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Hall of Fame

Begins On
Page 17

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HOT SPOTS



11 Rockin' Radio

Switchfoot is one of a variety of bands that is making its breakthrough at modern rock radio.



39 Going Platinum

Platinum Star Sean Paul is honored for putting dancehall in the spotlight with his sophomore set, "Dutty Rock."



86 Still Rolling

In a rare interview, Rolling Stone's Jann S. Wenner talks about his magazine in The Last Word.

WMG Speeds Into New Era

1,000 Jobs Going; Fresh A&R Sources Sought

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—The remaking of the Warner Music Group is in full swing.

Within hours of closing the deal to buy WMG from Time Warner, a new senior management team began tak-

ing the music company apart and putting it back together again.

The changes started with the news that 1,000 employees would be cut worldwide, including such high-profile executives as Atlantic Group co-CEO
(Continued on page 85)

Sperling Pleased With 'Smart Buy'

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—Just four days after the \$2.6 billion acquisition of Warner Music Group, one of the key members of the buyout team valued the music company's assets at \$3.5 billion.

Scott Sperling, managing director of Thomas H. Lee Partners, made that assessment in a keynote address at the third annual Billboard Music & Money Symposium, held March 4 at the St. Regis Hotel here.

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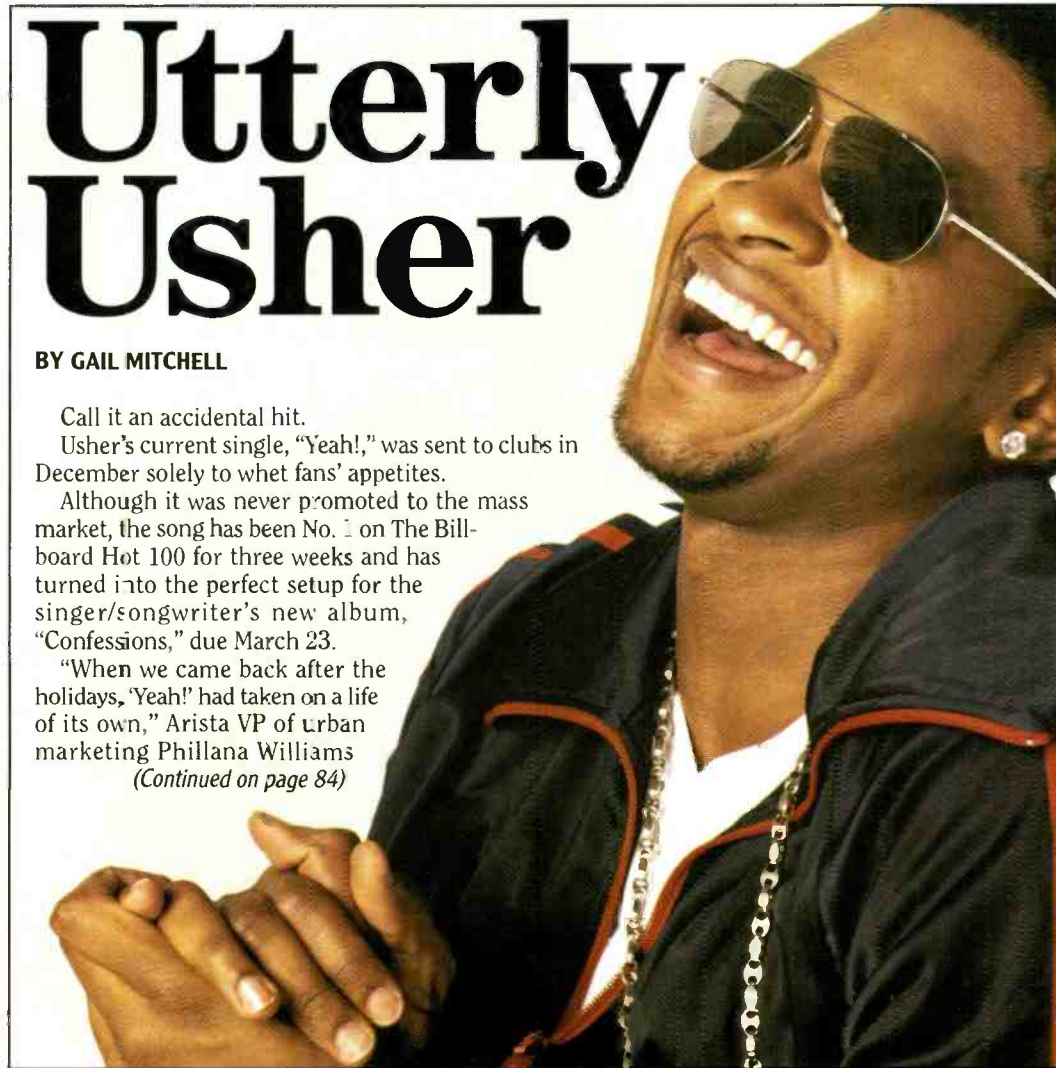
Utterly Usher

BY GAIL MITCHELL

Call it an accidental hit. Usher's current single, "Yeah!," was sent to clubs in December solely to whet fans' appetites.

Although it was never promoted to the mass market, the song has been No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100 for three weeks and has turned into the perfect setup for the singer/songwriter's new album, "Confessions," due March 23.

"When we came back after the holidays, 'Yeah!' had taken on a life of its own," Arista VP of urban marketing Phillana Williams
(Continued on page 84)



Insurance Crisis Lingers For Biz

Many Artists Lack Coverage

BY CHRIS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—Friends held a benefit for Tony Thompson at the Hard Rock Café in December.

Thompson, one of the best-known drummers of the '70s and '80s, was diagnosed with renal cell cancer. Doctors removed one of his kidneys, but by then the cancer had spread to his lungs and liver. After receiving expensive emergency-room care, he died Nov. 12.

Thompson was uninsured.

"He couldn't afford it," says his widow, Patrice Thompson. "When I met him, he had no money."



TONY THOMPSON

PITCHING A BITCH

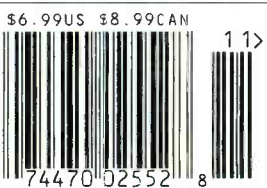
Patrice now faces hospital and medical bills that she calls "astronomical."

A contribution from MusiCares, the charitable arm of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), and \$6,000 raised by the Hard Rock benefit have done little to defray the debt.

(Continued on page 84)



ON MARCH 9, 1949, DEAN MARTIN MADE A SPECIAL TRIP TO NEW YORK TO RECORD A NEW SONG, "DREAMY OLD NEW ENGLAND MOON", FOR CAPITOL RECORDS WRITTEN BY PHILADELPHIA COMPOSERS, MORTY BERK, FRANK CAPANO & MAX C. FREEDMAN. THE SONG IS CURRENTLY INCLUDED IN MARTIN'S CD RELEASE, "THE CAPITOL YEARS", WITH PAUL WESTON & HIS ORCHESTRA AND THE MARTINGALES AND ALSO IN NUMEROUS OTHER CD CONFIGURATIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THE PUBLISHER IS CAPANO MUSIC OF GIBBSTOWN, NEW JERSEY.



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LA OREJA DE VAN GOGH

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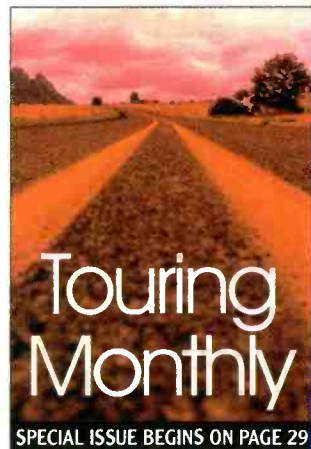
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ED SHANE, SHANE MEDIA SERVICES
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CHARLOTTE MARTIN

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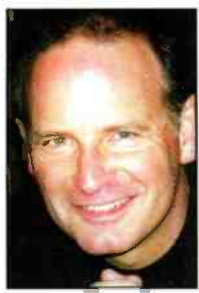
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Upfront



TOP OF THE NEWS



'Schindler's List' Comes To DVD

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Renewed public attention to such issues as anti-Semitism and the Holocaust may garner big consumer interest in the March 9 DVD release of "Schindler's List" (Universal Studios Home Video).

"The fact that this is a best picture winner that hasn't been available on DVD before will equate into high demand," says Vince Szydowski, senior director of product for the Los Angeles-based Virgin Megastore chain. "It will also touch a chord with a lot of people with all of the discussions regarding 'The Passion of the Christ,' " the controversial Mel Gibson release.

Retailers believe the title will experience strong sales over time as an anticipated catalog title for fans of moviemaking.

Brian Lucas, spokesman for Minneapolis-based Best Buy, calls "Schindler's List"

a "real prestige piece to own. It's not light fare you just pop in and watch, but it's good to have in your collection if you are a movie buff. We have high expectations."

"Schindler's List," a seven-time Oscar winner that counts the best picture and best director (for Steven Spielberg) awards among its prizes, explores the story of Oskar Schindler. A Nazi party member, Schindler employed 1,100 Jews in his crockery factory during the Holocaust and saved many of their lives by keeping them from the death camps.

The film stars Liam Neeson as Schindler and features performances by Ben Kingsley and Ralph Fiennes. Spielberg shot the movie almost entirely in black-and-white.

The DVD will be available for \$26.98 in a full-frame or widescreen version. It features a 77-minute documentary called
(Continued on page 60)

Radio Reacts To Indecency Flak

BY BRAM TEITELMAN

It all started with Janet Jackson's breast.

The singer's "wardrobe malfunction" at the Super Bowl put the Federal Communications Commission on the warpath to stamp out indecency and hold congressional indecency hearings.

As the federal storm gathered, Clear Channel led radio's self-regulation on the issue. It fired longtime Florida-based morning host Todd "Bubba the Love Sponge" Clem and pulled

Howard Stern's syndicated morning show from the six Clear Channel stations carrying it. Clem's program was cited by the FCC in a recent \$715,000 indecency fine against Clear Channel in January.

Viacom-owned Infinity—the company from which Stern's show originates—also reacted. Infinity executives John Sykes and Joel Hollander issued an internal memo Feb. 18 outlining the FCC's current definition of indecency and mandating that any show with live
(Continued on page 82)

Operación David Bisbal

Spanish Idol Builds Global Following

BY LEILA COBO

The TV reality shows that dominate the musical landscape of many countries are by definition local phenomena. The artists they spawn rarely step beyond their locally honed fan bases.

Then there's David Bisbal.

The 24-year-old, a finalist in Spain's first edition of TV reality show "Operación Triunfo," has released a sophomore album whose early success in multiple countries points to a bona fide international career.

"Bulería" (Vale Music/Universal), released worldwide Feb. 10, debuted at No. 1 on Spain's sales charts. What's more, it came in at No. 5 on the *Billboard* Top Latin Albums chart (where it is No. 9 this issue) and No. 1 in Argentina. And Bisbal's debut album, "Corazón Latino," which has already sold more than 1 million copies in Spain, soared to No. 4 on that country's sales chart,

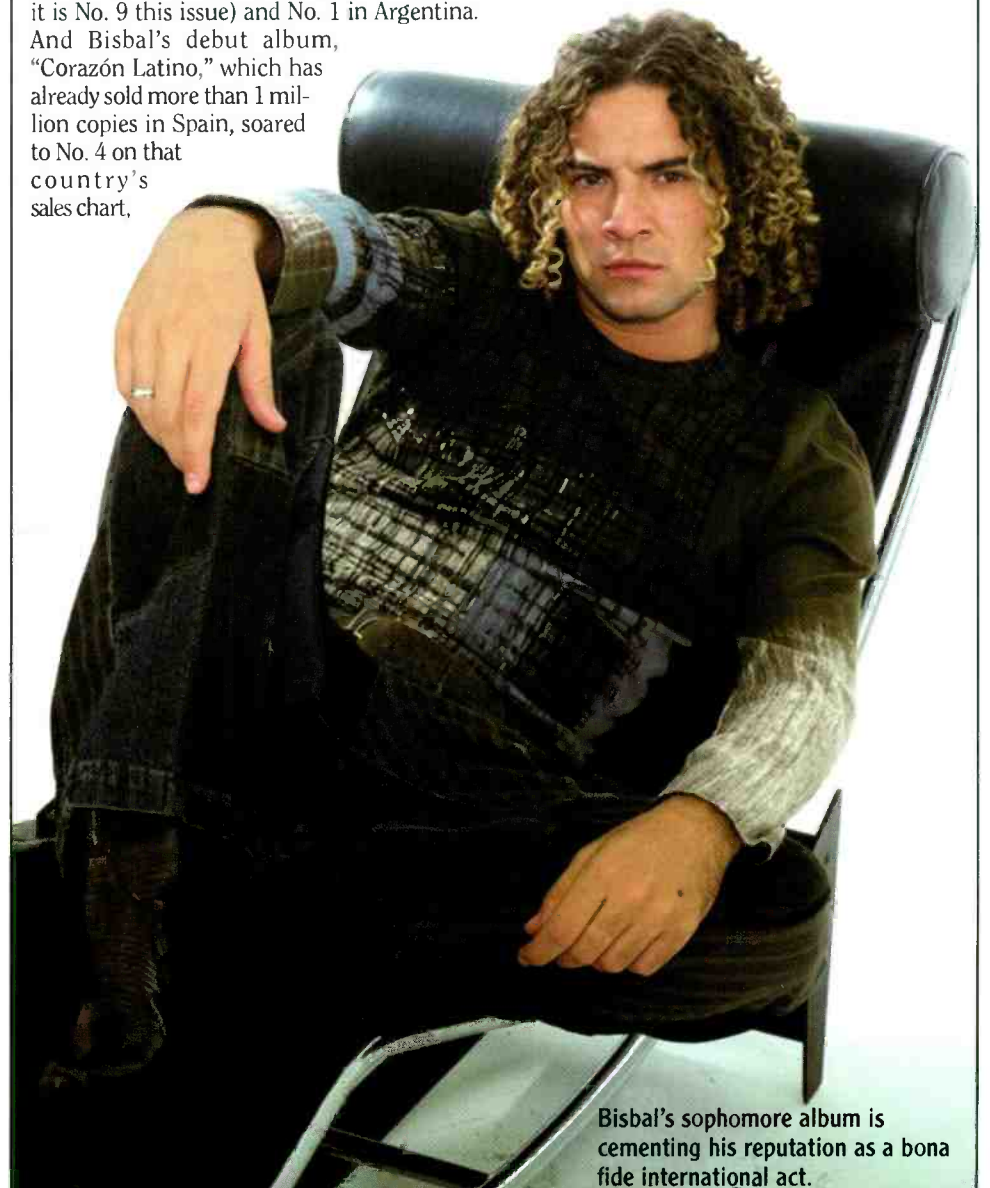
nearly two years after its release.

TV reality shows have resulted in extraordinarily successful artists in such countries as Argentina (Bandana and Mambrú), Brazil (Rouge), Mexico (Yahir and Nadia, among others) and Spain (Bisbal, Bustamante, Chenoa).

In Spain alone, "Operación Triunfo" acts have dominated the charts for the past two years.

But among all of these, the only one who has been successfully exported to multiple countries is Bisbal.

Part of the overseas success has to do with the fact that his solo career, unlike that of most TV-born acts, was conceived from the beginning as
(Continued on page 83)



Bisbal's sophomore album is cementing his reputation as a bona fide international act.

Legit Content Must Increase

Forum Finds P2P Offerings Still Dwarf Legal Download Services

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH
and BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—Commercial digital music services still don't have enough content to effectively compete with peer-to-peer networks, the chief lobbyist for the digital music business says.

In a keynote address at the recent Digital Music Forum in New York, co-sponsored by billboard.biz, Digital Media Assn. executive director Jonathan Potter said that to keep pace with P2P, commercial services need to grow their catalogs from 500,000 songs to in excess of 1 million tracks.

"If royalty-paying services are to compete more effectively with online black markets, the amount of available online music must double and triple quickly," he said.

Potter said that to grow the availability of commercial content online, there needs to be easier rules for acquiring publishing licenses. He also called on artists not represented in commercial services to make their music available for distribution online.

"Too many prominent, wealthy recording artists are only giving lip-service to this cause," Potter said. "Every day these artists delay putting

their music on royalty-paying services promotes piracy of their own music and others and harms commercial services and the music industry at large."

Recent successes exemplified by Apple Computer's iTunes Music Store and other services still represent a tiny fraction of overall downloading activity, attendees noted.

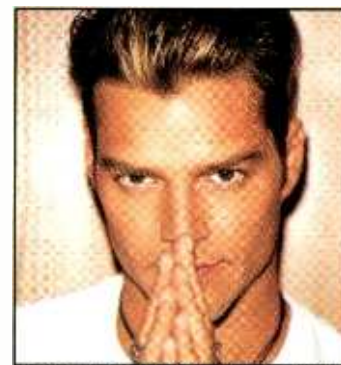
CONTENTIOUS ISSUE

Despite ongoing demands for the compulsory licensing of catalogs among advocates of commercializing P2P, it remains a contentious issue.

In another session—"Can the Music Industry Profit From Legitimate Uses of P2P?"—Jim Griffin, CEO of Cherry Lane Digital, said it is unrealistic for the industry to expect to sell music online that P2P networks give away for free.

"It's not just our task but our opportunity, our responsibility, our obligation to license what's going on [so we can] put that money into the pockets of the artists and creators who make those things," he said.

Adam Eisgrau of advocacy group P2P United added, "It's essential that we have this discussion in a meaningful way."
(Continued on page 83)



MARTIN: MANAGER'S SUIT SEEKS \$63.5M

Medina Countersues Martin

BY LEILA COBO

Angelo Medina, the Puerto Rican empresario who managed Ricky Martin for 12 years, has filed a \$63.5 million countersuit against his former client, alleging breach of contract, unjust enrichment and pain and suffering.

"I've been forced into doing this," Medina tells *Billboard*, noting that he will donate any money he wins from the suit to charity. "This is a moral issue, not a business issue."

Medina's suit, filed March 3 in Superior Court in San Juan, Puerto Rico, is in response to an action Ricky Martin Enterprises (RME) filed against him Feb. 17 in New York Supreme Court. RME is headquartered in San Juan.

In his suit, Martin seeks \$2.5 million from his ex-manager for "unearned management commissions through the assertion of claims for unjust enrichment,"
(Continued on page 83)



FORMER RCA ACT LIT HAS ENTERED A JOINT VENTURE WITH DRT AND NITROUS RECORDS

Execs Build New Label With Established Acts

BY CHRIS MORRIS

DRT Entertainment, the new label started by industry veterans Derek Shulman, Ron Urban and Ted Green, is seeking to become an independent haven for former major-label talent and developing acts alike.

New York-based DRT is being distributed by Navarre Entertainment Media in New Hope, Minn.

The label has already issued "I Didn't Get Where I Am," an album by former Squeeze vocalist Chris Difford, and "Adam's Apple," a new collection by singer/songwriter John Wesley Harding.

"You Made Me," the solo debut of ex-Buckcherry vocalist Josh Todd, is due March 9; metal act Clutch's "Blast Tyrant" arrives March 30. The coming months will bring albums by Seven Mary Three (May), Lit (June) and Edwin McCain (June).

Shulman says, "I do think it's a model that will work, not can work—having artists who are not 'prime time,' as it were, anymore for other labels

right now because they're not multi-platinum, but they're very viable and vital and will come back... and be as successful, if not more successful, than they were at the majors.

"By the time that happens, we're going to be looking at smaller and unknown acts to go alongside them, to develop artists."

Lit arrives at DRT after two albums on RCA that sold 1.4 million and 165,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The Fullerton, Calif., band secured its release from RCA after a regime change at the label and is doing a joint-venture with DRT and Gary and Steve Richards' Nitrous Records.

Lit guitarist Jeremy Popoff says, "From a business standpoint, being a joint venture, we could make 10 times as much money selling 10 times fewer records... If this thing flies, everybody's laughing. If it doesn't, even if it sells 150,000 records, everybody's making money. It's just much more efficient this way."

Shulman says DRT was established...
(Continued on page 83)



SHULMAN: IT'S A MODEL THAT WILL WORK

House Cans CARP, Creates Rate Panel

BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Copyright holders and music and movie users say they are delighted that the House of Representatives passed the Copyright and Distribution Reform Act March 3.

They say the new bill will bring greater professionalism and efficiency to the establishment and distribution of statutory license royalty rates, benefiting all parties. It now goes to the Senate for expected passage.

Under the new bill, H.R. 1417, a panel of three full-time administrative law judges would adjudicate whenever private negotiations fail to establish rates or distribute royalties. The panel would govern the commercial use of

such copyrighted works as movies and music, including Webcaster digital royalty rates. The judges will be paid \$125,000 per year.

"It's terrific," says John Simson, executive director of SoundExchange, the artist-label collection agency for digital Webcaster royalties. "There will be judges experienced in copyright law. And people will be able to participate without the fear of having to pay huge arbitration costs."

The bill would replace the part-time Copyright Arbitration Royalty Panel (CARP), initiated by Congress in 1993.

Rep. Lamar S. Smith, R-Texas, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Courts, the Internet and Intellectual Property, sponsored the bill. Rep.
(Continued on page 82)

Napster Takes First Euro Steps

BY PAUL SEXTON

LONDON—Roxio chairman/CEO Chris Gorog says the European launch of the company's Napster 2.0 online music service will take place in the United Kingdom before the end of summer.

The arrival of the service in Europe will happen "the sooner the better, as far as we're concerned," says Gorog, who is also chairman/CEO of Napster.

He says the introduction of Napster 2.0 across the region—its first move outside North America—will likely happen on a "country by country" basis, coordinated from its European headquarters in London.

"It's our goal to have localized programming in each region," Gorog says, "and that really suggests they will not all roll out on the same day."

Much industry speculation about a launch date in the first half of 2004 followed Gorog's appearance at the MIDEM trade

fair in January in Cannes (*Billboard*, Feb. 7).

During a Q&A session that he chaired, Gorog confirmed that Napster was looking to enter European markets this year.

Gorog says Napster is "still working with labels and publishers" on copyright clearance issues. "These rights in some regards weren't granted originally from the artists, so it's a smorgasbord of challenges to go back and get everything together."

Because of its policy of programming services locally, Napster will "certainly be paying strict attention to the charts in the U.K.," Gorog says. "What's hot, what people are interested in. We'll probably try very hard to get a lot of live content created from the U.K., for the U.K."

That content, Gorog says, will mirror that of Napster's U.S. subscription offering, for which artists visit the recording studio in the company's Los Angeles headquarters "three or four times a week" to cut exclusive material.
(Continued on page 70)



GOROG: SERVICE WILL BOW BY SUMMER'S END

NEWSLINE
THE WEEK IN BRIEF

Nielsen Music, which supplies chart data to *Billboard* through Nielsen SoundScan and Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, has promoted three key executives. Nancy Wagner is named East Coast senior VP/GM, Mark Tindle becomes West Coast senior VP/GM and Abbe Frank gets the post of senior VP of product development and client relations. Wagner was one of the original BDS staffers in Los Angeles when the company launched in 1990. Most recently, she served as GM of Nielsen SoundScan/Nielsen BDS, East Coast. Tindle has been with Nielsen SoundScan/Nielsen BDS since 1999, most recently as West Coast GM. Frank has been with SoundScan since 1999 as director of product development in New York. All three executives report to Rob Sisco, president of Nielsen Music/COO of Nielsen Entertainment East Coast operations.

The Walt Disney Co. board said March 3 that it separated the positions of CEO and chairman at the entertainment conglomerate the same day that 43% of shareholders voted against re-electing chairman/CEO Michael Eisner to the board. The Disney board, meeting in Philadelphia after a contentious shareholder gathering, said it had elected former U.S. Senator George Mitchell chairman by a unanimous vote. Eisner will continue as CEO. Mitchell had served as Disney's lead independent director; 24% of shareholders voted against his re-election at the annual meeting. **REUTERS**

After casting a critical eye on the prospects of Clear Channel Entertainment in a previous analysis, equity research firm William Blair & Co. admits it was "surprised by the organic growth of Clear Channel's live entertainment division" in a recent report. Last fall, William Blair & Co. issued a report that stated it would "view favorably a sale of the [entertainment] division" of Clear Channel Communications (*Billboard*, Oct. 25, 2003). The new report, which analyzes fourth-quarter 2003 performance, states, "Pro forma revenue [for CCE] increased 2%; we had modeled a decrease of 10%." The report goes on to say that "expense growth lagged revenue growth, and the division's margin increased to 3.5% from 2.2%." Overall Clear Channel numbers also exceeded estimates. **RAY WADDELL**

A suit that Ruben Blades filed against his former record and publishing companies is set to go to trial March 8 in New York federal court. The suit against Fania Records, Vaya Records, Musica Latin Internacional, Vaya Publishing, Fania Publishing, Vev Plub and Sonido includes multiple counts against the companies. All companies are or were part of the Latin music enterprise owned by the late Gerald Massuci, who recorded some of the biggest names in the genre. In the 1970s, Blades signed to Fania Records and released some of his most famous recordings under the label. Among other things, the suit claims failure to pay recording royalties, failure to pay publishing royalties and copyright infringement. Blades also alleges that several of the companies named in the suit unlawfully exploited compositions that he owns in full. In 1984, Blades filed a similar complaint, and all parties reached a settlement in 1985. Blades claims the defendants have not adhered to the court-ordered terms of the settlement. Sony/ATV has administered Blades' publishing since 2000. **LEILA COBO**

Digital-music service provider Loudeye has acquired Overpeer in a stock swap valued at \$4 million. Seattle-based Loudeye, which provides online retailers with music services including downloads and streaming radio, plans to market Overpeer's anti-piracy technology as a way to track music being swapped on peer-to-peer networks, block file swapping and promote legitimate content. Overpeer is a leader in distributing decoy files over P2P services, a practice commonly known as "spoofing." Labels are increasingly populating P2P networks with such phony files in an attempt to stymie unauthorized downloading of music content. **BRIAN GARRITY**

Sen. Judd Gregg, R-N.H., disagrees with the ruling by the Federal Communications Commission last month allowing new low-power FM stations in urban areas with existing FM stations. In his March 2 letter to chairman Michael Powell, Gregg takes the FCC's outside study by the Mitre Group to task, saying several "technical and methodological errors" in the study hide that interference would be a problem in some cases. **BILL HOLLAND**

Production of Tobias electric basses has returned to the United States with a new line of instruments handcrafted in Conway, Ark. Originally made by luthier Mike Tobias in 1977 in Orlando, Fla., the company changed hands, and production moved to Asia. The new Tobias basses, which feature Bartolini electronics, exotic wood combinations and neck-through-body construction, will be made in the facility previously used for production of Baldwin grand pianos. **CHRISTOPHER WALSH**

RIAA: Q4 Offset 2003 Losses

While total U.S. music shipments were down 7.2% last year, a strong fourth quarter at retail helped stem the tide.

According to figures released March 4 by the Recording Industry Assn. of America, the U.S. industry shipped 798.4 million units last year to all channels including direct and special markets. On a dollar basis, the decline was 6%, with shipments valued at \$11.9 billion.

At retail, a strong fourth quarter saw shipments rise 5.5% to help reduce the overall year-end decline to 2.7%, with shipments totaling 658.2 million units.

On a value basis, retail ship-

ments totaled \$11.1 billion, 4.3% behind the 2002 total of \$11.6 billion.

CD unit shipments to retail markets decreased 3% in 2003; 609.8 million units were shipped

LATE-BREAKING NEWS

in 2003, and 628.4 million units were shipped in 2002.

This decrease equates to a 5.1% decline in suggested list dollar value in 2003.

Shipments of CD singles improved significantly, up 85.5% from 2002. In 2003, 8.3 million units were shipped and in 2002, 4.5 mil-

lion were shipped. This represents a dollar value increase of 84%, equaling \$35.9 million.

The three-year decline (2000-2003) of music unit shipments is now 26%, and the value of those units declined 17.2% since 2000, according to the RIAA.

The report shows the popularity of newer music formats. The music video category, dominated by the DVD format, demonstrated significant growth to 19.9 million units, up 35.6%.

Figures for other emerging formats, such as digital downloads, were not included in the report.

ED CHRISTMAN and BILL HOLLAND

SUM-Thing New In China

Universal Partners With Shanghai Media Group

BY SCOTT MURPHY

HONG KONG—The launch of the first joint venture between a mainland China media company and an international music company has given Universal Music a new route to Chinese consumers.

Universal Music Asia Pacific (UMAP) and the Shanghai Media Group (SMG) announced Feb. 27 that they have teamed to launch a new entertainment company called SUM Entertainment.

SMG is mainland China's second-largest media conglomerate. It operates TV and radio stations, magazines, newspapers and Web sites and owns sports teams.

SUM Entertainment will be based in Shanghai and focus on mainland artist and repertoire development. Artists signed to SUM will have their output released in China on an as-yet-un-



HUI: VENTURE IS A 'POWERFUL COMBINATION'

named imprint, to be distributed through SMG.

The teaming of the two companies is a "powerful combination," Hong Kong-based UMAP president Harry Hui says.

"The primary goal for us is to create good music in China first," Hui explains. "We'll look for the best artists in

all genres; we're genre-agnostic." Long term, Hui says the new company will aim to export and market the best of its artists overseas.

Hui cites the regional success of the pop/traditional Chinese music crossover act 12 Girls Band as an example of what artists from mainland China can achieve. The Universal Music Hong Kong signing has shipped more than 2 million units to date of its self-titled 2003 debut album in Japan, according to the label, plus a further 200,000 units in the rest of Asia.

ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

Former UMAP regional marketing director Carol Choi heads SUM Entertainment as GM, based in Shanghai. Her appointment is effective immediately, and she will report to the SUM board. SMG holds a 51% *(Continued on page 83)*

Rose Garden Plows Ahead Amid Ch. 11

BY RAY WADDELL

Oregon Arena Corp., the company that operates the Rose Garden Arena in Portland, Ore., filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection Feb. 27 in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the district of Oregon. But arena officials say operations will be unaffected.

The company claims losses of nearly \$20 million since the 20,000-seat showplace arena opened in 1993, with debt service hammering the building's profitability.

"The bottom line is, this is a business reorganization," says Jay Isaac, senior VP of sales/marketing for the Rose Quarter complex.

Arena officials have cited an untenable financing plan and unsuccessful negotiations with bondholders as the culprit for the bankruptcy filing.

"We have a \$155 million construction loan at 9% interest, so our current payments are 2 1/2 times what comparable single-tenant buildings in the country are paying," Isaac tells *Billboard*.

The company had been scheduled to make a \$3.2 million interest payment March 1. The arena was built for \$267 million, including the \$155 million construction loan from 12 institutions.

The Rose Quarter complex includes the Rose Garden Arena, the

13,000-seat Memorial Coliseum and a theater configuration in the arena billed as Theatre of the Clouds.

"OAC remains manager of the buildings, and it's business as usual for the promoters," Isaac stresses. "This is a successful arena that does a lot of business. Our problem is on the costs side, mainly the debt payment."

After filing on Friday, Isaac says, the Rose Garden hosted a Clear Channel Entertainment motorsports event during the weekend. "We wired them their money on Monday, just like they asked us to," Isaac says.

Oregon Arena Corp. is wholly owned by Microsoft co-founder Paul *(Continued on page 70)*



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CED Report Lacks Logic

There's one thing about common sense, early-20th-century humorist Will Rogers often remarked, "It ain't common."

In a sentence, that explains the fundamental flaw in a new report by the Committee for Economic Development (CED), a Washington think tank that specializes in economic development issues.

It defies common sense.

The report attempts to address the conflict between those who create intellectual property and those who are deemed "users" of intellectual property. Stripped of its academic niceties, however, it's really about Internet piracy.

As Washington think tanks go, the CED carries some weight; it was created after World War II to find ways to transform the wartime economy into a peacetime economy. Today, it claims to promote economic growth, largely by identifying market solutions to economic problems.

The report is gaining far more currency than it deserves because its conclusions are being widely misinterpreted.

Last week, for example, The New York

Times cited the CED report in a story proclaiming that entertainment industry efforts to protect copyrighted materials were "bad for business and for the economy." The report, of course, doesn't say that at all. It simply raises red flags about the dangers of imposing government mandates on technology or enacting stricter copyright laws.

Fearing that any effort to rush new laws onto the books might pose a risk

The study assumes that because illegal file sharing is possible, it should be considered viable.

to innovation and economic growth, the report calls for a two-year moratorium on any such effort. Then, ostensibly cooler heads will have the time to find a "consensus" on the best way to balance the right of creators to benefit from their work with the public's right to use it.

Nothing controversial there; but where it deviates from common sense is

in a couple of the underlying assumptions on which it bases its conclusions.

For one, the study assumes that just because illegal file sharing is possible, it should be considered viable. Since it exists in conflict with copyright law, it's the law, not the technology, that needs to be re-examined. In other words, technology, no matter how questionable its use, gets the benefit of the doubt.

The issue has never been about the technology, but about how it is used and the most efficient way to curb illegal activity.

Secondly, the study assumes that any attempt to regulate file sharing could theoretically threaten innovation and therefore economic development. But what about the economic development and innovation that file sharing has already put at risk in a real and tangible way?

The music industry already has lost tens of thousands of jobs, and the film industry is standing at the edge of the very same abyss. As a result, it's become increasingly difficult for the industry to innovate and develop new artists.

Where is the common sense in that?

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

Helpful Guidelines On How Artists Can Protect Themselves

Musician: Your Band Is A Business

If you're serious about making it, you've got to run your band like a business. There are important benefits to setting up and maintaining a business structure for your band.

Here are some of those benefits and the procedures for making your band a business enterprise:

Protect your band's name. Before investing a lot of time and money in your band's name, you should investigate whether another group is already using that name.

Start by doing an in-depth Internet search. Also check out *Billboard's* annual International Talent & Touring Guide. Once you are reasonably sure

that no other group is using your band's name, consider applying for federal trademark protection.

A federal trademark (or in this case, a service mark) gives your band exclusive rights to the name throughout the United States. Online

registration is available at uspto.gov.

Make sure all of your band's songs have copyright protection. Full federal registration with the U.S. Copyright Office is always advisable. Yes, you can do the "poor man's copyright" and mail yourself a CD of songs to prove the creation date.



However, federal copyright registration, among other things, allows you to bring suit in federal court and receive certain statutory damages if infringement is proved. You can get more information and download forms at copyright.gov. Use Form SR.

Obtain a business license and a federal tax ID number. The exact procedure for acquiring a business license is available by contacting the city or county licensing agency near you. Most forms are available online. For a federal tax ID number (or FEIN), go to irs.gov and download Form SS-4.

File it with your local IRS office. Having a business license and tax ID number allows you to open a band checking account.

Keep track of all the income the band earns. Keep track of all the band's expenses, too. This includes everything from promotion costs to equipment to tour expenses—all can be tax-deductible. If taxes and finances are not your strong suits, you may want to see an accountant. Don't worry. The accountant's fees are usually tax-deductible, as are a lawyer's.

Become an affiliate of either BMI or ASCAP. Each time your band's music is played, either live or recorded, on the radio or at a club, you are eligible for a performance royalty. Without getting too deep

into copyright law, the "right of performance" is one of the exclusive rights afforded a copyright holder.

BMI and ASCAP, performing rights societies, get performance royalties for you. Of course, for a new band, the royalties will be minimal, if anything at all, but as things get rolling, they can become a significant revenue stream. Go to bmi.com or ascap.com for more information.

Execute a written partnership agreement. The general law of partnerships presumes that when a group of people acts together, it is a partnership. Without a written agreement to the contrary, the law will assume various things about your band.

First, everyone will be liable for everyone else. The law presumes that each partner will be bound by the actions of all the other partners. Also, if you break up, the law presumes that all the band members own the band name equally.

A written partnership agreement should, among other things,

address several important points: 1) who owns the right to the band's name; 2) who owns the band's songs; 3) what to do when someone leaves the band; 4) who can spend money on behalf of the band; and 5) the procedure for kicking someone out of the band. Anything can go into a written partnership agreement.

Consider taking out insurance. Use it to insure your equipment. If it gets stolen or damaged, an insurance policy can help get the band playing again. Also, if you have a band vehicle, make sure the driver has auto insurance. In most cases, insurance is tax-deductible.

There are important reasons why your band should be run like a business. An accountant and an attorney with entertainment-business experience can help get you through these and other business and legal issues.

Donald R. Simon is an intellectual property attorney concentrating on entertainment, copyright, trademark and advertising law issues.

Letters

Give The Supremes Credit Where Credit Is Due

Lost in the entertainment industry and media hoopla over the arrival of the Beatles on the U.S. pop music scene in 1964 is the fact that this year also marks the 40th anniversary of a homegrown pop success story.

It was 40 years ago this June that a trio of talented American women emerged from Detroit's Brewster Housing Project to take the world by storm.

It was also 40 years ago this December that these women made their first national television appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show."

I am referring, of course, to the Supremes—America's answer to the Beatles. During the period from 1964 through 1965, while the Beatles dominated the U.S. music scene, the Supremes—Diana Ross, Mary Wilson and the late Florence Ballard—charted five consecutive number No. 1 records and eight top 25 records.

By the end of 1965, the Supremes would have their sixth chart-topper, with "I Hear a Symphony." Not bad during an era when virtually every other American group was relegated to the background.

More than any other group, the

Supremes not only met the challenge of the British Invasion, they made history. With a total of 12 No. 1 records by the end of the decade, the Supremes were the top-selling American group of the 1960s.

More than their musical accomplishments, however, the Supremes also were trendsetters. Their ascendancy coincided with the success of the civil rights movement in this country.

By reflecting a positive image of successful African-American women, the Supremes broke down barriers and opened the doors for today's talents.

Many, including Oprah Winfrey and Luther Vandross, have cited the Supremes' historic first appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" as being influential and inspirational to their own careers—it was the first time they saw people who looked like them on national TV. The Supremes were the face of the changes taking place in American society.

Sadly, however—with the exception of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, which is planning a major exhibition later this year honoring the Supremes' 40th anniversary—their contributions to American pop culture are ignored. Perhaps we as a society haven't

come as far as we would like to think we have.

Thomas Ingrassia
Ingrassia Image Consulting
Holden, Mass.

Lots Of Female Rockers, Few VPs

In your article about Courtney Love (*Billboard* Feb. 7), you quote a chain record-store executive as saying, "There aren't a whole lot of women playing real rock'n'roll."

Are people really this brain-washed? The only "void" needing to be filled with female rockers exists at the industry level, where conservative VPs are too timid to back women rock bands as marketable.

If gatekeepers really want to fill that void, they need only peruse the live music listings in any major city and start venturing out of their little dusty glass attics.

Lalena Fissure
Woodside
Queens, N.Y.

The Problem Is: Too Many Radios!

I disagree with your position in your editorial on Howard Stern

(*Billboard*, March 6).

The public may be able to decide, but the public lacks the ability to control the technology.

We do need to control the content that is distributed so widely and "received" so easily. Cable and other subscription services are perhaps another discussion and are a bit easier to control.

Controlling this kind of content was apparently never considered by radio manufacturers, as there is no effective method for blocking these broadcasts. I have personal experience with the V-Chip and parental controls on TVs, and I can tell you they don't work reliably.

Am I supposed to take away and lock up every small radio, boom box, car radio, etc.? When I buy a Barbie tape player/boom box for my daughter, is the manufacturer anticipating that I can receive Howard Stern on it? Apparently not, but radios are built into everything these days.

Should I have to give up radio in general because of one or two questionable programs in a given market? I don't think I should have to.

Brian Kelly
Warwick, N.Y.

Richard Rodgers' Writing In Reverse

According to most biographical sources (including Richard Rodgers), Mr. Rodgers would write a melody and give it to Lorenz Hart, who would then write lyrics. By contrast, Oscar Hammerstein would write the lyrics first, which Richard Rodgers would then set to music.

Both methods obviously worked well, and details of their collaborations have been well-documented over the years.

In the Jan. 17 issue of *Billboard*, comedian/musician Michael McKean got the above relationships exactly backwards while discussing his songwriting techniques.

Jim Blanchard
New Orleans

FOR THE RECORD

Due to an editing error, the sentence "Year after year, I'm absolutely shocked at what comes out of [the Grammys]" was attributed to Ricky Skaggs, (*Billboard*, Feb 28). RCA Label Group chairman Joe Galante made the statement, which Skaggs was rebutting.

In the music & entertainment business, access to the right information can be the difference between success and failure. Getting that information used to be difficult.



MUSIC



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LEGAL & MANAGEMENT



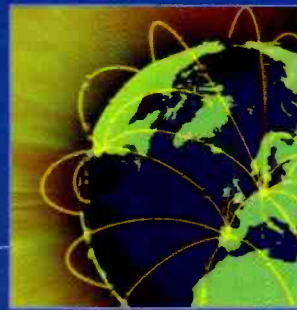
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Jacki-O shows her stuff on debut set 'Poe Little Rich Girl'



Country radio jock Stu Evans questions the timing of the recent indecency crackdown



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

Thomas, Stapp Prep Solo Efforts

Solo albums by band vocalists have become a rite of passage. Inevitably, it turns out, singing other people's songs or having to collaborate with one's bandmates can sometimes feel like a prison sentence, albeit one with velvet handcuffs and minimum security. A little time on one's own before returning to the safety of the fold can be very appealing.

Two lead singers for multi-platinum groups—Matchbox Twenty's Rob Thomas and Creed's Scott

ing the songs and knowing what I want them to sound like and how I want to be represented," he says. "I think I'm not going to know until me and [producer] Matt [Serletic] get into the studio and start fresh."

The process of writing for a solo project vs. for a band is a liberating one, he says.

"First of all, it doesn't have to have two guitars, a bass and a drum on every song. After a while you want to try something different. It's all about not having a framework that you have to fit into. It doesn't have to sound like a band."

Thomas says he expects the album to come out at the end of 2004 or the beginning of 2005.

Stapp says that after a decade together, it was time for the members of Creed to take a break.

"We all committed

10 years to each other, and then we would work on some other stuff we had going on," he says. "We hit 10 years in mid-January."

Stapp is working with producer **Seven Aurelius** (Nelly, Ashanti, Ja Rule). "It's Creed meets Zeppelin meets Doors with Seven's [influence]. So it's going to have some thump in the back and rock over the top of it—but I'm not going to rap," he adds with a laugh. "I'm going to sing."

In addition to working on his solo album, which he expects to come out later this year, Stapp says he is pursuing an acting career. "I'm reading through scripts right now. I want something people wouldn't expect from me. I don't want to be stereotyped as a musician."

As history shows, solo projects can be career highlights or quickly forgotten side efforts that barely register a blip. For every **Beyoncé**, **Justin Timberlake** or **Dave Matthews** successful solo album, there's a **Scott Weiland**, **Jagger** or **Dave Gahan** release that sells a sliver of what their bands' albums sell.

DOUBLE SERVING: Christian rock group **Skillet**, which has already had success in the Christian market with its **Ardent** releases, has signed with **Lava Records**.

(Continued on page 14)

The Beat

By Melinda Newman
mnewman@billboard.com

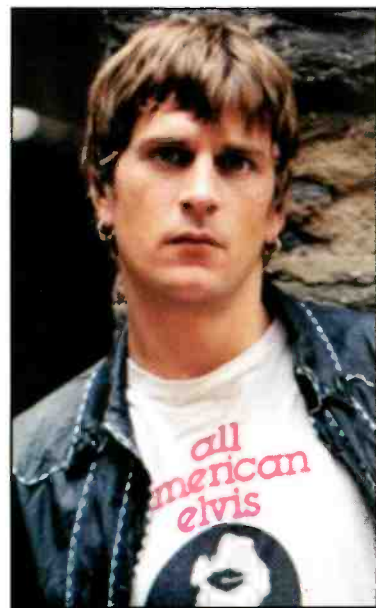


Stapp—are working on solo projects.

Thomas' success outside Matchbox Twenty is a known quantity; he co-wrote and sang "Smooth" for **Santana's** multimillion-selling "Supernatural" album and has written with **Willie Nelson** and **Mick Jagger**, among others.

Thomas' solo effort is still in the formative stages.

"I've started the writing, but it's such a long step between even hav-



THOMAS: EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITIES



JET: PROGRAMMERS PREDICT THE BAND HAS THE BEST PROSPECTS FOR A LONG CAREER

New Bands Storm Modern Rock Radio

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

LOS ANGELES—Modern rock is sporting many new faces these days.

A number of breaking bands—**Jet**, **Switchfoot**, the **Darkest**, **Three Days Grace**, **Lostprophets** and **Story of the Year**—are enjoying their first blushes of success at modern rock radio.

The format's embrace of burgeoning acts is not new, says **Oedipus**, PD of **WBCN** Boston, citing breakthroughs by such bands as **Evanescence**, **AFI** and **Interpol** at his station last year. However, other PDs believe this current crop

is larger than normal, in part because of modern rock's identity crisis.

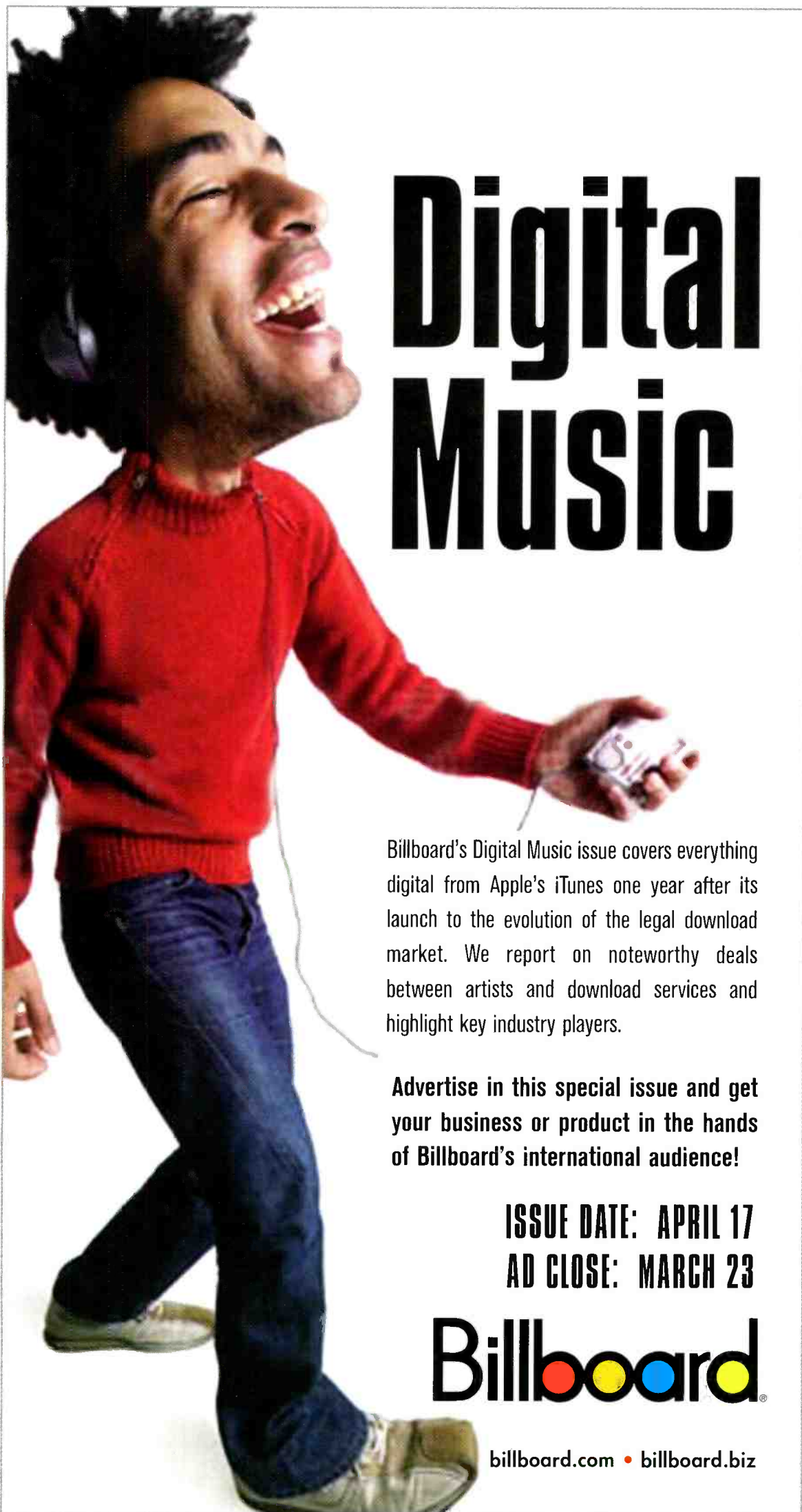
"Modern rock is searching for the next fashion so we can have a renaissance of the format," says **Chris Williams**, PD at **WNNX** (99X) Atlanta. "We need something the kids want to dress like and have represent them. We're searching for the band that's raising its hand."

All six groups have registered hits on the Modern Rock chart. **Three Days Grace's** "(I Hate) Everything About You" hit No. 2. **Jet** flew to No. 3 with "Are You Gonna Be My Girl," and

(Continued on page 16)



THREE DAYS GRACE: HAS SOLD 356,000 COPIES OF ITS SELF-TITLED DEBUT



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Conductor Bychkov Finds Independent Freedom

After several relatively quiet years away from critical American attention, Russian conductor **Semyon Bychkov** is back on the scene.

After helming a lauded run of **Musorgsky's** epic opera "Boris Godunov" at the **Metropolitan Opera**, he is earning kudos for two dynamic new releases: **Shostakovich's** Symphony No. 7, "Leningrad," and **Mahler's** Third Symphony, both with his current ensemble, the **WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne**. A disc of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 8 will be released early this summer.

Bychkov, who blazed onto the international scene in the 1980s with a **Philips** recording deal, has found a home in U.K.-based **Avie**, a label started in 2002 by industry vets

Simon Foster and **Melanne Mueller**.

According to Avie's innovative business model, artists retain complete control and ownership of their recordings. In return for the use of the company's name, logo and manufacturing and distribution muscle, Avie deducts a small percentage of net sales.

The 51-year-old conductor says the freedom that Avie offers has been liberating for him and his musicians.

"One of the difficulties in the past was the limited flexibility in terms of what repertoire was available to artists," Bychkov observes.

"A major record company is a large enterprise, and by the time my generation entered in the mid-1980s, these companies, including Philips, already had huge back catalogs. So it was not so easy for them to see what I could record that would make sense for them. Conversely, there were projects that they wanted me to do that I declined.

"Once we entered into a relationship with Avie," Bychkov continues, "the whole premise changed. They tell me that they'll take whatever I

want to record. So the considerations are purely of an artistic nature and not burdened by anything else."

As of Feb. 1, the upstart Avie enters a new phase with a new American distributor, the newly formed **Forte Distribution**, which specializes in classical, jazz and world labels (see *The Indies*, page 58). The company also represents **Alpha**, **Arabesque** and German mid-price label **Oehms**.

IN BRIEF: If you haven't seen it already, you should check out **Alex**

Classical Score



By **Anastasia Tsioulcas**
atsioulcas@billboard.com



Ross' superb essay on classical music, "Listen to This," in the Feb. 22 issue of *The New Yorker*.

Daniel Barenboim says he will step down from the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra's** podium at the end of the 2005-06 season, because the position "require[s] many nonartistic activities, and I have neither the energy nor the time to fulfill them." A major component of those "nonartistic" activities is community outreach. Is that such an onerous task?

Minnesota Public Radio is announcing its Classical Music Initiative, which is supported in part by a \$500,000 grant from the **National Endowment for the Arts**. MPR is currently soliciting proposals from music professionals and the general public for new classical music programming that builds audiences, cultivates music understanding and brings new voices to public radio. Proposals chosen for production will air on MPR and will be made available to public stations across the United States. For details on the program and to submit proposals, visit access.mpr.org.



BYCHKOV: GIVEN A FREE HAND IN CHOOSING HIS REPERTOIRE

'Return Of The King' Wins Two Oscars For Its Music

Music from **New Line Cinema's** "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" ruled at the 76th annual Academy Awards ceremony, held Feb. 29 at the **Kodak Theatre** in Los Angeles. The film and its music were the predicted front-runners going into the awards (Movies & Music, *Billboard*, Feb. 14).

"Return of the King" triumphed not only in the music categories of best original score and best original song (for "Into the West"), but it was also the night's big winner. With 11 awards, including best picture, "Return of the King" is now tied with "Ben-Hur" and "Titanic" for the film that has won the most Oscars.

The movie's composer, **Howard Shore**, shared the best original song award with co-writers **Fran Walsh** (who is also the film's co-producer and co-writer of the screenplay) and song performer **Annie Lennox**. Shore previously won a best original score Academy Award for "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," the first film in the trilogy.



ary (Movies & Music, *Billboard*, Jan. 17).

Under the agreement, Metallica will own and pay for marketing costs of the film, **IFC Films** will have U.S. distribution rights for theatri-

Movies & Music
By Carla Hay
chay@billboard.com



cal release and **Paramount Home Entertainment** will release the movie on VHS/DVD.

IFC will also partner with the band on funding the marketing campaign's print and advertising costs. Metallica and the group's **Q Prime Management** will have consulting roles for distribution. It is unusual for an act to take on such extensive business responsibilities for a theatrically released documentary about itself.

The theatrical release of "Metallica: Some Kind of Monster" will coincide with the band's upcoming North American tour, which began March 2 in Phoenix. The documentary, produced and directed by **Joe Berlinger** and **Bruce Sinofsky**, is expected to roll out in most of the same markets that the tour will visit.

Berlinger and Sinofsky's film company **Third Eye**—which will have a

(Continued on page 82)

THE NEXT BIG IDEA

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Backstage in the press room, Lennox said, "I watched Howard Shore composing and recording every day in **Abbey Road Studios**, 16-hour days, seven days a week. It was absolutely extraordinary. His pallor went from pink to gray in a few months, and he's still standing."

Lennox, the recipient of the 2002 **Billboard Century Award**, commented on winning her first Academy Award: "I'd just like to say I'm so thrilled. Thank you. I'm just grateful and privileged."

The accolades will continue for Shore when he receives the **Henry Mancini Award** for lifetime achievement at the 19th annual **ASCAP Film and Television Awards**, set to take place April 21 at the **Beverly Hilton** in Beverly Hills, Calif.

In other awards-show news, **Gabriel Yared's** "Cold Mountain" score won the **Anthony Asquith Award** for achievement in film music at the 2004 **Orange British Academy Film Awards**, which were presented Feb. 15 in London.

METALLICA MOVIE UPDATE: Metallica has struck a unique deal for its documentary "Metallica: Some Kind of Monster," which was featured at the 2004 **Sundance Film Festival** in Janu-

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Roberson's JDI Records Fills Inspirational Niche

For those looking for music that fits their Sunday-morning church services, **James Roberson's JDI Records** has long proved inspirational.

Roberson, a professor of music at the **University of California at Los Angeles**, launched the label eight years ago. Since then it has become home to **Norman Hutchins**, **DeNertia Champ**, the **UCLA Gospel Choir** and other noted acts whose music uplifts church congregations and believers everywhere.

Roberson recalls the label's genesis, when he went to his church pastor with concerns that "we were having a hard time finding Sunday-morning music, because everybody was trying to cross over and do the contemporary thing," he says. "My pastor said, 'Instead of complaining about it, do something about it. Start a record company and do that music.' So that's how JDI came about. It was to do music for Sunday-morning worship.

"We've been very successful, because we are filling a niche that wasn't being met by other people," he continues. "We have a great following of people who will buy our music even if they don't know the

artist, because they know our type of music and the quality of music we do."

JDI is distributed in the general market through **Navarre** and in the Christian market through **Butterfly International Distribution**. **Central South** also distributes JDI product to independent retailers.

The label's next release is "Can't Nobody Do Me Like Jesus" by **Minister Timothy Britten & Shabach Praise Co.** March 2. Produced by Roberson and Britten, the project was recorded at **Interdenominational Faith Assembly** in Baton Rouge, La., where Britten has been minister of music for 10 years.



BRITTEN: HIS MINISTRY ATTRACTED JDI

Britten sings lead on the rousing title cut, and the remainder of the album features inspired lead performances from other vocalists including **Champ** on "It Will Last," **Shabach Praise Co.'s Nancy Armstrong** on "In Excelsis Deo," **Arona Johnson** on "Yes God Is Real," **Jerod Woods** on "Victory Shall Be Mine" and **Michael Stampley** on "I Got the Victory."

Although all the cuts are wonderful, Britten's performance is a standout. But it is his only lead on the project. "I have always said to the choir that it's not only Timothy Britten, it's all of us," he says. "And I was trying to give soloists in the choir an opportunity."

Roberson and Britten met at the 2003 Stellar Awards and began talking about doing a project together. "When I look for talent, I look at the person's ministry first and foremost," Roberson says. "Are

they in it because they are interested in being a star? If it's being a star, then JDI is not the right label for them. We are always looking for people who are ministry-oriented.

CD contains a bonus cut, an accompaniment track that can be used in worship services.

CANDI CAN: Candi Staton fans will be happy to know that **Vision Records Entertainment (VRE)** plans to reissue her first four gospel albums on CD for the first time March 16. The albums, recorded on Staton's Atlanta-based **Berach Records**, will be repackaged as two double-CD compilations with 16 songs on each set. "Make Me an Instrument" (1983) and "The Anointing" (1985) will be compiled as "Classic Candi Volume 1." The second pair of albums, "Sing a Song" (1986) and "Love Lifted Me" (1988), are packaged as "Classic Candi Volume 2."

VRE is distributed by mainstream home entertainment company **Image Entertainment**. Distribution for the Christian market will be handled by **Provident Music Group**. There are also plans for VRE to issue a Staton gospel-hits compilation and a Christmas project later this year.

In other Staton news, the singer/songwriter has ended her long-running **Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN)** weekly musical series "Say Yes," which began in 1986. Feeling the show had run its course, Staton opted to end it, but she will still perform on other TBN network specials and event programming. The channel will continue airing the already-completed season of "Say Yes" during the next few months.

In The Spirit™

By Deborah Evans Price
dprice@billboard.com



"Secondly, they [should] understand that they've been called to do this," he continues. "And we look for people for our label who have strong songwriting abilities and overall excellence in how they present themselves. It's hard to find those things in one package."

Roberson felt Britten had the entire package. Britten had served as music director for the late Rev. **James Moore** and had worked with such artists as **Dorinda Clark-Cole**, **Rance Allen** and **Yolanda Adams**.

"Rev. Moore encouraged me to do something on my own, because he wanted me to make it one day on my own," Britten says, adding that Moore influenced his "writing skills and how to put music together."

In keeping with the label's goal of aiding church music programs, the

The Beat

Continued from page 11

"We are taking [first track "Savior"] to active rock. We've had a fantastic reception from the programmers we've played it for already," Lava president **Jason Flom** says.

The band remains on Memphis-based **Ardent** for distribution of its albums to the Christian market.

Skillet's current album, "Collide," will be reissued this spring to the general market on Lava with one new song added.

WORK ETHIC: No one could accuse the members of **System of a Down** of being lazy. In between **SOAD** albums, singer **Serj Tankian** and guitarist **Daron Malakian** have been working on a project by **Bad Acid Trip**. The group is signed to **Serjical Strike Records**, Tankian's co-venture with **Columbia Records**. Malakian produced the album.

Meanwhile, Malakian has his own label, **eatURmusic**, which has signed

European metal band **Satyricon** for distribution in North and South America, Asia and Australia.

Serjical Strike and **eatURmusic** are distributed through **RED**.

END OF AN ERA: **Brian Malouf** has left **RCA Records**, where he was senior VP of A&R. Malouf was the last remaining senior A&R executive from the **Bob Jamieson** era, which ended when **Clive Davis** took over as RCA Music Group chairman in November 2002. An RCA spokesman declined comment.

The RCA A&R team now consists of senior VPs **Steve Ferrera** and **Steve Ralbovsky**, VP **Matt Marshall** and A&R manager **Donna Pearce**, all reporting to executive A&R VP **Ashley Newton**, who joined in January 2003 from **Virgin**.

Malouf joined RCA in 1994 as a staff producer and rose to senior VP of A&R in 1998. During his tenure, he worked with **Eve 6**, **Lit**, **the Verve Pipe** and **Stellastarr**, among others.

Additional reporting by **Deborah Evans Price** in Nashville and **Troy Carpenter** in New York.

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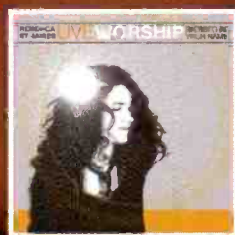
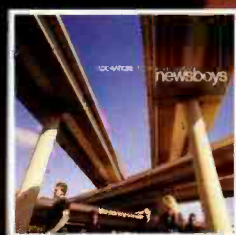
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LATIN MUSIC QUARTERLY #1 issue date: May 1 • ad close: April 6

DVD-AUDIO issue date: May 1 • ad close: April 6

Music

New Bands

Continued from page 11

follow-up "Cold Hard Bitch" is climbing the chart. Switchfoot reached No. 5 with "Meant to Live."

Lostprophets' "Last Train Home," the Darkness' "I Believe in a Thing Called Love" and Story of the Year's "Until the Day I Die" are still moving upward. Lostprophets briefly appeared on the chart in 2002 when it peaked at No. 33 with "Shinobi Vs. Dragon Ninja."

"The question is, Are modern rock stations open to these acts or just open to these songs?" radio consultant Jeff Pollack asks. "Each of them delivered a really good song, [but] what will their second and third songs do? Are these real acts? Only time will tell."

The bands are also receiving airplay on either MTV or MTV2. Lostprophets will be one of the featured acts on MTV's Campus Invasion '04 tour.

FILLING THE VOID

Following the rap/rock days of Limp Bizkit and the garage band movement of the Hives, the Vines and the Strokes—which never really took off at modern rock—the format finds itself looking for the next big thing.

"We're stuck between cycles," Williams says.

Bill Gamble, PD at WZZN Chicago, adds that tweaks within the format are paving the way for the new bands.

"It's becoming harder and harder for bands like Coldplay and Metallica to exist on the same stations," he says, "and that opens up room on both sides."

Indeed, none of these bands falls into an easily identifiable category. Three Days Grace's "(I Hate) Everything About You" blends Vertical Horizon's modern pop with explosive choruses.

Melbourne, Australia's Jet's guitar-driven rock wears its Rolling Stones and AC/DC influences on every chord.

Switchfoot's mellower music blends strong melodies with lyrical content about the search for meaning.

Story of the Year is in the pop/punk vein of Good Charlotte. The Darkness provides over-the-top glam rock redolent of Queen, while Welsh act Lostprophets is in the style of Linkin Park.

And the bands' reasons for making music are just as diverse.

For Jon Foreman, lead singer of San Diego-based Switchfoot, it's about the message. "The whole record is about yearning for something more than cell phones and modern conveniences," he says. "Making music that hits on a spiritual and emotional level was our goal, rather than just [music] to tap your foot to."

Conversely, for Nic Cester of Jet, it's all about a few chords and bringing back the days of real rock'n'roll. "Things are just so plastic these days," he says. "We just wanted to remind people that it's four guys who play their instruments and write their own songs. It's not something packaged together by some dickhead in a suit."

As Williams sums it up: "The only thing these bands have in common is that they are all different and that the format is diverse, which allows them to have a place at radio."

ROADWORK

While radio was chasing the next trend, many of these acts were quietly playing show after show and developing their fan bases.

Williams says, "Now there's a vacuum of music, and we're going 'Cool,' because we're finding there was already word-of-mouth on Switchfoot in Atlanta. People are going 'Holy cow, we can't believe 99X is playing them.'"

Most of these bands are on their first or second full-length album; however, Switchfoot had released two albums on

Christian imprint Re:think and one album on Sparrow. The band's current album, "The Beautiful Letdown," was issued on Sparrow and Columbia.

And Switchfoot's fans were very willing to follow the group to the mainstream, in part because the band didn't veer dramatically from its past sound. "We made the record before Columbia ever stepped on board," Foreman says. "The goal was to be the band that your friend told you about."

Other groups found other means of exposure.

Jet got a tremendous boost from the placement of "Are You Gonna Be My Girl" in a TV campaign for Apple Computer's iTunes and iPod, as well as in Electronic Arts' "Madden 2004" videogame.

"Anything that's getting our music recognized whilst providing us with a shitload of cash, I'm going to say 'Yes' to," Cester says.

RETAIL WEIGHS IN

Switchfoot and Jet look to be the early sales leaders, but several of the other bands are gaining.

According to Nielsen SoundScan, "The Beautiful Letdown" has sold 435,000 copies since its release in February 2003. "Get Born" (Elektra) from Jet has sold 423,000 since its October release.

Three Days Grace's self-titled Jive album has sold 356,000 units since coming out last July. The Darkness' "Permission to Land" (Atlantic) has moved 304,000 copies since its September release. Story of the Year's "Page Avenue" (Maverick/Warner Bros.) has sold 230,000 units in three months. And Lostprophets' "Start Something" (Columbia) has racked up 90,000 in sales in three weeks.

"Definitely right now the most excitement is around the Darkness," says Chris Brown, VP of marketing and operations for the 10-store, Portland, Maine-based Bull Moose Music.

"Permission to Land" is the only new modern rock release in the chain's list of top 20 sellers.

An inviting price point initially helped move units for Three Days Grace and Jet, Brown says.

WEA Distribution originally offered Jet's "Get Born" at a

suggested list price of \$13.98 until January. The album slipped eight slots on Bull Moose's internal sales chart the week the price increased.

Brown experienced a similar sales drop when BMG raised the price for the Three Days Grace set.

HANDICAPPING THE BANDS

Radio programmers say Jet has the best prospects for a long career.

"They will be a band that people will recognize and will have successful music," Williams says.

Jet also wins favor with listeners at WZZN. "Jet is the one we're having the most success with, because it sounds like AC/DC," Gamble says.

Programmers are also intrigued by the Darkness.

"They could really surprise a lot of people with their next album taking a direction that [makes] people realize, 'Hey, this album isn't a joke,' " Oedipus says. "Do they have the potential to be Queen, or are they the Tubes?"

As for the Darkness snaring three trophies at the Feb. 17 Brit Awards in the United Kingdom, "It means nothing here," Oedipus says.

One issue that all of the bands must work on, the experts say, is putting a face with the name since many of the acts remain relatively anonymous. However, the bands say the music will always come before the image.

Switchfoot felt so strongly about the issue, it refused to have its picture on the cover of its album.

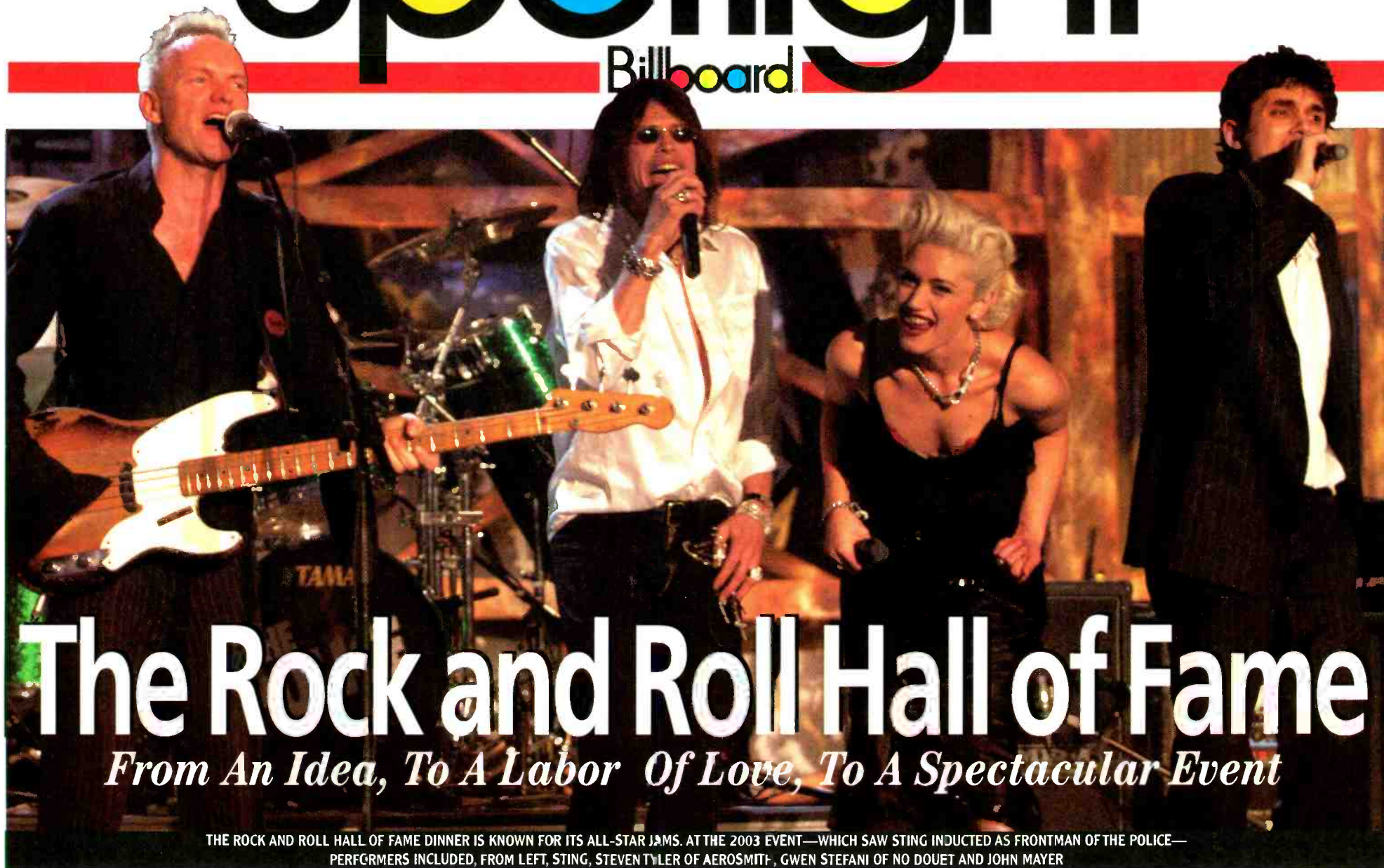
Cester wants the motive to remain pure. "We're not doing this so we can get recognized," he says. "I think that's part of the shame nowadays. People are into being rock stars and being famous, instead of just loving music."



SWITCHFOOT: NOT INTO HAVING A ROCK STAR IMAGE

Spotlight

Billboard



The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

From An Idea, To A Labor Of Love, To A Spectacular Event

THE ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME DINNER IS KNOWN FOR ITS ALL-STAR JAMS. AT THE 2003 EVENT—WHICH SAW STING INDUCTED AS FRONTMAN OF THE POLICE—PERFORMERS INCLUDED, FROM LEFT, STING, STEVEN TYLER OF AEROSMITH, GWEN STEFANI OF NO DOUBT AND JOHN MAYER

BY CARLA HAY

There is an unwritten rule in the music business: Getting a Grammy Award means you have won the approval of your peers. Getting inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame means you've become a respected and enduring legend.

During the past 18 years, the Hall of Fame honor has gone to such an elite group that it is little wonder the induction ceremonies have produced unforgettable moments—reunions of disbanded superstar groups, emotional and historically rich speeches and once-in-a-lifetime, all-star jam sessions.

The magic will continue with the 19th annual Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony March 15 at the Waldorf Astoria in New York. This year's performer inductees are Jackson Browne, the Dells, George Harrison, Prince, Bob Seger, Traffic and ZZ Top.

Stars set to induct the honorees include: Bruce Springsteen, Dave Matthews, Tom Petty, OutKast and Alicia Keys. VH1 will tape the event for broadcast March 21.

A lifetime achievement award in the non-performer category will be presented to Jann Wenner, co-founder and editor-in-chief/publisher of Rolling Stone and chairman of Wenner Media (see *The Last Word*, page 86).

"The idea of having the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame started with a pay-per-view TV company that owned the rights to the name," says Ahmet Ertegun, the co-founder of Atlantic Records and considered by many to be the official "godfather" of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. Ertegun—now co-chairman/co-CEO of the Atlantic Group—is one of the music industry's pioneers and one of the earliest champions of R&B and rock'n'roll.

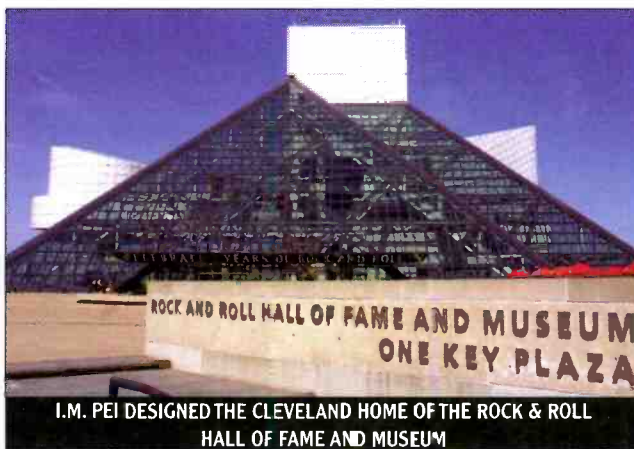
"They asked for my help in putting the show together. At first I turned them down, because I didn't want to get involved in a scheme that would create just another music show on television."

Ertegun says he changed his mind when the company convinced him that without his help, the show might turn into tacky farce with questionable credibility.

"So I said, 'If I do it, I want to get all the right people involved who love rock'n'roll and who understand that we want to make something like this dignified.'"

In 1983, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation was created. Ertegun invited record-company leaders, top managers, attorneys and other influential industry people to take part.

A select group of people joined the foundation's board of direc-



tors. They included Ertegun as chairman, Wenner as vice chairman, Sire Records co-founder and president Seymour Stein as president, attorney Suzan Evans as executive director and attorney Allen Grubman as secretary/treasurer.

Through the years, the board has grown to include about 60 top industry veterans, including Bruce Springsteen manager Jon Landau, former Elektra chief Bob Krasnow, BMG North America chairman/CEO Clive Davis, MTV Networks chairman/CEO Tom Freston, ASCAP chairman/president Marilyn Bergman, BMI president/CEO Frances Preston, Island Def Jam Music Group chairman Antonio "L.A." Reid, Sony Music Entertainment chairman/CEO Andrew Lack, Infinity Broadcasting chairman/CEO John Sykes, Universal Music Group chairman/CEO Doug Morris and others.

Grubman—a senior partner in the law firm Grubman, Indursky & Schindler—remembers vividly, "One of the first meetings we had was at a Chinese restaurant called Pearl's [in New York], and we've reminisced about that many times over the years."

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation eventually bought the rights to the Hall of Fame name. And the board immediately decided against a TV broadcast of the induction ceremonies.

In starting the foundation and establishing its criteria for induction, the board faced two main challenges, Evans says.

"It was very important that the honor be considered prestigious," she says. "In order to do that, we had to get a top-notch board in place who had the passion, love and time to make this into a credible organization.

"The second challenge was to create by-laws and rules which would stand the test of time yet be flexible to change with time. The rules of nomination and election had to work and be credible." (see story, page 6).

The inaugural Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction dinner took place in 1986 at the Waldorf Astoria in New York, which has been, for the most part, the longtime home of the event.

The first class of performing inductees is a roster of rock'n'roll's founding pioneers: Chuck Berry, James Brown, Ray Charles, Sam
(Continued on page 22)

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The Dells Silky, smooth harmony. That's what comes to mind when you think of the Dells, the quintet that first doo-wopped its way onto the R&B scene in the 1950s.

From street-corner rhapsodizing to jazz vocalizing, the Dells have warbled their way into R&B history—and the act hasn't stopped yet.

"There have been peaks and valleys, but we had no idea it would last this long," group member Chuck Barksdale says about the career that led to this year's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction. "This award is the bomb. It's the ultimate award, other than a Grammy.

"Borrowing from Gladys Knight's induction speech," he continues, "this award isn't just for the Dells—it's for all the brothers and sisters who may not get here."

(Continued on page 26)

Bob Seger Word reached Bob Seger of his induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame from his son Cole and daughter Samantha. "I was watching an NBA game," he recalls, "and they came down the stairs screaming, 'Daddy's in the Hall of Fame!' It was pretty exciting."

Humbly, Seger adds, "Obviously, there wasn't a Hall of Fame when I started, but to be in there with your heroes—Little Richard, Elvis, the Beatles, the Stones, Dylan—is just beyond words. I think about Al Kaline, who's in the [baseball] Hall of Fame, or how I played golf with Larry Bird, who's in [the basketball] Hall of Fame. Now I'm in my

(Continued on page 26)



Prince Prince is the only first-time nominee elected to the Hall of Fame this year, but he is also possibly the most complete rock star in history.

Few musicians have been as successful as Prince at singing, writing, arranging and producing, as well as playing a wide variety of instruments and dazzling live audiences. In addition, he has maintained a compelling mystique while being both musically innovative and business-savvy.

"He does everything well," Grammy Award-winning producer/songwriter Jimmy Jam says of Prince. The two met in junior high while performing in the school band, and Jam later played in Prince-produced group the Time during the early 1980s.

(Continued on page 26)



Jackson Browne

As one of seven performing members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's class of 2004, Jackson Browne is thrilled with the company he's keeping.

"Bob Seger, Prince, ZZ Top, Traffic... I'm so happy to be going in with these people," he says. "They're all people I've listened to and enjoyed and [who] have influenced me. I just think it's a great class to be in."

The induction validates years of hard work. "To have what I do and the values that I hold honored in this way is an affirmation," Browne says. "I'm really honored by the attention that's been given my music by listeners. That's the context in which I think of all this. There are people that have listened to me for their whole life."

And yet, he admits that the whole induction process is a bit of a mystery to him.

(Continued on page 26)



ZZ Top ZZ Top guitarist Billy Gibbons says he was compiling the track list for the Texas trio's new boxed set, "Chrome, Smoke and BBQ," when he got a blast of perspective on the 35-year career of the Lil' Old Band From Texas. That career has led to the band's induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

"Well, it's a big, deep breath," Gibbons says of ZZ Top's output. "I remember when we wrote something or when we were on the road and something happened."

Bassist Joe "Dusty" Hill adds, "I'm sure nobody knew the three of us would still be playing together—with the same manager, no less—"

(Continued on page 24)



George Harrison

The tragedy of George Harrison's induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame—a new honor supplementing the Beatles' entry in 1988—is that it is posthumous. But more than two years since his death and 40 years since the Fab Four's momentous landing in the United States, the recognition is more appropriate than ever, according to Harrison's close friend Jeff Lynne.

"I don't think George was too into honors," observes Lynne, Harrison's frequent co-writer and producer, "but I suppose he would have been pleased. I think he should have been [inducted] a long time [ago]. Even just his slide-guitar playing would [have gotten] him in for me, and his Beatles solos."

(Continued on page 24)



Traffic The induction of Traffic into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame marks much-deserved recognition for a band that grew from pop origins in England—with hits like "Paper Sun," "Hole in My Shoe" and "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush"—to reach the vanguard of folk- and blues-inflected British album rock.

Founding members Steve Winwood, Jim Capaldi and Dave Mason will play at their induction (at press time, plans called for them to perform the classic "Dear Mr. Fantasy"). Stephanie Wood, the sister of the band's late flautist/saxophonist Chris Wood, who died in 1983, will represent her brother.

(Continued on page 24)

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THE EVERLY BROTHERS
ALAN FREED
BUDDY HOLLY
JERRY LEE LEWIS
LITTLE RICHARD
SAM PHILLIPS
ELVIS PRESLEY

★1987★

LEONARD CHESSE
EDDIE COCHRAN
BO DIDDLEY
AHMET ERTEGUN
ARETHA FRANKLIN
LOUIS JORDAN
B.B. KING
CLYDE MCPHATTER
RICKY NELSON
ROY ORBISON
CARL PERKINS
BIG JOE TURNER
T. BONE WALKER
MUDDY WATERS
JERRY WEXLER
HANK WILLIAMS
JACKIE WILSON

★1988★

THE BEACH BOYS
THE BEATLES (PRS)
THE DRIFTERS
WOODY GUTHRIE
LEADBELLY
THE SUPREMES

★1989★

THE INKSPOTS
OTIS REDDING
THE ROLLING STONES (PRS)
PHIL SPECTOR
THE SOUL STIRRERS
THE TEMPTATIONS

★1990★

HANK BALLARD
CHARLIE CHRISTIAN
BOBBY DARIN
THE FOUR TOPS
GERRY GOFFIN &
CAROLE KING
HOLLAND, DOZIER &
HOLLAND
THE KINKS (PRS)
THE PLATTERS
SIMON & GARFUNKEL
THE WHO (PRS)

★1991★

LAVERN BAKER
DAVE BARTHOLOMEW
RALPH BASS
THE BYRDS
JOHN LEE HOOKER
THE IMPRESSIONS
WILSON PICKETT
JIMMY REED
IKE & TINA TURNER
HOWLIN' WOLF

★1992★

BOBBY "BLUE" BLAND
BOOKER T & THE MGS
BILL GRAHAM
ELMORE JAMES
PROFESSOR LONGHAIR
DOC POMUS
SAM & DAVE
THE YARDBIRDS

★1993★

RUTH BROWN
CREAM
CREEDENCE CLEARWATER
REVIVAL
ETTA JAMES
VAN MORRISON
SLY & THE FAMILY STONE
DINAH WASHINGTON

★1994★

THE ANIMALS
WILLIE DIXON
DUANE EDDY
ELTON JOHN (PRS)
JOHN LENNON
JOHNNY OTIS

★1995★

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND
AL GREEN
MARTHA & THE VANDELLAS

★1996★

DAVID BOWIE (PRS)
TOM DONAHUE
JEFFERSON AIRPLANE
LITTLE WILLIE JOHN
PINK FLOYD (PRS)
PETE SEIGER
THE SHIRELLES
THE VELVET UNDERGROUND

★1997★

THE BEE GEES
BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD
CROSBY, STILLS & NASH
THE JACKSON FIVE
SYD NATHAN
PARLIAMENT-FUNKABELIC
THE (YOUNG) RASCALS

★1998★

THE EAGLES
FLEETWOOD MAC
THE MAMAS & THE PAPAS
GENE PITNEY
LLOYD PRICE
SANTANA
ALLEN TOUSSAINT
GENE VINCENT

★1999★

CHARLES BROWN
GEORGE MARTIN (PRS)
CURTIS MAYFIELD
DEL SHANNON
THE STAPLE SINGERS

★2000★

ERIC CLAPTON (PRS)
CLIVE DAVIS
EARTH WIND & FIRE
BILLIE HOLIDAY
NING CURTIS
LOVIN' SPOONFUL
THE MOONGLOWS
EARL PALMER

★2001★

SOLOMON BURKE
JAMES BURTON
THE FLAMINGOS
MICHAEL JACKSON
QUEEN (PRS)
PAUL SIMON
RITCHIE VALENS

★2002★

CHET ATKINS
ISAAC HAYES
BRENDA LEE
TOM PETTY & THE
HEARTBREAKERS
GENE PITNEY
TALKING HEADS

★2003★

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Hall Of Fame

Continued from page 17

Cooke, Fats Domino, the Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis Presley and Little Richard. Also inducted that year were Alan Freed, Sam Phillips, Robert Johnson, Jimmie Rodgers, Jimmy Yancey and John Hammond.

"My only regret was that we didn't start a Rock and Roll Hall of Fame sooner," Stein says. "We were having so much fun in the music business it didn't occur to us to have one sooner. We don't tend to realize the value and importance of rock'n'roll. Music is the thing that unites us around the world, and so much of it is American and rock'n'roll."

As annual induction dinners continued, the idea of a physical museum to enshrine the history of rock'n'roll gained momentum.

"Our goal was to build a museum, but in the beginning we envisioned buying a brownstone in New York City and filling it with memorabilia," Evans reveals.

But interest in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum quickly grew to such an extent that the foundation received offers to fund and house it from several cities, including

Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago, Memphis, New York, Atlanta, New Orleans and San Francisco.

In the end, Cleveland—home to pioneering rock DJ Alan Freed, who is credited for coining the term "rock'n'roll"—landed the museum.

Initially, the foundation considered renovating an existing building for \$20 million to \$30 million. But ultimately, in large part because of Cleveland's enthusiasm and financial support, plans took shape for a new building to house the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum.

Designed by noted architect I.M. Pei, the museum is a striking, 150,000-square-foot structure, anchored by a 162-foot tower. "I.M. Pei was our first choice as the architect," Ertegun notes. "When I asked him to do it, I said to him, 'Be sure to tell your children about this offer before you turn it down.' And of course, his children said that he had to do it. He gave us what is probably one of the greatest achievements of his career."

Builders broke ground for the museum in 1993. A star-studded concert televised on HBO marked its open-

ing in 1995.

Wenner says, "The biggest challenge was getting it right, because we were starting something new. We took our time, because we wanted to get it right. We wanted a balance of making it serious with a historical purpose as well as [making] it popular and attractive to visitors."

The museum prides itself on presenting the ultimate history of rock'n'roll, according to chief curator Jim Henke. In addition to permanent exhibits (including those devoted to

Hall of Fame inductees), it features limited-edition exhibits, educational programs and special events.

"We have a Hall of Fame series in which we bring inductees to play in this little theater that seats about 160 people and answer questions from the audience," Henke says. Music notables who have participated in the series include Aretha Franklin, Al Green, Ray Davies of the Kinks, Dickey Betts of Allman Brothers Band fame, the Band (minus Robbie Robertson), record producer Jerry Wexler and the songwriting duo of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller.

As for the exhibits, most of the items come from the artists or their estates. "Mothers are often a good source of material," Henke adds. "That's how we got a lot of stuff from Jim Morrison and the Everly Brothers. People love to see things like report cards, handwritten notes and [childhood] possessions."

"One of our favorite pieces," Henke says, "is an early John Lennon notebook called 'The Daily Howl,' which was in the form of a newspaper with his writings and drawings from when he was about 12 or 13. We also had several of his report cards."

For years, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremonies (Continued on page 26)

Getting In: How The Rock Hall Votes

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame currently has four categories: performers, non-performers, early influences and sidemen.

A performer is eligible for induction 25 years after the release of the act's first record. For the performer category, a nominating committee consisting of about 30 to 40 various influential people in the music industry selects a list of nominees.

The nominee list is then sent out for voting to between 700 and 1,000 rock experts around the world. Performers must receive more than 50% of the votes to be inducted.

Smaller committees vote on the other three categories.

The board members acknowledge that it is impossible to please everyone when it comes to selecting artists for induction.

"The subjective criteria [include], was this person instrumental in the perpetuation and development of rock'n'roll?" notes Suzan Evans, executive director of the Rock And Roll Hall of Fame Foundation.

So what else is taken into consideration?

"Beautiful music," says legendary producer Jerry Wexler, who is on the

nominating committee. "That, and, of course, impact," he adds.

Since affinity for rock music is largely a matter of personal taste, what is actually "rock's best" can be a matter of fiercely held opinion.

"We've had some pretty lively debates," admits Jon Landau, a longtime member of the nominating committee. "We really try to do justice to our [musical] history. In some cases, it has helped when a few people on the committee really believe in a particular artist. Some of us can be quite persistent. We take this very seriously."

CARLA HAY and RAY WADDELL

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ZZ Top

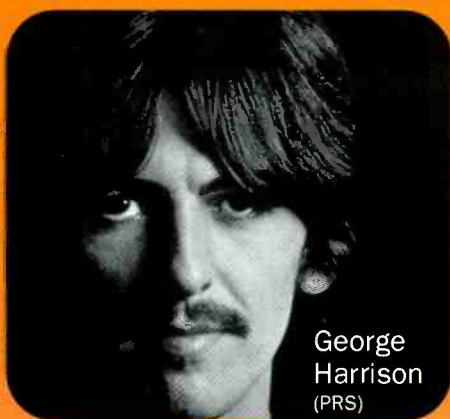


We're proud of all our
members inducted into
the 2004 Rock & Roll
Hall of Fame.

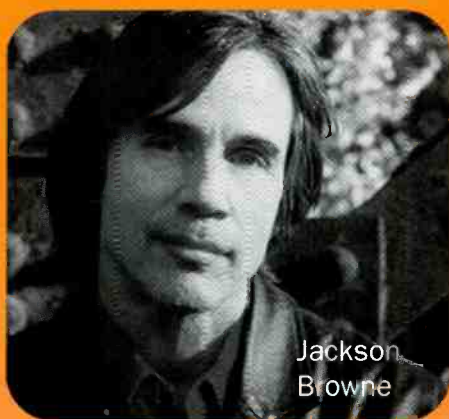


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to them, and
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Achievement Winner
Jann Wenner.

George
Harrison
(PRS)



Jackson
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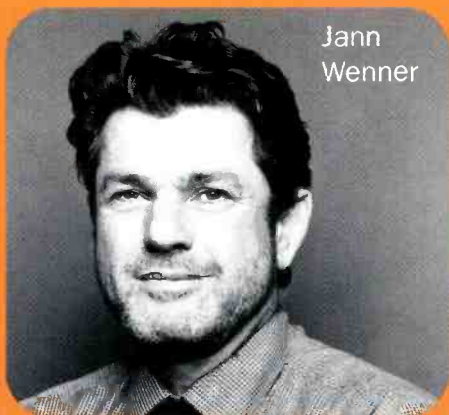
Prince



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The Dells



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ZZ Top

Continued from page 20

after all these years. But we are, and it's turned out great."

ZZ Top came together in Houston in 1969, after Gibbons' tenure in the Moving Sidewalks and Hill and drummer Frank Beard's stint with American Blues.

Gibbons gave the band its proper name after seeing a pair of Z beams sticking out of an open hayloft. Ever since then, the trio

has been blending a strong blues and boogie sensibility with heavy rock conventions to become one of rock's hardest-working bands—occasionally visiting the charts with such radio hits as "La Grange" and "Tush."

ZZ Top's commercial zenith came in the 1980s, when it entered the multi-platinum realm. It was driven by the success of songs like "Gimme All Your Lovin'," "Sharp Dressed Man," "Legs" and "Sleeping Bag" and their accompanying videos, which captured the group's sly sense of humor and long-beard-

ed imagery. These clips also featured a collection of unique guitars, some of which have resided in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum since its 1995 opening.

After 35 years, ZZ Top still remains active. Aside from a boxed set, 2003 saw the release of the band's 14th studio album, "Mescalero." And the trio plans to hit the Foam Box—its "clubhouse" studio in Houston—for some more recording, but most of its 2004 plans center on touring, including a summer jaunt in North America.

GARY GRAFF

Traffic

Continued from page 20

"I was very proud to be part of Traffic," Winwood says, "and I'm very glad for the lots of people who played with the band during all those times. There's a whole list of them, from all the many chapters."

Such players include Reebob Kuaku Baah, Rick Gretch, Jim Gordon, Randall Bramlett and Walfredo Reyes. "I'm very pleased they've got a well-earned place on a wall in Cleveland, and I'm very grateful to the powers that be for putting Traffic in this prestigious institution."

The induction comes during a period of live activity for Winwood. He was a guest vocalist along with Isaac Hayes on European shows in late January and early February by the Funk Brothers, the former Motown house band. Those shows were followed by his own solo dates.

Indeed, Winwood's involvement with the much-revered, belatedly acknowledged session players has only heightened his appreciation for the sidemen awards the Hall of Fame presents. "The fact that it recognizes the sidemen is a fantastic thing," he says.

Winwood's 2003 album, "About Time," is being repromoted by his

own Wincraft label in the United States and by Sanctuary internationally, with three new songs, including a version of "Voodoo Chile," a tune associated with Winwood since he played keyboards on the Jimi Hendrix original in 1968.

Winwood's manager, Mick Newton at Atomic Management, adds that Wincraft will also issue a DVD of Traffic's 1994 tour.

Last summer, Universal Music Enterprises completed its "Traffic Remasters Campaign" with the final three albums in the series. As Bill Levenson, UME senior VP of A&R, points out, the catalog was remastered from the original analog master tapes, and many of the new versions feature bonus material.

The set now comprises 10 albums, starting with the 1967 sets "Mr. Fantasy" and "Heaven Is in Your Mind" through to 1974's "When the Eagle Flies."

"The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is essentially an American institution," Winwood says, "and interestingly enough, in terms of American popularity, it's the later chapters of Traffic, such as 'John Barleycorn Must Die,' 'The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys' and 'Shoot Out at the Fantasy Factory,' that were more widely known than the first two records."

PAUL SEXTON

Harrison

Continued from page 20

His slide work was so controlled and beautiful—it was silky the way he played—and his vibrato was perfect and soulful. And the great songs he's written since [the Beatles], like 'Isn't It a Pity' and all that stuff."

In the wake of the release in November of the "Concert for George" by Warner Strategic Marketing, Capitol Records was set to reissue six of Harrison's solo albums Feb. 24, originally

released on the Dark Horse label.

"Thirty-Three & 1/3," "George Harrison," "Somewhere in England," "Gone Troppo," "Cloud Nine" and "Live in Japan" have been unavailable for some years. Capitol has digitally remastered the discs with added bonus tracks, new liner notes and rare photographs. The albums are the latest in a reissue series that began in 2001 with the expanded version of 1970's "All Things Must Pass." Harrison had planned on overseeing further rereleases.

Capitol has also released "The Dark Horse Years, 1976-1992," a deluxe

boxed set. It comes with a DVD containing 75 minutes of footage along with a 36-page booklet that features an essay from Harrison's widow, Olivia, and liner notes by journalist David Fricke. The footage features Harrison discussing his solo career and performing with longtime friend Eric Clapton during a 1991 tour of Japan.

"The emotions and sentiments contained in the songs on these albums are timeless, but they feel more relevant than ever," EMI Music U.K. and Ireland chairman/CEO Tony Wadsworth says.

PAUL SEXTON

*Jackson, it's been a wonderful 30 years.
Thanks for taking me along.*

*Buddha
(Donald Miller)*

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Jackson Browne

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Steve Winwood

ZZ Top

on being inducted into the

2004 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

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Browne

Continued from page 20

"It's not clear to me [how] the voting is [done], and I don't really care. I've only met three or four people who can vote. Bruce Hornsby told me he votes, and I was like, 'You vote?' Tom Petty told me he votes. I didn't make an attempt to find out how to vote. I didn't vote for myself!"

But it's easy to see why so many others did. With the release of his first self-titled album in 1972 (also known as "Saturate Before Using"), it was clear that a new, fresh voice with much to say had arrived. As one of the pioneers of the '70s Southern California sound that blended rock and country, Browne ushered in a new age of sensitive storytellers.

Lyrics stood side by side with acoustic-based melodies and often

delved into deeply private subjects on such albums as 1974's "Late for the Sky"; or 1978's classic life-on-the-road opus, "Running on Empty"; or his No. 1 album, 1980's "Hold Out." No topic was too personal for Browne, but he was also not afraid to tackle political subjects either, including taking on Ronald Reagan on 1986's "Lives in the Balance."

For Browne, it's hard to believe he's eligible: The clock's steady march forward has often taken him and his fans aback. "People have asked me about my son," whose photo as a toddler appears on "The Pretender." "When I tell them my son is 30, everybody's always taken by surprise by how much time has passed."

Browne, who has parted ways with longtime home Elektra Entertainment, continues to work on new music (*The Beat*, *Billboard*, Feb. 7) but is also looking back. He is

preparing to release three of his titles in 5.1 surround sound on Warner Strategic Marketing, including a two-CD collection titled "The Very Best of Jackson Browne."

He is most excited about an extra feature that will appear on the DVD-A for his last studio album, "Naked Ride Home," that documents his songwriting process. "I'd thought how great it would be if I could see some of my fave songwriters write their songs. There has to be a lot of pacing around, getting another cup of coffee or remembering to take the trash out."

But surprisingly, one of rock music's most revealing songwriters has one last confession: "I always envied people who didn't write their own material. I had to write them myself. And to tell you the truth, I know that any number of people could sing them better."

MELINDA NEWMAN

Hall Of Fame

Continued from page 22

remained somewhat cloaked in the kind of mystique similar to exclusive club events. That changed in 1996, when VH1 began televising the ceremonies.

"We resisted televising it for a long time," Evans says. "The artists enjoyed the feeling that they could say anything, knowing it wasn't going to be televised. But then people started criticizing us for being 'elitist' and not sharing this event with everybody."

Evans adds, "Once the museum was built, we decided to build awareness for the museum through televising the ceremony."

Lee Rolontz is the TV show's executive producer, a role Rolontz has had for several Rock and Roll Hall of Fame ceremonies as well as VH1's "Divas Live" shows. Award-show veteran Joel Gallen of Tenth Planet Productions also returns as a producer of the induction ceremony.

A frequent challenge of any ceremony often is reuniting a disbanded group when its members have been estranged from each



ERTEGUN: GODFATHER OF THE HALL OF FAME

other for years. Even harder is getting them to perform onstage together. Such was the case with acts like the Police and Cream.

VH1 executive VP of talent and music programming Rick Krim explains why the artists are often convinced to reunite. "We tell them, 'This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance, so can you put your differences behind you?' More often than not, they come together for the event."

Evans concludes, "We always try to keep in mind that this is a show for the artists."

Dells

Continued from page 20

Even with an average age of 68, the Dells' elder statesmen of soul can not only still out-sing their contemporaries, but they are doing it with the same 1960 lineup.

Marvin Junior (lead baritone), Johnny Funches (lead tenor), Verne Allison (tenor), Lucius McGill (tenor), Mickey McGill (second baritone) and Chuck Barksdale (bass), all high-school classmates from Harvey, Ill., initially teamed up in 1953 as the El-Rays.

Lucius McGill left that same year, soon after the group's first single, "Darling I Know" (Checker), failed. Renaming themselves the Dells, the quintet notched a minor R&B hit in 1955 on Vee Jay with "Dreams of Contentment." Then, "Oh, What a

Night" went top five a year later.

After a two-year hiatus following a near-fatal car accident involving several of the members in 1958, the Dells went on the road. The gig? Touring with Dinah Washington as her opening act and backup group.

Since he opted to stay home, Funches was replaced by former Flamingos lead/falsetto tenor Johnny Carter.

The group once again enjoyed R&B success with the 1965 top 30 song "Stay in My Corner." But it was not until the Dells signed with Chess Records subsidiary Cadet that their spotty chart record turned into an enduring string of hits.

Under the direction of songwriter/producer Bobby Miller (Eddie Kendricks) and arranger/composer Charles Stepney (Earth, Wind & Fire), the Dells discovered their harmonic niche.

That partnership led to the still-

unmatched six-minute, slow-grind rerelease of "Stay in My Corner." It reached No. 1 on the R&B chart and made the top 10 on the pop chart in 1968.

The group remained an R&B mainstay during the late 1960s and 1970s with a string of top-20 hits, including "Always Together," "Oh, What a Night" (a remake of the 1956 hit), "Open Up My Heart," "The Love We Had (Stays on My Mind)" and the group's first certified million-seller, "Give Your Baby a Standing Ovation."

The Dells served as consultants for the 1991 film "The Five Heartbeats" and its soundtrack yielded their top 20 hit "A Heart Is A House For Love."

Still a major concert draw, the group came back this year with a new album, "Hott," featuring the single "My Lady." Released on Atlanta-based A&E Records, it is the Dell's first album since 2000's "Reminiscing" on Volt.

GAIL MITCHELL

Prince

Continued from page 20

"You have to put Prince in the top of a bunch of categories—songwriting, performing, musicianship. But besides all that, he's a visionary with the way he fuses music and film, such as in 'Purple Rain,' or the way he puts his stage shows together. I don't think anybody's done that better."

Jam adds that he and partner Terry Lewis still rely heavily on the things they have learned from Prince's live performances and recording skills.

Prince, born Prince Roger Nelson in 1958 in Minneapolis, started his chart career in the 1970s, with "Soft and Wet" and "I Wanna Be Your Lover."

In the 1980s, he had 14 top 10 singles on The Billboard Hot 100, four of which went to No. 1: "Let's Go Crazy," "Kiss," "Batdance" and "When Doves Cry," which stayed atop the charts for five weeks. In 1984, the soundtrack to "Purple Rain" remained at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 for 24 weeks. No album released since has spent more weeks at No. 1.

During the 1990s, he had five top 10 hits, including the chart-topping "Cream."

Through it all, he has sold more than 36 million albums in the United States, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of America. He has also starred in four movies.

Prince has written and/or produced hits for the Bangles, Chaka

Khan, Sheena Easton, Sinéad O'Connor, Tom Jones and Stevie Nicks, among others.

With all these hits, it's obvious that Prince's music contributions have staying power. So even though his commercial fortunes have faded during the past 10 years, he remains an unstoppably dazzling performer.

"I'm always floored when I see him live," David Bowie says. "Prince is one of the greatest artists in the world."

Prince has been well-known for challenging the rules and conventions of the music industry. These days, he sells his music through his own Internet subscription music club and often promotes his own tours.

Last year, he self-released an instrumental album, "N.E.W.S.," which was nominated for a Grammy for best pop instrumental album.

Although the press-shy Prince declined to be interviewed about his induction into the Hall of Fame, it has been announced that he will contribute a track to an upcoming Jimi Hendrix tribute, "Power of Soul."

On March 29 in Los Angeles, Prince will open his first U.S. arena tour in six years to showcase his upcoming "Musicology" album and, for the last time he says, many of his well-known hits.

JON BREAM

Jon Bream is a music critic at the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* and the author of the 1984 biography "Prince: Inside the Purple Reign."

Seeger

Continued from page 20

Hall of Fame. It's a great feeling."

The honor follows the release by Capitol Records last year of Seeger's collection "Greatest Hits 2," a follow-up album to the 1993, six-times-platinum "Greatest Hits."

The "Hits" disc is another testament to Seeger's position as the consummate Midwestern rocker, earnest and creatively steeped in a rich blend of R&B, country, folk and rock'n'roll.

Raised in near poverty in Ann Arbor, Mich., Seeger was 10 when his father left the family. Ironically, he had already kindled a musical fire in his son.

Seeger worked his way out of the local club scene, first with Doug Brown & the Omens, then on his

own. He hit big regionally in 1966 with "East Side Story"—which sold 50,000 copies in Detroit—then made a national splash with 1968's "Ramblin' Gamblin' Man," which reached No. 17 on The Billboard Hot 100.

However, Seeger's real breakthrough did not come until eight years later, when the "Night Moves" album and single launched a platinum hit parade that has so far resulted in sales of nearly 50 million records.

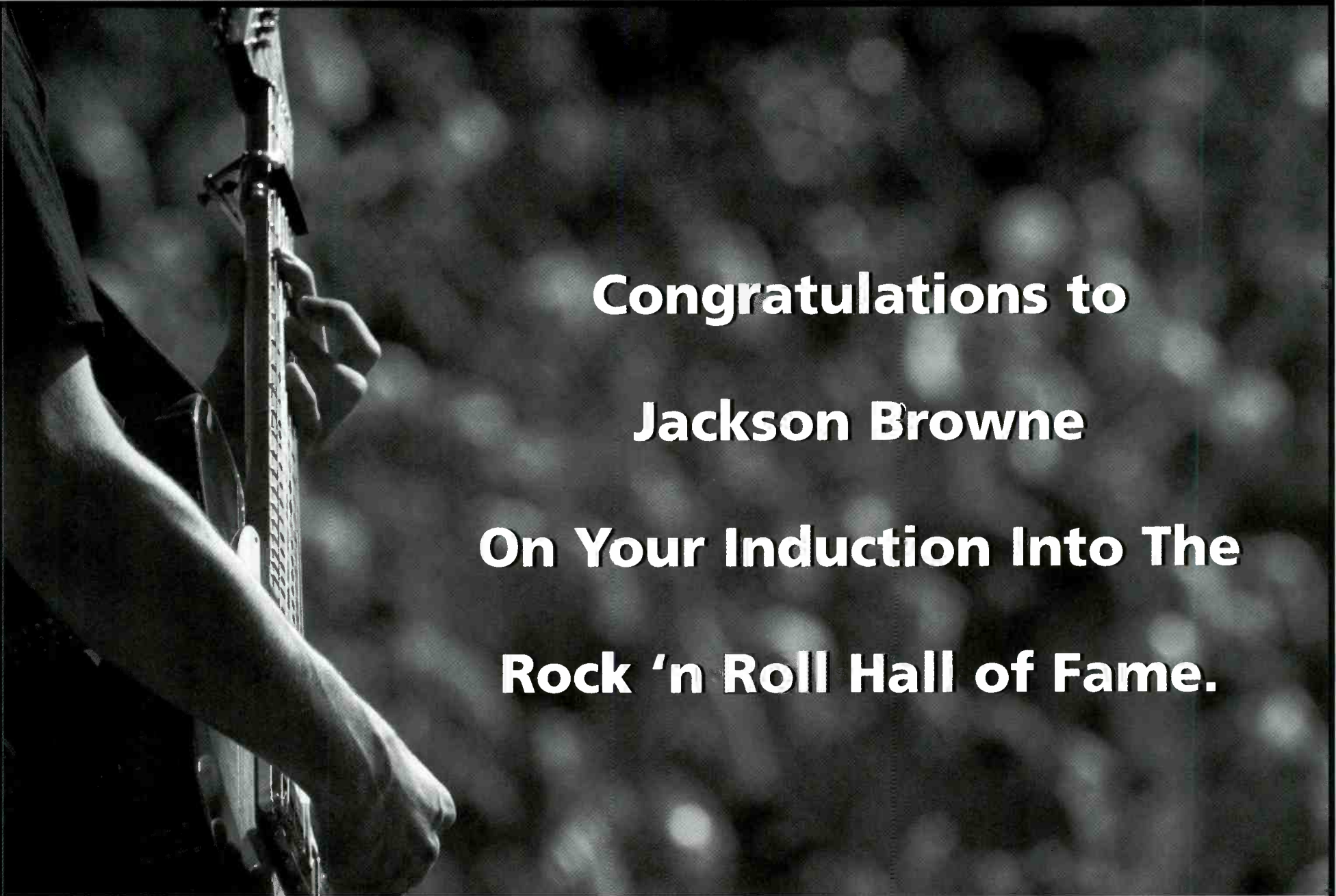
He hasn't had trouble filling his greatest-hits collections with a rash of such enduring singles as "Hollywood Nights," "Still the Same," "Against the Wind," "Like a Rock" and the chart-topping "Shakedown" (from the "Beverly Hills Cop 2" soundtrack). His 1978 hit "Old Time Rock and Roll" has become an anthem for weddings, bar mitzvahs and other parties.

The song was also took on a new life thanks to the 1983 movie "Risky Business," when Tom Cruise, in his first leading role, lip synched and air-guitared to the tune in his underwear.

Meanwhile, "Greatest Hits 2," features two new tracks, and he promises a new studio album later this year—his first since 1995's "It's a Mystery." He hopes the pair of new tracks on "Greatest Hits 2" offers a taste of what can be expected from the upcoming album.

"I think I'm writing a little simpler, a little more direct and out front," Seeger explains. "I'm really gravitating toward the in-your-face, very present kind of stuff. There's a presence about the two new [songs] that exists on the new album. Even the ballads kick very hard; they've got punch. I think I'm just coming into my own groove."

GARY GRAFF



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IAAM Aims For Maximum Effectiveness In Meetings

BY RAY WADDELL

Officials of the International Assn. of Assembly Managers still consider the formula for IAAM district meetings a work in progress. At issue: walking the fine line between appropriate representation and too many meetings.

The seven geographic districts of the IAAM begin their annual meetings March 13-16, when District 5 meets in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Districts 4, 6 and 7 meet April 3-6 in Seattle; districts 1, 2 and 3 meet May 22-26 in Madison, Wis.

The IAAM heads into the district meetings having reached an all-time membership high of 3,624 members. That is an impressive feat at a time when many organizations, including arenas, are tightening their budgets and downsizing their staffs.

Formed in 1924 with six charter members, the IAAM has enjoyed a growth spurt in recent years, first topping the 3,000-member mark three years ago. Membership has doubled in the past decade.

IAAM executive director Dexter King calls the districts "our grassroots regional membership chapters."

But the district meetings do not necessarily reflect the overall growth of IAAM.

"I think the district meeting situation is in a high state of flux right now," says Michael Enoch, owner of arena consultancy firm Enoch Light Productions and VP of district 7.

"We're at a crossroads," says Enoch, who thinks that the success of IAAM specialty meetings like the Arena Management Conference, Crowd Management Seminar and

Arena Marketing Convention, as well as the huge national convention, has come at a price in this era of budget constraints.

"IAAM has been so successful at the other meetings that the district meetings have lost some of their allure," Enoch says.

Several years ago, in an effort to reduce the number of IAAM meetings each year, the association began combining district meetings.

"There is a question as to whether [combining meetings] has been successful or not," notes Jim Hess, director of the Monona Terrace in Madison, Wis., and VP of district 3, which includes Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

"The intention was to decrease the number of meetings that members, particularly the allied, had to participate in," Hess explains. "But the combined meetings often end up in larger cities where the costs are higher, so sometimes the [combined district meetings] end up competing with some of the other specialty meetings, even the [IAAM] national convention."

DECREASED ATTENDANCE

For many districts, though, meeting attendance has decreased. "If attendance drops off, does it really help the allied?" Enoch wonders. "And does it help [building managers] discuss local issues the way they need to?"

King admits that there are some differences of opinion as to the success of the combined meetings: "IAAM accomplished one thing we

set out to do as an organization, and that's fewer meetings so that our allied constituents don't have to spread themselves so thin," he says.

"But in doing that we found we displaced something else, and we may find we have to restructure [the district meetings]. We cannot lose the grassroots connection."

District 7—comprising California,



KING: MAY RESTRUCTURE MEETING

Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, Utah, Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific islands and Asia—has begun to foster that grassroots networking through a series of "chapter" meetings within the district's North American cities. Meetings have already been held for managers of buildings in or around Las Vegas, Phoenix, San Diego, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles and Sacramento, Calif.

It is a concept Enoch would like to see expanded into other districts, particularly those that are widespread geographically.

District 6, for example, includes New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas and Mexico. District 4

consists of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming in the United States and Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Saskatchewan and Yukon in Canada.

"All the people in the general area of the city can meet once a quarter to talk about local issues and encourage people to form student chapters and support the district," Enoch says.

Those attending the meeting control its content, with little or no national or district input, Enoch says. King also supports the concept.

THE FIFTH DIMENSION

While district 5 has combined with other districts in the past, the Southeastern-based group has fared quite well meeting on its own for the past two years.

District 5 contains building professionals in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

"It's not that we don't want to meet with other districts, it's just that we don't feel the need like some other districts do," notes Tim Riddle, director of the Chattanooga (Tenn.) Convention & Trade Center and district 5 VP. "Some of the other districts might only have four or five members attend a meeting. We typically get about 200."

Riddle says district 5 is a "very participatory [district]. We're in the Southeast, and we've got a lot of buildings. We're a close-knit district, with a lot of communication between peers."

Hess is trying to bolster interest in the May combined meeting for

districts 1, 2 and 3. "Right now we're concentrating on trying to have an excellent meeting and getting a good turnout," he says. "As far as I can see, the finances for the association and world headquarters [in Coppell, Texas] are looking good, so we're focusing on putting together some excellent educational sessions and networking opportunities."

Hess says meeting participation from district 3 is "fairly strong. I'd like to see it stronger. That's why we're emphasizing the educational components and, of course, you have to make it fun, too."

Randy Brown—director of the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne, Ind., and VP of district 2—says, "Historically, district 2 has a good turnout." District 2 includes Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

Mike Scanlon, director of the Sovereign Bank Arena in Trenton, N.J., and VP of district 1, also hopes for a strong turnout from his constituency, made up mostly of the Northeastern United States and Canada but also including international markets.

"I'd like to see more active involvement from district 1, which has been lacking at best," he says. "I think it's very important to the future of the district meetings and IAAM as a whole."

The Madison meeting will offer a one-day registration this year for the first time to encourage those who can do so to drive to the meeting if they cannot commit to three days or the cost of flying.

"This way, if they want they can drive in for one day and then get back to their building," Hess says.

'Queer As Folk' Tour Gives Babylon Club A Twist

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

The boys are back in town.

For the second consecutive year, Embrace Productions and Showtime Networks are teaming up for a Queer as Folk tour.

Subtitled the Future Babylon tour, the 20-city trek—which further increases the branding of "Queer as Folk"—commences May 2 at Chicago's Crobar club.

The tour coincides with the fourth season of Showtime's successful "Queer as Folk" series, which begins April 18.

Like the inaugural tour, the 2004 edition—which has an estimated budget of \$500,000—will re-create the series' Babylon disco in 2,000- to 3,000-capacity clubs, but with a twist.

Each venue will be made to resemble Babylon in the year 2050. Assisting with design, decor and performance art is Miami-based

production company RKM.

Depending on the market and date, tickets are expected to be between \$20 and \$50. The Future Babylon tour is sponsored by 2(x)ist, Orbitz, Interactive Male and Astroglide. Midori is the title sponsor.

In addition to the opening night, other confirmed dates include May 9 at Avalon in New York, May 30 at Space in Miami and July 9 at the Commodore Ballroom in Vancouver.

According to Embrace president Adam Gill, the audience for the 2003 tour—which cost \$350,000 to produce (it broke even)—was 80% gay and male. Gill says he was surprised by this, particularly because the show's viewing audience is "50% gay men and 50% straight women."

So, he adds, "one of our biggest challenges this time around is enticing and reaching the other side of the



YOUNG: NEW MUSIC FOR THE TOUR

'Queer as Folk' fan: the female."

Certainly, there is a concerted effort to attract more women to the tour, Showtime senior VP of advertising/promotion Stephanie Gibbons acknowledges.

To illustrate, Gibbons points to upcoming ads in—and special promotions with—such mainstream

publications as People, Jane and Cosmopolitan. This will be accompanied by a presence in local and national gay press.

On March 12, Embrace and Showtime will officially announce the tour dates at a press conference at South Miami's Raleigh Hotel to coincide with the annual Winter Party AIDS Benefit Festival in Miami.

DJs Tracy Young and Grammy Award winner Peter Rauhofer, who provided the beats and rhythms last year, will be joined by DJ Manny Lehman this year. Some dates will feature all three DJs, others will spotlight one or two.

Young, who also operates independent dance label Feroch Records, says it was an honor to be asked to participate again this year. "I am fortunate to be offered such opportunities," she says. "It may

open new doors for me."

Young says she will introduce much new music during the trek—including Feroch's single "Believe in We" by Ceevox, which Young produced.

In addition to the DJs, actors from the show—Robert Gant and Sharon Gless, for instance—will make special appearances at various stops along the tour.

March 12 is also the launch of futurebabylon.com, an interactive Web site spotlighting the tour. Here, and on Showtime's site (sho.com), special promotions and tour info will be offered. Additionally, Showtime will tag episodes of the show with Future Babylon tour info.

Ultimately, Gill stresses the importance of over-delivering on peoples' expectations. "People have it all these days; they expect that much more," he says. "So, we must—and will—give them 110%."

Touring

Billboard

Venues Bring It All Back In-House

BY RAY WADDELL

In recent years, venue managers have had the option of hiring outside contractors rather than employing staff to handle a growing number of building functions.

The outsourcing trend emerged in the 1990s and allowed building managers to focus on such core operations as booking, producing events, political obligations and the day-to-day minutiae of running a public-assembly facility.

Opportunities for outsourcing range from commonplace functions—such as parking, concessions, ticketing, janitorial services and security—to such specialized niches as stagehands, merchandising, physical plant, audio/visual, ushering and marketing.

Now, there is a new trend: for buildings to control as many aspects of their operation as possible.

"It seems to go back and forth," says Jim Hess, director of the Monona Terrace convention center in Madison, Wis. "If you would have asked me a few years ago, I would have said, 'There is definitely a trend toward more outsourcing.' Now, I think we're seeing more buildings looking to take over stuff and have more control."

'CONTROL FREAKS' IN PHILLY

That is definitely the case at the Wachovia Center complex in Philadelphia.

"We're control freaks," admits John Page, senior VP of Comcast-Spectacor, which operates the Wachovia Center and the adjacent Wachovia Spectrum.

At the Wachovia complex, aside from concessionaire Aramark and ticketing company Ticketmaster, most services are handled in-house.

"This was a business decision we made based on the common ownership of the two buildings," Page says. "This was just the best situation for us to get things done the way we want to get them done."

At the Wachovia Center and Spectrum, even ushers, cleaners and union stagehands are employed by Comcast-Spectacor.

"It works great for us, but that doesn't mean it works for every
(Continued on page 32)



Euro Promoters Upbeat As ILMC Approaches

BY JULIANA KORANTENG

The shadow left on the European touring business by the recent recession and the war in Iraq has not deterred the positive outlook of European promoters for the year ahead.

Those involved in Europe's live-music business continue to be optimistic as they prepare for this year's International Live Music Conference (ILMC), taking place March 12-14 in London.

"Many fans choose to save up to go to festivals, because there is a great thirst for live music at a time when the recording industry is having a tough time," says James Curran, executive producer for the United Kingdom's Virgin Radio, which promotes the popular V Festival in Britain. "And in this digital age, festivals remind acts why they went into the business in the first place."

Nick Ashton-Hart, executive director of the London-based International Music Managers Forum (IMMF) and manager for James Brown and Heaven 17 in Europe, is confident of a buoyant year in that territory.

At a time of slow CD sales, live gigs can save careers. Ashton-Hart cites Brown's recent performance in Amsterdam in front of a crowd of 6,000, even though he has not had a hit since the 1980s.

"He is a great entertainer, and that will always sell," Ashton-Hart says. "Soon, there could be more super-gigs like Robbie Williams in [U.K. open-air venue] Knebworth [where he played

before 375,000] last year. He knows how to work an audience like a cheap suit, and I mean that in the best way. I think there is something about being part of a big crowd that has a magic of its own."

But along with other promoters, venue operators and managers, Ashton-Hart is aware of the issues that affect the continually unpredictable concert market. Issues high on the industry's agenda include ticket pricing, gig cancellations and crowd safety.

On the artist-development front, promoters are also debating whether European acts need to tour in the United States for long-term careers and whether English-speaking artists will continue to

(Continued on page 30)



In-House

Continued from page 29

body," Page says. "A lot of it depends on the size of your staff and how you want to operate."

The size of the building's budget is another factor. "It adds to your costs when you do everything yourself, because you have to hire someone to oversee all the scheduling and all the other details," Page says. "But if you hired a contractor, they would have that overhead built into their rates anyway."

At the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Biloxi, Miss., managers chose to outsource work a few years back in reaction to a tight labor market. They liked the concept enough to stick with it. The MCC outsources security, merchandising, parking, ushers and food and beverage.

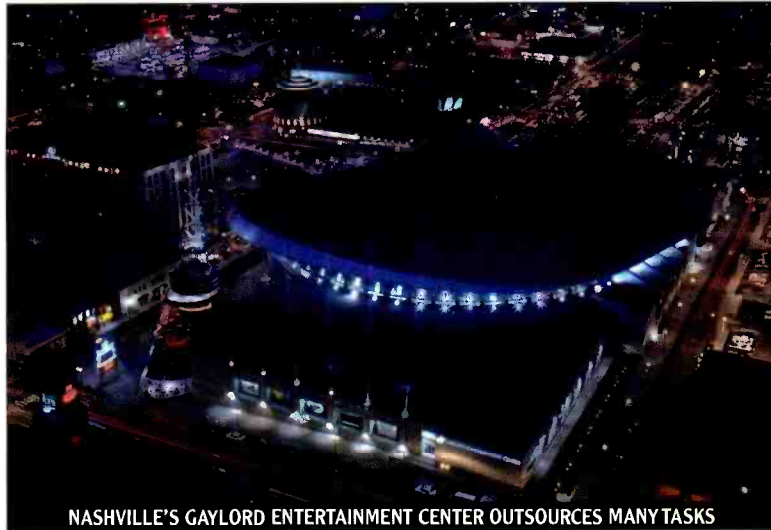
"The only thing we don't outsource, even though we've taken several looks at it, is our custodial/maintenance labor," says Matt McDonnell, assistant director at the MCC. "I know other arenas have gone that way, but we just haven't found quite the right fit yet."

McDonnell points out that the staff needs of an arena often do not fit with the work force available in a given market.

"Several years ago, when our labor market was extremely tight, it was difficult for us to acquire the part-time help we needed, based on the peaks and valleys of our business," McDonnell says. "We found that, particularly from a security standpoint, we got better training, more thorough background screening and more liability coverage by outsourcing."

Later, McDonnell says, the arena found other benefits from outsourcing.

"From a management perspective, outsourcing allows us to manage fewer people so we can focus on other aspects of our operation," he



NASHVILLE'S GAYLORD ENTERTAINMENT CENTER OUTSOURCES MANY TASKS

says. "This allows us more flexibility in the things we want to do."

Any increases in cost have been negligible, McDonnell says. "Increases in operating costs would be passed on to our clients that rent the building," he says. "But we've found



LOMBARDI: OUTSOURCING SAVES

[that] from a cost standpoint, we're very competitive with facilities in surrounding markets. It hasn't been a negative factor at all."

Mike Scanlon, director of the Sovereign Bank Center in Newark, N.J., says his arena outsources food and

beverage and some marketing responsibilities. Most staffing, including ushers, ticket-takers and cleaning, is handled in-house.

The local IATSE union handles stagehands for the arena. "We have a choice," Scanlon says. "It would be less expensive to provide stagehands in-house, but you pay extra for the quality, which helps you get the show in and out a lot quicker."

Similarly, at the Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville, concessions, security, housekeeping, ushers and merchandising for non-hockey events are all outsourced. Ticket-takers, marketing and overnight security are handled in-house.

GEC GM Hugh Lombardi says that deciding what to outsource and what to keep in-house is a matter of prioritizing. "There are some cost savings to outsourcing some of these things as well, because you save in administration costs," he adds.

MCC's McDonnell says outsourcing has a positive impact in Biloxi in two major ways: "First, it gives us more consistency of employees. And second, the liability coverage that most of these companies bring to the table is extremely attractive in the litigious society we live in today."

ILMC

Continued from page 29

dominate the concert scene in Europe.

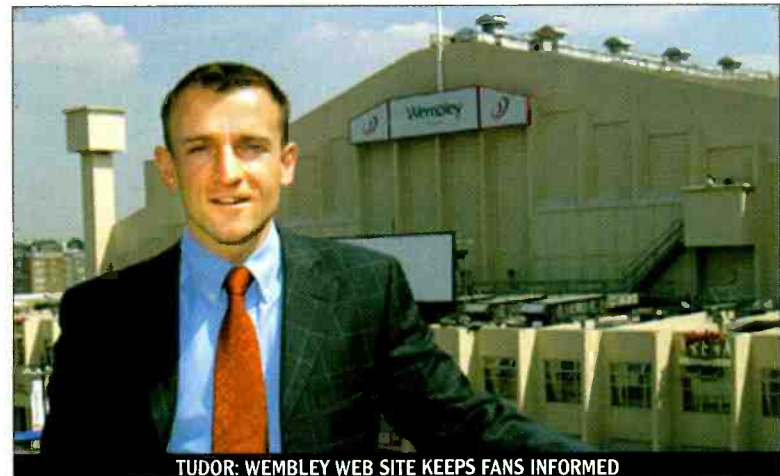
Ticket prices, Ashton-Hart says, "are getting crazy worldwide. U.S. prices are just unbelievable at \$60 to \$70 for general admission. That is a lot, especially if you are there for only one hour and are standing. And the live scene in Germany is apparently rougher. Ticket prices tripled in the last year. We in the U.K. are in danger of doing that."

An average U.S. ticket price of \$150 for three days at a music festival may make sense, Ashton-Hart says. "But if you pay \$75 for one gig here, people would think this is taking [advantage of fans]," he says.

Christoph "Chrissy" Uerlings, production co-coordinator/operations manager at Peter Rieger Konzertagentur, a leading concert promotion company based in Cologne, Germany, argues that ticket prices will always be a sensitive issue in Europe.

PRICE RESISTANCE

At a time when cheap airfares for a long weekend in a warm Mediterranean resort cost only £250



TUDOR: WEMBLEY WEB SITE KEEPS FANS INFORMED

(\$317.50), European music fans think twice before paying for concert tickets, Uerlings says.

"For the same amount of money, you can pay for the ticket, the T-shirt, parking your car and drinks at the bar," he says.

Uerlings says ticket prices increased in Germany in response to the country's recent economic slump when promoters invested in stadium and big arena shows. In 2003, for example, Peter Rieger invested in such international acts as Meat Loaf, David Bowie, Paul McCartney and Peter Gabriel.

"With big shows you can make more money than ever before. The huge artists can bring in that income and cover the costs," Uerlings says.

Another challenge is setting the right ticket price for performances in clubs that help break new acts. In the past, record companies would help foot the bill with tour support, but not in these days of poor record sales.

Uerlings suggests that promoters and venue owners should join forces

to determine how much audiences are willing to pay. "Research is more important than ever before," he says.

Rising ticket prices also make gig cancellations a touchy subject. Martin Hopewell, lead organizer of the ILMC, describes concert cancellations as "that taboo subject that never gets discussed."

However, communication through Web sites has made life easier for venue owners when the unforeseen occurs, says Peter Tudor, director of sales and marketing at Wembley London Ltd.—owner of Wembley Arena—and chairman of the United Kingdom's National Arenas Assn.

The Internet helped spread the news when Ozzy Osbourne's accident last winter resulted in cancellation of a tour that included a Wembley appearance. Last November, Meat Loaf collapsed onstage at Wembley. And the war in Iraq led to various cancellations last February and March.

"We send out e-mails, letters and [cell-phone] text messages to ticket buyers; we also contact 140,000 [Wembley Arena] members via our Web site [whatsonwembley.com]," Tudor explains. "But that is if we know in advance. Sometimes the cancellation can happen on the night as the audience is coming through the door."

One solution is for every venue to have a plan of action and for the promoter and management to work closely together. "We always have a customer service team on hand," he adds.

Moreover, Tudor continues, concert-goers must buy tickets from recognized sources. This makes it easier to refund their money or allocate them seats for rescheduled shows.

EUROPEAN RULES NEEDED

On the safety front, the ILMC has obtained European Union financing to develop the first Pan-European guide to crowd control and safety at live shows. Calls for Europe-wide guidelines have been frequent in a region where the definition of safety varies from market to market.

About three years ago, local authorities in the United Kingdom revised an Event Safety Guide widely used throughout Britain. But problems crop up when overseas acts bring their

(Continued on page 32)

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ILMC

Continued from page 30

stage sets to a U.K. venue.

"A particular tour is able to do something in one country but not in the U.K. And some promoters make the mistake of thinking that you can take the template of one show and place it elsewhere," Tudor says.

Part of Wembley's solution is a handbook for promoters, which asks, among other things, that promoters' representatives meet with Wembley's management two weeks before the show comes to town.

Peter Rieger's Uerlings says some countries can be over-protective with their crowd safety regulations. Last year, he says, new German legislation took effect that required show organizers to have at least two audience barriers for venues with capacities of more than 5,000.

A larger crowd would require "several more barriers and would, therefore, be caging the people in," Uerlings says. "Barriers can be a good thing, but we've also got to be careful."

In Poland, local officials demanded one security guard for every 100 people in the audience at a concert Peter Rieger organized. "In a stadium of 60,000 people, that would mean 600 security guards," Uerlings says.

COMPROMISES NEEDED

In the end, his company approached the local authorities, explained why the audience-to-security guard ratio was untenable and reached a compromise after Peter Rieger demonstrated it had taken all the necessary precautions.

Uerlings has appointed a crowd manager to understand the company's needs for every type of venue.

Another ongoing debate is whether European talent needs the U.S. market for a long-term career.

At the ILMC, there will be a session on whether English-speaking U.S. and U.K. acts still rule the concert business in Europe or whether the tide is turning in favor of local-language performers.

"Europe now has good performers who sing in their own language and who can make the Rolling Stones look small when they play in front of their local audience," ILMC's Hopewell notes.

Hopewell adds that there are some French and German acts that can fill stadiums, but only in one city and nowhere else in the country. He also cautions European acts that think they do not have a long-term future without conquering the United States.

"People who focus on one territory of any size do so at their own peril. Only about 5% of the music sold in the U.S. comes from outside the country, compared with 40% in the U.K.," he says. "For a European to make it in Europe, you need to stay there for an extended period of time. That's an uphill battle to start with, and even then there's no guarantee you'll succeed."



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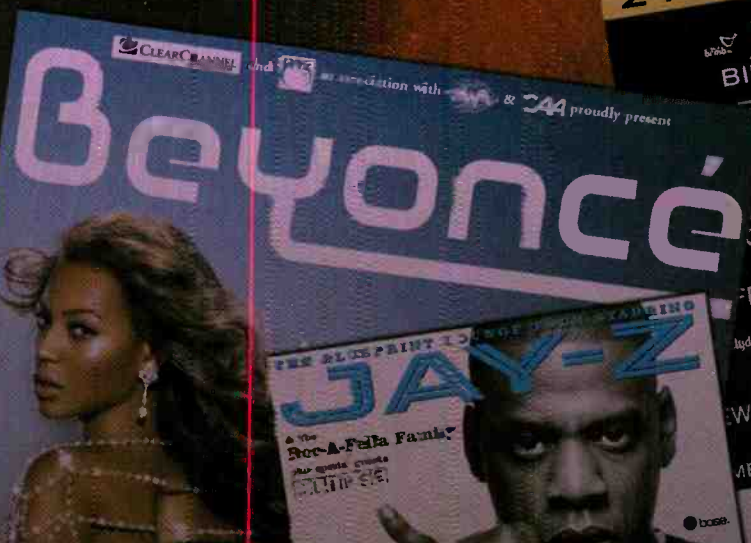
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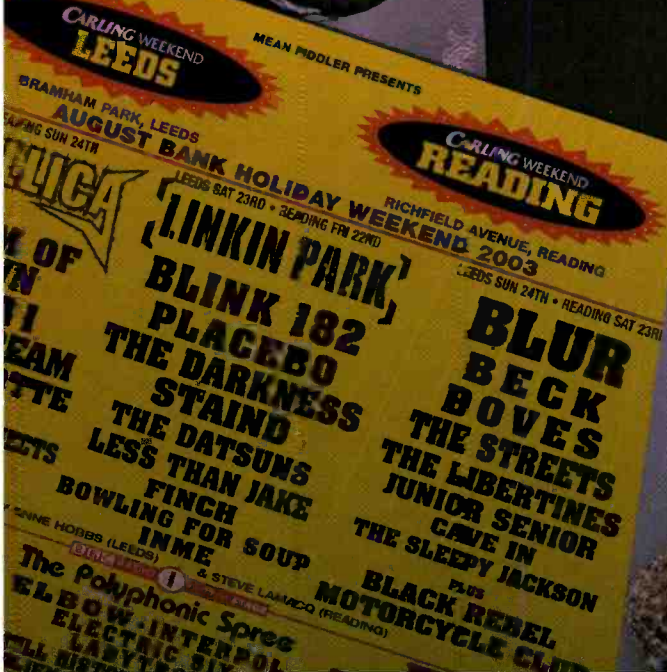
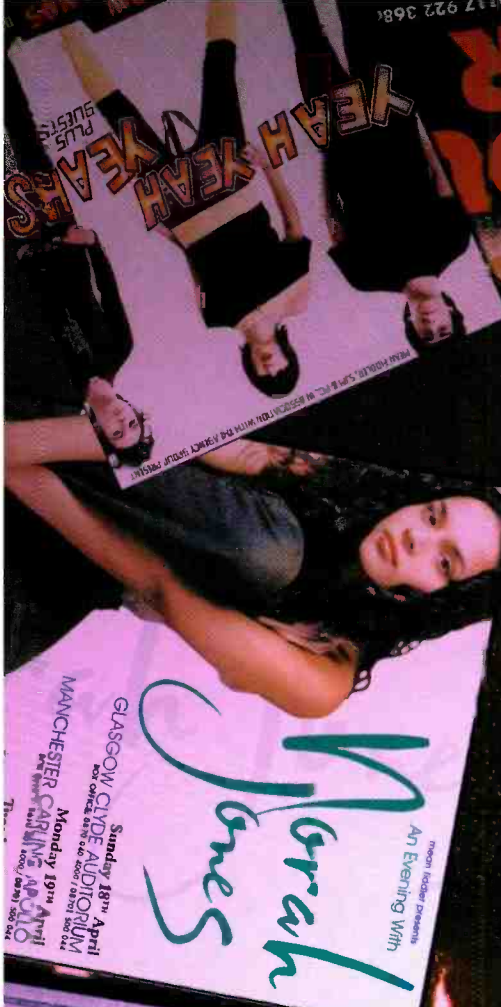
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Twista Clearing U.S. Tour Path

Things are heating up in the New York offices of **Monterey Peninsula Artists**. In the wake of the exploding "Kamikaze" record on **Atlantic** (more than 700,000 units sold in four weeks, according to **Nielsen SoundScan**), Monterey artist **Twista** will tour the United States this spring before heading overseas.

Twista will begin a run of 1,500- to 2,500-seaters beginning April 13 in New York. The tour, which will run through May, follows a run of 500-seaters in January/February.

"The interest from buyers [on Twista] is phenomenal," says **Stephanie Mahler**, hip-hop/R&B agent for Monterey in New York. "Ninety percent of the people we're working with are mainstream buyers, like [House of Blues], Clear Channel and AEG Live."

Mahler says booking Twista into theaters is a deliberate strategy to stimulate demand.

"We want to sell out and build him as a touring entity," she says. "We want the places to be packed, with people waiting outside."

Monterey artist **Kem** has been touring since last July in support of the **Motown** release "Kemistry," and a new album drops this fall. "We have confirmed dates [for Kem] with **Ruben Studdard** in April and with **Boney James** later this year," Mahler says. "We are also doing the festival circuit [with Kem]."

who formerly worked with veteran urban agent **Cara Lewis** at **William Morris Agency**.

Monterey New York was last in the news when former agents **Joe Brauner** and **Mario Tirado** moved from Monterey to open a new New York office for **Creative Artists Agency** (*Billboard*, Feb. 7). Monterey is based in Monterey, Calif., and also has offices in Chicago and Nashville.

On The Road

By Ray Waddell
rwaddell@billboard.com



SMG IN HOUSTON: Philadelphia-based facility management firm **SMG** has been awarded a renewal contract to continue managing the **Reliant Park Complex** in Houston.

Harris County Sports and Convention Corp. extended **SMG's** contract until March 31, 2012. The complex comprises four major facilities on 350 acres: **Reliant Stadium**, **Reliant Center**, **Reliant Astrodome** and **Reliant Arena**.

Reliant Park is home to the **NFL's Houston Texans** and the **Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo**. It hosted Super Bowl XXXVIII in February and will host the **NCAA Final Four** in 2011. **Shea Guinn** is president/GM for **SMG** at Reliant Park.

WHITHER VAN HALEN? Talk persists that **Van Halen** will reunite and tour with vocalist **Sammy Hagar** this year and possibly **David Lee Roth**, and several arenas are holding dates for Van Halen in late summer. When contacted by *On the Road*, Hagar manager **Irving Azoff** confirmed, tongue firmly in cheek, that he, too, had heard Van Halen rumors, as well as rumors that he managed Van Halen.

FK IT, I'LL SIGN:** **David Zedeck**, president of **Evolution Talent** in New York, says he has signed rising **Jive** artist **Eamon**—whose breakthrough hit, "F**k It (I Don't Want You Back)," is soaring up *The Billboard* Hot 100—to an exclusive booking contract. **Evolution** is putting together a touring plan for this spring.

Zedeck adds that **Evolution** artist **Britney Spears** has moved an impressive 42,000 tickets in Ireland, culminating with a June 6 show at the **Royal Dublin Society** stadium in Dublin.



TWISTA: TOUCHES DOWN IN NEW YORK

Monterey's **Calvin Richardson** will also do dates with **Studdard** in March, Mahler says, and he will tour in April and May. Other acts on the Monterey New York roster include **Petey Pablo**, **Carl Thomas**, **Bubba Sparxxx** and new Warner Bros. artist **Leela James**.

Additionally, Monterey New York has hired **Fleurette Vincent**,

MARCH 13 2004		Billboard® BOXSCORE™ CONCERT GROSSES™		
ARTIST(S)	VENUE/ DATE	GROSS/ TICKET PRICE(S)	ATTENDANCE/ CAPACITY	PROMOTER
ELTON JOHN	The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas Feb. 13-15, 17-18, 20-22	\$6,415,950 \$250/\$175/\$100	32,682 eight sellouts	Caesars Palace, Concerts West
ROD STEWART	Madison Square Garden, New York Feb. 25-26	\$2,388,607 \$125/\$75/\$45	26,947 two sellouts	AEG Live
BETTE MIDLER	MGM Grand Garden, Las Vegas Feb. 14	\$1,977,356 \$262.50/\$78.75	11,122 12,645	Clear Channel Entertainment
ROD STEWART	FleetCenter, Boston Feb. 29	\$1,026,344 \$95/\$75/\$49.50	12,515 sellout	AEG Live
GEORGE STRAIT, DIERKS BENTLEY, KELLIE COFFEY	The Pyramid, Memphis Feb. 27	\$900,622 \$61.75/\$50.75	15,066 18,000	Varnell Enterprises
BETTE MIDLER	Lawlor Events Center, Reno, Nev. Feb. 20	\$736,976 \$153/\$53	5,938 8,506	Clear Channel Entertainment
GAITHER HOMECOMING	American Airlines Center, Dallas Feb. 13-14	\$688,273 \$29.50/\$16.50	31,076 44,980 four shows	Clear Channel Entertainment
BETTE MIDLER	San Diego Sports Arena, San Diego Feb. 18	\$667,439 \$153/\$42.50	6,748 9,994	Clear Channel Entertainment
ROD STEWART	Giant Center, Hershey, Pa. Feb. 18	\$591,272 \$85/\$55/\$35	8,583 sellout	AEG Live
SMOKEY ROBINSON & GLADYS KNIGHT	Universal Amphitheatre, Universal City, Calif. Feb. 6-7	\$569,098 \$90/\$75/\$59.50/\$37.50	8,366 10,778 two shows	House of Blues Concerts
LINKIN PARK, P.O.D., HOOBASTANK, STORY OF THE YEAR	Alltel Arena, North Little Rock, Ark. Feb. 27	\$524,987 \$34.50	15,217 sellout	Beaver Productions
ALAN JACKSON, MARTINA McBRIDE	Roanoke Civic Center, Roanoke, Va. Feb. 26	\$522,657 \$64.50/\$54.50	8,197 sellout	Outback Concerts
HILARY DUFF	Universal Amphitheatre, Universal City, Calif. Jan. 24	\$482,145 \$45/\$40/\$30	12,178 two sellouts	House of Blues Concerts
ENRIQUE IGLESIAS	Radio City Music Hall, New York Feb. 14	\$433,035 \$90/\$40	5,910 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
JOSH GROBAN	Bell Centre, Montreal Feb. 20	\$419,986 (\$558,707 Canadian) \$67.28/\$52.24/\$37.21	7,825 8,082	Clear Channel Entertainment, Gillett Entertainment Group
SARAH BRIGHTMAN	Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Ill. Feb. 18	\$417,150 \$750/\$45	4,685 10,505	Clear Channel Entertainment
BARENAKED LADIES, JASON PLUMB, RON SEXSMITH	Air Canada Centre, Toronto Feb. 26	\$407,480 (\$543,901 Canadian) \$44.58/\$37.08/\$29.59	11,892 15,022	House of Blues Canada
KID ROCK, PUDDLE OF MUDD	Alltel Arena, North Little Rock, Ark. Feb. 20	\$362,331 \$33.25/\$23.25	11,776 15,151	Clear Channel Entertainment
HOT 92 JAMZ LOVE AFFAIR: BLUE MAGIC, BLOODSTONE, HEATWAVE, ONE WAY, JOE BATAAN & OTHERS	Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles Feb. 13-14	\$340,069 \$40.50/\$24	12,186 12,581 two shows	Clear Channel Entertainment
KID ROCK, GOV'T MULE	RBC Center, Raleigh, N.C. Feb. 14	\$330,872 \$35/\$18	10,314 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
TOBY KEITH, BLAKE SHELTON, SCOTTY EMERICK	Savannah Civic Center, Savannah, Ga. Feb. 7	\$317,206 \$49.75	6,376 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
JOSH GROBAN	Fox Theatre, Detroit Feb. 14	\$316,105 \$115/\$55	4,703 4,741	Clear Channel Entertainment
LINKIN PARK, P.O.D., HOOBASTANK, STORY OF THE YEAR	Cox Arena, San Diego Feb. 17	\$315,281 \$31.25	10,089 sellout	House of Blues Concerts
KID ROCK, PUDDLE OF MUDD	Fort Worth Convention Center, Fort Worth, Texas Feb. 19	\$310,915 \$35/\$25	9,653 12,463	Clear Channel Entertainment
SARAH BRIGHTMAN	Palace of Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Mich. Feb. 9	\$309,520 \$250/\$89.50/\$59.50/\$39.50	5,259 10,389	Clear Channel Entertainment, Palace Sports & Entertainment
JOSH GROBAN	John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario Feb. 17	\$309,404 (\$407,019 Canadian) \$67.09/\$44.28	5,234 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment, in-house
BARENAKED LADIES, GAVIN DeGRAW, BUTTERFLY BOUCHER	Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J. Feb. 19	\$305,811 \$43/\$10	8,249 14,866	Clear Channel Entertainment
NICKELBACK, STAIND, THREE DAYS GRACE	Bell Centre, Montreal Feb. 12	\$291,480 (\$382,832 Canadian) \$32.36/\$26.27/\$22.46	9,099 9,500	Gillett Entertainment Group, House of Blues Canada
KID ROCK, GOV'T MULE	Crickit Arena, Charlotte, N.C. Feb. 13	\$281,995 \$35	8,468 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
GINUWINE	Fox Theatre, Detroit Feb. 15	\$274,241 \$89.50/\$55	4,726 4,782	Clear Channel Entertainment
PATTI LABELLE	Westbury Music Fair, Westbury, N.Y. Feb. 13-14	\$271,487 \$60	4,859 5,484 two shows one sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
BROOKS & DUNN, JOE NICHOLS	Sovereign Center, Reading, Pa. Feb. 12	\$269,872 \$41.75	6,769 7,089	Clear Channel Entertainment
RASCAL FLATTS, BRIAN McCOMAS, CLEDUS T. JUDD	Family Arena, St. Charles, Mo. Feb. 19	\$261,322 \$32.75/\$24.75	7,836 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
JOSH GROBAN	Milwaukee Theatre, Milwaukee Feb. 8	\$260,619 \$75/\$60	3,996 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
SARAH BRIGHTMAN	Target Center, Minneapolis Feb. 20	\$237,582 \$750/\$39.50	3,657 5,479	Clear Channel Entertainment

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Skor Hits Hole In One With LPGA

BY GAIL MITCHELL

New York-based management company Skor Entertainment's hottest client right now is Grammy Award-winning producer Rich Harrison, the man behind Beyoncé's "Crazy in Love." But the company wanted more.

"Our thoughts were, 'How do we do TV?'" Skor partner and former label executive Dorsey James says.

The answer came in the form of the Ladies Professional Golf Assn.

"The LPGA targets a very specific fan base that we're also going after. Their goal was to become younger and hipper via music. It's symbiotic."

Thus, a new concert series was born. The first show is set to kick off April 29 at the Chick-Fil-A Championship in Stockbridge, Ga. On the drawing board are the Sybase Classic in New Rochelle, N.Y. (May 20), and the Kellogg-Keebler Classic in Aurora, Ill. (June 4). The initial agreement calls for four concerts.

The LPGA had looked at several musical tie-

in possibilities during the past few years before Skor came knocking.

Previously, according to LPGA senior VP/chief marketing officer Karen Durkin, the organization had occasionally brought in musical talent for individual tournaments at "the 19th hole."

"It's part of our plan to elevate the golfing experience for fans at the tournaments, viewing the telecasts or visiting the Web site," Durkin says. "Music is a great draw for so many people; it's part of our lifestyles now. The concert series adds another dimension, helping the LPGA grow in the sports entertainment arena."

"This is a great opportunity to appeal to some of our younger demos who have an affinity for golf," adds Eve Wright, LPGA director of legal

affairs. "We're also targeting 30- to 50-year-old parents with younger children."

At this juncture, Skor and the LPGA are in the process of sponsorship solicitation. Durkin notes that the concept "will be put in front of some of our sponsors." Those include MasterCard International, Rolex, Anheuser Busch, Office Depot and State Farm, which sponsors tournaments and the LPGA's TV series on ESPN and ESPN2.

Once the solicitations are secured, the talent

will be selected. Merchandising tie-ins are also being discussed.

"This entrée into the sports field gives us the opportunity to put our artists in front of crowds to play live," James says. "It's also a chance to have our artists' music played on bumpers in and out of TV commercials to a 20-million-plus audience."



stints with MCA/Universal, La Face and Arista.

Matt Shelton, also an Arista alumnus with international experience, oversees press and publicity. Angie Aguirre, formerly with Family Tree Management, has worked with OutKast and Donell Jones. Jim Nyce handles A&R and is responsible for bringing songwriter/producer Harrison to the fold.

In addition to Harrison (Skor also manages his label, Rich Craft Records), Skor represents four other producers, among them Don Vito and Sound Control. Its artist roster includes Arista R&B/pop singer Natasha, Geffen rapper Pharoahe Monch, Luaka Bop/Virgin group Zap Mama and singer Gordon Chambers, who has written songs for Aretha Franklin and Stephanie Mills. There is also a publishing division, Fairway Publishing, that is looking for an administrative partner.

"This is a great time for entrepreneurs," James declares. "There are so many things, like artist development, that large record companies don't want to do. And we small entrepreneurs are also very good at finding co-financing or co-marketing opportunities."

Large or small, though, what has not changed is the competitive nature of the record industry. Ask James about the duration of Skor's agreement with the LPGA, and you receive this cryptic answer: "I know my competitors and love them to death. But I'd rather not say. I don't want people poaching my deal."

BEHIND THE SCENES

The 2-year-old Skor comprises three additional partners besides James, whose background includes execu-

Thomas Has Lots To Say

'Let's Talk About It' Shows Bad Boy Artist In A Happy Frame Of Mind

No doubt a lot of folks will be talking about projected sales for Usher's "Confessions" when it streets March 23. However, another R&B artist bows his sophomore set that same day: **Carl Thomas**.

"Let's Talk About It" (Bad Boy/Universal) finds the singer/songwriter still taking on matters of the heart. But it's a more content Thomas this time around.

"The 'Emotional' album [2000] was a collection of things I wanted to get off my chest," he says. "I appreciated the way everyone gravitated to 'I Wish' [his first major R&B hit]. But it was one of the saddest records I ever did."

"Because we're living in a post-9-11 world, I thought the best way I could contribute was to put feel-good music out there this time."

Touted as Bad Boy's first male R&B singer four years ago, Thomas isn't concerned about the long break between albums.

"I spent two years touring with

'Emotional' when I should have spent one. BMG, the parent company at the time, didn't feel the need for us to make an international presence. But I wanted to. So I latched onto

"Everybody addresses the question like it's a terminally ill patient," he says. "Because there is an ocean of hip-hop, it makes it difficult to see the lakes of R&B. But a lake is still a very large body of water."



MUSICAL NOTES: Patti LaBelle (lifetime achievement) and Bobby Blue Bland (pioneer in music) will be among those receiving Communications Awards during the National Assn. of Black Owned Broadcasters' 20th annual dinner. It is March 12 at Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C.

The Roots, production team Andre Harris and Vidal Davis (aka Dre & Vidal) and producer Allan Slutsky ("Standing in the Shadows of Motown") are on the 2004 Philadelphia Heroes awards list. Presented by the Philadelphia chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, the awards will be handed out April 26 at the Hyatt Regency Penn's Landing.

And one more thing about "Standing" main characters the Funk Brothers: Be sure and check out "The Best of the Funk Brothers."

The recent release features original instrumental performances by the group culled from rare singles and two never-on-CD albums circa the '60s and '70s. A choice cut is the unreleased instrumental of Marvin Gaye's pivotal "What's Going On." The album is part of Motown/Universal Music's 20th Century Masters/The Millennium Collection.

domestic acts who were big overseas and toured with them so it wouldn't be so difficult this second time."

After that he spent 18 months recording and then whittling the album selections down to the 14 "that were the natural progression of my growth."

Besides producing several songs himself, Thomas worked with Just Blaze, Mike City, Dre & Vidal, Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, Mario Winans and Deric "D-Dot" Angeletti. Lead single "She Is," featuring LL Cool J, peaked at No. 56 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart last issue. Second single "Make It Alright" is on tap with a video by Chris Robinson. Also of note are the autobiographical "Dreamer" and the Marvin Gaye-esque "Baby Maker."

Thomas—who plans to move to Los Angeles this summer—is not falling prey to the media's obsession with the "death" of R&B.



THOMAS: PUTTING OUT 'FEEL-GOOD MUSIC'

MARCH 13 2004		Billboard HOT RAP TRACKS™	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL	Artist
1	2	ONE CALL AWAY DISTURBING THE PEACE/CAPITOL	Chingy Featuring J. Weav
2	1	SLOW JAMZ ATLANTIC	Twista Featuring Kanye West & Jamie Foxx
3	5	TIPSY SO SO DEF/ARISTA	J-Kwon
4	4	SPLASH WATERFALLS DISTURBING THE PEACE/DEF JAM SOUTH/IDJMG	Ludacris
5	3	HOTEL FULL SURFACE/J/RMG	Cassidy Featuring R. Kelly
6	8	DIRT OFF YOUR SHOULDER RDC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM/IDJMG	Jay-Z
7	6	SALT SHAKER CDLIPARK/TVT	Ying Yang Twins Featuring Lil Jon & The East Side Boyz
8	7	THROUGH THE WIRE RDC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM/IDJMG	Kanye West
9	10	WANNA GET TO KNOW YOU G-UNIT/INTERSCOPE	G-Unit Featuring Joe
10	9	THE WAY YOU MOVE ARISTA	OutKast Featuring Sleepy Brown
11	13	RUBBER BAND MAN GRAND HUSTLE/ATLANTIC	T.I.
12	12	I'M STILL IN LOVE WITH YOU VP/ATLANTIC	Sean Paul Featuring Sasha
13	11	NO BETTER LOVE RDC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM/IDJMG	Young Gunz Featuring Rell
14	17	FREEK-A-LEEK JIVE	Petey Pablo
15	14	DAMN! SO SO DEF/ARISTA	YoungBloodZ Featuring Lil Jon
16	15	IN MY LIFE CASH MONEY/UMRG	Juvenile Featuring Mannie Fresh
17	16	GIGOLO NICK/JIVE	Nick Cannon Featuring R. Kelly
18	18	I'M REALLY HOT THE GOLD MIND/ELEKTRA/EEG	Missy Elliott
19	21	GAME OVER SUCKA FREE/COLUMBIA/SUM	Lil' Flip
20	19	GANGSTA NATION HOO-BANGIN'/CAPITOL	Westside Connection Featuring Nate Dogg
21		ALL FALLS DOWN RDC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM/IDJMG	Kanye West Featuring Syleena Johnson
22	23	DUDE SHOCKING VIBES/VIRGIN	Beenie Man Featuring Ms. Thing
23	22	NEVA EVA BME/REPRISE/WARNER BROS	Trillville
24	24	ENCORE RDC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM/IDJMG	Jay-Z
25		LUV ME BABY FD/REEL/UNIVERSAL/UMRG	Murphy Lee Featuring Jazze Pha & Sleepy Brown

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Platinum Stars

Billboard



PAUL'S 'DUTTY ROCK' WON THIS YEAR'S GRAMMY AWARD FOR BEST REGGAE ALBUM

Sean Paul

Trailblazing Act For Dancehall Beat

BY RASHAUN HALL

During the past year, dancehall music has permeated the pop radio airwaves with its pulsating beat and island swagger.

Sean Paul: Fact File

Age: 31
Hometown: St. Andrew, Jamaica
Album: "Dutty Rock"
Label: VP/Atlantic
Web site: sean-paul.net
Distributor: WEA
Int'l Distributor:
Warner Music International

The genre's breakthrough has resulted, in large part, from the success of Sean Paul and his VP/Atlantic Records album "Dutty Rock." With this sophomore set, Paul introduced dancehall music to mainstream America on his own terms. At the Grammy Awards Feb. 8, Paul took home the Grammy for best reggae album for "Dutty Rock."

"The year has been crazy," Paul says. "Like Biggie [Smalls] said, 'I used to dream about these things.' I feel incredible about working with every producer and all the artists I have collaborated with and the path that I have taken and soon earned."

"Dutty Rock" arrived at retail Nov. 12, 2002, and soon earned

platinum certification from the Recording Industry Assn. of America. It is Paul's first release to achieve that distinction. The milestone merits Paul recognition as *Billboard's* latest Platinum Star of 2004.

This new series, which has previously profiled the success of Hilary Duff's "Metamorphosis" album (*Billboard*, Jan. 31) and Clay Aiken's "Measure of a Man" (*Billboard*, Feb. 28), focuses on selected acts that have achieved platinum sales for the first time as well as major new releases by established platinum acts.

"Dutty Rock" has since received multiplatinum certification from the RIAA and, according to Nielsen SoundScan, has sold more than 2.2 million units to date in the U.S.

Sean Paul Henriques, a native of Saint Andrew, Jamaica, first came to the attention of U.S. fans in 1999 with the song "Hot Gal Today," a collaboration with Mr. Vegas and DMX for the "Belly" soundtrack. The following year, Paul released his VP Records debut, "Stage One."

For VP Records, the independent reggae-focused label based in Queens, N.Y., Paul was its next great find.

"Sean had had some success in
(Continued on page 42)

A Lot Of People Got Busy To Push Sean Paul

Atlantic's Kallman, VP Records Execs Are Among The Team Members

Every platinum star benefits from platinum partners, business relationships that drive a career forward. Our Platinum Stars series will regularly spotlight these relationships to give credit to the individuals who support successful artists.

THE MANAGEMENT

Jeremy Harding of 2 Hard Recordings guides Sean Paul's music career. In addition to managing the artist, Harding produced the songs "Top of the Game" and "Can You

Do the Work" for Paul's album "Dutty Rock."

THE LABEL

"Dutty Rock" was released Nov. 12, 2002, on VP/Atlantic Records. The album was the first from a joint-venture deal between VP Records and Atlantic. Major players in its campaign include, at VP Records, CEO Chris Chin, VP of marketing Randy Chin and VP of A&R Murray Elias; at Atlantic Records, co-president Craig Kallman, senior VP/GM of urban Ronnie Johnson, senior VP

of R&B promotion Morace Landy and manager of black music media artist relations Sydney Margetson; and at JLM Public Relations, publicist Gabe Tesoriero.

THE SONGS

"Gimme the Light," the first single from "Dutty Rock," was produced by Troyton and co-written by Paul. The track is published by Dutty Rock Music (ASCAP) and Black Shadow Records (ASCAP). "Get Busy," the album's second single, was produced by Steven "Lenky" Marsden. Marsden

co-wrote the song with Paul for Greensleeves Publishing and Dutty Rock Music, respectively. "Like Glue," the album's third single, was produced by Tony "CD" Kelly. Kelly co-wrote the song with Paul for Tony Kelly Music/Universal Songs of PolyGram (BMI) and Dutty Rock Music (ASCAP), respectively.

THE STUDIO

Paul, Harding, Elias and Randy Chin served as the album's executive producers. Producers credited on the album include Troyton, Marsden and Kelly as well as producer duos Steely & Cleve and the Neptunes. Paul Shields at VP Mastering in New York mastered "Dutty Rock."

THE ROAD

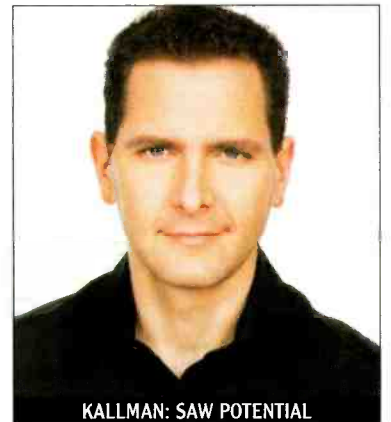
Paul's booking agency is Kingston, Jamaica-based Headline Entertainment, and the responsible booking agent is Jerome Hamilton.

THE LICENSEES

Paul's attorney, Terri Baker, reports that the artist is reviewing business offers from companies ranging from clothing manufacturers to mobile-phone suppliers. Deals have not yet been announced.

THE MEDIA

Paul continues to receive support from R&B and top 40 stations. In December, he was featured at holiday concerts hosted by some of



KALLMAN: SAW POTENTIAL

the most influential top 40 stations. Paul appears on the soundtrack to the forthcoming DreamWorks film "Sharkslayer"; he is also reviewing scripts for future film and TV appearances. The artist's official Web site is sean-paul.net.

THE CATALOG

Paul's previous album, "Stage One," was his debut on VP Records in 2000. He has also been featured on the soundtracks to "Sail Away," "Belly" and "Showtime." Paul has been a guest artist on albums from Mya, Beyoncé and Mark Ronson, among others. He has also contributed to various dancehall and reggae compilations.

Information compiled by Ra-shaun Hall in New York.

DUTTY ROCK'S SALES TRAJECTORY



DATA: Cumulative unit sales by month of Sean Paul's "Dutty Rock" album according to Nielsen SoundScan for Nov. 30, 2002, through Feb. 28, 2004.

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*to New Heights and
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M I L E S A H E A D I N R E G G A E M U S I C

Trailblazer

Continued from page 39

Jamaica," says Randy Chin, VP of marketing at VP Records. "We saw that there was a lot of potential. He was a good writer, and he had great delivery. We had also worked with [his manager] Jeremy Harding before, and we just thought that there was something there from the very beginning."

Like Chin, Paul's attorney Terri Baker saw his promise.

"I loved [the music]," Baker says of her first impression. "I don't know who couldn't. It's so infectious. I was so impressed with Sean, as a person, even before I heard the music. He's so incredibly passionate about his work. He's very professional and real caring. I just knew immediately, even without the music, that this kid was a star."

Baker, who has represented Junior Tucker, Spragga Benz and the Noto-

rious B.I.G. (aka Biggie Smalls), credits Paul's management team as part of the reason for his success.

"Sean has a great team, which is critical to any artist's success," Baker says. "They had a vision, and we knew that it wasn't going to happen the way it happened [with "Dutty Rock"] on the first album, because we needed to take it to another level. That's where Atlantic came in."

VP promoted "Gimme the Light," the lead single from "Dutty Rock," independently in the summer of 2002. As the song began to gain attention at radio and video outlets, VP entered a joint venture with Atlantic Records. Rights to release Paul were a principal component in that deal.

"There was a lot of interest from the majors," Chin recalls. "Atlantic came along and really expressed an interest in not only Sean but the whole reggae thing."

ATLANTIC SAW POTENTIAL

Atlantic co-president Craig Kallman instantly saw Paul's crossover potential.

Atlantic recognized "how incredible a songwriter he is," Kallman says, "and his ability to transcend the genre of dancehall with such incredibly powerful pop and R&B records with great hooks and a sense of melody."

"He has the ability to communicate with the listeners on song after song, and he proves that on 'Dutty Rock,'" Kallman continues. "His style, lyrical ability and unique tone were all things that set him apart from the pack and were such an important reason for what became a phenomenal dancehall explosion."

"Following Sean's career from 'Deport Them' to 'Hot Gal Today,' I watched his growth as both a songwriter and an artist who had a phenomenal ability to connect to street, R&B consumers, hip-hop consumers, pop consumers," Kallman adds. "We felt he was an artist whom we could put the entire corporation behind and champion, not just lead and build for himself, but also carry a moment that has been so vital and fertile to the underground."

The strength of the business relationship between VP and Atlantic was integral to Paul's success. The companies understood their respective roles and executed them well.

Kallman credits VP's strong roots in the reggae community, which have grown since the late Vincent Chin and his wife, Pat (the "V" and "P" behind "VP") founded the label a quarter-century ago.

"VP has been a phenomenal partner who has been instrumental in servicing the core and all the first believers of these artists," Kallman says. "Their role has been to make sure that the core is 'super-served' with the artists and the music first. Then we step in at the right time, obviously, and take it to the next level. That's certainly that partnership with 'Gimme the Light.'"

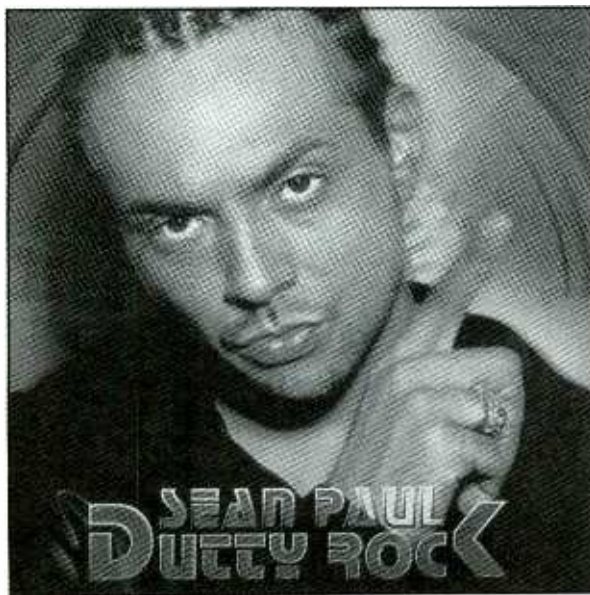
"Gimme the Light" peaked at No. (Continued on page 44)

Jeremy Harding,
his Sean Paul Management Staff,
2 Hard Recordings, and
Terri Baker, Attorney-at-Law



Congratulate
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Sean Paul

for the multi-platinum
success of *Dutty Rock*, and wish
him many more Billboard
chart-topping hits to come...



Big Up and 'Nuff Respect!

Global Glory

BY KWAKU

LONDON—"Dutty Rock" has rocked the world. Sales of Sean Paul's album have exceeded 2.5 million units outside the United States, according to Warner Music International. Paul's strongest international markets include the United Kingdom, Japan, France, Germany and Italy.

The album has reached the top 10 on charts in at least 19 international markets, including No. 1 positions in Canada and Slovenia and No. 2 slots in the United Kingdom, Ireland and Columbia.

Several factors helped the album surpass the double-platinum (600,000-unit) mark in the United Kingdom, where total sales have now exceeded 730,000.

TARGETED TV ADS

East West Records, which released the album in Britain, supported the disc with targeted TV advertising each time the label released a single. Exclusive tracks from Paul appeared on the B-side of singles, which also helped propel sales. Five singles charted in the U.K. top 10: "I'm Still in Love With You" (No. 6), "Gimme the Light" (No. 5), "Get Busy" (No. 4), "Like Glue" (No. 3) and "Baby Boy," featuring Beyoncé (No. 2).

Paul further boosted his profile as the featured artist on Blu

Cantrell's song "Breathe."

The singer committed to extensive promotional and performance dates across Europe. He also toured Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, the Middle East and South Africa.

STILL AT WORK

"He's worked his ass off promoting this album since June 2002, when the first single came out through VP," says Sue Wildish, VP of International for Atlantic Records. "Now, twenty months later, he is still working, doing phoners, interviews and photo sessions in Jamaica and abroad, promo trips, concert tours, awards performances and more."

Radio and TV abroad supported Paul willingly.

"We've had massive support from Radio 1 in the U.K.," Wildish continues. "MTV jumped on board throughout Europe immediately. We had network priority on 'Gimme the Light,' 'Get Busy' and 'Like Glue.'"

At the 2003 MTV Europe Awards, Paul won the honor for best new artist and opened the show by performing "Baby Boy" with Beyoncé.

The combined marketing and promotion push has resulted in one of the greatest breakthroughs for Jamaican reggae around the globe in recent memory.



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DUTTY ROCK

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Trailblazer

Continued from page 42

3 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart and No. 7 on The Billboard Hot 100.

But pop radio did not immediately embrace "Gimme the Light," Kallman admits.

The first single "didn't blow the doors down," Kallman recalls. "Fortunately, we were right in 'Get Busy' as our selection for the second single, and it turned out to be one of the biggest records of the year. And even that was a tough fight."

"Get Busy" went on to top the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart and The Billboard Hot 100. Its success was in large part thanks to an infectious videoclip directed by Little X.

VIDEOS WERE CRUCIAL

Paul's videos have been another critical factor in his good fortune.

"In videos, he's just such a compelling artist," Kallman observes. "He just jumps off the screen. When that 'Get Busy' video hit, people just loved it. That was definitely the watershed moment where people really started to connect with Sean as an artist and a new big star."

"Dutty Rock" was not only a commercial hit. The album also earned Paul three Grammy Award nominations, including a best new artist nod. Paul went on to win the Grammy for best reggae album.

"The nominations show that Sean has reached way beyond the confines of reggae," Randy Chin says. "He's definitely getting into the consciousness of the American mainstream."

Kallman adds, "That was such a satisfying moment for everyone to really get the recognition for what Sean had accomplished. It's an award for all of dancehall and Jamaica as well."

"It was an important group of nominations for Sean," he adds. "To be nominated for nest new artist alongside 50 Cent and the other nominees is a very proud moment, because he really can stand tall as one of the most important new artist breakthroughs of the year. And he did it in a way that was very unique. He wasn't in a genre where he just came up with hits. He really paved the way for an entirely new genre."

For Paul, the award means he now has a standard to maintain.

"It means that you have attained a certain status," he says. "When you are rewarded for something, people put you in a category. But, at the same time, I have to work harder. It means I need to focus and concentrate. I can't become relaxed. I just have to look toward the future and see there is a standard you have to keep up."

With "Dutty Rock" blowing up, Paul quickly became an in-demand artist. He has collaborated on hit singles with such artists as Blu Cantrell and Busta Rhymes. Paul's guest turn on Beyoncé's "Baby Boy" made it one of the hottest singles of

2003. The single topped the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart and The Billboard Hot 100.

FILM & TV BECKONS

Paul is not limiting himself to music: Film and TV producers are also courting him. According to Baker, he has completed a cover of a Bob Marley song for "Sharkslayer," a new DreamWorks film due later this year.

"He's a 21st-century artist pushing the bounds of what I like to call 'bleeding-edge technology,'" Baker says. "He's one of the largest-selling ring-tone artists that there is right now. That's a \$3.5 billion business in Europe alone. That's just one market he's crossing over into."

"We're fielding all kinds of offers in the clothing line business," she adds. "We're also fielding some other high-tech offers from phone companies for the next level of where phones are going. We've also been offered movie roles, none of which have either fit his schedule or have been quite suitable yet, but I think he has a future there."

Meanwhile, Paul already has begun working on his third studio set.

"A few singles have been released in Jamaica that will appear on the [new] album," Paul says. "We should have it finished in April or May and out around August or September. I have been working with a few producers, and about 98% of the album is going to be produced in Jamaica."

Chin adds, "We've started to talk about a new album. However, there is still work to be done, because we're just in the beginning stages of [his fourth single] 'I'm Still in Love.' There is some amount of promotion that has to go to that, but we are focused on making a new album."

Kallman has high hopes not only for the upcoming album but Paul's long-term career and the influence it will have on his homeland.

"He's really opened up the flood gates to what is possible out of the island of Jamaica," he says. "He really is this generation's ambassador to a new musical movement. If the quality and the level of songwriting and the production continues to be innovative, you're going to continue to see an increased growth of Jamaican music in the market share."

Accolades aside, Paul says his success really hits home when he is back in Jamaica "and I am talking to people, seeing it from their perspective."

"The other day, this dude said, 'When it happened to you, it went 'boom' with 'Gimme the Light,' and it hasn't stopped since.' He's right... The promotion hasn't stopped since."

"It hasn't come and gone; it has been steady since the first song bust," he adds.

"I don't think people realize what it takes. It's constant promotion. You have to evaluate everything that is presented to you. If it looks like a good look, take it. But if it looks like it will overflow the cup and spill over, don't do it. You have to make the decision that makes sense."



Survey Sheds Light On Rock En Español Trends

The inability of *rock en español* to emerge as “the next big thing” continues to be a source of contention among observers of the genre. But aside from blaming radio, there has been little effort to understand lagging sales.

To that end, Latin Notas has taken a first look at a 19-question survey sent to California-based retailers to identify the roots of the problem.

The survey was compiled by Ric Fazekas, a Los Angeles-based independent marketing and promotion consultant.

Fazekas surveyed employees at 40 California stores whose rock en español sales totaled at least 10% of overall Spanish-language music sales. According to the respondents, sales of rock en español product are strong, accounting for 50% or more of all Spanish-language music sales in half of the predominantly Spanish-language stores.

If the number seems unusually

high, it is because the survey includes small indie retailers that sell *only* rock en español, as well as chain stores, including **Ritmo Latino's Ritmo Rock** locations, **Tower Records** and **Wherehouse Tu Música** locations with signifi-

will result.”

More surprising than the sales—after all, this is a small sampling from a state that traditionally has been the hotbed of the genre—are responses describing rock en español consumers.

They're not that young, first of all. Only 17% of the stores said a majority of their customers were younger than 18, while 33% said they were older than 18 and 50% said they were evenly split. Fazekas sees this as an indication that more must be done to market the genre to a teen audience.

On the bright side, the typical rock en español consumer purchases two CDs per visit, according to 60% of the respondents. And 45% of respondents said their buyers were “very interested” in finding out about new bands.

As for the servicing from labels, it was described as “spotty.” A majority of the stores—45%—said they “occasionally” receive CDs for in-store play, although *all* the respondents said that in-store play generates “frequent” or “occasional” sales.

In addition to in-store play CDs, the most important merchandising material for respondents was videos, which 69% of the stores deemed “extremely helpful.” Least helpful? Postcards. A surprising 45% of respondents said they weren't helpful at all.

As far as the Internet goes, 75%

with the current epidemic of staff layoffs, it's unrealistic to expect that kind of dedication from labels whose entire staffs are already spread paper thin.

Fazekas, however, sees a silver lining. “With the way the teen Latino demographic is growing,” he says, “if we can reach them, if we can make them aware, this is a real growth area.” For a copy of the report, contact Fazekas at elcoheteradio@aol.com.

CONFAB NEWS: The March 16 deadline for early-bird registration is almost here. For the latest on the 15th annual Billboard Conference, visit billboardevents.com.

Don't delay, or you'll miss out on a smash telecast. Network **Telemundo** has confirmed that the hosts for this year's awards will be soap star **Mauricio Islas** and TV presenter **Candela Ferro**.

The Billboard Latin Music Awards will air live on Telemundo April 29 from the **Miami Arena**.

Latin
Notas™
By Leila Cobo
lcobo@billboard.com



cant rock en español movement.

“I didn't come out and put that [percentage of rock en español sales] in big, bold letters because I don't have concrete figures,” Fazekas says. “But I think it's safe to say that if the store is dedicated to the genre and the people pushing the product are knowledgeable, sales in much higher numbers



of respondents noted that downloading had decreased their sales, but 70% said that online promotion had a “substantial” or “moderate” impact on sales.

Of course, respondents also clamored for more radio and more label promotion.

A regularly heard beef is that labels do not have enough people dedicated to rock en español at a national level. Unfortunately,

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U.S. Opens Ears To La Oreja De Van Gogh

BY LEILA COBO

MIAMI—You could describe the members of La Oreja de Van Gogh as accidental pop stars.

In 1998, they were college students in San Sebastian, Spain. And like so many college kids, they formed a band with, by their own admission, absolutely no knowledge of music.

Today, La Oreja de Van Gogh (which translates to “Van Gogh’s ear”) is the best-selling pop band in Spain and the country’s most influential pop group since Mecano in the 1980s.

Propelled by strong melodies and the distinctive high-pitched voice of singer Amaia Montero, the quintet (which includes keyboardist Xabi San Martín, guitarist Pablo Benegas, bassist Alvaro Fuentes and drummer Harits Garde) is making strides in the United States after selling more than 3 million copies of its three albums in Spain alone.

La Oreja’s overseas success, which extends to Latin America, is a testament to Sony’s regional commitment to the group, being reminiscent of the lengthy artist-development strategies that were the norm in the 1980s and early 1990s. La Oreja’s sales pattern reflects that commitment.

Its debut album, 1998’s “Dile al Sol,” sold close to 800,000 copies in Spain but only 19,000 in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. (According to Sony, the band sold 40,000 units, with that number including non-scanned sales.)

The follow-up, 2000’s “El Viaje de Copperpot,” sold an astounding 1.2 million copies in Spain—becoming Sony Spain’s second-highest-selling release in history—but scanned only 43,000 copies in the States (100,000, according to the label).

THIRD TIME’S THE CHARM

With “Lo Que Te Conté,” the third time has been the charm for U.S. sales. Since its release in April 2003, the album has sold 70,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and close to 160,000, according to the label.

The clincher is that “Lo Que Te Conté” only made it to the *Billboard* Top Latin Albums chart in July, a full three months after its release. It debuted at a modest No. 60 and since then has steadily climbed to the top 10. This week, it is No. 10 after 36 weeks on the chart.

“If there is a change, it is perhaps one of perception,” Sony Norte president Kevin Lawrie says in explaining the band’s slow rise to success here.

“While the music has always been pop-oriented with massive commercial appeal, the perception in the U.S. was that this was an alternative rock act with a somewhat limited market,” Lawrie says.

That perception, of course, was flawed. And yet, it is indicative of



LA-OREJA DE VAN GOGH: ENJOYING THE FRUITS OF A RENEWED PUSH IN THE UNITED STATES

how resistant U.S. Latin radio is to new sounds.

“La Playa,” for example, a smash hit from 2000’s “El Viaje de Copperpot,” was the only La Oreja track from previous albums to even make it on the *Billboard* Hot Latin Tracks chart. It peaked at No. 30 in March 2002.

This time around, “Puedes Contar Conmigo” peaked at No. 5 last August and “Rosas” hit No. 4 last month.

“La Oreja stands out as a pop band,” manager Iñigo Argomaniz says, defining a group that is the epitome of that genre in Spain and beyond. “Its main ingredient is songs, songs with pop melodies like no one else does in Spain.”

Argomaniz initially broke La Oreja in its homeland through a steady diet of touring in the tiniest of venues, which helped create word-of-mouth

around the band.

The commercial success was so astounding that in the beginning, he says, it caught Sony by surprise. The label was not ready to properly work the band abroad.

When “El Viaje de Copperpot” came around, Sony focused on new territories. But U.S. success remained elusive.

“Honestly, we thought it would take this long,” Argomaniz says now. “Experience shows us that there are no strong Spanish sellers in the U.S. market.”

Lack of strong Spanish acts here has to do in part with lack of presence. Few successful Spanish acts can devote sufficient time to promoting abroad when they have a heavily booked agenda in Spain.

However, Lawrie says, further

pushing the band “was a no-brainer. We all felt that we had a franchise act in La Oreja and that with a focused, long-term approach we would achieve massive sales.”

PUSH PAYS OFF

La Oreja’s renewed push in the United States also coincides with Lawrie being named president of Sony Music Norte last summer. Under his tenure as president of Sony Music Mexico, La Oreja broke in that country, selling 400,000 copies of its previous album.

In the past 12 months, La Oreja has made several promotional visits to the States, more than ever before, including a mini-concert tour at small venues last year. This year, it was nominated for a Grammy Award in the best Latin pop album category, and the band performed at Premios Lo Nuestro, where it garnered several nominations.

U.S. promotion has been flanked by Latin American promotion and the whole process was made easier by the creation of Sony Norte last year. The new label encompasses Sony operations in Mexico, the United States and

Central America.

Beyond that, the group has been willing to start from scratch again and again.

“[The United States and Latin America] has been a lesson in humility,” keyboardist San Martín says. “We’ve had to start from zero.”

San Martín and his bandmates readily admit that luck has been a factor in their success. After all, this was a band made of non-musicians.

“Most things that happened to the band were spontaneous and with no expectations,” Benegas says. “We got together, and suddenly we realized we could write our own songs. We’ve learned how to play together.”

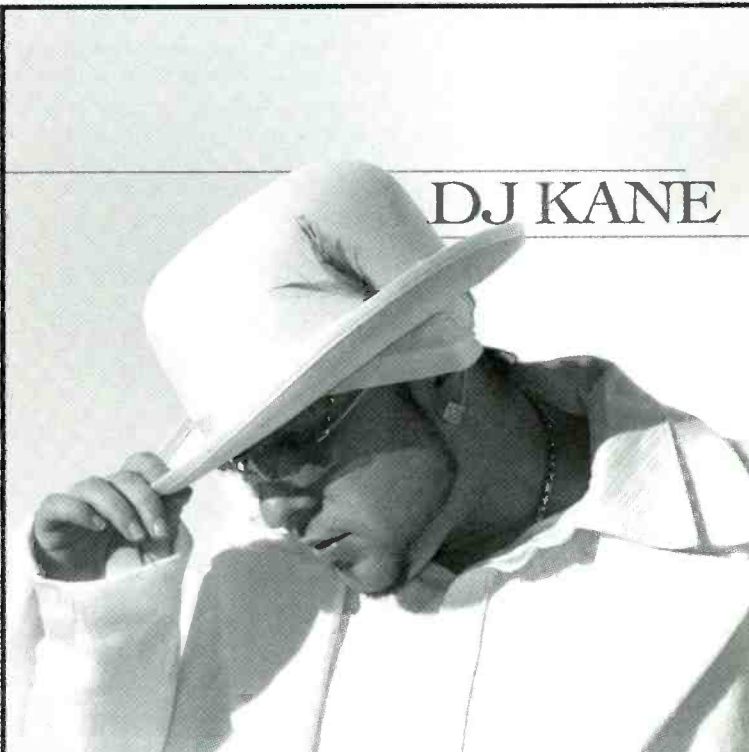
Bassist Fuentes recalls with a laugh, “I remember the day we discovered we all had to tune our instruments at the same time.”

Amazingly, good songs have come out of this band of neophytes.

“It’s the basic thing,” San Martín says. “In the end, it’s not about marketing campaigns or looks. People buy songs. I think that’s 95% of the success of this album. We make music. We make songs that people want to sing.”



MOCK DEAL: Puerto Rican singer Melina León recently signed a management deal with Mock & Roll Enterprises. León will release her upcoming album, comprising mostly uptempo pop ballads, on Sony Norte late this spring. León is pictured with Mock & Roll president Francisco Villanueva.



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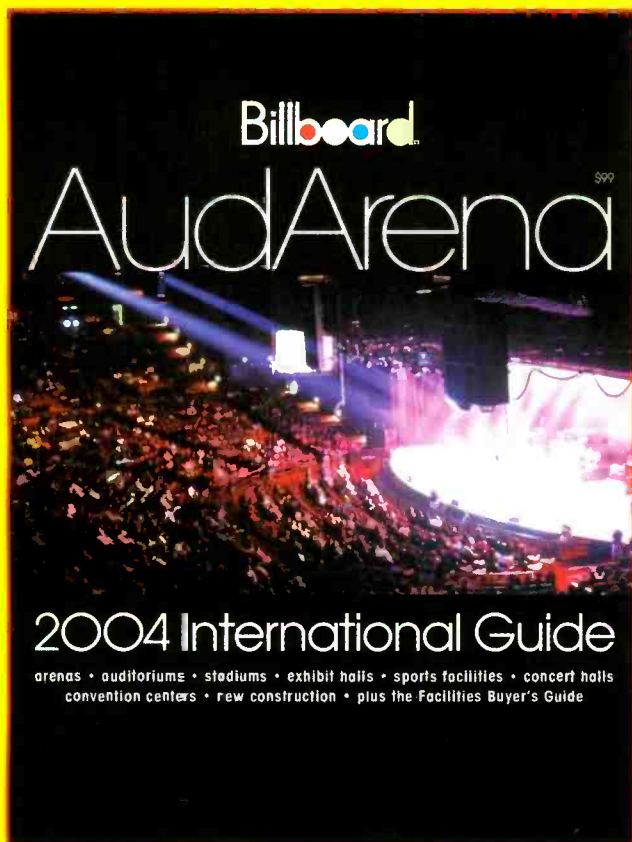
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Music Dance

Ultra Series Entrances Buyers; Armani Set Taps Rauhofer

Ultra Records is at it again. The New York-based label's newest compilation, "Ultra.Trance:3," is poised to become the series' best-selling title.

Mixed by Johnny Vicious, the two-disc collection has sold 20,000 units in its first four weeks, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Its predecessors, "Ultra.Trance:1" (2002) and "Ultra.Trance:2" (2003), have sold 49,000 and 43,000 copies, respectively.

What's going on? Has Ultra instituted a special pricing plan this time around? Is Vicious on a special tour? "No," and "no," Ultra president Patrick Moxey says. He credits the disc's success to a great track listing and to the increased strength of the Ultra brand in the marketplace.

Of course, it doesn't hurt to include Majestic 12's hard-to-find, funky rerub of Kelis' "Milkshake." Or, for that matter, Lost Brothers' euphoric remix of G Tom Mac's "Cry Little Sister (I Need U Now)."

"Cry Little Sister" was originally penned and recorded by singer/songwriter Gerard McMahon for cult '80s film "The Lost Boys." In 2001, Dynas-D created a tribal-infused remix of the track (the Beat Box Hot Plate, *Billboard*, June 30, 2001).

Then, late last year, hot U.K. imprint Incentive issued the Lost Brothers reconstruction. (FYI: McMahon is G Tom Mac.)

Now, Ultra has made "Cry Little Sister" a focus track of "Ultra.Trance:3." It was one of six tracks included on an "Ultra.Trance:3" promotional sampler that the label sent to radio mix-show and club DJs several weeks ago.

If properly promoted, the rock-etched "Cry Little Sister" is the type of track that could work at more than one radio format. Ultra may even want to consider making it available as a commercial single. As for Madison Avenue, the possibilities are many.

FASHIONABLE BEATS: Fashion retailer Armani Exchange has tapped Grammy Award-winning Peter Rauhofer to mix the third installment in its A|X Music Series.

The retail chain will launch the new disc, "A|X Music Series Volume 3: Higher," March 8 at an invitation-only party in its South Beach store.

A partnership between Armani Exchange and Rauhofer's Star 69 Records, "Higher"—subtitled "The Ultimate Blend of Seductive House Tracks"—will sell for \$12.50 at all

A|X stores nationwide.

Highlights of the collection—which follows last year's release, "A|X Music Series Volume 2: Bring On the Night," helmed by Grammy Award winner Frankie Knuckles—include Pet Shop Boys' "Break 4

Beat
Box™

By Michael Paoletta
mpaoletta@billboard.com



Love," Mr. Fingers' "Can You Feel It" and Christian Falk Featuring Demetres' "Make It Right."

Also spotlighted are Rauhofer's remixes of Madonna's "Nothing Fails"



and Murk's "Time."

According to Armani Exchange senior director of PR/marketing events Patrick Doddy, the A|X Music Series has proved itself to be a winner with Armani Exchange customers.

"They go to the clubs. They know the music. They know the DJs," Doddy explains. "For them, fashion is music and music is fashion. They're a savvy bunch."

THE NEW DEAL: Effective immediately, production/DJ duo Deep Dish has signed a new management deal with Jorge Hinojosa of Caliente Entertainment in Los Angeles. The duo's career was previously overseen by Washington, D.C.-based Kurosh Nasser of Nasser Music Business Solutions.

Grammy Award-winning Deep Dish—Ali "Dubfire" Shirazinia and Sharam Tayebi—is currently working on a new album, which follows

the pair's critically acclaimed 1998 debut, "Junk Science" (Deconstruction/BMG).

Although no label is yet confirmed to release the sophomore album, Hinojosa says he is fielding several international offers.

Hinojosa's Caliente partner Caresse Henry manages the career of Madonna, among others.

HIGH LIFE: DJ/producer Christopher Lawrence is launching a record label, Pharmacy Music, that will specialize in singles (CD and 12-inch vinyl formats).

Although Pharmacy's debut single, "Genesis"—by the label owner himself—will not arrive until next month, promotional copies were mailed to club and mix-show DJs the week of March 1.

According to Lawrence, "Genesis" reflects the "peak-hour sound" that the label will represent. Prior to starting the label, Lawrence placed the track in two forthcoming independent films: "LA DJ" and "Put the Needle on the Record."

In addition to selling physical product, Pharmacy will soon make its releases available as digital downloads on its Web site (pharmacymusic.org).

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY: Joel Whitburn's life revolves around the *Billboard* charts: He is the mastermind of numerous reference books, including "Top Pop Albums 1955-2001" and "Top R&B Singles 1942-1999."

Now comes Whitburn's "Hot Dance/Disco 1974-2003." Published by Record Research (recor-dresearch.com), it is the first book to offer a complete chart data history of *Billboard's* national club play chart.

With this book, Whitburn has created a useful step back in time. Most of the listings include invaluable artist info, which, in a genre that is often viewed as "faceless," is most welcome.

For example, Tasha Thomas—responsible for the fabulous 1978 hit "Shoot Me (With Your Love)"—was born in Jeutyn, Alaska, and moved to New York in 1970. She was a session singer for Diana Ross, among others, and played the part of Auntie Em in "The Wiz" on Broadway. She died of cancer in 1984 at the age of 34.

There's a wealth of information, although titles that charted pre-1974—like MF5B's "Love Is the Message" and Three Degrees' "Dirty Ol' Man"—are missing in action.

With this book, a genre of music that is often treated as the bastard child of the industry is given the respect it so deserves.

MARCH 13 2004		HOT DANCE SINGLES SALES			
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WKS. ON	TITLE	Artist
				Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan	
				IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	
				NUMBER 1	11 Weeks At Number 1
1	1	1	17	ME AGAINST THE MUSIC	Britney Spears Featuring Madonna
2	2	2	12	NOTHING FAILS/NOBODY KNOWS ME	Madonna
3	3	4	16	YOU PROMISED ME (TU ES FOUTU)	In-Grid
4	5	5	26	(THERE'S GOTTA BE) MORE TO LIFE	Stacie Orrico
5	10	12	34	THE DISTRICT SLEEPS ALONE TONIGHT	The Postal Service
6	4	9	4	LOVE'S DIVINE (DEEPSKY, MURK, & PASSENGERZ MIXES)	Seal
7	11	7	25	RUBBERNECKIN' (PAUL OAKENFOLD REMIX)	Elvis Presley
8	7	10	33	OFFICIALLY MISSING YOU (REMIXES)	Tamia
9	13	11	17	HAREM (CANCAO DO HARU) (M. LEHMAN, R. RIVERA & H. HECTOR REMIXES)	Sarah Brightman
10	9	6	24	SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL (REMIXES)	The Rolling Stones
11	6	8	3	TRULY	Delerium Featuring Nerina Pallot
12	8	13	14	BREATHE (REMIXES)	Michelle Branch
13	12	3	3	TOXIC (REMIXES)	Britney Spears
14	15	15	11	BORN TOO SLOW	The Crystal Method
15	14	16	56	THROUGH THE RAIN (HEX HECTOR/MAC QUAYLE REMIX)	Mariah Carey
16	21	24	13	LIMBO ROCK (REMIXES)	Chubby C & OD Featuring Inner Circle
17	16	14	32	I'M GLAD (REMIXES)	Jennifer Lopez
18	17	17	34	HOLLYWOOD (REMIXES)	Madonna
19	18	20	12	ROCK YOUR BODY, ROCK	Ferry Corsten
20	19	19	25	PAVEMENT CRACKS (REMIXES)	Annie Lennox
21	25	—	4	GIA	Despina Vandi
22	NEW	1	1	UPTOWN	Aya
23	20	—	5	AS THE RUSH COMES	Motorcycle
24	—	—	5	BEAUTIFUL THINGS	Andain
25	RE-ENTRY	17	17	WAITING FOR YOU (REMIXES)	Seal

MARCH 13 2004		HOT DANCE RADIO AIRPLAY			
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON	TITLE	Artist	
				Airplay compiled by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems	
				IMPRINT & PROMOTION LABEL	
				NUMBER 1	1 Week At Number 1
1	3	13	13	AS THE RUSH COMES	Motorcycle
2	2	5	5	LOVE ME RIGHT (OH SHEILA)	Angel City Featuring Lara McAllen
3	1	5	5	TOXIC	Britney Spears
4	6	31	31	SOMETHING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO HEAVEN	Deborah Cox
5	5	17	17	HEY YA!	OutKast
6	8	14	14	IT'S MY LIFE	No Doubt
7	9	6	6	THE WAY YOU MOVE	OutKast Featuring Sleepy Brown
8	4	16	16	GIA	Despina Vandi
9	7	31	31	ALONE	Lasgo
10	10	31	31	NEVER (PAST TENSE)	The Roc Project Featuring Tina Arena
11	11	5	5	ROCK YOUR BODY, ROCK	Ferry Corsten
12	12	13	13	WHEREVER YOU ARE (I FEEL LOVE)	Laava
13	RE-ENTRY	—	—	NOTHING BUT YOU	Paul Van Dyk Featuring Hemstock & Jennings
14	NEW	—	—	GIVE IT UP	Kevin Aviance
15	22	3	3	DEJA VU (IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE)	The Roc Project Featuring Tina Novak
16	16	4	4	I FEEL LOVE	Blue Man Group Featuring Venus Hum
17	17	4	4	JUST A LITTLE WHILE	Janet Jackson
18	21	10	10	ALL THINGS (JUST KEEP GETTING BETTER)	Widelife With Simone Denny
19	23	3	3	LOVE'S DIVINE	Seal
20	20	—	—	CRUISING	N&K Vs. Denis The Menace Feat. Alex Prince
21	13	—	—	SLOW	Kylie Minogue
22	18	14	14	DEEPEST BLUE	Deepest Blue
23	RE-ENTRY	—	—	RIE Y LLORA	Celia Cruz
24	24	15	15	SUNRISE	Simply Red
25	14	7	7	IF I WERE YOU	Candee Jay

MARCH 13 2004		TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS			
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON	TITLE	Artist	
				Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan	
				IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	
				NUMBER 1	4 Weeks At Number 1
1	1	9	9	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Fired Up!
2	2	4	4	SOUNDTRACK	Queer Eye For The Straight Guy
3	3	5	5	AIR	Talkie Walkie
4	4	7	7	THE CRYSTAL METHOD	Legion Of Boom
5	5	47	47	THE POSTAL SERVICE	Give Up
6	6	5	5	JOHNNY VICIOUS	Ultra.Trance:3
7	9	2	2	RAVIN	Buddha Bar VI
8	7	11	11	SARAH MCLACHLAN	Remixed
9	8	20	20	MARIAH CAREY	The Remixes
10	10	22	22	ENIGMA	Voyageur
11	12	7	7	VARIOUS ARTISTS	This Is Trance!: 17 Euphoric Dance Floor Anthems!
12	11	5	5	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Best Of Trance Volume Four
13	NEW	—	—	RICHARD "HUMPTY" VISSION	Big Floor Funk
14	13	15	15	LOUIE DEVITO	N.Y.C. Underground Party 6
15	NEW	—	—	THE HAPPY BOYS	Techno Party (Volume Two)
16	15	22	22	THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS	Singles '93 - '03
17	18	4	4	SANDRA COLLINS	Perfecto Presents... Sandra Collins
18	14	5	5	DAFT PUNK	Daft Club
19	23	2	2	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Trance Classics Vol. 2
20	22	27	27	LOUIE DEVITO	Louie DeVito Presents: Ultra.Dance 04
21	NEW	—	—	FERRY CORSTEN	Right Of Way
22	19	19	19	BASEMENT JAXX	Kish Kash
23	20	27	27	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Verve//Remixed2
24	16	17	17	THE HAPPY BOYS	Dance Party (Like It's 2004)
25	17	2	2	DIMITRI FROM PARIS	In The House

• Dance Airplay titles showing an increase in detections over the previous week, regardless of chart movement. Compiled from a national sample of airplay supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems' radio track service. 6 dance stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Songs ranked by number of detections. A title which has been on the chart for more than 20 weeks will generally not receive a bullet, even if it registers an increase in detections. Titles below the top 15 are removed from the chart after 26 weeks. ©2004, VNU Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved. • Electronic Albums with the greatest sales gains this week. • Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units (Gold). • RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum). • RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamond). Numerical following Platinum or Diamond symbol indicates album's multi-platinum level. For boxed sets, and double albums with running time of 100 minutes or more, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. * Asterisk indicates LP is available. Most tape prices, and CD prices for BMG and WEA labels, are suggested lists. Tape prices marked EQ, and all other CD prices, are equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. [M] indicates past or present Heatsseeker title. © 2004, VNU Business Media, Inc. and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

Billboard® HOT DANCE CLUB PLAY

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WKS. ON	TITLE	Artist
				IMPRINT & NUMBER/PROMOTION LABEL	
				NUMBER 1	1 Week At Number 1
1	2	4	10	BURNING	Robbie Rivera & Axwell Feat. Suzan Brittan
2	4	6	9	FACE TO FACE	Daft Punk
3	1	2	7	LOVE'S DIVINE (DEEPSKY, MURK, & PASSENGERZ MIXES)	Seal
4	7	9	9	SLIPPIN' AWAY	Sweet Rains
5	8	13	8	POWERLESS (SAY WHAT YOU WANT) [WIDELIFE, JUNIOR, & CHAB MIXES]	Nelly Furtado
6	9	11	8	BORN TOO SLOW (E. MORILLO, DEEPSKY, & NUBREED MIXES)	The Crystal Method
7	10	14	7	ALL THINGS (JUST KEEP GETTING BETTER)	Widelife With Simone Denny
8	3	5	7	JANET MEGAMIX 04 (CHRIS COX REMIX)	Janet Jackson
9	18	34	3	TOXIC (REMIXES)	Britney Spears
10	12	15	7	WHERE LOVE IS	Trinity Featuring Revi
11	16	24	4	NOT IN LOVE (D. AUDE, MINGE BINGE, & R.H. VISSION MIXES)	Enrique Iglesias Featuring Kelis
12	6	1	13	SLOW	Kylie Minogue
13	15	18	7	WHERE DID LOVE GO	Sun
14	5	8	10	HARU (WIDELIFE, J. VASQUEZ, & DEMARKO MIXES)	Haru
15	19	23	5	FREE (S.A.F. & NEMO MIXES)	Sarah Brightman
16	11	3	9	ME, MYSELF AND I (JUNIOR MIXES)	Beyonce
17	17	21	6	GOD IS A DJ	Pink
18	23	29	4	TRULY	Delerium Featuring Nerina Pallot
19	21	26	5	IT'S MY LIFE (REMIXES)	No Doubt
20	22	25	6	SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED	Colton Ford And Pepper Mashay
				POWER PICK	
21	31	41	4	LOVE PROFUSION (REMIXES)	Madonna
22	14	7	13	GIVE IT UP	Kevin Aviance
23	27	33	5	GOOD BOYS	Blondie
24	13	10	13	FAKE	Simply Red
25	28	38	15	I TRY (RAUHOFFER, PILIAVIN & ZIMBARDO MIXES)	Made By Monkeys Featuring Maria Matto

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WKS. ON	TITLE	Artist
				IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	
26	36	44	3	MAKE ME DANCE ALL NIGHT	3 Speaker High
27	24	17	12	JUST A LITTLE MORE LOVE	David Guetta Featuring Chris Willis
28	33	43	3	FRIDAY MARSHMALLOW	Samba La Casa
29	25	20	10	INTO THE LIGHT (DAVE AUDE REMIXES)	Cause And Effect
30	32	37	5	GET YOURSELF HIGH	The Chemical Brothers Featuring K-OS
31	20	12	13	NOTHING FAILS (REMIXES)	Madonna
32	46	—	2	ELECTRIFY	GTS Featuring Heigo Tani
33	26	22	12	BORN SLIPPY NUXX (P. OAKENFOLD & R. SMITH MIXES)	Underworld
34	45	—	2	STRAIGHT AHEAD	Tube & Berger Featuring Chrissie Hynde
35	39	40	5	PASS THAT DUTCH (SCUMFROG REMIX)	Missy Elliott
				HOT SHOT DEBUT	
36	NEW	1	1	AMAZING (FULL INTENTION MIXES)	George Michael
37	35	28	12	ROCK YOUR BODY, ROCK	Ferry Corsten
38	43	48	3	FIND MYSELF	Presta + Stakey
39	NEW	1	1	HOLE IN THE HEAD (FULL INTENTION & GRAVITAS MIXES)	Sugababes
40	30	27	14	GET IT OFF (THAT KID CHRIS REMIX)	Monica
41	29	16	15	FALLEN (REMIXES)	Sarah McLachlan
42	41	46	14	AS THE RUSH COMES	Motorcycle
43	44	45	8	GIA	Despina Vandi
44	NEW	1	1	SEX BOMB (THE REMIXES)	Tom Jones
45	38	31	12	KISS MY EYES	Bob Sinclair
46	37	36	8	SIGH	Praful
47	34	19	14	BREATHE (REMIXES)	Michelle Branch
48	47	47	8	DEJA VU (IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE)	The Roc Project Featuring Tina Novak
49	40	30	13	1000 YEARS	Arthur Baker Featuring Astrid Williamson
50	42	32	15	WALK ON BY (S.A.F. & EDDIE X MIXES)	Cyndi Lauper

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

Bear Family Nurtures Quality Boxed Sets

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—It puts out some of the most coveted product for die-hard country music fans, yet Richard Weize's Bear Family Records has never sold more than 3,000 units of a title.

"Our philosophy is to make good product, whether the artist is known or unknown," Weize explains.

Weize is a record collector who founded Bear Family in 1975, taking the name from an engraving of a bear family in an 1898 encyclopedia. The source was fitting, as the Vollersode, Germany-based company's reissue products—primarily its prized boxed sets—are nothing short of encyclopedic.

Releases last month, for example, included "I Love You So Much It Hurts." The six-CD, 173-track box spans Texas country legend Floyd Tillman's debut recordings with the Blue Ridge Playboys in 1936 through his five years at Decca and nine years at Columbia, as well as lesser stints at RCA Victor, Liberty, Cimmaron and, in 1981, Gilleys.

Like all Bear Family boxes, the Tillman set is LP-sized and includes a hardcover book detailing his career.

Additionally in February, Bear Family released single-disc compilations of Carl Butler, '50s "hill-billy hula" Hawaiian steel guitarist Jenks "Tex" Carman and, in the pop vein, Wayne Newton featuring the Newton Brothers. The Newton collection contains New-

ton's singles from 1954 to 1963, including his 1963 breakthrough hit, "Danke Schoen."

Releasing such far-reaching and voluminous packages obviously requires an all-consuming passion—and an utter disregard for profit.

A case in point: The company's acclaimed 12-CD, 307-track Carter Family boxed set that was released in 2000, "In the Shadow of Clinch Mountain," which the Ernest Tubbs Record Shops' Web site lists at \$259.98.

Weize explains the label's pricing structure. "We have, say, a unit price of \$15 for one CD," he says, "so a four-CD box would be the equivalent of \$60—plus one or two extra units for the book. But each CD usually has 30 titles—which isn't just 10-12 titles for a \$20 CD. So a seven- or eight-CD box may cost \$150, but it's worth it for what you're getting."

Luckily, Bear Family has a successful mail-order business selling some 20,000 import and German titles. That pays for the production of approximately 250 Bear Family boxed sets, another 1,000 single CDs and a new Town Hall Party DVD series. The DVD line comprises performances on the California country music barndance TV series that ran from 1952 to 1961 and featured such artists as Johnny Cash, Marty Robbins and Bob Luman.

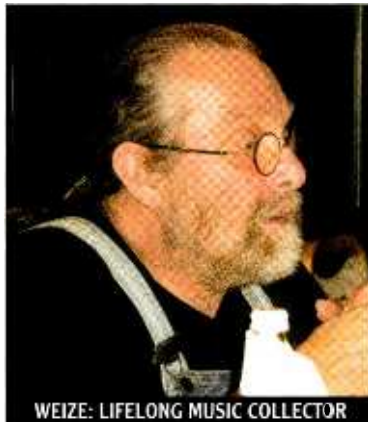
EXCLUSIVE OFFERINGS

Weize was only 10 years old when he bought Bill Haley's "Rock Around

the Clock." From that point on, "the [record collecting] bug never left me," he says, recounting how he sought to offer "something exclusive" to his mail-order clientele when he started his reissue business.



BEAR FAMILY RECORDS



WEIZE: LIFELONG MUSIC COLLECTOR

The first Bear Family release was "Goin' Back to Dixie" by bluegrass great Bill Clifton. In 1978 came "The Unissued Johnny Cash," its first LP by a major-label artist.

Bear Family's first boxed set was Haley's "Rockin' Rollin' Haley—The Complete Decca Recordings," a 1981 five-LP set; Weize now has two Haley CD boxed sets in his catalog.

"Boxed sets became more impor-

tant when CDs came, and we put big books inside with large pictures and the history of the artist and the songs," he says.

The Carter Family box is representative. "It has a hardback book with hundreds of never-seen-before photos, a complete discography, lyrics of every single Carter song and a terrific essay by Charles Wolfe," Nashville music historian Robert Oermann says. "It's a masterpiece."

HISTORICALLY RICH

Oermann has written numerous texts for Bear Family boxes, most recently the Maddox Brothers & Rose's 1998 four-CD "The Most Colorful Hillbilly Band in America."

"I'm just a huge fan of what they do, both in terms of boxed sets of the complete works of an artist and individual CDs devoted to people who never had an album in their whole career, like Ole Rasmussen, who recorded for Capitol, or Ronnie Self—Mr. Frantic—a terrific rockabilly artist who never had his works collected by a U.S. company," Oermann says.

He notes that he recently bought the five-CD "Satisfaction Guaranteed" Carl Smith box in honor of Smith's induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame last year. "I use them literally every week as a music historian."

Weize cites Lefty Frizzell, Hank Snow and Cash among the artists whose boxes are his own favorites.

Although he licenses from his German home base, Weize gener-

ally comes to America to secure first-generation source tapes and to maintain his traditionally high-quality mastering standards.

As his product is licensed for Europe, he generally does not promote it in the United States. But last year the two Easy Street Records stores in Seattle set up a Bear Family promotion through their San Rafael, Calif.-based City Hall Records distributors, with the label providing in-store play copies.

"We sale-priced 10 titles and kept them lower than we usually would have," Easy Street buyer/treasurer Chris White says. White adds that Lou Reed, who came in to do a reading from his album "The Raven," afterward bought Bear Family's Johnny Burnette and Speedy West & Jimmy Bryant boxes.

"We're willing to go the extra mile [for Bear Family], because we believe so much in the product," White says. "We're willing to take less margin [on Bear Family titles] to build a clientele for it."

"When my sales rep comes in with new Bear Family titles, we get so excited," White says. "[Weize has] a wonderful company, and we hope he can keep it going for years to come."

Weize concludes, "It's seven days a week, 24 hours a day—but as long as we can live on it, it's fine. It's not a money thing; I just want to keep the liberty to do very good records by artists that aren't so well-known."

Zero-Tolerance Policies Polarize Country Radio

The recent indecency crackdowns by the **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** and individual radio groups (see story, page 5) have left broadcasters divided.

Some think the threat of potential fines and radio groups' "zero tolerance" policies will have the positive benefit of "cleaning up" the airwaves. Others think it will have the more chilling effect of stifling free speech and making some jocks afraid to open the mic for fear of what might slip out.

While broadcasters agree that indecency is much less of an issue in the family-friendly country format than it is in some other genres, the crackdown has already changed the way some are doing business.

"We're not able to have any live contests on the air right now, no live interviews or in-studio guests

without a delay system," **Tim Wall of WYCD Detroit** morning duo **Wilhite & Wall** says. "We've never had a problem or complaint to the FCC, yet we have to pay the price for the shows that have."

Nashville Scene
By Phyllis Stark
pstark@billboard.com



"Only time will tell how long the screws will be tightened on stations," Wall continues. "It seems like the 5% of broadcasters who go over the edge are making it hard on those of us who do play by the rules."

KZLA Los Angeles operations manager **R.J. Curtis** thinks the crackdown will "paralyze some personalities and basically neuter some stations that

target young males. There's a whole generation of radio personalities who only know how to entertain by pushing—and breaking—the envelope. This will be a real test of their creativity and, in some cases, it will cripple them or even make them extinct. The combination of an election year and [the] **Janet Jackson** [stunt] has created this perfect storm of short-term over-correction.

"I think the public will approve at first," Curtis continues. "Long term, combined with an already perceived [to be] overly safe and predictable playlist, sterile content has a risk factor of making radio a less compelling entertainment category . . . Long term, I see the fences being moved in on indecency."

WGGY Scranton, Pa., PD **Mike Krinik** thinks, "Most air talent will become more reserved on their shows. This means the listener will lose out."

Some broadcasters are not surprised that the crackdown is taking place but rather that it took so long to happen.

"I am not the least bit surprised by this backlash. My only question is,

Why did this take 15 or 20 years?"

KMLE Phoenix afternoon host **Stu Evans** asks. "The hypocrisy of [the FCC and broadcast groups] suddenly noticing the problem turns the discussion that should have happened years ago into a witch hunt. I respect the talent of my fellow broadcasters, but have they only recently begun to push the envelope?"

Consultant **Ed Shane of Shane Media Services** agrees. "I wish **Lenny Bruce** were still around to do justice to the men who first gave voice to **Howard Stern** and **Bubba the Love**

Sponge, then asked for zero tolerance from employees in order to look good for Congress," he says. "[**Clear Channel Radio** CEO] **John Hogan** was applauded for pulling Stern off the air as if he heard the show for the first time last Monday morning."

Many broadcasters think the new focus on indecency could ultimately

result in better radio.

"The new zero-tolerance policies many broadcast companies are adopting will be good for the radio listeners," says **KSKS** Fresno, Calif., morning host **John Garabo**, who

notes that some personalities "will have to clean up their act and challenge themselves to be more creative instead of relying on sophomoric, objectionable humor."

Curtis thinks the indecency crackdown "will clean up the airwaves, and at the risk of sounding puritan and ultra-conservative, that's probably a good thing."

Consultant **Joel Raab** believes all of this focus on indecency will be good for the country format. "Our stations have always been a safe haven for content that parents and kids [can] listen [to] together," he says. "Families looking for radio that they don't have to explain or shield from their kids have a place to go."



EVANS: WHY BACKLASH NOW?

MARCH 13
2004

Billboard® TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS™

Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WEEKS ON CHART	ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	Title	PEAK POSITION	WEEKS AT NO. 1	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WEEKS ON CHART	ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	Title	PEAK POSITION		
															WEEKS AT NO. 1	
							4 Weeks At Number 1									
1	1	1	4	KENNY CHESNEY BNA 56801/RLG (12.98/18.98)	When The Sun Goes Down	1	4	39	39	39	4	JO DEE MESSINA CURB 78790 (18.98 CD)	Greatest Hits	1		
2	2	2	17	TOBY KEITH ▲ ³ DREAMWORKS 450435/INTERSCOPE (12.98/18.98)	Shock'n Y'all	1	0	40	40	38	35	TRACY BYRD RCA 67073/RLG (11.98/18.98)	The Truth About Men	5		
3	3	3	11	ALAN JACKSON ▲ ² ARISTA NASHVILLE 54860/RLG (18.98 CD)	Greatest Hits Volume II	2	0	41	41	40	33	PAT GREEN REPUBLIC 000562/UNIVERSAL SOUTH (8.98/12.98)	Wave On Wave	2		
4	4	4	20	JOSH TURNER ● MCA NASHVILLE 000974/UMGN (4.98/9.98) [H]	Long Black Train	4	0	42	38	34	3	KEITH URBAN CAPITOL 97847 (9.98/17.98)	Keith Urban In The Ranch	34		
5	5	10	72	KEITH URBAN ▲ CAPITOL 32936 (10.98/18.98)	Golden Road	3	0	43	52	54	72	\$\$\$ GREATEST GAINER \$\$\$ RANDY TRAVIS ● WORD-CURB 86236/WARNER BROS. (11.98/18.98)			Rise And Shine	8
6	7	6	22	MARTINA MCBRIDE ▲ RCA 54207/RLG (11.98/18.98)	Martina	1	0	44	44	53	23	CLAY WALKER RCA 67068/RLG (11.98/18.98)	A Few Questions	3		
7	6	8	84	TOBY KEITH ▲ ⁴ DREAMWORKS 450254/INTERSCOPE (11.98/18.98)	Unleashed	1	0	45	42	46	23	VARIOUS ARTISTS SUGAR HILL 3980 (17.98 CD)	Just Because I'm A Woman: Songs Of Dolly Parton	6		
8	10	13	22	GARY ALLAN MCA NASHVILLE 000111/UMGN (8.98/12.98)	See If I Care	2	0	46	43	45	23	VARIOUS ARTISTS WARNER BROS./BMG/CURB/SONY MUSIC 73955/WARNER STRATEGIC MARKETING (18.98 CD)	Totally Country Vol. 3	2		
9	9	5	67	SHANIA TWAIN ◆ ^D MERCURY 170914/UMGN (12.98 CD)	Up!	1	0	47	45	44	14	VARIOUS ARTISTS UNIVERSAL SOUTH 000458 (18.98 CD)	Livin' Lovin' Losin': Songs Of The Louvin Brothers	44		
10	11	12	77	KENNY CHESNEY ▲ ³ BNA 67038/RLG (12.98/18.98)	No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems	1	0	48	48	48	27	ALABAMA RCA 54371/RLG (14.98 CD)	The American Farewell Tour	6		
11	1	1	1	HOT SHOT DEBUT			0	49	46	49	49	TERRI CLARK MERCURY 170325/UMGN (11.98/18.98)	Pain To Kill	5		
12	12	16	15	RODNEY CARRINGTON CAPITOL 94164 (18.98 CD)	Greatest Hits	11	0	49	47	43	30	WYNONNA CURB 78811 (12.98/18.98)	What The World Needs Now Is Love	1		
13	12	16	15	DIXIE CHICKS ● MONUMENT/COLUMBIA 90794/SONY MUSIC (13.98 EQ CD)	Top Of The World Tour Live	3	0	49	49	42	24	LYLE LOVETT CURB 001162/LOST HIGHWAY (12.98 CD)	My Baby Don't Tolerate	7		
14	8	7	33	BROOKS & DUNN ● ARISTA NASHVILLE 67070/RLG (12.98/18.98)	Red Dirt Road	1	0	52	58	51	7	🔊 PACESETTER 🔊 VARIOUS ARTISTS GAITHER MUSIC GROUP 42460 (18.98 CD)			Bill Gaither Presents: A Gospel Bluegrass Homecoming Volume One	37
15	16	15	79	RASCAL FLATTS ▲ LYRIC STREET 165031/HOLLYWOOD (12.98/18.98)	Melt	1	0	53	51	47	26	JEFF FOXWORTHY WARNER BROS. 73903/RHINO (18.98 CD/DVD)	The Best Of Jeff Foxworthy: Double Wide, Single Minded	10		
16	13	9	13	TRACE ADKINS CAPITOL 40517 (12.98/18.98)	Comin' On Strong	3	0	54	50	50	5	THE FLATLANDERS NEW WEST 6049 (18.98 CD) [H]	Wheels Of Fortune	35		
17	15	14	66	TIM MCGRAW ▲ ² CURB 78746 (12.98/18.98)	Tim McGraw And The Dancehall Doctors	2	0	55	54	57	5	GEORGE STRAIT ● MCA NASHVILLE 170319/UMGN (12.98/18.98)	For The Last Time: Live From The Astrodome	2		
18	17	17	32	BRAD PAISLEY ● ARISTA NASHVILLE 50605/RLG (12.98/18.98)	Mud On The Tires	1	0	56	53	58	7	DIXIE CHICKS ▲ ⁶ MONUMENT/COLUMBIA 96840/SONY MUSIC (12.98 EQ/18.98)	Home	1		
19	14	11	38	ALAN JACKSON ▲ ² ARISTA NASHVILLE 53097/RLG (12.98/18.98)	Greatest Hits Volume II And Some Other Stuff	1	0	57	55	56	26	JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY WARNER BROS. 73918/WARNER (18.98 CD)	The Very Best Of John Michael Montgomery	11		
20	19	19	28	DIERKS BENTLEY CAPITOL 39814 (12.98/18.98)	Dierks Bentley	4	0	58	56	59	16	BILL ENGVALL WARNER BROS. 48534/WARNER (18.98 CD)	Here's Your Sign: Reloaded	37		
21	18	18	15	LEANN RIMES ● CURB 78829 (18.98 CD)	Greatest Hits	3	0	59	59	62	22	VARIOUS ARTISTS CAPITOL 93166 (18.98 CD)	CMT Presents: Most Wanted, Volume 1	11		
22	20	22	69	JOHNNY CASH ▲ AMERICAN 063339/LOST HIGHWAY (12.98 CD)	American IV: The Man Comes Around	2	0	60	65	70	11	BILLY CURRINGTON MERCURY 000164/UMGN (4.98/9.98) [H]	Billy Currington	17		
23	21	23	75	ELVIS PRESLEY ▲ ³ RCA 68079/RMG (12.98/19.98)	Elvis: 30 #1 Hits	1	0	61	67	74	17	BILLY RAY CYRUS WORD-CURB 86274/WARNER BROS. (18.98 CD)	The Other Side	18		
24	24	25	38	GEORGE STRAIT ● MCA NASHVILLE 000114/UMGN (8.98/12.98)	Honkytonkville	1	0	62	61	60	20	PATTY LOVELESS EPIC 86620/SONY MUSIC (11.98 EQ/18.98)	On Your Way Home	7		
25	22	20	46	SOUNDTRACK WARNER BROS. 48424/WARNER (18.98 CD)	Blue Collar Comedy Tour: The Movie	16	0	63	63	52	27	WILLIE NELSON & FRIENDS LOST HIGHWAY 000453/UMGN (12.98 CD)	Live And Kickin'	4		
26	28	29	79	MONTGOMERY GENTRY ● COLUMBIA 86520/SONY MUSIC (11.98 EQ/17.98)	My Town	3	0	64	64	64	13	VARIOUS ARTISTS GAITHER MUSIC GROUP 42460 (18.98 CD)	Bill Gaither Presents: A Gospel Bluegrass Homecoming Volume Two	42		
27	23	27	84	JOE NICHOLS ● UNIVERSAL SOUTH 170285 (8.98/12.98) [H]	Man With A Memory	9	0	65	68	68	81	NICKEL CREEK ● SUGAR HILL 3941 (18.98 CD)	This Side	2		
28	29	35	36	JIMMY WAYNE DREAMWORKS 490355/INTERSCOPE (17.98 CD)	Jimmy Wayne	7	0	66	71	67	47	WILLIE NELSON LEGACY/COLUMBIA 86740/SONY MUSIC (25.98 EQ CD)	The Essential Willie Nelson	24		
29	26	21	69	ALISON KRAUSS + UNION STATION ▲ ROUNDER 610515 (19.98 CD)	Live	9	0	67	57	55	23	EMMYLOU HARRIS NONESUCH 79805/AG (18.98 CD)	Stumble Into Grace	6		
30	35	30	16	RANDY TRAVIS WORD-CURB 86273/WARNER BROS. (18.98 CD)	Worship & Faith	9	0	68	69	—	3	LORRIE MORGAN IMAGE 0609 (17.98 CD)	Show Me How	49		
31	25	24	39	LONESTAR ▲ BNA 67076/RLG (12.98/18.98)	From There To Here: Greatest Hits	1	0	69	69	—	5	DOLLY PARTON BLUE EYE 79756 (17.98 CD)	For God And Country	23		
32	27	26	48	CHRIS CAGLE ● CAPITOL 40516 (11.98/18.98)	Chris Cagle	1	0	70	70	—	28	DOLLY PARTON RCA/BMG HERITAGE 52008/RLG (18.98 CD)	Ultimate Dolly Parton	20		
33	34	36	11	RON WHITE PARALLEL/HIP-0 001582/UME (12.98 CD) [H]	Drunk In Public	32	0	71	60	—	2	JOHNNY CASH AMERICAN 001679/LOST HIGHWAY (79.98 CD)	Cash Unearthed	33		
34	31	32	35	BUDDY JEWELL ● COLUMBIA 90131/SONY MUSIC (12.98 EQ/18.98)	Buddy Jewell	1	0	72	72	—	15	RODNEY CROWELL DMZ/EPIC 89082/SONY MUSIC (12.98 EQ CD) [H]	Fate's Right Hand	29		
35	30	37	101	GEORGE STRAIT ● The Best Of George Strait: 20th Century Masters The Millennium Collection MCA NASHVILLE 170280/UMGN (9.98 CD)	The Best Of George Strait: 20th Century Masters The Millennium Collection	8	0	73	73	—	1	CONWAY TWITTY PLATINUM DISC 2839 (18.98 CD)	Conway Twitty The Legend	73		
36	32	31	34	TRACE ADKINS ● CAPITOL 81512 (10.98/18.98)	Greatest Hits Collection, Volume I	1	0	74	74	—	8	BRIAN MCCOMAS LYRIC STREET 165025/HOLLYWOOD (11.98/18.98) [H]	Brian McComas	21		
37	33	28	35	REBA MCBENTIRE ● MCA NASHVILLE 000451/UMGN (8.98/12.98)	Room To Breathe	4	0	75	75	—	8	BILLY RAY CYRUS MERCURY 170165/UMGN (12.98 CD)	The Best Of Billy Ray Cyrus: 20th Century Masters The Millennium Collection	59		
38	36	33	38	SARA EVANS RCA 67074/RLG (12.98/18.98)	Restless	3	0									
39	37	41	46	TOBY KEITH MERCURY 170351/UMGN (12.98 CD)	The Best Of Toby Keith: 20th Century Masters The Millennium Collection	5	0									

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

MARCH 13
2004

Billboard® TOP COUNTRY CATALOG ALBUMS™

Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	Title	TOTAL CHART WKS	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	Title	TOTAL CHART WKS
1	1	MARTINA MCBRIDE ▲ ² RCA 67012/RLG (12.98/18.98)	Greatest Hits	128	13	14	RASCAL FLATTS ▲ LYRIC STREET 165011/HOLLYWOOD (12.98/18.98) [H]	Rascal Flatts	195
2	3	KENNY CHESNEY ▲ ³ BNA 67976/RLG (12.98/18.98)	Greatest Hits	179	14	15	TOBY KEITH ▲ ² DREAMWORKS 450297/INTERSCOPE (12.98/18.98)	Pull My Chain	131
3	2	JOHNNY CASH ▲ LEGACY/COLUMBIA 69739/SONY MUSIC (7.98 EQ/11.98)	16 Biggest Hits	256	15	13	GEORGE JONES ● LEGACY/EPIC 69319/SONY MUSIC (7.98 EQ/11.98)	16 Biggest Hits	143
4	4	TIM MCGRAW ▲ ⁴ CURB 77978 (12.98/18.98)	Greatest Hits	171	16	22	HANK WILLIAMS JR. ▲ ¹⁵ CURB 77638 (5.98/9.98)	Greatest Hits, Vol. 1	495
5	5	SHANIA TWAIN ◆ ¹⁹ MERCURY 536003/UMGN (8.98/12.98)	Come On Over	330	17	17	GARTH BROOKS ◆ ¹⁹ CAPITOL 97424 (19.98/26.98)	Double Live	227
6	7	LARRY THE CABLE GUY ARK 21 810076 (18.98 CD)	Lord, I Apologize	37	18	16	ROY ORBISON LEGACY/MONUMENT 69738/SONY MUSIC (7.98 EQ/11.98)	16 Biggest Hits	76
7	6	BROOKS & DUNN ▲ ³ ARISTA NASHVILLE 18852/RLG (12.98/18.98)	The Greatest Hits Collection	337	19	20	JOHNNY CASH ▲ LEGACY/COLUMBIA 66017/SONY MUSIC (7.98 EQ/11.98)	Johnny Cash At San Quentin	64
8	9	ALAN JACKSON ▲ ⁵ ARISTA NASHVILLE 18801/RLG (12.98/18.98)	The Greatest Hits Collection	436	20	17	SOUNDTRACK ▲ ³ CURB 78703 (11.98/17.98)	Coyote Ugly	181
9	8	WILLIE NELSON ▲ LEGACY/COLUMBIA 69322/SONY MUSIC (7.98 EQ/11.98)	16 Biggest Hits	285	21	23	JOHNNY CASH ▲ LEGACY/COLUMBIA 66773/SONY MUSIC (5.98 EQ/9.98)	Super Hits	163
10	11	SOUNDTRACK ▲ LOST HIGHWAY/MERCURY 170699/UMGN (8.98/12.98)	0 Brother, Where Art Thou?	169	22	19	MERLE HAGGARD ▲ LEGACY/EPIC 69321/SONY MUSIC (7.98 EQ/11.98)	16 Biggest Hits	65
11	10	DIXIE CHICKS ◆ ¹² MONUMENT 68195/SONY MUSIC (10.98 EQ/17.98) [H]	Wide Open Spaces	317	23	18	JEFF FOXWORTHY ● WARNER BROS. JWRN (10.98/16.98)	Totally Committed	50
12	12	TOBY KEITH ▲ ² MERCURY 55862/UMGN (8.98/12.98)	Greatest Hits Volume One	274	24	25	JOHN DENVER ▲ MADACY 4750 (5.98/9.98)	The Best Of John Denver	284
					25	—	JCHNNY CASH ▲ LEGACY/COLUMBIA 65955/SONY MUSIC (7.98 EQ/11.98)	Johnny Cash At Folsom Prison	100

● Albums with the greatest sales gains this week. Catalog albums are 2-year-old titles that have fallen below No. 100 on The Billboard 200 or reissues of older albums. Total Chart Weeks column reflects combined weeks title has appeared on Top Country Albums and Top Country Catalog. ● Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units (Gold). ▲ RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum). ◆ RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamond). Numeral following Platinum or Diamond symbol indicates album's multi-platinum level. For boxed sets, and double albums with a running time of 100 minutes or more, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. *Asterisk indicates LP is available. Most tape prices, and CD prices for BMG and WEA labels, are suggested lists. Tape prices marked EQ, and all other CD prices, are equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. [H] indicates past Heatseeker title. © 2004, VNU Business Media, Inc., and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

MARCH 13 2004

Billboard® HOT COUNTRY™ SINGLES & TRACKS

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WEEKS ON CHART	Airplay monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems			TITLE PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	Artist IMPRINT & NUMBER/PROMOTION LABEL	PEAK POSITION	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WEEKS ON CHART	Airplay monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems			TITLE PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	Artist IMPRINT & NUMBER/PROMOTION LABEL	PEAK POSITION
				MON	TUE	WED								THUR	FRI	SAT			
							NUMBER 1	4 Weeks At Number 1		31	34	33	9			LOCO D.L.MURPHY,K.TRIBBLE (D.L.MURPHY,K.TRIBBLE)	David Lee Murphy AUDIUM ALBUM CUT/KOCH	31	
1	1	1	17				AMERICAN SOLDIER J.STROUD,T.KEITH (T.KEITH,C.CANNON)	Toby Keith DREAMWORKS 002048	1	32	35	34	12			A GUY LIKE ME D.MORRIS,T.BROWN (P.GREEN,D.NEUHAUSER,THE PAT GREEN BAND)	Pat Green REPUBLIC ALBUM CUT/UNIVERSAL SOUTH	32	
2	4	5	28				LITTLE MOMENTS FROGERS (C.DUBOIS,B.PAISLEY)	Brad Paisley ARISTA NASHVILLE ALBUM CUT	2	33	36	36	8			LAST ONE STANDING R.MARK (R.MARK,F.WAYBILL)	Emerson Drive DREAMWORKS 001894	33	
3	3	4	20				WATCH THE WIND BLOW BY B.GALLIMORE,T.MCGRAW,D.SMITH (A.OSBORNE,D.ALTMAN)	Tim McGraw CURB ALBUM CUT	3	34	39	43	4			IT ONLY HURTS WHEN I'M BREATHING R.J.LANGE (S.TWAIN,R.J.LANGE)	Shania Twain MERCURY ALBUM CUT	34	
4	2	2	19				REMEMBER WHEN K.STEGALL (A.JACKSON)	Alan Jackson ARISTA NASHVILLE ALBUM CUT	1	35	43	—	2			LET'S BE US AGAIN D.HUFF (R.MCDONALD,M.DERRY,T.L.JAMES)	Lonestar BNA ALBUM CUT	35	
5	6	6	17				IN MY DAUGHTER'S EYES M.MCBRIDE,P.WORLEY (J.T.SLATER)	Martina McBride RCA ALBUM CUT	5	36	33	29	19			ON YOUR WAY HOME F.GORDY,JR. (R.SAMOSEY,M.BERG)	Patty Loveless EPIC ALBUM CUT/EMN	29	
6	8	8	30				I LOVE YOU THIS MUCH C.LINDSEY,J.STROUD (J.WAYNE,C.DUBDIS,D.SAMPSON)	Jimmy Wayne DREAMWORKS 001239	6	37	37	38	9			I GOT A FEELIN' C.CHAMBERLAIN (P.CURRINGTON,C.CHAMBERLAIN,C.BEATHARD)	Billy Currington MERCURY 001983	37	
7	7	7	25				HOT MAMA S.HENDRICKS,T.BRUCE (C.BEATHARD,T.SHAPIRO)	Trace Adkins CAPITOL ALBUM CUT	7	38	40	39	8			I WANNA MAKE YOU CRY K.BEARD,D.MALLOY (K.BEARD,J.BATES)	Jeff Bates RCA ALBUM CUT	38	
8	9	9	26				PERFECT S.EVANS,P.WORLEY (S.EVANS,T.SHAPIRO,T.MARTIN)	Sara Evans RCA ALBUM CUT	8	39	42	42	8			TOUGHER THAN NAILS L.WILSON,J.DIFFIE (P.DONNELL,K.MARVELL,M.T.BARNES)	Joe Diffie BROKEN BOW ALBUM CUT	39	
9	11	11	15				YOU'LL THINK OF ME D.HUFF,K.URBAN (D.BROWN,T.LACY,D.MATKOSKY)	Keith Urban CAPITOL ALBUM CUT	9	40	41	41	8			FLIES ON THE BUTTER (YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN) D.HUFF,WYNNONNA (C.CANNON,A.SHAMBLIN,A.CUNNINGHAM)	Wynonna With Naomi Judd ASYLUM-CURB ALBUM CUT	40	
10	10	10	20				SWEET SOUTHERN COMFORT C.BLACK (R.CLAWSON,B.CRISLER)	Buddy Jewell COLUMBIA ALBUM CUT	10	41	38	37	14			THIS LOVE D.HUFF (L.RIMES,M.BEESON,J.COLLINS)	LeAnn Rimes ASYLUM-CURB ALBUM CUT	37	
11	12	13	6				WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN B.CANNON,K.CHESENEY (B.JAMES)	Kenny Chesney & Uncle Kracker BNA ALBUM CUT	11	42	44	46	8			MEN DON'T CHANGE L.MILLER (A.DALLEY,T.MILLER)	Amy Dalley CURB ALBUM CUT	42	
12	5	3	30				I WANNA DO IT ALL B.GALLIMORE (T.NICHOLS,R.GILES,G.GODDARD)	Terri Clark MERCURY 001257	3	43	48	51	4			THE WRONG GIRL B.GALLIMORE (L.ROSE,P.MCCLAUGHLIN)	Lee Ann Womack MCA NASHVILLE ALBUM CUT	43	
13	14	15	11				MAYBERRY M.BRIGHT,M.WILLIAMS,RASCAL FLATTS (A.SMITH)	Rascal Flatts LYRIC STREET ALBUM CUT	13	44	45	47	7			I'D BE LYING C.CAGLE,R.WRIGHT (C.CAGLE,D.BANNING)	Chris Cagle CAPITOL ALBUM CUT	44	
14	15	14	42				LONG BLACK TRAIN M.WRIGHT,FROGERS (J.TURNER)	Josh Turner MCA NASHVILLE 000976	13	45	47	48	8			WE ALL FALL DOWN M.D.CLUTE,DIAMOND RIO (A.ALBRIGHTON,S.D.JONES)	Diamond Rio ARISTA NASHVILLE ALBUM CUT	45	
15	16	16	17				SONGS ABOUT RAIN M.WRIGHT,G.ALLAN (L.ROSE,P.MCCLAUGHLIN)	Gary Allan MCA NASHVILLE ALBUM CUT	15	46	49	—	2			THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY BOY L.WHITE,B.DEAN (J.M.SOMMERS)	Billy Dean VIEW 2 ALBUM CUT/HZE	46	
16	17	17	20				SPEND MY TIME C.BLACK (C.BLACK,H.NICHOLAS)	Clint Black EQUITY 003	16	47	57	54	1			THE COAST IS CLEAR J.STROUD,T.KEITH (S.EMERICK,R.LANE)	Scotty Emerick DREAMWORKS ALBUM CUT	47	
17	20	20	9				DESPERATELY T.BROWN,G.STRAIT (B.ROBISON,M.WARDEN)	George Strait MCA NASHVILLE 001982	17							HOT SHOT DEBUT			
18	19	19	22				GOOD LITTLE GIRLS D.HUFF,D.JOHNSON (T.SEAL,S.B.JONES)	Blue County ASYLUM-CURB ALBUM CUT	18	48	new	1				REDNECK WOMAN M.WRIGHT,J.SCAIFE (G.WILSON,J.RICH)	Gretchen Wilson EPIC ALBUM CUT/EMN	48	
19	18	18	25				COOL TO BE A FOOL B.ROWAN (J.NICHOLS,S.DEAN,W.NANCE)	Joe Nichols UNIVERSAL SOUTH 001371	18	49	46	40	17			NO REGRETS YET D.HUFF (S.ISAACS,D.BROWN)	Sonya Isaacs LYRIC STREET ALBUM CUT	36	
20	21	23	7				LETTERS FROM HOME B.GALLIMORE (T.LANE,D.LEE)	John Michael Montgomery WARNER BROS. ALBUM CUT/WRN	20	50	59	—	2			SICK AND TIRED M.MCCLURE,CROSS CANADIAN RAGWEED (C.CANADA)	Cross Canadian Ragweed UNIVERSAL SOUTH ALBUM CUT	50	
21	22	21	16				SIMPLE LIFE D.HUFF,C.D.JOHNSON (C.LINDSEY,H.LINDSEY,A.MAYO,T.VERGES)	Carolyn Dawn Johnson ARISTA NASHVILLE ALBUM CUT	21	51	52	49	3			I WON'T GO AN AND ON M.WRIGHT,S.DECKER (C.PRATHER,T.LOONEY)	Colt Prather EPIC ALBUM CUT/EMN	49	
22	23	22	21				MY LAST NAME B.BEAVERS (H.ALLEN,D.BENTLEY)	Dierks Bentley CAPITOL ALBUM CUT	21	52	54	59	4			BREAK DOWN HERE B.ROWAN (J.BROWN,P.J.MATTHEWS)	Julie Roberts MERCURY ALBUM CUT	52	
23	24	24	20				PAINT ME A BIRMINGHAM J.STROUD (B.MCDRE,B.DUFFY)	Tracy Lawrence DREAMWORKS ALBUM CUT	23	53	55	52	7			IF HEARTACHES HAD WINGS D.VINCENT,R.VINCENT (J.A.SWEET)	Rhonda Vincent ROUNDER 614615	48	
24	28	30	6				IF YOU EVER STOP LOVING ME R.RUTHERFORD (B.DIPIERO,T.SHAPIRO,R.RUTHERFORD)	Montgomery Gentry COLUMBIA ALBUM CUT	24	54	53	60	3			SHE THINKS SHE NEEDS ME R.SCRUGGS (S.LEMAIRE,C.MILLS,S.MINOR)	Andy Griggs RCA ALBUM CUT	53	
25	26	26	11				WILD WEST SHOW B.KENNY,J.RICH,P.WORLEY (B.KENNY,J.RICH,B.DALY)	Big & Rich WARNER BROS. 16515/WRN	25	55	new	1				WHEN SOMEBODY KNOWS YOU THAT WELL B.BRADDOCK (J.MELTON,H.ALLEN)	Blake Shelton WARNER BROS. ALBUM CUT/WRN	55	
26	27	27	24				YOU'RE IN MY HEAD L.REYNOLDS (S.MINDY,J.STEELE,C.WALLIN)	Brian McComas LYRIC STREET ALBUM CUT	26	56	51	50	20			THE FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST J.SHANKS,G.FUNDIS (C.STEVENS)	Sheryl Crow A&M ALBUM CUT/MERCURY	35	
27	31	35	5				THAT'S WHAT SHE GETS FOR LOVING ME K.BROOKS,R.DUNN,M.WRIGHT (R.DUNN,T.MCBRIDE)	Brooks & Dunn ARISTA NASHVILLE ALBUM CUT	27	57	new	1				I WANT TO LIVE M.WILLIAMS (R.RUTHERFORD,B.JAMES)	Josh Gracin LYRIC STREET ALBUM CUT	57	
28	29	32	6				PASSENGER SEAT D.HUFF,SHEDEAISEY (K.OSBORNE,C.HARRINGTON)	SheDaisy LYRIC STREET ALBUM CUT	28	58	58	55	12			I CAN ONLY IMAGINE P.KIPLEY (B.MILLARD)	MercyMe IND 73150/ASYLUM-CURB	52	
29	30	28	9				SOMEBODY R.MCINTIRE,B.CANNON,N.WILSON (D.BERG,S.TATE,A.TATE)	Reba McEntire MCA NASHVILLE 001981	28	59	new	1				ME AND EMILY C.LINDSEY (R.PROCTOR,C.TOMPKINS)	Rachel Proctor BNA ALBUM CUT	59	
30	32	31	14				I CAN'T SLEEP J.RITCHIE,C.WALKER (C.WALKER,C.WRIGHT)	Clay Walker RCA ALBUM CUT	30	60	new	1				BACK OF THE BOTTOM DRAWER J.HUSKINS,C.WRIGHT (L.ROSE,C.WRIGHT)	Chely Wright VIVATON ALBUM CUT	60	

Records showing an increase in detections over the previous week, regardless of chart movement. Compiled from a national sample of airplay supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems' radio track service. 127 Country Stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Songs ranked by number of detections. Airpower awarded to songs appearing in the top 20 on both the BDS Airplay and Audience charts for the first time with increases in both detections and audience. Titles below the top 15 are removed from the chart after 20 weeks. Hot Shot debut available. Catalog number is for CD Single, or Vinyl Single if CD Single is unavailable. CD Single available. DVD Single available. CD Maxi-Single available. Cassette Single available. Vinyl Maxi-Single available. Vinyl Single available. Cassette Maxi-Single available. © 2004, VNU Business Media, Inc. All rights reserved.

MARCH 13 2004 Billboard® TOP BLUEGRASS ALBUMS™

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART	Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan			TITLE	Artist
			MON	TUE	WED		
1	1	66				ALISON KRAUSS + UNION STATION ROUNDER 610515	Live
2	2	17				VARIOUS ARTISTS GAITHER MUSIC GROUP 42459	Bill Gaither Presents: A Gospel Bluegrass Homecoming Volume One
3	5	17				VARIOUS ARTISTS GAITHER MUSIC GROUP 42460	Bill Gaither Presents: A Gospel Bluegrass Homecoming Volume Two
4	4	11				NICKEL CREEK SUGAR HILL 3941	This Side
5	6	3				OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW NETTWERK 30349	O.C.M.S.
6	8	8				VARIOUS ARTISTS MADACY CHRISTIAN 3241/MADACY	Best Of Bluegrass Gospel
7	7	33				EARL SCRUGGS/DOC WATSON/RICKY SKAGGS ROUNDER 610526	The Three Pickers
8	11	9				VARIOUS ARTISTS CMH 8775	Pickin' On Toby Keith Volume II
9	9	47				RICKY SKAGGS & KENTUCKY THUNDER SKAGGS FAMILY/LYRIC STREET 901004/HOLLYWOOD [M]	Live At The Charleston Music Hall
10	12	24				THE DEL MCCOURY BAND MCCOURY MUSIC 0001/SUGAR HILL [M]	It's Just The Night
11	3	44				RHONDA VINCENT ROUNDER 610497 [M]	One Step Ahead
12	13	24				VARIOUS ARTISTS SMCMG 18940/TIME LIFE	Heaven Bound: The Best Of Bluegrass Gospel
13	10	25				JUNE CARTER CASH QUALTONE 01142	Wildwood Flower
14	new					THE ISAACS HORIZON 50875	Songs Of The Faith
15	14	31				VARIOUS ARTISTS WARNER SPECIAL PRODUCTS 15828/TIME LIFE	Bluegrass Today

Records with the greatest sales gains this week. Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units or 25,000 DVD single units (Gold). RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units or 50,000 DVD single units (Platinum), with multimillion titles indicated by a numeral following the symbol. [M] indicates past or present Heatseeker title. © 2004, VNU Business Media, Inc., and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

MARCH 13 2004 Billboard® HOT COUNTRY SINGLES SALES™

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART	Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan			TITLE	Artist
			MON	TUE	WED		
1	1	15				HURT AMERICAN 009770/LOST HIGHWAY	Johnny Cash
2	2	24				PICTURE UNIVERSAL SOUTH 172274	Kid Rock Featuring Allison Moorer
3	3	15				I CAN'T TAKE YOU ANYWHERE DREAMWORKS 001581/INTERSCOPE	Scotty Emerick With Toby Keith
4	4	3				WILD WEST SHOW WARNER BROS. 16515/WRN	Big & Rich
5	6	60				THE IMPOSSIBLE UNIVERSAL SOUTH 172241	Joe Nichols
6	8	8				LAST ONE STANDING DREAMWORKS 001894/INTERSCOPE	Emerson Drive
7	5	38				BROKENHEARTSVILLE UNIVERSAL SOUTH 000782	Joe Nichols
8	7	37				STAY GONE DREAMWORKS 000345/INTERSCOPE	Jimmy Wayne
9	9	8				IF HEARTACHES HAD WINGS ROUNDER 614615	Rhonda Vincent
10	new					IT DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T LOVE YOU UNIVERSAL SOUTH 000329	McHayes

ALBUMS

Edited by Michael Paoletta

POP

► VAST

Nude
PRODUCERS: various
Fourfivesix Entertainment 4560022
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 "Nude" is the first release from Carson Daly's label, Fourfivesix Entertainment. The brainchild of multi-instrumentalist Jon Crosby, Vast released two underrated records on Elektra before coming to Daly's attention. At its best, "Nude" suggests a jam session between U2 and Moby, with Crosby's earnest vocals reaching the passion of Bono's while Middle Eastern chants, lush strings and acoustic guitars swirl around him. The set peaks early, with "Turquoise" and "Thrown Away," two of the more up-tempo songs. While the album itself sounds great, subsequent songs fail to distinguish themselves from one another, with the exception of "I Need to Say Goodbye" and the bass-heavy "Ecstasy." But between the aforementioned songs and the band's pre-existing fan base, Vast's audience may increase vastly.—**BT**

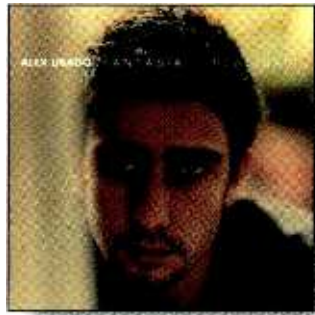
★ GARRISON STARR

Airstreams & Satellites
PRODUCERS: Curt Schneider, Andrew Williams
Vanguard 79752
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 17
 After a couple of major-label entries during the '90s and some time taken to regroup, Mississippi-bred singer/songwriter Garrison Starr reappears with a noteworthy new effort. The Los Angeles-based musician sports one of the strongest voices in town. She is also the author of affecting, emotion-baring songs that are clothed in attractive, melodic garb. The present album combines artistic and commercial elements with great poise. Adult alternative and public radio will find much to adore in originals like "Gasoline," "Sing," "Hey, Girl," "Superhero" and the title track. Starr's engaging and forceful live performances should help this solid effort get a leg up with her fan base and newcomers alike.—**CM**

COOPER TEMPLE CLAUSE

Kick Up the Fire and Let the Flames Break Loose
PRODUCERS: Dan Austin, Cooper Temple Clause
RCA 59573
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 Promising British rock act Cooper Temple Clause is all over the map on this set, which debuted at No. 5 last fall on the U.K. albums chart. On the best tracks, particularly "Blind Pilots," "A.I.M." and "New Toys," a welcome emotional resonance shines through. Production touches like twinkling electronics and faux-choir multitracking help distinguish the music, but an original approach is still a bit lacking throughout. For one, vocalist Ben Gautrey is an absolute ringer for Oasis' Liam Gallagher. For another, the songs are overcrowded with compositional ideas, careening from super-heavy riffs

ESSENTIAL REVIEWS



ALEX UBAGO

Fantasia o Realidad
PRODUCER: Jesús N. Gómez
Warner Music Latina 61342
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 Alex Ubago became one of the most successful new artists in Spain when he debuted in 2002. His album, "Qué Pides Tú?," sold upwards of 1 million units. Refreshingly enough, there wasn't any gimmick to Ubago's success. As a singer/songwriter, he performs quietly beautiful songs with sweeping melodies and conversational lyrics. His follow-up, "Fantasia o Realidad," is lushly arranged; guitars and acoustic piano co-exist with a string orchestra completely devoid of cheesiness. In songs like "Prefiero," the effect is symphonic, while single "Aunque No Te Pueda Ver" conforms more to traditional pop standards. With few exceptions (the more upbeat "Allí Estaré"), "Fantasia o Realidad" is dreamy but not languid; the richness of the arrangements precludes this. Although it could have been better served by less formulaic musical landscapes, "Fantasia o Realidad" is a stunning album.—**LC**

ZERO 7

When It Falls
PRODUCER: Zero 7
Elektra 61558
RELEASE DATE: March 9
 Many a critic and fan have been anxiously awaiting the release of this album, the follow-up to Zero 7's globally admired "Simple Things." With the release of that album in 2001, Zero 7's Henry Binns and Sam Hardaker shared a wonderfully warm electronic soul vision with the world. Thankfully, the British duo did not feel the need to deviate from this winning sound on its sopho-



more set. Like its predecessor, "When It Falls" features the sublime vocal stylings of Sia Furler ("Somersault"), Sophie Barker ("Passing By") and Moez ("Warm Sound"). Danish newcomer Tina Dico makes her Zero 7 debut on two tracks: "The Space Between" and "Home." The latter sounds like a long-lost recording from "Ladies of the Canyon"-era Joni Mitchell. Rich, lush and romantic, "When It Falls" is aural nourishment for the soul.—**MP**



WYNTON MARSALIS QUARTET

The Magic Hour
PRODUCER: Delfeayo Marsalis
Blue Note 7087 6 18163
RELEASE DATE: March 9
 After a two-decade career recording for Columbia, Wynton Marsalis makes his Blue Note debut with "The Magic Hour," his first ensemble CD in five years and arguably his finest jazz hour to date. His previous disc, "All Rise," released in 2002 on Sony Classical, was a fully orchestrated extended composition, a mammoth undertaking for the virtuoso trumpeter/composer. So on the new album, Marsalis sounds relaxed and fired up, riding the swinging flow and thoroughly enjoying himself in the intimate improvisational setting with his simpatico quartet members pianist Eric Lewis, bassist Carlos Henriquez and drummer Ali Jackson. With a full set of catchy melodies, "The Magic Hour" marks a dynamic new chapter in the recording life of the jazz maestro. Highlights include the freedom song "Free to Be," the title track with its pleasing, unexpected turns and the anthemic "The Feeling of Jazz" with Dianne Reeves.—**DO**

to expansive balladry. If "Fire" demonstrates anything, it's that this band could really make an impact if it learns to harness its obvious talents.—**JC**

COUNTRY

► BR549

Tangled in the Pines
PRODUCERS: BR549, "Cowboy" Keith Thompson
Dualtone 80302
RELEASE DATE: March 9
 BR549 is nothing if not a survivor, and in this reshuffled lineup and new label deal the band members remain true to their retro roots while pushing the envelope creatively. "That's What I Get" pulses and twangs with Bakersfield flair, and Chuck Mead's country shuffle "I'm All Right (For the Shape I'm In)" benefits from punchy production and endearing vocals. "She's Talking to Someone (She's Not Talking to Me)" is early-'60s country gold, and "No Train to Memphis" and the stellar title cut bring to mind Johnny Cash in their thump and soul. The hard-charging "Ain't Got Time" and cool "Movin' the Country" work well as "state-of-BR549" addresses, and "Run

a Mile" is a screamin' take on backwoods indiscretion. Later, "No Friend of Mine" owns a biting lyric and a raucous delivery, and a brace of drinkin' songs in "Honky Tonkin' Lifestyle" and the rockabilly "Way Too Late (To Go Home Early Now)" close this great album with style.—**RW**

★ TOM RUSSELL

Indians Cowboys Horses Dogs
PRODUCER: Tom Russell
HighTone 81652
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 Tom Russell is a songwriter's songwriter whose best work owns a vaquero's valor and a saddletramp's heart. Both are present in abundance here, starting with the stirring, salty historic panorama "Tonight We Ride," followed by the rodeo showpiece "All This Way for the Short Ride" and superbly drawn romance like "Bucking Horse Moon" and "No Telling." "Bacon Rind, Chief Seattle, the Ballad of Ira Hayes" is one hell of a piece of work rendered with passion, and "Old Blue" is everything a dog song should be. Russell wisely chooses covers that fit his style, like stunning renditions of Bob Dylan's "Seven Curses" and "Lily, Rosemary, and the Jack of Hearts"

(with Joe Ely), Marty Robbins' "El Paso" and Woody Guthrie's "East Texas Red." Russell closes with the gentle "Little Blue Horse," a fitting cap on a near-perfect record.—**RW**

R&B/HIP-HOP

► YOUNG GUNZ

Tough Luv
PRODUCERS: various
Roc-a-Fella/Def Jam B0001937
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 Newcomers Young Gunz believe they are the future of Roc-a-Fella and aim to prove why with this debut. The Philadelphia-bred duo of Young Chris and Neef showcases a cocky braggadocio that fits the label's reputation. However, the set's lead single, "No Better Love," shows the group's softer side. Featuring Rell, "No Better Love" is an ode to the women who stick by their rappers. Jay-Z is among a host of Roc-a-Fella artists who guest on "Tough Luv." The rapper's turn on "Never Take Me Alive" raises the stakes; to the Young Gunz's credit, they keep up with the vet on the Scott Storch-produced track. "Friday Night" is also a winner. For fans of last year's hit "Can't Stop, Won't Stop," a remix

(featuring Chingy) serves as one of two bonus tracks.—**RH**

► LIL SCRAPPY & TRILLVILLE

The King of Crunk & BME Recordings Present Lil Scrappy & Trillville
PRODUCERS: various
BME/Reprise/Warner Bros. 48691
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 With Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz opening the door for crunk artists in 2003, who better than the Atlanta-based producer/artist to introduce the newest acts in the subgenre? Serving as the first release from Lil Jon's BME imprint, the set is a double album—in theory—crammed onto one disc. For his part, Scrappy serves up the album's first half. His single "Head Bussa," which features Lil Jon, is a crunk anthem. Similarly, Trillville is not to be denied. "Neva Eva," which features Lil Jon and Lil Scrappy, is a crunk call to arms that rivals the former's "Bia Bia." While not a thinking man's album, "The King of Crunk" will get that next party started right. And there is nothing more crunk than that.—**RH**

★ VAN HUNT

Van Hunt
PRODUCER: Van Hunt
Capitol 7243 5 35233
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 Van Hunt, soul music's latest troubadour, offers beautiful mood music on his self-titled debut. Equal parts blues and rock, Hunt's scratchy falsetto moves and grooves over the self-produced set with an air that he has been here before. Lead single "Seconds of Pleasure" is driven by a thick guitar riff and deep bassline; the song is as gritty as it is sexy. Consider it an open invitation to get close to that special someone on a cool (or warm) spring night. "Down Here in Hell (With You)" has an old-school R&B feel with a lyric that is worthy of a red-light basement party. Other highlights include "Dust" and the piano-driven "What Can I Say." Like a good drink, Hunt's set is incredibly smooth. And if you're not careful, it will sneak up on you.—**RH**

WORLD

★ THE OUTERNATIONALISTS

Ethnomixicology
PRODUCERS: various
Six Degrees 657036 1096
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 Afro Celts founder/guitarist Simon Emmerson and British DJ Phil Meadley are the Outernationalists. And "Ethnomixicology" is a successful foray into the realm of global beat, the purpose of which was to create a club album that also inspires world-music fans. Mission accomplished. Opening track "Green Africa" is a pounding jungle mix with a distinct Afro-beat pedigree. In that same Afro-beat vein, stay in the green and cue up Spiritual South's "Green Gold." Emmerson and Meadley evoke a Gypsy dancehall groove by way of Balkan wild men Taraf de Haïdouks' "Carolina." They touch on those Eastern European roots again with their inclusion of Headmix's "Passenger." For pure sonic intrigue, check out the mixology brought to bear on Doreen Thobekile's "Hambanam."—**PVV**
 (Continued on page 56)

CONTRIBUTORS: Keith Caulfield, Leila Cobo, Jonathan Cohen, Gordon Ely, Deborah Evans Price, Rashaun Hall, Gail Mitchell, Chris Morris, Dan Ouellette, Michael Paoletta, Bram Teitelman, Philip van Vleck, Ray Waddell.

ESSENTIALS: Releases deemed by the review editors to deserve special attention on the basis of musical merit and/or *Billboard* chart potential. VITAL REISSUES: Rereleased albums of special artistic, archival and commercial interest and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. PICKS (►): New releases predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format. CRITICS' CHOICES (★): New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send album review copies and singles review copies to Michael Paoletta (*Billboard*, 770 Broadway, 6th floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

(Continued from page 55)

JAZZ

★ **ANDY BEY**
American Song
PRODUCER: Herb Jordan
Savoy Jazz SVY 17330
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24

Vocalist/pianist Andy Bey is one of jazz's best-kept secrets. While fellow singers revere him, it's surprising that Bey is not more widely celebrated. His sumptuous "American Song"—where he sings into the nucleus of 10 songbook standards with a stellar support team including flutist/tenor saxophonist Frank Wess and pianist/horn arranger Geri Allen—should remedy that oversight. His Savoy Jazz debut is a low-lights affair, teeming with romanticism and elegance. In his dark-roast baritone, Bey sings golden soul into such classic Ellington repertoire pieces as "Prelude to a Kiss." He absolutely owns Billy Strayhorn's "Lush Life" with his profound rendering and covers Leonard Bernstein's "Lonely Town" with heartfelt abandon. Bey breaks the ruminative mood midway through with a gleaming jaunt through Duke's "Caravan," but mostly he sinks in deeply and delivers the strongest set of his career.—**DO**

GOSPEL

★ **GWEN McCRAE**
I'm Not Worried (Going Back to Church)
PRODUCER: Haran Griffin
LewMar 2036
RELEASE DATE: March 2

It was the summer of 1975 when then-R&B/disco diva Gwen McCrae ruled the pop, R&B and dance charts with her now-classic "Rockin' Chair." Nearly 30 years later, McCrae—who scored additional R&B/dance hits with "Funky Sensation" and "Keep the Fire Burning" in the early '80s—re-emerges with a gospel offering that shows her soulful alto to be even stronger and more stirring than ever. "Highest Praise" is a moving ballad, and "Home Awaiting" is punchy, horn-driven gospel/R&B. But the most delightful surprise is McCrae's no-doubt-about-it command of traditional, can't-sit-still, Sunday-morning gospel ("Back to Church," "At the River," "Will You Meet Me"). At the top of her form and in complete command of her material, McCrae proves herself to be no gospel dilettante. This album arrives like a postcard from a dear friend—one who was gone for much too long. Welcome home, Ms. McCrae. For info, contact 404-296-6738.—**GE**

CHRISTIAN

★ **GREG LONG**
Born Again
PRODUCERS: Don Koch, Mookie Taylor, George King, Greg Long
Christian Records 824973301625
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 17

Greg Long is one busy man. Witness his two current high-profile releases: In addition to this impressive new solo collection, Long makes his debut as a member of popular vocal quartet Avalon ("The Creed"). (His wife Janna is also a member.) With "Born Again," Long delivers a thoroughly engaging set. The title cut is a buoyant anthem about the new life that believers find in accepting Jesus Christ. The powerful

"Fifteen" encourages believers to take the time to reach out. The uplifting "Sing About Jesus" wonderfully showcases Long's warm, passionate voice. Though he has enjoyed hits during the past few years, Long has yet to receive a level of success commensurate with his impressive gifts. This solid collection should change that.—**DEP**

VITAL REISSUES

EMMYLOU HARRIS
Blue Kentucky Girl
REISSUE PRODUCER: Brian Ahern
ORIGINAL PRODUCER: Brian Ahern
Warner Bros./Rhino 78112
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 Country diva and 1999 Billboard Century Award honoree Emmylou Harris' 1979 opus "Blue Kentucky Girl" was her most assured and scintillating album to date. She received top-flight support from a backup group that included Ricky Skaggs, Albert Lee, Rodney Crowell, James Burton, Hank DeVito, Tony Brown and Glen D. Hardin. The repertoire included the definitive Dallas Frazier ballad "Beneath Still Waters"; a potent, plaintive reading of her late vocal partner Gram Parsons' "Hickory Wind"; a spunky cover of Willie Nelson's "Sister's Coming Home," dueting with Tanya Tucker; and a strong rearrangement of the Drifters' "Save the Last Dance for Me." Warner Bros./Rhino has rereleased four other superlative '70s Harris albums, including her fine '75 debut, "Pieces of the Sky," and its follow-up, "Luxury Liner"; each contains a couple of previously unreleased bonus tracks.—**CM**

DVD

THE BLASTERS
Live: Going Home
Shout Factory 33830
RELEASE DATE: Feb. 24
 This crisply produced concert video, shot last August at the Galaxy Theatre in Santa Ana, Calif., captures what was purportedly the final reunion show by Southern California roots band the Blasters. Heated performances of the group's long-running repertoire are intercut with band interviews, which to their credit do not ignore the contentious relationship between brothers Phil and Dave Alvin, the group's vocalist and guitarist/songwriter, respectively. Sun Records rockabilly pioneer Sonny Burgess, Chicago bluesman Billy Boy Arnold and the SoCal R&B acts the Calvanes and the Medallions guest. A like-titled CD (Shout Factory 30244) featuring slightly different repertoire has been released simultaneously; in terms of sound quality and performance, it isn't quite up to the band's 2002 live set on HighTone. But the DVD, which also includes vintage '80s Blasters clips, is a treat for fans of this smoking Los Angeles institution.—**CM**

Billboard.com

- Graham Parker, "Your Country" (Bloodshot)
- Hootie & the Blowfish, "The Best of Hootie & the Blowfish (1993 Thru 2003)" (Atlantic/Rhino)
- Squarepusher, "Ultravisitor" (Warp)

SINGLES

Edited by Michael Paoletta

POP

★ **SUGABABES** **Hole in the Head** (3:37)
PRODUCERS: Brian Higgins, Xenomania, Jeremy Wheatley, Yoad Nevo
WRITERS: various
PUBLISHERS: Xenomania Music, Warner/Chappell Music, EMI Music, Universal Music Publishing
Island/Interscope INTF-1111-2 (CD promo)
 It was a crime that Sugababes' previous international album, "Angels With Dirty Faces," was not issued in the United States. One of the best releases of 2002, "Angels" was buoyed by numerous hit singles, including the U.K. No. 1 "Freak Like Me." Now, Island/Interscope is prepping for the U.S. release of the 'Babes third album, "Three." Lead single "Hole in the Head" is a smart, lyrically potent piece of progressive pop. A breakup song, "Hole" is more "good riddance" than "come back, I miss you." Note the reactive lyrics: "Ooh boy/Do you miss me like a hole in the head?/Cause I do boy . . . But late at night when I'm feeling blue/I'd sell my ass before I think of you." In a perfect world, "Hole"—with its seamless blend of light funk, ska and pop-dance—would be an instant U.S. hit. Let's make this a perfect world.—**KC**

RAP

▶ **J-KWON** **Tipsy** (4:03)
PRODUCERS: the Trackboyz
WRITERS: J. Jones, J. Kent, M. Williams
PUBLISHERS: Jerrell Jones Publishing Designee/Tarpo Music/Nottingdale Music, ASCAP
So So Def/Arista 57597 (CD promo)
 Last year saw the South rise again in hip-hop, but 2004 is quickly shaping up to be the year of the Midwest. Following the chart success of Chicago MCs Twista and Kanye West is J-Kwon. The St. Louis native makes his debut with the intoxicating "Tipsy." Serving as the lead single from his forthcoming full-length, "Hood Hop," the single is already garnering J-Kwon much attention. Backed by an infectious hand-clap track—reminiscent of Clipse's "Grindin'"—J-Kwon spins tales of nightlife and libation. R&B radio and mix shows have already picked up on the party anthem. It will be interesting to see if J-Kwon can follow in the footsteps of St. Louis brethren Nelly and Chingy and ride his early success to pop fame and fortune.—**RH**

DANCE

▶ **DANNI MINOGUE** **Don't Wanna Lose This Feeling** (3:50)
PRODUCER: Neïmo
WRITERS: various
PUBLISHERS: Dannii Music, Sony ATV Music Publishing, Warner/Chappell
Ultra BLT1173 (CD promo)
 "Don't Wanna Lose This Feeling" is the follow-up to Dannii Minogue's dance smash, "I Begin to Wonder," which reached No. 2 on the *Billboard* Hot Dance Radio Airplay chart in November. The track is a catchy, fun

ESSENTIAL REVIEWS



JANET JACKSON **I Want You** (3:50)
PRODUCERS: Kanye West, Jimmy Jam, Terry Lewis
WRITERS: H. Lilly, K. West, B. Bacharach, H. David
PUBLISHERS: various
Virgin 7087 6 18489 2 (CD promo)
 On the heels of her new top 40-aimed pop single, "Just a Little While," Janet Jackson embraces her urban fans with "I Want You." Co-produced by Kanye West—the current poster child for churning out crossover R&B/hip-hop hits—the retro-vibed song calls to mind the sparkly yet wistful soul of '60s-era girl groups. It also carries a contemporary reference. Its feel and girl-desires-boy theme are reminiscent of Alicia Keys' own crossover gem, "You Don't Know My Name," also ascribed to the prolific West. The opening drum downbeat immediately sets the tone. That beat smoothly propels the song, accompanied by swirling string crescendos that are the perfect backdrop for Jackson's breathy vocals. Not to take anything away from the festive, guitar-based "Just a Little While," but this song stands a much better chance of multiformat popularity.—**GM**

thumpy-funk club romp, complete with a springy bassline. Of special note is an alternate version of the cut, titled "Don't Wanna Lose This Groove." This version is an officially sanctioned "mash-up," placing Minogue's vocals atop the music of Madonna's seminal 1985 hit "Into the Groove." "Don't Wanna Lose This Groove" works marvelously and could spark instant curiosity.—**KC**

AC

GLORIA ESTEFAN **I Wish You** (3:52)
PRODUCERS: Gloria M. Estefan, Emilio Estefan Jr., Sebastian Kryz
WRITERS: G.M. Estefan, S. Kryz, J. Falcone
PUBLISHER: Foreign Imported Productions & Publishing, BMI
Epic ESK58373 (CD promo)
 For whatever reason, Gloria Estefan's latest album, "Unwrapped" (issued last year), has yet to find a large audience. Its lead single, "Wrapped," failed to click at radio. So, along comes "I Wish You," which may very well inject some much-needed life into a richly hued album that deserves to be heard. "I Wish You" is postcard-perfect for AC radio; its peaceful, rock-solid arrangement surrounds Estefan's empowering—at times plaintive—vocals with much warmth. A tale of forgiveness, "I Wish You" is home to such essential lyrics as "Deceive me/Hurt and mislead me/All that I wish you is love." In times



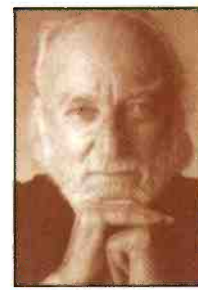
OUTKAST **Roses** (4:14)
PRODUCERS: Matt Boykin, André 3000
WRITERS: A. Benjamin, A. Patton, M. Boykin
PUBLISHERS: Gnat Booty/Chrysalis Music/Seven Sax, ASCAP
Arista 82876 57551 (CD promo)
 Despite the critical acclaim, 8 million-plus albums sold and three Grammy Awards—including album of the year—OutKast is just now getting started. Following the chart-topping success of the double-A-side single "Hey Ya!"/"The Way You Move," André 3000 and Big Boi combine their efforts on this new single from "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below." "Roses" is a hilarious ode to women who think that the world revolves around them. The song combines André's signature falsetto with a rapid-fire delivery from Big Boi. The duo's offbeat chemistry is again what drives this infectious, organ-drenched track. Given the success of the pair's recent efforts—and despite its quirky sound—R&B and top 40 radio should be more than willing to play this. Chalk up another one for the ATL's dynamic duo.—**RH**

like these, it's gratifying to know that some have indeed mastered the game of love. Let's hope this will not be lost on radio programmers.—**MP**

COUNTRY

▶ **COLT PRATHER** **I Won't Go On and On** (3:46)
PRODUCERS: Mark Wright, Shane Decker
WRITERS: C. Prather, T. Looney
PUBLISHERS: Peermusic III, Ma Jane Music Publishing, BMI
Epic ESK 58186 (CD promo)
 Prather's "I Won't Go On and On" is the first release from a stable of new acts on Sony's country roster. Described by Sony Nashville president John Grady as "Stevie Ray Vaughan in a cowboy hat," Prather demonstrates an abundance of personality with this solid debut single. His voice has an element of drama to it, immediately drawing in the listener. Penned by Prather and Tucker Looney, the song is a smoldering, guitar-driven tune about a disintegrating relationship. "I won't go on and on/I'll just go on and go," Prather sings. Mark Wright and Shane Decker's production has a cool intensity that is well-suited to the vibe of Prather's performance. Prather is the owner of a voice that should easily separate him from the rest of the pack. Success in the country format is surely forthcoming.—**DEP**

Jack DeSalvo caters to jazz, classical and world-music lovers with Forte



Russ Solomon's Tower Records seems close to emerging from Ch. 11

MERCHANTS / MARKETING / HOME VIDEO / E-COMMERCE / DISTRIBUTION

EXCLUSIVE Barbie CD Invites Fans To Sing Along

Album Has Kids Performing Such Hits As 'Hey Ya!'

BY SARAH HAN

With sing-along albums continuing to dominate the *Billboard* Top Kid Audio charts, it was only a matter of time before Barbie released her own CD.

"Barbie Hit Mix," a 16-song compilation of today's top tracks, hits stores April 6. The CD is priced at \$18.98, while the cassette will be available for \$12.98.

The album is performed entirely by kids, with sing-along versions of OutKast's "Hey Ya!," Hilary Duff's "Come Clean," Michelle Branch's "Breathe" and Martina McBride's "This One's for the Girls."

Mattel and Kid Rhino/Warner Strategic Marketing (WSM) selected these tracks to specifically target Barbie's audience, which is young girls.

"We've decided to hold off until Easter, because it's a holiday solely for children," says Andrea Kinloch, VP of strategic marketing at WSM, when explaining why that release

date was chosen. "Easter is the peak selling time for kids' products, without facing too much competition, as we would've during Christmas."

CROSS-MARKETING BLITZ

Given the strength of the \$3.5 billion Barbie brand, finding marketing partnerships was easy, Kinloch says.

For "Barbie Hit Mix," WSM has cross-promotional deals with Hallmark and Scholastic Books. Hallmark will advertise the CD by placing an insert of the album's cover art into 300,000 of their party invitation packages, Kinloch says. In return, "Barbie Hit Mix" will carry a pamphlet marketing Hallmark's party invitations. A similar deal has been reached with Scholastic books.

"One of the best ways to market an album or any product is through direct-response ad campaigns in television," Kinloch says.

The album will appear on such children's TV
(Continued on page 58)

'Barbie Hit Mix' includes Hilary Duff's 'Come Clean' and Michelle Branch's 'Breathe.'



Gaming Software A Solid Market

BY STEVE TRAIMAN

With the game industry posting record software sales in 2003, retailers are expanding store space for console, portable and computer game programs in 2004.

Executives at Trans World/FYE, Tower, Hastings, Musicland, Blockbuster, Hollywood Video and Circuit City are banking on expanded space for games to return big dividends.

Although game-rental revenue dipped 1% to \$719 million, total software sales and rentals rose to \$7.7 billion from \$7.6 billion in 2002. The rental figures are from HVE/Rentrak, which tracks retail transactions for the Video Software Dealers Assn.

A record 239 million games were sold, up 7% from 2002, according to NPD Group, which tracks retail

point-of-sale data.

Meanwhile, total game industry sales—including software, hardware and accessories—dipped to \$11.2 billion from \$11.7 billion in 2002. Including rentals, combined 2003 revenue fell 4% to \$11.9 billion from one year ago.

"The sales results are quite impressive when you look at the overall industry performance during 2003," NPD senior video games analyst Richard Ow says.

"The market saw price cuts from console manufacturers and declines in retail software prices to vie for consumer dollars, so another \$11 billion-plus sales year is far from disappointing," he explains.

A broad array of retailers has moved in tandem with the widening game-market demographics, says Douglas

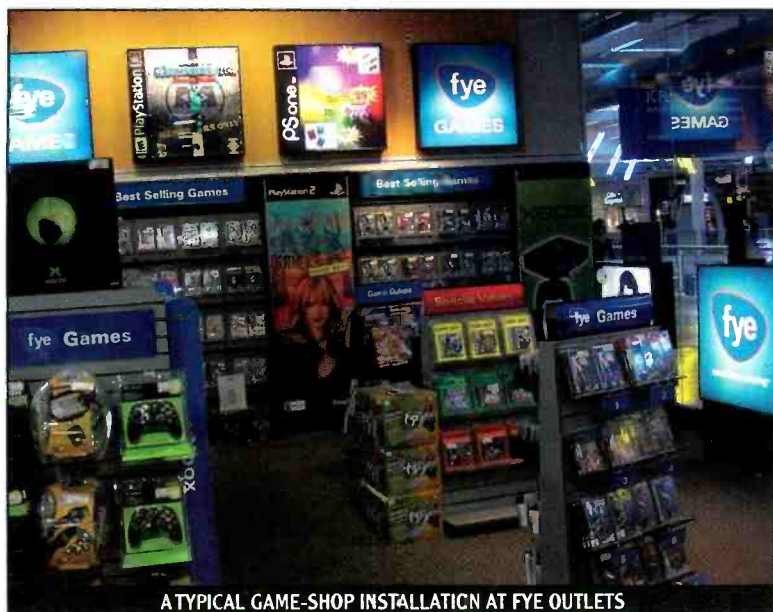
Lowenstein, president of the Entertainment Software Assn., whose publisher members represent more than 90% of U.S. sales.

This development bodes well for long-term industry growth, Lowenstein says.

"The expansion to major music and video retailers reflects the arrival of videogames as a mass-market phenomenon as important to pop culture as films and music. The increased interest of more top artists in contributing music to games is more evidence of their appeal to a similar demographic," he adds.

BIG THINGS AHEAD

Indeed, most of the key retailers *Billboard* surveyed were bullish on gaming. "By year-end, more than 660 of the
(Continued on page 58)



A TYPICAL GAME-SHOP INSTALLATION AT FYE OUTLETS

Forte Will Build Biz By Catering To Adult Buyers

Forte Distribution LLC, a new independent distribution firm, will ship its first releases in March.

The New York-based company is being launched by private investors. It is headed by **Jack DeSalvo**, who has previously served as a sales and label executive for **On Demand Media Services**, **Andante Records**, **Universal Classics**, **BMG Classics** and **Allegro Distribution**.

Forte will work a market niche, albeit a significant one. DeSalvo



DeSALVO: ADULTS ARE A BIT NEGLECTED

says his company plans to address a hunger for music among older jazz, classical and world-music listeners.

"The adult demographic is being somewhat neglected," DeSalvo says. "If we can cater to the buying habits [of those] who buy this music, we can make a living."

Former **WEA Classics and Jazz** national sales director **Barry Bender** will act as director of sales for Forte, based in San Francisco. Sales will be handled by a team of six part-time reps based in New York, Detroit, Chicago, Northern California, Southern California and Florida.

Capacity LLC in New Brunswick, N.J., will handle fulfillment and returns processing.

"It's a huge warehouse that has very advanced software to handle fulfillment and orders," DeSalvo says. "They deal with a lot of companies who don't want to handle a lot of overhead for the warehouse."

Forte's startup roster of 25 labels includes U.S. jazz and classical imprint **Arabesque** and such offshore lines as **Avie** (England),

Alpha and Nocturne (France) and **Codaex** (Belgium).

"There will be a number of domestic jazz labels we'll start distributing in May and June," he says.

Noting that he handled hundreds of small classical labels at **Allegro**, DeSalvo says Forte will attempt to keep its label roster to less than 50.

TIMBER! Toledo, Ohio-based indie label consortium **Lumberjack Distribution** has forged new exclusive distribution agreements with three imprints run by punk-rock veterans.

Lumberjack will now handle **BrokenSounds**, a hardcore punk label founded by **Chad Gilbert** and **Ian Grushka** of **New Found Glory**; indie-rock label **Silverthree Sound Recordings**, whose principals include **Mike Harbin** of **Burning Airlines**; and **Goodfellow Records**, operated by **Chris Logan**, formerly of the hardcore bands **Chokehold** and **Seventy-Eight Days**.

Lumberjack is distributed by

Navarre Entertainment Media in New Hope, Minn.

YES, RASTA: New York label group **MRI** has signed a deal to distribute Jamaican roots reggae vocal-

The
Indies™
By Chris Morris
cmorris@billboard.com



ist **Burning Spear's** label, **Burning Music Productions**, in the United States.

Some of Spear's catalog titles will be reissued in April, and his "Live in Paris 1988" CD and DVD will be released in June. MRI is distributed by **Ryko**.

LIQUID 8-ING: Mark Heyert has been named VP of sales for independent **Liquid 8 Records** in Minneapolis. He will report to label

CEO **Michael Catain**.

Heyert was most recently VP of sales for **Fuel 2000 Entertainment** in Los Angeles. He previously held sales posts at indie labels **TVT**, **Oglio** and **Ubiquity** and distributor **Navarre Corp**.

SONGS FOR A CAUSE: On May 11, **Ryko Distribution** will release "Parkinson, Volume I: 38 Songs of Hope," a two-CD compilation by Americana artists that will benefit research for Parkinson's disease.

Proceeds will go to the **Parkinson Song Foundation**, a nonprofit organization founded by the three children of New Jersey teacher **Selma Litowitz**, who has battled the disease for more than a decade.

Produced by **Lloyd Maines**, the set includes previously unreleased tracks by **Steve Forbert**, **Chuck Prophet** and **Dave Alvin**. It also includes selections by **David Crosby & Graham Nash**, **Bonnie Raitt**, **Tom Russell**, **Alejandro Escovedo**, **Jonatha Brooke**, **Dar Williams**, **Neko Case**, **Kim Richey**, **Kelly Willis**, **Greg Brown**, **Caitlin Cary**, **Sarah Hickman**, **Hot Club of Cowtown** and **Eastmountainsouth**.

Barbie

Continued from page 57

networks as Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network and ABC Family. Also getting behind Barbie are such radio stations as Radio Disney and XM Kids Radio.

And, like the rest of the celebrity world, Barbie has her own Web site, **barbie.com**. With an average of 200 million visitors per year, according to Mattel, **barbie.com** is the No. 1 Web site specifically for young girls.

MUSIC AS A FORUM

Mattel had been wanting to expand into music for some time,

according to Mary Rafferty, senior director of licensing for Mattel brands consumer products.

"Music is a strong touchstone for girls, and the opportunity to work with Warner, a leader in the music industry, made for a great partnership," Rafferty says.



Barbie will continue expanding in the music sector, with such upcoming products as the Barbie Karaoke Guitar and My Scene ear buds. Also, for the first time, original songs will be commissioned for the fourth Barbie Entertainment movie, "The Princess and the Pauper."

WSM and Mattel have also just sealed a deal for a "Cali Girl" CD that will debut this fall with the Cali Girl line of Barbies.

The bonus CD comes with Barbie's new ride for the fall, the Chevrolet SSR, and her Doll & Fashion Gift Set. Each product will carry a bonus five-track CD. Mattel and WSM are finalizing artist selections for the "Cali Girl" CD.

Games

Continued from page 57

total 950 FYE mall outlets had dedicated game shops," Trans World merchandising and marketing executive VP Fred Fox says.

With less competition from recently bankrupt KB Toys in many malls, Fox predicts that "games will be a big growth vehicle for us this year, with an opportunity to take market share for high single- to low double-digit revenue increases."

Hastings Entertainment is equally game for videogames.

"Our increase [from 2002] was a huge multiple, as we outperformed the industry—with all 149 stores adding 12 to 16 feet for games from the prior 60 feet of space," says Victor Fuentes, Hastings senior director of video, videogame and computer software.

The chain carries software, hardware and accessories for all three console platforms: PlayStation 2, GameCube and Xbox. Fuentes says price drops (to \$19.99 from \$24.99) on former AAA games contributed to successful sales.

"Last year we had a 41% increase in overall game business," Tower merchandising director Kevin Winnick says.

EXPANDING SELECTION

At year-end, 45 of Tower's 95 outlets had full game departments, and others stocked a good selection of top titles and accessories.

Winnick is also impressed by the expansion of such game soundtracks as those of "Outlaw Volleyball" and "Project Gotham Racing 2." This year, Tower plans to add interactive demo systems at major stores.

Meanwhile, 605 of Musicland's

stores, including all Sam Goody locations and Media Play, carry games.

"We are revitalizing our stores' merchandising efforts, including more interactive. This is a strategically important category," Musicland marketing spokesperson Laurie Bauer says.

"Musicland remains a top 10 retailer of gaming software and hardware, with the highest attachment rate in the industry," she says.

At Circuit City, all of the chain's 618 stand-alone superstores and five mall-based outlets carry games.

"We expect a stronger year, looking for lower PS2 and Xbox pricing, and

new portable systems from Sony and Nintendo that should expand this market to both casual and older gamers," Circuit City spokesperson Jim Babb says.

At Blockbuster Entertainment, game sales for the first nine months of 2003 spiked 195% to \$175.1 million, offset by an 8% dip in game rentals, which totaled \$350.5 million, according to senior VP/GM of games Thibault de Chatelluf.

All 5,500 of Blockbuster's corporate and franchise stores carry games, with more space "game rush" created and more selections added in 2003, he says.

AOL Music: Total Monthly Streams

Top Audio

1	EAMON Don't Want You Back <small>IVE</small>	3,776,417
2	USHER Yeah! <small>ARISTA</small>	3,668,252
3	OUTKAST Hey Ya! <small>ARISTA</small>	1,941,916
4	BRITNEY SPEARS Toxic <small>IVE</small>	1,672,194
5	CHINGY One Call Away <small>CAPITOL</small>	1,467,136
6	HILARY & HAYLIE DUFF The Siamese Cat Song <small>HOLLYWOOD</small>	962,810
7	BEYONCÉ Baby Boy <small>COLUMBIA</small>	830,145
8	CHEETAH GIRLS Cinderella <small>SESNY</small>	718,597
9	CHINGY Right Thru <small>CAPITOL</small>	706,736
10	USHER * Burn <small>ARISTA</small>	561,673

Top Video

1	BRITNEY SPEARS Toxic <small>IVE</small>	3,818,237
2	JESSICA SIMPSON With You <small>COLUMBIA</small>	1,872,141
3	HILARY DUFF Come Clean <small>HOLLYWOOD</small>	1,750,179
4	EVANESCENCE * My Immortal <small>WIND-UP</small>	1,451,980
5	LINDSAY LOHAN * Drama Queen (That Girl) <small>HOLLYWOOD</small>	1,330,497
6	EAMON Don't Want You Back <small>IVE</small>	1,193,366
7	CHINGY One Call Away <small>CAPITOL</small>	956,281
8	OUTKAST Hey Ya! <small>ARISTA</small>	951,558
9	BABY BASH Suga Suga <small>UNIVERSAL</small>	844,980
10	DAVE MATTHEWS Save Me <small>RTA</small>	630,197

* First Listen/First View * Artist of the Month ** Breaker Artist *** Sessions@AOL
Source: AOL Music for four weeks ending Feb. 26, 2004

Tower Records Set To Quickly Emerge From Ch. 11

Tower Records had a good day in bankruptcy court Feb. 27, when the judge ruled it could reject six leases and gave final approval to the debt-in-possession (DIP) loan/use of cash collateral.

The six leases are for two existing stores, while the remainder are for stores already shuttered during the company's restructuring.

The \$100 million DIP loan will be converted to a revolving credit facility, when the chain emerges from Chapter 11 March 15, at which point the prepackaged reorganization plan goes before the judge for approval.

So far, all objections from the

landlords and disgruntled bondholders have already been resolved. So, if no one else files an objection by the March 8 deadline, it looks like smooth sailing for Tower to exit Chapter 11 in 35 days, making it one of the quickest reemergences from Chapter 11 the industry has ever seen. As one participant in the process puts it, "This train is rolling at 120 miles an hour."

The only other time there was such a quick turnaround was when **Live Entertainment** did a prepackaged deal back in the early 1990s. When Tower emerges, its balance sheet will be cleaner, and it will have a new ownership structure, with the bondholders claiming an 85% stake and **Russ Solomon** and his family holding the remainder.

FOR THE RECORD: Speaking of Tower, Solomon, the founder of the chain, never pulled a Chapter 22, something that I accused him of in the Feb. 21 Retail Track column. Solomon phoned me with the information that while the wholesaler business he operated before Tower went broke and shut down, he never went so far as filing Chapter 11.

MY MISTAKE, PART TWO: In a story in the Feb. 7 issue on **Amici Forever** and its debut album, "The Opera Band," I should have identified the **Gary Group**—a Santa Monica, Calif.-based advertising firm—as the company responsible for putting together the commercial and making the time buys for the album's direct-response TV campaign.

MAKING TRACKS: The **Handleman Co.** has promoted two executives to the position of group VP. **Ron Lund**, previously VP of music purchasing and merchandise planning, will be responsible for product management and logistics. **Scott Wilson**, most recently VP of marketing, will oversee marketing, customer support, field sales and Canadian operations.

CONDOLENCES: Retail Track extends condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of **Merrill Kirsch**, who died Feb. 20 at the **Mayo Clinic** in Rochester, Minn., while recovering from heart surgery. He was 67. Kirsch had a 45-year career in

the music industry, working with **Heilicher Bros.**, **J.L. Marsh** and **Pickwick International**. In 1985, he bought the then-20-year-old rackjobbing operation **Dart Distributing**, which is currently based in Chaska, Minn.

pany's day-to-day operations.

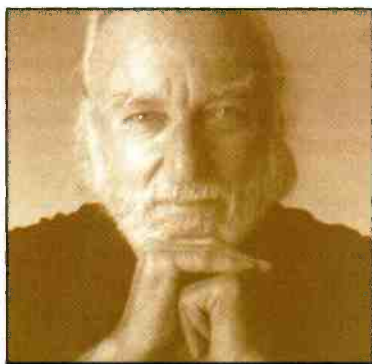
"One of the things that impressed me the most about Merrill is the unbelievable number of key industry executives he hired into the industry while he worked at Pickwick," Dart president/CEO **Les Baggett** recalls. Furthermore, Kirsch was responsible for introducing music to the inventory of a couple of big-box retailers that are now prominent players in the industry, Baggett adds.

Kirsch is survived by his wife of 40 years, **Patty**; sons **Patrick** and **Tony**, both Dart employees; and daughter **Catherine Seck**.

The industry lost another well-known distribution name when **Jerry Winston** died Feb. 27 from a heart attack in Boca Raton, Fla. He was 80.

Winston, an independent distribution pioneer, founded **Malverne Distributors** in 1946 and ran it right up until its sale to the now-defunct **INDI** in 1990. Along the way, he also owned **Mardi Gras Records**, a Latin label that released the **Joe Cuba Sextet's** "Bang Bang."

Winston is survived by his wife, **Elaine**.



SOLOMON: NEVER PULLED A CHAPTER 22

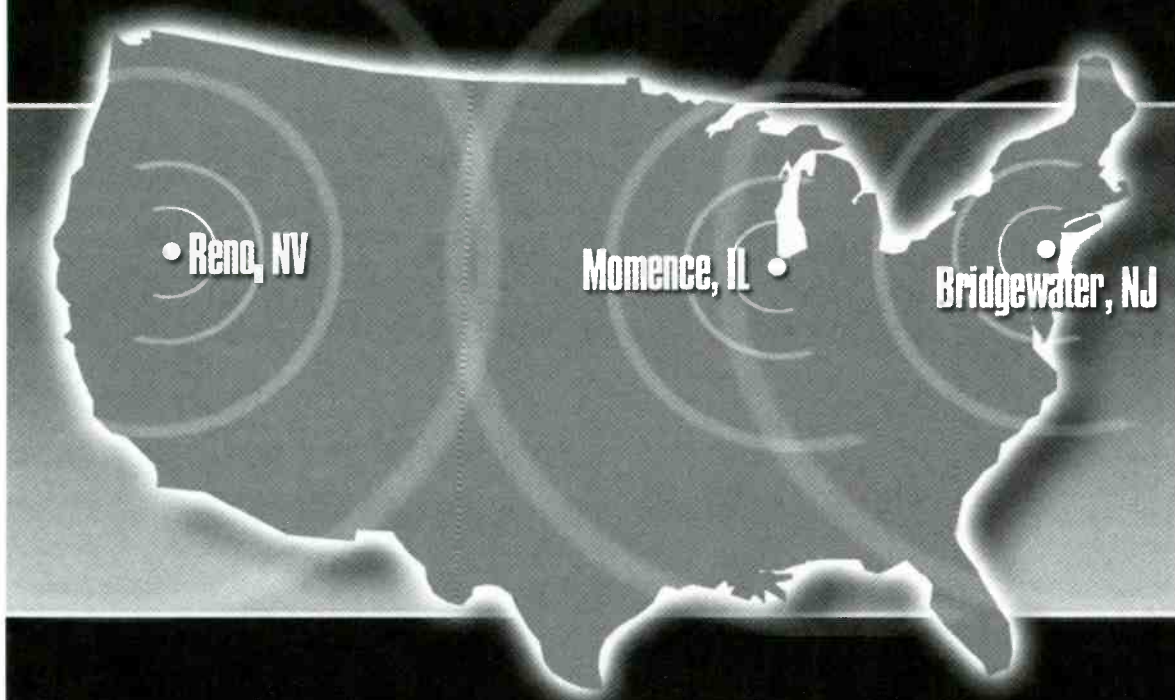
Retail Track
By Ed Christman
echristman@billboard.com



"Merrill was a real gentleman, a great family man and a good businessman. He was very ethical in doing deals," says Navarre chairman **Eric Paulson**, who worked with Kirsch at Pickwick.

Kirsch sold Dart in 1997 to Milwaukee-based investment firm **Cedar Creek Partners** but stayed on as chairman. He held that role until his death, although he had become less involved in the com-

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PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES: Warner Bros. Records in New York names **Cynthia Johnson** senior VP of urban promotion. She was VP of urban promotion at **J Records**.

Telarc Records in Cleveland promotes **Evelyn Mowbray** to VP of business affairs. She was manager of business affairs.

DISTRIBUTION: Universal Music and Video Distribution/Visual Entertainment in Santa Monica, Calif., appoints **Kim Sullivan** VP of video sales. She was VP of sales at **Ventura Distribution**.

Provident Distribution in Nashville elevates **Lesley Caraway** to director of international sales and marketing. She was coordinator of international sales and marketing.

Koch Entertainment Distribution in Los Angeles names **Don Edwards** Western regional sales manager of video. He was regional video director for **Universal Studios Home Video**.

PUBLISHING: BMI in New York names **Beka Callaway** associate director of writer/publisher relations. She was director of business development at **iMusic Group**.

Also at BMI, Puerto-Rico-based **Jerry Vilá** is promoted to associate director of Latin music. He was regional manager.

RADIO: Infinity Broadcasting in New York ups **Greg Strassell** to senior VP of programming. He was VP of hot AC programming and VP of programming for Infinity's adult top 40 **WBMX**, oldies **WODS** and classic rock **WZLX**, all in Boston.



SULLIVAN



CARAWAY



CALLAWAY



VILA



STRASSELL

Also at Infinity, **Jon Zellner** segues to VP of hot AC programming. He was VP of CHR/top 40 programming, and he will continue to be VP of programming in Kansas City, Mo., and PD of Kansas City's top 40 **KMXV** and AC **KSRC**.

Infinity also promotes **Mike Preston** to VP of CHR/top 40 programming. He adds those duties to his title of PD of top 40 **KBKS** Seattle.

Journal Broadcast Group in Tucson, Ariz., appoints **Greg Dunkin** operations manager of its Tucson operations. He was Indianapolis operations manager at **Emmis Communications**.

MUSIC VIDEO: MTV Networks International in Miami appoints **Manuel Torres** VP of consumer products. He was GM of **Warner Bros. Consumer Products**.

CONCERT PROMOTION: **Knitting Factory Entertainment** in New York names **Eileen Wolter** director of business development. She was an independent marketer.

HOME VIDEO: **Lions Gate Entertainment** in Santa Monica, Calif., promotes **Wayne Levin** to executive VP of corporate operations. He adds those duties to his title of executive VP of business and legal affairs.

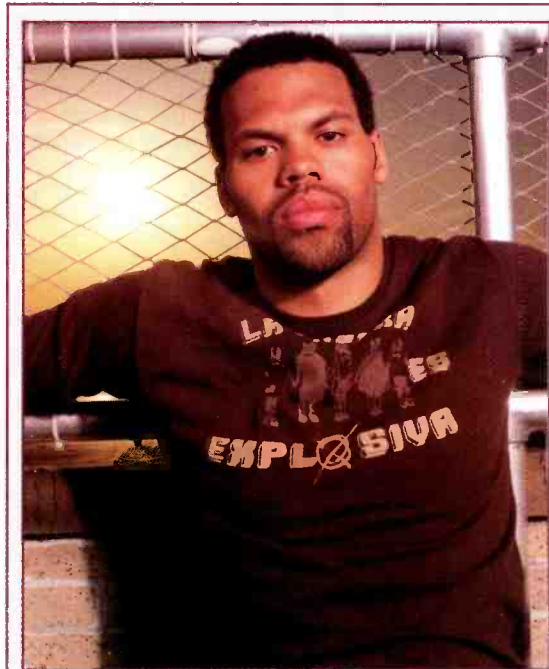
RELATED FIELDS: **The Museum of Television and Radio** in New York appoints **Stuart N. Brotman** president. He was president of **Stuart N. Brotman Communications**.

Radio and TV brokerage firm **Satterfield & Perry** in Lakewood, Colo., promotes **Ron Swanson** to president. He was VP.



Billboard, DMC In The House

Darryl McDaniels, also known as **DMC** from **Run-D.M.C.**, was among the partygoers who recently joined **Billboard Information Group** staffers at **Jay-Z's 40/40** nightclub. Pictured, from left, are **Airplay Monitor** account manager **Peter Weinstock**, **Billboard** sales and telemarketing assistant **Adam Gross**, **Billboard** VP of integrated sales **Joseph Guerriero**, **McDaniels**, **Erik Blam Management** president **Erik Blamoville**, **Billboard** president/publisher **John Kilcullen** and **Billboard** national consumer advertising director **Suzanne Lang**. (Photo: Mary Ann Kim/Billboard)



Now, Hear This ... ERIC ROBERSION Artists to Watch

As a songwriter, **Eric Roberson** has penned tunes for **Will Downing**, **Musiq**, **Jill Scott** and **Glenn Lewis**. Now he's taking center stage with his own album, "Eric Roberson Presents: The Vault—Vol. 1.5." Released through **Steelpetal Music** and distributed by **Studio Distribution (Navarre)**, the soulful, 12-track set is not Roberson's first foray as a solo artist. The New Jersey native initially landed a contract with **Warner Bros. Records**. A debut single, "The Moon," was released in 1994 and peaked at No. 33 on the **Billboard** Hot R&B Singles & Tracks chart. Despite out-of-the-gate success, however, he opted to complete his Bachelor of Arts degree in musical theater at **Howard University**. While writing songs for others after graduation, Roberson independently released his first solo album in 2000, "The Esoteric Movement." His new album finds the singer/songwriter animating tunes produced by himself as well as **Dre & Vidal**, **Redhead Kingpin**, **Osunlade** and others. Joining him on the sensuous track "She Ought to Know" is **Floetry's Marsha Ambrosius**. What is striking about Roberson's compositions is his penchant for storytelling. Each song is a mini-play brought to life by his soothing tenor and honest lyrics. "I see music from a musical theater aspect," he says. "The story has to be true to you. Then it must be able to reach out and grab someone. That's soul music."

GAIL MITCHELL



Hip-Hop Confab **Snoop Dogg**, left, and **Layzie Bone** of **Bone Thugs-N-Harmony** fame were among the stars who attended the Los Angeles Hip-Hop Summit Feb. 14. Presented by the nonprofit **Hip-Hop Summit Action Network (HSAN)**, the summit took place at **Bovard Auditorium** at the **University of Southern California** campus. Other notables in attendance were **Roc-a-Fella Records** CEO and HSAN co-chairman **Damon Dash**, **Kanye West**, **Loon**, **Tamia**, **Young Gunz** and **Fredro Starr**. (Photo: Leroy Hamilton)



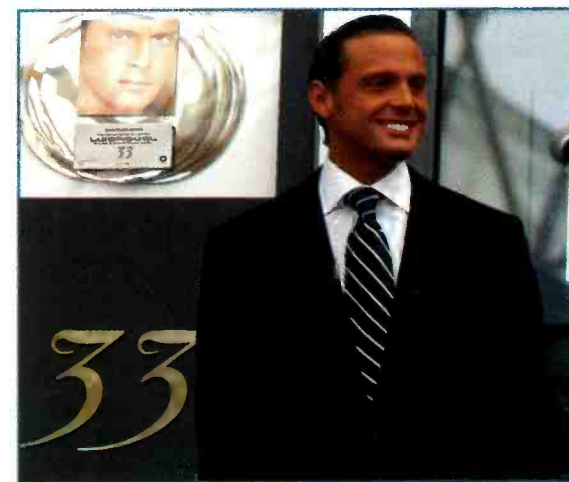
Supper Time For Rosa **Robi Draco Rosa** played an intimate show Feb. 25 at New York's **Supper Club**. Rosa performed tracks from his latest pop/rock album, "Mad Love," due March 30 on **Columbia Records**. The singer has metamorphosed from a former member of **Menudo** to co-founding the now-defunct alternative pop/rock band **Maggie's Dream** to being a noted songwriter/producer and solo artist who has co-written hits for such artists as **Ricky Martin** ("Livin' la Vida Loca," "She Bangs") and **Sisqó** ("Thong Song"). Celebrities in attendance at Rosa's Supper Club show included supermodels **Patricia Velasquez** and **Karolina Kurkova**. (Photo: Theo Wargo/WireImage.com)



HOT FASHION ... DAVE NAVARRO

Jane's Addiction guitarist **Dave Navarro** rocked the runway during a celebrity fashion show at General Motors' GM Ten Rocks Award Season With Cars, Stars and Fashion event, held Feb. 24 at Sunset and Vine in Hollywood. For his runway stint, Navarro wore apparel by designer **J. Lindeberg** and **Yves Saint Laurent** shoes. Other music stars at the event included **Steven Tyler** of **Aerosmith**, **Anthony Kiedis** of **Red Hot Chili Peppers**, **Billie Joe Armstrong** of **Green Day**, **Michelle Branch**, **Mark McGrath** of **Sugar Ray**, **Kelis**, **Jonathan Davis** of **Korn**, **Macy Gray** and **B-Real** of **Cypress Hill**. In other music-meets-fashion news, **Kelly Clarkson** has teamed with actress **Jenny McCarthy** for a new **Candie's** print-ad campaign that launches this spring . . . **Eve** has added athletic shoes to her **Fetish** fashion line; the new Fetish shoes will arrive in July. (Photo: Dimitrios Kambouris/WireImage.com)

Sealed With A Kiss **Michael Bolton**, left, and **Isaac Hayes**, right, give **BMI** president/CEO **Frances W. Preston** a congratulatory kiss after presenting her with the Broadcasters Foundation Golden Mike Award. Bolton performed in Preston's honor at the ceremony, which took place Feb. 23 at the **Plaza Hotel** in New York. (Photo: Wendy Moger-Bross)



Multi-Platinum Miguel **Luis Miguel** poses next to a five-times-platinum award plaque he recently received for selling 500,000 copies in Mexico of his latest **Warner Latina** album, "33." Miguel, a native of Mexico, completed a series of 25 consecutive sold-out shows at **Auditorio Nacional** arena in Mexico City, making him the artist who has performed there the most times in the history of the venue.



Sony/ATV Tree Honors Casey **Sony/ATV Tree Publishing** executives congratulate **Casey Beathard** for being named Sony/ATV Tree's songwriter of the year for 2003. The executives presented Beathard with a commemorative trophy at a surprise luncheon Feb. 18 in Nashville. Beathard has penned hits for numerous artists, including **Kenny Chesney**, **Tracy Byrd**, **Gary Allan** and **Trace Adkins**. Pictured, from left, are Sony/ATV Tree senior VP/GM of creative **Woody Bomar**, Sony/ATV Tree president/CEO **Donna Hilley**, Beathard, Sony/ATV Tree senior director of creative **Mike Whelan** and Sony/ATV Tree VP **Troy Tomlinson**. (Photo: Alan Mayor)

Bayside Meets Billboard

Members of rock band **Bayside** stopped by **Billboard** headquarters in New York for a Feb. 20 **Billboard Café** performance. Bayside is on a North American tour in support of its current **Victory Records** album, "Sirens and Condolences." Pictured, from left, are **Billboard** East Coast advertising director **Joe Maimone**, Bayside vocalist **Anthony Ranieri**, Bayside guitarist **Jack O'Shea** and Bayside manager **Jamie Arthurs**. (Photo: Mary Ann Kim/Billboard)



Rod Rules At The Palace **Rod Stewart** played to a capacity crowd Feb. 21 at the **Palace of Auburn Hills** in Auburn Hills, Mich. According to the venue, it was Stewart's ninth capacity crowd at the Palace since the 20,000-seat arena opened in 1988. Pictured, from left, are Palace of Auburn Hills sports and entertainment senior VP of booking and marketing **Marilyn Hauser**, Stewart and Palace of Auburn Hills event coordinator **Tom Nisun**. (Photo: Steve Galli)

Zombies Rise Again

BY JIM BESSMAN

Coinciding with the 40th anniversary observance of the Beatles landing in America, one original British invasion band, the Zombies, was miraculously touring the United States ahead of its first album since the 1968 classic "Odessey & Oracle."

"For the first time in 37 years, I was writing songs in the context of having a band and with Colin's voice in my mind," says Rod Argent, the Zombies' keyboardist/songwriter, of vocalist Colin Blunstone, with whom he fortuitously reteamed three years ago.

The two ex-Zombies released "Out of the Shadows" in 2002, forgoing the Zombies name as the material was largely written prior to the reunion.

The pair are Zombies again after 2½ years on the road with a new band. "As Far As I Can See . . ." which comes out April 30 in the United Kingdom, logically shows "so many resonances of the old stuff without trying to," Argent notes.

"But it's a many-faceted album because of the new guys," he adds, citing guitarist/vocalist Keith Airie, bassist/vocalist Jim Rodford and his

son Steve Rodford on drums.

Argent also hears similarities to the more recent writing he did for his band Argent, which scored a No. 5 single in 1972 with "Hold Your Head Up."

"It quite naturally has some elements" of Argent, he says. But he notes that Argent lead singer Russ



PHOTO: JUDY TOTTEN

ARGENT, LEFT, AND BLUNSTONE: 'FAR' OUT

Ballard had "a darker and more vibrant voice" than Blunstone.

"I'm the sort of writer that writes for particular people," Argent explains.

He also notes the importance of lyrics. The new album's lead track "In My Mind a Miracle" alludes to the

"Odessey & Oracle" album title.

As with that album and the preceding Zombies material, "As Far As I Can See . . ."—which Argent hopes to release in the United States this summer—shows the uncommon musical depth of the '60s British band. "It covers a large area with a 21-piece string section on seven tracks, and songs like 'Time to Move' come straight out of a '60s Zombies album," he says. Tellingly, he notes that the first Zombie recording was George Gershwin's "Summertime," in 1962.

"We sang it when we were a semi-professional stage act in a beat competition, and by winning it we got a deal with Decca," Argent recalls. "They were very much behind making it our first single, but the producer said I should write something for the session, so I wrote only my second song."

That was the Zombies' 1964 breakthrough hit "She's Not There."

Argent says that artists like Gershwin and Duke Ellington were always favorites. "All of us used to listen to a lot of music, from classical to the rawest rock'n'roll: I guess what you listen to gets strained into the soup and affects the final flavor."

BMI Has Its 'Way' At SXSW

BMI, which is an original sponsor of the South by Southwest Music Conference, will present a "Songwriters Way With Words" panel March 18 at the Austin extravaganza.

The panel will be moderated by writer/publisher relations Nashville VP Paul Corbin. It will feature such songwriters as Robyn Hitchcock, Ron Sexsmith and Charlotte Martin. (Martin will also perform during an invitation-only BMI songwriter brunch at SXSW.)

In other BMI news, the BMI Foundation—which funds the creation, performance and study of music through awards, scholarships, commissions and grants—has established the Peermusic Latin Scholarship for



young songwriters and composers. The \$5,000 scholarship will be funded by the Peermusic companies and awarded annually through a competition for original Latin songs and instrumental compositions.

young songwriters and composers.

The \$5,000 scholarship will be funded by the Peermusic companies and awarded annually through a competition for original Latin songs and instrumental compositions.

HALF A 'HAND JIVE': Windswept Holdings LLC has acquired 50% of blues legend Johnny Otis' El Dorado Music Publishing catalog and will co-own and co-administer it with Otis. The catalog contains such classic Otis tunes as "Willie & the Hand Jive" and "So Fine" among its 300-plus titles.

"A catalog like El Dorado is hard to find," Windswept CEO Evan Medow says. "The high caliber of the songs and their relative underexposure means that there is tremendous potential for us."

HAL LEONARD NETS CHRYSALIS: Print music publisher Hal Leonard Corp.

has picked up the exclusive music print rights to the Chrysalis Music catalog, currently prominent thanks to the music of OutKast. The Milwaukee-based company will employ Chrysalis catalog in print publications ranging from artist songbooks to song collections for piano, voice, guitar and other instruments, to arrangements for school bands and choirs. Exclusive digital rights are also part of the deal, with Chrysalis sheet-music downloads available through all Hal Leonard-affiliated Web sites, including sheetmusic-direct.com.

Besides OutKast, Chrysalis has the Paul Anka standard "My Way." Other acts represented include Blondie, David Bowie, Billy Idol, Jethro Tull, David Lee Roth and the Smashing Pumpkins.

"We've always admired the catalog for its standards and rock classics and for the fact that Chrysalis is so active in signing new acts," Hal Leonard VP of pop/standard publications Jeff Schroedl says. "The catalog offers a mixture of everything, which lends itself well to our publishing style."



MARTIN: FEATURED ON SONGWRITING PANEL

The Down Low On 'The Love Below'

André 3000's "The Love Below," one-half of OutKast's Grammy Award-winning "Speakerboxx/The Love Below" album, is an extraordinary aggregation of sounds and styles. It recalls timeless classic recordings by Sly & the Family Stone and the Jimi Hendrix Experience.

R&B, jazz, psychedelic-style rock and even acoustic folk freely mingle on one of 2003's most memorable releases.

"It's funny you should say that," says Neal Pogue, who mixed seven tracks on "The Love Below," including "Hey Ya!" "A lot of

people say [the album sounds like] Jimi Hendrix, but the first thing I think of is Sly Stone—Prince, Sly Stone, Curtis Mayfield all in one, like a gumbo. That's what I grew up on."

"The Love Below" is just one of Pogue's many multi-platinum successes. He also mixed tracks on OutKast's "Stankonia" and "Atlans" albums as well as "Crazysexycool" by TLC, including "Waterfalls"; Mystikal's "Let's Get Ready"; and "Everybody's Somebody's Fool" from Aretha Franklin's "So Damn Happy."

"Hey Ya!" was mixed on a Solid State Logic (SSL) 9000 XL K Series console at the Hit Factory in New York; Pogue's other mixes were done on an SSL 9000 J Series at Larrabee North in Universal City, Calif.



POGUE: A RELAXED, MINIMAL APPROACH

Given the unique nature of the tracks, Pogue says, an open mind was essential when mixing.

"I wanted to approach this differently, in terms of nothing being very thought-out, just a vibe," Pogue says. "This is the first time [André 3000] really got into guitar, so he wanted to make it as different as possible and not really pre-plan it."

Processing of sound was kept to a minimum, Pogue adds. Most of the instrument tracks are dry, with one exception being the reverb applied to the guitar solo on the trippy "Prototype." "But that was just a simple [re]verb," Pogue says.

"When I use outboard gear, I bring up something one at a time," he adds. "It's not just laid out for me already."

Studio Monitor™
By Christopher Walsh
cwalsh@billboard.com



"Ninety-nine percent of ["Speakerboxx/The Love Below"] was tracked to Pro Tools," says John Frye, studio manager/engineer at OutKast's Stankonia Studios in Atlanta. Frye served as primary tracking engineer and mixed all tracks on "Speakerboxx" and three tracks on "The Love Below." (Dexter Simmons and Kevin "KD" Davis also mixed tracks on "The Love Below.")

"Every song that I mixed, I mixed completely in Pro Tools," Frye adds. "It was start to finish; it never left the box."

Additional engineers on "The Love Below" include Robert Hannon, Pete Novak, Matt Still, Terrence Cash, Reggie Dozier, Darrell Thorpe, Brian Paturski and Padraic Kernin. Tracks were also recorded at Tree Sound and ZAC

in Atlanta, with additional recording and mixing completed at Enterprise Studios in Burbank, Calif., and Ocean Way Recording in Hollywood. Bernie Grundman and Brian Gardner mastered the album.

GEORGIA ON MY MIND: The Georgia Music Industry Assn. (GMIA)

plans a new recording studio with equipment and expanded educational programs.

The studio is the result of GMIA's receipt of a \$65,000 gift, granted through the Georgia State Court System, to be used for expanding educational opportunities to blind and disabled youths and adults in Georgia.

Fiona Renshaw's jazzy vocals are attracting a new audience in the United Kingdom



Global



Former Ticketmaster U.K. director Nick Blackburn heads up new ticket agency

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



FREDDIE MERCURY OF QUEEN: THE BAND'S MUSIC IS FINDING NEW POPULARITY WITH CELL-PHONE OWNERS IN JAPAN

'Ring Tunes' Ready To Roar For Japanese

BY STEVE McCLURE

TOKYO—Following explosive growth in Japan's ring-tones market during the past couple of years, sales of "ring tunes" look set to take off.

Ring-tone versions of songs are released in Japan more or less simultaneously with CD recordings.

Now, Japanese record labels are hoping that sales of "ring tunes," or *chaku-uta* (actual song clips used as incoming call signals), will take off just like their lower-tech cousins.

"Ring tones mean good royalties for publishers and songwriters," notes Mamoru Murakami, president of Tokyo-based music publisher Nichion.

"Ring tones—besides being a good way of promoting CD sales—mean income for everyone involved: publishers, songwriters, artists and record companies," he adds.

Japan's burgeoning ring-tones market got a major boost Feb. 6 when mobile-services provider NTT DoCoMo launched its third-generation FOMA

900i series of high data-capacity mobile phones. The high-speed transmission-capable phones have a much higher data capacity than previous models.

Observers expect the combination of telecom giant NTT DoCoMo's market clout and the increased capacity and transmission rates to open up the Japanese market for ring tunes.

Many Japanese ring-tone providers are expected to start offering ring-tone services in the coming months.

ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Japanese labels acknowledge ring tunes as a potential new revenue stream in an era of falling CD sales.

"We've managed to exploit the characteristics of cell phones to realize the enjoyment of music anywhere, anytime," says Toshihiro Konno, head of Sony Music Online at SMEJ's Digital Network Group.

"That fact has made possible a more casual, relaxed approach to music [by consumers]," he adds. "We also think
(Continued on page 68)



MURAKAMI: 'RING TONES MEAN GOOD ROYALTIES'

Tighter Rules Make Touring In U.S. Tougher For Canadians

BY LARRY LeBLANC

TORONTO—Increased immigration and security demands imposed by a post-Sept. 11, 2001, United States are making it more difficult for Canadian artists to cross the U.S. border.

"It has always been difficult for Canadians, but it's been more so since 9-11," says Julien Paquin, director of Paquin Entertainment Agency in Toronto.

"The problem fluctuates," argues artist manager Jason Marcus at Vancouver-based Netzwerk Manage-

ment, which handles Sarah McLachlan and the Barenaked Ladies. "When the Americans tighten up [the border], to process [work-permit] paperwork goes slower. [When] the 'heat' disappears, it goes faster again."

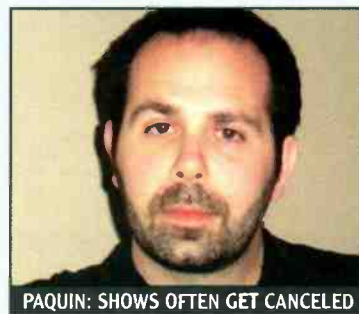
Traditionally, it has been easier for American acts to cross the border to play in Canada. As long as an American Federation of Musicians-affiliated U.S. musician has a signed employment contract and their identification and criminal records check out, he or she can usually get into Canada.

Increasingly, however, there is no

advance guarantee that AFM-affiliated Canadian musicians will get into the United States to work.

"I have had no problem getting American artists into Canada," Paquin says. "I have had to cancel many shows with Canadian acts in the U.S."

For a Canadian musician to cross the U.S./Canada border to work, he or she first has to have signed contracts with U.S. employers six to eight months in advance of applying for P-1 or P-2 nonimmigrant work permits. The application is filed through the international office of the American



PAQUIN: SHOWS OFTEN GET CANCELED

Federation of Musicians in Toronto, which forwards it to the Vermont Service Center of the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS). It can then take 110 to 150 days to process. There is no guarantee that the act will be let in.

"Before 9-11, it took 90 days [for U.S. immigration] to process applications," says booking agent Joan Kirby

of LiveTourArtists in Oakville, Ontario. "It is difficult to plan tours for smaller Canadian acts in the U.S. You have to tell promoters to book right away because of immigration."

Marcus claims there is no leeway in the processing time in applications for even major Canadian acts. "The only difference is the amount of crew people we can put on an application with a bigger act. For our smaller acts, we have to get it exactly right."

Work permits, however, can be expedited through a 15-day process that costs \$1,000 over and above the \$130 fee for P-1 and P-2 applications. This process was initiated three years ago.

Marcus says, "\$1,130 allows you to fast-track an application. That's only a guarantee that U.S. Immigration
(Continued on page 68)



JAPAN		UNITED KINGDOM		FRANCE		GERMANY	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(JEMPA PUBLICATIONS INC.) 02/03/04		(THE OFFICIAL UK CHARTS CO.) 03/01/04		(SNEP/IFOP/TITE-LIVE) 03/03/04		(MEDIA CONTROL) 03/03/04	
SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES	
1	NEW	1	NEW	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	NEW	2	2	2	NEW
3	NEW	3	NEW	3	3	3	2
4	NEW	4	1	4	4	4	5
5	NEW	5	4	5	6	5	4
6	4	6	6	6	5	6	8
7	NEW	7	NEW	7	11	7	3
8	5	8	3	8	7	8	6
9	1	9	NEW	9	12	9	9
10	NEW	10	NEW	10	9	10	10
ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS	
1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
2	3	2	1	2	4	2	2
3	NEW	3	14	3	3	3	4
4	NEW	4	4	4	2	4	NEW
5	2	5	12	5	6	5	3
6	NEW	6	8	6	7	6	6
7	NEW	7	5	7	5	7	7
8	NEW	8	13	8	9	8	5
9	4	9	7	9	14	9	8
10	5	10	9	10	8	10	9

CANADA		ITALY		SPAIN		AUSTRALIA	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(SOUNDSCAN) 03/13/04		(FIMI/NIELSEN) 03/01/04		(AFYVE/MEDIA CONTROL) 03/03/04		(ARIA) 03/01/04	
SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES	
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	NEW
2	2	2	2	2	3	2	1
3	3	3	7	3	4	3	2
4	5	4	3	4	7	4	3
5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	7	6	6	6	9	6	6
7	9	7	10	7	2	7	4
8	6	8	4	8	10	3	7
9	NEW	9	9	9	6	9	9
10	8	10	12	10	NEW	10	13
ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS	
1	1	1	NEW	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	1	2	4	2	2
3	3	3	9	3	5	3	3
4	NEW	4	4	4	2	4	4
5	5	5	NEW	5	3	5	NEW
6	4	6	2	6	9	6	8
7	7	7	6	7	10	7	5
8	6	8	8	8	6	8	19
9	NEW	9	7	9	11	9	7
10	NEW	10	3	10	13	10	6

THE NETHERLANDS		SWEDEN		NORWAY		SWITZERLAND	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(MEGA CHARTS BV) 03/01/04		(GLF) 02/27/04		(VERDENS GANG NORWAY) 03/01/04		(MEDIA CONTROL) 03/02/04	
SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES	
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	NEW	2	NEW	2	4	2	2
3	2	3	3	3	2	3	3
4	5	4	2	4	3	4	4
5	3	5	9	5	5	5	NEW
ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS	
1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
2	12	2	2	2	NEW	2	3
3	2	3	4	3	2	3	2
4	3	4	3	4	1	4	5
5	4	5	5	5	NEW	5	4

AUSTRIA	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(AUSTRIAN IFPI/AUSTRIA TOP 40) 03/01/04	
SINGLES	
1	2
2	1
3	3
4	5
5	9
ALBUMS	
1	1
2	2
3	4
4	8
5	5

BELGIUM/WALLONIA	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(PROMUVI) 03/03/04	
SINGLES	
1	1
2	8
3	5
4	2
5	4
ALBUMS	
1	1
2	6
3	2
4	3
5	8

DENMARK	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(IFPI/NIELSEN MARKETING RESEARCH) 03/02/04	
SINGLES	
1	1
2	NEW
3	2
4	4
5	NEW
ALBUMS	
1	1
2	NEW
3	2
4	5
5	7

PORTUGAL	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(AFP) 03/02/04	
SINGLES	
1	1
2	2
3	4
4	NEW
5	6
ALBUMS	
1	1
2	10
3	2
4	5
5	16

IRELAND	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(IRMA/CHART TRACK) 02/27/04	
SINGLES	
1	1
2	NEW
3	3
4	4
5	NEW
ALBUMS	
1	1
2	3
3	7
4	2
5	6

NEW ZEALAND	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(RECORD PUBLICATIONS LTD.) 03/01/04	
SINGLES	
1	2
2	1
3	3
4	4
5	7
ALBUMS	
1	1
2	3
3	4
4	2
5	7

GREECE	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(IFPI GREECE/DELITTE & TOUCHE) 02/27/04	
SINGLES	
1	NEW
2	1
3	2
4	3
5	NEW
ALBUMS	
1	NEW
2	1
3	NEW
4	3
5	21

ARGENTINA	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(CAPIFI) 02/26/04	
ALBUMS	
1	2
2	1
3	9
4	3
5	5
6	NEW
7	4
8	17
9	NEW
10	8

COMMON CURRENCY										
A weekly scorecard of albums simultaneously attaining top 10 chart status in three or more leading world markets.										
Repertoire owner: B: BMG, E: EMI, I: Independent, S: Sony, U: Universal, W: Warner										
ARTIST	USA	JPN	UK	GER	FRA	CAN	SPN	AUS	ITA	NTH
BLACK EYED PEAS Elephunk (U)			6	7	5	10	9			9
DIDO Life For Rent (B)				8	9			6		
EVANESCENCE Fallen (S)	4			7	5	3		4		7
NORAH JONES Feels Like Home (E)	1		2	1	1	1	3	2	2	1
OUTKAST Speakerboxx/The Love Below (B)	7		8			8				

Billboard® EUROCHARTS

Eurocharts are compiled by Billboard from the national singles and album sales charts of 18 European countries.

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
03/03/04	
SINGLES SALES	
1	1
2	2
3	4
4	3
5	9
6	5
7	NEW
8	8
9	11
10	NEW
11	NEW
12	7
13	NEW
14	16
15	6
16	13
17	15
18	18
19	23
20	33

ALBUM SALES	
1	1
2	3
3	4
4	5
5	2
6	14
7	12
8	18
9	6
10	10
11	7
12	9
13	15
14	48
15	11
16	8
17	13
18	19
19	27
20	26

Monitored Radio Airplay information from 17 European countries as monitored and tabulated by Music Control.

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
03/03/04	
RADIO AIRPLAY	
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	9
8	11
9	12
10	8
11	14
12	16
13	7
14	13
15	10
16	15
17	19
18	18
19	17
20	25

Sasha's 'Brave' Spoof Is Chart Hit

What started out as a spoof has taken **Dick Brave & the Backbeats** to the top of the German charts. The alias conceals WEA recording artist **Sasha**. "Dick This!" the album bearing the name of his alter ego, has spent four months on the charts and gone platinum (300,000 units), recently returning to No. 1 for a second spell. The record is a congenial mixture of rock'n'roll classics and contemporary songs, including **Pink's** "Get the Party Started," **Michael Jackson's** "Black or White" and a rockabilly rendering of **Avril Lavigne's** "Complicated." Sasha explains, "During our promo trip to the U.S., I visited Graceland and was so inspired that we decided to get a band together to perform rock'n'roll classics for fun. When word got out, we decided to record an album." **Dick Brave** and crew are on a 24-city tour of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and the DVD "Live at the Limelight" arrived March 1.

Fiona Renshaw's debut, "Love in a Bubble," has proved timely. On the independent **Laws of Motion** label, distributed by **Amato Disco**, the cool, dusky jazz-folk ambience of the set's songs is heightened by Renshaw's smoky vocals, a cross between those of **Joan Armatrading** and veteran jazz siren **Cleo Laine**. Renshaw, 28, was born in Australia and was signed for a time to **Alan McGee's Creation** label. She also gained attention as a vocalist for **Ninja Tune** dance act **Mr. Scruff**. "It's my first full-length release, so I was exploring the sound and parameters of what I do," she says. "I'm not interested in pastiche. Music for me is all about soul and emotion, and all the singers I admire have a rawness to them."

PAUL SEXTON

Global Pulse™

Nigel Williamson, Editor
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ENNIO SCORES: 2003 marked the 75th birthday of film composer

Ennio Morricone. The anniversary was celebrated with "Arena Concerto" (CGD East West/Warner), a live recording made in Verona, Italy, where the maestro conducted orchestral versions of a dozen of his 400 compositions. CGD East West GM **Luciano Linzi** says, "When we signed Morricone for this project, our sales reps told us, 'This sort of record will do 5,000 units, if we're lucky.' We've now done 10 times that, with 12 straight weeks in the Italian top 30." The album has been released internationally, and a DVD version is also selling strongly.

MARK WORDEN

BUBBLING UNDER: Amid continuing signs of the British album market extending a warm welcome to artists cultivating a more mature audience, the Feb. 16 release of

BELIEVE IT: Thai starlet **Tata** has finally achieved the breakout she has been seeking for almost a decade. Big in Thailand in the mid-'90s when she was signed to **Grammy Records**, her career stalled with an ill-fated deal with **Warner**. Now, she has been picked up by **Columbia** for her first international release. "She's going to be released in 10 countries throughout Asia, including Japan and China," manager/father **Tim Young** reports. "Sexy, Naughty, Bitchy" is the lead single from the **Martin Ankelius**-produced album "I Believe" (released Feb. 23). The accompanying video features a newly sexed-up **Tata**, now in her 20s, who is seeking to shed her former innocent-tween image.

ADAM FLORANCE



RENSHAW: FORMER MR. SCRUFF VOCALIST

TWO JUST MEN: J.U.S.T. is the name of a new Serbian-based duo specializing in jazzy house and dancefloor music. Debut album "Searching" appears on the Belgrade-based **B92** label. Yet **Hana Vucicevic** and **Boris Krstajic** are hardly newcomers, having previously been part of jazz-house outfit **Speed Limit**. "It's a natural development of our sound," Krstajic says. After testing the waters with its infectious single "True Love" (which also appeared on the "Belgrade Coffee Shop Vol. 3" sampler), the band's "Searching" sets new standards for house music in the Balkans. The album will be made available across Northern Europe.

TAYFUN KESGIN

U.K. Ticketing Agencies See Merits Of Merger

BY JULIANA KORANTENG

LONDON—The Feb. 24 launch of ticketing brand See has seen a shake-up of the U.K. music and entertainment ticketing sector.

See formed when the London-based ticketing operations of Really Useful Theatres (RUT) was integrated with Nottingham, England-based ticketing agency Way Ahead and spun off to form a new company.

Nick Blackburn, London-based managing director of See, says his company is now the largest U.K.-owned

ticketing agency and the second-biggest after U.S.-owned Ticketmaster. According to him, the companies that now form See sold more than 7 million tickets in 2003, compared with 10 million sold by Ticketmaster.

"We're easily No. 2 after Ticketmaster, and we think we shall be nearly 80% the size of Ticketmaster," he says. "This is the beginning of a gradual soft launch to start marketing the See brand to consumers after launching it to promoters and [theater] producers last December."

See is a standalone operation, wholly



BLACKBURN: WARMING UP TICKETING BIZ

owned by RUT. London-based entertainment company the Really Useful

Group (RUG) and venture capital firm Bridgepoint Capital jointly own both RUT and Way Ahead.

Previously, RUT had two ticketing subsidiaries. RUT Ticketing served the 13 theaters owned by parent RUG, while sister operation Tickets-elect sold non-RUT theater tickets. Blackburn joined RUT Ticketing in 2001 as business development manager from Ticketmaster U.K., where he had been a director.

Way Ahead, based in the city of Nottingham, specialized in tickets for rock concerts and launched in 1979. It expanded its operations in July 2002, when it bought Wembley Ticketing, which catered for events at London's Wembley Arena and Earl's Court venues. RUG acquired Way Ahead later that year.

The new company has three call centers: one in London deals with theater tickets, while two in Nottingham handle other live events. The Notting-

ham centers will be overseen by See COO Rob Wilmshurst, previously Way Ahead managing director.

The new operation will represent some of the U.K.'s top music venues. They include the Really Useful Theatres—famous for their musicals—London arenas at Wembley and Earl's Court and Nottingham Arena.

"Apart from going to an event itself, the most exciting part is buying the ticket," Blackburn says. "And some ticket agencies are too cold and ill-informed for customers. Our call centers and Web sites will be manned by people who are interested in the events. Call the music line, and you'll get through to hardcore music fans who know their Franz Ferdinand from their 50 Cent."

Blackburn says no jobs will be lost as a result of the integration.

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London.

Ring Tunes

Continued from page 65

that we can expect [ring tunes] to help the promotion of packaged CDs."

With ring tones, service providers pay authors rights to collecting society JASRAC. With ring tones, service providers pay a set price per track to the labels, which then take care of all royalty payments, much as with a CD purchase.

"The labels pay for JASRAC as well as master-right and performance fees," explains Mike Ueda, president of Tokyo-based ring-tone provider Label Mobile.

Mobile-phone service provider KDDI launched Japan's first ring tones in December 2002 and now claims to average 6 million to 7 million downloads per month. The Japanese arm of Vodafone introduced its ring-tones service in December 2003.

SOARING SALES

Total sales of ring tones in Japan for 2003 were 95 billion yen (\$900 million), according to estimates from Tokyo-based ring-tone provider Label Mobile.

For the year ended March 31, 2003, JASRAC collected 13.2 billion yen (\$125.2 million) in "compound use" income from downloadable ring tones and online karaoke service operators, up 42.2% from the previous year. Ring tones accounted for 95.6% of that amount, JASRAC says.

Label Mobile estimates that sales of ring tones totaled 7 billion yen (\$66.4 million) last year.

The country's mobile-phone mania is a welcome shot in the arm for Japan's

ailing music industry.

In the past couple of years, the burgeoning popularity of ring tones has made them a crucial source of revenue for songwriters and publishers and a valuable promotional tool for labels.

Four firms—Xing, Giga, DAM and the ring-tones division of consumer electronics giant Yamaha—account for some 70% of the Japanese ring-tones market, according to industry sources.

Motohiro Endo, multimedia development support manager of the Imaging Business Unit at mobile telecommunications company Nokia Japan, suggests that Tokyo-based ring-tone content developers/providers Xing, Giga and DAM were able to consolidate their leading positions in this new market because of their parent companies' backgrounds.

The companies' respective parents (Joy Sound, Ricoh and Daiichi Kosho) are all network karaoke content developers/providers with backgrounds in developing MIDI versions of popular songs for their main businesses.

Label Mobile, established in July 2001 to market downloadable ring tones to mobile-phone users, has been at the forefront of Japan's emerging ring-tones market. The company is jointly owned by Avex Network (a subsidiary of Japanese independent label Avex), Sony Music Entertainment (Japan), Victor Entertainment, Toshiba-EMI and Universal Music K.K. Twelve other Japanese labels sell ring tones through Label Mobile.

Label Mobile currently has some 4,000 song clips available for download as ring tones. Currently, it takes 10 seconds to download a 30-second song clip, most of which are priced at 100

yen (95 cents) each.

Domestic songs account for 75% of the clips on offer, roughly mirroring the overall Japanese market. Label Mobile's top 10 ring-tone listing for January (based on its own download sales) is dominated by domestic repertoire.

Despite that, its top tune for the month was Queen's "I Was Born to Love You," recently used here as the music for a Kirin Beer TV commercial.

According to Ueda, that there are around 80 million mobile handsets in use in Japan (which has a total population of 126 million), including 14 million third-generation sets, shows the potential scale of the ring-tones market. Some 68 million handsets have browser functions that enable users to gain access to the Internet.

FULL-LENGTH FUTURE

Although the ring-tone song-clip market is seen as promising, there is less certainty among Japanese executives about the potential of offering full-length song downloads to mobile users.

"Chaku-uta as a promotional tool has potential," a spokesman for Japanese major BMG Funhouse says. "Full-song downloads will become a significant part of overall revenues when correct balances can be achieved between music-provider revenues, pricing that is appealing to the consumer and the proportion of fees paid" to Internet service provider/technology providers.

Konno also does not expect full-song downloads to become big business anytime soon. "There are still many problems that need to be solved," he notes, "such as packet pricing, the limited memory of cell phones and limited [battery] power."

"Basically, it's now \$1,130 to get across," Paquin says. "You can go through the hoops of the regular application, but it's not worth the risk of not getting across."

Meanwhile, the American Federation of Musicians is seeking congressional support to make the CIS change its policy, permitting holders of P visas to be processed in no more than 30 days. If it takes longer, the visa applica-

tion would automatically shift to a 30-day turnaround, without having to pay the \$1,000 fee.

Meanwhile, as a final resort if an application has not been greenlighted, Kirby suggests contacting a U.S. congressman two weeks before the first tour date.

"I've done that many times," she says, "and the application is done in 48 hours, in most cases."

NEWS LINE

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEK IN BRIEF

Sony Music Australia has become the third key label—and the second major Down Under—to sign up to digital-rights-management provider Destra's online music store, destramusic.com. Under the agreement, destramusic.com will sell Sony repertoire as downloads through retail partners sanity.com.au, hmv.com.au, jbhifi.com.au and chaosmusic.com.au. Sony will initially provide more than 10,000 tracks and plans to expand that to 30,000 during the coming months. Melbourne-based destramusic.com already has content deals with Warner Music Australia and high-profile indie Festival Mushroom Records. "We expect the Australian market to follow some of the tremendous results being achieved in [digital music] in both Europe and the U.S.," Sony Music Australia director of digital services Gavin Parry says. **CHRISTIE ELIEZER**



Saul Galpern, who founded now-defunct British label Nude Records, has launched a new U.K. label, Altered States. The London-based label will be distributed by indie Pinnacle, but Sony has an option to pick up releases for major distribution. Altered States does not yet have any artists. "We're looking to sign acts with vision capable of making classic-sounding records," Galpern says. "Altered States will have a broader scope than Nude, which was more 'indie,' but I still want it to be looked upon as a quality brand." Galpern is joined by two staffers at his new North London office. He also manages vocalist Brett Anderson, frontman of recently split alternative rock act act Suede. Nude launched the careers of Suede, Geneva, Ultrasound and Lowgold but folded in 2002. **ADAM HOWORTH**

With two nods apiece, local artists Stef Bos and Veldhuis en Kemper and international acts Evanescence and the White Stripes lead the nominations for the 2004 edition of the Dutch record industry's annual Edison Music Awards (EMAs). This year's show will be held March 23 in Amsterdam club De Melkweg. Unlike previous years, the event will not be broadcast on TV. "We are working on a new profile for the EMAs and did not want to make just another show," says a spokesperson for organizer NVPI, the Dutch trade body. "We want the EMAs to grow into a coherent musical event and hope to take a first step with an entertaining show with lots of live music in De Melkweg." The EMAs are voted upon by a jury of professionals involved with music, including journalists, concert-venue directors and retailers. Sister event the Edison Classical Music Awards will be held June 4 in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. **CESCO VAN GOOL**

Touring

Continued from page 65

will respond to you. They are doing far more elaborate checks these days. They are pulling out very minor convictions, flagging things like marijuana or drunk-driving convictions."

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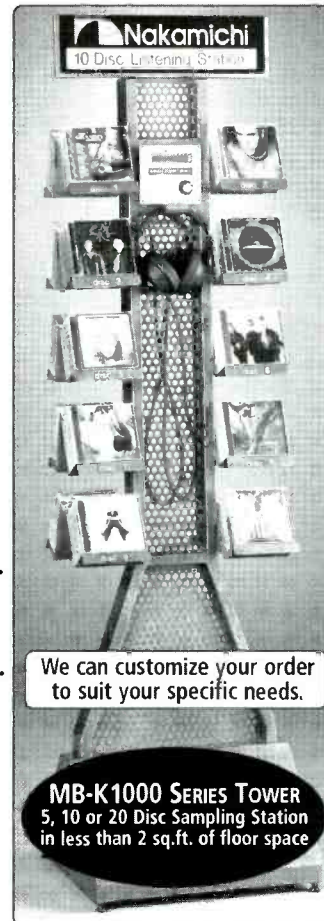
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Napster

Continued from page 6

Of the perceived race with Apple's iTunes Music Store to be the first to expand into the British market, he says: "It's fun to be first—and we would like to be first into the U.K. market and into Europe. But we don't think it's 'mission-critical.'"

With Napster having recently sold its 5 millionth download in the United States, Gorog believes the investment of "in the neighborhood of \$100 million" in its relaunch as a legitimate service last October will result in a European payoff.

"That investment is highly lever-ageable," he says, "so when we talk about going into the U.K., France, Germany, Spain and Italy, it's all additional growth we can put onto that investment we've already made."

Napster's European rollout will be overseen by London-based Leanne Sharman, who in January was appointed to the new role of VP of business development. Sharman now takes the additional role of Napster U.K. GM and is currently assembling her U.K. team. She reports to Los Angeles-based Napster president Brad Duea.

Of intended pricing levels for the European service, Gorog says: "We aren't quite there yet. It will partially be informed by the rights deals. But there's no question we'll have to be very attractively priced, [because] you're changing consumer behavior. You're saying, 'Don't go to a store and purchase a physical good; obtain it electronically.'"

"Consumers are going to be looking for value," Gorog says, "so it's critically important we come out of the gate with a price offering that's considered compelling."

Rose Garden

Continued from page 7

Allen, who put up much of the money to build the arena. Allen also owns the National Basketball Assn.'s Portland Trailblazers, the Rose Garden's primary tenants. The bankruptcy filing does not involve the Blazers.

The arena has lost money in seven of its nine years, not uncommon with public facilities, less so for private buildings.

"For arenas, it's certainly not uncommon to lose money, but public facilities often have a government subsidy that covers operating deficits," Isaac explains. "As a private facility, we have to be profitable. Our business model is fine, except for the inordinate amount of debt we carry."

The Chapter 11 move is geared to help the company restructure that debt and prevent lenders from pursuing foreclosure.

"Nothing is really changing, other than we needed to restructure our debt. Over 11,000 companies filed Chapter 11 last year," Isaac says.

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SALES / AIRPLAY / TRENDS / ANALYSIS

Down Week; No Worries

This is the week that record labels and music stores pay the piper for the glorious album sales that occurred a few weeks ago, when the Grammy Awards moved to the Sunday before Valentine's Day.

That thick sandwich, wrapped around potent opening stanzas for **Norah Jones** and **Kanye West**, provided the fastest album volume of any week outside of a November or December in Nielsen SoundScan history.



Fun as that was, you knew that stores would soon hit an adjustment frame when we got to the week that corresponded with the week that followed the 2003 Grammys show, with its later Feb. 23

broadcast date. That day of reckoning is here, as album sales are down from the same week of the prior year for the first time since the frame that ended Dec. 21.

The queen of The Billboard 200 illustrates this shift. Jones' new album easily leads the field by more than a 2-to-1 margin (281,000 copies, down 29%), actually padding her lead over runner-up West (132,000 copies, down 33%).

Over the Counter

By Geoff Mayfield
gmayfield@billboard.com



Yet Jones cannot compete with her own shadow, as the comparable week of last year marked the incomparable increase that her first album saw after she collected an armload of Grammys. The 477,000-unit gain that her "Come Away With Me" saw then was not only the biggest SoundScan increase to follow an awards-show appearance, it was also the biggest gain by any title to appear on The Billboard 200 for more than a week or two.

Standing against the sales week that housed last year's Grammy spikes, album sales are off by 2.2% from that 2003 frame, but this feels more like a speed bump than a wall. Album sales to date still lead those of last year by 10.6%.

GETTING COMFORTABLE: We hope the penthouse suits **Norah Jones**, because it appears she'll be there for at least another week or two.

It appears that next issue's Hot Shot Debut on The Billboard 200 will belong to hip-hopper **Cee-Lo** with about 50,000, good for a start in the top 20.

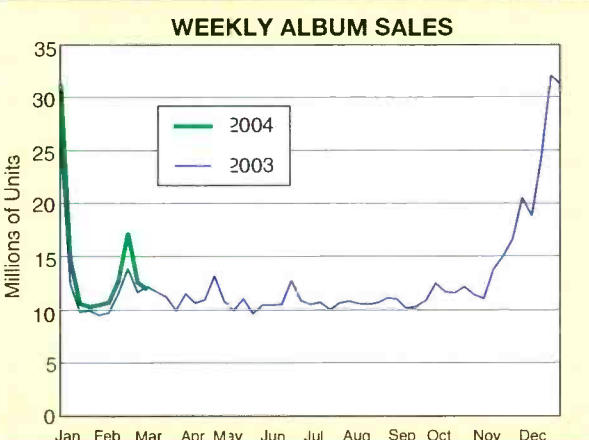
A big gun that was anticipated for release March 16, the new album from **Godsmack**, is now scheduled to hit stores March 23, so the field should be clear for Jones for a while—especially since it appears her sales are starting to stabilize. She was also scheduled to play "Saturday Night Live" March 6, which will give her new album a little air.

Rap rookie **Cassidy** will street March 16. His label, **J**, thinks he could do 150,000 in his first week, but Jones looks as if she

(Continued on page 74)

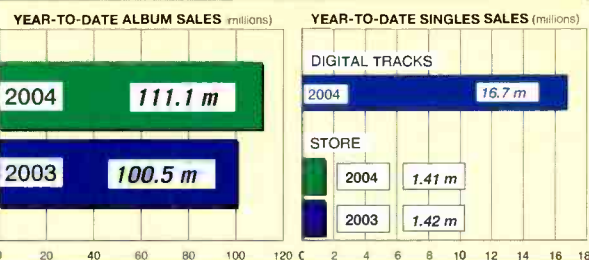
Market Watch

A Weekly National Music Sales Report



WEEKLY UNIT SALES

	Albums	Store Singles	Digital Tracks
This Week	11,910,000	139,000	2,022,000
Last Week	12,577,000	145,000	2,061,000
Change	↘5.3%	↘4.1%	↘1.9%
This Week 2003	12,181,000	179,000	—
Change	↘2.2%	↘22.3%	—



YEAR-TO-DATE OVERALL UNIT SALES

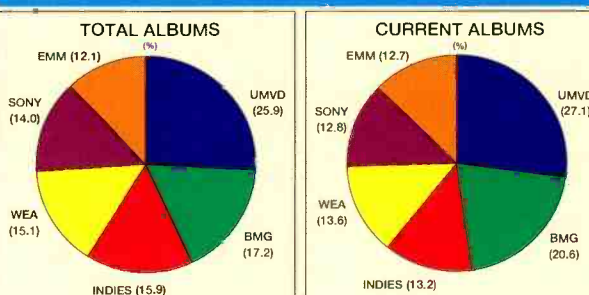
	2003	2004	Change
Total	101,873,000	129,232,000	↗26.9%
Albums	100,456,000	111,088,000	↗10.6%
Store Singles	1,417,000	1,405,000	↘0.8%
Digital Tracks	—	16,739,000	—

YEAR-TO-DATE SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

	2003	2004	Change
CD	96,635,000	108,343,000	↗12.1%
Cassette	3,507,000	2,391,000	↘31.8%
Other*	314,000	354,000	↗12.7%

*Includes vinyl albums, mini-discs and digital downloads of full albums

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	UMVD	BMG	INDIES	WEA	SONY	EMM
Total Albums	25.9%	17.2%	15.9%	15.1%	14.0%	12.1%
Current Albums	27.1%	20.6%	13.2%	13.6%	12.8%	12.7%
Store Singles	19.6%	22.2%	26.8%	12.1%	13.1%	6.3%

For week ending 2/29/04. Rounded figures.

Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected and provided by

Nielsen SoundScan

Just Joshin' On Charts

The "American Idol" phenomenon continues to impact the *Billboard* charts, with the third- and fourth-place finalists from season two scoring with their first solo singles.

Kimberley Locke's "8th World Wonder" (**Curb**) is in its second week on Mainstream Top 40 and Adult Top 40. On the former, the track rises 34-31; on the latter, it earns a backward bullet, moving 39-40. "8th World Wonder" arrives in stores March 9, so the single will either debut on The Billboard Hot 100 on airplay alone or enter in a lofty position once sales kick in.

The week before Locke was voted off the show, **Josh Gracin** was sent home. The U.S. Marine excelled on the show whenever he sang a country song, and this issue he debuts on Hot Country Singles & Tracks at No. 57 with "I Want to Live" (**Lyric Street**).

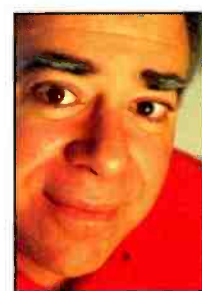
The run of chart titles by contestants from the second season of "American Idol" began the week of May 3, 2003, with the debut of "God Bless the U.S.A." at No. 4. Credited to **American Idol Finalists**, the ensemble included Locke and Gracin, as well as ultimate winner **Rubén Studdard** and runner-up **Clay Aiken**.

This issue, Studdard matches the peak position of his first hit on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks, as "Sorry 2004" (**J**) rises 3-2. Last June, his remake of "Superstar" also peaked at No. 2.

Studdard, Aiken, Locke and Gracin join first-season contestants **Kelly Clarkson** and **Justin Guarini** on the list of "Idol" finalists who have charted in *Billboard*. Another second-season top 12 finalist, **Vanessa Olivarez**, hasn't had a U.S. hit, but her single "The One" peaked at No. 10 in Canada.

Chart Beat

By Fred Bronson
fbronson@billboard.com



RISE OF 'RAISE': **Josh Gracin** isn't the only male artist with the first name of Josh and the initials "J.G." making chart news this issue. On the Adult Contemporary tally, **Josh Groban** collects his third No. 1, as his cover of **Secret Garden's** "You Raise Me Up" (**143/Reprise**) advances 2-1.

Groban is 3 for 4, as he previously topped the AC list with "To Where You Are" and "O Holy Night," both in 2002. His only chart entry to miss pole position was "You're Still You," which stopped at No. 10 in April 2003.

Groban's ascension ends a 40-week period where, except for one Christmas song, the same four songs have ruled the AC chart. "Drift Away" by **Uncle Kracker Featuring Dobie Gray** went to the head of the class the week of June 7, 2003. It has rotated in and out of the top spot, in a seemingly unending tussle with **Shania Twain's** "Forever and for Always," **Matchbox Twenty's** "Unwell" and **Train's** "Calling All Angels."

'AIN'T THE REAL THING: **Michael McDonald's** "Motown" album has proved so successful that he's already at work on "Motown 2." Meanwhile, his update of the **Nick Ashford/Valerie Simpson** song "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" moves 12-9, earning a berth in the top 10 of the Adult Contemporary chart.

It's McDonald's first time in the AC top 10 in 14 years, since his "Take It to Heart" peaked at No. 9 in July 1990.

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WEEKS ON CHART	ARTIST	Title	PEAK POSITION	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS. AGO	WEEKS ON CHART	ARTIST	Title	PEAK POSITION
100	91	58	71	ROD STEWART ▲ ²	It Had To Be You ... The Great American Songbook	4	150	128	89	34	MICHAEL BUBLE ●	Michael Buble	47
101	77	101	16	SOUNDTRACK ▲	Tupac: Resurrection	2	151	NEW	1	1	INTOCABLE	Intimamente: En Vivo Live	151
102	104	121	58	TRAPT ▲	Trapt	42	152	136	120	54	R. KELLY ▲ ²	Chocolate Factory	1
103	132	130	22	ANTHONY HAMILTON	Comin' From Where I'm From	33	153	151	135	28	DIERKS BENTLEY	Dierks Bentley	26
104	NEW			AVALON	The Creed	104	154	144	132	15	LEANN RIMES ●	Greatest Hits	24
105	99	55	67	SHANIA TWAIN ◆ ¹⁰	Up!	1	155	141	143	16	3 DOORS DOWN	Another 700 Miles (EP)	21
106	88	93	13	MUSIQ ●	soulstar	13	156	127	87	69	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE ▲ ³	Justified	2
107	106	88	97	KENNY CHESNEY ▲ ³	No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems	1	157	150	158	48	CHER ▲ ²	The Very Best Of Cher	4
108	89	77	5	VARIOUS ARTISTS	Disneymania 2: Music Stars Sing Disney ... Their Way!	29	158	114	53	3	COURTNEY LOVE	America's Sweetheart	53
109	84	38	3	DAMAGEPLAN	New Found Power	38	159	155	154	9	SOUNDTRACK	Cold Mountain	94
110	98	99	11	JOE	And Then...	26	160	140	134	14	COUNTING CROWS ●	Films About Ghosts: The Best Of...	32
111	142	160	10	CASTING CROWNS	Casting Crowns	111	161	NEW	1	1	ROYCE DA 5'9"	Death Is Certain	161
112	NEW			RODNEY CARRINGTON	Greatest Hits	112	163	NEW	1	1	PASSION WORSHIP BAND	Passion: Hymns Ancient And Modern	163
113	112	113	14	PUDDLE OF MUDD ●	Life On Display	20	164	134	145	12	BIG TYMERS ●	Big Money Heavyweight	21
114	109	108	14	SOUNDTRACK ●	The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of The King	36	165	154	161	38	JACK JOHNSON ●	On And On	3
115	76	86	10	SOUNDTRACK	You Got Served	34	166	163	168	4	BRONCO/LOS BUKIS	Cronica De Dos Grandes	127
116	96	103	12	THE OFFSPRING ●	Splinter	30	167	157	163	59	JOHNNY CASH ▲	American IV: The Man Comes Around	22
117	102	54	22	STING ▲	Sacred Love	3	168	158	172	93	EMINEM ▲ ⁸	The Eminem Show	1
118	107	125	11	MEMPHIS BLEEK	M.A.D.E.	35	169	153	153	36	JAMES TAYLOR ●	The Best Of James Taylor	11
119	111	92	39	TRAIN ●	My Private Nation	6	170	NEW	1	1	Z-RO	The Life Of Joseph W. McVey	170
120	105	115	23	BABY BASH ●	Tha Smokin' Nephew	48	171	152	131	17	BOB SEGER ●	Greatest Hits 2	23
121	129	119	3	THE CARPENTERS	Carpenters Gold: 35th Anniversary Edition	119	172	148	152	5	AIR	Talkie Walkie	61
122	83	42	3	KYLIE MINOGUE	Body Language	42	173	156	128	3	THALIA	Greatest Hits	128
123	118	138	38	THE BEACH BOYS ●	The Very Best Of The Beach Boys: Sounds Of Summer	16	174	184	—	17	CECE WINANS	Throne Room	32
124	115	117	15	DIXIE CHICKS ●	Top Of The World Tour Live	27	175	162	167	70	ELVIS PRESLEY ▲ ³	Elvis: 30 #1 Hits	1
125	137	173	29	YELLOWCARD	Ocean Avenue	99	176	NEW	1	1	DAVID PHELPS	Revelation	176
126	101	106	12	KELIS ●	Tasty	27	177	188	181	29	GEORGE STRAIT ●	Honkytonkville	5
127	94	57	33	BROOKS & DUNN ●	Red Dirt Road	4	178	171	155	8	SOUNDTRACK	Blue Collar Comedy Tour: The Movie	132
128	116	127	13	SOUNDTRACK	The Fighting Temptations	19	179	145	147	4	DIANA ROSS & THE SUPREMES	The No. 1's	72
129	143	129	21	VARIOUS ARTISTS	WOW Hits 2004	51	180	165	174	24	A PERFECT CIRCLE ●	Thirteenth Step	2
130	103	68	3	PROBOT	Probot	68	181	160	157	7	AMICI FOREVER	The Opera Band	74
131	123	165	7	FINGER ELEVEN	Finger Eleven	123	182	175	193	46	GODSMACK ▲	Faceless	1
132	110	107	31	SOUNDTRACK ●	Freaky Friday	19	183	159	162	46	KELLY CLARKSON ▲ ²	Thankful	1
133	121	112	25	SEAL ●	Seal IV	3	184	173	175	49	STACIE ORRICO ●	Stacie Orrico	59
134	131	111	70	RASCAL FLATTS ▲	Melt	5	185	NEW	1	1	LOS LONELY BOYS	Los Lonely Boys	185
135	139	141	20	JAGGED EDGE ●	Hard	3	186	167	166	41	STAIND ▲	14 Shades Of Grey	1
136	117	144	12	FEFE DOBSON	Fefe Dobson	67	187	NEW	1	1	REBECCA ST. JAMES	Live Worship: Blessed Be Your Name (EP)	187
137	149	102	3	JEREMY CAMP	Carried Me: The Worship Project	102	188	166	149	3	KEB' MO'	Keep It Simple	149
138	126	150	42	AFI ●	Sing The Sorrow	5	189	170	—	8	GAVIN DEGRAW	Chariot	103
139	119	75	13	TRACE ADKINS	Comin' On Strong	31	190	178	191	12	VARIOUS ARTISTS	The Source Presents Hip Hop Hits Vol. 7	89
140	130	109	66	TIM MCGRAW ▲ ²	Tim McGraw And The Dancehall Doctors	2	191	NEW	1	1	JOHN FRUSCIANTE	Shadows Collide With People	191
141	120	133	14	LIL JON & THE EAST SIDE BOYZ	Part II	37	192	147	74	18	WARREN ZEVON	The Wind	12
142	138	118	32	BRAD PAISLEY ●	Mud On The Tires	8	193	190	—	35	LED ZEPPELIN	Early Days & Latter Days: The Best Of Led Zeppelin Volume One And Two	116
143	108	104	7	VARIOUS ARTISTS	WWE Originals	12	194	RE-ENTRY	67	67	MONTGOMERY GENTRY ●	My Town	26
144	122	122	15	MICHAEL JACKSON ●	Number Ones	13	195	182	196	45	SOUNDTRACK ▲	The Lizzie McGuire Movie	6
145	124	85	29	ALAN JACKSON ▲ ²	Greatest Hits Volume II And Some Other Stuff	1	196	RE-ENTRY	43	43	KEM	Kemistry	90
146	146	164	10	DAVID BANNER	MTA2: Baptized In Dirty Water	69	197	168	—	22	ROONEY	Rooney	125
147	125	114	67	MATCHBOX TWENTY ▲ ²	More Than You Think You Are	6	198	164	169	6	SOUNDTRACK	Pixel Perfect (EP)	133
148	NEW			DISTURBED/CHEVELLE/TAPROOT/UNLOCO	Music As A Weapon II	148	199	186	187	14	JOE NICHOLS ●	Man With A Memory	72
149	133	136	50	JASON MRAZ ●	Waiting For My Rocket To Come	55	200	169	139	21	BETTE MIDLER ●	Bette Midler Sings The Rosemary Clooney Songbook	14

● Albums with the greatest sales gains this week. ● Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units (Gold). ▲ RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum). ◆ RIAA certification for net shipment of 10 million units (Diamond). Numerical following Platinum or Diamond symbol indicates album's multi-platinum level. For boxed sets, and double albums with a running time of 100 minutes or more, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. RIAA Latin awards: ○ Certification for net shipment of 100,000 units (Oro). ▲ Certification of 200,000 units (Platino). ▲² Certification of 400,000 units (Multi-Platino). *Asterisk indicates LP is available. Most tape prices, and CD prices for BMG and WEA labels, are suggested lists. Tape prices marked EQ, and all other CD prices, are equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. Greatest Gainer shows chart's largest unit increase. Pacesetter indicates biggest percentage growth. Hearseeker Impact shows albums removed from Heatseekers this week. [M] indicates past or present Heatseeker title. © 2004, VNU Business Media, Inc., and Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.

Indecency

Continued from page 5

phone calls or controversial content should have a delay in place.

The memo also issues content guidelines on avoiding indecency. "Failure to abide by this policy is grounds for harsh discipline, including immediate termination," the memo states.

An Emmis Communications spokesperson tells *Billboard* sister publication *Airplay Monitor* that Emmis is preparing a zero-tolerance policy on indecency as well.

Clear Channel's new Responsible Broadcasting Initiative—issued one day before radio division CEO John Hogan took the stand before Congress—states that any DJ accused of indecency will be suspended and immediately terminated if the jock is found to have violated indecency codes. It also states, "There will be no appeals and no intermediate steps."

In addition to the measure, Clear Channel is modifying its talent contracts so that any jocks accused of indecency will be financially liable for part of any fines levied against the station by the FCC.

LISTENING CLOSELY

Now stations like modern KBZT (FM 94.9) San Diego are re-examining the music they play.

"The main thing we've done with this FCC witch hunt that's going on is taken a real close look at the music library and made sure there weren't any songs in there that we have overlooked," PD Garret Michaels says. "There are quite a number of songs, particularly from the grunge era, that occasionally sneak in an 'f' word, and sometimes those are buried in the mix.

"In light of what's going on out there, there's so much watchdogging that we want to be careful and make sure we don't get fined on a technicality," he says.

Michaels cites such core library tracks as Tool's "Sober" and Alice in Chains' "Heaven Beside You" as songs that the station has re-edited.

Regardless of the outcome of the congressional hearings, the FCC's guidelines or individual radio groups'

mandates, the developments of the past several weeks prove that radio is entering previously uncharted territory.

"Everything has changed," says one PD who requested to remain anonymous. "It's obvious now that radio companies that have 1,300 stations or 600 stations or 200 stations will not hesitate to blow somebody out and ruin one particular radio station, or even one particular network, for the protection of its entire network."

SLIPPERY SLOPE

And the commission might be stepping over the line in attempting to decide what's indecent. A poll conducted by USA Today found that popular opinion did not back the FCC's crack-down on indecency. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents said that if people did not like what they were watching or hearing, they should just turn it off, while 16% said the FCC should label shows with questionable content and let listeners decide for themselves.

The FCC's current guidelines consider three criteria when determining whether something is indecent: the explicitness or graphic nature of the description of sexual or excretory organs or activities, whether the material dwells on or repeats at length those descriptions and whether the material appears to pander to or is used to titillate or is presented for shock value.

But many of the programmers contacted for this story say the FCC's current guidelines for indecency are too vague for them to be completely sure that they're avoiding the use of indecent material.

"We've scrutinized some bits that have been on the station for years and—given the current, scary environment—have moved to edit them somewhat to try to ensure that they don't violate a very vague set of rules," another PD who asked for anonymity says.

"That's based on the Bubba decision, where it appears that [the FCC was] fining WXTB [Tampa, Fla.] and Clear Channel for what was inferred rather than what was said," the PD adds. "To my knowledge, that hasn't happened in the past. In my mind, we're now headed down a particularly slippery slope."

"Any time you start to talk about regulating free speech or limiting free speech, that can be a scary topic," another programmer says. "The

biggest thing this has done is really made talent uneasy about what to say and what can be said . . . It would be beneficial if the FCC would come out and let everybody know what's indecent and what's not."

Some stations have taken a closer look at their production. "It's more than just what the jocks are saying, it's also the messages that we're relaying in between the records," another programmer says.

"There were a couple of liners that we thought were inappropriate," the PD adds. "For us, it's not just the sex stuff but any sort of drug references." That includes the liner "There's a fine line between genius and insanity. Unfortunately, we snorted it."

Others say they're keeping things status quo.

"So far, I haven't changed a thing," active KRFR (Real Rock 104.3) PD Alex Quigley says. That includes the station's risqué liners, which remain on the air.

"What was good enough two weeks ago should be good enough now," Quigley says. "We're not going to change everything suddenly, which is what I feel Clear Channel did. Howard Stern wasn't indecent one week ago? It's the same show it has always been."

Copyright

Continued from page 6

Howard Berman, D-Calif., the ranking Democrat on the subcommittee, was co-sponsor.

Jay Rosenthal, counsel for the Recording Artists' Coalition, says that by having experienced arbitrators, "the new panel would benefit everyone."

"We're happy with it. It's a bill that's fair and balanced," says Jonathan Potter, president of the Digital Media Assn., which represents Webcasters and new-media companies like Liquid Audio.

Under the new plan, compulsory license rates would be set every five years. They would be set prospectively, preventing gaps in royalty revenue streams. Appeal rights would be limited to those parties that participate in future arbitrations.

vel Comics character of the same name, "The Punisher" (from *Lions Gate Films*) will open April 16 in U.S. theaters.

For film-score junkies, *Rhino Records* has two recent releases that represent a range of movies from popular blockbusters to the art-house obscure.

"Simply the Best Movie Themes" is a two-disc set with the titled themes from such modern-classic movies as "Chicago," "Shakespeare in Love," the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and "Gladiator." Meanwhile, film composer *Daniele Luppi's* "An Italian Story" album includes his take on movie music. The CD also features *Alessandro "the Whistler" Alessandrone* and members of *Marc 4*.

MILEPOSTS

BIRTHS

Boy, Maxwell Grant, to **Sara and Simon Renshaw**, Jan. 9 in Los Angeles. Father is co-head of music for the Firm.

Girl, Piper Story DeMartino, to **Robin Lentz and Joe DeMartino**, Jan. 23 in New York. Father is associate director of merchandising for Sony Music.

Girl, Maysa Elon, to **Angela Linnea Johnson and Russell Lee Johnson**, Jan. 26 in New York. Mother is a singer/songwriter/producer. Father is co-CEO of Purpose Records and Nine One 4 Music.

Boy, Jackson Sam, to **Robyn and Rick Rosenberg**, Jan. 31 in New York. Father is VP of sales and marketing for Shanachie Entertainment.

Boy, Kaden, to **Stacie and Kalel**, Feb. 4 in Nashville. Father is bassist for Christian alt-metal group Pillar.

MARRIAGES

Rachel Schwarz to **Marc Schiffman**, Feb. 15 in New York. Groom is senior news editor for *Billboard*.

Deborah Poppink to **David Hirshland**, Feb. 15 in Palos Verdes, Calif. Bride is a singer/songwriter. Groom is executive VP of Bug Music.

DEATHS

Julius E. Dixon Sr., 90, of natural causes, Jan. 30 in New York. Dixon is best-known for co-writing "Lollipop," made famous by the Chordettes in 1958. After hosting a weekly radio show while serving in the army, he made a name for himself as a songwriter by co-writing "Dim, Dim the Lights (I Want Some Atmosphere)," which went to No. 11 in 1954 with Bill Haley & His Comets. Dixon is survived by six children, two siblings and eight grandchildren.

Grelun Landon, 80, of natural causes, Feb. 2 in Ojai, Calif. The longtime head of West Coast publicity for RCA Records was instrumental in developing the career of Elvis Presley, acting as the label's liaison with the singer and leading a New York tour. As VP of Hill & Range Music in the '50s, Landon worked with country legends like Hank Snow and Johnny Cash. From 1971 to 1989, he was an active trustee of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum and co-wrote "The Encyclopedia of Folk, Country and Western Music," now in its third edition. He is survived by three children and three granddaughters.

Gene Hughes, 67, of complications from pneumonia and a broken neck he sustained during an auto accident, Feb. 3 in Nashville. The Music Row veteran sang lead vocals with '60s pop group the Casinos and was best-known for the 1966 hit "Then You Can Tell Me Goodbye." In the '80s, he served as VP of promotion for MCA Records Nashville before launching his own independent promotion firm.

Duke Niles, 85, of natural causes, Feb. 14 in New York. A veteran music publisher and jazz enthusiast, Niles held positions at Leeds Music, Chappell, Irving Berlin Music and Bourne Music throughout his five-decade-long career. He co-owned Rayven Music with Ray Ventura before retiring in 1991. His publishing hits include the Village Stompers' "Washington Square," "The Good Life" by Tony Bennett and the Ames Brothers' "Melodie D'Amour." Niles is survived by two daughters and four grandchildren.

Doris Troy, 67, of emphysema, Feb. 16 in Las Vegas. Born Doris Payne, the singer/songwriter was best-known for the 1963 Atlantic R&B/pop crossover hit "Just One Look." Troy, who was also an actress, was the inspiration for the award-winning black gospel musical "Mama, I Want to Sing." She portrayed her own mother in the long-running play, which was co-written by her sister, former WBLB New York radio personality Vy Higginson. Troy also sang on the Rolling Stones' "You Can't Always Get What You Want," Pink Floyd's "The Dark Side of the Moon" and Dusty Springfield's "In the Middle of Nowhere." She recorded for the Calla, Capitol and Apple labels. During a British tour in 1965, her backing band included Reginald Dwight, who later became Elton John. Troy is survived by two sisters and a brother-in-law.

Estelle Axton, 85, of natural causes, Feb. 24 in Memphis. Axton and her brother Jim Stewart co-founded famed soul label Stax Records, which also operated a record store and adjacent studio. Stax was lofted by the 1960 hit "Cause I Love You" by local DJ/musician Rufus Thomas and his daughter Carla. Becoming the top Southern soul imprint of the '60s and early '70s, Stax was responsible for launching the careers of acts like Booker T. & the MG's, Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, Johnnie Taylor and Isaac Hayes. After the sale of Stax to Gulf & Western in 1968, Axton founded Fretone Records, which issued the No. 1 novelty hit "Disco Duck," by DJ Rick Dees.

Movies

Continued from page 13

role in worldwide distribution of the movie—is currently negotiating the release of the film in several countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Japan, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Brazil.

IN BRIEF: *OutKast* will star in a musical for *HBO Films*; the film is in development.

If *Colin Farrell* is cast as *Ozzy Osbourne* in the planned biopic about the singer (*Movies & Music, Billboard*, Feb. 28), the actor is prepared, since he has already

sung on a soundtrack. On March 9, *Virgin Records* releases the soundtrack to *IFC Films* drama "Intermission." It features Farrell (who stars in the movie) singing "I Fought the Law."

Other acts on the "Intermission" soundtrack are *U2*, *the Thrills*, *Ron Sexsmith*, *Clannad*, *Fun Lovin' Criminals* and *Turin Brakes*. The movie opens March 19 in limited U.S. release, with wider expansion to follow.

On March 23, *Wind-up Records* releases the soundtrack to "The Punisher," featuring an entire collection of new songs from such acts as *Nickelback*, *Drowning Pool*, *Seether* (featuring *Evanescence* vocalist *Amy Lee*), *Puddle of Mudd*, *Queens of the Stone Age* and *Trapt*. Based on the *Mar-*

Bisbal

Continued from page 5

an international venture.

"Vale always wanted to have an artist that could compete with the likes of Cristian, Ricky Martin or other Latin idols, but we hadn't found the right artist," Vale Music co-founder Gabriel Blanco told *Billboard* in 2002.

In Bisbal, Vale saw the possibility. Unlike other TV contestants, he was not completely green. Prior to the show, he had spent years touring as a singer with a cover band. He had pop-star good looks as well as a dazzling voice.

But if Bisbal wanted to be a Latin idol, he needed more of a Latin—as opposed to a Spanish—sound.

So, instead of recording Bisbal's album in the obvious place, Spain, the label sent him to Miami to work with producer Kike Santander, who has produced successful pop albums for the likes of Cristian, Alejandro Fernandez and Gloria Estefan.

In addition, so as to leave no doubt of where this project was headed, Bisbal's debut album was titled "Corazón Latino" (Latin Heart). Despite the title

and the predictability of the music (think a younger Chayanne or Ricky Martin), it was a smash in Spain, selling 600,000 copies in its first week, a record for a debut act there.

But in the United States and Latin America, it was much slower going.

The album debuted on the *Billboard* Top Latin Albums chart March 3, 2003, a full six months after its release in the United States. It peaked only this past January, at No. 19.

SLOW BUT STEADY

But that very slow rise is indicative of a steady and very concerted campaign in the United States and Latin America by Universal, which licenses Vale's product for distribution, marketing and exploitation in the region.

"We made a clear division between his work in Spain and the rest of Latin America," says Jesús Lopez, chairman of Universal Music Latin America/Iberian Peninsula. "First, he worked hard in Spain, and it seemed like a mistake, because we had imports in Venezuela and Puerto Rico that cut into our sales. But in the end, that set the ground, and later, he was physically available to us. That made the difference."

People initially saw Bisbal only as a TV act, López says.

In addition, he also sang predictable pop material, the kind that TV-produced acts usually perform.

But what was undisputable was his onstage delivery, and Universal made every effort to display that in a big way, culminating with a Latin American tour at the end of 2003.

Bisbal enjoyed his first big U.S. break last May.

"He exploded with the *Billboard* [Latin Music] Awards" in 2003, says Walter Kolm, senior VP of A&R and marketing at Universal Music Latino. "That was his first big exposure, and it gave him prestige and credibility. From that point on, he started to rise [on the



BISBAL: NEW SET HAS 'A DIFFERENT SOUND'

charts], and we began to see him in the Northeast and West Coast."

Bisbal also performed at the Latin Grammy Awards in September and won the award for best new artist.

"David has everything a good artist needs to have, [like] a good voice," says Ricardo Campoy, head of Vale Music, which releases all "Operación Triunfo" albums in Spain. "But he has something exceptional: his great professionalism and his desire to work."

A PAN-REGIONAL PUSH

Bisbal isn't the only Vale artist that has been recorded in the United States or that has been launched abroad. He is, however, the only one that has received this kind of pan-regional promotional push.

The model, López says, was Juanes. The Colombian singer was pushed at a pan-regional level starting with his first album on Universal. Sales of that album never reflected the promotion behind it. But sales of his follow-up did.

"We asked ourselves, 'Is it worth it to work this artist?'" López recalls of Bisbal.

"Many people were coming into my office requesting [this kind of promotion]. For me, it's becoming more common. It's the only way of showing artists and managers that they're with a multi-

national," López says.

However, that kind of promotion is possible only if the artist is available. Bisbal, following his initial push in Spain, made the time, even though he could have easily stayed in Spain making money through touring.

"The secret was to insist," Kolm says of Bisbal's U.S. rise. "And his availability. We were able to treat him like a local artist."

That was the case not just for the United States but other countries as well.

Sales for "Corazón Latino" started to pick up after the second single. All told, the album sold close to 400,000 copies in the United States and Latin America, according to Universal; not a landslide, but very respectable.

"Bulería," however, is off to a much stronger start, although in Mexico it has failed to crack the top 10.

Musically, Bisbal describes it as an evolution.

"It's a different sound," he says. "The Latin style, of course, but it has a lot of variety. I've put in styles like [Spanish] rumba. There's more metals, more production. And musically, there's many things that I didn't feel before and now I can say."

Despite the Spanish/Latin fusion found on "Bulería," it remains a safe, standard pop album.

And that may ultimately be Bisbal's ticket to success.

"I'm intrigued by how the audience has received this cross between classic songs and a cutie," says John Echevarría, president of Universal Music Latino. "Surprisingly, they've embraced it."

P2P

Continued from page 6

ful way in Washington and figure out how to make this system work, finally, for artists, not just for the major conglomerates, who are entitled to a share of the revenue."

Despite disagreements and continuing, widespread illegal file sharing, commercial digital music is poised for explosive growth in 2004, many panelists agreed.

Increasing content availability, rapid adoption of broadband, a wide variety of cheaper and faster consumer electronics devices and the legal crackdown on P2P file sharing are conspiring to stimulate consumer interest in legitimate downloading of music, said keynote speaker Sean Ryan, Real Networks VP of music services.

"There is a lot of growth," Ryan summarized. "All physical media is going digital, and music is leading the way."

The challenge for digital music services is to get the labels to keep pace with changes in technology, MusicNow CEO Scott Kauffman said.

"In concert with [the] next push to portability comes an important set of dialogues with labels," Kauffman said. "It's our job to convince the content holders that there is a bigger market and bigger business in subscription services than all of the heat and excitement around today's download market."

Martin

Continued from page 6

breach of agreement and breach of fiduciary duty."

The suit refers to several advances that Martin received from his label, Sony Music Entertainment, stemming from his obligation to record at least five more albums.

Several legal experts have described the suit as "unusual," given that managers are usually entitled to commissions when artists receive their money, as was the case here.

"Absent some contractual limitation, the fact that the artist has future obligations vis-à-vis the label does not usually restrict the ability of the manager to receive his commission from the monies already paid by the label to the artist," says Carol Fernández, an attorney with Hunton & Williams in Miami. "The rationale being that the monies are derived from the fruit of the manager's efforts."

Another entertainment attorney says, "It's a novel approach, and it will be watched closely."

HISTORIC CROSSOVER

Beyond the legal issues, Martin's suit has left many in the Latin music indus-

try perplexed, as his relationship with Medina was one of the most enduring, and closest, in the industry.

Medina began handling Martin early in his career, when the singer was relatively unknown. With Medina, Martin achieved what many consider to be the most successful crossover in Latin music history.

"It's really sad," one executive says.

Martin's new manager, Benny Medina (no relationship to Angelo Medina) of Handprint Entertainment, did not return calls from *Billboard*.

A press release issued in Puerto Rico by Martin's public relations agency stated that "prior to filing the suit, representatives for Ricky Martin

Enterprises Inc. exhausted all avenues to come to a cordial and reasonable agreement."

John Rosenberg, who represents RME, says, "Ricky Martin Enterprises is content to have these issues addressed and resolved through the judicial process. Accordingly, their only comment on these matters will be in the context of the pending legal procedures."

Martin amicably parted ways with Angelo Medina in September 2003.

According to a press statement at that time, Medina was to continue promoting Martin's concerts in Puerto Rico. Medina, in his suit, alleges that Martin breached that agreement.

SUM

Continued from page 7

stake in the new venture, with UMAP holding the remainder.

Negotiations regarding the launch of a joint venture between the two companies began in 2002. The initial focus was on artist development and the co-production of music-related events,

either live or for broadcast.

Hui says SUM Entertainment will look to expand its focus once its initial stable of projects and artists is in place. The company hopes to work with corporate sponsors to promote and produce music-based events in China. It also aims to be involved with mobile-phone services, new media, live performances and DVD.

Hui and SMG president Li Ruigang agree that the continuing high piracy rate in China means that they are

obliged to find and develop new revenue streams.

"Piracy is a big problem in the industry, but the Chinese government is trying to crack down on it," Li says. "However, the market is so big that you can't totally stop it."

Li and Hui confirm that they have discussed the possibility of using their combined resources to bring in Western acts to play live in China. The company may also bring in Western artists and producers to the mainland

to work with Chinese artists. Hui says announcements concerning SUM Entertainment's debut projects will be made soon.

Universal Music will continue to release its own product in mainland China on its own imprints. The company has a representative office in Shanghai, and its repertoire is licensed to Chinese mainland distributors.

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London.

DRT

Continued from page 6

lished as a result of long professional and personal relationships among its principals.

Shulman has known Green since the latter was the head of business affairs at PolyGram, which Shulman joined as an A&R man in the early

'80s. The two worked together at Atco (where Shulman served as president); Green later became president of Sony Wonder.

In his role as president of Roadrunner Records during the '90s, Shulman became acquainted with Urban, who headed Edel Music's North American operations after stints at EMI and Sony.

Shulman says, "We all have long-standing knowledge of each other and have worked together. We all

have different attributes we can bring to this situation."

Beyond signing acts directly, DRT is partnering with some third-party labels. Besides Nitrous, the company will handle releases from Ed Phillips' XS Records (home of Todd) and producer Glenn Rosenstein's American Garage. It is also releasing urban product from Moe Doe Entertainment and Sumday Entertainment.

DRT has set up shop with a staff of 12. Key employees include head of

marketing Milo Pacheco, formerly with Razor & Tie Records; head of promotion Jeff Gillis, previously with DreamWorks; head of sales Betsy Grant, a veteran of PGD; and head of publicity Lulu Cohen, most recently with Koch Entertainment.

Shulman says that DRT wants "to keep the costs of marketing and promotion low and the expectations to be realistic but the rewards to be very high, assuming we can all do the right job as a team."

Continued from page 1

Val Azzoli and Elektra Entertainment Group chairman/CEO Sylvia Rhone.

Also in the picture are the consolidation of the Atlantic and Elektra label groups, the closure of some international outposts and salary reductions among remaining employees, all with the goal of \$225 million in annual savings.

The cuts began swiftly but with apparent sensitivity.

"They were really upfront, and they have been fair with me and treated me well. I have no complaints with this company," one departing executive tells *Billboard*.

Amid the demolition, the new team—led by Edgar Bronfman Jr. and Lyor Cohen, chairman/CEO of U.S. Recorded Music—has begun rebuilding WMG into a more nimble company with an entrepreneurial mentality.

Bronfman and Cohen were not available for comment.

As a priority, the new team is understood to be looking for ways to beef up its A&R presence.

In fact, sources suggest that Cohen and key executives are scrutinizing the independent label sector, looking for deals with small, hot labels that could serve as new talent sources.

In the keynote address at the Billboard Music & Money Symposium (see story, page 1) March 4, Scott Sperling, managing partner of Thomas H. Lee—one of the firms involved in the WMG buyout group—said that while WMG is undergoing operational consolidation, it "will continue to be aggressive" in the area of A&R. Later, in an interview, he added that WMG "has huge liquidity" if acquisition opportunities are presented. "We want to grow the business," he said.

Also, in a move to increase catalog, WMG is believed to be the sole major still looking at Fantasy, the independent label that is up for sale (*Billboard*, March 6).

ARTISTS REACT

Most managers of artists on the WMG labels are still waiting for the dust to clear. But Missy Elliott was so upset by the changes, according to published reports, that she plans to leave Elektra although she has one album left on her contract.

Calls to Elliott's manager, Violator Management's Mona Scott, were not returned by press time.

Elektra's Rhone was instrumental in Elliott's development. She has also played a major role in the career of contemporary gospel star Yolanda Adams, who is currently cutting her third Elektra studio album.

"We're saddened and concerned," Adams' manager Shiba Haley says about the label changes. "Sylvia had a

good understanding of who Yolanda is. We don't know what the changes will mean or how the new people will feel about an artist like Yolanda. She's gospel, but we see her as a world artist."

On the other hand, Michael Lippman of Lippman Entertainment, which represents Lava act Matchbox Twenty, says, "I am very excited about the energy that is coming into WMG and Atlantic/Elektra. I am sorry to see those who we worked really close with not be there, but I have to feel that it is a new beginning."

Jennifer Cooke—partner in Nashville-based Blanton, Harrell, Cooke and Corzine, which manages Amy Grant, who is signed to WMG's Word label—wonders about the impact of the changes.

"The hardest part for me is feeling like you never get to build from one project to another project with a consistent team," Cooke says.

But she understands it is the age of consolidation. "I have great faith that a lot of time and thought was put into how they made these changes, and I look forward to regrouping with the new team," Cooke says.

Another manager says, "It's still too early to really tell what's going on there." He declines to comment publicly because he doesn't know yet "who to stroke."

EXEC TEAM TAKES SHAPE

Bronfman, who led the \$2.6 billion purchase of the music company, will serve as WMG chairman/CEO. His buyout group included his own firm, Lexa Partners, along with Thomas H. Lee Partners, Bain Capital and Providence Equity Partners. A published report that designer Tommy Hilfiger has ponied up \$25 million for a piece of the action could not be confirmed.

Reporting directly to Bronfman are Cohen, Warner Music International chairman/CEO Paul-Rene Albertini and Leslie Bider, who continues as chairman/CEO of Warner/Chappell Music. Albertini was previously president of WMI.

WMG confirms prior *Billboard*

reports that it is in discussions with Roger Ames, who has been WMG chairman, about a senior management role at the company (*Billboard*, Feb. 7). The March 4 L.A. Times reported that as discussions continue, Ames is calling himself an "at-will non-exclusive consultant."

The remainder of the top corporate staff also reports to Bronfman. Helen Murphy remains as CFO, while Dave Johnson stays on as executive VP/general counsel. Will Tanous will oversee corporate communications. He takes over for former corporate communications chief Dawn Bridges, who is exiting.

Reporting to Cohen are holdovers Tom Whalley, chairman/CEO of Warner Bros. Records; Scott Pascucci, president of Warner Strategic Marketing; and John Esposito, president of WEA Corp.

LABEL CONSOLIDATION

Many of the U.S. cuts will come through the merger of Elektra and Atlantic, WMG's two big East Coast label groups. According to sources, the new combined Elektra/Atlantic operation will have a staff of about 200 to 250 people, down from the 410 or so the two label groups currently employ.

The consolidation has cost the jobs of Azzoli and Rhone, as well as Atlantic co-president Ron Shapiro. In their wake, Cohen is serving as interim chairman of what is being referred to as "the East Coast label."

In what some see as the first step in a two-step process to merge Elektra and Atlantic, WMG is combining the labels' legal and business affairs, finance and sales units. Michael Kushner will oversee legal and business affairs, with Samantha Schwam heading up finance and Rick Froio in charge of sales. All had been with Atlantic; they will report to Cohen.

Other departments, including promotion, marketing and A&R, will stay separate for now. Atlantic department heads are reporting to Craig Kallman, who had been co-president of Atlantic Records; at Elektra, department heads

are reporting to Greg Thompson, the label's executive VP/GM.

Cohen went out of his way in an e-mail to employees to say that the dominance of Atlantic executives named so far in the new structure was "purely coincidence and not a true reflection of the new, united Elektra/Atlantic culture that we will work together to create."

He pointed out that when he was involved in the merger of Island, Def Jam and Mercury, "everyone had an equal opportunity to continue, and the same will hold true here."

Who will ultimately head the East Coast label has not been announced, although most insiders were privately saying in the days leading up to the closing that it would be Jason Flom, currently president of WMG's Lava Records.

Atlantic Records founder Ahmet Ertegun will remain with WMG in an as yet unspecified role.

While cuts were taking place at many WMG divisions, the pink slips had yet to start being distributed at the two labels. With the Atlantic department heads in business affairs, finance and sales staying, sources say that the corresponding Elektra heads will either be dismissed or offered positions elsewhere within WMG.

The Warner Bros. Records Group, which includes Word and Warner Nashville, started its cuts March 2. About 50 employees were cut there.

Among the senior Warner label executives exiting are Karen Moss, senior VP of publicity; John Boulos, senior VP of promotion; Craig Kostich, senior VP of marketing; Damu Mtume, senior VP of A&R; Bill Bentley, VP of publicity; and Randall Kennedy, VP of jazz sales.

In addition to Whalley, vice chairman Jeff Ayeroff remains at the label, a company spokeswoman says.

At Word, 32 people were cut. The departments hardest hit were public relations, with the entire staff dismissed, including director of publicity Leanne Bush, and A&R, which lost about half of its staff, including VP of A&R Chris Rodriguez. Senior Word management remains in place,

including CEO Malcolm Mimms, Word Label Group president Barry Landis and Word Distribution president Mark Funderburg.

Warner Nashville cuts include senior VP of creative services Janice Azrak and senior VP of A&R Paige Levy. Label president Jim Ed Norman is understood to remain.

OTHER DIVISIONS HIT

"Changes will affect the business globally," a WMI spokesperson confirms. But it is unclear how those changes were playing out across the globe.

In the Latin area, George Zamora has departed as president of Warner Music Latino. And on March 2, employees of Warner Music Colombia were informed that the label is shutting down as of April 30. It handled operations for that country as well as Venezuela and Peru.

Negotiations are under way to determine who will license Warner products in these markets.

The WEA distribution operation lost about 70 staffers, including senior VP of sales and marketing Craig Applequist, sources say. The makeover will see the distribution company eliminate layers to allow the field to more effectively communicate with headquarters.

On the publishing side, Warner/Chappell Music axed about 50 staffers, sources say.

While cuts of this magnitude are never a pretty sight, departing executives and field staffers privately agreed WMG had done its best to ease the pain.

As one field staffer put it, WMG "handled this process about as well as a big company can handle such a hard process."

The WMG package includes three weeks for every year at the company, plus vacation time.

Additional reporting by Lars Brandle in London; Leila Cobo in Miami; Deborah Evans Price, Phyllis Stark and Ken Tucker in Nashville; Brian Garrity in New York; Gustavo Gomez in Colombia; and Gail Mitchell in Los Angeles.

'Smart Buy'

Continued from page 1

Despite the problems facing the business in recent years, Sperling said things have begun turning around recently for the music industry, and now people are complimenting his firm for "making a pretty smart buy."

Sperling noted that the firm was attracted to WMG by its strong asset coverage for its investment. The firm "saw significant asset valuation" for the music publishing unit, which separately could be valued at \$2 billion-plus; the recorded music business is valued at

\$1.5 billion-plus, according to Sperling.

Before partaking in this deal with Edgar Bronfman Jr.'s Lexa Partners, Bain Capital and Providence Equity Partners, Sperling said Thomas H. Lee had been watching the industry for five years and had examined several companies, including Vivendi Universal's music operation.

But the firm found the right investment partners and the right assets in the WMG deal. Sperling calls WMG "a real crown jewel," one that is a leading player with a long track record of growing market share.

He praised the company's "deep existing management team" while citing the important additions of Bronfman as chairman/CEO and

Lyor Cohen as chairman/CEO of U.S. Recorded Music.

"We think we will continue to be able to add outstanding world-class talent," he said.

In an interview with *Billboard* after the speech, Sperling discussed how long Thomas H. Lee typically holds onto assets and exit strategies.

"When we look at a business, we usually have a five-year horizon," he said. In this case, if at that time the music industry's "uncertainties have been resolved" and it appeared to be the right move, taking the company public would be an option.

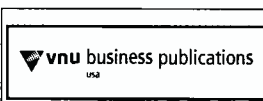
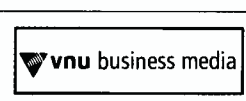
In a panel session following his speech, Sperling noted that one of those uncertainties—piracy—has

been negating the industry's growth for the past three years. Still, the "cash-flow stream is very robust" for catalog and music publishing assets, and music itself still had "strong fundamental demand."

The evolving business model may see movement to the digital world, but "we suspect it will take a long time," Sperling said.

What's more, the industry will benefit from other new revenue streams, including the cell-phone and video-game market.

Sperling said early tests show that the consumer will also pay a premium for such high-value physical product as dual discs that can carry music and video.

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'I Wish The Music Business Would Stop Blaming The Internet'

BY CARLA HAY

When people speak of music visionaries, artists usually get most of the credit. But in terms of those who work behind the scenes, few visionaries stand out more than Rolling Stone editor-in-chief/publisher Jann S. Wenner, who this year is being inducted in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame for lifetime achievement in the non-performer category.

It is undisputed that rock'n'roll has had a far-reaching and explosive impact since its origins in the 1950s. But it was not until the following decade, in 1967, that rock finally got its own national consumer magazine with Rolling Stone, the brainchild of Wenner and co-founder Ralph Gleason.

Rolling Stone became much more than a magazine; it is now a cultural institution. The magazine has a legacy of documenting rock and pop culture not just as an art form but as a way of life and as a catalyst for social change. Dozens of music magazines have followed in Rolling Stone's footsteps, yet Rolling Stone is still the No. 1 U.S. consumer music magazine, with a paid circulation of more than 1.3 million, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations.

Wenner is chairman of Wenner Media (which publishes Rolling Stone, US Weekly and Men's Journal), as well as one of the founders of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. He is currently vice chairman of the Hall of Fame's board of directors in addition to being a philanthropist and a tireless champion of artists and free speech.

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Foundation executive director Suzan Evans says of Wenner, "When I called to tell Jann that he had been overwhelmingly voted in [for the lifetime achievement award] this year, he wanted to turn it down. But I said, 'You're going to be inducted, whether you want to or not.' The award is meaningful not just because of what's he done historically to promote rock'n'roll but also because he was one of the first people who agreed to work on our board."

In a rare interview, Wenner opens up to *Billboard* about his thoughts on Rolling Stone, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and the music industry.

Q: If you started Rolling Stone today, knowing what you know now, what would you do differently? And how has the magazine climate changed since 1967?

A: We launched Rolling Stone with seed money of \$7,500. If you were to start a national magazine today, it would take millions of dollars, and it's hard to get that kind of money together.

The competition for people's time and attention is greater in intensity. The music business is wildly different today; it's open to more people. Today, popular culture is covered all the time.

I don't know if it's possible to start a magazine like Rolling Stone again. In the beginning of Rolling Stone, it was part of the rise of a whole cultural shift with the baby-boom generation.

Q: What is Rolling Stone's biggest responsibility to its readers and the music industry?

A: To tell the truth.

Q: Some say Rolling Stone's depiction of women on the cover is sexist. Others say the magazine has gotten soft. How do you respond?

A: I think the criticism is bullshit. I laugh at that criticism. Is a sexy woman on the cover any more sexist than the Justin Timberlake cover by Herb Ritts? They're both sexy. Some of the men are scantily clad, too.

People have said, "Why do you put Britney Spears on the cover? That's selling out." I don't think it's selling out. We had Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash on the cover within the same year.

People just like to criticize. If you look at a year's worth of Rolling Stone, you'll find that we have covered everything important there is to cover with due seriousness and in all due depth.



The Last Word

A Q&A With Jann S. Wenner

Jann S. Wenner: Career Highlights

- 2004: Rock & Roll Hall of Fame lifetime achievement induction
- 1997: Becomes youngest inductee in the American Society of Magazine Editors Hall of Fame
- 1995: Men's Journal wins the National Magazine Award for general excellence
- 1994: Named publishing executive of the year by Adweek
- 1993: Launches Family Life magazine; sells publication two years later
- 1992: Launches Men's Journal
- 1985: Purchases US magazine, which is later renamed US Weekly
- 1983: Co-founds Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Foundation; becomes vice chairman of the Hall of Fame board
- 1977: Launches Outside magazine; sells publication two years later
- 1967: Co-founds Rolling Stone magazine

Q: What do you think of Rolling Stone's competitors in the music consumer magazine field?

A: I don't read any of them. We haven't had any real competition. They're not that good or interesting to me. Nobody comes to me on my staff and says, "You should've read this article in one of our imitators/competitors."

Q: How has your role at Rolling Stone changed through the years?

A: I'm still running the magazine, but I'm not involved in the day-to-day operations anymore. I run three magazines, and all the editors report to me. I oversee the business and make the final decisions on the covers. I read virtually 100% of the features.

Q: What artists have come along in the past five years who really excite you?

A: People tend to like who they grew up with, so I still like what I was listening to around college age. My favorite artists are still Bob Dylan, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and R&B-based artists like Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, James Brown—the old Motown artists.

I love singer/songwriters like Paul Simon, Jackson Browne, Bruce Springsteen. There are a lot of newer artists who are doing wonderful stuff and are very relevant to their current audiences. Today, a lot of it is rap. Justin Timberlake and Beck are real talents.

Q: Some people might think there's a conflict of interest in that you are getting a Rock & Roll Hall of Fame lifetime achievement award when you are a vice chairman of the board. Can you set the record straight on how the voting worked? Is it true that you initially declined this honor?

A: When it was suggested to me in the past, I said no. At first I was very touchy about getting this award. I felt weird about it. But now I feel good about it.

We have a select group of voters of about 50 or 60 people—musicians, executives, critics—whom we consider the most knowledgeable about music to vote for the non-performer category. All the voting is done by secret ballot. That's the only way to do it.

This was the year that apparently a lot of people decided to vote for me, and no one has challenged it. So now I don't have a choice but to accept it. It seems like the appropriate moment, for some reason. People would've freaked out if it happened 10 years ago.

Q: Speaking of awards shows, why doesn't Rolling Stone have its own awards show on TV?

A: I'm just not a TV person. We've done Rolling Stone TV specials, and I'm proud of all of that. But as much as I'd love the commercial gratification of doing our own awards show, now there are just too many awards shows. I don't think there's much we could bring to the table.

And there's not much money in it. You end up busting your ass, and the bulk of the money goes to the TV network. Forget it. I've got other things to do than work for a network.

Q: If there was anything you could change about the music business, what would it be?

A: I wish the business had responded quicker and a lot more intelligently to the rise of the Internet. I wish the industry had embraced it instead of fighting it. I wish the industry had seen the Internet as a great new medium for the promotion, development and spreading of music.

And now I wish the music business would stop blaming all its ills on the Internet. I think the music industry is not doing the best A&R job right now.

Q: Any final thoughts on the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame?

A: I've been lucky that I've been able to work with a lot of my friends and people I've admired for a long time. It gave me another avenue to work with a tremendous number of artists. It's been a great opportunity to be close to something I love, which is the music.

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Billboard CHART ALERT

YOUR FIRST LOOK BETWEEN THE BULLETS
DECEMBER 03, 2003

Geoff Mayfield; Contributors: Keith Caulfield, Todd Martens

Jay-Z Fends Off No Doubt; Reclaims No. 1

In its third week on the charts, Thanksgiving week traffic softens the erosion on Jay-Z's "The Black Album" from 38% in the second week to 9.7% on the current Billboard 200. The rapper finishes ahead of the pack with a lead of less than 8,000 copies (4-1, 260,000) ... A hits album by No Doubt sets up shop at No. 2. With 253,000 sold in its best frame, the band is just a hair off its best Nielsen SoundScan opener ... Thanksgiving week album sales are down less than 3.6% from the same holiday week of 2002, but if Jay-Z, Korn

MARKET WATCH

- Album units, current chart week: 20.5 million units
- UP 23.7% over last issue's charts: 16.6 million units
- DOWN 3.4% over same week, 2002: 21.3 million units
- This week Each of the top 21 albums surpass 100,000 copies, with each of the top 7 above 200,000.

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

1	4	JAY-Z The Black Album (Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam /IDJMG)	11	4	BLINK-182 Blink-182 (Geffen /Interscope)
*2	New	NO DOUBT The Singles 1992-2003 (Interscope)	*12	New	NELLY Da Derry Versions - The Reinvention (Fo' Reel/Universal /UMRG)
3	1	BRITNEY SPEARS In The Zone (Jive /Zomba)	*13	1	MISSY ELLIOTT This Is Not A Test! (The Gold Mind/ Elektra /EEG)
*4	18	HILARY DUFF Metamorphosis (Buena Vista /Hollywood)	*14	18	CLAY AIKEN Measure Of A Man (RCA /RMG)
*5	8	VARIOUS ARTISTS Now 14 (Columbia/Universal/EMI/Zomba /Sony Music)	15	8	SHERYL CROW The Very Best Of Sheryl Crow (A&M /Interscope)
*6	9	TOBY KEITH Shock'n Y'all (DreamWorks (Nashville) /Interscope)	16	9	SOUNDTRACK Tupac: Resurrection (Amaru /Interscope)
7	6	JOSH GROBAN Closer (143/ Reprise /Warner Bros.)	17	6	THE BEATLES Let It Be... Naked (Apple /Capitol)
8	2	G-UNIT Beg For Mercy (G-Unit/ Shady /Interscope)	18	2	SARAH MCLACHLAN Afterglow (Arista)
*9	19	KORN Take A Look In The Mirror (Immortal/Epic /Sony Music)	*19	19	ROD STEWART As Time Goes By ... The Great American Songbook Vol. II (J /RMG)
*10	10	OUTKAST Speakerboxxx/The Love Below (Arista)	*20	10	PUDDLE OF MUDD Life On Display (Geffen /Interscope)

* indicates titles with greatest sales gains this week

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

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