

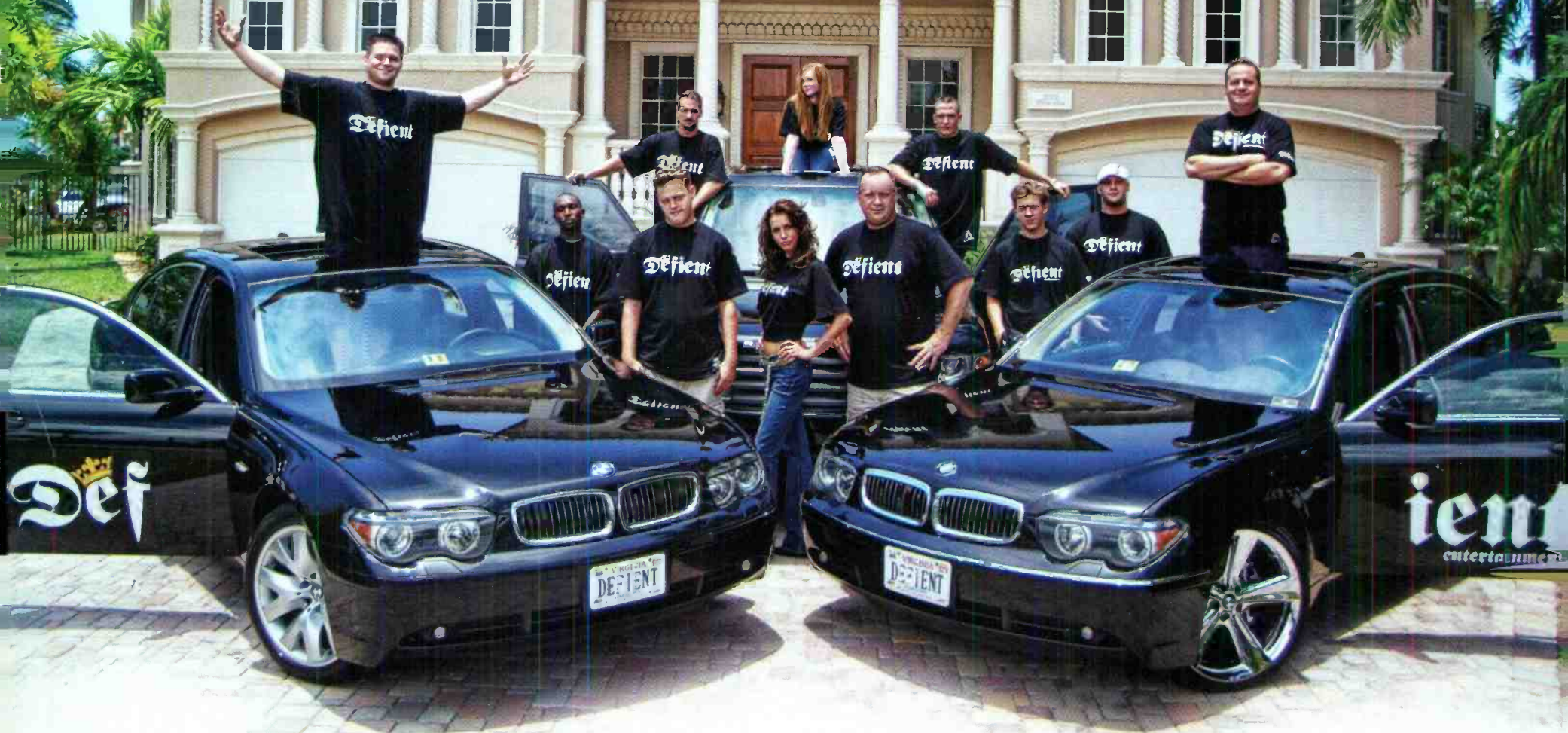
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ON THE COVER: James Blunt photographed by Andrew Zaeh.



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HOME FRONT

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Billboard's **Touring Conference & Awards** will include panels, networking opportunities and an awards reception targeting promoters, agents, venues, managers, sponsors and production professionals. See billboardevents.com.

Video

DOWN UNDERGROUND
Watch an exclusive Billboard Underground performance and interview with Australian duo the Kin at billboard.com/underground. Also, see page 44 for a review of the pair's song "Blue on Blue."



OPINION

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White Spaces And White Noise

Why The Concert Industry Is At Risk

BY MAUREEN DRONEY

Most of you have probably experienced something like this: You're at a concert, it's sounding great and you're grooving to the music, when suddenly, the vocalist's beautiful voice is interrupted by an ugly burst of static. As sometimes happens, another wireless unit came within range of the singer's microphone, and the interference impaired an otherwise flawless performance.

A frustration for the sound engineers. An annoyance for the audience. But if some have their way in Washington, D.C., this is just a tiny sample of a very big problem that the live concert business may face in the near future, when every BlackBerry in the audience has the potential to disrupt a musical performance.

Currently, wireless concert technologies—such as microphones, in-ear monitors and wireless instrument transmitters—utilize unused segments (called white spaces) of the wireless spectrum of local analog TV stations. When the transition to digital TV is complete in 2009, the FCC plans to reallocate this spectrum for other uses, such as for public safety. So far, so good.

But lobbying efforts by consumer electronic device manufacturers are pressuring Congress and the FCC to allow new, unlicensed devices ranging from PDAs to garage door openers into this spectrum—a scenario that has the potential to wreak havoc on the wireless concert technologies that have been in use for more than 30 years. And this wouldn't just affect concerts. Broadway shows, sporting events, political conventions, even churches could be affected. (Not that we check our BlackBerries in church, of course.)

Three bills in Congress would force the FCC to expedite the entrance of the

potentially interfering devices into the marketplace (for the policy folks, that's S.234, S.337 and H.R. 1597). If passed, any of these bills would force the FCC to allow the unlicensed devices into the spectrum in just a little more than a year.

The Recording Academy's Producers & Engineers Wing is part of a broad coalition that includes manufacturers, music organizations, sports leagues and many others asking only for one simple request: more time. Time to test, time to study the impact and time to provide

Los Angeles. As the Staples Center was being prepared for the 49th annual Grammy Awards, the delegation from D.C. had an opportunity to see firsthand just how much the concert industry relies on wireless technologies.

The education effort for policymakers continues. But as I speak to producers, engineers and other music professionals throughout the country, I've come to realize that we must educate our own industry as well. This issue is simply not on the radar of most music professionals.

‘The Rush bill requires many of the new devices to certify through independent testing that they will not cause interference of the existing technologies that our industry—and the fans—rely on.’

a technology solution that will allow all of us to co-exist and work in the spectrum efficiently.

Congress shouldn't rush the FCC to act before proper testing is complete. Right now, the best solution to confront this rush is, well, Rush—as in Rep. Bobby Rush, D-Ill., who has introduced a bill (H.R. 1320) that would protect the current technologies. Most important, the Rush bill requires many of the new devices to certify through independent testing that they will not cause interference of the existing technologies that our industry—and the fans—rely on.

Advocacy representatives from the Recording Academy have spent time on Capitol Hill with other members of the coalition to help educate members of Congress about this important issue. In addition to lobbying in Washington, D.C., the academy briefed officials from Congress and the FCC in February in



DRONEY

And if we don't act on our own behalf, Congress most certainly will not.

I encourage the music industry to learn more about this topic. And if you agree that wireless concert technologies should be protected, there's an easy way to ask your legislators to support Rush's bill. All you have to do is set down your Billboard, go to grammy.com/wireless and with a few clicks, send an e-mail directly to Congress. The academy's Washington, D.C., office will even hand-deliver a copy of your message to the key policymakers.

Producers and engineers take pride in providing the highest-quality sound to the artists and fans they serve. Let's not allow any interference in their important mission.

Maureen Droney is executive director of the Recording Academy's Producers & Engineers Wing.

FOR THE RECORD

■ In the July 7 issue, the artist in the music section story "From Russian (Via Canada) With Jazz" should have been identified as Sopié Milman, and the president of Linus Entertainment should have been identified as Geoff Kulawick.

■ In the upfront story "Video Versions" in the July 14 issue, Gotuit's David Dudas should have been identified as the company's chief technology officer.

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After prison, could Jah Cure's career take off?

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"Iz" Kamakawiwo'ole leads a state's spate

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Sweet, heavy Sounds of the Underground

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Jermaine Dupri's new life at Island Urbar

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>>>COURT DENIES WEBCASTERS' PETITION

A federal court has denied a petition to delay the July 15 due date of 2006 royalty payments that Internet radio outlets are required to pay SoundExchange under the new rates that the Copyright Royalty Board set May 1. However, the decision does not affect the pending appeal or ongoing negotiations between the parties.

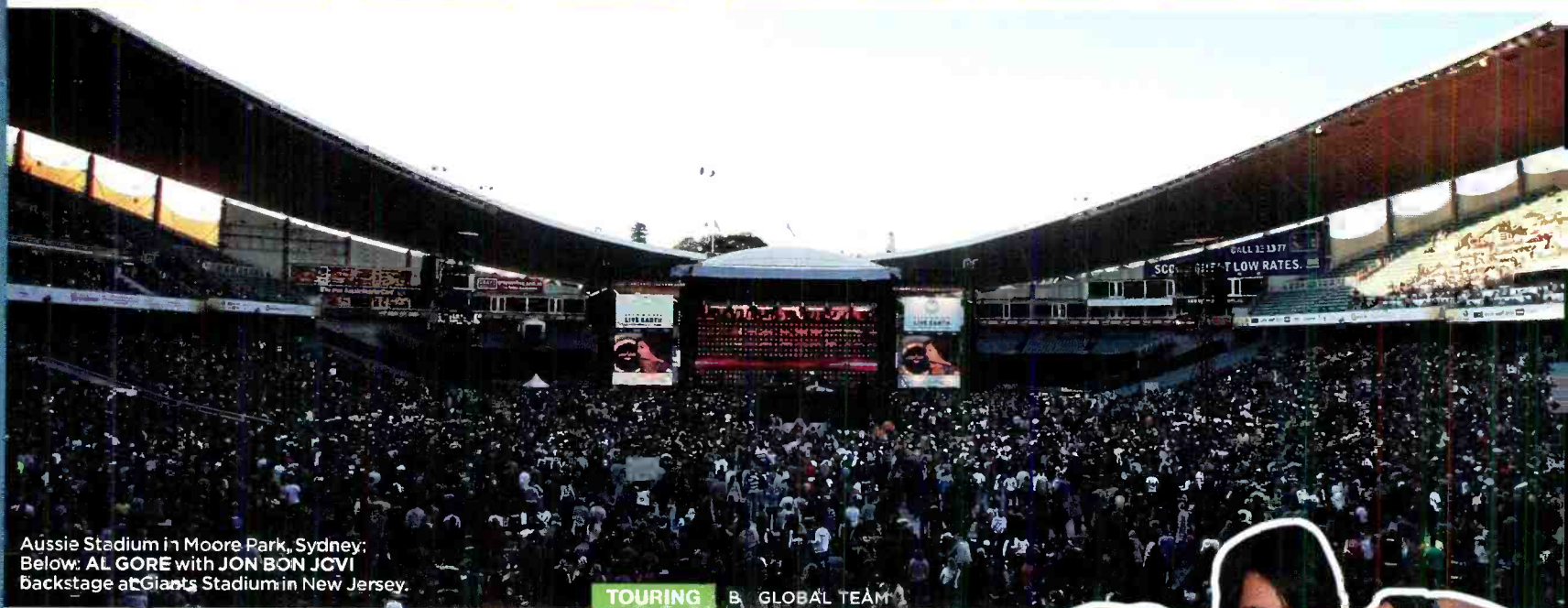
>>>SENATOR WANTS ACTION FROM RADIO HEADS

Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., has sent a two-page letter to the heads of the four largest radio groups strongly requesting an update on the companies' actions to enforce anti-payola policies agreed to in April. As of press time, CBS Radio had not received the letter; a Citadel lawyer believes the letter was sent to the company's Las Vegas office and expects a response in due course; and Clear Channel and Entercom did not respond to queries.

>>>MUSICNET EXPANDS SCOPE, REBRANDS

MusicNet has unveiled a plan to expand its content and technology portfolio to include music videos, TV and film—changing its name to MediaNet Digital in the process. The company's back-end technology and licensed content is used by such services as Yahoo Music and Microsoft's Zune, among several others.

UP FRONT



Aussie Stadium in Moore Park, Sydney; Below: AL GORE with JON BON JOVI backstage at Giants Stadium in New Jersey.

TOURING B. GLOBAL TEAM



Did The Earth Move?



KT TUNSTALL (above) backstage at Giants Stadium; **DRUM CAFE** performing with **DANNY K** (below) in Johannesburg.



DAVE GROHL of Foo Fighters (above) performs at Wembley Stadium in London; **AYAKA** (below) performs at Makuhari Messe in Tokyo.



Al Gore has declared it "the largest global entertainment event in history."

And with eight main gigs taking place on six continents, broadcast in more than 100 countries and featuring hundreds of artists, the sheer scale of Live Earth was certainly impressive.

But beyond such numbers, can the event be judged a success one week on? Did it achieve its principle aim of raising awareness of climate change? Did the concerts' own green credentials match up to the rhetoric onstage? And, judged purely as entertainment events, did the concerts work?

In short, did Live Earth rock the world? Billboard's global team reports on the aftermath of "the greatest show on planet Earth, for planet Earth."

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biz MOBILE: For 24/7 news and analysis on your cell phone or mobile device, go to mobile.billboard.biz.



from >>p9

>>> WMG, IMEEM STRIKE DEAL

Warner Music Group has struck a licensing agreement with music-based social network Imeem. Under the deal, Imeem members will be able to stream on demand WMG's catalog of music and videos for free. It's a dramatic change of stance for WMG, which in May sued Imeem for copyright infringement. Under the agreement, that lawsuit has been settled. WMG is the first major label onboard for Imeem's new ad-supported streaming music service.

>>> DIGITAL MUSIC GROUP, ORCHARD MERGE

Digital Music Group and the Orchard have agreed to merge. The combined business will retain Digital Music's Nasdaq listing and change its name to the Orchard, with Orchard CEO Greg Scholl leading the combined company. The Orchard is a digital distribution firm that helps various independent artists and labels get placement on such digital music services as iTunes. DMG does the same, but owns a much larger collection of assets, particularly video.

>>> LYRIC PREPS 'IDOL' LINE

Lyric Jeans has entered a licensing agreement with FremantleMedia, co-producer/licensor for "American Idol," to create an "American Idol"-branded apparel line. The initial collection will target the juniors market and then expand to other areas, including lines for girls and children. The company expects the collection to hit stores in conjunction with the next season of "American Idol" (February) and is in discussions with mass-market distributors.

LET'S GET LOGISTICAL

Live Earth As A Live Event

Organizers say the two biggest paid-for Live Earth concerts—Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., and Wembley Stadium in London—were huge successes, both at the box office and in logistical terms.

The London show, which featured acts including Metallica and Madonna, came off "as close to perfect as we could have wished for," says Stuart Galbraith, managing director of Live Nation U.K., which produced the Wembley show.

Meanwhile, at the Giants Stadium show where performers included the Police and Kanye West, Live Nation New York president Bruce Moran says he is "not sure it could have come off any better." **Giants Stadium was an official sellout at 52,000 tickets, with Wembley likewise at 71,000.**

Technical hitches at the two shows were minimal. Unlike Live 8 London, which over-ran by more than an hour, the Wembley show finished on time, despite being 25 minutes behind schedule at one point.

The only technical problem evident to the London crowd was when a satellite link-up to Al Gore's speech failed, prompting actress Thandie Newton to quip, "I've always wanted to stand in front of 2 billion people with nothing to say."

Live Earth Sydney also sold out, with 45,000 fans paying to see Crowded House's comeback.

"Things went seamlessly," says Mark Pope, managing director of Mark Pope Management, which organized the Australian event alongside Michael Chugg Entertainment and IMC Agency.

Things did not run quite so smoothly elsewhere, however. The event struggled in South Africa, where even a last-minute change of venue to the 18,000-capacity Coca-Cola Dome in Johannesburg failed to attract more than 10,000 fans. John Langford, COO of Cape Town-based organizer Big Concerts, attributes this to cold winter weather and negative advance press. Germany also failed to capture concertgoers' imagination, with just 31,500 fans in the 45,000-capacity HSH Nordbank Arena in Hamburg. Sources cite the recent tours by many of the German acts on the bill as the reason.

In Shanghai, a thunderstorm caused problems, shorting out headliner Sarah Brightman's microphone and causing a 10-minute delay. In Tokyo, organizers had to halt Linkin Park's headlining set for almost 15 minutes after a potentially dangerous crush at the front of the stage.

Rio de Janeiro, where the concert was free, drew the biggest crowd: 400,000 turned up to Copacabana Beach to see artists including Lenny Kravitz, although this was much less than the estimated 1.3 million who attended the Rolling Stones' free concert there in 2006.



MERCY ME (THE ECOLOGY)

Live Earth As A Green Event

Live Earth organizers were always aware of the potential hypocrisy involved in staging a global rock concert against climate change. On the day itself, they strived to make the event as green as possible. "We went to extraordinary lengths to make this a much more eco-friendly concert experience," Moran says.

At Giants Stadium, producers used biodiesel fuel for all generators and shuttle buses. "We had over 10,000 attendees use mass transit," Moran says. "I recognize in other places 20% of the audience doesn't sound like a lot but at Giants Stadium, that's really incredible." In the end, Moran thinks Live Earth New York was at or near carbon neutrality, a benchmark also achieved in London, organizers say.

"The whole stadium is brand-new, it has low-energy light bulbs in it, all the power supplied to the stadium was from renewable sources," Galbraith says. "We did run on biodiesel. But having said that, the trucks that carried the gear there were still burning diesel."



Recycling bins at Live Earth New York, held at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J.

Perhaps more important, Live Earth has changed the way Live Nation U.K. will operate going forward. "This event has certainly been the catalyst for us changing how we do business," Galbraith says. "To the point where this week we're actually appointing an environmental compliance director."

Running on biodiesel almost caused problems

in Sydney, where supply ran out near the end of Crowded House's set. The stage lost its lights and the band finished its last few songs in near-darkness. "We're making a statement," frontman Neil Finn quipped. "We're saving power."

Sydney organizers say their event will come out carbon neutral, with approximately 20 cubic meters of trash recycled, while an estimated 50% of concertgoers took advantage of the free public transport included in the ticket price.

Joseph Malki, VP of business development at green event expert Seven-Star, says Live Earth Shanghai was the first green rock concert in China. He claims 90% of trash was diverted to recycling or compost—although some observers criticized the choice of venue: Oriental Pearl Tower, famous for its multitude of flashing lights.

In Japan, Rihanna, Xzibit and Linkin Park all flew in especially for the show, although organizers pledge the event will ultimately be carbon neutral.

Live Earth Hamburg's green credentials took a knock when environmental lobby group Greenpeace withdrew its support in protest of Mercedes-Benz's sponsorship. However, stage generators ran on biodiesel, with organizers claiming the nine-hour event burned only half the fuel normally used for a three-hour concert.

In South Africa however, biodiesel was not available. "We had to use the Coca-Cola Dome's usual supply of electricity," says Langford, who stresses that all carbon emissions will be offset once they have been calculated.

Green data for the Rio show are not yet available.

WAKE-UP CALL

Live Earth As An Awareness-Raising Event

Ultimately, Live Earth will be judged by how well it helped the green cause enter the public consciousness. On that score, Live Earth founder/producer Kevin Wall calls it successful. "Live Earth has established a deep foundation for the ongoing campaign that will continue to move people to help solve the climate crisis," he said in a statement.

This is supported by the results of U.K.-based Lightspeed Research's "Live Earth—Was It Worth the Energy?" study, which polled 600 Americans, 200 Britons and 200 Australians in the 18- to 45-year-old demographic. Of those watching the event, 61% of Americans, 51% of Australians and 36% of Britons said Live Earth would encourage them to go green.

Live Earth was chasing a global audience of 2 billion, but given TV viewing figures, it seems unlikely to hit that target. Its biggest likely audience was online, where official online partner MSN says it has served more than 30 million live and on-de-



AL GORE at Live Earth New York.

mand streams of the concerts since they took place, a record for an entertainment show.

But TV viewers around the world found the event a turnoff. In the United Kingdom, where the concert followed two previous weekends of live music broadcasts (Glastonbury Festival and the Concert for Diana), it drew a disappointing peak viewership of 4.5 million viewers—less than one-third of the Diana concert audience. In the United States, NBC's peak-time broadcast drew just 2.7 million viewers, according to Nielsen Media Research. This made it the lowest-rated of the four major networks between 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. However, 19 million people tuned in to watch at least six minutes of the telecast on NBC and cable channels. In Germany, Live Earth peaked at 1.6 million viewers; by comparison, 5 million watched Live 8 there in 2005.

No other TV viewing figures are yet available, but all the concerts achieved blanket media coverage in their own territory—although not all of it was positive.

In the United Kingdom, pre-event criticism came from everyone from Arctic Monkeys to Live Aid architect Bob Geldof, and while the tabloid press was supportive, the Telegraph dubbed Live Earth "a dead loss."

But according to Live Nation's Galbraith, for this cause, there really is no such thing as bad publicity.

"As long as somebody's talking about the issue, whether they are agreeing with it or disagreeing with it, [Live Earth has] done its job," he says. "It has raised the profile of global warming."

Reporting Team: Wolfgang Spahr in Hamburg; Diane Coetzer in Johannesburg; Lars Brandle, Juliana Koranteng and Mark Sutherland in London; Ray Waddell in Nashville; Tom Gomes in Rio de Janeiro; Rebecca Catching in Shanghai; Christie Eliezer in Sydney; and Steve McClure in Tokyo.

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>>> THE WHO RELEASE NEW ALBUM A LA VIDEOGAME

The upcoming "Rock Band" videogame release will make the Who's "Who's Next" album available as a digital download direct to the game console, becoming the first full-length album distributed via a videogame. Electronic Arts and developer Harmonix are also making additional music available for purchase and download after its release on a weekly basis.

>>> DISNEY'S CAVALLO TO RECEIVE CITY OF HOPE AWARD

City of Hope will honor Disney Music Group chairman Bob Cavallo with the Spirit of Life Award Sept. 27 during a dinner in Los Angeles. The award is the highest honor bestowed by the City of Hope, and is given in recognition of outstanding philanthropic commitment.

>>> LAVIGNE SUED OVER 'GIRLFRIEND'

Avril Lavigne is being sued over her hit "Girlfriend." Rubinoos founder Tommy Dunbar filed a suit alleging "Girlfriend" bears striking similarities to the Rubinoos' song "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend," co-written by Dunbar and former Rubinoos road manager James Gangwer. Lavigne has dismissed allegations. "I had never heard this song in my life, and their claim is based on five words," Lavigne writes in an open letter on her official Web site.

Compiled by Chris M. Walsh. Reporting by Antony Bruno, Susan Butler, Larry LeBlanc, Charles Riley, Ken Tucker, Chris M. Walsh and Jeffrey Yorke.

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PUBLISHING BY SUSAN BUTLER

BUG GETS BIG

Windswept And T/Q Acquisitions Lift Company Into Upper Echelon Of Indie Publishing

When Bug Music CEO John Rudolph was working for indie publisher Windswept Pacific, the thought that he might own an interest in the company one day didn't cross his mind.

But with Bug's acquisition of Windswept Holdings and T/Q Music, the CEO and part owner of Bug doesn't just own a piece of Windswept. The purchase catapults Bug into the top echelon of the indie publishing world and provides Rudolph with the clout to become one of the strongest voices for independent music publishers.

Just last year, Bug was a well-established publishing administration company, but it owned only about 10% of the copyrights it controlled. Rudolph was a broker matching buyers and sellers of publishing catalogs, and he helped orchestrate a deal in which Crossroads Media acquired a controlling interest in Bug. He landed at the helm as CEO and part owner.

Around the same time, Tokyo-based Fujipacific Music

and Fuji Television Network decided to sell their U.S.-based Windswept Holdings. They had formed the publishing company in 1999 after selling most of their Windswept Pacific catalog to EMI—a deal Rudolph helped engineer as then-CFO of Windswept.

Several industry sources say that although numerous publishers and private equity firms lined up to kick the tires of Windswept Holdings during the past year, no one until Bug would agree with some of the terms or come up with enough money to close the deal. But then Rudolph didn't have to look too closely to understand what was for sale and how it would enhance Bug's position in the market.

After Fujipacific and Itochu Corp. (as T/Q Music) acquired the Trio/Quartet catalog of classic 1960s song from Leiber & Stoller in 2003, Windswept held administration rights in the catalog. Rudolph, after leaving Windswept, had advised

Leiber & Stoller on that sale of Trio/Quartet Now, Bug owns 100% of T/Q Music.

Windswept also has a co-venture with Antonio "L.A." Reid in Hitco Music; in the mid-1990s, Rudolph managed Reid's Stiff Shirt Music, which is Windswept's partner in Hitco. So while he had access to information about a portion of the catalogs through the years, Rudolph also established a strong relationship with Windswept's owners.

"Price was certainly important, but so was the certainty of the transaction and the possibility of an expanded business relationship going forward," Fujipacific chairman Ichiro Asatsuma says, adding that Windswept president/CEO Evan Medow "and I have worked to build this company with the highest quality in mind. It is rewarding to see someone we know so well continue that journey." Rudolph



RUDOLPH

holds an ownership interest in a majority of the copyrights it controls, Rudolph says. Several lawyers estimate that Bug will now be one of the top three indie publishers in terms of revenue, along with Chrysalis Music Publishing and peermusic.

says that Medow will be serving as a consultant for Bug and Windswept.

"We are not shutting down or merging Windswept into Bug so that it disappears," Rudolph says. "We're truly focused on building a great and strong independent international music publisher in this time of uncertainty and consolidation, run by talented people who care about songs and songwriters."

As part of the deal just closed, Fujipacific will be sub-publishing the Windswept and T/Q catalogs in Japan and Southeast Asia, Rudolph says. Bug will eventually combine the Bug and Windswept offices in Los Angeles, New York and Nashville, while continuing to maintain Bug's London and Munich offices. Financial terms were not disclosed.

With the purchase, Bug now

Current Windswept songwriters include Michael Elizondo and Bridget Benenate. Included under the umbrella of Hitco are rights in songs penned by Beyoncé and Sean Garrett. T/Q's catalog includes standards like "Fever," "Happy Together" and "Splish Splash."

"We now feel we have enough critical mass that we can lead changes in how business, from an independent point of view, is done in music publishing, from technology to licensing," Rudolph says. "We are not going to be followers; we are going to be leaders looking for new ways to help our writers and catalogs continue to flourish."

In May, Rudolph was elected to the National Music Publishers' Assn. board of directors, the only non-incumbent to be elected.



From left: FRUITY VITAMIN C, ANGELA CHANG, CLAIRE KUO, CHANG CHUN XIAO and FAN FAN.

GLOBAL BY LARS BRANDLE

Welcome To The Family

Universal Bolsters China Foothold With New Deals

LONDON—Universal Music Group's (UMG) mission to build a formidable Chinese creative business is beginning to bear fruit.

Billboard can reveal that the music major has signed several deals to bring a wealth of contemporary, young Chinese-language talent onto its books.

"We have to build up a large roster of Mandarin

music," Universal Music Group International (UMGI) Asia Pacific president Max Hole says. "These deals represent two very exciting producers of Mandarin-language music who are wanting to work with us."

UMG has forged an exclusive license arrangement with Dong Music to develop and promote the recently launched Beijing label's artist roster throughout the mainland and to the world. Separately, UMG has renewed its relationship with Linfair Records, the Taiwan-based label founded in 1961.

The earlier establishment of a Universal "creative hub" in Beijing (Billboard, April 21) has played an important role in the development, note executives who forged the deals.

Universal Music China GM Catherine Leung says that the "masterminds" behind both labels, Linfair chairman Denver Chang and Dong Music founder Zhang Ya Dong, "have a proven track record in creating new music trends." Leung points to Chang's success breaking Mavis Fan, a pop idol who unlocked the teen/kids market in Taiwan 15 years ago. Dong, meanwhile, is a leading local composer/musician/producer who has worked with many of

China's top artists and helped star Faye Wong develop her signature sound. Hole adds, "We are as much investing in their talent as the artists that they bring."

Leung singles out Dong Music pop/rock bands Fruity Vitamin C and Future Bicycle as likely future stars. Dong also has the likes of singer Zhang Shi Di and model/singer Chang Chun Xiao on its roster.

Linfair's talent stable features hotly tipped singers Fan Fan and Claire Kuo, plus singer/actress Angela Chang—"a regional star to watch out for," according to Leung.

UMG will distribute and sell Linfair's Mandarin-language works in the world's most populous market, continue distributing its catalog in Taiwan and market, distribute and sell in Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand.

Hole is encouraged by the long-term prospects for a genuine international music breakthrough from China. "We've got a long way to go before we can cross this into the English-language world," he says. "But there are some unique and remarkable artists. You never know until you try."

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Freedom Songs

After Eight Years Behind Bars, Could Jah Cure Be Reggae's Next Superstar?

While incarcerated in a Jamaican prison, reggae singer Jah Cure's career has grown drastically: He's recorded some of his finest music in his cell's makeshift studio, and he's earned several No. 1 records on various international reggae charts.

On July 28, the 27-year-old artist, born Siccaturie Alcock, will be released after serving eight years of a 15-year sentence for two counts of rape, robbery and illegal possession of a firearm. And wheels are now in motion to shift his career into higher gear as soon as he is out from behind bars.

Jah Cure's empowering lyrics and hauntingly plaintive vocals positioned him at the threshold of a very promising career when, in November 1998, he was identified as one of two alleged attackers who forced two women into a car at gun point, drove them to a remote Montego Bay locale and raped them.

But since his sentencing on April 16, 1999, Jah Cure's imprisonment has become a cause célèbre throughout the reggae industry. Widespread belief in his innocence is based on the lack of a jury trial and the exclusion of the rape kit (vaginal swabs and other biological material collected from the victim) as trial evidence. In the end, good behavior in prison made him eligible for early release.

In Jamaica, "Free Jah Cure" became a familiar outcry, punctuating many reggae artists' performances. Others, though, bristle at the widespread championing of a convicted rapist, particularly after reading the victim's anguished account of events, as published in the Jamaica Gleaner newspaper in 2005: "While begging for my life with a gun pointed at my head I began resisting him and I remember him saying, 'Hey, gal, do wey me tell yuh and yuh will live.'"

"As a woman, I initially had doubts about continuing to air Jah Cure's work especially after reading that his victim felt further victimized each time she heard his music," says Pat McKay, reggae programmer for Sirius Satellite Radio. "But in his time away Jah Cure has built a U.S. fan base beyond the core and our audience, overall unaware of his circumstances, responds positively to his voice and message."

With his freedom just weeks away and a hit, "Sticky," topping the BBC 1 Xtra reggae charts for the week ending July 5, Jah Cure is prepared for the impending adjustment to the requisite demands made on a successful

artist's schedule. "Thinking about the love that is out there fills me with joy, and I can't wait to meet my fans all over the world," says the singer, who has steadfastly maintained his innocence, during a recent conversation at the Tower Street Adult Correctional Center, Jamaica's maximum security facility. "It's natural to feel bitter but I try to stay focused on positive things like my music. This will be a new chapter, and I am looking forward to becoming a better artist, putting all that I have learned into my music."

So far, Jah Cure's stateside sales have been minimal—his biggest album, 2005's "Freedom Blues," has moved 10,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But that could change soon. Jah Cure's management team, Allison Hunte and Delmar "Della" Drummond, will implement several strategies to transform his convicted-criminal status into a successful musical career.

A new album, "My Life," is scheduled for release by year's end on Drummond's Miami/Jamaica-based Danger

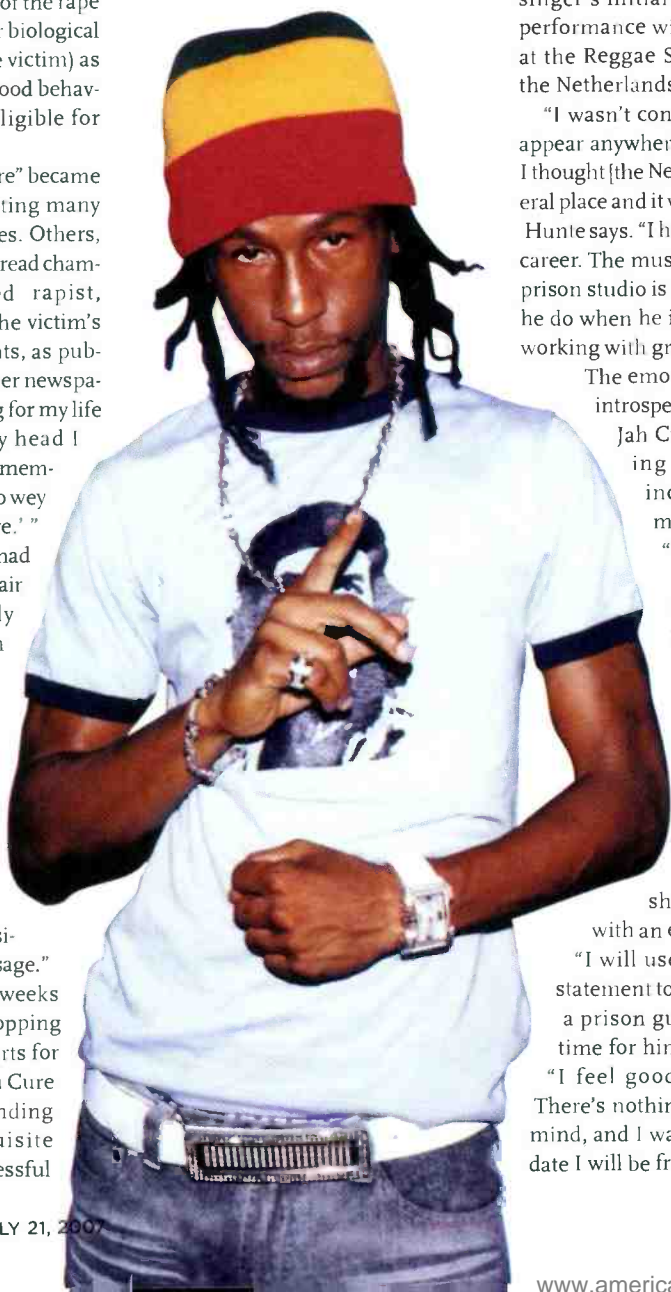
Zone label. The title track, an acoustic, tenderly sung account of the singer's observations on life, will be released worldwide July 28. A few U.S. majors have expressed interest in the project. "Jah Cure has made a lot of great songs, but it is not a simple decision to say, 'He was incarcerated, he's getting out, let's sign him and put a record out,'" says Mr. Morgan (aka Morgan Lieberthal), an Atlantic Records A&R rep and president of Caribbean-focused Atlantic subsidiary Nyan King. "He is going to be continually faced with the question of guilt or innocence, so we would like to have discussions with him and see where his head is in terms of moving forward."

A major step forward arrives with Jah Cure's much-anticipated return to the Jamaican stage. He will headline his own freedom celebration/cultural reggae extravaganza Curefest Oct. 12-14 at James Bond Beach in the Jamaican fishing village Oracabessa, presented by Iyah Cure Promotions, Danger Zone and U.S.-based Brass Gate Promotions. However, the singer's initial post-imprisonment performance will take place Aug. 12 at the Reggae Sundance Festival in the Netherlands.

"I wasn't considering having him appear anywhere before Curefest but I thought [the Netherlands] is a very liberal place and it would be a good look," Hunte says. "I have great hopes for his career. The music that he created in a prison studio is fantastic, so what will he do when he is in a real studio and working with great musicians?"

The emotive vocals and lyrical introspection that characterize Jah Cure's recordings during the past few years, including the 2005 Jamaican No. 1 singles "Longing For" and "True Reflection"—both featured on VP Records' "True Reflection," a Jah Cure hits compilation scheduled for release July 31—indicate the former teenaged inmate has matured into an enlightened adult who is ready to share his observations with an expanding fan base.

"I will use Curefest to make a statement to the world," he says as a prison guard signals that it is time for him to return to his cell. "I feel good about everything. There's nothing like freedom of the mind, and I was free long before the date I will be freed."



HAWAIIAN MUSIC BY MIKAEL WOOD

ISLAND INVASION

Hawaiian Releases Scale The Charts

Hawaiian music suffered a blow earlier this year with the death of Don Ho, but strong debuts by three new Hawaiian albums this month suggest that the music is recovering quite nicely.

"Wonderful World," the newest posthumous release from the late Israel "Iz" Kamakawiwo'ole, debuted last week at No. 44 on The Billboard 200, the highest debut by a Hawaiian music album, and now stands at No. 72. The CD, which sold 17,000 copies in its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan, is also now in its second week at No. 1 on the Top World Albums chart.

Additionally, Grammy Award-nominated singer Raiatea Helm's new album, "Hawaiian Blossom," entered Top World Albums at No. 5 and the Heatseekers chart at No. 38 last week and is now at No. 8 on Top World Albums. And Honolulu-born singer/actress Tia Carrere's new album, "Hawaiiiana," recently spent a week at No. 13 on Top World Albums.

Is this the beginning of a Hawaiian invasion?

"We certainly hope so," says Leah Bernstein, president of Honolulu-based Mountain Apple, which distributes the Kamakawiwo'ole and Raiatea discs. "Iz opened the door, and now lots of other musicians are riding the wave." Bernstein traces the buzz to a late-'90s eToys spot that featured Kamakawiwo'ole's ukulele-and-voice version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," a tune the label has since licensed to numerous TV

shows and movies, including "ER" and "Finding Forrester." (According to Nielsen SoundScan, this version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" has racked up 783,000 digital sales.) "In this complicated day and age, when you come across a simple song that makes you feel good, it catches your attention," Bernstein says. "It allows you to think for a minute, 'Hey, maybe the world isn't so bad.'"

Increasing sales of Kamakawiwo'ole's last two albums prepared Mountain Apple for the demand

783K

Digital sales for Israel "Iz" Kamakawiwo'ole's "Somewhere Over the Rainbow"

on "Wonderful World," which pairs previously unreleased Kamakawiwo'ole vocals with new orchestral backing tracks. "We had tens of thousands of CDs on palettes in different warehouses across America," Bernstein says.

The question now is how to extend Kamakawiwo'ole's mainstream penetration: Bernstein says the vault of unreleased Kamakawiwo'ole recordings is nearly empty. Licensing, she says, is the most likely route. "In the last two weeks we've licensed Iz's music to Sony, a bank in Hungary and an Italian mineral water. There are still millions and millions of people who haven't discovered him yet."

Maroon 5 For The Long Run

Live Nation Partners With Band Through Summer 2008

Live Nation is now in the live Maroon 5 business. And not just for one tour.

Billboard has learned that the promoter has cut a deal to not only produce Maroon 5's 28-city fall arena tour, but both parties have also committed to a full-blown Live Nation amphitheater tour for summer 2008. Maroon 5 will play at least 60 shows under the Live Nation banner by the end of next year.

The deal follows previous statements by Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino that he wants to extend the life of the relationship between artist and promoter beyond one show or tour.

At a time when the touring industry is focusing on developing more arena-level headliners, many think Maroon 5 might fit the bill. "They are uniquely poised at this point in their career to be a huge force in the industry for years to come," says Jason Garner, president of North American music for Live Nation. "This is what everyone has said they would like to see—the promoter taking a step in the direction of helping to grow an artist's career. We think we've come into this partnership at exactly the right time."

Buying into multiple tours motivates Live Nation to promote the band beyond a given show or run of dates. "It's brilliant for the artist and management because they really have us incentivized not just to do a great job on the tour at hand, but to continue to work through the downtime to make sure that Maroon 5 is as visible as possible and [that] we're thinking toward the future," Garner says.

Maroon 5 manager Jordan Feldstein of Career Artist Management says, "We are really excited to be working with Live Nation to promote the tour over the next year-and-a-half. Using one promoter throughout all of North America gives us a great opportunity to nationally market and brand Maroon 5."

The band's fall "It Won't Be Soon Before Long" tour, announced last week at the Live Nation-owned House of Blues in Los Angeles, begins Sept. 29 at the Palace of Auburn Hills (Mich.) with the Hives as support. "We brought our PR assets to the table, we used our database to drive the Web site we launched virally, we have a national TV campaign brought to bear by our alliances group by using in-venue signage in the amphitheaters," Garner says.

How the signage is being used is a unique concept: It will promote the TNT network

in Live Nation sheds this summer in exchange for TV time to promote a Maroon 5 fall arena tour.

Though Garner declined to comment on financial aspects of the tour, it is believed that outside of its longevity, the deal is fairly typical, in that it's a standard minimum guarantee versus a back-end percentage deal.



Maroon 5's JAMES VALENTINE, left, and ADAM LEVINE perform July 3 at the House of Blues during a press conference announcing their fall tour.

Additional promotional aspects by Live Nation include Maroon 5 webisodes on livenation.com, promotion on video screens at the company's 11 House of Blues clubs in December when the band is not on the road, promotion in 49 Live Nation sheds for the arena tour and database marketing to 27 million opt-ins during the next year.

"It really is taking the promoter relationship with the artists and giving it the twist that we're 100% incentivized to promote this band, whether they're on tour or not, whatever venue they're in," Garner says. "We want to continue to see Maroon 5 grow because we have multiple tours we have to continue to think about how to promote."

"These relationships never work when it's just about, 'How can the promoter tie the artist up just to make more money?'" Garner adds. "It always has to start with, 'How can we really provide great service and great value to this band?'"

AN AUDIENCE OF ONE. WHAT A CROWD.

Hello Dave on tour for Armed Forces Entertainment in Southwest Asia



"We were on tour for Armed Forces Entertainment in Kuwait last year and I noticed an Air Force kid in the mess tent eating alone and keeping to himself. We wound up sitting next to him and struck up a conversation. It was a bit one-sided at first, but when he realized we were a band from back home, he perked up. We told him we were playing that night and his expression changed. "I have to get on a plane in three hours to go back to Afghanistan. I'm on a two-day leave." He wasn't going to be able to see the show, so we invited him to our soundcheck. We played the longest soundcheck ever. By the time we finished, that kid was grinning from ear to ear. "This is the first time I've felt this good in months," he said as he grabbed his gear and headed to the flight line.

That's why we do it. At least once a year, we set out on an Armed Forces Entertainment tour with one goal—to put a smile on some faces."

— Mike Himebaugh -Hello Dave

Mike Himebaugh is lead singer for Hello Dave, a Chicago-based band blending elements of rock, pop, folk and blues.



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Latin Notas

LEILA COBO lcobo@billboard.com

The Latin Lag

Genre Sales Plummet In First Half Of 2007

Validating long-expressed pronouncements of doom and gloom from many in the Latin music community, Nielsen SoundScan reports that, for the first time since 2001, Latin music sales have declined.

According to SoundScan data, sales of Latin music albums (defined as albums

with 51% Spanish-language content) for the first six months of 2007 stood at 16.1 million units. That's a 13% drop from the 18.5 million Latin albums sold during the first half of 2006. Overall CD sales are down 19.3% from the same point last year.

At first blush, those num-

bers may not raise eyebrows. After all, haven't all music sales been declining during the past few years?

Not for Latin. According to SoundScan, and, as Latin Notas has reported repeatedly through the years, Latin music sales have been steadily rising since at least 2001. Even in 2006, a notoriously difficult year for the music industry, Latin music sales stood at 37.7 million units, an all-time high for the genre, and up from the 35.9 million units sold in 2006.

In contrast, this first half has been disastrous.

For example, the top Latin album for the first half of 2007 is Jennifer Lopez's "Cómo Ama Una Mujer,"

which has scanned 163,000 copies. For 2006, the top-selling title was Daddy Yankee's "Barrio Fino: En Directo," with 380,000 copies scanned. For 2005, Daddy Yankee was again on top with 525,700 sold for "Barrio Fino."

In fact, the combined sales of the top five Latin albums so far this year are 726,000 units, compared with the slightly more than 1 million copies sold in 2006. That's a 33% decline. Why now?

On the one hand, Latin trends typically lag several months—sometimes years—behind the mainstream. As a result, digital sales are just now beginning to make a significant dent in the market. From the numbers available, however, one presumes that illegal downloads vastly outpace legal digital sales.

For the first six months of 2007, Latin digital album sales stood at 231,000 units, compared with 122,000 for the first half of 2006. That's almost double, sure, but still a pittance. And, given the push iTunes has made to the Latin market via iTunes Latino, the results are disap-

pointing. (Digital Latin single sales numbers were not available at press time.)

Beyond digital, Latin is suffering from high gas prices—which cut into the budget of low-income Latin music buyers—and from fear of immigration arrests, which keeps illegal immigrants from leaving the house to buy music and attend the live shows that drive sales.

The fact that most Latin music is sold at mass merchants also affects sales, as space is limited in those stores. New-artist development is most certainly affected by the exodus to mass-merchant accounts.

And of course, there is radio, which is still alarmingly stingy in playing new acts. In this week's issue, there are only four new artists out of 50 on Billboard's Hot Latin Songs chart.

It's a timid performance from all involved in a market that can no longer afford to be shy. ...

biz For 24/7 Latin news and analysis, see billboard.biz/latin.

'LEAN' AND MEAN

Latin Novelty Song A Bit Hit At Digital, Mobile

Latin crossover novelty hits have come and gone, but unlike "Macarena" or "Rico Suave," Down aka Kilo's "Lean Like a Cholo" has gotten a boost from the online and mobile space.

To date, the song has sold 173,000 downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and 62,000 ringtones, according to Nielsen RingScan.

The mostly English-language dance track with a jumpy synth beat debuted at No. 29 on Billboard's Latin Rhythm airplay chart the week of April 21. It peaked at No. 8 on Latin Rhythm and at No. 11 on the July 7 Rhythmic Top 40 chart. A Spanish remix hit iTunes July 3.

The video, complete with an "elbows up, side to side" dance demonstration featuring regional Mexican star Lupillo Rivera and former Eazy-E manager Jerry Heller, has garnered more than 1.9 million views on YouTube. The video is also packaged on a DVD with Down aka Kilo's album "Definition of an Ese" on Silent Giant/Machete.

The rapper (real name: Juan Martinez) says he was inspired by the success of Young Dro's "Shoulder Lean" and Terror Squad's "Lean Back" to make a Latin club anthem in a similar vein. "It's a dance we've been doing since back in the zoot suit days," he says. "It's real old, and no one has ever done a song about it."

Jerry Pulles, music director/assistant PD at bilingual station KXOL (Latino 96.3) Los Angeles, says that when he first heard the song, he thought it was just a parody of Latin rap. "Then I saw the video and said, 'Wow, this is for real, but it's hilarious,'" he says. "It really convinced me that it was our lifestyle. It was something cool and fun and lighthearted, and something we should probably play." —ABY



A SEMESTER OF SLIPPAGE

Combined sales of the top five Latin albums so far this year are 726,000 units—down from more than 1 million in 2006.

TOP-SELLING LATIN ALBUMS 2007

(week ending July 1)

Jennifer Lopez, "Cómo Ama Una Mujer" (Epic/Sony BMG Norte)	163,000
Daddy Yankee, "El Cartel: The Big Boss" (Epic/Interscope/IGA)	155,000
Valentín Elizalde, "Vencedor" (Universal Latino)	144,000
Aventura, "K.O.B.: Live" (Premiere Latin/Sony BMG Norte)	139,000
Mana, "Amar Es Combatir" (Warner Latina)	125,000

TOP-SELLING LATIN ALBUMS 2006

(week ending July 2)

Daddy Yankee, "Barrio Fino: En Directo" (Epic/Interscope/IGA)	380,000
Various Artists, "NOW Latino" (The EMI Group/Universal/Zomba/Sony BMG Norte/Sony BMG)	206,000
Wisin & Yandel, "Pa'í Mundo" (Machete)	174,000
Don Omar, "King of Kings" (VJ/Machete)	162,000
RBD, "Nuestro Amor" (EMI Televisa)	161,000

SOURCE: Nielsen SoundScan



Family Matters

Slain Banda Star's Relatives Keep Musical Flame Alive

Seven months after Valentín Elizalde's death, the slain banda star's relatives are keeping the dynasty going with their own work.

On July 3, Universal Music Latino released "Mi Última Bohemia... En Vivo," a collection of songs Elizalde recorded live at the grave of his father, "El Gallo" Elizalde. It debuts at No. 13 this issue on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart.

The only survivor of the November shooting that killed the 27-year-old Elizalde was his cousin, producer/bandleader Fausto "El Tano" Castro Elizalde.

The latter's "Dedicado a Ti" with La Banda Guasaveña has sold 21,000 copies in the United States since its April release, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"Obviously it's a big push, the fact that it's Valentín's band. But we believe the band carries its own weight with its leader," says Starmex VP of A&R/marketing Daniel Osuna, whose profit-share label with Universal Latino has La Banda Guasaveña signed for four albums.

Far from trying to take the band on its own path, "we want to continue with [Valentín's] legacy, God will-



ELIZALDE

ing, for many years with the band and keep doing shows and albums in his honor," El Tano Elizalde says.

The late singer's girlfriend Natalie Fernandez (and archival footage of Elizalde) appear in the video for the single "Solo Un Sueño." Fernandez joined El Tano and Elizalde's brother Francisco "El Chico" on "El Show de Cristina" May 7 to discuss the murder.

El Chico followed May 22 with his own album of songs, many of them previously recorded by his brother, on Universal Latino. With accompaniment by La Banda Guasaveña, the album "De Un Elizalde Para Un Elizalde" has sold 9,000 copies stateside.

In contrast, Jesús "El Flaco" Elizalde's "Corazon

de Acero" on Fonovisa, which was released April 3, does not cover material from his late brother.

"Over time, what will make him stay or be successful is that he will be himself," Fonovisa VP/GM Alfonso Larriva says. An emphasis on tributes "will pigeonhole the artist... He'll always be linked to the tragedy."

"Corazon de Acero" has sold 6,000 copies in the States, more than El Flaco's previous efforts combined.

La Tricolor radio network PD Napo Sanchez says Valentín Elizalde's younger siblings previously focused on working Mexico's Pacific Coast. But now there's an effort "to internationalize them. Their careers are just barely starting."

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

.com EN LA RED: For 24/7 coverage of the Latin music world, Billboard has partnered with MSN. For a complete roundup in Spanish, go to Billboard.Latino.MSN.com.



The Indies

TODD MARTENS tmartens@billboard.com

A New Kind Of Indie

Caroline Blurring Boundaries After Recent Cutbacks At EMI

The lines between indies and majors keep blurring, and EMI-owned Caroline Music will further muddy the boundaries.

It's fitting, as it was Caroline Records that turned upstreaming into a trend when **the Smashing Pumpkins** jumped to Virgin. But even as majors have invested heavily in indie labels (see Sub Pop, Roadrunner, Ferret) and such joint ventures as Vice and Atlantic have walked an indie/major tightrope, the major-owned independent distributors have traditionally played up their independence.

That began to change when Universal Music Group Distribution launched Fontana in 2005 and bragged of the distributor's relationship with its parent company. Today, RED regularly takes on projects from Sony BMG, and the Alternative Distribution Alliance has its own Warner-run initiative with its Independent Label Group unit.

Caroline seems to be going one step further. Recent cutbacks at EMI saw Caroline eliminating much of its sales force, and Caroline-distributed product now goes through the major's distribution pipeline, EMI Music Marketing (EMM) (Billboard, May 12).

"Are we a major or an indie? I don't know," says **Bill Hein**, who oversees Caroline Music, home to Caroline Distribution, the recently relaunched Caroline Records and Astralwerks. "We're working with independent labels and providing distribution services for them, so in that sense we work closely with the independent community. But it's the same sales force that sells **Beatles** and **Rolling Stones** records. It's a hybrid."

That could be a cause for alarm with some. Caroline's third-party indies include rock label Century Media, hip-hop imprint Def Jux and electronic-focused Warp. Will a major-label sales rep care as much about an experimental act like **Battles**, whose Warp debut, "Mirrored," has sold 13,000 units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, when a new **Korn** record comes out?

"These days you have to go for every sale," Hein says. "No

one turns up their nose at a sale, and every sale is a good thing. We're seeing some sales bumps with some of the labels, but I want to get through a few more street dates before I call it an unqualified success."

Hein points to labels like Def Jux and Warp as having solid summers, and is looking ahead to a strong fall, with new titles from **Aesop Rock** (Def Jux),

ber of that year. The charge came from an indie exec, and it was, admittedly, the result of my journalistic inexperience. My boss, **Tamara Conniff**, had to talk me out of resigning, and I'll be forever indebted.

During the next 31 months, I had the opportunity to document the most exciting sector of the business. As recently as three years ago, the notion that



Bat for Lashes (Caroline), **the Magic Numbers** (Astralwerks) and **VHS or Beta** (Astralwerks).

The shift to working with EMM has brought other changes. Caroline no longer works with nonexclusive labels like Revolver and is tightening its label roster, not wanting to thrust volume for the sake of volume upon its major-label sales force.

"Some labels we're very aggressively renewing, and others we are letting go as deals are expiring," Hein says. "We explicitly want to work with less labels. That's not to imply we have crappy labels and want to see them go, but we want to provide a boutique service, and of the ways we do that is by working with less labels."

FAREWELL: My last day at Billboard was July 6, so by the time this column is printed, I will be gone.

I started writing The Indies in October 2004 and received my first death threat in Decem-

an indie band like **Arcade Fire** could debut in the top five of The Billboard 200 still seemed like a long shot.

In short, this is a hard post to leave. But I love journalism more than music, and I've decided to take an opportunity in the new-media department of the Los Angeles Times, where new entertainment and calendar sites will be launched later this year.

I thank everyone who ever returned one of my calls or e-mails and everyone who read and contributed to this column. And those who haven't already done so should download **Tim Fite's** "Over the Counter Culture," as there likely won't be a better album released this year. Cheers.

Editor's note: *Fear not, folks. Despite Todd's new gig, Billboard's indie coverage isn't going anywhere. Good luck, Todd.*

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DIGITAL MUSIC BY ANTONY BRUNO

How To Define A Hit

Digital Music Tracking Will Soon Affect Billboard Charts

In an effort to reflect the growing importance of digitally measuring the popularity of a given track, album or artist, Billboard's charts and the RIAA's certification programs have incorporated the medium in different ways.

At present, both include a la carte sales of single tracks and full-song downloads from a number of sources, including iTunes and various mobile music services. Full-length album downloads in digital form count toward most of Billboard's various album charts as well as in the RIAA's gold and platinum album certification process.

Downloads for single tracks have their own chart (Hot Digital Songs) as well as their own RIAA certification. Digital singles also play heavily into The Billboard Hot 100—to the point where the chart's formula is being adjusted to better factor the growth of the digital market since they first began having an impact on the charts in February 2005.

The need to track such digital music metrics becomes clearer by the year. Recent Nielsen SoundScan figures show digital tracks sales increased 48.5% during the first half of this year over the same period last year, compared with a 19.3% drop in CD sales. And to be sure, digital sales are having a noticeable effect on chart positioning. For the last week of June, for instance, Timbaland's "Make Me Better" shot from No. 40 on the Hot 100 to No. 18 after the track's digital sales doubled.

But there is more to meas-



Yahoo's Turning Purple program will recognize tracks that receive 10 million 'plays' lasting 60 seconds or more via various on-demand streams.

uring the digital reach of a given song beyond the pay-per-download model, and incorporating additional digital metrics is something that those providing the data and those compiling it are actively trying to achieve. There are Internet radio stations to be measured, subscription-tethered downloads to be counted and even on-demand music video streams to account for. There is a growing debate over adding ringtones sales to the mix above and beyond the current practice of measuring them separately. Some sources even advocate measuring peer-to-peer (P2P) downloads as another way to gauge music's popularity.

Starting with

measuring a la carte sales makes sense because that is where the bulk of digital music activity is taking place. But by no means is it the end.

Billboard has been working with Nielsen BDS for more than a year now to add streaming music data to the charts. But collecting the data from the various service providers has been a challenge. Many of the services offering Internet radio streams or subscription music downloads have not provided traffic data in a manner that is timely and accurate enough to justify inclusion in the charts.

That could change soon.

This week Yahoo is unveiling its own certification program based on how many plays a song receives on its various services. Called Turning Purple—based on the purple Yahoo Music logo—the program will recognize tracks that receive 10 million "plays" lasting 60 seconds or more via on-demand streams from Yahoo Music Unlimited and the Yahoo video service, as well as those streamed via the Launchcast Internet radio feeds and custom radio playlists.

Yahoo Music head Ian Rogers says the company will in a matter of weeks begin providing this information to Nielsen's data collection process in hopes it will soon make its way onto the Bill-

board charts. Incorporating the data will take some time, as the chart gurus determine how to appropriately weigh music downloaded on a subscription plan or streamed online compared to music purchased a la carte.

For instance, in the revamped Hot 100 formula, one digital track purchase will be worth 1,000 radio audience impressions. When streamed and on-demand music and music videos are added to the chart, that data will approximate the audience of a small radio network.

What about ringtones? One could argue that paying \$2.50 for a ringtone is just as much a measure of its popularity as downloading the full track from iTunes. But it's not quite that easy. First, there is hardly a consensus among record labels on that point. Second, while most U.S. wireless operators are reporting ringtone sales data to the Nielsen RingScan service, not all are onboard. Finally, not all ringtones are available to purchase at the same time the song is available on radio and at download retailers. The lag in availability can skew chart results if late ringtones come to market after radio play and digital sales have peaked.

Tracking P2P downloads, meanwhile, is a much dicier matter. With about 1 billion tracks downloaded from P2P networks per month, according to BigChampagne, tracking what's downloaded could be a telling statistic. But aside from the politics involved with monitoring what the labels consider theft, there is also the matter of effectively auditing the traffic reported on P2P networks, many of which operate underground specifically to avoid detection and accountability.

Chalk it up to an industry still in the early stages of a massive format upheaval. The fact is that music is still primarily purchased in physical form and listened to via terrestrial radio. As the balance starts to tip, so will the tracking.

BITS & BRIEFS

PURPLE HEART

Yahoo Music has begun awarding artists and songs that have received 10 million streams through its various online services, including music videos, Launchcast radio station, and subscription music service. The award is called "Turning Purple," based on the company's music logo. The inaugural recipients include:

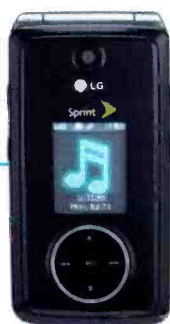
- Beyoncé, "Irreplaceable"
- Shakira and Beyoncé, "Beautiful Liar"
- Justin Timberlake, "Sexyback" and "What Goes Around, Comes Around"
- Akon, "Smack That"
- Fergie, "London Bridge"
- Ciara, "Get Up and Promise"
- Nelly Furtado, "Say It Right"
- Evanescence, "Call Me When You're Sober"

FOUND SOUNDS

Anyone looking online for free music samples, music loops and sound effects can now visit a new service called Soundsnap. The free service is designed to let users upload and download content for any kind of media production, both personal and professional. The site launched with about 30,000 files.

TEJANO TONES

Verizon Wireless is taking aim at the Latin music category for ringtones and ring-back tones. Called Tonos Calientes (Hot Tones), they include 20 tracks from such artists as Daddy Yankee ("Impacto"), Enrique Iglesias ("Dimelo") and Jennifer Lopez ("Que Hiciste"). The tracks are also featured in the V Cast Music full-song download service.



NOT THAT PHONE

Believe it: There are other phones that play music besides the iPhone. On July 15, Sprint will begin selling its new model from LG, called the Muziq. Like other Sprint music phones, the Muziq allows users to buy and download music from the Sprint Music store over the air, as well as access Pandora's personalized streaming radio service.

It also has a few cool new features, like a "background mode" that lets you play songs while using other phone functions such as text messaging or playing mobile games. Storage capacity comes in the form of an SD Memory slot that can hold a 4 GB memory card, but the phone ships with only a 64 MB card. The Muziq retails for \$99 with a two-year service agreement.

—Antony Bruno

The songs on her "I'm Not Dead" album have sold 2.2 million digital downloads, including 944,000 for this comeback hit.



The tune is one of only two singles in the top 20 that have yet to reach the top 10 on The Billboard Hot 100. The other? Ciara's "Like a Boy" at No. 11.



YAHOO! MUSIC JUL 21 2007

Rank	Artist	Label	Streams
1	AVRIL LAVIGNE	Girfriend RCA	3,625,961
2	RIHANNA	Umbrella SRP/DEF JAM	3,299,251
3	KELLY CLARKSON	Never Again RCA	2,531,861
4	MAROON 5	Makes Me Wonder A&M/OCTONE	2,235,103
5	T-PAIN FEATURING YUNG JOC	Buy U A Drank (Shony Snappin') KONWICT/JIVE	2,077,049
6	BEYONCÉ & SHAKIRA	Beautiful Liar COLUMBIA	1,685,086
7	FERGIE	Big Girls Don't Cry WILLIAMS/A&M/INTERSCOPE	1,543,924
8	PINK	U → Ur Hand LAFACE	1,426,944
9	SHOP BOYZ	Party Like A Rockstar ONDECK/UNIVERSAL REPUBLIC	1,414,332
10	LIL' MAMA	Lip Gloss JIVE	1,330,999
11	CIARA	Like A Boy LAFACE	1,268,499
12	CARRIE UNDERWOOD	Before He Cheats ARISTA	1,263,535
13	DAUGHTRY	Home RCA	1,259,558
14	HUEY	Pop, Lock & Drop It HITZ COMMITTEE/JIVE	1,251,435
15	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	What Goes Around ... Comes Around JIVE	1,220,749
16	ELLIOTT YAMIN	Wait For You HICKORY	1,201,151
17	TIMBALAND	Give It To Me MOSLEY/INTERSCOPE	1,190,790
18	SHAKIRA	Hips Don't Lie EPIC	1,166,759
19	AKON	Don't Matter KONWICT/UNIVERSAL MOTOWN	1,165,767
20	ENRIQUE IGLESIAS	Do You Know? UNIVERSAL LATIN/INTERSCOPE	1,134,186

The top 20 audio and video streams (combined) for June 4 through July 1, 2007. Source: Yahoo! Music

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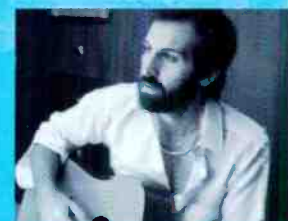
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The Carling Weekend Leeds Festival now boasts a stage purely for local bands. Inset: THE PIGEON DETECTIVES

GLOBAL BY MICKEY NOONAN

LEEDS UNITED

Kaiser Chiefs Spark City Revival

LEEDS, United Kingdom—In Victorian times, the northern U.K. city of Leeds was renowned for its textiles industry. In 2007, it's making a name for itself by producing a stream of successful alternative rock bands.

It began with local lads Kaiser Chiefs, who sell T-shirts that proudly declare, "Everything is brilliant in Leeds." But while they scored consecutive U.K. No. 1 albums and boast album sales in excess of 2.3 million in Britain alone, according to the Official U.K. Charts Co. (OCC), they haven't forgotten their roots.

Instead, they have gleefully given a leg-up to other Leeds bands, taking the Pigeon Detectives and the Cribs on tour with them in the last two years. Both bands have recently enjoyed hit albums of their own—Pigeon Detectives' debut "Wait for Me" (Dance to the Radio) crashed in at No. 3, while the Cribs' third set, "Men's Needs, Women's Needs, Whatever" (Wichita), reached No. 13.

Meanwhile, the U.K. music press is touting bands like Dead Disco (Fierce Panda), the Sunshine Underground (City Rockers), Hadouken (Atlantic) and Forward Russia (DTTR) as names to watch.

"Even before Kaisers, there was a scene," Cribs frontman Ryan Jarman says. "The Kaisers blew that up on a national level. People get bored with stuff being from London. Often the small towns are good for more original music."

The city had spawned occasional cult acts, including 1970s post-punk band Gang of Four and 1980s gothic rockers the Sisters of Mercy. Yet throughout the 1990s, Leeds was forced to play second fiddle to resurgent northern rivals Manchester and Liverpool.

"Leeds has always had a massive DIY scene of essentially uncommercial music," says Forward Russia guitarist Samuel "Whiskas" Nicholls, who is also founder and head of A&R

of Pigeon Detectives' Leeds-based label DTTR. "Since Kaiser Chiefs, the very real possibility of reaching a bigger audience has meant that bands have developed themselves more."

Nicholls also points to the growth of a local support network. New independent imprints, including DTTR, Dead Young Records and Bad Sneakers—all established in the last two years—mean up-and-coming artists no longer have to rely on being discovered by a national label.

Many also note that, five years ago, only one venue in Leeds—the 500-capacity Cockpit—was regularly putting on shows. Now there are eight, ranging from the 425-capacity Faversham to Leeds University's 2,100-capacity Refectory.

"Leeds needed another venue," says Ash Kollakowski, local promoter and owner of the Bad Sneakers label. "The Cockpit was full up; you could only have seven gigs a week. Now you've got eight venues putting on about 24 different bands" per night.

Another key factor has been Leeds' expanding student population—traditionally, U.K. students are big consumers of alternative rock. According to Leeds city council, there are 45,000 students in the city for the 2006-07 academic year, out of a total population of around 700,000, almost double the number recorded a decade earlier.

The presence of two major festivals is also a draw for music fans. The 30,000-capacity O2 Wireless, which enjoyed its second Leeds edition in June, loyally had the Kaisers as headliners, while the 70,000-capacity northern leg of the Carling Weekend Reading and Leeds festivals, established in Leeds in 1999, now boasts a stage purely for local bands.

Mean Fiddler's Neil Pengelly, who books the Carling Weekend, says the second site was chosen for practical reasons.

"Geographically, Leeds is really accessible," he says. "But over the last few years, there have been bands from Leeds and from [nearby] Sheffield, and it's become their festival."

Kollakowski says with a grin, "There's no need to go to London nowadays. The Pigeon Detectives, the Kaisers and the Cribs have all made successful careers, but they're still in Leeds. That says everything."



GLOBAL BY MARK WORDEN

The Big Chill

Wind Awards Rub Italian Indies The Wrong Way

MILAN—The organizers of Italy's Wind Music Awards are adamant that the show will return next year, despite a first edition that caused a huge row with Italy's independent labels.

The awards, held June 6 in Rome, were heavily criticized by PMI, Italy's main indie representative body, and others in the sector for "excluding" independent artists. That leaves the prospects for resurrecting an "official" industry-wide Italian awards ceremony along the lines of the BRITs or the Grammys increasingly remote.

Nevertheless, Ferdinando Salzano, managing director of Friends & Partners, the Milan-based agency that organized the Wind Music Awards and the last official Italian Music Awards show in 2003, says he was delighted with the event, broadcast June 14 on the Italia Uno network.

Praising the "impressive lineup," which attracted big-

name Italian stars like Ligabue, Tiziano Ferro, Zucchero, Nek, Claudio Baglioni and Antonello Venditti, Salzano notes that the TV audience "reached over 4 million viewers with a share of 13%, which Italia Uno considers good."

"I'm due to be meeting them next week to start planning next year's event," he says.

Italia Uno and sponsor Wind—an Italian cell phone service provider—declined to comment on their future intentions. But Enzo Mazza, president of labels body FIMI, who attended the event, says he is sure it will continue. "It provided an enjoyable entertainment spectacle, and it adds an extra something to the calendar," Mazza says.

The indies, however, remain unhappy. Awards were given out for having sold more than 150,000 albums, but critics say sales informa-

tion was provided by the labels rather than being certified, with confusion surrounding the qualifying period and whether sales figures were for Italy only.

Only one winner, Sugar's Elisa, was signed to an indie. Mario Limongelli, president of indie umbrella group PMI, which broke away from FIMI in 2005, says, "We were offended by the fact that Salzano didn't contact us and we complained to" IFPI chairman/CEO John Kennedy.

Others went further in their protests. Claudia Mori (wife and manager of veteran Italian singer Adriano Celentano), Dori Ghezzi (widow of legendary singer/songwriter Fabrizio de André) and Sugar president Caterina Caselli wrote a joint letter to Italy's leading national daily newspaper, Corriere Della Sera, in which they criticized the exclusion of the indies, the lack of transparency regarding the sales figures and the use

GLOBAL NEWSLINE

>>>U.K. ALBUMS MARKET SLUMPS IN FIRST HALF '07

U.K. physical CD sales slipped by 10% during the first half of 2007, according to over-the-counter sales figures reported by the BPI.

CD album sales declined to 57.9 million units during the first six months, the Official U.K. Charts Co.'s data reveals. This led to a combined (physical and digital) albums decline of 7.7% to 60.2 million units in the first six months, compared with 65.2 million units in the first half of 2006. However, sales of digital and compilation albums rose to partly compensate the drop-off.

Digital sales surpassed 100,000 units per week during that period, a sign that they "are starting to have a real impact on the albums market," the BPI report stated.

Downloadable singles rose 49.9% to 36.4 million units. —Juliana Koranteng

>>>BRAZIL MOVE FOR RICHARD OGDEN MANAGEMENT

Richard Ogden is relocating his European artist management and live music firm from London to Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Effective Aug. 1, Ogden, the former manager of Paul McCartney, and his wife and business partner, Telma, will migrate Richard Ogden Management to South America.

ROM will maintain an office in the United



SANGALO

Kingdom, staffed by Tom Favilla, and will continue working with its existing consultancy clients in Europe, including MJM Music, City Concerts in Russia and Espelho de Cultura in Portugal.

ROM launched in August 2000 with financial backing from German concert promoter Deutsche Entertainment AG. Two years later, Ogden bought back DEAG's stake. In recent

of a sponsor.

But with Mazza stating there are “no plans to stage [another] official awards event,” the Wind Music Awards may remain the best

bet for uniting the warring factions, despite that Italian awards shows do not appear to boost sales in the way they do in other territories.

Angelo Leone, a section

head in the music department at Milan’s FNAC store, says, “I didn’t see any effect on sales [from the awards]. Italian music is holding up these days, but the artists that have seen a pickup in recent weeks, such as Biagio Antonacci and Laura Pausini, have done so because of their stadium concerts.”

Salzano says he is keen to pacify the indies, suggesting a new section for albums that are “creatively successful,” rather than just big sellers. But Limongelli warns, “If Salzano or anyone else wants to do this again, then they cannot exclude us. The show needs an official academy which votes for artists in each category. That was in place in 2003.”

Giordano Sangiorgi, president of Audiocoop, which represents Italy’s smaller independent labels, says he would work with the majors on an event, but adds, “The indies, who are excluded from airplay and so much else in this country, deserve to have their own separate event.”



NEK, center, one of several Wind Music Award winners, with presenter (and former Miss Italia) CRISTINA CHIABOTTO, left, and VANESSA INCONTRADA.

years, ROM and its clients have promoted or produced shows for the likes of Rod Stewart and David Gilmour as well as the debut European tour of Brazilian star Ivete Sangalo.

—Lars Brandle

>>>MAMA PLAYS MEAN FIDDLER TUNE

Media and marketing firm MAMA Group has approached Mean Fiddler Music Group with a provisional offer to buy six of the live-music firm’s London venues.

The sites include the iconic Jazz Cafe, Garage, G.A.Y. and the Borderline venues, but a sale of the Astoria in central London is not in the cards.

“We consider the offer to be positive and are currently awaiting confirmation of that offer being confirmed before a final decision is to be taken. We anticipate the offer to be formalized in early August,” Mean Fiddler managing director Melvin Benn says.

Benn adds that “absolutely no redundancies” will occur should the offer be accepted.

Earlier this year, Mean Fiddler agreed to sell its London Forum venue to MAMA for £1 million (\$1.9 million).

—Lars Brandle

>>>SONY BMG STRIKES DEAL WITH LAST.FM

Sony BMG Music Entertainment is the third major label to sign an international content deal with Last.fm, the U.K.-based online music-recommendation service.

Last.fm subscribers can now listen to Sony BMG tracks and then buy download-

able versions via such online music stores as Amazon and 7digital.

EMI Music Group and Warner Music Group had already reached agreements clearing their acts’ recordings to be streamed on Last.fm’s Web site. Works handled by such online-music aggregators as the Orchard and the Independent Online Distribution Alliance are also available for use on Last.fm.

Last.fm made headlines recently when CBS bought it for £141 million (284 million).

—Juliana Koranteng

>>>LIVE NATION, PEPSI TOAST NEW PARTNERSHIP

Live Nation has signed a three-year sponsorship, supply partnership and pouring-rights deal with soft-drinks group PepsiCo.

The agreement covers such Live Nation U.K. live-music events as the O2 Wireless Festival, Hard Rock’s Hyde Park Calling, the Download Festival and the Sputnik Presents Global Gathering.

The pouring rights, expected to yield refreshments for more than 5.2 million people, include Live Nation-managed and -owned city-center venues in the United Kingdom like London’s Dominion Theatre and the Manchester Apollo.

As part of the arrangement, the Pepsi Web site will host competitions offering Live Nation tickets as prizes.

—Juliana Koranteng

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GLOBAL BY PAUL SEXTON

PPL GOES GLOBAL

U.K. Collecting Society Targets Overseas Income

LONDON—In just five years, U.K. collecting society PPL’s international revenue has sped from zero to £6 million (\$12.2 million). But chairman/CEO Fran Nevrkla says that figure is just a fraction of his target—and that the organization is prepared to get tough if necessary.

PPL, which collects performance rights on sound recordings for 3,500 U.K. record companies and 40,000 performers, now has 33 reciprocal agreements with overseas societies, including recent pacts with Bulgaria’s Prophon and Denmark’s Gramex. The latest, with Spain’s AIE, was signed last month. But Nevrkla sounds a note of warning that diplomatic negotiation to recover payment is not PPL’s only option.

“My overseas counterparts have to accept the inevitable,” he says. “Persuasion is a lovely thing, but at some point you have to say ‘enough is enough.’”

While declining to be specific about the worst offenders among fellow societies, he says that if talks fail, a 30-day payment warning may be issued. And, while Nevrkla is cautiously encouraged by the £6 million total, which was double that of 2005, he has loftier ambitions. “It needs to be several times last year’s figure,” he says,

and Nevrkla applauds the work of “senior figures in the performer community, who recognized the need for a united front.”

India and Australia are among territories on the agenda, but at PPL’s June 6 annual general meeting, director of legal and business affairs Peter Leatham said that talks on reciprocal agreements with the United States would continue in “a focused, determined and collective way,” while conceding that logistics would take another two or three years.

Unlike most countries, copyright law in the States grants a performance right in sound recordings only for digital performances (Internet, cable and satellite broadcasts), not for analog performances (terrestrial radio broadcasts). Recording artists and labels have just begun a push in Washington, D.C., to have the law changed to require terrestrial radio pay to broadcast recordings as well as compositions (Billboard, June 23).

Nevrkla says PPL enjoys one of its “friendliest, most two-way relationships” with SoundExchange, the U.S. performance rights organization that collects digital audio transmission royalties for featured artists.

●●●●
“There wasn’t any history or culture of collecting overseas income. It all had to be created afresh.”

—FRAN NEVRKLA, PPL



“and I don’t mean [just] twice or three times.”

He praises the work of some corresponding international societies, specifically SENA in Holland. He declines to give an exact figure, but says, “For the size of its population, it’s [returned] an enormous share.

“When I stepped into the job in 2000, this instinctively felt like one of the priorities,” Nevrkla adds. “Apart from one or two commercial agents who traditionally collected overseas income for a handful of megastars, nobody looked after the bulk of British performers in terms of overseas income. There wasn’t any history or culture of collecting overseas income. We didn’t have the contacts or experience. It all had to be created afresh.”

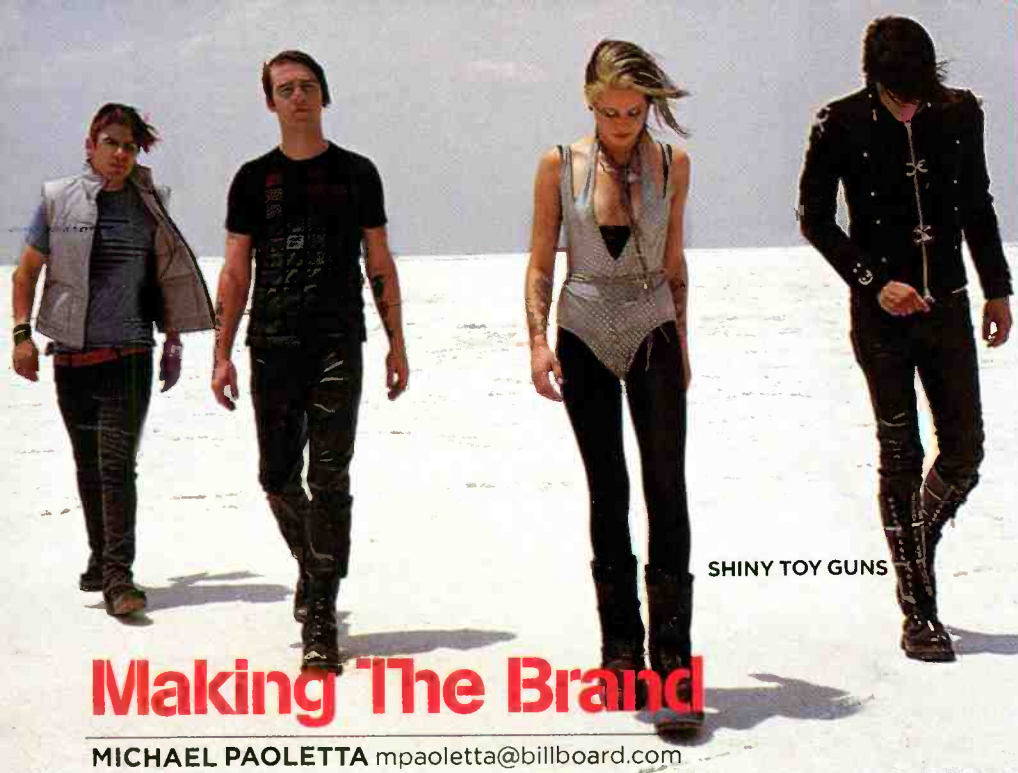
The framework for an overseas revenue stream was built around the Performer Forum, established in 2001 by PPL and four other British performer organizations to centralize payments to performers under one umbrella,

“British repertoire is significant in America, as America’s repertoire is important in the U.K.,” SoundExchange executive director John Simson says. “I expect the value of our reciprocal agreements to continue to grow.”

Simson didn’t put a financial figure on the relationship, but is optimistic that the U.S. terrestrial radio campaign will succeed. “We know it will be difficult,” he says, “but the timing is right and long overdue.”

“Their problem is greater than anyone else’s,” Nevrkla says of SoundExchange, “because there’s never been a culture of collective licensing [in the States] on the part of the record companies and artists. But if radio stations had to pay even a reasonable rate for every sound recording they play, what an income stream that would be.”

Additional reporting by Susan Butler in New York and Tom Ferguson and Lars Brandle in London.



Making The Brand

MICHAEL PAOLETTA mpaoletta@billboard.com

Half The Battle

Shiny Toy Guns Strike Branding Deals, But Radio Slow To Follow

Shiny Toy Guns bassist Jeremy Dawson likens the quartet's numerous global synch licenses to a "midget pop radio." TV shows and ad campaigns that feature STG's music let Dawson and his bandmates—vocalist/guitarist Gregori Chad Petree, singer Carah Faye Charnow and drummer Mikey Martin—experience what it feels like to be big top 40 stars.

"I could walk into a mall with a boombox, press the 'play' button and everybody would know 'Le Disko,'" Dawson says. "But only about 15% of the people would know who I was. People are familiar with the song and they know its hook. Yet they don't necessarily know the band Shiny Toy Guns."

That appears to be changing. With each new license, the band's profile is heightened. This increased exposure has paved the way to just-inked endorsement deals with electronic equipment company Roland, Vestal Watches and Canadian clothing brand Vexy. Dawson is the spokesmodel in Roland's upcoming fall/winter campaign, while Charnow is set to appear in upcoming ads for the watch and clothing companies. Expect the band to be identified in each campaign.

"Each time we place music somewhere else, different people are being exposed to the band's music," says STG manager Jim Welch of entertainment firm 2012. "We've seen increased crowds at their live shows. It's pretty amazing what getting a song on a show like 'Dancing With the Stars' can do for a band like Shiny Toy Guns."

The fact that a straight-up electronic-rock jam was heard on a show like ABC's "Dancing With the Stars" made it stand out even more, says Heather Kreamer, music supervisor at trailer house mOcean. "It's kind of ironic," she adds, "because you wouldn't necessarily associate a band like Shiny Toy Guns with 'Dancing With the Stars.' But it brought attention to the band and their music."

"Le Disko" was featured in the first episode of the show's second season. It was also heard in TV spots leading up to the program's bow.

In addition to "Dancing With the Stars," the group's music has been featured in several other TV shows, including CBS' "Viva Laugh-

lin" (the track "Rainy Monday"), ABC's "Ugly Betty" ("Turn to Real Life"), Showtime's "The L Word" and CW's "One Tree Hill" ("Le Disko"). The last of which included an ad card at the end of the show, which is something labels and management strive to get, but rarely do.

"Le Disko" was also heard in ad campaigns for Honda and Motorola (Product) Red. During Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in New York in February, the band was tapped to play the auto manufacturer's opening-night party. The act also performed last month at Kanye West's birthday bash at the Louis Vuitton boutique in New York.

The act's grass-roots, promotional business arrangement with Burton Snowboards continues to grow, and encompasses contests, concerts and Internet initiatives.

Dawson maintains that each of these scenarios helps to create "a coloring, a foundation to paint and build something bigger and stronger. We consider it added fuel that helps build and tell a story at radio. Licensing has brought our music into Joe and Jane's world."

"Le Disko" peaked at No. 26 on Billboard's Modern Rock chart earlier this year. Last month, follow-up single "You Are the One" reached No. 31 on the chart.

Still, without major support from radio, the band's debut album, "We Are Pilots"—released Oct. 17, 2006, by Universal Motown (STG released two demo versions of the album independently in 2005)—has been selling between 2,000 and 3,000 units per week since April, according to Nielsen SoundScan. To date, the disc has sold 159,000 copies.

Dawson, Welch and Universal Motown Records Group senior VP of strategic alliances Lori L. Lambert credit these numbers to the band's brand partnerships and busy tour schedule.

Lambert calls "Le Disko" "a branding track for the band," which helped set the tone for the major-label setup. "You Are the One," meanwhile, sounds nothing like "Le Disko." So, there is a disconnect, Dawson says, with people not realizing it's the same band. "But the more we tour and ram our videos down the Internet sites, the more we'll connect."

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UPFRONT



Retail Track

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Giving It A Go

What Russ Solomon Has To Prove With R5

One after another, reporters from the mainstream press and business publications keep calling up Retail Track to ask whether **Russ Solomon** is Don Quixote tilting at windmills. Taking as a given that the music industry is turning entirely digital, they want to know whether the Tower Records founder has any chance of making a go of R5, his new brick-and-mortar store in Sacramento, Calif.

The press seems to believe that Solomon is motivated by the desire to prove that brick-and-mortar outlets can survive in the current landscape, which may be partially true. But Retail Track believes that the legendary merchant is also driven by another reason.

Anyone who has talked to the man during the last five years knows his hands were tied as Tower went down the tubes. With first the chain's bank and then the bondholders calling the shots, Solomon was completely pushed to the side. He was powerless to stop whatever mistakes he saw executed by the chain's leadership—first **Alan Rodriguez**, who was CEO from 2002 until June 2006, and then, for the final six months, CEO **Joe D'Amico**.

But when the chain finally succumbed and become the lead story for many a newspaper

business section and just as many Web sites, most articles repeatedly mentioned Solomon's name, not Rodriguez's or D'Amico's. It was as if Tower's downfall was painted as Solomon's failure. Naturally, this must have rankled the proud retail innovator.

"What I want to prove is that I was right all along during the demise of Tower when nobody would listen to me," Solomon says. "When financial people take over and the entrepreneurs are kicked out, I don't care what kind of company it is: The company will ultimately suffer or fail."

Of course, time heals all wounds, or at least helps you to hide them better. Talking to Solomon today, you will find the merchant is back in the swing of things.

"Yeah, we had a good opening weekend, without any advertising, just publicity driving traffic," Solomon says a week after R5 opened its doors on June 22. While he isn't exactly working the cash registers, he says he "hang[s] around a couple of hours every day and talk[s] with the customers. I want to know what is going on so I



The Publishers Place

SUSAN BUTLER sbutler@billboard.com

Restructuring Warner/Chappell

Executive Appointments Point To Synch, Digital Strategies

For the first time in at least two decades, the heads of every major music publisher are restructuring their companies. The reason is simple. During the last six months, new chairmen/CEOs have taken control of Warner/Chappell Music, EMI Music Publishing and Sony/ATV Music, while BMG Music Publishing has become part of Universal Music Publishing Group.

At Warner/Chappell, the first major to change its chief executive, chairman/CEO **Dave Johnson** has begun focusing and coordinating the publisher's departments for a synchronized, digital future through recent executive appointments, changing roles and new hirings.

Interestingly, Johnson has

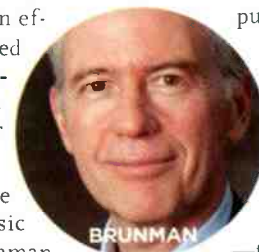
brought in a record guy with extensive movie soundtrack experience to head up the publisher's creative, A&R and synchronization efforts in the United States. **Glen Brunman** is now executive VP/head of creative (U.S.).

As executive VP of Sony Music Soundtrax, Brunman was most recently in charge of soundtracks for all Sony labels. During the past 15 years, he worked on more than 200 soundtrack albums, including "Dreamgirls," "Titanic," "Forrest Gump," "Chicago," "Philadelphia" and "Garden State." In the 1970s, he was a label publicist and worked on breakthrough albums

for **Bruce Springsteen**, **Billy Joel**, **Michael Jackson** and others.

"Glen is new to music publishing, but not new to the music business," Johnson says. "Because of the particular world he operated in for so many years—the intersection of

the music business and the film business—he had dealt with an extraordinarily wide range of creative and business people ranging from new artists to the most established artists, record labels—not just owned by his employer, but with other labels as well—and the whole range of motion picture producers, Hollywood



can be the coach."

And if anyone thinks Solomon has mellowed, don't get him started on where he believes the music industry went wrong.

"How do we get kids re-energized to buy records?" he asks. "No one in the industry will face that question. We just have to have something that kids will come in and buy on a regular basis."

SHIFTING SECTORS: At the midyear mark, the nontraditional sector—a category that combines download sales by stores like iTunes with online CD sales by merchants like Amazon, retailers like Starbucks, TV 800-phone orders and concert hall sales—remains the only growth sector in the United States. Nielsen SoundScan figures show nontraditional sales increasing to

39.7 million scans in the first six months of 2007, up 30.6% from the corresponding period last year. Those sales now comprise 17.3% of all album sales; in the first six months of 2006, nontraditional stores sold 11.2% of all albums.

But despite non-traditional stores' upswing, mass merchants like Wal-Mart and Target are still the most popular places to

buy CDs. In fact, 2007 marks the first time since the early days of the record industry that mass merchants have led the retail sector. This quarter, mass merchants widened their market-share lead while garnering 88.2 million album scans, equivalent to 38.4% of album sales vs. the 86.3 million scans, or 37.5% of album sales, for chains like Trans World Entertainment, Best Buy, Barnes & Noble, Newbury Comics and Gray Whale.

Not everything is coming up roses for mass merchants, though, as the sector still outpaces the overall industry's decline. In the first six months of 2007, the sector suffered an 18.1% drop, versus the U.S. industry's 15.1% dip. Breaking the sector out by quarter, album sales at mass merchants declined 17.8% in the first quarter and 18.5% in the second.

In its most recent fiscal results, Handleman Co.—a rackjobber that services a number of Wal-Mart and Kmart stores—noted that its sales are down because of a reduction in CD inventory in stores. Some executives suggest that the sector's sales have likely also suffered from country music's weak first-half release schedule.

Country's strongest sellers so far this year are **Carrie Underwood's** "Some Hearts," which arrived in November 2005, and **Rascal Flatts'** "Me and My Gang," which came out in April 2006.

"Is country down because the mass merchants are hurting, or are those stores' sales down because of the weak release schedule?" UMG Nashville executive VP of sales, marketing and new media **Ben Kline** asks. "Either way, both sides of the ledger are hurting." ...

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UNDERWOOD

studios, etc."

For Brunman, the timing was right to make the switch. What had interested him in movie music was the opportunity to find a film with the kind of music that the music business would never really associate itself with, he says. Then he would make a soundtrack to expose people to that music.

But now, he says, "soundtracks have become very predictable. In some ways, we had gotten ourselves back to the garden, to what soundtracks had always been—souvenirs of movies that people love because of the role that music plays in them. That's what was selling them. The whole game had become, 'Can you find those?' And having found them, 'Can you get [rights to release] them?' There wasn't a great opportunity to spread your wings nearly as far as you could spread them before."

Brunman says he sees himself moving from "a place where the opportunity to change, and to relate to all the changes in the business, was being restricted and narrowed" to a place where "everything is possible. In an expanding, changing uni-

verse, there are so many different ways to create and financially associate songs into different media that are growing and embracing music."

To help build a strong, digital foundation for these synch efforts, Johnson recruited Sony/ATV senior VP of business affairs and administration **Ann Sweeney** to become executive VP of Warner/Chappell.

Sweeney's central role will be dealing with digital revenue opportunities, working in close coordination with Warner Music Group (WGM) record labels.

"As we navigate the new-media world, there is the need for cooperation, the need for consensus within Warner/Chappell worldwide, within Warner Music Group and within the publishing industry," Johnson says. "We need someone like Ann, who has the talent, experience and personality that can bring people together."

One of Sweeney's goals is to contribute a publisher's viewpoint into the larger WGM digital business strategy and into all the WGM deals.

"Publishers are used to

thinking about the separate aspects of our bundle of rights," Sweeney says. "Most digital deals implicate a whole number of those rights: a stream versus a download, using lyrics or, to the extent we control them, rights in a name and likeness. A publisher's mind logically breaks a user's experience down into which rights are implicated, and then we can step in and sort of place a price tag on them. We're also typically looking long term, to promote the long-term value to our copyrights for our songwriters and our shareholders." Sweeney will also be identifying and completing catalog acquisitions as well as working with the publisher's senior team to tackle issues that affect music publishers industry-wide.

Other appointments include **Brad Rosenberger**, who now heads up strategic marketing and synch licensing to coordinate these two departments. **Ed Pierson** in Los Angeles and **Jane Dyball** in London will continue handling business and legal affairs. ...

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LITTLE STEVEN'S UNDERGROUND GARAGE



GARAGE ROCK

As even the slowest of us start to realize there will be no getting out of this permanently bad economy, that it isn't a cycle or a temporary blip, we will begin to see the last vestiges of reason, logic, pride, quality, integrity and dignity fly out the window.

Of course few of us will notice since most of those things have been systematically compromised, trivialized and marginalized by our corporate elite, and Lord knows our government, for quite some time and live on in our culture exclusively in disparate groups that by now must resemble religious cults and pitifully handicapped social niches.

The latest evidence of this sad loss of logic, pride and integrity comes in the form of a feverish obsession by virtually everyone to make all those greedy, evil radio stations pay for the privilege of playing our precious records.

How dare they!
The free dance is over, buddy, it's time to pay the piper!

It's perfectly obvious that this has been the problem with the record industry all along.

Too much damn airplay!
And now that we've figured out that radio is the enemy, we're going to need a spokesman to voice our feelings and calm the outraged millions of customers who are angry and embarrassed at having been hoodwinked into foolishly buying records simply because they heard the song on the radio. And ladies and gentlemen—right on cue—here he is:

University of Texas at Dallas economics professor **Stan Liebowitz**, who argues that radio "acts as a substitute for music sales. If they weren't listening to the radio in their cars," he opines, "they might buy more CDs."

What else is he teaching those lucky kids in Dallas? That those oil wells out the window are the real keys to the greening of America?

With all due respect, professor, *why* will everyone be buying these CDs, or downloading or

whatever? Because they like the artwork?

We have talked about, right here, the new ways people hear music and its significance especially for young bands: ads, videogames, TV, movies, ringtones, car horns, whatever.

But can any sane human being think all that can ever replace a great radio station?

Could it be that the professor has forgotten, or is too young to know, that there would be no record industry without radio?

Does anyone think it's a coincidence that ever since radio has been playing less and less new music, new music sales have gone down? And now we want to make it *less* profitable for radio to support new music?

I am a songwriter and a performer and I own record companies and publishing companies and I do not believe radio should pay anything to anyone. And I mean every kind of radio.

Let me go further and say anyone performing a song on TV or in a movie in a concert context shouldn't have to ask permission to do it or pay anyone either.

Soundtracks? Yes, that's different. Videogames? Yes. Ads? Yes.

But radio stations and concert performers shouldn't have to pay for promoting our music and helping us sell it. Radio is the greatest thing that ever happened to us all, not counting **Les Paul** sticking that pickup on his guitar—which also worked out quite well.

The record industry, the publishers and our government should be doing everything possible to help radio, old and new, and start treating it like the national treasure it is instead of trying to kill the golden goose that's carried everyone for 60 years.

And as for you economics professors, how about you spend some time figuring out why the value of the dollar is worthless and leave the music stuff to us?

See you on the radio. ...

COOLEST GARAGE SONGS

TITLE	ARTIST / LABEL
1 DO THE ROBOT <small>COOLEST SONG IN THE WORLD THIS WEEK</small>	SEISELY & THE SAFETY PIN-UPS / TEENACIDE
2 LINDSAY NEVER GETS LONLEY	THE ACTUAL / SOFT DRIVE
3 99%	THE MOONEY SUZUKI / ELIXIA
4 SOME OTHER GUY	THE HENCHMEN / ITALY RECORDS
5 CODE FUN	BLACK TIE REVUE / GEARHEAD
6 SHE'S MY GIRL	THE SHAKE / RAINBOW QUARTZ
7 RENTACROWD	THE LEN PRICE 3 / WICKED COOL*
8 DANNY SAYS	FOO FIGHTERS / CBGB FOREVER
9 DANCE THE GO-GO	THE BREAKERS / FUNZALO
10 ICKY THUMP	THE WHITE STRIPES / WARNER BROS.

COOLEST GARAGE ALBUMS

TITLE	ARTIST / LABEL
1 ICKY THUMP	THE WHITE STRIPES / WARNER BROS.
2 BABY 81	BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB / RCA
3 THE WEIRDNESS	THE STOOGES / VIRGIN
4 CBGB FOREVER	VARIOUS ARTISTS / CBGB FOREVER
5 YOURS TRULY, ANGRY MOB	KAISER CHIEFS / UNIVERSAL
6 GLITTER IN THE GUTTER	JESSE MALIN / ADELIN
7 HAVE MERCY	THE MOONEY SUZUKI / ELIXIA
8 HERE FOR A LAUGH	THE BREAKERS / FUNZALO
9 RENTACROWD	THE LEN PRICE 3 / WICKED COOL*
10 CATCH YOUR SNAP	PEACHFUZZ / TEENACIDE

*NEW YORK-BASED WICKED COOL RECORDS IS CREATED AND HEADED BY LITTLE STEVEN VAN ZANDT.

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On The Road

RAY WADDELL rwaddell@billboard.com

Loud And Proud

Sounds Of The Underground Boosts A Black-Sheep Genre

There's something about the gentle strains of **Goatwhore** hovering on a warm evening breeze that signals summer is here.

Sounds of the Underground (SOTU), the annual pilgrimage of niche hard rock bands, is out again. Presented by Hot Topic, the lineup boasts **GWAR, Shadows Fall, Chimaira, Every Time I Die, Job for a Cowboy, Necro, Darkest Hour, Amon Amarth, the Acacia Strain, the Devil Wears Prada, Heavy Heavy Low Low, the Number Twelve Looks Like You, This Is Hell, 2 Cents** and, yes, Goatwhore.

As ever, the tour is managed by principals **Paul Conroy** and **Carl Severson** of Ferret Music, **Tim Borror** of the Agency Group and **Larry Mazer** of Entertainment Services. What these guys do, basically, is provide a platform for bands that must tour to connect with fans, because radio and TV are pretty much out of the question.

"Ozzfest pays a little attention to some of these bands. Warped pays a little attention to some of them, and some of them nobody pays attention," Borror says. "We're waving the flag for these bands, and we're getting somewhere with it. I wouldn't hang it all on this tour as the reason that's happening, but it's another strong component, along with these labels and managers that are passionately behind them."

For sure, no one's getting rich on SOTU. Borror says the tour has yet to finish in the black. In short, everyone's taking it on the chin in the interest of artist development and supporting this multigenre metal tour.

Live Nation is onboard as producer this year, filling a role that House of Blues handled in the past. So Borror and his partners have managed to keep the attention of national promoters. Talent buyer **Kelly Kapp** is leading the charge on the Live Nation side of the team. Kapp has a background working with Ozzfest and Family Values.

The Live Nation team has had an immediate impact on SOTU by increasing sponsorship involvement. Label partners are Metal Blade Records, Prosthetic Records, Trustkill Records and the Syndicate, and tour sponsors in addition to Hot Topic include Music Choice, Ibanez, Tama, Manhunt 2, Purevolume, AOL Radio, Revolver magazine, Lambgoat and Full Metal Jackie.

Kapp says up-and-coming bands in the genre like Job for a Cowboy, the Devil Wears Prada and Necro make SOTU attractive to brands like Hot Topic.

"They've done a really good job picking out bands that kids in Hot Topic want to see. They feel like it's their summer tour," Kapp says. "There are Hot Topic band signings at every tour stop. Kids have the opportunity to meet every band on the bill."

SOTU averaged less than 3,000 people per show last year, even though in some cases it was booked into much larger venues. That's one of the reasons Borror and company "pulled in the reins" a little this year and booked generally smaller rooms. "Our focus this year was to keep the brand alive with some level of damage control," he says. "We didn't want to go out and sell it to the same-sized venues we have in the past and just crush promoters."

That said, ticket counts early on are satisfactory in most cases and better than expected in others, propelled by a strong presale with direct-to-fan site ArtistArena and through livenation.com. Special guests in certain markets are providing steam.

"In New Jersey we've got **Testament** making a one-off appearance with **All That Remains**. We've got a real good shot of having our biggest show in New Jersey in three years," Borror says. "On the West Coast we've got **Suicidal Tendencies** headlining on three shows. And we've got **Lamb of God** and **Behemoth** in Louisville [Ky.] for the last date of the tour on one of their off days of Ozzfest, so that's going to be special."

The always candid Borror says he thought SOTU would be a bigger tour in its third year. But one thing is for sure: The crew is not giving up. They're hard-headed headbangers.

"We like to think of SOTU as the little tour that could. It's a bunch of people with a good idea and a lot of spirit for what we're doing," he says. "We haven't had the big breakthrough yet, but we've had a lot of wins that we've chalked up. It's a slow grind to the promised land."



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	GROSS/ TICKET PRICE(S)	ARTIST(S) Venue, Date	Attendance Capacity	Promoter
1	\$3,784,600 \$225/\$50	THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE American Airlines Center, Dallas, June 26-27	33,708 two sellouts	The Next Adventure (A Live Nation Company)
2	\$3,281,121 \$91.50/\$51.50	KENNY CHESNEY, BROOKS & DUNN, SUGARLAND & OTHERS Qwest Field, Seattle, July 7	45,939 sellout	The Messina Group/AEG Live
3	\$2,866,956 \$225/\$175/ \$127.50/\$87.50	CELINE DION Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, June 27-July 1	20,740 five sellouts	Concerts West/AEG Live
4	\$2,753,651 \$128/\$45	ROGER WATERS Wachovia Center, Philadelphia, June 1-2	23,692 two sellouts	Live Nation
5	\$2,420,461 \$92.25/\$68.25/ \$52.50/\$32.50	TIM MCGRAW & FAITH HILL TD Banknorth Garden, Boston, July 5-6	28,417 30,472 two shows one sellout	Live Nation
6	\$1,872,140 \$200/\$50	THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE Scottrade Center, St. Louis, July 2	17,821 sellout	The Next Adventure (A Live Nation Company)
7	\$1,847,945 \$225/\$50	THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE Toyota Center, Houston, June 29	15,651 sellout	The Next Adventure (A Live Nation Company)
8	\$1,677,470 \$200/\$50	THE POLICE, FICTION PLANE New Orleans Arena, New Orleans, June 30	15,992 sellout	The Next Adventure (A Live Nation Company)
9	\$1,498,817 \$129.50/\$49.50	ROGER WATERS United Center, Chicago, June 9	14,372 14,736	Live Nation
10	\$1,413,522 (\$1,498,439 Canadian) \$141.50/\$65.56	ROGER WATERS Bell Centre, Montreal, June 7	12,896 15,351	Live Nation
11	\$1,411,844 \$170/\$35	ROGER WATERS Madison Square Garden, New York, May 30	15,217 sellout	Live Nation
12	\$1,271,704 \$148/\$31	ROGER WATERS Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J., May 24	13,945 sellout	Live Nation
13	\$1,202,327 (\$1,273,207 Canadian) \$141.65/\$65.63	ROGER WATERS Scotiabank Place, Ottawa, June 6	10,937 2,898	Live Nation
14	\$1,158,623 \$127/\$45	ROGER WATERS Phillips Arena, Atlanta, May 22	12,204 13,525	Live Nation
15	\$1,121,748 \$92.75/\$68.75/ \$52.75/\$33	TIM MCGRAW & FAITH HILL Verizon Center, Washington, D.C., July 7	13,390 14,753	Live Nation
16	\$1,030,400 \$129.50/\$25.25	ROGER WATERS Ford Amphitheatre, Tampa, Fla., May 19	19,366 sellout	Live Nation
17	\$1,007,119 (\$1,067,882 Canadian) \$141.47/\$65.55	ROGER WATERS Colisee Pepsi, Quebec City, June 4	9,414 9,530	Live Nation
18	\$1,000,052 \$129.50/\$25.25	ROGER WATERS Sound Advice Amphitheatre, West Palm Beach, Fla., May 18	19,381 sellout	Live Nation
19	\$995,995 \$30/\$19.89	ROCKFEST: GODSMACK, THREE DAYS GRACE, BUCKCHERRY & OTHERS Liberty Memorial Park, Kansas City, Mo., June 9	40,000 sellout	AEG Live
20	\$966,083 \$77.75/\$39.75	KENNY CHESNEY, PAT GREEN Sleep Train Amphitheatre, Marysville, Calif., July 3	17,384 sellout	Live Nation, The Messina Group/AEG Live
21	\$860,671 \$125.50/\$29.50	RUSH Nikon Jones Beach Theater, Wantagh, N.Y., July 2	12,300 13,851	The Next Adventure (A Live Nation Company)
22	\$847,913 \$77.75/\$39.75	KENNY CHESNEY, PAT GREEN Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, Calif., July 2	16,783 sellout	Live Nation, The Messina Group/AEG Live
23	\$748,881 \$55.50/\$35.50	JOHN MAYER, BEN FOLDS, BRETT DENNEN Smirnoff Music Centre, Dallas, June 22	19,552 sellout	Live Nation
24	\$689,995 \$78/\$25.50	RUSH Tweeter Center, Mansfield, Mass., June 27	12,358 14,245	The Next Adventure (A Live Nation Company)
25	\$662,267 \$92/\$35	RUSH Tweeter Center Waterfront, Camden, N.J., July 6	12,180 24,956	The Next Adventure (A Live Nation Company)
26	\$640,046 (\$681,400 Canadian) \$39.92/\$35.22	MAMU CHAO Parc Jean-Drapeau, Montreal, July	17,830 20,000	Gillett Entertainment Group, Festival Jazz de Montreal
27	\$628,792 \$81/\$31	RUSH PNC Bank Arts Center, Holmdel, N.J., July 8	12,014 16,996	The Next Adventure (A Live Nation Company)
28	\$621,988 \$35/\$20.24	VANS WARPED TOUR: CUTE IS WHAT WE AIM FOR & OTHERS Fairplex Park, Pomona, Calif., June 29	20,916 sellout	Goldenvoice/AEG Live
29	\$614,249 \$264/\$23.50	DEF LEPPARD, STYX, FOREIGNER First Midwest Bank Amphitheatre, Tinley Park, Ill., June 30	15,848 28,534	Live Nation
30	\$611,972 \$53/\$29	JOHN MAYER, BEN FOLDS, BRETT DENNEN Verizon Wireless Music Center, Noblesville, Ind., June 30	18,591 23,856	Live Nation
31	\$599,840 (\$1,481,665 lei) \$120/\$20	RBD, DIEGO Stadionul Cotroceni, Bucharest, Romania, June 12	8,744 9,000	Roptus
32	\$595,866 \$63.50	KS 107.5 SUMMER JAM LUDACRIS, ICE CUBE, BOW WOW & OTHERS Coors Amphitheatre, Englewood, Colo., June 9	16,336 sellout	Live Nation
33	\$594,843 (\$631,295 Canadian) \$79.50/\$49.50	GWEN STEFANI, LADY SOVEREIGN, AKON MTS Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, June 10	8,893 11,274	Live Nation
34	\$591,037 \$79.50/\$35.50	BOB DYLAN Nikon Jones Beach Theater, Wantagh, N.Y., June 29	9,067 13,836	Live Nation
35	\$590,113 \$205.50/\$126/ \$81/\$51	TRUE COLORS: CYNDI LAUPER, ERASURE, DEBORAH HARRY & OTHERS Radio City Music Hall, New York, June 18	5,959 sellout	Metropolitan Talent Presents

ISLAND
URBAN
PRESIDENT

Jermaine Dupri

The man has worked with many acts, including Mariah Carey and Dem Franchize Boyz. His latest signing, Jason Fox, is a YouTube phenomenon.



duction team, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis?

I don't really know what he's got in mind at this point. His past record isn't shabby so I'm going to let him do what he's going to do. I'm going to do Mariah, and we're going to make it seem like we're in competition to see who's going to have the biggest album of the year.

You signed Jason Fox to a singles deal. Why?

That's all he had, so we hope to sell a shitload of ringtones and have it be one of the most popular records of the year.

What drew you to him?

Jason Fox created this dance called the "Aunt Jackie." I was drawn to him because the kids in Atlanta are creating their own buzz. There's a kid called Soulja Boy, and he's signed to Mr. Colipark. He's got over a million hits on his MySpace page and a song in Atlanta called "Crank Dat." It's a new dance that all these kids are doing, but I'm like, "Where the fuck are they seeing this dance?" There's no video on TV, yet it's big.

These kids aren't paying attention to the charts. If it's big to them, it's huge in their mind. When they go in these teen clubs, these are the records they want to hear and the dances they want to do. So when I saw Jason Fox and the Hood Presidents, it reminded me of the same thing going on in Atlanta. People keep trying to separate these cities, to make them so different. The sound is different, but attitude and the atmosphere is the same. The kids are just trying to find their own thing, and Jason Fox is representing Harlem. ...

On the heels of taking Atlanta's snap scene mainstream with Dem Franchize Boyz and recrafting Mariah Carey's stale stardom into the multiplatinum, worldwide success that was "The Emancipation of Mimi," Jermaine Dupri recently became president of Island Urban. Waving goodbye to his president of urban music position at Virgin Records late last year, following the lackluster sales of girlfriend Janet Jackson's "20 Y.O.," Dupri announced in February that he was joining the Island Def Jam family.

A producer at heart, Dupri acknowledges that he's working on several projects, including Usher's fourth-quarter disc and Whitney Houston's forthcoming "comeback album." (He wrote and produced "Never Give In.") Dupri is also attacking the YouTube generation with his newest artist, Jason Fox. Dupri was recently honored at ASCAP's 20th annual Rhythm & Soul Awards with the songwriter of the year award for the seventh time.

Reflecting on his career—which visibly began in Whodini's "Freaks Come Out at Night" video with a wide smile, denim vest and slick breakdancing moves—Dupri says songwriters are served best when they "just try to write as many songs as you can and always believe in your songs. Don't let somebody tear your records apart."

Dupri—whose autobiography, "Young, Rich and Dangerous: My Life in Music," arrives Oct. 16 via Simon & Schuster—has yet to discuss with anyone exactly what he plans to do with the newly formed Island Urban imprint. During a one-on-one conversation with Billboard, Dupri couldn't help but talk about Jackson's new label home (Island), Carey's new album and why today's kids don't care about charts anymore.

First things first—what are your plans for Island Urban?

I'm going to continue what I've been doing: bring new, young and fresh talent to the label. I want to re-create what Hiram Hicks had when he ran Island Records separately from the Def Jam brand. Artists like Dru Hill and Ron Isley made Island's urban music more of its own situation. The kids want to be on Def Jam. It's like when I'd sign somebody to Virgin and they'd want to be on So So Def. It's the branding that they recognize. However, So So Def artists feel differently to me.

What's different about a So So Def act and an Island Urban act?

Johnta Austin and Jagged Edge are So So Def. The So So Def artists are more in tune with my life and want to be a part of Jermaine Dupri at all times. You've got artists that want to create their own thing and their own move-

ment. They've got their own production company and already have their thing going, so that doesn't really lend itself to being molded. At So So Def, we create the momentum around you. The Def Jam artist Sterling Simms is going to become a So So Def artist. He's a nice, cool kid that we could definitely groom in the right direction.

How will you build the Island Urban brand?

We're just going to put out records, and most importantly, create hype with the records. Once the records are released and people start recognizing the records, then I'll begin doing the parties and building the brand that way. But right now it's about the music.

What are your first releases?

I've got a bunch of releases coming up on Island Urban. One of our first is Jason Fox with the song "Aunt Jackie," which is out

now. Johnta Austin's single "Video" featuring DJ Unk is also out now, along with Jagged Edge's "Put a Little Umph" featuring Ashanti. I got them off of Columbia Records and signed them to Island Urban. Hot Dollar also has his first record called "Streets on Lock." Both Hot Dollar and Johnta's albums are coming out Aug. 21, and Jagged Edge's album is due Aug. 28.

Now that you're part of Mariah Carey's label, have your responsibilities with her upcoming project increased?

No, I'm doing the exact same thing I did before. But I do get to hear more music from the other producers beforehand. Last time, I just went into the studio and did what I did. Now, it's a little bit more A&R work. We're working on her album right now.

Is there a tentative album release date and title?

I want to say the week of Thanksgiving. And no album title yet, though I'm sure she's got it already.

When you're signing artists, are you more intensely focusing on hip-hop or R&B?

I don't really have an agenda in that way. I'm hoping that I can kill on both sides. I'm coming with a lot of R&B records and have more R&B records coming right now than I do rap.

Has Janet Jackson been officially added to Island Urban?

She's on Island, but it's more or less [Antonio "L.A." Reid's] project. I let him deal with that on a day-to-day basis. He's going to A&R that project, too. Janet's record is one that he's wanted to do for a long time. He's very passionate about it.

Does he have plans to partner Jackson with her original pro-

The So So Def artists are more in tune with my life and want to be a part of Jermaine Dupri at all times.

James Blunt

BEAUTIFUL AND THE BEAT

Can James Blunt's Follow-Up Match His Debut's Gargantuan Global Success?

By Michael Paoletta Photograph by Andrew Zaeh

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Blunt





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James Blunt spent the better part of 2006 living and working in Ibiza, Spain, one of the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean Sea. Known for its nonstop summer dance parties, Ibiza is not the first destination that comes to mind when thinking of the mellow British singer/songwriter. **Blunt's** breakthrough debut, "Back to Bedlam"—released in 2004 in the United Kingdom and one year later in the United States, where it has sold 2.6 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan—was anything but dance music. In fact, its smash hit, "You're Beautiful," could have passed for a 1970s AM radio staple. But there was Blunt, last summer, making the scene like a veteran of the club community. "You go to Space at nine in the morning, and you carry on till nine in the evening," Blunt says with a smile. "I'm a healthy clubgoer."

Following a day—or night—of clubbing, Blunt would "head back to mine": to his secluded home "away up in the hills." It was there, with a piano and guitar at his side, that he wrote many of the songs that appear on his second Custard/Atlantic album, "All the Lost Souls," due Sept. 18 (one day earlier internationally).

According to Blunt, the album's lead single, the propulsive, anthemic "1973," which makes its worldwide radio debut July 23 (the digital download and accompanying video will be available at iTunes Aug. 7), was inspired by all that dancing and hanging out in Ibiza.

Blunt stayed in Ibiza beyond the summer season. But during the winter, when the tourists and partiers were nowhere to be found on the island, Blunt describes his daily routine as "alone and secluded—living like a monk."

It proved to be an amazing experience. "I hadn't been alone for three years," he says. "I'd been sleeping on a tour bus with 12 people. So, it was a real moment to stop and have a look around, to realize what had gone on in my life and find a sense of calm."

He was also able to free himself of competing with the success of his debut album. "There's no way I'm going to sell 11 million copies" of the new album, he says, citing his debut's global sales figure. "That album was a moment and I'm happy for that, but I'm certainly not going to try to emulate it in any sort of way."

Once upon a time—back before he embarked on a career in the music industry—Blunt had greatly different issues to confront.

The son of a colonel, Blunt (whose real surname is Blount) served as an officer in the British army—a stint that included NATO's peacekeeping force in Kosovo. He exited the army in 2002, swapping his gun for a guitar.

As a struggling musician armed with a demo, Blunt caught the attention of Twenty-First Artists and EMI Music Publishing, which signed him to management and publishing deals, respectively.

Toward the end of 2002, songwriter/producer Linda Perry was in London, "hopping from label to label as a fan" with hopes of hearing some new music that would excite her. "But I was pretty much disappointed," she recalls. That is, until she stopped by the offices of EMI Music Publishing, where she heard Blunt's demos.

At the time, Blunt didn't have a label deal. In Perry, EMI saw a potential collaborator for Blunt. She had other things in mind: "I said, 'He doesn't need a collaborator—he needs a record label.'" Days later, I was having dinner with James and told him I wanted to sign him to my label [Custard]."

Fast forward to South by Southwest in 2003, where Blunt performed at a showcase in a banquet room at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Perry was one of about 20 people in the room. Within days, Blunt and Perry had done a deal.

"Bedlam" went on to spend nine weeks at No. 1 in the United Kingdom. "You're Beautiful" was the third single and wound up topping the charts for five weeks. By the end of 2005, "Bedlam" was the biggest-selling album of the year in the United Kingdom.

Eventually, "Bedlam" topped the album charts in 16 territories around the world, and was No. 1 on the European Top 100 Albums tally for more than two months. In the United States, "You're Beautiful" topped The Billboard Hot 100 in the March 11, 2006, issue. In the process, Blunt became the first British artist to achieve that feat since Elton John's "Candle in the Wind 1997."

So without question, "All the Lost Souls" is a fourth-quarter (and beyond) priority for Atlantic Records. "James is coming off 11 million sold worldwide of his debut," Atlantic president Julie Greenwald says. "He's super important. We see him as a career artist and an important singer/songwriter."

But this time out, Atlantic won't be able to micro-manage the new release geographically, as it did with the debut. "With the first album, James was an unknown artist, so we had the time and luxury to market and promote it in each territory," says Blunt's manager, Todd Interland of Twenty-First Artists. "Now, we are setting up a global campaign."

In the States, with the new album, Target and Wal-Mart will each sell exclusive CD/DVD collections, while Target will also pre-sell tickets for Blunt's tour early next year. Atlantic will initially seed "1973" at adult top 40 and triple-A radio before servicing mainstream top 40. Beginning July 23, Verizon Wireless will exclusively offer the full digital download of the track for two weeks. On the radio front, it already has some influential fans.

"The mark of a true superstar is following a huge hit with a song that takes the artist to a whole new level,"



JAMES BLUNT (above, performing July 7 in London at Live Earth) turned to outside writers like Mark Batson and Max Martin to enrich his new songs.

The British Bonanza

U.K. Talent Makes Inroads In The U.S.

After a long run of limited visibility on the Billboard charts—in spring 2002, for the first time in almost 40 years there were no U.K. acts on The Billboard Hot 100 for two consecutive issues—U.K. talent has made a major comeback during the past few years. Beyond James Blunt, here are some of the top U.K. acts hitting it big stateside:

ARCTIC MONKEYS

After storming the U.K. charts with their ramshackle debut, these lads from Sheffield made significantly more inroads here with the recent "Favourite Worst Nightmare." The album debuted at a career-best No. 7 on The Billboard 200 and has shifted 110,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan, despite limited touring and airplay.



ARCTIC MONKEYS

KT TUNSTALL

This Scottish singer/songwriter was a complete unknown in the States with the release of her 2006 debut, "Eye to the Telescope," but such singles as "Black Horse & the Cherry Tree" made her a quick fixture on AC radio. The album has gone on to sell 1.1 million copies. Sophomore project "Drastic Fantastic" is due Sept. 18 via Virgin.

KEANE

Keane's mellow, piano-driven rock rode a post-Coldplay wave to the upper reaches of the charts in recent years. Last year's "Under the Iron Sea" debuted at a career-high No. 4 on The Billboard 200 and has shifted 342,000 units, while 2004's "Hopes and Fears" is at 944,000.

NATASHA BEDINGFIELD

Her 2005 Epic debut, "Unwritten," was a surprise stateside hit thanks to radio faves like the title track and "These Words," which propelled sales to 811,000 copies. The artist's next project, "N.B.," is slated to arrive in the States in October.

LILY ALLEN

A sugary-sweet voice mixed with a bad-girl attitude—what's not to love? The 21-year-old's Capitol debut, "Alright, Still," arrived amid mega-hype but has shown commercial staying power, peaking at No. 20 on The Billboard 200 and selling 344,000 units.

AMY WINEHOUSE

Over-the-top behavior, bouffant hairstyles and a dynamite voice landed this soul siren's jazzy breakout, "Back to Black," at No. 6 on The Billboard 200. Thanks to hit singles "Rehab" and "You Know I'm No Good," the album has moved 759,000 copies since March and is poised for a big summer.

SNOW PATROL

This group rose from obscurity with 2004's "Final Straw," which scraped its way to gold status on the back of the arena ballad "Run." After building a loyal U.S. base with constant touring, the group's 2006 album "Eyes Open" raised its U.S. profile exponentially, with sales now at 1 million copies. —Jill Menze



KT TUNSTALL

VIDEO: For more on Winehouse and Allen's over-the-top behavior, go to billboard.com/sixty.

pen with these two in the studio?' But we clicked immediately. I'd play a piano part, he'd play some guitar, we'd work on a melody together. We kept bouncing ideas off each other."

"James wanted to change up and experiment with songwriters and sounds," Atlantic Records chairman/CEO Craig Kallman adds. "The new album is soulful and has an edge; it speaks to James' evolution as an artist."

Early last month, the label and Interland began previewing the album for U.S. tastemakers from the worlds of radio, retail, advertising, TV and film. A couple of weeks later, Blunt performed a short set at the 54th annual Cannes Lions, the international advertising festival held in France. "This was our way of letting the ad agencies and their creatives know that James is back with something new," says Camille Hackney, senior VP of brand partnerships and commercial licensing at Atlantic Records.

Though nothing is yet confirmed, Greenwald confirms that the performance has led to numerous agencies and their clients (brands) expressing interest in working with Blunt on upcoming campaigns. And for Blunt, the gig wasn't a first, either: During a New York showcase at the Cutting Room in fall 2005, he played to a packed room of creatives and music supervisors.

This paved the way to "Bedlam" tracks "High" and "You're Beautiful" being featured in multiplatform campaigns for Hilton and Sprint, respectively. ("High" was also featured in a Vodaphone spot in Europe.) In fact, nearly every song from "Bedlam" was licensed, more than once, for use in TV and films (see list, right).

That multiplatform exposure was key in breaking Blunt commercially. By late 2005/early 2006, radio was playing "You're Beautiful," while "High" was heard in the Hilton campaign. Meanwhile, Blunt was already treating fans to follow-up single "Goodbye My Love" during performances on "Saturday Night Live" and "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

"People were hearing one song on the radio, but different [ones] in ads, TV shows and films," Atlantic senior VP of pop/rock marketing Dane Venable says.

While radio has been good to Blunt, the singer is fully aware that it focuses on tracks more than albums. Because of this, Blunt believes it's not wise to be wholly dependent on the format. "In the digital age, a person hears one song on the radio and then downloads that song," he says. "In my case, they have then missed nine songs, which are just as important.

"So, you need to look at other ways to get your music heard," he continues. "At least, if [people] hear other songs, and not just the ones on the radio, they'll approach the album as a whole. And they'll click on 'buy album' and go on the journey that we recorded."

To get fans started down that road, Blunt sang "Same Mistake" during his July 7 Live Earth set at London's Wembley Stadium. On July 12, he was scheduled to deliver a sunset performance in a private villa in Ibiza for key international media, mobile and online companies.

These new eyes and ears would be joining an audience that covers a wide terrain. "His fans range in age from 10 to 60"—and you can't say it's predominantly female," Interland says. "In the U.S., people focused on 'You're Beautiful' and 'Goodbye My Love,' which tug at the heartstrings, attracting a more female demo."

It's not surprising, then, to find Blunt confirmed to appear on a handful of morning/daytime and late-night TV shows surrounding the release of "All the Lost Souls."

On Sept. 18, he will perform on "Today." It will mark his fourth appearance on the morning show, which prides itself on being the first TV show in America on which Blunt performed (Nov. 3, 2005). "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live" are on his slate as well—along with "secret live shows" in the United States, Venable says. Blunt will spend October overseas; then, it's back to the States for more. The goal is simple: to repeat the worldwide success of "Bedlam."

That Synch King Feeling

Licensing-Wise, James Blunt Leaves No Song Unturned

When it comes to synch licenses, James Blunt is no slouch. Nearly every song from his debut album, "Back to Bedlam," has been featured—more than once—in TV shows, films, promo/trailer spots and ad campaigns. Indeed, his songs resonate with many in Hollywood and on Madison Avenue.

"Today" senior producer Melissa Lonner—responsible for all talent/entertainment bookings—credits this to Blunt's voice and storytelling. "His songs are about falling in and out of love, about wanting to be pursued and yearning for another, about breaking up and feeling sad," Lonner says. "His songs are a soap opera. Everyone can relate."

The following list details, "Bedlam" track by "Bedlam" track, each song's synch licenses.

—MP

TRACK ONE

'HIGH'

ABC Family Channel promos (August 2006)

"Las Vegas" (May 12, 2006)

"Courting Alex" (Feb. 6, 2006)

"Rabbit Fever" film (2006)

Hilton advertising campaign (2006)

"Wildfire" (June 20, 2005)

"Grey's Anatomy" (Nov. 15, 2005)

"Grey's Anatomy" promo spots (November 2005)

TRACK TWO

'YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL'

"Days of Our Lives" (March 14, 2006)

"Extreme Home Makeover" promo spots



(February 2006)

"Smallville" (Jan. 26, 2006)

"Beauty and the Geek 2" (Jan. 11-12, 2006; March 9, 2006)

Sprint ad campaign (2006)

"ER" (Oct. 20, 2005) 2006 Winter Olympics promo spots

(October 2005-February 2006)

"Just Like Heaven" film trailer (October 2005)

"Wildfire" (Aug. 1, 2005)

"Wildfire" promo spots (January 2005)

"Undiscovered" film (2005)

TRACK THREE

'WISEMEN'

"Runaway" (Sept. 25, 2006)

"Trust the Man" film (May 2006)

TRACK FOUR

'GOODBYE MY LOVER'

"The Office" (Dec. 14, 2006)

"The Young and the Restless" (April 20, 2006)

"Las Vegas" (May 12, 2006)

TRACK FIVE

'TEARS AND RAIN'

"Brothers & Sisters" promo spots (September 2006)

"Vanished" (Aug. 21, 2006)

"Windfall" (June 15, 2006)

"Conviction" (March 3, 2006)

"South Beach" (Jan. 18, 2006)

"Grey's Anatomy" (Dec. 4, 2005)

"Criminal Minds" (Nov. 2, 2005)

"Wildfire" (July 11, 2005)

TRACK SEVEN

'SO LONG JIMMY'

"Love Monkey" (Feb. 7, 2006)

TRACK NINE

'CRY'

"Without a Trace" (May 11, 2006)

TRACK TEN

'NO BRAVERY'

"Conviction" (March 31, 2006)

BONUS*

'FALL AT YOUR FEET'

"The OC" (Feb. 2, 2006)

* Bonus song in iTunes album bundle and a live cut on "Back to Bedlam" expanded edition

'If people hear other songs and not just the ones on the radio, they'll approach the album as a whole.'

—James Blunt

Despite his enormous success at home, Blunt has come in for a mauling from the acerbic British press, which has targeted the troubadour for his high-pitched singing voice, his nonconfrontational music and his well-to-do background. The criticism has been so harsh that Coldplay frontman Chris Martin called for a media truce during the 2006 BRIT Awards.

Blunt's name has even entered the vernacular in Britain, although not in a flattering context. To be called "a James Blunt" is an X-rated slur. (Replace the first two letters of Blunt's last name with the third letter of the alphabet.) To his credit, Blunt has made light of it. He is purported as having said, "John F. Kennedy got an airport named after him. I got my favorite part of the female anatomy." During a video tribute to his manager at the Music Managers Roll of Honour in London earlier this year, a jovial Blunt introduced himself as "James Cunt."

Never taking himself or his newfound superstar status too seriously also helped Blunt see his new songs on "All the Lost Souls" to fruition. Once ensconced with his band and "Bedlam" producer Tom Rothrock at Conway Studio in Los Angeles to rehearse the songs (prior to hunkering down in Rothrock's studio for the actual recording process), the artist began a running joke that lasted throughout the practice sessions.

Each day, as the band arrived at Conway, Blunt or one of his bandmates would press the buzzer and, like

clockwork, the receptionist would ask, "Who's there?" Laughing, Blunt says the response was always the same: "Hey, we're the James Blunt Band and we're here to create soft-rock history." Keyboardist Paul Beard, guitarist Ben Castle, bassist Malcolm Moore and drummer Karl Brazil, who had toured with Blunt for the past two-and-a-half years, played and recorded the 10 songs as a unit, together and live. "There was strong desire to capture that live-band feel that was so prevalent in the '70s," Blunt says. The recording process was in direct contrast to that of "Bedlam," which Blunt made with studio musicians and then overdubbed many of the instruments himself.

Upon arriving at Conway on the final day of rehearsals, Blunt pressed the buzzer to gain entry and said, "We're the James Blunt Band. What are we here to do?" Without missing a beat, the receptionist said, "You're here to create soft-rock history." Retelling this story, Blunt cannot help but laugh: "She totally got it."

Now, Blunt will step back and hope his fans will stay with him the second time around. "I'm really excited to see the development from an album that was naive and honest and charming in its own way," he says, "to an album that is a bit deeper, a bit richer in its approach."

Additional reporting by Lars Brandle in London.



MAKING

Can An MTV SERIES Still Create A Music Career? BY BRIAN GARRITY

When Bamboo Shoots recently made their national TV debut on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien," they were an obscure booking, even by the standards of a show that specializes in spotlighting lesser-known acts. The band, which plays a funky, South Asian/Indian-influenced variation of pop-emo, didn't have an album, had never been on a label, claimed fewer than 3,000 MySpace friends and had never performed in front of a crowd larger than a few hundred people. But they had a backer that most bands with such a thin résumé do not: MTV. In mid-May, Bamboo Shoots were named the winner of a discover-the-best-unsigned-college-band contest from MTV Networks' mtvU—selected from a mixture of fan voting online at mtvu.com and vetting by executives at MTV and Epic Records. And, in a Cinderella turn, the quintet with ties to Middlesex County College in New Jersey, found themselves thrashing about in front of the "Late Night" cameras just days later.

"These kids come on and I invite them over to the couch afterwards and they're high-fiving each other, they're just jumping off the couches they're so excited," O'Brien says.

The gig was part of a prize package worth more than \$1 million that also included a recording contract with Epic and a substantial promotional commitment from MTV once the album came out.

The mtvU promotion, called Best Music on Campus, (BMO) is just one of a number of reality band initiatives MTV Networks has in the works for emerging acts across its channels. Other recent and pending projects:

"Making the Band 4." Now airing on flagship channel MTV, season four of the Sean "Diddy" Combs-fronted series "Making the Band" features the hip-hop impresario looking for the best male performers to shape into a new chart-topping act. An album is set to follow through Bad Boy/Atlantic.

Menudo. After trolling malls across America and Puerto Rico for months, casting has wrapped on a reboot of the 1980s Puerto Rican boy band franchise that launched Ricky Martin's career. The show, which will document the development of the new five-person Latin-infused R&B group, is set to air on MTV Tr3s later this year. MTV and Reveille, the production company from NBC Entertainment chief Ben Silverman, are co-producing. An album is set to follow through Epic Records.

Band in a Bubble. In a much-publicized move, the members of pop-punk act Cartel at the end of May sealed themselves inside a huge transparent bubble on a New York pier and dedicated themselves to making their self-titled sophomore album for Epic Records during a 20-day span. Fans visiting the bubble could

witness the band in action, and MTV cameras captured the whole thing for an accompanying reality show on MTV2. First-run episodes of the series wrapped in June. The network is now putting together a rollout strategy for the video for the first single.

To be sure, band-making shows are just one of a variety of ways MTV approaches music promotion and programming (see story, below). But the current surge in discover-the-next-great-artist series comes as that reality TV subgenre—long a strong suit for the Viacom-owned network—has become increasingly crowded with competitors.

"American Idol" has become the gold standard in launching new music careers and is dominating TV ratings in the process.

VIRAL VOTING

Online Services Search For Stars

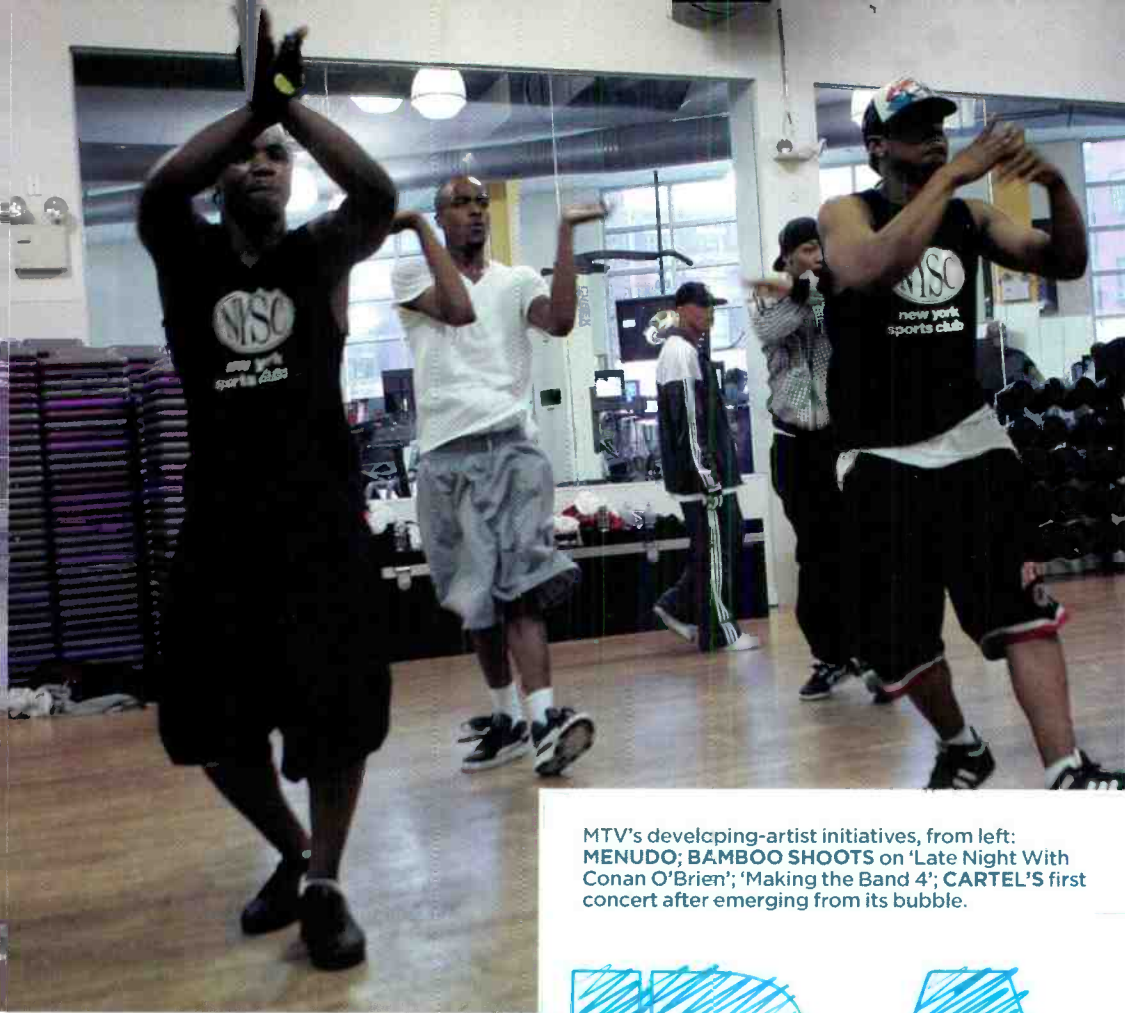
MTV and "American Idol" are hardly alone in their searches for "the next big thing." A growing number of Web services are getting in on the act as well.

A new breed of online services that merge the viral video aspects of YouTube, the social networking elements of MySpace and the voting angle of "Idol" are looking to raise the bar on fan-driven A&R.

Leading the pack is New York-based startup MusicNation.com. The company, which runs discover-the-best-unsigned-band contests through its sites, has raised more than \$5 million in private equity funding from

Greylock Partners and Point Judith Capital and claims Epic Records as a minority stake holder in the venture.

MusicNation recently wrapped its first series of contests searching for the best pop, rock and urban acts. One winner was chosen from each of the three categories and received a recording contract with Epic along with a segment on Clear Channel Radio's original online video series "Stripped" and an endorsement deal from guitar maker Gibson. The winners—Kid Deposit Triumph (rock), Yolanda Ruiz (pop) and T-Max (urban)—were selected from a mix of fan voting and a panel of industry judges. Epic president Charlie Walk and producer Jonathan "J.R." Rotem helped judge the pop category; Joel and Benji Madden of Good Charlotte, and Grammy Award-nominated producer Howard Benson served as rock judges; and Nelly, the Game and Jive Records president of urban music Mark Pitts contributed to the urban judging.



MTV's developing-artist initiatives, from left: **MENUDO**; **BAMBOO SHOOTS** on 'Late Night With Conan O'Brien'; 'Making the Band 4'; **CARTEL'S** first concert after emerging from its bubble.



THE BANDS

Meanwhile, a glut of other networks and shows are getting in on the act too. Witness everyone from the CBS' "Early Show" to online programming initiatives like MusicNation and OurStage (see story, below) all trying to find "undiscovered artists," often with the help of viewer voting.

"Right now the public is interested in these reality shows," MTV president Christina Norman says. "It's important for us to keep stretching the definition of what that genre is."

MTV VP of music and talent Amy Doyle says the appeal of such programs is clear: "The audience wants a voice. They want to be credited for their choices around music, they want to feel empowered."

Still, MTV is attempting to largely retain its role as a "curator" for new music rather than turn over the A&R process to the public in its reality initiatives. Besides BMOC, the new programs are as focused on the artist development process, not fan voting.

"It's all in the making-the-band genre, but the paths to being made are all very different," Norman says.

Beyond "Idol," MTV remains one of the few outlets with a proven track record of launching successful careers from reality shows that take an insider's look at the music-making and star development process.

Ashlee Simpson's 2004 debut "Autobiography," subject of MTV series "The Ashlee Simpson Show," has sold more than

2.9 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. And Danity Kane, the last "Making the Band" creation from Combs, has sold more than 900,000 copies of its self-titled 2006 debut.

"The model works. And I think as long as it does, we'll find a way to keep doing it," Doyle says. "What we hear a lot from our audience is the more they get to see behind the scenes and know the story and access to artists, the more they commit to that artist."

Yet it doesn't always result in a home run. Cheyenne Kimball's 2006 Epic/Daylight debut "The Time Has Come" sold 129,000 copies following the run of her self-titled reality series on MTV.

Just how much fans commit to this latest wave of made-for-MTV acts remains to be seen.

Albums are yet to be made for Menudo and the "Making the Band" casts. And Cartel's album is still on the way. "Lose It," the first single from the new Cartel album, has sold more than 9,000 downloads in its first two weeks.

Meanwhile, in the case of Bamboo Shoots, MTV execs are hoping the early buzz of the "Late Night" appearance will carry over once the band actually has a record to promote.

mtvU GM Stephen Friedman says the point of the launch is to set the stage for what hopefully is a long-term relationship with the band.

"You do this stuff because you want the talent to resonate with the audience," Norman adds. "Sometimes you have incredible successes and sometimes things don't play out the way you like them to. For us it's providing a variety of opportunities for the pop-loving fan, the rock-loving fan, the Latin music fan."

O'Brien thinks nontraditional methods for breaking bands are a necessary experiment.

"None of us really knows where television or music is going in the next 10 years, so you have to try things. There might be some version of this that happens more often in the future," he says.

And, in the meantime, he'll be keeping an eye on Bamboo Shoots' development in the mean time.

"If this works I'll be all over them," he says. "And if it doesn't go well, I will distance myself so quickly."



RUIZ

As the service moves to its second "season," the judges and prize packages are bit more modest. Major label presidents and multiplatinum artists aren't participating in the judging this time out. And winners will be signed jointly to Epic and Original Signal Recordings, Music Nation's label arm that is able to sign artists independently and in conjunction with Epic.

MusicNation co-founder/CEO Daniel Klaus says the point of the celebrity judges was to help drive awareness for

the site, which now claims 450,000 unique visitors per month. He adds that the core appeal of the service is the same regardless of who is judging. "It's not so much about the fans being pushed music anymore," he says. "Fans are helping create stars."

A similar concept is behind OurStage.com. The site, which launched in March and claims more than 100,000 unique visitors per month, allows artists to upload music and videos that are later voted on by fans. Along with performance slots at various live music events like Bonnaroo and the CMJ Music Marathon, monthly winners are awarded with cash prizes up to \$5,000. New prizes to be awarded this month include stage appearances at Bumbershoot in Seattle, CMJ and the Starbucks Music Maker competition. The company isn't yet giving away label deals, but plans to do so later this year.

"We're getting close to a point where

you can give the tools to the crowd where they can make a decision on an artist out of the gate, rather than an artist having to wait and hold their breath for that decision until after they have cut and released an album," OurStage CEO Ben Campbell says.

The big test for services like OurStage and MusicNation will be whether an online version of "American Idol" can actually yield a star. For all the hype surrounding such sites as YouTube and MySpace, these destinations are good at generating buzz and traffic for unsigned acts, but have yet to "break" a star act in the way MTV or "Idol" has.

Klaus says a blended approach is ultimately required. "There is no question that community-based A&R is one element of the future of the record business. It helps bring artists to the forefront," he says. "But for artists to really cross over into the big time they still need more traditional marketing offline."

—BG

MAKING THE BAND 4: COURTESY MTV; CARTEL: ZANDY MANGOLD/RETNA; RUIZ: ODESSY BARBU

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#1 HOT 100 AIRPLAY

#1 POP 100

#1 ITUNES SINGLE

#1 ITUNES VIDEO

#1 HOT DIGITAL SONGS

#1 UK SINGLES

#1 CANADIAN HOT 100

#1 EUROPEAN HOT 100 SINGLES

#1 EURO DIGITAL TRACKS

#1 GERMANY

#1 AUSTRALIA

#1 SWITZERLAND

#1 DENMARK

#1 FINLAND

#1 NETHERLANDS

#1 NORWAY

#1 SWEDEN

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URBAN

SONGWRITERS TO

WATCH

10 Musical Minds Behind The Hottest Hits And Artists

BY MARIEL CONCEPCION, HILLARY CRÖSLEY AND GAIL MITCHELL

In an industry that thrives on what's new, the question of who's got next is a constant refrain. And in covering the music business, *Billboard* sings along with that chorus. Thus, welcome to our second annual Urban Songwriters to Watch. The inaugural edition of this special supplement (*Billboard*, July 1, 2006) presented a stellar lineup of songwriter/producers: Otis Wonder, Johnita Austin, Cool & Dre, Dre & Vidal, Sean Garrett, Harold Lilly Jr., Bryan-Michael Cox, Ne-Yo, the Clutch and Tim & Bob. Austin and Cox won a Grammy Award earlier this year for Mary J. Blige's "Be Without You," while Ne-Yo became a first-time Grammy nominee. Recently, Garrett and Austin were named songwriters of the year by BMI (for pop) and ASCAP (rhythm & soul), respectively. This year's 10 to watch is an equally talented lineup, culled from input provided by key publishing executives and our own chart experts. The process also revealed an exciting plus: a new pool of bubbling talent—including the Runners, Kerdrick Dean, L-Roc, Lonny Bereal, Kristal Oliver and Keri Hilson—to watch during the next year. In the meantime, read on.



AKON

Akon is an established artist, thanks to two multiplatinum albums ("Konvicted" and "Trouble"), plus a string of hits including "Don't Matter," "I Wanna Love You," "Smack That," "Lonely" and "Soul Survivor." He has also become an in-demand songwriter/producer. His collaboration with Gwen Stefani on her *Billboard* Hot 100 No. 2 hit "The Sweet Escape" was just a hint of things to come.

Akon has credits on two current chart-climbers: T-Pain's "Bartender" and Bone Thugs-N-Harmony's "I Tried." He has also clocked time with a virtual who's who list: Mario Whitney Houston, Nelly, Snoop Dogg, Nicole Scherzinger and David Banner. And that's not counting artists he's grooming under his own label auspices. Besides T-Pain, that roster includes TLC founding member Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas and newcomers Brick and Lace, Rock City and Ray L.

Noting that melodies and originality are what set him apart from other writer/producers, Akon advises aspiring songwriters to "come up with their own style. You do that and you blow up faster—and you last longer."



MARK BATSON

As a youngster in Brooklyn, N.Y., Mark Batson learned to play classical as well as jazz and gospel. To this day he still draws inspiration from something he grasped early on: Music is one thing. "It's not separate," he says. "I learned how to respect everything equally, whether it's classical, country, R&B, hip-hop or whatever." That comfort level has led him down an intriguing path that veers from India.Arie, Anthony Hamilton, 50 Cent and Dr. Dre to Seal, Maroon 5, Gwen Stefani and Dave Matthews.

In addition to Matthews and Hamilton, Batson's current studio schedule lists sessions with Alicia Keys ("She's on fire; a grown woman singer"), James Blunt ("People are sleeping on him") and Dr. Dre. "People don't under-

stand his level of perfection," Batson says, referring to Dre's long-awaited "Detox" album. "His work is on the level of a Ferrari... this is Dr. 'Motherfucking' Dre." Still on Batson's wish list: Stevie Wonder, Bono and Wu-Tang Clan's RZA.

JASPER CAMERON

Atlanta native Jasper Cameron was discovered in 1998 by Joyce Irby, whose talent-scouting credits include songwriter/producer Dallas Austin and singers Lloyd and Sammie. Signed to Austin's production company Darp, Cameron sharpened his pen on songs for Gerald Levert, Christina Aguilera, Ciara, Tamia, Nelly, Mario and Heather Headley. Following nearly seven years under Austin's tutelage, the 30-year-old songwriter signed with Universal Music Publishing Group in January.

After penning Lloyd's biggest hit single to date, "You," and "Promise" for Ciara, Cameron says he is working on "some real good songs" for Ashanti and is also in the studio with Pussycat Doll Nicole Scherzinger. His dream gig? "If I could work with anyone right now that I haven't worked with yet, it would be Babyface."

continued on >>p34





scrambling for a piece of T. LaHassee Pain's electronic soul.

In the last two years, he has penned hooks for Chris Brown, Britney Spears, Charlie Wilson, Mya, Joe, Mario, Huey, Sean Paul, Mike Jones, Trey Songz, Fabolous, Lil' Wayne, Paul Wall and R. Kelly. T-Pain also co-wrote and appears on another crossover summer hit, "I'm a Flirt." When it comes to describing his songwriting philosophy, a frank T-Pain says, "If you go pop, you're going to sell. But if you don't go pop, you ain't going to sell. a motherfucking thing."

WILL.I.AM

He was born William James Adams Jr. in Los Angeles. But fans know him best as will.i.am, a founding member of the Black Eyed Peas. Still a driving force behind the group's ongoing success, Will.i.am has widened his writing and producing scope during the last several years. In 2006 alone, his creative imprint was heard on recordings by Sergio Mendes, Busta Rhymes, Diddy, Peas colleague Fergie, the Pussycat Dolls, Justin Timberlake, Ciara and Nas.

Under his self-titled label with Geffen, Will.i.am wrote and produced Macy Gray's 2007 return, "Big." Other 2007 collaborations include Chris Brown, Amerie, Rihanna, Nicole Scherzinger, Hilary Duff, Lil' Wayne, Common and Lupe Fiasco. Not to mention working on what could turn out to be the comeback of all comebacks: Michael Jackson's new album.

"Man, he still sings like a bird," Will.i.am told *billboard* earlier this year. "He could go anywhere. We have a real opportunity to do something here. It's either going to be really big or nobody's going to care. Ain't no middle ground on this one."



NATE 'DANJAHANDZ' HILLS

As a protégé of Timbaland, Nate "Danjahandz" Hills has helped write six No. 1 singles on the pop and R&B/hip-hop charts, including Justin Timberlake's "My Love" and Nelly Furtado's "Promiscuous." A few months ago, SESAC presented Hills with its prestigious songwriter of the year award. And Epic Records president Charlie Walk goes so far as to call him "this generation's Quincy Jones."

Hills, who cut his musical teeth producing rapper Lloyd Banks' "I'm So Fly," is now keeping track of a calendar that includes appointments with a diverse clientele: Duran Duran, Mariah Carey, Ashlee Simpson, T.I., Madonna and Britney Spears.

With plans to establish his own label, Hills credits his Virginia stomping grounds as the reason for his success. "In Virginia we're eclectic," he says. "We take elements from everywhere and put them together. Being bored leaves you with nothing else to do but create something extraordinary."

Music Publishing.

She has since written for Danity Kane, Fantasia, Jessica Simpson and another female superstar: Beyoncé. Riddick co-wrote the "Dreamgirls" star's 2006 crossover hit, "Déjà Vu." The song later earned two Grammy nominations while the album that spawned it, "B'Day," won the 2006 Grammy for best contemporary R&B album. In addition to starting her own publishing company, Riddick hopes to work with Mary J. Blige and Madonna.



LIL' RONNIE

The music industry became acquainted with Lil' Ronnie (born Ronnie Jackson) when Ruben Studdard crooned his way to an R&B hit with Ronnie's "Sorry 2004." The Kansas City, Mo., native initially signed with Jermaine Dupri's So So Def before moving to Los Angeles. Once there, he hooked up with production ace the Underdogs and made the Studdard connection.

Not one to sit around, Ronnie relocated to Atlanta two years ago. The move proved fortuitous. He co-wrote two of this year's biggest R&B hits for R. Kelly and Bow Wow ("I'm a Flirt") plus Kelly and Usher ("Same Girl"). His writing credits include Jamie Foxx, Omarion, Mario and Monica.

Ronnie pegs his success to the public's thirst for reality. "Reality TV has taken over, and my sound is for the reality generation. As with 'Same Girl,' which is a true story, most of my songs are about everyday things that happen to people but they're scared to talk about them. I do real music that talks about something."



TANK

Born Durrell Babbs in Milwaukee, R&B singer/songwriter/producer Tank got his official start in the music industry singing background for Ginuwine and Aaliyah in 1997. A year later, Background Records offered him a contract as a solo artist. The songwriting bug bit after he dropped back-to-back albums, 2001's "Force of Nature" and 2002's "One Man."

"Once I realized you could create a legacy through songwriting, I went crazy," the 28-year-old recalls. Tank's burst of craziness precipitated a slew of credits ranging from Jamie Foxx and Chris Brown to Fantasia and Kelly Rowland. In between, Tank managed to pen a hit for himself, "Please Don't Go," which is featured on his recently released third album "Sex, Love and Pain." Currently in the studio with Jennifer Hudson, Charlie Wilson and Foxx, Tank has also teamed with Ginuwine and Tyrese as TGT. The trio's Shirts Off tour gets under way early next year.



TERIUS 'DREAM' NASH

Terius "Dream" Nash put his stamp on summer 2007 with reggae-turned-pop star Rihanna's infectiously hooked "Umbrella." The guitar-laden electronic beat—fleshed out by Nash's lyrics about loyalty and selflessness—was originally written for Britney Spears. Having written the hook for Yung Joc's single "Coffee Shop," Nash is moving forward on recordings by Nicole Scherzinger and Mary J. Blige, plus newcomers J. Holiday and Lucy Walsh, daughter of Eagles member Joe Walsh. He's also putting the finishing touches on an album for his wife, R&B songstress Nivea.

The Atlanta native swears he can tell if he has a hit song within 10 minutes of writing it and is glad '80s pop is back in vogue. "It's like telling a story," Nash says. "When I'm writing, it's more about feeling. Typing up the lyrics is nice and all, but it's really about the melody and letting your feelings project where the melody goes."



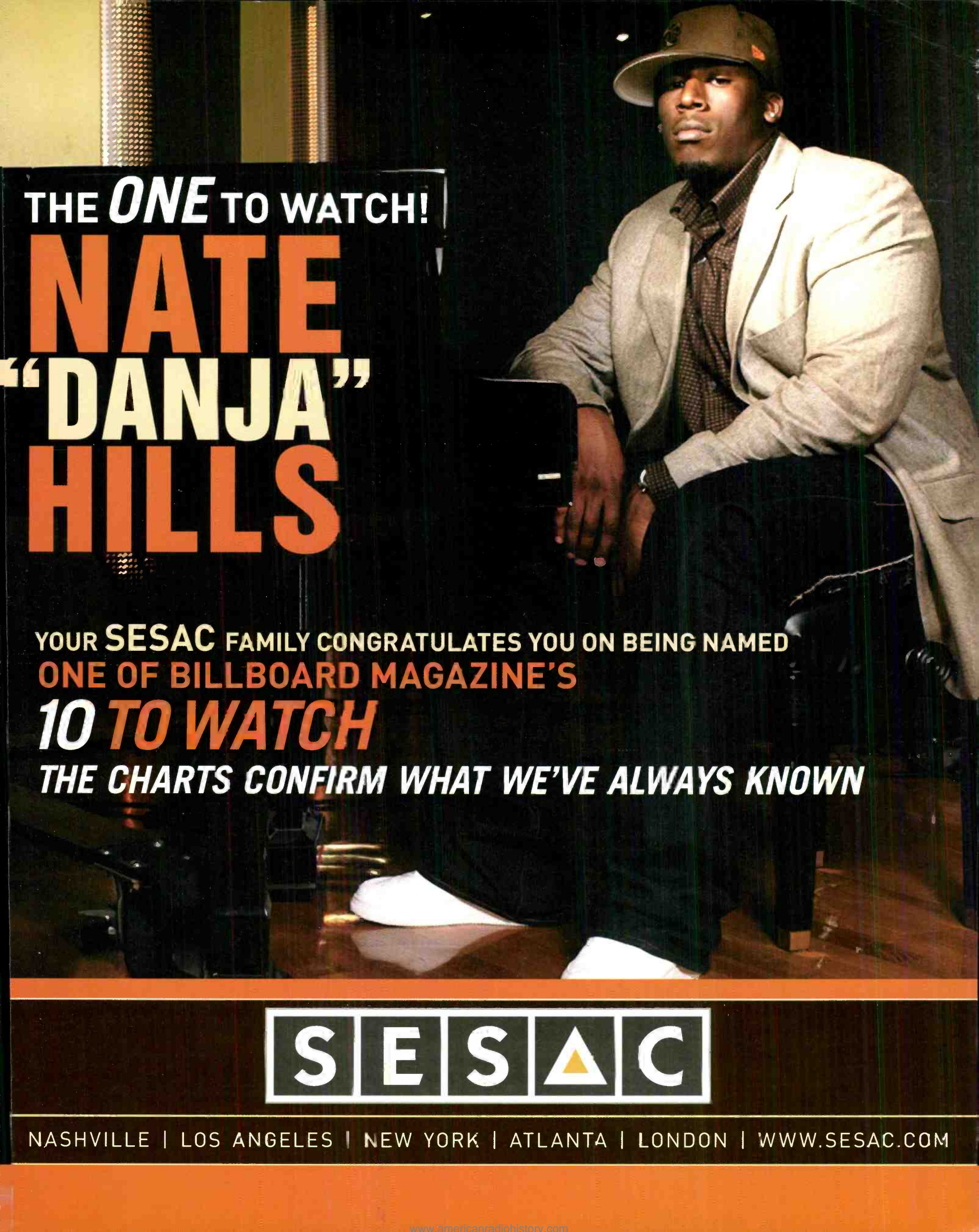
MAKEBA RIDDICK

Baltimore-bred Makeba Riddick scored her first major hit at the tender age of 20 with Jennifer Lopez's "All I Have." The 2002 song, featuring an assist by LL Cool J, peaked at No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100 for five weeks and earned the fledgling songwriter an ASCAP pop award. "I was so young that I didn't even know what that meant," the 26-year-old says. A year later, the hot commodity signed with Sean "Diddy" Combs' Bad Boy/EMI

T-PAIN

Faheem "T-Pain" Najm's first hit, 2005's "I'm in Luv Wit a Stripper," was just the warm-up for his latest chart-topper, "Buy U a Drank (Shawty Snap-pin')." The ditty, which fuses Zapp frontman Roger Troutman's trademark vocoder and Atlanta's snap craze, claimed No. 1 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart and The Billboard Hot 100. Now a growing number of artists in the R&B/hip-hop and pop communities are



A photograph of Nate Danja Hills, a Black man, sitting at a piano in a dimly lit room. He is wearing a light-colored blazer, a patterned shirt, a tie, and a baseball cap. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The piano is dark, and the background is dark with some vertical light streaks.

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"DANJA"
HILLS

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One More Day/ **Diamond Rio** /Arista
Roll To Me/ **Del Amitri** /A&M

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Far Away/ **Nickelback** /Roadrunner/Lava/Atlantic
Livin' La Vida Loca/ **Ricky Martin** /C2/Columbia
My Boo/ **Usher & Alicia Keys** /LaFace/Zomba
Promiscuous/ **Nelly Furtado Feat. Timbaland** /Mosley/Geffen
Temperature/ **Sean Paul** /VP/Atlantic
What Hurts The Most/ **Rascal Flatts** /Lyric Street

300,000 SPINS

Dani California/ **Red Hot Chili Peppers** /Warner Bros.
My Humps/ **Black Eyed Peas** /A&M/Interscope
When The Sun Goes Down/ **Kenny Chesney & Uncle Kracker** /BNA

200,000 SPINS

Buy U A Drank (Shawty Snappin')/ **T-Pain Feat. Yung Joc** /Kcnvict/Nappy Boy/Jive/Zomba
Give It To Me/ **Timbaland Feat. Nelly Furtado & Justin Timberlake** /Mosley/Blackground/Interscope
If Everyone Cared/ **Nickelback** /Roadrunner/Lava/Atlantic
The Cowboy In Me/ **Tim McGraw** /Curb
U + Ur Hand/ **Pink** /LaFace/Zomba
Underneath Your Clothes/ **Shakira** /Epic
Walk Away/ **Paula DeArda Feat. The DEY** /Arista/RMG
Wave On Wave/ **Pat Green** /Republic/Universal South
When I Get Where I'm Going/ **Brad Paisley Feat. Dolly Parton** /Arista Nashville

100,000 SPINS

A Woman's Love/ **Alan Jackson** /Arista Nashville
Coming Undone/ **Korn** /Virgin
Find Out Who Your Friends Are/ **Tracy Lawrence** /Rocky Comfort/CO5
Get It Shawty/ **Lloyd** /The Inc./Universal Motown
High Maintenance Woman/ **Toby Keith** /Show Dog Nashville
Home/ **Daughtry** /RCA/RMG
I Tried/ **Bone Thugs-N-Harmony Feat. Akon** /Full Surface/Interscope
I'm A Flirt/ **R. Kelly or Bow Wow** /Columbia/Jive/Zomba
Kryptonite/ **Purple Ribbon All-Stars** /Purple Ribbon/Virgin
Like A Boy/ **Ciara** /LaFace/Zomba
Makes Me Wonder/ **Maroon 5** /A&M/Octone/Interscope
Moments/ **Emerson Drive** /Midas/New Revolution
Outta My System/ **Bow Wow Feat. T-Pain & Johnta Austin** /Columbia
Party Like A Rockstar/ **Shop Boyz** /OnDeck/Universal Republic
Pop, Lock & Drop It/ **Huey** /Hitz Committee/Jive/Zomba
Rock Yo Hips/ **Crime Mob Feat. Lil Scrappy** /Crunk/G's Up/Reprise
Summer Love/ **Justin Timberlake** /Jive/Zomba
Umbrella/ **Rihanna Feat. Jay-Z** /SRP/Def Jam/IDJMG
What I've Done/ **Linkin Park** /Warner Bros.

50,000 SPINS

A Different World/ **Bucky Covington** /Lyric Street
Antes De Que Te Vayas/ **Marco Antonio Solis** /Fonovisa
Beautiful Girls/ **Sean Kingston** /Beluga Heights/Epic/Kcch
Big Girls Don't Cry/ **Fergie** /will.i.am/A&M/Interscope
Eres Mi Religion/ **Mana** /Warner Latina
Everything/ **Buckcherry** /Eleven Seven/Atlantic/Lava
Hey There Delilah/ **Plain White T's** /Hollywood
I Told You So/ **Keith Urban** /Capitol Nashville
Johnny Cash/ **Jasor Aldean** /Broken Bow
Lost In This Moment/ **Big & Rich** /Warner Bros./WRN
Made To Love/ **tobyMac** /Forefront/EMI CMG
Never Again/ **Kelly Clarkson** /RCA/RMG
Open Skies/ **David Crowder Band** /sixsteps/Sparrow/EMI CMG
Teardrops On My Guitar/ **Taylor Swift** /Big Machine
The Woman In My Life/ **Phil Vassar** /Arista Nashville
Thanks Fr Th Mmrs/ **Fall Out Boy** /Fueled By Ramen/Island/IDJMG
U Got That Love (Call It A Night)/ **Gerald Levert** /Elektra/Atlantic
When I See U/ **Fartasia** /J/RMG
Wipe Me Down/ **Li Boosie Feat. Foxx & Webble** /Tri I/Asylum/Atlantic
Your Love Oh Lord (Psalm 36)/ **Third Day** /Essential/PLG



POST-PIRACY POP
Chicane rebounds from a counterfeit debacle



LOWE AND BEHOLD
Nick picks up where he left off, acts his age



RADIO REMEMBERED
A film's historical look at urban airwaves



DRIVE-BY DEPARTURE
Jason Isbell's new life after the Truckers



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Why you oughta know A Fine Frenzy

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MUSIC



ROCK BY JILL MENZE

RILO KILEY

THE NEXT ADVENTURE

After Solo Successes, Rilo Kiley's Members Regroup For Warner Bros. Debut

After a year-plus hiatus during which Rilo Kiley's principal members both pursued solo careers, the Los Angeles-based indie pop quartet is returning to business Aug. 21 with its major-label debut, "Under the Blacklight." Well, sort of.

"People keep calling it our 'major-label debut,' but I think [2004's] 'More Adventurous' was that," frontwoman Jenny Lewis says. And in some respects, she's right. "Blacklight" marks Rilo Kiley's first effort on Warner Bros. proper, whereas "More Adventurous" was released on the band's own Brute/Beaute imprint before the major upstreamed it.

However you tag it, "More Adventurous," the band's third full-length, is its biggest release to date. It has sold 177,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and cracked The Billboard 200 at No. 161.

Just as noteworthy was the success Lewis met with her solo debut, the country- and soul-flavored "Rabbit Fur Coat."

Recorded with the Watson Twins and released on pal Conor Oberst's indie label Team Love in January 2006, the album has shifted 112,000 and peaked at No. 88 on The Billboard 200.

Warner Bros. marketing director Brant Weil says Lewis' solo run, as well as Blake Sennett's work with his side band the Elected, have stoked awareness for Rilo Kiley's upcoming release. "The solo projects have kept Rilo in the public's eye during a time when most bands fade back a bit," he says.

As for greater expectations this time around thanks to the group's heightened profile, Weil notes that Rilo Kiley has "grown to their current status, so any pressure is a product of what they have achieved on their own."

For Rilo Kiley, which is Lewis (vocals/guitar/keyboard), Sennett (vocals/guitar), Pierre de Reeder (bass) and Jason Boesel (drums), that road started in 2001 with its Barsuk debut, "Take Coffs and Landings." The band then relocated to Omaha,

Neb.-based Saddle Creek Records for 2003's "The Execution of All Things" before finding a home within Warner Bros. Although each album improved upon its predecessor, the band remained chiefly within its lo-fi, hook-driven pop confines, occasionally dipping into fuzzed-out guitar rumpers or acoustic-based folk tunes.

On "Blacklight," there are hints of what Rilo Kiley excelled at in the past. But those anticipating too much familiarity are in for a few surprises.

The album touches on everything from glistening disco ("Breakin' Up") to Spanish-sung choruses ("Dejalo") and '60s-inspired surf vibes ("Smoke Detector"). Lyrically, much of the material is devoted to Hollywood's dark underworld, as Lewis references topics like the porn industry and cyber dating.

When Rilo Kiley recorded "More Adventurous," "we were in a completely different place musically," Lewis says of the shift in sound. "We wanted to try something new. I think in working with two new producers [Jason Lader and Mike Elizondo], that brought out different aspects of our band, sonically."

Sennett adds, "We'd done a lot of crying for a long time, and it was time to dance."

One of the most notable departures is first single "MoneyMaker," which bounces along like a sleazier, funkier version of Heart and has an accompanying 12-minute video featuring risqué footage of Hollywood sex workers auditioning for jobs. The clip hit the Internet July 1 as the first piece of the promo campaign. The second single, "Silver Lining," is the band at its most accessible; it will be at radio by the end of the month.

Indie stores, which still attract the bulk of Rilo Kiley's fan base, are the label's primary retail target. Select retailers (particularly those that sold "Rabbit Fur Coat") will have exclusives like a special 7-inch vinyl single, a poster or vinyl copies that also contain the CD.

"I don't want to have to make the fans buy the record three times to get different items," Brant says of the decision to promote heavily in one market. "It's been a very loyal fan base, and I don't want to take advantage of that fact."

Coalition of Independent Music Stores president Don Van Cleave notes that anything attached to Lewis' name is a strong selling point. "A new Rilo Kiley release is always a good thing," he says. "We have done really well with anything connected to Jenny Lewis, and I'm sure we will all rally behind this new effort."

A supporting European tour will commence in August, with a U.S. trek lined up for September and October.

But even with Rilo Kiley back on the front burner, Lewis and Sennett are continuing to work on solo material.

"Right now we just want to put this record out and then see where those next songs fit in," Sennett says. "There's probably even [future] projects there that we don't even know about. We just write a lot of songs. We're restless individuals." ...

RILO KILEY: ANTHONY DE WIT/DE

>>> 'NIGHT' FEVER

David Gilmour wowed audiences on his 2006 world tour with a band that featured Pink Floyd keyboardist Rick Wright. The trek, specifically a gig at London's Royal Albert Hall, is chronicled on the live DVD "Remember That Night," due Sept. 18 via Columbia. The project includes evergreens like "Wish You Were Here," "Echoes" and "Breathe," plus a complete performance of Gilmour's 2006 solo album, "On an Island." —Jonathan Cohen

>>> MAGIC 'NUMBERS'

Ludacris is eyeing an Aug. 28 release date for his third Disturbing Tha Peace label compilation, "Strength in Numbers." The 14-track package features 12 previously unreleased songs, including first single "Duffle Bag Boy" by Playaz Circle featuring Lil Wayne. "Duffle Bag Boy" will be serviced to radio July 23. The second single, "Celebrity Chick" by Chingy, Steph Jones and Small World, will impact radio Aug. 27.

—Mariel Concepcion

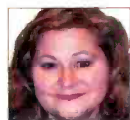
>>> HE'S A HUSTLER

Yung Joc will follow up his hit 2006 debut, "New Joc City," with "Hustlenomics" Aug. 28. The Block Entertainment/Bad Boy South project is led by the single "Coffee Shop" featuring Gorilla Zoe from Boyz n Da Hood. "Hustlenomics" is expected to include tracks like "Cut Throat," featuring the Game and Jim Jones; the Trick Daddy-assisted "Chevy Smile"; and "Brand New," with guest turns from Snoop Dogg and Rick Ross. —Mariel Concepcion

>>> YOU'VE GOT A 'FRIEND'

Bob Mould will release a live DVD, "Circle of Friends—Live at 9:30," Oct. 9 via Trixie. The project captures an October 2005 show at the 9:30 Club in his Washington, D.C., home base. The artist performed such Hüsker Dü songs as "Makes No Sense at All," "Celebrated Summer," "Chartered Trips" and "I Apologize" with a full band for the first time as a solo artist on the trek.

—Jonathan Cohen



Higher Ground

DEBORAH EVANS PRICE dprice@billboard.com

Behind The Wheelies

Farris Opens Up About Faith On 'Salvation'

Who would have thought that the former frontman for the Screamin' Cheetah Wheelies would release the most talked-about gospel album of the summer? With his INO Records debut "Salvation in Light," Mike Farris is generating quite a buzz. Never have I had so many people pitching me on an artist, and I'm not talking just about his people. Retailers, TV executives, other journalists and an array of music-loving folks have called, e-mailed or shoved a CD in my hand.

This guy lives up to the hype. "Salvation in Light" pulsates with energy, passion and unbridled soul. "I had the concept way back in 2000," Farris says of the collection, which combines his potent originals alongside such classic spirituals as "Can't No Grave Hold My Body Down" and "Oh Mary Don't You Weep." "You stop trying so

hard to do something and just go back to doing exactly what you're built to do, and the whole world just relaxes around you."

Farris formed the Wheelies in 1991. The band recorded two albums for Atlantic and one for Capricorn as well as three live indie albums. Through the years Farris struggled with drug and alcohol addiction that nearly killed him.

Once sober, he began writing new music and re-discovering his appreciation for old spirituals, which led to the new record. "Musically it's more soul-driven and groove-oriented, and that's what's always has moved me," he says. "Lyrically, it's discussing spiritual struggle. I've always been a spiritual-minded person, but it's never been an easy thing for me."

Farris recorded the project in the same Nashville studio

where Jack White produced Loretta Lynn's Grammy Award-winning "Van Lear Rose" album. "We get to this house and the house looks exactly like this music sounds in my head," he says of Eric McConnell's studio. "My biggest point of reference for the actual sound of the room was like what Ry Cooder did with Buena Vista Social Club. To me, the room had become an instrument unto itself with those sessions. We captured that room sound and once we did that, we were off and running. It's the record that I've always wanted to make in every way."

People are taking notice. "You can hear in his voice he truly feels and believes in the message," says Brian Smith, VP of store operations for Marietta, Ga.-based Value Music Concepts. "It is a glorious example of a performer coming face to face with what they were born to sing and making the album of their career."

Farris' live show is generating as many raves as his album. "I have been at this music-selling thing for 27 years, seen a lot of shows, been fed a lot of hype and never had an artist give more of themselves to a performance than what I witnessed Mike deliver live in concert," Smith says. "This is a record that needs to be heard and a show that needs to be seen. The audience for this should be wide."

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH:

One of the biggest events in Christian music, the Gospel Music Assn.'s Music in the Rockies takes places July 29-Aug. 4 in Estes Park, Colo. Michael W. Smith, Rebecca St. James, Brian Littrell, the Crabb Family, Sandi Patty, Mark Schultz, Natalie Grant and Rush of Fools are among the acts participating in the annual training camp for artists, songwriters and worship leaders. Music in the Rockies has long served as a valuable A&R source for the Christian industry.



FARRIS

GLOBAL BY GARY SMITH

Turning The Corner

Chicane Takes Self-Financed Route Back To Stardom

Named after one of the obstacles found on a motor racing circuit, leading U.K. dance act Chicane's career threatened to turn into a car crash—thanks to the effects of piracy.

In 2003, Nick Bracegirdle, the musician who essentially is Chicane, was a dance music sensation across Europe thanks to global hits like "Saltwater" featuring Maire Brennan of Clannad and "Don't Give Up" (both on Xtravaganza) featuring Bryan Adams. The latter hit No. 1 in the United Kingdom in 2000 and also went top 10 in Finland, Greece, Hungary, Norway and Spain and on Billboard's European Top 100 Singles chart.

In 2002, Bracegirdle signed to WEA and had just finished his third album, "Easy to Assemble," when Edgar Bronfman Jr.'s buyout of Warner Music Group resulted in the A&R manager and music director who signed him leaving the company. Bracegirdle extracted himself from his contract and prepared to release the album independently.

But the album leaked online and was pirated ruthlessly, with one Russian counterfeiter alone selling thousands of illegal CD copies and even taking the sleeve from an earlier album and digitally removing the old title.



Global Pulse

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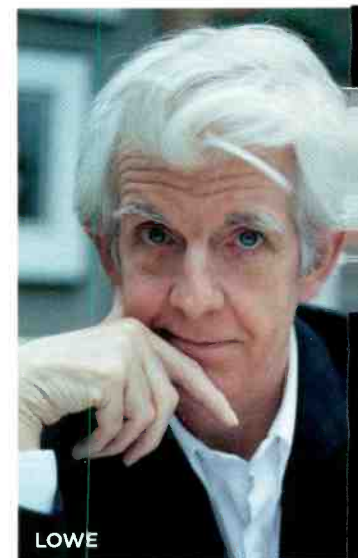
Pre-Pop For

Lowe Hits Another High With 'At My Age'

Singer/songwriter Nick Lowe still bases himself in his beloved west London locale of Brentford, but he's traveled a long creative road since his late-'70s new wave producer/pop hitmaker incarnation.

On several critically acclaimed albums during the last decade, Lowe has developed a gentler narrative style influenced by vintage country and pre-pop stylings. His 12th solo studio set is "At My Age," licensed by Lowe in Europe to U.K. independent Proper, which released the album June 4. A June 26 U.S. bow followed on Chapel Hill, N.C.-based Yep Roc, whose co-owner Glenn Dicker calls Lowe "the cornerstone of our label," praising his "massive credibility in the U.S. with media, retail and radio."

"The Convincer" (2001), Lowe's first Yep Roc set, has sold 30,000 units stateside, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Lowe is published by Plangent Visions and booked for Europe by London-based Asgard, with U.S. shows through Sausalito, Calif.-based High Road Touring.



LOWE

"It looked pretty convincing," says Bracegirdle who, powerless to take action, was forced to scrap the official release.

Now, Chicane is trying to rebound with a self-financed, rock-influenced fourth album, "Somersault" (Modena, distributed by Absolute



CHICANE

Music), out July 23 in the United Kingdom.

"I've invested close to \$400,000 so far, raised by selling my Ferrari and remortgaging the house," Bracegirdle says. "I've always played live with a sizable group of musicians, but now I'm financing everything myself. It is a challenge. The group and crew cost \$8,000 per show."

Bracegirdle proved his hitmaking touch is still there when the album's lead single, "Stoned in Love" featuring Tom Jones, peaked in May in the United Kingdom at No. 7. But he is determined not to sign another label deal, with his manager John Kavanagh seeking further investment from corporate sponsors.

"For the moment we're concentrating on the U.K. market," Kavanagh says. "The U.S. is our next target. But we are looking to get Nick's music placed in a TV series or advertising campaign before we release a record there."

Chicane has struggled for success stateside, with career album sales totaling 71,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But Bracegirdle may yet have the last laugh on the nation that caused him so much piracy-related trouble.

"Ironically, Russia is fast becoming a good market" for Chicane, he says with a laugh. "We've been there more than four times already this year."



DON CHEADLE stars as tell-it-like-it-is DJ Ralph Waldo 'Petey' Greene Jr. in 'Talk to Me.'



Rhythm & Blues

GAIL MITCHELL gmitchell@billboard.com

Something To 'Talk' About

New Film Spotlights Early Days Of Urban Radio

Radio One architect **Cathy Hughes'** dream of a black-owned radio chain took root at Washington, D.C., news/talker WOL. But the AM outlet had earlier left a significant imprint, thanks to **Ralph Waldo "Petey" Greene Jr.** and **Dewey Hughes.**

The pair's largely unknown chapter in urban radio history during the civil rights era provides the storyline for the Focus Features film "Talk to Me" (July 13). **Don Cheadle** stars as hard-drinking, sharp-dressing ex-con Greene, a D.C. native who loud-talks his way into a music-and-talk morning gig at WOL. Greene's humorous, tell-it-like-it-is persona bumps heads with street-bred but politically correct-sheened PD Dewey (**Chiwetel Ejiofor**) and station owner **E.G. Sonderling** (portrayed by **Martin Sheen**).

Greene and Dewey developed an unlikely friendship and an at-work rhythm through which Greene passionately advocated social reforms and racial pride—and gave voice to a previously silent constituency.

A unifying yet calming force for two decades in "Chocolate City," Greene later took his activist act to TV via a co-host stint on local show

"Where It's At" and his own public access program, "Petey Greene's Washington," featuring his signature opening tag line: "Adjust the color of your television."

Dewey, with then-wife Cathy, acquired WOL in 1980. Divorcing soon after, Dewey, whose station share was purchased by Cathy, relocated to Los Angeles, where he now resides. Greene, who influenced such local DJs as current Sirius Satellite Radio personality **Howard Stern** (a guest several times on Greene's TV show), died of cancer in 1984.

Directed by **Kasi Lemmons** ("Eve's Bayou") and co-starring **Taraji P. Henson** and **Mike Epps**, among others, "Talk to Me" is an illuminating film on several fronts. There is the bond between Hughes and Greene: Each possessed something in his character that the other needed to succeed in his respective pursuits. But it wasn't a use-then-discard type of friendship. It was forged from a deep-rooted love and respect that eventually helped them repair a painful rift.

Then there's the historical snapshot of black radio and its potent, engaging mix of community service and entertainment. It was a pre-syndication, pre-satellite world back then, inhabited by individually styled personalities who were just as popular as the artists

whose music they played because of their innate ability to relate to their audiences.

Greene wasn't the only popular personality at WOL. There was the conservative **Sunny Jim Kelsey** (**Vondie Curtis Hall**) and flamboyant smooth talker "Night-hawk" **Bob Terry** (**Cedric the Entertainer**).

Equally popular and community-oriented counterparts were stationed in other major markets like New York's **Frankie Crocker** and **Hal Jackson**, Philadelphia's **Georgie Woods** and Los Angeles' **Magnificent Montague.**

"That's what made what we called 'Negro radio' then," recalls now-Las Vegas-based Montague, who notes that Sonderling gave many black DJs their breaks at WOL and other stations. "We were preachers, leaders, the people's jockeys . . . just as big as movie stars."

The movie also sheds light on a period percolating to the dual rhythms of a newly heightened social consciousness and vibrant soul music. Scored by frequent **Spike Lee** collaborator **Terrence Blanchard**, the film sports an Atlantic soundtrack that features such era-defining flashbacks as "Time Has Come Today," "Say It Loud—I'm Black and I'm Proud," "Compared to What" and "A Change Is Gonna Come."

"Talk to Me" mirrors a black America that is sadly fighting many of the same issues. But it also shows a sometimes complacent hip-hop generation what raising one's voice can do.

Grown People

His U.S. promotional visit this month includes a July 16 performance on NBC's "Late Night With Conan O'Brien." The BBC filmed a June 7 Lowe show at London's St. Luke's Church for future U.K. TV broadcast on digital channel BBC4.

"I don't think I'll ever be a mainstream artist [again] because of the way my records are," Lowe says. "I really like the hand-made feel that's on them, and that makes the general public nervous—they're used to a certain polish. But the people who get it, really get it."

—Paul Sexton

TWANG TIME: The Twang is very much the thang for U.K. alternative rock fans right now.

Based in Birmingham, the band's debut "Love It When I Feel Like This," released June 4 by B-Unique/Polydor, crashed the Official U.K. Charts Co. albums survey at No. 3. Its rowdy mix of **Oasis**-style guitars and **Streets**-style lyricism sold more

than 35,000 units in its first week, according to the OCC.

"We just wanted to make a good record and we have," vocalist **Phil Etheridge** says. "I'd have signed to anyone just to be able to get on the road. B-Unique felt right."

The band signed to the label for the world except North America and is talking to U.S. labels about a deal. In the meantime, it's concentrating on the international festival circuit, with high-profile slots booked at the Glastonbury and Reading/Leeds festivals (United Kingdom), Oxegen (Ireland), Summercase (Spain) and Summer Sonic (Japan). A full U.K. tour is scheduled for October/November, booked by London-based International Talent Booking. The band is published by Warner/Chappell.

—Mark Sutherland

MAXIMUM PEZZALI: Champagne corks were popping at Warner Music Italy in early

June when pop vocalist **Max Pezzali's** latest album "Time Out" hit No. 1 on the FIMI chart in the week after its May 25 release, giving Warner the top five chart slots. "I don't know whether that's the first time this happened to a label in Italy," Warner Music Italy president/CEO **Massimo Giuliano** says, "but it was certainly the first time for us."

"Time Out" is Pezzali's first original studio album in three years. According to Warner, his 2005 compilation "Tuttomax" has shipped 250,000 units. Giuliano says the new set is already halfway toward hitting its 160,000-unit target.

Pezzali has been an established chart artist in Italy since 1992, when he debuted as half of pop duo **883**, which enjoyed such hits as "Sei un Mito" and "Hanno Ucciso l'Uomo Ragno." He is published by D.J.'s Gang; booking is through Live Nation's Milan office.

—Mark Worden

MALO



Nashville Scene

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Malo Interprets The Classics With Class

Yoakam, Miller, Kristofferson Feted On New Set

Nashville-based, Miami-born **Raul Malo** has never been part of the country mainstream. Even when his seminal band **the Mavericks** was scaling the country airplay and sales charts in the early '90s, he was on another plane. Malo's musical palette has included everything from Latin rhythms to rock to bluegrass to children's music, which, depending upon your point of view, makes his new release either a natural progression or a complete left turn.

Malo's interpretation of country classics, "After Hours," out July 17, and "A Marshmallow World and Other Christmas Favorites," another album of covers due later this year, will be released on New Door/Universal Music Enterprises. The label is "primarily dedicated to producing new music from historically significant" Universal Music Group artists, according to the UMG Web site. (The Mavericks recorded for MCA Nashville in the '90s.) **Styx**, **Smokey Robinson**, **Joe Cocker** and **Nanci Griffith** are among the acts that have released projects on the label.

"After Hours" includes exceptional treatments of **Eddy Arnold's** "Welcome to My World," **Hank Snow's** "(Now and Then There's) A Fool Such As I" and the **Ray Price**-sung, **Kris Kristofferson**-penned "For the Good Times." **Buck Owens'** "Crying Time," **Hank Williams'** "Cold, Cold Heart" and "Take These Chains From My Heart," and **Roger Miller's** "Husbands and Wives" are also included.

Malo says the concept for the new album came out of his band's jams on the road. "We started with the band learning some of these old country songs and we liked the arrangements that we were doing. We were changing them up and making them a little jazzier and whatnot. We thought, 'Man, it might be fun to make a record like this.'"

Malo's road band—bassist **Jay Weaver**, pianist **Robert Chevrier** and drummer **Tom Lewis**, with the addition of horn player **Jim**

Hoke—recorded the album at Weaver's studio near Nashville.

The songs he chose had to meet certain criteria. "They're going to almost always be older songs because modern songs don't lend themselves to this kind of arrangement, unfortunately," Malo says.

"I don't think 'Honky Tonk Badonkadonk' lends itself to this kind of [treatment]," he adds with a laugh.

The exceptions to the rule were two **Dwight Yoakam** songs, "Pocket of a Clown" and "It Only Hurts Me When I Cry," the latter of which Yoakam wrote with Miller. "Dwight is one of the few [modern] artists whose music could be classified as 'timeless,'" Malo says. "His songs have a certain quality to them that lend themselves to any sort of arrangement that you want."

Malo jokes that not only is he touring to support the new record, "I'm touring to support my children, to support their school." As with his days with the Mavericks, Malo is playing theaters and other small venues, eschewing the honky-tonks and festivals that are the bread and butter of many Nashville artists. "We can rock out, but I certainly prefer the more intimate setting," he says.

Malo, one of the modern era's purest voices, knows that his forays into different styles of music have kept him from mainstream success. "I could probably stick to one thing and just do that and nurture that, but as a musician there's a part of me that wants to do so much and wants to try so many things and wants to branch out. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. There's just a creative urge that needs to be satisfied, and that's all I've wanted to do."

Meanwhile, Malo says he has two albums' worth of original material ready to record before year's end. "It'll be somewhere between the Mavericks and **Los Lobos** and everything else I do," he says. "I haven't done a record of originals in a while, so I'm excited to record." ...

ROCK BY ANDRE PAIN

The Write Stuff

Editors Aim To Join Coldplay, R.E.M. In Big Leagues

Editors frontman Tom Smith contemplates the huge anticipation surrounding the British band's imminent sophomore set, "An End Has a Start," and shivers. "I get nervous thinking about it," he says.

No one else around the band seems concerned, however. Editors' debut, "The Back Room," was a slow-burn success in the United Kingdom after its bow in 2005. Released on the independent Kitchenware label at home and licensed to PIAS for Europe and Sony BMG for the rest of the world, it's BPI-certified platinum, with total British shipments of 450,000, according to Rob Whitaker, who co-manages the band for Zoot Music.

Whitaker says expectations for the follow-up—released June 25 in the United Kingdom, two days after a high-profile appearance at the Glastonbury Festival, and set to bow July 17 in the United States—are even higher.

"The shipment on the new record is Sony's biggest of the year" in the United Kingdom, he says. "They're looking at about 170,000."

That's in contrast to the steady progress of

"The Back Room," which earned comparisons to gloomy post-punk bands Joy Division and Echo & the Bunnymen, spawned several hit singles and was nominated for the 2006 Nationwide Mercury Prize.

"The first record did fairly well at the beginning, but we built a fan base over two years of touring," Smith says. "The record climbed back up the [U.K.] chart months after we initially released it. So because of that, now there's this weight of anticipation for this next record."

Since its U.S. release in March 2006 via Fader/Epic, "The Back Room" has sold 47,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan—a performance that Epic VP of marketing Scott Carter describes as "very respectable," predicting that the follow-up will "break them through in the States."

First single "Smokers Outside the Hospital Doors" was serviced to college radio and specialty shows at the start of June, and became the band's first commercially available single June 26 in the States, with a three-



Classical Score

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Bye Bye, Bubbles

Remembering Beverly Sills' Great Recordings



To millions of Americans in the days before "The Three Tenors" sold out stadiums, American coloratura soprano **Beverly Sills** (known as **Bubbles** since childhood) was the defining face, voice and personality of opera. It didn't matter if she was singing at her beloved New York City Opera (NYCO), exchanging antics with her old friend **Carol Burnett** or championing Lincoln Center: Her vivaciousness shone through everything she did, as did her down-to-earth, Brooklyn-girl-made-good spirit. Finally triumphing after a long struggle to fame and enduring personal heartache, Sills was an American icon that a mainstream public could relate to, opera cognoscenti or not.

While she was an extraor-



track EP of album songs available via iTunes. Carter says the band is aggressively targeting download sales, which SoundScan confirms made up 20% of the total U.S. sales of "The Back Room." Purchasers of the EP, released the day after the U.K. album to deter import purchases, will be able to buy the whole album via iTunes at a reduced rate.

The next single, "An End Has a Start," will coincide with a monthlong American tour in September. "That will be the first single we work properly to modern rock radio," Carter says.

But it's another potential single, "The Weight of the World," that might prove to

be the most important, as it signifies a move toward the expansive, emotive sound of Coldplay.

Smith is happy enough to be compared to the biggest U.K. band of recent years, although he was more excited that R.E.M.'s Peter Dinklage turned up to watch the band perform at a Seattle in-store during the last campaign.

"It is big guitar music," Smith says of the new album. "I like Coldplay—'A Rush of Blood to the Head' is a great record. But if I wanted to [pick] a record that we're trying to emulate, we're trying to make our 'Automatic for the People' or our 'The Bends.' That's what we aim to do."

inary arts administrator and a cheerful TV presence, it is her accomplishments as a singer—a wonderful and thoroughly American artist—that have been memorialized on recordings, including some very fine reissues released in the past decade. Among the must-hears: **Rossini's** "The Barber of Seville" recorded in 1975 with **James Levine** conducting and Sills playing Rosina with masterful comedic timing (EMI Classics), **Douglas Moore's** American classic "The Ballad of Baby Doe" from 1959 (Deutsche Grammophon) and, also on DG, the reissues from 2000 of **Donizetti's** "Three Queen" operas—"Anna Bolena," "Maria Stuarda" and "Roberto Devereux."

Unfortunately, the production that finally made Sills a superstar after years of toiling in opera's minor leagues—**Handel's** "Giulio Cesare" at the NYCO, with **Julius Rudel** conducting—is out of print. With the most recent

reissue having been on RCA Gold Seal nearly two decades ago, perhaps Sony BMG Masterworks can now be persuaded to go back into the vault to revisit this landmark performance.

FROM BOW TO (COMPUTER) KEYBOARD: Add "novelist" to the list of violinist **Eugene Drucker's** accomplishments. One of the founding members of the revered **Emerson String Quartet** and a well-known soloist, Drucker is receiving warm reviews for his first novel, "The Savior," published by Simon & Schuster and available July 17. The story concerns a non-Jewish German violinist who is forced to take part in a sadistic psychological experiment during World War II, playing for a small group of dying Jewish inmates at a concentration camp.

While references to **Bartók, Paganini, Beethoven, Ysaye, Reger, Hindemith, Brahms** and **Mozart** are woven into the narrative, it's **Bach**, though—and specifically the St.

Matthew Passion and the Chaconne movement from the Partita in D minor—that underpin the novel's emotional climaxes. (The irony within is that the Nazis held up Bach as an example of the pinnacle of Aryan culture.)

While Drucker's grace and fluency as a writer don't quite match his revelatory musical performances, his meditations on heroism, cowardice and on the place art may (or may not) hold at moments of humanity's worst failures are moving. His descriptions of these musical works are intensely poetic, and they will undoubtedly shed light on these pieces for classical music lovers as well as those not generally drawn to such music.

Drucker writes with profound sensitivity, and his personal connections to this material run deep: His own father was the model for one of the book's characters, a Jewish violinist whom the Nazis tried to bar from performing at his graduation concert from Cologne's famed Hochschule.

ROCK BY RAY WADDELL

Solo And Southern

Out On His Own, Jason Isbell Stakes A Post-Truckers Claim

Jason Isbell may have shocked Drive-By Truckers loyalists when he abruptly departed the Southern rock band in April, but with his debut solo release, "Sirens of the Ditch," the singer/songwriter will likely solidify his own loyal fan base. "Sirens," released July 10 on New West Records, was produced by DBT's Patterson Hood. It showcases a broader musicality than Isbell delivered in his previous, songwriting-rich band. The album's 11 cuts blend rock with R&B, gospel and acoustic influences, all powered by Isbell's perceptive, Southern-themed songwriting and bluesy vocals.

Isbell started the project in 2003 at Muscle Shoals, Ala.-based FAME recording studio during rare DBT downtime, but completing the record was a long process. "It only took two or three weeks in the studio, but it took me about two-and-a-half years to get it done because we were on the road so much," Isbell says.

Even after the record was in the can, it took more than a year for New West to release it, again thanks to the arduous DBT workload. But that said, Isbell's departure from DBT was not the catalyst that spurred the release. "What actually made it finally come together," he says, "was the fact that the Truckers weren't planning on doing a whole awful lot of touring this year."

The album's showpiece and leadoff single is "Dress Blues," a heartbreaking take on the effects of a soldier's death on a small Southern town. Isbell manages to deliver the tale without being heavy-handed politically, which heightens the song's emotional impact.

"I do have a political opinion on [the war], but I didn't really have to put that out there in the song," he says. "Like Stephen Colbert says, reality has a liberal bias. If you just tell the story it ends up coming out the way I feel about it."

The song's story "pretty much told itself," Isbell says. "This is not just a small-town phenomenon, but for some reason when I'm paying attention to the people who have died over there it just seems like there are more of them coming from small towns in the South."

Elsewhere, "In a Razor Town" is reminiscent of Tom Petty's more acoustic work, "Grown" and "Brand New Kind of Actress" are hooky rock songs and "Try" is balls-out blues rock. "Hurricanes

and Hand Grenades," a boozy take on love gone wrong that boasts a bluesy piano part, veers into Ray Charles territory.

"We had a great album from start to finish, which is rare these days, so press was the critical launching pad" for marketing the release, New West VP of marketing and operations Herb Agner says. "We're using a nationwide major-market tour to solidify local PR coverage, drive more fans online to Jason's and New West's Web sites for special offers and give Jason the chance to visit radio and TV." In slightly more than a month, he says, Isbell's MySpace profile has grown "from zero to 124,000 plays."

Though a variety of musicians contribute to "Sirens," Isbell is touring this summer with the Muscle Shoals-based 400 Unit, which is now his full-time backing band. The set list includes "Sirens" material and Isbell-penned DBT classics like "Outfit" and "Decoration Day."

"I still feel like those songs are fairly fresh," he says. "It's not like I played them for 20 years with the Truckers and got tired of doing them."

Since "Southern Rock Opera" in 2002, according to Nielsen SoundScan, the Truckers have topped the 70,000 sales mark with every release except their most recent, 2006's "Blessing and a Curse," which came close at 68,000—a dip, nonetheless, from the 88,000 their top seller "Dirty South" sold in 2004. But as for why he left a successful band with such a passionate following, Isbell says, "I don't talk about it much. I could give you the stock answer I've given everybody, but it is basically a personal thing between us and them. It's not something I could possibly explain in the course of anything less than six months of sessions."

It's clear, though, that the challenges of touring added fuel to the fire of a rather strange dynamic anyway. Isbell was at the time married to DBT bassist Shonna Tucker, who remains a member of the band. "A lot of things happened over the course of all of us being roommates for that long, under those conditions," Isbell says. "I still feel real close to them, I still talk to them, we still get along most of the time."

It's possible we may play together again in the future, but right now it's real important for me to do this."

While Isbell's songs, vocals and guitar playing were often featured in DBT, he rarely took the frontman role. Now, "If people are going to be entertained, they're going to be looking at me for it," he says. "I don't mind that. I don't know if I'd have been ready for it five or six years ago, but I feel like I'm ready for it now."



DEVELOPING ARTISTS BY SUSAN VISAKOWITZ

You Oughta Know Knows

How VH1's Artist Discovery Program Makes A Difference

At this point, if VH1 says "you oughta know," you probably should.

The cable TV channel's You Oughta Know artist discovery program has an outstanding hit-to-miss ratio, having identified stars like Amy Winehouse and Corinne Bailey Rae long before most radio stations and propelling already-building acts like the Fray and KT Tunstall to greater heights.

Even YOK acts that have thus far seen more modest results by mainstream standards—up-

and-comers like Rocco DeLuca & the Burden, for instance—can be classified as YOK program successes, as most of their sales and street buzz have flowed directly from VH1's floodgates.

According to VH1 executive VP of talent and music programming Rick Krim, there is no magic formula for making the right choices. "There are no hard, fast rules, and a lot of the decision is based on that intangible feeling that an artist just screams VH1."

The original YOK program, which was always artist-focused, started in 2004 and lived only online. At that time, VH1 also had a song-focused program called "Inside Track" that relied solely on video spins. YOK found such good traction online that, in 2005, it expanded into a multiplatform plan, making "Inside Track" obsolete.

The YOK branding package includes not only intense, long-term video play on VH1, but also promo spots, news pieces, inclusion in the channel's video countdown show and a live performance hosted on VH1.com.

Thus far, 21 acts have been featured—each one, at the time, deemed by VH1 to be new to the channel's core demo. "An artist can sell a couple of hundred thousand records and still be unknown to our audience," he says, "but we always want them to hear of that artist from us first."

There is one other commonality among all the acts VH1 has chosen: a dedicated show of support from the backing label.

"Before we make a final decision, we like to talk to the label and see the details of the marketing plan," Krim says. "We need a clear sense of everything they're going to do to support an act so we don't end up out there hanging on our own."

The labels are only too happy to push hard to earn their acts the YOK spotlight.

"It's become such an important stamp to have, especially early on," Sony BMG VP of marketing Greg Linn says. "To be able to add to an artist's one-sheet that they are a You Oughta Know artist—whether you're pitching writers or TV supervisors or radio stations or Web portals—is something that is taken very seriously."

In fact, execs from all the majors were unanimous in singing the program's praises. Warner Bros. senior director of video promotion Liz Lewis says she was "gunning for You Oughta Know when Regina [Spektor's] album first came out. We had seen what it had done for KT and Corinne and we knew we had to get it, and I can't say enough about the results. It had an instantaneous affect on record sales, it helped with radio, and it had a tremendous impact on her ability to fill bigger rooms. It was definitely the catalyst for the success we've had."

Universal Republic president Monte Lipman says the effect of YOK on Hinder was "massive," even though the band wasn't added until almost a year after its debut album dropped. "There were already signs that 'Lips of an Angel' would be a big hit single, but when they got You Oughta Know [coverage], it took them to the next level."

Sony BMG senior VP of digital media promotion and TV programming Greg Fisher believes You Oughta Know is so powerful because "it has a range of visibility that is unmatched. The frequency with which your video runs and all the branding—the graphics on the video, the interview they wrap it with, the promo spots—it all allows you to cut through the clutter," he says. "And the support VH1 gives their You Oughta Know artists is staggering. The video for Mat [Kearney's] 'Nothing Left to Lose' was in rotation for 45 weeks."

Krim says VH1 "is being bombarded constantly from all sides with new artists to be considered," but he's not complaining. "It's nice to be wanted, and we're still selective. No one cares more about our batting average than we do."

Only one indie act has thus far made the YOK cut—Ironworks band Rocco DeLuca & the Burden. But Krim says he would "love to find a couple more of those, because those are great stories. As long as it's the right artist and the label is equipped to support it, we're open to it."

Ironworks founder Jude Cole is grateful for that receptiveness: "In a world where it's become almost impossible to break a new act, this is one of those few windows that can really make a difference. It's really refreshing to have a platform



like this looking beyond the majors."

But the majors are equally thankful. "We have to deal with gatekeepers every day," Linn says. "Anything that gives us an opportunity to get them to take a second listen is welcome, especially when you've got the track record You Oughta Know does." ...



MIGHTY FINE

New You Oughta Know Act Riding Early Wave Of Buzz

Capitol Music Group chairman/CEO Jason Flom thought he was having a flashback the first time he saw A Fine Frenzy (aka Alison Sudol) play—in her mother's living room, with homemade cookies for the taking.

The scene was oddly reminiscent of his debut encounter with an unsigned Tori Amos, which happened to be in her parents' basement in Maryland.

"It brought back fond memories," Flom says. "Although Alison and Tori are very different artists, they share music and lyrics that have a mystical, ethereal quality. And like Tori, I think Alison will be someone who is seen as an important artist."

Sudol, now 22, is a literature fanatic who started writing stories when she was "pretty young, 9 or 10. But it wasn't until I was a teenager, experimenting with poetry, that I tried my hand at songwriting," she says.

She wrote "Almost Lover," the stirring first single from her forthcoming Virgin Records debut "One Cell in the Sea," about two years ago. "I didn't know I was writing for an album at the time," she recalls. "But I did know that was the first time I had captured what I was

feeling in song, and from that moment on I knew I couldn't go beneath that bar. It became a foundation."

"One Cell," which will be listed at a developing artist price, arrives July 17 riding a wave of buzz. A Fine Frenzy's music has already been featured in such TV shows as "Gilmore Girls," "House" and "One Tree Hill," and the act is a newly added VH1 You Oughta Know artist. Sudol and her band make their TV performance debut July 13 on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno," and the group is also booked for a session on KCRW Los Angeles' taste-making "Morning Becomes Eclectic" program on street date.



On the touring side, A Fine Frenzy will support Rufus Wainwright throughout August and is the opening act on VH1's second You Oughta Know tour, which features Brandi Carlile and kicks off in September.

"Somehow the stars have aligned," Sudol says. "It's pretty incredible to look at my schedule for the next few months and know I'll be out there with artists who are so uncompromising. I'm honored." —SV

GRADUATING CLASS

Since the start of 2006, VH1 has featured 15 acts in its You Oughta Know program. What follows is a chronological list of those acts, with information on their most recent release, including title, Billboard 200 chart peak and total sales through June 24, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

2006

KT Tunstall "Eye to the Telescope"—No. 33 on The Billboard 200; 1.1 million
The Fray "How to Save a Life"—No. 14; 2.1 million

Daniel Powter "Daniel Powter"—No. 9; 564,000

Corinne Bailey Rae "Corinne Bailey Rae"—No. 4; 1.6 million

Snow Patrol "Eyes Open"—No. 27; 1 million

Hinder "Extreme Behavior"—No. 6; 2.4 million

Mat Kearney "Nothing Left to Lose"—No. 109; 253,000

Regina Spektor "Begin to Hope"—No. 20; 419,000

Augustana "All the Stars and Boulevards"—No. 96; 269,000

2007

Rocco DeLuca & the Burden "I Trust You to Kill Me"—No. 177; 83,000

The Feeling "Twelve Stops and Home"—has not charted on The Billboard 200; 15,000

Amy Winehouse "Back to Black"—No. 6; 696,000

Paolo Nutini "These Streets"—No. 48; 114,000

Brandi Carlile "The Story"—No. 41; 105,000

A Fine Frenzy "One Cell in the Sea"—streets July 17 —SV

THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

ALBUMS

ROCK

YELLOWCARD

Paper Walls

Producer: Neal Avron
Capitol

Release Date: July 17

At the start of "Paper Walls," Ryan Key sings, "We've been here many times before." No kidding. How many times have we witnessed the melodic punk/emo band's rise from the independent ranks to major-label debut glory and the subsequent slump of the more creatively ambitious follow-up? That makes "Paper Walls" a retrenchment, with Yellowcard re-embracing the fast and furious adenoidal-voiced anthemry of "The Take-down," "Fighting," "Light Up the Sky" and "Five Becomes Four." It's prototypical Warped tour rock—but, to be fair, at the top level of that particular realm, with thoughtful lyrics and tightly crafted guitar arrangements. It may not win the band a trip back to the lucrative side of 2003's "Ocean Avenue," but "Paper Walls" definitely houses a band that will make its best shot to get there.—GG

THE MAGIC NUMBERS

Those the Brokes

Producers: various
Capitol

Release Date: July 17

On the Magic Numbers' self-titled debut, the London-based quartet was lauded for its charming, '60s-inspired folk-pop chock-full of catchy hooks and ooh-la-la choruses. This sophomore set likewise has moments of indelible pop bliss, but too often veers off track with unnecessarily long songs and dull arrangements. Such songs as "Slow Down (The Way It Goes)" and the flat, midtempo "Let Somebody In" fade quickly from memory, and the breezy chorus of "Keep It in the Pocket" doesn't quite deliver. The bouncy and harmony-rich "This Is a Song" and the spirited "Take a Chance" find the Magic Numbers at the top of their game, and "Undecided" is a groovy, soulful departure that hints at where the band is capable of going.—JM

ROONEY

Calling the World

Producer: John Fields
Cherrytree/Geffen

Release Date: July 17

Rooney picked the right season to release its sophomore set: This collection of lightweight pop-rock tunes about girls is well-aligned with the hot summer months. The summer of what year, however, is another matter. The stacked,

THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS

We Are the Night

Producers: The Chemical Brothers
Astralwerks

Release Date: July 17

The Chemical Brothers certainly have their formula, but nearly 15 years on, their mix of rock-show beats and accessible synthetics remains a pleasing one. The Brothers have never strayed far from the rock'n'roll foundation that supports their best beats, but when this sixth CD opens with a cataclysm of "Transformers" noises, it signals a record that's a little more unapologetically electronic than their previous ones. The title track and hit first single "Do It Again" are born of the same hypnotic, churning code that the Brothers have been writing for years, but they also leave themselves space to plant little seeds of folksy melody into their songs' mechanical exoskeletons on the oddly moving "Das Spiegel" and the epic "Burst Generator." They also score bonus points for employing rapper Fatlip to lay down vocals on the ridiculous and fully engaging "Salmon Dance."—JV



powerhouse harmonies on "Don't Come Around Again" brings to mind Journey's "Any Way You Want It" and its ilk, while the guitar licks on "Paralyzed" could have come from Billy Squier and the synths-and-strut of "All in Your Head" start like the Cars and give way to Weezer's "Say It Ain't So" riff. Lead single "When Did Your Heart Go Missing" is big and catchy and the startlingly raw "Help Me Find My Way" helps things along, but there aren't enough original ideas here to know if Rooney can shine as a relevant, modern rock band.—KH

ver wrote—as a midtempo ode to lasting love. Other songs also reflect on ups and downs of relationships, highlighted by the moody tale of betrayal "Mockingbird," the countrified "How to Be Good" and the introspective "Coming Back to Life." As a whole, a triple A triumph with appeal to adults looking for a message inside their music.—CT

COUNTRY

RAUL MALO

After Hours

Producers: Raul Malo, Evan York, Jay Weaver
New Door/UMe

Release Date: July 17

Miami-born, Nashville-based Malo's musical palette has long included everything from Latin rhythms to rock, bluegrass and country, so it's not surprising that this treatment of country classics—recorded with his three-piece road band and horn player Jim Hoke—is authentic and innovative. One of modern music's purest voices, Malo nails Eddy Arnold's "Welcome to My World," does a bouncy take on Hank Snow's "(Now and Then There's) A Fool Such As I" and offers a fresh, passionate version of the Ray Price-sung, Kris Kristofferson-penned "For the Good Times." Roger Miller's "Husbands and

Wives" and the Dwight Yoakam and Miller-penned "It Only Hurts Me When I Cry" are among the other standouts. Top honors, though, go to Malo's absolutely outstanding big band romp through Hank Williams' "Cold, Cold Heart."—PVV

JAZZ

CHARLES MINGUS SEXTET WITH ERIC DOLPHY

Cornell 1964

Producers: Sue Mingus,
Michael Cuscuna
Blue Note

Release Date: July 17

More than 40 years after it was put to tape, this double-disc live set is finally seeing the light of day. Better late than never, especially given the monumental performance turned in by the Mingus Sextet on this occasion. A 31-minute version of "Meditations" and another half-hour tour de force on "Fables of Faubus" are remarkably powerful tracks. Also noteworthy are the band's first recording of Billy Strayhorn's "Take the 'A' Train" and a thoroughly compelling, wildly inventive rendition of Duke Ellington's "Sophisticated Lady," featuring some gorgeous keyboard work by Jaki Byard. "Cornell 1964" also includes the concert debut of Mingus' intriguing,

idiosyncratic "Orange Was the Color of Her Dress, Then Blue Silk." This is the Mingus Sextet at the apex of its brief yet astonishing collaboration.—PVV

LATIN

TOÑO ROSARIO

A Tu Gusto

Producers: Toño Rosario,
Ysrael Casado
Universal Music Latino

Release Date: June 26

Rosario blends old and new on an album that is versatile, but within the clearly marked scope of merengue. Rosario's trademark is his laid-back vocals, which hold as much boldness as sly mischief in them. It works—for him—even when put to use in novelty songs like "Who Said," a set of whispered phrases over a repetitive, danceable beat. Beyond this track, the arrangements here are often rich and complex. On "Ella Sabe," the tempo switches from rapid, merengue 4/4 to a quicker double beat adorned with rippling horns. Covers of well-known pop tracks, including Franco de Vita's "Tú de Qué Vas" and "Vivir Así Es Morir de Amor," hint at the original ballad form with light touches such as a hint of strings or a female chorus that gives new shade to the beat.—LC

continued on >>p44

SUZANNE VEGA

Beauty & Crime

Producer: Jimmy Hogarth
Blue Note

Release Date: July 17

If "Beauty & Crime," Suzanne



Vega's love letter to New York, was a tourist publication, it would be a pamphlet you'd refer to regularly. At 34 minutes, it is a compact set of observations, anecdotes and sentimental reminiscences. It's trim rather than hurried, does not waste a note and, because of that, may be the best of Vega's seven studio albums. She's seldom sounded more buoyant than she does on the opening "Zephyr & I" or as unself-consciously rocking as she does on "Frank & Ava" (that would be Sinatra and Gardner), with KT Tunstall adding backing vocals to both. The aptly titled "Unbound" blends midtown dance club with Greenwich Village coffee shop, while horns lend a jazzy touch to "New York Is a Woman." Vega is hardly the first performer to mine Manhattan for thematic inspiration, but she's managed to make more out of it than most.—GG

POP

MINNIE DRIVER

Seastories

Producer: Marc "Doc" Dauer
Rounder

Release Date: July 17

Minnie Driver, who was signed to a recording contract before her renown as an Academy Award-nominated actress, returns here with the follow-up to her well-received 2004 debut "Everything I've Got in My Pocket." The overall template is calm, quiet, organic and acoustic, an ideal accompaniment to Sunday sunsets and merlot. Lead single "Beloved," featuring Kris Kristofferson-penned "For the Good Times." Roger Miller's "Husbands and

MEAT PUPPETS

Rise to Your Knees

Producer: Curt Kirkwood
Anodyne

Release Date: July 17

For the first time in 12 years, the Meat Puppets' new album is a collaboration between brothers Curt and Cris Kirkwood, who formed the band in 1980 and built an indie-rock legacy on a druggy blend of punk rock and Americana. Singer/guitarist Curt welcomes his sibling back to the fold (after a decade of addiction battles and personal tragedy) with some killer songs. "On the Rise" is a triumphant pop song featuring the appropriate line "how much salvation can my stomach stand." "Enemy Love Song," a bouncy, ethereal soft rocker, also speaks of recovery from turmoil. And "New Leaf" boasts some impressive riffing around its lazily anthemic chorus. Even without original drummer Derrick Bostrom, the Meat Puppets' magic is evident. The focused, yet relaxed, music throughout this album is among the best the band has ever made.—TC



THE HOT BOX

A WEEKLY ROUNDUP OF NOTABLE CHART ACHIEVEMENTS



BIG RASCALS

>>Rascal Flatts' bow at No. 24 on Hot Country Songs for "Take Me There" is the highest by any group since the chart expanded to 75 titles in October 1966. One duo, Jim Ed Brown and Helen Cornelius, began at the same rank in the March 31, 1979, issue with "Lying in Love With You."

FIVE FOR A NICKEL

>>Thanks to "Rockstar" (34-26), Nickelback becomes the first rock band since Genesis to place five top 40 hits from one album on The Billboard Hot 100. Genesis earned such a roll from 1991 to 1993 with the album "We Can't Dance."



FOND FAREWELL

>>Proof that Beverly Sills was a beloved ambassador of classical music resides on billboard.biz chart Top Classical Midline Albums, where news of her death prompts three listings: a re-entry at No. 7 and debuts at Nos. 3 and 15.

CHART BEAT

>>Which legendary songwriting team expands its career chart span of No. 1 hits to 54 years and three months? The duo's run began with Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton's "Hound Dog" in 1953 and continues with Sean Kingston's "Beautiful Girls." All the details of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller's latest amazing accomplishment appear in Chart Beat online.

>>Fred Bronson also figures out where "Umbrella" stands among the biggest hits for Rihanna, Jay-Z and the Def Jam label and explains why other Broadway cast albums are green with envy over the success of "Wicked" on Top Cast Albums.

Read Fred Bronson every week at billboard.com/fred.

Billboard

CHARTS

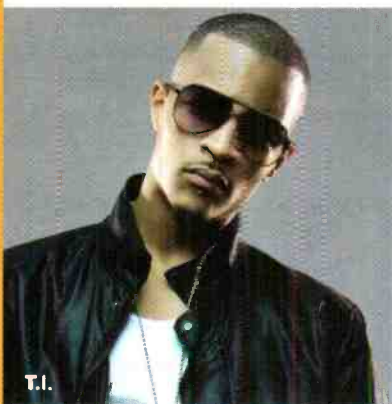


Over the Counter

GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com

New T.I. Triumph Extends Album Rally In Top 10

A second straight debut at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 for rapper T.I. continues not only his personal streak, but also a healthy industry trend playing out in the big chart's penthouse.



"T.I. vs. T.I.P." begins with 468,000 copies, the year's second-largest sum and the biggest since the latest Linkin Park album began with 623,000 in the June 2 issue. This also marks the biggest total by a rap album since Thanksgiving week 2006, when Jay-Z's "Kingdom Come" opened at 680,000.

About 15 months ago, T.I. rang The Billboard 200's bell with "King," which began with 522,000, the third-largest week by any album during the

first half of 2006. T.I.'s new one also represents his third No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums.

More significant than his personal achievement, the rapper's arrival marks the third straight week—and the fourth time in the last six weeks—that the No. 1 album sold more than the chart-topper of the comparable 2006 frame. And, in each of those six weeks, the volume in the top 10 beat that of the same week in the prior year.

So, even though we've yet to see a 2007 week sell more albums than its 2006 counterpart, the year-to-date gap has narrowed during that six-week stretch, from a deficit of 16.6% in the frame that ended May 27, to 14.7%. In that same span, the gap for current albums has narrowed from 19% to 16.6%.

As was the case when T.I. released "King" in March 2006, his sales muscle is hardly confined to album units. The new set's lead track, "Big Things Poppin' (Do It)," has moved 379,000 master ringtones (9-8 on Hot Ring-Masters at billboard.biz, 49,000 for the week) and has tallied another 307,000 full-length downloads (11-8 on Hot Digital Songs).

Depending on how well he holds up in week two, "Vs." could be the first No.

1 in two months to hold court a second frame, although the Smashing Pumpkins' comeback album, expected to start at around 140,000, is also a contender.

LET FREEDOM RING: With Independence Day stuck right in the middle of the tracking week, several patriotic songs, or ones that prominently mention "U.S.A." in its lyrics, post handsome digital spikes.

Among the ones that more than doubled their prior-week sales: Ray Charles' "America the Beautiful" (up 224%), Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the U.S.A." (206%), Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." (155%), John Mellencamp's "R.O.C.K. in the U.S.A." (188%), James Brown's "Living in America" (117%) and Neil Diamond's "America" (117%).

None of them grow enough to reach Hot Digital Songs. For the week, the biggest of the bunch is Greenwood's song, tracking 10,000 copies, about 5% of its digital sales to date.

Springsteen's "Born" rings almost 5,000 for the frame.

LIKE A CANDLE: In the next issue, we'll learn what impact the environmentally themed Live Earth concerts,

which were covered on msn.com and NBC Universal's various networks, will have on U.S. music sales. In the meantime, we can take a look-see at the spikes that followed the Concert for Diana, the commemorative July 1 event staged by sons Prince William and Prince Harry that paid tribute to Princess Diana on the 10th anniversary of her death.

As one might expect, Elton John gets conspicuous benefit. His latest hits album, "Rocket Man: Number Ones," marches 88-74 on The Billboard 200, up 23%. That marks the collection's biggest increase since it hit the chart 15 weeks ago, and 10,000 copies is its biggest total in 10 frames.

John's biggest-selling digital track for the week, "Tiny Dancer," clocks 5,000 sales, an increase of about 1,000.

Other Billboard 200 beneficiaries from that event include Fergie (12-11, up 16%), Nelly Furtado (63-50, 23%), Joss Stone (65-63, 4%) and Lily Allen (87-80, 13%). Allen was seen on VH1's coverage but not on NBC's recap special.

The NBC broadcast was the sixth-highest-rated show of the week in households, drawing an estimated 8.8 million viewers.

Market Watch A Weekly National Music Sales Report

Weekly Unit Sales

	ALBUMS*	DIGITAL ALBUMS*	DIGITAL TRACKS
This Week	8,731,000	909,000	15,404,000
Last Week	8,330,000	953,000	15,664,000
Change	-1.1%	-4.6%	-1.7%
This Week Last Year	9,000,000	541,000	10,474,000
Change	-3.0%	68.0%	47.1%

*Digital album sales are also counted with in album sales.

Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)



Year-To-Date

	2006	2007	CHANGE
OVERALL UNIT SALES			
Albums	279,615,000	238,576,000	-14.7%
Digital Tracks	291,457,000	432,731,000	48.5%
Store Singles	2,165,000	1,033,000	-52.3%
Total	573,237,000	672,340,000	17.3%
Albums w/TEA*	308,760,700	281,849,100	-8.7%

*Includes track equivalent album sales (TEA) with 10 track downloads equivalent to one album sale.

DIGITAL TRACKS SALES



SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

	2006	2007	CHANGE
CD	263,178,000	213,462,000	-18.9%
Digital	15,238,000	24,410,000	60.2%
Cassette	720,000	184,000	-74.4%
Other	479,000	520,000	8.6%

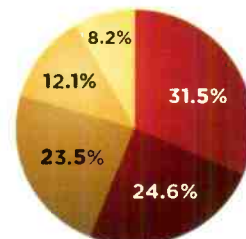
For week ending July 8, 2007. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected and provided by

nielsen
SoundScan

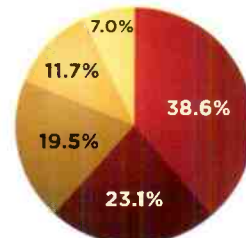
Distributors' Market Share: 06/04/07-07/01/07

● UMG ● Sony BMG ● WMG ● Indies ● EMI

Total Albums



Current Albums



JUL 21 2007 POP Billboard

POP 100

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST (IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL). Top entry: #1 BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY by Fergie.

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST (IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL). Top entry: #1 DON'T MATTER by Akon.

POP 100 AIRPLAY

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST (IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL). Top entry: #1 BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY by Fergie.

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST (IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL). Top entry: #1 LOVESTONED by Justin Timberlake.

122 radio stations top 40 stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This data is used to compile the Pop 100.

HOT SINGLES SALES

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST (IMPRINT / PROMOTION LABEL). Top entry: #1 ONLY THE WORLD by Mandisa.

HIT PREDICTOR

Table with columns: ARTIST/Title/LABEL (Score), Chart Rank. Includes sections for POP 100 AIRPLAY, ADULT TOP 40, ADULT CONTEMPORARY, and MODERN ROCK.

POP 100: The top Pop singles & tracks, according to mainstream top 40 radio audience impressions measured by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, and sales compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. See Chart Legend for rules and explanations.

HOT COUNTRY SONGS

Chart table for Hot Country Songs, positions 1-29. Top entry: 1. LOST IN THIS MOMENT - Big & Rich. Other entries include Wrapped, Lucky Man, I Told You So, Never Wanted Nothing More, Startin' With Me, Teardrops On My Guitar, Johnny Cash, These Are My People, I Need You, A Different World, Because Of You, Tough, Ticks, I Wonder, Everyday America, Proud Of The House We Built, Guys Like Me, Love Me If You Can, If You're Reading This, How I Feel, All My Friends Say, A Little Big Town, Greatest Take Me There, Free And Easy (Down The Road I Go), Livin' Our Love Song, I Wanna Feel Something, I Got More, Measure Of A Man, and Fall.

Single is McGraw's 40th top 10 since he first cracked that tier in March 1994. This also marks wife Hill's 22nd top 10 appearance.

Up 2.9 million impressions, duo leaps over the Airpower hurdle in sixth chart week with first single from next album, due Sept. 25.

Band from Muncie, Ind., opens with second single on Toby Keith's Show Dog imprint. Its first logged 70 chart weeks, peaking at No. 47 in April.

Chart table for Hot Country Songs, positions 30-60. Top entry: 31. JUST MIGHT HAVE HER RADIO ON - Trent Tomlinson. Other entries include Famous In A Small Town, Another Side Of You, Sunday Morning In America, She Ain't Right, Lost, Online, You Never Take Me Dancing, Nothin' Better To Do, As If, Daisy, One Of The Boys, This Is My Life, Firecracker, Men Buy The Drinks (Girls Call The Shots), The One In The Middle, Way Back Texas, Last Train Running, I'll Stand By You, Bad For Me, Dirty Girl, The More I Drink, Tangled Up, Days Of Thunder, The Strong One, Guitar Slinger, Flip-Flop Summer, Nineteen, Nowhere Than Somewhere, and Tattoo Rose.

HIT PREDICTOR

DATA PROVIDED BY promosquad

See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates recently tested title, ☆ indicates New Release

Table with columns for ARTIST/Title/LABEL/(Score) and Chart Rank, listing predicted hits for Country, Rock, and Pop genres.

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BETWEEN THE BULLETS wjessen@billboard.com BIG & RICH FIND FIRST NO. 1 WITH 'LOST' Big & Rich claim top ink on Hot Country Songs for the first time as the duo's first top 10 single reaches the summit. Recent history suggest duos are finding new favor at country radio. Of those five duos, four have scored their first chart-toppers in the past three years: Montgomery Gentry, the Wreckers, Sugarland and Big & Rich. Rascal Flatts takes the Hot Shot Debut at No. 24 with "Take Me There," a record-high debut for groups.



HOT COUNTRY SONGS: 127 country stations are electronically monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems... ALL CHARTS: See Chart Legend for rules and explanations.

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MILEPOSTS

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Boots Randolph, 80

Boots Randolph, 80, Nashville saxophonist and session musician, died July 3 after he was taken off his respirator at Skyline Medical Center in Nashville.



RANDOLPH

He had been in a coma since June 25, the result of a cerebral hemorrhage.

Born in Kentucky, Randolph was best-known for his 1963 hit "Yakety Sax," co-written by guitarist James Rich. The song gained an immense following when it later became the theme song for "The Benny Hill Show."

In addition to his solo work, Randolph was also an accomplished session musician. He played an integral role in countless recordings, including Elvis Presley's "Return to Sender," Roy Orbison's "Oh, Pretty Woman" and Brenda

Lee's "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree."

Randolph is survived by his wife of 59 years, Dee Randolph; a son, Randy Randolph; and a daughter, Linda O'Neal.

BIRTHS

GIRL: Payton Elizabeth Robbins, July 3 to **Cory** and **Sarah Robbins**. Father is founder/president of Robbins Entertainment. Mother is Bobbi Brown Cosmetics VP of product marketing.

DEATHS

Carla White, 56, jazz vocalist, died May 9 in New York from cancer.

White performed around the world for 15 years as a jazz and scat artist, and recorded albums for Milestone Records, including "Orient Express" and "Mood Swings." She was a well-respected teacher and worked as a voice-over artist on TV and radio commercials for such brands as Estee Lauder, Ethan Allen and Neutrogena.

Keith Girdler, lead vocalist for British group Blueboy, died May 15 from cancer.

Girdler got his start with musician Paul Stewart in English band Feverfew until the duo later formed Blueboy on the Sarah Records label. A gifted and respected vocalist/songwriter, Girdler was well-immersed in the indie pop scene, having played with a variety of acts such as Arabesque, Beaumont, the Snowdrops and Lovejoy in addition to Blueboy.

In recent years, he turned his focus to social work and became a volunteer services manager for England's Age Concern Eastbourne. Keith is survived by his partner and siblings.

John Murphy, 56, a retired Sony Music Distribution executive, died June 2 from a heart attack while on vacation in Flagstaff, Ariz.

Murphy was with Sony for 25 years, culminating in the position of senior VP of sales and distribution. "John was a great friend of the music industry and one of the originators that helped bring the industry's business practices forward," says Danny Yarbrough, Murphy's friend, colleague and former boss. Murphy is survived by his wife, Mary, and his children, John and Sara.

John Pike, 23, drummer for Ra Ra Riot, was found dead June 3 in an area of coastal water near Fairhaven, Mass.

Ra Ra Riot was just about to begin an East Coast tour with Tokyo Police Club; the band's self-titled debut EP is slated for release July 10 via Rebel Group. Pike, a 2006 magna cum laude Syracuse University graduate, had gone missing during a house party the night of June 3. The cause of death appears to be drowning, but autopsy results are still pending. There has been no determination of foul play.

Stack Bundles, 24, rapper and member of Dipset/Byrdgang, was found dead from a gun shot to the head and neck June 11 in front of his home in Queens, N.Y.

Bundles, whose real name was Rayquon Elliot, gained fans as a member of DJ Clue's Desert Storm family and through his work on several DJ mixtapes. He signed with Jim Jones' Byrdgang Records in 2006.

Byrdgang manager Yandy Smith says, "Stack Bundles was a joy to be around, charming, very intelligent, compassionate and concerned about the upliftment and enrichment of his community and the people in it."

The case is under investigation and so far no arrests have been made.

Johnny Frigo, 90, jazz violinist/bassist, died July 4 in Chicago from cancer.

Born on Chicago's South Side, Frigo played bass in the U.S. Coast Guard band during World War II, and toured with clarinetist Jimmy Dorsey and his orchestra. Frigo wrote a jazz standard, "Detour Ahead," recorded by Billy Holiday and Sarah Vaughn, among others. In his late 60s and early 70s, Frigo focused his attention on a jazz violin career, appearing twice on "The Tonight Show With Johnny Carson."

He is survived by his wife, Britney Brown; a son; and a younger sister, Aurora Bray.

EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: Koch Entertainment elevates **Gerald Moss** to VP of marketing and **Bill Kennedy** to VP of West Coast sales. Moss was director of East Coast sales, and Kennedy was director of West Coast sales.

Universal Music Group International promotes **Sandy Monteiro** to senior VP of Universal Music Southeast Asia. He retains his current posts as Universal Music Southeast Asia VP of digital and Universal Music Malaysia managing director.

PUBLISHING: Veteran music publishers **Martha Irwin** and **Mike Molinar** announce the formation of Nashville-based **Elevation Music Publishing**. The pair will share in creative and management responsibilities, and will both have the titles of creative principal/GM.



MOSS

MONTEIRO

FLICK

SCHULTZ

DISTRIBUTION: Universal Music Group Distribution appoints **Adam Flick** to VP of marketing/digital and **Laura Saez** to VP of sales/digital. Flick was VP of marketing at Universal Music Mobile, Saez was VP of digital strategy and sales at Rhino Entertainment.

Super D taps **Tim Hinsley** as GM. He was president at the Lumberjack Mordam Music Group.

TOURING: United Center in Chicago names **Shelly Schultz** director of entertainment. He is a co-founder of Trident Media Group and serves as president of TMG Artists Agency.

Live Nation appoints **Riley O'Connor** chairman of Live Nation Canada. He was senior VP of talent at House of Blues Concerts Canada.

MEDIA: Telemundo Network Broadcast Operations names **Ken Wilkey** senior VP. He was senior VP of technology at NBC and Telemundo TV stations.

MTV Networks Africa appoints **Alex Okosi** senior VP/managing director. He was VP/GM.

MTV Tr3s names **Michael Galbe** VP of music and talent. He was senior international director at Jive Records.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOODWORKS

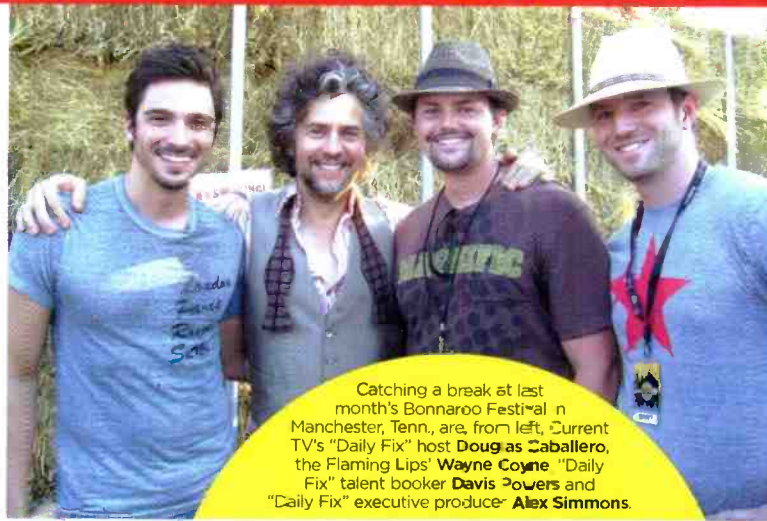
MUSIC IS OUR WAY OF LIFE

Former President Bill Clinton and Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., will be honored at the VH1 Save the Music Foundation's 10th-anniversary gala, to be held Sept. 20 at Lincoln Center in New York. The Clintons—along with VH1 Save the Music founder John Sykes, Mariah Carey and music products association NAMM—are being celebrated for their support of the foundation's mission. John Mayer, Roger Waters and Jon Bon Jovi will perform at the fund-raiser, to be hosted by Maria Menounos. Tim Gunn of "Project Runway" will play the role of auction MC. For more info, go to vh1.com.

DISPATCH USES WEB TO RAISE FUNDS

Roots/rock band Dispatch will release recordings from Dispatch: Zimbabwe, its three-night benefit at New York's Madison Square Garden. Music from the July 13-15 sold-out shows will be available via the Boston trio's Snocap MyStore on its MySpace page. Money raised from concert ticket sales and Snocap downloads will be donated to the Dispatch Foundation's efforts to fight disease, famine and social injustice in Zimbabwe. The concerts are being recorded by AEG Network Live and Dispatch for broadband, TV, wireless, DVD and other outlets.

BACKBEAT



Catching a break at last month's Bonnaroo Festival in Manchester, Tenn., are, from left, Current TV's "Daily Fix" host **Doug Saballero**, the Flaming Lips' **Wayne Coyne**, "Daily Fix" talent booker **Davis Powers** and "Daily Fix" executive producer **Alex Simmons**.



J Records artist **Emily King**, right, garnered a new legion of fans after completing several dates on her first major tour with R&B crooner **John Legend** left. The New York native has also lined up support dates with **Lyfe Jennings** in the weeks ahead.



The release of **Deborah Cox's** "Destination Moon: A Tribute to Dina" "Washington" was celebrated June 20 at the New York home of Nick Scianaleo and Ric Swezey with a live serenade from the artist. The Decca set debuted at No. 3 on Billboard's Top Jazz Albums chart. Flanking Cox are Billboard senior correspondents **Michael Paoletta**, left, and **Chuck Taylor**.



Attending the July 7 opening of **Gerber Group's** Rise Lounge at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Biloxi, Miss., are, from left, **Kid Rock**, **May Arden**, **Cindy Crawford** and **Rande Gerber**.



Brentwood/Benson Publishing execs. visited SESAC's Nashville headquarters to present songwriter **Brian White** with a platinum plaque for his contribution to the Rodney Atkins CD "If You're Going Through Hell." White co-wrote "Watching You" with Atkins, which went on to become a multiweek No. 1 country hit. From left are SESAC associate VP **Tim Fink**, Brentwood/Benson Publishing creative director **Holly Zabka** and A&R director **Ross Asher**, White, Brentwood/Benson Publishing president **Dale Mathews** and VP of creative affairs **Marty Wheeler**, and SESAC director **John Mullins**. PHOTO COURTESY OF KAY WILLIAMS

INSIDE TRACK

UNIVISION SPOTLIGHTING SOLÍS IN TV SPECIAL

Mexican star **Marco Antonio Solís** will be feted in a Univision network special to be shot July 26 at Miami's Bank United Center. The show will air in September as part of a series of specials produced by Univision to celebrate the Latin Grammy Awards. Last year, the network shot a general music special. This marks the first time the network will focus the show on a single artist. Solís, one of the top-selling artists in the Latin music world, is as well-known a performer as he is a songwriter and producer; he has penned some of the most-covered Latin songs of all time. Acts confirmed thus far to perform on the special include **Olga Tañón**, **Tito Nieves** and **Amas**.

KICK OFF THE JAMS

At last month's Bonnaroo festival in Tennessee, Ben Harper took part in a once-in-a-lifetime collaboration alongside the Roots' Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson and Led Zeppelin's John Paul Jones. The impromptu trio played a set of Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder and—yep—Led Zep covers that has already taken on legendary status (Web sleuths will often find it titled "Superjam.")

"When I got the call, I couldn't have been more excited," Harper tells Track. "I can't speak for them, but speaking for me, it felt like something special. I felt very connected to that musical moment." The feeling was

mutual from the lucky crowd on hand that night. "I've gotten [comments] on that from more corners of my life than I can even tell you," he says. "I'd strike that up again if the guys were willing. I'd be thrilled."



From left: **JOHN PAUL JONES**, **BEN HARPER** and **QUESTLOVE**



Music icon **Les Paul** celebrates his 92nd birthday and the debut of PBS special "American Masters Les Paul: Chasing Sound!" June 13 at New York's Cutting Room. From left are writer/producer **James Arntz**, Koch Entertainment Distribution president **Michael Rosenberg**, Paul, "American Masters" creator/executive producer **Susan Lacy** and "American Masters" director/producer **John Paulsen**. The show premiered July 11, and will be released on DVD Aug. 14.



A quartet of Universal Music Group executives hail the signing of a new agreement for the company to promote and distribute Taiwanese artists signed to independent Linfair Records throughout mainland China. From left are Universal Music China and Hong Kong managing director **Hung Tik**, Linfair Records chairman **Denver Chang**, Music Group International Asia Pacific president **Max Hole** and Universal Music Taiwan managing director **Sunny Chang**. Under the deal, such Linfair acts as Angela Chang, Fan Fan, Claire Kuo and Freya Lin will benefit from the major's promotional efforts on the mainland.



Grammy Award-winning singer **Keely Smith** received the Society of Singers Lifetime Achievement Award and headlined the charitable organization's recent fund-raiser, 2 Men... A Woman and a Big Band at the El Rey Theatre in Los Angeles. The night also featured vocal turns by Warner Bros. Studios president of worldwide music **Gary LeMel** and SOS president **Jerry Sharell** and **Pat Boone** serving as MC. From left are LeMel, Sharell, Smith and Boone.



Former Cars frontman and songwriter/producer **Ric Ocasek** has teamed with Universal Music Publishing Group. Celebrating the signing at UMPG's offices, from left, are UMPG executive VP of operations/CFO **Mike Sammis**, UMPG chairman/CEO **David Renze**, Ocasek, UMPG executive VP of acquisitions and strategic projects **Linda Newmark**, UMPG director of business affairs **Michael Rexford** and OK Management's **Brian Higgins**.

INSIDE TRACK

IN XANADU WITH OLIVIA

Sure, new Broadway extravaganza "Xanadu" features a muse as its lead character—but on opening night July 10 at the Helen Hayes Theatre in New York, the ultimate

muse could be found sitting in prime orchestra seats at the sold-out show. None other than Olivia Newton-John, who starred in the less-than-blockbuster 1980 film of the same name, attended the musical's premiere. After a triumphant standing ovation at curtain call, Newton-John joined the cast onstage.

From left: Billboard's **CHUCK TAYLOR**, **OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN** and songwriter/producer **JOHN FARRAR**.

Throughout the new production, which is high on camp and consistently large on laughs, Newton-John heartily chuckled along, even with occasional lighthearted jokes made at her expense. At one point, lead character Kira, played by Kerry Butler (assuming Newton-John's role), spontaneously decides to use an Australian accent.

Joining Newton-John in the audience was John Farrar, who wrote the majority of the artist's hits through the years, including "Magic" and "Suddenly," both part of the Broadway score. Sharing scoring duties with Farrar is ELO's Jeff Lynne, responsible for "I'm Alive," "All Over the World" and "Xanadu."

Based on opening-night mania, it appears that this time around, it's "Xana-do!"



The annual Tooth & Nail tour came to a close last month in Salt Lake City. The trek featured such seasoned veterans as MXPX and rising stars like Sullivan. From left are MXPX tour manager **Tommy Rat**, Sullivan's **Zack Harward** and **Brooks Paschal**, MXPX vocalist **Mike Herrera**, Sullivan's **Jeremy Stanton** and Sullivan crew member **William Keith Reed**.



Nearly 300 people attend the Entertainment AIDS Alliance's fifth annual Wine & Wisdom event June 21 at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. Aside from donations raised at the door, the event included a silent auction and a live auction for a trip to Australia. From left are EAA board member **Vallery Kountze** of Mirage Productions, Dr. **Judith Currier** of the University of California-Los Angeles' Clinical AIDS Research and Education Center and EAA board members **Vicki Greenleaf** (Greenleaf & Associates), **Barbara Javitz** (Union Station Media), **Erin Crawford** (Nielsen VideoScan) and **Meral Kaloustian** (Weber Shandwick).



U.K. R&B phenomenon and Kin Productions act Livin' Out Loud treated Billboard's Los Angeles office to a special performance June 28. From left are Billboard West Coast advertising director **Aki Kaneko** and Livin' Out Loud's **Rueben MacCalla**, **Lisa LaShawn Sylvia MacCalla** and **J. Martini**. PHOTO: COURTESY OF PETERSON GONZAGA/NIELSEN ENTERTAINMENT WIRE

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Among adults 18-34 CY 07-to-date (2007 thru 6-25-07)
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Among: Blk viewers, Blks 18-49, Blks 35+ & Blk teens

Source: Nielsen Media Research via BET Market Research; FOOTNOTE 1) Measurement: 12/26/05-06/26/2007; Claim based upon Live + Same Day P2+ Impressions for BET vs. Award Ceremony Type Code-cable programs only (NPower). FOOTNOTE 2) Measurement 12/27/04-06/26/07; Claim based upon Live + Same Day Black P2+ Impressions for BET vs. Award Ceremony Type Code-broadcast and cable programs (NPower). FOOTNOTE 3) Measurement 12/30/02-6/26/07; Claim based upon Live + Same Day Black P18-34 Impressions for BET vs. Award Ceremony Type Code-broadcast and cable programs (NPower). FOOTNOTE 4) Measurement 01/01/07-6/26/07; Claim based upon Live + Same Day Black P18-34 Impressions for BET vs. Award Ceremony Type Code-cable programs only (NPower). FOOTNOTE 5) Measurement 12/29/97-6/26/07; Claim based upon BET Network Live + Same Day among the following Black Impressions: P2+, P18-49, P35+, & P12-17 (NPower), and BET Network Live Data among the following Impressions: P2+, P18-49, P35+ & P12-17 (StarMedia). Note: Data is Live +SD where applicable. Further qualifications available upon request.