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TRACE ADKINS, THE FRAY

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2008

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Soulja Boy

Cranks Out The
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The Sneaker Game
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A Download on the Digital Music Revolution

Billboard's Digital Music Live! - the exclusive digital music track of CES - offers insight from industry insiders on the digital transformation of the music business including: new music services, social media, ad-supported free streaming revenue models, digital DIY artist services and more.

ADDITIONAL KEYNOTES:



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SVP of Electronic Games & Music
MTV



DOUGLAS MERRILL
President, Digital Business
EMI Music Group



ALEX RIGOPULOS
CEO and Co-Founder
Harmonix



PETER BRODSKY
EVP for Business Affairs
Sony/ATV Music
Publishing



TIM CHANG
Principal
Norwest Venture Partners



TED COHEN
Managing Partner
TAG Strategic



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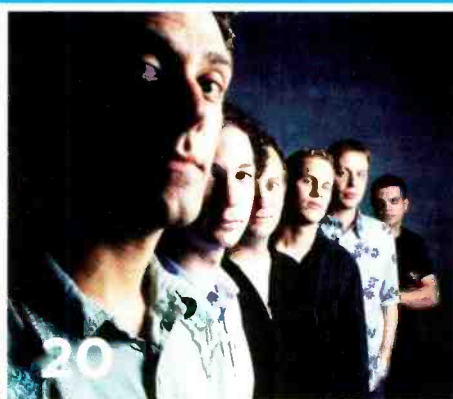


No. 1 ON THE CHARTS

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ON THE COVER: Soulja Boy Tell'em photograph by Zach Wolfe.



360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD

HOME FRONT

Events

DIGITAL MUSIC LIVE
Billboard's Digital Music Live!—the exclusive digital music track of CES—offers keynotes with hip-hop artist **Soulja Boy Tell'em**, EMI Music Group's Douglas Merrill, MTV's Paul DeGooyer and others. For a schedule, visit billboardevents.com.

LATIN MUSIC
Don't miss the hottest week in Latin music. Join Billboard April 19-23 at the 20th anniversary of the **Latin Music Conference & Awards**, the single most important Latin music industry event. More at billboardevents.com.

MUSIC & MONEY
Connect with the deal-makers driving the music biz at this exclusive event that gathers the music and financial communities for an examination of the realities facing the music industry. For details, go to billboardevents.com.

Online

CONFAB VIDEO
Visit billboard.com/video to watch interviews with Gene Simmons, Diane Warren and other highlights from the recent **Film & TV Music Conference** and Billboard's **Touring Conference and Awards**.



SANTA HOLD
Music retailers bank on
late Xmas



AD IT UP
Deutsch partners with
L.A. indie artist



LESS IS MORE
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U.K. retail chain,
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**>>> LAYOFFS
HIT VIACOM,
MTV**

Viacom unveiled plans to cut 850 jobs, or 7% of its work force, across its operations. The company says it will suspend senior level management salary increases for 2009 and take write-downs on programming and other assets, though it didn't provide details on the write-downs. Viacom-owned MTV was to deliver details of the cuts to its department heads Dec. 4, according to multiple reports, though specifics weren't available at press time.

**>>> ULTRA
FEST UNVEILS
LINEUP**

DJ Tiësto, Carl Cox, Bloc Party, Deadmau5, the Ting Tings, Cut Copy and Crystal Castles, among others, will perform as part of the 2009 Ultra Music Festival, to be held March 27-29 at Bicentennial Park in Miami. The event will take place in conjunction with the 24th annual Winter Music Conference. Two-day passes for Ultra are available through its Web site for \$99.95, and a two-day VIP pass runs \$350.

**>>> HFA SIGNS
RECIPROCAL
DEALS**

The Harry Fox Agency has entered two foreign reciprocal agreements—one with the Russian Authors Society and one with the Southern Africa Music Rights Organization—for the licensing and collection of music copyright royalties in each other's territories. The agreement with the RAO covers the United States, Puerto Rico and the Russian Federation. The SAMRO deal is for the States, Puerto Rico and the Republic of South Africa.



PRE-GAMESHOW

Can The Grammy Nomination Special Draw More Buyers Than Viewers?

This year's transformation of the annual Grammy Awards nominations announcement into a full-blown prime-time TV special could help provide a badly needed boost in sales at a difficult time for the music industry.

But the Dec. 3 "Grammy Nominations Concert Live!" telecast on CBS fell short of being a ratings winner. The one-hour show finished fourth in its 9 p.m. time slot, averaging 7 million viewers, behind NBC's "Life" with 8.1 million, Fox's "Secret Millionaire" with 8.1 million and ABC's "Private Practice" with 7.8 million, according to Nielsen Media Research.

The audience for the nominations special was also less than half the disappointing average viewership of 17.2 million for the 50th annual Grammy Awards in February.

And even though it featured live performances by Taylor Swift, Christina Aguilera, Mariah Carey, Foo Fighters and John Mayer, the show also failed to resonate strongly with younger viewers, finishing third among those ages 18-34.

Still, the extra exposure could yet provide additional strength to the sales boost that Grammy nominees, especially those with multiple nods, usually enjoy leading up to the awards show

two months later.

Speaking from the red carpet before the concert, Recording Academy chairman Neil Portnow called the untested concept of a televised nominations show "the Wild Wild West," but one that could give the music business a much desired lift in the fourth quarter.

"It's very important to always try to raise the bar of what you're doing," Portnow said, noting that unlike the Academy Award or Emmy nominations, "we have the unique ability to make a concert out of it."

Was he looking for a certain ratings share to judge the night's success, given the poor ratings of the Grammys telecast earlier this year?

"I don't view this as an evaluation that could be simply codified by ratings numbers," Portnow said, attributing poor ratings last year to lowered TV viewership overall because of the writers' strike.

Portnow said after the nominations show that he wasn't disappointed by its fourth-place finish, given that it was the first time the event has been telecast.

Already on track to have the best-selling album of 2008, Lil Wayne led the field with eight nominations, including nods for album of the year and best

rap album for "Tha Carter III," best rap song for "Lollipop" and best rap/sung collaboration for "Got Money" featuring T-Pain.

Other leading nominees are Coldplay, which earned seven nominations, and Jay-Z, Ne-Yo and Kanye West, who each earned six. Ne-Yo's "Year of the Gentleman" scored an album of the year nomination, while his single "Closer" was honored with a nod for best male pop vocal performance, signaling the R&B vocalist's emergence as a mainstream star.

The Recording Academy has often been criticized for its middle-of-the-road inclinations, such as when it awarded album of the year honors to Steely Dan's "Two Against Nature" in 2001 over Eminem's "The Marshall Mathers LP." But in recent years, Grammy honorees have appeared more in synch with critical tastes, and that's certainly the case this year. Well-received favorites dominate album of the year nominees, including Radiohead's "In Rainbows" and Robert Plant & Alison Krauss' "Raising Sand," while tastemaking Brits M.I.A. and Adele were recognized for record of the year. The latter category was a near-sweep for the United Kingdom, with Coldplay, Leona Lewis and Plant (with Krauss) also receiving nods.

The nominations (billboard.biz, Dec. 3) had their share of surprises. Multiple Grammy-winner Carey's album "E=MC2" failed to garner any nominations. Then there was the return of '90s hip-hop hitmaker Heavy D, who received a best reggae album nod for "Vibes," his first new release in nearly a decade.

And Paul McCartney was nominated for best male pop vocal performance and best solo rock vocal performance for two tracks from "Amoeba's Secret," a vinyl-only four-track live EP of a June 27, 2007, in-store appearance at Amoeba Records in Hollywood. Total sales: 6,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The nominations also provided a bittersweet Cinderella story. The late R&B singer Linda Jones, who was best-known for her 1967 hit "Hypnotized," was nominated with her daughter Terry Jones and Helen Bruner

Envelope, please: Grammy nominees COLDPLAY (top), LIL WAYNE (above left) and LEONA LEWIS

for best traditional R&B vocal performance for "Baby I Know." The elder Jones, who was nicknamed "the Empress of Soul," died in 1972 at the age of 27 before receiving the widespread recognition that many felt she had deserved. "Baby I Know" was part of a posthumous album of all new material titled "Soul Talkin'" that was released in September (billboard.biz, Oct. 7).

Reporting by Ayala Ben-Yehuda, Keith Caulfield, Jonathan Cohen, Ann Donahue, Louis Hsu and Gail Mitchell.

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>>> MYSPACE DELIVERS VIDEO TO MOBILES

MySpace made video-clips from its members' pages available for viewing on mobile devices including the BlackBerry Bold, Palm Centro, Motorola Q9, LG Voyager, Nokia N95 and Samsung Instinct. Members are able to watch videos on their home pages and their friends' pages, as well as professionally produced video from outlets like TMZ, the celebrity news and gossip Web site owned by Time Warner; the National Hockey League; satirical newspaper the Onion and others. The free service will be supported by advertising.

>>> BRITNEY TO TOUR IN 2009

Britney Spears will embark on her first arena tour in five years next spring. The Circus Starring Britney Spears jaunt is set for 27 dates and begins March 3 in New Orleans, with support from the Pussycat Dolls. Atlanta, Miami, Boston, Las Vegas and Los Angeles are among the stops. Spears will start rehearsals next month with longtime choreographer Wade Robson. In addition to the North American dates, which run through April 28 in Chicago, Spears will play London's O2 Arena June 3-4.

>>> AMAZON'S U.K. MP3 STORE GOES LIVE

The long-anticipated Amazon.co.uk MP3 service has finally arrived. The service boasts 3 million digital rights management-free tracks from all four majors and leading independent labels, through licensing deals with the Orchard and the Independent Online Distribution Alliance. Indie-label groups Beggars and Concord have also signed with the service. Prices undercut iTunes, with tracks starting at 59 pence (87 cents) and albums at £3 (\$4.43). The standard iTunes price of a track in the United Kingdom is 79 pence (\$1.17).

UPFRONT

BY ED CHRISTMAN

DREAMING OF A LATE CHRISTMAS

Retailers Hope For Holiday Cheer After Weak Post-Thanksgiving Sales

What used to be a seasonal retail lament may emerge as a fervently desired holiday wish: After weak sales during the Black Friday weekend, music merchants say they are hoping that the holiday selling season will be saved by a "late" Christmas.

Rob Perkins, president of the Marietta, Ga.-based retail chain Value Music, is among those who anticipate belated yuletide blessings, something that he says the calendar plays into this year.

Christmas falls on a Thursday, instead of a Tuesday like last year. The additional two shopping days that week suggests "there will be an enormous last week where retail will recover some of the decline," Perkins says.

It's a scenario that industry insiders hope will salvage what is shaping up to be a disappointing holiday season. While merchants report that sales on Black Friday were fair, they say that sales during the rest of the post-Thanksgiving weekend declined dramatically from the same period last year, reporting that comparable-store sales



Green Christmas: LUDACRIS

declined anywhere from 5% to 21%. They also note that sales remained weak immediately following the holiday weekend.

"I hear traffic was high, but overall purchasing wasn't because shoppers were cherry-picking the deals," one senior distribution executive says.

Nielsen SoundScan data shows that the slide in recorded-music sales during the last two weeks of Novem-

ber was somewhat worse than the decline recorded year to date. (Thanksgiving was in the last week of November this year, but in the third week of November 2007.) Album sales during the two weeks ending Nov. 30 fell 17.4% from a year earlier to 21.7 million units, compared with a 13.6% year-to-date decline in album sales to 370 million units.

Current album sales—those sales accumulated in the first

18 months of an album's availability, or longer if an album remains in the top half of the Billboard 200—were down 15%, while catalog sales were down 21.5% for the last two weeks of November.

While merchants reported poor performances from hit albums, sales of the top 10 titles on the Billboard 200 were actually up 9.7% in the last two weeks of November from a year earlier. Meanwhile, the overall Billboard 200 suffered a 9% decline during the same period.

The top three titles during Thanksgiving week were Kanye West's "808s & Heartbreak," which scanned 450,000 units; Taylor Swift's "Fearless," which scanned 267,000; Guns N' Roses' "Chinese Democracy," which came in with 261,000 units as a physical exclusive at Best Buy; Beyoncé's "I Am... Sasha Fierce," which sold 257,000; and Ludacris' "Theater of the Mind," which scanned 213,000.

After two straight years of strong Christmas sales, seasonal music is not in favor this year. Total sales for the Billboard seasonal sales chart

were down 36.7% during the last two weeks of November from a year earlier, with the 100-place chart generating total sales of 2.2 million units this year, down from 3.4 million last year.

Some merchants are reporting that seasonal album sales are down as much as 50%. One wholesaler says that he has already begun to return Christmas product because he feels he will have little chance of selling it, marking a break from the customary practice of returning Christmas product after the new year.

The decline comes amid a dearth of big Christmas album debuts, which generally drive volume for the overall category. Certainly no new Christmas titles emerged to match the performance of Josh Groban's 2007 album "Noel," which was the top seller during Thanksgiving week last year with 405,000 units. While Enya's "Winter Came" topped the seasonal chart in its first two weeks, it fell to third in the last week of November, allowing "Noel" to reclaim the top spot.

Looking at downloads, sales of digital tracks climbed 17.5% during the last two weeks of November from a year earlier, cooling off from the 28.3% growth pace recorded during the same period last year. But digital album sales surged 46.7%, outperforming the 31.3% growth the category has achieved so far this year.

INTERNET BY ANTONY BRUNO

Streaming Ahead

CBS Radio Extends Its Online Reach

While other Internet radio providers are frantically trying to stay afloat in the wake of higher music royalty fees, CBS Radio is using the situation to solidify its standing within the format.

After essentially taking over AOL's Web radio operations earlier this year, CBS Radio has struck a similar deal to power Yahoo Music's Launchcast Internet radio service starting in early 2009. CBS Radio will handle advertising sales for Launchcast's 150 stations, as it already does for AOL's 200 stations. The company has 150 online simulcast and Web-only stations of its own and is a CBS Corp. sibling of streaming music site Last.fm.

Driving CBS Radio's momentum in Internet radio is the growing pressure on webcasters to monetize their traffic more effectively. In particular, the U.S. Copyright Royalty Board's decision last

year to sharply increase the performance royalties paid by Internet radio operators has forced such services to ease their resistance to audio ads, which are likelier to reach listeners than display ads (Billboard, Nov. 22).

But portal sites like Yahoo and AOL are geared more toward national ad sales than the local focus typical of radio ads, another factor pushing them toward partnerships with CBS Radio, one of the largest U.S. terrestrial radio broadcasters.

"Advertisers want to reach specific metro areas that are relevant to their products and services," Yahoo Music head Michael Spiegelman says. "Yahoo is really oriented to sell nationally. That translates well into video and display advertising, but not as well into audio ads."

Launchcast doesn't have a dedicated ad sales team. By contrast, CBS Radio has a sales staff of thousands dedicated to local

markets around the country. And that staff now has more than 500 Internet radio channels to sell inventory on, many of which overlap in major metro areas, allowing advertisers to buy one ad that will run on CBS, Yahoo and AOL stations simultaneously.

CBS Radio's deals with Yahoo and AOL have greatly extended its online reach. In October, the most recent period for which data is available, CBS' Web properties had 3.95 million unique visitors, and Launchcast had 2.87 million. AOL exceeded both with 3.99 million, according to comScore Media Metrix.

CBS doesn't rely on music alone to drive its ad sales. Unlike AOL and Yahoo, CBS Radio carries several stations dedicated to news, sports and talk radio. In fact, sports-oriented WFAN (660 AM) New York is its highest-rated Internet radio feed, according to David Goodman, president of digital media and integrated

marketing for CBS Radio.

"We're now the second-largest streaming media company in the world after YouTube," Goodman says, citing CBS Radio's pre-Yahoo 3.6 billion streams per month to YouTube's 12.9 billion. "We have the ability to leverage that entire audience, or slice and dice it in a number of different ways, to give an advertiser the best solution for their needs."

CBS Radio's agreement to handle online radio ad sales for both longtime portal rivals could raise eyebrows, given the persistent merger speculation surrounding the two companies.

The consolidation of three of the top Internet radio entities into one ad network could prove appealing for advertisers keen on reaching an aggregated online listening audience. That, in turn, could keep the participating parties from scaling back their music programming—something other online radio outfits are considering to save costs. But the downside is that playlists could become homogenized, as has happened at terrestrial radio in the wake of consolidation. CBS Radio insists it will leave music programming decisions to its partners.



GOODMAN



Ad rock: MISS DERRINGER

BRANDING BY KATIE HASTY

Commercial Alternative

Deutsch Delves Into Band Marketing With L.A. Indie Artist

At first glance, an indie rock band and a prominent advertising agency might seem to make for odd bedfellows.

But Los Angeles country-rock act Miss Derringer and ad firm Deutsch have joined hands in an unusual strategic partnership under which the agency will help in the launch and marketing of the band's forthcoming album, "Winter Hill."

Deutsch will construct a new Web site and online store for Miss Derringer and assist in the design of the CD packaging and related merchandise and promotional materials. Perhaps most important, the agency will also pitch Miss Derringer's music for placement in ads for its clients, a roster that includes big consumer brands like IKEA,

Sony PlayStation and Saturn.

For the band, the partnership opens doors to potentially lucrative revenue streams and the marketing savvy of a leading player on Madison Avenue. For Deutsch, working with Miss Derringer gives it a chance to demonstrate to potential ad clients that it has the expertise they need to reach younger demographics.

Big clients "want to see that we have a proven track record with youth culture," Deutsch New York chief creative officer Peter Nicholson says. "When we support and develop an act like Miss Derringer... that's a genuine mark for our street-level credibility."

Deutsch VP/account director Tim Rivera pitched the idea of a partnership to the unsigned Miss Derringer and its manager David Bason earlier this year. While the group isn't signed to a label, it has released two albums on its own, supported Blondie on tour, appeared on the cover of L.A. Weekly and had one of its songs featured last year in an episode of the CBS comedy "How I Met Your Mother."

Rivera says Miss Derringer fits the profile of the type of music act that Deutsch is interested in working with—"bands who already know who they are, where they want to go" and appear to be on the verge of breaking out to a larger audience, he says.

"They understand what they need in order to get more exposure as a band without a record deal," Rivera says. "You don't need to be on the radio. You need eyeballs; quicker, faster word-of-mouth. We're not music experts. We're not the radio or a label. [But] we know audiences and the media landscape."

Bason, a former Roadrunner Records A&R director who describes Miss Derringer as a "goth-country-art-noir band," says the group is interested in reaching nonexclusive licensing deals and partnerships with the right brands.

Rivera is "a music guy, and he pitched

the company like an A&R person does," Bason says. "The fit had to be right."

Working directly with an ad agency wouldn't work for just any act, says Bason, who also manages Razor & Tie rock band Semi Precious Weapons. He says it's important for the act in question to own its own masters and publishing. That enables it to enter into any number of nonexclusive agreements and everyone can walk away with bigger percentages.

"For a band like ours, synchs are the only way that anyone makes money," he says.

Deutsch will earn a percentage of each successful revenue stream it has a role in securing, whether it be a synch deal or album and merch sales. The two sides declined to reveal the exact terms of the deal.

The firm's partnership with Miss Derringer isn't the first time it has dabbled in this sort of scheme. In 2006, Deutsch offered Australian rock act Sick Puppies free labor on its CD packaging, logo, merchandise design, Web site and MySpace page design for the album "Dressed Up for Life" (Billboard, March 24, 2007). Deutsch farmed out the project to students at New York's Fashion Institute of Technology and the band chose a winner out of six submissions.

Sick Puppies "had some basic brand elements and were basically like, 'What else can you do with this?'" Deutsch's Nicholson says. "As a trial study, it was a great way to be exposed to this kind of band, its brand and its audience."

With that experience under its belt, Deutsch began approaching more bands and, according to Rivera, has worked loosely with "two or three" other artists, including one "bigger name" that ultimately walked away.

"An association with an ad agency is something that some groups just aren't comfortable with," Nicholson says. "Some artists just want to make art. They don't want to look at themselves as a business property." ■■■

>>>FLEETWOOD MAC RETURNING TO THE ROAD

Fleetwood Mac will embark on its first tour in five years next spring, beginning March 1 in Pittsburgh. Tickets for the Live Nation-produced Unleashed tour go on sale Dec. 15. So far, 16 dates are on tap through March 26 in Toronto, but the trek is expected to run through the summer. Core members Lindsey Buckingham, Stevie Nicks, John McVie and Mick Fleetwood are all onboard.

>>>MEXICAN AUTHORITIES RAID NIGHTCLUBS

Nearly a dozen Mexico City nightclubs were raided by police last month, according to IFPI, for playing music without authorization from rights holders. Acting on tips from Mexican music licensing agency Somexfon, police and representatives of the Mexican attorney general's office carried out the raids between Nov. 7 and Nov. 21. The raids targeted nightclub owners and DJs who played pirated CDs with violation notices.

>>>BONNAROO SETS DATES FOR 2009

The eighth Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival will be held June 11-14, 2009, on its usual site in Manchester, Tenn., an hour southeast of Nashville. A lineup announcement is expected early next year. Last month, Bonnaroo won the top festival honor at the Billboard Touring Awards for the fourth time. The event's 2008 lineup featured Metallica, Pearl Jam, My Morning Jacket and Widespread Panic, among many others.

Compiled by Chris M. Walsh. Reporting by Ayala Ben-Yehuda, Antony Bruno, Jonathan Cohen, Andre Paine, Mitchell Peters, Reuters, Georg Szalai and Chris M. Walsh.

DIGITAL BY KAMAU HIGH

Tap Dancing

Popular iPhone Gaming App Moves Into Multi-Artist Editions

You've played the iPhone app. Now get the soundtrack.

EMI Music has become the first major label to line up multiple artists for an edition of Tapulous' popular iPhone game application Tap Tap Revenge.

The new version of the rhythm game, called Tap Tap Dance, features songs by five EMI acts—Moby, the Chemical Brothers, Digitalism, Daft Punk and Basement Jaxx—as well as independent acts Justice, Junkie XL, Soul Magic Orchestra and Morgan Page.

Tapulous will release all 10 tracks included in the game by the end of the year as a digital soundtrack that will be available exclusively through iTunes.

The Palo Alto, Calif., app developer is also in talks with other major labels and expects to launch another application with

multiple artists early next year, Tapulous CEO Bart Decrem says.

"We are close to having a formula that the artists, labels, publishers and Apple are all happy with," he says.

After Apple gets its 30% cut of Tap Tap Dance's \$4.99 sale price, that would leave about \$3.50 to be divvied up among Tapulous and the other parties.

The original Tap Tap Revenge, which is free, was the iTunes App Store's most popular game download of 2008.

Despite the involvement of EMI Music, the label says it will leave promotion of Tap Tap Dance to the artists involved, according to Cynthia Sexton, EMI Music executive VP of global brand partnership, licensing and synchronization. "We're talking to them about ways of letting their fan base



Button pushers: DAFT PUNK

know through existing social networks," she says.

While EMI's planned digital soundtrack for Tap Tap Dance would be a first for Tapulous, the company is also positioning the growing Tap Tap franchise itself as a way for fans to hear new music. Every Thursday, Tap Tap provides game users free song downloads and exclusive remixes from well-known acts, including Katy Perry, Kaiser Chiefs and Lady Antebellum.

Christmas With Weezer, another new edition of the Tap Tap game, includes covers of six classic Christmas songs including "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" and "Silent Night."

In an announcement on the band's Web site, Weezer said the tracks were "recorded exclusively for this game and are not available anywhere else." ■■■



MISS DERRINGER: ADAM WALLACAVAGE; DAFT PUNK: DAFT LIFE LTD.



TOURING BY MITCHELL PETERS

MUMBAI MOURNS

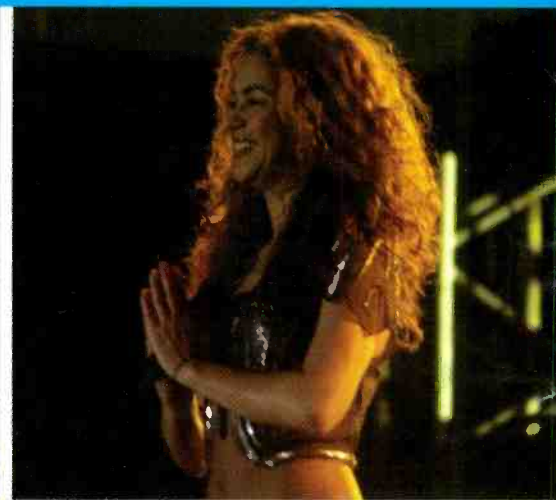
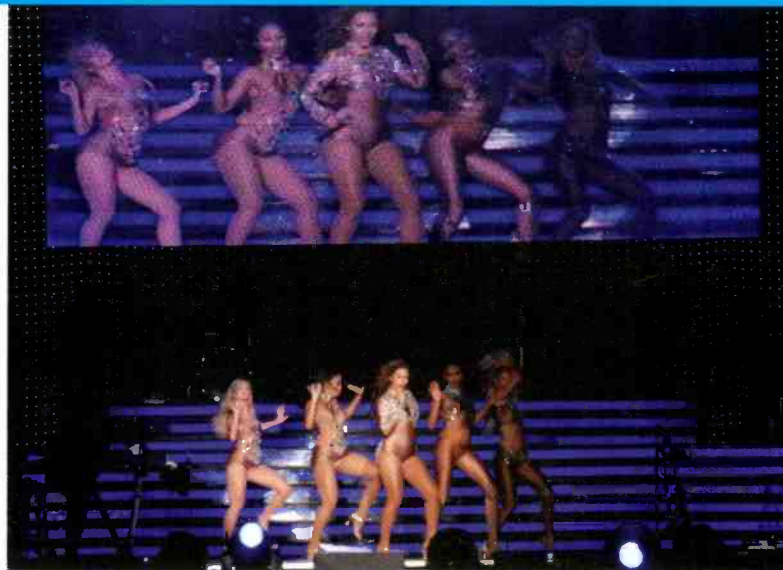
Fallout From Terror Attacks For India's Live Biz

At a time when some international recording artists are looking to include India in their Asian touring itineraries, the late November terrorist attacks in Mumbai could have a damaging impact on the country's emerging live entertainment business.

While India's touring market remains relatively small and is hampered by inadequate infrastructure, a growing number of Western recording stars have performed there in recent years, including Beyoncé, 50 Cent, Wyclef Jean, the Rolling Stones, Shakira, Aerosmith, Lionel Richie and Iron Maiden.

"The tragic events in Mumbai will have a huge impact on the decision of artists touring in India in general," Agency Group CEO Neil Warnock says. "This is such a shame, as we have seen the touring business in India becoming more viable over the last several years."

One immediate casualty of the attacks was the Dec. 7 Live Earth India concert, which organizers canceled after gunmen killed 171 people during a three-day siege at two hotels and other landmarks in Mumbai, India's entertainment and financial cap-



Live nation: 50 CENT, BEYONCÉ, and SHAKIRA (from left) were among the artists who toured Mumbai in 2007.

ital. Live Earth India was to be held at Mumbai's 20,000-capacity Andheri Sports Complex featuring Bon Jovi, Roger Waters, Will.i.am of the Black Eyed Peas, Bollywood actor Abhishek Bachchan and others.

Large concerts in India are typically held in stadiums, with the top markets being Mumbai and Bangalore. Since many shows are held outdoors, the recent terror attacks could raise the question of crowd control and safety.

"They don't have arenas like we have, where you can control the ingress and egress," AEG Live CEO Randy Phillips says. "The question is the confidence level that you have in the [security company] you're hiring, and whether they can do the job and secure the site."

Warnock says he hopes the Indian government will introduce new security measures at concert venues, noting that such steps would "reassure not only the local people but also the international touring community that coming back to India can be achieved in a safe and secure way."

India has about four primary concert promotion companies and a number of up-and-coming promoters trying to tap into the business, according to a booking agent at an international talent firm who asked to remain anonymous.

"Agents and managers will take a step back and want to work with those who have a more proven track record, which unfortunately, in my opinion, may hurt some of the younger guys who are starting to do a good job," the agent says. "But we want

to be careful who we're working with."

While safety is a concern, touring acts shouldn't rule out the country, the agent says. Artist fees to perform in India are comparable to other markets in Asia, but since promoters can't charge high ticket prices, most concerts in the country are sponsored, he says. As such, acts can see additional dollars from endorsement opportunities, albeit offset in part by high entertainment taxes.

"They're starting to sell albums in India more than they used to, so there's a new awareness of Western artists," the agent says, noting that A-list acts sell between 10,000 and 30,000 tickets per show. "If you start closing your eyes to opportunities in the outside world, you're going to cut yourself off."

Amita Sarkar, head of the entertainment division at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi, says she believes India's touring business will recover quickly, buoyed by a growing middle class interested in new entertainment options.

"It is still an emerging sector within the overall context," she says. "But of course, it has huge potential."

AEG's Phillips agrees that the Indian market holds promise. "Time has a way of healing all wounds and changing people's perspective on things," he says. "As a company, we wouldn't mind opening up a market that is potentially that big."

Additional reporting by Andre Paine in London.

6 QUESTIONS

With **BETSY McLAUGHLIN**
by **KAMAU HIGH**

Music doesn't account for a large portion of Hot Topic's overall business.

In fact, CEO Betsy McLaughlin says, music CDs and DVDs are only "a single-digit part of what we sell."

Still, the teen apparel and lifestyle retailer has made judicious use of marketing partnerships with record labels and film studios to drive traffic to its stores—and, yes, to sell the occasional CD.

In October, Hot Topic expanded its music retail operations with the launch of a new digital storefront called Shockhound.com, which sells music downloads and licensed merchandise and incorporates social-networking features throughout the site.

In an interview, McLaughlin talks about Hot Topic's approach to music retailing.

1 Some retailers have announced plans to cut back on the amount of floor space devoted to music. Is Hot Topic planning a similar move?

No. We are experiencing double-digit increases in [sales of] CDs. We have more market share because so many of the record stores are going out of business. Last summer we repositioned the inventory to be about small

bands. We want only 20-25 of the [albums] we sell to be really big bands and the rest to be small, regional bands, the kinds of bands people want to support and are willing to pay for a CD.

2 Wal-Mart, Best Buy and Target continue to score exclusive album releases for big-name artists. Does Hot Topic have any interest in vying



for album exclusives as well?

It depends. They are paying a lot of money to secure those album releases. We are more interested in small and medium artists than in paying millions in upfront money to larger artists.

3 Hot Topic worked closely with Atlantic and Summit Entertainment to promote the "Twilight" soundtrack, with themed window displays and even a line of "Twilight" apparel. How did that deal come about?

We have a license business as well as a music business. Whether it's "The Dark Knight" or "The Nightmare Before Christmas" or "Iron Man" or the upcoming "Punisher: War Zone" and

"Watchmen," we have this history of doing licensed properties.

Summit, which has the rights to the movie, was looking for a retail partner and they approached us. At the time we had no idea Paramore was going to do the title track. As the soundtrack came together we started to realize a good portion of the music in it was applicable to Hot Topic. When the soundtrack was released we were a natural place to put it.

When we placed our order, Atlantic may have been a bit shocked. We actually took our numbers up after we saw presales. We had more people show up for "Twilight" listening parties and presales than we had ever before. Our initial order was for 15,000 units. Then it went to 30,000 and finally up to 50,000.

4 What will be the next "Twilight"? I don't know. We're still working on "Twilight" and they have maybe three more movies. Harry Potter will be interesting. "Twilight" is one of those licenses that comes along once a decade.

5 Why start another Web site devoted to selling music and merchandise?

The initial plan was to incorporate the digital music piece into hottopic.com. As we started to scope it out, we realized how much opportunity there was for not just rock but other genres. At the time we started planning the site [about a year ago] there were sites selling only music or only with editorial [content]. There weren't many social-media sites combining merch with music. We have 3 million tracks in all genres. No longer are teens just interested in only one genre of music. They're not just listening to rock but their father's rock or jazz because it's an inspiration to their favorite artist.

6 Who is the Shockhound consumer? I ask because on the Top Artists page recently, the No. 1 pick was Pink and No. 2 was Dean Martin.

One of the things we're seeing is we're getting a wide variety of customers. Less than 50% of people's profiles on Shockhound say that rock is their favorite genre. It spreads out to pop, hip-hop, electronica and jazz. I'm not sure how Dean Martin got up there. Pink doesn't surprise me, and country artists have made it to the top five. I'm hoping Tom Jones will hit the top five.

Alan Gordon, 64

Alan Gordon, 64, who co-wrote the Turtles' "Happy Together," Three Dog Night's "Celebrate" and other hits, died Nov. 22 of cancer at his home in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Spanning the length of his career, the Natick, Mass., native wrote songs that went on to be performed by an eclectic mix of top musical acts, including Bobby Darin, the Righteous Brothers, Barbra Streisand, Alice Cooper, Joe Walsh and Frank Zappa.

He remained perhaps best-known for the hits he co-wrote for the Turtles with longtime collaborator Garry Bonner, including the 1967 No. 1 "Happy Together," as well as the top 20 hits "She'd Rather Be With Me," "You Know What I Mean" and "She's My Girl."

"We in the music business were so lucky to know such a person, a real man of such joy and greatness," Bonner said in a statement.

"He was a wonderful guy," says Charles Koppelman, Gordon's longtime music pub-



lisher. "Both Alan and his songs will live forever in everyone's hearts and minds."

Gordon is survived by his wife, Annette; his son, Christian; his daughter-in-law, Giovanna; and his grandson, Joshua.

—Jaclyn Albert

DEATHS

Rob Partridge, 60, the veteran music publicist who helped persuade Island Records to sign U2, died Nov. 26 in London following a lengthy battle with cancer.

Partridge was the founder/owner of London-based music PR and artist management company Coalition Group.

A hugely popular and respected figure within the U.K. music business, Partridge began his industry career as a journalist for the British trade publication Music Week

before joining the now-defunct weekly music magazine Melody Maker in the mid-'70s.

He became the head of press at Island in 1977, joining the company's board as media director four years later. In that role, Partridge was responsible for a roster that included Bob Marley & the Wailers, with whom he worked until Marley's death in 1981. Partridge subsequently handled press for the Bob Marley Estate until 1997.

Other acts with whom he worked closely at Island included U2, Grace Jones, Kid Creole & the Coconuts, Run-D.M.C., N.W.A, Lee "Scratch" Perry, Robert Palmer, Steve Winwood, the B-52s and Tom Waits.

"Rob Partridge was the first person in the British music industry to sing our praises," U2 frontman Bono said in a statement on the band's Web site. "He not only had an eye for talent, he was a nurturer."

Partridge exited Island in 1990 to launch the PR agency Partridge & Storey with his business partner Neil Storey in early 1991. The company became Coalition PR when Storey departed in 1996. Current acts on its roster include Waits, Marianne Faithfull, Amadou &

Miriam, Manu Chao, Billy Bragg, the Charlatans and Daniel Lanois. The company has also enjoyed lengthy relationships with retailer HMV and the Mercury Music Prize.

In 1999, Partridge launched Coalition Management, which has a client list that includes the Music, the Streets, the Zutons, the View, Bloc Party, Embrace and Fionn Regan.

Partridge is survived by his wife, Tina.

—Tom Ferguson

Danny Yarbrough, 64, the former head of Sony Music Distribution, died in his sleep Nov. 3 in Savannah, Ga.

Yarbrough was known for his business acumen and for playing a leading role in helping modernize the music industry's sales and distribution practices.

He joined CBS Records in 1965 as a sales representative in the company's Southeast branch in Atlanta. In 1975, he was named field sales manager for the New York branch and a year later became branch manager of that complex. In 1979, he was appointed branch manager of the company's Southwest office in Dallas and then moved back to New York in 1987 as VP of sales for Columbia Records. In 1989, he returned to distribution as senior VP of sales and distribution.

Yarbrough was named president of Sony Music Distribution in May 1994 and became chairman in 1998, replacing Paul Smith. After leaving Sony in 2003, he joined Musicland, staying there for a year before becoming an industry consultant.

Yarbrough is survived by his wife, Mary Ellen.

Remembrance donations may be made in his name to the Bethesda Home for Boys at 9520 Ferguson Ave., Savannah, GA 31406 and the T.J. Martell Foundation, 555 Madison Ave, Third Floor, New York, NY 10022.

—Ed Christman

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"APPRECIATION FOR YOUR SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES WORLDWIDE AND YOUR SONGS IN THE WORLD ALBUM VOICES UNITE FOR UNHCR." UNITED NATIONS (UNHCR)

"MUSIC PRESENTED AT LIVE NEUROLAB MISSION LAUNCH AT CAPE CANAVERAL." NASA - SHUTTLE COLUMBIA

"WORLD CLASS ACT, HER TRUE PERSONA IS FANTASTIC. FIVE MEDALS OF EXCELLENCE." USA - NATO FORCES

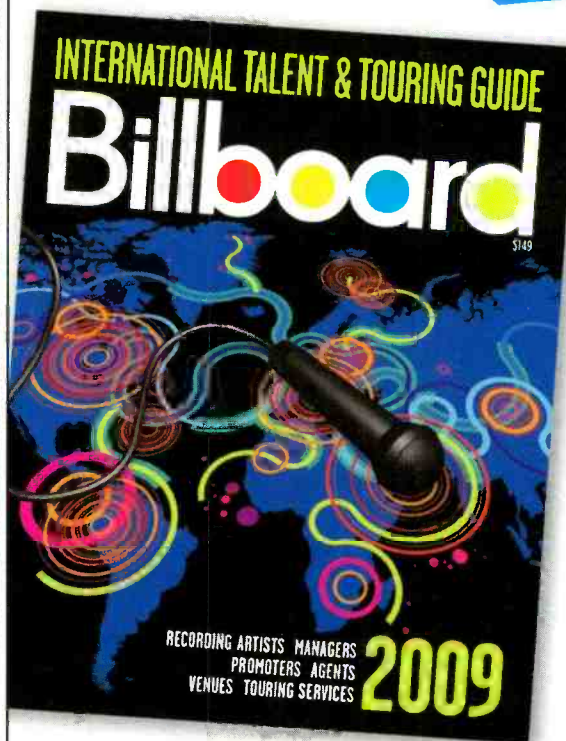
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Happy Holidays?

Indie Retailers Believe They'll Survive The Season

By all rights, indie record store owners should be chasing Prozac with shots of gin.

After all, analysts were predicting that Nov. 28 would be the Blackest Friday of them all (Billboard, Dec. 6).

True, the numbers weren't good. But some of the retailers I spoke to are cautiously optimistic.

Part of this may be due to the fact that indies traditionally see stronger sales closer to Christmas. "Black Friday has not been a big dynamic here," says **Todd Robinson**, president of the Indianapolis store Luna. "For us, it is closer to the holiday—when people start getting their lists together and stock at chain locations starts to dwindle—that we get super busy."

"Our biggest sales will come the week before Christmas," adds **Jim McGuinn**, owner of Hot Poop in Walla Walla, Wash.

Let's hope he's right. Black Friday's numbers were bleak, to say the least. New releases from **Kanye West** and **Guns N' Roses** underperformed, with the former moving 450,000 copies and the latter selling 261,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The overall decline was 0.7%, with 12.15 million albums sold total, down from 12.24 million for the same week last year.

But even the prospect of Christmas cheer isn't enough to soothe others.

"We're hopeful, but in the end we can't be too sure," says **Ruben Mendez**, a buyer at Seattle's Sonic Boom Records. "New CD sales aren't what they used to be, and I don't really know what's going to be the must-have gift for this Christmas. We've



For the record: Sonic Boom (left) and Hot Poop

been doing well selling vinyl and record players, but now nontraditional stores are also starting to carry them."

While Mendez is worried that bigger stores take his sales, other retailers happily report seeing the opposite.

"We have more people traveling to the store now from other parts of Long Island," says **Karl Groeger**, owner of Looney Tunes in West Babylon, N.Y. "I've always believed that this business is about the Long Tail, and as Best Buy and Wal-Mart continue to cut space, more people are coming to us for music. We stock a lot of deep catalog and price it all at \$13.99, and people have really responded to that."

Dennis Callaci, head buyer at Mad Platter Records in Riverside, Calif., adds that he expects catalog to help keep the store open. "We don't really have the hits, but we have a great base of collectors who'll keep coming in," he says. "Even though we're located in a college town, I'm always shocked when I see a college kid coming in to buy a CD."

Other stores say that an older client base is likely to take them through the season.

"Thank God working adults don't know how to download



Marsalis and Willie Nelson.

Appealing to purists also seems to work for **John Henderson**, the head buyer at Vintage Vinyl in St. Louis. "Vinyl is showing large gains, and CD sales have been slightly up for the year. We have seen increases in overall sales every month this year," he says.

But not everyone has been this lucky, and there are a few who think their stockings will be filled with coal.

"There is some truth to the theory that CDs will die off soon, and all the indicators are bad for our business," says **Rand Foster**, owner of Fingerprints in Long Beach, Calif. "Unfortunately, the record industry has convinced people they shouldn't want the core product. I'm trying to stay positive, but it's not always easy."

.biz For 24/7 indie news and analysis, see billboard.biz/indies.

DIGITAL BY ANTONY BRUNO

FIND THE SOURCE

Leaks infuriate managers and artists, because they usually occur after an album has been delivered to the label. The culprit is often someone in the production chain who's gone rogue or an A&R rep trusting the wrong person with an advance copy. So the label needs to take every step possible to determine where the leak occurred and take action against who is responsible. "You can't unring the bell," Gartner analyst Mike McGuire says. "But if it is an internal leak, then somebody needs to be punished."

STOP THE BLEEDING

Once the leak has sprung, it's almost impossible to stop it from spreading. But targeting the top online sources of leaked material can pay dividends by at least stemming the flow long enough for the release to be distributed through legitimate channels. Make sure you've updated the audio fingerprinting of partners who use them to filter out unwanted content. Contact the MP3 bloggers with whom you have relationships. And send takedown notices or cease-and-desist letters when necessary. "The strategy is one of containment," BigChampagne CEO Eric Garland says. "Chase everybody everywhere with your legal eagles and have the Internet

FIXING A HOLE

Five Tips On How To Respond To An Album Leak

When an album leaks online before it arrives in stores, it can be a real punch in the gut. New releases from Guns N' Roses, Metallica and AC/DC have all found their way onto peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing networks weeks before their release, proving that even the most closely guarded projects are vulnerable. But it's not the end of the world. After angrily beating your head against the wall, there are several measures you can implement to mitigate the damage. Here are five recommendations not intended for artists or managers who deliberately leak their own material.

scrubbed clean. It's got to be a coordinated, rapid response."

COMMUNICATE WITH FANS

In cases where the leaked album is not the final version, artists and labels should get the word out to fans that what's available online is not the finished product. The goal is to convince them to wait for the final, official version by promising better sound quality or other bonuses. Be specific about how the official version of the album will be different from what's been leaked and provide a firm date for the authorized re-

lease. "Make sure you're clear on when it is going to be done and give people that," McGuire says. "Managing the PR is about setting expectations."

RUSH THE RELEASE

Skip all the marketing plans and just get the album into stores or make it available through authorized channels as soon as possible. This serves two purposes: it responds to the increased demand that a leaked album creates for the final product and takes advantage of the one positive aspect of a leak—marketing. Many industry observers say that P2P is

today's radio, and the buzz that a leaked track creates can often supplant the best-laid marketing plans—as long as the feedback is positive, of course. "We live in a word-of-mouth world, and the unfettered Internet is a platform for evaluation, promotion and marketing," Garland says. "It is hard for me to think of an instance where a marketing plan is more important than the immediate need to get out there with a legitimate offering." For added measure, package the authorized release with such exclusive, previously unreleased material as a new track or other bonus content to help differentiate it from the leaked version.

PRE-EMPTIVE MEASURES

One of the best ways to insulate yourself from an Internet leak is by taking action well in advance. Letting fans pre-order the album is one good solution, since it locks in sales before any potential leak. Another is building buzz by posting streaming-only singles when appropriate or taking advantage of programs like iTunes' Complete My Album feature to sell songs from an album before its release. "Establishing a transaction and an implicit social contract is one of the ways you remove incentive to find leaked material," McGuire says.

BILLBOARD EXCLUSIVE

Priced To Rock

Buckcherry, Avenged Sevenfold Extend Tour

Nothing screams holiday spirit like a Buckcherry/Avenged Sevenfold tour.

So here's some news to spread yuletide cheer: On the Road can reveal that these hard rock co-headliners have decided to extend their tour with a second leg set to begin Jan. 28 in Albuquerque, N.M. Joining them on the bill will be Papa Roach and Saving Abel.

Buckcherry/Avenged had been kicking tail in secondary markets this fall, and the upcoming tour will add major markets and more secondaries.

The four-band bill is priced to sell, with tickets less than \$40.

"The idea was to take four acts that could tour alone and put them together for \$40 or less to be able to let people hear three-and-a-half hours of music and experience some up-and-coming acts," says Allen Kovac, CEO of 10th Street Entertainment, which manages Buckcherry and Papa Roach. "You're talking about a demo that seems to be 15 to 25 [years old], and their disposable income right now is a lot less than it was before."

Tickets go on sale Dec. 15, and the price tag will ensure they'll be under the Christmas trees of many a headbanger.

Kovac says the original proponents of the pricing and packaging strategy were TKO agency head Dave Kirby and TKO agent Andrew Goodfriend, who represents Buckcherry. Goodfriend also worked on the tour with Ryan Harlacher at Pinnacle Entertainment Group, which represents Avenged Sevenfold.

"As long as we keep the packages smart and the ticket prices reasonable, I think people are going to keep coming out," Goodfriend says.

The first leg of the Buckcherry/Avenged package began in the fall, with dates "slam-dunks," according to Goodfriend. That leg, with Shinedown in the Papa Roach slot, played in the Midwest and South and wrapped Dec. 3 in Orlando, Fla. The upcoming leg will be majors and some secondaries in the Southwest, Northwest and Midwest. "We're following the same model: keep ticket prices low, lots of underground marketing with 10th Street, keeping it tight," Goodfriend says. "We've been really careful and it has worked."

Kovac points out that fans of these acts don't wait for warm weather concerts. "We've found that rock is a 365-day sport in secondaries, tertiaries and major markets," he says. "And when you start getting into the tertiary markets, rock is still king."

Radio will be a key element in 10th Street's tour marketing, Kovac says.

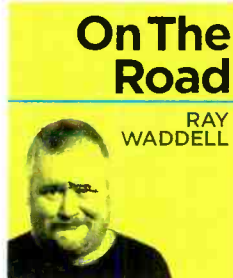
"A lot of what we're doing is making sure we have different bands on different for-

mats," he says. "Saving Abel is focusing on AC and pop, while Avenged works alternative and Buckcherry's working active rock. And because Buckcherry has had some success with hot AC and pop, we're using the new track to really make sure that audience knows they're coming to town as well. Papa Roach will focus on the alternative side. It's really a four-format tour; it's not an active rock or alternative tour."

The tour is working with Ticketmaster and venues to

keep service charges and facility fees as low as possible, Kovac says. "To make a tour like this happen it takes cooperation from the agents' and managers' and artists' perspective," he says. "If you're going to have four acts, that means less money in guarantees for each act. But if it succeeds, there's more money on the back end. I think this shows you can sit down and take a responsible guarantee without compromising the opportunity to have four acts."

Buckcherry and Avenged could have asked for higher guarantees, Kovac says, "but they wouldn't have been able to take these other acts out with them. By taking these other bands out, they will more than



On The Road

RAY WADDELL



Hair today: BUCKCHERRY

make up the loss in guarantees. And when you're doing 6,000- to 10,000- [capacity venues] as opposed to 2,000, that tends to make itself up in many, many areas."

Larry Frank at Milwaukee-based Frank Productions will promote the bulk of the dates. The 10th Street team includes Josh Klemme, who handles day-to-day on Buckcherry; Brad Freiss, head of tour marketing; and Phillip Kovac, head of the 10th Street touring department. Larry Jacobson manages Avenged Sevenfold.

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

BOXSCORE Concert Grosses

	GROSS/ TICKET PRICE(S)	ARTIST(S) Venue, Date	Attendance Capacity	Promoter
1	\$6,137,030 \$350/\$55	MADONNA, PAUL OAKENFOLD Dolphin Stadium, Miami, Nov. 26	47,998 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring
2	\$5,170,100 \$350/\$55	MADONNA Minute Maid Park, Houston, Nov. 16	41,498 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring
3	\$3,231,000 \$350/\$50	MADONNA Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City, N.J., Nov. 22	13,293 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring, Caesars Atlantic City
4	\$2,632,952 \$552/\$57	MADONNA Phillips Arena, Atlanta, Nov. 24	14,843 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring
5	\$2,443,078 (31,209,478 pesos) \$101.76/\$15.66	ALEJANDRO FERNÁNDEZ Auditorio Nacional, Mexico City, Nov. 3, 5, 8-9, 11-12, 14	65,701 66,955 seven shows	CIE
6	\$2,395,900 \$350/\$25	MADONNA Ford Field, Detroit, Nov. 18	30,119 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring
7	\$2,318,530 \$350/\$55	MADONNA Wachovia Center, Philadelphia, Nov. 20	13,790 sellout	Live Nation Global Touring
8	\$841,979 \$75.50/\$55.50	METALLICA, DOWN, THE SWORD Jobing.com Arena, Glendale, Ariz., Oct. 21	16,008 sellout	Frank Productions
9	\$790,483 (\$979,145 Canadian) \$141.28/\$36.33	NEIL YOUNG, EVEREST, WILCO Bell Centre, Montreal, Dec. 1	10,123 sellout	Gillett Entertainment Group, Live Nation
10	\$757,050 \$75/\$55	METALLICA, DOWN, THE SWORD New Orleans Arena, New Orleans, Nov. 23	13,313 15,600	Beaver Productions
11	\$752,139 (\$929,668 Canadian) \$202.26/\$40.45	NEIL YOUNG, EVEREST, WILCO Metro Centre, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Nov. 29	10,272 sellout	Gillett Entertainment Group, Live Nation
12	\$719,720 \$47.50	WIDESPREAD PANIC Lakefront Arena, New Orleans, Oct. 31-Nov. 1	15,411 two sellouts	Live Nation, in-house
13	\$709,660 \$75.50/\$55.50	METALLICA, DOWN, THE SWORD Tingley Coliseum, Albuquerque, N.M., Oct. 23	10,946 sellout	Frank Productions
14	\$656,700 \$75/\$55	METALLICA, DOWN, THE SWORD Alltel Arena, North Little Rock, Ark., Nov. 22	11,708 13,600	Beaver Productions
15	\$479,239 (\$539,260 Canadian) \$48.39/\$36.39	JAMES BLUNT Bell Centre, Montreal, Nov. 28	9,960 11,320	Gillett Entertainment Group, Live Nation
16	\$462,885 \$75/\$60	ALAN JACKSON, TRACE ADKINS, JAMES OTTO Citizens Business Bank Arena, Ontario, Calif., Nov. 23	6,889 7,243	Goldenvoice/AEG Live
17	\$445,759 \$150/\$59.50	MAXWELL, JAZMINE SULLIVAN Verizon Wireless Theater, Houston, Nov. 6-7	5,749 two sellouts	Live Nation
18	\$436,971 (\$539,570 Canadian) \$101.23/\$60.33	SARAH BRIGHTMAN Bell Centre, Montreal, Nov. 26	5,816 6,850	Gillett Entertainment Group, Live Nation
19	\$420,371 \$175.50/\$59.50	MAXWELL, JAZMINE SULLIVAN Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles, Nov. 1	5,554 6,239	Live Nation
20	\$397,304 \$75.50/\$37.50	SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE TOUR Nassau Coliseum, Uniondale, N.Y., Nov. 5	8,064 8,500	AEG Live
21	\$395,029 \$49.50/\$22.25	BRAD PAISLEY, JEWEL, CHUCK WICKS Verizon Wireless Amphitheater, Selma, Texas, Oct. 18	9,907 19,328	Live Nation
22	\$393,515 (\$508,503 Canadian) \$61.52/\$35.21	BOB DYLAN Rexall Place, Edmonton, Alberta, Oct. 29	8,322 9,800	Live Nation
23	\$393,397 (5,133,047 pesos) \$40.44	ANDRÉS CALAMARO Auditorio Nacional, Mexico City, Oct. 13	9,721 sellout	CIE
24	\$388,905 \$244.75/\$33.75	MARY J. BLIGE, ROBIN THICKE, DAVE YOUNG Sleep Train Pavillon, Concord, Calif., Oct. 18	6,447 7,807	Live Nation, Bay Area Productions, Haymon Entertainment
25	\$386,890 \$250/\$50	TRUC TIEP THU HINH V-60 Terrace Theatre, Long Beach, Calif., Nov. 8	4,850 4,818 two shows one sellout	Asla Entertainment
26	\$383,555 \$85/\$45	SMASHING PUMPKINS United Palace, New York, Nov. 6-7	6,586 two sellouts	Live Nation, in-house
27	\$379,847 \$67/\$52/\$42	JOHN LEGEND, RAPHAEL SAADIO Chicago Theatre, Chicago, Nov. 20-21	6,506 two sellouts	Jam Productions
28	\$377,070 \$53.50/\$18	TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA Colonial Life Arena, Columbia, S.C., Nov. 9	10,978 11,501 two shows	Live Nation, in-house
29	\$372,412 \$54.50/\$35	SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE TOUR St. Pete Times Forum, Tampa, Fla., Nov. 17	7,794 sellout	AEG Live
30	\$365,767 \$125.50/\$39.50	MAXWELL, JAZMINE SULLIVAN Paramount Theatre, Oakland, Calif., Oct. 28-29	5,102 two sellouts	Live Nation, Bay Area Productions
31	\$364,963 (4,730,565 pesos) \$37.80	COCA-COLA ZERO FEST: LOS FABULOSOS CADILLACS & OTHERS Parque Fundidora, Monterrey, Mexico, Nov. 8	15,121 25,000	CIE
32	\$364,706 \$55/\$35	CARRIE UNDERWOOD, LITTLE BIG TOWN Citizens Business Bank Arena, Ontario, Calif., Nov. 9	7,620 sellout	AEG Live
33	\$363,903 \$55/\$35	CARRIE UNDERWOOD, LITTLE BIG TOWN E Center, West Valley City, Utah, Nov. 19	7,585 sellout	AEG Live
34	\$363,073 (\$449,755 Canadian) \$48.03/\$39.96	JAMES BLUNT Colisée Pepsi, Quebec City, Nov. 30	7,571 8,420	Gillett Entertainment Group, Live Nation
35	\$362,409 \$54.50/\$37.50	SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE TOUR Arena at Gwinnett Center, Duluth, Ga., Nov. 13	7,302 7,433	AEG Live

New—Improved

In A Season Where Compilations Were Expected To Rule, Front-Line Releases Take Over

November was supposed to be the month of the compilation, the greatest-hits collection and the live album, with releases from **Ricky Martin**, **Cafe Tacvba** and **Chayanne** on offer.

Instead, the chart week ending Nov. 23—pre-Thanksgiving weekend—ended up being one with surprisingly good performances from front-line Latin releases.

“**[Ricardo Arjona]** happened,” says **Alberto Uribe**, the head buyer of the Ritmo Latino chain, referring to Arjona’s No. 1 debut on Billboard’s Top Latin Albums chart of “5to Piso,” the Guatemalan singer/songwriter’s new album and his first on Warner.

Arjona, a top Latin artist, notched his best debut week, selling nearly 18,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The success was the result of a heavy marketing strategy from his new label, which aggressively discounted the album.

Beyond Arjona, we expected the week’s top 20 to include one or more of the numerous compilations and live albums that came out in the past two

weeks (including an Arjona collection on Sony BMG). None of these albums made it to the top 20, although sales of **Juanes’** 2007 studio set, “La Vida... Es Un Ratico,” climbed 31-10 on Top Latin Albums, thanks to the Nov. 18 release of a deluxe edition featuring bonus tracks.

All of this is actually good news for a Latin music marketplace that’s been relatively barren this year.

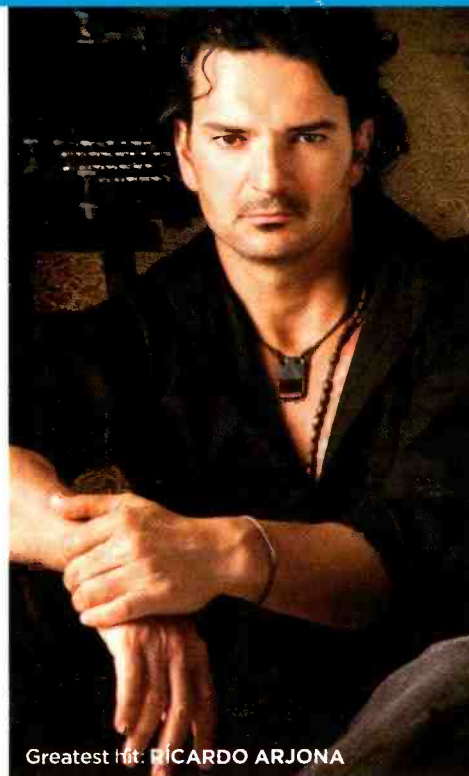
“People are saturated with compilations and live albums,” Uribe says.

“People want new music. They tell us so.”

This week, the charts told us so as well. With the exception of Juanes’ “La Vida,” every title in the top 10 of the Top Latin Albums chart was a front-line release, including brand-new albums from **Pesado**

(“Solo Contigo,” debuting at No. 4), **Los Tucanes de Tijuana** (“Propiedad Privada,” No. 6) and **Los Inquietos del Norte** (“La Borrachera,” No. 8).

All told, for the week ending Nov. 23, **Enrique Iglesias’** hits collection “95/08” was the only greatest-hits album in the top 20 at No. 11. And that



Greatest hit: RICARDO ARJONA

set, which had been in the top 10 for 35 weeks, was boosted by two previously unreleased tracks that have benefited from heavy radio play.

By comparison, a year ago there were 10 compilations or live albums in the top 20. The following week, on the Dec. 1 chart, there were 11 such titles in the top 20.

“I’m relying less and less on compilations, because when people want a greatest hits, they download them and make their own,” Venevision VP of music **Jorge Pino** says. “Our audience wants fresh things. And as an independent, because I have limited catalog, I release my albums as

I get them, at the best possible time.”

This signals that, although late in the year, Latin labels may be once again gearing up for strong front-line efforts after a lukewarm 12 months.

Like Arjona, **Pesado** also had its biggest sales week. The group migrated to Disa after years on Warner and benefited from strong radio and TV marketing. And **Los Inquietos del Norte**, now released through the indie label **Venemusic** after years of delivering albums on its own label, also had record first-week sales.

“Quite honestly, compilations haven’t sold for a while, but it’s taken time for labels to realize that,” says **Rafy Nieves**, accounts manager for Puerto Rico-based distributor/retailer **Distribuidora Nacional**. Nieves specifically cites reggaetón, which thrived on compilations in years past. Now, the genre’s top-selling title is “Mente Maestra,” on which top duo **Wisín & Yandel** introduce their producer, **DJ Nesty**, and feature a series of guest artists.

“When people walk into our stores, they don’t ask for compilations,” Nieves says. “They ask, ‘What’s new?’”

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

Latin Notas

LEILA COBO



THE BILLBOARD Q&A?

After a five-year absence from the recording studio, Puerto Rican singer **Yolandita Monge** signed a deal with Univision Records and released “Demasiado Fuerte,” which went on to sell 34,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and debuted at No. 1 on Billboard’s Latin Pop Albums chart in June 2007.

Now Monge returns with her follow-up, “Mala” (Universal Music Latino), which debuts this week at No. 3 on the Top Latin Albums chart. A pop set that includes a duet with salsa star **Victor Manuelle**, “Mala” has a youthful energy that belies Monge’s veteran status and the title track is No. 31 on the Hot Latin Songs chart.

During a break from shooting a TV special in Puerto Rico, the Latin diva spoke about her longevity and hipness.

What’s your secret to remaining relevant?

It lies in love for the profession. I think artists never stop being artists, regardless of the passing of the years. But success depends on many external factors. Artists don’t retire because they want to. Many times the media loses interest because

an artist is a certain age. Many get tired because this is a hard life, very removed from luxury and glamour. In my case, I’m lucky to have a partner [**Carlos Mamery**, president of programming for Spanish Broadcasting System in Puerto Rico] who is also in the business. I’m thankful for this second



Puerto Rican pop: YOLANDITA MONGE

wind, where I’m able to bring good music and show that age has really little to do with quality. And I’m not only talking for myself, but for many artists who’ve had to retire. I’m 53 years old, and I say that openly. One should be proud of every stage in life, and I’m enjoying each of those stages.

You did quite well with your previous album, “Demasiado Fuerte,” which was more classic. This new one is far edgier and the single, “Mala,”

has a very urban-looking video.

I couldn’t release an album like “Mala” two years ago. At that point, I hadn’t recorded in five years, so we needed an appetizer of sorts to release this second stage, which is “Mala.” I hadn’t recorded because I had been working in television and in theater—I played roles in “Pedro Navaja” and “Master Class”—and the opportunity came up to record.

Does your background in TV and theater affect this album?

“Mala” is like a great film of 10 intertwined stories where, to go to the next chapter, you have to listen to the one before and the one before to tie everything together. They’re all very visual songs, and the notion is to have the listener feel like he’s listening to a song and also watching a video for the first time. —*Leila Cobo*

EN ESPAÑOL: All the great Latin music coverage you’ve come to expect from Billboard—in Spanish! Billboardenespanol.com.

EN BREVE

OKLAHOMA OK!

If you’re looking for a silver lining to this year’s 20% drop in Latin album sales, look no further than... Oklahoma? According to Nielsen SoundScan figures for the week ending Nov. 16, only three U.S. markets held stable as far as Latin album sales this year: Tulsa, Okla.; Oklahoma City; and Shreveport-Texarkana (a market that straddles the borders among Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas).

Tulsa’s sales grew 4.6% from the same week in 2007; Oklahoma City and Shreveport-Texarkana each grew about half a percent.

Carlos Alvarez, Central U.S. promotions rep for A.R.C. Discos, says regional Mexican consumers in particular have been migrating ever further into the heartland in search of jobs. Oklahoma “was a very vibrant Tejano market and on top of that is another regional Mexican market,” Alvarez says, noting that Oklahoma City alone is serviced by two FM regional Mexican stations and two major clubs.

‘PANDA’ CHOPS

Producer **Fingazz** (aka **John Stary**), who helped create hits for such Latin urban artists as **Lil Rob**, **Mr. Capone-e** and **Down** (“Lean Like a Cholo”), will write the theme song for **DreamWorks’** “Kung Fu Panda 2.” The producer, who has his sights set on film scoring, says the track approximates “I Like to Move It,” **Reel 2 Real’s** song that was remade for “Madagascar.” The Ontario, Calif.-based producer’s upcoming projects include **Epic** teen rapper **Meech**.

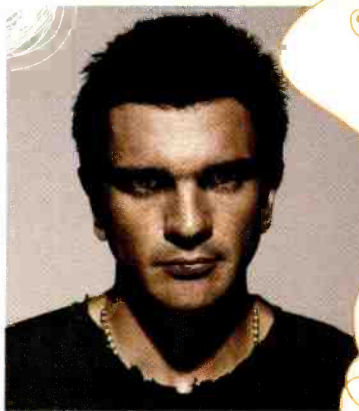
BROTHERLY LOVE

Following a promo blitz and a 3,500-person sellout in April at Mexico City’s **Vive Cuervo Salon**, **Jonas Brothers** are severely upping the ante in the city. **Live Nation** and **Ocesa** are bringing the trio to the capital’s **Foro Sol** Dec. 20 with a show capacity of nearly 40,000. About three-quarters of the tickets (ranging from about \$17 to \$134) have been sold. **Jonas Brothers’** “A Little Bit Longer” album has been certified gold in Mexico (40,000 copies), according to trade group **Amprofon**; the trio’s self-titled release is platinum (80,000). —*Ayala Ben-Yehuda*

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Juanes

Record of the Year, Album of the Year
Song of the Year, Best Male Pop Vocalist
Best Short Form Music Video

Latin MusicCare's
Person of the Year



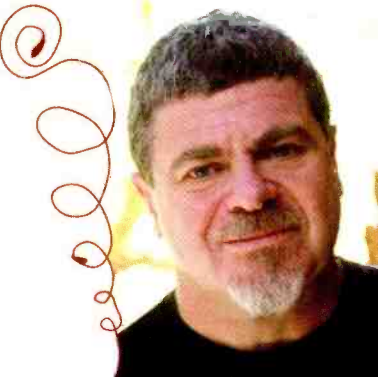
Gloria Estefan

Best Traditional Tropical Album
Best Tropical Song



Cafe Tacvba

Best Rock Song
Best Alternative Song



Gustavo Santaolalla

Record of the Year
Album of the Year



Anibal Kerpel

Record of the Year
Album of the Year



Julieta Venegas

(SGAE)

Best Alternative Music Album
Best Long Form Music Video



Emilio Estefan, Jr.

Best Tropical Song



Flex

Best Urban Song



Molotov

Best Rock Album
By a Duo or Group



Belanova

Best Pop Album
By a Duo or Group



Sergio George

Producer of the Year



Vince Norman

(Caribbean Jazz Project)
Best Latin Jazz Album



Aberto Gaitan

Best Tropical Song



Ricardo Gaitan

Best Tropical Song



Los Horoscopos

De Durango
Best Banda Album



Siggnó

Best Norteño Album

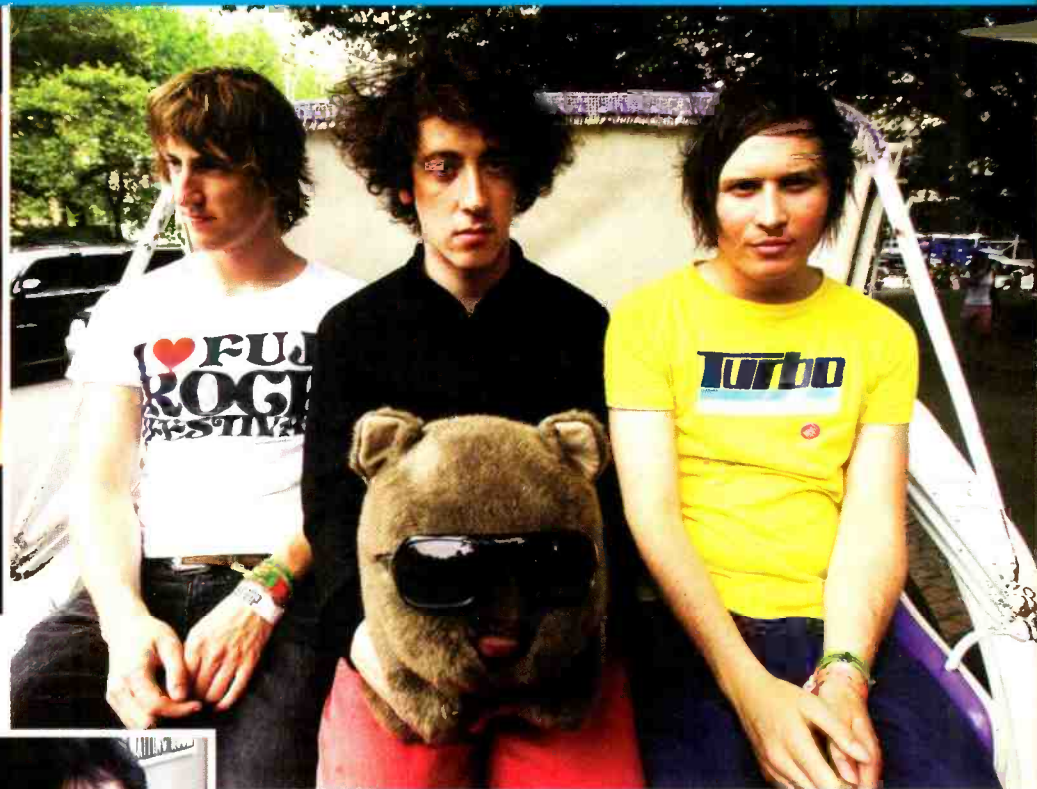


Wisn Y Yandel

Best Urban Music Album



Christmas presence: Alt-rockers (from left) GLASVEGAS and THE WOMBATS hope to follow in the footsteps of such veterans as SHAKIN' STEVENS (inset) this festive season.



GLOBAL BY PAUL SEXTON

'X FACTOR' STEALS XMAS

U.K. Biz Calls For More Christmas Hits

LONDON—As the festive season approaches, the best-selling Christmas songs of the past will probably have a yuletide chart encore. But missing from the holiday revelry will be much in the way of new Christmas-themed releases from mainstream pop acts.

Some of the blame rests with the enormously popular TV talent show "The X Factor," which for the fourth consecutive year will release its winner's debut single right before Christmas, effectively rendering the once-pitched battle for the season's No. 1 a one-horse race.

"The biggest artist in the world couldn't beat 'The X Factor,'" says Rupert Adams, a spokesman for bookmaker William Hill. "The stars steer clear, as it would be slightly embarrassing to be beaten by a performer that, in their view, is not a serious artist."

The fight for the No. 1 single at Christmas has long been a major sales driver and media attention grabber in the United Kingdom, with national press, broadcasters and bookmakers alike speculating on the likely winner of the race. In years past, rock and pop stars ranging from Slade and Mud to Wham and Shakin' Stevens vied for the holiday top spot by releasing Christmas songs.

But 2008 doesn't herald any seasonal releases from their present-day counterparts,

prompting retailers and radio programmers to grumble that labels are missing out by keeping their pop heavyweights from the Christmas party.

"They may be missing a trick in not trying to make more of the opportunity the Christmas singles market still represents," says John Hirst, rock/pop manager at market-leading retailer HMV. "I sense this year that the wider public and the media would be prepared to back a song that could challenge the dominance of 'X Factor.'"

Although none of their respective debut sin-

●●●●●
'Labels may be missing a trick in not trying to make the most of the opportunity the Christmas singles market still represents.'

—JOHN HIRST, HMV



gles carried a seasonal theme, "X Factor" winners have snared the Christmas No. 1 in each of the last three years. Leon Jackson was on top last year with "When You Believe" (Syco Music), Leona Lewis reigned in 2006 with "A Moment Like This" (Syco Music), and Shayne Ward ruled in 2005 with "That's My Goal" (Syco Music).

But while the TV show appears to have a tight grip on the peak of the yuletide chart, demand for Christmas-themed singles remains strong, bringing many previous favorites back to the charts.

The Official Charts Co.'s U.K. singles chart for the Christmas week of 2007 included 10 holiday songs in the top 40, of which only the Killers' "Don't Shoot Me Santa" (Vertigo) was a new recording. The chart also contained perennial favorites "A Fairytale of New York" (Warner Bros.) by the Pogues featuring Kirsty MacColl, which became a top 10 hit for the fourth time, and Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas" (Columbia), which revisited the top five a week earlier. This year, Carey and the Pogues appeared on the chart before the end of November.

The impending festivities have at least attracted new Christmas singles from popular alternative acts. The Wombats offer "Is This

Christmas" (14th Floor) while Glasvegas lifts "Please Come Back Home" (Columbia) from a mini-album of festive songs packaged as part of a limited edition of its self-titled debut album, which arrived in September.

"I knew a bit about the Slade song "Merry Xmas Everybody" and wanted to create an alternative to that," Glasvegas singer James Allan says. Wombats singer/guitarist Matthew Murphy adds: "It's a bit cheap and cheeky to release a Christmas single, but we're bringing it back to the people."

Still, neither is likely to beat the "X Factor" victor's single, which is due after the show's Dec. 13 finale. The strongest challenger is expected to be "Once Upon a Christmas Song" (Polydor) by transsexual singer Geraldine, aka comedian Peter Kay (Billboard, Nov. 1).

Geraldine's single will raise funds for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Polydor head of marketing Orla Lee describes it as "a bit of fun and a good cause—people actually want new Christmas songs."

Terry Underhill, head of music for commercial AC radio group GMG, agrees, saying, "If a new song captures the spirit of Christmas, we would definitely play it."

Shakin' Stevens, whose 1985 No. 1 "Merry Christmas Everyone" (Sony) reached No. 22 last year, says the industry should encourage the release of more Christmas songs.

"We have the classics," he says, "but we'd all welcome a few more."

HOLIDAYS IN SYNCH

A Guide To U.K. Christmas Ad Campaigns

LONDON—Yuletide cheer may be in short supply at record labels, but Christmas music still plays a big role in most U.K. retailers' TV ad campaigns.

This year some artists and stores are taking their relationship beyond

a synch deal. Rising Australian singer Gabriella Cilmi's version of Connie Francis' 1962 hit "Warm This Winter" appears in an ad for the supermarket chain the Co-operative, which is promoting the song on its Web site.

The supermarket giant Tesco has the U.K. showbiz vet Des O'Connor as the face of its campaign. O'Connor sings "The Christmas Song," while his album "Inspired" (Buzz Records) is available exclusively in Tesco stores.

In an unusual twist, Take That

is appearing in a Marks & Spencer ad soundtracked by Macy Gray's "Winter Wonderland," while its own song "Shine" has been used in ads for rival supermarket Morrisons.

But Universal Music U.K. chairman/CEO David Joseph, who helped broker the Marks & Spencer deal, says it was "a conscious decision" to not use the band's music in the ad.

"The ad is about the sentiment of Christmas, as opposed to a vehicle to promote new music," he

says. "The Morrisons campaign has been running for 18 months and it's working for everyone, so we decided to continue with it."

One of the most notable synch deals of the season was for a non-holiday song used in a TV ad for the department store chain John Lewis. The spot features a cover version of the Beatles' "From Me to You" performed by members of the John Lewis Music Society and marks the first use of a Beatles song in a U.K. campaign in five years, which is part of a re-

cent shift in approach by the Beatles publisher Sony/ATV Music Publishing (Billboard, Dec. 15, 2007).

For those seeking a further respite from Christmas music, there's M.C. Hammer's 1990 hit "U Can't Touch This" that's been wheeled out in a tongue-in-cheek campaign for the catalog shopping company Argos.

—Jen Wilson

Additional reporting by Mark Sutherland in London.

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GLOBAL BY ANDRE PAINE

Play On

Merry Christmas Ahead For U.K. Retailer Play.com

LONDON—At a time when the U.K. retail industry is reeling from the collapse of Woolworths (see story, page 19), online entertainment merchant Play.com is quietly anticipating its best Christmas yet.

Based on Jersey, the larger of the two main Channel Islands off of France's northern coast, Play generated the third-highest volume of Web site traffic among U.K. retailers in October, behind Amazon and shopping catalog merchant Argos, according to the measurement firm Hitwise.

Music is a key part of Play's product offerings. Counter to trends at most retailers, Play claims its CD sales are up sharply from last year. The company also launched its PlayDigital music download store this year, as well as a secondary ticketing business called Play.com Tickets in October.

Confident its core home entertainment business will overcome the global decline in CD sales, Play recently implemented its largest TV ad campaign yet.

"In the current climate, people look to the Internet as a value channel," co-founder/chairman Richard Goulding says.

Play, which launched in 1998, claims to have a registered customer base of 7 million, with about 5 million unique visitors in November. Although the privately held company doesn't publish annual sales figures, Goulding projects sales will climb to about £400 million (\$617 million) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2009. He didn't provide sales totals for the previous fiscal year.

CDs are a robust part of Play's sales mix. Although the company won't release sales data, Goulding says that "at this point, CD revenues have grown 30% year on year." That contrasts with U.K. market data from the Official Charts Co. showing an 8.7% year-to-date decline in CD unit sales through Nov. 25 from the same period last year. (Value figures weren't available.) The strong sales helped boost Play's U.K. album market share, which totaled 3.2% of value and 3.6% of units for the 52 weeks ending Oct. 12, up from full-year 2007, when its market share was 2.2% of both value and volume, according to the market research company TNS.

Play's CD prices—£8.95 (\$13.85) for most chart titles—are competitive rather than rock bottom. While mass merchants and some online retailers beat them on price, Goulding says Play prospers by pairing attractive pricing with strong customer support. Play co-founder/CEO Simon Perrée says the company enjoys good relationships with the major labels for cooperative marketing campaigns.

The company has been steadily expanding its other music offerings as well. In October, PlayDigital became one of the first

online U.K. music retailers to sell digital rights management-free music downloads from all four majors. PlayDigital, which launched in February with songs from EMI Music and independent labels, now has a catalog of 3 million titles that it sells for £0.65 (\$1) per track.

"They had to do it, because Amazon U.K. [was] going to be launching [downloads] at some point," says Ben Drury, CEO of the U.K. download store 7digital. Amazon U.K. eventually launched its MP3 service Dec. 2, claiming to offer more than 3 million DRM-free songs.

Also in October, Play entered the secondary ticketing market with its launch of Play.com Tickets. In addition, Goulding says the company is mulling a move into primary ticket sales. Graham Burns, chairman of the trade body Assn. of Secondary Ticket Agents, says Play's involvement signals that "secondary ticketing has entered the mainstream."

By being based in the Channel Islands, Play enjoys the political status of a British Crown Dependency but is not legally part of the United Kingdom or the European Union. That means it can ship products priced less than £18 (\$27.80) to customers within the EU without being subject to a sales tax, which is 15% in the United Kingdom. Many other online subsidiaries of U.K. retailers now base their operations in the Channel Islands as well.

Goulding and Perrée justify their Jersey base in simple terms. "We have both lived here since we were children," Goulding says. ●●●

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London.

PERRÉE (left) and GOULDING



Wings, clipped: PAUL McCARTNEY is among the artists reported to have shelved shows Down Under because of the Aussie dollar's slump.

GLOBAL BY LARS BRANDLE

DOWN UNDER'S DIVING DOLLAR

Aussie Currency Plunge Stings Tour Promoters

BRISBANE, Australia—The summer festival season is heating up Down Under, but a dramatic slump in the value of the Australian dollar has promoters sweating over bookings of

international talent.

After hitting a 25-year high of 98.49 U.S. cents in mid-July, the Australian dollar plummeted to about 64 U.S. cents at press time.

GLOBAL NEWSLINE

>>> EMAs BACK IN BERLIN

Berlin will host the 2009 MTV Europe Music Awards Nov. 5—the fourth time the ceremony has been staged in Germany since the inaugural EMAs took place in Berlin in 1994 and the first time a city has staged the EMAs twice. The 2009 show also marks the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. It will take place alongside the city's own program of commemorative events. The awards will be broadcast from two locations: the recently opened 17,000-seat O2 World Arena operated by AEG and the Brandenburg Gate. Both will feature artist performances. The 2008 EMAs were held in Liverpool, England, and broadcast in more than 40 countries. MTV Networks International says it received a total of 100 million votes online across all categories. —Andre Paine

>>> U.K. MUSICIANS PRESSURE PRIME MINISTER

A group of U.K. session musicians has deliv-

ered a video message to Prime Minister Gordon Brown, urging the government to support proposals to extend the copyright term for performers and record companies. The video, which can be viewed at uk.youtube.com/ppl-videos, was filmed at London's Abbey Road Studios and features 28 session musicians who have recorded with acts ranging from the Beatles to Madonna. It is the latest phase in an ongoing campaign spearheaded by the collecting society Phonographic Performance Ltd. to extend the copyright term from 50 years to 95 years. The European Parliament and the European Council of Ministers are debating a proposal to extend the term. But the U.K. government has not yet backed the proposed change. —Jen Wilson

>>> UNIVERSAL OPENS DELI

Universal Music Japan is adding a sixth domestic label to its roster of Japanese imprints when Delicious Deli Records debuts Jan. 1. Delicious will be part of the company's Universal International division and will develop Japanese acts that it can market over-

That's "causing quite a lot of problems for all promoters in Australia," says Vivian Lees, co-promoter of touring festival Big Day Out, which will be held Jan. 16-Feb. 1. "Such a rapid decline has meant everyone has been caught."

Sources say negotiations over Australian tours by Paul McCartney, Neil Diamond, Green Day, Madonna and Metallica have been shelved until the financial situation settles.

Some of those acts were expected to play Sydney's 21,000-capacity Acer Arena. "We've seen a couple of tours blow out," the venue's business development manager Don Elford says. "It probably has a lot to do with the dollar."

Promoters who agreed to pay acts in U.S. dollars during the Aussie currency's ascent have been badly stung. For example, if a promoter had agreed to pay an overseas act \$9 million U.S. for an Australian tour, paying half of that upfront and the remaining \$4.5 million when the act arrives. The second payment would now cost almost \$7 million Australian—rather than the \$4.6 million Australian it would have cost in mid-July. "We're all taking a battering," says Andrew McManus, managing director of Melbourne-based AMP.

The recent currency volatility follows two strong years for the Aussie live scene. Ticket revenue topped \$1.2 billion Australian (\$775 million U.S. at today's values) in 2007, up 6.1% from 2006, when revenue surged 38.8%, according to trade association Live Performance Australia. Non-classical music, musicals and theater were the top three cash-earners.

McManus wants local promoters to insist all fees are paid in Australian dollars. "That cushions the promoters and the acts share the risks," he says.

But many international touring acts demand payment in U.S. dollars and other promoters—

who wish to remain anonymous—suggest their peers need to nail down currency conversions at the time of negotiation. Billboard has learned of other promoters aggressively renegotiating reduced appearance fees in exchange for larger shares of merchandising sales.

While the Australian dollar's plunge is on the minds of promoters as they prepare for the summer festival season, some expect to fare just fine.

"We're lucky because we've got the weight of the festival to insulate us from that," Big Day Out co-promoter Lees says. "Only a fraction of our bands are paid in U.S. dollars."

Other fests could struggle if they lack marquee names or a "lifestyle" connection with the public, says Richard Moffat, manager of Melbourne-based music programming operation Way Over There, which represents the sold-out Falls Festival (Dec. 29-Jan. 1).

"Maybe the level of the dollar has made some people a bit too ambitious about the types of shows they put together," he says.

Other sources say established festivals are doing fine box-office business. "Bluesfest sales are exceptionally good," says Peter Noble, founder of the 17,500-capacity Byron Bay Bluesfest, which will celebrate its 20th anniversary April 9-13 with such headliners as Ben Harper and Michael Franti.

While few economists predict Australia's dollar to fly high again in the near future, many executives are optimistic the touring cycle will soon be on the upswing.

"I've got tours dropping out right now," Elford says. "But it'll only be for a minute. Then it'll be back on again." ●●●

Additional reporting by Christie Eliezer in Melbourne.

seas, identify Japanese artists outside of Japan who have the potential to reach a domestic audience and serve as a collaborative platform for Japanese and international acts. The name reflects "a wish to deliver fresh and attractive music which is created in a cross-cultural atmosphere," says Universal International managing director Kim-itaka Kato, who will head the new imprint. Delicious Deli joins UMJ's domestic artist label roster of Universal J, Nayuta Wave, Universal Sigma, Far Eastern Tribe and Milestone Crowds. —Rob Schwartz

>>>NEW AUSTRIAN SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

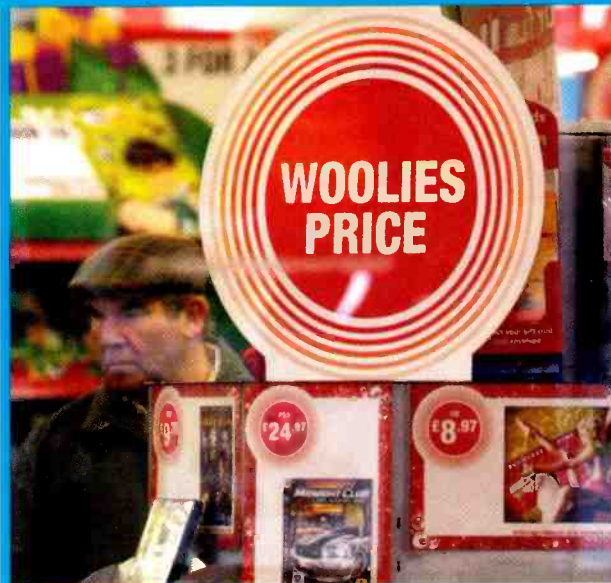
Mobile multimedia provider Hutchison 3G Austria has launched a music subscription service, MoreMusic, and an a la carte download store. The store (drei.at/music) has a catalog of more than 3.3 million audio tracks (in MP3 and WMA formats) and more than 60,000 WMA videos, with masterpieces to be added soon. Content comes from all four majors and various independent labels. Audio tracks are priced between €0.99 (\$1.28) and €1.29 (\$1.66), while video tracks are €1.99 (\$2.57). MoreMusic is available in weekly and monthly payment plans. Universal Music is the only major signed on for the subscription serv-

ice, along with selected indies. The weekly cost is €2.99 (£3.86), monthly is €10 (\$12.88). Digital entertainment provider 24-7 Entertainment powers the service. Hutchison 3G Austria is a subsidiary of Hong Kong-based Hutchison Whampoa. —JW

>>>AUSSIE VIBES FADING

Eclectic Australian label/distributor Creative Vibes is folding after nearly 15 years of operation. Founders Gordon Henderson, Peter Pasqual and Heidi Pasqual launched the Sydney-based independent label in January 1994. Early releases were jazz-related, including material from Japanese acid jazz acts Mondo Grosso and Kyoto Jazz Massive plus British "new jazz" group Down to the Bone. Creative Vibes built its licensed roster of international product while ramping up its A&R efforts to sign critically acclaimed domestic acts including Soup, Moonrock, Eon, Multiball and Jeff Dread. In a statement, the founders blamed the label's closing on competition from vertically integrated multinational companies and the recent decline in the Australian dollar. —Lars Brandle

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GLOBAL BY TOM FERGUSON and ANDRE PAINE

Winter woolies: A cold Christmas may be in store for Woolworths Group's 30,000 staffers.

were still missing. The titles finally began to arrive in Zavvi outlets later that day and the company confirmed it was "dealing direct with relevant suppliers." Zavvi also had to stop selling music, DVDs and games on its Web site and cancel some customer orders.

Despite the distribution problems, Take That still managed the biggest first-day sales of 2008, selling 133,000 copies of "The Circus" Dec. 1, according to the Official Charts Co. (see story, page 47). Spears' first-day sales of "Circus" totaled 24,288.

EUK's challenges have left record companies concerned about how to get stock into stores during the vital Christmas shopping period. One

'Circus' Games

Woolworths Woes Spark Retail Chaos

LONDON—Hot on the heels of U.S. retailers' Blackest Friday, their U.K. counterparts suffered a Blue Monday.

The collapse of mass merchant Woolworths and entertainment wholesale distributor EUK (billboard.biz, Nov. 27), both part of Woolworths Group, caused chaos on a much-anticipated sales week, with the Dec. 1 release of new albums by Take That and Britney Spears. Both companies are still operating but were placed in administration—broadly equivalent to U.S. Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection—Nov. 26.

If the short-term consequences were difficult to deal with, the long-term implications could prove even worse. In 2007, one-tenth of all albums sold in the United Kingdom were purchased at Woolworths' 820 stores, while outlets serviced by EUK accounted for 32.9% of all albums sold in the United Kingdom, according to the market research company TNS.

As music retailers opened for business Dec. 1, Spears' "Circus" (Jive/Sony BMG) and Take That's "The Circus" (Polydor/Universal) were conspicuously absent. Outlets that rely on EUK for entertainment stock include music specialist Zavvi; newsagent WH Smith; mass merchants Asda, Morrisons and Sainsbury's; and Woolworths itself.

A random Dec. 1 store check in London found that the Take That and Spears albums were missing from the racks at all EUK client stores apart from Asda. Some retailers turned to contingency plans or made other arrangements to get the albums.

The following morning, the efforts had at least partly paid off, with Take That's album available at Morrisons, Sainsbury's and WH Smith. However, in Woolworths and Zavvi, both albums

major-label source confirms that "all routes—direct and through other wholesalers" are being investigated to provide short- and medium-term solutions.

But retail sources suggest it is in the mass merchants' interests to see EUK remain in business. Since it launched as Record Merchandisers in 1966, EUK's role has been to simplify the supply chain for mass merchants reluctant to deal with a wide variety of suppliers. While EUK is in stasis, market-leading Tesco is the only mass merchant utilizing the one-stop option of a merchandiser to handle its entertainment supplies. Tesco was an EUK customer until March 2007, when it switched to the U.K. arm of the U.S. distribution giant Handleman. Tesco acquired Handleman's U.K. operations earlier this year.

The accounting firm Deloitte & Touche, which was appointed administrator of Woolworths and EUK, says there have been talks with several parties "interested in buying the Woolworths stores as a going concern." It also says that there is "strong interest" in EUK from "a number of prospective buyers."

Deloitte & Touche says it expects Woolworths stores will remain open past Christmas. Even if they don't, Entertainment Retailers Assn. director general Kim Bayley is confident few sales will be lost.

"If you took the worst-case scenario that there was no Woolworths anymore, the likelihood is at least half of that market, if not more, will move to other retailers," she says. "Woolworths is focused predominantly on chart-end product easily mopped up by supermarkets and specialist retailers. It will probably only be in those towns where Woolworths is the only option [for consumers] that it really does have an effect." ●●●

●●●
'If there was no Woolworths anymore, the likelihood is that at least half of that market will move to other retailers.'

—KIM BAYLEY, ENTERTAINMENT RETAILERS ASSN.

DIGITAL BY ANTONY BRUNO

Umpfrey's Biz Plan

Chicago Band Uses Digital Savvy To Goose Album Pre-Orders

After celebrating 11 years as a band, Umpfrey's McGee decided it's time to take its career to the next level.

The Chicago-based progressive jam band wants to take its nationwide base of loyal supporters into the mainstream and it's relying heavily on the Inauguration Day release (Jan. 20) of its upcoming album "Mantis" as the vehicle to achieve that goal. But it's the album's pre-order campaign that is capturing the attention of the music industry.

Album pre-orders are certainly nothing new, and many offer an incentive to buyers—a free download of the first single or access to early ticket sales for concerts. But few acts have gone to the lengths that Umpfrey's McGee has.

The group has a variety of content that it's making available to anyone buying the album through the pre-order campaign, including digital singles, rare live performances, behind-the-scenes video footage and photos. But in an innovative twist, the band is not releasing it all at once. Instead it's releasing tiers of content based on how many pre-orders are sold. Each time the number of pre-

orders reaches a certain threshold, a new tier of content is released. (There are nine tiers in all.) The idea is to engage diehard fans as evangelists who will convince their friends and family to pre-order "Mantis" so the next tier of content can become available.

So far, it's worked. According to band manager, Vincent Iwinski, Umpfrey's McGee has sold more than 2,400 pre-orders since it launched in late October, including a \$50 deluxe package that contains a bonus DVD and vinyl copy. That may not seem like a lot to mainstream acts, but it's twice the number of pre-orders that the band logged for its last album, 2006's "Safety in Numbers," according to Iwinski.

Already, Umpfrey's McGee has released six of the nine content tiers and had to raise the sales requirement for the remaining tiers to avoid running out of content too soon. "We're realizing that doing things the way we've done the last few years is not going to keep people's attention," Iwinski says. "What's important to us in this day and age is to give people a reason to buy one copy of the album in return for all this free stuff."

The campaign could serve as a template for how emerging and established acts alike



Tunes on tap: UMPFREY'S MCGEE

can kick-start interest in a new release. But it's not as if this idea came out of nowhere. For more than a decade, Umpfrey's McGee has built its fan base through the strategic use of free content and fan engagement.

The band, which plays some 120 live dates annually, sells out 4,000-capacity venues by charging a core group of eight to 15 fans in each market with the task of giving away free CDs. It then lets attendees freely tape shows; and it sells the sound board mixes for \$15 per CD after the concert or \$10 for a digital download available 72 hours after each gig. It sells upwards of 300 CDs per show and to date has moved 750,000-plus tracks online. It also has a podcast series that releases two 75-minute recordings of live material every month to more than 20,000 subscribers.

The demand that this has created among fans is such that the band began holding onto certain content rather than making it available immediately. Select shows were not available for taping or post-event purchase. Umpfrey's McGee also stopped performing some of its songs, particularly those to be included on "Mantis." This content, combined with tracks

from early out-of-print releases and 11 years of rarely seen photos and videos, is driving the demand for the presale.

"Because we're a band that has always recorded everything, taken photos of everything, used video as much as possible and doing that for such a long time, we have a lot of stuff," Iwinski says.

What's more, Umpfrey's McGee isn't frontloading all of this content into the presale. The CD will contain an electronic key that will give anyone buying it—presale or otherwise—access to a site where even more material will be released monthly for a year after the arrival of "Mantis."

The combined strategy has gotten the attention of several digital music experts, including Gartner analyst Mike McGuire, who cites the initiative as the perfect way to implement a pre-order campaign. While far better-known acts like Radiohead and Nine Inch Nails have raised the bar for generating interest in upcoming releases, Umpfrey's McGee has become an unlikely role model for a music industry still struggling with the conversion to digital distribution amid rampant piracy.

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

BITS & BRIEFS

UMG, MEEBO DEAL

Universal Music Group has agreed to license music videos to Meebo, a service that lets users watch the content and chat about them in real time. All videos will feature advertising, and the two companies will split the revenue. The initial acts participating in the program include Kanye West, Ludacris and the Killers, who will be featured on the Meebo home page. Those acts' Web sites will also have a Meebo widget that will let fans visit either the artist Web site or the Meebo home page to interact with each other while watching the videos.

SUBSCRIPTION BONUS

With holiday retail sales headed for another decline and digital sales growth expected to slow as well, mobile entertainment content service Dada Entertainment is slashing prices to boost its subscriber rolls. On Black Fri-

day, the company began offering new subscribers 50 bonus downloads of music, ringtones, wallpaper or games during their first month's normal allotment of 15 downloads. Subscriptions cost \$10 per month. Dada Entertainment is a joint venture between Italian Web and mobile services company Dada and Sony BMG.

SLACKER ON SONY

The Slacker personalized Internet radio service is now available through Sony Bravia TVs. The high-definition digital TV includes a service called the Bravia Internet Link, which provides access to a number of Internet-accessible content sites. Existing Slacker users can access their personalized stations in addition to 100-plus preprogrammed Slacker stations. The company says it will soon allow BlackBerry users to access their personalized stations as well.

HOT RINGMASTERS™ DEC 13 2008 Billboard

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART	TITLE	ORIGINAL ARTIST
1	1	17	#1 16 WKS WHATEVER YOU LIKE	T.I.
2	2	10	LIVE YOUR LIFE	T.I. FEATURING RIHANNA
3	3	7	CHOPPED 'N' SKREWED	T-PAIN FEATURING LUDACRIS
4	18	16	ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS YOU	MARIAH CAREY
5	4	9	RIGHT NOW (NA NA NA)	AKON
6	5	8	LOVE STORY	TAYLOR SWIFT
7	11	6	SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT)	BEYONCE
8	6	5	CHICKEN FRIED	ZAC BROWN BAND
9	7	8	LOVE LOCKDOWN	KANYE WEST
10	9	16	I'M YOURS	JASON MRAZ



T.I. celebrates a chart record 16th straight week in the pole position as "Whatever You Like" breaks a tie with Lil Wayne Featuring Static Major's "Lollipop." "Whatever" has shifted more than 1.4 million units in its 17-week chart run.

11	8	21	MRS. OFFICER	LIL WAYNE FEATURING BOBBY VALENTINO & KIDD KIDD
12	21	4	JUST DANCE	LADY GAGA FEATURING COLBY O'DONIS
13	12	19	CAN'T BELIEVE IT	T-PAIN FEATURING LIL WAYNE
14	10	6	IF I WERE A BOY	BEYONCE
15	14	16	MY LIFE	THE GAME FEATURING LIL WAYNE
16	13	13	SO WHAT	PINK
17	19	11	LET IT ROCK	KEVIN RUDDOLF FEATURING LIL WAYNE
18	15	20	PAPER PLANES	M.I.A.
19	16	25	ADDICTED	SAVING ABEL
20	17	6	GOTTA BE SOMEBODY	NICKELBACK

Based on master ringtones sales data reported by Nielsen RingScan, a service of Nielsen MobileScan. Chart endorsed by CTIA - The Wireless Association and Mobile Entertainment Forum.



NOISES OFF

When it comes to iPod headphones, there are usually just two choices: either the so-so earbuds that come with the device or a pricier upgraded pair. The Whoomp Earbud Enhancers from Hearing Components provide a third option—convert the factory-provided earbuds into noise-canceling headphones. The Earbud Enhancers are attachments made of plastic and foam that use a technology developed through funding from the National Institutes of Health to provide a custom fit and reduce the risk of hearing loss.

The Whoomp Earbud Enhancers are available now for \$20. —AB



MTV NETWORKS
SENIOR VP OF
ELECTRONIC
GAMES AND MUSIC

Paul DeGooyer

The frontman of the 'Rock Band' franchise talks about gaming's place in the music industry and why he had to practice playing 'Gimme Shelter.'



Walk into the MTV store adjacent to the network's Times Square headquarters, and you'll get an immediate sense of what's most important to the venerable music brand these days: "Rock Band 2."

There's the game system itself, related accessories, AC/DC merchandise—part of a partnership that gave "Rock Band" exclusive game rights to one of the band's live DVDs—even a demo area where customers can try out the game. In fact, the entire front half of the store is dedicated to "Rock Band 2."

And with good reason: the "Rock Band" franchise is on one hell of a roll. The original and the recently released sequel have sold close to 5 million units combined this year, according to the NPD Group. Consumers have bought and downloaded more than 26 million new songs for the franchise. And MTV just announced an exclusive deal with the Beatles to develop a game that will be released in time for the 2009 holiday season.

Within MTV, the "Rock Band" buck stops with the unassuming Paul DeGooyer. When he's not busy finalizing licensing deals for new music or demonstrating the game for music industry executives, DeGooyer strategizes about where the success of the "Rock Band" franchise can take MTV—and the music industry as a whole.

Sipping tea in a dimly lit office, clad in an untucked dress shirt and blue sneakers, DeGooyer shared his thoughts about music gaming with Billboard.

People always say that MTV doesn't really play music anymore. How does "Rock Band" address that?

Music has migrated to become somewhat of a lifestyle accessory for many and that may have been reflected on our channel, as people were acquiring music on the Web for free. "Rock Band" is a bit of an antidote to that, and for our channels it's a great adjunct, because even if you buy your music legitimately and listen to it on your iPod, chances are you're not sharing it with people. The whole communal sitting and listening to music thing is now confined to concert experiences, which cost a lot of money. So for MTV to be involved with bringing that back into people's living rooms is fantastic.

Some acts are featured in "Rock Band" as downloadable songs. Others, like AC/DC, get their own disc, and still others, like the Beatles, get their own game. How do you decide which artist gets what treatment?

The marketplace is a great balancer, so if we don't think the market is going to support a certain type of release, we're not trying that. We do approach this in the spirit of partnership with artists and labels. If something

fails, it's not good for either of us and when you approach it that way, it really does open up the conversation. So far, we've been at a very good place in terms of striking the right balance of artists.

You know, music's not going anywhere. I'm sure there's going to be more important music released; I'm sure there was some released yesterday that's going to be classic in the future. We think that we fit into that, because if we really hold onto that approach, these games will become a legitimate long-term way for people to get into music, to discover music and to really get a deeper understanding of it. I think if we try to give our input into, "Oh, it should be this kind of product," and really kind of tweak the creative, as you see sometimes in games associated with movies, it would be bad for the category.

Where does "Rock Band" fit into an album release strategy?

Pretty much every release has a sort of windowing strategy. If you can only hear the song in "Rock Band," it's tough to have that be the first thing that comes out. You have to have something else. In the case of Mötley Crüe, it was radio, and then iTunes very soon

after. So that can work, but that's a big thing. If it's a brand-new artist, it probably makes sense to have it come out day and date. But if we like the music and we think it should be in the game, it almost doesn't matter, because we feel like we can make it work.

There's also the community aspect of "Rock Band." When you get a song that's new and you like it and want to play it with your friend who happens to be in Omaha and you're in Connecticut, they have to buy it too so you can play it together. So there's this nice built-in pass-along, and if you get the window right, there really is some leverage there.

Warner Music Group chairman/CEO Edgar Bronfman Jr. caused a bit of a stir in August when he said that labels should be paid more for providing their music to these games. What do you think about that?

I really have no comment on what he said. I will say that we have great relationships with our partners across the board that supply us content, and we continue to get great content from those partners every day.

Activision CEO Bobby Kotick said that he thought labels should pay for the privilege

These games will become a legitimate long-term way for people to get into music, to discover music and to really get a deeper understanding of it.

of having their music in these games.

I have no comment, except to say that it's not a comment we would make.

What kind of integration can we expect between "Rock Band" and Rhapsody, MTV's joint venture with RealNetworks?

We definitely want to make sure that "Rock Band" is tied very closely to music sales and they are our partner in music sales. It's very complex, as you might imagine. We don't own the direct relationship with the consumer when we sell our downloadable content. It's distributed through Xbox Live Marketplace. We would love to have that solution, and we're working towards it. And it can cut both ways, because if you purchase a song from Rhapsody that you like, and it happens to be on "Rock Band," it would be great to make it an easy transition both ways.

Out of all the songs on "Rock Band," which do you like to play the most?

I go through phases, but I will say that my favorite song to demo was "Gimme Shelter" by the Rolling Stones, because it just sounds incredible when you got it right. Then the people I demo with were telling me that I didn't do it well enough. So I actually had to practice it. The experience of playing that song and knowing you're playing a classic rock song is irony overload. But that was my favorite irony overload.

Is there a song you don't have on "Rock Band" that you would really like?

I would like "Stairway to Heaven." I like the song "Custard Pie"; that would be cool. But just as Led Zeppelin is a tremendously important band that would be great, there's also a ton . . . you know, it's endless. . . .

DON'T WRITE HIM OFF AS A KID WITH A DANCE. WITH HIS SECOND ALBUM, SOULJA BOY TELL'EM WANTS TO SHOW THE WEB WHO IS 'SUPERMAN.'

Soulja Boy Tell'Em

22 | BILLBOARD

DECEMBER 17, 2008

Looking like a spoiled kid forced to sit in on his dad's business meeting, DeAndre "Soulja Boy Tell'em" Way slumps in a black leather chair at Billboard's New York offices, twiddling his thumbs on his two-way. He's distracted. ¶ With BlackBerry in hand, the 18-year-old rapper/producer sports a bright yellow baseball hat with a baby blue hair pick halfway tucked underneath it, a matching Yums Soulja Boy Block Star sneakers—more on that later—and a diamond-encrusted chain and wrist cuff. ¶ He laughs out loud at an incoming message, then looks up at his best friend, Arab, who is smirking back at him. The two have tuned out the dialogue around them, leaving Soulja Boy's manager, Derrick Grooms, to handle the matters at hand. They are having their own chuckle-worthy conversation with their mobile devices, and they don't plan on letting anyone else in on the joke. ¶ It's easy to dismiss Soulja Boy as a run-of-the-mill teenager, but appearances can be deceiving. His breakthrough was due in part to his Internet fame and many consider him a Web-savvy business prodigy.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZACH WOLFE

BY MARIEL CONCEPCION





By the time Soulja Boy signed to Collipark/Interscope Records last summer, he'd already garnered an unfathomable online following from his YouTube channel and MySpace page. "I was one of the first artists to have a YouTube account, if not the first. I joined two months after the site launched," Soulja Boy says. "I faked it until I made it. I acted like I was a celebrity. I was signing autographs, taking pictures, but I had no record deal. I was living the life of a star, but I was just a regular kid then."

Soulja Boy then released "Crank That," the top-selling digital track of 2007, according to Nielsen SoundScan, which at 3.9 million digital copies sold is the third-biggest song download since such data started being tracked in 2003. He's gone on to sell 943,000 copies of his debut album, "SouljaBoyTellEm," making him one of the few artists to sell this many digital singles and also sell a decent amount of physical copies of an album. When it comes to ringtones, "Crank That" has tallied 2.4 million, according to Nielsen RingScan (see chart, above).

"He's a smart kid," Crooms says. "Change in the music industry always comes with resistance, but he handles it all very well. He understands this business more than most grown men I know."

Soulja Boy will use this savvy to promote his sophomore set, "iSouljaBoyTellEm," due Dec. 16 from Collipark/Interscope Records. Producers Mr. Collipark, Polow Da Don and Drumma Boy helmed tracks for the set, while T.I., Shawty Lo, Sean Kingston, Yo Gotti and Gucci Mane—who Soulja Boy calls his mentor—make guest appearances.

The first single, the dance-inspired "Birdwalk," is No. 47 on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart and has sold 10,000 downloads. "I'm just beginning to work the song—it always starts from the bottom up," Soulja Boy says about the so-far modest sales. "People didn't see the groundwork that went into 'Crank That,' they just saw the success and sales. It probably won't take as long with 'Birdwalk,' but it will still take a little time."

The accompanying video, directed by Erik White, was filmed at Morris Brown College in Atlanta—the same place where the footage for "Crank That" was shot—during a battle of the bands. Soulja Boy has participated in various battles, which consist of a competition between two bands from two different colleges, during which he performs "Birdwalk." "It takes place on Sundays and we have over 30,000 people out there at a time," he says.

Other tracks on the album include promotional single "Turn My Swag On," where Soulja Boy addresses the "haters" over double-speed drums and a heavy bassline. On "Easy" Soulja Boy calls himself "Soulja Boy Pacino" and "Soulja Boy Mandigo" with flutes in the background. Chris Brown wrote the boastful "Yamaha Mama" ("My neck taste like chocolate/Now take a lick," Soulja Boy rhymes atop piano riffs), and second single "Kiss Me Thru the Phone," featuring Sammie and produced by Jim Jonsin, has Soulja Boy rapping alongside a videogame-like beat about longing for a lover.

According to Interscope co-head of marketing Chris Clancy, the campaign is "driven by content. It's a cliché thing to say, but the truth is Soulja Boy has a presence that's interesting and funny. It just makes you want to pay attention."

Aside from constantly feeding his YouTube channel, MySpace page and official Web site souljaboytellem.com almost daily with random, day-in-the-life videos, Soulja Boy will debut

a third season of Soulja Boy TV, in which he documents the making of the new album. "On season one it was me getting signed; on season two I was on tour with Chris Brown," Soulja Boy says. "I hopefully want to take this series to TV one day."

Soulja Boy launched a Let's Go Platinum in One Week campaign through his various online portals, where he's telling fans to "get ready for the album and help me go platinum," he says. "I go by the motto that it's never enough money. When I was 16, I said I wanted to become a millionaire. When I got my first million, I wanted more. Now that I've gone platinum with my first album, I want to break that in a week this time around. No one's done it since [Lil] Wayne [who did it with the "Tha Carter III" in June of this year]. If I go 100% and grind, I think it's possible."

Last month, Soulja Boy launched an animated/live-action cartoon, by the creators of Adult Swim's "Robot Chicken," on his Web site. He plays a celebrity teenager that has to go back to class and finish the school year. Soulja Boy, Arab and friend Jabar are animated characters, while the rest of the cast, including Alfonso Ribeiro—who played Carlton in "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air" and here portrays the school principal—are actors. Soulja Boy hopes a TV network will pick up the series and is targeting Comedy Central or Cartoon Network.

On MTV, Soulja Boy has an episode of "Super Sweet 16" dubbed "My Super Swag 18," covering the celebration of his 18th birthday that took place during the summer. He hopes to branch out into acting through the William Morris Agency, and although he hasn't come across a script he's interested in—"I'm a comedic person. I want my first movie role to reflect my actual personality"—he hopes to delve further into it in 2009.

He began a promotional tour Dec. 1 that leads up to the album release, and a more extensive mid-January trek is in the works. For the latter, Soulja Boy hopes to partner with fellow rapper Bow Wow, for whom he recently produced the track "Marco Polo."

Now, about those kicks. This month Soulja Boy launched a sneaker called the Soulja Boy Block Star sneaker and a Soulja Boy clothing line with the apparel company Yums. He partnered with Yums' in-house designer Tex for the venture and also bought stock in the company.

"I was on the Chris Brown tour with Bow Wow last year, and we had a concert stop in Dallas, Texas. I brought out a local Texas act called Lil Will onstage with me, but when we were backstage I noticed they had these shoes and these hats," Soulja Boy says. "I asked them where they got it from because I wanted to get some. So, I hooked up with the owner, I told him what I wanted to do, we did a deal and after that it's been Yums ever since."

To tie the new venture into the online campaign, Interscope brand manager Brian Washington says, Soulja Boy announced a contest that lets fans film themselves doing their version of the Birdwalk dance and upload it to YouTube. The best video will be featured on Soulja Boy's MySpace page and the winner will receive a pair of Yums.

Other Soulja Boy ventures are generating revenue already. "Really, I don't depend on royalty checks to make money. Those only come but every six months," he says. "How I make most money is from shows. I get up to \$75,000 for each, and I might do up to 20 shows a month."

The second-highest income source for Soulja Boy comes from

Xcaliber a club he recently purchased on the north side of his hometown of Atlanta. "We do teen nights and 18-and-up nights," he says.

A third source is his BMI publishing deal and from his tracks for Bow Wow and Lil Vic ("Get Silly"). The smallest amount of revenue comes from his YouTube channel and his official Web site. According to Crooms, every time Soulja Boy's channel receives a view or someone leaves a comment on it, Interscope makes money, a percentage of which goes to Soulja Boy. Soulja Boy also runs ads on his Web site, which make him revenue as well.

"The thing he's accomplished and created is a whole new revenue for artists and companies," Crooms says. "Others are probably not aware of the deals being cut with YouTube, but, every time there's a view, money goes into Interscope by way of a deal cut between Universal Music Group and YouTube. Since Soulja Boy has a 360 deal with the label, they obviously get a cut, but Soulja Boy walks away with a percentage of it as well."

On YouTube Soulja Boy has the third-most-watched music channel of the week with 558,283 views, the second-most watched for the month of November with 4.4 million views and the fifth-most-watched of all time at 258 million views, after artists like Chris Brown and Britney Spears. His MySpace page has 98.2 million plays, 55.8 million views and 855,174 fans.

He's also planning on launching a videogame next year with an undisclosed game maker. That deal, Soulja Boy says, came about the same way he landed his record deal—from the Internet. "I put up a video on YouTube challenging Xbox Live players around the world. Next thing you know I got an e-mail from a videogame company—in the same way Collipark e-mailed me about signing me—offering me an opportunity to set up a videogame," he says.

Soulja Boy continues to build his music empire in other ways. In 2004, he launched his independent label, SOD Entertainment (which stands for Stacks on Deck), and recently signed a one-off deal with Universal Republic for his group Show Stoppers' first single, "Whoop Rico." Although it didn't make him the money he's accustomed to, it was an experience that he hopes will help him down the line. "I always thought of myself as being hot, but I'm not going to be hot forever," Soulja Boy says. "I wanted to test the waters with them before I released my solo artist, Arab. I want to have an artist with a No. 1 song in the country. I want to have the next big thing. I don't want the next big thing to come kill my career. I want to be the boss."

Arab, who he's known since the eighth grade, will be the first artist to follow in his footsteps with an album planned for as early as fourth-quarter 2009, yet Soulja Boy has his hesitations. "That project is tricky," he says. "He's my best friend and I want him to be ready, but I can't make him be something he doesn't want to be. I want an artist that's got passion and drive. I want to see them in the studio, on the Internet promoting themselves—but I can't force him to do something he's not ready to do."

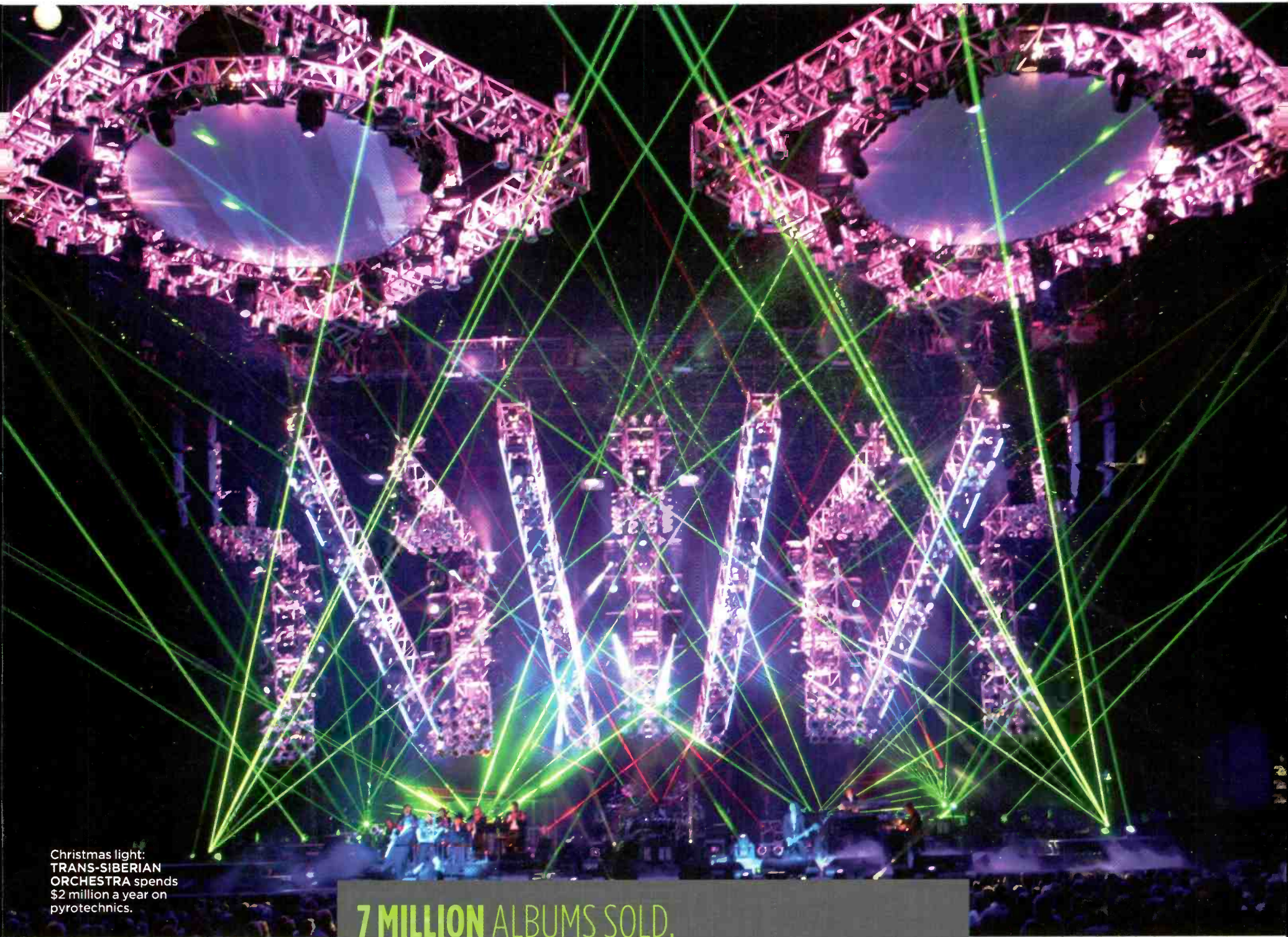
Arab isn't the only fellow Atlantan Soulja Boy hopes to help. This month, he's tapping into charity work, partnering with DJ Hit Man in December for a Toys in the Hood toy drive, where he will give away Christmas gifts to 100 families in Atlanta.

"He's kind of set the standard between what the record business should be these days," Clancy says. "The reality is for a guy that most people thought would be a one-hit wonder, he's a source for entertainment. He proved everybody wrong and has cemented himself as a natural artist."

Soulja Boy unabashedly agrees. "People know I do good business. If I endorse something or say I'm doing something, then it's getting done and it's getting done right. With great power," he says, quoting a line from the "Spider-Man" movie, "comes great responsibility."

SOULJA SPEAKS

Register for Billboard's Digital Music Live conference to hear Soulja Boy and his management team discuss the artist's groundbreaking use of the Web to launch his career. Digital Music Live—the official digital music track of the annual Consumer Electronics Show—brings together digital music industry leaders to discuss trends and share insights. For more information, go to billboardevents.com.



Christmas light:
TRANS-SIBERIAN
ORCHESTRA spends
\$2 million a year on
pyrotechnics.

7 MILLION ALBUMS SOLD.
\$200 MILLION ON TOUR.
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(WE HAD TO GIVE YOU *SOME* HOLIDAY CHEER.)

HEY, HO HO HO, LET'S GO!

BY MITCHELL PETERS

It's easy to spot Trans-Siberian Orchestra musical director/guitarist Al Pitrelli backstage following the band's late-November concert at the Honda Center in Anaheim, Calif. He's the one wearing a bulky knee brace and hopping around on metal crutches.

• Earlier in the evening, Pitrelli—a seasoned guitarist who has also toured with Alice Cooper and Megadeth—had to sit down onstage to shred through the Christmas-themed symphonic rock band's nearly three-hour show. Dressed in a black coat, a white-collared shirt and black slacks, the longhaired musician was “a little overconfident” during the band's tour-opening concert Nov. 1, according to Paul O'Neill, the wizard behind the curtain of TSO's rock operas and effects-filled shows.

"He took a huge jump from stage left onto the main deck, locked his knees and tore his ACL right off," O'Neill says.

Pitrelli remembers it differently. "The true story is that I didn't want to do one of O'Neill's arrangements, so he came up and kneecapped me," he jokes.

O'Neill attempted to hire a temporary replacement guitarist, but Pitrelli wouldn't have it. "He said, 'Paul, I'll leave the tour when I'm dead,'" O'Neill says.

Pitrelli and O'Neill have been friends for 25 years. During the past decade, they've watched TSO grow from theater gigs to a reliable fixture on Billboard's yearly list of the 25 highest-grossing tours. In 2007, the act ranked 15th among Billboard's most profitable tours, grossing \$49.3 million and drawing more than 1.1 million people to 128 concerts reported to Billboard Boxscore. This year, the group will rank 12th with \$47.3 million in grosses from 120 shows.

TSO's albums have collectively sold 6.7 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The act has charted five albums on the Billboard 200, and it has racked up three top 10 sets on Top Pop Catalog, with two of those hitting No. 1 ("Christmas Eve and

Other Stories" and "The Lost Christmas Eve").

This success is all the more impressive considering the way TSO defies description. "The only way to describe Trans-Siberian Orchestra is 'Phantom of the Opera' meets the Who, with Pink Floyd's light show," says lyricist/composer/producer O'Neill, who founded the group more than 10 years ago with creative partners Robert Kinkel and Jon Oliva. "This thing has grown so fast and taken off beyond our wildest expectations."

Prior to TSO, the three musicians were involved with the heavy metal group Savatage, which signed with Atlantic Records in 1983 and released such albums as "Hall of the Mountain King" and "Streets: A Rock Opera." (O'Neill wasn't an official member of Savatage, but he produced and wrote much of the music and lyrics.) It was an obscure cut from the band's 1995 album "Dead Winter Dead"—a rock opera about the Balkan War—that led to the creation of TSO.

Former Atlantic executive Jason Flom (now president of Lava Records) says that Savatage was on its last legs at the label when the band delivered "Dead Winter Dead." The group offered the set for free, Flom says, "because it was worth it to have their record out on Atlantic, in terms of their touring and European profile."

"Dead Winter Dead" didn't live long. But the band's situation changed in December 1996 when Flom received a phone call from the band's attorney, who told him that the influential radio station WPLJ New York was going to add an obscure instrumental cut from the album called "Christmas Eve (Sarajevo 12/24)." After WPLJ PD Scott Shannon read part of the album's liner notes on-air, "the phones melted down and every store in New York sold out of the record," Flom says. By January, other stations around the country had caught wind of the song, and "we had sold an additional 45,000 units," he says.

After thinking about the success of traditional Christmas act Mannheim Steamroller, Flom asked O'Neill if he would be interested in writing a whole album of symphonic rock songs about Christmas.

"People loved the song but they hated Savatage," Flom says. A couple of weeks after Flom's suggestions, O'Neill came back and said, "What do you think about the name 'Trans-Siberian Orchestra?'" Flom recalls. "I said, 'What do I know? I'm Jewish.'"

With Flom's and Atlantic's support, O'Neill and his crew began writing material for the new Christmas-themed album at the musician's New York apartment, nicknamed "the Kitchen Table" after the spot where they do all their writing.

"We just threw ideas about arrangement and concepts around, because who was going to buy the record anyway? It didn't matter," Pitrelli says. At the time, heavy metal music was dying.



Through the years, TSO's debut release, "Christmas Eve and Other Stories," has sold 2.8 million copies, according to SoundScan. "They literally took Savatage and put them in tuxedos," Flom says.

TSO's first big TV break was a 1997 booking on "The Rosie O'Donnell Show," according to Flom, who pushed hard to get the band on the then-popular talk show. "The booker wanted nothing to do with Trans-Siberian Orchestra," he says. "She liked very hip sort of stuff."

Flom went to the head of Warner Bros. Studios to get the band's music into the hands of the show's producer. After the episode aired, "they told us it was the biggest reaction to any music guest they had on the history of the show," he says.

Since then, TSO has enjoyed TV exposure on "Good Morning America," "Live With Regis and Kelly," "Today," "Late Night With Conan O'Brien," CNN and PBS, among other outlets.

Although radio and TV were key to breaking TSO, the real success came after the act built a fan base on the road, according to Adam Lind, who co-manages the group with

Kenneth Kaplan. "The band has grown like it's a big rock band in 1975," he says. "It has really gone and broken itself market by market." Lind says that some markets in which the band performs may sell 3,000 tickets, while another market may draw 13,000 people.

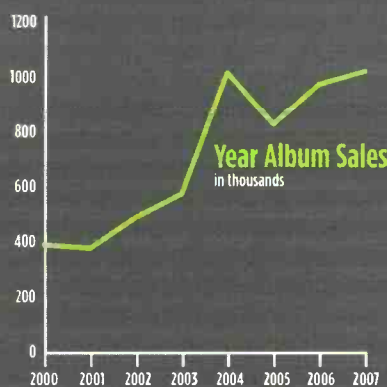
The band typically advertises its concerts across radio, TV, print and the Internet. But since people who hear a TSO song on the radio may not immediately realize what group they are listening to, the act's management focuses most of its advertising budget on radio spots and TV.

It's TSO's live performance, however, that wins lifelong fans. The act's over-the-top stage production features a string section, a rock band with more than 20 members, multiple vocalists, a narrator, pyrotechnics, a laser/light show and snowfall in the course of a two-hour-and-45-minute show. Past concerts have featured guest vocals from Roger Daltrey, Paul Rodgers, Greg Lake and Jon Anderson.

To help keep concertgoers coming back each year, the group prices its tickets from \$20 to \$60 and never sells seats with ob-

JINGLE BELL ROCK

TSO's albums and tours have become Christmas standards.



Touring Numbers

Year	Gross	Attendance	Shows
2000	\$1,800,000	52,592	22
2001	\$4,700,000	136,141	51
2002	\$7,300,000	200,902	57
2003	\$14,200,000	382,686	79
2004	\$21,100,000	546,277	89
2005	\$25,500,000	666,597	88
2006	\$35,800,000	877,152	97
2007	\$49,300,000	1,147,662	128

SOURCE: Touring numbers are according to Billboard Boxscore. Cumulative album sales are according to Nielsen SoundScan.



From Savatage to salvation: TSO has tallied \$207.7 million in tour revenue, according to Billboard Boxscore.

structed views of the stage. Affordable pricing and great sightlines have paid off, according to Live Nation senior VP of concerts for the Midwest Michael Belkin, who estimates a 50%-60% visitor return rate for the shows his company promotes.

"You see all generations of a particular family, from the grandparents to young children," Belkin says. "And rockers appreciate the huge lights, pyro and lasers." As in years past, Live Nation will promote about 90% of the band's concert dates in 2008, Lind says.

As a strategy to cover more ground, O'Neill divides TSO into two groups splits in two during the nine-week holiday season to sometimes play a matinee and evening show. O'Neill divides his time between the touring troupes. Most of the time he's behind the scenes ensuring the operation is running smoothly. The TSO ringleader says that most of the band's annual holiday tour profits are dumped back into the following year's production to make it bigger and better. Since its first tour 10 years ago, TSO has pulled in approximately \$207.7 million from 736 shows, according to Boxscore.

'THEY ASKED, "WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE NAME 'TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA'?" I SAID, "WHAT DO I KNOW? I'M JEWISH.'"

—JASON FLOM

TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRATORS

From top: PAUL O'NEILL, AL PITRELLI and ROBERT KINKEL comprise TSO; "Christmas Eve (Sarajevo 12/24)" has appeared on Billboard's Hot Holiday Songs chart every year since 2002.



"If they were a public company, their stock would be through the roof," says Marc Geiger, the band's agent at the William Morris Agency.

TSO's live show—which this year will feature more than \$2 million of pyrotechnics alone, according to O'Neill—has kept album sales on track, even though new studio material hasn't been released since 2004's "The Last Christmas Eve," which has sold 1.6 million copies, according to SoundScan. Predecessors "The Christmas Attic" (1998) and the nonholiday set "Beethoven's Last Night" (2000) have sold 1.5 million and 511,000 copies, respectively.

"The touring gets bigger and bigger, so they're playing in front of more and more people," Atlantic VP of A&R Gregg Nadel says.

Without a new album to promote, Nadel says that a Miller Lite commercial that ran during the holiday season from 2005 to 2007, featuring the TSO song "Wizards in Winter," helped keep the group in the public eye. Along with an on-screen tag that name-checked the song, "We worked ["Wizards in Winter"] to radio and it's become a hit over the last couple of years," Nadel says. According to Nielsen SoundScan, it's sold 175,000 downloads. (It was uncertain at press time whether Miller Lite would use the track again in 2008.)

In another effort to keep the act's name alive at retail, Atlantic released "10 Years of TSO" exclusively on Amazon in October. For a list price of \$69.98, the four-album boxed set "sold out in a matter of hours," according to Nadel, who says only 500 were available. Additionally, the band offered a free download on Amazon of the new song "Night Enchanted," which will appear on the act's forthcoming non-Christmas album "Nightcastle."

With a minimum of two studio recording sessions going simultaneously, O'Neill has been working on "Nightcastle" for several years now. He promises that "it will be out next year, no matter what . . . the argument is whether or not to make it a single CD, a double-CD or a triple-CD," he says, "but we want to keep it at a single-CD price."

O'Neill declines to reveal details about the album's storyline, but he says that "it will be half rock opera and half a regular record, with a booklet of poetry and illustrations" by artist Greg Hildebrandt. Pitrelli says "Nightcastle" would have been completed a year sooner if the album's writing team hadn't recently discovered singers Jeff Scott Soto and Tim Hockenberry.

"We couldn't have this record coming out without these guys on it," Pitrelli says, noting that many of the songs had to be rewritten for their vocal parts. "Paul is the kind of person that will take as long as is needed to

finish a record."

O'Neill still plans to keep touring TSO during future holiday seasons, but he says, "The Christmas albums are done . . . for the immediate future." In 2010, after the release of "Nightcastle," the band will tour 60 theaters in North America, about 20 venues in Europe and then "fill in the rest of the world," according to Lind.

"It would be a slam-dunk sellout," Lind says. "They want to go out and play theaters in markets where they've done 20,000 people."

For the Christmas spectaculars, however, O'Neill wants it to be just that—spectacular. He has a dream of touring baseball stadiums. "The reason I love baseball stadiums is because there's no limit on the production," he says. "The fans don't care if you have a new Maserati or a new house in Tahiti, but the fans do care if there are new toys on the flight deck." . . .

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RED ZONE ENTERTAINMENT

HOW THE SONGWRITING AND PRODUCTION TEAM IS RUNNING UP THE SCORE IN THE HITMAKING GAME



CHRISTOPHER 'TRICKY' STEWART (left) and TERIUS 'THE-DREAM' NASH



COURTESY OF RED ZONE ENTERTAINMENT

TOUCH DOWN

THE SECRETS BEHIND RED ZONE ENTERTAINMENT'S DREAM TEAM

BY MARIEL CONCEPCION

In American football, the red zone is the distance from the 20-yard line to the goal, considered the most probable area in which an offensive team can score. To the Stewart brothers—manager Mark, 38, and music producer Christopher, 34, whose nickname is Tricky—who founded Atlanta-based Red Zone Entertainment in 1995. The name of their management/publishing company is an allegory for how close they were to “scoring.”

“We named it Red Zone because we’re all football fanatics,” Christopher says. “It indicates we haven’t scored yet, but we are in striking distance. It was a metaphor of where we felt we were in the business.”

Red Zone started when the Chicago-born brothers, who had been honing their musical skills under the tutelage of eldest brother and producer Laney (Aaron Hall, K-Ci & JoJo) since 1989 in Los Angeles, left for Atlanta to start their own management and production business at the request of music mogul Antonio “L.A.” Reid. “We met L.A. in 1994 through a mutual acquaintance. Our official relationship started when

he signed our artist Sam Salter to LaFace,” Mark says. “He flew us down and heard our music and some music by artists we were working with at the time, and he told us he wanted to do more business with us. But he wanted us to move there to work on a day-to-day basis. We cut a deal with him that helped us build and finance our own studio, Triangle Sounds. That’s what started Red Zone.”

Now, after the addition in 2006 of partner and singer/songwriter Terius “the-Dream” Nash (who hyphenates his artist name due to legal issues with a group by the same name), Red Zone can say it’s attained a number of musical touchdowns. Among its hits are Britney Spears’ “Me Against the Music,” featuring Madonna; Rihanna’s “Umbrella”; J. Holiday’s “Bed”; Mariah Carey’s “Touch My Body”; Mary J. Blige’s “Just Fine”; Jesse McCartney’s “Leavin’”; and most recently Beyoncé’s “Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It).” That’s not even including the upcoming projects that are in the works with Celine Dion, Laura Izibor, Jamie Foxx and Mario.

These achievements are just the latest for Red Zone, which has been building its rep since 1995. Its first signing was music producer She’kspere, who helmed the No. 1 hit song “No Scrubs” for R&B group TLC in 1999. A month later Christopher produced “Who Dat” for rapper JT Money, which reached No. 2 on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart. She’kspere went on to produce portions of Destiny’s Child’s 1999 album “The Writing’s on the Wall,” which has sold 6.3 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Red Zone continued to produce hits, like Mya’s “Case of the Ex” (which hit No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100), and manage sought-after artists like Blu Cantrell, executive-producing her debut album, “So Blu,” both released in 2001 via Interscope and Arista Records, respectively. “So Blu” peaked at No. 8 on the Billboard 200 and spawned the No. 2 single “Hit ‘Em Up Style (Oops!).”

Although they were doing well and gaining notoriety, something was still missing. “I was managing and Christopher Stewart was producing and we did Pink and a bunch of other records, but it was nothing profound. Christopher Stewart was talented but something was still missing,” Mark says. “We had a great life, but no one knew who we were. It paid the bills and gave us our lifestyle but we weren’t known like that.”

In 2003, Mark and Christopher met then-up-and-coming singer/songwriter Nash after a common friend introduced them, but they weren’t convinced he was what they were looking for. “We saw his talent, but he had another type of energy,” Mark says. “Our style was different, so it took us some time to find a comfortable working relationship.”

Nash had already been trying his hand at music, first as part of an Atlanta-based singing group and then as a solo artist signed to an independent label owned by a local rapper named Raheem; he guest-appeared on Raheem’s song “Most Beautiful Girl” in 1999 and then wrote a remix of it that became a regional hit.

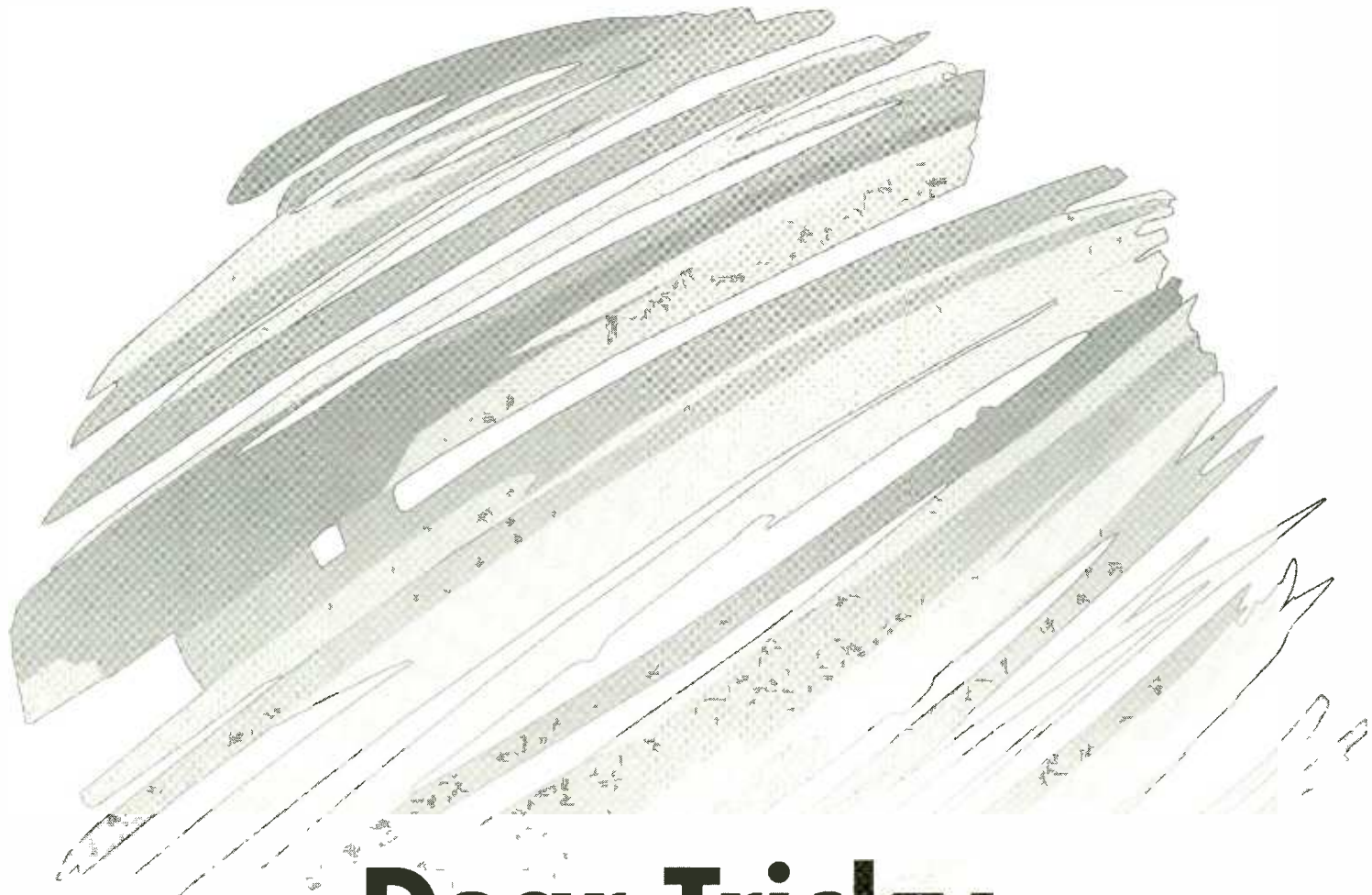
Three years later, Nash realized that even more than singing, his affinity at the time was in telling stories through music. “I kind of fell in love with being able to write a story melodically. When I was in the band **continued on >>p33**

Tricky and the-Dream as a team are ‘like lightning in a bottle.’

—SAM KLING,
PEER MUSIC PUBLISHING



Tricky kid: CHRISTOPHER ‘TRICKY’ STEWART writing a song this past summer in Malibu, Calif., for the-Dream’s second album.



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R E C O R D S



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from >>p30 we were playing someone else's music. When it was my own, I just felt this sense of control," Nash says. "I wrote what I wanted to and fell in love with that process. That's what kept me going."

Coincidentally, while Mark and Christopher contemplated whether a partnership with Nash made sense, the artist teamed with Laney Stewart on B2K's "Pandemonium!" album later that year, becoming Nash's first major artist placement. A year later, by "default," as Christopher says, he and Nash inadvertently joined forces for Spears' "Me Against the Music." "Christopher Stewart did the track for Britney and he didn't know if he liked it. So he left it behind one day, and I pulled it up, played it and wrote something to it," Nash says. "It didn't happen because he said, 'Let's write.' It happened because I stole it."

It was then that Mark and Christopher grasped the notion that who they needed to complete the team was right in front of them the entire time. "Everything clicked. When we met him and he became part of our writing relationship, that's when things went to another level," Mark says.

The synergy between Christopher and Nash as a songwriting and production team is "like lightning in a bottle," says Sam Kling, head of A&R for Peer Music Publishing, which signed Christopher in 2000. "They have the right sound and combination at the right time, and perseverance is a part of that," Kling says. "[Tricky's] been around long enough to have

their time come."

So far, Red Zone's biggest breakout hit, contrary to popular belief ("Although Britney Spears' 'Me Against the Music' was considered our crossover track because it was the first mainstream artist we worked with, it wasn't as big of a hit as we expected," Mark says), has been Rihanna's "Umbrella." But the

track was written with a different artist in mind.

"When Tricky called me and said he had a record that was crazy, my inclination was to send it to whoever would get it because there was nothing else out there that sounded like it. I knew L.A. Reid would, so I sent it to him, but I also sent it to [Warner/Chappell senior VP/head of urban music

continued on >>p34

COURTESY OF RED ZONE ENTERTAINMENT



Living the dream: TERIUS 'THE-DREAM' NASH (right) with LOS, who produced the-Dream's 'Shawty Is a Ten.'

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Great collaborations: TRICKY (left) and STING writing together. Inset: Interscope's MARTIN KIERSZENBAUM, Tricky, the Pussycat Dolls' NICOLE SCHERZINGER and KUK HARRELL.



from >>p33 and Atlantic Records senior VP of urban music] Chris Hicks, who had sent it to Mary J. Blige, and she loved it," Mark says. "We had a dilemma, but it was our call. The deciding factor was that Mary wasn't going to put out another album for another year, but Rihanna was about to come out that spring and we wanted the record exposed as quickly as possible. The rest is history."

Shortly before the release of "Umbrella," Hicks signed Nash to a publishing deal with Warner/Chappell. "It was pretty instant," Hicks says about the decision. "Jazze, one of my writers, was working in the same studio and [Nash] invited me to come over and listen to some records he was doing for [R&B singer] Nivea. I listened to the records, and then they played me 'Umbrella.' I lost my mind over it.

"As a songwriter, Dream is extremely diverse," Hicks continues. "The same person that wrote 'Shawty Is a Ten' is the same person who wrote 'Bed' and 'Umbrella.' I think his level of depth and diversity is unrivaled. He's phenomenally well-rounded."

Christopher and Nash have not only been responsible for some of the aforementioned tracks, but they also launched Red Zone label Radio Killa. As Christopher puts it, "People need a little R&R," referring to the in-house acronym for Red Zone and Radio Killa. Started in 2004, Radio Killa houses girl group Elektrik Red, which recently signed with Def Jam; R&B singer Brian J; and Nash, for whom the label released 2007 debut album "Love/Hate" through Def Jam. The album spawned hit singles like "Shawty Is a Ten" and "Falsetto," among others, and has sold 512,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

In addition, Red Zone signed a co-management deal with UOMO Management in 2005, which will handle all of its international business moving forward. According to UOMO chairman/CEO Camara Alford, the company's interest was sparked when it saw the partnership between Christopher and Nash come to fruition. "At any given moment a producer and

writer can have [their] finger on the pulse of where [the] listeners and public are," Alford says. "Christopher Stewart's been making hit records for a long time. Several years ago Christopher Stewart and the-Dream did 'Me Against the Music,' and it was a big record for them together. The difference is now they have been able to put together an amazing and historic run. They have their finger on the pulse of the music listeners globally."

Although in the last two years they haven't done much globally, Mark says they hope to branch out in 2009. "Right now we wish we'd

done more so far, but we've been here the past two years working on some of the biggest artists. It's hard to tell [Blige] and Beyoncé that you have to go work on some artists that Americans haven't even heard of," he says. "But our music travels, so I want to have someone that represents us [all] over the world when I

can't be there. Next year, we're looking at artists in Europe."

On the publishing side, Red Zone has Remarkable, a new publishing arm that evolved from the Peer Music-financed venture 2412 Publishing. The new venture is financed by Red Zone and administered by Universal Music Publishing and was facilitated by longtime Red Zone collaborator Monte Olson, now senior VP of A&R for Universal Music Publishing/Interscope.

"I've been a business partner and colleague of Mark and Tricky for a long time," Olson says. "I made the first big investment in Tricky, when I gave him his first publishing deal at Peer years ago. I was the guy who signed him there." Olson says he has continued with the Red Zone team as a business partner

"They played me "Umbrella" and I lost my mind."

—CHRIS HICKS,
WARNER/CHAPPELL
MUSIC AND ATLANTIC
RECORDS

continued on >>p36

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Team players: From left, TRICKY, LIL JON and THE-DREAM during sessions at the Studio at the Palms in Las Vegas.

from >>p34 and consultant because “they are a special group. They bring a lot of fresh ideas and are willing to try new things musically. They are not afraid.”

Christopher’s publishing contract with Peer expired in June, and Universal is one of the parties interested in picking it up. “To me, it’s an absolute no-brainer to continue our association,” Olson says.

Red Zone also represents other writing teams like the Movement, which comprises J.B. and Corron; the pair has worked on such hits as Lionel Richie’s latest single, “Good Morning,” released Nov. 3, and Pleasure P’s upcoming track “Birthday Suit.” There’s another team, songwriter/producers Sean K. (Lionel Richie) and Kelly (Jennifer Lopez), as well as songwriter Dean, who has worked with Mya, Ciara and the Pussycat Dolls. And then there’s Kuk Harrell, cousin to the Stewarts, who Mark refers to as “the secret weapon.” “He produces

all the vocals as well as writes and produces. He’s the silent member and a major part of what we do on a creative basis.”

Moving forward, one of the major business moves that Red Zone hopes to make is branching out into TV production. In addition to Dion, Foxx, Mario and Izibor, Nash and Christopher are also working with Sting, Ciara, Jennifer Lopez and Lloyd, as well as Nash’s sophomore album, “Love Vs. Money,” due in February through Def Jam.

When asked what the secret to their success is, Mark says it’s simple: a willingness to change. “A lot of people fall off because they don’t want to change. But we make adjustments every day. Tricky and I are veterans of the game, but Dream showed us we always have to respect that young energy. He is the guy who really impacted our business. Those kinds of adjustments allow for true longevity.”

SOUND ADVICE

TRICKY AND THE-DREAM OFFER THEIR TOP FIVE TIPS FOR SONGWRITING/PRODUCING SUCCESS

1 WRITE FOR THE LISTENER

“The business of songwriting is about service, so always write for others. Keep in mind what you want to hear, but remember you are a storyteller and they are the listener. Tell the story in a way that people can understand.”

2 DON'T RUSH YOUR CRAFT

“Be a good listener and a great student. Don’t allow your ego to walk through an open door before your heart does, because your ego wants what it wants right now but your heart will be patient enough to wait for it and earn it.”

3 DO YOUR HOMEWORK

“Listen to all the other great songs of history and compare them to yours. Once your song sounds like it could be on an album alongside the timeless songs, then you got it. Just don’t forget how you got there.”

4 HEALTHY COMPETITION IS GOOD COMPETITION

“Out-work the next writer. Write and produce like your mother’s life depended on it.”

5 REWARD YOURSELF

“If you’ve done all these things, buy something really extravagant from time to time to remind yourself of your blessings and all you’ve achieved. And remember, always force those who receive things from your hard work to also be a shoulder and not just a weight. Force them to help and not hurt, force them to know and obtain your knowledge, for there will be a day where your passion will outgrow you and they will understand you best and comfort you when it gets rough.”

—Mariel Concepcion

WARNER/CHAPPELL MUSIC



SALUTES

OUR RADIO KILLA...

THE-DREAM



Radio Killa
R E C O R D S



Celebration: From left, TRICKY, THE-DREAM, JAZZE PHA and DALLAS AUSTIN at wine bar/bookstore Vino Libro in Atlanta, celebrating Rihanna's 'Umbrella' going to No. 1. Right: Tricky and the-Dream while working on 'Love vs. Money,' due in February.

SHAWTY IS A TEN

TRICKY AND THE-DREAM'S TOP TRACKS

Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Terius "the-Dream" Nash have collaborated on hit after hit since joining forces at Red Zone Entertainment. Here are 10 of their top tracks to date.

"ME AGAINST THE MUSIC," Britney Spears Featuring Madonna
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash and Christopher "Tricky" Stewart; produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart

"UMBRELLA," Rihanna
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash, Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Kuk Harrell; produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart

"SUFFOCATE," J. Holiday
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash and Christopher "Tricky" Stewart; produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart

"JUST FINE," Mary J. Blige
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash, Christopher "Tricky" Stewart, Mary J. Blige and Jazze Pha; co-produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Jazze Pha

"TOUCH MY BODY," Mariah Carey
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash, Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Mariah Carey; co-produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Terius "the-Dream" Nash

"LEAVIN'," Jesse McCartney
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash, Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and J.B. and Corron of the Movement; co-produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and JB & Corron of the Movement

"FALSETTO," the-Dream
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash and Christopher "Tricky" Stewart; co-produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Terius "the-Dream" Nash

"I LUV YOUR GIRL," the-Dream
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash and Christopher "Tricky" Stewart; co-produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Terius "the-Dream" Nash



"MOVING MOUNTAINS," Usher
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash, Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Kuk Harrell; co-produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Terius "the-Dream" Nash

"SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT)," Beyoncé
Co-written by Terius "the-Dream" Nash, Christopher "Tricky" Stewart, Kuk Harrell and Beyoncé; co-produced by Christopher "Tricky" Stewart and Terius "the-Dream" Nash
—*Mariele Concepcion*

COURTESY OF RED ZONE ENTERTAINMENT

CONGRATULATIONS!

Your accomplishments this year are a true testimony to your pursuit of excellence.

Continue on this path and strive for nothing less.

From all of us at TSG Financial Management LLC.

Radio Killa
R E C O R D S



SunTrust congratulates Tricky & The Dream and Red Zone Entertainment.

Our Sports and Entertainment Specialty Group applauds your remarkable accomplishments and contributions to the music industry.



Congratulations

to our favorite dynamic
duo.

Tricky & Dream!

from your friends and family
here at
Triangle Sound Studios!

Love,

Cynthia, B Luv,
Jason, Steve,
Bobby & Paige



TRIANGLE SOUND STUDIOS



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Animal Collective
keeps it weird

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Late of the Pier wants
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Weezer frontman
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MUSIC

R&B BY MARIEL CONCEPCION

HAMILTON'S HEIGHTS

R&B Star Gets To The 'Point'

Anthony Hamilton is best-known for chronicling heartbreak on songs like "Charlene" and "Can't Let Go." But on "The Point of It All," arriving Dec. 16 from Jive, the artist says it's time to rejoice.

Embodying the message is the first single "It's Cool" featuring David Banner, on which Hamilton sings, "You can conquer the world," over a looping, guitar-tinged beat. "It's a down-South, feel-good track with a little island thing to it," he says. "The lyrics are about day-to-day life, the struggles and trying to make things happen without a lot. But, of course, there's a happy ending."

The artist's brand of tell-it-like-it-is R&B and soul found an audience on his 2003 So So Def debut, "Comin' From Where I'm From," which has sold more than 1.3 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The follow-up, 2005's "Ain't Nobody Worryin'," has moved 639,000.

Now, Hamilton is looking at the other side of love on the piano-based, uptempo "Feel Like Falling in Love," which he describes as a combination of an Elvis Presley and James Brown track, and the title cut, a love ballad in contention to be released as a single early next year. "Be careful when listening to it," Hamilton says of the latter cut. "If you don't have kids, you might have some after this one."

Hamilton also addresses the current economic crisis ("Souls on Fire") and the dangers of infidelity ("Please Stay With Me"). "We must not forget things can still go on in the world that affect you and even in your own relationship," he says.

Raphael Saadiq, Jack Splash, Cee Lo, Dre & Vidal, Salaam Remi, Avila Brothers and Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis contributed production to the project, while Banner, Fatin Dantzler from Kindred the Family Soul and Hamilton's wife, Tarsha' McMillian Hamilton, make guest appearances.

And while he's enjoyed a handful of radio hits on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart, Hamilton's greatest promotional asset is his live show, according to Jive VP of marketing Lisa Cambridge. The artist has an average gross of \$62,211 from 24 shows reported to Billboard Boxscore since 2003.

Hamilton is already on a mostly sold-out club tour in the United States, with dates booked through Dec. 14 in Atlanta, and will play this month on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" and "Good Morning America."

This will be followed by a stateside tour in larger venues, for which Hamilton hopes to partner with Noel Gourdin or up-and-coming artist Yazarah, who used to sing backup for Erykah Badu and Bilal.

Hamilton is reinforcing the connection with his audience through a tour blog on his official Web site and MySpace page. In the meantime, Jive is working to align him with either a high-



Hat trick: ANTHONY HAMILTON

end liquor company or a female lifestyle brand to help broaden his audience.

"I just want to make sure it's some real smart stuff that I believe in," Hamilton adds. "I'm not trying to put people in the slaughterhouse, but an occasional glass of wine or cognac won't kill you. I want to make sure it's responsible branding."

Hamilton's guest spots on recent albums have also kept him visible while his own album, which was delayed on a couple of occasions, was nearing release. He appears on Young Jeezy's new "The Recession," two songs on Al Green's "Lay It Down,"

the "Soul Men" soundtrack and, oddly enough, on songs with country artists Josh Turner and Big & Rich's John Rich.

"I love country," Hamilton says of the collaborations. "I wrote the song for Josh Turner—he's a good friend of mine—and he said he'd be honored if I duetted with him."

It all ties in with an old-school approach to music, one that seems unconcerned with deadlines or deals for the sake of making deals. "Sometimes deadlines get in the way of some really good things," Hamilton says. "That's why I didn't want to rush it. Now, it feels complete."

LATEST BUZZ

>>>TAKE THEM HIGHER

Creed is hammering out details for a lucrative 2009 reunion tour, sources tell Billboard. The Scott Stapp-led group, which was one of the top sellers of the past decade, has not performed since a rancorous split in June 2004. "There have been some talks, but it would be premature to comment on them at this time," a Wind-up representative says.

>>>REVOLVING DOOR

Velvet Revolver has cut ties with RCA Records, which released the group's two studio albums. According to the band, the move was made at its request, to allow "complete freedom to go through whatever process it would take to accomplish" replacing former frontman Scott Weiland. "The band is thankful that RCA understood the task at hand and has allowed the band to continue on their own," manager Carl Stubner says.

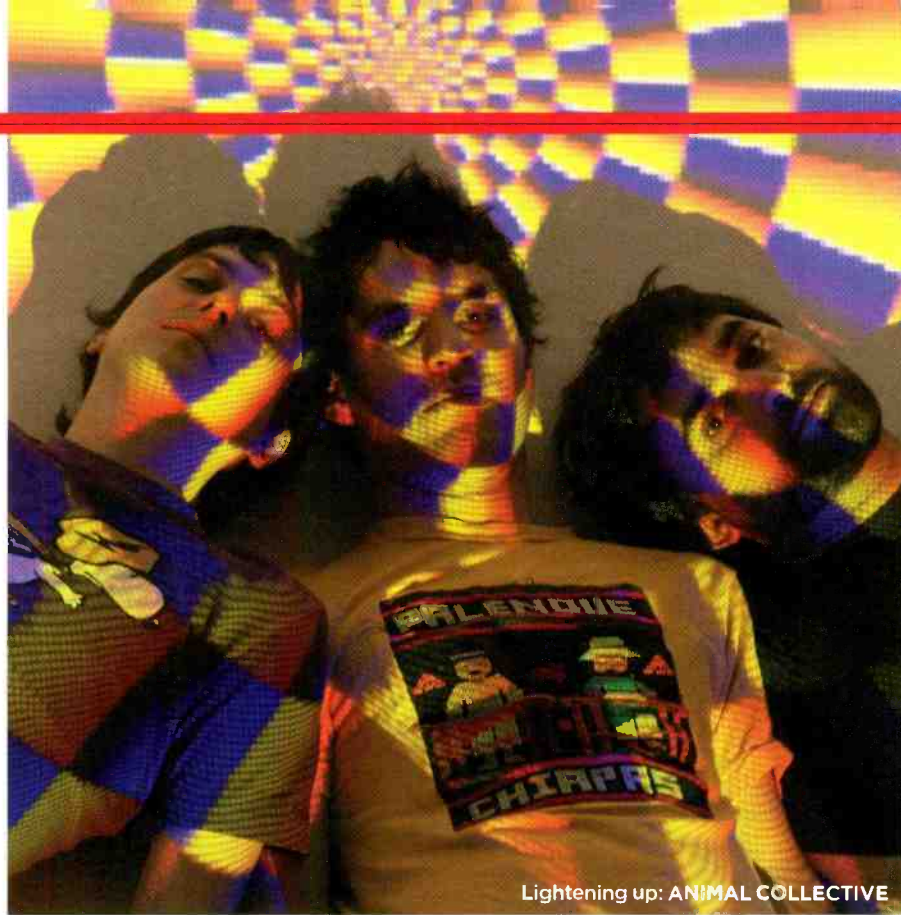
>>>RIDE THE 'CYCLONE'

Neko Case will follow up 2006's "Fox Confessor Brings the Flood," the best-selling album of her career, with "Middle Cyclone," due March 3 via Anti-. The 15-track collection boasts guest appearances from the Band's Garth Hudson, fellow Canadian singer/songwriter Sarah Harmer, M. Ward and members of Case's primary band the New Pornographers, Calexico, Los Lobos, Giant Sand, the Lilys and the Sadies.

>>>SO HELP ME JESUS

The Jesus Lizard will play its first shows in 10 years in 2009, while Touch & Go will remaster and reissue its first four studio albums. The original lineup of David Yow, Duane Denison, David Wm. Sims and Mac McNeilly will return to the stage May 9-10 at All Tomorrow's Parties' the Fans Strike Back in Minehead, England. The group will play "very limited" as-yet-unannounced dates in the months to follow, concluding with a November show in Chicago.

Reporting by Jonathan Cohen.



Lightening up: ANIMAL COLLECTIVE

ROCK BY MICHAEL D. AYERS

'Post' Rock

Animal Collective Climbs The Indie Food Chain

When it burst onto the indie rock scene in 2003, Animal Collective was tagged as the leader of the budding freak-folk movement. While that descriptive has since faded, it hinted at one thing: The band likes to do things differently.

That goes for everything from strange band names (Panda Bear, Avey Tare) to songs about weather to an ever-changing musical approach. Most recently, on 2007's "Strawberry Jam," Animal Collective ditched the lush, acoustic arrangements of earlier work in favor of a louder, electric guitar-meets-electronics attack.

And even though it recorded as a trio (guitarist Josh "Deakin" Dibb took a self-imposed break from band duties), the move toward a larger sound continues on "Merriweather Post Pavilion," due Jan. 20 from Domino.

"Since there are only three of us playing, especially for the live situation, it just seemed more interesting to use samplers instead of a lot of live instrumentation," Dave "Avey Tare" Portner says. "It's a lot more low-end—and that was a conscious decision on our part—to make a record that was for the most part more rhythm."

The result is a heavy mix of thumping, sample-heavy psychedelia, best heard on sprawling opener "In the Flowers" and the romantic, subdued "Bluish." The album certainly sounds like the work of a band, but one not connected to a specific music scene.

That ideology has helped drive Animal Collective to the top of the indie-rock food chain in a relatively short period of time. Although few would call its music accessible, the group has sold 176,000 albums in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, with 2005's "Feels" at 55,000 and

"Strawberry Jam" at 50,000.

Instead of drawing on direct influences, Animal Collective makes albums with a connection to places in mind. "We usually try to connect to outdoor environments, and there was something about this that was harking back to the time where we would be outside, in backyards, listening to music on a boombox," Portner says. "Because that's how we really grew up and got attached to listening to music together."

Hence the new album's title, which shares its name with an amphitheater in Columbia, Md. "I had seen the most concerts there, growing up," Portner says. "But we didn't really name it after the venue. We really liked the way it sounds and that it has the word 'weather' in it. We cast a lot of the songs to different weather patterns."

Domino, which picked up the band from Fat Cat in 2007, began rolling out "Merriweather Post Pavilion" through private listening parties last month in the hopes of cultivating word-of-mouth. The label will cater to hardcore fans with the album packaging; the CD features a four-panel Softpak inside an interlocking envelope, while the double vinyl is a gatefold with printed inner sleeves. Animal Collective will tour throughout 2009, including an appearance at the second All Tomorrow's Parties New York event in September. The group is also planning to hit the studio again to record music for an as-yet-untitled video project.

Buzz for "Merriweather Post Pavilion" got an unexpected boost when a member of like-minded band Grizzly Bear posted a leaked MP3 of the song "Brothersport" on his blog, prompting a take-down notice from content monitoring/Web policing firm Web Sheriff and a host of coverage in the blogosphere.

"The goal is to create an atmosphere where everyone from fans, record stores, radio stations and journalists all feel like they are a part of this release as early as possible," Domino U.S. label manager Kris Gillespie says. "We want the promotion and marketing to stem from that excitement."

ROCK BY KERRI MASON

Early Daze

Newcomer Late Of The Pier Finds U.S. Groove

As frontman of a hyper-kinetic, stylistically schizoid, hipster-praised band like the United Kingdom's Late of the Pier, one might expect Sam Eastgate to be a handful to interview: distracted, maybe even intoxicated, and on a premature ego trip.

But Eastgate is the opposite of the swaggering rock star he becomes onstage and the shape-shifting voice—from Freddie Mercury to Robert Smith to Simon Le Bon—that springs from him in the studio. He's thoughtful, affable and gets to the heart of what makes Late of the Pier so different from its post-dance-rock contemporaries: It has thought of everything.

"We definitely have a lot of stuff really planned out; like exactly how it's going to go," he says.

To do what the group does, it would have to. The four-piece's sound is a high-speed, high-art mélange of melodic

rock and '80s pop, with fits and starts of the disco energy that's propelled the dance-rock craze. It was able to capture it on debut album "Fantasy Black Channel" (Astralwerks, due Jan. 13), produced by electronic wunderkind Erol Alkan. The act can also reproduce it live.

While Eastgate and bandmates Ross Dawson (drums), Andrew Faley (bass) and Sam Potter (synths) focus on the music, the careful planning continues among their U.S. team, who knows what it has in a band with talent this raw.

"We loved the record when we heard it. It was just so all over the place. One moment it sounded like Queen, the next moment it sounded like Gary Numan, and another moment it sounded very contemporary, like something you've never heard before," Astralwerks senior project manager Lawrence Lui says of "Fantasy Black Channel," which de-

GLOBALPULSE

EDITED BY TOM FERGUSON

>>>VERDE GO!

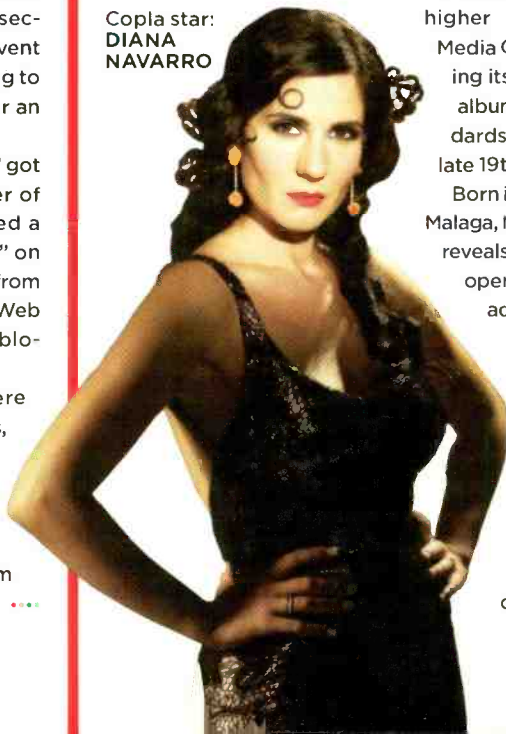
Since winning the best new artist award at Spanish radio network Cadena SER's annual Premios Ondas awards in 2005, Diana Navarro has gained attention for the "copla" singing style among Spain's pop-buying public.

Copla, related to southern Spanish flamenco, dates from

the 19th century. Navarro's 2005 debut for Warner Music Spain, "No Te Olvides De Mi," has sold some 200,000 units, according to the label, and gained her a Latin Grammy Award nomination that year. Her 2007 sophomore album, "24 Rosas," has sold some 90,000 units, according to Warner, while her new album "Camino Verde" settled in the higher reaches of Spain's Media Control charts following its Oct. 28 release. The album reworks copla standards made famous in the late 19th century.

Born in the southern city of Malaga, Navarro's strong voice reveals the clear influence of opera as well as flamenco, adding to her distinctive take on copla. "Diana gives a modern touch to traditional copla while maintaining a deep respect for the genre," says Warner Music Spain manager of international ex-

Copla star:
DIANA
NAVARRO





Here's looking at you: LATE OF THE PIER

buted at No. 28 this summer on the U.K. album chart.

"The only question was whether we wanted to match their release or kind of grow it on a grass-roots level here first, take advantage of the U.K. hype and release the record a little bit later in January, and that's what we ended up doing. There were pros and cons for both, but we decided it's better to make sure this record is really, really well set up and to make it a priority on our schedule."

The Astralwerks onslaught included feeding remixes to blogs, like Emperor Machine's version of "The Bears Are Coming," a shout-sung electro-march with a balladeer bridge; securing placements on "as

many CD samplers as possible," including those distributed by magazines like Under the Radar and Vice and retail stores like Metro Park; and an all-important showcase during New York's CMJ Music Marathon, which was the act's U.S. debut.

At the outset, that Oct. 22 gig at Music Hall of Williamsburg had all the makings of a disaster, starting with the lack of a sound check.

"They're like, 'OK, you've got 15 minutes,'" Eastgate says. "We all thought it was going to be the worst show possible. And then something weird happened. When we were setting up our equipment, the crowd just started coming up and talk-

ing to us at the edge of the stage. We didn't want to go back off-stage and come on again, so we started getting drinks ordered onstage. Then we just stood up and played the set. I've never seen a band do that, but I think the crowd wanted it to go well, because they'd just been talking to us. And that kind of just set everything perfectly for the whole gig."

Late of the Pier's North American booking agent, Joel Zimmerman of William Morris, says the band cannot only win over crowds—it must. "This is not a venue-specific band," he says. "It is all about the show structure and vibe. They are a band that needs to connect with the audience. If they are too far removed, at this stage it won't work. The minute they connect, they have the audience the whole show. We will have this in the front of our minds when choosing where to book shows in North America."

The band will tour the United States from March to April, "and they're going to be doing festival dates, the ones you can probably imagine, during that period," Lui says. ●●●

ploitation Adriana González.

Navarro's own material is published by Warner/Chappell Spain, and her booking agency is Madrid-based Una Gira Más. Following her current theater tour of Spain that began Nov. 5, Navarro plans a February promotional trip to Mexico, where her three albums were issued Nov. 4. —Howell Llewellyn

>>> LOVE LETTERS

The songs in prolific Australian singer/songwriter Paul Kelly's 30-year career have genuinely covered the A-to-Z of life, so it was appropriate that earlier this year he took the novel approach of giving away alphabetically organized downloads each month from his Web site (paulkelly.com).

The "one-letter-a-month" downloads are of live performances from shows under the banner "A to Z," where Kelly sings 100 songs from his 30-year career in alphabetical order over four nights.

The rights to Kelly's recordings reverted to him in September, paving the way for a slate of reissues licensed to EMI as well as the Nov. 8 compilation "Songs From the South Vol. 2." The set is also available as a

double pack with its 1997 predecessor and a deluxe limited edition (2,000 copies) containing both albums, a DVD, T-shirt and other collectibles.

"The online initiative quadrupled [Kelly's] fan database, and we sold 1,000 copies of the deluxe set in just two weeks," says the artist's manager Bill Cullen of Sydney-based One Louder Entertainment. International deals are being negotiated.

Kelly's current deal with Universal Music Publishing expires at year's end. Booked by the Harbour Agency internationally and by Paradigm in North America, he will support Leonard Cohen on Australian shows in January and February, with his own headlining tour scheduled for April/May. —Lars Brandle

>>> HIPPIE CHICK

She's less than 5 feet tall, but Annett Louisan's big voice has been heard loud and clear in Germany since her debut album "Boheme" (105 Music/Sony BMG) was certified double-platinum (400,000 units) in 2004.

Louisan's back with her fourth album "Teilzeithippie,"

which peaked at No. 2 on Germany's Media Control chart one week after its Oct. 16 release and remains in the top 10. The album has also charted in Austria and Switzerland.

The singer's early development as an artist was overseen by publisher peermusic's German arm in Hamburg, which created a team around her including producer Frank Ramond, who co-writes the 31-year-old's chanson-influenced pop material with fellow songwriter Matthias Hass.

Louisan's Hamburg-based manager Michael Böttcher reports growing international interest in the artist. "We get a lot of e-mails from the United States and all over Europe describing people's enthusiasm for Annett Louisan and her songs," he says. "The special atmosphere of the songs and her fascinating voice are enough to cause an international reaction, despite the fact that the albums are not on sale outside the German-speaking area."

Louisan will play 50 shows in Germany, Austria and Switzerland Jan. 21-May 15, booked through Semmel Concerts.

—Wolfgang Spahr

POP BY MICHAEL D. AYERS

Jingle Sells

Indie Acts Board The Holiday Music Train

Holiday albums have usually been the domain of big stars—think Bing Crosby, Dean Martin or Josh Groban. But this year, an influx of indie artists and labels are getting into the holiday spirit, all with different goals in mind.

Artists like Aimee Mann and Sufjan Stevens have proved there's a market for a different kind of Christmas tune. Stevens' 2006 collection "Songs for Christmas" has sold 81,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, while Mann's "One More Drifter in the Snow" from the same year has sold 39,000.

The underlying notion is that there's a youthful audience that will buy (or at least pay attention to) records that are more left-of-center than the everyday reinterpretation of a classic holiday ballad.

Longtime Stevens colleague Rosie Thomas decided to take the plunge almost on a whim this spring, calling on a handful of friends from the Seattle area to help her record "A Very Rosie Christmas." Released Nov. 4 by Nettwerk, the set's 12 tracks include Alvin & the Chipmunks' "Christmas Don't Be Late."

"I don't blame people for overlooking it," Thomas says with a laugh. "A chipmunk sung it."

Thomas is on a holiday-themed tour that she hopes to make an annual occurrence, much like Mann, who is in her third year of touring around "Drifter."

Nettwerk sees evergreen potential in "A Very Rosie Christmas," with the idea being to make "an event" out of each tour stop and draw in fans for years to come, according to manager Mike Cochran. The Coalition of Independent Music Stores' Junketboy imprint is handling physical distribution for the album.

Meanwhile, Merge is hoping to carve out a similar niche for former Neutral Milk Hotel multi-instrumentalist Julian Koster, whose "The Singing Saw at Christmastime" recently became the 20-year-old label's first Christmas album.

For Koster, this is no mere stylistic diversion. "We've been approached by other artists to do holiday singles, but this project seemed perfect. For Julian, it's Christmas 12 months of the year," Merge publicist Christina Rentz says. "His dog is actually named Rudolph."

Indeed, following his stint on the Elephant 6 Holiday Surprise tour, which saw reclusive Neutral Milk Hotel leader Jeff Mangum make several unannounced appearances, Koster is upping the holiday ante.

Of late, he's using e-mail to solicit private homes to "carol" in and spread his quirky brand of Christmas cheer. "It would be so nice if music knocked

on my door and came to see me," he says of his rationale for staging such a trek.

Other holiday releases have the potential to inject new life into the most recent studio albums from a given artist.

When the Raveonettes released "Lust Lust Lust" in February on Vice, they planned on touring for the remainder of the year, but personal issues prevented that. Instead, the group released three digital EPs, culminating with last month's "Wishing You a Rave Christmas."

"We wanted to keep them on the radar, repositioning a record that came out in February," Vice Music GM Jamie Farkas says. "It was nice timing to have the last one hit right at the point where people are thinking of what came out this year."

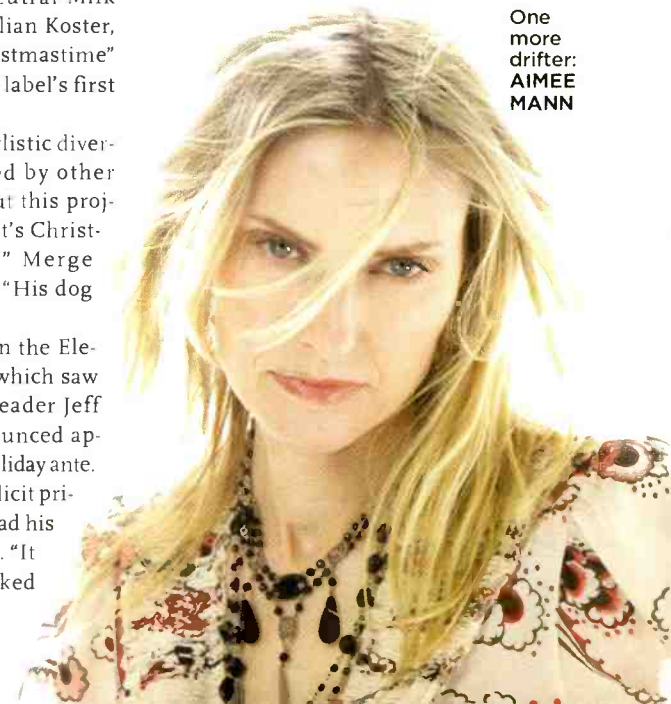
On the compilation front, "I'll Stay Til After Christmas," compiled by Force Field PR owner Daniel Gill and featuring holiday songs from Blitzen Trapper, Sally Shapiro and My Brightest Diamond, was just released digitally, with 100% of proceeds going to charity.

Also on the market is a compilation from Joan Jett's Blackheart Records, an EP from Underoath drummer Aaron Gillespie's side project the Almost and the first holiday-themed albums from Mary Chapin Carpenter and Bela Fleck (Rounder).

And despite the challenges of getting their music heard amid a glut of holiday releases, most artists say the hardest part of the process was simply picking the material. "That's always the difficulty with covers—you're not pressured to do the songwriting, but I am touchy about it, because a lot are done so well," Thomas says of the holiday canon. "Once we figured out what would work, we tried to reinvent them as a unique experience." ●●●



One more drifter: AIMEE MANN



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POP

BARRY MANILOW The Greatest Hits of the Eighties

Producers: Barry Manilow, Clive Davis, Scott Erickson, Michael Lloyd

Release Date: Nov. 24
Arista

▶ With a Christmas single on the AC singles chart for the second year in a row and a fifth sold-out year of live shows beginning in Las Vegas, Barry Manilow's millennial presence continues to dazzle. Following "The Greatest Hits of the Fifties" (No. 1 debut, 2006), "Sixties" (No. 2, 2006) and "Seventies" (No. 4, 2007), "Eighties" is already off to a merry start with a No. 14 debut this week. Manilow's gleeful duet with Reba McEntire on "Islands in the Stream" proves what a master arranger/interpreter he is, taking an overtly familiar hit and recasting it honorably. The same holds true for "Right Here Waiting" and "Have I Told You Lately." Most surprising are "I Just Called to Say I Love You," now a lite rhumba, and "Never Gonna Give You Up," where Manilow busts a groove. There's a lot

of uncertainty in the world at large, but "Eighties" is one sure thing.—CT

ROCK

THE ALL-AMERICAN REJECTS

When the World Comes Down

Producer: Eric Valentine
Interscope

Release Date: Dec. 16

▶ The All-American Rejects' 2005 effort "Move Along" spawned a number of radio-friendly hits that appealed to the Vans Warped tour crowd and mainstream listeners alike. "When the World Comes Down" doesn't evince much growth, proffering more of the same hooky pop/rock centered around adolescent love and heartache. Accelerated rockers like "I Wanna" and "Breakin'" are the best of this lot, while on "Gives You Hell," singer Tyson Ritter does his best Freddy Mercury before leading into a stomping, "Beverly Hills"-like chorus. Orchestral flourishes pretty up the otherwise strummy "Sunshine," and guitars are largely absent from "The Wind Blows," adding a welcomed

MAROON 5

Call and Response: The Remix Album

Producers: various
A&M/Octone

Release Date: Dec. 9

Remix albums rightfully have a bad rep. Too often they're merely contract satisfiers—easy ways to give big artists something fresh on the shelves or to separate dedicated fans from more of their dough. But "Call and Response" is everything the format could and should be. The band enlisted names big and small to get deep into its two-album catalog, and judging from the thoughtfulness of the contributions, they're all pre-existing Maroon fans. Swizz Beatz uses an uncharacteristically loose and light hand on "If I Never See Your Face Again"; Mark Ronson gets Mary J. Blige to contribute a great vocal to his funky take on "Wake Up Call"; and Pharrell Williams' "She Will Be Loved" is lo-fi and completely devoid of schmaltz or radio trickery. No one was trying to make new hits here or take their stock remix loop and carelessly plop it over an unrelated melody—they seem to just really love the songs.—KM



electro twist to the band's straightforward approach to the rest of the songs. For fans of AAR's past work, "World" is a familiar listen, but the group could benefit from a bit more outside-the-box thinking.—JM

impact. Does it upset the appercart of ethics of both DJ'ing and live performance? Absolutely. But hearing a crowd go wild for a kick drum has to do the dance community proud.—KM

FOLK

CHARLIE LOUVIN

Sings Murder Ballads and Disaster Songs

Producer: Mark Nevers
Tompkins Square

Release Date: Dec. 9

▶ Amid daily news of tragedy and economic collapse, now is either the worst or best time to release a collection of songs about death and mayhem. But either way, this album from country legend Charlie Louvin, who began his career with his late brother Ira in the early '40s, is a welcome remembrance of traditional American folk music and its role as an ancestor of today's news cycles. Louvin's once-crystalline voice does wear his 81 years, but it also carries deeper understanding of the heartache central to the disaster songs he first recorded decades ago, including the adapted spiritual "Wreck on the Highway," the coal-miners' lament "Dark As a Dungeon" and the tragic waltz "Mary of the Wild Moor." The songs don't

DANCE

JUSTICE

A Cross the Universe

Producer: Justice
Downtown/Atlantic

Release Date: Dec. 9

▶ Unfortunately for Justice, the act's "live" CD/DVD sees release a few weeks after the blogosphere had a field day with a photo that showed it playing ferociously on MIDI equipment—which was visibly unplugged. No matter, though. The Justice live show—like any proper nightclub party—is more about communal experience through music playback, as the crowd noise on this 18-track synth blitz proves. Just listen to those kids fill the silence with a singalong during "We Are Your Friends" or bust a gut cheering when the familiar sing-song refrain to the hit "D.A.N.C.E." first drops. Nearly every track here is from the French duo's 2007 debut "Cross," tweaked and sequenced for maximum rock concert-like

vary greatly in rhythm or simple sing-song melody, but they are stories as much as tunes, and Louvin and his first-rate musicians are engaging storytellers indeed.—EN

HIP-HOP

ILLA J

Yancey Boys

Producer: Illa J
Delicious Vinyl

Release Date: Nov. 4

▶ The late James "Jay Dee/J. Dilla" Yancey was a master of hip-hop production, a man whose influence will be forever etched into the fabric of the rap game's future endeavors. However, as an MC, he left much to be desired. On the other hand, his little brother is something of a natural on the mic, as demonstrated by this album on the newly revitalized Delicious Vinyl label. Using previously untouched beats that his big brother created while working on the Pharcyde's 1995 album "Labcabincalifornia," Illa J holds his own on the De La Soul-sampling "R U Listenin'" as

effectively as he does sans assistance on tracks like "Showtime." The boy can sing to boot, crooning D'Angelo-style over his brother's classic grooves on "Timeless" and "Swagger." Keeping it in the family, literally, "Yancey Boys" is perhaps as fine a testament to the legacy of J. Dilla as anything that has yet to be released.—RH

WORLD

CHOPTEETH AFROFUNK BIG BAND

Chopteeth Afrofunk Big Band

Producer: Michael Sherekis
Gri Gri Discs

Release Date: Dec. 9

▶ This Washington, D.C., crew, assembled by bassist Robert Fox and guitarist Michael Sherekis, was initially inspired by the musical legacy of Nigerian icon Fela Kuti. The album opens with "Struggle," a thunderous bit of Afrofunk that does, indeed, invoke the Fela Kuti vibe. Further adventures in this groove include "Dog Days" and "Weigh Your Blessings," while "Herky Jerky,"

COMMON

Universal Mind Control

Producers: The Neptunes, Mr. DJ
G.O.O.D. Music/Geffen

Release Date: Dec. 9

Everything's wacky in Chicago



hip-hop these days: Kanye West is all mopey and contemplative, while Common has just landed on Planet Rock. "This is that new shit/It don't feel the same," goes the hook to the title track of the rapper/actor's latest, which, in its employment of the entire soundtrack from the Atari 2600 edition of "Super Breakout," sets the tone for a synthetic, sexified club record that'll bring in new fans while probably alarming old ones. As was the case with John Legend, who beamed into the club on his latest, the initial effect is jarring, even in its star's capable hands. But it also settles in nicely. "Announcement" benefits from a slinky beat that lets the MC breathe, "Make My Day" issues some California love courtesy of Cee-Lo, "Gladiator" is a great old-school brag rhyme, and the pro-Obama preacher "Changes" lets the old Common back in the door. Common's been around long enough to earn this kind of detour (even if he already took one with the trippy "Electric Circus"), and it must be frustrating having all the acclaim in the world but not all the sales. All of which makes "Universal" an interesting spin, even if it requires adjusting for those who used to love him.—JV

KEVIN RUDOLF

In the City

Producer: Kevin Rudolf
Cash Money/Universal Republic

Release Date: Nov. 25

Kevin Rudolf is a new face in pop—

but not to those who pay attention to liner notes. The New York musician is one of producer Timbaland's resident studio aces, with playing credits on albums by Justin Timberlake, Nelly Furtado, the Black Eyed Peas and Tim himself, and that pop/rock/hip-hop cred has made him the first non-rap artist signed by Cash Money Records. "In the City" is not a musician's album, however; Rudolf is as much of a top 40 aspirant as any of the folks he's worked with, and the dozen tracks on his solo debut, on which Rudolf plays nearly everything, hew toward the hooky, tuneful and danceable. The three collaborations with rappers—including first single "Let It Rock" with Lil Wayne plus hookups with Nas ("N.Y.C.") and Rick Ross ("Welcome to the World")—are thumping, synthesizer-heavy club anthems, while "Coffee and Donuts," "She Can Get It," "Gimme a Sign" and "Livin' It Up" are brightly uptempo and, in spots, new wavey. Such mellower moments as "I Song" and "Scarred" have the pop mainstream firmly in their polished cross hairs, but it's not until the album-closing opus "Great Escape," with guitar and piano solos laced throughout its six-and-a-half minutes, that Rudolf really displays some of the chops that could ultimately separate him from the pack.—GG



THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

SINGLES

bristling with heated horn solos, is a potent instrumental number. Chopteeth's reach extends beyond Afrofunk, however. "Upendo" is all about South Africa, including a lyric sung in Swahili. Malian griot Cheick Hamala Diabate joins the band on "Wili Nihé," working a song that, appropriately, praises the band members. The closer, "No Condition Is Permanent," features D.C. rapper Head-Roc in a bangin' rap-Afrofunk fusion that sounds exactly like something Fela would be into, were he alive and kicking.—PVV

TESLIM

Producers: *Kaila Flexer, Gari Hegedus*
Self-released
Release Date: Dec. 9

★ Teslim's Kaila Flexer and Gari Hegedus are, respectively, a violinist and an instrumentalist of bewildering proficiency, including the oud, lauto (an eight-stringed Greek lute), frame drums and viola. Together they make exquisite music, drawing inspiration from Sephardic, Greek and Turkish traditional sources. Their tunes are exotic, and their virtuosity is spellbinding. "Ajuar De Novia Glana/Timarxou Street Dojo" is a medley, blending a Sephardic tune with a Hegedus original. "Stone's Throw" is a gorgeous original number by Flexer, with Hegedus on viola and guest Olov Johansson on nyckelharpa (a Swedish keyed fiddle). Another Hegedus original, "Patalouda" ("butterfly" in Greek), is a string tour-de-force, featuring Flexer on violin and Hegedus on cura saz and divan saz (Turkish stringed instruments). The album concludes with a

gentle medley, "For a 5/Karsilamás for Sara."—PVV

VITAL REISSUES

PAVEMENT

Brighten the Corners:

Nicene Creedence Edition

Producer: *Mitch Easter Matador*

Release Date: Dec. 9

★ Matador's reissue campaign for the Pavement catalog continues with "Brighten the Corners," arguably the most overlooked of the band's five studio albums. It's still a bit tough to figure out why. Some would argue Pavement had already begun to fracture by 1997 (the group split two years later), while others claim "Brighten" merely suffers by comparison to its three excellent predecessors, "Slanted and Enchanted," "Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain" and "Wowee Zowee." Either way, "Brighten" rarely gets its due, which is a shame, because the singles "Stereo" and "Shady Lane" are among the band's best, and the move to a mellower sound portended a deepening stylistic breadth that was never fully realized. The bonus disc contains previously unreleased gems like a BBC Sessions recording of "Harness Your Hopes," which crackles with the band's signature angular rock; such covers as Echo & the Bunnymen's "The Killing Moon"; and alternate versions of "Brighten" tracks. A 62-page book and new vinyl pressing complete the package for the audiophiles and superfans, but the real value is in the album itself, an important piece of the history of a seminal '90s band.—LJW

LEGEND & CREDITS

EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)

CONTRIBUTORS: *Hillary Crosley, Gary Graff, Ron Hart, Kerri Mason, Michael Menachem, Jill Menze, Evie Nagy, Deborah Evans Price, Shad Reed, Chuck Taylor, Phillip Van Vleck, Jeff Vlabel, Chris Williams, Lavinia Jones Wright*

PICK ▶: A new release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format.

CRITICS' CHOICE ★: A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send album review copies to Jonathan Cohen and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

POP

RIHANNA

Rehab (4:05)

Producers: *Timbaland, Justin Timberlake, Hannon Lane*

Writers: *J. Timberlake, T. Mosley, H. Lane*

Publisher: *not listed*
Def Jam

And the hits just keep coming, as Rihanna mines her now greatest-hits opus "Good Girl Gone Bad" for an amazing eighth hit single. Here, she taps Justin Timberlake to co-star in a hot video that showcases the addictive chemistry between the two sexually charged performers. While "Rehab" has always been a highlight on the album, it does sound a bit dated, 18 months after its debut. That said, there's no doubt Rihanna is spitting fire on the charts and this will be no exception, with its slinky, Timberlake-assisted background vocals and tension-filled production, contrasting strings and guitars. Another fine entry that radio is sure to show the love. With no signs of burn yet, a word to the label: "Breaking Dishes" could break records as the next single.—CW

R&B

BRANDY

Long Distance (3:47)

Producers: *Bruno Mars, Philip Lawrence, James Fauntleroy*

Writers: *B. Mars, P. Lawrence, R. Jerkins, J. Bhasker*

Publisher: *Bug/Windswept/Music Famamanem, ASCAP; EMI Blackwood/Above the Line, BMI*

▶ An old radio wives' tale says that a good ballad will carry an artist through the winter months—and up the charts. As such, Brandy follows her comeback single "Departed"—an affecting song about missing someone who has passed—with another slow burn about loss. But this time, her lyric details a long-distance relationship and how difficult it is to go on while her beau is away. The piano-driven track is peppered with layered vocals from the songstress. It's refreshing to hear Brandy's voice again and equally heartwarming to see she and Rodney Jerkins reunite creatively.—HC

DANCE

3OH!3

Don't Trust Me (3:37)

Producers: *Matt Squire, Benny Blanco*

Writers: *S. Foreman, N. Motte*

Publishers: *Master Falcon Music/Pilot Creative/Matzah Ball/EMI, BMI*

Photo Finish/Atlantic

★ Boulder, Colo.-based duo 3OH!3 ("three-oh-three," as in the Denver area code) put its name on the map with viral hit "Don't Trust Me" from its debut album "Want." The hip-hop/electronic mash-up band recently broke the Billboard Hot 100 at No. 99 with this catchy tune. Matt Squire, who produced for Panic at the Disco and Boys Like Girls, applies his savvy to Nathaniel Motte's beats and MC Sean Foreman's out-of-control and at times controversial rhymes. Novel in its delivery, the single has achieved top 10 iTunes video delivery and ranked among its top 10 alternative downloads, thanks to a huge following on MySpace and heavy summer touring, including Vans Warped and Bamboozle Left. The most alluring part of "Don't Trust Me" is 3OH!3's command for girls—among the most of-

JAMIE FOXX FEATURING T.I.

Just Like Me (3:26)

Producers: *Tricky Stewart, the-Dream*

Writers: *J. Foxx, C. Harris, T. Stewart, T. Nash*

Publisher: *not listed*
J Records



Three years after his surprise hit "Unpredictable," Jamie Foxx returns to the microphone for his third studio album "Intuition," due out before year's end. For the first single "Just Like Me," he enlists help from T.I. and sings about being in a relationship with a woman who has the same difficulty with monogamy that he does. But rather than expressing sadness or anger, he just comes to terms with how something they have in common is keeping them apart. Foxx's smooth vocals are complemented by a stellar instrumental, and T.I.'s rhymes are strong as usual. Although not as powerful as their first collaboration—2006's "Live in the Sky"—the song is still very good. "Just Like Me" proves that Foxx and T.I. continue to make beautiful music together.—SR

fensive lyrics of late, which should delight the politically incorrect.—MM

CHRISTMAS

BARRY MANILOW

Christmas Is Just Around the Corner

Arista/RCA

JIM BRICKMAN FEATURING MARK MASRI

Christmas Is

Brickhouse Direct

TAYLOR SWIFT

White Horse (3:24)

Producers: *Taylor Swift, Nathan Chapman*

Writers: *T. Swift, L. Rose*

Publishers: *Sony/ATV Tree/Taylor Swift, BMI; Sony/ATV Timber/Hillsboro Valley, SESAC*

Big Machine Records

The second single from Taylor Swift's top-selling sophomore CD is a beautiful, understated ballad that showcases her skill with a lyric and shines a spotlight on her signature tender, heart-on-her-sleeve vocals. Musically and materially, this is the antithesis of her previous single "Love Story," with its upbeat melody and happily-ever-after ending. On this poignant ballad, Swift looks at what happens when the fairytale falls apart, singing, "I'm not a princess, this ain't a fairytale/I'm not the one you'll sweep off her feet/Lead her up the stairwell." Sparse production places the focus on Swift's vocal and she makes the pain and disillusionment palpable. Her previous hits have explored the joys and disappointments of love from a decidedly youthful perspective, but this angst-ridden effort is something everyone can relate to. Heartbreak has rarely sounded as compelling—or hitworthy.—DEP



KRISTIN CHENOWITH Sing

Sony Classical

FAITH HILL

A Baby Changes Everything

Warner Bros. Nashville

BRIAN MCKNIGHT

I'll Be Home for Christmas

Razor & Tie

MICHAEL FITZ

Eyes of a Child

MAGJOY

LUKE BRYAN

Run Run Rudolph

Capitol

PLUMB

Silver Bells

Curb

NEIL SEDAKA

The Christmas Song

Razor & Tie

THE HIVES FEATURING CYNDI LAUPER

A Christmas Duel

The Orchard

ELVIS PRESLEY WITH MARTINA MCBRIDE

Blue Christmas

RCA

JOSH KELLEY

To Remember (Holiday Mix)

DNK/Rocket Science



Picking up the pieces:
TAKE THAT

POP BY MARK SUTHERLAND

Come One, Come All

'The Circus' Comes To Town For Take That

Former boy band Take That is delivering some very grown-up sales figures. The act—a U.K. sales phenomenon since original members Gary Barlow, Mark Owen, Jason Orange and Howard Donald re-formed in 2005—posted the biggest first-day

U.K. album sale of the year Dec. 1. Its Polydor album "The Circus" sold 133,000 copies, according to the Official Charts Co. (OCC), beating Coldplay's "Viva La Vida or Death and All His Friends" (Parlophone) by 8,000 copies. That sale was delivered

despite the album being unavailable at many key U.K. retailers after wholesaler EUK went into administration, which is similar to U.S. Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection (see story, page 19).

"The business is in transition," says Universal Music Group International executive VP Max Hole, also president of Universal Music Asia Pacific. "But if you've got great music and great artists, you can still do quite remarkable numbers."

"There's a huge amount of love out there for the band," says Rudy Osorio, head of music at market-leading retailer HMV. "And they have such broad appeal. It makes the album the perfect family gift."

The numbers are the latest landmark achievement for the band, which smashed U.K. box-office records in October when 600,000 tickets for its 2009 stadium tour sold out in less than five hours. The group subsequently added more dates and has now sold a total of 700,000 tickets for its 14 stadium shows, kicking off June 5 at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland. The first single from the album, "Greatest Day," debuted at No. 1 on the OCC's Nov. 30 chart with sales of 70,300. It's the group's 11th No. 1, a tally topped only by the Beatles (17) and Irish boy band Westlife (14).

Universal Music U.K. chairman/CEO David Joseph signed the reformed act after working with its original incarnation at RCA (featuring Robbie Williams) before the group split in 1996. He attributes Take That's success to its desire not to just rehash its old sound.

On its previous album "Beautiful World," "the whole approach was to make them sound like they would if the band had been making records for the previous 10 years," he says. "Now they can afford to take a creative

risk knowing that they look and sound like a supergroup."

"Beautiful World" went on to outsell all of the band's previous albums in the United Kingdom, providing 2.5 million of a career sales total of 6.1 million units. However, Hole notes its "reasonably modest" performance in the rest of the world. The album hit No. 1 in Ireland and the United Kingdom, and went top 10 in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland.

"The band are committed to giving us the time we need to get them on TV around the world," he says. "We flew a lot of media and our own people into Paris for the album launch to focus everybody's minds on how amazing Take That are live."

"The Circus" was released worldwide Dec. 1, except in France where it hits stores in February and the United States. Only the original lineup's swan song album, "Nobody Else" (Arista), received an official U.S. release, with sales of 287,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"We have a lot of interest in the music from our American partners," says Joseph, who adds that a decision on a U.S. release will be made "in the next few months."

In the meantime, the band is concentrating on further boosting its U.K. sales, with a prime-time ITV1 special airing Dec. 7, following up a special edition of the same channel's "The X Factor," which featured the band's songs Nov. 29. The act also stars in mass merchant Marks & Spencer's current Christmas ad campaign (see story, page 16).

"All the key indicators are there, and we're looking at a very healthy first-week number," Joseph says. "We've got a few really great parts of the campaign to unveil in the next two weeks so it's not all front-loaded—it could lock in at No. 1 for the rest of the year." ■■■

A FINE NEST

What does it take to debut on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart at No. 1? A little help from your friends, which in DJ Nesty's case, include reggaeton superstars Wisin & Yandel.

Nesty's "La Mente Maestra" on WY/Machete, which is No. 2 this week, is the latest example of the "duo de la historia" giving a boost to its protégés. Through their Machete/Universal-distributed label, Wisin & Yandel have put out such compilations as "Los Vaqueros" (204,000 copies sold in the United States and Puerto Rico, according to Nielsen SoundScan) and "Los Vaqueros Wild Wild Mixes" (60,000), as well as a solo album by reggaeton singer Tony Dize (31,000). In each case, Wisin & Yandel have lent their voices, not just their names, to the projects.

In the case of Nesty (aka Ernesto F. Padilla), the Puerto Rican DJ was the main producer, an executive producer and co-writer with Wisin & Yandel on "La Mente Maestra." Other acts on the WY roster, such as Franco "El Gorila," Dize, Jayko, Gadiel and Tico "El Inmigrante," also appear on the album.

Nesty began working on albums with reggaeton's original hitmaking producers, Luny Tunes, in 2004. After several releases, including Wisin & Yandel's hit album "Pa'l Mundo," he scored credits on several hits for Calle 13, Voltio and Hector "El Father."

Wisin & Yandel manager Edgar Andino says the duo discussed the notion of a compilation album with Nesty and co-producer Victor "El Nasi" Martinez because such albums had become scarce after they were all the rage a few years ago. The final concept was an album presenting Nesty and Victor but co-produced by Wisin & Yandel, who also sing the first single, "Me Estas Tentando." The song is No. 15 on the Hot Latin Songs chart this issue.

"Fans are looking for new acts, and a Wisin & Yandel endorsement is important," Andino says. Universal Music Latino/Machete president Walter Kolm adds, "Wisin & Yandel have transcended the natural barriers of the urban market and exploded into the mainstream."

In the month after "Me Estas Tentando" became available as a single, it was purchased 9,000 times, with 2,000 ringtones. Key to the promotion, Andino says, are the slick videos

that have already been shot to support the album. Currently in rotation is the "Tentando" video, directed by film director Jessy Terrero. Three more videos have been shot, including one of a remix that isn't on the current album. —Ayala Ben-Yehuda

Additional reporting by Leila Cobo.



DJ NESTY

Back to work: SPRINGSTEEN

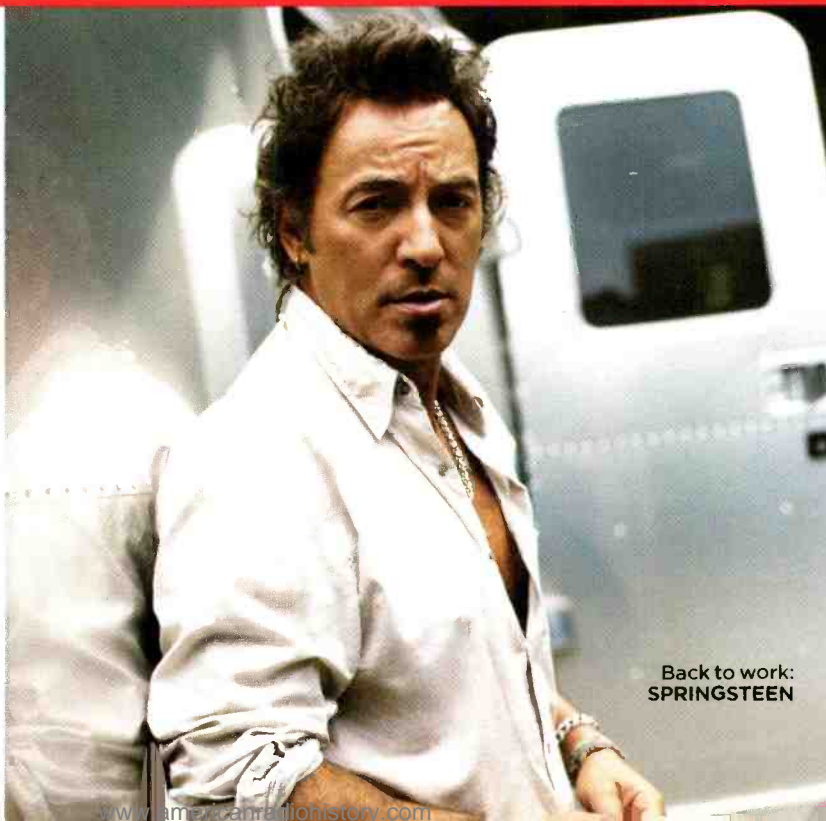
'DREAM' ON

Triple A radio has been kind to Bruce Springsteen in the past decade, and the good vibes continue this week for "Working on a Dream," the first single from the Boss' Jan. 27 Columbia album of the same name. "Dream" debuts at No. 13 on Radio & Records' Triple A chart, making it only the fifth title to debut in the top 15 since the chart expanded to 30 positions in August 2006.

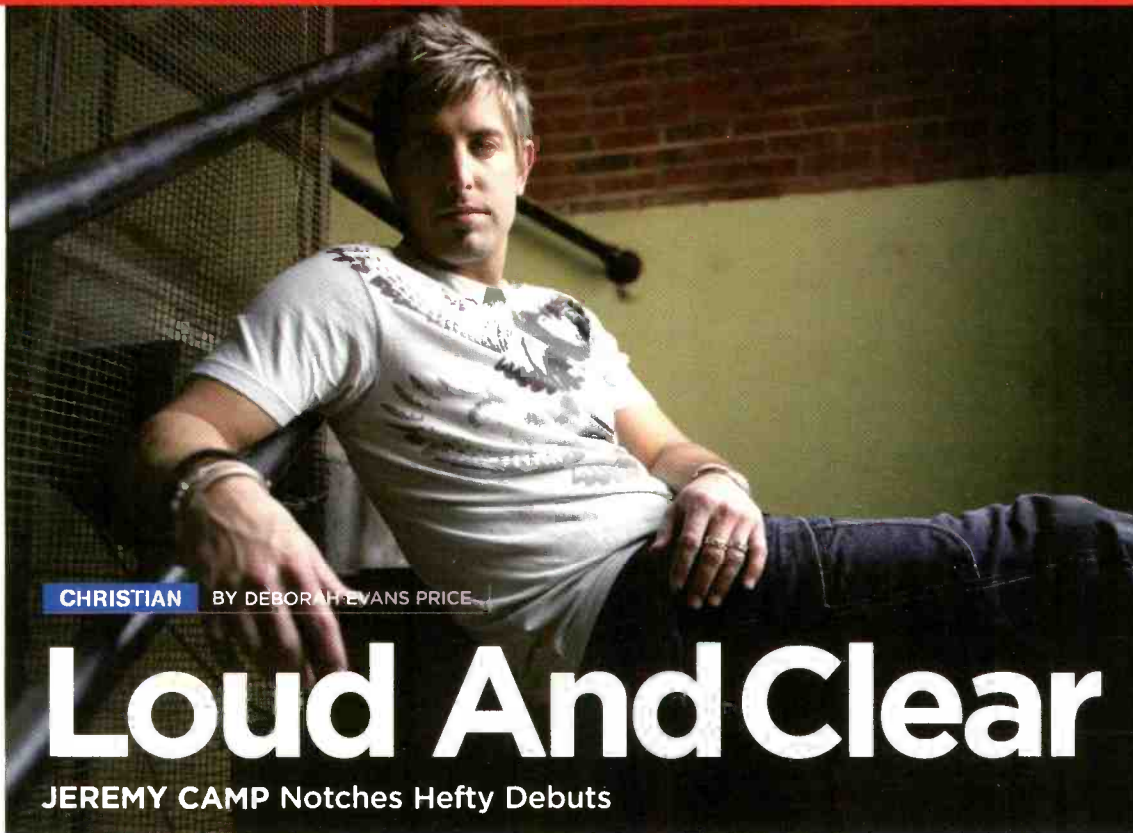
Springsteen is also the only artist to achieve that distinction twice; "Radio Nowhere" debuted in the same position in 2007 and eventually climbed to No. 2. Since the chart launched in 1996, Springsteen has notched five top 10s, includ-

ing a No. 1 with "The Rising." "Dream" debuted during a Nov. 2 rally for Barack Obama in Cleveland. Excerpts from the studio version soundtracked a package of NFL highlights that aired Nov. 16 on NBC, while the full track hit digital retailers Nov. 24. In its debut week, the song sold 8,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

A second new track from the album, "My Lucky Day," went live Dec. 1 on Amazon and MySpace. Fresh off winning the top tour honor at the Billboard Touring Awards, Springsteen and the E Street Band will return to live duty Feb. 1 as part of the Super Bowl XLIII halftime show in Tampa, Fla. —Jonathan Cohen



TAKE THAT: COURTESY OF UMG; SPRINGSTEEN: DANNY CLINCH/NESTY; COURTESY OF UMG, LATINO



CHRISTIAN BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

Loud And Clear

JEREMY CAMP Notches Hefty Debuts

It's a cold winter morning at a Starbucks outside Nashville, and Jeremy Camp raises his voice slightly to be heard above the whirl of barista activity. It may be hard to hear him in this environment, but Camp's music is ringing loud and clear this week on the Billboard charts.

His new BEC Recordings set "Speaking Louder Than Before" debuts this week at No. 2 on Top Christian Albums and No. 38 on the Billboard 200, after selling 33,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"It's a call to action, but a call to action through love," Camp says of the

new project. "If you are a believer, you don't have to go out and be a street evangelist. We all have the opportunity to share the gospel and we should—that's what we were called to do. If you don't have much passion, well, get on your face and pray for the passion and get into the word of God. That's what I've been sharing. That's the whole concept."

Camp's desire to share his faith, combined with an amazing voice and great songwriting chops, has made him one of the Christian industry's most successful artists. Since releasing his 2002 debut album, "Stay," the Indiana native has had three albums certified

gold, won five Dove Awards—including two male vocalist of the year titles—and earned three ASCAP Christian songwriter of the year honors.

The new album marks the first time he's worked with veteran producer Brown Bannister and the first time Camp has served as co-producer. Inspiration was still striking even at the last minute: The first single "There Will Be a Day" "wasn't even supposed to be on the record because it wasn't in existence a month before we started recording," Camp says of the song, which is No. 2 on Hot Christian Songs.

Though only 30, Camp has experienced a tremendous amount of heart-

break. His first wife died of ovarian cancer just four-and-a-half months after their marriage. Now remarried and a father of two daughters, Camp's past still colors his work, especially on such songs as "Healing Hand of God," a poignant ballad about surviving tragedy with God's help.

"Speaking Louder Than Before" is accompanied by 12 video devotionals, which can be accessed via a link on the CD to a special Web site or on the DVD that comes with the expanded edition of the album.

"He is sharing thoughts behind the songs based on scripture and pulling life applications out of them," BEC Recordings GM Tyson Paoletti says. Camp adds, "I want to eventually do a study guide that [can] go along with videos to have material for youth groups."

BEC is encouraging fans to participate in the "Speak Louder" concept through a YouTube contest, where they can upload videos to the site and "speak up about whatever is on their mind." Entrants can win autographed memorabilia and meet-and-greets with Camp.

At retail, Wal-Mart has an exclusive track with its version of "Speaking Louder Than Before," while iTunes has an exclusive Christmas tune, "Christ Has Come." During street week, Camp did album-launch events in Dallas and Corona, Calif. In addition to touring the United States in 2009, he's planning a European jaunt that will take him to Ireland, Scotland, the Netherlands and Germany. ...



THEY'VE GOT THE TOUCH

Getting booked onto a major U.S. festival is only a dream for most developing bands. But since playing its first show last December, Austin-based rock act Electric Touch has performed at the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival, the Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival, Lollapalooza, the Virgin Mobile Festival and the Austin City Limits Music Festival, among others.

Electric Touch released its self-titled debut album in late August on Justice Records, and since then the band has spent most of its time on the road "playing in front of as many people as possible" and "winning over one fan at a time," singer/guitarist Shane Lawlor says.

Along with appearances this year at South by Southwest in Austin, Electric Touch has opened for such acts as the Bravery and the Fratellis. Upcoming plans include a handful of gigs in December with Hoobastank and other club dates.

"We've played in front of two people before and we've played in front of 10,000 people before," Lawlor says. "We're always going to be the band that gives everything we've got, to our last drop of sweat on the stage."

The roadwork has helped Electric Touch land additional bookings, according to Justice Records owner Randall Jamail. "The band's name recognition is getting out there and people are starting to talk about the band more," he says. "If they can continue to perform in new markets, the sale of the record is going to continue."

Along for the ride is veteran concert promoter and Electric Touch manager Louis Messina, who is also the father of the band's guitarist Christopher Leigh and drummer Louis Messina Jr. As manager, Messina has exposed Electric Touch to some of the live entertainment business' key decision-makers, but concert promoters and talent buyers won't book a "band that they don't think is worthy of the slot," Jamail says.

Lawlor acknowledges that the elder Messina's credibility in the concert industry has helped open doors for Electric Touch, "but it's up to us to walk through those doors and give it everything we've got," he says. Messina is just as determined: "It's my last challenge in the business to break and get them to the top." —Mitchell Peters

CAMP: DAVE HILL; CUOMO: COURTESY OF UMG; ELECTRIC TOUCH: ALEXANDRA VALENTI



RIVERS, DEEP

A Jermaine Dupri song about partying excessively seems a far cry from a Brian Wilson song about sweetly loving a girl. The tie that binds these polar opposites of pop music is the ever-eccentric Rivers Cuomo. As the frontman for Weezer, Cuomo has sang wistfully about time spent alone in the garage, and with the arrival of "Alone II," his second album of rare and unreleased solo tracks, it's becoming more and more obvious he spent that time recording heaps of music.

The DGC/Interscope album debuts this week at No. 2 on Billboard's Heatseekers chart with U.S. sales of 6,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The first volume in the series, released almost exactly a year ago, started with 14,000 and has gone on to sell 43,000.

"I knew I had a lot more recordings that I wanted to share with the world, but I wanted to wait and see how 'Alone I' was received," Cuomo says. Satisfied with the results, he delved back into the vaults. "I love the process of listening to all the old recordings and picking my favorites and going through my old journals and seeing what I was think-

ing when I was writing these songs."

About that Dupri song: The producer/mogul sent Cuomo a demo of "Can't Stop Partying," but the lyrics didn't initially jive with Cuomo's style. He tried to write his own, but "every line I came up with just sounded stupid compared with his, so I went back and changed the music and gave it some very sad chords filled with longing." The cover of Wilson's "Don't Worry Baby" follows years of study of the artist's output by Cuomo, which he says has guided his own songwriting.

Cuomo "carefully transcribed" the song's five-part harmonies "in my bedroom on my tape player. But then I added the element of the modern crunchy-guitar sound. And that's what really helped me figure out what I wanted to do as a songwriter and a performer in Weezer."

Weezer will be back on the road next spring, possibly with Oasis, in support of its 2008 self-titled release, dubbed "The Red Album." The group is also putting together its own collection of unreleased material, appropriately titled "Odds and Ends." —Lavinia Jones Wright

THE HOT BOX

A WEEKLY ROUNDUP OF NOTABLE CHART ACHIEVEMENTS



AMA-ZING IMPACT

>> The Impact of ABC's Nov. 23 broadcast of the American Music Awards (hosted by Jimmy Kimmel, above)—combined with increased holiday shopping—is felt all over the charts this week. Non-debuting albums by 19 of 21 AMA performers see gains on the Billboard 200 and Top Pop Catalog Albums.

COMEDY TIDINGS

>> The soundtrack to Stephen Colbert's TV special "A Colbert Christmas" bows at No. 119 on the Billboard 200 and at No. 15 on Top Digital Albums. The digital-exclusive album features John Legend, Toby Keith and Willie Nelson, among others.



BRITNEY'S BACK

>> Britney Spears' sixth studio album, "Circus," is on course to become her fifth No. 1 set next week as it led Nielsen SoundScan's Dec. 3 Building chart. Akon's new, "Freedom" looks good for the runner-up slot.

CHART BEAT

>> Elvis Presley returns to Hot Country Songs for the first time in almost 11 years. Paired with Carrie Underwood on "I'll Be Home for Christmas" (RCA) from his "Christmas Duets" album, Presley makes his 67th appearance on this tally, expanding his chart span to 53 years and five months. This is Underwood's 13th chart entry and her first with another artist since her debut single teamed her with Rascal Flatts.

>> Presley isn't the only star who has played the Las Vegas Hilton to have a chart debut this week. Current show-stopper Barry Manilow is new at No. 14 on the Billboard 200 with "The Greatest Songs of the Eighties." This is Manilow's 34th album to chart in 34 years and three weeks.

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

Billboard

CHARTS

Light Bows Greet Kanye West, Roses' Return

Think of Kanye West's "808s & Heartbreak" as the turkey in your Thanksgiving dinner. (And no, I'm not taking a poorly worded potshot.) Instead of being the 20-pound bird that some thought, it turned out to be a still-tasty 12-pound gobbler. That's not to say the album's 450,000-unit debut at No. 1 is nothing to feast on. However, many label sales and distribution executives—including some at Universal Music Group—certainly projected higher first-week sales than what it achieved.

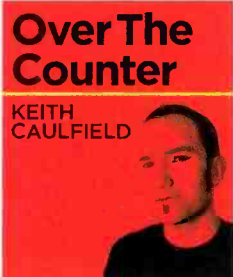
West's last album, 2007's "Graduation," started with 957,000 when it bowed at No. 1. Before that, his No. 1-debuting sophomore set, "Late Registration," chalked up an 860,000-unit entry in 2005, while his premiere effort, "The College Dropout," started at No. 2 with 441,000 in 2004.

The hefty debut for "Graduation"—the biggest sales week of 2007—was perhaps helped by an overhyped showdown with 50 Cent's "Curtis," which came out the same day. Additionally, "Graduation" was armed with the radio hit "Stronger." In the week of the album's debut, it was No. 7 on the Hot 100 Airplay

chart with 90.6 million in radio audience. This week "Love Lockdown," the lead track from "808s," is No. 11 with 69.3 million in audience.

GUNS NOT SO BLAZING: The long-awaited new Guns N' Roses album finally arrives... not with an assumed gangbuster week, but rather a just-OK 261,000 at No. 3.

What happened? Wasn't this one of the most-anticipated and talked-about albums of all time? Wasn't it so steeped in myth and lore that a massive debut week was all but assured? Maybe not.



Over The Counter

KEITH CAULFIELD

The release of AC/DC's "Black Ice," while not a perfect comparison, comes to mind. Like Guns N' Roses, AC/DC was a band that had been off the radar for a while and opted to partner with one retailer for the release of its own

long-awaited new album. "Ice" ultimately chilled with 784,000 in its debut week—the veteran group's best sales frame since Nielsen SoundScan started in 1991.

And now we have GNR's album, coming 17 years after its last studio set of original material, in an exclusive deal with Best Buy (and iTunes). And it starts with much less.



So, why didn't GNR's number even get close to AC/DC's?

Wal-Mart gave AC/DC the red carpet treatment. The retailer made sure the album had the appearance of an event record—something every Wal-Mart shopper needed to own. If that didn't convince consumers, maybe their famed store-within-a-store display did.

With Best Buy stores' massive amount of floor space, filled with TVs and audio equipment, I expected to see and hear GNR's videos and music at the location I visited on street date. Well, that wasn't the case, but the fixture displaying the "Chinese" CDs was absolutely unmissable. It practically blocked the entrance. Generally speaking, however, from the store locations our staffers visited during release week, Best Buy's promotion was on a different scale to what Wal-Mart

did for AC/DC.

And I know—no one ever said Best Buy was going to stage a Wal-Mart-like campaign for "Chinese Democracy." But, because of AC/DC's Wal-Mart deal, there are bound to be people making comparisons.

But beyond the retail promotion of "Chinese Democracy," what about the intangibles?

Maybe the public got tired of waiting for an album that was probably never going to live up to their expectations? Maybe fans were turned off by the ever-shifting lineup of band members? Maybe it would have sold more had the group made a promotional appearance in support of the release? Perhaps it would have started stronger had it been available to all retailers?

Or, maybe we should just take a step back, breathe and see where the album goes from here. There very well may be quite a long, healthy road ahead for "Chinese Democracy."

FOR THE RECORD: Nielsen SoundScan reprocessed its sales charts last week after the magazine had already been sent to press early because of the Thanksgiving holiday. Our Web sites reflected the correct chart information, and in this issue, all of the "last week" positions on the charts correspond to a title's correct ranking.

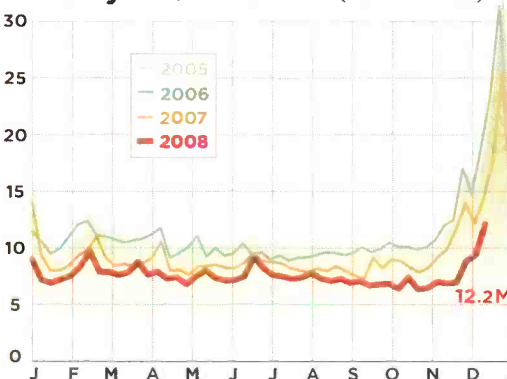
Market Watch A Weekly National Music Sales Report

Weekly Unit Sales

	ALBUMS	DIGITAL ALBUMS*	DIGITAL TRACKS
This Week	12,208,000	1,717,000	20,095,000
Last Week	9,457,000	1,358,000	17,394,000
Change	29.1%	26.4%	15.5%
This Week Last Year	12,265,000	1,033,000	15,173,000
Change	-0.5%	66.2%	32.4%

*Digital album sales are also counted within album sales.

Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)



Year-To-Date

	2007	2008	CHANGE
OVERALL UNIT SALES			
Albums	428,018,000	369,967,000	-13.6%
Digital Tracks	750,615,000	962,983,000	28.3%
Store Singles	2,015,000	1,525,000	-24.3%
Total	1,180,648,000	1,334,475,000	13.0%
Albums w/TEA*	503,079,500	466,265,300	-7.3%

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

DIGITAL TRACKS SALES



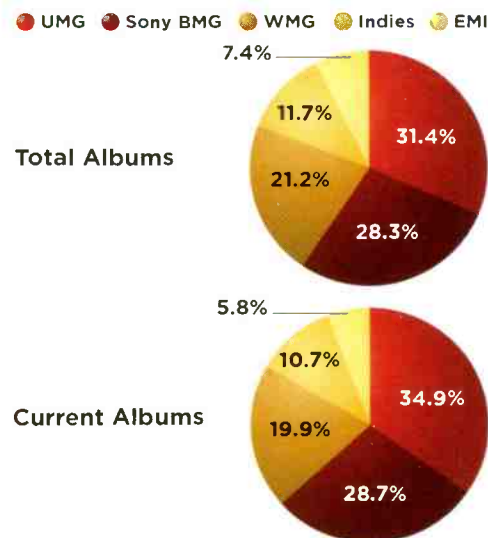
SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

	2007	2008	CHANGE
CD	381,949,000	309,283,000	-19.0%
Digital	44,867,000	58,927,000	31.3%
Cassette	261,000	78,000	-70.1%
Other	941,000	1,679,000	78.4%

For week ending Nov. 30, 2008. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected and provided by

nielsen SoundScan

Distributors' Market Share: 11/03/08-11/30/08



Main Billboard 200 chart table with columns for Rank, Artist, Title, and Peak Position. Top entries include Kanye West (808s & Heartbreak), Taylor Swift (Fearless), Guns N' Roses (Chinese Democracy), and Beyonce (I Am...Sasha Fierce).



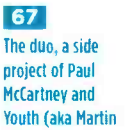
This album, which debuts with 78,000, has Manilow covering Rick Astley's No. 1 Billboard Hot 100 hit "Never Gonna Give You Up."



The band's album at No. 25 (up 127%) was reissued Nov. 23 with an EP's worth of material, which was also offered separately (77,000).



The act's last concert release, 2003's "Live in Texas," bowed at No. 23 with 89,000. This new set (31,000) was recorded June 29 at the Projekt Revolution's tour stop in England.



The duo, a side project of Paul McCartney and Youth (aka Martin Glover), reaches a Billboard chart for the first time with its third album (17,000).



The debut album from the singer/guitarist starts with 11,000. The set's lead single, "Let It Rock," peaked at No. 5 on the Billboard Hot 100 in October.

Continuation of the Billboard 200 chart table, showing ranks 51 through 100. Top entries include Hinder (Take It To The Limit), Varies Artists (WOW Hits 2009), and Pacer Setter (Point of Grace).

THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX table listing artists and their corresponding chart positions.

Continuation of THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX table, listing artists from K to Z.

HOT COUNTRY SONGS

Table listing Hot Country Songs with columns: This Week, Last Week, 2 Weeks Ago, Weeks on Chart, Title, Artist, and Peak Position. #1: CHICKEN FRIED by Zac Brown Band.



The song is Currington's sixth top 10 and his first since "Good Directions" logged 13 weeks at that level in spring 2007, which included three weeks at No. 1.



Up 1.4 million impressions, the third single from "Good Time" (No. 22 on Top Country Albums) is Jackson's 49th top 10.



The duo's collaboration with McEntire swipes the Greatest Gainer nod (up 3.2 million impressions) in its eighth chart week.

Table listing Hot Country Songs (continued) with columns: This Week, Last Week, 2 Weeks Ago, Weeks on Chart, Title, Artist, and Peak Position. #26: THAT'S A MAN by Jack Ingram.

TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS

Table listing Top Country Albums with columns: This Week, Last Week, 2 Weeks Ago, Weeks on Chart, Artist, Title, and Peak Position. #1: FEARLESS by Taylor Swift.



Black Friday shopping and an American Music Awards win spike "Fearless" by 50,000 copies, earning it double Greatest Gainer roses (No. 2 on the Billboard 200).



Adkins' 10th charted title is his ninth straight top 10 bow (37,000 copies). Two of those sets opened at No. 1.



Evans swipes the Pacesetter award (up 170%) after singing the national anthem Nov. 29 on CBS to kick off the Auburn-Alabama football game.

Table listing Top Country Albums (continued) with columns: This Week, Last Week, 2 Weeks Ago, Weeks on Chart, Artist, Title, and Peak Position. #26: GREATEST HITS LIMITED EDITION by Tim McGraw.

HOT COUNTRY SONGS: *11 Country stations are electronically monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems. 24-hour-a-day, 7-days-a-week. Airplay averaged to songs appearing in the top 20 on both the BDS Airplay and Audience charts for the first time with increases in both directions and audience.

TOP R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, ARTIST, Title, CERT., PEAK POSITION. Top entries include Kanye West (808s & Heartbreak), Ludacris (Theater Of The Mind), Beyonce (I Am...Sasha Fierce), T.I. (Paper Trail), T-Pain (Thr33 Ringz), E-40 (The Ball Street Journal), John Legend (Evolver), Lil Wayne (Tha Carter III), Ne-Yo (Year Of The Gentleman), Jazmine Sullivan (Fearless), Jennifer Hudson (Jennifer Hudson), Young Jeezy (The Recession), Rihanna (Good Girl Gone Bad), Robin Thicke (Something Else), DJ Khaled Presents Ace Hood (Gutta), Seal (Soul), Slim (Love's Crazy), Jaheim (Classic Jaheim Vol. 1), Mary Mary (The Sound), The Game (LAX), Usher (Here I Stand), SPM (The Last Chair Violinist), Q-Tip (The Renaissance), Keyshia Cole (Just Like You), Eric Benet (Love & Life).



"The Ball Street Journal" halts E-40's streak of consecutive top five debuts at eight. His previous set, "My Ghetto Report Card," bowed at No. 1 in 2006.

Now signed to Atlantic, the crooner's hits package is compiled from his days with sister label Warner Bros.



Some of the chart's more senior titles benefit from Black Friday excitement. Keyshia Cole (pictured), moves 33-24 (up 74%), Chris Brown goes 35-26 (up 86%), and Mariah Carey glides 55-35 (up 105%).

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, ARTIST, Title, CERT., PEAK POSITION. Top entries include Chris Brown (Exclusive), Deborah Cox (The Promise), Brian McKnight (I'll Be Home For Christmas), DJ Khaled (We Global), Marvin Sapp (Thirsty), Joe (Joe Thomas, New Man), Raphael Saadiq (The Way I See It), Wayne Brady (A Long Time Coming), Mary J. Blige (Growing Pains), Mariah Carey (E=MC2), Alicia Keys (As I Am), Various Artists (Christmas In The City 2), Solange (Sol-Angel & The Hadley St. Dreams), 2 Krayze (2 Krayze), Ashanti (The Declaration), Lil' Keke (Loved By Few Hated By Many), Estelle (Shine), Musiq Soulchild (A Philly Soul Christmas (EP)), Nelly (Brass Knuckles), Nas (Untitled), Plies (Definition Of Real), San Quinn (From A Boy To A Man), Ledisi (It's Christmas), Pastor Troy (T.R.O.Y.), Unk (Second Season).

MAINSTREAM R&B/HIP-HOP

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST, HIT PREDICT. Top entries include Single Ladies (Put A Ring On It) by Beyonce, Live Your Life by T.I. feat. Rihanna, Bust Your Windows by Jazmine Sullivan, Chopped 'N' Skrewed by T-Pain feat. Ludacris, Whatever You Like by T.I., Miss Independent by Ne-Yo, Mrs. Officer by Lil Wayne feat. Bobby Valentino & Kidd Kidd, Green Light by John Legend feat. Andre 3000, Can't Believe It by T-Pain feat. Lil Wayne, Trading Places by Usher, Playa Cardz Right by Keyshia Cole feat. 2Pac, Pop Champagne by J. Cole & Ron Browz, Swagga Like Us by Jay-Z & T.I. feat. Kanye West & Lil Wayne, Get Up by 50 Cent, Spotlight by Jennifer Hudson, One More Drink by Ludacris co-starring T-Pain, Put It On Ya Plies feat. Chris J., If I Were a Boy by Beyonce, When It Hurts by Avant, So Fly by Slim feat. Yung Joc, Ifuleave by Musiq Soulchild feat. Mary J. Blige, Just Like Me by Jamie Foxx feat. T.I., Heartless by Kanye West, BEEP by Bobby Valentino feat. Yung Joc, Ride by Ace Hood feat. Trey Songz.

ADULT R&B

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST, HIT PREDICT. Top entries include Here I Stand by Usher, The Sweetest Love by Robin Thicke, Ifuleave by Musiq Soulchild feat. Mary J. Blige, Spotlight by Jennifer Hudson, Nothing Left to Say by Mint Condition, Need U Bad by Jazmine Sullivan, You're the Only One by Eric Benet, Heaven Sent by Keyshia Cole, When It Hurts by Avant, Superwoman by Alicia Keys, Never Would Have Made It by Marvin Sapp, Magic by Robin Thicke, There Goes My Baby by Charlie Wilson, Miss Independent by Ne-Yo, The River by Noel Gourdin, Cool by Anthony Hamilton feat. David Banner, Love That Girl by Raphael Saadiq, The Hunger by Eric Benet, Get Up by Mary Mary, Green Light by John Legend feat. Andre 3000, Ordinary by Wayne Brady, Did You Ever Love Me by Deborah Cox, At Last by Beyonce, From My Heart to Yours by Laura Izibor, A Few Reasons by Dwele.

RHYTHMIC

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST, HIT PREDICT. Top entries include Live Your Life by T.I. feat. Rihanna, Whatever You Like by T.I., Miss Independent by Ne-Yo, Right Now (Na Na Na) by Akon, Mrs. Officer by Lil Wayne feat. Bobby Valentino & Kidd Kidd, Can't Believe It by T-Pain feat. Lil Wayne, Love Lockdown by Kanye West, If I Were a Boy by Beyonce, Single Ladies (Put A Ring On It) by Beyonce, One More Drink by Ludacris co-starring T-Pain, Heartless by Kanye West, My Life by The Game feat. Lil Wayne, Green Light by John Legend feat. Andre 3000, Pop Champagne by J. Cole & Ron Browz, Disturbia by Rihanna, Swagga Like Us by Jay-Z & T.I. feat. Kanye West & Lil Wayne, Put It On Ya Plies feat. Chris J., Bust Your Windows by Jazmine Sullivan, Chopped 'N' Skrewed by T-Pain feat. Ludacris, I'm So Paid by Akon feat. Lil Wayne, Hot N Cold by Katy Perry.

HOT RAP SONGS

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHART, TITLE, ARTIST, HIT PREDICT. Top entries include Live Your Life by T.I. feat. Rihanna, Whatever You Like by T.I., Mrs. Officer by Lil Wayne feat. Bobby Valentino & Kidd Kidd, Pop Champagne by J. Cole & Ron Browz, One More Drink by Ludacris co-starring T-Pain, Swagga Like Us by Jay-Z & T.I. feat. Kanye West & Lil Wayne, Heartless by Kanye West, Put It On Ya Plies feat. Chris J., Got Money by Lil Wayne feat. T-Pain, My Life by Lil Wayne feat. Lil Wayne, Get Up by 50 Cent, Arab Money by Busta Rhymes, Paper Planes by M.I.A., Ride by Ace Hood feat. Trey Songz, Put On Young Jeezy feat. Kanye West, Get Like Me by David Banner feat. Chris Brown & Sean Garrett, My President Young Jeezy feat. Nas, Lost by Gorilla Zoe feat. Lil Wayne, By My Side by JadaKiss feat. Ne-Yo, Krazy by Pitbull feat. Lil Jon, What Them Girls Like by Ludacris co-starring Chris Brown & Sean Garrett, Show Out by Unk, Dangerous by Kardinal Offishall feat. Akon, Bird Walk by Soulja Boy Tell'em, Bust It Open by Lil Wil.

JAPAN	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(HANSHIN/SOUNDCAN JAPAN/PLANTECH) DECEMBER 2, 2008	
1	NEW
2	2
3	NEW
4	NEW
5	NEW
6	NEW
7	4
8	NEW
9	7
10	13

UNITED KINGDOM	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(THE OFFICIAL UK CHARTS CO.) NOVEMBER 30, 2008	
1	NEW
2	NEW
3	NEW
4	1
5	NEW
6	3
7	6
8	8
9	5
10	7

GERMANY	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(MEDIA CONTROL) DECEMBER 2, 2008	
1	NEW
2	NEW
3	2
4	1
5	5
6	16
7	6
8	NEW
9	11
10	8

EURO DIGITAL SONGS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(NIELSEN SOUNDCAN INTERNATIONAL) DECEMBER 13, 2008	
1	NEW
2	2
3	1
4	5
5	4
6	3
7	NEW
8	6
9	10
10	7
11	9
12	16
13	8
14	NEW
15	13
16	17
17	14
18	11
19	18
20	12

EURO SINGLES SALES	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
DECEMBER 3, 2008	
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	5
5	7
6	8
7	4
8	NEW
9	6
10	NEW
11	10
12	9
13	17
14	13
15	11

FRANCE	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(SNEP/IFOP/TITE-LIVE) DECEMBER 3, 2008	
1	1
2	6
3	2
4	4
5	NEW
6	NEW
7	8
8	5
9	3
10	26

CANADA	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(NIELSEN BDS/SOUNDCAN) DECEMBER 13, 2008	
1	NEW
2	1
3	2
4	NEW
5	3
6	NEW
7	4
8	5
9	6
10	14

AUSTRALIA	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(ARIA) NOVEMBER 30, 2008	
1	1
2	2
3	NEW
4	NEW
5	3
6	4
7	7
8	5
9	9
10	8

EURO DIGITAL SONGS SPOTLIGHT	
NETHERLANDS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(NIELSEN SOUNDCAN INTERNATIONAL) DECEMBER 13, 2008	
1	2
2	3
3	1
4	6
5	4
6	NEW
7	NEW
8	5
9	NEW
10	6

EURO ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
DECEMBER 3, 2008	
1	36
2	NEW
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	6
7	7
8	1
9	NEW
10	10
11	83
12	8
13	11
14	NEW
15	NEW

ITALY	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(FIMI/NIELSEN) DECEMBER 1, 2008	
1	1
2	2
3	NEW
4	3
5	NEW
6	NEW
7	5
8	4
9	8
10	6

SPAIN	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(PROMUSICAE/MEDIA) DECEMBER 3, 2008	
1	1
2	2
3	6
4	4
5	3
6	5
7	NEW
8	12
9	NEW
10	9

PORTUGAL	
ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(RIM) DECEMBER 2, 2008	
1	NEW
2	1
3	3
4	2
5	8
6	4
7	9
8	7
9	NEW
10	NEW

French rapper Booba goes four for four as his new album enters the France Albums chart at No. 6. All four of his releases have reached the top 10.

EURO RADIO AIRPLAY	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
DECEMBER 3, 2008	
1	2
2	1
3	4
4	5
5	13
6	NEW
7	9
8	7
9	3
10	6
11	11
12	10
13	12
14	15
15	16

NETHERLANDS	
SINGLES	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(MEGA CHARTS BV) NOVEMBER 28, 2008	
1	1
2	2
3	12
4	34
5	8

ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
1	1
2	3
3	4
4	NEW
5	2

AUSTRIA	
SINGLES	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(AUSTRIAN IFPI/AUSTRIA TOP 40) DECEMBER 1, 2008	
1	2
2	1
3	7
4	3
5	9

ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
1	NEW
2	1
3	NEW
4	3
5	2

NORWAY	
SINGLES	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(VERDENS GANG NORWAY) DECEMBER 2, 2008	
1	1
2	2
3	19
4	4
5	13

ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
1	NEW
2	5
3	1
4	8
5	6

DENMARK	
SINGLES	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
(IFPI/NIELSEN MARKETING RESEARCH) DECEMBER 3, 2008	
1	2
2	1
3	3
4	10
5	4

ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
1	1
2	2
3	NEW
4	4
5	11

EURO ALBUMS	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
DECEMBER 3, 2008	
1	2
2	1
3	4
4	5
5	13
6	NEW
7	9
8	7
9	3
10	6
11	11
12	10
13	12
14	15
15	16

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RECORD COMPANIES: Island Def Jam Music Group elevates **Noah Sheer** to VP of top 40 promotion. He was senior director of rhythm promotion.

Robbins Nashville promotes **Joe Redmond** to director of national promotion. He was director of promotion for the Northeast and will retain those duties.

Warner Music Latina in Miami names **Miguel Garrocho** director of marketing. He founded **GIG Entertainment Music Group** in Los Angeles.

Sony BMG International names **Caron Veazey** VP. She was senior VP of marketing at Island Def Jam Music Group.



SHEER

REDMOND

VEAZEY

WILLIAMS

PUBLISHING: Composer **Nigel Westlake** and **J. Albert & Son CEO Tim Prescott** have been elected to the respective boards of the **Australasian Performing Right Assn.** and sister organization the **Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners' Society**.

TOURING: The **Ryman Auditorium** in Nashville names **Sally Williams** GM. She succeeds **G. Scott Walden**, who is leaving to pursue other ventures. Williams was senior manager of event programming and development at the **Country Music Assn.**

RADIO: **Dial Global** promotes **Kareem Alexander** to national account manager, **Scott Deaner** to senior research analyst and **Nicole Leonardi** to senior account coordinator. Alexander was senior marketing and research analyst, Deaner was research analyst, and Leonardi was sales associate.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOODWORKS

HIP-HOP AUCTION FIGHTS DIABETES

It's safe to say that **Rock the Bells** founder/organizer **Chang Weisberg** of **Guerilla Union** lists reuniting **Rage Against the Machine** for the hip-hop festival's 2007 edition as a noteworthy accomplishment. But if a recently launched online charity auction between **Guerilla Union** and **Hip Hop Official** to raise awareness for diabetes "can help somebody [detect the disease] early... it might be better" than the reunion, he says with a laugh.

Through Dec. 15, visitors of guerillaunion.com/auction can bid on memorabilia from the 2008 **Rock the Bells** North American amphitheater tour, which featured such acts as **A Tribe Called Quest**, **Nas**, **Mos Def**, **De La Soul**, **Rakim**, **Pharcyde**, **Santogold**, **Kid Sister**, **Cool Kids** and **Murs**, among others.

"All the artists participated and every day we still get more new things to offer up," Weisberg says.

Proceeds from the auction will go to the **American Diabetes Assn.**, as well as trusts set up in memory of hip-hop producer/rapper **J Dilla** and former **Motown** president/CEO **Jheryl Busby**, according to Weisberg.

ARTISTS PERFORM FOR INVISIBLE CHILDREN

Members of **Thrice** (**Dustin Kensrue**), **Switchfoot** (**Jon Foreman**), **Saves the Day** (**Chris Conley**) and **Sparta** (**Jim Ward**) will perform acoustic sets Dec. 19 at the **Troubadour** in Los Angeles to help raise awareness for **Invisible Children**, a nonprofit group that provides education and economic relief to northern Uganda.

"Whenever they call or have a big event happening, I'm always really excited to support when I can," says Foreman, who is recording a new **Switchfoot** album in San Diego. "If music can come alongside what they're doing, it's an honor."

Tickets for the concert are available through ticketmaster.com for \$30.

—Mitchell Peters

BACKBEAT



Billboard publisher **Howard Appelbaum**, left, with keynote **Gene Simmons**, Nielsen Business Media senior VP of finance **Derek Irwin** and Nielsen senior VP of human resources **Michael Alicea**.

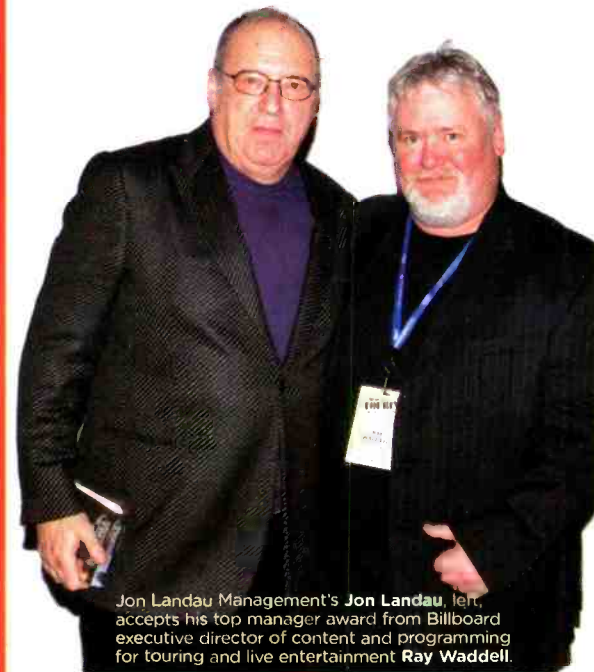


Attendees network during a coffee break sponsored by **Pioneer Coach**.

BILLBOARD TOURING CONFERENCE & AWARDS

The touring industry descended on the **Billboard Touring Conference and Awards**, held Nov. 19-20 at the **Roosevelt Hotel** in New York. The event notched record attendance in its fifth year and featured a provocative keynote from **Gene Simmons**, followed by a packed-house pre-awards cocktail reception co-hosted by **Arena Network** and **Tickets.com**. It all culminated with the **Billboard Touring Awards**, sponsored by **Wells Fargo**, with the **Allman Brothers Band** and **Widespread Panic** in the house. Additional sponsors included **Ticketmaster**, **Eventful** and **Alltel Arena**. PHOTOS: COURTESY OF RICK GILBERT/SKYHOOK ENTERTAINMENT

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Jon Landau Management's **Jon Landau**, left, accepts his top manager award from **Billboard** executive director of content and programming for touring and live entertainment **Ray Waddell**.



XOXO Media Group chairman **Donna Dowless**, right, gets a laugh from **Allen Vella**, GM of Atlanta's **Fox Theatre**, left, and **Michael Marion**, GM of the **Alltel Arena** in North Little Rock, Ark., at the **Ticketmaster**-sponsored opening reception.



Havkins Rosenfeld Ritzert & Varriale partner **Carla Varriale** moderated the "Two Tickets to Paradise" panel.



Attendees join a round-table discussion.



Widespread Panic's **John Bell**, left, and **John "JoJo" Hermann** accept the **Road Warrior Award**.



The **Allman Brothers Band** was honored with the **Legend of Live Award**. From left: **Allman Brothers Band** drummers **Jaimoe** and **Butch Trucks**, **Billboard** editorial director **Bill Werde**, the band's **Gregg Allman** and the group's manager **Bert Holman**.



Gene Simmons had a bit of a mind of his own about how his Q&A would work, as Billboard executive director of content and programming for touring and live entertainment **Ray Waddell** listens attentively.



From left, Carroll, Guido & Groffman partner **Elliot Groffman**, moderator of the "Turn the Page" panel, with William Morris Agency contemporary music head **Marc Geiger** and Live Nation Northeast chairman **Jimmy Koplik**.



Superfly Presents president **Jonathan Mayers**, left, cracks up Live Nation Southwest chairman **Danny Zelisko** during the "Dance" panel, sponsored by i wireless Center.

BILLBOARD TOURING CONFERENCE & AWARDS

continued from page 65



Madison Square Garden Entertainment CCO **Melissa Ormond**, left, and MSGE VP **Laurie Jacoby** were on hand to receive the top arena award for the Garden and the top venue (10,000 seats or fewer) honor for Radio City Music Hall.

INSIDE TRACK

NOT ON HIS WATCH!

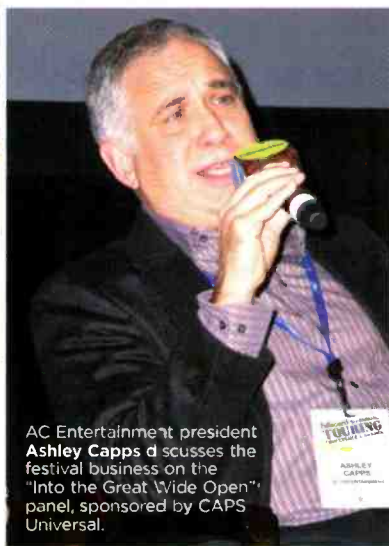
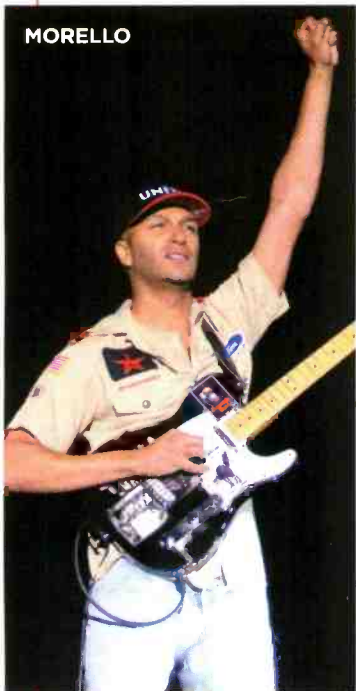
With two albums out, more than 50 songs that haven't yet been recorded and a world gone awry, Tom Morello plans to stay busy as the Nightwatchman for the foreseeable future. "It's not just going to keep going; this is my principal musical focus, as I see it, for the remainder of my life," he tells Track. "From the earliest

days of playing open-mic nights at coffeehouses, it was apparent to me that this music was as important to me as any music I've ever been involved in. It really encapsulates everything I want to do as an artist."

Morello insists the Nightwatchman will not let his guard down even during the term of President-elect Barack Obama—despite "eerie similarities" of "both having Kenyan fathers and white Midwestern mothers and having attended Harvard and... being devastatingly handsome."

Having reunited with his former band in 2007, Morello says he's "certain there will be more Rage Against the Machine shows"—and is equally sure that there will not be another Rage album. "There are no plans for that," the guitarist says. "We've had a wonderful year-and-a-half of playing shows, and I don't see any reason to not play more shows. The thing is there's only so many hours in the musical day, and mine are very occupied right now."

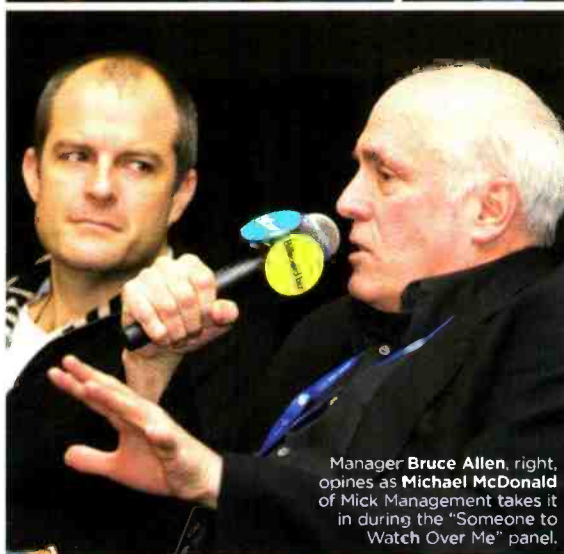
MORELLO



AC Entertainment president **Ashley Capps** discusses the festival business on the "Into the Great Wide Open" panel, sponsored by CAPS Universal.



Panel "The Dance," sponsored by the i wireless Center, featured **Doc McGhee** of McGhee Entertainment, center, who makes a point to Paradigm agent **Marty Diamond**, right, as Billboard executive director of content and programming for touring and live entertainment **Ray Waddell** looks on.



Manager **Bruce Allen**, right, opines as **Michael McDonald** of Mick Management takes it in during the "Someone to Watch Over Me" panel.



AEG Live CEO **Randy Phillips**, left, accepts the Eventful Fans' Choice Award for Kenny Chesney as best concert of the year from Eventful CEO **Jordan Glazier**, center, and Billboard editorial director **Bill Werde**.



The ticketing panel included, from left, Live Nation executive VP of business development **Greg Bettinelli**, Tickets.com chief commercial officer **Derek Palmer**, Veritix president **Jeff Kline**, StubHub director of music relations **Chuck LaVallee**, TicketNetwork CEO **Don Vaccaro** and Ticketmaster senior VP **Joe Freeman**.

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