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# MUSICROW

NASHVILLE PUBLICATION

Toby  
Keith

## The Big Uglies

NASHVILLE'S MOST  
CONTROVERSIAL  
DEAL POINTS

## Northern Lights

CANADIAN COUNTRY  
MUSIC WEEK

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PLUS: *Timeless*—Hank's Legacy; Skepner Remembered; Songs & Tragedy

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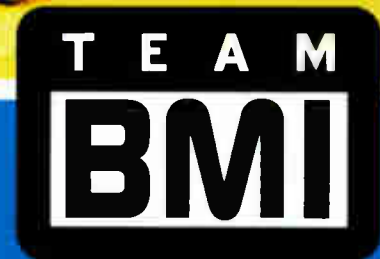
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## On the Cover Toby Keith

**Label:** DreamWorks  
**Current Single:** "I Wanna Talk About Me"  
**Current Album:** *Pull My Chain*  
**Current Video:** "I Wanna Talk About Me"  
**Current Producers:** James Stroud, Toby Keith  
**Management:** T.K. Kimbrell/TKO Artist Management  
**Booking:** Monterey Peninsula Artists  
**Recent Hits:** "I'm Just Talkin' About Tonight," "You Shouldn't Kiss Me Like This," "How Do You Like Me Now?!", "I Wanna Talk About Me"  
**Awards:** 2000 ACM Top Male Vocalist, 2000 ACM Album of the Year  
**RIAA Certs To Date:** *How Do You Like Me Now?!* was his fourth platinum album.  
**Special TV/Film Appearances:** *In Performance At The White House*; five national 10-10-220 commercials; *CNN Showbiz Today*; *CBS Early Show*; *Austin City Limits*; *Late Show with Craig Kilborn*; *Miss America's Jr. Miss Pageant*, several awards shows.  
**Hometown:** Moore, Okla.  
**Birthdate:** July 8, 1961  
**Interesting Facts:** Writes or co-writes 90 percent of his music. Has an IQ that is in the same range as members of MENSA. Picked 13 out of 16 *Monday Night Football* NFL Games in 2000.  
**Outside Interests:** Breeding, training and racing thoroughbred horses; weight training.  
**Musical Influences:** Merle Haggard, Alabama, Eagles, Roger Miller  
**Favorite Records:** Any John Prine record; Roger Miller's box set; Don Henley's *Greatest Hits*

In the past two years, singer/songwriter Toby Keith has delivered just the right attitude to shake up country music as witnessed by his platinum-selling album *How Do You Like Me Now?!* and two Academy of Country Music trophies. Continuing this momentum into 2001, Keith unleashed his chart-topping album, *Pull My Chain*, with an astounding 119,504 scanned units in its first week.



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## ACM Names Board; Publishers Sue MP3.com; Dualtone Teams with Razor & Tie

### NEWS

**ACM NAMES BOARD**—The Academy of Country Music has selected 17 new board members who will be in place for the next two years. Directors serve staggered two-year terms with half the board changing every year. The ballots were voted on by the total Academy membership and the results follow: **President**, Jack Lameier; **VP**, Joey Lee; **Affiliated**, John Briggs; **Artist/Entertainer**, Tracy Lawrence; **Club Operator**, Jerry Hufford; **Composer**, Steve Bogard; **Disc Jockey**, Robynn Jaymes; **Manager**, David Corlew; **Musician**, Kenny Liebenson; **Music Publisher**, Ronda Espy; **Publications**, Neil Pond; **Publicity**, Cathy Gurley; **Radio**, John Blassingame; **Record Company**, Butch Waugh; **Talent Agent**, Gayle Holcomb; **Talent Buyer**, Fran Romeo; **TV/Motion Picture**, Rac Clark

**PUBLISHERS SUE MP3.COM**—More than 50 independent songwriters and music publishers including Copyright.net Music Publishing have filed a copyright infringement suit against MP3.com. The complaint identifies about 1,000 individual songs whose publishing rights were repeatedly infringed. The lawsuit was filed after MP3.com failed to reach a settlement for its unauthorized use of the independent publishers' copyrights.

**DUALTONE TEAMS WITH RAZOR & TIE**—Dualtone Records and Razor & Tie Records have entered into a new strategic partnership. Under the agreement Razor & Tie will distribute

Dualtone's releases and provide other support, including traditional marketing and direct television marketing. Razor & Tie's co-owners **Craig Balsam** and **Cliff Chenfeld** said, "We are excited about beginning a relationship with Dualtone. In a very short time, they have shown that they can find artists and projects that are both credible and appealing. We want to help their business grow."

**JEFF ROBERTS & ASSOCIATES, APA FORM ALLIANCE**—Jeff Roberts & Associates (JRA), one of the nation's largest booking agencies for Christian music artists, has formed a representation alliance with Agency for the Performing Arts (APA). While all artists will remain under the branding of JRA for Christian booking, they will now have the expanded benefits of full service major marketing and mainstream career representation from APA's Los Angeles, New York and Nashville offices.

**615 MUSIC SIGNS DEAL WITH NBC**—NBC has signed a three-year contract with 615 Music Library to provide each of its stations use of the entire 615 Music catalog. "This is a tremendous leap in the growth of our company," said 615 Music Companies President **Randy Wachtler**. "Stations will be able to delve into the 615 Music Library for all their music needs."

**CMT's NEW FEED**—CMT President **John Sykes** announced the company would launch a new feed in the United States, serving the Pacific and Mountain regions as well as Alaska

and Hawaii. The new Western feed officially launches Sept. 10. "We've had tremendous demand from our viewers in the western half of the country to see their favorite CMT programs at the right time for their time zones," said Sykes. "This additional feed puts CMT on par with MTV and VH1."

**HALL OF FAME RESTRUCTURES**—As part of a restructuring, the Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum dismissed five employees, including **Ronnie Pugh**, a 22-year researcher, and *Journal of Country Music* Editor **Chris Dickinson**. The Hall also announced promotions for **Diana Johnson** to VP of Museum Services; **Nina Hammontree** to VP of Financial Services/Operations; **Erika Wollam Nichols** to VP Marketing; and **Paul Kingsbury** to Senior Director of Museum Services/Special Projects.

**AMERICANA TV PARTNERS WITH CRAWFORD COMMUNICATIONS**—Americana Music Television (AMT) of Nashville and post production/satellite services facility Crawford Communications Inc. of Atlanta have signed a strategic partnership agreement which effectively launches a new satellite and DBS network featuring country, bluegrass, blues and Gospel music, plus features and documentaries. The Americana "roots" channel plans to achieve 24-hour broadcast status by second quarter 2002. AMT's CEO **Stanley Hitchcock** founded Country Music Television, currently owned by MTV Networks. **Roger Sarchet** serves as the new network's VP of Industry Relations. **MIR**

## MUSICAL CHAIRS

**Renee Bell** has been promoted to VP of A&R for the RCA Label Group (RLG). In her new role, Bell will oversee all A&R aspects for Arista Nashville, BNA Records and RCA Records...Windswept-Nashville announced the following promotions: **Steve Markland** to VP of Creative Affairs, **Cliff Audretch III** to Director of Creative Affairs, and **Lisa Gamertsfelder** to Catalog Manager. **Mahri Raquel Feldman** joins as Office Manager/Administrative Assistant...Broken Bow announced the additions of **Jon Loba** as Southeast Regional Promotions Representative and **Leslie Gray** as Administrative Assistant; and the promotion of **Andrea Williams** to Promotions Coordinator. Also, **Chris Neese** has exited as VP of A&R...**John W. Styll**, who founded *CCM Magazine* in 1978, has been named publisher of *The Life@Work Journal*, a publication geared toward helping people integrate their faith and their work...Curb Records announced the appointment of

**Bob Catania** as VP, Pop Promotions and **John Butler** as Senior Director, Promotion and Marketing...The law firm Bass, Berry & Sims has added six new attorneys. They are **Gene L. Humphreys**, **Stephen C. Taylor**, **David R. Esquivel**, **Robert L. Brewer**, **Peter R. Pettit** and **Barbara Muhlbeier**...**Camellia Petty** has been promoted to Assistant VP, Application Systems at BMI...Country Radio Broadcasters, Inc. (CRB) announced the addition of two new staff members. **Celeste Irvin** has joined as Event Support Coordinator and **Lidia Graham** as Manager of Sales...Gaylord Entertainment announced the hiring of **David C. Kloeppel** as Executive VP and CFO. Kloeppel joins Gaylord Entertainment from Deutsche Bank where he was responsible for mergers and acquisitions practice in real estate, lodging and leisure in the U.S...**Yvonne Johnson** has joined the Nashville office of Jerry Duncan Promotions as Executive Assistant...**Mary Martin** has joined Mercury as VP of A&R...**Bill Macky** was named MCA VP of National Promotion this week, filling the spot created by the departure

of Senior VP of National Promotion **David Haley** who had been with the company for 17 years...CMT Senior VP/GM **Paul Hastaba** exited the network and was replaced by KPLX radio programmer **Brian Philips**...Director of A&R **Laura Putty** has exited Sony...RCA reports that four employees will be voluntarily exiting, but that all vacancies will be filled. VP Sales **Ron Howie** is accepting an early retirement package. Accepting voluntary retirement packages are Executive Assistant **Jane Messmore**, Manager of A&R Administration **Janice Soled**, Legal Assistant **Kelley Snead** and Senior Director A&R **Sam Ramage**, who will join RPM Management...Sony VP of Creative Services **Bill Johnson** has accepted a retirement package and exited the company. Also leaving Sony was Senior VP National Promotion **Jack Lameier** who spent 39 years with Sony, 23 of them in Nashville...Arista A&R alumni **Steve Williams** will join EMI joint venture Sea Gayle Music...**Thom Schuyler** has joined Balmur Corus Music as Senior VP. **MIR**



Bell



Markland



Styll



Irvin



Graham



Macky



Philips



Williams



Schuyler





# Timeless: A Tribute To Hank Williams

The impact Hank Williams had on country music is immeasurable. While his myth as a singer and country icon continues to grow, his impact as a songwriter is often overlooked. With the Sept. 25 release of *Hank Williams: Timeless, Lost Highway* is putting the spotlight back on Hank Williams the songwriter. Ten of the 12 tracks on *Timeless* are solo compositions by Williams.

**Mary Martin**, Mercury Records VP and *Timeless* Co-producer, says that from the very beginning of the project Mercury/Lost Highway President **Luke Lewis** wanted to focus on Williams as a songwriter.

"He said let's understand that Hank was a songwriter," says Martin. "So let's see if some of your pals in rock 'n' roll might be inclined to make a version of one of their favorite songs of Hank's. That was the boundary. We wanted to try and honor Hank with as many incomparable artists that we could contact and who would respond to our request."

To that end, they went after artists who were also songwriters. They reasoned, correctly as it turned out, that other writers might respond favorably to the concept.

"Count me in" was the reaction from the artists we contacted," says Martin. "The first person we asked was **Hank Williams III**. Within days he went into the studio and cut his song."

When the dust had settled, *Lost Highway* ended up with a virtual who's who of contemporary songwriters attached to the project. In addition to Hank III, **Bob Dylan, Sheryl Crow, Keb' Mo', Beck, Mark Knopfler, Tom Petty, Keith Richards, Emmylou Harris, Ryan Adams, Lucinda Williams** and **Johnny Cash** all agreed to revisit Hank Sr.'s catalog.

Martin says the label took a very hands-off approach to the actual recording of the album. "There was no A&R interference whatsoever. The artists chose the songs. Everybody was given the same amount of money for recording costs. We told them to go off and have a good time."

She goes on to say that a project like this, with artists from so many different labels, presents its own unique challenges. "The promotion department has indicated that they would be pleased and honored to work a single. But Luke and I have to get the go-ahead from other recording companies to do that."

*Lost Highway* may, however, have some promotional tricks up its sleeve.

"We've been noodling with the idea of assembling as many of these artists as we can to do some kind of really swell television show," Martin reveals. "The album will have to find some loving legs first. We want to have some penetration in the consciousness of America before we do something like a TV special."

—John Hood



## Remembering David Skepner



Music industry veteran David Skepner, 63, died Sept. 11 of a heart attack in Nashville. His career in the music business began in 1960 with MCA Inc. in Los Angeles, where he worked in international television. After leaving MCA in 1972, he began a fruitful 14-year relationship as Loretta Lynn's manager, guiding her career to superstar heights. *Forbes* magazine, in October 1980, said of Skepner, "As much as anyone, he and Lynn...propelled country music into the mainstream."

Skepner also managed Riders in the Sky from 1985-1997, and was managing Wylie & The Wild West, Goose Creek Symphony, Syd Masters & the Swing Riders, and The Larkins at the time of his death.

His real passion, however, was working with Music Row's younger generation. He served as a faculty member at Belmont University's music business school from 1983-2000. Last year he began teaching as part of Trevecca University's music business program and often attended industry functions with students in tow.

"He had a love for students and for helping young people trying to get started in the business," said friend Michael Milom, a Nashville entertainment attorney. "That was his first love. He wanted to make sure they didn't waste time or get hooked up with the wrong people."

Among his previously held positions were Chairman of the Academy of Country Music, The Tennessee Film, Entertainment & Music Commission and Nashville Entertainment Association. He was also a member of NARAS, the Tailhook Association, the Association of Naval Aviators and the Marketing Committee for the USO.

According to friends, Skepner was working on a book for beginners in the music business, tentatively titled *They Ain't Comin' To Your House—The Would-Be, Wanna-Be's Guide to the Music Business*.

He is survived by one sister, who resides in California.

—Richard McVey II

### The Buzz

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#### Wake-Up Edition

**We love Ralph's new show, but shouldn't he be awake?**

- Clear Channel**—Thank you so very much for getting insensitive drive like John Lennon's "Imagine" off the air.
- Tracy Byrd**—Stranded in Hawaii. Oh, the humanity!!
- www.musicrow.com**—ISP snafu. Server problem. A virus. We had a flat tire. A terrible flood. Locusts. It wasn't our fault!
- Canada**—Yep. Still there.
- Terrorism**—Osama bin Grenaded has the life expectancy of a fruit fly. Who's scared now?

## SONGS AND TRAGEDY

"It seems so trivial to be thinking about songs at a time like this."

That was the statement from a publisher at the meeting of my plugger's group last week. Who could disagree?

When so many have lost lives and loved ones to mass murder, how can we be concerned with something as trivial as a song?

Every songwriter I talked to expressed a similar sentiment. Songs seemed so unimportant compared to the heroics and tragedy of the week. Writing appointments got canceled. Pitches were postponed.

So I, like so many of you, became a news addict, focusing on the horrifying film footage and the worsening news, as if feeling terrible could somehow help sanctify the loss of so many.

And then I asked myself what I ask you now: How many songs did you hear that week? Think of the scenes that were broadcast as a song elicited our grandest emotions. From John Lennon to Enya to Ray Charles and Lee Greenwood, composers expressed what we could not.

How many times did you hear groups of people singing songs that brought them together as they held hands in front of the White House, in a park, during a church service?

Songs became the binding force that helped hold us up, helped us find courage, and most importantly, helped us connect and remember that we all feel the same things.

Then I thought of the lesson so many were learning: Our relationships, our families and friends that are so dear and so easily lost, these are most important in the end. Everyone I know called their loved ones, whether they were near New York or not. We just suddenly wanted to know that Mom and Dad were all right. We hadn't talked to good old Charley in ages and felt like we should see how he was. Old grudges between brothers were set aside to ask, "How are you doing? You taking care of yourself? Do you need anything?" Husbands and wives set aside bickering for quiet time together.

Suddenly those trivial songs didn't seem so silly. What we write about in Nashville is what the world is thinking about in the wake of this tragedy. Family, friends, old and new loves. Lost love.

The best of us are not doing this to make a buck; we do it to make a difference. Don't feel like you are "doing nothing" as you write those songs. Don't feel that pitching a song is insensitive at a time like this. Don't cancel that recording session.

We are waiting for you. We need that song. We want you to help us remember that it is good to be human in the face of so much inhumanity.

—Kevin Johnston

*Johnston is a Nashville-based songwriter with Sevanne Music Publishing, and founding member of Inside Pitch Songpluggers Group.*

# STUDIO WEST ◀

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Steven Roads

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to climb  
the world's highest  
mountains,  
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only  
one  
place to call;

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### Client Profile

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Age: 37

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Weight: 235

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Lifestyle:

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**NOVEMBER**

*A look at Nashville's hottest music*

**MAKERS**



**Pull My Chain**—Toby Keith knocks one out of the SoundScan park with 119,504 units scanned in its debut week.



**Contract Clauses**—"Mr. Lincoln was not referring to entertainers in his proclamation." (See page 13)



**Earl Scruggs and Friends**—MR's Larry Wayne Clark calls these pairings with the banjo virtuoso "a humble masterpiece." (See page 27)



**"God Bless The USA"**—Greenwood's patriotic anthem returns at No. 16 on the charts.

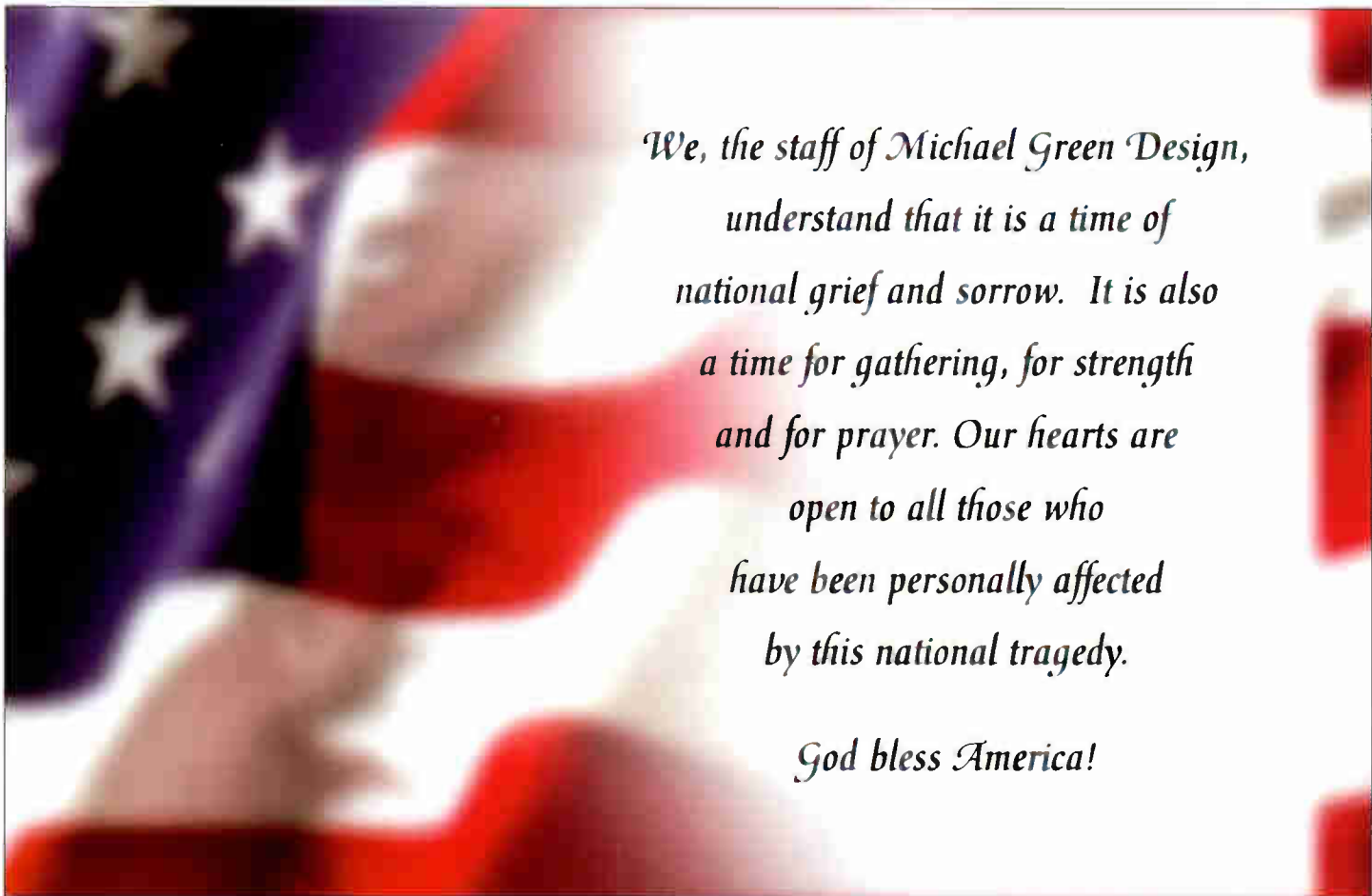


**John Hiatt**—MR's John Hood attests, "The Tiki Bar Is Open solidifies Hiatt's reputation as one of America's most enduring and important songwriters." (See page 29)



**Manager Bruce Allen**—"I'm sick of seeing ugly looking people with no style." (@MusicRow #87)

**Ricky Skaggs**—Oermann says "Shady Grove" is "played and sung with flawless perfection." (See page 16)



*We, the staff of Michael Green Design,  
understand that it is a time of  
national grief and sorrow. It is also  
a time for gathering, for strength  
and for prayer. Our hearts are  
open to all those who  
have been personally affected  
by this national tragedy.*

*God bless America!*



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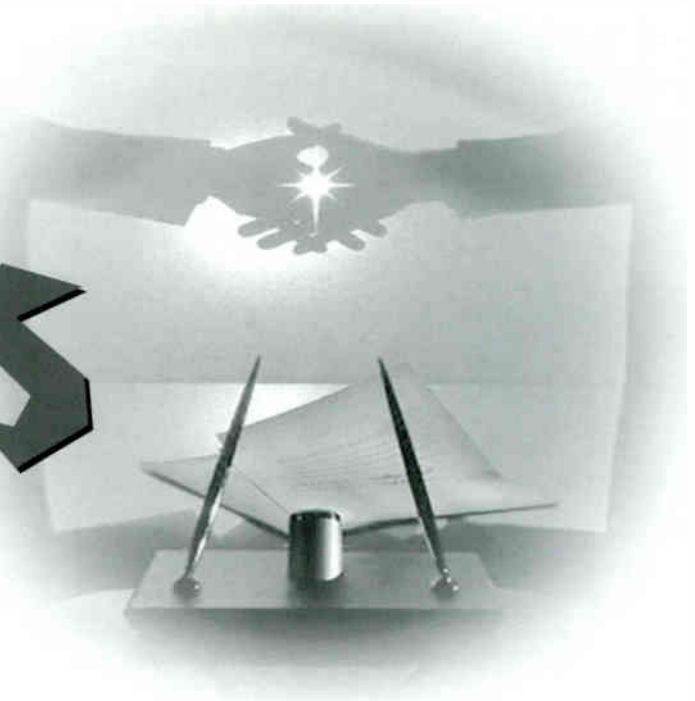
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# THE BIG UGLIES

## Nashville's Most Controversial Deal Points

by Chuck Aly



**C**ontracts are inevitable in the music industry. Often lengthy and confusing to the lay (read: creative) person, these documents govern many of the most important business relationships. Some contracts are more contentious than others. Money aside, the publishing contract, for instance, seems less controversial than, say, the management contract. And then there's the label deal. As manager Bob Titley said after rattling off several touchy deal points, "...and basically everything in the recording contract. The whole concept of the recording contract."

Headlines and lawsuits confirm the artist-label relationship as a rocky one, but wherever entities enter into contracts, disagreements arise. Each negotiation is different and every deal varies, but some contract terms become industry flash points. Creative control, non-compete, controlled composition and work-for-hire are just some of the terms we've asked a group of Music Row experts to discuss.

**Deal Point:** *Royalty rate. Commission.* Simply put, money. It's what everyone's in business to make, and consequently is the focus of almost all negotiations.

**The Balance:** Varies depending on contract type. Manager commissions typically run from 15 to 20 percent. Most established songwriters can secure a co-publishing agreement that earns them 75 percent of the royalty stream. Royalties for recording artists can run from 12 percent of retail to, reportedly, as much as 40 percent for Diamond Award winners.

**Survey Says:** Michael Milom, Chairman of the Entertainment Practice Group at Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, says rate is just part of the equation in the recording contract. "Royalty structure is a hot topic and has been reemphasized by the ongoing debate over electronic distribution. Packaging deductions and other ways the penny rate is affected are significant. Most contracts treat audio visual recordings differently from audio. Because of DVD and CD-ROM, that can be a problem.

You want whatever the principle configuration is to be at the top of the royalty structure. Just because they put two and a half minutes of EPK on your CD shouldn't cut the artist's royalties in half."

"There continues to be a bias on the coasts against Nashville-originated music," says Richard Frank, Jr. of Frank & Frank. "Royalty scales for rock or rap artists are substantially higher than the typical Nashville contract. I've had people say they just don't give that kind of rate to a Nashville artist. It's bigotry. Makes me wonder if we're still being occupied 150 years after the recent unpleasantness has ended."

Frank says royalty escalators can benefit new artists if their work becomes successful. "If the best basic rate I can get is 14 percent, I like to seek a non-recoupable bonus, say at a million albums, in an amount approximately equal to one or two percent of the basic royalty. This, in effect, is a retroactive royalty adjustment, but it doesn't screw up the computers."

Rates are generally flat, says RCA VP of Legal & Business Affairs Kathy Woods. "I don't see a trend in royalties. Costs are going up and yet sales overall are down."

**Deal Point:** *Management Commissioning of Writer Royalties.*

**The Balance:** "When I started practicing law in 1985, there was a heavy convention in this town that the songwriter/publisher income was sacrosanct," says attorney Steven Gladstone of Gladstone, Doherty & Associates. "As we grew in sophistication and market share we began to bring concepts in that, from the standpoint of covering your risk as a manager, weren't bad business. One was the 20 percent commission. The other was the right to commission publishing earnings."

"Top line managers almost invariably get that now," says Milom. "At least to the extent that they commission publishing revenue received by the artist/writer from their songs





**Bob Titley**



**W. Michael Milom**



**Richard Frank**



**Kathy Woods**



**Steven Gladstone**

which they record. I'd say 80 percent of management contracts at that level include it."

**Survey Says:** TBA Entertainment's Bob Titley says there is still a good bit of resistance to the concept. "A lot of artists and attorneys really don't endorse and will not allow managers to commission publishing and writing income," he says. "That's a mistake and it blows a lot of deals apart."

Gladstone asserts that the scope of the commissioning is an issue. "Does the manager get a portion of the royalty stream from past deals? On new records that create publishing income? If anything, the manager should be entitled to participate in income from records recorded and released during the term." In addition to commissions for the duration of the agreement, Titley also advocates payment on "sale of a publishing asset for a period of time post-term."

"Still," Titley says, "there is a dramatic difference between developing an artist as a writer over a period of years, and signing an established act. I would have difficulty asking an established writer/artist to allow me to fully commission their writing income. But if I invest significant time and energy, or sacrifice potential touring income to develop that aspect of an artist's career, then I should be allowed to participate in the income at some level. Why would an artist seek to remove their manager's economic incentive for balancing time allocation between writing and touring, recording or marketing? They better be damn certain their manager has an unusually powerful ability to set self-interest aside."

**Deal Point:** *Controlled composition.* Record labels typically seek to pay mechanical royalties at a reduced rate to artists who write their own songs.

**The Balance:** "The contentiousness of any issue boils down to the market position of the creative person," Gladstone says, an idea that can be applied to most of the points mentioned in this article. "If they love you and want you, especially if two companies do, a lot of things that might have been a hard argument never get brought up. If they're on the fence, you're going to have to argue about everything."

**Survey Says:** Frank provides an historical perspective, saying, "Some years ago the record labels were unsuccessful in asking the copyright tribunal [to change] the mechanical royalty rate. Shortly thereafter there was an RIAA meeting. Shortly after that each of the major labels began inserting into their contracts, for the first time, markedly similar controlled composition clauses. This was when the clause first came into effect. I will not say there was collusion or conspiracy, but there was a hell of a lot of coincidence. It was quite a maneuver to get by contract that which they had been found unentitled to legally."

"There are ways to gain relief," Gladstone says. "Either it can be negotiated away over time, or if there is enough market interest in your client you can negotiate it away from the beginning."

There are concerns that controlled composition hurts other parties, and can prompt further sanctions on the artist. "They are enforcing a diminished royalty not only on the artist but also on the publisher and co-writers," Frank says. Gladstone adds, "Many of the major publishing agreements contain penalty clauses that allow them to collect the difference from a writer's other royalties. That is where the controlled composition rate really becomes oppressive."

Woods says RLG has a moderate stance on the issue. "It comes up all the time, and I think we're pretty reasonable. We generally acknowledge that a controlled composition is

only that portion that is written by the artist as opposed to making the whole composition controlled. We're fairly reasonable in our willingness to escalate rates and increase caps—the aggregate maximum royalties that are payable for an album."

**Deal Point:** *Non-compete.* Employment contracts often restrict the employee's ability to work for a competitor and take clients or employees with them.

**The Balance:** "It is possible to make an executive so damned unhappy they'll do anything to leave," Frank says. "The non-compete cuts down greatly on their freedom to leave an onerous situation and go into competition with their former employer. On the other

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(Pictured l to r) Jake Cauley, Tracy Holt, Jackie Clark, John Landry, Shawn Dell Shannon, Dierdra Ekins, Jimmie Jones

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## On Publishing Contracts

In contrast to the deal points listed, publisher-writer agreements seem to be much less contentious. "Once you get past what the publisher's job is and how expenses and revenue should be shared," explains Michael Milom, Chairman of the Entertainment Practice Group at Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, "most of what you negotiate about is somewhat esoteric. Does the writer get an office? Do the copyrights revert after a period of years?"

"The publishing agreement in appearance and actuality is more of a partnership," Milom continues. "If it's a co-pub situation the publisher is getting a quarter out of every dollar. The accounting systems are more straightforward. It's more balanced, more open. There aren't a lot of hidden costs being deducted that the writer can't see. Anytime you're dealing with a record company and they say you can't look at certain books and records, that just sends people into orbit."

hand, compensation is very good in the entertainment business, generally. The employer should have protection against the employee making contacts through the company, building his reputation, then taking knowledge he has acquired across the street."

**Survey Says:** "It's the scope of non-compete," Milom says. "Ours is a relatively small, closed industry. There aren't many places you can go and use skills developed as the president of a record company. Can't go work for General Motors. The scope in terms of where else you can work and how long you are prevented from working for a competitor are key issues."

"The backdrop of Tennessee law is important," Gladstone says. "Our jurisdiction is—short hand term—a right-to-work state. A person needs to be able to make a livelihood. You've got to narrow down what competition really is, and as an employee you want the time period, geography and market scope as small as possible. You want to make sure if you're fired without cause you're also not locked out of a job. Getting the employer to adopt a termination-without-cause provision at all is sometimes a tough nut to crack."

Frank adds, "There is a substantial degree of fairness in the standard non-compete. At the end of the term, however, the employee

must be cleared of the non-compete otherwise he is at the mercy of the employer who can offer minimum wage because the [employee] can't work anywhere else."

"More and more," Milom sums, "there is no non-compete as long as you agree to no poaching, be it employees or former clients."

**Deal Point:** *Domain name ownership.* Record labels sometimes seek to own the artist's name as URL—www.joeartist.com, for instance.

**The Balance:** "The Internet hasn't become what everybody thought it would," Woods says, "so Website issues are not as hotly contested as people expect."

**Survey Says:** "A majority of companies are insisting that they own the artist's name in all versions for domain name purposes," Milom says. "The artist can use a secondary domain name for a fan club and other sites they may want to have. Some will give you back principle domain at end of contract, some won't."

"Labels say they don't know how significant the ability to electronically distribute records is going to be," Milom continues, "but that most buyers will seek music through recognition of the artist's name. There's some validity to that."

"Domain name ownership has huge implications for trademark rights for the

Steven Dale Jones • Mike Curb • Drew Alexander • Jeff Tweel • Brad Kennard • Portis Tanner • Randy Russell  
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## BOBBY TOMBERLIN

Mike Curb Music



# On Recording Contracts

artist," Gladstone says. "At the end of the day, the artist should own his or her own domain name and Website. A deal can be made for record company use or co-use."

From the label perspective, Woods says, "We'll negotiate. Right now we're not maintaining artist Websites. Until we do I don't know that we can say we should own it."

**Deal Point:** *Creative control.*

**The Balance:** Unproven creators have little ability to secure this concession.

**Survey Says:** "We generally try to work on a consultation basis," Woods says. "Let's agree rather than one person having control over the other. Work together. I don't see it as a heavily negotiated issue because we work with the artist on creative decisions."

"If the artist does not feel the song it won't be successful," Frank says. "One of [record labels'] favorite phrases is mutual approval, but in the event we cannot agree the label shall designate. That is something you make every effort to avoid."

"It's a sticking point for the veteran artist who has recorded for several labels and for the new artist naive enough to believe the label will let them do it on their own," Gladstone says. "They're not too excited about someone who's never built a car before building the one they're going to race in."

**Deal Point:** *Work-for-hire.* Almost all recording contracts use this phrase, which confers ownership of the master recordings to the label in perpetuity.

**The Balance:** "Only superstars have the clout necessary to get a concession on reversion of masters," Milom says. "There is a legitimate position on both sides. The artist contends if the recording is successful the costs are paid out of their royalties. But there has been very little movement if any on that position by the record companies based upon their risk benefit analysis."

**Survey Says:** "Ownership of masters is not a contested or highly-negotiated item," Woods says.

Finally, when the time comes for contract wrangling, expertise is essential. "A lot depends on the quality of your negotiating team," Gladstone says. And not just the attorney. "There are some great business managers in this town who get to see where the pennies trickle in every day on a hundred different deals. They know the nuances." And if that advice doesn't help secure a balanced deal, Frank says it helps to remember, "Nobody ever said life was fair." **MR**

With the Dixie Chicks in a high-profile legal contest with Sony and scores of artists testifying against recording contract injustices, there perhaps has never been more focus on the label-artist relationship. Rightly so, says Richard Frank, Jr. of Frank & Frank. "Mr. Lincoln was not referring to entertainers in his proclamation," he says. "In many cases, the artists are almost in involuntary servitude to the record company. It's hard to imagine someone driving a Ferrari being in involuntary servitude, but if they signed a contract as a wannabe that was not terribly thought out, their recording career is almost totally in somebody else's hands."

Perhaps the most egregious issue for artists, LeAnn Rimes particularly, is term. "In the not so recent past," Frank says, "a three to five-year contract was fairly standard. For some years now the record companies have been insisting on as many as eight albums which can extend a contract eight, 10, 12 years. The record label has the option to terminate the contract at any time, but has the artist bound up for virtually their entire career."

Michael Milom, Chairman of the Entertainment Practice Group at Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, adds, "There are so many things in the recording contract that are at least perceived to be oppressive. Artists have virtually no ability to deal with the packaging deduction, and that's the key deduction. The other key, which turns out to be a deduction, is free goods. The theoretical base of that being that labels ship 100 records for which the buyer pays, and 10 or 12 free. In fact, the record company is paid for all shipments, they're just discounting across that number of units and the artist is paid on 85 percent of sales. The artist is taking a bigger hit than the record label.

"Club sales are always a contentious issue. Labels resist changes to the club system by claiming those terms are dictated by the label's contract with the club. Although, if you're a successful artist, strangely you're able to deal with that much more effectively. Suddenly all the reasons they couldn't do it before disappear."

It is in complexity and accounting secrecy that artists seem to have the strongest case against label contracts.

"I've had people ask why we can't just tell them exactly what they're getting paid instead of having all these calculations and formulas," admits Kathy Woods, RCA VP of Legal & Business Affairs. "My response is, that's the way it's been and it will take someone getting the ball rolling to change it. But I don't see it happening."

The remedy for successful artists is renegotiation. "Understand your market position," says Steven Gladstone of Gladstone, Doherty & Associates. "Do your best at the beginning to create stepping stones when your market position changes, then recognize that it is a convention in this industry to renegotiate."

Woods says renegotiations are so common that those signing an initial deal can almost count on it. "When attorneys with new artists [push on certain issues], I ask, 'What am I going to have left to give you when you come back to renegotiate?' Our risk is on those early records. That's where we need to try to keep costs down."

Renegotiation isn't Frank's first choice. "That is totally at the option of the label," he says. "I prefer that a recording contract be relatively fair and constructed in such a manner as to adjust to any success the artist has."

Gladstone recognizes the high stakes game the labels are playing. "Any business has to recognize financial risk. The greater risks they take the more ways they'll try to find to reduce that risk. And it's probably riskier today than ever."

There is also a danger of alienating the label with contract negotiations. "An artist can get too good a contract," Frank admits. "I've seen them do that and ruin their career by taking away the label's monetary incentive to promote the artist."



# NORTHERN LIGHTS

## Canadian Country Music Week

by David M. Ross

**T**he 25th Canadian Country Music Awards were held in Calgary (9/7-9/10) which now becomes the permanent host city for this annual four-day event. In addition to its high-profile award show, broadcast live on Canada's CBC Television and CMT in the U.S., attendees enjoy seminars, award banquets and music from new and established artists.

After Friday's Kick-Off Party and numerous showcases, Saturday began with the Industry Awards luncheon and a performance from DreamWorks group Emerson Drive. "From Pitch To Product—the Artist Development Process," an afternoon panel, was packed with artists, managers and songwriters. Moderated by *Billboard's* Wade Jessen, panelists included Carolyn Dawn Johnson, RPM's Scott Siman, Sony/ATV's Woody Bomar, producer David Malloy and Sony Nashville's Cliff Audrich. Later that afternoon, the CMA's Jeff Green and Pinky Gonzales donned surfer shirts, clicked online and gave their packed audience a taste of innovative Internet outlets where independent artists can gain exposure and sell product.

BMG, one of the largest Canadian country labels, hosted a party/showcase Saturday evening. After some bar-time they ushered everyone into a makeshift stage area with stadium seating. BMG's Jill Snell and Warren Copnick hosted the show which featured short sets from Paul Brandt, Carolyn Dawn Johnson, The Wilkinsons, Tebey Ottoh, Aaron Lines and others.

Sunday's business included a general meeting of the CCMA plus another afternoon of panels. Sony's Mike Kraski moderated "Understanding Radio's Role in Marketing Your Music." Panelists included Jill Snell, BMG Canada; Brent Corbell, CKBY; Jennifer McKillop, Cumulus Broadcasting; John Hart, Bullseye Marketing; and Catherine Saxberg, Balmur Corus. Screening new music, or "Is It A Hit?" proved especially popular—moderated by ASCAP's Ralph Murphy who was joined by Cindy Forman, Balmur Corus; Michelle Metzger, Curb; and Cole Wright, Marathon Key. Another Sunday highlight was "Satellite, Digital and Internet Radio" featuring Steve Warren, Sirius; David Marsden, theiceberg.com; Mike Giunta, Galaxie; and moderator David Ross.

This year's Monday evening award show at the Pengrowth Saddledome in Calgary was produced for the first time by Balmur Corus Music as part of a new five-year agreement with the CCMA. Steven Goldmann acted as the show's Creative Producer and writer.



Carolyn Dawn Johnson made five trips to the podium to collect awards in the Female, Album, Rising Star, SOCAN Song and Single categories.



Many Nashvillians got stranded in Calgary as a result of the terrorist attacks. RPM's Scott Siman and Sony's Mike Kraski organized a plan to get home. A van and driver was rented to ferry an intrepid group of seven escapees south to Cut Bank, Montana, and a waiting plane. Pictured (l-r): Kelly Wright, Scott Siman, Matt Fisher, Carolyn Dawn Johnson, Mike Kraski, and Tanya Bishop. (taking the photo-David Ross)





Paul Brandt performed "Canadian Man" and the crowd screamed when he flipped his guitar over and showed the flag.



The Wilkinsons hosted the award show and performed their new single, "Paper Doll."



Lisa Brokop performed "Something Undeniable" which won Independent Song. Brokop also received the Indie Female Award.



Terri Clark won the Fans' Choice and Video award.



Indie artist Shauna Leigh wins new fans during a Friday evening showcase hosted by the Calgary Stampede.



BMG's Jill Stoll accepted awards for Major Record Company and Music Publisher during the President's Dinner on Sunday.



Sony Music Canada head Denise Donlon got "Up Close & Personal" with manager Bruce Allen who covered a broad range of topics including country's health, style, touring and more.



Promoter Ron Sakamoto was recognized by the CMA as its International Talent Buyer of the Year and by the CCMA as Promoter of the Year.

# 2001 CCMA AWARDS WINNERS

Carolyn Dawn Johnson was the big winner at this year's Canadian Country Music Awards held Sept. 10 in Calgary. With nominations in 10 of the CCMA Awards' categories, Johnson captured a record-breaking five awards including Female Artist, Album and Rising Star. Terri Clark picked up the Fan's Choice and the Video award. Below is a complete list of CCMA winners.

**Fans' Choice Award**  
Terri Clark

**Female Artist**  
Carolyn Dawn Johnson

**Male Artist**  
Jason McCoy

**Group or Duo**  
The Wilkinsons

**Album**  
*Room With A View*, Carolyn Dawn Johnson

**Single**  
"Complicated," Carolyn Dawn Johnson

**SOCAN Song of the Year**  
"Complicated," Carolyn Dawn Johnson

**Video**  
"No Fear," Terri Clark

**Top Selling Album**  
*Breathe*, Faith Hill

**Rising Star**  
Carolyn Dawn Johnson

**Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame Inductees**  
Gordon Lightfoot, Gary Buck

## 2001 CCMA INDEPENDENT ARTIST WINNERS

**Independent Female**  
Lisa Brokop

**Independent Male**  
Duane Steele

**Independent Group**  
Poverty Plainsmen

**Independent Song**  
"Something Undeniable" written by Lisa Brokop, Cyril Rawson, Richard Woldp; recorded by Lisa Brokop

# Indies Keep Nashville Cool



The industry feels sluggish, but that's because no one has figured out that the coolest music being made in Nashville is happening on independent labels. If we could wrest control of our destinies away from multi-national conglomerates and marketing by committee and return record making to individuals with creativity, taste and vision, this whole scene would look like an art colony instead of a group of robotic morons programmed by focus groups.

If you think Nashville music sucks, you're just not listening in the right places. I refer you at once to our award winners of this issue.

Nashville popster **Anna** would be a good place to start. She's a distinctive writer-artist who deserves to be a radio-airplay queen. But because of record-label politics she's putting her album out on her own. Lend her your ears.

Country/Americana music is alive and well in New York City as well as Tune Town. I've read that Amy Allison's debut album was an Elvis Costello favorite and now I hear why. Her current CD on Diesel Only is my first exposure to her and I'm blown away by how soulful she sounds.

Those two women both deserve DISCOVERY Awards.

Rounder Records has always been a home of quality. This month, the Massachusetts firm is unleashing a bluegrass torrent—Blue Highway, Union Station's Ron Block and the late John Hartford. Give the Little Label That Could a Label of the Day award.

The classy little Hightone is the home of Nashville's **Buddy & Julie Miller**. Their outstanding work gives them our hands-down prize as Disc of the Day.

## AMERICANA

### **NANCI GRIFFITH/Clock Without Hands**

Writer: Nanci Griffith; Producer: Ray Kennedy/Nanci Griffith; Publisher: Irving/Ponder Heart, BMI; Elektra (track) (nancigriffith.com)

At last Nanci is back with an album of original material. Her songwriting muse is still with her. Indeed, the imagery here is sometimes more "poetic" than much of her previous, reality-based oeuvre. She's turned a page sonically, too. The gentle, lightly brushed production here is as mind tickling as her song. A great record.

### **PHIL LEE/Daddy's Jail**

Writer: Phil Lee; Producer: Richard Bennett; Publisher: Big Yellow Dog, BMI; Shanachie (track) (phillee1.com)

For my money, this guy is one of the greatest country talents ever to emerge from Lower Broadway. This snarling hillbilly rocker combines his downhome biographical lyrics with a grungey guitar combo. You can almost smell the cigarette smoke and stale beer. This is truly country with dirt under its fingernails. Album is called *You Should've Known Me Then*. It's the Right Stuff.

### **BUDDY & JULIE MILLER/Rock Salt and Nails**

Writer: Bruce "Utah" Phillips; Producer: Buddy & Julie Miller; Publisher: Tinkie Tunes, ASCAP; Hightone (track) (hightone.com)

A staple of Mr. and Mrs. Miller's live show, this now becomes a biting, edgy standout on their first duet album. Drawlin' Buddy takes the wailing lead on this backwoods lament, but Julie's harmony is extraordinarily inventive and ear grabbing. The keening fiddle/guitar backing raises goosebumps, too. A simply fabulous performance.

### **AMY ALLISON/Sad Girl**

Writer: Amy Allison; Producer: Jim Scott; Publisher: Shopgirl Songs, BMI; Diesel Only (track) (dieselonly.com)

The daughter of southern jazzbo Mose Allison has one of those love-it or hate-it voices. It's nasal with a slight drawl. To these ears, this country waltz with steel guitar is ineffably soulful. Put me in the "love-it" column. She's as cool as the breeze.

### **LYNNMARIE/All Over It**

Writer: LynnMarie Rink/Steve Ivey; Producer: Steve Ivey; Publisher: Squeeze This/Steve Ivey, ASCAP; Rink Entertainment (track) (lynnmarie.net)

Nashville's Grammy-nominated polka queen has titled her new CD after a track that proves that you can, indeed, be a virtuoso on the accordion. An instrumental so dazzling your fingers will hurt.

### **GILLIAN WELCH & DAVID RAWLINGS**

#### **I Want to Sing That Rock 'n' Roll**

Writer: Gillian Welch/David Rawlings; Producer: T Bone Burnett; Publisher: none listed; Lost Highway (track) (losthighwayrecords.com)

If you were at the O Brother concert at the Ryman, you'll remember this as a wry standout of the evening. Gillian and David managed to combine an old-time gospel songwriting style with contemporary lyrics that made us all grin. The album documents an evening full of delights. The whoops at the end say it all. You can also find this song on Gillian's new CD.

### **ROBBIE FULKS/Cocktails**

Writer: Bill Anderson; Producer: Robbie Fulks; Publisher: Johnny Bienstock, BMI; Bloodshot (track) (bloodshotrecords.com)

One of the best of our alterna-country songwriters ("She Took a Lot of Pills and Died") proves he's a killer interpreter, too. This CD, titled *13 Hillbilly Giants*, features his covers of Jean Shepard, Hylo Brown, Benny Martin, The Carlises, Wynn Stewart, Porter & Dolly, Gordon Terry and more. No collection of classic country would be complete without a tune from *Whisperin' Bill* and Robbie nails it to the wall.

## CHRISTIAN

### **PHAT CHANCE/Sunshine Daylight**

Writer: Phat Chance/Tony Palacios/Scotty Wilbanks; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none

listed; Flicker (track) (phatchance.com)

There's way too much going on in the production. Especially for a song this inconsequential.

### **WES KING/What Matters Most**

Writer: Wes King/Michael W. Smith; Producer: Wes King; Publisher: Dayspring/Father Brown/Word/Smittyfly, BMI/ASCAP; Word

The message is sweet. His delivery is too, particularly on the high-tenor choruses.

### **TWILA PARIS/Sparks and Shadows**

Writer: Twila Paris; Producer: Mark Hammond; Publisher: Ariose/Mountain Spring, ASCAP; Sparrow (twilaparis.com)

Nice work. Her girly soprano doesn't drift up like a helium balloon because of the dark rhythm crunch in the production. The melody is yummy, too. This is one of the new tracks on her Greatest Hits collection.

### **MARK SCHULTZ/Kyrie Eleison**

Writer: none listed; Producer: Monroe Jones; Publisher: none listed; Word

I think I hear "hit." It's got just enough traditional about its structure and the vocal to be mainstream. Yet the production is imaginative enough to catch younger ears. Very classy.

## BLUEGRASS

### **BLUE HIGHWAY/Still Climbing Mountains**

Writer: Tim Stafford/Shawn Lane; Producer: Jerry Douglas; Publisher: Daniel House/Cat Town, BMI; Rounder (track) (oldhomepage.com/bluehighway)

There's warmth and heart here. The dobro-dominated production underscores the yearning, down-and-out lyric. I remain a fan.

### **RICKY SKAGGS/Shady Grove**

Writer: none listed; Producer: Ricky Skaggs; Publisher: none listed; Skaggs Family (track) (skaggsfamilyrecords.com)

It's played and sung with flawless perfection. At breakneck speed, I might add. And if the song is a bit overly familiar (as are several of the tunes on his new *History of the Future* CD), well, maybe there's a new audience for this music that won't find it so.

### **DALE ANN BRADLEY/Cumberland River Dreams**

Writer: Dale Ann Bradley/Vicki Simmons; Producer: Dale Ann Bradley/Vicki Simmons/Tim Austin/Dan Tyminski; Publisher: Coon Creek, BMI; Doobie Shea (track) (doobieshea.com)

She is blessed with one of the greatest female voices in contemporary bluegrass. This lilting autobiography in song demonstrates her ascent as a composer as well. As lovely as mountain wildflowers.

### **RALPH STANLEY & IRIS DEMENT** **Ridin' That Midnight Train**

Writer: Ralph Stanley; Producer: Bill VornDick; Publisher: Fort Knox/Trio, BMI; Rebel (track) (rebelrecords.com)



*Clinch Mountain Sweethearts* is full of star power. Pam Tillis, Dolly Parton, Sara Evans, Joan Baez, Melba Montgomery, Lucinda Williams, Gail Davies, Maria Muldaur, Gillian Welch and Jeannie Seely are among the many who teamed up with the legendary Ralph Stanley on the project. Iris blends surprisingly well and winds up with one of the choicest tracks. But this is a "drop the needle anywhere" project.

#### RON BLOCK/Faraway Land

Writer: Ron Block; Producer: Ron Block;  
Publisher: Moonlight Canyon, BMI; Rounder  
(track) (rounder.com)

The strongest writer in Union Station now has his first solo showcase. Ron's voice might not be a barn burner, but it can sure warm up the place with its plain-spoken honesty. The picking, as you might expect, is extraordinary.

#### JOHN HARTFORD/Hamilton Ironworks

Writer: traditional; Producer: Bob Carlin;  
Publisher: public domain; Rounder Select (track)

This CD marks the final studio recordings of the beloved John Hartford, who died last June. Accompanied here by his old-time string band, he's fiddling with a smile.

### POP/ROCK

#### MATTHEW RYAN/Drift

Writer: none listed; Producer: Matthew Ryan/  
Richard McLaurin; Publisher: none listed; Waxy  
Silver (track) (615-340-9596)

He's still a Music City treasure. This third album grips you by the throat with its quiet intensity. This track puts his raspy, cool, strangled vocals against crunchy percussion and stark guitar work. Americana folks will like it, too.

#### ANNA/The Long Way

Writer: none listed; Producer: none listed;

Publisher: none listed; Transfer (track)  
(annawilson.com)

The title tune to Anna's album is apt. She recorded it for Island, but it was never released. Three years down the pike, she's got her tapes back and is putting it out on her own label. There's a throaty, dry quality to her compelling vocal, sorta like a jazzy Stevie Nicks. The stately simplicity of the piano accompaniment throws her extraordinary lyrics into high relief. Support this music.

#### BECK/Your Cheatin' Heart

Writer: none listed; Producer: none listed;  
Publisher: none listed; Lost Highway (track)

The Hank Williams tribute album, *Timeless*, has some of the usual suspects (Emmylou, Hank Williams III, Johnny Cash). But more often than not, you round a corner to find somebody unexpected (Keith Richards, Bob Dylan, Sheryl Crow, Keb' Mo'). Beck is definitely in the latter camp, turning in an echoey, ghostly "Your Cheatin' Heart" that's druggy sounding. It ain't exactly bitter as the lyrics suggest, but it is definitely fascinating.

### COUNTRY

#### OJ HANSSEN/What's It Gonna Take

Writer: Tony Stampley/Toni Dae; Producer:  
Barry Beckett/OJ Hanssen; Publisher: Paris  
Landing, BMI; RMG (track) (ojhanssen.com)

Honky tonk music kicked into country-rock overdrive. He phrases like a Frizzell and the rapid-fire wordplay is delightful. In short, it's about 10 miles better than your average, major-label "country" single. Play it again.

#### PAT HANEY/Ghost of Things to Come

Writer: Pat Haney; Producer: Ben Ewing;  
Publisher: Vette City, BMI; FreeFalls (track)  
(pathaney.net)

Big, electric-guitar production is an effective contrast to his dry, conversational delivery and the folkish, anthemic song construction. Very listenable.

#### DALLAS WAYNE/Here I Am in Dallas

Writer: L. Morris/R. Hughes/T. Ishmall; Producer:  
Bruce Bromberg/Dallas Wayne; Publisher: Bocephus,  
BMI; Hightone (track) (hightone.com)

The structure and production are lifted directly from classic Waylon Jennings. The song is a Faron Young oldie (1975). It's as country as a dirt-floor roadhouse.

#### JESSE DAYTON/Hey Nashvegas

Writer: Jesse Dayton; Producer: none listed;  
Publisher: none listed; Stag (jessedayton.com)

These people sound like they met about 10 minutes before the tape rolled.

#### GABBIE NOLEN/Wait a Minute

Writer: Hank DeVito/Rodney Crowell; Producer:  
Clyde Brooks; Publisher: Little Nemo, ASCAP;  
Rainforest (615-321-4688)

This rollicks nicely. The pickers sound like they're having a blast. She's within a hair's breadth of stardom as a singer, particularly when she yelps in front of the guitar break.

### HONORABLE MENTION

#### MICHAEL SNOW/Pride of America/Irish Eye

#### WOODY ROCK/The Question Is/Gospo Centric

#### BILL KIRCHEN/Tied to the Wheel/Hightone

#### JAMES LEVA/Sourwood Mountain/Copper Creek

#### KELLY MINTER/Believer/Word

#### BILL WENCE/California Callin'/615

#### MARK NEWTON BAND/Charlie Lawson's Still/Rebel

#### DONNA FROST/Feels Like Home/DF

#### DINAH ENGLUND/Aftermath/DE

#### KAREN TAYLOR-GOOD/On Angel's Wings/Scream

## PROFESSIONAL

### LISA RAMSEY

VP, Writer Development  
Hamstein Music Group

914 18th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37212  
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Lisa Ramsey began her musical endeavors following in the footsteps of her mother and grandmother, who both played piano. "I started piano lessons when I was a child," says Ramsey, a born and bred Nashvillian.

While attending Antioch High School, where she served as class president and captain of the cheer-leading squad, she put her piano lessons to use by joining a band. "We were called Revenge," she says. "We did some original stuff and cover songs by Pat Benatar, AC/DC and such. I played keyboards and sang back-up. Amanda Hunt-Taylor, who co-wrote 'Your Love Amazes Me,' was the lead singer."

After graduating in 1981, she attended nearby MTSU on a scholarship, majoring in Mass Communications and minoring in Recording Industry Management. "There was a time when I wanted to be a newscaster," she says. The distraction of being in a band, however, took its toll on her academic studies and she left school.

Eventually she was forced to get the obligatory 9-5 job, which she describes as "the worst day of my life." Then, a chance encounter changed her life forever. "I was having drinks at Ruby Tuesday's with my girlfriends from the office and Wynonna just happened to be in there," she recalls. "I went over and started talking

to her. Two weeks later I quit my job and became her personal assistant. I did that for almost four years. Being on the road with The Judds ended up being my college."

By 1988, however, she longed to discover more about the business and landed a job with artist manager Mike Robertson. "He and Randy Wachtler owned a building together with a studio in it. I was hired as the receptionist, studio manager, Mike's assistant and Randy's assistant." While there she got her first taste of publishing. "One day Mike asked me to listen to some songs and tell him who I thought should record them," she says. "So I did, and later he showed me where to take the tapes and what to do. That's when I decided that this is what I want to do."

With her career in focus she joined the staff of The Music Mill in 1990 as a song plugger. After a long and successful tenure there she joined Hamstein Music Group in 1998 and currently works with a staff of six writers. "The most rewarding thing," she says, "is to sign a new writer to

a publishing deal, help them get co-writes, critique their songs and then watch that light come on when they get it and finally start having success."

In her time away from the office, this White House, Tenn., resident enjoys early morning eight-mile runs. "It gets me juiced in the morning and I have some good spiritual time," says Ramsey, who attends Bible study during her Tuesday lunch hour. As for anything people might be surprised to know about her, she laughs and explains, "Well, I like to alphabetize and arrange all the cans in my pantry. That's pretty surprising."

Ramsey says her next goal is to start her own publishing company. In fact, she's already got a named picked out—Angel Beach Music. "The challenge of starting a company from the ground up and turning it into something is probably the next thing for me. I don't ever want to be one of those people who are just getting a paycheck and become bored with what they do."

—Richard McVey II



# Bobby Karl...

# Works The Room

Press conferences. We love them.

It's not that we are news junkies or anything like that. We go for the fellowship; the stars are just an excuse.

Still, you couldn't help feeling happy for IBMA when its first-ever award-nominations press event turned out to be such a stunning success (8/9).

"This is an outstanding turn-out," marveled IBMA exec Dan Hays. "O Brother, what a year we've had in bluegrass music."

Crowding the Country Music Hall of Fame conference room were the likes of Chris Skinker, Chris Dickinson, Traci Todd, Traci Thomas, Kitsi Kuykendall, Jay Orr, John Grady, Donna Hughes, Wade Jessen, Shari Lacy, Walt Trott, Denise Stiff, Nancy Cardwell, Dan Keen, Barry McCloud, Heather Johnson, Craig Havighurst and Keith Case.

"The soundtrack is big, but our success goes much deeper than that," Hays told them, citing bluegrass albums by Patty Loveless, Ricky Skaggs, Del McCoury, Hayseed Dixie, Dolly Parton and the *Songcatcher* CD as chart successes. Steve Wariner and Rhonda Vincent were brought out to read the nominees. The former will host the bluegrass awards at the Kentucky Center for the Arts in Louisville on Oct. 4.

"I'm liking this—it's a good day," pronounced Rhonda after her banjo player, her fiddler and she all got nominations.

In the audience were such musicians as Dan Tyminski, Jim Hurst, Ronnie Reno and Tom T. Hall, as well as Bluegrass Hall of Honor members Lance Leroy, Mac Wiseman and Pete Kuykendall. Not bad for a first-time event, eh?

WSM's Eddie Stubbs said, "Bluegrass music is really the only real country music we have left." He then announced The Carter Family as this year's Hall of Honor inductees. Wiseman says he is going to record an album of Carter classics. Stan Hitchcock was there with a crew representing a new Americana cable channel.

Press Conferences. We like them even more when they feed us. Breakfast at Adelphia Coliseum sounded good, so we headed there for the CMA nominee announcements (8/28).

The joint was jumpin' with label reps Joe Galante, Bruce Hinton, Bob Heatherly, Greg McCarn, Wes Vause, Allen Brown, Butch Waugh, Claire Cook and Katie Gillon. It was wall-to-wall publicists as Kirt Webster, Jules Wortman, Holly Gleason, Kim Fowler, Cathy Gurley, Alison Auerbach and Erin Morris schmoozed. Print media mavens Vernell Hackett, Pat Harris, Peter Cooper, David Ross, Bob Paxman, Jim Sharp, Brad Schmitt, Brian Mansfield and Ray Pilzak mingled with broadcasters Harry Chapman, Jerry Damon, Tamara Saviano and Greg Travis. Sprinkled in amongst them were such greats as Janet E. Williams, Robert Deaton,



**TOP:** Trick Pony was on hand at the CMA Awards nominee press conference, held Aug. 28 at Adelphia Coliseum's Stadium Club. The Warner Bros. trio announced the finalists for the 2001 CMA Broadcast Personality and Station of the Year. **BOTTOM:** Brooks & Dunn, pictured with CMA Executive Director Ed Benson, also took part in the CMA Awards nominee press conference.



**L:** Steve Wariner (l) and Rhonda Vincent (r) announced the nominees for the 12th Annual International Bluegrass Music Awards on Aug. 9 at the Country Music Hall of Fame. Wariner will host the awards show, which is scheduled for Oct. 4 at the Kentucky Center for the Arts in Louisville, Ky. **ABOVE:** Several artists were on hand to hear their names read at the award-nominations press event for the IBMA. Pictured are (l-r): Dan Tyminski, Jim Hurst, Rhonda Vincent, Tim O'Brien, Tom T. Hall and Dixie Hall.



Nancy Shapiro, Raeanne Rubenstein, show producer Walter Miller and CBS exec Jack Sussman.

Ed Benson recognized nominee Jamie O'Neal in the crowd, but ignored nominee Dan Tyminski, who was sitting practically right in front of him. No wonder there's no bluegrass show at Fan Fair anymore. The CMA boss also announced a new award for national radio show hosts. Trick Pony did the honors. This brings the number of CMA radio awards to nine. We only give out seven devoted solely to performers, two to recordings, one to musicians, one to songwriters and one to video makers. There's another one for media, but that is given in a dark alley when there's no full moon.

Then Jo Dee Messina and Brooks & Dunn read this year's nominees. *O Brother Where Art Thou* got its due, and there was surprised applause for deserving double nominees Nickel Creek. The rest of the nominations? Well, considering what she's accomplished this year, Reba was completely robbed in the Entertainer category. Travis Tritt's comeback CD was far better than most in the Album field. Jo Dee was utterly overlooked. Yaddadda yaddadda yaddadda. The Big Show is Nov. 7 at the Opry House.

We did come away with the news that both Rodney Good/Jamie O'Neal and Clarence Spalding are moving to the "hood," Hillsboro-Belmont, joining such other recent arrivals as Ralph Murphy and d.c. talk's Kevin Max.

Every so often, we media folk make our own events, without a press conference. And when you're Hazel Smith, all you have to do is dish up a cookbook autographing session to draw a throng (9/6). Gathering at Border's Books on West End were fabulons Andy Griggs, Will Byrd, Tim DuBois, Stormie Warren, Stan Mores, Kevin Lane, Kira Florita, Fletcher Foster, Schatzi Hageman, Ellen Pryor, Tony & Anastasia Brown, Bonnie Garner, Brenna Davenport-Leigh, Les & Dot Leveritt, Mitchell Galin, Jenny Alford, Jerry Bailey, Judy Wray, John Lomax III, Mike Martinovich, Mike Campbell,

Mike Dungan, Troy Johnson, Troy Williams and, natch, Billy and Terry Smith.

Hazel practically wrote a novel to each one on her frontispieces. Even if you don't get it autographed, buy *Hazel's Hot Dish*—it really is a cute book and a dandy gift.

In other literary news, Becky Sowers feted the publication of *The Dance of Heaven* at Borders (8/24) with music by the esteemed Ashley Cleveland, Kim Hill and Bonnie Keen. And photographer Beth Gwinn chose Davis-Kidd for the autographing of her tome of portraits, *Dark Dreamers*.

Make of this what you will, but I'd never before been to Travellers Rest until its "Country Flair Folklife Festival" (9/8). The attractions there were the musical presentations of The Nashville Mandolin Trio, The Peasall Sisters, The Roy Harper Trio and Edandi. The house and grounds are lovely, by the way.

Celebrating new CDs were The Derailers (8/16) at The Exit/In, Dominic Chianese ("Uncle Junior" on TV's *The Sopranos*) at BMI (9/6), Donna Frost at French Quarter Cafe (9/10), Larry Mitchell at Douglas Corner (9/1), Sierra at Lifeway (8/7) and Jameson Clark (8/8) at The Exit/In.

Blake Shelton had No. 1 bashes at Warner Bros. (8/29), BMI (8/13) and ASCAP (8/13), the latter two alongside "Austin" songwriters David Kent and Kirsti Manna. Tim McGraw and Tom Douglas enjoyed their time at the top of the charts with "Grown Men Don't Cry" at BMI (9/5). Jamie O'Neal, Roxie Dean and Sonny Tillis frolicked for "When I Think About Angels" at both ASCAP (8/20) and BMI (8/8).

One of your bigger bashes of late was the celebration for Reba McEntire at The



Tim McGraw stopped by ASCAP to congratulate songwriters Steve Seskin and Tom Douglas on their recent No. 1 song "Grown Men Don't Cry." Pictured at the celebration are (l-r): Douglas, McGraw, ASCAP's Connie Bradley and Seskin. Photo: Michelle Goble-Peay

Country Music Hall of Fame (8/22). This was to preview her TV sitcom, salute her *Arnie Get Your Gun* triumph, mark the successful Girls' Night Out tour and party for the release of *Greatest Hits III* and its "I'm a Survivor" single. Bruce Hinton, Rod Essig, Tony Brown and Brian Williams presented her with a crystal vase. She presented Kyle Young with seven of her Broadway costumes. Kyle presented her with a plaque.

I'm presenting The End. Until next time.

Overheard recently at a Music Row watering hole:

"Man, we need to get some new blood in here. Everything's sounding the same."

"Hey, I used this keyboard guy last week, great ideas on piano and killer B-3 player."

"Yeah? what's his name?"

**"MARK T. JORDAN."**

"Who's he worked with?"

"Oh, Wynonna, Bonnie Raitt, Van Morrison, Taj Mahal, Hank Thompson, Patti Page for starters. He's on the new Delbert and Lee Roy, too."

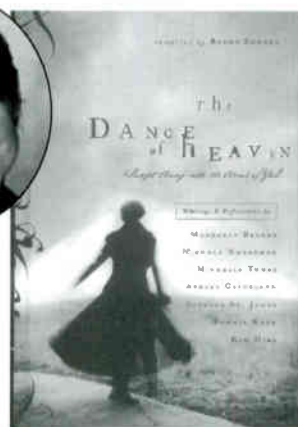
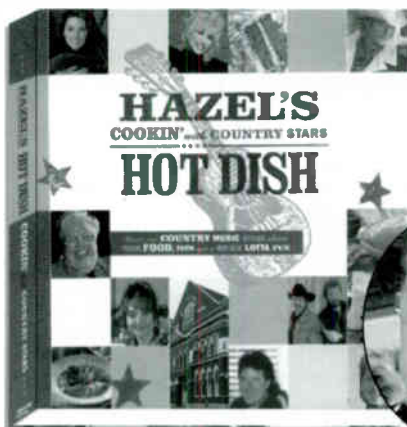
"Wow. Where's he been?"

"On the road with Wy, Lyle and Boz... but check him out! Call Warley, Vezner, Scruggs, Massenburg, Nicholson—they've all used him."

"Hmm. Probably doesn't do demos then."

"He did for me."

**"DANQ! WHAT'S HIS NUMBER?"**



# “Austin” Breaks Studio Ground; Seventeen Grand Hosts Dolly & Charlie

Ed Seay is one of the studio gurus behind the No. 1 Blake Shelton single “Austin.” Seay reports that the song is the first No. 1 country record to be mixed on ProTools using Digidesign Procontrol as the console. “While this has occurred in the pop and dance charts before,” says Seay, “this is the first time that ProTools has replaced the tape machine, the console, and the outboard gear. Others have used Tools as a tapeless recorder to feed a conventional console, but never staying completely internal, as well as providing total and instant recall.” Seay tracked the song at a conventional studio and then transferred to ProTools. The song as well as several other cuts off Shelton’s album were overdubbed and mixed at Cool Tools Audio...

Dolly Parton was tracking in the Neve room at Seventeen Grand for upcoming movie projects with Producer Steve Buckingham, Engineers Neal Cappelino and Gary Paczosa, and Assistant Engineer Thomas Johnson. Producer Scott Rouse has also been in the Neve room working on a project for Charlie Daniels on Daniels’ Brave Recordings

label. Paczosa mixed with the help of Johnson. Hammer dulcimer virtuoso Craig Duncan tracked in the Neve room for an upcoming self-produced album on Intersound. Bil Vorndick engineered with the assistance of Chris Scherbak. Sony Nashville newcomer Robin English tracked in the Neve room for her upcoming debut album. Kyle Lehning produced, while Casey Wood manned the board. Engineer Jake Niceley has been busy in the Euphonix room working on a 5.1 mix for entertainer Shoji Tabuchi’s upcoming DVD...

Island Bound Studio has gone completely ProTools. The studio has a new central 24 console, a new ProTools mix cube system, and new outboard gear and microphones...The SoundShop Recording Studios was recently home to Yuletide cheer as Aaron Tippin, Kree and Kenny Chesney completed Christmas projects. Also in SoundShop was European Opera singer Philip Zawisza. The baritone singer worked with Engineer Mike Bradley and piano players Melissa Rose and Daphne Nicari to record opera music in French, German, Russian and Italian.

**Artist      Producer      Engineer      Label      Project**

**AUDIO PRODUCTIONS**

Tracy Byrd	George Achaves	Travis Turk	Arista	CCUSA
keith urban	"	Scott Goudeau	Capitol	"
K.T. Oslin	Barry Freeman	"	BNA	satellite tour
Blake Shelton	"	"	Warner Bros.	"
Toby Keith	George Achaves	Travis Turk	DreamWorks	CCUSA
George Jones	Susan Nadler	"	Bandit	radio interviews
Tammy Cochran	Barry Freeman	Scott Goudeau	Columbia	satellite tour
Jeff Carson	Tim Riley	"	Curb	radio interview
Mark Wills	George Achaves	"	Mercury	CCUSA
Waylon Jennings	Lisa Fetterman	Travis Turk	—	"Family Guy" TV
Billy Gilman	Barry Freeman	Scott Goudeau	Epic	satellite tour

**BENNETT HOUSE**

Charlotte Church	Keith Thomas	Bill Whittington	Columbia	od's/mix
Amy Grant	"	"	A&M	od's

**BOARD ROOM**

Trent Summar	Trent Summar	Laron Pendergrass	VFR	demos
Heather Dunn	Laron Pendergrass	"	Clessie's Songs	"
Jeff Finlin	Finlin/Pendergrass	"	—	od's
Clint Daniels	Laron Pendergrass	"	Mamanem Music	demos

**BRUSH HILL**

Reb.Rachel Mitchum	Alan Lawrence	Arvel Bird	Southern Draw	demo
Rothert/Bird	Arvel Bird	"	Singing Wolf	od's/trax

**Artist      Producer      Engineer      Label      Project**

Adie Grey	Grey/Bird	"		Hey Baby	demo
Tim Buppert	Arvel Bird	"		Robert Jenkins	"
Ray Barnette	"	"		Get Oulta Town	"
Tim Hopkins	"	"		Roger LeBlanc	"
Ernie Harkins	Harkins/Bird	"		World	album cuts

**CASTLE RECORDING**

Summerlee Staten	David Huff	Spinner/Short	—	mix
Benjamin Gate	Mike Quinlan	McNeely/Monterrosa	Forefront	"
Curtis Lance	Thom McHugh	Mike Janas	Copyright.net	tracks
Third Day	Monroe Jones	Dineen/Short	Essential	od's/mix
Lowery Lockard	Randy Boudreaux	Janas/Short	—	mix
Demos	Trey Bruce	Buchanan/Griffith	Big Tractor	od's/mix
Jeff Bates	Gastor/Chamberlain	Barrow/Short	Warner/Chappell	trax
Regie Hamm	Regie Hamm	McNeely/Weeks	—	mix
California Driver	"	"	—	"
Mark Tinney	Greg Hunt	Hunt/Leach	—	od's
Lane Brody	Eddie Bayers	Mike Janas	Medallion	"

**DAN WILLIAMS MUSIC**

—	Dan Williams	Dan Williams II	—	Toyota
—	"	"	—	Chrysler
—	"	"	—	McDonald's
—	"	"	—	Budweiser
—	"	"	—	Ford/Ford Trucks
—	"	"	—	Color Tyne

**EMERALD**

Jewel	Dann Huff	Balding/Hackett	Atlantic	mix
Ken Somerville	Barry Somerville	Tillisch/Bickel	Sunsound Music	trax
Holly Lamar	Byron Gallimore	Balding/Bickel	MCA	mix
Susan Haynes	Huff/Brite	Fowler/Saylor	—	trax
Nashville America	Lovelace/Clinard	Sinko/Sochor	—	od's/mix
Kellie Coffey	Dann Huff	Balding/Hackett	RCA	"
Windswept Pacific	John Hobbs	Ben Fowler	—	od's
SHeDAISY	Dann Huff	Balding/Hackett	Lyric Street	"
John McCabe	John A. Lello	Bullock/Greene	Banner	"
Bobby Bland	Wolf Stevenson	Stevenson/Konshak	Malaco	"
Laine	Michael Black	Bullock/Greene	—	od's/mix
The Wilkinsons	Williams/Brite	Williams/Kidd	RCA	"
Darrell Waltrip	Richard Yasi	Russ Martin	Papyrus Racing	liners
Jimmy Buffett	Russ Titleman	O'Donnell/Kidd	Mailboat	od's
Vince Leggart	Lou Coratello	Green/Beckett	Coratello Prods.	mix
Brenda Schalte	Kevin Stokes	Pete Green	Spring Hill	od's
Britney Cleary	Guess/Chemay	Guess/Murphy	FreeFalls	mix
Brett James	Dann Huff	Mark Hagen	RCA	od's
Kenny Chesney	Cannon/Wilson	Sherrill/Piske	"	trax/mix



Emerald's Studio Six was home to a recent session with Jimmy Buffett. Pictured as part of the session are (l to r): Producer Russ Titleman, Engineer Dave O'Donnell, and Assistant Engineer Scott Kidd.



# STUDIO REPORT

Artist	Producer	Engineer	Label	Project
Century Men	Buryl Red	Rudin/Bauer	Gotham Ent.	strings
Delnora Reed	Cannon/Wilson	McMakin/Piske	DreamWorks	trax/mix
Best Built Demos	Sheridan/Ruddy	Mike Konshak	—	trax/mix/od's
Artist Dev. Group	Norro Wilson	Legg/Bickel	—	trax
Rob Mathes	Rob Mathes	Brookshire/Bickel	—	strings/od's
Gary Cotton	Cole Wright	Russ Martin	Marathon Key	mix
Disney/BMG demos	Marcus	Matthews/Konshak	—	trax/mix/od's
The Chase	Dean Sams	Mark Hagen	Dean Sams Prods.	trax/od's

## GREY HOUSE

King Cone	Billy Herzig	Wendy Mazur	AH!	cd
Stephany Delray	Stephany Delray	"	—	demos
Carla Rhodes	Zig	"	Green Zebra	cd
Fly Billy	Kim Copeland	Herzig/Mazur	—	demos
Jordy	Billy Herzig	"	AH!	cd
Frankie Moreno	Moreno/Zig	Wendy Mazur	Primo	"

## ISLAND BOUND

Foscage	Freddy Wall	Geoff Koval	—	album
Amanda Martin	David Z	"	RCA	demos
Dean Miller	Dean Miller	"	Island Bound	"
Max T. Barnes	Max T. Barnes	"	"	"

## MONEY PIT

Jo Anna Janet	Paul Worley	Schleicher/Hellerman	DreamWorks	od's/mix
Susan Ashton	Worley/James	"	Capitol	od's
Ty Herndon	Worley/Watson	Poole/Schleicher	Sony	"
Little Big Town	Worley/Chancey	Schleicher/Hellerman	"	"
The Players	The Players	Hellerman/Hachler	—	trax
Wall Paper	Hachler/Hellerman	"	—	trax/od's/mix

## SEVENTEEN GRAND

Shoji Tabuchi	Shoji Tabuchi	Jake Niceley	SEI	5.1 mix
Robin English	Kyle Lehning	Casey Wood	Sony	trax
Dolly Parton	Steve Buckingham	Paczosa/Cappellino	—	"
Annie Roboff	Annie Roboff	Chris Mara	—	demos
Charlie Daniels	Scott Rouse	Paczosa/Johnson	Brave Recordings	mix
Craig Duncan	Bil Vorndick	Vorndick/Scherbak	Intersound	trax/mix

## SOUND EMPORIUM

Jefferey Steele	Baggett/Anderson/Steele	"	"	"
—	—	Baggett/Jaskowiak	Sony Nashville	trax
Cyndi Thomson	Tommy Lee James	Sinko/Muncy	Still Working	"
Jennifer Day	"	Poole/Jaskowiak	"	"
Jude Johnstone	Garth Fundis	Andrew/Jaskowiak	Rogue	"
Bob DiPiero	Bob DiPiero	Lowery/Gantt	Sony/ATV	demos
Empty Bowls Proj.	Owlsey Manier	Wolak/Jaskow'ak	Gold Vision Ent.	trax
Kim P. Johnstone	Kim P. Johnstone	Matt Andrews	Jody Williams	demos
Lambchop	Mark Nevers	Mark Nevers	Merge	trax
Myrrh	Mike Wrucke	Mike Wrucke	Sony/ATV	"
Steve Bogart	Steve Bogart	"	Warner/Chappell	demos
Derrick George	Derrick George	Jason Lehning	Windswept Pacific	"
Jim Collins	Jim Collins	Lowery/Gantt	Warner/Chappell	"

## SOUNDSHOP

Trent Tomlinson	Trent Tomlinson	Bradley/Capps	Lyric Street	mix
David Lee Murphy	Martin/Tassi	Tassi/Shapach	Sony	"
Raul Malo	Raul Malo	Mark Capps	Higher Octive	od's/mix
Lynn/Jackson	Don Cook	Brandley/Shapach	Loretta Lynn Ent.	trax
Minnie	Jim Murphy	Good/Capps	—	"
Wade Hayes	Bradley/Watson	Bradley/Capps	RCA	"

## STUDIO 23

Barbara Warhust	Warhurst/Cumming	Bryan Cumming	—	cd
Hogman	Ishman/Cumming	"	—	"
Ric/Fayth Kirk	Ric/Fayth Kirk	"	—	demo
Richard Campbell	Campbell/Cumming	"	—	"
David Dwortzan	David Dwortzan	"	—	"

# Writer's Notes

## Holly Lamar



**Birthplace:** Atlanta, Ga.

**Publisher:** Song Garden

**Hits/Cuts:** "Breathe," Faith Hill; "That's the Way," "Angelene," "These Are The Days," Jo Dee Messina; "Unbroken," Tim McGraw; "Softly," "Like A Good Cowboy," Lonestar, among others.

**Favorite Song You Wrote:** "Tumblin' Weed" for my upcoming MCA record.

**Favorite Song You Didn't Write:** "Imagine" by John Lennon

**On What Instrument Do You Write:** Guitar and voice

**Influences:** Everything

**Advice To Writers:** Write what you feel. Make sure every section of the song is a hit. If a song is right and good in your gut, don't let anyone tell you no. Fight for it.

**Little Known Biographical Fact:** I speak three languages and used to be an investment banker on Wall Street. I have a record deal on MCA and Byron Gallimore is my producer.

**Issues Facing Songwriters Today:** Fear of the industry (labels) to take risks, too many non-songwriters (publishers) telling songwriters how to write, too many songwriters writing what they think other people want to hear and not what they feel.

This lyrical muse was raised in Georgia, the daughter of a military dentist. At age 15, she headed off to Westminster, a boarding school in Connecticut, for two years. "It was a good education," says Lamar. "It was nice to go out on my own and have some independence."

The summer before starting college at Duke University, she put her love of writing to work at the *Tallahassee Democrat* in Florida. "I covered a little bit of everything," she recalls. "I was always good with literature and writing essays and such. I toyed with becoming a journalist, but that summer cured me of it."

Attending Duke from 1988-92, she graduated with a degree in economics and Spanish. Shortly thereafter she was hired by Solomon Brothers to work as an investment banker in New York City, where she spent the next three years in trading and Latin American corporate finance.

"When I was in New York I saw a friend of mine in a play and right then I decided that I wanted to perform—acting, singing, whatever. The next day I enrolled at an acting/music performing academy. I started taking voice lessons again and trying out for rock bands." It was at this time that she penned her first song, "Heaven Knows." "I had always been a singer," she explains, "and I used to write poetry when I was little, but I had never put the two together."

She eventually fazed out her investment banking job and in 1996 headed to Nashville with friends to pursue more creative endeavors. Within five months her tenacity and talent landed her a publishing deal with what is now Cal IV Entertainment. To bring in extra income she worked nights at home as a medical transcriptionist. Yet success didn't come quickly. She spent the next few years honing her craft and eventually hit big with Faith Hill's cross-over hit "Breathe." "I went to see Missi Gallimore and played her 'Breathe,'" says Lamar. "She jumped out of her chair and called Byron (Gallimore). Then I talked to Byron's publishing company and they signed me. From there on, I've just been writing my butt off."

In addition, her singing career is about to unfold. "MCA offered me a deal last October," she says. "I've written all the songs on the upcoming album. I feel like I'll either sell four copies or four million because it's so edgy and different. They're talking about releasing a single in January."

In her time away from music, this self-described "vivacious" singer/songwriter enjoys running, watching movies and spending time-at home with her two Pugs—Ruby and Lilly.

—Richard McVey II

## Business Management Defined

An artist at the beginning of his or her career is in many ways like a start-up company. Both run the risk of focusing so much attention on introducing their new product into the marketplace that the basic financial responsibilities needed to stay in business can be neglected. For the recording artist, these matters are entrusted to the business manager, who assumes responsibility for the overall well-being of the artist's business and, in many instances, personal finances. The principal areas of business management include:

**1. Financial accounting and management**—financial forecasting, planning and reporting,

domestic and foreign tour accounting, compensation structures, cash management, tax and investment planning, and wealth preservation.

**2. Evaluation, negotiation and monitoring of contracts**—artist and songwriter contracts, agency and personal management agreements, merchandising, publishing, live performance, production, and endorsement and sponsorship agreements.

**3. Risk management**—disability, life, medical, property, business liability, and nonperformance insurance.

The most common fee arrangement for business managers is 5% of the artist's income, although other percentages are used, as are fees based on hourly rates or fixed amounts per month. Many new artists find a percentage arrangement to be in their best interest, so that their business affairs are managed correctly from the beginning even though fees are not payable until some success is achieved and income is produced. (In such a case the business manager must be willing to "invest" in the artist, initially performing their services without compensation in hopes of sharing in future success.)


An artist who, quite correctly, wonders if the benefits of the business manager's services will outweigh the cost should consider the consequences if these tasks are not performed. The artist's livelihood depends on the creation of artistic works, to which as much time and energy as possible must be devoted. Without the ability to delegate the planning, administrative, and day-to-day financial responsibilities, the creative process will certainly suffer. While it is important to understand and communicate frequently with the business manager about financial goals, these concerns must not overwhelm the creative ones or there will soon be no finances to manage.

Additionally, savings are derived from the careful management of all cash transactions, such as reviewing accounts payable, auditing road reports and concert settlements, direct

involvement with insurance audits, and reviewing royalty statements. Further savings will occur through better forecasting and budgeting, planning to save and defer taxes, and the ability to negotiate and obtain the best possible deals. The skillful business manager is equipped to deal with all of these complex financial responsibilities and, ultimately, to produce a higher net income for the artist.

Selection of a business manager is one of the artist's most important decisions, and each prospect should be carefully evaluated based on his or her reputation, credibility and integrity. Here are some other factors to be considered:

- A thorough awareness and understanding of the entertainment industry.
- Significant expertise in domestic and foreign tax planning.
- Professional qualifications and continuing education requirements.
- Many years of experience for owners and staff.
- Information and reporting systems designed and geared specifically for the entertainment industry.
- A high priority on client confidentiality.
- Good match of personalities, stressing open communication and sufficient information to encourage client participation in important decisions.
- Strong internal controls (some examples are a two signature requirement for checks, work review procedures, separation of duties between those with check writing and bank reconciliation responsibilities).
- Adequate business insurance which includes employee dishonesty and Errors & Omission insurance coverage.

The overall objective in business management is to provide creative and profitable business ideas, and to assure that business affairs will be conducted with a high level of efficiency and competence. The entertainment industry is speculative, highly specialized, and subject to rapid changes. The all too common story of a successful artistic career ending in financial ruin need not be yours, with the help of a diligent, experienced business manager. 

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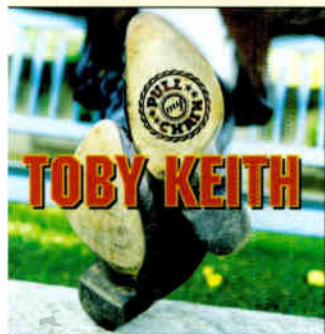
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## TOBY KEITH/*Pull My Chain*

(DreamWorks) Producers: Toby Keith & James Stroud

**Prime Cuts:** "I'm Just Talkin' About Tonight," "I Can't Take You Anywhere," "Tryin' To Matter," "Pick 'Em Up And Lay 'Em Down," "My List"

**Critique:** Being at the top of your game is a nice place to be. Just ask Toby Keith. The ACM's Top Male Vocalist has followed his current ACM Album of the Year with a record that might just allow him to keep that distinction for another year. With his usual good-time magnetism, Keith has delivered an album that is sure to appeal to the masses, as well as the most hardened critic. Keith

and James Stroud have avoided the prevalent "slick" sound, presenting crisp, straight-ahead music. The album begins with Keith's current single, "I'm Just Talkin' About Tonight," which sets the tone for what follows. At a time when even a former President can argue the definition of the word "is," Keith's clear-cut honest lyrics are a breath of fresh air. The cleverly written "I Can't Take You Anywhere" showcases Keith's unique phrasing, while "Tryin' To Matter"—with its Restless Heart feel—shows his versatility. "Pick 'Em Up And Lay 'Em Down" picks up the pace with cool guitar riffs and driving melody, and Keith sticks to the formula that made him so successful last year with "Forever Hasn't Got Here Yet." The album's crowning achievement, however, is "My List." The song tells of a man who realizes his need to prioritize what's really important on a list of things to do, and "relishing life" is at the top. With the release of *Pull My Chain*, Keith might need to add "pick up awards" to the top of his list. **Grade: A**

—John Kennedy



## CAROLYN DAWN JOHNSON/*Room With A View* (Arista)

Producers: Paul Worley, Carolyn Dawn Johnson

**Prime Cuts:** "Georgia," "Complicated," "I'll

Think of You That Way," "Room With A View"

**Critique:** Never mind the aurora borealis, the

brighest light shinning out of Canada these days

is Carolyn Dawn Johnson. She's got a top 10 hit

with the infinitely catchy "Complicated" and

recently picked up a record five Canadian

Country Music Awards including Female Artist,

Album and Rising Star. Johnson first gained

notoriety as a songwriter; co-penning Chely

Wright's biggest hit "Single White Female." She

demonstrates her writing skills early on with the

opening "Georgia," which boasts a gorgeous

melody and takes an insightful look at the demise

of a long-term relationship. The sing-along chorus

of "I'll Think of You That Way" makes it a prime

candidate for a single. Sonically the song's a

reezy piece of ear candy, but lyrically it deals with

complex issues of forgiveness and acceptance.

One of Johnson's strengths is her ability to write

catchy tunes that lyrically have meat on their

bones. She's got style and substance. There are a

few missteps—the occasional trite phrase ("I'm

the one who used to rock your world" from "Just

Another Girl") or cliché ("it's better to have

loved and lost/then to never have loved at all"

from the otherwise excellent "Love Is Always Worth The Ache")—but for a brand new artist, Johnson comes across like a seasoned veteran. She also sings with power and conviction. Johnson has already conquered Canada; don't be surprised if America is next. **Grade: B+**

—John Hood



## GARY ALLAN/*Alright Guy*

(MCA) Producers: Tony Brown, Mark Wright

**Prime Cuts:** "What Would Willie Do," "Devil's Candy," "Adobe Walls," "Alright Guy"

**Critique:** After a two-year interval, Gary Allan

presents his second MCA album. Delivered

with a well-orchestrated bad-boy image, he

serves up an interesting collection of country/

rock tunes with a twist of Southern California

humor. Although the album has interesting

instrumentation and arrangement, the mix

seems a bit cloudy. For this listener, the album

took on an A.M. radio ambiance with the mid-

range laden mix. Allan has always performed

songs that didn't beat around the bush, and this

album is no different. It starts off with a

confrontational love-triangle in "Man To Man,"

and moves on to lament the addiction to the

night-life with "Devil's Candy." The album is

also graced with the hard-rocking first single,

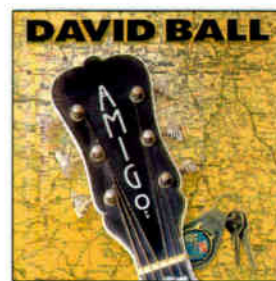
"Man Of Me," and the hilarious "Alright Guy."

However, Allan seems to be at his best singing

quirky, off-kilter songs like the humorous but sweet "Adobe Walls." Reminiscent of an old standard, the song provides a nice relief from the whisky-drenched vocals on the rest of the album. The record's most interesting song has to be "What Would Willie Do." His tongue firmly in cheek, Allan is perfect for one of Bruce Robison's coolest songs. Comprised of a diverse song selection, this album should not only satisfy the longtime Allan fans, but also provide a different enough sound to attract new listeners.

**Grade: B**

—John Kennedy



## DAVID BALL/*Amigo*

(Dualtone) Producer: Wood Newton

**Prime Cuts:** "Amigo," "Whenever You Come Back To Me," "Missing Her Blues," "Texas Echo"

**Critique:** David Ball's first Dualtone release,

*Amigo*, reminds me of the old saying "you can

take the man out of Texas but you can't take

Texas out of the man." His musical message that

Texas dancehalls are alive and well can be heard

loud and clear with a harmonious blend of country,

western, blues and Americana. Throughout he

weaves old-fashioned storytelling with the more

contemporary vibes of fiddle, pedal steel and

electric guitar. The 13-song album, with eight

Ball credits, demonstrates his unique talent for

touching people where their heart's live. The

Ball/Allen Shamblin co-write "Whenever You

Come Back To Me" offers emotional songwriting

and a well orchestrated melody. The Lonestar-

state evoking "Texas Echo" includes a yodeling

experience that had me looking for a Shiner

Bock and a dance partner. With the easy pace of

"Missing Her Blues," Ball lets you savor someone

else's misery, led by a chorus of "It's those missing-

her-all-day-everyday-and-more-ways-headin'-for-

a-heartache blues." Finally, the question of what

this 1994 Grammy nominee and BMI Millionaire

Award winner ("Thinking Problem") has been

doing is once and for all answered. He's been

making an exceptional CD, *amigo*. **Grade: A-**

—Suzanna Eckchum

## MARK WILLS/*Loving Every Minute*

(Mercury) Producers: Carson Chamberlain, Keith Stegall

**Prime Cuts:** "I Hate Chicago," "One O' These Days," "Somebody," "I'm Not Gonna Do Anything Without You"

**Critique:** It's almost poetic justice that *Loving*

*Every Minute* is so drenched in "sincerity" that it

ends up shorting out its own credibility. Country

music has always been unashamedly sentimental,

but at one time its sentimentality was infused

with (and made believable by) a down-home





appeal and an indisputable honesty. There isn't much of either here. The singing is technically flawless and utterly generic. The material too obviously panders to the daytime drama crowd—which might be sound fiscal policy, but it's definitely an aesthetic pitfall. A fiddle or dobro riding on an overly familiar studio-perfect arrangement doesn't create enough down-home appeal to render schmaltz like "Universe," "In My Heaven" and the dreadful "Balloon Song" palatable, let alone convincing. Some engaging stories get told on "Somebody," "One O' These Days" and the cheeky "I Hate Chicago" (thankfully, country's sense of humor hasn't yet been bred out). And the refreshingly low-key duet, "I'm Not Gonna Do Anything Without You," with Jamie O'Neal has a lovely, relaxed feel. But the rest sinks beneath the weight of the same rigid, formulaic, "sincere" approach heard on albums from one male country singer after another in recent years—an approach that by now rings transparently false. *Loving Every Minute* seems coldly packaged and singularly unappetizing, like biting into frozen strawberries. Time to head out of town to that roadside produce stand. **Grade: C-**

—Johnny Norris



## CONFEDERATE RAILROAD/*Unleashed*

(Audium) *Producers: Barry Beckett, Danny Shirley*  
**Prime Cuts:** "She Treats Her Body Like A Temple," "White Trash With Money," "Between the Rainbows and the Rain"

**Critique:** *Unleashed* marks the the first album of new material in three years from Confederate Railroad, a band whose sound and attitude is sorely missed from country radio. While their latest isn't their strongest outing, it still manages to combine an effective balance of Southern rock fun and heart-tugging ballads. Veteran producer Barry Beckett remains at the throttle with Danny Shirley wearing a co-producer's cap to keep the Railroad on track. Two of the album's finest moments are duets. The first, "Still One Outlaw Left," ranks alongside Southern rock's best, as it pairs Shirley, who remains one of country's most identifiable voices, with the band's former boss, David Allan Coe. The second, "She Treats Her Body Like A Temple," features Shirley sharing

vocals with one of his idols, George Jones. The cleverly-writ song should receive serious single consideration. The hilarious, video-ready "White Trash With Money," one of two Shirley co-writes, is musical kin to earlier hits "Queen Of Memphis" and "Trashy Women," while the on-the-mark, funny tune from Dennis Linde, "The 'R' Word," has the makings of a new "redneck" anthem. Other album highlights include, "Wasted Time," another Shirley co-write that's in the "Cat's In the Cradle" vein; and "Between the Rainbows and the Rain," which features a rueful Shirley looking back on lost love and missed chances. It's high time country radio got Railroaded again. **Grade: B-**

—Ron Young

## CHAD BROCK/III (Warner Bros.)

*Producers: Norro Wilson, Buddy Cannon*

**Prime Cuts:** "The Thought Of Bein' In Love," "Tell Me How," "Population Minus One"

**Critique:** As a singer Chad Brock just keeps getting better with each new album. Though a good album, *III* doesn't quite take him to that next level of stardom built after the success of his self-titled debut that featured "Ordinary Life" and his sophomore effort *Yes!* The new disc starts off promisingly enough with the energetic "The Thought Of Bein' In Love," an exuberant take in the better-to-have-loved-and-lost column. "Park the Pickup (Kiss the Girl)," a song where the



singer battles his conscience, is an amusing high school date ditty that's radio-friendly. Meanwhile, "Tell Me How," a quintessential break-up ballad, packs a powerful punch and should also be earmarked for single status. The project's bright beginning soon fades in the middle with a handful of pedestrian tunes, although "I Ain't Cryin'" is remarkable for its cool production from the veteran tag team of Wilson and Cannon. "The Lie," about a guilt-ridden wife who has another man's baby, is a serious subject indeed. Though Brock sings it well, the tune's mid-tempo bongo-driven arrangement robs some of its lyrical depth. "I'd Love To Love You" is a cute ditty that really stretches the singer and is helped by a cool arrangement (love those "ooh-ooh-who" harmonies). But that's about it. As a bonus, the buyer gets a reprise of Brock's biggest hits "Yes!," "Ordinary Life" and "Lightning Does the Work." **Grade: B**

—Ron Young

## EARL SCRUGGS AND FRIENDS

ELTON JOHN · STING · MELISSA ETHERIDGE  
JOHN FOGERTY · JOHNNY CASH · DON HENLEY  
VINCE GILL · DWIGHT YOAKAM · MARTY STUART  
BILLY BOB THORNTON · RANDY SCRUGGS  
GARY SCRUGGS · TRAVIS TRITT · ROSANNE CASH



## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### Earl Scruggs And Friends

(MCA Records) *Producer: Randy Scruggs*

**Prime cuts:** "Country Comfort," "Ring Of Fire," "The Angels," "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," "Blue Ridge Mountain Blues," "Passin' Thru," "Foggy Mountain Rock/Foggy Mountain Special"

**Critique:** Country's iconic founders are rapidly disappearing. Fortunately, the marvelous Earl Scruggs is very much alive and picking. If the recently-departed Chet Atkins personified the guitar for millions so does this 75-year-old North Carolina genius loom colossal on the five string banjo. Decades before Bela Fleck or the Dixie Chicks, Scruggs made his instrument—once dismissed as a minstrel's prop—hip and legitimate. Aficionados may rhapsodize about his subtle innovations but *everybody* felt their pulse quicken as Scrugg's barbwire syncopations accompanied Bonnie and Clyde along the dirt roads of the Great Depression. *Earl Scruggs And Friends*, the maestro's first album in 17 years, seems long overdue, but those looking for a tribute CD will be in for a surprise. Homage is paid to a few Scruggs standards here but mostly this is a collection of new material with no previous Scruggs connection. It's played and sung by an unlikely gallery of Scruggs worshipers including Elton John, Don Henley, Melissa Etheridge, Billy Bob Thornton, Sting and Steve Martin, alongside more expected cronies Vince Gill, Marty Stuart, Johnny Cash and Scruggs' sons Gary and producer-guitarist Randy. Sounds like a novelty outing? In fact, it all works to organic perfection, amounting to one of the year's outstanding musical events. Thornton, for instance, may be no great shakes as a pure singer but his rumbling revisitation of "Ring Of Fire" drips with cool. Etheridge's self-written "The Angels" is scorchingly passionate and John Fogerty's reworking of "Blue Ridge Mountain Blues" sounds like something from a '40s radio show. Comedian Martin joins an all-star cast in a version of "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" that proves his own banjo skills are no laughing matter. Cash's canyon-deep recitation, juxtaposed with Henley's grainy tenor, reminds us that we're merely "Passin' Thru." Perhaps so, but for the meantime let's be grateful to Scruggs and his many friends for gifts like this landmark album. A humble masterpiece. **Grade: A**

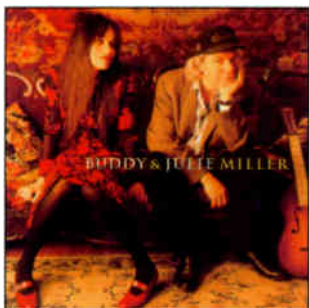
—Larry Wayne Clark



# So Much Music, So Little Time

As the fall release schedule kicks into high gear, my desk is being overrun with new music. Country, folk, bluegrass and Americana releases are arriving in mass, but where are the rock and pop records? It's not just roots music here at the Perimeter. If it's Nashville-based send it my way, no matter what the genre. Below are some of the records that have been spinning in my player recently.

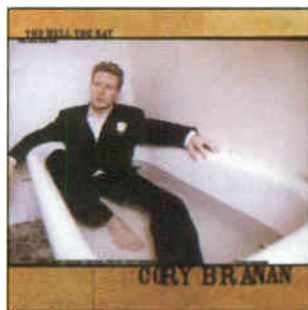
## REcordViews



### **BUDDY & JULIE MILLER** **Buddy & Julie Miller** **(Hightone)**

Buddy and Julie Miller are making more consistently brilliant country music than any other artist(s) in the format. Whether it's a Bob Dylan cover ("Wallflower") or an ode to the tragedy at Columbine High School ("Rachel"), the Millers' trademark harmonies can turn any song into a country classic. She sings with a voice like molten honey, he sings with a whiskey-soaked gruff tenderness. On "Little Darlin'" those voices mix into a high wail of pure bluegrass perfection. In the

murder ballad "Rock Salt and Nails" they sing their way through a graveyard of ache and despair. Country radio can have Tim and Faith, I'll take Buddy & Julie any day of the week.



### **CORY BRANAN** **The Hell You Say** **(Madjack)**

Snarling out of Memphis with a songbook full of lines as sharp as a piano-wire necktie, Cory Branan introduces himself in a major way with his debut album. He still has some developing to do, his mock angry growl in "Troublesome Girl" might work in performance, but on record it doesn't ring true. Still, with lyrics like "the angle of her cheek is the math of persuasion" from the rollicking "Mrs. Ferguson" and "it's the kind of night mistakes all make themselves" in "Pale Moon On Paper Town," Branan has found what some performers spend whole careers searching for—his own distinct voice. And anyone who can come up with the lines "they all say I'll never tame her/who says I want her tame?" (from "Tame") gets my seal of approval. Remember the name Cory Branan, you'll be hearing it again.



### **MONTE MONTGOMERY** **Wishing Well** **(TMG)**

I've been assured by friends whose musical opinions I respect that Monte Montgomery is a guitar wizard of the highest order and that I should make every opportunity to see him in performance. He makes a guitar come alive,

I'm assured. Why then did he put out an album so slickly produced and soulless? Yes, it's technically proficient and sonically the album sounds great, but it also sounds cold and lifeless. Guitar magic for the easy listening crowd. I think I'll pass.




### **GRETTA LEE** **You Must Be Present To Win** **(Let's Roll)**

Stone country and proud of it, Lee writes and sings the kind of emotionally riveting, touched-by-the-truth songs that are sorely lacking on mainstream country radio. The only song Lee didn't write on this album is a honky-tonk take on Johnny Russell's "Got No Reason Now For Goin' Home," which was a Top 10 single for Gene Watson in 1985. Sometimes the most simple lyrics—"It would have been easier if you just stayed in love/but you changed your heart, changed your mind/and now I'm just dyin'/and I'm gonna die tryin' gettin' over you"—are spellbinding when delivered with Lee's aching sincerity. At times she brings to mind Mary Chapin Carpenter with her witty wordplay ("Everything's Changed," "Run With You") but vocally she's closer to Kelly Willis. Lee, however, transcends any comparisons with this album of songs that take an unflinching look at life's ups and downs. If the Nashville labels don't sign this Atlanta-based artist, they should at least snatch up her tunes. She's got something to say and says it well.

### **JOHN HIATT** **The Tiki Bar Is Open** **(Vanguard)**

On the heels of last year's acoustic *Crossing Muddy Waters*, Hiatt continues his creative rebirth with a plugged in and electrifying collection of new music. *The Tiki Bar Is Open* is Hiatt's first album with backup band the Goners since his 1988 release *Slow Turning*. In the intervening years, the Goner's Sonny Landreth has quietly become one of the nation's most distinct and exciting guitarists. He helps put a soulful, bluesy stamp

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on some of Hiatt's most inspired songwriting in years. The album opens with the blistering "Everybody Went Low," a raw-boned rock tune that forecasts the album's feisty nature. "My Old Friend" feels just like its title, the song rolls out of the speakers with the warmth and intimacy of a treasured friend. There's more than hard-charging rock 'n' roll here though. The ballads "Something Broken," "I'll Never Get Over You" and "Come Home To You" are heartbreaking in their earnest simplicity. *The Tikki Bar Is Open* solidifies Hiatt's reputation as one of America's most enduring and important songwriters.

## THE CLUB SEEN

One of Nashville's best rock bands, the ultra-original *Without Ruth*, stopped by *Music Row* offices for an unbelievable acoustic performance (Aug. 10). They rocked, they rolled, they raised the roof with a display of energy and showmanship that outclassed any performance I've yet seen in our conference room. They got a standing ovation and we're a pretty tough crowd. The next night at Douglas Corner, the band plugged in and performed an hour-and-a-half

of stellar rock music. That this band remains unsigned is a travesty. Are you listening Lost Highway, Dualtone, VFR, Vanguard?

Kelly Zullo and Cynthia Williams wowed an intimate crowd with acoustic guitars at a send-off party (Aug. 24) for my former *blink* magazine partner Jamie Bolyard, who is moving to Portland, Ore. Both Zullo and Williams deserve your attention. Zullo is a folk rocker who keeps raising the bar for local pop writers with her razor sharp word-play. A jazzy singer who's the embodiment of earthy cool, Williams is also a mesmerizing live performer with undeniable charisma. Be on the lookout for these two young stars on the rise.

Bluewater songwriter Suzanna Spring made a case for herself as a performer at the

Radio Café (Sept 13). She sang like an angel and offered up a tight set of introspective story songs. Some of her best material was co-written with Carter Wood who provided harmony vocals. Don't be surprised if Spring/Wood songs start cropping up on major label albums.

One of Nashville's most interesting songwriters, Blake Hensley, played a round with Bill Boutwell and others at the Bluebird Café (Aug. 18). Hensley's song "Bathwater" as in "I'd drink your bathwater" has to be heard to be believed. It's a riot. He is, however, more than a novelty writer. His songs always come with a unique perspective and he's a thoughtful and perceptive observer of the human condition. Worth a listen. Till next month, I'll see you in the clubs. MR



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## LETTERS

(Letters have been edited for space)

### EXPLETIVES DELETED

Great article Mr. Ross (in @MusicRow #87). I believe Bruce Allen is correct in his statements. The one thing wrong was his use of profanities. It was unnecessary and vulgar.

He talked of the success of NASCAR. He apparently overlooked the point that they are an overwhelmingly Christian organization (not perfect, but decent people) where the fans are fairly insulated from the dominating immorality of the other major sports. You wouldn't see a NASCAR-sponsored interview with his profanity. At one time you wouldn't have seen it in a country publication.

A great article still, but I would have preferred to have read it expletives-deleted.

—Robert Lloyd, Ft. Myers, FL  
americansongs@cs.com

## INDUSTRY CALENDAR

For updated listings: [www.musicrow.com](http://www.musicrow.com)

### October

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Cystic Fibrosis Allstar Music Bash with Richard Marx & Friends, Opryland Hotel, 255-1167   | 9 BMI Songwriters Workshop with Jason Blume, BMI, 1-5 pm, 401-2000                              |
| 2 ASCAP Presents IBMA Songwriter Showcase, Louisville, 4 p.m.  | 10 ASCAP Presents Straight Talk, 10 a.m.  |
| 3 ASCAP Presents Straight Talk, 10 a.m., 742-5000  | 10 Nashville New Music Conference, Ramada Inn & Conference Center (Oct. 10-14)                  |
| 3 ASCAP Publisher Writers Night at the Bluebird Cafe, 6 p.m.   | 11 ASCAP Live at Opry Mills with Swan Dive, 7 p.m.  |
| 6 Jack Daniels' Bike To Jack And Back Charity Ride for Multiple Sclerosis, 269-9055 or <a href="http://www.msnashville.org">www.msnashville.org</a> (Oct. 6-7) | 17 ASCAP Presents Straight Talk, 10 a.m.  |
|  | 24 ASCAP Presents Straight Talk, 10 a.m.  |
|  | 31 ASCAP Presents Straight Talk, 10 a.m.  |
|  | 31 <i>Billboard</i> Music Video Conference, Beverly Hilton, Los Angeles, Calif. (Oct. 31-Nov.2) |

To list an event in the *Music Row* Industry Events Calendar, please send an e-mail to [news@musicrow.com](mailto:news@musicrow.com) or fax us at (615) 329-0852. Please include the name of the event, date, location and phone number (if applicable).

The event must be of relative importance to Nashville's music industry to be printed.

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