nacional.

Latin
Notas™
By Leila Cobo
lcobo@billboard.com



for celebration.

But let's be clear: As far as Latin music is concerned, RIAA numbers and SoundScan numbers are not always in synch.

In this case, they aren't even going in the same direction, for a variety of reasons.

First and foremost, because so much Latin music continues to be sold at mom-and-pop stores and such nontraditional outlets as flea markets, SoundScan cannot reflect

Billboard TOP LATIN ALBUMS

Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WEEKS ON	ARTIST	Title	PEAK POSITION	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WEEKS ON	ARTIST	Title	PEAK POSITION	
				IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL							IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL			
				NUMBER 1			5 Weeks At Number 1	49	47	57	8	LOS ANGELES AZULES/LOS ANGELES DE CHARLY	Encuentros De Angeles Vol. 2	28
1	3	4	7	LOS TEMERARIOS	Tributo Al Amor	1	50	41	36	46	A.B. QUINTANILLA III PRESENTS KUMBIA KINGS		4	
2	2	3	36	JUANES	Un Dia Normal	1	51	60	40	8	ANA GABRIEL	Dulce Y Salado	27	
3	1	1	11	MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS	La Historia Continua...	1	52	43	44	7	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Bachatahits 2004	38	
4	4	2	12	A.B. QUINTANILLA III & KUMBIA KINGS	La Historia	1	53	28	19	25	CELIA CRUZ	Regalo Del Alma	1	
5	5	5	8	MANA	Eclipse	2	54	58	—	33	LOS PLAYER'S	Ranchero De	26	
6	8	11	8	LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE	Herencia Musical: 20 Boleros Romanticos	5	55	55	32	34	RICKY MARTIN	Almas Del Silencio	1	
7	6	9	15	GRUPO MONTEZ DE DURANGO	De Durango A Chicago	2	56	53	65	13	LOS ORIGINALES DE SAN JUAN	La Historia	12	
8	7	7	13	VICENTE Y ALEJANDRO FERNANDEZ	En Vivo: Juntos Por Ultima Vez	4	57	49	70	12	TEGO CALDERON	El Abayarde	49	
9	9	8	12	SIN BANDERA	De Viaje	6	58	51	66	29	DON OMAR	The Last Don	2	
10	11	12	10	PEPE AGUILAR	Con Orgullo Por Herencia	7	59	65	46	39	SOUNDTRACK	Frida	4	
				PACESETTER				60	69	—	9	CARDENALES DE NUEVO LEON	Paso A La Reina	36
11	31	20	10	JULIO IGLESIAS	Divorcio		61	50	48	12	JERRY RIVERA	Canto A Mi Idololo...Frankie Ruiz	33	
12	10	6	15	LUIS MIGUEL		33	62	72	—	11	CUISILLOS	Coleccion De Oro	57	
13	14	23	38	JOAN SEBASTIAN	Coleccion De Oro	13	63	64	—	27	LOS ANGELES AZULES/LOS ANGELES DE CHARLY	Encuentros De Angeles Vol. 1	7	
14	16	18	29	LA OREJA DE VAN GOGH	Lo Que Te Conte Mientras Te Hacias La Dormida		64	73	—	2	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Reggaetonhits 2004	64	
15	18	29	5	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Historia Musical Del Pasito Duranguense	15	65	57	67	12	LOS RELEEROS DEL NORTE	Abriendo Caminos	7	
16	12	10	20	CHAYANNE	Sincero	1	66	RE-ENTRY	26	GILBERTO SANTA ROSA	Solo Bolero	40		
17	17	30	31	AKWID	Proyecto Akwid	7	67	74	—	49	ANTONIO AGUILAR	Con Tambora	38	
18	13	16	35	DAVID BISBAL	Corazon Latino	13	68	66	56	90	CHAYANNE	Grandes Exitos	1	
19	30	31	5	GARGOLAS	The Return	11	69	56	55	15	FITO OLIVARES	30 Exitos Inolvidables	20	
20	23	37	62	PANCHO BARRAZA	Las Romanticas De Pancho Barraza	12	70	RE-ENTRY	2	PAQUITA LA DEL BARRIO	Coleccion De Oro	65		
21	22	27	23	LOS BUKIS	25 Joyas Musicales	3	71	67	34	12	JUAN GABRIEL	Inocente De Ti	21	
22	29	21	15	CRISTIAN	Amar Es	4	72	63	52	42	ALEXANDRE PIRES	Estrella Guia	12	
23	26	13	8	EDNITA NAZARIO	Por Ti	1	73	71	—	19	LIMITE	Gracias 1995-2003	9	
24	27	35	28	LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE	Herencia Musical: 20 Corridos Inolvidables	1	74	59	68	20	CONTROL	La Historia	9	
25	15	17	24	CELIA CRUZ	Exitos Eternos	2	75	68	51	62	SHAKIRA	Grandes Exitos	1	
26	40	53	30	LOS CADETES DE LINARES	30 Inolvidables	5								
27	25	26	8	MANA	Sol	16								
				HOT SHOT DEBUT				28	NEW	1	JAVIER TORRES	El Amor Y La Desgracia	28	
28	34	28	11	LUIS FONSI	Abrazar La Vida	3								
				GREATEST GAINER				30	54	60	9	GRUPO MONTEZ DE DURANGO/CONJUNTO ATARDECER	El Pasito De Durango	30
30	54	60	9	GRUPO MONTEZ DE DURANGO/CONJUNTO ATARDECER	El Pasito De Durango	30								
31	20	15	19	ALEJANDRO SANZ	No Es Lo Mismo	2								
32	19	22	55	CELIA CRUZ	Hits Mix	2								
33	24	25	8	MANA	Luna	13								
34	32	42	9	LUPILLO RIVERA	Live	26								
35	37	33	21	CONJUNTO PRIMAVERA	Decide Tu	3								
36	42	50	35	MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS	Tu Amor O Tu Desprecio	1								
37	38	38	31	PEPE AGUILAR	Coleccion De Oro	30								
38	33	45	11	CONJUNTO PRIMAVERA/PESADO	Dos Romanticos De Corazon	16								
39	21	14	7	MANNY MANUEL	Serenata	9								
40	36	39	20	OBIE BERMUDEZ	Confesiones	29								
41	46	63	37	CUISILLOS	Las Romanticas De Cuisillos	16								
42	35	24	73	MANA	Revolucion De Amor	1								
43	61	58	4	RICARDO ARJONA	Lados B	43								
44	48	61	17	JAE-P	Ni De Aqui Ni De Alla	25								
45	52	62	21	LOS ACOSTA	En Vivo Vol. 1	13								
46	39	49	12	BANDA EL RECODO	Por Ti	7								
47	44	47	21	INTOCABLE	Nuestro Destino Estaba Escrito	1								
48	45	41	10	VICO C	En Honor A La Verdad	5								

LATIN POP ALBUMS	TROPICAL ALBUMS	REGIONAL MEXICAN ALBUMS
1 JUANES UN DIA NORMAL (SURCO/UNIVERSAL LATINO)	1 CELIA CRUZ EXITOS ETERNOS (UNIVERSAL LATINO)	1 LOS TEMERARIOS TRIBUTO AL AMOR (FONOVISA/UG)
2 MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS LA HISTORIA CONTINUA... (FONOVISA/UG)	2 CELIA CRUZ HITS MIX (SONY DISCOS)	2 LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE HERENCIA MUSICAL: 20 BOLEROS ROMANTICOS (FONOVISA/UG)
3 A.B. QUINTANILLA III & KUMBIA KINGS LA HISTORIA (EMI LATIN)	3 VARIOUS ARTISTS BACHATAHITS 2004 (J&N/SONY DISCOS)	3 GRUPO MONTEZ DE DURANGO DE DURANGO A CHICAGO (DISA)
4 MANA ECLIPSE (WARNER LATINA)	4 CELIA CRUZ REGALO DEL ALMA (SONY DISCOS)	4 VICENTE Y ALEJANDRO FERNANDEZ EN VIVO: JUNTOS POR ULTIMA VEZ (SONY DISCOS)
5 SIN BANDERA DE VIAJE (SONY DISCOS)	5 JERRY RIVERA CANTO A MI IDOLO...FRANKIE RUIZ (ARIOLA/BMG LATIN)	5 PEPE AGUILAR CON ORGULLO POR HERENCIA (UNIVISION/UG)
6 JULIO IGLESIAS DIVORCIO (SONY DISCOS)	6 VARIOUS ARTISTS REGGAETONHITS 2004 (J&N/SONY DISCOS)	6 JOAN SEBASTIAN COLECCION DE ORO (MUSART/BALBOA)
7 LUIS MIGUEL 33 (WARNER LATINA)	7 VARIOUS ARTISTS 2004 ANO DE EXITOS: REGGAETON (UNIVERSAL LATINO)	7 VARIOUS ARTISTS HISTORIA MUSICAL DEL PASITO DURANGUENSE (DISA)
8 LA OREJA DE VAN GOGH LO QUE TE CONTE MIENTRAS TE HACIAS LA DORMIDA (SONY DISCOS)	8 LUNYTUNES & NORIEGA MAS FLOW (VII)	8 AKWID PROYECTO AKWID (UNIVISION/UG)
9 CHAYANNE SINCERO (SONY DISCOS)	9 DIVINO TODO A SU TIEMPO (LUAR)	9 PANCHO BARRAZA LAS ROMANTICAS DE PANCHO BARRAZA (MUSART/BALBOA)
10 DAVID BISBAL CORAZON LATINO (IVALE/UNIVERSAL LATINO)	10 GRUPO MANIA HOMBRES DE HONOR (UNIVERSAL LATINO)	10 LOS BUKIS 25 JOYAS MUSICALES (FONOVISA/UG)
11 GARGOLAS THE RETURN (SELLOS ASOCIADOS/VII)	11 OLGA TANON A PURO FUEGO (WEACARIBE/WARNER LATINA)	11 LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE HERENCIA MUSICAL: 20 CORRIDOS INOLVIDABLES (FONOVISA/UG)
12 CRISTIAN AMAR ES (ARIOLA/BMG LATIN)	12 VARIOUS ARTISTS SALSAS HITS 2004 (J&N/SONY DISCOS)	12 LOS CADETES DE LINARES 30 INOLVIDABLES (UNIVISION/UG)
13 EDNITA NAZARIO POR TI (SONY DISCOS)	13 CELIA CRUZ EL CARNAVAL DE LA VIDA (LIDERES)	13 JAVIER TORRES EL AMOR Y LA DESGRACIA (FONOVISA/UG)
14 MANA SOL (WARNER LATINA)	14 NUEVA ERA MAKE WAY (OLE)	14 GRUPO MONTEZ DE DURANGO/CONJUNTO ATARDECER EL PASITO DE DURANGO (LIDERES)
15 LUIS FONSI ABRAZAR LA VIDA (UNIVERSAL LATINO)	15 VARIOUS ARTISTS MERENHITS 2004 (J&N/SONY DISCOS)	15 LUPILLO RIVERA LIVE (UNIVISION/UG)
16 ALEJANDRO SANZ NO ES LO MISMO (WARNER LATINA)	16 VARIOUS ARTISTS BACHATAHITS 2003 (J&N/SONY DISCOS)	16 CONJUNTO PRIMAVERA DECIDE TU (FONOVISA/UG)
17 MANA LUNA (WARNER LATINA)	17 CELIA CRUZ EXITOS ETERNOS II (UNIVERSAL LATINO)	17 MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS TU AMOR O TU DESPRECIO (FONOVISA/UG)
18 MANNY MANUEL SERENATA (UNIVERSAL LATINO)	18 CELIA CRUZ LA MAS GRANDE HISTORIA JAMAS CANTADA (LIDERES)	18 PEPE AGUILAR COLECCION DE ORO (MUSART/BALBOA)
19 OBIE BERMUDEZ CONFESIONES (EMI LATIN)	19 TONO ROSARIO AMIGO MIO: TONO Y SUS EXITOS (WEACARIBE/WARNER LATINA)	19 CONJUNTO PRIMAVERA/PESADO DOS ROMANTICOS DE CORAZON (UNIVISION/UG)
20 MANA REVOLUCION DE AMOR (WARNER LATINA)	20 VARIOUS ARTISTS 2004 ANO DE EXITOS: BACHATAS Y MERENGUES (UNIVERSAL LATINO)	20 CUISILLOS LAS ROMANTICAS DE CUISILLOS (MUSART/BALBOA)

Albums with the greatest sales gains this week. ● Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units (Gold). ▲ RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum). ◆ RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamond). Numerical following Platinum or Diamond symbol indicates album's multi-platinum level. For boxed sets, and double albums with a running time of 100 minutes or more, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. RIAA Latin awards: ○ Certification for net shipment of 100,000 units (Oro). ▲ Certification of 200,000 units (Platinum). ◆ Certification of 400,000 units (Multi-Platinum). * Asterisk indicates LP is available. Must tape prices, and CD prices for BMG and WEA labels, are suggested lists. Tape prices marked EQ, and all other CD prices, are equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. Greatest Gainer shows chart's largest unit increase. Pacesetter indicates biggest percentage growth. Heatseeker Impact shows albums removed from Heatseekers this week. [M] indicates past or present Heatseeker title. © 2004, VNU Business Media, Inc., and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

A&R Exec 'Thinks Fink' For New Launch

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

With numerous labels closing, downsizing or consolidating, two dance/electronic veterans are optimistically proceeding hand-in-hand into the future with new game plans.

Gladys Pizarro, former A&R director of the defunct Strictly Rhythm Records, is starting a new production company, Launch Entertainment.

Launch will work closely with Strictly Rhythm founder/CEO Mark Finkelstein, whose repertoire-management firm, Think Fink, will handle Launch's business affairs.

"With Launch, I will continue to do what I'm known for," Pizarro says. "I will be looking for all styles of dance music—from house to trance and all points in between—that I feel passionate about. Music that I believe has a shot of being embraced."

Launch—which is in the process of signing talent—will shop its repertoire to labels in the U.S. and abroad. Pizarro says she will be looking to secure singles deals or license the music for use on compilations.

With her international contacts and connections in the dance/electronic community, many in the industry acknowledge that Pizarro has what it takes to get the music into the hands of deal-

signing executives.

"This is an excellent service for many DJs, producers and artists," says Craig Roseberry, founder of New York-based management, marketing and consulting firm Shifty Entertainment. "Because of Gladys' reputation, Launch is beneficial for newcomers as well as more established figures. She can cut through the layers of bullshit."

In today's business environment—where there is more talent than there is opportunity—Roseberry and others stress the importance of compilations and looking abroad to secure distribution for dance/electronic music.

Pizarro should also focus on film soundtracks, TV ads, satellite radio and the gaming industry, Roseberry adds. "Like all of us, she must create a new model out of the old one—the one that no longer works. It's the only way to remain in business."

That said, one element from Strictly Rhythm's old business model will remain intact for Pizarro and Launch. "I'll handle the A&R, and Mark will take care of the business affairs," Pizarro says. "Sound familiar?"

It should. Throughout the '90s, Strictly Rhythm provided DJs and enthusiasts with a non-stop sched-



PIZZARRO: LOOKING FOR ALL STYLES OF DANCE

ule of 12-inch vinyl singles. Many were international hits, including Ultra Naté's "Free" and Reel 2 Real Featuring the Mad Stuntman's "I Like to Move It."

Along the way, Pizarro discovered, nurtured and guided the careers of such globally recognized DJs/producers as Roger Sanchez, Erick Morillo, Armand van Helden and others.

After numerous hits—and misses—Strictly Rhythm created a 50/50 worldwide joint venture with Warner Music Group (*Billboard*, Dec. 16, 2000). Two years later, the New York-based independent ceased operations (*Billboard*, Oct. 12, 2002).

Finkelstein remains in litigation with Warner Music Group. According to Finkelstein, the lawsuit involves disputes arising out of the formation and operation of the joint venture between Strictly Rhythm and Warner.

At the end of 2002, Finkelstein opened the doors to Think Fink (Beat Box, *Billboard*, Dec. 21, 2002). He currently manages the repertoire of several DJs/producers, including Lee Cabrera and John Kano.

Last year, Finkelstein says he secured more than 20 licensing deals (encompassing singles and compilations) for Cabrera's crossover hit "Shake It."

In addition to managing repertoire, Finkelstein also handles sub-publishing deals in the U.S. for such labels as Italian dance im-

print Energy.

Since Strictly Rhythm's closing, Pizarro says she has spent time "re-evaluating things, figuring out where I'm headed and what I need to get there."

Eschewing the label route—particularly because of the expenses it would entail and incur—Pizarro focused on her A&R abilities.

Today's dance music business is in licensing, Pizarro notes. And while today's licensing fees are definitely lower than during the late-'90s licensing frenzy, "with less overhead, you need less in return," she adds.

Pizarro also stresses the importance of utilizing legitimate digital download services, which she and Finkelstein firmly believe are replacing the 12-inch vinyl store.

Of course, recent sales figures from digital download sites point to a rosy future for singles sales. And because dance music is predominantly a singles-oriented genre, the coming months could be an extremely exciting and lucrative time for those in the dance/electronic trenches.

"There is, and always will be, a need for dance music," Finkelstein says. "The genre will come back really strong within the next three years. Digital downloads will show the way."

TV's Queer Guy Opts For The Musical Life

Jai Rodriguez, the culture maven of Bravo/NBC hit reality series "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," is in the studio recording his debut album. If initial tracks are any indication, the full-length will encompass dance ("Love Is Good"), R&B ("Back to L.A.") and pop ("Shining Star"). And don't fret, Rodriguez *can* sing.

Prior to "Queer Eye," he spent time on Broadway and off-Broad-

way, performing in "Rent" and "Zanna, Don't!" respectively. Last March, Arrive at Eleven Productions issued "Love Is Good."

The track became a favorite in New York, prompting a performance by Rodriguez at the Roxy club. Then came "Queer Eye."

"I had been trucking along quite well before 'Queer Eye,'" Rodriguez says. "And while it's been a huge vehicle for me and I love working on it, I want to be known as a performer, not solely as 'the culture guy.'"

Rodriguez says he wants the album to be complete by June. Until then, he'll continue recording, taping episodes of "Queer Eye" and shopping for a label deal.

"A few years ago, I never would have thought that a 24-year-old gay man could have a chance in the world of music," he says. But the times

have changed. Now, anything is possible."

BEBEL BAUBLE: Fans of **Bebel Gilberto's** genre-bending "Tanto Tempo" will be happy to learn that the Brazilian artist is putting the finishing touches on her follow-up disc, which continues to bridge the gap between electronic and jazz (see *Jazz Notes*, page 15).

Scheduled to arrive in spring, the new Ziriguiboom/Six Degrees album—recorded in Rio de Janeiro and New York and mixed in London—finds Gilberto working with producers **Marius DeVries** (Björk, Rufus Wainwright), **Guy Sigsworth** (Seal, Britney Spears) and **Pascal Gabriel** (Kylie Minogue, Dido).

COMFORT ZONE: Three years ago, Indonesian-born singer/songwriter **Astrid Suryanto** crafted a rough demo using audio software that she had downloaded for free from the Internet.

The song, "You Give Me (Love)," ended up in the hands of

Beat Box™

By Michael Paoletta
mpaoletta@billboard.com

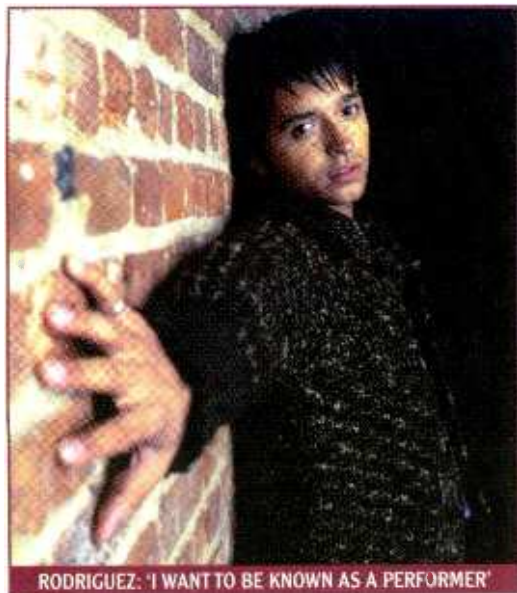


Calderone mesmerizes with chilled-out house grooves and melancholic piano tinklings. Such a lush foundation provides the postcard-perfect foundation for Suryanto's sweet, yearning vocals.

"Rainwater" precedes the artist's debut album, due later this year. By the way, for those that absolutely need Calderone's signature tribalisms, a Calderone remix is included on the CD.

CH-CH-CHANGES: Gladys Pizarro, formerly of Strictly Rhythm Records, is opening the doors to new production company Launch (see story, above). She can be reached at 212-844-9400 or launchentinc@aol.com.

TRACK OF THE WEEK: The Machine Head rerub of "I Need More Love" by **Robert Randolph & the Family Band**. Remixers **Jason Bentley & Smitty's** have concocted a bootylicious atmosphere—one that is equal parts jam band and Sunday-morning revival, replete with soulful vocals, powerful handclaps and roof-raising rhythms. The original version appears on the act's 2003 Dare/Warner Bros. album "Unclassified."



RODRIGUEZ: 'I WANT TO BE KNOWN AS A PERFORMER'

Billboard **HOT DANCE SINGLES SALES**
 JANUARY 24 2004
 Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WKS. ON	TITLE	Artist
1	1	1	10	NUMBER 1 ME AGAINST THE MUSIC	Britney Spears Featuring Madonna
2	2	2	5	NOTHING FAILS/NOBODY KNOWS ME	Madonna
3	3	4	19	(THERE'S GOTTA BE) MORE TO LIFE	Stacie Orrico
4	4	3	18	RUBBERNECKIN' (PAUL OAKENFOLD REMIX)	Elvis Presley
5	5	5	7	BREATHE (REMIXES)	Michelle Branch
6	6	6	17	SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL (REMIXES)	The Rolling Stones
7	9	13	4	BORN TOO SLOW	The Crystal Method
8	RE-ENTRY	6	4	LIMBO ROCK (REMIXES)	Chubby C & OD Featuring Inner Circle
9	7	10	27	THE DISTRICT SLEEPS ALONE TONIGHT	The Postal Service
10	11	11	26	OFFICIALLY MISSING YOU (REMIXES)	Tamia
11	13	14	9	YOU PROMISED ME (TU ES FOUTU)	In-Grid
12	10	8	10	HAREM (REMIXES)	Sarah Brightman
13	8	7	25	I'M GLAD (REMIXES)	Jennifer Lopez
14	17	17	5	ROCK YOUR BODY, ROCK	Ferry Corsten
15	14	12	27	HOLLYWOOD (REMIXES)	Madonna
15	19	19	16	TIME OF OUR LIVES/CONNECTED	Paul Van Dyk Featuring Vega 4
17	16	15	49	THROUGH THE RAIN (HEX HECTOR/MAC QUAYLE REMIX)	Mariah Carey
18	15	18	18	PAVEMENT CRACKS (REMIXES)	Annie Lennox
19	23	21	8	A TOAST TO MEN (F**K THE MEN)	Willa Ford Featuring May
20	21	20	13	WAITING FOR YOU (REMIXES)	Seal
21	18	22	6	FLY AGAIN	Kristine W
22	12	9	32	STUCK (THUNDERPUSS REMIX)	Stacie Orrico
23	22	—	9	HYPNOTISED	Paul Oakenfold
24	RE-ENTRY	3	3	SLOW	Kylie Minogue
25	RE-ENTRY	29	3	NOTHING BUT YOU	Paul Van Dyk Featuring Hemstock & Jennings

Billboard **HOT DANCE RADIO AIRPLAY**
 JANUARY 24 2004
 Airplay compiled by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON	TITLE	Artist
1	1	24	NUMBER 1 SOMETHING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO HEAVEN	Deborah Cox
2	2	24	NEVER (PAST TENSE)	The Roc Project Featuring Tina Arena
3	6	10	HEY YA!	OutKast
4	4	9	GIA	Despina Vandi
5	3	24	ALONE	Lasgo
6	8	7	MILKSHAKE	Kelis
7	9	21	BABY BOY	Beyonce Featuring Sean Paul
8	10	7	IT'S MY LIFE	No Doubt
9	17	6	WHEREVER YOU ARE (I FEEL LOVE)	Laava
10	18	7	RIE Y LLORA	Celia Cruz
11	12	24	IF YOU'RE NOT THE ONE	Daniel Bedingfield
12	14	23	ROCK YOUR BODY	Justin Timberlake
13	7	16	YOU PROMISED ME (TU ES FOUTU)	In-Grid
14	25	3	ALL THINGS (JUST KEEP GETTING BETTER)	Wideline With Simone Denny
15	5	20	I BEGIN TO WONDER	Dannii Minogue
16	13	8	YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL	Donna Summer
17	24	5	WAITING FOR YOU	Seal
18	19	13	SLOW	Kylie Minogue
19	16	24	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE	Milky
20	23	11	APPRECIATE ME	Amika Featuring Sheila Brody
21	22	23	AT THE END	iio
22	RE-ENTRY	—	AS THE RUSH COMES	Motorcycle
23	15	20	CRAZY IN LOVE	Beyonce Featuring Jay-Z
24	20	22	E	Drunkenmunky
25	21	8	DEEPEST BLUE	Deepest Blue

Billboard **TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS**
 JANUARY 24 2004
 Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON	ARTIST	Title
1	1	4	NUMBER 1 SARAH MCLACHLAN	Remixed
2	3	40	THE POSTAL SERVICE	Give Up
3	2	13	MARIAH CAREY	The Remixes
4	5	15	ENIGMA	Voyageur
5	4	8	LOUIE DEVITO	N.Y.C. Underground Party 6
6	6	12	BASEMENT JAXX	Kish Kash
7	7	10	THE HAPPY BOYS	Dance Party (Like It's 2004)
8	8	15	THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS	Singles '93 - '03
9	10	20	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Verve//Remixed2
10	9	20	LOUIE DEVITO	Louie DeVito Presents: Ultra.Dance 04
11	14	14	PRAFUL	One Day Deep
12	12	15	PAUL OAKENFOLD	Perfecto Presents... Great Wall
13	13	8	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Ministry Of Sound: The Annual 2004
14	11	8	MOBY	18: B Sides + DVD
15	19	5	MIKE RIZZO	Webster Hall's New York Dance CD V.6
16	18	24	THE HAPPY BOYS	Trance Party (Volume Three)
17	21	8	UNDERWORLD	Underworld 1992-2002
18	17	23	BT	Emotional Technology
19	15	14	PAUL VAN DYK	Reflections
20	20	17	BOND	Bond: Remixed
21	16	39	VARIOUS ARTISTS	30th Anniversary Collection: Ultimate Disco
22	22	23	BJORK	Greatest Hits
23	24	6	KINKY	Atlas
24	RE-ENTRY	—	THEIERY CORPORATION	The Richest Man In Babylon
25	25	12	STEPHANE POMPOUGNAC	Hotel Costes V.6

Billboard **HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY**
 JANUARY 24 2004

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WKS. ON	TITLE	Artist
1	2	3	11	NUMBER 1 STONED (DEEP DISH REMIX)	Dido
2	4	7	10	WONDERFUL (S. KLEINENBERG & D. AUDE MIXES)	Annie Lennox
3	8	13	6	NOTHING FAILS (REMIXES)	Madonna
4	6	8	10	ADDICTED (REMIXES)	Enrique Iglesias
5	1	2	10	A THOUSAND BEAUTIFUL THINGS (RAUHOFFER, G&D, BIMBO JONES)	Annie Lennox
6	11	16	7	BREATHE (REMIXES)	Michelle Branch
7	12	15	8	FALLEN (REMIXES)	Sarah McLachlan
8	3	4	11	LUCKY STAR	Basement Jaxx Featuring Dizzee Rascal
9	16	22	6	FAKE	Simply Red
10	15	21	6	GIVE IT UP	Kevin Aviance
11	7	9	10	RELEASE ME (RAUHOFFER, MORRIS, CRUZ & BAGZ, MIDNIGHT SOCIETY)	Industry
12	14	19	8	THE HURTING	Mac Quayle Featuring Donna Delory
13	9	5	10	ME AGAINST THE MUSIC	Britney Spears Featuring Madonna
14	10	1	13	ARE YOU READY FOR LOVE	Elton John
15	18	23	8	WALK ON BY	Cyndi Lauper
16	22	26	6	SLOW	Kylie Minogue
17	5	6	12	YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL	Donna Summer
18	20	24	7	GET IT OFF (THAT KID CHRIS REMIX)	Monica
19	26	29	5	JUST A LITTLE MORE LOVE	David Guetta Featuring Chris Willis
20	27	33	5	BORN SLIPPY NUXX (P. OAKENFOLD & R. SMITH MIXES)	Underworld
21	13	10	13	BELIEVE	Murk
22	30	41	3	BURNING	Robbie Rivera & Axwell Feat. Suzan Brittan
23	37	—	2	POWER PICK ME, MYSELF AND I (JUNIOR'S REMIX)	Beyonce
24	19	17	14	MILKSHAKE (X-PRESS 2 & DJ ZINC MIXES)	Kelis
25	21	18	11	DO U GOT FUNK?	Big Bang Theory

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WKS. ON	TITLE	Artist
26	28	34	6	1000 YEARS	Arthur Baker Featuring Astrid Williamson
27	17	14	12	NOBODY KNOWS ME (P. RAUHOFFER, ABOVE & BEYOND, MOUNT SIMS MIXES)	Madonna
28	24	12	11	BABY, I'M IN LOVE (BORIS & BECK, NORTY COTTO MIXES)	Thalia
29	31	38	5	KISS MY EYES	Bob Sinclair
30	29	37	5	ROCK YOUR BODY, ROCK	Ferry Corsten
31	35	43	3	HARU (WIDELIFE MIX)	Haru
32	34	40	5	ONENESS (FRED JORIO REMIXES)	Damian Featuring Sasha Lazard
33	23	11	13	WAITING FOR YOU (THICK DICK, PASSENGER, 29 PALMS, D. CARTER)	Seal
34	46	—	2	FACE TO FACE	Daft Punk
35	40	45	3	INTO THE LIGHT	Cause And Effect
36	42	—	2	SLIPPIN' AWAY	Sweet Rains
37	33	30	9	FOREVER	Mia
38	36	35	7	RIE Y LLORA (THE REMIXES)	Celia Cruz
39	NEW	1	1	HOT SHOT DEBUT BORN TOO SLOW (E. MORILLO, DEEPSKY, & NUBREED MIXES)	The Crystal Method
40	25	20	14	I'M WAITING	Aubrey Vs. Johnny Vicious
41	NEW	1	1	SIGH	Praful
42	41	36	9	BEAUTIFUL OUTSIDE (MINGE BINGE & E-SMOOVE MIXES)	Velocity Code
43	NEW	1	1	GIA	Despina Vandi
44	NEW	1	1	POWERLESS (SAY WHAT YOU WANT) [WIDELIFE, JUNIOR, & CHAB MIXES]	Nelly Furtado
45	NEW	1	1	DEJA VU (IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE)	The Roc Project Featuring Tina Novak
46	45	44	8	YOU GOT ME	Giovanna
47	32	28	12	GUAJIRA (ROGER SANCHEZ REMIX)	Emmanuel
48	48	49	7	AS THE RUSH COMES	Motorcycle
49	39	31	16	FLY AGAIN (K&S PROJECT, R. ROSARIO, SCUMFROG, J. VASQUEZ MIXES)	Kristine W
50	38	25	16	MY LOVE IS ALWAYS	Saffron Hill

Titles with the greatest sales or club play increases this week. Power Pick on Club Play is awarded for the largest point increase among singles below the top 20. The Club Play chart is compiled from a national sample of reports from club DJs. Video clip availability, Catalog number is for vinyl maxi-single, or CD maxi-single, or CD single respectively, based upon availability. On Dance Singles Sales chart: CD Single available, CD Maxi-Single available, Vinyl Maxi-Single available, Cassette Maxi-Single available. ©2004, VNU Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

Set Recognizes Nashville's R&B Past

BY JIM BESSMAN

NASHVILLE—Nashville's central position in country music history is a given, but its place in the annals of R&B is underappreciated.

Now, however, none other than the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum is celebrating Music City's considerable contributions to the genre with the Feb. 24 release of "Night Train to Nashville: Music City Rhythm & Blues, 1945-1970" on CMF Records.

The two-disc set will be distributed through Lost Highway/Universal. It complements the Country Music Hall of Fame's exhibit of the same name, which is slated to open March 15. The 18-month schedule of public programs includes concerts, panel discussions, lectures and films.

"A single CD just wouldn't do it," Country Music Hall of Fame special projects director Kira Florita says.

She notes that the recordings were culled from more than 20 labels including Bullet, Nashville's first notable independent record company, and Excello, Music City's most important R&B label. The titles were recorded mostly in Nashville but also include outside recordings, such as Nashville native Bobby Hebb's 1966 pop smash "Sunny," which he cut in his then-home base of New York.

OUT-OF-TOWN ARTISTS

Other major artists from out of town are also featured on such local recordings as Etta James' 1963 version of Ray Charles' hit "What'd I Say," taped live at R&B nightspot the New Era Club, and Esquerita's 1958 Capitol recording of "Rockin' the Joint." Esquerita fan

Little Richard is present with his 1956 Royal Crown Hairdressing spot for one-time Nashville R&B AM radio powerhouse WLAC.

As music critic Ron Wynn points out in his liner-note essay, Nashville's historic importance to African-American music has heretofore been relegated to awareness of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, early Grand Ole Opry star DeFord Bailey and country music legend Charley Pride.

But "Night Train to Nashville" brings to the fore such under-recognized local artists as Cecil Gant, whose "Nashville Jumps" (1946) initiated Bullet's "sepia" line of early recordings from the likes of B.B. King, Wynonie Harris and Rufus Thomas; New Era Club house band Kid King's Combo, whose cuts like "Skip's Boogie" (1953) shaped the Excello label sound; Arthur Gunter, whose self-penned 1954 Excello hit "Baby Let's Play House" was covered that year by Elvis Presley at Sun for his first chart single; and Christine Kittrell, who recorded for the Tennessee/Republic Records family and whose included songs "L&N Special" (1953) and "Sittin' Here Drinking" (1952) place her in the company of R&B greats James and Ruth Brown.

Brown, meanwhile, is represented with a 1962 Nashville remake of her 1953 chart-topper "Mama, He Treats Your Daughter Mean," produced by Shelby Singleton and starring country legends Jerry Kennedy on guitar and Ray Stevens on piano. Arthur Alexander's 1962 hit "Anna (Go to Him)"—recorded with famed Nashville session musicians Charlie McCoy, Hargus "Pig" Robbins, Kenneth Buttrey and the Anita Kerr Singers—was soon covered by the

Beatles, while Gene Allison's 1957 hit "You Can Make It If You Try" was later covered by the Rolling Stones.

Robert Knight's 1967 hit "Everlasting Love" was arranged and produced by its writers Buzz Cason and Mac Gayden and later covered by U2 and Gloria Estefan. Joe Simon's 1969 R&B and pop hit "The Chokin' Kind" was previously Waylon Jennings' Harlan Howard-penned country hit; also that year, New Orleans R&B ace Johnny Adams' biggest hit, "Reconsider Me," was produced by Singleton, again with Kennedy on guitar.



"We originally called it 'The Lost History of Nashville R&B,'" Florita says, "because people know very little about what went on here in R&B. But it was a very vibrant scene, and Nashville's role was integral to R&B in the South. And obviously, there was a connection with the country music industry. So many musicians, songwriters and studio session players and producers who worked on R&B records went on to become legends in country music—and vice versa."

Country Music Hall of Fame associate director of museum services

Michael Gray co-produced the set and also contributed liner notes. He further delineates Nashville's country/R&B relationship.

"Beginning in the late '40s and into the '50s and '60s, Nashville was a real hotbed for R&B," he says. "That's overshadowed by Nashville's identification today with country music, but to fully appreciate its rise as the capital of country music, you need to look at the context within which that emergence took place and the important role of R&B in Nashville becoming a recording center."

Gray also cites the "A-Team players" associated with Nashville's country music sessions who graced many of its R&B recordings and holds up Hebb's story as particularly illustrative of the intersecting genres.

"The whole Hebb family was one of the most famous musical families in Nashville in terms of R&B," Gray says, noting that Bobby performed as a youngster with his older brother Harold in a tap-dance revue at the Bijou Theater before playing spoons, singing and dancing in Roy Acuff's band in the early '50s.

"I was singing standards on [legendary Nashville Sound producer] Owen Bradley's [local variety] TV show every week, and Roy saw me and liked my act," Hebb recalls, noting that Acuff had previously employed Bailey.

"I sang hits of the time, including [Hank Williams'] 'Cold Cold Heart': I remember Hank telling me to keep on singing it—and believe it or not, I just recorded it in Germany last year. But country music in those days leaned a little closer to gospel: [Pioneering gospel composer] Thomas Dorsey wrote 'Peace in the Valley'—which his friend Red Foley recorded—and Nash-

ville was a more experimental city at that particular time."

WIDESPREAD PROMOTION

As the "Night Train to Nashville" set precedes the museum's exhibit, the Hall of Fame is using it to generate advance press. "The city of Nashville and the Convention and Visitors Bureau will be investing \$400,000 to market the exhibit regionally, and the CDs will be mentioned everywhere," Florita says, announcing a "strong" local print/radio media buy along with an "aggressive" outdoor billboard campaign together with bus benches and wraps.

"We're working on a media sponsorship and local, regional and national promotions with partners including the Grand Ole Opry and CMT," she adds. "We're exploring new opportunities with BET and others and will have an aggressive online promotional presence."

Co-promotions with Lost Highway are still being finalized, Florita says. "They'll utilize a point-of-purchase version of an art poster we've created for sale," she notes, "and they'll obviously try to engage the indie [retail] coalitions, especially in strong R&B markets."

In-store promotions and performances are also being planned for the museum's store, Florita says, and possibly at the local Tower Records outlets, "if we can do them without competing."

"Night Train to Nashville" is not CMF Records' first foray into black music. In 1998, the label, through Warner Bros., issued the three-CD anthology "From Where I Stand: The Black Experience in Country Music."

15 Years Later, Randy Owen Still Cares

This month marks the 15th anniversary of Country Cares for St. Jude Kids, a national fundraising program for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis.

The country music industry has raised more than \$200 million for St. Jude since Randy Owen of the group Alabama founded the Country Cares program in 1989. St. Jude has been embraced by more than 200 country radio stations, nearly every country record label and scores of artists and industry executives as their charity of choice.

A meeting with actor and St. Jude founder Danny Thomas inspired Owen to launch Country

Cares. Thomas persuaded Owen to carry on his work raising money to help the hospital research diseases and treat children with catastrophic illnesses.

"Danny mentioned to me he was an old man and he was tired," Owen recalls. "I think a lot of this was God's way of using me. He knew he had a willing servant to do that. He had one in Danny Thomas [too], and what a wonderful legacy."

Early on, Owen was a bit reluctant to use his leverage as the lead singer of a superstar country act to generate support for Country Cares at radio. He thought that "as an artist, I can't really lean on these people too

much, because I don't want to make them mad," he says. "I finally made up my mind that we put the kids first and what I do with Alabama is second. That's the way I've done it since the time I made that decision. I'm sure our career suffered a little bit because of that in some cases, but I never did."

The work strikes a personal chord for Owen. In junior high school he became very ill, but he didn't go to a doctor because his family couldn't afford it. That memory is among the things that helped Owen make a connection with a hospital where

patients' families are never asked to pay beyond what any insurance they have may cover.

"That always stuck with me," Owen says. "The thought of being



OWEN: INSPIRED BY ACTOR DANNY THOMAS

Nashville
Scene™
By Phyllis Stark
pstark@billboard.com



a child and not being able to afford the care that is out there."

He says his involvement with Country Cares has "made my life richer. It has made my heart different."

ON THE ROW: Arista Nashville artist Brad Paisley has signed with Fitzgerald-Hartley for personal management. He previously was repped by Jimmy Gilmer of JAG Management in Nashville.

Cindy Wunsch has closed her Nashville artist management firm to return to school to pursue a master's degree in education. She had represented Lyric Street group Shedaisy, which now shifts to new manager Scott Welch at Nashville-based Mosaic Media Group.

Dolly Parton will host the CMT Flameworthy 2004 Video Music Awards set for April 21 in Nashville. Shania Twain will perform on the show, set to be telecast live on CMT from 8 p.m.-10 p.m. (ET).

Phyllis Stark is on the industry advisory board for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

ALBUMS

Edited by Michael Paoletta

POP

ANI DIFRANCO
Educated Guess
 PRODUCER: Ani DiFranco
 Righteous Babe RBR034
 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 20

After last year's impressive full-band album "Evolve," Ani DiFranco announced she was returning to her solo roots. With "Educated Guess," on her homespun Righteous Babe label, the renegade singer/songwriter/guitarist makes good on her minimalist promise by delivering a one-woman set recorded with overdubs on vintage reel-to-reel equipment. She serves up four literate spoken-word pieces and several tunes that sound like they were journal-generated. In her singular style, DiFranco muses and strikes with poignancy, humor and political correctness. There is also the personal politics: the questioning of love (the lyrical "You Each Time"), the plaintive breakup (the gritty, blues/rock-charged "Bubble") and the act of independence (the best track of the collection, "Swim," with its clinky-clunky guitar line matched by the cadence of her vocals). Overall, DiFranco exhibits a strong-fingered guitar attack on the CD that is characterized by production rawness—for better (the immediacy of the performance) and worse (traces of off-key harmonies).—**DD**

THE CHURCH
Forget Yourself
 PRODUCER: the Church
 SpinART 134
 RELEASE DATE: Feb. 3

It has been a decade since the major-label heyday of this Australian quartet, but the Church continues to thrive artistically after nearly a quarter-century at work. The group's new self-produced effort sports a grand, appropriately cathedral-like sound. It also contains the band's familiar mix of Steve Kilbey's understated vocalizing, highly impressionistic lyrics and spacey pop psychedelia that effortlessly melds the supposedly incompatible styles of such progenitors as Pink Floyd and the Beach Boys. There is a wealth of superior tracks to select from here, with "Song in Space," "Appalatia," "Don't You Fall" and "Reversal" the strongest tunes. The Church falls between the cracks of established stateside rock radio formats, and the group's melodic trippiness may elude programmers. But longtime fans will find plenty to cherish on this very atmospheric and tuneful sortie.—**CM**

KATY ROSE
Because I Can
 PRODUCER: Kim Bullard
 V2 27170
 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 27

Seventeen-year-old Katy Rose certainly has enviable pipes for her young age. That said, there is still some room for this singer/songwriter to grow into her

ESSENTIAL REVIEWS



AMICI FOREVER
The Opera Band
 PRODUCER: Nick Patrick
 Victor 82876-52739
 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 13

Reportedly signed for £6 million (\$11 million), the five good-looking singers in U.K.-based "opera band" Amici Forever are the next Three Tenors-style hitmakers. At least that is the hope of their label, which has created a pop-length showcase platform ranging from a thunderous arrangement of Handel's Sarabande (now dubbed "Prayer in the Night") to a new arrangement of the theme from the HBO series "Band of Brothers." The set aims squarely to please with the pretty (albeit pretty bland) crossover that is in such vogue, jacked up by cloying arrangements and otherworldly engineering that makes the singers sound as if they are coming from another astral dimension. But unlike many crossover aspirants, these performers have had training and have some vocal maturity, which are real points in their favor. Only time will tell if their appeal crosses the Atlantic.—**AT**

material. Her voice, a soft sound containing an old soul, is impressively complicated. Yet much of "Because I Can," the artist's debut full-length disc, meanders into bland pop territory. However, Rose can be proud of riskier rock-flavored tracks like "Catch My Fall" and earlier-released single "Overdrive." The former blares to life by way of a screaming Rose, later settling into a wild but incredibly accessible beat. And the latter intelligently mixes pop accents into a hard guitar line. Considering even young music fans are not embracing teen pop as they have in the past, it should serve Rose well to step more heavily on the rock pedal in the future.—**SA**

R&B/HIP-HOP

★ ROY AYERS
Virgin Ubiquity: Unreleased Recordings 1976-1981
 PRODUCER: not listed
 BBE/Rapster RR0026
 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 27

Jazz vibraphonist Roy Ayers has been making music for more than three decades. His classic tracks—"Everybody Loves the Sunshine," "Evolution," "Get on Up, Get on Down" and "Run-

MINDY SMITH
One Moment More
 PRODUCERS: Steve Buckingham, Mindy Smith
 Vanguard 79736
 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 27

It seems the beginning of each year brings the bow of a bright new female singer/songwriter. Last year, it was Canada's Kathleen Edwards; this year, it's New York-born, Nashville-bred Mindy Smith. In October, Smith covered Dolly Parton's "Jolene" for Sugar Hill's Parton tribute album, "Just Because I'm a Woman." She made an impression among heavy company



(Norah Jones, Shania Twain, Shelby Lynne), and her debut is accompanied by a bright buzz. Smith's bell-like, slightly tremulous voice is the perfect vehicle for her introspective, largely subdued original tunes. "Falling," "Train Song" and "Amazing" are the most immediately engaging of a consistent package of songs, which should capture instant attention at Americana and public radio outlets. Don't discount pop prospects, though. Smith is a winner.—**CM**

ning Away," among others—have influenced many DJs, producers and artists in the worlds of R&B, hip-hop, soul and dance. This collection is home to 13 unreleased gems, many of which dazzle in a disco-jazz hybrid that was popular in the mid- to late '70s. "Virgin Ubiquity" opens with the appropriately titled "Boogie Down"; featured vocalist Carla Vaughn does just that. Merry Clayton, who is responsible for the voice in the funky "What's the T?" proves that she, too, knows how to get down. In fact, it becomes readily apparent that Vaughn, Clayton and the disc's other featured female singer, Sylvia Cox ("Brand New Feeling"), are getting down for one reason: They were truly *feeling* the musically rich landscapes being created by Ayers and his musician friends. Put such artistry alongside today's so-called divas and the comparisons between then and now become incredibly far-reaching. Vaughn and Clayton can also be heard, separately, on other tracks, including "Mystic Voyage (Version)," "Sugar," "I Really Love You" and "Mystery of Love." Rounding out this essential package are liner notes penned by Ayers himself. Racked in the U.S. by Studio Distribution.—**MP**



YO-YO MA
Obrigado Brazil—Live in Concert
 PRODUCER: Steve Epstein
 Sony Classical SK 90970
 RELEASE DATE: Feb. 10

In this live recording of his successful and gorgeous "Obrigado Brazil" concept album, cellist Yo-Yo Ma has brought together most of the musical cast that accompanied him on the original studio recording. And that cast—including clarinetist Paquito D'Rivera, guitarist brothers Sergio and Odair Assad, singer Rosa Passos and percussionist Cyro Baptista—continues to lend credibility and interpretative flair to this project. Classical crossovers are tricky. The specter of stiffness and triteness lords over most of them. But the tracks on "Obrigado"—many not included on the original recording—are effortless. Even the opening "Libertango," rendered a bit stiff with the crisp piano accompaniment, survives on sheer beauty. "Obrigado" live is more populist than its predecessor and has no qualms about including Ary Barroso's "Aquarela do Brazil." It is but one example of how good taste can supersede what is overly familiar.—**LC**

DANCE/ELECTRONIC

► DAFT PUNK
Daft Club
 PRODUCER: Daft Punk
 Virgin 94241
 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 27

Perhaps you really cannot have too much of a good thing. For its remix disc, "Daft Club," French duo Daft Punk (Thomas Bangalter and Guy-Manuel De Homem Christo) showcases the work of others—specifically, DJ/producers who reconstructed songs primarily from the act's 2001 album, "Discovery." Two tracks ("Aerodynamic" and "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger") are revisited more than once here. Fortunately, the various versions work. Slum Village adds an underground vibe to the originally ethereal "Aerodynamic." Guess what? These opposing forces bounce well off each other. Jess & Crabbe's deceptively simple rejigging of "Harder, Better" completely reinvigorates a song that was pretty much perfect to begin with. In the Neptunes' hands, "Harder, Better" becomes a lounge-styled track; this, too, strikes a great note. Other worthy mentions are Boris Dlugosh's

rerub of "Digital Love" and Basement Jaxx's retweaking of "Phoenix" (the only track here from Daft Punk's debut, "Homework"). First released overseas last December, "Daft Club" will hopefully help fans forgive the band for notoriously waiting years between album releases.—**SA**

COUNTRY

THE FLATLANDERS
Wheels of Fortune
 PRODUCER: Joe Ely
 New West 6049
 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 27

Thirty years after first collaborating, the Flatlanders—Joe Ely, Butch Hancock and Jimmie Dale Gilmore—fulfilled decades of pent-up demand with the release of their only "official" album, "Now Again," in 2002. Touring heavily in support of that critically acclaimed release, the Flatlanders obviously stoked a creative fire, with the result being "Wheels of Fortune." At least as great as the sum of their considerable parts, as a group, the Flatlanders are inspired, shifting songwriting and vocal duties like powerful gears. Hancock-penned cuts like the slow-rollin' "Baby Do You Love Me Still" and rhythmic "Wishin' for You" come off like a Lone Star Traveling Wilburys. Gilmore pines convincingly on the title cut and the philosophical "Once Followed by the Wind," while Ely kills on the atmospheric "Neon of Nashville." Singer and songwriter are seldom the same, with one artist interpreting another to remarkable effect. Their instincts are keen, bespeaking creative synergy and combined genius. Finally, the Flatlanders are more band than legend.—**RW**

WORLD

★ PERU NEGRO
Jolgorio
 PRODUCERS: Rony Campos, Juan Morillo, Felipe Pumarada
 Times Square 9035
 RELEASE DATE: Jan. 20

Peru Negro is the most well-known Afro-Peruvian music and dance company in Peru. Its music is a distinctive Latin American style, derived from West African influences that were evidently rediscovered through Afro-Cuban music. One of the unique Afro-Peruvian instruments, the *cajón* (a box drum), is a dominant percussive voice throughout "Jolgorio." Because Peru Negro is essentially a revivalist movement, bent on recovering the African cultural heritage of Peru, song lyrics frequently mock colonial practice. "De Espana," for instance, contains the lyric: "From Spain Christ arrived/But so did the master/And just like the master did with Christ/He took blacks and crucified them." The stylistic range here is mostly uptempo *festejo*, *comparsa* and *zamacueca*. The Peruvian tap dancing style—*zapateo*—is also featured in "Con Su Toque De Violin." Despite the frequent colonial subject matter, the music is celebratory and beautifully performed. Racked in the U.S. by Koch.—**PVV**

(Continued on page 32)

CONTRIBUTORS: Susanne Ault, Keith Caulfield, Leila Cobo, Deborah Evans Price, Chris Morris, Dan Ouellette, Michael Paoletta, Chuck Taylor, Anastasia Tsioulcas, Philip van Vleck, Ray Waddell. ESSENTIALS: Releases deemed by the review editors to deserve special attention on the basis of musical merit and/or Billboard chart potential. VITAL REISSUES: Rereleased albums of special artistic, archival and commercial interest and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. PICKS (►): New releases predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format. CRITICS' CHOICES (★): New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. All albums commercially available in the U.S. are eligible. Send album review copies and singles review copies to Michael Paoletta (Billboard, 770 Broadway, 6th floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

(Continued from page 31)

★ **HABIB KOITÉ & BAMADA**
Fôly!—Live Around the World
PRODUCER: Michael De Bock, Daniel Boivin
World Village 468021
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 13
 Malian guitarist/singer Habib Koité is without question one of the most gifted and compelling performers on the contemporary Afropop scene—and this joyous, vibrant two-disc set serves as affirmation of his place of pride. Fusing gentle, almost singer/songwriter-like vocals with high-energy playing that draws its inspiration from myriad Malian styles, Koité and his band Bamada soar through a collection of their hits. Highlights include the gently propulsive currents of “Ma Ya,” the eminently danceable beats of “Nanale” and the sly wit of “Cigarette Abana” (the song that rocketed Koité to stardom across West Africa). This specially priced set lasts for well more than two hours. Of course, when spent in such good company, the time passes in a flash.—**AT**

JAZZ

★ **DAVE DOUGLAS**
Strange Liberation
PRODUCER: Dave Douglas
Bluebird 82876-50818
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 27
 Forty-one years old with 21 albums to his credit: That is a remarkable résumé for jazz's most adventurous trumpeter. Dave Douglas' sixth Bluebird outing, “Strange Liberation,” is a reflective, whimsical and driving quintet date with guest Bill Frisell. It marks the first meeting of the fellow alchemists. The pairing is a perfect tonal match: Frisell's dreamy yet barbed guitar stylings harmonically mated to Douglas' trademark bumblebee trills and high-pitched wails. But the Frisell-Douglas partnership is only part of the CD's success story. Equally vital to its dynamism is Douglas' brilliant road-honed band—tenor saxophonist Chris Potter, Fender Rhodes stylist Uri Caine, bassist James Genus, drummer Clarence Penn—who help cook up sweetly lyrical tunes (“A Single Sky”), swinging beauties (the Monk-inspired “Skeeter-ism”), a rousing rock-tilted jaunt (the playfully titled “Rock of Billy”), a tempo-shifting rush (“Seventeen”) and a show-stopping ballad (“Just Say This”).—**DO**

BLUES

★ **KENNY NEAL AND BILLY BRANCH**
Double Take
PRODUCER: Didier Tricard
Alligator 4894
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 13
 Louisiana blues guitarist Kenny Neal and Chicago harmonica ace Billy Branch have teamed to create this excellent acoustic blues record. Both gentlemen are exceptional players and vocalists, and they adhere to the original premise of the project. This is nothing but acoustic guitar, harp and voice. There will always be something alluring about elemental blues music. The listener can tap into this vibe on any of the dozen tracks and find a righteous tune. Seven of the songs, including “My Babe,” “Mannish Boy” and “Don't Start Me Talking,” are standards. Neal contributed four orig-

inal numbers, and Branch added his song “Northern Man Blues.” For a special moment among many, check out both takes of “The Son I Never Knew.” With percussion and electricity stripped away, this album is all about feel and mood, and the tracks are ripe with both. “Double Take” is a tasty and soulful way to open blues year 2004.—**PVV**

CHRISTIAN

► **THE CRABB FAMILY**
Crabb Fest Live 2003
PRODUCERS: Gerald and Kathy Crabb
Daywind 1418713802
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 10
 Southern gospel artists are known for delivering exuberant performances. This 17-song collection captures the passion and enthusiasm that make Southern gospel gatherings such a huge draw. It accomplishes this by showcasing some of the genre's top acts doing what they do best. The Crabb Family is joined by Brian Free & Assurance, LordSong, Mike Bowling, the Hoskins Family, Gerald Crabb and the Perrys. This project was recorded in Owensboro, Ky., at Crabb Fest, the Crabb Family's annual homecoming event. Bowling's a cappella rendition of “The Call” is powerful. LordSong's “While I Wait” is a vibrant celebration of faith. The Perrys' “Calvary Answers for Me” is another highlight. And when Jason Crabb rips into “Through the Fire,” everyone will want to stand and shout, “Hallelujah!” Accompanied by a VHS/DVD release, this recording is the next best thing to being there.—**DEP**

CLASSICAL

NIGEL KENNEDY; MEMBERS OF THE BERLIN PHILHARMONIC; DANIEL STABRAWA
Vivaldi, The Four Seasons
PRODUCER: David Groves
EMI Classics 7243 5 57666 0 1
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 13
 Way back in the halcyon days of 1989, classical music's purported “bad boy,” violinist Nigel Kennedy, released a barn-burning version of Vivaldi's Four Seasons that sold more than 2 million copies. Fifteen years later, Kennedy is back to the music that has buttered his bread—in a recording that offers disappointingly little new insight. Supposedly, this latest rendering is the first (limited-edition) entry in a whole Kennedy-Berlin Philharmonic series that will eventually explore Vivaldi's lesser-known output, which is in itself a welcome idea. Unfortunately, though, the A minor and D Major double violin concertos featured here (with Daniel Stabrawa) seem mere window dressing to the main event. If you have not had quite enough of Kennedy and the Four Seasons, check out the bonus DVD.—**AT**

Billboard.com

- Stereolab, “Margarine Eclipse” (Elektra)
- Firewater, “Songs We Should Have Written” (Jetset)
- The Wannadies, “Before and After” (Parasol)

SINGLES

Edited by Michael Paoletta

POP

JC CHASEZ *Some Girls (Dance With Women)* (3:54)
PRODUCERS: Riprock 'N' Alex G, JC Chazez
WRITERS: JC Chazez, A. Greggs, B. Daymond
PUBLISHERS: JC Chazez Music, Alex Griggs Publishing, ASCAP; BMG Music Publishing Canada, SOCAN; Internash Songs, ASCAP
Jive 57357 (CD promo)
 While 'N Sync member Justin Timberlake was ruling pop radio last year, the group's other lead vocalist, JC Chazez, immersed himself in the dance/electronic scene. In 2003, he collaborated with BT and Basement Jaxx and released the under-appreciated, beat-heavy single “Blowin' Me Up (With Her Love).” Now, Chazez has returned with “Some Girls (Dance With Women),” a simmering, uptempo hip-pop track. Chazez's subtle and sexed-up vocals are coupled with lyrics that are guaranteed to react with listeners. The song wears well with repeat plays; by the third time around, the chorus is fully lodged in the brain. Chazez's debut album, “Schizophrenic,” is out next month.—**KC**

ROCK

► **THE STROKES** *Reptilia* (3:35)
PRODUCER: Gordon Raphael
WRITER: Julian Casablancas
PUBLISHER: the Strokes Band Music, ASCAP
RCA 58274 (CD promo)
 “Reptilia” should have been the first single off the Strokes' latest album, “Room on Fire.” Sure, both “Reptilia” and the actual first single, “12:51,” replicate the somewhat sloppy—but endearingly so—nightlife melodies found on the band's debut, “Is This It.” However, the adventurous jolt of a guitar solo half-way in, coupled with a knowing, sinister take on the partying life, makes “Reptilia” a more memorable song. When frontman Julian Casablancas drawls “please don't slow me down, if I'm going too fast,” it feels right to root the guy on in his rebellion. Granted, the similarity between albums has bothered some critics when assessing “Room on Fire.” Still, “Reptilia” stands tall as a legitimate addition to the Strokes' repertoire.—**SA**

AC

MELISSA ETHERIDGE *Breathe* (3:15)
PRODUCER: John Shanks
WRITERS: R. Jordan, M. Wanninger, A. Dwiggin, D. Randall, B. Armstrong
PUBLISHER: Through the Pink/EMI April/EMI Music, ASCAP
Island 15969 (CD promo)
 Melissa Etheridge returns with “Breathe,” the lead single from her eighth album, “Lucky” (due Feb. 10). The track is a cover of Greenwheel's minor 2002 hit. It reunites her with producer John Shanks, who worked with Etheridge on her 2001 effort, “Skin,” and in 2003 helmed hits by Sheryl Crow and Michelle Branch.

ESSENTIAL REVIEWS



HOOBASTANK *The Reason* (3:54)
PRODUCER: Howard Benson
WRITERS: D. Estrin, D. Robb
PUBLISHERS: Spread Your Cheeks and Push Out the Music, ASCAP
Island B0001488 (CD promo)
 As Hoobastank's top 10 “Out of Control” continues to howl loud and long at rock radio, the SoCal band tosses out a real left curve with the beautiful, affecting ballad, “The Reason,” crafted to give the quartet its first sip of top 40 success. Amid a slow simmer of guitars and gently driving percussion, the theme here—regret—is simple and direct as lead singer/lyricist Douglass Robb laments, “I'm not a perfect person/There's many things I wish I didn't do/I've found a reason for me to change who I used to be/And the reason is you.” His delivery is soaked with suffering and the kind of inventive nuances that make this a natural for sing-along crooning. Like No Doubt's uncharacteristic “Don't Speak,” this record is far from a sell-out; it showcases a previously unseen versatility, allowing Hoobastank instant cred. “Reason” enough?—**CT**

Etheridge's voice is always a comforting sound—warm and familiar and perfect for radio. The solid, rocking track combines her gutsy vocals with a killer guitar-driven chorus (“I'm alright/I'm alright/It only hurts when I breathe”). Adult-leaning stations are already onboard, but mainstream top 40 outlets should take note as well.—**KC**

COUNTRY

► **BIG & RICH** *Wild West Show* (3:58)
PRODUCERS: Big Kenny, John Rich, Paul Worley
WRITERS: Big Kenny, J. Rich, B. Daly
PUBLISHERS: Big Love Music, Songs of Windswept Pacific, BMI; WB Music, ASCAP
Warner Bros. 101210 (CD promo)
 Something that sounds different always attracts attention, and this debut single from Warner Bros. duo Big & Rich has a very distinct vibe that is unlike anything else on country radio right now. The song boasts a hauntingly beautiful melody and lots of quirky Western imagery. This tale of a troubled relationship is peppered with a “hey ya” chant (no relation to OutKast) that injects the song with a mysterious, Native American-hued flavor. John Rich, who previously had a solo deal on BNA, and Big Kenny have joined forces to create an intriguing new act, propelled by vibrant vocals and an innovative



LIZ PHAIR *Extraordinary* (3:24)
PRODUCER: the Matrix
WRITERS: Lauren Christy, Scott Spock, Graham Edwards, Liz Phair
PUBLISHERS: not listed
Capitol 7087 6 18260 (CD promo)
 With the release of “Liz Phair” last year, the sexy singer/songwriter surprised many. Unlike previous recordings, beginning with the artist's 1993 debut, “Exile in Guyville,” “Liz Phair” ditched modern rock mannerisms for playful pop. The set has already spawned the biggest hit of Phair's career with “I Can't Stop.” The infectious track was a top 10 hit on the *Billboard* Adult Top 40 chart; it also became the singer's first top 40 entry on The *Billboard* Hot 100. Apparently, Phair's surprise musical turn is being embraced by radio programmers and consumers alike. This should only continue with the ultra-catchy and oh-so-buoyant “Extraordinary,” which finds Phair telling a potential new boyfriend that she is simply “your ordinary average everyday sane psycho super goddess.” Such a self-description perfectly captures the confusion surrounding Phair's pop pleasures.—**MP**

sound. “Wild West Show” previews the duo's forthcoming album, “Horse of a Different Color.”—**DEP**

LATIN

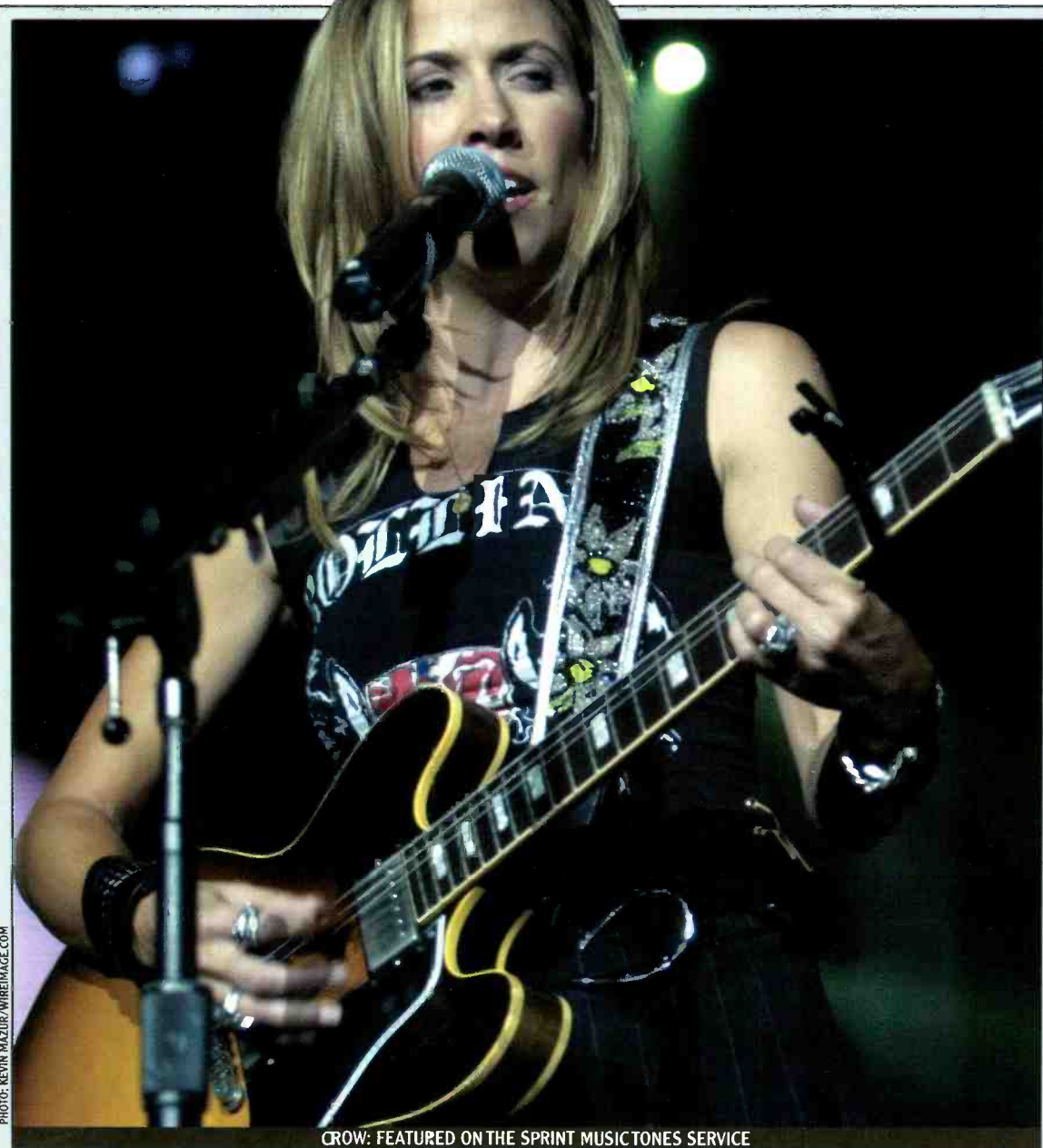
► **PAULINA RUBIO** *Te Quise Tanto* (4:06)
PRODUCERS: Emilio Estefan Jr., Archie Peña
WRITERS: Coti Sorokin, Andahi
PUBLISHERS: Doble Acuarela Son, SGAE (ASCAP)
Universal (CD promo)
 Paulina Rubio's previous Spanish-language album, the mega-selling “Paulina” from 2000, was a mix of irresistibly fluffy pop and feminist affirmation—as well as a techno-mariachi track. Even her English-language debut could not match that. Now, one cannot help but wonder if her follow-up Spanish recording can do the trick. “Te Quise Tanto,” the first single from “Pau-Latina” (due Feb. 10), follows the instantly catchy pattern of the “Paulina” tracks: a chorus that gets tattooed on your brain, thanks to relentless repetition, effortless groove and the maddeningly (although in a good way) easy-to-hum melody. Rubio continues to defy Latin radio's tradition of having big ballads pave the way for a new album. Accompanying her are surf-rock guitars blended with the ubiquitous Spanish guitar. Post-Ricky, it may not be the most innovative touch, but it serves its youthful intent and aim.—**LC**

Rykodisc's 20th-year two-CD set features David Bowie, among others



BMG Distribution revamps its branch management structure

MERCHANT MARKETING / HOME VIDEO / E-COMMERCE / DISTRIBUTION



CROW: FEATURED ON THE SPRINT MUSICTONES SERVICE

Sprint's Music Tunes To Ring With UMG, WMG Songs

BY CARLA HAY

NEW YORK—Universal Music Group and Warner Music Group are the latest players in Sprint PCS Vision's blossoming Music Tones business.

UMG and WMG are making select songs available for downloadable purchase as part of Sprint's Music Tones, which are ring tones that use actual songs instead of simulations.

Sony music has been available for Music Tones since last July, while UMG songs debuted earlier this month.

WMG songs will become available within two or three months, says Nancy Sherrer, Sprint GM of wireless music (*Billboard* Bulletin, Jan. 13).

WMG tunes will include songs from Green Day, Seal and Jet, as well as select tracks from Jason Mraz ("You and

I Both"), Sonny & Cher ("I Got You Babe"), the Spinners ("I'll Be Around"), Yes ("Roundabout"), Grandmaster Flash ("White Lines") and Bobby Darin ("Mack the Knife").

UMG's Music Tones feature songs by Sheryl Crow ("C'Mon, C'Mon," "Over You"), Sting ("Send Your Love"), Hoobastank ("Crawling in the Dark," "Running Away"), Black Eyed Peas ("Que Dices," "Fallin' Up"), Smash Mouth ("You Are My Number One") and Andrew W.K. ("It's Time to Party," "Party Hard").

But the Sprint deal is "just the tip of the iceberg," says David Ring, UMG e-Labs VP of business development and business affairs. "It's the first of many such deals we will be doing with wireless companies. We're excited to see customers will buy downloadable ringers, and our goal is to bring the best content to as many

(Continued on page 34)

Localism Keeps Chain Alive

Managers Have Loose Rein To Run Cat's/Pop Tunes

BY CHRIS MORRIS

After a quarter of a century, the Cat's/Pop Tunes chain keeps on keepin' on by keeping things local.

The 24-store retail operation is run by Nashville-based Music City Record Distributors (MCRD), the 50-year-old wholesaler.

The lion's share of Cat's and Pop Tunes locations are in Tennessee, with Memphis and Nashville its top markets. Cat's singles can also be found in Chattanooga, Dixon, Knoxville, Oak Ridge, Pigeon Forge, Johnson City and Kingsport.

MCRD purchased the five-store Pop Tunes chain—including Memphis' historic Poplar Avenue store, where Elvis Presley used to shop—in 2001. Three Cat's stores in the Charleston, S.C., area were acquired from Harbor Music in 1995. In early January, the company acquired Manifest Discs & Tapes' Charleston location (*Retail Trac*s, *Billboard*, Jan. 17).

Cat's and Pop Tunes maintain a strong hometown flavor by putting most of the purchasing in the hands of store managers, according to VP of retail Scott "Perk" Perkins.

"We give them a lot of leeway," Perkins says. "We give them quarterly budgets. We'll set an inventory budget, and then we turn the

managers loose.

"Now, 99% of the time, that works beautifully for us, 'cause the managers are right there. [Unlike] somebody in the home office, they can react quickly to what the customers are asking for, and they know the personality of their store... They've got a better feel for that than somebody at the warehouse."

He continues, "Once in a blue moon, you get a manager who doesn't care or isn't paying attention, and it bites you in the butt. But nine times out of 10, it works."

MANAGEMENT AUTONOMY

Perkins says the stores buy 98% of their product from MCRD, though they sometimes use outside vendors like one-stop Alliance Entertainment or, in Memphis, indie distributor Select-O-Hits.

But the home office generally tries to stay out of the managers' way.

Perkins says, "There are some things we feel like we need to allocate out, or the label requests to make sure something gets out, or I bring in a lifestyle item—the incense or beaded curtains or candles, things we can actually make money on. Sometimes we'll do some [chain-wide] allocation [on things] like that. If we do a mid-

(Continued on page 35)



THE CAT'S UNION AVENUE STORE, MEMPHIS: IN-STORES ARE A REGULAR FIXTURE

Billboard SPECIALS

FOLK & ACOUSTIC

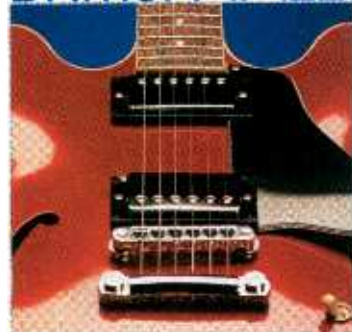


Billboard's inaugural Folk & Acoustic Talent spotlight focuses on the genre's top acts and labels, and highlights the most notable releases. We'll also feature news surrounding the 16th Annual International Folk Alliance Conference taking place in San Diego from February 26-29.

issue date: february 21 • ad close: january 27

Joe Maimone 646.654.4694 • jmaimone@billboard.com

BRITISH TALENT

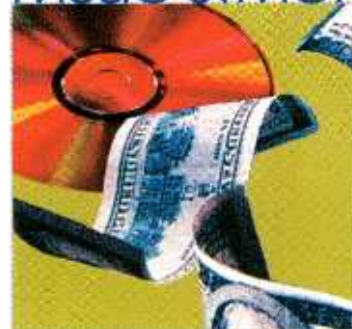


Billboard's British Talent spotlight focuses on the international markets where UK acts are achieving success. We'll provide a list of nominees for The BRIT Awards 2004 and note key UK talent to watch. We'll also look at the ties between British music and London Fashion Week and report on the latest news and developments in the marketplace.

issue date: february 21 • ad close: january 27

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MUSIC & MONEY 1



Billboard's Music & Money #1 spotlight coincides with the 2004 Music & Money Symposium and takes an in-depth look at the business behind making music. We report on survival strategies for distributors and labels selling into cash-challenged retail accounts and the continually rising value of music publishing assets.

issue date: march 6 • ad close: february 6

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UPCOMING SPECIALS

DANCE & ELECTRONIC #1 issue date: March 6 • ad close: February 6

ROCK + ROLL HALL OF FAME issue date: March 13 • ad close: February 17

PLATINUM STARS #3 issue date: March 13 • ad close: February 17

TOURING SPOTLIGHT #3 issue date: March 13 • ad close: February 17

Retail

Retrospective Celebrates Ryko's 20-Year Anniversary

Rykodisc will celebrate its 20th anniversary with a specially priced two-CD package set for release Feb. 3. The 36-song collection, priced at \$16.98, ranges far and wide through the distinctive and highly eclectic Ryko catalog. It includes selections from acts signed by the label and tracks by notable performers who have been the subject of retrospective programs.

Featured acts include **Sugar; Morphine; Kelly Willis; Kelly Joe Phelps; the Fire Theft; Josh Rouse; Medeski, Martin & Wood; Golden Smog; Ali Farka Toure & Ry Cooder; Cubanismo; Robert Cray; the Joe Jackson Band; David Bowie; Devo; Frank**

merly handled the label.

The first releases under the agreement will be two titles from Down Under: **the Church's** "Forget Yourself" (Feb. 3) and **Paul Kelly's** two-CD set "Ways and Means" (Feb. 24).

The label's roster also includes **Frank Black & the Catholics, the Apples in Stereo** and **Clem Snide**.

SELECT-O-HITS SCORES: Select-O-Hits in Memphis has inked some new exclusive distribution pacts.

Houston-based Dope House Records has joined the distributor's posse. The label was previously with now-defunct Southwest Wholesale. Coming March 23 will be a currently untitled album by rapper **South Park Mexican**.

Also on board is Baton Rouge, La.-based Bogalusa Records, which is the stateside representative for the German label Real Music. Dancehall reggae star **Sizzla's** album "Speak of Jah" arrives Feb. 24 from Bogalusa/Real.

Burbank, Calif.-based rock label Suburban Noize Records has arrived at Select-O-Hits. The company will release a new studio album by former Capitol act **the Kottonmouth Kings. The Humble Gods'** set "Born Free" was issued under the new deal Jan 13.

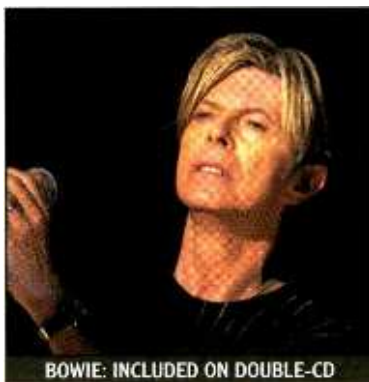
Finally, the distributor has picked up the World Class Gospel label. Releases from **Tramaine Hawkins, Walter Hawkins, Ruby Terry** and **Moses Tyson Jr.** are due in the first quarter.

BACK ON BOARD: Manny Simon has rejoined Artemis Records as director of promotion and international marketing.

Simon, who reports to Artemis president **Daniel Glass**, was most

recently manager at World Entertainment Group. He began his career at Glass' GlassNote Records in 1998 and was with Artemis from 1999-2002.

The
Indies™
By Chris Morris
cmorris@billboard.com



BOWIE: INCLUDED ON DOUBLE-CD

Zappa; Mission of Burma; They Might Be Giants; the Replacements; Soul Asylum; Nick Drake; Big Star; Richard Thompson; Yoko Ono; Jimi Hendrix; Alejandro Escovedo; John Cale; Mickey Hart; the Jayhawks; and Bruce Cockburn.

The company promises the collection will include "an unflinching history of the label's ups and downs." That should make for interesting reading.

ON THE MOVE: Brooklyn, N.Y.-based SpinART Records has signed an exclusive U.S. distribution deal with Ryko Distribution in New York. Alternative Distribution Alliance for-

TRILOKA, ARTEMIS BOND: Artemis Records in New York has acquired the assets of Los Angeles-based Triloka Records/Karuna Music.

The relationship kicked off as a distribution agreement this summer, with the release of albums by **M Path, Krishna Das** and **Samite**.

Under the new deal, Artemis will market and distribute Triloka's releases both domestically and internationally. Triloka was previously distributed by Razor & Tie through BMG. Prior to that, the company was handled by Gold Circle Entertainment, through RED Distribution. Gold Circle exited the music business in 2002.

Triloka president **Mitchell Markus** now reports to Artemis chairman/CEO **Danny Goldberg**.

Forthcoming releases under the new arrangement include albums by **Wasis Diop** and **Tarika**, due in early 2004.

IN THE MARKET: Scott Haidle exited his sales position with Navarre/BCI Jan. 9 and is seeking other opportunities. Haidle—formerly the head of Paulstarr Distribution in the Twin Cities—can be reached at 952-226-2233.

Sprint

Continued from page 33

mobile customers as possible."

Sprint says it sold 20 million ringers and screensavers through PCS Vision in 2003. Sprint had 2.7 million PCS Vision customers at the end of third-quarter 2003.

EYEING HIP-HOP

UMG will make more hip-hop music available for Music Tones within the next month, Ring says. He notes that R&B/hip-hop is UMG's best-selling genre for wireless-phone ringers.

Sprint recently announced that Beyoncé's "Crazy in Love" and "Baby Boy" have together surpassed 500,000 Music Tones downloads since they became available less than six months ago.

Music Tones cost about \$1.50-\$2.50 per song—considerably higher than the 99-cent-per-song downloads available through such services as Apple's iTunes.

Customers are willing to pay more for Music Tones, Sherrer says, because they place a premium on being able to personalize their wireless-phone ring tones.

"People are relying on their mobile devices more and more, and people are looking for their mobile phone to do more than it has in the past," Sherrer

adds. "People want their mobile phones to define their unique musical tastes."

PROMO OPPORTUNITY

A bonus feature is that Sprint PCS customers can look up artist photos and bios on their wireless phones.

A growing trend involves music companies collaborating with wireless-phone companies to promote certain songs and time an album's promotion around its release date or when the song is serviced to radio, according to Sprint executives.

"The message that we have to get out is that we've got to make sure that these home-network and wireless systems support the legitimate music services," Ring says.

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VEG, UMVD Patch Up JumpStart Disagreement

The 24-unit Virgin Entertainment Group has ended its boycott of the JumpStart program and will now do business with Universal Music & Video Distribution again, sources say.

Although many applauded the theory behind JumpStart—especially the lowering of front-line pricing to \$9.09—



they also criticized its execution.

While accounts fell into several different camps, each seemingly aligned behind a different grievance, in the end nearly 99% of those buying direct from UMVD signed on to the program. The sole exception of the top 20 accounts was VEG, which started buying from one-stops and banned UMVD product from prime in-store positions.

Relations chilled between the two companies after that, with a little tit-for-tat interplay occurring. But on Jan. 8 they had a détente-type meeting, which ultimately resulted in a normalization of business relations, sources

say. UMVD executives were unavailable for comment; VEG did not return calls. (VEG chief executive **Simon Wright** comments on JumpStart and more. See The Last Word, page 66.)

RESHUFFLING: Since June 2001, BMG Distribution has downsized its field staff by one-third.

In response to dismal market conditions, BMG Distribution's management has shrunk to six branch managers from nine.

Mike Tawa, the Boston manager, will now also oversee the New York office, replacing **Dickie Zwirn**, who left the company a few months ago.

Washington, D.C., branch manager **Rob Mansfield** will add the Atlanta office to his mandate, while Los Angeles manager **Jerry Silhan** will now oversee the Seattle office too. As part of the shuffle, **Susan Luke**, the Atlanta branch manager,

and **Len Rokosz**, the Seattle branch manager, are leaving the company. That leaves in place **Tracy**

Retail Track
By Ed Christman
christman@billboard.com



five weeks ended Jan. 3. Accordingly, the company has raised its fourth-quarter earnings estimates to 80 cents per share from 75 cents.

For the 11 months ended Jan. 3, same-store sales rose 1%, while total sales rose 3%, to \$1.24 billion compared with \$1.20 billion last year.

In other Trans World news, the chain has closed another 19 Wherehouse stores, bringing total closures since its acquisition to 48. This means that there are now 92 stores still operating under that logo.

LOOKING AHEAD: Hastings Entertainment has announced estimates for the year ended Jan. 31. (Final results will be announced in the third week of March.) According to a Securities and Exchange Commission filing, the company expects to report pretax income of \$6 million on sales of \$511 million.

For the 12 months ended Oct. 31, 2003—which includes three months of results for the last fiscal year and nine months from the current fiscal year—earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization were \$46.5 million, or \$4.11 per share.

For the fiscal year, the company

expects total revenue to consist of 26% music, 23% books, 20% rental, 17% sell-through video, 7% videogames, 2% computer software and 5% other product.

Separately, Hastings said used and

hastings
Your Entertainment Superstore

budget product accounted for about 9% of its total revenue in the 10 months ended Nov. 30, 2003.

LOOKING BACK: Navarre Corp.'s stock price tripled in value, to \$6.08 per share Dec. 31, 2003, from \$2.01 one year earlier (*Billboard*, Jan. 17).

Borders Books & Music's stock climbed 36%, to \$21.92 from \$16.10, during the same period. Similarly, Circuit City closed 2003 up 36.5%, at \$10.13 per share, from \$7.42 the previous year.

In contrast, Hastings Entertainment's share price slid 13.9%, to \$4.23 per share, from \$4.91 one year earlier.

Localism

Continued from page 33

line promotion, we'll do some allocation there. But typically, we give the managers information [and] just count on them to buy from Music City."

He adds, "It's as close as you can come to running your own store without it being your capital invested."

Cat's and Pop Tunes do not employ district managers but, in the case of Memphis, one local manager has a major say in the stores' purchasing.

"Steve Walker is the manager at the Union [Avenue] store and does a very good job of keeping his ear to the street," Perkins says. "He helps the other Memphis stores. He'll say: 'Hey, I'm bringing in a consignment on this piece. I think it's something that all the stores in Memphis need to have,' and he'll get the product out to the stores."

LIFESTYLE, URBAN ITEMS IMPORTANT

Not surprisingly for a company concentrated in the Mid-South and Southeast, the majority of Cat's and Pop Tunes' business is in urban music.

"Speaking generally, Memphis is my predominantly urban market," Perkins says. "That said, I do have some stores where [local rap group] Three 6 Mafia doesn't mean that much in Memphis. In Nashville, I've got a couple of stores that I consid-

er urban. My Chattanooga store is a very urban-oriented store. Knoxville and East Tennessee, I don't really have an urban store, short of what crosses over. In the Charleston area, I've got one store that does real good urban business."

The chain is trying to deepen its business in lifestyle items and in used product—growth areas for many indie retailers (*Billboard*, Nov. 15, 2003).

Concerning lifestyle merchandise, Perkins says, "The stores that do the least with it, it'll be 1% or 2% of their sales. My better stores will do anywhere between 5% and 7%. I'd love to see all the stores doing 10% or more in lifestyles, because the margins are so sweet."

Used product is 5%-10% of the chain's business. Perkins says, "That's something I'd like to see over 10%."

Like many an indie retailer squeezed in tough times, Cat's/Pop Tunes has signed on with a retail coalition, the 96-store Music Monitor Network (MMN) of small chains.

"We recently upgraded our kiosks out in the stores, which feature the [MMN's] 20 picks," Perkins says. "They change every two months; there's a sampler disc. Now we've got video capability. It's touch-screen. They can hear all the songs on the CD and see promotional videos."

"We have internal contests within the chains in the network to try to sell the most of those featured titles," Perkins adds. "It tickled the stew out of me to get Al Green on that thing, because, hey, that's Memphis."

Donihoo, who is still the branch manager in Dallas; **Diane Steffens**, the branch manager in Detroit; and **Mark Van Gorp**, the branch manager in Chicago, who is based in the Minneapolis satellite sales office.

All the branch managers report to **Bob Morelli**, senior VP of branch operations and marketing.

HOLIDAY CHEER: Music retail is still riding high from the strong Christmas selling season, as Trans World Entertainment announced that it posted a 4% same-store gain for the

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Magazine

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Glittering Jewel Cases Can Sell More DVDs

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Though the proverb says that you “can’t judge a book by its cover,” looks do matter when it comes to consumer purchases.

In the home video industry, a creative package can increase a DVD’s collectibility factor. It can also garner more sales, home video executives say.

“We are competing for the consumer’s eye and dollar, and if we’re not releasing something like [Disney/Pixar’s] ‘Finding Nemo,’ we have to have something else to make a title special,” Artisan Home Entertainment president Steve Beeks says. “Consumers definitely respond to packages. A package can have an impact on sales.”

Vince Szydlowski, senior director of product for Virgin Entertainment, says that “95% of the time when a DVD has unique packaging, it turns into a bigger winner than we could anticipate. Most importantly, it depends on what the actual content of the DVD is. An awesome combination is having great content and a great package.”

UNIQUE DESIGNS

Most DVDs are released in a plastic jewel case with front and back cover paper inserts. Increasingly, distributors are using the more versatile Digi-pak, which offers multiple DVD trays and can be covered with graphics on all parts of the package.

A number of companies—including Artisan, Anchor Bay Entertainment

and New Line Entertainment—are moving beyond these options.

For example, Artisan’s June 3, 2003, release of “T2—Extreme DVD” (\$29.98) featured a metal sculpture-embossed package. Anchor Bay Entertainment released a rubber face package for “The Evil Dead—Book of the Dead Limited Edition” (March 5, 2002, \$49.98). Artisan’s “Hot Wheels—World Race” (Dec. 2, 2003, \$19.98) had a holographic cover, and New Line’s Jan. 13 release “Fredy vs. Jason” (\$29.95) featured a mirror-style package.

The companies would not provide sales figures for these titles.

Several upcoming movies will also include unique packages. Anchor Bay has created special foil design for “Mirror Mirror” (March 6) and “Osterman Weekend” (March 23). (Prices are not yet available.) New Line’s “The Texas Chainsaw Massacre—Special Edition” (March 30, \$39.98) will feature a metal face plate on the front and an evidence kit inside.

Not every DVD warrants the extra expenditure of one-of-a-kind packaging. Companies spend more money to create them, which often translates into a higher suggested retail price.

“We do a lot of research before we do something like this,” Beeks says. “We will look at consumers’ purchase

intent for that particular product. Special packages cost special money. You don’t do it on every picture. You do it when the idea makes sense.”

New Line Home Entertainment VP of marketing Justine Brody says that in addition to being “fiscally responsible,” the main factor that comes into play is whether a more unique package will

ates a special package depends first on the title’s “margin goals.”

Also, the kind of art that is available helps determine if special packaging is merited. “We have a title called ‘Crime Story’ with virtually no art,” Weisenauer says. “We came up with something more creative. We did photography to create a crime file by using real police files and copying them.”

“Crime Story—Season One,” a five-disc set, was released Nov. 4, 2003, for \$59.98.

CONSUMER DEMAND

Industry executives say that consumers are going to start demanding interesting packaging and that video companies may need to invest more into the packaging process to stay competitive.

“If you have a rabid niche audience, you need to deliver for them,” says Brian Lucas, spokesperson for the Minneapolis-based Best Buy chain. “Collectors like the bells and whistles. More categories are going to start expanding into specialized packaging.”

Horror and action films have been the primary beneficiaries of special packaging since DVD’s debut. “The horror genre warrants unique packaging and raises the bar for it,” Brody says. “More categories may take advantage of this in the

future, because we have to communicate that we are just as devoted to our properties as other companies are to their properties.”

Lucas predicts that companies will tap into the competition and offer multiple packaging choices per title to consumers.

“When ‘Seabiscuit’ [Universal Studios Home Video] came out, there was the basic version and the special-edition version,” he says. “The special-edition version had luxurious packaging. Consumers who are really into the movie will get the one with the cool package, but there is also another lower-priced choice. Special packages will never be an impulse buy.”

DVDs with special packages tend to take up more space on retail racks than traditionally packaged discs. This could become an issue, as more releases are competing for shelf space.

However, retailers are largely welcoming them with open arms.

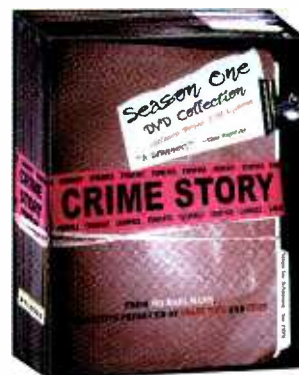
“We are more than happy to display unique packages,” Szydlowski says. “We have the fortunate luxury of having the space to display them.”

Some mass-market chains are also creating sections specifically to house larger packages. At the Best Buy chain, for example, special DVD packages are often found in a boxed-set section.

“Those sections have been created to handle bigger packages,” Lucas says. “We want to carry these special packages to give us a lot of DVD selection for our customers.”



These jewel cases for “The Evil Dead—Book of the Dead Limited Edition,” left, and “Crime Story—Season One” show the innovative designs that are used to transform titles into collector’s items



“better communicate the features on the DVD,” she explains.

“For example, we think that ‘Blow’ [starring Johnny Depp and Penelope Cruz] was a great movie, but it did not get as much attention as it deserved in theaters. Because its package was so eye-catching, that really helped people take a second look and understand the value of its special features as well.”

“Blow,” released Feb. 4, 2003, on DVD for \$19.98, had a mylar package that mimicked a mirror.

Anchor Bay Entertainment senior VP of marketing Sandy Weisenauer says that whether the company cre-

Writers Guild Seeks More DVD Revenue

DVD revenue will play a large role in upcoming contract negotiations for the Writers Guild of America.

Before the contract expires May 2, the WGA will be negotiating with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) to refine the minimum basic agreement already in place with studios and TV networks. In a letter sent to its members in December, the WGA pointed out that writers received “less than one-sixth of 1%” of DVD revenue in 2002. Of the \$11 billion generated that year, the WGA says that writers got \$18 million.

“Members have been bringing video residuals to our attention since 1995,” WGA assistant executive director Charles Slocum says. “The reason it has become a higher priority now is that the revenue from DVDs is so obvious. The profit margin in the home video area is higher. There is money to be shared, in our point of view.”

The current residual formula was created in the 1980s. Writers get 0.3% from the first \$5 million of a

project’s wholesale sales. The percentage increases to 0.36% when a title generates more than \$5 million in such sales.

The AMPTP could not be reached for comment by press time.

DVD-COPYING SUIT:

Copy-protection company Macrovision has filed a lawsuit against 321 Studios, claiming that 321’s “DVD X Copy” software infringes upon Macrovision’s patented copy-protection technology and violates the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA).

“DVD X Copy” products enable consumers to make a backup copy of a DVD.

“Everybody knows that the vast majority of consumers aren’t using this software to make backup copies. They are ripping it,” Macrovision CEO Bill Krepick says. “The DVD media itself has a 20-year life-

time, and they are sold on a single-copy basis. We are very firm that there is no such thing as fair use or any requirement to make backup copies of DVDs.”

Macrovision claims that 321’s product bypasses its patented copy-protection process without authorization and that the DMCA prohibits bypassing copy-protection mechanisms.

In a statement, 321 president and founder Robert Moore said that Macrovision’s copy-protection device “has absolutely nothing to do with any of

321 Studios’ products. We are confident that 321 Studios does not infringe on Macrovision’s patents and intend to defend ourselves vigorously and successfully.”

SPRING KICK-OFF: The second quarter already has strong sales poten-

tial, with Warner Home Video’s announcement that the final Matrix film, “The Matrix Revolutions,” will be released April 6 for \$29.95 as a two-disc DVD.

“We found that the timetable of approximately five months after theatrical release works well,” says Mark Horak, WHV executive VP of worldwide marketing. “This will be supported with one of the biggest television ad campaigns from Warner that rivals what you would see for a major theatrical release.”

Horak also says that “The Matrix” and “The Matrix Reloaded” will be repromoted prior to the “Revolutions” release, though he would not give exact details. He adds that there are not any specific plans for selling a “Matrix” boxed set as yet.

The film trilogy has grossed \$1.5 billion in worldwide box-office receipts, according to WHV. The

company also reports that “Revolutions” grossed \$310 million in its first 10 days of release.

RETAIL NEWS: The 2004 Home Entertainment convention sponsored by



KREPICK: ‘NO SUCH THING AS FAIR USE’ FOR DVD COPYING

Picture This
By Jill Kipnis
jkipnis@billboard.com



the Video Software Dealers Assn. will return to the Venetian Resort Hotel Casino in Las Vegas this year. The event will take place July 14-16.

Retail sales are already starting out strong this year. Universal Studios Home Video’s “American Wedding” sold 3 million units in the three days after its Jan. 2 release, according to the company.

EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



LUMMEL



SALTZMAN



AGNER



LINN

PUBLISHING: ASCAP promotes **Lynne Lummel** to senior VP and **Seth Saltzman** to senior VP of member management in New York. They were, respectively, VP and VP of member management. ASCAP also names **Harry Poloner** VP of membership in New York. He was VP of creative for EMI Music Publishing.

DIRECT MARKETING: **Herb Agner** is promoted to VP of EMI Music catalog marketing for EMI Music Marketing in Los Angeles. He was senior director of marketing.

EMI Music Marketing also names **Julia Michels** VP of soundtracks and **Kenny Di Dia** VP of marketing in Los Angeles. They were, respectively, VP of creative affairs for 20th Century Fox Music and VP of marketing for Warner Bros. Records.

RETAIL: **Craig Braasch** is named chief marketing officer for Gibson Guitar in Nashville. He was VP of global advertising and youth marketing for Burger King.

FILM MUSIC: New Line Cinema in Los Angeles promotes **Jason Linn** to executive VP of music development. He adds that title to his current responsibilities as head of New Line Records.

RADIO: **Irving Der** is named manager of publicity and communications for Radio Disney in Los Angeles. He was senior publicist for the DuVernay Agency.

MUSIC VIDEO: MTV in Santa Monica, Calif., promotes **Lois Curren** to executive VP of series entertainment. She was executive VP of series and movie development.



Hit Factory R. Kelly's latest studio album of new material, "Chocolate Factory" (Jive Records), was recently certified double-platinum by the Recording Industry Assn. of America. Kelly was presented with a plaque commemorating this achievement backstage at the 2003 Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas, where Kelly was a performer and multiple winner. Pictured, from left, are Jive senior VP of U.S. record labels **Peter Thea**, Jive VP of A&R **Wayne Williams**, Jive president **Barry Weiss**, Jive senior VP of R&B promotion and marketing **Larry Khan**, Kelly, Jive GM/senior VP of sales and marketing **Tom Carrabba**, Jive senior VP of artist marketing **Janet Kleinbaum** and Kelly's business manager, **Derrel McDavid** of Winkler & David.



The People's Choice

Music stars made their presence known at the 30th annual People's Choice Awards Jan. 11 at the Pasadena (Calif.) Civic Auditorium. CBS aired a live broadcast of the show. **Mandy Moore** was one of the awards show presenters. At right, **Reba McEntire** congratulates **Toby Keith** on winning the favorite music video award for "I Love This Bar." Other musical winners included **Tim McGraw** (favorite male musical performer), **Beyoncé** and **Faith Hill** (who tied for favorite female musical performer) and **Matchbox Twenty**, winner of favorite musical group or band. (Photos: Kevin Mazur/WireImage.com)



Norah Goes 'Home' Grammy Award-winning singer **Norah Jones** spent time at Sear Sound studio in New York to put the finishing touches on her new album, "Feels Like Home," due Feb. 10 on Blue Note Records. For "Feels Like Home," Jones once again teamed with producer **Arif Mardin** and engineer **Jay Newland**, who worked with Jones on her breakout debut album, "Come Away With Me." Pictured, from left, are Sear Sound owner **Walter Sear**, bass player **Lee Alexander**, Jones, Sear Sound assistant/Pro Tools engineer **Steve Mazur**, Mardin and Newland.



Winter Season Edgar Winter and his band visited the studios of syndicated radio program "Rockline" for an interview and live performance. Winter played some of his classics, including "Free Ride," "Dying to Live" and "Frankenstein." Pictured, from left, are "Rockline" host **Bob Coburn**, Winter, Ventura Distribution product manager **Jill Schlesinger** and Winter's manager, **Jake Hooker**.



Music Laws

Savoy Jazz artist **Hubert Laws**, seated, recently hung out in the studio with record-label executives during the making of his new album, "Moondance," which Savoy will release March 9. Standing behind Laws are Savoy Label Group VP of A&R **Guy Eckstine**, left, and Savoy Label Group president **Steve Vining**.

Spanish hip-hop artist La Mala Rodríguez is living up to her 'Bad Girl' name



Major changes to follow the departure of EMI Denmark president Michael Ritto

UNITED KINGDOM / EUROPE / ASIA / JAPAN / AUSTRALIA / AFRICA / CANADA

Korea Opens Up

Market Set For Japanese Repertoire Influx

BY MARK RUSSELL

SEOUL, South Korea—With the new year bringing an end to remaining restrictions on Japanese culture in South Korea, local labels are rushing to get releases by Japan's leading acts to the domestic market.

The South Korean government has been slowly loosening its post-World War II restrictions on Japanese culture in Korea since 1998.

The latest deregulation, effective Jan. 1, was the largest single step to date. It meant that the distribution of Japanese music, videogames, movies and TV dramas was no longer illegal in South Korea.

"We submitted our Japanese artists' [repertoire] to the Korea Media Rating Board right away on Jan. 2," EMI Korea marketing representative Jenny Kim says.

The Korea Media Rating Board is a government-funded body. Among its responsibilities is approving and classifying entertainment product before its release in Korea.

Kim says EMI expects each batch of albums submitted for scrutiny to take two or three weeks to be approved.

EMI hopes to have released 12 Japanese albums in South Korea by March, and other leading labels confirm they have similar

release schedules.

Seoul-based SM Entertainment is the South Korean licensee for Japanese label Avex. Tokyo-based Avex head of international Haji Taniguchi says the company plans to release between 20 and 40 albums in South Korea by mid-January, subject to the approval of the rating board.

Avex chairman Tom Yoda is also chairman of the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan. Speaking Jan. 5 at an RIAJ event in Tokyo, Yoda reiterated the association's determination to fight for a change to existing law that would give its member companies the right to ban imports of Japanese product pressed overseas.

CDs are priced significantly lower in South Korea than in Japan, where labels are still able to set retail prices for a period following release because of the country's *saihan* fixed-price system.

The imports issue is a major concern on the part of Japanese labels in the face of Seoul's removal of the remaining restrictions on J-pop.

Chris Lee, executive director of South Korea's music retail market-leading chain Synnara, says, "We had several trips to Japan and met several companies regarding the opening of Japanese culture in Korea. Starting February, we will stock a few titles,

(Continued on page 48)



YODA: FIGHTING FOR LAW CHANGE



McLACHLAN: NEW DISC BOOSTED HOLIDAY-SEASON SALES

Catalog Sales Buoy Canada's Christmas

BY LARRY LeBLANC

TORONTO—Hampered by slow sales in 2003, Canada's major music retailers were happy with strong Christmas gains. However, no retailer experienced music sales increases over 2002.

"Sales were flat throughout the year, but the last few weeks were great," reports Bruce MacKenzie, senior buyer at Pindoff Record Sales, which operates the 90-store Music World chain in Canada.

Other retailers agree. "Sales kicked in and didn't stop. People really wanted to shop this year," says Tim Baker of Sunrise Records, which

has 32 stores in Ontario.

Humphrey Kadaner, president of HMV Canada, which operates 100 stores nationally, adds, "When kids got out of school Dec. 19, a real uplift [in sales] really began. DVD had big growth during Christmas, but CDs performed well."

CATALOG IS KING

For the full year, total Canadian album sales fell 9% to 33.1 million units scanned from 36.7 million one year earlier, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

For the month of December, Canadian album sales

(Continued on page 42)

MidemNet To Emphasize Upside Of Digital Music

BY JULIANA KORANTENG

LONDON—Organizers of the Jan. 24 MidemNet conference in Cannes, France, are putting a positive spin on the still-emerging digital-music sector after a relatively downbeat meeting in 2003.

"Music & Technology: Back on Track!" is the title of this year's MidemNet, whose organizers urge the music industry to embrace technology, not fear it.

Or, as the MidemNet program notes: "If what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, then perhaps technology can finally put the music industry on the path to success."

MidemNet conference director Stephane

Gambetta says, "Last year, we addressed piracy and the need to turn consumers into customers," referring to the industry's fear that peer-to-peer technology had persuaded consumers that music should be free.

"But this year," Gambetta continues, "we wanted to say we're seeing positive things about technology."

He points to developments that suggest technology can help as well as hurt the troubled music industry: Apple's success with its iTunes Music Store, Roxio's resurrection of

Napster as a commercial venture, the

(Continued on page 48)



GAMBETTA: POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Danish Execs Form Label

Former EMI Denmark Staffers To Run Copenhagen Records

BY CHARLES FERRO

COPENHAGEN—Four senior executives from EMI Recorded Music Denmark are leaving the company to form a new independent label, Copenhagen Records (CR).

News of the label's launch came within days of EMI president Michael Ritto confirming that he was to leave his post at the end of February (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 22, 2003). The new company began trading Jan. 5 from a temporary office in Copenhagen.

Capitol/Medley labels GM Mik Christensen, Medley marketing manager Jakob Sørensen, EMI Denmark head of A&R Nick Foss and A&R manager Christian Bachman are the co-founders and main owners of CR.

"We'll start up in two phases," Christensen says. "Jakob and Christian are setting up operations; Nick and I will join them from April 1. Nick and I remain under contract until March 31 and have some projects to complete."

Christensen says he will take the main administrative role in CR, and the other co-founders will "continue to do what they're good at doing." He declines to elaborate on the financial details of CR's structure and ownership or whether Ritto might work with CR in some future capacity.

Ritto founded Danish indie label Medley Records in 1978; EMI acquired it in 1992. Ritto is also chairman of the local International Federation of the Phonographic Industry affiliate.

EMI is the dominant player in the country, claiming about a 40% share of the total music market in 2003 through Medley (which concentrates on local repertoire), Capitol and Virgin labels and special marketing arm CMC. EMI is acknowledged by industry observers here as being exceptionally strong in local repertoire.

Although unavailable for comment on his departure at

press time, Ritto said in a statement that it had "not been an easy decision." He added: "I feel the time is right; EMI Music Denmark is enjoying considerable success at the moment, even though the market remains difficult. Moreover, the company has just celebrated its 100-year anniversary, so in many ways it seems like a good time to hand it over."

CR has not yet inked a distribution deal or signed any acts. However, Christensen says, "we do not plan to take artists away from EMI. [CR aims] to recruit and develop quality Danish musicians. Sales of Danish artists have not dipped nearly as much as international acts [in Denmark]."

Christensen and Foss have worked at Medley for 19 years. "[Foss] and I have wanted to start a new company for a long time, but Michael persuaded us to stay," Christensen says. "EMI attempted to get us to stay, but after 12 good years with EMI, it's time to move on."

Lars Toft takes over as managing director of EMI March 1, reporting to London-based EMI Music Continental Europe COO Thomas Hedstrom.

Since 2002, Toft has been executive VP of sales and marketing at Danish furniture company Fritz Hansen. He first joined the EMI-Medley operation in 1992 as sales and marketing director, then became BMG Denmark managing director in 1994. He moved to Munich as BMG Classics managing director Europe in 1998.

EMI Music Denmark commercial director Michael Werth will oversee the company's day-to-day operations until Toft assumes his new post.

The company's director of international exploitation, Ole Mortensen, takes over from Christensen as Medley GM. He will continue in his current role until a replacement is found.

Capitol marketing director Morten Myrup is named Capitol/Virgin GM. Virgin GM Jonathan Fanø has left the company. Further changes are expected.



FROM LEFT, SØRENSEN, FOSS, BACHMAN AND CHRISTENSEN: DEVELOPING 'QUALITY DANISH ACTS'

Canadian Sales

Continued from page 39

sales were 9.04 million this year vs. the 9.11 million scanned last year in the corresponding period, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That's a decrease of 0.7%.

Canadian retailers report that it was a catalog Christmas but could not point to a dominant title.

"Catalog sales in the last two weeks were like I haven't seen in years," MacKenzie says. "Sales were across the board."

Several retailers cite Universal Music Canada's price-reduction policy for the sales spikes. The Canadian initiative is similar to Universal Music Group's JumpStart program in the U.S. (Billboard, Sept. 13).

"Universal's market share with us has dramatically risen," Baker says.

According to MacKenzie, "People shop catalog more [in the week

after Christmas], but once they got here and started seeing Universal's pricing, catalog went nuts."

New titles boosting the 2003 holiday season were Universal's compilations "MuchDance 2004" and "Big Shiny Tunes 8" and titles by Sheryl Crow, Evanescence and Sarah McLachlan. "MuchDance 2004" started 2004 at No. 1 on Nielsen SoundScan's album chart. It is the second MuchDance compilation (after "MuchDance 2000") to reach the top spot.

'BEST-OF' LINEUPS RULE

"The big artist winners were Sarah McLachlan and Josh Groban," MacKenzie says.

Also performing strongly were titles from international acts Dido, OutKast, Rod Stewart and Linkin Park and Canadians Fefe Dobson, Michael Bubl  and "Canadian Idol" star Ryan Malcolm.

Crow's "best-of" was cited by several merchants as the season's unexpected sales winner. "That surprised me," MacKenzie says. "It was strong right through Christmas. Dido was also unexpected."

"We did well with Britney Spears,

which I didn't expect," says Ken Kozey, purchasing manager at Handleman Co. of Canada—which racks the 166-store Wal-Mart Canada chain and the 302-store Zellers department chain. "But we also did well with Ryan Malcolm."

All Canadian merchants report that for the third consecutive year, there was increased public enthusiasm for DVDs during Christmas. Top sales titles included "Pirates of the Caribbean," "Finding Nemo" and "The Lord of the Rings (Extended Version)."

"We saw growth in entertainment software, and it was driven by DVD movies and gaming; music CDs were steady," says Lori Decou, director of corporate communications at Future Shop, which operates 105 Future Shop outlets, and Best Buy's 14 Canadian stores.

"DVDs were huge for us," MacKenzie says. "Even bigger than in 2002."

Kozey sees music video as the music industry's future bright spot.

"Music DVDs like [those from] Coldplay and Shania Twain played a big role in our Christmas season," he says. "DVD seems to be the software of choice out there, and we're trying to wake labels up to get a piece of that action."

NEWSLINE

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEK IN BRIEF

The U.K. government has formed a task force to support the live-music industry in England and Wales. Feargal Sharkey, former vocalist with 1970s/1980s U.K. hitmakers the Undertones, will chair the forum. Representatives of the music industry, the Arts Council, local authorities, small-venue owners and the U.K. government will take part in the two-year project. The inaugural meeting of the forum is scheduled for Feb. 3. The group aims to identify barriers to the commercial success of live music and investigate why some venues thrive while others fail. British ministers first committed to examining the live-music scene during the July passage of the 2003 Licensing Act. **LARS BRANDLE**

Eros Ramazzotti's "9" (Ariola/BMG Ricordi) was the top-selling album in Italy of 2003, according to annual listings prepared for labels body FIMI. The year-end charts are based on over-the-counter sales monitored by the Italian arm of research company ACNielsen. Giorgia's "Gocce di Memoria" (Dischi di Cioccolata/BMG Ricordi) was the top-selling single. The multi-artist collection "Festivalbar Blu 2003" (Columbia) headed the compilation charts, while Vasco Rossi's "@San Siro 03" (EMI Music) was the best-selling music-related DVD. *Billboard* sister company ACNielsen analyzed results from 275 points of sale, ranging from specialist record stores to hypermarkets. **MARK WORDEN**



NEVRKLA

Fran Nevrkla has signed a new, three-year contract as chairman/CEO of British collection society Phonographic Performance Ltd. The former director of commercial and business affairs at Warner Music U.K. joined PPL in 2000. Nevrkla says he has more to accomplish at the society. "A lot of the dirty work has been done in terms of cutting costs, improving the efficiency of the organization and creating better systems . . . but there's still a lot to do," he says. Nevrkla says a priority for the coming years is to improve the collection of revenue from overseas. Also high on his agenda is the collection of performance rights from new-media companies. "There has been a seven-year window during which they have used our repertoire without paying," he says. "They have to be disciplined, and they have to pay us."

EMMANUEL LEGRAND

Dido's "Life for Rent" (Cheeky/Arista) earned its fourth Platinum Europe Award from the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry in December, marking Pan-European shipments of 4 million units. Christina Aguilera's "Stripped" (RCA), Evanescence's "Fallen" (Wind-up/Epic), R.E.M.'s "In Time: The Best of R.E.M. 1988-2003" (Warner Bros.) and Robbie Williams' "Live at Knebworth" (Chrysalis/EMI) each passed the 2 million European shipments mark in December. Black Eyed Peas' "Elephunk" (A&M), Busted's "A Present for Everyone" (Universal), Florent Pagny's "Ailleurs Land" (Mercury), Michael Jackson's "Number Ones" (Epic), Pink's "Try This" (Arista) and Westlife's "Turnaround" (S/BMG) also passed the platinum milestone that month. **LARS BRANDLE**

The debut DVD by Australian singer/songwriter Delta Goodrem, "Delta," has become the country's biggest-selling music DVD ever. The title has shipped more than 165,000 units since its October release, according to Sony Music Entertainment Australia. It has overtaken the Eagles' 1999 Warner Vision Australia DVD release of "Hell Freezes Over," which that label says has shipped 157,000 units to date. Shipments of Goodrem's 2003 debut album, "Innocent Eyes" (Epic), are approaching the 1 million mark in Australia. The album yielded five No. 1 singles on the Australian Record Industry Assn. chart in 2003. Only the Beatles have notched more chart-toppers Down Under in one calendar year, with seven in 1964. Sony says "Innocent Eyes" has shipped 2 million units worldwide. **CHRISTIE ELIEZER**

As expected, BMG U.K. and Ireland has inked a long-term joint-venture deal with Hugh Goldsmith, former managing director of Virgin U.K. imprint Innocent Records (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 2, 2003). The currently unnamed 50/50 venture "goes beyond records and incorporates publishing, management and consultancy," according to a BMG statement. Goldsmith was at RCA in the U.K. as marketing director, then managing director before exiting in 1997 to set up Innocent, where he has enjoyed success with pop acts Blue, Atomic Kitten and Billie Piper. **LARS BRANDLE**

MIDEM

Billboard

MIDEM Reflects New Opportunities

Technology, Mobile Phone Exhibitors Highlight Growing Revenue Streams

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—For international music executives attending MIDEM 2004 Jan. 25-28 in Cannes, France, the key topics on the agenda will include finding new revenue streams, exploring new business opportunities and taking advantage of technology.

MIDEM, the international music market, will showcase new music technology as well as play its traditional role as a global gathering for music licensing. Technology companies offering exhibits this year include Microsoft, OD2, Yahoo, Real Networks and Roxio. Joining them will be mobile phone companies NTT DoCoMo, T-Mobile, Vodafone Global, Nokia Entertainment and Universal Music Mobile.

NEW ATTRACTIONS

MIDEM director Dominique Leguern says organizers put a lot of effort into attracting companies with an increasing involvement in music. "Mobile services, downloading and streaming are new [revenue] for the industry, and all the major players

will be at MIDEM," she says.

Along with MidemNet on Jan. 24, which will focus on the digital music sector, this year MIDEM has added a Music Mobile Forum on Jan. 26, during which repertoire owners will be able to meet and talk with mobile-services representatives.

Another innovation—and a reflection of the development of an additional new revenue stream for the industry—is the Music for Images session that will focus on music licensing for videogames. This will include a listening session of tracks pitched for Electronic Arts' forthcoming game "FISA 2005."

Leguern says these developments—along with the decision by Reed Midem, organizer of the conference, to freeze registration rates at 2003 prices—offer participants a cost-effective gathering. The moves apparently have paid off. Last month, Reed Midem reported an increasing number of registrants and companies compared with

2003, as well as representation from a greater number of countries.

"This is a vindication of our pricing strategy," Leguern says. "And it is also proof that more than ever, people in this industry need to meet and do business."

DENMARK, FINLAND: ON THE RISE

Among MIDEM participants from outside the U.S., one country that exemplifies the spirit of the moment is Denmark, according to Leguern. In recent years, this nation of 10 million has become an important source of repertoire and is aggressively trying to export its artists.

"It's a small market but a very dynamic one when it comes to exporting," Leguern says. "It has a very deep expert culture, and I am very happy that a country like Denmark invests so much into its local music scene."

Denmark will host the opening-night party for delegates at the Martinez Hotel.

During the past year, MIDEM has hosted numerous collective stands, presenting companies from a given country, city or national trade group. Music Export Finland (MEF) is an example of a trade group that will host a national stand this year.

MEF director Paulina Ahokas reports that the number of Finnish companies attending MIDEM 2004 is at its highest ever, with more than 20 participating in the national stand.

"In addition to the companies that have already attended MIDEM, we have some new labels

and entrepreneurs who are quite fresh in this business but who understand the need to export," Ahokas says.

She admits that "going to MIDEM is an investment. MIDEM is [an] expensive platform for business, but it is the most efficient marketplace and the only truly global market."

Ahokas says that the labels attending MIDEM cover a wide range of music genres—from rock and dance to world and classical. And she surmises that there is an increasing interest in Finland's talent, following recent international success from such acts as rock outfit the Rasmus, hip-hop duo Bomfunk MC's and trance act Darude.

(Continued on page 44)



THE PALAIS DES FESTIVALS IN CANNES, FRANCE, WILL HOST MIDEM 2004

Opportunities

Continued from page 43

"Of course, success brings more attention," she says. "People in the industry realize now that Finland covers a wide range of genres and that there's a vast pool of talent here."

One of the most notable Finnish companies present on the MEF stand will be mobile-phone manufacturer Nokia. Ahokas says that Nokia's presence alongside labels is a clear sign that "they want to work with the music business as a partner—it is a statement for them."

But as the number of collective stands

grows, some companies have decided to set themselves apart with their own exhibit. For example, leading French independent distributor Wagram will take its own stand. Wagram president Stephan Bourdoiseau says it is time to broaden his company's profile.

"At a time when the market seems to be getting even more concentrated—with major companies restructuring and merging—indies are more attractive, so it made sense for us to [have] our own stand," Bourdoiseau says.

Bourdoiseau hopes to attract labels searching for distribution in France and to add to a stable that already includes Tommy Boy, SPV, One Little Indian and Cooking Vinyl. And he is seeking new artists to sign recording and publishing deals. "We launched our publishing unit in 2003 and are now getting ready to expand," he says.

Bourdoiseau is also looking for international partners to release music from Wagram artist Corneille. "He is a survivor from Rwanda who tells his story in a very touching way."

VALE RETURNS—AT LEAST THIS YEAR

Among other MIDEM participants from Europe, Barcelona-based Vale Music has grown in recent years from a tiny newcomer into a heavyweight. Vale has released recordings spun off from "Operación Triunfo," Spain's "American Idol"-style TV talent show, including hit CDs from such artists as David Bisbal, Manu Tenorio and Rosa.

Vale, however, began as a dance label. So international exploitation director Dani Molina says he will not be pushing its "Operación Triunfo" artists at MIDEM, as the label wants to concentrate on its dance niche.

"Our aim is to present and license our [dance] products and acquire the best songs for our compilations," Molina says. "MIDEM is not the place to push our big artists—such as David Bisbal, Bustamante and David Civera—but to seek out the

best local dance product from the different countries present.

"Our aim is to continue being Spain's No. 1 dance company and to stay in the top 50 worldwide," Molina continues. "Dance has been our business base since day one, and we hope to tighten relations and find new business alternatives with other outstanding [dance] labels from around the world."

Vale will review its participation at MIDEM if this year's fair does not generate more business, Molina says. Vale executives have attended every MIDEM since January 1998, following the creation of the company the previous year. "But as things stand, we are weighing the possibility of not going next year, as business opportunities have fallen substantially," Molina says.

SWAT NEEDS TEAM

Former Zomba International managing director Stuart Watson, who relaunched his SWAT company in 2003 after leaving Zomba, will also attend MIDEM. Watson has targeted the emerging ring-tone business, seeking repertoire and partnerships for this new revenue stream. "We are [working with] the telephone companies," he says, "sourcing songs from where they want."

SWAT began in 1994 as an independent marketing and promotion service for independent labels in the emerging markets of the Asia-Pacific region. Watson says his contract with Zomba allowed him to regain control of the SWAT name. "So I took it back and relaunched with Tommy Boy and V2," he says. "With Tommy Boy, we put together license deals and helped with marketing coordination, and for V2 we do marketing coordination in Southeast Asia, [excluding] Japan."

Watson says his goal is "to work for the repertoire owners—be they management companies, publishers, software companies—who want to concentrate their resources on the major markets of the world and leave the rest [to independent partners] because they don't have the staff for the smaller markets. We are on the spot in those markets and allow them to focus on the major markets."

Watson says the key territories he focuses on are South Africa, Russia, China and India. At MIDEM, he adds, he aims to connect international companies seeking to do business in those markets and local operators.

"Recently, an American manager went to Southeast Asia, and it cost [the company] \$30,000," he recalls. "We could have provided the input and arranged meetings for them at MIDEM or Singapore, where everyone could have flown in for a third of the price."

Additional reporting from Howell Llewellyn and Adam Howorth.

'This is proof that more than ever, people need to meet and do business.'

—DOMINIQUE LEGUERN, MIDEM

Confab Boosts U.S. Indies

BY STEVE TRAIMAN

More U.S. independent labels, distributors and management firms will have exhibits at this year's MIDEM, including several important new participants.

The indie label/distribution sector had a 16.7% total U.S. market share for 2003, leading all major distributors except Universal, and up from 16.4% for 2002.

Indie distributors collectively ranked first in classical, jazz, gospel and new age. They ranked second in catalog & music video.

Because of this, "participation from the independent sector is definitely up," says Bill Craig, U.S. market sales VP for MIDEM.

Although the Assn. for Independent Music (AFIM) will not have a stand this year, it will most likely be represented through a member company, says its chairman, Clay Pasternak. He is running the indie group on an interim basis, along with board members Duncan Browne (Newbury Comics) and Bruce Iglauer (Alligator Records).

The American Dance Labels stand at MIDEM was put together by Craig and Jane Rodriguez so the dance independents could have a significant presence. Such imprints as Psychobaby Records, Robbins Entertainment and Tommy Boy Records are the first confirmed participants.

"Last year, MIDEM was very successful for Psychobaby," says the label's president, Richard Rees. "This year's goals are to cultivate licensing relationships in foreign territories for our artists—Morel, D:Fuse, Blowoff [Bob Mould and Richard Morel] and Core—and to promote label and artist representation services."

Robbins Entertainment also had a good year, president Cory Robbins notes. "We had a top 40 single with 'Something' by Lasgo from Belgium, and licensed our first game music to Konami from DJ Sammy for 'Heaven' and several tracks from Ian Van Doll," Robbins says. "We're very open to more game opportunities."

He is going to MIDEM to find global dance music hits, since about 75% of the records the label releases originate in Europe.

Tommy Boy owner/chairman Tom Silverman observes, "We're interested in licensing singles and albums in the areas of dance, hip-hop and everything in between. We're especially looking for artists who are stars and music that pushes the envelope."

On the distributor side, Koch Entertainment CEO Michael Koch reports that the distribution operation had increased 2003 sales—with major additions Artemis Records and Compendia Music Group—and now has four of the top seven U.S. indie labels.

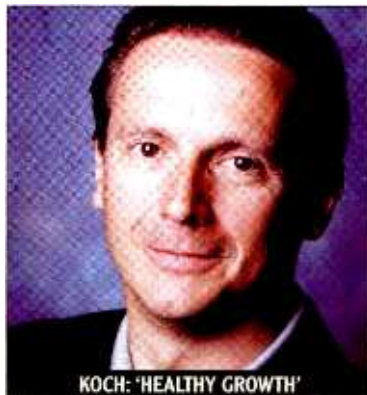
Koch Records registered another year of healthy growth "and further cemented its position as the No. 1 independent label in America," Koch says.

"MIDEM is the perfect opportunity for us to meet with our international licensees and partners and to look for licensing opportunities," Koch says. "This year, we'll release albums in the U.S. by such established international artists as the Cardigans, Junkie XL and Lamb."

RED Distribution president Ken Antonelli points to "an unbelievable year, where we've solidified our hard rock legacy, diversified with successes in country [with Dualtone and Craig Morgan] and in jazz [with Savoy and Rendezvous], and exploded our DVD/home video business."

Priorities for RED at MIDEM are to strengthen the distribution roster and expand further into these newer areas.

Navarre Entertainment Media's contingent is headed by senior VP/GM Steve Pritchitt, whose primary goals are to meet with current European-based label partners and find new North American distribu-



KOCH: 'HEALTHY GROWTH'

tion opportunities. Its overseas roster includes SVP, !k7/Raster, One Little Indian, Windsong, Raven, Ace, the Beat Goes On, Snapper, Bear Family, Escape, United States of Distribution and JSP.

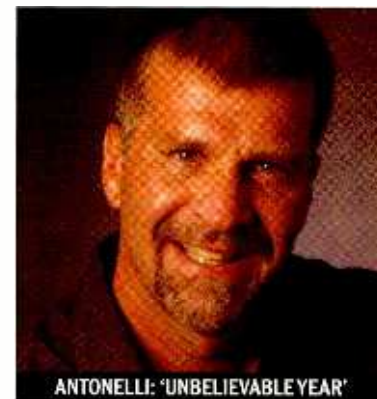
Along with Navarre Canada managing director Peter Piasecki, Pritchitt notes, "We'll especially be looking for product for our Canadian operation and seek label partners with both audio and DVD products."

CROSS-SECTION OF LABELS

Another first-time Midem exhibitor is Roxio, the company that recently acquired Napster. CEO Chris Gorog will keynote MidemNet Jan. 24. He will share the company's plans on re-creating Napster 2.0 with other music professionals, Napster worldwide business development VP Brad Duea says.

The new, legal Napster 2.0 music service will be introduced, with an announcement of European market entry, this year.

In conjunction with business partner Malaco Records, Tiffany Couch will actively pursue new labels for



ANTONELLI: 'UNBELIEVABLE YEAR'

North American distribution and licensing arrangements for various proprietary labels. Director Tommy Couch Jr. will be exploring licensing deals for Malaco, Select-O-Hits and 40 West and its new jazz group Voodoo Village. "We're also actively involved with the Memphis Music Commission's delegation," Phillips says. Voodoo Village producer/leader Niko Lyras will be Select-O-Hits representative with MMC.

Putumayo World Music CEO Dan Storper plans to meet with about 40 global distributors at MIDEM to review the pros and cons of 2003 and outline a program for the new year focused on improved international release schedule coordination and promotion.

"We'll announce that, beginning in April, all our CDs will include liner notes in English, Spanish and French," he says.

Another important goal for the company is a search for new music, plus music videos and documentary and performance footage for a DVD series to be launched in May.

"MIDEM 2003 was one of our most productive in years," Rounder Records VP Paul Foley claims. "We closed a deal involving some great DVD titles that by the end of 2003 contributed to more than 10% of our total sales."

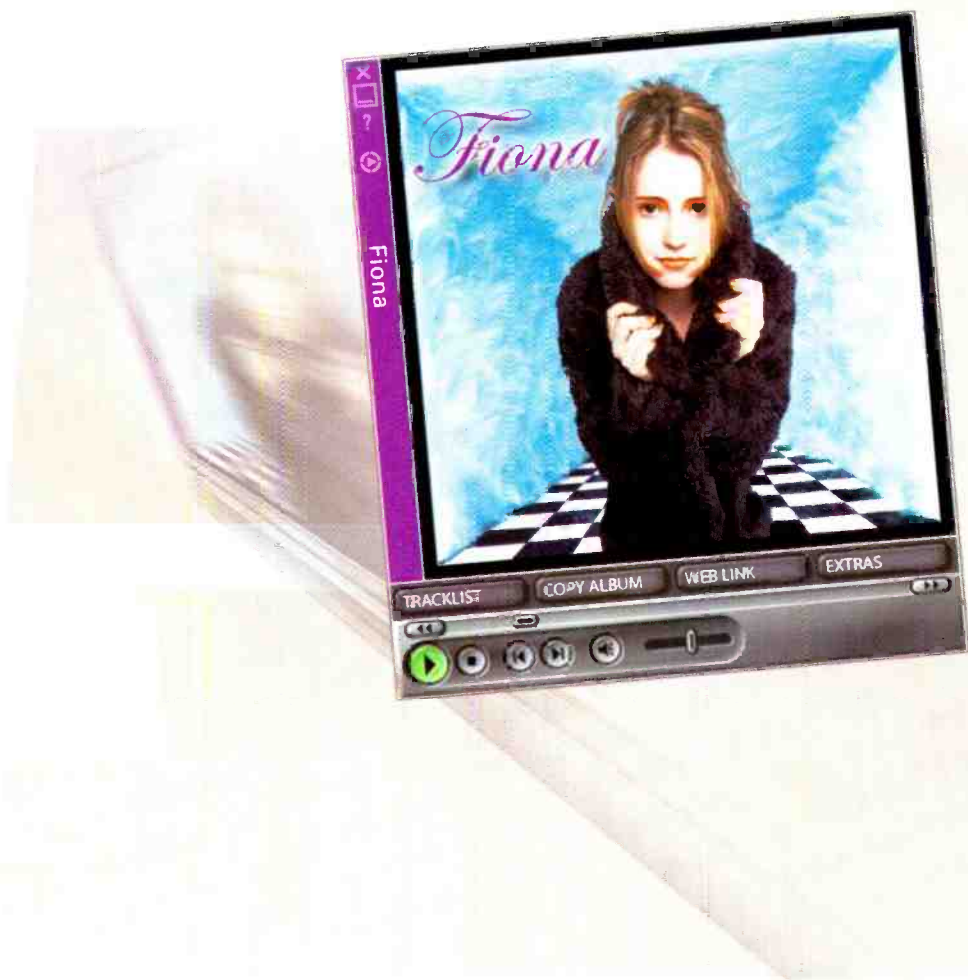
As a strong supporter of all legitimate digital delivery services, the company will be working to expand that strategy in all markets at this year's MIDEM. Another priority is to improve touring opportunities for its U.S. artists, as the few bands that have successfully toured outside the States have proven that their music will sell.

"We want to identify markets and promoters that are willing and able to work with us to make this viable for more of our artists," Foley says.

Concord Records GM Gene Rumsey reports "a truly remarkable year in the U.S., as we continue to raise our profile and build our reputation for quality adult music."

Concord's focus at this year's MIDEM is on fulfilling some distribution needs in key markets and generating excitement on such 2004 projects as new releases from

(Continued on page 46)



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U.S. Publishers Meet The World

BY JIM BESSMAN

For music publishers, MIDEM remains the key gathering place for making and maintaining business contacts and relationships and addressing mutual issues of concern.

"Our business is quite complex at the moment, and we need to maintain personal contact with all of the people we work with," says Windswept Music Publishing CEO Evan Medow. "Most of the people I need to see will be at MIDEM, so I can accomplish quite a bit in a few days. Also, I find that by going, I put myself in the stream of traffic, and something always comes up that I didn't expect."

According to Fox Music senior VP/GM Mary Jo Mennella, MIDEM is "the only global music forum of its kind," and continued attendance and support by Fox Music remains crucial.

"Since the [industry] players and companies are always changing, MIDEM serves as the marketplace to meet and establish new relationships around the world," she notes. "This is particularly critical for an independent music publishing operation [that does not have] regional offices."

The priority for pubberies, including Universal Music Publishing Group, then, is for executives to network, negotiate new deals and interact with current clients, "plus have meetings with societies," says senior director of marketing and new media Rebekah Alperin.

"We're sending various international executives to MIDEM, including senior VP of international busi-

ness and legal affairs Crispin Evans, VP of international Kim Frankiewicz and managing director of Australia Bob Aird," Alperin continues. "Evans will be meeting with various music executives and societies on industry issues, while Frankiewicz and Aird will meet with the clients we represent for sub-publishing around the world."

Sub-publishing is commonly cited among the chief goals of pub-

the company has since signed a sub-publishing agreement. "We're always investigating territories where we don't [already] have sub-publishing deals, in hopes of opening up our catalogs to new markets," he says.

Bug Music's executive VP David Hirshland appreciates the opportunity afforded by MIDEM to "review in depth" the past year's activities with its sub-publishers, as well as

presentation every year with highlights of our national TV advertising campaigns and film and TV programming placements in both the U.S. and Europe, and part of our staff will be focused on meeting with our network of synch agents and sub-publishers."

Chess also points to promoting synch rights at MIDEM.

"This is the second year that I am traveling with [Arc's VP of finance and Latin music operations] Juan Carlos Barguil to promote our one-stop shopping of both masters and synch of our Latin catalog, which includes Discos Fuentes, Maria Victoria and various European acts," Chess says.

Cherry Lane Music Publishing VP of marketing and licensing Rich Stumpf also speaks of "the more traditional publishing business," specifically catching up with sub-publishers and licensing company-owned and -administered masters to international labels and new-media companies.

Also on the new-media side, Stumpf expects to be updated on current events in the international community regarding digital distribution. "Especially ring tones, which is a growing market, and videogames," he says. "We just basically want to find out what's available for our compositions."

Likewise, Mennella seeks to "monetize our catalog through creative ventures with wireless and Internet partners," she says.

But "the key business issue" that MIDEM should continue to address, Mennella says, is combating piracy and establishing educational platforms for consumers about copyright.

Ekbäck adds, "Of course, the never-ending issues of illegal downloads, digital distribution, piracy, declining sales and centralized licensing will be on the forefront of all discussions and panels."

Orbison is particularly hopeful that piracy problems will be dealt with.

"My catalog of masters gets bootlegged to the tune of 3 million units a year—and I got this [figure] from a bootlegger!" says Orbison, who holds the copyrights to her late husband's classic hits.

"They really don't address this issue at MIDEM," she continues, referring to piracy of older catalog. "They always think of current artists, but now, of course, back catalog is what everybody tries to [release]—and now [that is] what is supporting all those [record] companies."

Conceding that "I probably sound like a broken record," Hirshland joins in the anti-piracy charge. "Piracy is still the industry's No. 1 problem—both [in] physical [prod-



lisher attendees.

"MIDEM [is always] a universal meeting place for all my sub-publishers from around the world," says Roy Orbison Music president Barbara Orbison. "It saves me lots of trips because I do a lot of [global] business."

Marshall Chess, owner of Arc Music Group, echoes Orbison's goals.

"We always look forward to MIDEM as a place to meet with our international sub-publishers," he says. "Although many of them travel to [Arc's headquarters in] New York, [some] don't. It is convenient to meet in Cannes, have everyone trade ideas and network with each other."

Chess notes that last year's confab, Arc was introduced to India's Deep Emotions Music, with whom

go over expectations for the coming year.

"As usual, this year I will be joined by our VP of international Mark Anders, who runs our U.K. office, and the head of our German office, Doris Schloesser-Berster," Hirshland says. "In addition, Garry Velletri, who runs our New York office, will be attending. As Garry has been focusing on writer-publisher clients with primarily an international following—particularly in the dance and electronic genres—he will have the ability to liaise directly with our overseas partners whose attention to these catalogs is essential."

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Having only recently set up a U.S. branch of London's Notting Hill Music Group in Los Angeles, president Peter Chalcraft says he'll be looking at sub-publishing opportunities at MIDEM and for European companies that may need representation in the U.S. and Canada.

"That [is] one of our big things, because we have the capacity to administer ex-U.S. companies here and work their catalog," Chalcraft says.

MIDEM veteran attendee Dan Ekbäck, VP of operations for Bluewater Music Services Corp., is also centering on administration matters. "My main focus this year is to continue to expand and develop our administration division by meeting with attorneys and publishers to introduce our worldwide administration services," he says.

Ryko Group president Arthur Mann, whose domain includes its Rykomusic publishing arm, also looks to "massage the relationships" with the company's administration clientele. Another interest, one which he shares with other MIDEM publisher participants, is in the area of synchronization.

"It's a big part of our agenda," Mann says. "We create a synch

eventually replace the CD?"

For Red's Antonelli, piracy is the obvious concern. "How are we going to get our listeners to not abandon music for other forms of entertainment?" he asks. "In this era of megamergers and with the time and energy it takes to get the governmental approval to close them, how are key execs going to focus on finding and developing the talent to drive our business into the future?"

Navarre's Pritchitt hopes that participants get the opportunity to better understand the characteristics of today's music market "and to focus on bringing value to the consumer through great music in a great package at the right price."

Rounder's Foley is in full agreement and would like to see MIDEM address the stabilization of music prices. "Our music does not need to be given away," he emphasizes, "and a global campaign to promote the value of music would be a worthwhile direction."



HIRSHLAND: PIRACY IS STILL THE INDUSTRY'S NO. 1 PROBLEM

uct) and via the Internet. Since the marketplace is essentially global, everyone attending MIDEM needs to think of global solutions."

LOOKING AT THE FUTURE

But Hirshland looks beyond the ever-encompassing piracy problem.

"For years we have all decried the lack of developing new talent as a major contributor to the downturn of the business," he says. "I would love to see increased discussion at MIDEM about creating a more supportive global environment for young, developing artists."

Chalcraft adds that since the Internet is now "slowly but surely being policed in the right way, my main worry is addressing the fact that copyright is important. We should be looking at long-term careers rather than short-term records, and record companies should work closely with publishers because the day of the record company and the publisher being one [company] is really fragmented now."

Looking at the long-term, Chalcraft wonders, "Why worry about Elvis catalog being sold on the Internet? Shouldn't we worry about finding the new Elvis?"

To this end, Chess is introducing "the next generation of the Chess family" to the world music community at MIDEM.

"I am bringing my son Jamar to present his current projects," Chess says. "He's been developing Italian/English hip-hop act dropAflo and Spanish/English female MC Nahdi, and he will be presenting their recently finished recordings and videos."

Arc will also present music from Brooklyn producer/artist Burk Wainright. "He's begun reinventing the Arc Music catalog with new versions of [blues/R&B] classics 'Boom Boom,' 'Suzie Q' and 'Who Do You Love,'" Chess says.

Indies

Continued from page 44

jazz phenom Peter Cincotti, Karrin Allyson and Ozomatli; a much-anticipated Ray Charles duets CD; and "Ultimate Mancini," the rerecorded collection of Henry Mancini classics.

Tommy Boy's Silverman hopes MIDEM addresses what he calls "the new realities of the music business."

He points to four big questions: Can digital download sites save the record labels? With publishing mechanicals taking a bigger piece of the revenue pie in the digital domain and in long-term revenue, if publishers want to take more, will they begin to contribute to A&R and marketing costs to reduce risks for labels? How will mobile-phone revenue change record label economics? And what new physical music format will



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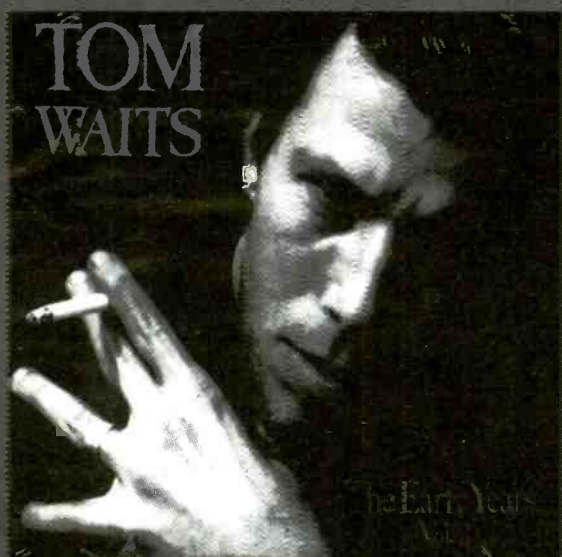
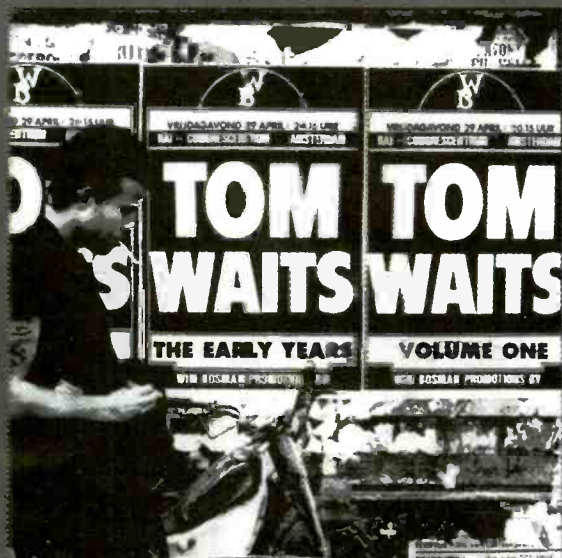
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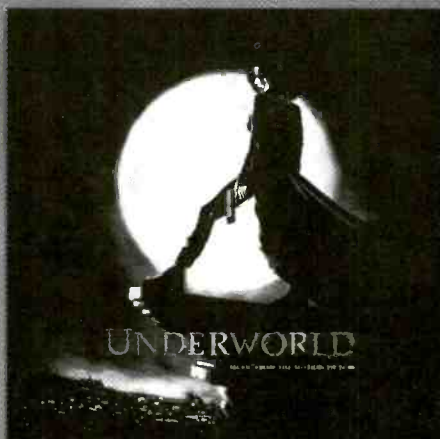
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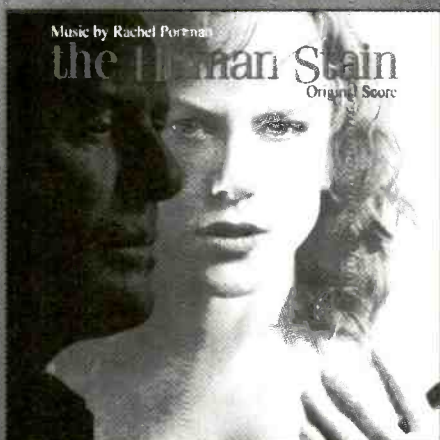
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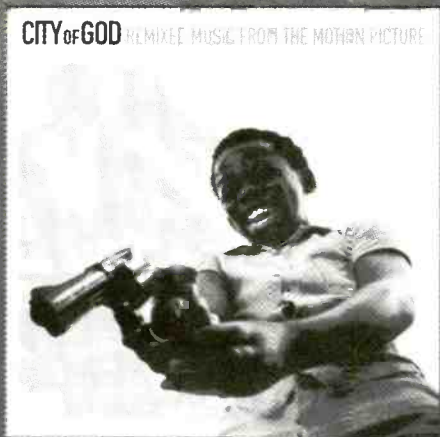
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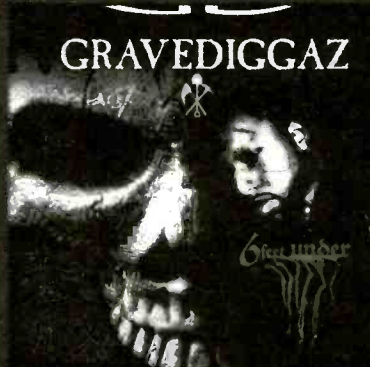
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MidemNet

Continued from page 39

increased use of such alternative disc formats as Super Audio CD (SACD) and the ability to listen to music through gaming consoles.

News that Microsoft and Dell Computers are becoming music vendors illustrates how symbiotic technology and music are becoming, Gambetta says.

Representatives of content owners and technology providers will offer their perspectives. Scheduled MidemNet participants include EMI Music senior VP of digital development and distribution Ted Cohen; Charles Grimsdale, CEO of digital music service provider, OD2; Oliver Sichel, CEO of French Internet service provider Wanadoo; Julia Miller, director at Microsoft's computer games console-maker Xbox Live; and Nora Rothrock, senior VP of new media at Clear Channel Entertainment Europe.

Attendees from the wireless world include Nokia Mobile Phone's Timo Pastila and Kent Thexton from U.K. cell-phone operator mm02.

Apple VP of applications and Internet services Eddy Cue and Chris Gorog, chairman/CEO of U.S. digital service provider Roxio, will chair two question-and-answer sessions.

Roxio has acquired and legitimized Napster, the once-notorious P2P pioneer that enabled rampant access to free, unauthorized music.

MidemNet will feature several panel discussions. "Sale of the Century—A View From the Top" will examine how digital music is entering consumers' mainstream consciousness. "What's Coming Next: New Formats, New Products" will analyze whether the SACD and DVD-A disc formats have become viable commercial platforms for music.

And "Technology Face-Off: DRM vs. Unrestricted Content" will examine how effective digital-rights management systems can encourage consumers to pay for digital music.

MidemNet Attendees: Our 2004 Priorities

BY JULIANA KORANTENG

Three leading music industry executives participating in MidemNet commented on their business priorities for this year and the primary issues they hope to see addressed at the conference:

- Nora Rothrock, senior VP of new media for concert promoter Clear Channel Entertainment Europe: "What I'm focusing on is new-media consumer marketing. We've a strong database of customers who are critical to our future, and we use that to promote our live entertainment, including concerts, via technology.

"Because we work with artists promoting albums while touring, we can use that database to promote new acts. I'm also looking for new ways to use technology to enhance the live-event experience."

- Charles Grimsdale, CEO of digital music service provider OD2: "We've decided to have a fairly sizeable presence compared to previous years. Our

main priority is to look for new online retail partners to sell music on our catalogs.

"We've licensed 1 million titles, of which 230,000 are live [for digital distribution]. We're keen to talk to independent labels and help them get their catalogs online. I think [digital] rights are still restrictive, and we need to work out the complex payment landscape in Europe, as not everyone in Europe carries credit cards."

- Jerry Roest, CEO of song-recognition service provider Shazam Entertainment: "This is my first MIDEM, although the company came last year. There are several senior head honchos that I would like to talk to about Shazam's technology [that enables consumers to use mobile phones to identify music they hear anywhere]. We shall also be introducing our new head of music. The one big problem the music industry still needs to discuss is piracy, by creating one consortium that talks to technology people."

Korea

Continued from page 39

especially J-Pop and *enka* [traditional Japanese ballads]. We have already made contracts with a few companies.

"Japanese music will not start big, but [it will] gradually increase," Lee adds. "We expect it will take six months or more to gain popularity."

Former Warner Music Korea director of marketing Catherine Park is

now head of international sales at movie production and distribution company Tube Entertainment in Seoul. Tube holds the South Korean rights to some 20 Japanese films.

The opening of the South Korean market to Japanese culture is "a ringing of the bell for the ignorant and lazy" in the country's domestic entertainment industry, Park suggests. "Unless they are competitive and creative, they will lose ground."

Additional reporting by Steve McClure in Tokyo.

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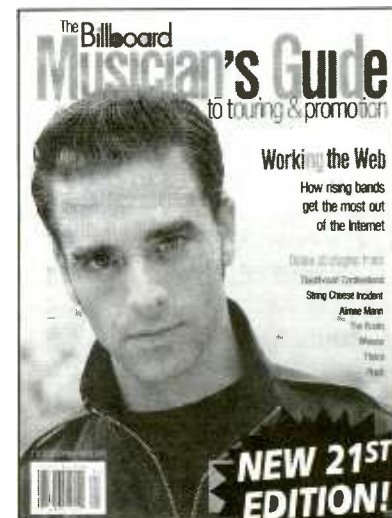
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Ardent Sees Potential In School Partnership

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

Ardent Studios and the Visible School (both in Memphis) are grabbing a trend and running with it.

While some commercial recording studios have recently started



FROM LEFT: ARDENT STUDIOS' JOHN FRY, ARDENT RECORDS' AISLYNN RAPPE AND VISIBLE SCHOOL FOUNDER KEN STEORTS

providing education in the recording arts—or partnering with recording schools—the recently announced partnership between Ardent and Visible goes beyond the traditional arrangement.

The Visible School, founded in 2000, offers one- and two-year certificate programs in recording, live sound production, vocal and instrumental performance and songwriting.

Among the Visible School and Visible Media Group's existing learning centers is an independently owned digital project studio—Sounds Eternal—and 818 Studios, a Web design and new-media studio.

Ardent Studios, founded by owner John Fry in 1966, adds considerably to the Visible School's offerings. With three recording/mix studios featuring Neve and Solid State Logic consoles—plus a mas-

tering studio and a client list that includes ZZ Top, Led Zeppelin, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jimmie Vaughan and Travis Tritt—Ardent adds a high-end, professional environment to the Visible School experience.

"We had been talking to them about two things," says Fry, who has taught at the University of Memphis and serves as vice chairman of the Memphis and Shelby County Music Commission.

"One was helping them expand their program, because it was initially a one-year program: nine months of classes plus a three-month, summer, practical-application exercise of some kind. They had people saying, 'We want more.'

"Plus, while the Visible School itself has a uniquely Christian mission—it's directed toward people who want to be in Christian music

—we also wanted to develop an independent path that would be very similar to the course content it presently has, but for persons who were not directed toward specifically working in Christian music."

Ken Steorts, founder of the Visible School, has a long history with Ardent. Once an intern at the studio, Steorts later served as guitarist in Skillet, a group on the studio's Ardent Records label.

Steorts says Ardent "is definitely a more large-scale music environment and [is involved with] mainstream music. We do a lot with Christian music in our facility, but there's a lot more real-world experience at Ardent."

First-year students enrolled in recording programs, Steorts explains, might spend 30% of their time at Ardent, with that figure dou-

bling for upper-level students.

In addition to the education that Visible School students will get in large-format consoles and professional music recording at Ardent, Fry feels that, given the ascendance of digital audio workstation-based recording and home or project studios, education is more important than ever.

"The fact of the matter is, there are an awful lot more people that want to do music recording and various kinds of video and media work in settings and for purposes that didn't exist in the past.

"These folks really want or need to be able to do this work themselves," Fry adds, "but they need to know what it is that they're doing. It's great for this equipment to be affordable, but it still requires skillful and knowledgeable use."

Grammys Recognize SSL's Technical Contributions

As reported in this column last week, Solid State Logic (SSL), manufacturer of analog and digital consoles for the music recording,

film, postproduction and broadcast industries, will be co-recipient of the Technical Grammy at the 46th Grammy Awards. The

Oxford, England-based company joins previously honored equipment manufacturers including Shure, Apple Computer, AMS Neve and Digidesign.

Today, there are more than 3,000 SSL-equipped facilities, from multi-room commercial studios in major cities throughout the world to top artists' private recording studios.

Founded in 1969 by the late **Colin Sanders**, SSL initially produced solid state switching equipment for pipe organ control. Since the introduction of its first recording console—the 4000 B Series, in 1977—SSL has grown to its current status, employing more than 380 people and maintaining regional offices in New York, Los Angeles, Milan, Paris and Tokyo.

The 4000 B Series, SSL managing director **Colin Pringle** says, "came up with this concept of an in-line channel strip, where you

had all of the equalization and dynamics in each channel. When it came out, people thought, 'That's decadent, why would anybody want all that processing on every channel?'

"Then," Pringle continues,

"because the consoles were becoming more sophisticated along with the growth in multitrack recording—tape machines and the number of tracks were growing exponentially—it was taking several

people to stand next to the console and push faders up and down. So the company developed its own computer automation system and integrated that as well. The console really embodied all of those things that people were attempting to do as the number of tracks went up. Signal processing and automation became available to them."

SSL's analog consoles, including the 4000 G Series, the Super Analog 9000 J Series and, more recently, the XL 9000 K Series, have dramatically influenced the sound of recorded music.

"Providing all of that signal processing allowed people to do things a bit more radically with things like drum sounds," Pringle says. "A number of well-known engineers using that dynamics processing were able to come up

with sounds on which their careers were based."

Further, Pringle adds, "the automation aspects allowed people to refine their work much more than they had been able to in the past, including revisiting a mix.

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TITLE Artist/ Producer (Label)	HEY YA! OutKast/ Andre 3000 (Arista)	YOU DON'T KNOW MY NAME Alicia Keys/ A. Keys, K. West (J/RMG)	THERE GOES MY LIFE Kenny Chesney/ B. Cannon, K. Chesney (BNA)
RECORDING STUDIO(S) (Location) Engineer(s)	STANKONIA (Atlanta, GA) TREE SOUND (Norcross, GA) LARRABEE NORTH (Universal City, CA) LARRABEE EAST (West Hollywood, CA) John Frye, Robert Hannon, Pete Novak	QUAD RECORDING (New York) Tony Black KAMPO (New York) Ann Mincieli	THE TRACKING ROOM @ EMERALD (Nashville, TN) Billy Sherrill
CONSOLE(S)/ DAW(S)	SSL 4000 G, SSL 4064 G+, SSL 9000 J, Neve 8078	SSL 9000 J, SSL 4096 G+	SSL 9000 J
MULTITRACK RECORDER(S)/PLAYBACK MEDIA	Pro Tools, Pro Tools HD	Pro Tools	Sony 3348
RECORDING MEDIA	Pro Tools, Pro Tools HD, Glyph EZQuest	Pro Tools	Quantegy 467
MIX DOWN STUDIO(S) (Location) Engineer(s)	HIT FACTORY (New York) LARRABEE WEST (West Hollywood, CA) Neal Pogue, Kevin "KD" Davis	LARRABEE NORTH (Universal City, CA) Manny Marroquin	LOUD (Nashville, TN) Kevin Beamish
CONSOLE(S)/DAW(S)	SSL 9000 K, SSL E/G	SSL 9000 J	Sony Oxford OXF-R3
MIXDOWN RECORDER(S)/MEDIA	Ampex ATR 102, Pro Tools	Pro Tools	Pro Tools
MIX DOWN MEDIA	Quantegy 499, Pro Tools Mix Plus, BASF GP9	Pro Tools	Pro Tools
MASTERING (Location) Engineer	BERNIE GRUNDMAN (Los Angeles) Brian Gardner	HIT FACTORY (New York) Herb Powers, Jr.	MASTERMIX (Nashville, TN) Hank Williams
CD/CASSETTE MANUFACTURER	BMG	BMG	BMG

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Studio
Monitor™
By Christopher Walsh
cwalsh@billboard.com



PRINGLE: AUTOMATION ENHANCES REFINEMENT

Previously, that was impossible; suddenly, it became practical to come back and set up a mix and take it from where you last were."

In 2003, SSL introduced the C200 digital console, based on its large-format MTP consoles, as well as the C100 digital broadcast console.

At the 115th Audio Engineering Society Convention, held last October in New York, SSL introduced the XLogic line of signal processing equipment, allowing the quality of its console components to be brought into new settings, such as digital audio workstation-based recording environments.

The Technical Grammy, Pringle says, "is a great honor. For a company that prides itself on the design and manufacturing quality of its products, to get something in that company is an important thing."

'World Idol' Names Norwegian No. 1

The first "World Idol" competition has come and gone, and Norway's **Kurt Nilsen** emerged as the winner.

The TV talent contest featured "Idol" winners from around the world. Voting was done by audiences in the various countries where "World Idol" aired.

Judges gushed over Nilsen's performance of U2's "Beautiful Day." Some even predicted Nilsen would be the underdog to win the race.

The rankings for the other "World Idol" contestants were as follows:

Kelly Clarkson from the U.S. in second place; **Peter Evrard** from Belgium in third place; **Heinz Winckler** from South Africa in fourth place; **Will Young** from the U.K. in fifth place; **Ryan Malcolm** from Canada in sixth place; **Guy Sebastian** from Australia in seventh place; **Alicja "Alex" Janosz** in eighth place; Germany's **Alexander Klaws** and the Pan-Arabic region's **Diana Karazon** tying for ninth place; and **Jamai Loman** from the Netherlands in last place.

The international exposure no doubt helped the contestants, although at press time, 19 Entertainment (the company behind the "Idol" franchise) had no comment on whether there were plans to make the "World Idol" contestants' records available in more countries.

Nilsen's debut album, "I," went platinum in Norway (50,000 copies sold) on the day it was released in September 2003. It has sold 75,000 units so far in that country, according

to Ariola/BMG, which released the album.

So how did viewers take to "World Idol"?

The two-part show got mediocre ratings in the U.S., where it aired on the Fox network, but was a hit in many other countries.

According to Nielsen Media Research, the first part of the U.S. broadcast of "World Idol"—which aired Dec. 25, 2003—got a 2.3 rating/7 share, or 6.5 million U.S. viewers. In TV terms,



NILSEN: 'WORLD' VICTOR

"share" equals the percentage of TV viewers tuned in to the program.

Part two of "World Idol," the results show that aired Jan. 1, scored a slightly higher viewing audience: a 2.8 rating/7 share, or 7.7 million U.S. viewers.

Tuned In: The Tube

By Carla Hay
chay@billboard.com



According to the respective networks that aired "World Idol," international ratings for part one of "World Idol" included a 22.5 share in Germany on the RTL network.

In other countries, that "World Idol" episode was No. 1 in its time slot, including Poland (28.6 share on the Polsat network) and the Netherlands (25.8 share on the RTL4 network).

In other countries, part one of "World Idol" was the most-watched show of the day, including Belgium (a whopping 42.1 share on the VTM network), Canada (nearly 2 million viewers on CTV) and Australia (2.4 million viewers on Network 10).

Michelle McManus was named the winner of the second season of the U.K.'s "Pop Idol" in the Dec. 20, 2003, broadcast of the show. McManus' first single, "All This Time," was released Jan. 5 on S/BMG and went straight to No. 1 in the U.K.

Meanwhile, Singapore will get its own local version of the "Idol" TV contest franchise. "Singapore Idol" will premiere on MediaCorp TV Channel 5 later this year.

Billboard VIDEO MONITOR

THE MOST-PLAYED CLIPS AS MONITORED BY NIELSEN BROADCAST DATA SYSTEMS
"New Ons" are those clips with six or more plays for the first time in the chart week

BET	CMT	MUSIC TELEVISION	VH1
1234 W Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20018	330 Commerce Street, Nashville, TN 37201	1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036	1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036

<p>ALICIA KEYS, YOU DON'T KNOW MY NAME WESTSIDE CONNECTION, GANGSTA NATION JAY-Z, CHANGE CLOTHES YING YANG TWINS, SALT SHAKER B2K, BADABOOM G UNIT, STUNT 101 BOW WOW, MY BABY JUVENILE, IN MY LIFE MARQUEE HOUSTON, POP THAT BOOTY BEYONCE, ME MYSELF AND I TWISTA, SLOW JAMZ G UNIT, POPPIN' THEM THINGS KANYE WEST, THROUGH THE WIRE R. KELLY, STEP IN THE NAME OF LOVE MARY J. BLIGE, NOT TODAY LUDACRIS, STAND UP MUSIC, FOR THE NIGHT JAGGED EDGE, WALKED OUTTA HEAVEN KELIS, MILKSHAKE AVANT, READ YOUR MIND NELLY, IZ U JOE, MORE & MORE OUTKAST, THE WAY YOU MOVE RUBEN STUDDARD, SORRY 2004 TRILLVILLE, NEVA EVA TUPAC, RUNNIN' JAY-Z, ENCORE BIG TYMERS, GANGSTA GIRL NICK CANNON, GIGOLO SEAN PAUL, I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU MURPHY LEE, WAT DA HOOK GON BE OUTKAST, HEY YA MISSY ELLIOTT, PASS THAT DUTCH MYA, FALLEN ASHANTI, RAIN ON ME CHINGY, HOLIDAE IN OBIE TRIBE, THE SET UP YOUNGBL00Z, LEAN LOW TIMBALAND & MAGOO, COP THAT DISC CARL THOMAS, SHE IS</p>	<p>TOBY KEITH, AMERICAN SOLDIER SHANIA TWAIN, SHE'S NOT JUST A PRETTY FACE ALAN JACKSON, REMEMBER WHEN GARY ALLAN, SONGS ABOUT FAIN BROOKS & DUNN, YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HONKY TONK OUT OF THE GIRL BRAD PAISLEY, LITTLE MOMENTS KENNY CHESNEY, THERE GOES MY LIFE SARA EVANS, PERFECT SHERYL CROW, THE FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST CHRIS CAGLE, CHICKS DID IT REBA MCKENTRE, I'M GONNA TAKE THAT MOUNTAIN TRACE ADKINS, HOT MAMA MONTGOMERY GENTRY, HELL YEAH AUSON KRAUSS & UNION STATION, EVERYTIME YOU SAY GOODBYE JOE NICHOLS, COOL TO BE A FOOL JOSH TURNER, LONG BLACK TRAIN MARTY ST. LARRY, MELE HAGGARD, FARMER'S BLUES BUDDY JEWELL, SWEET SOUTHERN COMFORT CLINT BLACK, SPEND MY TIME RODNEY CROWELL, EARTHBOUND DIXIE CHICKS, SIN WAGON (TOP OF THE WORLD LIVE) DIERKS BENTLEY, MY LAST NAME BRIAN MCCOMAS, YOU'RE IN MY HEAD JIMMY WAYNE, I LOVE YOU THIS MUCH ROBIN ELLA & THE CC STRING BAND, MAN OVER WYONNNA, HEAVEN HELP ME CARY ALLAN, TOUGH LITTLE BOYS KEITH URBAN, WHO WOULDN'T WANNA BE ME RECKLESS KELLY, NOBODY'S GIRL TERRI CLARK, I WANNA GO IT ALL TIM MCGRAW, REAL GOOD MAN ALAN JACKSON & JIMMY BUFFETT, IT'S FIVE O'CLOCK SOMEWHERE DEL MCCOURRY BAND, MY LOVE WILL NOT CHANGE ROSANNE CASH, SEPTEMBER WHEN IT COMES TOBY KEITH, I LOVE THIS BAR RASCAL FLATTS, I MELT MINDY SMITH, JOLENE JAMES TAYLOR & AUSON KRAUSS, HOW'S THE WORLD TREATING YOU DIERKS BENTLEY, WHAT WAS I THINKIN' JUNE CARTER CASH, KEEP ON THE SUNNY SIDE</p>	<p>KELIS, MILKSHAKE JAY-Z, CHANGE CLOTHES NO DOUBT, IT'S MY LIFE BLINK-182, FEELING THIS GOOD CHARLOTTE, HOLD ON OUTKAST, THE WAY YOU MOVE CHRISTINA AGUILERA, THE VOICE WITHIN TUPAC, RUNNIN' SIMPLE PLAN, PERFECT BEYONCE, ME MYSELF AND I TRUMP THE INSULT COMIC DOG, I KEEED CLAY AIKEN, INVISIBLE LINKIN PARK, NUMB ALICIA KEYS, YOU DON'T KNOW MY NAME TWISTA, SLOW JAMZ KANYE WEST, THROUGH THE WIRE OUTKAST, HEY YA YING YANG TWINS, SALT SHAKER JET, ARE YOU GONNA BE MY GIRL NICK LACHEY, THIS I SWEAR JESSICA SIMPSON, WITH YOU JC CHASEZ, SOME GIRLS DANCE WITH WOMEN BRIAN MCCOMAS, YOU'RE IN MY HEAD BRITNEY SPEARS, ME AGAINST THE MUSIC JAGGED EDGE, WALKED OUTTA HEAVEN LUDACRIS, STAND UP NICHELBACK, SOMEDAY G UNIT, STUNT 101 TRUMAN, GIRL WITH A PEARL CHINGY, HOLIDAE IN DARKNESS, I BELIEVE IN A THING CALLED LOVE THE OFFSPRING, HIT THAT BABY BASH, SUGA SUGA HILARY DUFF, COME CLEAN FEFE DOSSOM, EVERYTHING MURPHY LEE, WAT DA HOOK GON BE MYA, FALLEN HOOBASTANK, OUT OF CONTROL B2K, BADABOOM</p>	<p>NO DOUBT, IT'S MY LIFE SHERYL CROW, THE FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST BEYONCE, ME MYSELF AND I MAROON 5, THIS LOVE NICHELBACK, SOMEDAY KID ROCK, FEEL LIKE MAKIN LOVE OUTKAST, HEY YA 3 DOORS DOWN, HERE WITHOUT YOU ALICIA KEYS, YOU DON'T KNOW MY NAME JET, ARE YOU GONNA BE MY GIRL CHRISTINA AGUILERA, LULU, MYA & PINK, LADY MARMALADE OUTKAST, THE WAY YOU MOVE EVANESCENCE, MY IMMORTAL TRAIN, WHEN I LOOK TO THE SKY MATCHBOX TWENTY, BRIGHT LIGHTS JACK JOHNSON, TAYLOR GOOD CHARLOTTE, HOLD ON FUEL, FALLS ON ME CHRISTINA AGUILERA, THE VOICE WITHIN JAY-Z, CHANGE CLOTHES STAIN'D, SO FAR AWAY COUNTING CROWS, SHE DON'T WANT NOBODY NEAR O!O!O, WHITE FLAG JESSICA SIMPSON, WITH YOU CLAY AIKEN, INVISIBLE BRITNEY SPEARS, ME AGAINST THE MUSIC SARAH MCLACHLAN, FALLEN KELLY CLARKSON, THE TROUBLE WITH LOVE IS JASON MRAZ, YOU AND I BOTH DAVE MATTHEWS, SAVE ME EVANESCENCE, BRING ME TO LIFE JASON MRAZ, THE REMEDY (I WON'T WORRY) HOWIE DAY, PERFECT TIME OF DAY COLOPLAY, MOSES TRAPT, HEADSTRONG MAROON 5, HARDER TO BREATHE FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE, STACY'S MOM PINK, DON'T LET ME GET ME TRAIN, CROPS OF JUPITER NELLY FURTADO, POWERLESS (SAY WHAT YOU WANT)</p>
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<p>NEW ONS RUBEN STUDDARD, SORRY 2004</p>	<p>NEW ONS THE DEL MCCOURRY BAND, MY LOVE WILL NOT CHANGE</p>	<p>NEW ONS NO NEW ONS THIS WEEK</p>	<p>NEW ONS JESSICA SIMPSON, WITH YOU DAVE MATTHEWS, SAVE ME</p>
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REQUEST TV

OVER THE AIR COMMERCIAL BROADCAST NYC

HIP HOP/R&B	COUNTRY/ALT
<p>84 Hours Weekly</p> <p>W N X Y Y TV 26</p> <p>TWISTA F/ KANYE WEST SLOW JAMS CASSIDY F/ R. KELLY HOTEL JAGGED EDGE WALKED OUT OF HEAVEN ALICIA KEYS YOU DON'T NOW MY NAME SEAN PAUL I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU MEMPHIS BLEEK ROUND HERE ASHANTI RAIN ON ME (REMIX) JAY Z ENCORE JOE MORE & MORE MARQUEE HOUSTON POP THAT BOOTY R. KELLY STEP IN THE NAME OF LOVE BUSTA RHYMES F/ N. CANNON SHORTY AVANT READ YOUR MIND MARY J BLIGE/EVE NOT TODAY JAE MILLZ NO NO NO BEYONCE/SEAN PAUL BABY BOY BOW WOW MY BABY KELIS MILKSHAKE G-UNIT STUNT 101 JA RULE CROWN/CLAP BACK</p>	<p>NYC/Melbourne, FL TV 31</p> <p>W N X Y X TV 35</p> <p>SHANIA TWAIN SHE'S NOT JUST A PRETTY FACE ROSANNE CASH SEPTEMBER WHEN IT COMES FAITH HILL CRY BROOKS & DUNN YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HONKY CROSS CANADIAN RAGWEED 17 GARY ALLEN SONGS ABOUT RAIN KID ROCK/SHERYL CROW PICTURE TOBI KEITH AMERICAN SOLDIER DIXIE CHICKS SIN WAGON ALICIA KEYS YOU DON'T KNOW MY NAME LUDACRIS, STAND UP RODNEY CROWELL EARTHBOUND DWIGHT YOAKAM EARTHBOUND BUDDY JEWELL SWEET SOUTHERN COMFORT COLDBLAY MOSES ROBINELLA & THE CC STRING BAND MAN OVER KEITH URBAN WHO WOULDN'T WANNA BE ME CLINT BLACK SPEND MY TIME L'ANN RIMES SUDENLY LIZ PHAIR WHY CANT I</p>
VJ TOP 20	LATIN
<p>40 Hours Weekly</p> <p>W N X Y Y TV 26</p> <p>SEAN PAUL I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU TWISTA F/ KANYE WEST SLOW JAM ASHANTI RAIN ON ME -Remix JAY Z CHANGE CLOTHES G UNIT / 50 CENT STUNT 101 ALICIA KEYS YOU DON'T KNOW MY NAME LUDACRIS STAND UP BEYONCE/JAY-Z CRAZY IN LOVE NICHELBACK, FIGURED YOU OUT IGGY POP, LITTLE KNOW IT ALL DARKNESS, I BELIEVE IN A THING CALLED LOVE EVANESCENCE, MY IMMORTAL SWOLLEN MEMBERS, WATCH THIS GLEN LUIS, BACK FOR MORE CHINGY, HOLIDAE IN</p>	<p>40 Hours Weekly</p> <p>W N X Y X TV 35</p> <p>OBIE BERMUDEZ ANTES LOS CHALCHALEROS DESPEDIADA LEONARDO FAVIO FOTO DE CARNET PLASTILINA MOSH PELIGROSO POP TIGRES DEL NORTE REYNA DEL SUR ALEXANDRE PIRES QUEITOMOSOS LA ROPA DIEGO TORRES QUE NO ME PIERDA JANA PUERTO DE SAN BLAS CRISTIAN VOLVER A AMAR CHAYANNE AUN SIGLO SIN TI KGM LOVE CALLS R. KELLY STEP IN THE NAME OF LOVE AKON BELLY DANCER MARY J / EVE NOT TODAY JUVENILE IN MY LIFE ELEPHANT MAN PON DE RIVER CHRISTINA AGUILERA CAN'T HOLD US DOWN TWISTA / TAOO YING YANG TWINS SALT SHAKER MEMPHIS BLEEK ROUND HERE</p>

LIVE CALL REQUESTS FOR DECEMBER / 34,716 CALLS
BASED UPON VERIZON CALL COUNTS VIA IP 540 SERVICE NY LATA

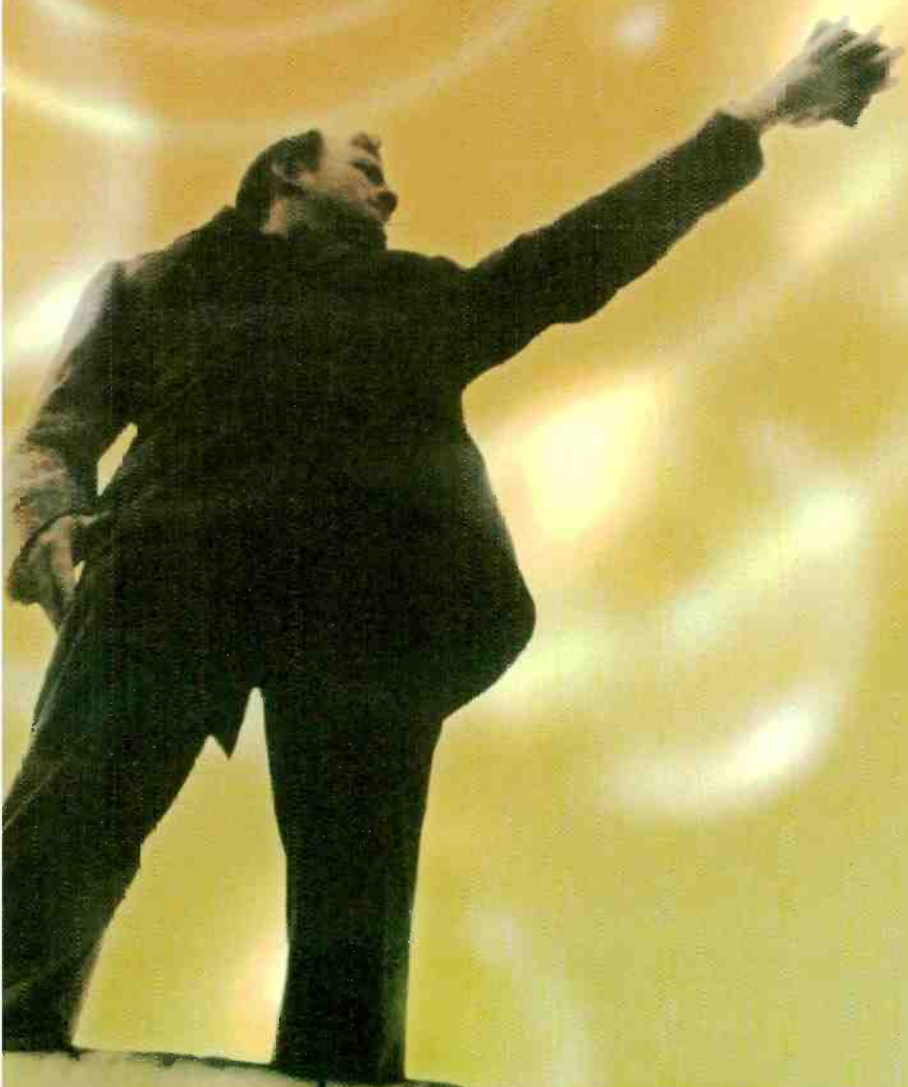
CONTACT : LENN COOPER 212-576-1446
WWW.TV26NEWYORK.COM

BROADCAST DATA SYSTEMS

Announcing This Month's Recipients of

BDS Certified

SPIN AWARDS



600,000 SPINS

Wherever You Will Go/ **The Calling** /RCA
In The End/ **Linkin Park** /WARNER BROS.

500,000 SPINS

The Middle/ **Jimmy Eat World** /DREAMWORKS

400,000 SPINS

Bring Me To Life/ **Evanescence** /WIND-UP
Unwell/ **Matchbox Twenty** /ATLANTIC
In Da Club/ **50 Cent** /INTERSCOPE

300,000 SPINS

Drift Away/ **Uncle Kracker** /LAVA
Get Busy/ **Sean Paul** /ATLANTIC
Headstrong/ **Trapt** /WARNER BROS.
Crazy In Love/ **Beyonce** /COLUMBIA

200,000 SPINS

Here Without You/ **3 Doors Down** /UNIVERSAL
So Far Away/ **Staind** /ELEKTRA
Into You/ **Fabulous Feat. Tamia or Ashanti** /ELEKTRA
P.I.M.P./ **50 Cent** /INTERSCOPE
19 Somethin'/ **Mark Wills** /MERCURY
Can't Let You Go/ **Fabulous Feat. Lil Mo & Mike Shor** /ELEKTRA
Someday/ **Nickelback** /ROADRUNNER
All My Life/ **Foo Fighters** /RCA

100,000 SPINS

Hey Ya/ **OutKast** /ARISTA
The Way You Move/ **OutKast** /ARISTA
Bright Lights/ **Matchbox Twenty** /ATLANTIC
White Flag/ **Dido** /ARISTA
(There's Gotta Be) More To Life/ **Stacie Orrico** /VIRGIN
Stacy's Mom/ **Fountains Of Wayne** /S-CURVE
Can't Stop, Won't Stop/ **Young Gunz** /ISLAND/DEF JAM
I Melt/ **Rascal Flatts** /LYRIC STREET
I Love This Bar/ **Toby Keith** /DREAMWORKS
Walked Outta Heaven/ **Jagged Edge** /SONY URBAN MUSIC/COLUMBIA
Tough Little Boys/ **Gary Allan** /MCA
Bigger Than My Body/ **John Mayer** /AWARE/COLUMBIA
This One's For The Girls/ **Martina McBride** /RCA
Step In The Name Of Love/ **R. Kelly** /JIVE
Almost Home/ **Craig Morgan** /BROKEN BOW
Stupid Girl/ **Cold** /Geffen
Wave On Wave/ **Pat Green** /REPUBLIC/UNIVERSAL SOUTH
Put That Woman First/ **Jaheim** /WARNER BROS.
Never Again/ **Nickelback** /ROADRUNNER

50,000 SPINS

Milkshake/ **Kelis** /ARISTA
It's My Life/ **No Doubt** /INTERSCOPE
Numb/ **Linkin Park** /WARNER BROS.
The First Cut Is The Deepest/ **Sheryl Crow** /A&M
Fallen/ **Sarah McLachlan** /ARISTA
Perfect/ **Simple Plan** /LAVA
Read Your Mind/ **Avant** /Geffen
Breathe/ **Michelle Branch** /MAVERICK
Honesty/ **Rodney Atkins** /CURB
You Can't Take The Honky Tonk Out Of The Girl/ **Brooks & Dunn** /ARISTA
Stunt 101/ **G Unit** /INTERSCOPE
You Don't Know My Name/ **Alicia Keys** /J RECORDS
Runnin'/ **Tupac Feat. Notorious B.I.G.** /AMARU/INTERSCOPE
Change Clothes/ **Jay-Z** /ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM/IDJMG
Are You Gonna Be My Girl/ **Jet** /ELEKTRA
There Goes My Life/ **Kenny Chesney** /BNA
Drinkin' Bone/ **Tracy Byrd** /RCA
Away From Me/ **Puddle Of Mudd** /Geffen
So Yesterday/ **Hilary Duff** /BUENA VISTA/HOLLYWOOD
Officially Missing You/ **Tamia** /ELEKTRA
Low/ **Kelly Clarkson** /RCA
Invisible/ **Clay Aiken** /RCA

TO EVERY SPIN AWARD WINNER
CONGRATULATIONS



Nielsen
Broadcast Data
Systems

www.bds online.com

Ella Fitzgerald and company replace Harry Connick Jr. atop Jazz list



Josh Turner makes record slow climb to Hot Country's top 20

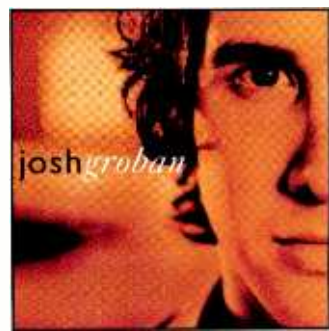


SALES / AIRPLAY / TRENDS / ANALYSIS

Groban Gets His No. 1

The chilly sales climate of January and a hot promotion at a major chain of department stores is just the combination **Josh Groban** needed to notch the first No. 1 album of his young career. And he's just getting started.

Thanks to juice from a Target Stores campaign, Groban's "Closer" scores The Billboard 200's Greatest Gainer award. More than that, it also becomes only the sixth album in the Nielsen SoundScan era and the first since 2001 to leap from a rank below No. 10 to the chart's highest rung (see Chart Beat, this page).



In this transitional week, when store traffic continues to settle from the high torque of the holiday frames, Groban

and **Beyoncé** were the only artists of the six featured in the Target sale to realize actual increases, and his gain is substantially larger (up 28,000 copies, compared with a 2,500-unit uptick for her "Dangerously in Love"). Thus, he flies 11-1 with a total for the week of 111,000, up 34% over the prior chart.

Groban's ascent to the penthouse comes just prior to the Jan. 22 start of his tour, which begins with sold-out shows in Boise, Idaho; Seattle; and Portland, Ore.

Amid his road dates comes the high profile of CBS' Feb. 1 telecast of Super Bowl XXXVIII, where Groban will perform a pre-game tribute to the crew of the Columbia space shuttle, just moments before Beyoncé delivers the National Anthem. That exposure could be especially beneficial, as Groban's two earlier albums always soared in the wake of TV appearances.

Over the Counter™

By Geoff Mayfield
gmayfield@billboard.com



ON TARGET: Here's the recipe for the aforementioned Target promotion. Take six popular albums and tout them in a widely distributed circular. Allow consumers to buy any combination of two advertised CDs and/or DVDs for \$20. Simmer in 1,107 stores nationwide and watch it cook.

Each of the half-dozen albums in the campaign rank among the week's top 12 titles, five move to higher chart positions and the four that sell less than they did the week before each see much smaller declines than the album market's 28.3% erosion from the prior-week sales.

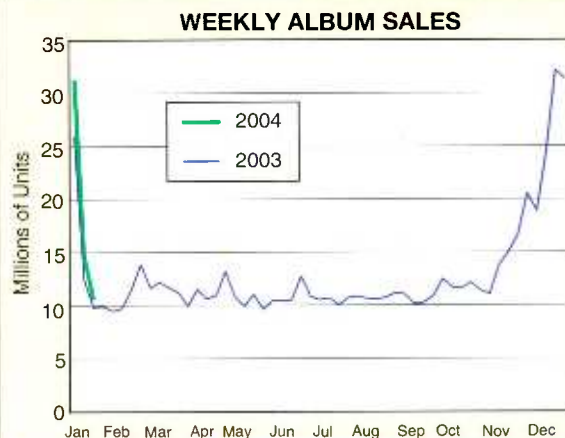
Target's scheme helps explain why 70.2% of **Josh Groban's** chart-topping sum comes from mass merchants this week, even though a majority of his career sales have come from traditional music stores (50.7% of 1.96 million on "Closer," 62.4% of 571,000 for the 2002 CD/DVD combo "In Concert" and 59.5% of his 2001 freshman album).

Similarly, in a week when a 4.6% gain jumps **Beyoncé** 23-11 on the big chart, the department-store sector accounts for almost 66% of her current total. That is in contrast to the 53%

(Continued on page 56)

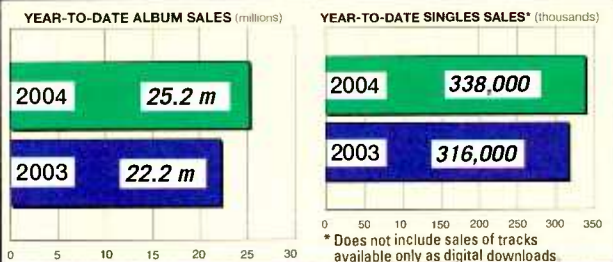
Market Watch

A Weekly National Music Sales Report



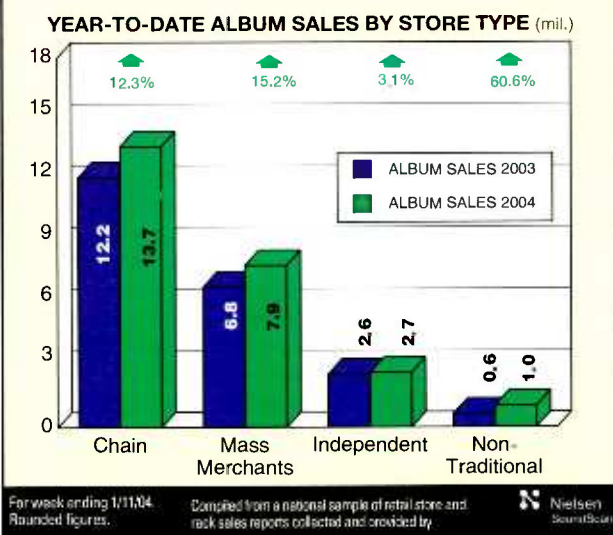
ALBUM SALES			
This Week	10,540,000	This Week 2003	9,788,000
Last Week	14,702,000	Change	↘7.7%
Change	↘28.3%		

SINGLES SALES*			
This Week	153,000	This Week 2002	149,000
Last Week	185,000	Change	↘2.7%
Change	↘17.3%		



YEAR-TO-DATE OVERALL UNIT SALES			
	2003	2004	Change
Total	22,547,000	25,580,000	(↘13.5%)
Albums	22,231,000	25,242,000	(↘13.5%)
Singles	316,000	338,000	(↘7.0%)

YEAR-TO-DATE SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT			
	2003	2004	Change
CD	21,422,000	24,635,000	(↘15.0%)
Cassette	737,000	522,000	(↘29.2%)
Other	72,000	85,000	(↘18.1%)



'Titanic' Leap For 'Closer'

For only the second time this century, an album moves to No. 1 on The Billboard 200 from outside the top 10. Making this rare leap is "Closer" (143/Reprise), the third album by **Josh Groban**. With an 11-1 jump, "Closer" becomes Groban's first chart-topping title (see Over the Counter, this page).

The only other 21st century release to move to pole position from outside the top 10 was **Aaliyah's** self-titled 2001 CD. In the wake of her death in a plane crash, the album took a 19-1 jump.

Before "Aaliyah," the last album to reach the summit from a position below No. 10 was the soundtrack to "Titanic," which, like "Closer," made an 11-1 leap. Coincidentally, the "Titanic" move was made on the chart dated Jan. 24, 1998, exactly six years ago.

Before "Titanic," the last album to move 11-1 was "Double Fantasy" by **John Lennon/Yoko Ono**. That move happened the week of Dec. 27, 1980, following Lennon's murder Dec. 8. After an eight-week reign, "Double Fantasy" moved to No. 2, the spot it occupied on Feb. 27, 1981, the day Groban was born.

WITCHY WOMAN: Broadway cast albums are infrequent visitors to The Billboard 200. After a two-year gap where no Broadway cast albums debuted, there have now been Broadway cast album debuts for five consecutive years. Keeping the run going is "Wicked" (Decca Broadway/Universal Classics Group), the musical that reveals the back story of the Wicked Witch of the West and Glinda, the Good Witch.

"Wicked" is the eighth Broadway cast album to chart this century and the first since the **Bernadette Peters** version of "Gypsy" debuted in September 2003. The highest-ranked Broadway cast album of the past 20 years is "Rent," which peaked at No. 19 in September 1996.

Chart Beat™

By Fred Bronson
fbronson@billboard.com



BLACK IS BACK: Next month marks the 15th anniversary of **Clint Black's** debut on Hot Country Singles & Tracks. His first single, "Better Man," was a new entry the week of Feb. 18, 1989, and went on to spend one week at No. 1. This issue, Black has his first top 20 hit since "Been There" peaked at No. 5 in April 2000. "Spend My Time" (Equity) moves 23-20.

LIKE IT GOES: "There Goes My Life" (BNA) is No. 1 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks for the sixth week. It's the third **Kenny Chesney** song to remain on top for six weeks or more, making him the first artist since Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems technology was introduced in 1991 to have three songs stay at No. 1 for six weeks or more.

OBIE ONE: Singer/songwriter **Obie Bermudez** has two songs in the top five of Hot Latin Tracks. His "Me Canse De Ti" (EMI Latin) returns to No. 1, while "Antes" falls 2-4. Bermudez is the first artist to have two simultaneous top five hits since Jan. 13, 2001, when **Son by Four** was No. 4 with "A Puro Dolor" and No. 5 with "Cuando Seas Mia." Bermudez is the sixth artist to have two top five hits at once on this chart. Aside from Son by Four, the others are **Alejandro Fernandez**, **Selena**, **Los Bukis** and **Julio Iglesias**.

Sexual Overload

Continued from page 1

album sales by Spears, Pink and similar artists may reflect a classic case of mismarketing.

"When social and economic times are more threatening and pessimistic, we actually prefer others with more mature facial, body and personality characteristics," says Terry Pettijohn, a Ph.D. social psychologist at Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pa.

TARTING UP

If Pettijohn's observations are accurate, then industry executives who are pushing artists to "tart it up" are miscalculating the market and could be damaging careers.

"Audiences are listening to lyrics more," says Ron Vos, president/chief executive of Hi Frequency Marketing in North Carolina. "They're focused on content and story line, not dancing and having fun, and they want the artist to reflect that."

Indeed, female artists who are succeeding on the radio and on the charts have tapped into the nation's post-Sept. 11 soul-searching.

Vos, whose firm worked with Avril Lavigne and Norah Jones, says these artists are writing music that's about being in touch with your own values. They portray themselves as self-made people who write about their own feelings, he says.

Sex certainly sells. The concept has been around as long as advertising. But Lavigne and Jones reflect a different kind of sexuality that's much subtler, more genuine and thus more alluring in a time of crisis.

Given the national mood, such nuances could easily be the difference between strong and mediocre sales.

One of the hottest breakthrough groups of last year, rock band Evanescence, is fronted by Amy Lee, who is appalled by the crass marketing of some pop stars. "Talking bad about Britney is like beating a dead horse; I won't even go there," she says.

But what really bothers Lee are female artists who are good writers or good singers but have gone from being "really classy and cool to just stripping it all away."

Jewel, for example, has gone from folk songstress to cover girl, and 40-something Sheryl Crow struts onstage in hot pants

even as she bemoans that other artists are being marketed like "porn stars."

"Obviously, sex is the most basic thing that you can [sell]," Lee says. "I mean, you sell yourself, and I just hate it."

TRAMP TREND

From Spears' kiss with Madonna at the MTV Video Music Awards to Pink's onstage antics at the Billboard Music Awards, the trend toward trampiness shows no signs of abating.

But some academic research suggests that it runs counter to current economic, social and demographic trends.

Last spring, Pettijohn and University of Georgia professor Abraham Tesser presented a paper to the American Psy-



PINK: TARTING IT UP TOO MUCH?

chological Society in Atlanta that examined how the social and economic environment affects human preferences.

"In times of trouble, strong, stable, supportive people are favored," he says. "When times are good, we tend to favor the fun person."

To reach that conclusion, the researchers studied the public's preferences for actresses between 1932 and 1995.

Individuals preferred smaller eyes, thinner cheeks and larger chins in bad times, and women with larger eyes, fuller cheeks and smaller chins in good times, the study found.

"The U.S. is always going back and forth between our puritan values and our need for indulgences," says Sharon Livingston of the Livingston Group, a Windham, N.H., marketing and research firm.

Indeed, American attitudes about sex have moved in cycles that seem to roughly follow the economy, according to Robert Fogarty, a history professor at Antioch College in Ohio.

In the early 1900s, the prim "Gibson Girl," who represented serene self-con-

fidence, was the prevailing icon. By the Roaring '20s, flappers were the rage.

"Flappers were nearly showing their knees," Fogarty says. "There was a personal liberation and freedom."

During the Great Depression and World War II, the prevailing female image changed again. But by the post-war boom of the 1950s, the pendulum had swung back.

Sultry sex kittens like Marilyn Monroe, Bridget Bardot and Jayne Mansfield became screen stars. And Playboy magazine was launched.

SEXUALLY AWARE

As part of his research, Pettijohn studied the physical characteristics of every Playmate of the Year, from 1960 through 2000.

Then he compared his findings with a "hard times" indicator made up of U.S. rates of unemployment, marriage, murder and other factors.

"During difficult years, models tended to be slightly older, heavier and taller, with larger waists and bigger waist-to-hip ratios," he says.

Madison Avenue also seems to be keenly aware of sexual-economic swings in national mood.

During the booming 1980s, Calvin Klein pushed the envelope with an ad campaign featuring the then-15-year-old Brooke Shields.

Madonna, of course, launched vampiness during the 1980s.

Calvin Klein once again typified the swing to racier advertising when the economy rebounded from the 1990-91 recession. It launched its controversial "teen porn" advertising campaign in 1995. And remember "heroin chic"?

The road to raunch for artists like Spears, Pink and Aguilera began about the same time, but for some reason, no one has clued them in that the national mood has changed.

In contrast, Madonna, who has switched images like a snake sheds skins, possesses an uncanny ability to judge the social climate.

While some considered her kiss with Spears at the MTV Awards a symbolic anointing or passing of the vamp torch, it was more like she was casting off a worn pair of shoes.

Today, the pop diva's well-cultivated image as a doting mother and children's book author is much more reflective of the times.

Likewise, songs with a mellow, introspective approach are finding a receptive U.S. audience, in part because of the confusion and sense of change in the wake of Sept. 11, according to Ball State University pop culture expert Richard Aquila.

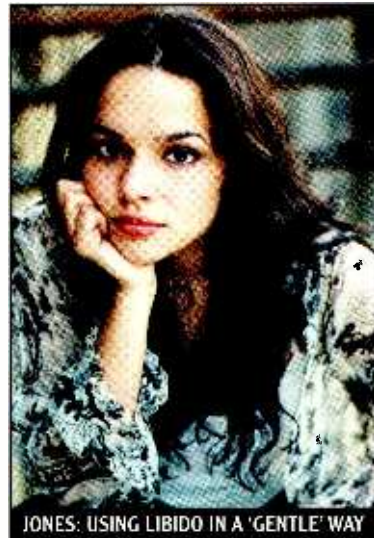
That mood plays into the resurgence of the singer/songwriter, where audiences are eager to hear what the individual has to say, he says.

"There's been a turn toward traditional values," Aquila adds.

Alicia Keys is representative of the trend. Her songs are introspective and soulful. Her image, while sexual, also exudes strength and character. Not surprisingly, her latest album is doing well on the charts.

Norah Jones is sexy, Livingston says. But "she's using libido in a gentle way and talking about relationships. It's a more constructive use of her libido, but she's still creating interest and intrigue."

She's saying, "Come be with me,



JONES: USING LIBIDO IN A 'GENTLE' WAY

and you'll feel good about yourself," she explains.

THE SEX CARD

While Keys and Jones are sticking with their images, the industry seems to be prone to playing the sexual card over and over again to juice sales in the tough economy.

Chris Knab, a music business consultant in Seattle, is unsurprised. Often, he says, it's easiest to attract mass-media interest by turning up the sexual tone and seeing how much they can get away with.

The fear is that such rising stars as Beyoncé Knowles could fall into that trap. Although her vamp quotient is low, some of the songs on her latest album, "Dangerously in Love," flirt with vampiness.

A spokesperson for Columbia Records, which put out the former Destiny's Child star's latest CD, declined to discuss Knowles' image.

The changed mood has affected other media as well. Felix Dennis, the founder of Dennis Publishing, epitomized the raunch trend in 1997 with the launch

of "laddy boy" magazine Maxim.

He followed with Stuff, another men's mag, and Blender, a consumer music magazine. The publications all soared on a combination of raunch and sophomoric humor. But that was then.

In a clear sign of a changing public mood, Stuff's single-copy sales dropped by 24% in the first six months of 2003, compared with the same period a year ago, according to Fortune magazine.

Newsstand sales of the still-profitless Blender also fell 26% from the January/February issue of last year to the June issue. Even Maxim sales are off nearly 7%, Fortune reports.

Spears, of course, has played the sex card most often and most blatantly in the face of declining sales.

Her biggest single, "... Baby One More Time," cut when her image was more wholesome, spent 39 weeks on the singles charts in 1998, including seven weeks in the top spot.

Her last single to hit No. 1 on the charts was "I'm a Slave 4 U" in 2001. It spent one week at the top.

Despite massive hype, Spears' latest album is posting only so-so sales. And Pink's latest release is suffering as well. Sales of "Try This" have fallen far short of her previous blockbuster album.

According to a source, her label is privately worried that she has been tarting it up too much. For her part, Pink says artists are just using what they've got.

"I don't think there's anything wrong with being sexy, but people use what they have," she says. "If people have a great voice, then you use your voice; if you have a great mind, then you speak a lot; if you have a great body, then you take your clothes off."

That may work if you're 20-something, but Evanescence's Lee isn't the only person who finds the trend disturbing among such established, talented female artists as Toni Braxton, Liz Phair and LeAnn Rimes.

Gina Vivinetto, pop music critic for Florida's St. Petersburg Times, noted in an article last summer that it's as if someone had issued a memo to every woman in rock. "No matter how seriously she once took herself, no matter how good her voice or her level of talent, [she] must start looking like a tramp."

It's unclear whether America will still show a penchant for buying somber melodies this year if U.S. troops start to return from Iraq and the stock market continues to climb.

Such changes could adjust the American disposition. But judging by the reaction to Spears' recent marital escapade in Las Vegas, the public is no longer amused; it's annoyed.

Borders

Continued from page 8

ect up and running.

Van der Pas notes that music is a key element in the life of many Europeans today and a symbol of the diversity of Europe's cultures. "Highlighting this diversity within our unity and supporting the blossoming of cultures that are composing today's Europe is one of the great missions of the Euro-

pean Union," he says.

He calls the Border Breakers Awards "an excellent tool to make all this visible and audible," through a celebration of music and the promotion of new European talents "beyond the regional and national borders."

London-based EMI Music Continental Europe president/CEO Emmanuel de Buretel welcomes the creation of the prize. "It puts the limelight on new European talent," he says.

The IFPI already organizes a biannual awards show in Brussels. The IFPI Platinum Awards recognize artists

whose sales in Europe have exceeded 1 million units. Brussels-based IFPI regional director for Europe Frances Moore says the two awards are complementary.

"These [Border Breakers] awards highlight the industry's investment in local culture," she adds.

EC INVOLVEMENT

For EMO director Jean-François Michel, who has been actively involved in the project, the prize is a way for the EC to participate in the promotional efforts labels undertake to push Euro-

pean artists.

"This is really about European repertoire," he says. "It is important that the EC recognizes that there is a wealth of repertoire in Europe but also that there are restrictions in the way this repertoire travels."

Michel says the industry will continue to work alongside the EC in setting up specific projects that can help promote European repertoire. One project that has been discussed with the EC is the creation of a European music export office in the U.S., based in New York.

Van der Pas points out that the European music market represents one-third of the world market. However, he agrees that it remains fragmented and partitioned nationally. "This situation makes it more difficult—and more expensive—for the circulation of works, artists and cultural products," he explains.

"Mobility is not simply for a cultural concern but also an economic one," Van der Pas says. He suggests that the Border Breakers Awards can highlight the role of the EC in the field of culture.

Korea

Continued from page 5

DVD and video piracy has been a particular problem, because no real enforcement mechanism exists to regulate licenses.

The government-appointed Korea Media Ratings Board has the authority to issue licenses but not to enforce or repeal improper licensing.

MIXED REACTION

Chris Lee, the executive director of Synnara, South Korea's biggest music retailer, calls the announcement "a shame and really surprising."

On the contrary, EMI Recorded Music Southeast Asia executive director Hans Ebert says, "We at EMI in this region welcome this initiative by the USTR. This is long overdue."

Savannah Hahn, country manager for gaming company Electronic Arts Korea and former manager of Sony Music Korea, welcomes the USTR's announcement. "It's necessary in particular for online piracy," Hahn says. "The Korean government pays very little attention to the piracy of foreign [intellectual property]."

The music industry is the main victim of online piracy. Lachie Rutherford, chairman of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry for Asia-Pacific, comments: "Making the Priority Watch List is the least you'd expect. This is the worst Korea's ever been—basically, there's not a music industry left in Korea."

In South Korea, with a world-leading broadband Internet penetration rate of more than 60%, online file trading is endemic. The RIAA says that is the main reason that music sales have fallen from \$345 million in 2000 to an estimated level of between \$126 mil-

U.S. Observers Back USTR Move

BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Observers of worldwide piracy here see South Korea in a technological imbalance. The country has one of the most advanced broadband technology networks in the world but offers little protection for the intellectual property rights of content owners using the technology.

The Jan. 8 decision by the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to place South Korea on its top trade-policy warning list stems from that.

"You have a complete disconnect," says Neil Turkewitz, executive VP of international for the Recording Industry Assn. of America. "The Korean government spent a tremendous amount of money and time in creating that infrastructure, but they didn't create the rights to the content that gets communicated."

Steve Metalitz of the D.C.-based International Intellectual Property Assn. says, "If somebody is putting your product online without authorization, that's against the law. Today in Korea, that is not against the law."

Through a separate existing re-

production right, Metalitz says, "songwriters may have a claim for infringement, but not the labels and artists for the transmission of sound recordings. Most of the cases that have already gone to court have been brought by the Korean recording industry—with minimal success."

The Korea decision shows that the U.S. is coming to grips with the new problems connected with highly wired internationals.

In the past, U.S. trade decisions based on lack of enforcement have been directed at such nations with hard-goods piracy problems as China and Taiwan.

The so-called Special 301 trade-partner reviews of copyright protection occur each April. Korea was placed on the lower-priority Watch List last year.

At that time, USTR asked Korea for a number of improvements. The most important was for the establishment of an exclusive right of transmission for sound recordings by the end of 2003.

"They didn't do that," Metalitz says. "They've made progress in some other areas, but not that

most important one."

Korea is the U.S.' sixth-largest export market; two-way trade in goods was more than \$58 billion in 2002. But U.S. copyright industry losses were \$572 million the same year.

Countries elevated to the Priority Watch List are subject to sanctions if good-faith negotiations and progress do not occur. Currently, the Ukraine is so designated and is subject to \$75 million in sanctions.

Nine years ago, the U.S. was close to leveling sanctions against China for rampant illegal CD production, but a trade war was averted when China made good on promises in a 1995 bilateral agreement (*Billboard*, June 15, 1996).

China, although not on the Priority Watch List, is still being watched closely by the U.S. in a Section 306 monitoring program. Observers add that China's turnaround is also a result of becoming a member of the World Trade Organization in 2001.

Market access in China for U.S. companies remains a major problem for the record industry. Former RIAA chief Hilary Rosen testified on the subject before Congress in March last year.

lion and \$168 million in 2003.

"The major problem in Korea is Internet-based piracy," Sony Music Asia president Richard Denekamp notes. "Korea is the No. 1 country in the world in terms of broadband penetration, so downloading songs and movies is child's play."

TO STAY OR NOT TO STAY?

As the situation worsens, some industry executives have started to

question their presence in South Korea.

"I can't think of any record company that is not reviewing its strategy and level of investment in South Korea," says Rutherford, who is also president of Warner Music Asia Pacific. He adds that while Warner has no intention of giving up on the South Korean market for the time being, the situation there is under close scrutiny.

EMI's Ebert says withdrawing from

South Korea is not on the agenda. "We believe that this step by the USTR will go a long way toward stamping out this problem," he says. "We absolutely have no plans to turn our backs on this very important market."

Likewise, Universal Music Southeast Asia president Harry Hui notes: "We are not planning on pulling out of Korea as a result of this action. We will be more careful about the investments to be made in this market."

Brit Awards

Continued from page 6

"The show has grown over the years," Brits executive producer Lisa Anderson comments. "We have seen an explosion in media coverage, and we're trying to keep up with all this media attention."

Grainge contends that the Brits are taken seriously by the industry, the artists and the media. "We have the biggest international and local artists ready to perform," he says, "and that is a testimony to the way this event has built up. It is a brand that artists want to be associated with."

BMG U.K. & Ireland chairman/CEO Tim Bowen says, "The Brits is the showcase event for both U.K. and international artists and generates huge media and public interest. It is a vital part of the U.K. music industry calendar for artists, record companies and retail, at the same time generating significant money for charity."

The show takes place Feb. 17 at one of London's biggest arena complexes, Earls Court. More than 6,000

people are expected to attend.

"The show has two challenges: It has to be an incredible show for TV audiences, and it has to be a unique experience for those in the hall," Grainge says. "Both are challenging, but the Brits have always been different from normal TV shows."

BACK TO BASICS

Anderson says this year's edition will return to the original concept of the Brits, which sees the audience dining while the show goes on.

Last year, the show took place in an arena in front of a seated audience, and to many in attendance, it had lost its sparkle.

Anderson explains the return to the old way of doing things as "a way to get back to the party spirit."

She elaborates: "The Brits started as a party before it was a show, then the show became predominant. Last year we made changes, but after a close review, we decided that what the people wanted was a party. We want everyone to have a good time."

The show will be broadcast "as live" on national commercial channel ITV1 one hour after it takes place at Earls Court. Anderson says the small delay in time will be used for

minor editing and, if necessary, to keep out any profanity or unsuitable words used by the winners.

In addition to the U.K., it is estimated that the show will be seen in more than 30 countries worldwide.

The show is underwritten by MasterCard. Anderson says the Brits' rise in notoriety during the year has attracted the attention of many commercial brands.

"The ad slots on ITV during the show are fiercely coveted—it is our Super Bowl," Anderson says.

CHARITABLE BENT

The evening's budget of £4 million (\$7.4 million) covers the cost of the show and the after-show party at Earls Court.

Proceeds will go to such charities as the Brit Performing School, Nordoff Robbins and environmental group Future Forests.

Nine acts will perform live during the show, among them the Darkness, Black Eyed Peas, Busted, Dido, Muse and 50 Cent. Duran Duran will also perform and will receive the Outstanding Contribution to British Music Award.

Anderson says that she is in talks with two more major artists "who

will change the flavor of the show" to join the lineup.

With four nominations, the Darkness leads the field for the 2004 Brit Awards. The band is up for best British group, rock act, British breakthrough act and album for "Permission to Land" (Must Destroy/Warner Music).

Dido (Cheeky/BMG), rapper Dizzee Rascal (XL), Daniel Bedingfield (Polydor) and Busted (Polydor) each have three nominations; Justin Timberlake (Jive) and Christina Aguilera (RCA) each have three nods in the international categories.

Other nominees include R&B stars Alicia Keys (J) and Missy Elliott (Elektra), as well as rockers Kings of Leon (Hand Me Down/BMG), the Strokes (Rough Trade/Sanctuary) and the White Stripes (XL).

Several British newcomers made it onto the nominations list: new British jazz sensation Jamie Cullum (Universal), singer/songwriter Amy Winehouse (Island), Dizzee Rascal, R&B singer Lemar (Sony) and the Coral (Deltasonic/Sony).

"I think this is the best list of nominations we've ever had," Grainge says. "It really represents the diversity of British talent, and if I just look

South Korea has been on and off the USTR's Watch List and Priority Watch List since 1990, while the government and trade bodies have been wrestling with evolving intellectual property demands.

South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) issued a statement Jan. 9 expressing regret over the U.S. government not appreciating how much progress South Korea has made regarding intellectual property rights in the past few years.

If South Korea does not take steps to improve its intellectual property protection, the USTR's announcement could lead to the U.S. imposing retaliatory tariffs.

MOFAT officials say they consider this unlikely. "We will continue our efforts to protect copyrights," MOFAT said in a written statement. "We will review the U.S. government's requests and positively consider those we believe will help protect copyrights."

One movie-industry source is less diplomatic. "If China's not on this 'watch list,' then the list is garbage," she says. "It's just the U.S. bullying smaller countries because they think they can get away with it."

Lee Jin-shik, deputy director of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism's copyright division, echoes MOFAT's statement, calling for further talks.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism "understands the U.S. concerns [regarding transmission rights], but Korea is also very concerned with the growth of the phonogram industry," Lee says.

He adds that the music industry "is one of the major cultural industries which Korea must take care of for the sake of the future. Within the framework of international agreements, Korea has been trying to build an appropriate and productive copyright system. We hope that the U.S. may understand this position."

at Universal nominations, 12 out of 17 are U.K.-signed."

BMG leads with 19 nominations (four of which are from Jive), followed by Universal with 17, Sony (10), Warner Music (seven) and EMI (seven). On the indie side, thanks to Rascal and the White Stripes, Beggars Group scores eight nominations, followed by Telstar (two) and Echo, V2 and Rough Trade/Sanctuary (one each).

The awards are voted on by an academy of 1,000 members from labels and the media. Some specific awards are chosen in partnership with media outlets.

The British breakthrough act is picked by listeners of public station BBC Radio One, while the best British single is voted for by U.K. commercial radio listeners. The British urban act award is voted for by MTV:Base viewers, the British rock act award by the viewers of music channel Kerrang! and the best pop act award by the viewers of TV show CD:U.K., the readers of the Sun newspaper's Bizarre column and subscribers to mobile-phone company O2.

A complete list of nominees is available at brits.co.uk.

DreamWorks

Continued from page 5

Meanwhile, managers of DreamWorks artists warmly welcomed the official reprieve for A&R.

"Keeping the A&R staff is very thoughtful to any act that's on DreamWorks," Lifehouse manager Jude Cole says. "That's respecting the artist, and that's a very good sign."

ANTHONY NAMED

The IGA enterprise under Iovine absorbed the label's roster and A&R staff and named former Epic Records president Polly Anthony to run the operation. Last month, *Billboard* predicted that Anthony would be chosen to run the label (*The Beat, Billboard*, Dec. 6, 2003).

Anthony's availability made her the perfect choice, Iovine says. "She's terrific."

He says that he and UMG chairman/CEO Doug Morris "wanted someone like her on the inside."

Anthony calls DreamWorks Records "a jewel box."

"I'm looking forward to working with all of them," she told *Billboard* Jan. 14. "I'm three days into it, and I'm thrilled with this opportunity."

STANDING BY ARTISTS

The decision to keep the Dream-

DreamWorks Power Trio At Crossroads

When DreamWorks SKG heads Steven Spielberg, Jeffrey Katzenberg and David Geffen formed DreamWorks Records in 1995, they picked three of the music industry's most highly regarded executives to run the label: the legendary Mo Ostin, Lenny Waronker and Michael Ostin.

Before forming DreamWorks, Mo Ostin and Waronker ran Warner Bros. during a time of unprecedented commercial and critical acclaim for the label, when such acts as R.E.M. and Prince topped *The Billboard* 200 and critics' year-end lists.

With Michael Ostin as head of A&R, artists like Neil Young and Joni Mitchell continued to produce some of their best work, as well as help draw other acts to the label.

After being dislodged in a Warner Music Group shake-up in the mid-'90s, the trio resurfaced to launch DreamWorks. Now, following the sale of DreamWorks Records to Universal Music Group, the three once again find themselves at a crossroads.

Although Interscope Geffen A&M head Jimmy Iovine, who now also oversees DreamWorks with new label head Polly Anthony (see story, page 1), says that Mo Ostin is always welcome at the company, Ostin says the gracious

offer will probably go unheeded. "Unless they ask me for some comment or advice on a specific situation, I have no intention of having an active role," he says.

Retirement is a real possibility, but Ostin says it is not a certainty. "I'm not interested in going back into business in terms of buying a business or starting a business. I'm interested in things where I can learn and grow where money isn't a concern, because that's not an issue for me."

Michael Ostin will continue to work with DreamWorks as executive producer of two soundtracks: "Shrek 2" and "Shark's Tale." "Shrek 2," which will feature an alternative pop soundtrack, will arrive at the end of May. "Shark's Tale," which is expected to have an urban-leaning soundtrack, will also hit stores that month.

"My permanent plans have not been determined yet," he says. "I'm just going through the process of disengaging. I want to see if there are some entrepreneurial opportunities that interest me; within the next few months, I'll settle on what I want to do."

Waronker could not be reached by press time, but sources say he is expected to work on selected music projects.

MELINDA NEWMAN

Works A&R staff was an easy one, Iovine says.

"The guys at DreamWorks are trained really well. It's my intention to keep the integrity and the vibe intact," he says.

Managers hope that DreamWorks' strategy of standing by artists will also be maintained.

"One of the things that really made

DreamWorks special was that they stuck with groups no matter what their first-week sales were. Floetry and Nelly [Furtado] were proof of that," Floetry manager Julius Erving III says.

"They stuck with us and continued to spend money on the project. I would hope that continues," he adds.

By becoming part of a much larger music group, DreamWorks staff should

be able to draw from a larger talent pool: Floetry is already working on writing and producing some Interscope artists, he says.

MINIMAL INTERFERENCE

For the new regime at DreamWorks, the records that came out recently are the first order of business, says Iovine, who has directed the staff to "do the

best we can for those artists."

Among DreamWorks' fourth-quarter releases were new projects from Nelly Furtado and Rufus Wainwright.

"Hopefully some of that care and support that Rufus had will carry over to the new regime at Interscope," says Wainwright's manager, Barry Taylor.

Iovine says he plans to let Anthony run the label with minimal interference, just as he does the heads of the other imprints that fall under his umbrella.

"My thoughts are really irrelevant if I really want each [label] to be itself," he says. "I don't tell Dr. Dre what artists to sign."

Anthony inherits a label that has registered a number of multimillion sellers, including Papa Roach's "Infest-ed" (3.27 million), Lifehouse's "No Name Face" (2.47 million) and Furtado's "Whoa, Nelly!" (2.4 million), according to Nielsen SoundScan.

DreamWorks' biggest seller, Toby Keith, remains part of DreamWorks' country division, headed by James Stroud in Nashville. He will continue to head DreamWorks Nashville and will report to Iovine (*Billboard*, Dec. 6, 2003).

Mo Ostin says he sees the sale as a "win-win."

"We're feeling good about how this came down," he says. "For Interscope, picking up the country operation that's profitable and given the hot rock acts that we've had, it's going to turn out to be a real positive thing."

Arista

Continued from page 1

and corporate mandates to cut costs, his spendthrift style was out of step with the times.

BMG is declining to comment on mounting bets that Arista may merge with RCA/J or Jive following the completion of the BMG/Sony Music merger.

"Any discussion of the post-merger management structure of Sony BMG is premature," BMG said in a statement. "No integration plans or discussions have taken place as yet."

Reid was named Arista president/CEO in July 2000, succeeding founder Clive Davis, who now heads the RCA Music Group.

Prior to that, Reid was co-president of Atlanta-based LaFace Records with partner Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds.

BMG bought and later incorporated the label into Arista. At the time, it was home to such acts as OutKast, TLC and Usher.

During his nearly four-year tenure at Arista, Reid achieved notable sales success with albums from Avril Lavigne ("Let Go") and Pink ("Missundaztood").

Ironically, his ouster comes as one

of the label's major success stories is still unfolding. OutKast's double-CD "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below" is up for multiple Grammy Awards and has sold 3.3 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Reid also inked several label joint ventures with heavy-hitting production operations, including Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis' Flyte Tyme, Arista senior VP Jermaine Dupri's So So Def and the Neptunes' Star Trak.

But Reid also endured heavy criticism. He raised eyebrows with his \$100 million deal with Whitney Houston, as well as his signing of Boyz II Men. Much-touted new albums by Houston, TLC, Aretha Franklin, Santana and Pink did not perform as expected.

While the U.S. industry was down 3.6% in overall album scans last year, Arista was down 11.1% for the year. According to reports, the label lost as much as \$110 million in 2003.

The end of the era of big-spending label execs was heralded by the ouster of Tommy Mottola as head of Sony Music two years ago. His replacement, former TV executive Andrew Lack, has been reining in costs ever since.

With the merger, both companies are looking for further cost cuts and, just as likely, a change in cor-

porate culture. Nonetheless, Reid will be missed.

"It's a shame to see Reid go," says Terry McBride, who manages such artists as Sarah McLachlan and Dido. "He's a very likable and talented person." McLachlan's "Afterglow" has sold 1.6 million units to date, with Dido's "Life for Rent" close behind at 1.4 million, according to Nielsen

SoundScan.

Up-and-coming acts like Kelis and Anthony Hamilton could be affected by Reid's departure. "L.A. Reid championed the project even before we signed," Hamilton's manager Eli Davis says.

Reid's ouster coincides with the exit of senior VP of marketing and artist relations Mark Shimmel.

The company stated that COO Michael Smellie will oversee Arista's executive management team "until further notice." Executive VP/GM Larry Mestel will continue to oversee the label's day-to-day operations.

Additional reporting by Ed Christman in New York and Margo Whitmire in Los Angeles.

Warner

Continued from page 1

restructuring initiatives." The memo also outlined severance-package proposals for staffers likely to be fired.

An investment group headed by Edgar Bronfman Jr. bought Warner's music division late last year for \$2.6 billion and could assume ownership by the end of the month. Proposals to slash operations are expected to be on employees' desks when the new team arrives.

An executive familiar with the process says, "The amount of cost reductions that has been tasked is far greater than what was expected. Even the divisions that may have had fat to

cut will be hard pressed to realize 60% of what is expected without reaching into muscle."

The Ames directive comes on the heels of a December mandate ordering each division within the company to cut overhead by targeted amounts. Most operations already have responded with plans on how to reach those goals, according to sources.

Five intracompany task forces have also been created to continue the search for overlapping functions within divisions. The groups—focusing on publishing, international, video, sales and corporate overhead—will examine if additional restructuring can achieve further savings. The Boston Consulting Group is guiding the process.

The severance package—three weeks per year of employment, and four weeks for those with less than four years of

service—will be available for 18 months.

As a result, some company executives believe that a round of severe cuts would come quickly, followed by more cuts over time.

If decisions have been made on any of the recommendations from each WMG operation and the task forces, word has yet to leak out within the company.

But that process has also fueled a spate of industry buzz and press reports questioning whether Ames will stay under the new regime.

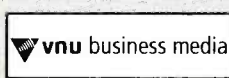
One executive involved in the process says answers are unlikely to come until at least the last week of the month, if not later.

At that time each division and the task forces are expected to sit down with the new owners and discuss budget cuts and any potential reorganizations.

A WMG spokesman declined comment.



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'Music Retailers Must Not Think They're In A Mode Which Can't Change'

BY TOM FERGUSON

As chief executive of London-based Virgin Entertainment Group, Simon Wright is used to having a high profile in the international music industry.

However, it was his role as chairman of the Global Entertainment Retail Assn.-Europe that kept Wright's name on the lips of European record company executives in late 2003.

In October, GERA-Europe issued a mission statement (*Billboard*, Nov. 1) claiming piracy was being portrayed as the main cause of decline in the music markets around the world, when "the decline in quality and diversity of releases should be seen as an equally large problem." The trade body called for increased investment in artist development to counter that perceived problem.

Wright says GERA's statement provoked strong reactions from record companies; major music merchants in Europe admit that it was a public expression of private frustration that many of them have been feeling in recent times.

Wright "has a great understanding of the key issues in the business," Sony Music U.K. chairman/CEO Rob Stringer says. "[He] has always dealt with the dynamic between retail and the record companies in a sensible and articulate manner."

The VEG chief is "committed to breaking new artists," Universal Music U.K. chairman/CEO Lucian Grainge adds. "So he is someone we can do business with; he's a retailer who wants to retail music and who has an interest in new artists."

Wright has also chaired the British Assn. of Record Dealers (BARD). That briefly overlapped with his tenure as chairman of GERA-Europe, representing national associations from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the U.K.

Q: How do you view the current business climate?

A: Over [2003], business was satisfactory in difficult markets, both in the U.S. and the U.K. But 2003 also brought a lot of the restructuring I've been doing over the last three years to completion. Our owned businesses are now focused on the U.K. and North America, and we're actively managing licensed businesses in France, Japan and Australia. We've exited all the Continental European territories and we're very happy with the structure.

Our primary focus is to concentrate on the U.K. and North America, having converted a number of our businesses [elsewhere] to licenses. We see that as the most appropriate way to operate in territories such as Asia or Australia.

Q: You recently relaunched the Megastore in San Francisco with lifestyle products. Will music remain VEG's key product line?

A: Whatever we do, we must not undermine our credibility in our key product areas of music and film. San Francisco is all about adding new products into the mix; it's not about suppressing music sales. We're acknowledging the fact that music in the U.S. has had its third year of decline—and in the U.K. we may be starting a few years of decline. We feel the best way forward is to add more product into the mix of what an entertainment store represents.

In San Francisco we've added more travel products, more fashion products, health products, more books, hardware. We've given the store a different context. We expect to see music to drop as a percentage of our sales in San Francisco, but we hope we don't see a decline in unit sales.

Q: What's the way forward for music specialty retailers?

A: Music retailers must not allow themselves to think they're fixed in a mode which can't change. You have to adapt to different markets and environments and create a profitable model. In [London flagship store] Oxford Street, we recently brought [instrument dealer] Sound Control into the basement. It's got the biggest selection of electric guitars and the widest selection of drum kits in Europe; it gives the store real music credibility.



The Last Word



A Q&A With Simon Wright

Simon Wright: Career Highlights

- 2003: Named chairman of Global Entertainment Retail Assn.-Europe.
- 2000-2003: Chairman of British Assn. of Record Dealers.
- 1999: Named managing director of Virgin Entertainment Group's U.K. Megastore business. In June, promoted to VEG chief executive.
- 1998: Named president/CEO of VEG's North American Megastore business.
- 1997: Promoted to VEG group finance director.
- 1996: Adds responsibility for the Virgin Cinema business to his finance director role.
- 1989: Joins London-based VEG (from U.K. clothing/homeware retailer Storehouse) as finance director of the U.K. Megastore business.

We've re-laid everything; we've got 20% more stock in the rest of the store, over 25% less space. It's more crowded, but it actually improves the atmosphere, and we've seen a 15% improvement in sales since the change.

Q: Do you see online sales overtaking traditional retailing?

A: Online is always going to supplement traditional retailing. Inevitably, the specialist sector will get smaller, due to a combination of straight Amazon-type online retailing and download-

ing. Downloading on a paid basis in mass terms is a generational shift. You're not going to find in two years' time that downloading has killed everything off. It's far more subtle than that.

We're looking at 10% of our market being replaced by downloading, which is just as much a problem. People will have to adapt and consolidate. Losing 10% off their sales would irreparably damage the business model of most retailers, unless they did something else.

Q: What about indie stores with more niche businesses?

A: I think the real specialist store has got a long life. When you really do specialize, that's the reason for the store. You're almost not a record store anymore, you're a specialist.

Q: What's your opinion of Best Buy's North American exclusive on the Rolling Stones' "Four Flicks" DVD?

A: That was a very bad precedent. I'd definitely not be keen to follow that route. I can't understand why the band did that, or why the label thought it was a good thing. No one retailer could give them the sales that they could have had if it was out in the wider market.

Q: How do you see GERA's role developing?

A: BARD and [the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers in the U.S.] and other bodies have operated quite successfully in their own territories, but the music industry is a global market. It's very important that trade bodies in Europe and America communicate and coordinate in such a way that the global content companies acknowledge that retailers act on a global level as well.

Q: How have labels reacted to that recent "mission statement"?

A: We're very pleased to have got a reaction. But what concerns me is the record companies are interpreting our comments on improving quality and diversity of releases as somehow downplaying the seriousness of the piracy situation. We're actually saying, "Don't ignore the general health of the market because of the focus on piracy."

Q: How can they reverse the perceived decline in musical quality and diversity?

A: I don't know that there's any simple answer. One of the good things to come out of the majors' consolidation might be that record companies get stronger financially, and then hopefully have more money and more capacity to invest in artists over a long period in time. So, there is merit in record companies getting stronger by consolidation, but it would be a worrying trend if they consolidate their artists as well as their operations. Then we end up with fewer artists and even less diversity.

Q: Would Universal Music Group's JumpStart price-cutting policy for the U.S. work in other markets?

A: That implies that it's working in the U.S., which I'm not sure it is. The whole point for everybody in the industry should be to provide good value to customers. Good value in the long term is not always served by going for the lowest price possible, because inevitably the market will build itself around very low value [product]. That again will kill diversity of content.

Price reductions achieved by a policy like Universal's will move volumes—so on one level it would work—but I think long term it would be very damaging. We are a specialist retailer offering range and depth of product and a great marketing space for record companies. It's a worrying trend for us when the trading policy of a record company undermines the model that we work to.

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