**Not Much Yule Cheer For Music Business**

**BY ED CHRISTMAN**

NEW YORK—With the weakest holiday selling season in memory capping one of the recording industry’s toughest years, music merchandisers are glum about prospects for 2003.

Distribution executives privately suggest that as many as 500 music specialty stores could close in the first half of the year (see Retail Track, page 351), while retailers are calling on the major labels to rethink their approach to the business.

The gloomy outlook is a reaction to the weak album-sales totals generated in the six-week holiday selling period Nov. 18-Dec. 29, 2002, during which album sales totaled 138.5 million units—down 11.6% from the 156.8 million units Nielsen SoundScan counted in the corresponding period last year, when Thanksgiving came one week earlier. Merchants report that a sales rally on the last week of the year—with album sales increasing 4.7% to almost 26 million from last year’s 24.8 million units during the same period—was not enough to save the holiday selling season.

While some may wonder if the Grinch stole Christmas, music merchants blame unauthorized CD burning.

Assessing the holiday selling season, Value Central Entertainment chairman Randy Davidson calls it a "slow, slow Christmas." That was one of the more optimistic assessments of those polled by Billboard. Some merchants call the holiday selling season (Continued on page 60)

**U.S. Data Paint Bleak Picture**

**BY ED CHRISTMAN**

NEW YORK—If the U.S. music industry hit a wall in 2001, when album sales declined for the first time in the SoundScan era, last year the floor collapsed. Total album sales finished down 10.7% with about 681 million units scanned, vs. 762.8 million the previous year, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Many attribute the sales decline to unauthorized CD burning, though there is no hard data to back that up. But analyzing the Nielsen SoundScan year-end statistics, which cover the period from Jan. 1 to Dec. 29, 2002, it is clear that the CD itself has lost the ability to drive growth. The format generated 649.5 million scans last year compared with 712 million in 2001, a drop of 8.8%. It was the first sales decline since 1989. A corresponding bump in the corresponding period last year, when Thanksgiving came one week earlier. Merchants report that a sales rally on the last week of the year—with album sales increasing 4.7% to almost 26 million from last year’s 24.8 million units during the same period—was not enough to save the holiday selling season.

While some may wonder if the Grinch stole Christmas, music merchants blame unauthorized CD burning.

Assessing the holiday selling season, Value Central Entertainment chairman Randy Davidson calls it a "slow, slow Christmas." That was one of the more optimistic assessments of those polled by Billboard. Some merchants call the holiday selling season (Continued on page 60)

**WHV President Exits: Page 3 • NAB Pushes For More Deregulation: Page 4 • Industry Mourns Strummer, Smith: Page 5**
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By Bill Kihn\nLos Angeles—Warner Home Video (WHV) will waste no time in naming a replacement for its president, Warren N. Lieberfarb, who was fired Dec. 20, 2002. According to an industry insider, a successor will likely be appointed the week of Jan. 6 and come from within WHV’s senior management, which includes executive VPs Jim Cardwell, Marcia King, and Ed Burns. More than one executive is expected to take on added responsibilities.

WHV declined to comment on its reasons for ousting Lieberfarb, who served as WHV president for 20 years (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 24, 2002). Lieberfarb, who was nick-named “the godfather of DVD,” pioneered the DVD Video format 10 years ago and spearheaded its worldwide acceptance. He initially joined Warner Bros. as VP of marketing in 1975.

Lieberfarb, who says he was dismissed a few days before Warner Bros. publicly announced the move, tells Billboard that it was “policy decisions on organization and structure” that led to the decision. He recently proposed that the company combine its film- and video-related divisions to better manage its revenue streams. Lieberfarb, 59, adds he has no immediate plans.

Although it is unclear whether any other issues were related to his departure, separat-\nally Lieberfarb policies have caused con-\ntention in the video industry. During 2002, he pushed the Dallas-based Blockbuster chain to emphasize video sales over rentals. In August, he introduced a new trading platform in Europe that closed both the BHS and DVD and additionally charged rental deal-\ners a premium for the right to rent.

WHV’s policy continues to cause great bitterness in the U.K. rental community others in the international industry who saw DVD as a premium-priced format for the short term (see story, page 36).

Further, it is believed that Lieberfarb was not placed with Warner Bros.’ pension package. He did not earn roy-\nalties on the DVD technology he helped to create but was given a stock-option grant instead. The option’s value has de-\ncayed dramatically as AOL Time Warner’s stock has gone down this year, Lieberfarb declined to comment on this issue.

Despite his dismissal, Lieberfarb’s higher-ups rushed to praising him. Warner Bros. chair-\nman/CEO Barry Meyer said in a statement that Lieberfarb “constantly pursued how best to max-\imize our profits and how best to position Warner Bros. for the digital 21st-century world. Warner Bros., as well as our industry in general, will be reap-\n\ning the benefits of his efforts for de-\cades to come.”

In other home-video news, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertain-\ment president Patricia “Pat” Wyatt left the studio Dec. 19, 2002, to start her own production and financ-\ing company. Her still-unnamed com-\pany is expected to specialize in Japanese anima-\ning.

Fox has not yet named a replacement for Wyatt, and company executives could not be reached for comment at press time.

In a statement, Wyatt said: “It was a dif-\fcult decision to leave, but the opportu-\nity to grow as a creative professional and realize my passion for independent film is something I can’t pass up.”

Wyatt joined the studio in 1995, head-\ing up its licensing and merchandising division. In 1997, she was also named president of the North American home-\nentertainment division. During her five-\nyear stint in home entertainment, she helped bring in record-setting revenue for the fiscal years 1998-2002. She additionally helped ease in releases on the new DVD-Video format.

Additional reporting by Sam Andrews in London.

‘Godfather Of DVD’ Exits WHV

Musimex Label Joins Uni Family

Universal Expands Regional Mexican Efforts With VP Moreno

By Leila Cobr

Miami—As part of a concerted effort to expand its regional Mexican department, Universal Music Latino (UML) has named veteran executive Gilberto Moreno VP of its regional Mexican opera-\n\ions, effective immediately.

UML will also distribute Moreno’s regional Mexican label, Musimex, launched one year ago under the auspices of Sony Discos, which funded and distributed the label.

Under the new arrange-\n\ment, Moreno will continue to head Musimex, which special-\izes in sonidero and tierra-\ncaliente music, two tropical subgenres of regional Mexican. UML has Musimex under license and is in the process of acquiring the la-\nder.

Moreno, who replaces Malú Elizondo, will be based out of Houston—UML’s new headquarters for regional Mexican—although the division will maintain an office in Los Angeles. Likewise, Musimex’s operations will now move into UML’s Houston offices. No details were available regarding whether there were further personnel changes. Moreno will report to UML president John Echevarría, who is based in Miami.

“Gilberto’s trajectory in regional Mexican music has convinced us that he’s the person who can transform Universal into a leading regional Mexican label,” Echevarría says. “And he’s been working

with sonidero and tierra caliente music, which we think are the new sounds in regional Mexican.”

Moreno, who was Pronovia’s longtime GM, left the company at the end of 2001 to create Musimex, for which he signed a three-year ex-\nclu-\sion contract. The label was se-\vered late last year because, according to him, “we each had different expectations.

“The reality is, Universal doesn’t have a big regional Mexican roster, so by adding Musimex’s roster, it becomes a bigger label,” adds Moreno, who stresses that Musimex’s 20 or so artists do not enjoy preferential treatment.

“My goal is to develop Uni-\versal—not Musimex—be-\cause one will benefit from the other,” he says. Moreno also expects Musimex to ben-\efit from UML’s distribution. Already, his marquee act—Trini y La Leyenda—\nshipped more copies of its sophomore album, El Amor de Mi Vida (The Love of My Life), late last month than were sold of its debut album last year.

Musimex’s roster of developing artists will continue to focus on sonidero music, which should complement UML’s exist-\nging roster.

UML’s regional Mexican acts include two of the genre’s best-selling artists: norteño band Los Tucanes de Tijuana and Grupo Limite, the band led by female singer Alicia Villareal.

New Year Brings New Features To Billboard

Beginning in this issue, Billboard introduces two new alternating columns on the programming page. The two columns, which will run biweekly, will cover music programming on TV and radio, respectively. “Tuned In TV” appears on page 46, written by Carla Hay, Billboard associate editor/film & TV. “Tuned In Radio” will first appear in next week’s issue, written by Marc Schiffman, Billboard senior editor/news.

Also in this issue, Fred Bronson’s popular “Chart Beat” column becomes a regular feature in the Back Seat section (page 62).
BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The National Assn. of Broadcasters (NAB), the lobbying group for the country's radio and TV stations, has filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) calling for the dismantling of the remaining FCC ownership rules. The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) has also filed comments with the FCC on this issue. The FCC is studying whether the current ownership laws need to be modified.

In its Jan. 2 filing, the NAB says the commission should not rein in the consolidation of radio mandated by the 1996 Communications Act's deregulation, which opened the gate to wholesale mergers and station buyouts in radio.

The NAB says further deregulation for traditional radio and TV broadcasters is needed because such new competitors as cable, direct broadcast satellite, and online services have led to unfair competition. Traditional broadcasters must comply with "a thick set of rules" that new entrants do not have to worry about, it says, resulting in a shrinking percentage of ad revenue for traditional broadcasters. It asks the FCC for reforms that will allow for "an equitable playing field" for all competitors.

The radio landscape has changed drastically since 1996, with many small companies across the country being swallowed by such giants as Clear Channel Communications and Infinity. Many critics say consolidation of radio has led to a lack of diverse, localized programming and fewer recording artists getting a chance at airplay.

The NAB disagrees. "The commission," it says, "should not attempt to cut back on the level of ownership concentration specifically allowed by Congress by changing, at this juncture, its longstanding method of defining radio markets and for counting the number of stations in a market."

Finally, the trade group argues that the FCC does not have any authority nor "basis grounded in either diversity or competition concerns" to override Congress' judgments in the act about ownership consolidation in local radio markets.

The "available empirical evidence, including the FCC's recent- ly completed radio market studies . . . provides no diversity nor competition-related justifications for thwarting congressional intent as to the allowable levels of local radio consolidation."

"Numerous studies," it says, "conducted over the past several years have demonstrated that radio programming diversity has continued to increase since 1996."

Future of Music Coalition director of government relations Michael Bracy says, "There's a fundamental disagreement on how the radical restructuring of the radio industry has impacted citizens. The industry claims greater format diversity and lower advertising prices justify consolidation. Consumer groups and musicians are concerned about the loss of local programming input and decisions and the disappearance of a wider range of musical formats and genres."

The NAB calls for repeal of the rule prohibiting newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership and the limits on radio/TV cross-ownership, among other changes.

AFTRA opposes further ownership deregulation. Its filing claims that large media companies do not provide a diversity of voices and that such diversity is "critically essential for protecting not only the delivery of diverse viewpoints in news and information but also for protecting against a loss of local control over the media and anti-competitive business practices that ultimately harm the media industries and our culture."
Heart Failure Claims Punk Icon Joe Strummer Of The Clash

BY CHRIS MORRIS
LOS ANGELES—In his 1992 punk rock history England's Dreaming (St. Martin’s Press), critic Jon Savage reprints an entry from one of his journals describing an October 1976 performance by the Clash.

“In the News
• EMI Recorded Music senior VP Rupert Perry has exited the company after 52 years’ service. Perry has held the posts of chairman of the British Phonographic Industry from 1993 to 1995 and of the European regional board of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry from 2000 to 2002.
• The Atlantic Group laid off 12 of its 250 staffs Jan. 3. The move was forecast in a Dec. 27, 2002, internal memo from co-chairman Val Azoldi that stated restructuring was needed to “respond and adapt to the new realities of our business.” The bulk of the cuts came from Atlantic’s A&R department, including two VPs. Atlantic’s market share remained steady in 2002, according to Nielsen SoundScan.
• Buena Vista Home Entertainment filed a lawsuit against Blockbuster Jan. 2 in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, claiming that the rental chain owes the studio $120 million in unpaid VHD revenue-sharing money.
• Industry veteran Allen Kovac filed an arbitration lawsuit Dec. 31, 2002, in Los Angeles Superior Court alleging that Jeffrey Sydney, president/COO/CFO/secretary/counsel and part owner of Left Bank Records and Left Bank Management, manipulated and defrauded him. The two were business associates in Left Bank.
• Thirteen of the 15 European Union (EU) member nations, including its biggest music markets—the U.K. and Germany—missed the Dec. 22, 2002, deadline for implementing into domestic law the EU Copyright Directive, which aims to improve protection in the digital age.
• Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) has laid off COO Steve Smith and VP of public relations Howard Schacter in cost-cutting moves. Two other staffers in CCE’s New York-based public relations division were also let go.
• Shady/Aftermath/Interscope recording artist 50 Cent was arrested Dec. 31, 2002, and charged with two counts of criminal possession with a weapon.

Distribution Trailblazer Smith Dead At 72

BY ED CHRISTIAN
NEW YORK—Paul Smith, one of the architects of modern music distribution, died Dec. 31, 2002, of heart disease. He was 72.

Tower Records chairman emeritus Roger Smith—who, along with Henry Droz, the longtime president of WEA, founded his music industry career in 1999 as Universal Music & Video Distribution (UMVD) chairman—“set the pace for the record industry for a long time, and when those guys were running it, the record industry was much better and a lot more fun.”

UMVD president Jim Urie remembers Smith as “one of the giants of the music business and certainly, along with Henry [Droz], one of the real geniuses behind modern-day distribution. The return policies, the pricing models—all of those things go back to the days of Paul and Henry... There was never any question of where you stood with Paul.”

Smith began his career in the music industry working in an appliance store in St. Louis and was hired by Columbia in June 1958, when distribution sold both records and audio hardware. He was named a branch manager in Chicago in 1961 and moved around within the branch system at that level until 1974, when he was appointed CBS Records VP of sales and distribution. From 1978 to 1989 he was CBS Records senior VP/CM in marketing, rising to the presidency in 1989 and then chairman of distribution in 1994.

Bob Higgins, chairman of Trans World Entertainment in Albany, NY, remembers that with Smith, “if there was a difficult issue to face, he met you head on, but you could always come up with a resolution.”

At his retirement, Sony Music Entertainment chairman/CEO Tommy Mottola cited Smith as “one of the towering figures” in the music business. Mottola said, “The greatest compliment I can pay is that his accomplishments have become the standard against which every distributor is measured.”

Smith’s funeral took place Jan. 4 at St. Elizabeth’s Church in Wyckoff, N.J. Remembrance donations can be made in Smith’s name to the TJ Martell Foundation in New York or to the cardiac rehab division of Meridian Hospital in Brick, N.J.

In a Dec. 31, 2002, note to colleagues, Danny Yarbrough, who succeeded Smith as chairman of SMD, said, “He was a great friend and mentor to many of us, and he will be greatly missed.”

“Suddenly four men with brutally cut hair come onstage, back into a microphone, start making an industrial noise,” Savage wrote. “Within 10 seconds I’m transfixed; within 30, changed forever.”

Much of the life-altering power and the political charge of the Clash was generated by Joe Strummer, the band’s rhythm guitarist/principal vocalist. Strummer died of a heart attack Dec. 22 at his home in Broomefield, Somerset, England. He was 50.

Given his upbringing, Strummer’s destiny as a punk firebrand was an unlikely one: He was born John Graham Mellor on Aug. 21, 1952, in Ankara, Turkey, where his father, a British Foreign Service diplomat, was stationed.

Schooled in London, he took up music as a teen, assuming the name Woody Mellor in honor of folk singer Woody Guthrie. During the early ’70s, he played in R&B-oriented band the Vultures and took his per- formance stage name, inspired by his flailing guitar work, as a member of the pub-rock band the 101ers.

After the breakup of the 101ers, manager Bernard Rhodes approached Strummer and asked him to join a new band featuring two former members of the group London SS, guitarist Mick Jones and bassist Paul Simonon. With drummer Terry Chimes (soon replaced by Topper Headon) rounding out the lineup, the Clash made its London debut in mid-1976, at the height of the city’s punk-rock ferment.

In marked contrast to the bitter nihilism of the Sex Pistols—the style’s reigning band—the Clash offered an equally ferocious yet socially alert brand of punk. Its potent, accusatory songs—“White Riot,” “Garageland,” “1977,” “Remote Control”—were put over onstage by Strummer, who bawled out the tunes in a rasping, nearly indecipherable ca-taract.

Signed to CBS, the Clash issued an eponymous album in 1977; the set was belatedly released in the U.S., with an altered track listing, by Epic two years later.

The band’s grand ambitions were delineated on its succeeding releases: Give ’Em Enough Rope (1978), a hefty-sounding opus helmed by American producer Sandy Pearlman; London Calling (1979), a massive two-LP collection that drew on a wealth of American styles; and Sen-dinista! (1980), a sprawling, equally eclectic three-LP set that marked the early maturing of punk and rap.

Though Combat Rock (1982) spawned the band’s only U.S. Top 10 hit, “Rock the Cashbah,” conflict between Strummer and Jones was already tearing the Clash apart. After Jones’ exit in 1983, the band managed a poorly received swap song, Cut the Crap, and broke up in 1986.

On his own, Strummer recorded music in earnest with the first of two Epitaph albums by his new band, the Mescaleros. He toured widely in 2001; those shows found him in fierce form, performing his new, world-beat-styled music side by side with white-hot versions of old Clash favorites.

Strummer is survived by his wife, Lucinda; two daughters; and a stepdaughter.

### Market Watch

**A Weekly National Music Sales Report**

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<tr>
<th>YEAR-TO-DATE OVERALL UNIT SALES</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>794,136,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
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<td>Singles</td>
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<th>YEAR-TO-DATE SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT</th>
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<td>649,494,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>49,413,000</td>
<td>29,806,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>1,660,000</td>
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### OVERALL UNIT SALES

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<th>This Week 2002</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Albums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
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<th>This Week</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>246,000</td>
<td>247,000</td>
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### TOTAL YTD CD ALBUM SALES BY GEOGRAPHIC REGION

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<th>2003</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<td>Northeast</td>
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<td>36,617,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>MidAtlantic</td>
<td>99,657,000</td>
<td>86,845,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>East North Central</td>
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<td>100,534,000</td>
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<td>West North Central</td>
<td>45,589,000</td>
<td>41,407,000</td>
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<td>South Atlantic</td>
<td>135,795,000</td>
<td>123,362,000</td>
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<td>Pacific</td>
<td>125,998,000</td>
<td>119,342,000</td>
<td>-5.3%</td>
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Compiled from a seasonal sample of retailizer and mass media reports solicited, compiled, and provided by Nielsen SoundScan.
ArtistDirect Executives Follow
Chairman/CEO's Lead, Defier Salaries

BY MATTHEW BENZ
NEW YORK—Two more top Artist-
Direct executives are following the
lead of company chairman/CEO Ted
Field and deferring part of their
salaries until the company secures the
necessary funding.

According to a Dec. 23, 2002, Se-
curities and Exchange Commis-
sion (SEC) filing, ArtistDirect vice
chairman Marc Geiger agreed to defer
50% of his annual salary of
$500,000 effective Nov. 1, 2002. In
a separate SEC filing on the same
date, ArtistDirect said president/COO
Keith Yokomoto had agreed to defer
33% of his $500,000 annual salary
for the month of August 2002 and 50%
of his salary thereafter.

Last month, ArtistDirect said
Field agreed to defer all of the $1.5
million annual salary he earns as
chairman/CEO of ArtistDirect and
CEO of ArtistDirect Records (ADR).

Three-Way Win. Billboard Music Group president/Billboard publisher Howard Lander, right, visited the offices of EMI Music Publishing to present chairman CEO Martin Bandier, left, with a plaque honoring the company for again topping the big three categories in music publishing (pop, country, and R&B) in the Billboard year-end charts. They are pictured in front of a neonstand EMI erected in celebration of the event, including mock Billboard covers marking the accomplishment.

Universal Music Latin America Licenses Vale

BY LEILA COBO
MIAMI—Spanish indie label Vale
Music, which gained fame last year
to its impressive sales of its
Operación Triunfo albums, has
inked an exclusive licensing deal with Universal Music Latin Ameri-
can (UMLA). Under the new arrange-
ment, which began Jan. 1, UMLA will
distribute and exploit Vale's entire
catalog in Latin America and the
U.S. Latin market.

Already, Corazón Latino (Latin
Heart), the debut album by Opera-
ción Triunfo finalist David Bis-
bal, is being worked by UMLA in
the region.

“Vale is the independent
record company of major relevance
in the Latino world and for its level
of sales, one of the largest world-
wide,” UMLA and Iberian Penin-
sula chairman Jesús López says.
“Their enormous catalog and new
artists with great success in Spain
offer us a magnificent opportunity
to increase our presence in the
Latino market.”

Vale, which is based in Barce-
lona, became that country's mar-
ket-share leader for the first half of
2002, according to its own sales
data and figures released by Spain’s
International Federation of
the Phonographic Industry affiliate,
AFPYVE. (Year-end figures have
not been released.)

That leadership was astounding,
because Vale only launched in 1997
and it is an independent label that
focuses mostly on dance music.

But Vale scored big by betting on
Operación Triunfo, releasing not
only the weekly “gala” albums
steaming from the TV series but
also securing the rights to most of
the solo CDs since released by the
contestants, which have dominat-
ed Spain’s sales chart throughout
the year. Of these, the most suc-
cessful has been Corazón Latino,
which topped the 1 million unit-
shipping mark in Spain alone.

“This agreement will permit
the release of those artists that
hold the first places on the list of
sales in Spain and project the
development of our company in
Latin America,” Vale Music pres-
ident Ricardo Campion said in a
statement.

Vale artists also expect to profit
from a joint-venture management
deal inked between Spain’s Academe-
dia de Arstas—the entity that
represents all acts stemming from
Operación Triunfo—and Miami-
based Santander Music Group
(SMG). Under the open-ended
agreement, SMG’s office will
handle management and booking for
Academia’s artists, which include
Risbal and Chenoa, in North and
Latin America.

Additional reporting by Howell
Llewellyn in Madrid.

Bluegrass Pioneer Dies

Grand Ole Opry Vet Jim McReynolds Was 75

BY PHYLIS STARK
NASHVILLE—The bluegrass music
community lost one of its pioneers
Dec. 31, 2002, when James Monroe
“Jim” McReynolds, half of the leg-
endary brother duo Jim & Jesse,
passed away at a hospital in Gallatin,
Tenn. He was 75.

Jim & Jesse charted 10 singles on the Bill-
board Hot Country Sing-
als & Tracks chart be-
 tween 1984 and 1996.

The duo’s best known
songs include “Diesel On My Tail,” “The
Golden Rocket,” and “Better Times Are Coming.”

Jim McReynolds and his younger brother
Jesse, who survives him,
were raised in Castle, Va. Their
grandfather, Charlie McReynolds,
recorded for RCA in the 1920s.

This agreement will permit the release of those artists that hold the first places on the list of sales in Spain and project the development of our company in Latin America,” Vale Music president Ricardo Campion said in a statement.

Vale artists also expect to profit from a joint-venture management deal inked between Spain’s Academia de Aristas—the entity that represents all acts stemming from Operación Triunfo—and Miami-based Santander Music Group (SMG). Under the open-ended agreement, SMG’s office will handle management and booking for Academia’s artists, which include Risbal and Chenoa, in North and Latin America.

Additional reporting by Howell Llewellyn in Madrid.

ExecutiveTurntable

RECORD COMPANIES: David Bur-
rage is promoted to VP of market-
ing for Atlantic Records in New
York. He was senior director of
product development.

Eric Cole is promoted to sen-
ior director of rock promotion
for Artemis Records in New
York. He was national director of
rock promotion.

Jeff Maxie is named CFO of
Virgin Entertainment Group
North America in Los Angeles. He
was CFO of Kinok’s.

ARTIST SERVICES: Kathi Sharpe-
Ross is named West Coast head/
executive VP of the Leverage Group
in Los Angeles. She was senior VP
of marketing, public relations, and
promotion for DIC Entertainment.

Hunter Williams is promoted to VP
of performing rights in Nashville. He
was associate VP of performing rights.

U.S. Supreme Court Weighs
In On DVD Copyright Case

BY ERIK GRIENWEDEL
LOS ANGELES—The U.S. Supreme
Court issued a temporary stay last
week on a previous California Su-
preme Court ruling that found that
a nonresident hacker could not be
sued for DVD trade-secret violations
in the state.

The court decision allows the Morgan
Hill, Calif.-based DVD Copy Con-
rol Assn. (DVCCA) — which li-
censes DVD copy-protection tech-
nology — to oppose the court with
further evidence that Texas-based
Webmaster Matthew Pavlovich,
along with other defendants,
should be brought to trial in Cali-
ifornia for posting source codes that
circumvent DVD technology.

According to Fred von Lohmann,
senior staff attorney with the Elec-
tronic Frontier Foundation — a San
Francisco-based civil-liberties or-
ganization—the DVCCA seeks Cali-
fornia jurisdiction in its 1999 suit
against Pavlovich because of the
movie industry's heavy presence. Von
Lohmann says, "They want to sue [in California] anybody who publishes anything anywhere they don't like.”

A DVCCA spokesperson says
Pavlovich’s alleged actions violat-
ed the California Uniform Trade
Secrets Act.
A BACKWARDS GLANCE: As we look at 2002 one last time, we asked a number of artists to tell us their highlights from the past year.

NELLY: "Having back-to-back No. 1 singles was just mouth-dropping. To follow in the footsteps of people like Elvis, the Beatles, and the Bee Gees—to be in that category is just unbelievable."

MARK TREMONTI, CREEED: "We had a blast when we went over to Australia and New Zealand to tour. That was a good time. We had been there before, but this time we were used to it and we knew the places to go and what not. I think Nashville was probably my favorite show of the whole tour. The crowd was great. Every good show was a high-light."

(Even after Sept. 11, when everybody was worried about going to concerts and the economy started going bad, people are still coming, because I think people wanted to feel good. We hope that our concerts are uplifting. It’s just been a blessing that we have done something that makes people feel good."

AVRIL LAVIGNE: "The highlight of my year was my record coming out. When I was a little girl, I always talked about how I wanted to have a CD really bad. I’d say, ‘I’m going to have a CD one day,’ and so, finally, it came out. I made it and it got released. I’m enjoying everything [that’s happening], for sure. At the same time, it’s taken a while for everything to sink in, because it happened really fast."

FAITH HILL: "I have so many to choose from. The highlight was probably [husband] Tim [McGraw] and I taking the girls around the world [for my promo tour]. The [kids] saw a lot of museums, a lot of palaces. They took part in a Japanese calligraphy class and Japanese tea ceremonies. They learned a lot, and they talk about it still. They finally got an education. We had classes for them in the mornings so they would learn about the palace they were going to visit during the day. So they had books, they’d do artwork, and then go see the actual palace that Henry VIII lived."

BROOKS & DUNN: "The tour was the highlight. And our album,一条and Steers and Stripes, continues really rock for us, putting us back into sales," Ron Durrence says. "We hit a lot of fronts that we were really concerned about the year before last. A lot of things came together for us. And we won the Academy of Country Music’s Entertainer of the Year Award.”

NICK CARTER: "I started writing and recording and really finding out about myself when it comes to the whole solo thing. I was still holding a lot of feeling my way through the dark and learning new things. So I think the highlight is that I’m really coming into my own as an individual, and it’s kind of just the beginning of hopefully what’s to come as a solo artist."

KEITH URBAN: "The highlight was ‘Somebody Like You’ doing what it did on radio. That was extremely unexpected to me. I have no idea why it struck such a chord. It’s one of those godsend blessings that happens to you once in a while. It’s a miracle."

Another highlight was Urban’s Golden Road achieving gold status in eight weeks, whereas his previous album took more than a year to reach the 500,000 mark. Urban jokes about its rapid success: "I thought, ‘What am I going to do with the 400,000 records in my basement?’"

Additional reporting by Rashah Mall.
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Mistle Thrush Mixes It Up On ‘Get Drunk With You’

Third Album, Via Ecstatic Records, Sees Boston Band Fly High Above Standard Male-Driven Rock Fare

BY ANDREW KATCHEN

The rock landscape is replete with fickle tastes, and Boston band Mistle Thrush is aware of this fact. Having flown just under the mainstream rock radar since 1993, the female-fronted pop outfit once fit quite well beside the roster of all-female or female-led rock bands from Garbage to Hole that, for a brief moment, took over the radio airwaves and made rock a less testosterone-driven half game.

While Mistle Thrush has always been an indie band, it has shared the stage with everyone from Luscious Jackson to Sonic Youth, and the group has dazzled local and national audiences since its inception with its brand of shimmering, sometimes dark, but always catchy pop. The band has withstood multiple lineup changes, failing labels and record deals, and the hardships of years spent kicking across the U.S. But Mistle Thrush—consisting of vocalist Valerie Forgione, guitarist Scott Patalano, drummer Todd Demma, and bassist Matt Klain—has proved that the hard times only result in tighter melodies, sweeter songs, and memorable new records.

With the Feb. 11 release of its third album, the 13-track Drunk With You (via Los Angeles indie Ecstatic Records and coproduced by Andrew Schneider), Mistle Thrush has begun a new chapter. The band is out to prove that dynamic and smooth female-fronted tunes can compete with the best of the boys’ songs—and do them one better.

The band’s sound is perhaps best defined by the genres it ignores. The songs are too excited and joyful to be punk or goth, too blistering and raucous in the classic sense to be electronica or electroclash, and too sophisticated and pop to be metal. Mistle Thrush’s songs celebrate warmth and midtempo rock structures, with ample vocal and compositional nods to such influential British bands as the Smiths, My Bloody Valentine, Lush, the Sundays, and Led Zeppelin.

"People don’t seem to know where to put us," drummer/band manager Demma says. "They’ll be perplexed that we’ll have this halla-doo, 70s-style song and then we’ll go into this poppy number and then into a sort of brooding song."

The biggest compliment I’ve ever gotten from someone regarding our music is that our record was their favorite album to have sex to," Forgione says. “To me that’s an incredible compliment, because that’s a huge moment in someone’s life.”

While Forgione confidently shines right up at the front of the song, grabbing the listener’s attention with her operatic vocals, Patalano’s guitar alternates between terse and crunchy and muted and watery—always following Forgione’s whims. Demma’s drumming and various percussive brushes are masterful, and his style works by offering just the right amount of subtle backbone and spotlight-stealing flair. Klain’s bass, often the nastiest component of the mix, opposes Patalano’s sunny major chords with a gritty low end and offsets the band’s bright demeanor with trace amounts of necessary murkiness.

Offering the world an outfit involving a woman as an essential and intelligent ingredient to the music, Mistle Thrush emerges as an alternative to the standard male-driven rock fare.

WBCN Boston PD Oedipus says, “[Forgione] is a compelling lead singer, and the band has given us good music. They’re one of the best bands in Boston.”

Mistle Thrush

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Jeffrey Gaines Moves ‘Toward The Sun’
Singer/Songwriter’s Patience Should Be Rewarded Via New Artemis Disc

BY TOM DEMALON

“It’s a wonderful place to have your imagination develop, because you’re always longing for something,” says singer/songwriter Jeffrey Gaines of his hometown, Harrisburg, Pa. “You have to steep your dreams a bit longer.”

Such patience has served Gaines well. He released three well-received albums, beginning with an eponymous set a decade ago, before finally achieving a breakthrough in 2001, when his stark, passionate take on Peter Gabriel’s “In Your Eyes” found favor with listeners. Gaines is primed to build on that success when Toward the Sun, his fifth album and his second for Artemis Records, bows Feb. 11.

“The beautiful thing was that it felt like the beginning of my musical career,” Gaines says of working with noted producer Mitchell Froom. “We were communicating about music,” he adds, describing the jam-session spirit that yielded Toward the Sun. “We found commonality in a bunch of different things.”

Artemis president Daniel Glass says, “It was so magical and simple.” For Gaines and Glass, it is the continuation of a relationship that dates back to Gaines’ Chrysalis debut, issued during Glass’ tenure with EMI. It was Glass who, at the time, pushed for the inclusion of “In Your Eyes” as a B-side. Despite that song’s belated success, as well as the airplay given “Hero in Me”—both songs were culled from Gaines’ 2001 effort, Always Be—Glass is focused on the future. “We’ve got a hook-driven, wonderfully produced record,” he says. “People are getting the record and loving it.”

The album’s first single, “Over and Over,” goes to triple-A radio Jan. 20 and hot AC two weeks later. Among Gaines’ backers is WPLJ New York PD/morning personality Scott Shannon. Along with the station’s Tom Cuddy, he was instrumental in breaking “In Your Eyes” and sums up “Over and Over” as another good record.

At retail, Mark Hudson, rock/pop buyer for the Trans World chain, expects Toward the Sun to continue Gaines’ upward career arc. “We’ve always supported him as an artist,” Hudson says, “and we did well with his last record.”

Instead of making a video for “Over and Over,” Glass says, “We’d rather put the funding toward tour support.” Gaines will perform Feb. 13 at the B.B. King Blues Club in New York to celebrate the release of Toward the Sun, and a spring/summer tour is being planned. “I play so many shows and am on the road so much,” he says, “my connection with people is the audience. It’s an absolutely strange kind of love.”

Gaines is managed and booked by Diane Dragonette for Fusion 7, based in New York. His songs are published by Mosiephonic Sound (BMI).
Trapt Finally Finds Right Home In Warner Bros.

BY CHARLES DAUGHERTY

Chris Brown admits that his Warner Bros. band, Trapt, derived its name largely from numerous false starts and frustrations experienced while searching for a label home. "We'd get a label interested in us, but then they wanted to mold us to be someone else," he says. "We turned our back on initial record deals, because they didn't have our band's best interests in mind."

The band's members decided to leave college to pursue their music full-time. They recorded tracks and were again courted by another major label, only to have the deal dissolve over creative differences. After playing for Warner Bros. on Sept. 11, 2001, they were signed—this time as themselves. Trapt (which streeted Nov. 26) consists of 12 original tracks along the rock spectrum. "It was important for us to have every song on the record sound completely different while [have] all of them sound like us," Brown says. "In picking songs, lyrics are extremely important to me, even if I am not trying to be a poet. All of our songs are about hope. It's not about being trapped. It's about trying to rise above that."

Warner Bros. Records VP of marketing Eric Fritschi elaborates, "What you get on this record are confident, big-sounding rock songs from great musicians who don't prescribe to any set parameters in their music. We have had overwhelming feedback from everyone." The first single, "Headstrong," was released to modern and mainstream rock stations last November. The single has also been picked up and licensed to a variety of other mediums, from retail marketing to several videogame tie-ins and televised sporting events.

The band's Web site (trapt.com) offers timed-out music downloads and video footage of live gigs. New tour dates are being set to replace a recently canceled tour with Filter. Trapt is managed by Drake Sutton at Zig Zag Management and booked by Scott Sokol at Pinnacle; both are based in Los Angeles.
LONG TIME COMING: VH-1 airs a program called "Ultimate Albums" that spotlights landmark releases. If that show included Christian bands, dCTalk's "Free at Last" would be a must-see installment. The project was groundbreaking in the Christian music community and propelled the trio's Kevin Max, Michael Tait, and Toby McKeehan to the forefront of the burgeoning Christian rock/rap/hip-hop movement. It also served as a pivotal setup for the band's double-platinum "Jesus Freak\" album.

dCTalk fans can now take a trip down memory lane, as ForeFront Records has released a special edition of "Free at Last" in honor of the project's 10th anniversary. The label is also issuing on DVD the never-before-seen "Free at Last" movie, a road documentary that was ambitious for its time and nearly saw the light of day. "The movie makers and the distributors and the label had disagreements," Tait explains. "It was a logistical nightmare. It was promoted, promoted, [and] promoted, and then it kept getting hung up, and finally, here we are years later. I think a lot of the problems just kind of went away.

The film chronicles an interesting time in the band's development.

FROM OUT OF NOWHERE: One of the biggest success stories of 2002 was Shekinah Glory Ministry (SGM). The group's debut LP, "Praise Is What I Do\" on Kingdom Records, garnered more than 80,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It also earned the act a top 10 slot on the "Billboard\" Top Gospel Albums Chart and the high-profile visibility that comes with having one of the hottest choir projects in the country.

So popular is the 43-member praise ministry born out of Valley Kingdom Ministries International, a 10,000-member church based in Chicago, that retailers couldn't keep "Praise Is What I Do\" on the shelves. Retailers like Vera Scarboro at Gospel King in Raleigh, N.C., and Lysile Daniels in New Jersey can't seem to keep the record in stock. "All year long, it's been the same," Daniels says. "The minute we get it in, we're out again."

"Every time we fill the orders, the next thing you know, we're on back-order again," says SGM member Anthony Harper, who also serves as president of the 2-year-old label founded by Pastor H. Daniel Wilson. Harper credits the idea for recording the CD to Wilson, who noticed the growing sold gold, and it was just that period that we didn't know what it felt like to have any notoriety."

ForeFront president Greg Ham says, "It would have been like robbing fans to not get this to market. It's like an A&B biography, very well done. It's got so many different elements to it. It's timeless."

"Free at Last" is being released in a CD/DVD combo pack, as well as on CD, DVD, and VHS. The project is being featured this month in Kmart and Best Buy circulars that will provide impressions to 70 million consumers. "We have a new single, a remix of 'The Hard Way,' that will go to radio," Ham says, adding that the special-edition album will also include "audio commentary in which the guys are actually talking—so fans get to hear what their perspective was, what was going on."

Coming in 2003, Tait and McKeehan are working on new solo albums. Max is doing European dates and contemplating his next solo effort, and Tait is doing 25 dates on New-Song's Winter Jam tour. Another dCTalk record is expected in the future, but no one knows when it will arrive, so fans can enjoy "Free at Last\" in the meantime.

"It was a coming-of-age record," Tait says. "It was a launching pad. Jesus Freak came a couple of years later. I think it was the first record where we felt like, 'Wow, this is dCTalk at its best, as far as the music.' We all felt like it was the most honest representation of who we all were as evolving artists at that time. Musically, vocally, and lyrically, it had a punch. It was musically savvy for the time, and it struck a note with people."

by Deborah Evans Price

SUPERSHOPPING: From the sound of it, Chris-tmas shopping is never going to be the same. There was a time when people would flock to the church from all over to hear SGM's Sunday-morning praise-and-worship service. Now, it is the CD that is drawing listeners from around the country to Chicago.

"When people hear the CD, they can hear our heart and love for God, and by us allowing the worship music to flow, they get the opportunity to just pray and worship and are literally ushered into the presence of God," Harper says. "We think that has a great deal to do with the fact that it was recorded live and unfiltered. Nothing was changed or edited. We believe that what we did that night just translated well onto the CD.\" So well, in fact, that SGM maintained at least top 20 chart positioning for nearly one year. Not bad for an unknown choir on an independent label no one had even heard of a year ago.

Harper has now turned his attention to developing Kingdom Records, the nearly 2-year-old label established by the church. First on the agenda is negotiating with a distributor for the concert VHS/DVD that is slated for release this month.

GET READY: As to whom will hold the distinction of having the surprise release of 2003, that's yet to be decided. What's clear is that gospel is in for another exciting year of growth, with new releases slated from Donnie McClurkin (March), CeCe Winans (April), Kurt Carr & the Kurt Carr Singers (fall), and Michael Smallwood (September), to name a few. What's more, the Canton Spirituals' Harvey Watkins will release his first solo project in June. Vickie Winans ends her four-year hiatus from recording with her Verity Records debut due in May, and in April the Family (the brood that backed Kirk Franklin's platinum debut CD) will get a chance to strut its stuff. Hold on to your hats. Looks like we're in for quite a ride.
Capitol’s Supergrass Coming Back To ‘Life’

BY CHRISTOPHER BARRETT

In 1995, amid the heady days of Brit pop, precocious U.K. rock trio Supergrass breezed to the chart summit with its guitar-fueled debut album, *1 Should Coco*. Seven years on, with many of its contemporaries long forgotten, Supergrass is making international noise again with *Life On Other Planets*.

Released internationally via Parlophone Sept. 30—with a U.S. release slated for Feb. 11 on Capitol—the set is being hailed by many as a superb return to form. “It worries me that we have been away for a long time and whether we will be able to make it back,” bassist Nick Quinn admits. “A number of factors slowed us down. We spent ages promoting the last record [titled *Supergrass*], and then we had to wait for our producer to become available.”

During the wait, Quinn and long-time Oxfordshire school friends turned-bandmates Gaz Coombes (vocals/guitar) and Danny Goffey (drums) travelled France in search of inspiration.

Quinn states, “We visited Normandy and southern France and wrote an album’s worth of material that we eventually scrapped. We always write music to entertain ourselves, and if it’s not entertaining us, then we don’t bother.”

Having not hired a producer since *1 Should Coco*, Supergrass’ decision to employ Tony Hoffer (Beck, Air) came after much deliberation. “We interviewed lots of producers and put them through their paces.” Quinn says. “It was quite an intense experience, but it was good to shake things up a bit and learn some new studio tricks.”

With *Life On Other Planets* showcasing a return to the pop sensibilities that once provoked Steven Spielberg to offer the group a TV series, Capitol U.K. international director of repertoire Kevin Brown is feeling understandably confident: “The album finds Supergrass in peak form, and it is their most commercially accessible to date. The aspiration is not just to target the Supergrass fan base, but to take them to a new audience by cracking commercial radio outside of the U.K.”

The album is more upbeat than usual,” Quinn admits. “It’s difficult. We strive not to be upbeat, but we just can’t help ourselves.”

Supergrass’ return has been welcomed by U.K. radio and music TV, with reactions to the uplifting single “Grace” universally positive. Jeff Smith, head of music and programming at U.K. pop station Capital FM, says, “‘Grace’ is a good crossover track and a great comeback single.”

Jamie Caring, head of talent and artist relations for MTV Networks U.K., agrees, noting, “It’s receiving pretty substantial support for a pre-release video.”

Having finished a late-2002 European tour, the band is eying a U.S. concert trek early this year.

Jazz Notes

PIECES OF EIGHT: If being slightly “out there” has become the current yardstick by which to judge jazz, then *Walkin’ The Line* (Fresh Sound/New Talent, Jan. 21), the sophomore date by the New Jazz Composers Octet, is not going to measure up to trendy expectations. However, when taking into account the importance of compositional innovation throughout jazz history, the octet’s aspirations can be most properly appreciated.

Formed in 1996 by trumpeter David Weiss, pianist Xavier Davis, bassist Dwayne Burno, and saxophonist Myron Walden, the octet’s mission is to provide a forum that focuses on its members’ compositional skills. Its current line-up is rounded out by saxophonists Jimmy Greene and Chris Karlic, trumpeter/bassist Steve Davis, and drummer Nasheet Waits.

The idea for such an ensemble dates to the late ‘80s, when Weiss was working for a production company. “It was during the ‘young lions’ craze, and a record company gave us some demos by up-and-coming musicians,” he recalls. “I wasn’t necessarily knocked out by their soloing, but I heard promise in their compositions. It stuck me that composing could be an avenue to push the music into unexplored territories.”

To fund the group’s efforts, Weiss began searching out grants designated for young composers. Davis was the inaugural recipient of the Doris Duke Chamber Music Foundation’s jazz program grant, which funds jazz composers who are writing new material for their groups. The next year, Weiss was awarded a grant, along with pianist Jason Moran and trumpeter Dave Douglas.

“In the 40s and 50s, the jazz musicians who made the music great were larger-than-life soloists,” Weiss says. “In a way, this group’s existence is a resignation on our part that our generation as a whole is not Miles Davis or Sonny Rollins. On the other hand, it also recognizes that what made these jazz greats so influential was not just their soloing but also their sense of composition. Charlie Parker was an amazing soloist, but his melodies were also breakthroughs, compositionally.”

The ensemble explored most of the material found on *Walkin’ The Line* in live performances throughout 2002, giving it the freedom to experiment with its arrangements before committing them to a recording. Weiss says that arranging for five horns provides a wide sonic palette from which to develop the composer’s ideas. “There is room for improvisation,” he says, “but only within the context of someone’s extended work. The freedom to solo comes within the opportunities that someone already thought through in the material.”

An eight-piece ensemble also presents its own logistical difficulties for touring and building an audience. Although it built word-of-mouth recognition as trumpeter Freddie Hubbard’s touring band, the octet’s own performances are often relegated to New York and its surrounding areas, necessitated by the costs of transporting and lodging eight musicians.

Despite the costs, Weiss nonetheless anticipates live dates in Boston and Philadelphia in support of *Walkin’ The Line*. Additional exposure will come from the commissioning of Don Lucoff’s DJ, Media to develop opportunities in print, an option not afforded *First Steps Into Reality*, the act’s 1999 debut. “We took our first record out as far as you could with word-of-mouth promotion,” Weiss says. “Just as we experiment with the music, we need to experiment with new ways for people to find out about what we are doing.”

AND: In June, pianist Beegie Adair released her six-CD Centennial Composers boxed set (Green Hill), with each disc dedicated to the songs of a different great American composer. The individual CDs the set contains are being made available to retail as follows: Richard Rodgers (Jan. 7), Duke Ellington (June 2003), Hoagy Carmichael (January 2004), George Gershwin (June 2004), Irving Berlin (January 2005), and Jerome Kern (June 2005). Adair is joined by drummers Chris Brown and bassist Roger Spencer. Two decades after her first trip to Cuba, Canadian-born saxophonist/Rautist Jane Bunnett releases *Cuban Odyssey* (Blue Note), her fifth in a series of dates with the Spirits of Havana Ensemble. For the first time, however, Bunnett is joined by indigenous Cuban musicians hailing from beyond Havana, including Maniànsa’s Los Municípios and Cienfuegos’ Los Narangos.
Holiday Spirits Lift Season Tours

Despite Economy & Shorter Calendar, Outings Have Reason To Be Jolly

BY SUSANNE AULT

LOS ANGELES—Neither the shorter-than-usual holiday season nor the rocky economic climate seem to be hurting holiday tours by acts as diverse as Crystal Gayle, Peabo Bryson, Trans-Siberian Orchestra (TSO), Kenny Rogers, Martina McBride, and Dave Koz.

Thanksgiving fell late in 2002, which meant artists had one less week to squeeze in performances between Thanksgiving and Christmas Day, the traditional holiday touring period. Yet several national outings—including Bryson’s Colors of Christmas (also featuring Donnie and GG Adams, and Jody Watley), TSO’s Christmas Eve and Other Stories, and Gayle’s A Crystal Christmas—are stepping out of the usual holiday fold.

For the first time in their collective 15-plus years of Christmastime touring, Bryson and Gayle scheduled shows past Dec. 25—this year, respectively. Both East Coast and West Coast TSO companies are playing shows before Thanksgiving and after Christmas, Nov. 22-23 and Dec. 15-16. Rogers is about 15 holiday tours under his belt, kicked off Christmas from the Heart Featuring the Toy Shoppe (based on his 1998 off-Broadway production) Nov. 17. It wrapped Dec. 21.

‘RECESSION-PROOF’

Since concert goers can be counted on to come out to the holiday spirit to see seasonal shows, bad economy or not, the tours’ agents and promoters say it made sense to fit in dates beyond the typical Christmastime frame.

“Christmas shows seem to be recession-proof,” Steve Lassiter, Nashville-based VP at the Agency for the Performing Arts (APA) and agent for Gayle, told Billboard prior to Christmas. “We aren’t having any more trouble selling dates this year than we have had in the past. We’re expecting sell-out business. The way I see it, that’s that time of year [when] people will want to see a show.”

“I would not do something like A Christmas Carol after Christmas,” explains Norman Easterbrook, general director at the Rylander Theatre in Americus, Ga., who sold out Dec. 29 Gayle concert. “But we’re focusing on Christmas, holiday entry show and that we’re continuing to enjoy the holidays.”

On a total of eight dates, running Nov. 29-Dec. 29 at venues ranging from 800-2,000 seats in capacity, Gayle’s ticket prices averaged $25-$30. Bryson’s average $30-$55 over 20 dates in similar theatre-sized buildings between Nov. 29 and Dec. 28.

Nick Caris, New York-based agent at the Agency Group for TSO, notes he has done “phenomenal” business with his client’s tri- ate tour, which is split between the two companies and routed to various-sized buildings (Billboard, Nov. 16, 2002). He says that the company’s ticket prices (sales $28-$45) are up 50% over the 2001 season, because so many second and third shows per venue had to be added as a result of unexpectedly high demand. Examples include the additional matinee installments plugged into Wilkes-Barre, Pa.’s First Union Arena (10,500 seats) Dec. 15 and Detroit’s Opera House (2,828 seats) Dec. 1.

Explaining the growing popularity of the rock opera—now going on its sixth Christmas outing—Caris says, “We put together a show that everyone leaves raving about. For every two that see the show, they want to bring back six for the next one.”

He says audiences are brimming with holiday cheer for the TSO team because “it’s their own music, not just ‘Jingle Bells.’ And it’s not single-star oriented, like a lot of other shows.”

McBRIDE MAKES MERRY

Even those who opted to schedule fewer dates for their Christmas tours because of the clipped season appear as joyful and triumphant as those responsible for the extended outings. McBride decided to roll out her first holiday-oriented tour, the 17-date Joy of Christmas, Nov. 29-22. Ticket prices ranged from $35-$65.

Ron Baird, agent at Creative Artists Agency, says she could have waited for a longer or more financially secure time, but “it has sold better than anyone expected. Frankly, these are the best numbers Martina has ever done.” He adds that the 15-date tour is something new by integrating dancers, actors, and a 70-foot-by-40-foot video screen into her set for the first time. The show was a massive production, involving various interpretations of Christmas celebrations.

For proof of the tour’s success, Baird notes that McBride’s Dec. 20 show at Milwaukee’s U.S. Cellular Arena had to be reconfigured to accommodate 416 more seats, pushing the venue’s capacity to 7,000. He is already looking forward to a second McBride Christ-mas tour this year. Brad Garrett, managing partner for Police Productions—which promoted the Milwaukee date, among others—says he is happily anticipating his cut from the $250,000 gross here.

“I am extremely happy with the crowds [we drew] to this show,” McBride says. “White Christmas (Nov. 10-Dec. 28) is a tradi- tional Christmas album, and I feel like this complements it. Even though it is on the cutting edge technically speaking, it still has the feel of old-fashioned Christ-mas TV special. I believe they [enjoyed] this tour because of that mix of familiarity and freshness.”

KOZ’S CHRISTMAS RUN

Dave Koz & Friends played 18 shows, priced between $35-$65, Nov. 29-Dec. 21, although about 25 dates have been the norm for the past three years in the show. “We’ve been running a little bit of over this year. It is due to the fact that we’ve run the show for years now,” Koz, who says, “Eighteen shows is a breath of fresh air. It’s a little less crazy. Having to fly at this time of year is complicated—more people are out there.”

Koz likes that the tighter schedule meant less cross-country travel and more multiple dates in one region, he says. McBride added value by providing the Montreal Symphony to the New York Dec. 6 show. McBride also sold out Dec. 5 and 6, respectively.

“Try to predict the concert business today, you have to be of the flying sponge that allows change to happen to be more solid than other types of business,” says Jim Gosnell, Koz’s agent at APA. “It’s that time of year when people want to get out and celebrate. You’re dealing with tradition.”

As Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) VP of touring, Brad Warva has been point man on some of the most successful nationally promoted tours of all time, including Cher’s 2002 trek. Warva speaks to Billboard about national tour activity during the past year and beyond.

Do you have any business-related New Year’s resolutions?

“No—well, just stay true to our form. When we make a decision to make a tour offer, we fundamentally try to decide that the artist and band have a great work ethic, are committed to their craft, and have got strong ideas that can work with you in all the right ways. Then you feel comfortable making an offer to be in business with that artist for the long term.”

With involvement in the Paul McCartney and the Rolling Stones tours and the exclusive with Cher, Warva and others, CCE had a bang-up year in 2002. Can you top or equal yourself in 2003?

Over the last three years, we’ve asked that same question of ourselves: “What can we possibly do now?” And out of the blue comes Paul McCart- ney willing and wanting to work. Out of the blue comes the Cher farewell tour, and we’ve got a habit of tak- ing care of ourselves. There are great artists that are ready to tour. Hopefully, they will acknowledge the value that Clear Channel brings.

Do you think national tour pro- motion only works successfully when it involves these superstar acts?

No, I think the model works for all acts. I think the idea behind the tour- ing is the added value and service [a company like CCE provides]. It works for everybody—whether you’re a theater act or club act or mid-range act. There’s a basic value, and a consistency, a level of decision-making, both financially and promotional- ly, that can get made on a global basis.

What changes would you like to jum- pstart within the touring community?

We should get to the point where we back into how we structure a deal, starting with what we think the ticket price could be. “How many tickets do we think we will sell? From that, how much will it gross? From that, how much will it cost to produce the show? How do we price that? What’s left on the table from which to now build the financial picture to the artist? What can they spend to bring that show on the road?” [Currently], we’re often—end up with a model where the artistic side of the production has driven the model to be so big, so expensive that it can’t help but be expensive all the way down the line. So if there is a way to go forward from the consumer’s perspective and work backward, you might be able to develop a model where the ticket price is primary and you still get to the point where the artist makes the kind of money that they want to make. SUSANNE AULT
Elton John

The Big Guy: As it was for the touring industry at large, 2002 was a topsy-turvy year for the world's largest producer of live entertainment, Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE). Still, CCE's top dog appears to have a steady hand on the wheel here in the early stages of 2003.

"I think our music division performed very well in 2002, particularly in light of a very difficult environment," CCE chairman/CEO Brian Becker says in an exclusive interview. "We did well in terms of market share, maintaining acceptable margins, and growing in profit over the last year."

It is important to note that CCE is much more than a promoter/producers of concerts. The company is also the world's largest producer of motor-sports and touring theater events, making its relationship with arenas and other venues hugely complex and complex. In short, despite CCE's reputation, sheds are just a piece of the pie, and, as Becker points out, only about one-third of all the thousands of events the company produces are in buildings it owns.

"I think we have a dynamic going on in terms of trying to maintain margins," he says. "We are now focusing on ways to increase the size of the pot, to bring more money to arenas as opposed to trying to fight over a limited pool. Moving forward, we'll be reaching out to arenas even more than in the past.

After CCE's at-times mind-boggling acquistive stance, dating back to the SFX days, slowed to nearly a halt in 2002, the company surprised many by snapping up Metropolitan Entertainment Group from brief owner Mitch Slater (Billboard, Dec. 14, 2002), making Slater the only guy to sell to CCE twice. Becker, however, is still inclined to give the competition, particularly in light of such a tight capital market and uncertain economy.

"Our leadership in San Antonio (headquarters of Clear Channel Worldwide and owners the Mays family) has made it a priority to focus on strengthening the balance sheet and being very disciplined in terms of our use of cash," Becker says. "That said, we expect to see some things that have an interest in it and it's very strategic and provides a great return, we will present it to them. If not, we won't. If you look at the Mays family, their history, and their reputation, one of their many strengths is very strong fiscal discipline.

Becker is bullish on the future of CCE and points out that he has the full and complete backing of San Antonio going forward. "I think that in the theater business there is a very strong cycle of shows that should give us a very strong performance over the next couple of years," he says. "Motorports continues to grow, as it has in the past. And I think music will probably still need to deal with the uncertainty of the record companies investing in new artists, along with touring, guarantees, ticket prices, and all of the things that have been impactful.

In the big-picture scheme, Becker says CCE is "looking to move forward in areas we see as opportunistic. Given we reach so many people directly through marketing, we see some wonderful opportunities to build upon the relationships we have with consumers."

Becker also intends for CCE to become more closely associated with the creative community in a "partnership with them that capitalizes on the assets we bring to the theater that enhance their value."

So despite a tough market, Becker is optimistic. "It is important to note that when Clear Channel acquired (SFX) it was at the height of U.S. economic activity and the ad market was on fire. Literally a few months later there was a dramatic negative change in both, and 2001 ended in tragedy with 9/11. Since then, we have been trying to balance our efforts between maintaining the bottom line as much as possible and implementing the strategies envisioned when the Mays family acquired the company. Going forward, we will actually be able to enact those strategies."
Robinson: Keeping The Synergy
Management Inc. CEO Uses All Resources To Help Achieve P. Diddy's Vision

Producer/artist/label executive Sean "P. Diddy" Combs' New York-based Bad Boy empire continues to grow. The company recently announced plans to open several Sean John clothing stores this year. Among those assisting Combs in this and other ventures is Management Inc. CEO Phil Robinson, who serves as Combs' manager/financial liaison.

What is your relationship with P. Diddy like?
We have a partnership. I manage him exclusively. He is the creative brain behind what he wants to do and where he wants to go. I am the negotiator/executive in making those things happen. It comes to his career, he has his opinions and ideas, and I have mine. Then I go out and execute them. When it comes to other people, we manage them together. It's more of a co-creator situation.

What is Management Inc.'s role within the Bad Boy family?
My role in Bad Boy is, one, to manage Puff and two, provide as much synergy as possible. Being my role is to manage him. I try to make sure that there is synergy between the person and his image with Blue Flame, our marketing division. So if you want to do marketing with Puff, you have to involve Blue Flame in some kind of way, because that's our in-house marketing company. It handles marketing for Sean John, Puff's clothing line, and does most of my marketing for Puff outside of records. Or if you're doing something in fashion or something else and you want Puff to be involved, I make sure that you get Sean John involved in some kind of way before I will give you that OK. If we're doing big events that require catering or after-parties, I make sure that Justin's [Combs' restaurant] is involved. I'm kind of the unit that keeps the synergy going as far as Puff's brand.

How do you maintain that balance with so many projects on the Bad Boy agenda?
It's not just me by myself. I can walk down the hall and speak to Jameel [Spencer], who is the president of Blue Flame, I can meet a couple of blocks down the street and speak to Jeff [Tweedy], who is the president of Sean John. I just make sure that I am constantly in communication with them. I'm not, then somebody from my office is. Whenever I speak of Puff, I automatically think of all the Bad Boy entities and how all of them can be involved. I involve people (effective) whatever is that somebody is pitching me to or we're pitching to them.

It was reported that you and Combs are working on a comedy project (Billboard, Sept. 7, 2002). What's the status of that venture?
We've looked at hundreds of tapes from around the country, in February. Being that Puff's time has been so consumed by producing, which he's really gotten back into, and negotiating the new label deal, he really hasn't had time to focus on the show. So we've been putting it together quietly. We've been assembling it here, and we think we're going to roll out first with a DVD of comedians that he likes. So we're happy with where we are with that.

P. Diddy was involved with MTV's Making the Band 2. Was the experience what you expected?
Like with anything, there were some unexpected bumps. But the thing that I liked about it is that we've been able to work them out. Whether it's been from our side or from MTV's side, we think we delivered a great show.

There have been a lot of rumors about where Bad Boy Records will land in terms of finding a new parent label. What's happening on that front?
We're still negotiating. I think we have an idea, but we haven't laid it down.

Regarding his future plans, he notes: "I'll probably just do an imprint and a different deal for Pookie [his own label], which, through its then-association with Beyond Records, released the 2002 eponymous Lucy Pearl album. I've already started to work on another [solo] album."

In the meantime, Saadiq recently logged in at No. 1 on the Hot R&B/ Hip Hop Singles & Tracks chart with his co-producer/co-writer credits on "Love of My Life (An Ode to Hip Hop)" by Erykah Badu Featuring Common. Upcoming Saadiq musical ventures include working with Jaguar Wright, Nappy Roots, former Elektra artist Reel and D'Angelo.

Following a now-rare, 15-year stretch with one label, Keith Sweat has wrapped his final Elektra album. It is a live disc—his first—that was recorded in Washington, D.C., and will be released in time for Valentine's Day. His final studio release for the label was the 2002 summer set Robbin' Disaga. "We had a great relationship there," says Sweat, who had first R&B No. 1 in 1987's "I Want Her." "But my contract is up now, and I'm just exploring the waters. I'm looking for a situation I'm comfortable with for a long while, so I need to take my time. But I'm blessed I've got the following I have."

R&B/HIP-HOP

THANKS: Before 2003 locks into full tilt, I want to take a moment and thank everyone in the R&B/hip-hop/rap communities for sharing your support, knowledge, perspectives, camaraderie, and laughter. I couldn't do this gig without all that.

FREE AGENCY: As the new year unfolds, two artists find themselves free agents. Songwriter/producer/artist Raphael Saadiq—whose Universal Records solo debut, Instant Vintage, came out last year—calls his split with Universal amicable, saying, "They were cool enough to let me out."

By Gail Mitchell

INDUSTRY BRIEFS: Patti LaBelle has launched Philadelphia-based Patnoy Management. Established in partnership with longtime collaborator Damascene Pierre Paul, the management firm is highlighted by signed singer/songwriter Mary Griffin, songwriter Mary Brown, and spoken-word artist Audra Woodard. Among other projects, LaBelle is writing Patti Labelle's Life Cuisine. The book should be published in time for Mother's Day....

Balqii Kweii joins Les Nubians on the French duo's first single from its March 25 Higher Hit Release, One Step Forward, called "Temperature Rising".... Hidden Beach group Kindred the Family Soul bows its first album, Surrender to Love, in February. "I am exploring the waters. We're looking at new avenues. I can walk away, but I don't think he's really ready to cut a film that's not a romance."

WE CHAPPEE: Following a one-year break to focus on his acting career, the list-making Tony Toni Tone frontman Brandy has released his first album in five years. Mind Your Self, a pop/R&B album, was released by the singer/songwriter May 13. Following a then-9-year dry spell, "Put My Baby Back" hasignon hit. The album has sold more than one million copies in the U.S. and has maintained steady airplay on urban radio for the past month. Brandy returned to the R&B charts in 1996 with the R&B No. 1 "The Man I Love." Since then, Brandy has scored 11 Top 10 hits, 17 Top 40 hits, and 11 Top 20 hits. She is also a 3-time Grammy Award winner and 3-time American Music Award winner. Brandy is currently making plans for a 2003 North American tour and will start work on her third album in late 2002.

by Rashaun Hall

For more info, visit bigeasyentertainmentgroup.com.
GOT NELLY? Coming off a year that included album sales totaling 4.5 million copies (according to Nielsen SoundScan) and six billboard Music Awards (Billboard, Dec. 21, 2002), Nelly shows no signs of slowing down in the new year, as the St. Louis native embarks on two diverse business endeavors.

Already a spokesperson for digital music player SongPro (Billboard, Sept. 7, 2002), Nelly recently became the first rapper to sport a milk mustache on his mug. "Michael Jordan did a milk campaign," Nelly says enthusiastically. "To be the first hip-hop artist to do a Got Milk? campaign is big. Everybody from actors, pop and rock musicians, cartoon characters, and superheroes have done them, and then here you come with your 'Got Milk?' That lets you know you're pretty big."

The print ad, which debuted in early December 2002, is aimed at getting teens to drink more of the cow juice. Fans may also view behind-the-scenes footage from the photo shoot exclusively at whymilk.com. In addition to his "Got Milk?" ad, Nelly is going behind the scenes with the launch of his Dirty Entertainment imprint. "It's a new label we came up with," the rapper says. "All, another member of the St. Lunatics, is the president, and I'm the CEO. We're just trying to keep everything in the family."

The label's first release will be from St. Lunatic member Murphy Lee. His Murphy's Law is due this spring. "He's the youngest member of the St. Lunatics, and we have a lot of anticipation for little dirty's album," Nelly says. "I like to give them my full support, the same way they give me theirs."

ON THE WAY: With 2003 just getting started, it's a good time to look ahead to some first-quarter albums that will be making noise in the near future.

Following in the tradition of mix-tapes like Funkmaster Flex, Tony Touch, and Desert Storm co-founder DJ Clue, New York's DJ Envy makes his major-label debut Feb. 4 with DJ Envy B.L.T. Party Vol. 1: The Desert Storm Mixtape (Desert Storm/Epic). Featuring everyone from Ja Rule to Juvenile, the forthcoming set also features fellow Desert Storm newcomers Paul Cain and Joe Budden.

Envy's Desert Storm labelmate Fabolous returns March 4 with his highly anticipated sophomore set, Street Dreams (Desert Storm/Elektra). Having quickly made a name for himself in 2002 by working with such artists as Clipse and Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, Fabolous currently has heads nodding with the set's lead single, "This Is My Party."

Another MC who received a lot of attention via his guest appearances was Roc-a-Fella/Def Jam recording artist Freeway. The Philadelphia native makes his official debut Feb. 11 with Philadelphia Freeway. The album, which features various members of the Roc-a-Fella family, is likely gaining attention, thanks to its first single, "What We Do." Featuring Jay-Z and Beanie Sigel, the single and its gritty accompanying cliq have already become a staple at video outlets across the country.

On the indie side of things, Onpoint Entertainment looks to have a hit on its hands with newcomer Seth Marcel's forthcoming set. Due in March, the album features an appearance from Jadakiss on the buzz single "Hardcore."

One of the already-most-talked-about MCs of 2003, 50 Cent (see In the News, page 5), comes from a label all too familiar with controversy. Eyes and ears will likely be on the Shady/Interscope recording artist when he debuts, Get Rich Or Die Trying, drops Feb. 11. A mix-tape legend in his own right, 50 Cent currently has three singles on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart. "Wanksta," the album's first official single, is No. 12. "Realest Nigga," featuring the late irreplaceable B.I.G., recently made its debut on the chart and is No. 44. And "In Da Club," at No. 32, receives greatest Gainer/Airplay honors this issue. It should be an interesting first quarter, to say the least.
Latin Rock Revival Paves Way For Return Of Pioneer Mateos

BY MARCELO FERNANDEZ BITAR

BUENOS AIRES—A successful national tour in the middle of an economic crisis, a one-shot concert in Mexico with an attendance of 35,000, a duet with the most prominent frontman of the Argentine alt-rock scene of the 90s, and a self-released double-CD set that includes live versions of popular hits and new songs recorded in a home studio: In a matter of months, all these elements have once again established Miguel Mateos as one of the most popular artists in Argentina, taking the country by surprise.

They have all highlighted how even the most popular acts have had to change the way they confront their art, market themselves, and do business in a new economy with limited labels and support.

The case of Mateos is particularly telling: He is a landmark artist who, during the late 80s, led the groundbreaking rock en español movement, laying the musical foundation for today's Latin rock acts across the continent along with fellow Argentine bands Soda Stereo and Los Enamorados Verdes.

It seems ironic that a pioneer of Mateos's stature has been without a contract since the 1997 album Bar Imperial (Empire Bar), released on Universal. Argentine labels did not jump at the opportunity of signing Mateos because of the deadly economic recession that left many local artists unsigned. Always the enthusiast, his strategy was to continue touring and composing new songs, while taking advantage of the unexpected rise of Argentine rock that has made FM Mega—a radio station that programs only that genre—the most popular radio station of the past three years. His new album, Salir Vivo (Get Out Alive), was released Sept. 6 through his own imprint, La Cabala Discos, reaching retail as a luxurious three-fold Digipak with two CDs. The set was recorded live one year ago at the traditional downtown Astral Theater in Buenos Aires, and the track listing includes fresh renditions of 18 popular hits spanning his career—many of them songs recorded from Mateos' back catalog—plus seven new tracks recorded at his home studio. Two surprises are a cutting-edge Spanish-language cover of Billy Idol's celebrated 1984 " Flesh for Fantasy" ("Sexo y Frenesí") and a duet with Cristian Aldana, frontman of popular alt-rock band El Otro Yo.

"This album is a powerful statement," Mateos says. "The new compositions are intense descriptions of the political and social turmoil in the country. In the worst moment of the economic crisis, I have decided to take the risk of going independent, even undertaking a costly packaging and a mid-price to avoid piracy. The results are awesome."

In Argentina, Salir Vivo is distributed through Pattaya, a new, small company that quickly struck a deal with retail giant Musimundo at a time when most multinationals were skeptical about the retailer's post-Chapter 11 structure.

Pattaya A&R director Sergio Fasanelly says, "It was very important that Miguel Mateos decided to entrust his new album to us. It is a great product. Our initial shipping of 5,000 units sold out, and we received orders for 5,000 more. In a better context, sales would have probably tripled that amount. Even so, being a double [disc], we consider that it has actually reached gold status [20,000 units]."

Outside Argentina, Salir Vivo is distributed by BMG in Mexico, the U.S., and Latin America with the exception of Chile, where in a first for a Mateos album, it was released through EMI-FM.

EMI-Chile A&R director Oscar Sayavedra says, "It was a true honor to work with this album with Mateos, who is one of the three most popular Argentine rock artists along with Charly Garcia and Soda Stereo."

Since last September, Mateos has been on an intensive nationwide tour that has taken him to remote states within Argentina. And after three years of absence from Mexican stages, a Mexico City show last November at the Plaza de Toros with popular band El Tri drew 35,000 fans and set the tone for a continental tour that will kick off in February.

"All this activity is a great satisfaction," Mateos says. "The album is doing well, and this whole tour is incredible. The fans respond with enthusiasm and buy the tickets with a great sacrifice, because I think that there is a necessity [to reach] out to local artists. The best promotion is always to perform live."

...and amounts to roughly a 4% drop—paltry in comparison with the drop in sales of more than 10% that was registered by the industry as a whole.

This would seem to point to a relatively healthy Latin segment in the midst of an overall industry crisis. And yet Latin record executives have spent the year in a non-stop lament over lost sales, bolstering their argument with an alarming 25% drop in recording Industry Sales, of America shipment figures.

But a 25% drop where? Most likely in sales of regional Mexican and tropical music at informal outlets—swaps meets and dances—as well as mom-and-pop stores not monitored by Nielsen SoundScan, which are significant in a market like Puerto Rico. Still, Nielsen SoundScan measures close to 90% of all U.S. retail, and those measurements paint an extremely telling picture. Of the year's top-selling Latin albums, seven were pop. One—Marc Anthony's top-selling Librecinta in Spanish with no doubt boosted by his broad pop and English-language fan base, and only two were regional Mexican.

While there is no hard data to prove it, we can speculate that physical piracy is siphoning away sales of regional Mexican titles, the bread and butter of Latin labels. And the consequences are dire: Take Disa. In the past year, the Mexico-based label dropped 30 acts from its roster, a move directly motivated by a sales decline attributed to physical piracy, according to executive Patricia Chavez.

In the meantime, the general sentiment is that Internet piracy is still not the overriding concern for Latin music because, presumably, the average Latin buyer does not have a computer where he can download music. This can only create a very false sense of security. The affluent buyer—the one that has that computer—is playing a big role in keeping those Latin sales numbers up, judging by the most-scanned titles in this country. It's only a matter of time before increased downloading begins to be reflected in the Nielsen SoundScan numbers as well.

Also noteworthy is an astounding 18 of the 50 Top Latin Albums titles of the year were compilations, greatest-hits, or live albums, signaling a slowdown in new-album production. (By comparison, 10 of the top 50 albums on the year-end Top Billboard 200 Albums chart fell in that category.)

Labels are working extra hard to push the newer acts they believe in, as evidenced by the success on radio and in sales of such acts as Juanes, Jennifer Peña, Alexandre Pires, Pilar Montenegro, Las Ketchup, and Sin Bandera.

But what an uphill battle it is. Let's forget for a minute the perversions of getting played on Latin radio and simply look at the final results. Of the top 50 titles on the Billboard year-end Hot Latin Tracks chart, only five—I'll belonged to brand-new artists, including tracks by Pires and Montenegro, who both started out in bands. By year's end, three brand-new acts—Areito, Grupo Aroma, and Alberto & Roberto—had done well on the Hot Latin Tracks chart. But radio's general unwillingness to play new acts is still dictated to the development of the Latin music industry in this country as pia. Until five years ago, this level of conservativeness could be attributed to the scarcity of Spanish-language radio in this market, which has evolved to be everything to everyone. But today, with more stations switching to Spanish every year, it's simply inexorable.

Radio programmers often say the reason they don't play more new music is because there's no good new music to be played. This is a far fetched, I can only respond with one word: Ketchup. That the Latin music industry in the U.S. hasn't suffered as much as the industry as a whole is commendable. Then again, we're not big enough to be able to afford that level of sales decline. My hope for the future is that from lessons learned and from signs delivered, losses can be prevented instead of lamented.

And to cap off 2002, the top three albums on the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart for the last two weeks of the year were Sony titles: Las Ketchup's eponymous album, Shakira's Gran Poder, and Carolee Arjona's Santo. This feat was last pulled by Universal the week of Oct. 21, 2001.

América Latina...
UNIVISION felicita a todos los nominados a

PREMIO LO NUESTRO
A LA MUSICA LATINA
15 ANIVERSARIO

EN VIVO
el 5 de febrero del 2003

Sólo por
univision
el Hogar de las Estrellas

- Adolfo Urias y Su Lobo Norteño
- Alberto y Roberto
- Alejandro Guzmán
- Alejandro Montaner
- Alejandro Sanz
- Ana Bárbara
- Aracely Arámbula
- Área 305
- Aroma
- Banda El Recodo
- Big Boy
- Brenda K. Starr
- Cabas
- Carlos Vives
- Celia Cruz
- Celso Piña y Su Ronda Bogotá
- Chayanne
- Christian Castro
- Conjunto Primavera
- Control
- Dobble Fillo
- El Coyote y Su Banda Tierra Santa
- El General
- El Gran Combo De Puerto Rico
- El Poder del Norte
- El Tri
- Elvis Crespo
- Enrique Iglesias
- Fito Olivares
- Fulanito
- Germán Lizárraga y Su Banda Estrellas de Sinaloa
- Gilberto Santa Rosa
- Ilegales
- Intocable
- Jenni Rivera
- Jennifer Peña
- Jerry Rivera
- Jimmy González y El Grupo Mazz
- Joan Sebastian
- Jorge Morero
- Juanes
- Kabah
- La Mosca Tse Tse
- Las Ketchup
- Laura Pausini
- Libración
- Locos Por Juana
- Los Palominos
- Los Temerarios
- Los Tigres del Norte
- Luis Miguel
- Lupillo Rivera
- Maná
- Marc Anthony
- Marco Antonio Solís
- Millie Quezada
- Monchy y Alexandra
- Oro Sólido
- OV7
- Pablo Montero
- Paquita La del Barrio
- Paulina Rubio
- Pedro Fernández
- Pilar Montenegro
- Proyecto Nuevo
- Proyecto Uno
- Rabanes
- Rafy Burgos "El Cupido"
- Ramón Ayala y Sus Bravos del Norte
- Rogelio Martínez
- Shakira
- Sin Bandera
- Sindicato Argentino del Hip Hop
- Susana Baca
- Thalía
- Tucanes de Tijuana
- Vicente Fernández
- Vico C
## LATIN POP AIRPLAY

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Bring Whistles And Tambourines: EMP Exhibition Remembers Disco

BY STEVE WIECKING

SEATTLE—Overheard from two 12-year-old boys exiting the Experience Music Project's (EMP) new disco exhibition: "This place is gay." And it is. The success of the EMP show, "Disco: A Decade of Saturday Nights"—star- ted adolescents and all—is that it knows where the flamboyant heart of the music lies and hasn't held back in articulating its very specific beat.

The exhibition has everything—the ubiquitous glitter ball, the flashing lights, the outrageous costumes, and white suits. But what you come away with is a surprising respect for the genre and a kind of melancholy exhilaration from the show's rich look at the life that once surrounded it.

While the selected media representation—earthy reportage of the fad, vintage video clips, portions of dance instruction tapes, a documentary made by New York University film students in 1977—is engaging, it's the more intimate stuff that stays with you and enriches the discussion of the era.

Among the choice "artifacts" are ingratiating personal photos, correspondence, and programs from the gay clubs that supported and fed on the burgeoning disco scene. The energy expressed in them is often sweeter funny: A membership leaflet from 70s New York club the Gallery notes, "If you wish, you may bring your witches and tambourines!" It's not all playful camp, though. Most moving are heartfelt letters sent to Michael Fesco upon the closing of his New York hot spot, Flamingo, in 1981. "It was the beginning of the general development of me," a saddened fan writes. "And I don't have to explain that it was far more than just good music and a good party.

The exhibition isn't strictly gay, of course. Curators Eric Weisbard, Ann Powers, and Ben London have done laudable work in respecting the genre's disparate origins, shining light into the corners from roots to rebirth; Philly soul, Afro-Latin rhythms, and the session musicians who gave disco room to breathe all receive ample credit before Madonna even comes into the picture.

There are pleasant surprises, too: Unsung mavericks like Grace Jones, who captured both the avant-garde and liberating multi-ethnic elements of the period, have whole sections devoted to them. Judicious archival photo selections capture the surrounding cultural excitement, featuring the blatant yet somehow innocent sexual exuberance of the club scene. And music choices at the provided listening stations don't stop at Donna Summer: brag for including Amanda Lear's "Enigma (Give a Bit of Mmm to Me)," a hidden gem.

The expansion show gets almost everything right, which—considering how easy it would have been to either wallow in the obvious excess or leech the life out of it altogether—is a considerable achievement. One of the only unfortunate aspects of the exhibition at EMP, in fact, is its home. Paul Allen's dream museum has noble ambitions, but its tourist-heavy, museum-march ambience often makes adventurous projects like this feel a bit like a novelty instead of an essential. It doesn't help that it is in a boxy little room, in a space so clean and prefabricated that it threatens to turn the proceedings into charming kitsch; there's something unintentionally funny about putting a "popper necklace" behind a protective glass cover and dryly explaining the use of its hazardous liquid on an informative title card.

That's probably just carping, though, because what has been achieved is still a sublime and ample example of how to present and educate the masses. Novices will get a kick out of the hands-on DJ booth; experts will love the journalistic inclusion of the DJ-oriented organization the New York Record Pool.

The show lets you feel as though you're actually one the putting the pieces together—what you're willing to put into it is what you'll get out of it. This is particularly true of the audio tour. Commentary from the people involved in the era brings into focus the honest passion that went into this blooming of the disco sound. Tom Moulton explains the sentiment behind his creation of the world's first remix (BT Express: "Do It [Til You're Satisfied]"). "That's the goal if you could extend that feeling!"

Better still are the humorous asides: Janice-Marie Johnson, lead singer/bassist with A Taste of Honey, recalls that some of the lyrics in the first verse to "Boogie Oogie Oogie" after telling of a particularly stiff military-base crowd. She had shouted, "If you think you're too cool to boogie...!"

And the rest is history.

Yes, the Disney antics and desperate Ethel Merman efforts and all the other evidence of oversaturation that signified disco's demise are here on visual and audio display. But it's the life that you will remember.

A Man and a Woman. Singer Jocelyn Brown recently stopped by Galaxy FM radio in the U.K. to co-host DJ/producer David Morales' weekly Friday-night dance show. One of the highest-rated national radio shows in its time slot, Morales on Galaxy FM airs from 9 p.m.-11 p.m. in the U.K. It can also be heard from 4 p.m.-6 p.m. EST on the station's Web site, galaxyfm.co.uk. Pictured are Brown, left, and Morales.
Jennifer Hanson Is Getting Off To A ‘Beautiful’ Start On Capitol

BY PHYLIS STARK

NASHVILLE—As the perennial pop vs. traditional stylistic debate rages on in the country format, Capitol Records has chosen to introduce newcomer Jennifer Hanson with a touch of edgier, more pop than country and has inspired Sheryl Crow comparisons. But Hanson’s eponymous debut album, due out Aug. 18, has some solid country songs on it that may placate purists.

Regardless of style, Hanson’s songwriting shines throughout the album, which was produced with Greg Droman and on which she co-wrote nine of the 11 songs. She wrote several with husband Mark Nesler, a prominent Nashville songwriter.

Fletcher Foster, Capitol senior VP of marketing in Nashville, says part of Hanson’s initial appeal to the label staff was that her songwriting is “versatile. To have a new artist who knows what they want to sing about and the material is [already] there, you’re already first, if not second, base.”

When talking about Hanson’s more country-rounding cuts as a future single, Foster says, “we’ll be able to show the whole breadth of Jennifer as an artist.”

Foster says Capitol chose the first single very carefully. “We felt that ‘Beautiful Goodbye’ was a great song to put her apart from not only all the other new artists out there but also the acts out there in general. We felt this would be a great song, because it did have some youthful appeal.”

A sexy video, which has received extensive play on Country Music Television and Great American Country, also helped differentiate Hanson. Foster notes, “there are very few females in the format that are playing electric guitar.”

The single has been on the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart for more than five months—not considered an unusually long time anymore in the country format. It has finally begun to kick in as a program play.

Hanson was introduced to radio with a lengthy bus tour of stations during the summer of 2002. Nash Mahan, PD of country WIRK, West Palm Beach, Fla., says, “The single is getting a lot of notice. It really stands out. We are also getting a lot of ‘Who is that?’ calls from men and women. The thing I like about the song is its ability to entertain WIRK listeners who are coming to the station to hear the new Tim McGraw, the new Dixie Chicks, Shania Twain, and Faith Hill songs. It definitely has P2 and P3 appeal without offending the P1s.”

Country WYRK Buffalo, N.Y., PD John Grogan says, “This album and its release response has been great. It’s a very relatable song for anyone who ended a relationship. The tempo is a nice fit, too.”

As far as Hanson herself, Paul says, “She’s got a tremendous amount of star quality. She’s beautiful with a wonderful personality and is an excellent songwriter. I think she’s got the goods to go very far.”

ROUNDING OUT THE ROSTER

Capitol, best-known as the home of male stars Garth Brooks, Keith Urban, and Trace Adkins, could use a successful female artist to round out its roster. The label staff recently endured the disappointment of launching Cyndi Thompson with a gold-selling album, only to have her walk away from her career as a performer. Capitol also recently parted ways with Mindy McCready after just one album. Thus, hopes are high for Hanson.

“She’s going to be a great artist and a great spokesperson for our format,” Foster predicts. “She loves country music and has no desire to leave the format, but the hipness and youth she’s got are going to be fresh for our format.”

For a country singer, Hanson comes from an atypical background, which is reflected in her music. She grew up in Southern California with a guitarist father who spent years on the road touring with the Righteous Brothers, followed by 16 years and counting touring with country supergroup Alabama.

Foster says Hanson will be marketed to fans of Alabama since many capitol artists grew up with her because of her father. The label is also planning showcases this month and in February in Nashville and New York. Capitol is exploring ideas for some Internet campaigns to launch the album because, as Foster says, “she’s very visually friendly for the Web.”

TOO YOUNG AND TOO POP?

Hanson moved to Nashville in 1995 and spent two years in a deal with J&R Records, which ultimately did not pan out. She signed with Acuff-Rose as a songwriter in 1998 and remains a staff writer for that company. She recently spent last year with Sony/ATV Tree. She has not yet signed a management or booking contract.

Hanson is happy to have landed with RCA. Although her experiences with RCA were positive, she says, “They had a full roster of females, and it probably wasn’t the best place for me to end up.”

Even before moving to Nashville, Hanson would make frequent trips there to try to launch her career. However, she says she was “tired of that and too pop for what was going on at the time.”

She persevered, determined that “what I was writing about lent itself more to the country market.” A lot of artists and writers who are trying to find their way try to second-guess what they want to do, she continues. “When I stopped doing that and started making music I liked, that’s when things took shape for me and began to make sense.”

Hanson has had the benefit of learning about the music business both from her father’s experiences and from seeing Nesler lose his record deal when his former label, Asylum, shut down.

“The main thing I learned from my dad is that this is a job, and it’s a hard job. It’s a lifestyle you really have to want,” she explains. What she learned from Nesler’s experience is that “the rug can get jerked out from under your feet at any moment. I try to approach this business with a realistic outlook.”

Still, she says, “I always felt like this career was for me. Growing up in Southern California and watching them play for 60,000 people seemed normal to me.”
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**GREATEST GAINER**

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### Billboard Top Bluegrass Albums - January 11, 2003

**Artist** | **Title** | **Imprint & Number/Distribution Label** | **Peak Position**
---|---|---|---
**NEW 1** | **THIS IS GOD** | **Phil Vassar (Arista Nashville/Polystar)** | **49**
**NEW 2** | **PICTURE** | **Kid Rock Featuring Sheryl Crow (Atlantic)** | **45**
**NEW 3** | **I DROVE ALL NIGHT** | **Pismonkey (Warner Bros.)** | **46**
**NEW 4** | **SPEED** | **Montgomery Gentry (MCA)** | **55**
**NEW 5** | **ROCKIN’ LITTLE CHRISTMAS** | **Brooks & Dunn (MCA)** | **57**
**NEW 6** | **JINGLE BELLS** | **Alan Jackson (Arista)** | **62**
**NEW 7** | **WINTER WONDERLAND** | **Brooks & Dunn (MCA)** | **56**
**NEW 8** | **LOVE WON’T LET ME** | **Tammy Cochran (Clockwork)** | **55**

### Billboard Top Country Singles Sales - January 11, 2003

**Artist** | **Title** | **Imprint & Number/Distribution Label** | **Peak Position**
---|---|---|---
**1** | **I’M GONNA GETCHA GOOD** | **Time Life** | **7**
**2** | **CONCRETE ANGEL** | **Capitol** | **32**
**3** | **WHEN THE LIGHTS GO DOWN** | **RCA** | **33**
**4** | **TRAVELIN’ SOLDIER** | **MCA** | **34**
**5** | **THAT’S THE NIGHT & THE MUSIC WILL** | **RCA** | **35**
**6** | **PRACTICE LIFE** | **Capitol** | **38**
**7** | **LET IT BE CHRISTMAS** | **Arista Nashville/AAC** | **37**
**8** | **WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY** | **Capitol** | **36**
**9** | **I’M NOT BREAKIN’ UP** | **Capitol** | **39**
**10** | **WON’T BE CHRISTMAS WITHOUT YOU** | **RCA** | **41**
**11** | **A MEMORY LIKE I’M GONNA HAVE** | **Capitol** | **47**
**12** | **THE LOVE SONG** | **BNA** | **43**
**13** | **LATELY (BEEN DREAMIN’ “BOUT BABIES)** | **BNA** | **37**
**14** | **FOREVER EVERYDAY** | **Capitol** | **38**
**15** | **MY OLD MAN** | **Capitol** | **39**
**16** | **HANGIN’ ROUND THE MISTLETOE** | **Capitol** | **46**
**17** | **IT’LL GO AWAY** | **C.C. Carpenter (Columbia)** | **34**
**18** | **FELIX NAVIDAD** | **Warner Bros.** | **46**
**19** | **ALMOST HOME** | **Capitol** | **51**
**20** | **THEY’S MORE TO ME THAN YOU** | **EMI Nashville** | **53**
**21** | **THREE WOODEN CROSSES** | **A&M** | **52**
**22** | **I’LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS** | **EMI Nashville** | **53**
**23** | **GOD HOW SHOULD I EXPERIENCE CHRISTMAS** | **EMI Nashville** | **53**

### Billboard Top Country Albums - January 11, 2003

**Artist** | **Title** | **Imprint & Number/Distribution Label** | **Peak Position**
---|---|---|---
**1** | **THAT’S THE NIGHT & THE MUSIC WILL** | **RCA** | **35**
**2** | **THE SONG WRITERS** | **RCA** | **34**
**3** | **JONAS BROTHERS** | **RCA** | **33**
**4** | **THE IMPOSSIBLE** | **RCA** | **32**
**5** | **THE WAY YOU LOVE ME** | **RCA** | **31**

### Billboard Hot Shot Debut

**Artist** | **Title** | **Imprint & Number/Distribution Label** |
---|---|---|
**NEW 1** | **19 SOMETHIN’** | **Mark Wills (Capitol)** |
**NEW 2** | **SHE’LL LEAVE YOU WITH A SMILE** | **George Strait (MCA)** |
**NEW 3** | **WHO’S YOUR DADDY?** | **Toby Keith (MCA)** |
**NEW 4** | **THREE DAYS** | **Rascal Flatts (MCA)** |
**NEW 5** | **FALL INTO ME** | **Emerson Drive (RCA)** |
**NEW 6** | **THE BABY** | **Blake Shelton (MCA)** |
**NEW 7** | **I JUST WANNA BE MAD** | **Terri Clark (MCA)** |
**NEW 8** | **A LOT OF DIFFERENT** | **Kenny Chesney (Capitol)** |
**NEW 9** | **SOMEBODY LIKE YOU** | **Keith Urban (Capitol)** |
**NEW 10** | **RED RAG TOP** | **Tim McGraw (MCA)** |
**NEW 11** | **YOU CAN’T HIDE BEAUTIFUL** | **Aaron Lines (EMI)** |
**NEW 12** | **LANSLAND** | **Dioon Chicks (EMI)** |
**NEW 13** | **MAN TO MAN** | **Gary Allan (EMI)** |
**NEW 14** | **BEAUTIFUL MESS** | **Diamond Rio (RCA)** |
**NEW 15** | **I WISH YOU’D STAY** | **Brad Paisley (EMI)** |
**NEW 16** | **UNUSUALLY.UNUSUAL** | **Lonestar (EMI)** |
**NEW 17** | **CHROME** | **Trace Atkins (EMI)** |
**NEW 18** | **AT THE END OF THE DAY** | **Kellie Coffey (EMI)** |
**NEW 19** | **ON A MISSION** | **Trick Pony (EMI)** |
**NEW 20** | **BROKENHEARTED FRIENDS** | **Joe Nichols (EMI)** |
**NEW 21** | **BEAUTIFUL GOBBLER** | **Jennifer Nettles (EMI)** |
**NEW 22** | **NEXT BIG THING** | **Vince Gill (EMI)** |
**NEW 23** | **UP** | **Shania Twain (EMI)** |
**NEW 24** | **EVERY RIVER** | **Brooks & Dunn (EMI)** |
**NEW 25** | **BELIEVE** | **Diamond Rio (EMI)** |
**NEW 26** | **THERE’S NO LIMIT** | **Deana Carter (EMI)** |
**NEW 27** | **RAINING ON SUNDAY** | **Keith Urban (EMI)** |
**NEW 28** | **FAMILY TREE** | **Daryl Worley (EMI)** |
**NEW 29** | **TIL SOMETHING COMES BETWEEN US** | **John Michael Montgomery (EMI)** |
**ALBUMS**

**SPOTLIGHTS**

**POP**

★ S CLUB

Don’t Stop Movin’

**PRODUCERS:** various

**Universal 065532**

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 17, 2002

Even with a top 10 single on The Billboard Hot 100 under its belt (the lush “Never Had A Dream Come True”), a gold album, and another top 25 Family TV series, S Club is largely unknown in the U.S. That’s a shame, as the group’s third American album, Don’t Stop Movin’, is a hook-laden collection of perfect pop tunes. Movin’ primarily comprises upbeat numbers, including the chirpy “You” and the dancefloor-prime “Alive.” The best cut is the superb (and insanely catchy) title track, which was a U.K. No. 1 hit and earned the group Best Single B Count at the 2002 Brit Awards. Hardcore fans take note: Movin’ culms tracks from the group’s two U.K. albums—Seeing Double and Sunshine—nearly all of which were released in the States. —KC

**KATE RUSBY**

10 PRODUCER: John McCusker

**Compass 4350**

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 7

Anglophiles with a taste for intimate, finely crafted folk music are already well aware of the classically trained, multi-instrumentalist, writer, who has been offering heartfelt material for nearly a decade. With 10, Kate Rusby collects her best tunes—many of which were written by her brother, Dan, who is now reaccepted, or reforcluded—for side project, Kate Rusby. The resulting set delves fans a fresh view of Rusby favorites while providing the unintinitated with enough reasons to become devoted disciples. Singing out any one tune doesn’t allow one to dismiss the others, though it is difficult not to gravitate most often to the swelling “Sweet Birdie” and the mournful “Over You Now.” With its complex melodies, wondrously literate prose, and richly layered performances, they are exemplary of Rusby’s one of the finest exports of the U.K. —LF

**SOUNDTRACK**

Adaptation

PRODUCER: Carter Burwell

**Astralwerks 43484**

**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 26, 2002

Mechanized grooves of doom from Fatboy Slim’s remix of the main theme lead you into the psychotically twisted landscapes of Adaptation. Carter Burwell’s hallucinogenic score to导导Spike Jonze’s new film. Mixing orchestra, electronica effects, Balinese gamelan, rippling harp, and the morphing guitar distortion soundscapes of David Torn, the veteran composer continues to subvert the orchestral tenets of the Hollywood score. Reflecting the internal doubts and recurring nightmares of a scorerwriter suffering writer’s block, Burwell knowingly takes the cliched ascending/descending cycle of Hollywood “dream sequences” and mutates it throughout the soundtrack, from the pastoral but haunting “The Writer” and the Crazy White Man” to the horrorific “Evasion and Escape.” Burwell’s delirious trip to psychosis is capped by the Turtles’ "Happy Together,” which has never sounded so sinister. —AD

**R&B/HIP-HOP**

**TYRESE**

I Wanna Go There

**PRODUCERS:** various

**J 80813-20041**

**RELEASE DATE:** Dec. 17, 2002

On his inaugural J album, Tyrese returns to the old-school rooted R&B he led with in 1998’s a la the top hit “Sweet Lady.” Evidence of that can be heard on his current chart-climbing lead track, “How You Go Act Like That.” Overall a much stronger effort than his last RCA project, 2000 Watts, this new album shines brightly when the former Coke pitcher works out on such ballad/midtempo numbers as the Musiq-sounding “U Don’t Give Me A Damn About Me” and “I Must Be Crazy,” while up tempo for “Girl Can’t Help It” pales in comparison. Music aside, female fans will no doubt be drawn to the CD cover, which portrays a bikini-brief-and-hat-clad Tyrese in all his chiseled glory. —GM

**JAZZ/FOILY**

Circle of the Sun

**PRODUCERS:** Warren Rosenberg, Marion Saunders, John Pondel

**Beaver Music 2003**

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 14

New York groove collective Jazzholic offers up another eclectic offering on its fourth set, Circle of the Sun. Founded by Warren Rosenberg, Marion Saunders, and John Pondel, Jazzholic’s ever-changing lineup is what keeps the music fresh. On Circle, the group enlists Kaissa Doumbé, Mark Robohm, and Naren Budhakar, among others, to craft an album that is equal parts soul, electronica, jazz, and ambient. In essence, Jazzholic disregards contemporary R&B conventions in favor of musical landscapes that, while certainly earthy, are also otherworldly. Among its highlights are “A Love Thing” and the inspiring “Love Philosophy.” The act’s cover of Depeche Mode’s “Enjoy the Silence” takes the electro-pop classic in a completely different direction, with vocalist Michelle Lewis effortlessly gliding over a lush backdrop. While post-punk band The Smashing Pumpkins have baulked at such a loose, left-of-center cover, it is rather sublime. A feast for the ears. —RH

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

Global Soul

**PRODUCERS:** Putumayo World Music 206

**RELEASE DATE:** Jan. 7

Numerous artists from around the world draw much inspiration from American R&B, hip-hop, and soul. Unfortunately, the bulk of this music rarely finds its way back to the U.S. (The Les Nubians and MC Solaar of the world are few and far between.) Of course, this is where a label like Putumayo steps in. For its latest compilation, the globetrotting imprint has scoped the continents in search of artists who have been influenced by such acts as Destiny’s Child, India.Arie, Musiq, the Roots, and Stevie Wonder. With the Carpenter Boys “Attandrom” (I Will Wait) by French trio Melgrove; fans of TLC’s “Unpretty” and “Waterfalls” will certainly embrace this song’s sweet melodies. Fernanda Abreu, who hails from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, offers “Eu Quero So” (I Want Sun), which is equal parts Soul and Ne’Shell Ndegocielo—albeit with an Ipanema twist. “Senza Trucco” (No Trick) by Italian trio Traccia Mista is styled in fusion of the classic to the Modern. This refreshing Global Soul also spotlights artists from South Korea and South Africa, among other locations. —MP

**DANCE/ELECTRONIC**

**COVENANT**

Unplugged

**MCA 3088**

**RELEASE DATE:** Dec. 10, 2002

With the Wu-Tang Clan on an extended hiatus, member MC Gza takes time to craft his third album. Never one to find his tongue on issues concerning the music industry, Gza challenges, producers, and label executives alike have on “Did Ya Say That.” Accompanied by an organ-driven sample, the Staten Island, N.Y., native lyrically goes for anyone who gets in his way. On “Standing Still,” Gza teams with songstress Santi White over a striking police-escu gui tar sample. Wu-Tang brethren RTJ, Ghostface Killah, and Inspectah Deck all make appearances throughout the set. In fact, “Silent,” which features Ghostface, and Streetlife, makes one yearn for a new Wu-Tang set. Until then, Legend of the Liquid Sword ably satisfies. —RH

**Northern Light**

PRODUCER: Jacob Hellen

**Metropolis 261**

**RELEASE DATE:** Dec. 10, 2002

Swedish sonic frontiersmen Covenant dish up their best disc yet with their ever-evolving brand of electronic body music. With grime to be labeled “synth pop,” this 11-track mix of techno cuts and delicious gloom tunes leave us at various neural connectponds and hits every time. Stark and modulating images inhabit the synth lines and Eskil Simonson’s Macintosh Macs—it’s such as they do the lyrics, delivering a panoply of bleeding circular soundscapes for futuristic brains. Airing on much more than atmospherically intoxicating, Northern Light is aural caviar for unfettered imaginations—no question perfect for the dance floor and UFO abductions. Welcome to the planetarium. —AZ

(Continued on page 30)

**CONTRIBUTORS,** Keith Catiffield, John Dilliberto, Deborah Evans Price, Larry Flick, Rasham Hall, Gail Mitchell, Tamara Palmer, Michael Pauletta, Craig Roseberry, Phillip van Vleck, Ray Waddell, Adrian Zipp, SPIN/OLIV: Reviews

*Restrictions apply: due to the limited visual attention on the basis of musical merit and/or Billboard chart position, VITAL REVIEWS: Reissued albums of special artistic, archival, and commercial interest, and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. POS:**

New releases predicted to hit the top 10% of the chart in the current reporting period. CRITICS’ CHOICE (°): New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. All albums commercially available in the U.S. are eligible. Send review copies to Michael Palenista (Billboard, 770 Broadway, 6th floor, New York, N.Y., 10036) or to the various independent distributors.

**BILLBOARD**

**January 11, 2003**

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REVIEWS & PREVIEWS

(continued from page 29)

JEAN MICHEL JARRE
Sessions 2000
PRODUCER: Jean Michel Jarre
Dreyfus 36165
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 7
Jean Michel Jarre has been a known commodity to fans of techno and ambience music since the groundbreaking album Oxygene in 1976. Sessions 2000 is Jarre’s latest foray into ambient electronics, though the pulsing fanfare at least partially merging his mesmerizing ambient music with a melodicism that’s most closely akin to jazz. These tracks all show a certain connection to the duo which is not unusual for ambient tunes, but Jarre has put a great deal of effort into evolving, using the atmosphere to feel that, at times—particularly on “March”—is reminiscent of Miles Davis’ late work. Nothing here is punctuated by silence, but there’s a good deal of space in Jarre’s solo voices. He’s created a deeply nuanced soundscape that invites repeated listening. Distributed by Koch.—PVV

COUNTRY

HICK’RY HAWKINS & SIDEMATE
The Nell I Am
PRODUCER: Waldo Matheson
Lost Gold 2225
Release Date: Dec. 10, 2002
South Carolina hellbilly Hick’ry Hawkins is kicking up some dust with an ornery brand of hard-twang country loaded with attitude. Hawkins moans with pride on “Country Girl, Pickettin’ Man,” and his “Holy Ghost Conductor” combines Cash-style shuffle with gospel sensibilities. The title cut is revoltingly entitled “Troublecooker” with a mean streak, and “Dentures on His Lady” is a bittersweet lament of love. Hawkins has a beer-soaked sense of humor: “Up Them Stairs” promises the glories of “ladies first,” and “I Just Can’t Get A Big One In Nashville” clears the air on his opinion of Music City. Misanthropists will love and sometimes laugh at it, if production is at all muddy, but this guy definitely has something more going on than just a novelty act. Available at hickryhawks.com.—RW

WORLD

★ ZEMOG, EL GALLO BUENO
Zemog, El Gallo Bueno
PRODUCERS: Abraham Delgado-Gomez, Juan Vilchez
Agogo 01
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 14
Abraham Delgado-Gomez, a native of Puerto Rico, is the person most responsible for bringing together this genre-grunching ensemble. (Zemog is “Gomex” spelled backwards; the band name is a double entendre in Spanish, “the Rooster.”) Zemog’s nine-piece lineup mimics that of a salsa band, but its repertoire is heavily influenced by the musical ideas that might fatally confuse lesser musicians. Instead, it thrives in the complexity of such tunes as “Ya No Volvere” (She’s Not Returning), “Animale” (Cheer Up), and “Rumba Pa’ Las Ninas” (Party for the Girls). Dense rhythmic structuring and the reappearing rock and blues sounds, vocals, and unpredictable arrangements make Zemog a challenging listening experience. Take the challenge; this is provocative music. Backed by Sufirefue.—PVV

JAZZ

★ JANE BUNNETT & CUBAN BRASS
Produced by: Jane Bunnett, Larry Kramer
Blue Note 411992
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 7
Soprano saxophonist/flutist Jane Bunnett has a long-standing affinity for Cuban music in general and Afro-Cuban music in particular, and she’s indulged this passion on previous releases with her Spirits of Havana ensemble. This time out, however, Bunnett and her husband, trumpeter Larry Cramer, have truly gone native. Most of the tracks were cut in Cuba with a host of massively talented local musicians and the result was short and sweet. The dynamic interplay of voice, soprano sax, and trumpet is heard on “Quilate El Chiquito” and “El Diablo” is the wild heart of the album. It’s a joyful, unruly, intensely rhythmic jazz vibe, meant to fuel a dance party. Quintero moments, such as “Prision,” featuring Grupo Vocal Descendan, have a folk music-like emotive quality.—PVV

CHRISTIAN

★ WAYNE WATSON
Living Room
PRODUCER: Neal Watson
Spring Hill Music 7-89042-1032
RELEASE DATE: Dec. 17, 2002
This album represents an intriguing chapter in Watson’s career. In 1989, he received the Dove Award for pop/contemporary album of the year. Watson’s latest release, Living Room, offers fans a spirited mix of jazz, rock, contemporary and soulful vocals and poignant songs that have long been Watson’s trademark. “Grace,” “Cry of My Heart,” and “Glorify Your Name” are among the cuts that celebrate his relationship with God, while “The Promise” is a tribute to his 29-year marriage to wife Lynn. Far from sappy, it’s a thoughtful, intelligent lyric that reflects the joys and challenges of two lives intertwined. This potent song is from an artist who always has something to say and says it brilliantly.—DEP

VITAL REISSUES

NEW ORDER
Retro
PRODUCERS: various
Epic EM243 5 39756
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 7
Retro collects all of New Order’s best-known singles, along with remixes, live tracks, and bonus cuts, and organizes them into four themed discs. The hits CD has the familiar fare: “True Faith,” “Bizarre Love Triangle,” the 12-inch remix of “Technique,” and “Blue Monday” so forth. The remix discs boast the famed Sheep Petitione reworking of “Bizarre” and album cuts, cutely and previously unreleased in the U.S. fans will probably be most interested in the live CD, which pulls together performances dating back to the 1981 Glasgow Christmas Festival. While Retro doesn’t boast any unreleased studio tracks, it does present a cohesive overview of New Order’s labels and repertoire, making it a necessity for collectors. The limited-edition package comes with a bonus disc of nine tracks, including the full 17-inch live version of “Elegia.” Retro paves the way for New Order’s single-disc best-of, International, which arrives Jan. 28.—KC

SPANDAU BALLET
Reformation
Produced by: various
Chrysalis EMC 7243 5 38862
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 7
In the early ’80s, Spandau Ballet arose as one of the darlings of Britain’s new romantic movement. Along with ABC, Duran Duran, and the Human League, the flamboyantly dressed giants of nocturnal posturing catapulted into the international spotlight with a stream of underground dance and mainstream pop hits fusing club culture aesthetics with a primitive eye, rock-solid sound, and stylized elegance. This three-disc anthology documents the quintet’s major discography up to 1984, plus international charts (beginning with its 1981 debut, Journeys to Glory). The collection assembles all the highlights (“To Cut a Long Story Short,” “Chantam 1,” “Communication,” “Paint Me Down”), including top 40 U.S. hits like “True,” “Gold,” and “Only When You Leave.” Also included are noteworthy album cuts, alternate mixes, and extended 12-inch versions. One disc features material from their debut and the other tracks the early–mid-80s hits fusing club culture aesthetics. The third disc presents the quintet’s major European tours and concert videos. (Dec. 28.): This is a daunting proposition. Many influential artists’ releases are available only as box sets or received limited distribution on independent labels, and even the greatest names in jazz have been known to put out albums that were sub-par, as the music’s history is fraught with less than fair recording contracts and extended contracts that failed to bring out the best in any of the participants. Given all this, the Love Supreme or Kind of Blue, there are probably 10 instances where a recording date was regarded as bunged down with a saccharine string section or a rhythm section being forced to blow over an intrusive synthesized backing. The best-known artists and recordings, a great deal less, even the most obscure (or virtuosic) artists and hits all receive extensive coverage here.

For those to many artists, the guide is nearly all-encompassing to a fault, listing many artists who might be unfamiliar to even the most knowledgeable jazz fan. While there is no doubt that these artists’ recordings may be of the highest caliber, many of the albums reviewed would probably be of interest to hardcore fans rather than someone simply looking to expand their jazz horizons. In addition, considering the lengthy careers of many jazz players, some entries read like a laundry list of great and fairly great recordings. For instance, there are 42 record reviews (and nearly as many album reviews) without a review) for pianist Chick Corea. To be fair, it would be impossible to condense Corea’s contributions to jazz into a few short paragraphs. However, with such a wide breadth of selections, it would be hard for a novice to determine which Corea record he should pick first in order to begin their collection. Likewise, with so many artists given in-depth coverage, a novice could spend an eternity pondering whether to purchase recordings of the late saxophonist great Joe Henderson or by lesser-known but perhaps equally thrilling pianist Hoey. Still, it’s hard to fault a tome that devotes a full page to the eclectic drummer/bandleader Ronald Shannon Jackson and lovingly details the significance of the late saxophonist Thomas Chaplin, complete with in-depth reviews of five of his most recent releases. In the case of Chaplin, the information provided proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the musician, despite his truncated life (Chaplin mysteriously passed away from leukemia, a disease that generally affects children, we are told, at the age of 40), was not highly influential then as he is highly original. Everything necessary to understand Chaplin’s place in jazz history, and to choose a CD or two to begin exploring his music, is at your fingertips.

Also refreshing is the tone of many of the album reviews. Mostly positive, they rarely attempt to take a stand and tout a release that the reviewer finds essential. If an album was considered to be trivial in its day, we are often told why, and if the reviewer still sees the value in it, very light, reasons for their support are frequently given. For instance, Miles Davis’ Live Around the World (1988), an exhaltation and complete recording that chronicles the trumpeter’s hands during the last years of his life, receives a positive review. Considered a seminal release, Davis’ last live recording was his later years for exploring contempt sounds rather than the bebop he pioneered, it is said the reviewer is no longer interested in comparing the music with the recordings Davis made decades earlier but rather considering the music for what it was intended, not to what some might have preferred it to be.

At times, the guide takes “if you can’t say anything nice, say nothing at all” approach, frequently listing but not reviewing lesser works. If an album is graded on a scale of 1 to 5, with separate designations for essential and “first purchase” suggestions, Davis’ Live Around the World gets the assistant jazz sub-genres, such as swing, bebop, and fusion. While this is a place where one would expect more information in the guide can be daunting, density should not keep one from perusing it. As a resource, it is wellequipped with useful information and for general reading, its essays and reviews are both enjoyable and informative. If one needs to refer to The All Music Guide to Jazz, it is an excellent place to start.

STEVE GRAYBOW

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BILLBOARD JANUARY 11, 2003

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MARIAN CARY The One (3:59) PRODUCER: Jermaine Dupri WRITERS: M. Carey, J. Dupri, B. Cox AND VANGUARDS: StreetATV/Rae Songs, BMG; Shaniah Cymone Music/Epi April, ASCAP; Babybobo’s Little Publishing/Nonpoint South, SESAC
Monarch Island 65574 (CD promo)
While her No. 3 entry on The Billboard 200 proved that Marian Cary’s fans are indeed charmed by Charming Bracelet, radio showed less zeal for tepid first single “Through the Rain,” which failed to triumph on the Hot 100. Follow-up “The One,” another ballad, returns the chanteuse to more dependable R&B waters, featuring an uncredited rap in her bid for street credit. The irony of this is that characteristic makes much of the disc monotonous: Carey never raises her voice above a languid whisper. The song, about a supposedlyendale, able to stroll away with you. One can see the embers of boring too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music is too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beautiful.” Sheik’s music too intelligent, beauty...
Rondor's Independence Reaps Rewards

UMG's Hands-Off Approach Allows Music Publisher To 'Have Fun'

BY JIM BESSMAN

When Universal Music Group (UMG) acquired Rondor Music in 2000, rather than absorb one of the leading independent music-publishing companies into its own estimable Universal Music Publishing Group (UMPG), it took a relatively hands-off approach, leaving Rondor in the proven hands of its president, Lance Freed.

Some 2½ years later, Freed feels that Rondor has “maintained the consistent level of success and profile, which is the main reason—other than catalog—why we were acquired to begin with.”

But Freed notes that the “unusual idea” of not folding Rondor into UMG at the onset is attributable to UMG president/COO Zach Horowitz’s vision.

“He recognized that this is a company that’s very artist-friendly and that philosophically, Rondor as a name brand always puts artists and music first—even before the bottom line,” Freed says. “We felt we had a job because people were writing songs—and we had the privilege of working with them. Zach recognized this as well and that we were an organization that continued to nurture artists and record artists from the inside and from the beginning—rather than signing them based on what other labels might be signing, as is typical of publishing.”

FREE-STANDING AND HAVING FUN

So Rondor—which was founded in 1962 by Herb Alpert and Jerry Moss—retained its creative offices in Los Angeles, Nashville, and London, remaining a free-standing creative operation with 60,000-plus song assets encompassing the works of the Beach Boys, Al Green, Otis Redding, Peter Frampton, Isaac Hayes, Supertramp, Tom Petty, and Leon Russell, to name a few luminaries. The company contains Almo Music (ASCAP) and Irving Music (BMI) and is known as Almo/Irving Music in Nashville.

“UMPG covers our royalty, collection, and copyright-administration functions, while we focus entirely on catalog and creative,” notes Freed, son of late rock ’n’ roll pioneer Alan Freed, who has helmed Rondor’s core creative team for the past 12 years, starting in the mail room and ascending to the presidency in 1990. “So we’re in the fortunate position of being able to have fun—which is an important word in music.”

Rondor’s hottest recent success is Avril Lavigne. But Freed also points to four other significant development stories from 2002:

Sophie Ellis Bextor is a homegrown project out of our London office—a wonderful young writer and great singer whose debut album, Read My Lips, sold well over 1 million copies overseas,” Freed recounts. “And we signed Memphis group Saliva long before their first album was released by Island Def Jam and sold about 800,000.”

Freed adds that Rondor’s U.K. office was also responsible for the activities of songwriter/producer William Orbit, who first rose to prominence with his work on Madonna’s Ray of Light album, “which was a total accident because we just sent tracks to her manager. But he’s now produced U2’s current single, ‘Electronic Storm,’ moving away from working with simply solo artists to a band situation.”

Freed cites another U.K. Rondor writer in Imogen Heap, who forms the acclaimed duo Frou Frou with producer Guy Sigsworth. Credit the U.K. office’s A&R exec James Darow for these and other “extremely strong songwriters” U.K. signings, Freed notes that the company focus is still on “the traditional part of music publishing—not just the producer/writer vein. We’re still developing songwriters and actively going out and pursuing cover recordings on their repertoires.”

A VERY GOOD YEAR

In addition to the major success stories of the past year, Freed mentions the performances of alternative-metal band Soil, which has sold more than 250,000 albums worldwide; writer/producer Don Gilmore, who has worked with Linkin Park, Eve, 6, Lit, and Sugar Ray; songwriter Shep Solomon, who has composed for Celine Dion, S Club, and Westlife; Mercury Nashville artist Anthony Smith, who has just scored his debut hit with “If That Ain’t Country”; and Steve Robinson, whose work has been recently covered by Faith Hill, Brooks & Dunn, and Rascal Flatts.

Freed commends a Nashville writing staff of mainly writers instead of writer/artists for achieving time hit singles in the past year and notes that a memorial tribute album by Rondor writer/artist Waylon Jennings—who’s catalog has stayed with Rondor at his family’s request—is in the works. For autumn coming in the fall is The Boy From Oz, a Broadway musical based on the life of Peter Allen that Freed says has already grossed more than the singer’s home country of Australia. He says that another musical using Beach Boys music is in development.

Noting such past acquisitions as the classic R&B East Memphis catalog—and, more recently, that of Squeeze’s Difford & Tilbrook—Freed adds that Rondor remains “on the prowl for acquisitions [to] balance the company and fill the void in places where we may be light in the loaders.

Rondor’s atypical situation inside its huge parent company, Freed says, “Zach’s philosophy was to work in tandem with UMPG, and they’ve done a wonderful job of working with us with synch licensing and other things. But for the most part, we operate as an independent company—and people still view us that way. They recognize us as a team, in maintaining some overhead—which usually would be absorbed into the acquiring company—but it’s paying some really beautiful dividends, starting now and expanding, and despite the downturn in the business and all the negative press in the record industry, no matter how large the company, if you have a great song, you’re uplifting the world and can compete with everybody.”
Audible Magic’s Capabilities May Charm The Industry

Company’s Digital-Fingerprinting, File-Tracking Technologies Help Copyright Owners Monitor Use Of Their Content

BY CATHARINE APPLEFELD OLSON

Audible Magic, a Los Gatos, Calif.-based technology firm specializing in tracking the distribution of music across the Internet, is making a name for itself with a range of industry players, as copyright owners look to monitor consumer use of their content in everything from peer-to-peer (P2P) networks to online radio services.

Among the clients using the company’s core audio-identification technology are EMI Recordings (Billboard Bulletin, Oct. 15, 2002), SESAC, and CMJ Network. The technology is particularly gaining notoriety for its anti-piracy uses, including digital fingerprinting and file tracking.

DETERMINING AUTHENTICITY

While its various partners are slicing off different applications of the Audible Magic technology, the unifying thread is its content-based retrieval and classification system that can identify a master recording under all compression levels and across any format, from TV and radio to satellite and Internet protocol.

The technology works by “listening” to a given piece of audio and then generating a unique fingerprint for each selection. A similar technology has been in use for more than a decade by other companies around the world, including Billboard sister company Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems.

“Our mission in life is to try to help content owners get the most out of their content,” says Vance Ikezoye, Audible Magic CEO and a former engineering executive at Hewlett-Packard.

Electronic commerce service company Loudbye Technologies provides the lion’s share of sound files that Audible Magic technology can monitor. Audible Magic recently signed a new development deal with EMI—its first such pairing with a major record company—which will bring a large portion of music from the EMI catalog into its database as well.

“We want to explore ways to keep track of our artists’ work on the Internet and have a better handle on piracy issues as well as the effectiveness to counter piracy,” EMI senior VP of worldwide new media Jay Samit says. “We are working together to come up with some practical applications.”

Among the primary Audible Magic offerings of interest to EMI is the Replicheck technology suite, which provides CD replicators with an automated tool to review incoming projects for piracy.

“There are real and pressing concerns across the music industry. With its acquisition in 2001 of network-monitoring technology from Internet database firm iArchive, Audible Magic landed a network-monitoring technology that can identify in midstream a recording that is being transferred and block the transfer if the user does not have the right to do so.

This application might be just the ticket to make P2P palatable, if not downright pleasing, to the music industry, according to Rick Riccobono, an outside music consultant who has been helping Audible Magic gain recognition among record companies.

“There is a great backlash against P2P in the industry that says, ‘Let’s stop this now because we had 10% attrition last year, 17% this year, second-week sales are off, and we want to kill it to combat it.’ But you have to subscribe to the idea that the consumer wants what they want when they want it,” Riccobono says. “The Audible Magic technology gives intellectual-property owners the ability to monitor P2P traffic vs. kill P2P traffic.”

Ikezoye says Audible Magic is already at work developing a system that will not only fingerprint a piece of content but also assign a watermark: “We envision that we could play a critical role in helping to understand the scale of the problem, report on it, and then hopefully have a way to help enable control of the content across distribution media.”

OTHER USES

Beyond anti-piracy applications, Audible Magic is also using its technology to monitor radio as it moves online.

Performing-rights organization SESAC, for example, entered a three-year agreement in January 2002 to use Audible Magic technology to monitor 34 terrestrial radio broadcasts utilizing Internet simulcasts as a means of better determining royalty distribution for less mainstream genres (Billboard Bulletin, Jan. 15, 2002).

For CMJ, Audible Magic is providing real-time radio airplay and Airplay information for college and select noncommercial formats.

Audible Magic was born from a challenge presented to Ikezoye in the late ’90s to develop a service where radio listeners could call an automated number and find out the name of a song currently playing and purchase it. The problem: Stations did not generally know at a given time what song was being played in the electronic format.

“Instead of using metadata and keywords and descriptors, we thought, ‘Why can’t you use the content itself?’ Ikezoye says. ‘Then once we started [developing] the technology to do that, we realized that if radio stations don’t even know what’s being played, there’s got to be a whole host of other problems this technology could solve in media and entertainment.”

Tower Turns In Profitable Third Quarter

BY ED CHRISTMAN

After 10 consecutive quarters of losses, Tower Records has turned in a profitable quarter, thanks to the sale of its Japanese operation.

For the quarter ended Oct. 31, 2002, the company posted a net income of $23 million, which was as a result of the $37.4 million profit it booked from selling the Japanese operation to Nikko Principal Investments Japan.

For the quarter, the company posted revenue of $130.1 million, which was down 7.1% from the $140.1 million it garnered in its first fiscal quarter the preceding year. Both totals are adjusted to exclude the Tower Japan results.

The $23 million profit was a considerable improvement over the $11.3 million the company posted in the same time period one year earlier. In conjunction with booking a profit on the sale of its Japanese operation, Tower also included a consolidated statement of comprehensive income, adjusting its $23 million in net income down to $11.8 million for the quarter. The adjustment concerned the valuation of its Japanese asset being negatively impacted by $11.1 million because of foreign-currency translations during the years of ownership, which had to be taken into account in stating the company’s equity. The shareholders’ equity shows a deficit of $29 million as of Oct. 31.

This year’s profitable quarter represents the first for Tower since the quarter ended Jan. 31, 2000, when it posted a net income of $2 million on sales of $335.6 million. With the current quarter containing the holiday selling season, industry executives hope that Tower can put together back-to-back profitable quarters. But given that this quarter is expected to mark the completion of the company’s restructuring plan, Tower might have some final write-offs to make, which could impact profitability.

On an operating basis, Tower posted a loss of $8.2 million for the current quarter, which is a 30.3% increase over the $6.3 million operating loss it turned during the corresponding 2001 time period. In operations, Tower achieved a gross profit of 31% of revenue, which is down from the 32.2% it had in the same quarter of 2001.
SINGER IS HIGH TECH: Warner Music Group (WMG) has named Howard Singer VP of technology. He was most recently a senior consultant at Rights.com and previously served as senior VP of marketing and product strategy at Reciprocal.

In his new post, Singer will oversee systems, networks, and other infrastructure-related technology for WMG’s global information services team; he will also lead the recently formed Digital Technology Group, which “supports technical aspects of WMG’s online music and new-media initiatives.” Based in New York, he reports to senior VP/chief information officer Tsvi Gal.

SPRINTING AHEAD: Listen.com has inked a pair of distribution deals with communications company Sprint for its Rhapsody subscription service, related wireless services. Under the alliance, Sprint will carry Rhapsody on the entertainment page of its high-speed Internet service, FastConnect DSL. As part of the agreement, listen.com offered Sprint customers a free Rhapsody trial through Dec. 22, 2002. Meanwhile, Sprint PCS, the mobile-phone division, will offer its users access to Rhapsody 411, a listen.com music information service. Wireless customers can use the feature to obtain music recommendations, artist bio, discographies, photos, and album art. Sprint PCS customers that use Rhapsody 411 will also be given a promotional code that will enable them to try the Rhapsody service.

TIVO TO PLAY TUNES: Tivo, the digital-TV recording system, will soon offer its subscribers the ability to download music and photo files from their personal computers to their TVs. The new service, which will cost an undisclosed extra fee and will be via the Tivo set-top box, will be tested this month at the Consumer Electronics Assn. conference in Las Vegas. Tivo CEO Mike Ramsey said at a recent financial investment conference in New York, “The TiVo service is expected to double to $1 million in fiscal 2004, which starts in February.

MCCARTNEY GIVES MORE ‘BACK’: Capital Records has launched a Paul McCartney Web site accessible to all those who have purchased the artist’s new DVD, Back in the U.S. Connection to the site is restricted to the DVD itself. The site features 30 additional minutes of performance footage, plus backstage outtakes. As previously reported, Back in the U.S. set records for highest single-week sales and highest debut sales of a music DVD when it sold 61,000 copies in its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan (Billboard, Dec. 14, 2002).

B&N Lowers Q4 Earnings Forecast

BY MATTHEW BENZ

NEW YORK—Barnes & Noble has lowered its earnings forecast for the rest of its fiscal year, which ends Feb. 1. Citing lower-than-anticipated holiday sales, the New York-based books and music retailer says it now expects fourth-quarter earnings from its bookstore group of $1.19-$1.31 per share, vs a previous forecast of $1.35. Full-year earnings per share are now expected to be $1.53-$1.65, down from an earlier forecast of $1.72.

The news caused Barnes & Noble stock to drop more than 18% Dec. 19, from $21.57 to $17.46. the holdings of Music Records and Landmarks, and some of their releases. But Savoy is also shooting for the attention of contemporary jazz consumers and upper-demo listeners with the signings of vocalists Andy Bey and Carol Welsman and saxophonists James Moody, Hubert Laws, and Mark Turner. The company is also making its foray into the pop marketplace with the signing of Jian Armatrading, whose debut for the label is expected in March.

Savoy president Steve Vining says the label “has been negotiating for some time” before acquiring the firm’s assets. The label, founded in the mid ’90s by producer Joel Dorn and his partner Robert Miller, had folded in bankruptcy.

In snapping up Savoy, Savoy gains the superior masters of Muse, formerly operated by longtime jazz exec Joe Fields, and Landmark, founded by notable producer Orrin Keepnews and Grant Green. Pianist Woody Shaw, Bobby Hutcherson, Kenny Burrell, and Donald Byrd were among those labels’ artists reissued by Savoy. Savoy has purchased some 400 album masters in the deal.

The first steps in mining that catalog will be the marketing of expanded versions of the Rainy Afternoon series, one of the most popular jazz anthologies in recent memory.

“We’re moving it to a two-CD set,” Vining says. “We’re trying to make it a more considerable value for the consumer.”

Priced at $12.98, the first three Rainy Afternoon twofer themes will run this month, followed by another in March and April. Some ’60s-vintage tracks from the Savoy catalog will be included among the Maze and Landmark selections on the three packages due in April, according to Vining.

In early May, Savoy will begin reissuing individual 32 titles, at the rate of seven to 10 albums per month. Vining says, “There are 50-60 solid releases we want to get out before Christmas next year.”

Of the new jazz signings, the executive says, “There’s a real opportunity for an independent right now ... It’s hard for [the majors] to deal with. There’s a whole different financial situation that comes into play.”

“At a minimum, we’ll make some really nice records, and we may hit with one or two,” he adds. “If the majors can’t figure out how to make a business out of it, that’s OK. I can.”

Vining suggests that Armatrading—an upper-demo-skewed artist with a successful major label record—is only the first signing of her kind due at Savoy.

“We want a fairly broad-based collection of artists who appeal to adults,” Vining says. “There will be more people like Joan coming to us.”

MOVING UP: Michael Olsen, COO of Compedia Media Group—the music division of Compedia Media Group—has been promoted to president of the unit.

Olsen was brought on board as COO in late 2001, after Compedia came into being as part of a reorganization of the assets of bankrupt Platinum Entertainment. He will remain based in Nashville and continue to report to Compedia Media Group’s Los Angeles-based president/CEO Teddy Turner.

Olsen will oversee Compedia’s Nashville-based imprints—Compedia, Light Music, and Intersound Media—and its licensing, sales, and data-related business unit, Compedia Distribution Group.

The executive’s ascent to the top is apt in the light of history: Olsen was a senior exec at both Platinum and its predecessor company, Intersound.
BY ED CHRISTMAN

Hastings Entertainment posted a net loss of $6.6 million, or 58 cents per share, on sales of $110.6 million in the quarter ended Oct. 31, 2002—a larger loss than the $5.5 million, or 46 cents per share, it posted in the corresponding quarter in 2001, when sales were $103.2 million.

Hastings attributed the bigger loss to lower gross margins, which were a reaction to competitor discounting. For the quarter, gross profit was 30.8% of revenue, down from the 31.1% of revenue in the corresponding 2001 period. Selling, general, and administrative expenses increased to 36.3% in the just-completed quarter from 35.9% in the comparable 2001 time period.

While total sales for the third quarter were up 7.2% from the corresponding 2001 period, comparable store sales were the main component of the figure, with the chain posting a same store sales increase of 6.1% for the quarter. Hastings broke out comparable store sales by product segments, books were up 4.7%, and music was down 12.2%. The company also noted that other music-related product experienced upturns, giving the overall music category a comparable-store decrease of 8.4%.

Of total sales, $24.2 million was from video rental for the quarter. The company also generated $38,000 in sales from its online store, which were down slightly from the $40,000 rung up in the same quarter of 2001.

For the nine-month period, the company lost $7.7 million, or 68 cents per share, on sales of $267 million, compared with a loss of $5.5 million, or 47 cents per share, on sales of $244.9 million from the nine months in the prior fiscal year. It had an operating loss of $7.6 million for the first nine months of its fiscal year vs. $4 million for the corresponding 2001 period.

For the nine-month period, the company’s Internet operation had sales of $131,000, up from $13,000 in the first nine months of the preceding fiscal year.

In third-quarter 2002, Hastings opened three stores and closed one; year to date it has opened five and closed two, leaving the chain with 145 units in 21 states at the end of the third quarter.

On Aug. 23, 2002, Hastings amended its revolving credit facility agreement with Fleet Retail Finance and the CIT Group/Business Credit, increasing it to $80 million from $70 million and extending it to Aug. 20, 2005. At the end of the quarter, the company had drawn down $45.6 million from the facility.

At the end of the quarter, inventories totaled $166.3 million, while accounts payable stood at $100.5 million. Shareholders’ equity totaled $89.7 million as of Oct. 31, 2002.

Also during the quarter, the company announced it would settle a class-action shareholder suit and will pay $5.75 million for an error that caused the company to restate its earnings for a five-year period.

Unless the music industry fixes problems like CD burning and file sharing, Hastings CEO John Marmaduke projects that music sales will drop to 24% of Hastings’ volume by 2004 (Billboard, Nov. 16, 2002). Hastings also has been critical of consumers shifting their dollars to discounters like Wal-Mart, Target, and Best Buy, noting that the music industry is losing its impulse-purchase business in this process.

As he told Billboard in a previous interview in late 2002, “We have the same or less number of customers making less impulse purchases and making less frequent purchases, all of which equals declining unit sales. That’s a recipe for disaster.”
HOME VIDEO

**2002 IN REVIEW**

Paramount Home Entertainment International president Phil Jackson is not sure about the longevity of the DVD boom, though he does believe that the format has helped create excitement in the home-video market as a whole. "DVD—just like so many other changes in this market over the last 20 years—has actually grown the pie," he says. "I think it has enticed more people to come into the market and buy product."

In 2001, worldwide spending on video software reached $39 billion, with 43%, or $17 billion, of that amount generated outside of the United States. Western Europe accounted for $8 billion of that home-video revenue, and Screen Digest predicts that by 2006, its total home-video spending will reach $19 billion. DVD provided the largest growth area, with sales up 80% over 2000 for a total of $13 billion. VHS and video compact disc spending declined 8%. (2002 figures are still being tallied.)

Executives say the early adopters of DVD spent approximately $1,000 on a player and bought many discs because of their enthusiasm for the technology and for film. According to DreamWorks head of international video Matt Brown, the same can not be said for the people buying a standard $100 machine.

We all have a budget, and clearly the people who are buying 14 to 16 DVDs a year are not the same people who buy a machine for $100. Will these people buy more than they did on VHS? It is hard to say, but they probably won't buy as much as the early adopters," Brown says. "Will the premium of quality mean that you will actually have higher buy rates in the end? I can't answer that question."

**VOD AND INVENTORY ISSUES**

For the home-entertainment divisions and retailers, there is a lot riding on a continuing boom in DVD sales. Additionally, there is a lot of the emergence of video-on-demand (VOD) as a credible home-entertainment format to rival retail.

While Jackson believes that VOD will find its place in the market and not necessarily to the detriment of any one sector of the business, he is convinced that DVD is here to stay: "I still think [home video] is going to be the king of home entertainment for some considerable time."

The future of VHS, however, is unclear. Moves to price discs at DVD levels, spearheaded in 2002 by veteran WHV president Warren Lieberfarb—who was forced to step down from his position Dec. 20 (see story, page 31)—have had a severe effect on the tape format. In many international territories, VHS is now seen by retailers as a bargain-bin product, even though VHS is the only home-entertainment format that many consumers use.

Throughout 2002, international studio chiefs have questioned whether entertainment retailers are moving disc titles priced too low. "I think DVD is a great new delivery system that has been embraced really rapidly," Brown says. "But I'm not sure there's a great change in consumer habits."

**WINDBEAT DEBATE**

WHV also created shock waves after the studio eliminated the rental-to-sell-through window on VHS and DVD with the August release of Academy Award-winning film Training Day. WHV claims that the strategy massively increased its self-through revenue and has also given rental and retail a boost. What this means for rental dealers is stockpiling its titles.

Comparative research from Screen Digest suggests that day-and-date releasing can lift sales by more than 50%—in some cases, by as much as 1,000%.

"We are very pleased with the direct-to-sale uplifts that we are getting on our title," Brown says. "We think DVD has provided the consumer with an opportunity to see video on their own terms. But there is a lot of work that needs to be done—and that is to do the marketing and sales before we actually release the title to the consumer."

WHV's David Naylor: "On a large scale, I'd say copyright protection was the most important issue in 2002. We have to make sure what happened in the music biz isn't repeated in the home-entertainment industry."

"I think the issue of copyright protection will figure prominently in 2003, but I also think the music business will shift more toward DVD. Expect Blockbuster to move even more toward sales than rentals, and expect funeral plans for VHS to be well under way."

Koch Vision president Michael E. Rosenberg: "The greatest challenge in the video industry in 2002 was staying competitive during this time of explosive growth of the DVD format. The bar was raised for studios/independents to produce compelling product and to be more creative in marketing efforts while remaining competitively priced. In 2003, we see DVD continuing to break ground in the U.S. through market in all genres, including the rather unappetizing children's and fitness categories. We also see increased opportunities for distribution internationally."
### Billboard Top DVD Sales

#### January 11, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title (Widescreen)</th>
<th>Label/Distributing Label &amp; Number</th>
<th>Weekly Sales Rank</th>
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#### Billboard Top VHS Sales

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*Note: sales data compiled by Nielsen VideoScan.*

### Billboard Top VHS Rentals

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With New ‘Believe,’ Aaron Neville Continues To Support DVD-Audio

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

Aaron Neville believes in multichannel audio. His Jan. 28 release, Believe, will be the second from the New Orleans soul legend to be featured in both the CD and DVD-Audio formats. As with 2000’s Devotion, entirely comprised of traditional and modern spirituals, Believe is a gospel album that will be presented in a 5.1-channel surround-sound mix as well as 2-channel stereo. Also like its predecessor, the DVD-Audio version of Believe will be released on the Silverline label, part of Los Angeles-based 5.1 Entertainment.

“Sitting in the middle of a room, you’re surrounded by it,” Neville says of the surround-sound experience. “It’s like you’re in the middle of a band.”

Neville was introduced to multichannel audio by producer Mark Mazzetti, who had worked with him on 1997’s To Make Me Who I Am. With Devotion and now Believe, Neville is yet another artist supporting the format. “Once you hear it,” Neville says, “you go back to the old thing and say, ‘Where is this, where is that?’ Here, you hear everything, it comes out at you like 3D.”

Both the 2- and 5.1-channel mixes—the former to be released on the EMI Gospel label—were created by Gary Lux of 5.1 Entertainment at the company’s Los Angeles studio. While most of Believe was recorded in Nashville with producer Barry Beckett, Lux explains, “‘Ave Maria’ and ‘Amazing Grace’ were recorded at the 5.1 Entertainment facility. ‘I knew that I was doing the 5.1 mix,’ Lux says, “and I had some structural things in place and ready to go, so that when the stereo was done, it would be generally easier to make it into 5.1. For the most part—for every part—the final stereo mix enveloped into the DVD mix. We worked very hands-on the stereo mixes, and that was a process, but going from the stereo into 5.1 was, generally, pretty simple.”

Being a gospel album—songs include “Change Is Gonna Come,” “Let Go,” “Going Home,” and “Gotta Serve Somebody”—Believe is rich in background vocals and choir, presenting a tantalizing array of mix options. “I’m driven by the music,” Lux says, “and what moves me, and things that I like to hear depending on whether it’s rock or gospel or a Joey Ramone thing—whatever [Lux mixed the DVD-Audio version of Ramone’s Don’t Worry About Me]. I’m moved by the music, by the craziness or conservatism of the music.”

The multitrack source for Believe was Pro Tools, Lux adds. Both the stereo and 5.1 mixes were recorded to a Euphonix R-1 hard-disk recorder, with the former also mixed to an Alesis ML-9600 Master-Link.

It all adds up to another release from the company that is among the leaders in multichannel music creation: Through its licensing agreement with Sanctuary Records, 5.1 Entertainment is releasing approximately 10 DVD-Audio titles per month. “It was a fun album,” Lux says of Believe. “We worked very hard on it, and the DVD sounds spectacular. It’s fun and it’s exciting, but then again it’s traditional as well. It rocks, I’ll tell you. I think this is one of his best-selling albums ever.”

Will 2003 be the year in which multichannel audio, recently characterized as an "underground hit" by International Recording Media Assn. president Charles Van Horn, finally gains acceptance in the mainstream?
2003 Kicks Off With New Chart Deal In Spain

BY HOWELL LLEWELLYN

MADRID—Spain’s music-sales charts are getting a fresh look as the new year begins.

German-based Media Control has taken over the task of informing the industry and fans which releases sell the most from the previous compiler, U.K.-owned Alef-Millward Brown, which assumed the role from another British company, Gallup, some 15 years ago.

“We were completely happy with Alef-MB,” says Carlos Grande, president of labels’ body AFYPE, which controls the charts, “but we’d heard that Media Control offers a broader range of services, including regional, TV, video, and Internet sales and specialist market reports. Media Control also offers lists by music genre, airplay lists, precisely market studies, and so on,” he adds. “It’s just a question of trying a new supplier.”

Media Control already compiles the sales charts in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland—“it has 25 years of experience in Germany—and puts together airplay charts in some 17 countries. AFYPE has 62 member companies, which account for about 3,000 labels imprints.”

Alef-MB technical director Susana Hernandez says her company understands AFYPE’s desire for a change. Alef-MB’s charts are based 100% on point-of-sales from some 85%-90% of sales points here—

including all the major department store chains like El Corte Ingles, which accounts for more than 25% of all Spanish recorded-music sales. Hernandez concedes that Media Control probably has more specialized software than Alef-MB.

Media Control director Marc Russell claims his company will start with 70% coverage of the Spanish market, which will rapidly grow to more than 90%. “We used advanced, over-the-counter methodology, based on real sales,” he says. “Every single sale is registered at a central database, as in Germany. We do not use label shipments at all. If a label asks us, we can monitor sales of a single album on a day-to-day basis.”

Russell adds that “Spain is undergoing a generational change—the charts will now be based on scientific criteria. We shall undertake market research for the labels and also market the charts through the shops to create a chart culture which does not really exist in Spain. Our detailed charts will also help the Spanish industry improve its exploitation of Spanish repertoire outside Spain.”

Music Warner Spain president Said Tagarro says, “Alef-MB has done a perfect job, but times change, and technology changes. We are interested in the much broader range of services, including Internet charts, that Media Control offers.” The first Media Control Spanish chart will be the second weekly listing produced in 2003.

Australian Radio, Labels’ Search For Common Ground Is Paying Off

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

SYDNEY—An experiment that saw six debut Australian acts perform a showcase in front of 300 commercial radio PDs and music directors looks set to pay dividends in 2003 and beyond.

The showcase—held Oct. 18, 2002, in Melbourne—was organized by the Australian Music Development Initiative (AMDI), a joint venture set up by labels body the Australian Record Industry Assn. (ARIA) and broadcasters’ organization Commercial Radio Australia (CRA) in 1999. Four of the acts featured—Delta Goodrem (Sony Music), the Androids (FMR), Irwin Thomas (BMG), and Dan Greenwood (Universal)—gained major metropolitan and regional airplay in the immediate aftermath of the event.

Goodrem’s “Born To Try” went on to top the ARIA singles sales chart in early December; the Androids’ “Do It With Madonna” hit the top 10 around the same time.

“Discussions between radio and the record industry about local content inevitably become heated, so I decided the best way was to literally get new music in front of the program directors and music directors,” explains AMDI chair Vicki Gordon, who is also director of marketing and A&R at Sydney-based independent label Transit Music Australia.

AMDI holds monthly discussions about breaking new talent. Until it launched in 1999, with radio playing only 30% local talent and labels giving radio only 19% of its marketing spend, there had been hostility on both sides of the fence. But when ARIA and CRA held discussions on new quotas for local acts, both realized they shared a common ground, leading to the formation of AMDI.

The showcase at Melbourne’s Mercury Lounge was held during the annual CRA two-day conference that includes its yearly awards ceremony. Timing was crucial, CRA CEO Joan Warner points out. “All the influential people in radio were in town together,” she says, adding that it helped that they could see six acts together.

Another showcase is planned during the CRA awards later this year. Seminars for radio and record executives to exchange views are also crucial, Gordon insists. “Both sides need to learn about each other’s machinations,” she says. “A lot of us are tired of arguing with each other about local content. We in the business of developing Australian talent spend a lot of time and resources. It’s important that radio realizes how much we rely on them, and I don’t think radio’s yet really understood what we do.”

In a keynote speech at the CRA conference in October, ARIA chairman and Sony Music Australia chairman/CEO Denis Handlin reminded delegates that with both the radio and record industries under fire from new rivals, “we have to invent new rules together. To keep the audience with radio and records, the best way to predict the future is to create the future ourselves.”

Radio executives here have also long argued that labels should learn about their culture. Warner says, “There has to be a 50/50 effort, without radio expected to make all the effort. The record industry needs to understand what makes radio tick.”

Wide Mouth Mason Dips A Toe In Chinese Waters

BY STEVEN SCHWANKERT

BEIJING—Warner Music Canada’s blues-rock trio Wide Mouth Mason completed a five-city tour of China in December 2002, becoming the first Warner international act to play here—a rare opportunity for international pop artists.

According to Warner Music China (WMC) international marketing manager Huang Feng, the tour was the result of deals between Wide Mouth Mason manager Norman Sharp and Hebei Province-based music promoter Hui Huang Co. The tour covered club dates in Beijing, Wuhan, a city on Yangtze River and one of China’s five largest conurbations; the Shanxi provincial capital of Taiyuan; and Shijiazhuang and Baoding (a nationally televised show) in Hebei Province.

To coincide with the live dates, WMC released a China-only greatest-hits collection, Wide Mouth Mason Greatest Hits, Nov. 23, which includes a cover of Michael Jackson’s “Billie Jean.” But WMC has only modest expectations for sales following the tour: 20,000 cassettes and 2,000 CDs of the album were pressed and distributed by Beijing-based Jingwen Records, a division of Hong Kong’s Sun Media Group Holdings, through a licensing deal with WMC.

Feng cites late product shipment and shipment through normal Jingwen channels instead of directly to scheduled performance cities as reasons for the company’s low expectations. He says, “I’m sure there are 20,000 cassettes and 2,000 CDs out there, but I’m not sure they got to the tour cities.”

Feng adds that the tour served as a learning experience, particularly on the distribution front, in handling releases around future tours by international Warner artists, although he concedes that China is not “considered part of the map” for such performances.

Feng says Warner acts including Craig David, Sixpence None the Richer, Matchbox Twenty, and Missy Elliot are among those who may tour Asia in 2003 and that total regional sales, artist interest, Chinese audience recognition, and local retailer interest will determine whether any of those acts “detour to China.”

Feng says that EastWest-signed U.K. singer/songwriter David Gray was considered for a China tour as part of a spring tour of Asia, but cold reaction from Chinese retailers killed off any further consideration of live shows here.
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As usual, Global Music Pulse’s European correspondents use the first column of the new year to tip off readers to those acts that will make waves far beyond their own territories in the coming months.

FADO’S NEW FAVORITE: Portugal’s new-wave fado star Maria Nazara looks set to establish herself as one of the biggest sensations in world music this year. The rise of the 28-year-old singer with the distinctly sculpted and bleached hair has been so swift that when Billboard ran a survey of emerging names in fado one year ago (Billboard, Jan. 26, 2002), Maria was not even mentioned. Since then, her debut album on World Connection, Fado Em Mim (Fado in Me), has made such an impact that it has been heralded as “the new Amalia Rodrigues” (the acknowledged “queen of fado,” who died in 1999) and gained her nominations in the BBC Radio 2 Awards for World Music as best European act and best newcomer. She is understood to have won in at least one of the categories and will perform at the awards concert in March in London. She went into the studio last month to begin recording her second album, due for release in early spring. Maria says, “It’s traditional fado, but it’s my contemporary and personal interpretation of the music.”

RENDER UNTO CESARE: Pop group Lunapop surprised everybody when its 1999 debut album, Squarez (on indie label Universal), sold 1 million units. Yet stardom created problems, and last year, the five band members decided to go their separate ways. Lead singer/guitarist/composer Cesare Cremonini signed a four-album solo deal with WEA/Warner Music Italy. The first album, Ragazze (Everything’s All Right), was released Nov. 15, 2002, shipping platinum (100,000 units), and the label made the record a domestic priority. Warner is considering overseas expansion this year. The 25-year-old Cremonini is passionate for international success, saying, “My heroes are John Lennon and Freddie Mercury, and I started writing songs in English long before I did in Italian. My dream is to live, write, and record in New York.”

MARK WOODEN

THRILLING PROSPECT: With the likes of Bono and Morrissey already lavish praise, it’s not hard to pick Dublin’s the Thrills as the Irish act most likely to succeed in 2003. Personally chosen by Morrissey to support him at London’s Royal Albert Hall last September, the Thrills released a well-received single, “Santa Cruz (You’re Not That Far)” on Virgin Records. The band, fronted by Conor Deasy, tours Ireland this month and has been chosen as one of the four emerging acts on the NME-sponsored “Bronze” tour of the U.K. Inspired by holidays spent in California, the Thrills specialize in melodic guitar pop that harps back to the 60s acts of the Byrds and the Beach Boys, as well as touching base with more contemporary artists like Mercury Rev. EM Ireland press officer Peter Murphy says the group is putting the finishing touches to its debut album, helmed by Beck/Air/Supergroup producer Tony Hoffer.

NICK KELLY

BUILDING BRIDGES: Russia’s most prominent new act in 2003 could be 17-year-old Sony signing Arina, who won Russian song of the year at the Golden Gramophone Awards last fall and was nominated for best Russian act at the MTV Europe Awards. All this has happened even before the release of her debut album, which is due this year. “I want to show the essence of Russia in my work,” says the Texan singer, now residing in Moscow with her Russian parents. “I want to have the bad connotations out of the term ‘Russian music.’” She adds with admirable youthful confidence, “I think I’m the strongest hope from Russia to the U.S. because of my dual origin.”

ALEXEY KRUZIN

SWEATING IT OUT: Finland’s Sweatmaster hopes that the emergence of such Swedish hands as the Hives and the Soundtrack of Our Lives will benefit its own debut album, which shares the same raw rock style. “People outside Scandinavia don’t really care whether a band is from Sweden or Finland, and if we’re lumped as part of the ‘Scandinavian scene,’ we don’t mind,” says Sweatmaster bassist/singer/composer Mats Myksten. “The main thing is that the music gives the raw, almost minimalistic trio’s sound an extra edge. Danish label Bad Afro signed the band after a recommendation from its other signing, the Flaming Lips. Sweatmaster’s immediate plans include tours of Germany, Holland, and the U.K. in February and March.

JONATHAN MANDER
‘Scraps’ Provide A Creative Feast
Canadian Brothers Bring Musical Background To DVD Production

BY LARRY LeBLANC

TORONTO—For co-partner of Enliven Entertainment in New York—directed its Rotterdam, Holland, concert footage during her Toward Our Union Mended Tour 2002, and François—who heads Laboratoire Fogo studio in Montreal—recorded and mixed the concert audio. The result is a totally distinctive view of Morissette’s stage show.

“My role as a producer,” Pierre says, “is to create the right environment and assemble the right creative team for each project within certain financial and time parameters. For Alanis, I really thought I was the right person to direct it.”

During the past two years, the siblings have worked together on various high-profile DVD projects, usually with Pierre as producer on behalf of Enliven Entertainment, which he co-founded 18 months ago with partners Barry Ehrmann and John Hopkins. Enliven also oversaw Slipknot’s 2002 live DVD Disasterpieces (Metropolis DVD) with Matt-thew Dilllon as producer and an upcoming, still-untitled Judy Collins DVD-Audio for Pioneer Entertainment, which Ehrmann produced.

The siblings’ collaborations include Pierre’s 2001 (Pioneer Entertainment), co-pro-duced by Pierre with Ehrmann, which includes performances by Willie Nelson, Neil Young, Dave Matthews, and Martina McBride; the upcoming live DVD release of last summer’s Warped tour (Pioneer Entertainment), with 18 bands including Bad Religion, NOFX, and Alkaline Trio (Pioneer Entertainment), who directed Who’s final U.S. date in Boston in September 2002 for an unspecified release. Pierre says of Enliven Entertainment’s role in developing DVD pro-jects, “We bring in deals and then put creative teams together. We will also negotiate a licensing deal with Pioneer Entertainment or Image Entertainment, who will then strike a deal with the rights holder—the management, the artist, or the label. Then we shoot and oversee post-production.”

As longtime musicians themselves, Pierre and François both understand backstage politics and can deal with stage and music production crews. “Musicians know they are in good hands, because we are also musicians,” Pierre agrees. “When I brief cameramen before a show, I tell them: ‘You guys have shot hundreds of shows for television, but that’s not what we are doing tonight. We are approaching this like a record.’”

Born in Sudbury, the brothers grew up in the city of Thunder Bay—Penaten-guanish, which are all in Ontario. In the 1990s, they were members of French rock trio Brasse-Camouflage, which released seven albums. In 1997, the pair co-founded Montreal-based label Full Stereo Records, which released albums by Brasse-Camouflage and Paul Demers. While Full Stereo still exists, it has not released any new titles since 2000.

The brothers began working more closely together on DVD projects two years ago, while Pierre was director of international productions at New York-based new-media company MCY Music World. At MCY, he co-produced the 2001.5.1 surround sound releases of Pete Townshend’s Music From Lifehouse, the Who’s Live at the Royal Albert Hall (at BBC), and Dave Mason’s Live at Sunrise, and Willie Nelson’s Live in Amsterdam, all released by Image Entertainment; as well as Hanson’s Live at the Fillmore (at Feb. 28). While planning the productions of the Hanson and Nelson DVDs, Pierre decided to bring in François to oversee their 5.1 surround sound audio mixes. “Having a head of audio production at MCY, Montreal, had performed on numerous film scores and recordings and had been musical director for Quebec superstar Isabelle Boulay. He thought it would be a good idea to have François mixing. And together, we can back-stage the costs of it,” Pierre recalls. “I needed people I could trust, with musical ears, who weren’t going to be overwhelmed by what 5.1 was. I knew I could trust them.”

François says mixing in 5.1 surround sound can be formidable, even for experienced audio producers. “The challenges are many,” he says. “First, there’s hours and hours of footage. It’s hard making everything while still trying to make the artist look and sound good. We mix twice. We mix the stereo portion, and then we do the 5.1 mix separate. Then we get the tapes, and we work on these are often significant creative differences in dealing with the audio and video aspects of any given DVD-Video project. Audio people are suspi-cious of the video guys, and vice-versa,” he says. “When we can, we like to be in charge of video editing, as well as audio.”

Pierre says, “Concert or music video productions are very different, and working together offers a compelling experience, which VHS never did. You listened to [VHS] through a small mono speaker on most televisions. These days, most people have more sophisticated tele-visions with better speaker systems.”

BY STEVEN PATRICK

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia—The new owners of the Tower Records franchise in Malaysia have aggressive plans to expand the brand during the next decade.

Kuala Lumpur-based TWinmove production house, optical-disc manufacturer, and home-video distribution company Motion Planet has bought Tower’s local franchise, De Sunvic Music. The purchase was agreed upon in November but not announced until late December. Although the sum paid was not disclosed, industry sources estimate a sale price of 1.2 million ringgit ($316,000), a relatively low figure that takes into account the weakened state of the country’s retail market.

Motion Planet executive director Chew Kia Saun Chew says that although Tower Records Malaysia has lost “a few million ringgit” in the past few years, he is confident that it can become profitable within the next two years. “There is still a legitimate [music] market in Malaysia, and we want to be the first to capture that opportunity.”

Motion Planet plans to open 15 more Tower Records stores during the next 10 years, beginning with a store this month in MidValley Mall in Bangsar, a fashionable suburb of Kuala Lumpur.

Tower Records has been operat-ing in Malaysia since August 1997, when it opened a store in KL Plaza, Kuala Lumpur. It opened a second outlet in a Kuala Lumpur suburb in 2000, but that store shuttered in 2001 as a result of Malaysia’s declining music retail market.

New Franchisee Has High Hopes For Tower Records In Malaysia

BY LARS BRANDLE

In 2002, Koch International U.K. Ltd.—has completed a management buyout (MOB) of the business for an undisclosed sum. The company has been renamed RSK Entertainment Ltd.; its roster of distributed labels includes SPV, Century Media, Silva Screen, Repertoire, Supraphon, and Channel Classics. Koch International U.K. was originally founded in 1990, Koch International U.K. Ltd. was acquired by Universal Music Group when it bought the European recording and publishing operations of the German-based parent Koch Group in February 2002. Former Koch U.K. managing director Rastin Patani and former head of marketing Simon Carver have started the new company, which will maintain its own independent sales force and marketing offices, with physical distribution via BMG. Patani says, “We have always run the company as a stand-alone, and our decisions to both diversify and maintain our third-party focus have paid dividends. It was actually our labels who encouraged us to pursue the MOB, and I think the fact that they have all stayed with us throughout the process is quite a humbling testament to our ability and worth.”

MasterCard has renewed its sponsorship of the Brit Awards until 2005. The credit-card company first backed the awards in 1999. Additionally, the 2003 event—set for Feb. 20 at London’s Earls Court Arena—has secured six more hours of TV coverage, including three “The Brits Are Coming” shows Feb. 1, 8, and 15 on national commercial channel ITV. The Jenny Ryan show will include taped performances by 10 acts, including Doves, Beverley Knight, and Badly Drawn Boy. ITV1 will screen two “post-Brits” shows Feb. 21 and 24.

The new head of Warner Music Manufacturing Europe (WMME) is John Fitzgerald, who took over as managing director Jan. 1. Fitzgerald was previously deputy managing director/CFO at Warner Music International’s (WMI) manufacturing and distribution plant in Aldsoy, Germany, where he will be based. He succeeds Guenter Severin, who retires after more than 25 years’ service at WMME. Fitzgerald joined WMME in 1989 as financial controller. He reports to Gero Caccia, executive VP of Warner Music Europe. Caccia says, “John Fitzgerald has both the ability and experience necessary to take on the role as head of this important division of WMI. I am confident that he and the existing strong management team will continue Aldsoy’s impressive success story.”

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**COUPE**

LONDON—A from Sydney store front to the other side of the world, indie label Laughing Outlaw is carrying the torch for Australian rock music that isn’t even known at home.

We’re up to our 55th album release in the international distribution set-up, and the release in the U.K. of the very large majority of its self-styled “power pop and all-country” roster, Coupe says. “At the beginning of this year, this was simply a Sydney-based independent label; we had no international profile of any consequence.

“Then we worked up a U.K. label manager, Geron Jones, and set up international distribution through [U.K. independent] Webradio, and although a lot of it is modest, we’re selling records. At least 70% of the releases we’ve had out in the U.K. have done better outside Australia than here.”

In Australia, Laughing Outlaw’s releases—many of which it licenses in—are distributed via Sydney-based Digdiddio, which also has a U.K. presence though its Hot Records imprint, home to the Eva Cassidy sales phenomenon (Billboard, March 10, 2001). In England, Jones, who runs that office from Christleton, a village near the Welsh border, describes Weatherbox as a “boutique” distributor. It operates in conjunction with leading indie distributor Pinacle, which holds most of the stock.

Laughing Outlaw has a series of slightly smaller deals around Europe that enable a selection of releases and now has a presence in both the U.S. and throughout Europe.

Laughing Outlaw Records

**Aussie Outlaws Laugh All The Way To The U.K.**

Leading indie distributor Pinacle, which holds most of the stock.

Laughing Outlaw has a series of slightly smaller deals around Europe that enable a selection of releases and now has a presence in both the U.S. and throughout Europe.

**Cooper**

Laughing Outlaw Records

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UPN TURNS UP THE MUSIC: Broadcast TV channel UPN is turning to music-themed shows to infuse some new life into the network, which has been trailing in its overall ratings behind rivals CBS, NBC, ABC, Fox, and the WB.

One of its new programs is a currently untitled, reality-based sitcom starring Latin pop group Soluna. The pilot will be filmed sometime this quarter. If UPN picks up the show, the series is expected to debut this fall. The Soluna show’s executive producers are the group’s manager, Suzanne De Passe and Irene Dreayer, who were part of the team behind the TV series Sister, Sister and Smart Guy. Dreayer says, “From the very beginning, we saw Soluna as a triple threat: They’re amazingly talented, and they have what it takes to succeed in music, TV, and movies. To be a really successful entertainer, you just can’t limit yourself in one area. Soluna’s characters in their sitcom will be based on their real personalities, and their music will be incorporated into the show.”

So why does Soluna—a developing act that isn’t exactly a household name yet—get the opportunity to star in its own sitcom? Soluna member T. Lopez admits that much of it has to do with the connections and experience of TV veterans Dreayer and De Passe; the latter has executive-produced several TV shows, including award-winning miniseries Lonesome Dove and biopics on the Jacksons and the Temptations.

Lopez adds, “We’ve had so many crazy and funny experiences as a group that a lot of people told us we should have our own TV show. Our managers pitched the idea to UPN, and the rest is history.”

The singer says that Soluna’s real-life experiences—from travel plans gone haywire to crashing a P. Diddy party and playing pranks on tour mate Enrique Iglesias—may end up on the sitcom. The group has been touring in support of its DreamWorks debut album, All Time, and Lopez says that being on tour has provided a wealth of material for the TV show.

Although Soluna’s sitcom may bring comparisons to The Monkees, Lopez notes that a critical difference between the two shows is that Soluna existed as a group before starring in a TV show, while the Monkees were UPN’s first breakout hit sitcom, which starred Brady and had a successful run from 1996 to 2001. “Brandy was great in Moesha,” Lopez says, “but that show wasn’t about her being a singer. We’ll be playing singers on our show.”

Dreayer adds of Soluna’s TV show, “It will be about pursuing dreams, but you don’t have to be in the music business to relate to this show or the group. It’s a show with a lot of heart, and the members of Soluna are great storytellers.”

Making it in the music business is also a main theme of the UPN drama Platinum, which is expected to debut in March or April. The show is about two brothers in the hip-hop industry, and several real-life rappers and their music videos will be featured in the series. Platinum is co-created by Sofia Coppola and John Ridley. Coppola and her father, acclaimed director Francis Ford Coppola, are among the show’s executive producers. UPN and MTV—both owned by Viacom—will work together to cross-promote the show.

MUSIC BIZ GAME: MuchMusic USA is giving viewers a chance to act like moguls in MXM: Interactive Music Exchange, a new series premiering Jan. 20. The one-hour show—airing live at 5 p.m. ET on weekdays—is a music-industry simulation game in which players will decide investments based on the market value of certain artists, songs, or albums. The program evaluates the changing value of these entities, based on such factors as record sales, radio airplay, chart positions, and concert grosses. Viewers can choose to buy or sell their MXM stock and will win prizes depending on the value of their portfolios. The technology for the program is provided by Los Angeles-based interactive gaming company Hollywood Stock Exchange.
BLUE CHRISTMAS: Certainly no one in the trade expected Christmas shopping to wipe out the decline from 2001 album volume that plagued the music industry throughout 2002. But did you expect that the fourth quarter's run would actually dig a slightly deeper hole? Yet that is the case, as sales from several November and December weeks paled next to the same frames of '01 (see story, page 1, and Market Watch, page 5).

Album units sold during the week before Christmas were down 18.8% from the same frame of 2001 (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 30, 2002), but a final-week rally helped improve the view, up 4.7% over the last stanza of 2001. Aside from the shifts caused by the placement of Easter and Thanksgiving, it's the first week all year when album units exceed those of the same 2001 week.

Two weeks before Thanksgiving, the year-to-date album decline stood at 10.5%. Despite the huge parade of high-profile releases that always hit stores during a fourth quarter— including the latest by Shania Twain (2.9 million to date) and Elvis Presley (2.4 million), the soundtrack from Eminem's 8 Mile (3.5 million), and million-plus sellers from the likes of Justin Timberlake, Christina Aguilera, Tim McGraw, the Rolling Stones, Santana, Jay-Z, Jennifer Lopez, and Missy Elliott—the album gap fell even further, to 10.7%, by year's end.

BEHIND THE '8 BALL: Shania Twain, who was No. 1 on The Billboard 200 for the past five weeks (including the week when Billboard did not publish) comes within one frame of running the table, as the post-Christmas tide flows in favor of the 8 Mile soundtrack. The Eminem vehicle—which had shown gains in each of the previous two weeks, including the unpublished frame, when a 49% swell pushed it 5—sells 511,000 units for the week, according to Nielsen SoundScan, down 23% from the previous Christmas week. Twain's 42% decline yields a sum of 262,000 (No. 2).

Bills are always in surge in the days that follow Christmas, as young consumers cash in gift certificates or return albums they received as gifts in exchange for titles they wanted. The three smallest crossovers in the big chart's top 25 each belong to rap titles, as 2Pac (23-13), Ja Rule (28-21), and Jay-Z (29-24) each have drops of 2% or less and thus move up the chart. And in a transition week when most albums sold less than they did during the pre-Christmas stanza, titles by Baby (82-54, up 13%), Busta Rhymes (106-49, up 15%), and Sean Paul (130-94, up 12%) are among 18 hip-hop entries on The Billboard 200 that sell more than they did in the previous week, with Clipse scoring the list's second-largest percentage increase (181-129, up 23%).

The shift also benefits rock, with Simple Plan winning the Greatest Gainer prize (148-98, up 31%), while Sum 41 (59-46, up 6%) and Queens of the Stone Age (90-60, up 7%) are among 11 rock bands who manage increases. It only seems appropriate that 8 Mile catches Twain at the wire, as the soundtrack was the only title left to sell more than her Up! during the fourth quarter. Of course, the soundtrack had a head start, having hit stores three weeks earlier. By the time Twain's latest arrived, 8 Mile had already scanned more than 1.6 million copies. Of course, on a per-week basis, Up! has the bigger yield of the two, averaging 455,000 units per week, compared with the soundtrack's weekly average of 389,000.

SEASON'S GREETINGS: As Mannheim Steamroller's 2001 Christmas title overtook the Now That's What I Call Christmas compilation on the final Top Holiday Albums chart of the 2002 season, we're reminded that the year's best-selling Christmas titles were actually released a year earlier. During the year that just ended, the 2001 Now/ set sold 741,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, while Mannheim's Christmas Extraordinaire moved 552,000. In 2001, the former sold 1.6 million, and the latter title did 1.4 million. The third-best selling Christmas title of 2002 was also the strongest of those released during the year, as Kenny G's Wishes sold 501,000. To date, the sax man's three holiday titles combined have tallied just shy of 10 million copies, with his 1994 set Wonders—The Holiday Album— accounting for more than 7 million of those units.

Fourth among Christmas albums in 2002 and second among those newly released during that year is Alan Jackson's Let It Be Christmas, which rang up 446,000 units, they have spent 20 weeks on the Hot 100 and have fallen below No. 50. If "Cry" continues to gain audience impressions next issue, an exception will be made to allow it to remain on the chart; otherwise, it will need to reach the top 50 in order to stav off exclusion.

Other songs reaping the benefit of the post-holiday adjustment are "Landslide" by Dixie Chicks, which rebounds from No. 16 to a new peak of No. 10; "The Game of Love" by Santanna Featuring Michelle Branch, which rises from 14-9; and "Dilemma" by Nelly Featuring Kelly Rowland, which jumps 37-30. The rise for "Dilemma" most likely comes from its inclusion on many a season's countdown of the top songs of 2002. Country tracks that rebound on the Hot 100 include Emerson Drive's "Fall Into Me" (No. 49-47), "The Baby" by Blake Shelton (54-51), Terri Clark's "I Just Wanna Be Mad" (55-52), and Aaron Lines' "You Can't Hide Beautiful" (67-64).

TRIPLE THREAT: 50 Cent. Eminem's latest signing to his Shady imprint, is making almost as much noise as his Mathers himself. As all of three of his charted titles show gains on Hot & R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks, "Worksta-" from the 8 Mile soundtrack, advances 15-12, priming him for his first bow in the top 10 on that chart. He also nabs this issue's Greatest Gainer/Airplay honors with "In Da Club," increasing its audience impressions by a third—growth that also earns Hot Shot Debut honors on The Billboard Hot 100 (No. 67). "Club" will be included on his forthcoming Shady/Interscope album Get Rich or Die Tryin'. slated for release Feb. 11. His third track, "Realz Niggaz" featuring the Notoriou B.I.G., jumps to No. 44 on R&B/Hip-Hop with a 21% rise in airplay. It was released to radio independently by 50 Cent's own imprint, G-Unit, but will not be included on his album. Also posing a triple threat is Clipse, which earns this issue's Hot Shot Debut designation on R&B/Hip-Hop with "Cot Damn," entering at No. 76. In addition to seeing top 10 success with its duo's first two singles, "Grindin'" and "When the Last Time," (now at No. 19), a third— "Ma, I Don't Love Her," featuring Faith Evans—climbs to No. 53 this issue. Virginia-based Clipse also does guest stints on "What Happened To That Boy" by Baby (No. 51) and "Star" by 702 (No. 98).
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**Greatest Gainer/Heatseeker Impact**

No Pads. No Helmets. Just Balls

Electric Circus

More Than A Woman
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<td>ALAN JACKSON</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Let It Be Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>VINCE GUARALDI</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A Charlie Brown Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>The Christmas Attic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>WOW Christmas From A to Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>CHARLOTTE CHURCH</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Dream A Dream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>CELENE DION</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>These Are Special Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>BROOKS &amp; DUNN</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>It Won't Be Christmas Without You</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>HARRY CONNICK, JR</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>When My Heart Finds Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>KENNY G &amp; JASON BARNETT</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Faith: A Holiday Album</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas Live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>JO DEE MESSINA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A Joyful Noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>DESTINY'S CHILD</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>8 Days Of Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A Fresh Aire Christmas</td>
</tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas Live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>BZK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Santa Hooked Me Up (EP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>JOHN TESH</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas Worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>JOHNNY MATHIS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>The Christmas Album</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>MARIAH CAREY</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Merry Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>The Time Life Treasury Of Christmas: Holiday Memories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>FRANK SINATRA, DEAN MARTIN &amp; SAMMY DAVIS JR</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas With The Rat Pack</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>NAT KING COLE</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas On The Campus, Pt. 1</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>THE BRIAN SETZER ORCHESTRA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Boogie Woogie Christmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>BING CROSBY</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>White Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>LEE ANN WOMACK</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>The Season For Romance</td>
</tr>
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<td>33</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Happy Holidays, Vol. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas In The Aire</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>ROY O'DONNELL &amp; THE SUNSHINE BAND</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Another Christmas Song</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>HILARY DUFF</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Santa Claus Lane</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>NAT KING COLE</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas Favorites</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A Peaceful Christmas</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>ELVIS PRESLEY</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>It's Christmas Time</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>RCA Original Christmas &amp; Holiday Classics</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>KENNY G</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Miracles - The Holiday Album</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>KIDZ BOP KIDS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Kidz Bop Christmas</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>NEWSONG</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>The Christmas Shoes</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>CARRERAS-COMINGO-PAVAROTTI (MECURO)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>The Three Tenors Christmas</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>RODGERS &amp; HAMMERSTEIN</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A Rodgers Christmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A Windham Hill Christmas</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>THE CARPENTERS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas Portrait</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas Classics Volume II</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Songs 4 Christmas Worship</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Christmas Memories</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>ANNE MURRAY</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>What A Wonderful Christmas</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>LUTHER VANDROSS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A Christmas To Remember</td>
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<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>LUTHER VANDROSS</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>This Is Christmas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOP HOLIDAY ALBUMS 2003**

* Nielsen SoundScan Top 10 Holiday Album Sales*
### Hot 100 Airplay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Airplay Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>One Last Breath</td>
<td>Joe Nichols/Warner Bros</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I'm Gonna Be Alright</td>
<td>Hannah Montana/RCA</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Play It It</td>
<td>Nelly/Atlantic</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Company You Keep in Me</td>
<td>Faith Evans/Clint Black</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ain't No Mountain High Enough</td>
<td>Creed/Sony</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>If I Die Young</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts/Capitol</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I'm Gonna Be Alright</td>
<td>Hannah Montana/RCA</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
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<td>The Company You Keep in Me</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>Creed/Sony</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>If I Die Young</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts/Capitol</td>
<td>23</td>
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</table>

### Hot 100 Singles Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist/Label</th>
<th>Sales Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Work It</td>
<td>Faith Evans/Clint Black</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I'm Gonna Be Alright</td>
<td>Hannah Montana/RCA</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Play It It</td>
<td>Nelly/Atlantic</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>If I Die Young</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts/Capitol</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>I'm Gonna Be Alright</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>If I Die Young</td>
<td>Rascal Flatts/Capitol</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Billboard January 11, 2003

- **January 11, 2003**
- **Billboard**
- **Hot 100 Airplay**
- **Hot 100 Singles Sales**
- **International Listings**

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Media Giants Ponder Stakes To Boost Stocks
Continued from page 1
their stock valuations through blockbuster mergers and acquisitions. But all that came to an end in 2002, when management changes and finance and accounting issues were the big shapers of stock prices for such firms as AOL-Time Warner (AOL TW), Clear Channel Communications (CCC), Sony Corp., Viacom, and Vivendi Universal (VU). The troubled music market also did not help the picture.

Dixon says the 50% decline in AOL TW stock in 2002—which reduced the company's stock-market valuation from $154.3 billion to $58.5 billion—and the dismissal of VU chairman/CEO Jean-Marie Messier "raised very real questions about the rationale" of the mergers in which these media and entertainment giants were forged. VU fell 70% as investors coped with the legacy of Messier's acquisitions, including $17 billion in debt and little sense of how the company's various parts fit together.

Despite the issues facing individual companies and the media sector as a whole, a select few stocks—such as growth at America Online, he said, "This is not a "trust us" issue. We understand that those days are over. [What I would say instead is "Watch us, and measure us, and form your own conclusions." ]"

—RICHARD PARSONS, AOL TIME WARNER

Viacom and Sony—withstanding the pressure, posting only modest declines on the year (see chart, this page). Even so, among companies with ties to the music industry, the positive performers—such as Sony Corp., and Internet retailer Amazon.com—proven scattered exceptions to the rule.

AOL TW CEO Richard Parsons acknowledged this during his recent keynote address at UBS Warburg’s Media Week Conference in New York. Of the company’s efforts to revive

2002: A Bleak Year In Stocks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company (Stock Symbol)</th>
<th>Share Price as of 12/31/01</th>
<th>Share Price as of 12/31/02</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AOL Time Warner (AOL)</td>
<td>$32.10</td>
<td>$13.10</td>
<td>-59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon.com (AMZN)</td>
<td>10.82</td>
<td>18.89</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Direct (ARDT)</td>
<td>14.42</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>-85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnes &amp; Noble (BKS)</td>
<td>29.60</td>
<td>18.07</td>
<td>-39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnes &amp; Noble (BNNH)</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Buy Co. (BBY)</td>
<td>49.65</td>
<td>10.30</td>
<td>-78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chrysalis Group (CGHC)**</td>
<td>254.40</td>
<td>192.00</td>
<td>-24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Channel Communications (CCL)</td>
<td>50.91</td>
<td>37.29</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMI Group (EMICY)**</td>
<td>35.50</td>
<td>13.80</td>
<td>-60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMV Group (HMV)**</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>-35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handelmann Co. (HDL)</td>
<td>14.85</td>
<td>11.50</td>
<td>-23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastings Entertainment (HAST)</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Broadcasting (HSB)</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>20.55</td>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infonet Technologies (IFTR)</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>-48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid Audio (LQID)</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lodlsey (LOUD)</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>-58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM Co. (MMC0.0B)</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navarre Corp. (NAVX)</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RealNetworks (RWRX)</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>-36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rovi (ROVI)</td>
<td>16.55</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>-71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sirius Satellite Radio (SIRI)</td>
<td>11.63</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>-57%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sony (SNE)</td>
<td>45.10</td>
<td>41.31</td>
<td>-8%</td>
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<td>Ticketmaster (TMCS)</td>
<td>16.39</td>
<td>21.22</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Trans World Entertainment (TWMC)</td>
<td>7.60</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>-52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Univision Communications (UVN)</td>
<td>40.46</td>
<td>25.42</td>
<td>-37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viacom (VIAH)</td>
<td>44.15</td>
<td>40.76</td>
<td>-7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vivendi Universal (V)</td>
<td>53.79</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XM Satellite Radio (XHR)</td>
<td>18.36</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>-85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Adjusted for 2-for-1 stock split on May 13
** Prices are in price.
** First share price as of May 9, 2002

WHAT'S NEXT?
In 2003, Bank expects CCC to focus on brand extensions, "innovations it can repur- chase stock and, pending changes in law, perhaps pursue acquisitions in the U.K. For the most part, though, Bank says, "I think for now they’ll stick to their knitting."

Another potential development this year is the initial public offering of Citadel Communications, the 185-station broadcaster controlled by buyout firm Perseus Little & Co. Once it happens, Bank expects Citadel to use its stock to make acquisitions and become a competitor to CCC and Infinity, the No. 1 and No. 2 radio station operators, respectively.

The year was less kind to XM Satellite Radio and Sirius Satellite Radio. While both are attracting subscribers, they also face pressing funding problems. As a result, XM fell 85% this year, and Sirius fell 94%.

Retail had a mostly down year, as chains coped with a 10.7% decrease in U.S. music sales, according to Nielsen SoundScan (see story, page 1). One standout, however, is Amazon.com. Though the company continues to generate losses, its stock rose 75% in 2002, helped in part by renewed growth in its core books, music, and video unit. Its stock rose 84%, although it still only trades around for $52.

Adjusting for a 3-for-2 stock split in April, Musicland parent Best Buy was down 51% for the year; Trans World Entertainment was down an equal amount. "Our U.K. subsidiary," Karmazin, said, "has won investor praise for how it coped with a bankruptcy filing by customer, which was 23% lower."

Not surprisingly, analysts say that Wall Street expects to get bullish again in 2003 as the music industry piracy must be curtailed and the market for digital music must be proved to be a legitimate and viable one. Nicolli says, "Certainly, our market value today reflects profound pessimism on the industry’s growth prospects, and that pessimism is understandable, if not wholly justified."

Thus, while, for example, many analysts say a potential EMI-WMG combination could generate cost savings, they caution that it will work long term only if it produces future growth.

"Having a larger piece of an underperforming industry doesn’t necessarily seem like a great idea," one analyst says. "To grow the business is ultimately the challenge in an industry that’s really had the rug pulled out from under it."
Yuletronics Not N.Y., achieved week this year last year's describes before entertainment store Sound and Video even in 19%. What's sale, according to software specialty store. But even they didn't know the quarter. Going into the third quarter, they were Shania Twain's albums and singles, according to Nielsen SoundScan, which moved about 405,000 units, and Dice Chicks' "Home," which sold about 401.00 units. In the week including Christmas, the best sellers were the 8 Mile soundtrack, with 313,000 units, and Twain and Avril Lavigne's "Let's Go," each with 263,000 units. Top video sellers were Austin Powers in Goldmember, Ice Age, Minority Report, Spider-Man, Men in Black II, and Disney's Lilo & Stitch.

Continued from page 1

Not Much Yule Cheer For Music Business

Continued from page 1
day selling season a "borderline disater" and add that the only thing that saved the season from being an outright bust was sales of DVDs and other non-music product. But even there, the heavy discounting on DVDs at mass merchants and the low sales figures for the electronic giants means that music retailers are seeing a comparable store basis during the week.

"Norah Jones was the big surprise for us, continuing to be Number 1 for the season, with Avril Lavigne and J.Lo coming in second and third," Dreese says. "I don't know what's going on with the rock'n rollers. Maybe they are all disc-burning now." Value Central Entertainment president Rob Perkins agrees: "The kids just abandoned the store. If they do come in, they buy one or two new CDs and 50 blanks. Our customers this year were looking more adult contemporary and less rock'n roll." According to Nielsen SoundScan, the big sellers in the final week leading up to Christmas were Shania Twain's Up!, which came in first with about 456,000 scans, followed by the 8 Mile soundtrack, which moved about 405,000 units, and Dice Chicks' "Home," which sold about 401.00 units. In the week including Christmas, the best sellers were the 8 Mile soundtrack, with 313,000 units, and Twain and Avril Lavigne's "Let's Go," each with 263,000 units. Top video sellers were Austin Powers in Goldmember, Ice Age, Minority Report, Spider-Man, Men in Black II, and Disney's Lilo & Stitch.

Not everyone had a blue Christmas. "Norah Jones and the Christian Frogs" were Shania Twain's albums and singles, according to Nielsen SoundScan, which moved about 405,000 units, and Dice Chicks' "Home," which sold about 401.00 units. In the week including Christmas, the best sellers were the 8 Mile soundtrack, with 313,000 units, and Twain and Avril Lavigne's "Let's Go," each with 263,000 units. Top video sellers were Austin Powers in Goldmember, Ice Age, Minority Report, Spider-Man, Men in Black II, and Disney's Lilo & Stitch.

U.S. Data Paint Bleak Picture

Continued from page 1

decline for the CD in the U.S. since its introduction in 1983. Also abetting the overall market's decline was the cassette album, which continued its walk into the sunset. Cassettes accounted for 29.8 million album units last year, down nearly 40% from 49.4 million units in 2001. As a percentage of album sales, CDs now account for 95.4% and cassettes only 4.4%. The remaining album formats— including vinyl and DVD—grew slightly to 1.7 million units, or 1.4 million units scanned in the previous year.

The single's journey into oblivion, at least in the physical world, continued. The compact disc generated a meager 12.2 million units, down 61.2% from the 31.4 million units counted in 2001. That decline occurred despite a push to revive the single by the National Association of Recording Merchandisers' annual convention in March. Looking at total unit sales of albums and singles, the U.S. industry shipped 693.1 million, down about 100 million units, or 12.7%, from the previous year's total of 794.1 million units.

Universal Music & Video Distribution (UMVD) remained the U.S. industry's top scorer in 2001, with 28.3% of all total album sales, followed by the independent sector, which collectively finished with 16.4%; WEA, with 15.9%; Sony Music Distribution, 15.7%; BMG Distribution, 14.8%; and EMI Music Distribution (EMD), 8.4%. Looking at current album market share for the U.S., UMVD ranked first with 31.3%, followed by BMG (17.4%), Sony (16.0%), the indie sector (14.6%), WEA (14.3%), and EMD (7.3%). (A full market-share analysis will appear in next week's Billboard.)

In looking at hit power, 65 albums hit the Top 40 last year, down from 99 in 2000. Some of the albums included varied titles with 88 titles in 2001 and 100 in 2000. Similarly, the top 10 sellers continued to decline, shifting a combined 35.6 million units last year, vs. 40 million in the prior year and 60 million in 2000. Meanwhile, the No. 1 seller, Eminem's The Eminem Show (Web/Alternative/Interscope), racked up a final total of 7.6 million units.

Country stays hot

Looking at genres, country (including such crossover artists as Shania Twain) was the only category that showed growth last year, with a 12.7% increase to 76.9 million units. Jazz albums also eked out a gain, with sales totaling 22.64 million units, up about 49,000 pieces over the prior year. The Christian/gospel category was also healthy, scoring 49.66 million units, down 1,000 units from 2001. Latin albums (including crossovers and predominantly English-language albums by Latin artists) almost held their own in the U.S. last year, scanning 23.7 million units, vs. 23.8 million units in the prior year. Soundtracks (including video game) also broke out album sales for the broad categories of rock and pop, but R&B—the largest genre it tracks—suffered the biggest decline of those monitored (down 24% vs. 2000's 21.7% decline). Last year, down 17.8% from the 1997 million units counted for the genre in 2001. Looking at it another way, R&B's album market share declined to 19.4% of U.S. album sales, compared with 25.8% it had in the prior year. The biggest sales decline on a percentage basis was registered by the genre with the smallest album market share, as tracked by Nielsen SoundScan. New-age album scans totaled 7.1 million units last year, down 41.5% from 12.2 million units the previous year. In tracking genre sales, titles may appear in more than one genre, resulting in double counting. Rapped separately by Nielsen SoundScan, even though its sales are also counted in R&B—incurred a 65% decline last year to 7.46 million units, down from 90.4 million units. Other areas where there appears to be double counting are alternative rock and metal. Both genres experienced a decline, with the former scoring 126.4 million units last year (down 4.4% from 132.2 million units in the previous year) and the latter tallying 74.9 million units, down a whopping 15.3% from 88.2 million units in 2001.

Soundtrack albums suffered a 10% decline in 2001, falling to 36.8 million units from 41.8 million units, while classical almost held its own with 21.5 million units, down 2.6% from 22.1 million in the preceding year. On the retail side, music chains were slightly bigger in 2001 than 2000, with 161.9 million square feet. Sales dropped 14.7% to 347.3 million units from 406.9 million. On a percentage basis, independent merchants suffered the largest decline, a 20% drop in album sales, down from 22.5% it had in the prior year. The biggest sales decline on a percentage basis was registered by the genre with the smallest album market share, as tracked by Nielsen SoundScan. New-age album scans totaled 7.1 million units last year, down 41.5% from 12.2 million units the previous year. In tracking genre sales, titles may appear in more than one genre, resulting in double counting. Rapped separately by Nielsen SoundScan, even though its sales are also counted in R&B—incurred a 65% decline last year to 7.46 million units, down from 90.4 million units. Other areas where there appears to be double counting are alternative rock and metal. Both genres experienced a decline, with the former scoring 126.4 million units last year (down 4.4% from 132.2 million units in the previous year) and the latter tallying 74.9 million units, down a whopping 15.3% from 88.2 million units in 2001.
**UPDATE**

**Events Calendar**

**JANUARY**


**FEBRUARY**

Feb. 4-5, Digital Content Delivery Expo (DCCX), San Jose Convention Center, San Jose, Calif. 947-341-9000.

Feb. 6-8, Ninth Annual Billboard/ Airplay Monitor Radio Seminar & Awards, Eden Roc Resort, Miami Beach. 614-564-1600.

Feb. 12-14, 15th Annual Frank Sinatra Celebrity Golf Tournament, presented by the Barbara Sinatra Children’s Center, Renaissance Esmeralda Resort, Indian Wells, Calif. 760-674-8172.

Feb. 9, 2003 San Francisco Governor Awards, presented by the San Francisco chapter of GMRAS, Grand Ballroom, Regency Building, San Francisco. 415-749-7079.


**MARCH**

March 1-2, Global Entertainment and Media Summit, Le Bait Bar, New York. 973-228-4450.

March 6-8, 2003 Million Dollar College Radio & Music Conference, Radisson Hotel Atlanta South, Atlanta. 404-761-4000.


March 8, 34th Annual NAACP Image Awards, Universal Amphitheatre, Los Angeles. 323-938-5268.

March 10, 18th Annual Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York. 212-781-7652.

March 10, Fourth Annual Best Cel- lars Wine Dinner, presented by the T.J. Martell Foundation, Loews Vanderbilt Hotel, Nashville. 615-256-2002.

March 12-16, International Billboard, five-day forum will explore new inroads to the music industry.

**APRIL**

April 5-10, Google Music Asso- ciation Convention, Nashville Convention Center & Renaissance Hotel. 615-242-0303.


**Submit items for Lifelines, Good Works, and Events Calendar to Whirley Whirlcycl at Billboard, 5055 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90036. or to submit your event to billboard.com.**

**Lifelines**

Boy, Anthony James Matthew, to Catherine and James Galgano, Dec. 10 in Guelph, Ont. Father is VP of Galgano Records.

Girl, Rachel Miriam, to Shoshana Samole Zisk and Brian Zisk, Dec. 11 in San Francisco. Mother is head of business affairs for George Clinton Enterprises. Father is director of telecommunications for the Future of Music Coalition.

**DEATHS**

Meri Wilson, 53, of injuries sustained in a car accident, Dec. 28 in Americus, Ga. Wilson was best-known for penning and performing the 1977 novelty hit “Telephone Man,” which reached No. 18 on The Billboard Hot 100. The tune was originally released on GRT Records and was reissued in 2002 on Legend Records. Wilson is survived by her husband, daughter, and granddaughter.

Bob Berg, 51, from injuries sustained in a car accident, Dec. 5 in Amarillo, Texas. Berg was a saxophonist who played in The Bad Plus, a band that fused the hard-bop jazz bands of Sonny Stitt, Clifford Brown, and Art Blakey.

Avree Shaw, 79, of a heart attack, Dec. 5 in Roosevelt, N.Y. Shaw began his career as a bass player with the Louis Armstrong Orchestra in 1945, eventually becoming one of the original members of Louis Armstrong’s All-Stars. He is survived by his long-time companion, his daughter, and two siblings.

**Billboard Music & Money Symposium**

March 6 – The St. Regis Hotel, New York City

**Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards**

May 5-8 – The Eden Roc Resort, Miami Beach

**Billboard Music & Money Symposium**

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**Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards**

May 5-8 – The Eden Roc Resort, Miami Beach

**For more information: Michele Jagacinski 646.654.4560 x 6808 billboardevents@billboard.com**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Billboard Monitor Radio Seminar & Awards**

Feb. 6-8 – The Eden Roc Resort, Miami Beach

**Billboard**
TENTH FRAME: By not yielding the top spot on The Billboard Hot 100, Eminem ties Ashanti and Nelly and Kelly Rowland for having the longest-running song that advanced to No. 1 in 2002. "Lose Yourself" (Shady/Interscope) joins an elite club of songs whose visits to pole position can be counted in double digits.

Ashanti's "Foolish" and Nelly and Rowland's "Dilemma" both had 10-week turns earlier in the year. What's amazing is that in the entire rock era, there were only three songs that completed their reigns at No. 1 in 10 weeks, until 2002.

Debby Boone had the first song to end its run after 10 weeks, with "You Light Up My Life" in 1977. Four years later, Olivia Newton-John had the second chart-topper to step down after 10 weeks with "Physical."

Nineteen years would pass before another No. 1 song stopped at 10 weeks: "Maria Maria" by Santana Featuring the Product G&B ruled the Hot 100 for 10 weeks in spring 2000.

Eminem may not be ready to give up his dominant position on the chart. If he is still No. 1 next issue, he will have the longest-running chart-topper from the class of 2002.

Meanwhile, the parent album to "Lose Yourself," the soundtrack to 8 Mile, reclaims its place atop The Billboard 200. 8 Mile continues to lead the Top Soundtracks chart as well, where it is in its ninth week at No. 1. That is the second-longest reign of any soundtrack in this chart's history.

The clear leader is O Brother, Where Art Thou?, which managed to run up 34 weeks in first place. Three albums were tied for second place until 8 Mile knocked them down to third: Spider-Man, Disney's Lilo & Stitch, and XXX all had six-week reigns.

COMMON KNOWLEDGE: "Love of My Life (An Ode to Hip Hop)" (Fox/MCA) continues to rule Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks for a third week. That makes the soundtrack cut Erykah Badu's second-biggest hit on this chart, behind "Bag Lady," which had a seven-week reign that began in October 2000. Badu's other R&B chart-topper was her first chart entry, "On & On," which remained in pole position for two weeks in February 1997.

Badu's debut with Common marks his only No. 1 hit on the R&B chart — in fact, it's his only top 10 hit. Before "Love," Common's highest-ranked song was "The Light," which peaked to No. 12 in September 2000. On the Hot 100, "Love of My Life" is down 9-16. The only Badu title to reach a higher position was "Bag Lady," which went to No. 6. Common's best placing on this chart before his collaboration with Badu is also "The Light," which reached No. 44.

Tasty Platinum

Nappy Roots was recently awarded a platinum album for its Atlantic debut, Watermelon, Chicken & Gritz, featuring third and current single "Headz Ups." Pictured during the presentation in New York are, standing, from left, Nappy Roots members Ron Clutch and Scales, Atlantic co-president Craig Kallman, Nappy's R. Prophet and B. Stille, and Atlantic Group co-chairman/co-CEO Val Azzoli; kneeling, from left, are Atlantic co-president Ron Shapiro and Nappy's Skinny Deville and Big V.

I'm With The Band

Singer/songwriter Siedah Garrett recently held a session at Ocean Way Studios in Los Angeles for a spring 2003 release on Higher Octave. Pictured in the foreground, from left, are Robin DiMaggio, Garrett, and Fish; in back, from left, are producer John Wooler, engineer Dan Bosworth, Ethan Farmer, and Nick Lashey.

On A Clear Day

Everclear was among the acts playing at the WFNX Midst Holiday Show Dec. 19 at the Avalon in Boston. The station collected more than 200 items to benefit Toys for Tots. Pictured, from left, are WFNX music director Kevin Mays, band members Greg Eklund and Art Alexakis, WFNX PD/morning show host Cruze, and Everclear's Craig Montgomery.

Chart Beat

by Fred Bronson

Desk Job: Dick Clark

It's a typical day at Dick Clark's office in Burbank, Calif. Family members and staffers are running around the three-story, sky-covered building, as are the Nappy Roots, Santana, and the Ronettes. Dick Clark is at his desk, surrounded by his impeccably maintained memorabilia.

There's no shortage of places for the scavenger to hide. Every nook and cranny of Clark's office is layered with memorabilia, ranging from priceless acetates and piano rolls to American Bandstand playing cards, Donny and Marie dolls, and a newspaper from the day JFK was shot. One wall is dedicated largely to photos of the Beatles and Elvis. Shelves climb two walls to the ceiling with every inch filled with some magical piece of history — much of which Clark helped create.

But there's always room for new additions. The latest is a babushka doll that arrived two days ago, plugging the new Wild Thornberies movie. And for items that aren't among the hundreds in Clark's office, he says there's a storage area with another 4,000 pieces of memorabilia.

Though he's constantly in motion, when Clark sits down, it's behind a covered desk that was part of an old pharmacy. "I have no idea how old the desk is. I bought it at an architectural auction," he says. "It came with a whole mess of bottles, which are stacked on the top shelf of the conference room. My chair is a dentist's chair from the early 1900s." Clark says it is impossible to single out the most precious artifact, but among his most prized is the white, slender microphone that he used for more than 30 years on American Bandstand. While there's plenty of AB memorabilia scattered around, none of the original set is on site: It resides in the Smithsonian Institute.

For his favorite American Music Awards memory, Clark references a photo of Lionel Richie clutching a brace of trophies. "That was taken right before everyone left to record 'We are the World,'" Clark says. (This year's AMAs air Jan. 13 on ABC.)

There's also a practical-joker side to Clark that clearly influenced his Bloopers series. He offers a fake slab of roast beef and then surveys the veritable plastic food mart in his office, including a box of chocolates that gets his visitors every time. "I have this box of candy over here (on the table), and people sit here and torment themselves and finally say, 'Can I have a piece?' And I say, 'Well, you can have a piece, but it's been in there 30 years.' This box of donuts is in the same condition."

One of the items that elicits the biggest laugh from visitors is a framed, orange, rectangular sign that reads: "Things that taste like lima beans." "It's an old sign from an April Fool's Day edition of the $10,000 Pyramid," Clark says. "I think Bill Shatner was the poor guy they put in the chair."

Clark admits that he has instant recall for any piece of memorabilia in the office, but adds that he is so busy with future projects, he doesn't often sit back to reflect on his past. "The only time this stuff gets disturbed is once a year, when they come in and dust."


RIM SHOTS by Mark Parisi

You know, I don't think he's showing up tonight.

AXL ROSE'S EARLIEST MOMENTS

MELINDA NEWMAN

On A Clear Day

Everclear was among the acts playing at the WFNX Midst Holiday Show Dec. 19 at the Avalon in Boston. The station collected more than 200 items to benefit Toys for Tots. Pictured, from left, are WFNX music director Kevin Mays, band members Greg Eklund and Art Alexakis, WFNX PD/morning show host Cruze, and Everclear's Craig Montgomery.
Monday's meeting between both sides of the issue on California's "seven-year statute" was a "waste of time," according to a source who was present at the Sacramento gathering (Bulletin, April 23). The three-hour meeting was called by California Sens. John Burton, D-San Francisco, and judiciary chair Martha Escutia, D-Montebello, to discuss a possible compromise on the issue. In addition to RIAA president/CEO Hilary Rosen and the body's negotiator, David Altstein/CEO Zach Horowitz. Among those representing the artists' side were Jay Cooper, co-counsel for the Recording Artists Coalition, and managers Irving Azoff and Jim Guerinot.

Key to the discussions are artist damages lawsuits, in which artists who exit a record company after seven years can be sued for undelivered albums. "The labels aren't yielding on the damages part," says the source.

Cooper tells Bulletin, "There was no resolution—nothing and that's it. Everybody stated their case. As far as another session, and that's it. The RIAA declined to comment. Escutia is expected to decide today if the judiciary committee will go forward with another hearing on the issue that had been scheduled for Friday in L.A.

Sen. Kevin Murray, D-Culver City, who introduced the bill admits to Bulletin, "I was disappointed in the meeting because we believed we were close to reaching a compromise, but always had the intention to go forward with it."

Melinda Newman

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