

# 2003 Independent Label Special

February 2003

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US & CANADA PUBLICATION

**INDIE CHIEFS  
TALK SHOP**  
What They  
Know That  
The Majors  
Don't

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**INDIES VS.  
MAJORS**  
Radney Foster  
Tells It Like It Is

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Detailed  
Label Listings

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SHEYTON**

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February 2003 • Volume 23 No. 2

## On the Cover Blake Shelton

**Label:** Warner Bros.

**Current Single:** "The Baby"

**Current Album:** *The Dreamer* (coming Feb. 4)

**Current Video:** "The Baby"

**Current Producer:** Bobby Braddock

**Hometown:** Ada, Okla.

**Management:** Hallmark Direction

**Booking:** William Morris Agency

**Recent Hits:** "Austin," "Ol' Red" and "The Baby"

**Awards:** *Music Row's* 2001 Critic's Pick, *R&R's* 2001 Breakthrough Artist, *Billboard's* New Country Artist 2001

**RIAA Certs:** self-titled debut (Gold)

**Birthdate:** June 18, 1976

**Outside Interests:** Hunting

**Musical Influences:** Earl Thomas Conley, Travis Tritt, Hank Williams Jr., Dan Seal

**Favorite Record:** *Earl Thomas Conley's Greatest Hits* (1985)

Blake Shelton's new album, *The Dreamer*, has already spawned the hit "The Baby." Shelton says of *The Dreamer*, "I certainly can hear a difference when I listen to the first record and then this one. I've got a lot more confidence in my singing than I did the first time around. Plus, I've been on the road non-stop for a couple of years, and the more you work on a muscle, the stronger it gets."

He adds, "When people buy my album or buy a concert ticket, I want them to think that they got their money's worth. I owe that to the kids who are out there driving around getting excited about country music. That's all."



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Tom Shapiro and Tony Martin were both named Writer of the Year for Sony/ATV Music Publishing Nashville during the company's annual brunch ceremonies at Hillwood Country Club in Nashville. Pictured at the event are (l-r): Sony's Woody Bomar, Shapiro, Sony's Donna Hilley, Martin and Sony's Don Cook. Photo: Alan Mayor



The members of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, producer Randy Scruggs and Hall of Famer Earl Scruggs were among those gathered at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum on Dec. 10 as the Dirt Band donated memorabilia documenting its *Will The Circle Be Unbroken Vol. III* album, which will be featured in an archive spotlight in April. Pictured (l-r) are: Randy Scruggs, Jimmie Fadden, Bob Carpenter, Earl Scruggs, Museum Director Kyle Young, Jeff Hanna, John McEuen, Museum VP of Museum Services Lauren Bufferd, and Jimmy Ibbotson.



The RCA Label Group RLG/Nashville announced an agreement with Bridge Media Solutions (BMS), which will address the specific protocol by which recorded music masters and other related archival information will be stored. Pictured (l-r) are: RLG VP of Finance Paul Barnabee, RLG's Senior VP of A&R Renee Bell, BMS VP Marshall Morgan, RLG's VP of Legal & Business Affairs Kathy Woods, RLG's Senior Director of A&R Administration Alison Booth and BMS President John Spencer.

## AMAs Gone Country

Country music was well-represented at the 30th Annual American Music Awards, which handed out trophies in Los Angeles on Jan. 13. The event was spotlighted by performances from some of Music Row's finest, including **Kenny Chesney**, **Shania Twain** and show-opener **Tim McGraw**. Here is a list of winners in the country category.

**Male Artist:** Tim McGraw  
**Female Artist:** Martina McBride  
**Band, Duo or Group:** Dixie Chicks  
**Album:** *Home*, Dixie Chicks  
**New Artist:** Carolyn Dawn Johnson  
**Award of Merit:** Alabama



ELTON JOHN AND TIM MCGRAW



KENNY CHESNEY



SHANIA TWAIN



ALABAMA



CAROLYN DAWN JOHNSON

## the buzz...

### WHO'S GONNA FILL THEIR SHOES EDITION

2002 saw a Full House of superstar releases. Yeah!... So why does it feel like we're now staring at a Pair of Twos?

- ▼ **Mottola Replaced by TV Exec.**—Glad to see the focus continues to shift toward the music.
- ▲ **New Rides**—McGraw toasts success with auto perks for his band. Similarly, Music Row staff perked with use of company Pogostick.
- ▶ **New Curb Imprint**—In a time of consolidation, Curb expands. Do they know something that we don't?
- ▲ **MTSU Net Classes**—Sit at home in your underwear and work at own pace. Hey, that's perfect preparation for the music biz.
- ▶ **New Faces**—Are we talking about the artists or label execs?



# “Always About The Music”

People don't just like Waylon, they are passionate,” says RLG Executive VP **Butch Waugh**. “So many people want to be a part of this tribute that the opportunities are mushrooming.” *I've Always Been Crazy: A Tribute to Waylon Jennings*, due out in April, has been approved by Waylon's wife, **Jessi Colter**, and features a variety of artists singing songs from the artist's four-decade career which began as a **Buddy Holly** protégé during the mid-'50s. Jennings has sold over 40 million records worldwide, won numerous Grammy and CMA Awards, and is a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame.

“I knew Waylon from the early '70s,” says **Hazel Smith**, journalist and Executive Producer for the project. “That's why RLG Chairman **Joe Galante** hired me to do this. It started with making a list of artists and songs that I felt would go together. There's so much genius in what Joe and RCA VP A&R **Renee Bell** do. They love great music, and that's what we strived for—on a daily basis.”

“Hazel's been a blast to work with,” says Bell. “She's so passionate about the record. This project makes so much sense for us in light of Waylon's 20-year career on RCA and all the artists he's influenced.”

“Waylon's music knew no boundaries,” Smith recalls. “Here was a man who had to fight all the time to produce his own records the way he wanted to. Back in the '70s, **Paul Randall**, who was working for RCA, used to come hear Waylon

play at the studio on 916 19th Ave. S. This little bean counter that looked like a teenager would come with him. He had an accent so I watched him like a hawk. One day in that studio it hit this bean counter, who did not understand country music, that this was the real deal. And that is where Joe Galante learned to love country music, at the altar of Waylon Jennings. Joe was a part of the music in a

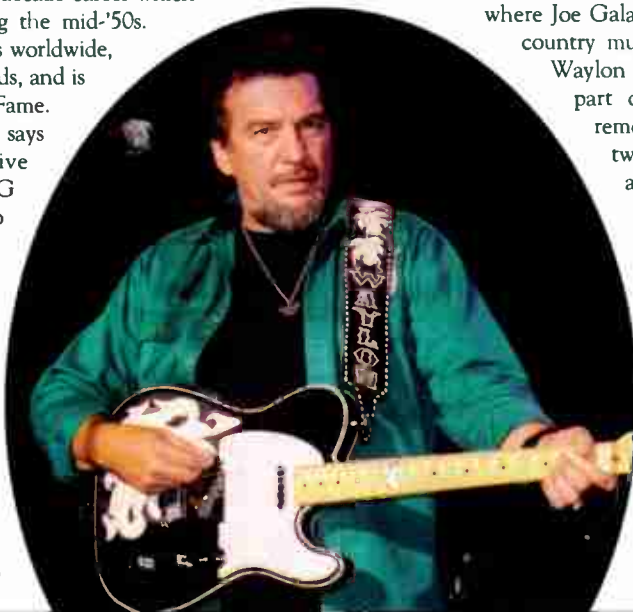
remote way because he was doing the ones and twos—financial crap—at the time. Afterwards, as soon as he could, he got involved in the creative end which is what he should have been doing all along, but didn't know it. Waylon's the one that built that bridge for him.

“Chet Flippo is writing the liner notes,” Smith continues. “I hired him from day one because when I named the music ‘Outlaw Music’ in 1973, he was the one writing about it in *Rolling Stone*. I named it, but Chet took it to the masses.”

“For Waylon it was always about the music,” said Galante last year after Jennings' passing Feb. 13. “The only spotlight he ever cared about was the one on him while he was on stage. It wasn't about the awards or events. He was an original and a pioneer in terms of creating his own sound.”  
—David M. Ross



Hazel Smith



## *I've Always Been Crazy: A Tribute to Waylon Jennings* (partial song listing)

**Jessi Colter**, “Storms Never Last”

**Brooks & Dunn**, “I Ain't Living Long Like This”

**Kenny Chesney with Kid Rock**, “Luckenbach, Texas”

**Sara Evans with Deana Carter**, “Mamas Don't

Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys”

**Andy Griggs**, “This Time”

**Ben Harper**, “Waymore's Blues”

**Alison Krauss**, “You Asked Me To”

Metallica lead singer **James Hetfield**, “Don't You Think

This Outlaw Bit's Done Got Out of Hand”

**John Mellencamp**, “Are You Sure Hank Done It This Way”

**Pinmonkey**, “Are You Ready for the Country”

**Travis Tritt**, “Lonesome, On'ry and Mean”

**Hank Williams, Jr.**, “Only Daddy That'll Walk the Line”

**Dwight Yoakam**, “Stop the World [And Let Me Off]”

**Shooter Jennings/Stargunn**, “I've Always Been Crazy”

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## Bandit Explores Spanish Market

What do George Jones and a new collection of Spanish folk and family songs have in common? Well, a label for one thing. Jones' label Bandit Records is behind *El Cancionero De La Familia* (The Family Songbook), a children's compilation CD of 30 hard-to-find songs from Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico and other pan-Hispanic countries. The album was produced by Mavericks' lead singer Raul Malo and features his family singing on it.

Bandit President Evelyn Shriver explains that one of Jones' daughters recently adopted a child from Guatemala and that experience sparked the idea for the album series.

"The family talked about how important it was for that little boy to remember his heritage," says Shriver.

She goes on to say that once they began doing research for the concept, they realized there was a vast untapped market. "We discovered the Spanish market is a multibillion dollar market and that 21% of all children under the age of five are Hispanic in this country."

The project was originally planned around a telemarketing strategy. According to Shriver, that approach is too cost prohibitive to do on a national scale.

"Television advertising is expensive. We should have backed off of it sooner than we did and tweaked it a little bit and dropped our price. Which we've done. Now, we'll go back out there and try it."

Bandit also introduced a shorter version of the album geared toward the retail market.

Shriver says, "We've been talking to distributors and they want something that will retail for \$9.99. I didn't want to give out 30 songs for that price, so we came up with an album for retail which features 15 songs."

She goes on to say this project allows Bandit a lot of flexibility and creativity in marketing.

"Because this is not an artist driven project, we can dice and chop this thing up a million different ways. For example, a telephone provider based out of L.A. wants to use the album as a gift for people when they sign up for phone service. There's a lot of different ways we can go with this and that makes it fun and exciting."

—John Hood



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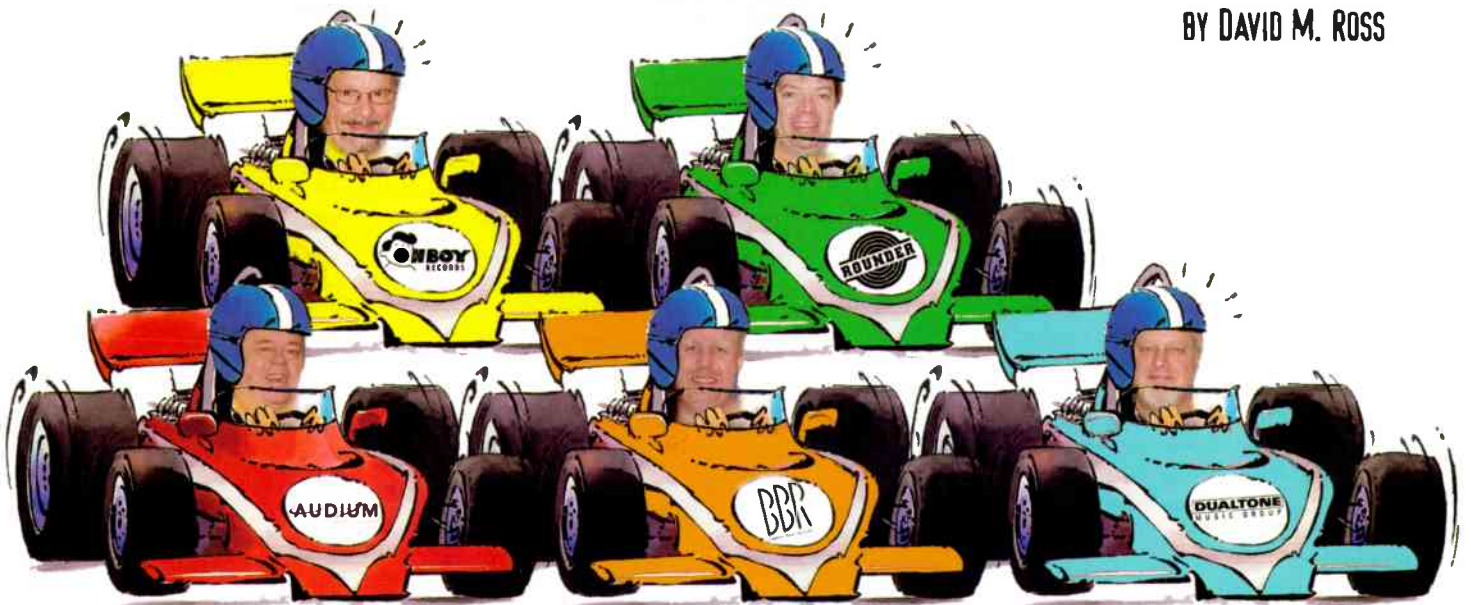
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# The Race Is On

## INDIE LABELS SHIFT INTO HIGH GEAR

BY DAVID M. ROSS



GRAPHIC BY CHRISTIE KING

**INDEPENDENT LABELS** MAY WELL BE ON THE VERGE OF A GOLDEN AGE. DURING THE EARLY '90S, WHEN COUNTRY MUSIC EXPLODED AND NASHVILLE'S MAJOR LABELS SWELLED TO ALMOST 25 IMPRINTS, THERE WAS LITTLE IF ANY ROOM FOR INDIE SUCCESS.

## ...BUT THINGS HAVE CHANGED

**S**hrinking profits, radio consolidation, digital downloading, CD burning and escalating costs have all conspired against the major label business model forcing round after round of downsizing, budget reductions and closures. Meanwhile, many of these same issues have actually improved the indie condition by leveling the playing field. For example, technology has enabled small but tightly run operations such as Oh Boy Records to create an Internet store which has become a key ingredient in their sales portfolio. Dualtone and others are able to produce competitive sounding product for a fraction of the recording cost that majors incur. Rounder utilizes a variety of distribution channels to niche-market each album's content and audience. Audium has amassed a large 45-album

catalog in only three years by embracing artists that major label budgets could no longer afford and Broken Bow has pioneered new style artist deals in an effort to attract top talent that can compete at mainstream country radio. Today's successful indie labels seem to have a common thread—entrepreneurial innovation.

Speaking of entrepreneurs, let's introduce our roundtable panel.

■ Industry veteran Nick Hunter founded Audium in 1999 with Simon Renshaw as a partnership with Koch Entertainment. Hunter's days as a Warner Bros. promo man during the '80s are legendary. It was Hunter's insistence that caused the re-release of Randy Travis' career-breaking single "On The Other Hand." Recently Audium signed Dwight Yoakam. The label's other artists

include Charlie Daniels, Daryle Singletary and John Anderson.

■ Broken Bow Sr. VP of Operations Paul Brown has been with the label since it began operations in 1999 and recently signed a business arrangement which gives Broken Bow artists exclusive rights to marketing, A&R, publicity and consulting services from the Consortium. In return, the Consortium gets its own imprint partnership and recently signed Joe Diffie. Other Broken Bow artists include Chad Brock and Craig Morgan.

■ Scott Robinson co-founded Dualtone Music Group with Dan Herrington in 2000. Previously the duo worked together at Arista Austin, an imprint for Arista Nashville. Robinson had prior artist management experience and Herrington



worked for Arista distributor BMG. Soon after its formation, Dualtone released "Driving With Private Malone," which became a No. 2 song for artist David Ball, piloting an album to near gold status. Other Dualtone artists include Radney Foster, Jim Lauderdale and pop artist Warren Zanes.

■ Oh Boy Records President **Al Bunetta** and GM Dan Einstein moved the operation to Nashville 10 years ago. The company consists of three imprints which include the music of Steve Goodman, John Prine and Todd Snider. Before entering the record biz in the early '80s, Bunetta was actively involved in artist management.

■ Now in his 20th year, VP National Promotion **Brad Paul** joined Rounder Records in 1983. The Boston-based label, founded in 1970, has an eclectic roster which spans over half a dozen imprints and includes titles in many niche markets including bluegrass, folk, blues, cajun, zydeco and rock. Rounder's Alison Krauss first caught Nashville and mainstream country radio's attention in 1995, winning four CMA trophies.



**MR:** In past years independent labels were like farm teams in baseball. They would discover, develop and then pass talent on up to the majors. Today indies are signing artists that have departed from major labels and giving them a "second career." Is this a new strategy?

**Brad Paul:** It just sort of happened that way for us in the '80s with artists such as Bela Fleck, Riders in the Sky, Nanci Griffith, Mark O'Connor and Iris Dement. It wasn't like we had a game plan to develop each artist to the point where we could get the big fat check from a major, but for a long time it happened very consistently. One could almost bank on it (although we didn't) and it provided a cash flow for the company to continue going out and doing what we do; which is basically find and make great music. Then I noticed over the last 10 years it has started to shift. You don't see the majors snapping up developed or developing talent like they were doing.

**Al Bunetta:** My strategy of 18 years is still the same. It's always been about taking artists that the majors weren't comfortable working. We have always kept the option open of having a new or young artist; but what happens if a label does get interested? It can stifle your business plan. We are not looking to sell out, but if a major came and wanted to take an act from us, I'd become a production company real quick with respect to that artist. Give me an advance but leave my company alone.

**Scott Robinson:** This past year I was on a panel at SXSW titled "Going From An Indie To A Major." It was a mock case where they had label heads and attorneys showing the process of transferring. It was really funny though, because the artist never made it to the major. Through



Pictured L-R: Nick Hunter, Brad Paul, Paul Brown, Al Bunetta, Scott Robinson

all the negotiations, at the end of the day, the artist wanted to stay with the indie because of the turmoil and the situations where there are no guarantees. There was actually more security at the indie level. The panel never really got to show how the transferring process works. We got called a couple years ago by a major that wanted an act we had. We told them to go to Wal Mart and buy all the records they want.

**Nick Hunter:** There are more artists available now because the big labels can't handle large rosters and the money it takes to develop each artist. Let Sony or BMG spend \$2-\$3 million to break an artist. Then, a few years later, if we do what we do right, we'll be able to take advantage of that investment. Most of the artists that I've seen are happier on the smaller labels and in most cases, unless the huge bucks return, they won't go back.

**Paul Brown:** We've been signing artists formerly on major labels such as Craig Morgan, Chad Brock and Joe Diffie. Artists that have had large amounts of investment by major labels and still have the kind of talent that will help us grow. When we incorporated in '97 my uncle, the

owner, predicted three things. He said there would be a serious downturn in the Nashville market (because he didn't like the way music was going at that point); that we would see severe downsizing that would free up incredible artists with a great deal of investment behind them; and that there would be an incredible employee pool. We've found all that to be true. He also predicted an element of caution in the daily lives of the big corporations, that they would play it a bit safer. It isn't surprising, as record sales come down, that it becomes

harder for the majors to continue with all the artists they have made investments in. Meanwhile, those artists can still be quite viable with the right business plan. They aren't going to sell gold and platinum but can provide a return.

**Scott Robinson:** I respect the majors. They are great at what they do, which is selling from 500,000 to five million units. That's their strength. Their weakness is going from zero to a quarter million, which for them becomes non-profitable, but is where our strength lies. And honestly, as a small company, it would be hard for us to go from a half to five million because we don't have the big machines and resources to push that button. Maybe we could get there, but it would be hard. We're better at hitting singles, doubles and triples than we are at scoring home runs and grand slams. We love hits, but we're not in the business of getting one-hit wonders, we want to grow and develop artists.

**Al Bunetta:** Without the mega airplay, which the records we all deal with usually don't get, we can't compete head-to-head with the majors. It's a million dollar program to go for that and back

## INDIES BY THE NUMBERS

Surveys returned by approximately a third of the labels listed in the Indie Directory yield the following data:

### Longevity

(# of years in business)

0-2	30%
3-5	40%
6+	30%

### Staff

(Number of employees)

1-5	71%
6-10	24%
10+	5%

### Roster

(Number of artists)

1-5	68%
6-10	9%
10+	23%

### Publicity

In-house	43%
Out sourced	43%
Both	14%

### Radio Promotion

In-house	36%
Out sourced	50%
Both	14%

### Marketing

In-house	83%
Out sourced	13%
Both	4%

### Sales

In-house	70%
Out sourced	22%
Both	8%

### Publishing

Yes	77%
No	23%

### Distribution/

### Sales Outlets

(Percentage of respondents accessing indicated method)

Major Dist.	10%
Specialty Stores	43%
Local Only	5%
Internet	81%
Concerts	67%
In-house	
Nat'l. Dist.	33%
Indie Dist.	90%

**Nick Hunter:** Since we own the company, our distributor Koch works pretty well. The hardest thing is they don't react well to hits because they've never had them; it's not their business model. When you get something that starts to sell, it can be hell getting those people to go back in. But we have over 30 field guys out there. And overall it works well. I'm worried about the smaller retailers. People are going out to buy the Shania record at huge discounts which the smaller guys can't match. Will the smaller accounts, which are the people that keep us going, be able to survive?

**Al Bunetta:** You know what they are doing? They are going into Best Buy and buying records at \$9 a unit to sell in their stores because its cheaper than they can get them wholesale.

**Scott Robinson:** It's disconcerting. I look at those numbers every week. The mom and pop stores which we love, are down 18-20% for the year which is their profit margin for the year. All the chains are down 13-15%. The mass merchants are up slightly, but they're giving away the product. What does that say? I went into Wal-Mart the week the Dixie Chicks came out and bought five cause they were only \$9 a pop. We can't compete in that world. It's not about net profits, it's about gross billing. But indies are in the net business.

**Nick Hunter:** I'm hoping that satellite radio and the Internet start to kick in and fill the void. We're never going to play in the \$8.99 ball game.



## "WE LOVE HITS, BUT WE'RE NOT IN THE BUSINESS OF GETTING ONE-HIT WONDERS, WE WANT TO GROW AND DEVELOP ARTISTS"

**Scott Robinson:** From a mass merchant standpoint it's cheaper for us to put out a country record than a triple A-crossover because I can get bigger buys on a country record. The Wal-Marts and Andersons are 35% of the overall country business. Triple A records need to go Top 10 or crossover for the mass merchants to even consider them, whereas I can come out of the gate with a brand new country artist and a little activity and they'll bite and be 20% of our forecast. There are 2000+ country stations out there. So that sometimes dictates what kind of records we look at putting out because it is so much easier to get more product in the marketplace in country as compared with other formats.

**MR: Are shared revenue label/artist deals on the horizon?**

**Al Bunetta:** Those deals only put a band aid on the situation. Plus you're opening yourself to conflict of interest. If business is bad, then the other revenue streams will also be bad.

**Paul Brown:** We've just begun dialog with a superstar. I don't know how it will end up, but I'm loving the opportunity to show this artist how math would work at Broken Bow. We're not trying to be a major, just the best we can be. My uncle challenged me a year ago to find a way to make my deal fair. I have the expectation, if things go well, that the artist will make money, will actually get a paycheck. That gives us the opportunity to say, "Look we're not going to give you an advance. We are not going to put our dollars there." We'll pay for recordings and to promote (we have a great in-house staff). But our approach is reflected in the equation of how soon an artist starts making a royalty. And artists are liking it. If we do land this new artist it will put us closer to being a strong independent that can play some at radio.

**MR: Do you like to own all the masters or are you willing to lease?**

**Al Bunetta:** It depends. You own, lease, whatever is right. We do whatever makes sense so we can all make a living. With all the downloading going on I'm not so sure what the master means.

**Scott Robinson:** Ownership of the masters is the tangible thing that we all look for—the content. But if you do a licensing deal then you have the use of the content. It all varies on a case by case basis depending upon what our needs are.

**MR: Aren't masters the equity of the label?**

**Brad Paul:** You can't build a company through strictly leased deals, but what everyone is saying is that you have to look at each individual deal and do what you have to do.

**Scott Robinson:** Here's the bottom line. We don't have a big war chest so I can't offer an artist a \$50,000 advance to sign with us. So maybe the way to get that artist over here is to offer a licensing deal where the record reverts back. Then I can compete but don't have to put out a lot of money up front.

**MR: How are indies able to do more with smaller budgets?**

**Paul Brown:** Indies can do things that the majors can't. We don't always get charged the same. We have producers going into the studio at rates that we can afford.

**Al Bunetta:** People want to be involved.

**Nick Hunter:** It's also true that all those guys' phones aren't ringing like they used to. Producers, photographers, you name it. But you have to ask...It's also about relationships. When people trust you, that's important. It's about being honest and straight with people.

**Scott Robinson:** We're doing a pretty big mainstream pop type record crossover type with an A+ team that all came from passion, not monetary reward. But I'll reward them on the back end.

**MR: Closing Statements?**

**Brad Paul:** The key to Rounder's success over the years has always been going out, finding good music and recording it. Then, finding whatever channel or avenue we can to get it out to the public. The Internet has been really important to us and I see it continuing to be a major part of our continued growth. Again, not playing the chart game, and not reaching for the stars, but focusing on the moon and realistic targets. Getting there and then moving on to the next one. When something shines a big spotlight on the core of what we do, we are there with the goods. It happened in the mid-'80s with a movie called the *Big Easy*. Suddenly all things cajun flew out of print. More recently, with *O Brother*. We had the catalog. We're ready to take advantage of those kinds of opportunities when they arise. In between, we just keep our nose to the grindstone, focus straight ahead and do the best we can.

**Scott Robinson:** We all know the risks of being entrepreneurs and we work harder than we realize. The difficult thing is to be realistic every day. To understand who we are and who we aren't. Our world is really small. When artists

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come to our label I tell them, "We may not be the right place for you. You might need L.A., N.Y. or Music Row. If you need the big push, and tour buses then you need to go get that. But here's what we do and we do it really well." And that's the partnership idea of working with your artists, being honest and realistic.

**Paul Brown:** At Broken Bow we're just trying to be the best we can be. We continue to learn something about the business each and every week. We've hired an incredible staff that has helped us realize there are parts of the business model that we're going to have to make changes to. We can't have everything trying to go through radio. But we think radio is ready and able to make room for a strong and well-funded indie label that wants to try and bring them top talent. We've also started working heavily in publishing and are looking at that as a long-term equity position. If you have to swing for the fences every time you are going to miss a lot. But, if you can hit some singles and doubles and then every once in awhile swing for the fences we think it will help us continue to grow. Beginning in the new year we will also look for catalog albums that don't have much to do with radio and servicing smaller acts that just need help with manufacturing and publicity.

**Nick Hunter:** At Audium we're doing a little bit of everything that's been mentioned. I'm a big fan of everyone in this room. After three years our catalog now contains about 45 albums. The saddest thing about this business, especially on the radio level, is that more and more it's not even about good music. And that's the part that starts to piss you off. We all say we don't care about making the radio thing work, but we all know we're lying to ourselves. Deep down inside we're hoping that we'll get one next year. So we dip in our toes and spend the money to see what we have. If we've got it then we keep going and if not we get the heck out, whereas the majors keep going regardless. Everyone here is funded well enough that they can do that, but no one is stupid enough to just keep spending and spending.

**Al Bunetta:** At Oh Boy we are going to continue our plan of getting great artists and music to our fans. We'll keep our Internet healthy while micro-managing the brick and mortar distribution and not getting away from our game plan. It would be nice to have radio and if that does rear its head we will be right on top of it. I'd like to sell 100 million records if they're relevant. If I could have another 18 years with the label like this last 18 I'd be a happy guy (not to mention 77 years old). I echo what everyone says in here. I'm really proud of what we do and to be at this table with everybody. I want to have fun. If I break the next big act, I don't care what it is, as long as it's wonderful. Indies started this business. Berry Gordy did it and Herb Alpert, Jerry Moss and others. It's not anything new. It's getting up in the morning and controlling your own destiny. Having a dream and trying to follow it through. **MR**

**In'•de•pend'ent adj.** 1 free from the influence, guidance, or control of another or others; self-reliant: an independent mind 2 not governed by a foreign power; self-governing 3 not determined or influenced by someone or something else; not contingent: 4 not dependent on or affiliated with a larger or controlling entity —*n.* one who is independent in thinking, action etc.

# Blue Hat Records



[www.bluehatrecords.com](http://www.bluehatrecords.com)

EDITORIAL:

# INDIES VS. MAJORS—What's the Deal?

BY RADNEY FOSTER

**W**hen asked to write about the differences between being on a major label and an indie label, I thought, "That could take the whole magazine." But when it gets down to it, the differences are easy to explain. For an artist, what's most important to know is what you want to accomplish and whether partnership with a label is going to get you there.

When looking at the differences between a major and an indie, you've first got to know what each does and how well they do it. Major labels are great at creating awareness and getting your music to the buying public, if they can get you played on a very narrow and expensive platform called radio. In other words, if you've got a radio hit, the majors know how to quickly mobilize to get you on the *Today Show*, the cover of *Rolling Stone*, and stock your CDs at Wal-Mart's around the country.

Independent labels generally don't have the money to do that, but the good ones target something that the majors can't seem to grasp—grassroots marketing. They take on the job of micromarketing by concentrating on places where an artist already has a following. That could mean

anything from regional radio airplay (on a variety of formats), to diehard Internet fans or a loyal live following. In that way, an indie also can get your music to your fans—on a smaller scale, of course, but you might end up making more because the marketing costs are less.

Now with both of these scenarios, there's good news and bad news. The bad news is that most major label contracts are a deal with the devil. The ins and outs are complex, but here's the bottom line: Unless you sell over a million units—fast—you will not get paid beyond your initial advance. If you have a hit on your third release and sell a million and a half units, you will already be too far in debt to the label to ever see a royalty check. What this means is that 80% of the country acts you hear on the radio will never make money from the sale of their CDs.

Now a lot of indie contracts are even worse (some even ask for ownership of your publishing royalties), but there are some indies offering artists a fair deal. It is essential to get a lawyer and an accountant to explain the contract in real terms. Sweat the small stuff, and don't be



afraid to question something—or say "no." An indie deal might look good at first, but might not pay royalties until after the first 100,000 units sold. The cold hard truth is that most indie country acts never reach that sales mark.

And under both of these scenarios, even after you have recouped the costs of making and marketing your music, in most cases, the label still owns the master recordings.

Now here's the good news. Technology has changed the playing field, and I've got three words of advice: Do it yourself. Build it and they will come. Dwight Yoakam, Vertical Horizon, Pat Green, Hootie and the Blowfish and the Dave Matthews Band all cut much better deals because they made and marketed their own CDs before they ever got involved with a major label. Some acts like Ani DiFranco and Aimee Mann have been so successful at their own labels that they really don't need another. When I left Arista, I was able to take advantage of all they had done for me and start my own label and Website to get directly to the fans. That led to a wonderful—and profitable—partnership with Dualtone Music Group, where ultimately I end up with ownership of my masters.

The best advice I can offer is to have the courage to say "no." It is still the most powerful tool in your arsenal. As anyone who has been there can tell you, a bad record deal is worse than no record deal at all. When I first signed to RCA with Foster & Lloyd, we got a better contract and more control over the product because we were willing to walk away from the deal. Question everything, and don't worry about offending the person with whom you are negotiating. Remember, it's not a date, it's a contract.

Because in the end, you don't just want a record deal—you want a career.

*Radney Foster came to prominence as one-half of the duo Foster & Lloyd, and found further success as a solo artist recording for Arista. He is now on Dualtone, an independent label based in Nashville. His current single, "Scary Old World," is from his latest studio album, Another Way To Go.*



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Pam Tillis, Sony Records  
Souljahz, Warner Bros.  
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Michelle Williams – Destiny’s Child, Columbia Records  
Jadyn Maria, Sparrow Records  
Play, Sony Records  
Tom Keifer of Cinderella, Sony Records  
Jaci Velasquez, Word Records  
Solange Knowles, Music World/Sony Records

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Beyoncé Knowles, Destiny’s Child  
*“Kim knows exactly what you need to get the results you need. She has helped me tremendously.”*

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Michelle Williams, Destiny’s Child  
*“Kim has helped me so much. I see a big difference in my voice.”*

---

*Kim is also experienced in Artist Development for various Record Labels, Producers, and Managers.*

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# INDIE MUSIC SPECIAL

## 2003 Directory of Independent Labels

### Aarrow Records

POB 110455, Nashville, TN 37222

615-831-0872

monelou@aol.com

**Execs:** Ruthie Steele, Pres.; Bethany Reynolds, VP

**Roster:** Bill McConnell, Kitty Kelley, The EEEKKKS, Nashville Nelly

### Audium Records

1709 19th Ave. S.

Nashville, TN 37212

615-269-4500 Fax: 615-269-0330

www.audiumrecords.com

**Execs:** Nick Hunter, Pres.; Barry Yarbrough, Dir. of Sales & Mktg.; Jack Purcell, Dir. National Promotion; Chuck Rhodes, Production & Promotion Admin., Artist Relations & Production; Anne Sarosdy, Promotion Mgr., Accounts Payable, Office Mgr.; Gary Greenberg, Promotion Mgr.; Tiffany Johns, Sales & Mktg. Coord.

**Roster:** Daryle Singletary, The Tractors, The Kentucky Headhunters, Dale Watson, Confederate Railroad, Charlie Daniels, Danni Leigh, Rhett Akins, Bonnie Bramlett, Steve Ripley, Ray Price, Doug Stone, John Anderson, Rodney Redman, The Larkins, Sammy Kershaw, Ray Benson, Dwight Yoakam

### B-Venturous Records

POB 292252

Nashville, TN 37229

615-830-4496 Fax: 615-333-1808

juanitalee@b-venturousrecords.com

www.b-venturousrecords.com

**Execs:** Albert Woodrow, Pres.; Juanita Lee, Senior VP of Operations; Priscilla Matten, Dir. of Business Affairs; Troy Lancaster, A&R Consultant

**Roster:** Wayne Warner

### Bandit Records

635 W. Iris Dr.

Nashville, TN 37204

615-242-1234 Fax: 615-242-2134

eshriver@banditrecords.com

www.banditrecords.com

**Execs:** Evelyn Shriver, Pres.; Susan Nadler, Exec. VP

**Roster:** George Jones; El Cancionero de la Familia

### Blue Hat Records

17060 Central Pike

Lebanon, TN 37090

615-443-2112 ext. 114

Fax: 615-443-3140



bluehatrecords@aol.com

www.bluehatrecords.com

**Execs:** David Corlew, Pres./CEO; Angela Wheeler, VP Creative Services/Production; Carolyn Corlew, VP Finance

**Roster:** The Charlie Daniels Band

### Blue Plate Music

33 Music Sq. W., #102-B

Nashville, TN 37203

615-742-1250

Fax: 615-742-1360

ohboy@ohboy.com

www.blueplatemusic.com

**Execs:** Al Bunetta, Pres.; Dan Einstein, GM

**Roster:** The Best of Mountain Stage Series, (Distributes First Generation Records)



### Broken Bow Records

209 10th Ave. S., #220

Nashville, TN 37203

615-244-8600

Fax: 615-244-3700

info@brokenbowrecords.com

www.brokenbowrecords.com

**Execs:** Benny Brown, Pres./CEO; Paul Brown, Senior VP of Operations; Jim Yerger, Senior VP Mktg.; D. Scott Miller, Senior Executive VP/A&R; Rick E. Baumgartner, VP, National Promotion

**Roster:** Joanie Keller, Chad Brock, Craig Morgan, J. Michael Harter, Joe Diffie



### Checo Records

POB 218103

Nashville, TN 37221

615-646-1337

checorecords@aol.com

www.cerritoonline.com

**Execs:** Felipe de LaRosa, Pres.; Toi de LaRosa, VP; Marie Casbarro, Secretary; Cheryl Harris, Coord.

**Roster:** Cerrito



### Combustion Music

COMBUSTIONMUSIC

1609 17th Ave. S.

Nashville, TN 37212

615-515-5490 Fax: 615-269-6883

**Execs:** Chris Farren, Co-Pres.; Ken Levitan, Co-Pres.; LeAnn Phelan, Creative Dir.; Terry Malone, Creative Dir.

**Roster:** Songcatcher, We Were Soldiers, The Banger Sisters, Autofocus, Welcome To Collinwood, All The Real Girls, and Kissing Jessica Stein soundtracks

### Compass Records

117 30th Ave. S.

Nashville, TN 37212

615-320-7672

Fax: 615-320-7378

info@compassrecords.com

www.compassrecords.com

**Execs:** Garry West, Co-founder

**Roster:** Alison Brown, Victor Wooten, Paul Brady, Jeff Coffin, Kate Rusby, Bill Jones, Pierce Pettis, Leftover Salmon, Thea Gilmore, Phillips/Grier/Flinner, Clive Gregson and Swan Dive, among others



### Compendia Music Group

210 25th Ave. N., #1200

Nashville, TN 37203

615-277-1800

Fax: 615-277-1801

info@compendiamedia.com

www.compendiamedia.com

**Execs:** Mike Olsen, Pres.; Don Boyer, VP/GM, Intersound Music; Phillip White, VP/GM, Light Records; Walt Wilson, VP/GM, Compendia

**Roster:** Compendia: Joan Osborne, Dead Reckoning's Kieran Kane & Kevin Welch, Kansas, Device Voice Drum; Light Records: Christopher Lewis, Vanessa Williams, Mighty Clouds of Joy, Youthful Praise



### Crowne Music Group

508 Autumn Springs Court,

Ste. 1E

Franklin, TN 37067

615-778-0700 Fax: 615-778-0707

www.crownemusic.com

**Execs:** David Byerley, CEO

**Roster:** Gary Chapman, Javen, Jon Fulton, Planet Shakers, Andre' Crouch, Happy Goodman Family, Duron, Seven Day Slumber



### Curb Records

47 Music Sq. E.

Nashville, TN 37203

615-321-5080 Fax: 615-327-1964

www.curb.com

**Execs:** Drew Alexander, Creative Dir.; Sue Austin, VP, Creative Services; Bob Bender, Dir., Sales; John Butler, Sr. Dir., Pop Promotion & Mktg.; Liz Cavanaugh, Dir. of Publicity; Benson Curb, VP, Sales; Mike Curb, Chairman; Tanya Dureaux, Mechanical Royalties, Licensing; Jeff Edmondson, Controller; Phil Gernhard, Sr. Consultant; Jill Gleason, National Promotion Coord.; Dennis Hannon, Exec. VP/GM; Joan Huddleston, Film Royalties/Human Resources; Michael Huddleston, Chief Financial Officer; Carson





James, VP Promotion and Media Strategy; Amy Johnston, Coord., Creative Services; Brad Kennard, Publishing Admin.; David Kronemyer; Debbie Loring, Coord., Sales & Mktg.; Stacey McDonald, Dir., Prod. & Internet Mktg.; Michelle Metzger, Dir., A&R; Patsy Moss, Accounts Payable/ Inventory; Claire Parr, Consultant; April Rider, National Dir. of Promotion; Christy Robinson, Publishing Royalties; Bryan Stewart, Special Projects Accounting; Portis Tanner, Publishing Asst.; Jeff Tuerff, VP, Mktg.; Jeff Tweel, Head of Publishing; Angie Warren, Accounts Payable; Craig White, Engineer/Studio; Curb Country Promotion Staff; Karen McGuire, Dir., Country Promotion Midwest; Joe O'Donnell, Dir., Country Promotion West; Brooks Quigley, Dir., Country Promotion South; Eva Wood, VP Field Promotions/ National Accounts; Rick Rockhill, Dir., Country Promotion Northeast; (Imprint staff): Rob Dalton, VP Country Promotion, Doug Johnson, VP of A&R; Mike Rogers, Dir., Southeast Reg. Promotions; Mark Westcott, Dir., Midwest Reg. Promotions; Rick Cardarelli, Dir., Northeast Reg. Promotions; Keith Greer, Dir., Southwest Reg. Promotions; John Curb, Dir., Western Reg. Promotions; Mary Befera, Promotion Coord.  
**Roster:** David Kersh, Bellamy Brothers, Tim McGraw, Hal Ketchum, Perfect Stranger, Sawyer Brown, Ken Mellons, Jeff Carson, Jo Dee Messina, LeAnn Rimes, Ray Stevens, Lee Greenwood, Jenai, Hank Williams, Jr., Rodney Atkins, Hank Williams III, Trini Triggs, Steve Holy, Mary Black, Mary Griffin, Kaci, Tyler Dean, Smoke 2 Seven, Tamara Walker, Nicol Smith, Natalie Grant, Plumb, Keith Perry, Jonathan Pierce, Selah, Michael English, Jim Witter, Wynonna, Lyle Lovett (Curb/MCA), Amy Dalley, Feel, Anna Wilson

**DMZ**

1227 17th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37212  
**615-321-5300** Fax: 615-321-5111  
**Execs:** John Grady, Pres.  
**Roster:** Ralph Stanley, Divine Secrets of the Yaya Sisterhood Soundtrack

**Doobie Shea Records**

POB 68  
 Boones Mill, VA 24065  
**540-334-1118**  
 bluegrass@doobieshea.com  
 www.doobieshea.com

**Execs:** Tim Austin, Pres.; Donica Christensen, Publicity & Print Media; Debbie Austin, Production Mgr. & Accounts; Beth Thomas, Art Direction & Design; Rebecca Austin, Office Asst.  
**Roster:** Craig Market, Dale Ann Bradley & Coon Creek, Dan Tyminski, Ernie Thacker, Jeanette Williams, Kane's River, Lonesome River Band, Marty Raybon, Mountain Heart, Rickie Simpkins, Scottie Sparks, The Grasshoppers, Tony & Gary Williamson, Tony Williamson Trio



**Door Knob Records**

3950 N. Mt. Juliet Rd., Mt. Juliet, TN 37122  
**615-754-0417** Fax: 615-754-0424  
 geneken@usit.net  
 www.doorknob-rec.com  
**Execs:** Gene Kennedy, Pres.  
**Roster:** Don Sepulveda, Harlee Duke, Michael Martin, D. McCall

**Dreamcatcher Records**

2910 Poston Ave.  
 Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-329-2303** Fax: 615-329-2350  
 www.dreamcatcherenter.com  
**Execs:** Jim Mazza, Pres./CEO; Bob Burwell, Senior VP/GM; Don Karamer, VP, Sales; Kelly Junkermann, Senior VP, Film and Television; Claire Cook, Dir., Media & Artist Relations; Misti Filipiak, Mgr., Creative Services; Danielle Taylor, Mgr., Finance; Melissa Beckham, Exec. Asst.; Lanette Rogers, Administrative Asst./Front Desk  
**Roster:** Kenny Rogers



**Dualtone Music Group**

2105 Elliston Place Fl. 2  
 Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-320-0620** Fax: 615-297-5020  
 info@dualtone.com • www.dualtone.com  
**Execs:** Scott Robinson, Co-Pres.; Dan Harrington, Co-Pres.; Nancy Quinn, Sr. Dir. Artist Development; Paul Roper, Coord. Artist Development  
**Roster:** David Ball, Jim Lauderdale, Chris Knight, Radney Foster, Victoria Williams, Mark Olson, Darden Smith, June Carter Cash, McBride & The Ride, Hayseed Dixie, Warren Zanes, Sandra McCracken



**Foremost Records**

1230 17th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37212  
**615-269-6770** Fax: 615-385-9310  
 makingsongsmusic@aol.com  
**Execs:** Chris Dodson, Pres.; Jo Ann Rossi, General Mgr./VP  
**Roster:** Steve McCormick

**FreeFalls Entertainment**

178 E. Washington St.  
 Chagrin Falls, OH 44022  
**440-247-5781** Fax: 440-247-7036  
 www.freefalls.com  
**Execs:** Bob Freese, Pres.; Lindsay Gips, Label Mgr.; Michael Hagerty, CFO; Eric J. Dale, Business Affairs  
**Roster:** Highway 101, Billy Burnette, Shenandoah, Pat Haney, Jackie King, Daylon Wear, Calvin Russell, Dickey Betts Band, Willie Nelson, Tommy Wiggins, Dennis Rogers



**Hightone Records**

220 Fourth St., #101, Oakland, CA 94607  
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 hightone@hightone.com • www.hightone.com



**Execs:** Larry Sloven, Bruce Bromberg, Managing Partners  
**Roster:** Dave Alvin, James Armstrong, Aztex, Big Sandy, & his Fly-Rite Boys, The Blasters, Bob Corritore, Deke Dickerson, Chris Gaffney, Joe Goldmark, Henry Gray, The Hellecasters, Hot Club of Cowtown, Bill Kirchen, Kim Lenz, Carl Sonny Leyland, Little Willie G., Christy McWilson, Buddy Miller, Julie Miller, Laura Minor, Geoff Muldaur, Tom Russell, Chris Smither, Redd Volkaert, Dallas Wayne, Rev. Billy C. Wirtz

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 www.hillsborojazz.com  
**Execs:** Greg Howard, VP/GM; Kyle Quigley, Mktg.  
**Roster:** Beegie Adair, Mark Douthit, Jim Wilson



**Hit Pros Records**

520 W. Santa Blvd.  
 Santa Ana, CA 92701  
**714-564-0158** Fax: 714-564-0900  
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www.kinkajourecords.com



**Execs:** Kinky Friedman, Pres.; Kacey Jones, VP; Kezia Murphy, GM; Peggy Bradley, Publishing Admin.  
**Roster:** Kinky Friedman, Jonathan Yudkin & The Chainsmoking Altarboys, Clay Greenberg, Kacey Jones, Chris Ramey, Alan Rhody, Jesse Goldberg, Dorian Michael, Garrison White

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2167 21st St., #231  
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**301-962-9101** Fax: 301-962-9030  
sumentboogie@home.com  
www.brooklyncowboys.com



**Execs:** Fredro Pery, Label Head; Steve Bogen, GM; Martha Moore, Publicist  
**Roster:** The Brooklyn Cowboys, Lonesome Bob

**Little Dog Records**

2219 W. Olive Ave., #150  
Burbank, CA 91506  
**818-557-1595**  
Fax: 818-557-0524  
info@littledogrecords.com



www.littledogrecords.com

**Execs:** Pete Anderson, Owner/Pres.; Jennifer Herold, Label Mgr./VP A&R  
**Roster:** Moot Davis, The Blazers, A Country West of Nashville, Scott Joss, Pete Anderson, Lonesome Strangers, Joy Lynn White, Jeff Finlin, Jim Matt

**Matic Records**

1620 16th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37212  
**615-351-7003**  
maticrecords@aol.com  
**Execs:** Jon Walker, Pres.

**MidLand Records**

POB 405, White House, TN 37188  
**615-285-0647** Fax: 615-285-0648  
rrice2303@aol.com  
www.midlandproductions.com  
**Execs:** Bobby G. Rice, Pres.  
**Roster:** Dave Wootton, Bobby G. Rice

**MPi Nashville**

20 Music Sq. W., #206, Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-672-6858**  
mpinashville@aol.com  
**Execs:** Bob Ham, Pres.; Bobby G. Rice, VP  
**Roster:** Phil Calkins, Ray Grizzell

**Music City Records**

2603 Westwood Dr.  
Nashville, TN 37204  
**615-269-3100** Fax: 615-269-3115



bob@musiccityrecords.com

www.musiccityrecords.com  
**Execs:** Bob Heatherly, Pres./CEO  
**Roster:** Sonny Burgess, Charley Pride

**Music Mill Entertainment**



809 18th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-254-5925** Fax: 615-244-5928  
daphene@musicmill.com • www.musicmill.com  
**Execs:** Jack Key, Pres.; Jeff Brothers, VP Sales; Daphene Smith, Copyright Licensing & Admin.

**Nashville Underground**



POB 120086  
Nashville, TN 37212  
**615-673-7215** Fax: 615-646-8135  
themole@artistsunderground.com  
www.nashville-underground.com  
**Execs:** Lari White, Pres.; Chuck Cannon, VP  
**Roster:** Samplers include Gary Burr, Chuck Cannon, Chuck Jones, Pam Rose, Stephony Smith, Victoria Shaw, Stephan Allen Davis, Gary Nicholson, Hugh Prestwood, Marcus Hummon, Billy Dean, Bob DiPiero, Tia Sillers, Beth Nelsen Chapman

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rdavis@naxosusa.com  
www.naxos.com

**Execs:** Jim Sturgeon, Pres.; Jim Selby, GM; Rebecca Davis, Mgr. of Publicity and Promotions; Peter Wolff, Sales & Mktg. Mgr.; Dolores Canavan, Naxos World Label Mgr./Mgr. of New Product Development

**Roster:** Naxos has over 2,500 recordings including the Nashville Symphony and Nashville Chamber Orchestra.

**Nuance Records Nuance Records**

6501 Harding Rd.  
Nashville, TN 37205

**615-364-6026**

www.nuancerecords.com

**Execs:** Louie Shelton, Pres.

**Roster:** Louie Shelton, Dash Crofts, Nashville Guitars, Dan Seals

**Oh Boy Records**



33 Music Sq. W., #102B  
Nashville, TN 37203

**615-742-1250** Fax: 615-742-1360

ohboy@ohboy.com

www.ohboy.com

**Execs:** Al Bunetta, Pres.; Dan Einstein, GM

**Roster:** John Prine, Todd Snider, Oh Boy Classics

**OMS Records**



POB 52112  
Durham, NC 27717

**888-522-5607**

Fax: 888-522-5607

info@omsrecords.com

www.omsrecords.com

**Execs:** Hugh Moore, Pres.

**Roster:** Bobby Osborne, Kenny Baker, recordings by the late Benny Martin and the late Johnny Russell

**Orbison Records**

1625 Broadway, #200  
Nashville, TN 31203

**615-242-4201** Fax: 615-242-4202

info@orbison.com • www.orbison.com

**Execs:** LeAnn Bennett, Production Dir.;

Barbara Orbison, Owner

**Roster:** Roy Orbison

**Persimmon Records**

7213 Lakewood Club Rd.  
Fairview, TN 37062

persimmonrecords@earthlink.net

**Execs:** Will Morgan, VP A&R; Michael

Mahler, GM

**Roster:** Wild Horses

**Pinecastle Records**



5108 S. Orange Ave.  
Orlando, FL 32809

**407-856-0245**

Fax: 407-858-0007

info@pinecastle.com • www.pinecastle.com

**Execs:** Tom Riggs, Pres./Owner; Amy Murray, VP

**Roster:** The Osborne Brothers, Jim & Jesse, Country Gentlemen, Eddie & Martha Adcock, Special Consensus, Josh Williams, Jim Hurst and Missy Raines, Larry Stephenson, Nothin' Fancy, Jesse Brock, Kristin Benson, Wayne Benson, Sally Jones, The Chapmans, WhiteHouse, Ross Nickerson, The Village Singers, Scott Vestal, Marshall Wilborn, Smokey Greene

**Raptor Records**



POB 120871  
Nashville, TN 37212

**615-331-4742**

Fax: 615-781-8259

raptorrecords@aol.com

www.stellaparton.com

**Execs:** Brenda L. Madden, VP Mktg.;

Timothy C. Rauhoff, VP

**Roster:** Stella

**Relentless/Nashville**



1707 Division St., #103  
Nashville, TN 37203

**615-252-4124**

Fax: 615-252-4130

amcgowan@madacy.com

www.relentlessnashville.com

**Execs:** Dave Roy, Pres.; Amanda

McGowan, Label Coord.

**Roster:** Asleep at the Wheel, Irene Kelley, Don McLean, Wayne Warner

**Request Records**



1806 Division St.  
Nashville, TN 37203

**615-321-5526**

Fax: 615-321-5528

steve@omnisoundstudios.com

www.request-records.com

**Execs:** Pat Flynn, Pres.; Steve Tveit, VP

**Roster:** Cowboy Dan, Alan Thornhill, Joe Nolan

**RMG Records**



1010 17th Ave. S.  
Nashville, TN 37212

**615-320-3009**

Fax: 615-321-3032

gcollier@gatalent.com

**Execs:** Sheila Futch, Creative Dir./Publishing;

Brooke Acred, Office Mgr.

**Roster:** Eddy Raven, Ricky Lynn Gregg, Don Williams, Gene Watson

**Rounder Records**



One Camp St.  
Cambridge, MA 02140

**617-354-0700**

Fax: 617-354-4840

info@rounder.com • www.rounder.com

**Execs:** John Virant, Pres./CEO; Paul Foley,

GM; Sheri Sands, VP Sales/Mktg.; Brad

Paul, VP National Promotion

**Roster:** Alison Krauss, Rhonda Vincent, Jeannie Kendall, J.D. Crowe, Ennis Sisters

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**Row Pro Entertainment**

1024 17th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37212  
**615-320-8777** Fax: 615-329-2194  
 info@rowpro.com • www.rowpro.com  
**Execs:** Terry Brown, Pres.; Ronald Cotton, VP; Phil Lister, VP; Mark Lister, VP  
**Roster:** Bobby Carlson, John Lemonis, Beyond Sunday

**Scarlet Moon Records**

POB 320  
 Pegram, TN 37143  
**615-952-3999**  
 Fax: 615-952-3151  
 whitehorse@comcast.net  
 www.pauloverstreet.com  
**Execs:** Paul Overstreet, Pres.; Julie Overstreet, Publicity  
**Roster:** Paul Overstreet



**Scream Records**

1625 Broadway Fl. 4, Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-250-4600** Fax: 615-250-4699  
 www.screamrecords.com  
**Execs:** Doug Grau, Pres.

**Shell Point Records**

816 18th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-782-8200** Fax: 615-782-8210  
 info@shellpointrecords.com  
 www.shellpointrecords.com  
**Execs:** Randy Harrell, Pres.; Polly Wolly, Admin. Assist.  
**Roster:** Larry Cordle & Lonesome Standard Time, Porter Wagoner, Ronnie Reno, The Gram Parsons Notebook, Davis Raines

**Skaggs Family Records**

329 Rockland Rd.  
 Hendersonville, TN 37075  
**615-264-8877** Fax: 615-264-8899  
 info@skaggsfamilyrecords.com  
 www.skaggsfamilyrecords.com  
**Execs:** Ricky Skaggs, Pres.; Stephen Day, GM; Bill Rix, Sales & Mktg.; Lori Kampa, PR  
**Roster:** Ricky Skaggs, Mountain Heart, The Whites, Del McCoury Band, Blue Highway, Paul Brewster, Andy Leftwich, Jerry & Tammy Sullivan, Transatlantic Sessions



**Slewfoot Records**

POB 390  
 Crane, MO 65633  
**417-723-1155**  
 Fax: 417-723-1118  
 jdalew@aol.com  
 www.slewfootrecords.com  
**Execs:** Dale Wiley, Pres.; Cecilia Havens, Mgr.  
**Roster:** The Domino Kings, The Morells, Duane Jarvis, Kristie Stremel, The Star Room Boys, Hadacol, Brian Capps, Honky Tonk Chateau, Florence Dore, Old Old Story, Hillbilly Idol, and Porter Hall, TN.



**Sound Art**

125 43rd Ave. N.  
 Nashville, TN 37209  
**615-292-0324** Fax: 615-292-0824  
 info@soundartrecordings.com  
 www.soundartrecordings.com  
**Execs:** Butch Baldassari, Owner/Artist  
**Roster:** Nashville Mandolin Ensemble, Nashville Mandolin Trio, Butch Baldassari



**Sugar Hill Records (Nashville)**

120 31st Ave. N.  
 Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-297-6890** Fax: 615-297-9945  
 publicity@sugarhillrecords.com  
 www.sugarhillrecords.com  
**Execs:** Steve Fishell, Dir. of A&R; Kim Fowler, Dir. of Artist and Media Relations  
**Roster:** Acoustic Syndicate, Terry Allen, Alan Bibey, BlueRidge, Ronnie Bowman, Guy Clark, Don Rigsby, Jerry Douglas, The Gibson Brothers, The Gourds, Aubrey Haynie, Sonny Landreth, Albert Lee, Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver, Scott Miller, Jim Mills, Nashville Bluegrass Band, Nickel Creek, Tim O'Brien, Maura O'Connell, Dolly Parton, Railroad Earth, Reckless Kelly, Seldom Scene, Sammy Shelor, Bryan Sutton, Chris Thile, Greg Trooper, Sean Watkins, Doc Watson, Jesse Winchester



**Sugar Hill Records**

501 Washington Ave. Ste. A  
 Durham, NC 27701  
**919-489-4349** Fax: 919-489-6080  
 info@sugarhillrecords.com  
 www.sugarhillrecords.com  
**Execs:** Bev Paul, GM

**SunBird Records**

1707 Division St., #100  
 Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-248-8360**  
 Fax: 615-248-8359  
 sunbirdt@bellsouth.net  
**Roster:** Len Doolin, Earl Thomas Conley, Johnny Rodriguez



**Tektonic Records Nashville**

2000 Mallory Ln., #130-171  
 Franklin, TN 37067  
**615-794-9884**  
 info@tektonicrecords.com  
 www.tektonicrecords.com  
**Execs:** A. Norris, Pres.  
**Roster:** Keith Norris, Devon M. Scott, "New Music America"



**Vanguard/Welk Music Group (Nashville)**

POB 159159  
 Nashville, TN 37215  
**615-297-2588** Fax: 615-297-2510  
 www.vanguardrecords.com  
**Execs:** Steve Buckingham, Senior VP A&R  
**Roster:** Peter Case, Patty Larkin, Mark Selby, Ian Tyson, Butterfly Jones, Shana

Morrison, Robert Bradley's Blackwater Surprise, Lee Roy Parnell, Quetzal, Julia Fordham, Ramsay Midwood, Peter Stuart

**Vanguard/Welk Music Group (Santa Monica)**

2700 Pennsylvania Ave.  
 Santa Monica, CA 91404  
**310-829-9355** Fax: 310-315-9996  
 info@vanguardrecords.com  
 www.vanguardrecords.com  
**Execs:** Kevin Welk, Pres./GM; Dan Sell, VP National Sales & Mktg.; Lellie Capwell, Dir. Artist/Media Relations; Art Phillips, VP Mktg. & Radio Promotion; Rob Evanoff, New Media Mgr.; Steve Buckingham, Sr. VP A&R



**VFR Records/Spark Entertainment**

1710 Roy Acuff Pl.  
 Nashville, TN 37203  
**615-369-3000** Fax: 615-369-3001  
 info@vfrrecords.com • www.vfrrecords.com  
**Execs:** Paul Lucks, Managing Dir. Operations; Harold Shedd, Managing Dir. Creative; Ed Arnold, Chairman  
**Roster:** Mark McGuinn, Corbi, In the Beginning Songwriters Tribute



**Waxy Silver Records**

POB 128291, Nashville, TN 37212  
 info@waxysilver.com • www.waxysilver.com  
**Roster:** Will Kimbrough, Matthew Ryan



**WE Records**

1229 17th Ave. S.  
 Nashville, TN 37212  
**615-321-4487** Fax: 615-327-7917  
 info@wrensong.com  
 www.wrensongentertainment.com  
**Execs:** Ree Guyer Buchanan, Pres.  
**Roster:** Sally Barris



**Western Beat Ent.**

POB 128105  
 Nashville, TN 37212  
**615-248-5026** Fax: 615-248-3067  
 billy@westernbeat.com  
 www.westernbeat.com  
**Execs:** Billy Block, Pres.  
**Roster:** Jubal Foster, The Raphaels, Toni Catlin, The Burn Steers, Harmony Ranch, Jill Block, Doak Snead, Walt Wilkins



**Indie Labels Online**

**Step 1:** [www.musicrow.com](http://www.musicrow.com)

**Step 2:** *Button appears on Menu Bar*

**Step 3:** *Surf Music Row's contacts: Labels, In Charge, Artist Roster, Publisher, Studio, Managers & more...*



## Independent Distribution— Making Money Without The Majors?

by David S. Crow; Bass, Berry & Sims, PLC

**W**ith the recent bankruptcy of Distribution North America (DNA), many independent labels and artists (collectively referred to as Owners) are scrambling to secure independent record distribution. In addition, many artists are considering independent distribution of their recordings as an alternative to pursuing the traditional major label deal. This column will discuss some of the factors that Owners may want to consider when evaluating the merits of various distribution agreements.

As a threshold matter, Owners must decide whether to pursue a pressing and distribution agreement, i.e., an arrangement where the distributor manufactures the product for Owners and distributes the product to various retail channels, or a traditional distribution agreement where Owners manufacture the product and the distributor confines its activities to soliciting and fulfilling orders for the product. As many independent distributors are loath to take on the financial risk of manufacturing Owners' product, we will focus on some of the key issues in the traditional distribution agreement.

**Exclusivity**—Early in the negotiation process, the parties must decide whether or not the right to distribute Owners' recorded product will be exclusive. Many Owners will want to carve out sales through Owners' Website, video units (VHS/DVD), Christian Book Stores and/or direct mail sales (as many Owners have a strong mailing list that they have developed over the years). If the distribution agreement is exclusive, Owners may want to consider exploring the possibility of an advance (particularly since Owners will have to front the manufacturing costs).

**Territory**—The territory of the agreement needs to be considered. Is the agreement limited to the United States or North America or is it a worldwide agreement? This decision is driven in part by the ability of the distributor to penetrate markets outside the United States. Many Owners will agree to a worldwide territory provided that the distribution rights in each foreign territory revert to Owners in the event that the distributor fails to secure distribution in that particular territory within a stated period after the initial United States release.

**Term**—The term of independent distribution agreements varies widely—from termination upon 30 days written notice by either party to a fixed term of three years or longer.

**Royalties/Expenses**—The structure of compensation for the distributor in independent distribution agreements ranges from a percentage of the gross sales (typically ranging from 18-35%) to a fixed price per unit sold by the distributor. Owners should pay particular attention to return fees per unit (sometimes as high as \$0.25), scraping fees, refurbishing fees and excessive inventory charges. In addition, Owners are typically responsible for any co-op advertising, i.e., the cost of buying product placement and in-store advertisements, and sales programs offered by the distributor to retail accounts (so-called "restocking programs"). Owners are often expected to pay the insurance and shipping costs associated with getting the product to the distributor's warehouse and the insurance and shipping costs of any returns.

**Accountings**—Once the parties agree on the method and level of compensation, they must address accountings, payments and reserves. Specifically, the parties must decide if the distributor will account monthly, quarterly or semiannually. Quarterly accountings are the most common arrangement. The parties must also determine the level of reserves the distributor is authorized to hold back against monies otherwise payable to Owners to cover possible returns. Reserves in an independent distribution agreement can run anywhere from 25% to 50%. Owners should pay particular attention to when such reserves will be liquidated, i.e., within how many accounting periods. Owners will want the reserves to be as low as possible (ideally, not to exceed the difference between units shipped and units scanned via SoundScan within a reasonable period) and liquidated as quickly as possible.

**Ownership of Inventory**—While it seems simplistic, the biggest lesson that many Owners learned from the DNA bankruptcy is that the distribution agreement must specify who owns the unsold inventory in the distributor's warehouse or at the retail outlets. Virtually all distribution agreements specify that the product is 100% returnable by retail to the distributor and from the distributor to Owners. In addition, distributors typically do not pay Owners until they have been paid by the retail account(s). As a result,

most people assume that records are sold on "consignment." Put another way, most Owners assume that they own the records they ship to the distributor until the distributor actually pays for them. However, as many Owners found out in the DNA bankruptcy, unless the distribution agreement uses certain magic "consignment" legalese and unless Owners files a UCC-1 financing statement in the appropriate locations to put the distributor's creditors on notice that Owners owns the inventory, it is not a "consignment" in the eyes of the bankruptcy courts. Why does this matter? This distinction is important because unless it is a true "consignment," if the distributor files for bankruptcy, the distributor's creditors can auction off the inventory that Owners sent to the distributor (for which Owners has not been paid) and keep the proceeds from such a sale. Adding insult to injury, the sale at such an auction by the distributor's creditors may trigger Owners' obligation to pay artist and mechanical royalties. As a result, Owners should carefully examine whether or not the relationship with the distributor is a true "consignment" and should review any language granting the distributor a security interest in the inventory. Owners should also seek written assurances from the distributor that the inventory provided by Owners will not be pledged as collateral or otherwise encumbered by distributor. Lastly, Owners should be wary of any language in the distribution agreement granting the distributor a security interest in "general intangibles" as that will include the copyright in the master sound recording.

• • •

Most contracts for independent distribution of records are presented by the distributor as a "standard" contract and negotiation is discouraged. Many such agreements appear to be simple—thus masking complexities that can be detrimental to Owners. However, the terms of most such agreements can be substantially improved through skillful negotiation. This article is merely intended to provide background information for those contemplating entering into an independent distribution agreement and is not intended to be construed as legal advice. Anyone not having substantial knowledge of independent distribution should seek the advice of an attorney experienced in the negotiation of such agreements. **MR**

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# Wearing Out The Jayhawks

by Robert K. Oermann

**M**ost of you are going to have to wait a few weeks, but I'm already wearing out my advance copy of the new Jayhawks CD, *Rainy Day Music*.

This band was a pioneer of the Americana/alt-country movement and has always made great music. But on its debut for Lost Highway, it hits a new peak. Even though it features our own Bernie Leadon on banjo, the record is much more on the pop side of things than ever before. By turns it evokes The Beatles, CSN&Y and The Eagles. However you want to classify it, this is brilliantly written and performed music.

Need I add that it is my **Disc of the Day?** And simply by virtue of releasing this audio delight, **Lost Highway Records** earns a **Label of the Day** prize.

If your taste runs more toward real hillbilly sounds, I heartily recommend the multi-act *For the Long Haul: Songs for the Open Road*. This bluegrass/acoustic gem is guaranteed to make the highway miles seem shorter and smoother.

As has been the case several times before, D Records and Jason Allen deliver a superb honky-tonk single that deserves massive airplay.

Jason is a former **Discovery Award** winner, and I'm happy to report that we have another stone-country singer in that category this month. His name is **Charlie Allen** and he's living proof that the multinational conglomerates don't have a monopoly on great country sounds, despite the looks of the charts.

## AMERICANA

### THE JAYHAWKS

#### Save it for a Rainy Day

Writer: none listed; Producer: Ethan Johns; Publisher: none listed; American/Lost Highway (track) ([www.losthighwayrecords.com](http://www.losthighwayrecords.com))

Deliciously tuneful. The jangly guitars and jaunty rhythm decorate a surprisingly melodic, hooky song and a boyish, endearing vocal. The harmonica punctuation ain't half bad either. I smell a big fat pop hit.

### CHIP TAYLOR & CARRIE

#### RODRIGUEZ/Sweet Tequila Blues

Writer: Chip Taylor; Producer: Chip Taylor; Publisher: Backroad/Bug, BMI; Lonestar (CDX) ([www.lonestarrec.com](http://www.lonestarrec.com))

Warm and rumpled, like a living-room picking session.

## BLUEGRASS

### VALERIE SMITH/Sit Down and Cry

Writer: Dixie Hall/Tom T. Hall; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Good Home Grown, BMI; Reb

Tom T. Hall is going like a house on fire as a bluegrass writer nowadays. He's getting cuts left and right. And you know you're hot when one of the genre's new female notables picks one of your songs.

### DON RIGSBY/Ravishing Ruby

Writer: Tom T. Hall; Producer: Tim Carter/Big Al Weekly; Publisher: Acuff-Rose, BMI; Golden Ring Entertainment (track) ([www.longhaulmusic.com](http://www.longhaulmusic.com))

I chose this track because Don is one of my favorite hillbilly singers and I wanted to hear what he'd do with this Tom T. Hall classic (1973). I was not disappointed. It's brilliant. The album it comes from is full of such gems. It's a trucker salute called *For the Long Haul* that features performances from Dave Dudley, LeRoy Van Dyke, Valerie Smith, Chris Jones, Tony King and more. Recommended with enthusiasm.

## COUNTRY

### CHARLIE ALLEN

#### Better Said Than Done

Writer: Charles Bouton/Earl Thomas Conley/Nelson Larkin; Producer: Nelson Larkin; Publisher: Mister Sunshine/Harris Gordon/Music Sale/Lust-4-Fun/Zomba, BMI/ASCAP; Parc (615-292-1189)

Intriguing. The backing track is layered pop/rock with a steel guitar. But the singer is country all the way. The longer this played, the more I loved it. A dandy production. This is proof positive that an indie label can stand toe to toe with anything mainstream Music Row throws down.

### JILL KING/One Mississippi

Writer: Jess Leary/Craig Wiseman; Producer: Jimmy Ritchey; Publisher: Famous/Song Matters/Leary's Tavern/BMG Songs/Mrs. Lumpkin's Poodle, ASCAP; Blue Diamond

She's got tons of vocal personality. But it is squandered on this throw-away song and junky production.

### COLTE BRADLEY/Ain't it Amazing

Writer: Claude Southall/Jack Schneider; Producer: Brien Fisher; Publisher: PolyGram,

BMI; Rustic (CDX) (615-371-0646)

Amateur night at the Dixie Bar & Grill.

### KING COUNTRY/5 Star Dive Bar

Writer: Mark Sherrill/Michael Huffman/Paul Pace/Barry Coggins; Producer: Bill Warner; Publisher: Key-Mark/Music Mell/Dixie Stars, ASCAP; Sun Country (CDX) (619-249-2673)

The players are doing their best, but this nasal, out-of-meter vocalist is a lost cause.

### THE WHITE FAMILY

#### One Nation Under God

Writer: Sonny Bailey/Brian Edwards; Producer: Ben Isaacs; Publisher: Warner Bros., BMI; WFM (CDX) (615-824-7548)

So dripping with sugary sincerity that it's actually painful. Beam this at Iraq at full volume and the entire nation will surrender instantly in agony.

### BOBBY SEALS/Corvette Jet

Writer: Jerry Cupit/Billy Wilbanks; Producer: Jerry Cupit; Publisher: Cupit/Cupit Memorials, ASCAP/BMI; Cupit (CDX) (615-731-0100)

Moronic. Repetitive. Bone-headed.

### FLINT THOMPSON

#### My Time with You

Writer: Del Way/Doris Lee; Producer: Del Way/Flint Thompson; Publisher: Del Way, BMI; Vam Viviadell (CDX) (936-327-4390)

He's got some ability as a honky-tonk singer. But who on earth cued those irritating backup vocalists?

### CHRIS CAMPBELL/If the Love Fits

Writer: Pearl Redrow; Producer: Jerry Ross; Publisher: O'Conner, BMI; Heritage (track) ([www.campbellcountry.com](http://www.campbellcountry.com))

Easily the most generic, boring, ordinary voice I've heard in months. And the lyric was even worse.

### JASON ALLEN/Lucky Arms

Writer: Vip Viperman/J.B. Rudd; Producer: Clay Blaker; Publisher: none listed; D ([www.drecords.net](http://www.drecords.net))

This took me straight to a Texas dance-hall in my mind. And I loved that feeling. Come to think of it, I've loved every record that Jason Allen has sent.

### CAROL McCARTNEY

#### You Made Your Bed

Writer: Carol McCartney/Tim Taylor/Thomas Wade; Producer: Thomas Wade/J. Richard



Hutt; Publisher: none listed; Moxy (Canada) (905-274-6366)

This western swinger would be more effective if she were a more potent singer. As it is, the band is hot and she's not.

#### MARY ELLEN/Stay With Me

Writer: Mary Ellen Brown; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Thorobred, no performance rights listed; Thorobred (track) ([www.aboutmaryellen.com](http://www.aboutmaryellen.com))

The pluperfect definition of "Don't Give Up Your Day Job."

#### PISTOL RIVER/Joe and the Man

Writer: John W. Bizzack/Marvin L. Adcock; Producer: John W. Bizzack/Marvin L. Adcock; Publisher: BSF Songs, ASCAP; BSF (track) ([www.pistolriver.net](http://www.pistolriver.net))

This track comes from a western musical play or narrative song cycle called "Joe, Moses & Doc" and "Abbey, Morgan & Rueben" (I know that looks weird, but that's what it says on the CD). To its credit, the band

delivers with believability. Hearty singing and playing.

### POP/ROCK

#### QUINN LOGGINS & THE IN-BETWEENS/Romeo

Writer: Quinn Loggins/Justin Schipper; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Wanted Woman, BMI; WW2 (track) ([www.quinnloggins.com](http://www.quinnloggins.com))

Taken from Quinn's live album, this song is a righteous stomper that marks its maker as one of the most talented popsters in Guitar Town. This boy needs to be a star.

#### KRISTY JACKSON

##### With All of My Broken Heart

Writer: Kristy Jackson/Cliff Goldmacher; Producer: Kristy Jackson; Publisher: Fever Pitch/Famous in France, BMI; Fever Pitch (track) (615-244-6893)

Recorded in Nashville, this simple piano-vocal performance throws the spotlight where

it belongs, on her remarkable songwriting ability. Somebody sign this chick, give her a publishing deal and get her on disc with a real production.

#### RICK PERRY/Cool Blue Eyes

Writer: Rick Perry; Producer: Rick Perry; Publisher: Dragon's Ear, ASCAP; Dragon's Head (track) ([www.rickperry.biz](http://www.rickperry.biz))

Horns, harmony singers, drums, electric guitars and a sax solo colliding into each other. I think the intent was to do something Santana-ish, with maybe a dash of Allman Brothers.

#### IZAK & WEST/Stay With Me

Writer: Izak/West; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Baby Doe, BMI; Baby Doe ([www.izakandwest.com](http://www.izakandwest.com))

This atmospheric ballad is underscored with a sighing steel guitar, so it could go "country" as well. The songwriting could use a little editing and tightening, but all in all, this is quite listenable.

## ROW FILE



## LINDA EDELL HOWARD

Attorney at Law  
Stokes Bartholomew Evans & Petree  
901 18th Ave. S.  
Nashville, TN 37212  
615-341-0068 Fax: 341-0596

Linda Edell Howard spent much of her youth doing two things—hanging out at the legendary night club The Stone Pony and watching surfers. "I was a professional surf and rock photographer from age 14 through law school," says Howard, who was born and raised in New Jersey.

Spending her time in the club allowed her meet superstars-in-the-making Bruce Springsteen and Jon Bon Jovi. "Everybody knew me," she laughs. "I was the kid who sat in the back and, while I was in law school, musicians would bring me their contracts to look at before they signed them. Of course, they had to buy me a slice of pizza for this service."

Howard's original career path out

of high school was to be a professional photographer and graphic designer. "I was going to become the head of a record company some day and design my own album covers. What happened? I went to law school as a means to that end and fell in love with the concept of helping people. I decided rather than taking their pictures I was going to help musicians."

She pursued her education with undergraduate work at the University of South Florida in the late '70s. She then transferred to Rutgers University and earned a degree in Visual Communications in 1982. "I went to Seton Hall for law school," she says. "As a photography major you didn't do a lot of academics so I figured I

better go to a place that was cold, dark and nasty so I would have to sit and study."

After earning her law degree in 1985, she was appointed to the New Jersey Supreme Court as a judicial clerk for Justice Robert L. Clifford. She later went into private practice in New Jersey, followed by several years as part of a firm in Manhattan, where she handled matters involving international intellectual property rights for the estates of Elvis Presley and George Gershwin.

Wanting to take a break from law, she joined PolyGram Music Publishing Group (New York) in 1993 as the VP of Operations. "While I was with PolyGram I'd come to the Nashville office to learn more about how to run the publishing company," she recalls. "I fell in love with Nashville. I'm a handshake kind of lawyer and I couldn't do that in New York. I would come down to Nashville and my heart would open up."

In 1994 the opportunity to work in Nashville came as she was hired at Loeb & Loeb, where she spent six

and a half years. In 2001 Howard joined Stokes Bartholomew Evans & Petree and opened their Music Row office. She currently serves as the Vice Chair of the firm's Intellectual Property and Entertainment/New Media Law practice group. In addition, she serves on the Board of Directors and the Alumni Committee for Leadership Music, and the Advisory Committee for Recording Industry Managers and Attorneys for the AFTRA Royalty Artist Coalition, whose purpose is to create fairness in recording contracts.

She describes her average "12-hour" day as full of meetings, telephone calls and lots of paper work. In her time away from the office she enjoys working at her antique store, Old Times At The Wartrace Whistle Stop, in Wartrace, Tenn. She also loves traveling with her husband, Doug Howard, Sr. VP of A&R at Lyric Street Records.

So have her rates gone up since her buy-me-a-slice-of-pizza days? "Yes, but I've maintained one rule of law," she smiles. "I can't bill and eat at the same time."

—Richard McVey II

# directory

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by Richard McVey II

**YEAR-END STATS**—2002 may not have been a great year for the music business at large, but country saw its shares rise. Here's a look at the highlights.

- Country sales in 2002 surged 12.3% and market share increased from 9 to 11.3%, while all-format unit sales dropped 10.7%.
- Nine country albums—**Dixie Chicks\***, **Alan Jackson\***, **Shania Twain\***, **Elvis Presley\***, **Faith Hill\***, **Toby Keith\***, **Kenny Chesney\***, **Tim McGraw** and **George Strait**—sold near platinum or higher.
- *Billboard* named **Toby Keith** the year's top country artist. **Kenny Chesney's** "The Good Stuff" was the most played country song. Its 114,630 detections qualified it for No. 45 on the top songs listing.
- Several country acts appeared among *Billboard's* Top 25 Tours of 2002. **Kenny Chesney** came in at No. 18, earning \$22 million. **Toby Keith** followed at No. 19 with \$21.3 million. The rest were **George Strait** (\$19 million), **Brooks & Dunn** (\$19 million) and **Alan Jackson** (\$18.7 million).

\* Debut week No. 1 country and Top 200

**MOTTOLA EXITS SONY**—After 14 years with the company, Sony Music Entertainment Chairman and CEO **Thomas Mottola** exited to start his own music label in partnership with Sony Music.

Mottola's position will be filled by NBC President/COO **Andrew Lack**.

Sony, which stands third in the music market among the five major music companies, had large operating losses in the past year.

According to *The L.A. Times*, Sony will pay Mottola a severance package in excess of \$20 million.

**CURB'S NEW IMPRINT**—Curb Records has formed a second imprint (as-yet-unnamed) that will reunite the team of **Doug Johnson**, **Jack Lameier** and **Rob Dalton**.

"I truly believe that country music is on the rebound and creating a new country label is a reflection of my confidence in it," said **Mike Curb**.

**Dalton** will head the label as VP Country Promotion, **Johnson** will assume VP of A&R responsibilities and **Lameier** will consult. Rounding out the label team will be: **Mike Rogers**, Director, Southeast Regional Promotions; **Mark Westcott**, Director, Midwest Regional Promotions; **Rick Cardarelli**, Director, Northeast Regional Promotions; **Keith Greer**, Director, Southwest Regional Promotions; **John Curb**, Director, Western Regional Promotions; and **Mary Befera**, Promotion Coordinator.

**BLUEGRASS LEGEND DIES**—**Jim McReynolds**, half of the legendary bluegrass duo **Jim & Jesse**, died Dec. 31 in Gallatin, Tenn. McReynolds, 75, had been suffering from cancer. In addition to his brother **Jesse**, McReynolds is survived by a sister, **Virginia**, and a daughter, **Janeen**.

**AMERICANA NEWS**—The 4th Annual Americana Music Association (AMA) Conference will take place Sept. 18-20 in Nashville. It will be hosted for the first time at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel.

In addition, newly elected AMA board members for 2003-2004 were announced. They are, in their respective categories: **Duane Jarvis**, Songwriter; **Cary Baker** (Baker-Northrop), Publicity; **John Timmons** (Ear X-Tacy), Retail; **Mark Mason** (BMI), PRO; **Al Moss** (Al Moss Promotions), Promotion; **Dan Herrington** (Dualtone), Label; **Claire Armbruster** (Merlefest), Presenter; **Steven Gladstone** (attorney at law), Business/Finance; **Kyla Fairchild** (No Depression), **Steve Gardner** (Sugar Hill) and **Jessie Scott** (XM Satellite Radio), At-Large. They join other board members who are serving the final year of their term.

**NEW FACES ANNOUNCED**—This year's picks for the CRS-34 New Faces show in Nashville were announced just before Christmas. Taking the stage Feb. 21 for the radio-industry crowd will be Universal South's **Joe Nichols**, DreamWorks' **Emerson Drive**, BNA's **Kellie Coffey**, Mercury's **Steve Azar** and Epic's **Tammy Cochran**. For the first time, the 2003 line-up was voted on by the previous year's CRS radio attendees from a ballot that ranks qualifying artists by airplay performance. **MR**



Pictured at the CRS New Faces announcement are (l-r): CRS-34 New Faces Vice Chair **Kim Leslie**, **Andy Griggs**, **Trick Pony's Heidi Newfield**, **Tammy Cochran**, **CRB Executive Director Ed Salamon**, and **New Faces Chair John Crenshaw**. Photo: *Karen Will Rogers*

## MUSICAL CHAIRS

Curb Records expands responsibilities for its country radio promotion staff. The team consists of **Karen McGuire**, Director, Country Promotion Midwest; **Brooks Quigley**, Director, Country Promotion South; **Joe O'Donnell**, Director, Country Promotion West; **Rick Rockhill**, Director, Country Promotion Northeast; **April Rider**, National Director of Promotion; **Eva Wood**, VP Field Promotions/National Accounts; and **Jill Gleason**, National Promotion Coordinator. **Bill Macky**, previously at MCA, is named Director, National Promotion for Epic-Monument Nashville...GM Operations **Chuck Aly** exits *Music Row* after a six-year tenure to pursue new opportunities... **Marcus Rowe** is named Product Manager at Americana Entertainment, LLC... **Ryan Barnstead** joins Sony Music as the new Epic/Monument Coordinator. **Michael**

**Olsen**, Chief Operating Officer of Compendia Media Group, is named President of the company's music division, Compendia Music Group... **Stokes Bartholomew Evans & Petree** adds **Chip Petree** to its Music Row office. Petree will practice in entertainment/new media and intellectual property... **Hunter Williams** is promoted to VP, Performing Rights at SESAC... **Tyne Whitten**, a Belmont intern, is handling songplugging for Washington Street Publishing through May... **Mary Sack** is named

Director of Marketing for the Brentwood-based label Altissimo! Recordings... **Nancy Tunick** joins GrassRoots Promotion as Managing Partner. In addition, GrassRoots forms a new promotion team comprised of **Johnny Mitchell** in Southeast, **JR Hughes** in Mid-Atlantic, **Greg Stevens** in Southwest/West Coast, and **Tracy Collins** in Northeast... **Joe Moscheo**, VP Entertainment/Music Division at US Bank, retires... **Pam Russell** is upped to VP National Sales for Mercury/MCA Nashville. **MR**



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## TERRI CLARK/*Pain to Kill*

(Mercury Records) Producers: Byron Gallimore, Keith Stegall  
**Prime Cuts:** "I Just Wanna Be Mad," "I Wanna Do It All," "Working Girl," "Better Than You"

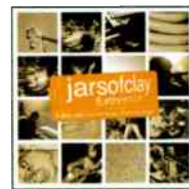
**Critique:** After releasing the easy-paced, introspective *Fearless*, Terri Clark shifts into overdrive again with *Pain to Kill*, an album that personifies Clark's image as a no b.s. gal with a tough-as-leather exterior and a big, warm heart of gold. The cowboy hat and boot wearin' Canadian teamed up with producers Keith Stegall and Byron Gallimore to select 12 songs about

everyday issues faced by everyday women—married, divorced or single—with children to feed, bills to pay and bulges and imperfections to hide...or not. On "I Wanna Do It All," an upbeat country rocker marked by wicked fiddle work, Clark's throaty-yet-sweet-voice recites one woman's unrealized dreams, such as "visit Paris in the Fall, watch the Yankees play ball" and "catch a few beads down at Mardi Gras." The title track is introduced with electric six-string runs to rival any long-haired metal band, while Clark cries for a woman who wants to numb her pain and heartbreak, even for just one wild weekend. "I Just Wanna Be Mad," Clark's current single, shows that even in the days of couples therapy and anger management, it's okay to sit and stew for a bit. Her direct, honest approach is especially effective on "You Can't Help the One You Love," a poignant ballad dealing with alcoholism, and "Better Than You," a tear-in-your-beer-type number about a woman who's been burned one too many times. On her fifth Mercury release, Clark delivers the slick, hard-core country she's best known for, while the album's direct, emotionally aware lyrics add depth and a sensitivity to those who work, play and love fearlessly and with no regrets.

—Heather Johnson

cheesy) lighter side on "Half A Heart Tattoo," an uptempo with attitude. The album closes with a torchy ballad ("Simply Yours") that highlights her range. The rest of the songs on this disc are less memorable. At her best ("Beautiful Goodbye") Hanson offers a glimpse of an artist with undeniable star power. A few more songs of that caliber and she might become a household name. Unfortunately, those songs aren't on *Jennifer Hanson*. Still, this is a promising debut from an intriguing new singer.

—John Hood



## JARS OF CLAY **Furthermore— From the Studio: From the Stage**

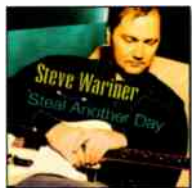
(Essential Records)  
 Producers: Jars of Clay,  
 Adrian Belew, Bob Wohler,

Robert Beeson, Dennis Herring, Stephen Lipson,  
 Steve Hindalong

**Prime Cuts:** "The Valley Song (Sing Of Your Mercy)," "This Road," "Liquid"

**Critique:** As the somewhat-uninspired title suggests, this is primarily a compilation of Jars of Clay's finest moments, live and in-studio. Nearly 10 years after releasing its debut album *Frail*, the Christian-pop-alternative group has created its first greatest hits album. Fan favorites such as "Liquid," "Crazy Times," "Flood," "Fly" and "Worlds Apart" are all good and dandy, but do we really need yet more versions of these songs? Based on the evidence here, the jury is still out. The two-disc set features an acoustic disc, *From The Studio*, with 11 songs, including three new ones. The second disc, *From The Stage*, offers 10 cuts recorded live on their The Eleventh Hour Tour. As with all Jars of Clay productions, the sound can be way too mellow for its own good. Some rough edges would breathe life into the more sterile moments on the studio numbers, while the live tracks contain a good dose of energy and passion.

—Eva Melo



## STEVE WARINER **Steal Another Day**

(Selectone Records)  
 Producer: Steve Wariner  
**Prime Cuts:** "Snowfall On The Sand," "Welcome To This World," "There

Will Come A Day," "In My Heart Forever"  
**Critique:** Since scoring his first Top Ten hit with 1980's "Your Memory," Steve Wariner has enjoyed a warm relationship with radio and fans alike, one that's translated into several gold albums and over a dozen No. 1 singles. An accomplished songwriter and guitarist as well as a fine singer, Wariner—a veteran of four major record deals since 1977—has now opted to go the independent route. *Steal Another Day* was produced by Wariner in his home studio, released on his new indie label, and features him as a writer or co-writer on 12 of 16 songs. The results are mixed. Some songs, like the Latin-tinged "Kiss Me Anyway" or the blue-grassy "Ride This Rocket," fail to catch fire and the production seems less than state-of-the-art, in spite of the presence of some stellar musicians. On the other hand, "Snowflakes On The Sand" works wonderfully, providing a rich, spacious backdrop to highlight the soft earnestness in Wariner's voice. A man who's never been afraid to wear his heart on his sleeve, Wariner brings palpable emotion to "There Will Come A Day (Holly's Song)," dedicated to his diabetic eight-year-old daughter, and "In My Heart Forever (For Chet)," which lets him pay homage to country's most famous guitarist while showing off some tasty licks of his own. "This Christmas

Prayer," co-written with Allen Shamblin, is a bit on the sappy side (a place where Wariner has been known to tread) but packs an emotional wallop as it describes a channel-hopping journey from warm-and-fuzzy Jimmy Stewart movies to the hollow eyes of war-ravished children. The CD's main flaw is the inclusion of several re-recorded early Wariner hits including "The Weekend" and "Some Fools Never Learn." Fine songs, true, but, while every effort has been made to clone the originals, those originals still work better. If it ain't broken...

—Larry Wayne Clark



## JENNIFER HANSON **Jennifer Hanson**

(Capitol)  
 Producers: Jennifer Hanson, Greg Droman  
**Prime Cuts:** "Beautiful

Goodbye," "Half A Heart Tattoo," "Get Yourself Back," "Simply Yours"

**Critique:** Newcomer Jennifer Hanson comes rocking out of the speakers sounding like a cross between Sheryl Crow and Kim Richey. The opening track and first single, "Beautiful Goodbye," sounds like it was lifted off a Crow album and has all the components that make Crow such a compelling act—it's California cool, wonderfully catchy and is a great introduction to a new artist. Later in the disc Hanson seems to be channeling Richey's mood drenched melodic sense on the three-song set "Get Yourself Back," "All Those Yesterdays" and "Travis." Hanson also shows a witty (but not



## MARTY RAYBON **Full Circle**

(Doobie Shea Records)  
 Producer: Marty Raybon  
**Prime Cuts:** "Everything," "Ghost In This House," "The Last Song," "All In

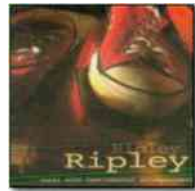
The Hands Of Jesus," "Prayer Bells Of Heaven"  
**Critique:** When Marty Raybon's voice hit the airwaves back in the late '80s and early '90s—as lead singer for Shenandoah—it gave that period one of its freshest sounds, a caramel tenor that made hits like "Mama Knows" and "Church On Cumberland Road" worth turning up the radio for. Shenandoah is gone now, but Raybon is back with a new collection of songs sporting a decidedly bluegrass flavor. But before you grumble



"O brother," be aware that this is no timely leap onto the latest bandwagon—bluegrass was the Florida singer's first love and tinged of it have marked everything he's done. Thus, *Full Circle* is aptly named and, more importantly, it sounds great. From the opening a capella strains of Flatt & Scruggs' classic "Down The Road," I knew the journey would be enjoyable, sung with authority and played to perfection, thanks to superb guest musicians like guitarist Bryan Sutton, dobroist Rob Ickes, banjoist David Talbot and fiddler Shad Cobb. Interspersed with traditional bluegrass fare by Bill Monroe and Jimmy Martin, there are originals like Raybon's own soulful "All In The Hands Of Jesus," and even a couple of refurbished Shenandoah hits. "Ghost In This House," Hugh Prestwood's melancholy anthem and a 1990 No. 1 for the group, sounds particularly lovely in this all-acoustic reading. The romantic ballad "Everything" gives Raybon a chance to partner with the sadly underheard Sonya Isaacs, and "The Last Song"—one of three offerings from the pen of bluegrass champ Jimmy Martin—

completes the song cycle with a funny-but-painful tale of a frustrated road musician who daydreams of quitting for good but never quite gets around to it. Let's hope it's a long time before Marty Raybon sings his last song.

—Larry Wayne Clark



**STEVE RIPLEY Ripley**

(Boy Rocking/Audium Records)

Producer: Steve Ripley

Prime Cuts: "Gone Away," "The Round and

Round," "Too Many Borderlines," "Crossing Over," "No Depression (In Heaven)"

**Critique:** Steve Ripley, frontman for the Tractors, has created a diverse and engaging first solo effort. It provides a rich array of clear and crisp sounds honed through years of experience. His credits as an engineer, guitarist, producer and singer/songwriter are all on display here, creating a varied palette of musical colors.

Recorded in Tulsa for his new label, Boy Rocking Records, Ripley uses vintage recording equipment and a dose of yesterday to achieve this Americana roots mix. Four of the tracks are gospel numbers, with shades of the blues, folk, rock and country mingling throughout the 10 tracks. "The Round and Round" is done in a blues manner, with a riveting rhythm making this track, with Fats Kaplin on mandolin and cello, exceptional. "Too Many Borderlines" portrays youth and the rash, life-changing choices they make. Ripley's gritty vocals are best on the album's first track and single "Gone Away," (co-written with Tim DuBois and John Wooley) which offers simple recollections of a lost love and icons of younger days. Ripley also employs some great harmony from vocal greats The Jordanares and The Whites. The common consensus today is that country music is canned and Xeroxed. *Ripley*, however, is anything but a robotic duplication. It's the first of its kind and an evolutionary concept in music.

—Jane Powell

WRITER'S NOTES



**BILL LABOUNTY**

**Cuts/Hits:** "Rock My World Little Country Girl," Brooks & Dunn; "This Night Won't Last Forever," Michael Johnson; "The Weekend," "Lynda," Steve Wariner; "I Want To Be Loved Like That," "Somewhere In The Vicinity of the Heart," Shenandoah; "Hot Rod Hearts," Robbie Dupree. Other cuts by Patti LaBelle, Ronnie Milsap, The Judds, Jimmy Buffett, Three Dog Night, Neil Diamond, Peter Cetera

**Years in Nashville:** 19

**Publisher:** Curb Music

**Favorite Song You Wrote:** Isn't it always the last one for a songwriter? I suppose it would be the ones that have endured and paid me the most. "This Night Won't Last Forever" and "The Weekend" have both lasted awhile.

**Favorite Song You Didn't Write:** Mike Reed's and Allen Shamblin's "I Can't Make You Love Me." And, of course all the great formative songs of my youth by Dylan, The Stones, Beatles and Steely Dan.

**Influences:** Steely Dan, Steve Wariner, Larry Carlton, Randy Newman, Brooks & Dunn

**Advice To Writers:** Work at loving what you do and do what you love.

**Issues Facing Songwriters Today:**

The implications of Internet file-sharing on the music industry at large. The positive and negative powers of the Internet for artists and writers...And, did my hold fall off?

**Like To Get A Cut By:** Ray Charles, George Jones, Kenny Chesney

Raised in a working class family in Nyssa, Oregon, Bill LaBounty began performing while still in high school. He listened to The Beatles and The Beach Boys and imitated music from his collection of 45s. In fact, songwriting hadn't entered his mind until he actually met a tunesmith. "I made friends with a guy in my hometown who had been writing songs," says LaBounty. "And it was amazing to me that someone actually wrote their own songs. That really inspired to me to start doing it

myself." And he did just that. He began fronting and writing songs for a band called Moby Dick & The Whalers.

After graduating high school in 1966 he attended school at Boise College in Idaho. But with music beckoning, he scuttled his college plans and relocated to Seattle with another band, ironically called Struggle. Soon after he went to Vegas ("I'd never seen palm trees before, so I thought it was glamorous," he laughs.) and then in 1968 headed for Los Angeles.

"I remember saying, 'I'm going to give music one more year and then I'm going back to Boise and finish school. And then I remember being 35 and 40 saying, 'Ok, one more year and I'm going back.'"

His first taste of musical success came in 1972 when his band, Fat Chance, released an album on RCA Records. By 1975, however, he was a solo artist and released an album titled *Promised Love* on 20th Century Records. This was followed by three albums for Warner Bros. in 1978, 1979 and 1982.

LaBounty scored big in 1979 when Michael Johnson cut his "This Night Won't Last Forever," which was a single for LaBounty the previous year. The following year Robbie Dupree had a hit with his "Hot Rod Hearts."

By 1983 his own recording career was waning as the sounds of disco

pushed his style of Pop/Jazz-flavored R&B music out of the limelight. The following year he moved to Nashville. "A buddy of mine introduced me to my wife in an attempt to seduce me to move here," he says. "It worked. I fell in love. For about seven years we had a place in LA and here. I'd spend half the year in each place. We'd write for both markets."

LaBounty and his wife, songwriter Beckie Foster, went on to co-write "The Weekend" for Steve Wariner, "Heart Don't Fall Now" for Sawyer Brown, and Peter Cetera's "No Explanation," which appeared on the *Pretty Woman* soundtrack.

In 1992 he resurrected his recording career with an independent album that was released in Japan and Paris, and toured to support it.

These days, however, LaBounty is squarely focused on writing every day. "I get up and go into a little writing studio. Sometimes I'm in there an hour, sometimes all day."

LaBounty, who still performs at writer's nights, believes one reason he loves songwriting is "You're master of your own world when you're in the middle of a song. It's a great place for control freaks and obsessive compulsives like me."

Away from his music, he spends time with his wife of 19 years and their nine-year-old daughter, Emma.

—Richard McVey II



# And The Dove Nominees Are...

Toby McKeehan, Michael W. Smith and Kirk Franklin led the nominations for the 34th Annual Dove Awards, announced Jan. 14 in Nashville. McKeehan and his alter ego tobyMac earned nine nods as did Smith. Franklin garnered eight. Winners will be announced April 10 at The Gaylord Entertainment Center. Here is a partial list of nominees:

## Song of the Year

- "Above All"; Lenny LeBlanc, Paul Baloche; Integrity's Hosanna! Music, Len Songs Publishing (ASCAP)
- "Back In His Arms Again"; Mark Schultz; Mark Schultz Music (BMI)
- "Breathe"; Marie Barnett; Mercy/Vineyard Publishing (ASCAP)
- "Come Unto Me"; Nicole C. Mullen; Wordspring Music/Lil'Jas Music (SESAC)
- "Great Light Of The World"; Bebo Norman; NewSpring Pub. Inc, Appstreet Music (ASCAP)
- "Here I Am To Worship"; Tim Hughes; Kingsway's Thankyou Music (PRS)
- "Holy"; Nichole Nordeman, Mark Hammond; Ariose Music, Mark Hammond Music (ASCAP)
- "Ocean Floor"; Mark Stuart, Bob Herdman, Tyler Burkum, Will McGinnis, Ben Cissell; Up In The Mix Music (BMI)
- "Spoken For"; Bart Millard, Nathan Cochran, Mike Scheuchzer, Robby Shaffer, Jim Bryson, Peter Kipley; Simpleville (ASCAP), Songs from the Indigo Room (SESAC)
- "Yes, I Believe"; Joel Lindsey, Tony Wood; Paragon Music/Vacation Boy Music/New Spring Publishing (ASCAP)

- "Youth Of The Nation"; P.O.D. (Traa, Sonny, Marcos, Wuv) Paul Sandoval, Marco Curiel, Mark Traa, Noah Bernardo; Souljah Music/Famous Music Publishing (ASCAP)

## Male Vocalist of the Year

- Bebo Norman
- Mac Powell
- Mark Schultz
- Michael W. Smith
- Steven Curtis Chapman

## Female Vocalist of the Year

- Joy Williams
- Natalie Grant
- Nichole Nordeman
- Nicole C. Mullen
- Rebecca St. James

## Group of the Year

- Audio Adrenaline
- MercyMe
- Selah
- Sixpence None The Richer
- Third Day

## Artist of the Year

- MercyMe
- Michael W. Smith
- Steven Curtis Chapman

- Third Day
- tobyMac

## New Artist of the Year

- Big Daddy Weave
- Daily Planet
- Jeff Deyo
- Paul Colman Trio
- Souljahz
- The Rock 'n' Roll Worship Circus

## Producer of the Year

- Brown Bannister
- Charlie Peacock
- Monroe Jones
- Nathan Nockels
- Steve Hindalong



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"The station was swamped by phone calls & listeners loving Izak & West big-time!"  
-Rick Mix, WKUL

"Love the CD. I love bringing new killer country groups to our listeners."  
-Hoss, WKKY

"Great and refreshing"  
-Steve Ferguson, WTHD

"Great arrangement and good country that deserves airplay, that's for damn sure!"  
-David Hallebeke, KCKL

"WOW the listeners loved it! Had 10 calls before it was over and more afterwards!"  
-David Houston, KUUP

"Some of the best response that I've received from a new record in a long time."  
-Mike Thomas, KFAU

"I love 'Stay With Me' I can tell that Izak & West have that something special."  
-Mac, WANT

"Izak & West did an incredible live acoustic at the station!"  
-Denis Banka, WUCZ

"Major phones! There seems to be tremendous interest in 'Stay With Me.'"  
-Greg Thrift, Kiss Country

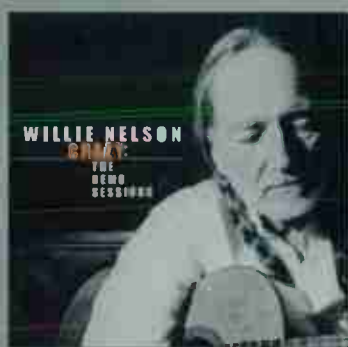
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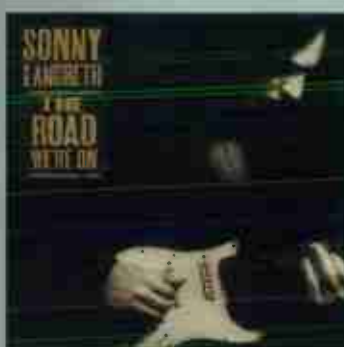
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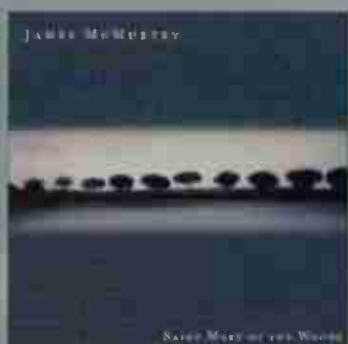
SONNY LANDRETH  
THE ROAD WE'RE ON

(SUG-3964)



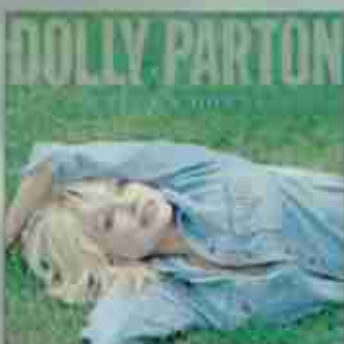
GUY CLARK  
THE DARK

(SUG-1070)



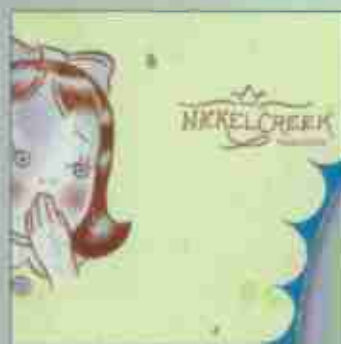
JAMES McMURTRY  
SAINT MARY OF THE WOODS

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DOLLY PARTON  
HALOS & HORNS

(SUG-3946)



NICKEL CREEK  
THIS SIDE

(SUG-3941)



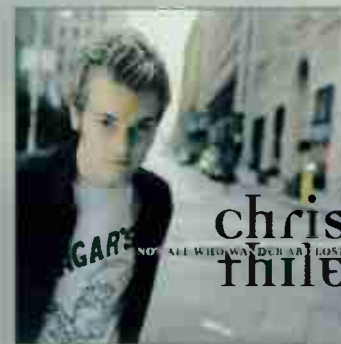
JERRY DOUGLAS  
LOOKOUT FOR HOPE

(SUG-3938)



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CHRIS THILE  
NOT ALL WHO WANDER  
ARE LOST

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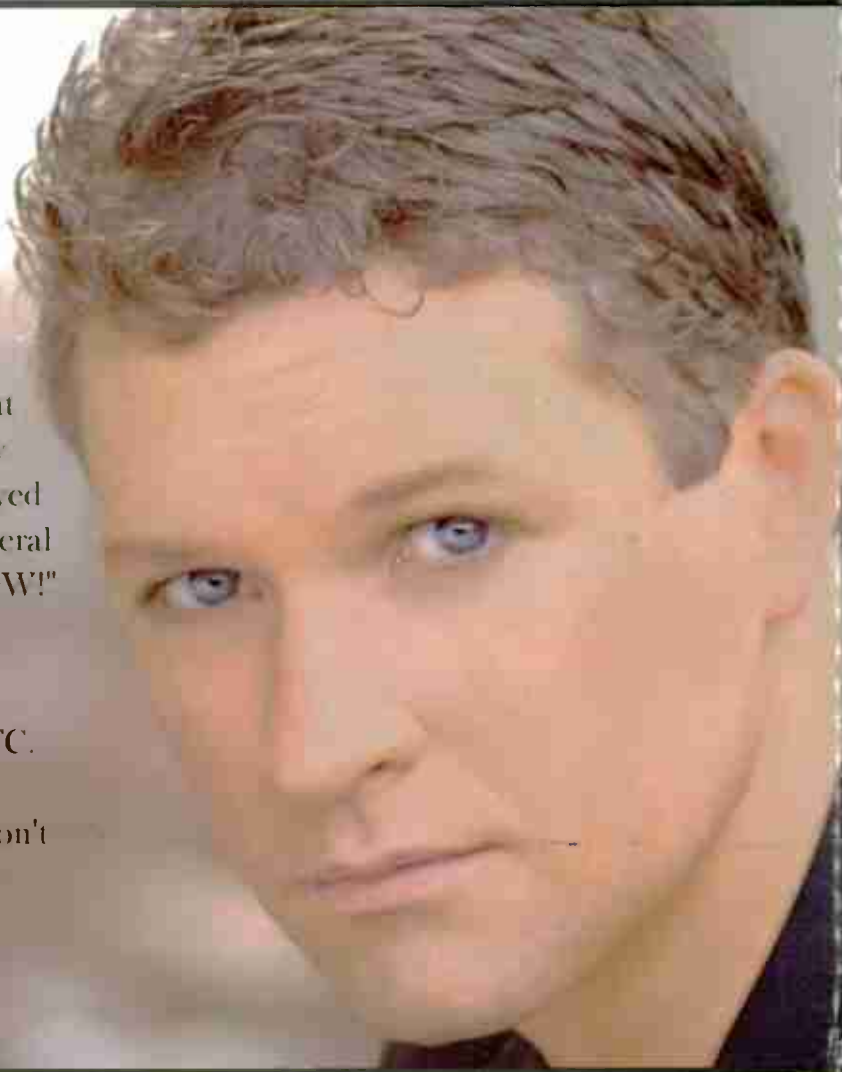
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