Digital Biz Reaches Two Frontiers

Apple To Enter Europe, But Faces Tough ‘Slog’

BY JULIANA KORANTENG

LONDON—Apple Computer’s success with its digital download store in the U.S. is irrefutably sweet, but the European market could prove to be bitter fruit.

Apple’s plans to take a bite out of the still nascent European sector will strongly depend on its capacity to deal with the region’s complex

Digital Singles Nearing Eclipse Of Hard Copies

BY BRIAN GARRITY and GEOFF MAYFIELD

NEW YORK—Digital tracks are outselling physical singles by a growing margin, a sign that consumers are increasingly embracing the brave new world of Internet downloading.

Digital download sales outpaced physical singles 857,000 to 170,000, according to Nielsen SoundScan figures for the week ending Oct. 26.

McLachlan: A Reflection Of Her Life

After Hiatus, Artist Basks in ‘Afterglow’

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Six years is a long time between studio albums—but sometimes life gets in the way.

Canadian pop powerhouse Sarah McLachlan actually spent about 2 1/2 years working on her latest disc, “Afterglow,” the follow-up to her 1997 breakthrough album, “Surfacing.” But its release—it arrives Nov. 4 on Arista—was sidetracked while the artist dealt with the death of her mother and gave birth to her first child.

Industry Ad $$ Still Ebb

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—While label executives say they are beginning to spend more on consumer advertising, they have yet to match spending with expectations, according to new data.

In 2002, consumer advertising by the music industry dropped by 25%, far outpacing the 10.7% decline in album sales. This year, the 6.7% ad-spent decline through July is more in line with the 8.4% drop in album sales.

The industry spent $266.5 million from January through July this year and spent $284.2 million during the same period last year, according to Nielsen Monitor-Plus. But those numbers may climb,
We Congratulate our 2003 CMA Nominees

Dixie Chicks
Alan Jackson
Johnny Cash
Kenny Chesney
George Strait
Rascal Flatts
Darryl Worley
Diamond Rio
Brad Paisley
Terri Clark
Brent Rowan
Kyle Lehning
Kim Williams
Sons of the Desert
Bellamy Brothers
Frank Rogers
Randy Travis
Nitty Gritty Dirt Band
Paul Franklin

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Quote of the Week
"I certainly don't meet with local clients or listeners that say, "Wow, what's wrong with radio these days?""
WES McSHAY, CLEAR CHANNEL RADIO

WENDY MACRIOS

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EXCLUSIVE

OPENING KEYNOTE

CLINT EASTWOOD

Memorable scores and successful soundtracks are hallmarks of Clint Eastwood’s films as a director, actor and producer. The director-producer-composer of "Mystic River" discusses his lifelong interest in music and how he approaches the use of music in his films.

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VANGUARD SESSION

Rebel with a Score:

ROBERT RODRIGUEZ

The filmmaker discusses how he made the creative leap from writer-director-editor to composer on films like "Once Upon A Time in Mexico" and "Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over."

ANATOMY OF A FILM

Hear from the creative team behind the music of "The Matrix Reloaded"

JASON BENTLEY, MUSIC SUPERVISOR
DANE A. DAVIS, SOUND DESIGNER/SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR
DON DAVIS, COMPOSER
ZACH STAENBERG, EDITOR

THE BILLBOARD Q&A

A one-on-one interview with Emmy winner and multiple Oscar and Grammy nominee

JAMES NEWTON HOWARD

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Hybrid Recordings
JEFF BRABEC
The Chrysalis Music Group
TODD BRABEC
ASCAP
MARC FERRARI
Master Source
RJ HELTON
"American Idol" Finalist
JOEL C. HIGH
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MICHAEL MCKEAN
actor/songwriter/director/screenwriter
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Hooters Music On Tap
Restaurant Chain Signs Deal With Trio UC3

BY GAIL MITCHELL

Restaurant chain Hooters is preparing its entrance into the music industry. Hooters will produce and promote the R&B/hip-hop female trio UC3 in partnership with Billboard Star Productions (not affiliated with Billboard magazine or its sister companies).

The UC3 venture will include merchandising, retail distribution and performances around the country. Hooters will introduce UC3—billed as the "original Hooters girl group"—during a Nov. 18 showcase at its Manhattan venue on 56th and Broadway.

The group will perform several songs—including first single "It's a Party"—and premiere the single's video. "Twenty-eight percent of our customers are female," says Mike McNeil, VP of marketing for Hooters of America. "We think this will be a great way to reach the female audience and make Hooters cool.

McNeil notes that specific details regarding promotional tie-ins with UC3 are "in progress."

But fashion merchandising is one area being explored. Also being discussed is a national/international, Hooters-sponsored tour that would commence next spring or summer.

Rob Fase, who manages UC3 and is a co-owner of 2-year-old, Tampa Bay, Fla.-based Billboard Star Productions, says U.K. promoters have already approached the group about doing a tour of schools and malls.

McNeil adds, "Hooters does a lot of sports events, so having the girls perform at those makes a lot of sense."

UC3 (a play on the phrase "you see three") is a songwriting trio comprising Tracy Williams, Cristal Bermudez and Kristy Scott. The three range in age from 17½ to 21 and are from Tampa Bay.

Williams is a former member of the group PYT, signed to Epic in the late '90s. Fase worked as a consultant to Williams during her PYT tenure. During its formal affiliation with Hooters, UC3 performed in July at the chain's annual swimsuit competition in Las Vegas and again in October at its 20th anniversary reunion in Clearwater Beach.

"We introduced ourselves to the Hooters executives," Fase says. "One thing led to another and eventually we hooked up big labels."

"Hooters has done some great things," says Mike Alfanno, a former member of the group's predecessor, PYT. "It's a very special situation.

UC3 will soon move to New York City to focus on their music career. Fase says that the group will be in the studio this week recording their first album. The group's debut single, "It's a Party," is expected to release in January.

MCN

Latin Producers Launch Labels

BY LEILA COBO

To exercise greater artistic control over acts they sign and develop, a growing number of prominent Latin producers have launched their own record labels.

The new companies often are linked with major record companies looking to diversify their A&R efforts.

The trend reflects the mainstream music industry, where joint ventures are par for the course.

It is also the result of an increasingly segmented U.S. Latin market, where expertise is needed in specific subgenres.

Although observers say major labels may be less willing to pony up big cash for such ventures in this economy, the trend continues.

The most recent big-name producer to jump on the bandwagon is veteran Roberto Livi (Billboard, Oct. 11), who has written and produced for dozens of acts, including Julio Iglesias, Rafael, Rocio Durcal and Cristian.

In forming Megamusic Records, Livi joins the ranks of fellow producers Rudy Perez, who last year launched RPE as a joint-venture project with Univision Music Group; Omar Alfanno, whose label, Alfanno Music, is a joint venture with Universal; and Gian Marco Perez, who runs his own label, Los Estudios del Manana.

"There's a lot of people out there doing a lot of different things," says Kimberly Hilleman, VP of A&R at Sony Music Latin.

Hilleman notes that the company has seen explosive growth in the Latin market the past two years. "We're up in the Top 10 with the top five songs every week."

"It's a matter of taking what they've been doing in other markets and applying it to Latin," she adds.

"It takes a different kind of label."
Long-Running Cher Farewell Tour A Stellar Send-Off

Pop Icon Grosses $145M From Trek's 200 North American Shows

BY RAY WADDELL

Her Farewell tour may have been a long goodbye, but parted has been a sweet sorrow for Cher, who will rank among the top touring acts for the second consecutive year.

With 200 concerts that grossed $145 million and drew 2.2 million people, an Emmy Award-winning TV special and a new record deal with Warner Bros., Cher continues to break down barriers.

“This is the biggest tour in history by a female artist,” says Brad Wavra, VP of touring for Clear Channel Entertainment, producer of the tour. “She crushed any other female [touring] artist.”

Numbers back the claim—a testament to Cher’s stamina and box-office clout. Top female touring artists Tina Turner ($108 million in 2000), Madonna ($74 million, 2001), Janet Jackson ($41 million, 2001) and Britney Spears ($43.7 million, 2002) did not scale such financial heights as Cher’s.

The success of the tour even caught Cher’s handlers off guard.

“Nothing that everyone is surprised at how well it’s done,” says Lindsay Scott, who co-manages Cher with Roger Davies. “It’s sort of like ‘Rocky Horror Picture Show’—not stylistically, but in that it’s taking on a cult status. People keep coming back.”

The North American trek—which was to conclude Halloween night for 25,000 people at the Sky Tent in Toronto—was marked by repeat plays, multi-night stands, tour extensions and financial successes in markets of all sizes, from New York to Billings, Mont.

With a total of about $70 million in box office for the year, Cher will rank among the elite of touring acts in 2003. She finished second behind Paul McCartney last year, according to numbers reported to Billboard Boxscore (Billboard, Dec. 28, 2002). Cher’s relentless road work has also helped keep her current platinum release, “The Very Best Of Cher,” camped out on The Billboard 200 chart for 30 weeks. There was also an Emmy-winning NBC TV special that drew 17 million viewers. A two-hour A&E Biography special is on tap for Nov. 9.

Scott says ticket and album sales have enjoyed a synergistic relationship. “She’s had off the other. They both remind everybody of all these wonderful songs.”


Scott says Warner chairman/CEO Tom Whalley came to a Cher show and observed the response. He thought that “if she comes with the right record, it could do very well. So she’s a Warner Bros. America recording artist now, a new deal.”

REPEAT ENGAGEMENT

Even concert industry veterans are impressed by what the tour has accomplished.

“We started out with two shows in June of 2002. She came back in

(Continued on page 63)

For Marketers, Teens Are Moving Target

BY SUSANNE AULT

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.—With at least $150 billion in spending power, the teen market represents the Holy Grail to many brand executives.

Yet reaching the fickle 12 to 20 crowd through ever-increasing media clutter remains an elusive art.

Even more daunting is keeping pace with teen tastes.

“I like Fleoetry this week. Last week, it was India.Arie,” said Amanda Patterson, a Santa Monica High School senior who was among a panel of teens at the inaugural What Teens Want conference held here.

“Next week it will probably be something else,” she added.

Speakers at the Oct. 27-28 conference provided numerous theories on deciphering what teens want and how to deliver it. The event was co-sponsored by Billboard and sister publications Adweek, Brandweek, Mediaweek and The Hollywood Reporter.

“It’s very difficult for teens to articulate exactly what they want,” said keynote speaker Brian Graden, MTV/ VH1 president of entertainment. “They are at the age where they’re figuring it out.”

Tactics like conducting focus groups at high schools and studying TV ratings are useful in understanding teens, Graden said. But he admitted, “Sometimes with research, you totally take it in and then throw it out and forget ever you saw it. [We] can figure it out through our intuition.”

Balancing research against gut instinct in developing teen-friendly products and campaigns was a common thread throughout the event.

Bruce Wilkinson—VP of media, agency and cable at Claritas, a New York-based marketing firm owned by Billboard parent VNU—showed tools that predict teen preferences based on (Continued on page 61)

Retail Reacts To Stones Deal

BY ED CHRISTMAN

The backlash against the Rolling Stones at Canadian retail regarding the band’s exclusive deal with Best Buy has spilled over into the U.S. Some U.S. retailers are protesting the move, saying they feel left out of the loop.

For example, 24-unit Newbury Comics in Brighton, Mass., is pulling the Stones’ deep catalog—about 32 titles—from its stores.

“Otherwise, retail isn’t important to them,” CEO Mike Dreese wrote in an e-mail to employees. “So much for good in deal-stocking an artist just because they thought their stuff was important to someone.”

Newbury Comics is keeping about 10 of its best-selling Stones titles in stores but is raising their prices to $18.99 from $16.99.

In Albany, N.Y., Trans World Entertainment executive VP Fred Fox says his chain will pull Stones catalog from its 940 units, trimming the 72 titles that Trans World stocks to about five albums and returning the product.

“If the Rolling Stones elect to market their new product exclusively with someone because they are more important to them,” Fox says, “I would have to step back and question why I would offer the slower-turning, older catalog pieces when I am not afforded the opportunity to sell the newer pieces, which are in higher demand.”

And Circuit City, Best Buy’s main competitor, is pulling a Rolling Stones catalog promotion it had planned to run in November and December.

Some are disappointed with the Rolling Stones’ exclusive agreement with a single retailer,” Circuit City spokesman Jim Babbs says. “We feel the arrangement not only damages other retailers who have supported the band for years, but-it also damages the band because this product will be available to the public in far fewer outlets.”

Meanwhile, members of the Coalition of Independent Music Stores are displaying mixed reactions, president Don VanCleave says.

“Some are pulling (Rolling Stones inventory), and some are yawning,” he says. “Some say, Who cares? Those are

(Continued on page 61)

Lions Gate Will Absorb Artisan

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—The just-announced merger between Lions Gate Entertainment and Artisan Entertainment, the two largest independent studios, will significantly boost the new company’s collective home entertainment operations.

Under the terms of the deal, New York-based Artisan will merge into Lions Gate (based in Vancouver and Marina del Rey, Calif.) for $160 million in cash and the assumption of Artisan’s debt—an additional $50 million to $60 million.

The deal is expected to be finalized by year’s end.

Lions Gate will gain a library of 6,700 plus Artisan titles developed through original productions; acquisitions from

(Continued on page 61)

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Here's to sharing future success in this exciting, expanding market!
Blues’ Is Red Hot
But Some Acts Doubt Effect Of PBS Series Will Last

BY CHRIS MORRIS and WES ORSHOSKI

America has experienced a heightening of its blues consciousness.

The plethora of releases tied to PBS series “Martin Scorsese Presents the Blues” has been hit with consumers.

Retailers are reporting brisk across-the-board increases in the blues category since the seven “Blues” shows aired in late September and early October (Billboard, Sept. 6).

But most artists featured in the series have reaped no immediate sales dividends, and the ultimate pay-off for their participation remains a question mark.

“I’m not feeling anything [from the series],” says Greg Preston, who manages singer Bobby Rush and runs Rush’s label, Deep Rush Records. “There was nothing tangible.

Not surprisingly, Scorsese-branded product tied to the series—released by Sony Legacy and Universal Music Enterprises—has taken the lion’s share of sales. Other albums by performers on the series failed to register on the sales barometer.

In this week’s Billboard Top Blues Albums chart, titles related to the “Blues” occupy five of the chart’s top 15 positions, with “Martin Scorsese Presents the Blues” at No. 1. Of the 45 best-selling blues albums tracked by Nielsen SoundScan this week, 19 are

(Continued on page 62)

Licensing An Issue For TV DVDs

BY JILL KIPNS

LOS ANGELES—TV series on DVD continue to be hot items at retail. But the prohibitive cost of clearing music licenses is changing, and in some cases halting, the process of releasing these projects.

The issue was a major point of discussion at the TV DVD Conference held here Oct. 22 at the Wyn- dham Bel Age Hotel.

Numerous executives cited music clearances as the single largest obstacle the TV-to-DVD industry faces. Given the growing customer demand for TV series on DVD, studios are trying to determine how to rectify the problem.

Sales of TV series on DVD are expected to top $1 billion this year, according to Video Store magazine research. These projects accounted for 10% of total consumer DVD spending in 2002 for a total of $870 million. In 2001, the figure was $300 million.

One solution to the music-clearance problem is to obtain clearances prior to the show’s TV air date. “Producers would have to increase their expenditures to do this,” says Peter Staddon, senior VP of marketing for Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment. “But they would ultimately see the benefits later.”

Clearing music upfront is only an option for contemporary TV shows, however. For older programs or those created before DVD technology was available, some studios are only clearing the music rights to particular episodes in a set or are replacing all of a show’s original tracks with new music.

On Bueno Vista Home Entertainment’s first-season release of “Felicity,” for example, the original music is only on the first and last episodes. The second-season release of “ Dawson’s Creek” (Dec. 16, Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment) includes all new music.

(Continued on page 62)

Trama Takes Brazil To The World

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

Since opening its doors in 1998, São Paulo, Brazil-based Trama has become that country’s largest independent record label. The multi-faceted entertainment company looks to cap its fifth year by opening a U.S. office.

Label co-founders João Marcelo Boscoli and André Szazman view Trama as more than a record label. To them, it is a media group, encompassing DVD, the Internet, film and TV.

Early next year, Trama—which has offices in England, Germany, (Continued on page 63)

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A Halloween Horror Story

By most accounts, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, is considered a friend of the music industry. After all, he was the one who suggested people download music to keep their computers from going down in a blaze. Wow, did that cause a stir.

Overstatement, however, is apparently only one of the senator’s shortcomings. He also seems to have a strange habit of seeing demons where none exist. While it may be easy to dismiss such foibles in ordinary folks, it’s downright scary in someone of such power and influence.

At issue are the senator’s comments in a speech last month on illegal file sharing before the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. During his lengthy discourse, Hatch managed to drag the peer-to-peer issue into an even more foreboding hell-warp.

Call this Halloween horror story “The Attack of the Trial Lawyers.” “Today, I’m going to fast forward to what might come next” in the file-sharing controversy, he told the crowd. “The more I think about artists and technology, the more I am concerned that the music industry’s lawsuits against consumers may very well lead to a litigation explosion that could seriously damage the country’s high-tech industry.”

Huh? How could that happen? Well, the senator’s reasoning went like this: Because the Recording Industry Assn. of America is suing and winning monumental monetary damages against large numbers of illegal downloaders, those people, in the cost of defending themselves, he said. Then the voracious trial lawyers will search for other deep pockets: How about the creators of the software, the Internet service providers, the companies that manufacture, sell and distribute computers, routers and peripheral equipment? We’re talking Microsoft, Verizon and Intel, he warns.

Now add oversimplification to the list. Next, he likes the current file-sharing situation to the asbestos and tobacco industries, which, of course, have been ravaged by hordes of trial lawyers for products that Hatch said “everyone knows [are] dangerous.”

As the senator must know, the fight to rein in trial lawyers and cap punitive damages is one of the longest-running and most intractable political fights in the history of both state and local government. The last thing the music industry needs is to be pulled into that tar pit. Yet Hatch seems to suggest that this could be one logical outcome of the RIAs’ legal campaign.

With friends like this, who needs enemies? Don’t take us there, senator; tell us it’s safe to turn out the lights.

Sen. Orrin Hatch seems to have a strange habit of seeing demons where none exist.

Does something make you jump and shout? Write a letter to the Editor! Mail to Keith Girard, Editor-in-Chief, Billboard, 770 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, N.Y., 10003, or e-mail to letters@billboard.com. Include name, title, address and phone number for verification. Letters should be concise and may be edited. Names can be withheld, if requested, at the discretion of the editor. All submissions published shall become the sole property of Billboard, which shall own the copyright in whole or part, for publication.
Even Mariel’s new bikini couldn’t keep Carl from wondering how the hell he was going to maintain audience share in today’s increasingly fragmented media landscape.

From fragmentation to consolidation, the only thing that’s certain in entertainment today is change. As industry leaders speed into uncharted waters, new complexities require rethinking the old ways. And thinking up the new. It’s why, more than ever, the industry needs fuel for thought. The keener insights and business intelligence that help ignite opportunity. The one source, the only source, they find it? The Hollywood Reporter.
Ring Tones, Text Messaging Are Poised To Grow As Avenues For Commerce

Mobile Market Can Keep Industry Going

Despite the gloom cloaking much of the U.S. record industry, the acceleration of the mobile-music market offers a revenue channel and strong cause for optimism for labels, artists and managers alike.

Progressive record companies are seeing evidence of this, as mobile consumers demand that their music be delivered to their phones or mobile devices.

Already, mobile ring-tone sales outpace singles sales in the U.K. and Europe and are growing rapidly in North America.

In the European Union markets, it is a $1.6 billion business, and it is expected to reach $2.6 billion in 2005.

Ring tones will increasingly become downloads of original sound recordings, not simply monophonic or the popular polyphonic production.

The craft now required for mobile music also offers an interesting new production channel for the creative communities of songwriters and artists.

Rapper 50 Cent earned the Mobile Entertainment Forum’s first U.S. “gold” ring-tone certification with his hit “In Da Club,” which has now spawned more than 500,000 paid-for mobile downloads, setting a new volume record in the burgeoning mobile-music business.

How long will it be before mobile-music customers will be able to get the weekly *Billboard* top five singles sent to their mobile phone or device at a viable premium charge or using short-code commerce?

Further evidence of the innovative link between mobile and music retailing can be seen in the huge success of interactive TV text voting across all phone carriers during the “American Idol” and “Nashville Star” TV series. This has prompted mobile-text messaging and short-code commerce that now allows record labels to engage customers personally, drive them to retail and build loyalty.

Using premium-rate, cross-caller text-messaging technology, the innovative Seattle-based Mobliis company uses SMS-based short-code marketing techniques to leverage existing marketing and distribution, creating incremental revenue streams for labels.

Labels already are looking at technology that would allow music consumers to buy a CD at retail and peel a sticker with a one-time short-claim code off the CD case.

Buyers then would text the short-claim code to become mobile and receive premium text and content from the artist as well as a sweepstake entry for a backstage event prize . . . . on their phone.

The premium rate and contest entry would only be activated by buying the CD at retail.

The mobile user is charged $2.49 for the premium content—in effect, an upsell on the retail CD and an additional bounty for the consumer. These versatile mobile properties are starting to influence purchase decisions closest to the retail point of sale.

MTV music and channel content to mobile users.

MTV Networks chairman/CEO Tom Freston has said that MTV is seriously considering a move into the fast-expanding online music business by offering downloads of songs on its Web sites. The mobile application of this strategy is here and ready to go.

There are other clear signs that this avenue is directly benefiting artists and labels.

Robbie Williams has become the first major recording artist to have his own micro-channel within Vodafone’s Live global network—certainly a harbinger of what is to come for distinctive artists and their content assets.

All of the major handset manufacturers—such as Nokia, Siemens, Motorola and Smartphone—are investing huge marketing efforts into getting upgraded, sophisticated handsets into consumers’ hands this Christmas and in becoming more closely involved with the music industry.

These signs all underpin the imperative that every record-label and A&R executive must now address, namely: If U Connected?

Ralph Simon is chairman of the Mobile Entertainment Forum—Americas.

In another pivotal deal, MTV recently announced a $75 million pact with handset-maker Motorola to deliver exclusive **MTV** music and channel content to mobile users.

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Billboard turns the spotlight on Ozzy Osbourne, prince of darkness, as he celebrates 35 years of success. We trace Ozzy’s career from the days of Black Sabbath to his solo career, take a look at the Osbourne family including manager/wife/mother Sharon, and report on the success of Ozzfest.

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Simpson Reels In Endorsement Offers

She may not know whether Chicken of the Sea is tuna or chicken, or that the plural of mouse isn't mouses, but Jessica Simpson knows the way to the bank.

Endorsement and merchandising offers are pouring in for theditzy blond as a result of "Newlyweds"—her high-rated show on MTV with hubby Nick Lachey—and the resulting media flurry, says Dell Furano, CEO of Signatures Networks, which handles licensing for Simpson.

"In the last two weeks, the phone has been ringing off the hook," Furano says. Offers fall into three categories: fan appreciation items, such as posters and calendars; health and beauty endorsements for perfume and cosmetics; and newlywed endorsements such as for furniture, jewelry, credit cards and cell phones, which could feature the couple.

Although Furano is sifting through fashion endorsements for Simpson, he says there are no plans for her own clothing company.

"Her own product line would need some longevity to take root and succeed; we're leaning more toward endorsement deals," he says.

Not surprisingly, Simpson will probably get hooked by a tuna fish company. "We had two tuna fish companies call who are going to send us packages to give to Jessica," Furano says. "So I would be surprised if we didn't do a major tuna fish endorsement, but it might not be [for] Chicken of the Sea."

He's evaluating all deals in terms of "credibility, longevity and money," Furano says. "Jessica and [her father/co-manager] Joe Simpson have a good sense of humor, and they're fine playing up her humorous, quirky, naive, beguiling and charming personality, but we're not going to be ridiculous about it."

Additionally, Furano is looking for endorsements that will feature music from Simpson's current Columbia album, "In This Skin," in ads. The title leapt from No. 127 to No. 74 on The Billboard 200 last issue and goes to No. 67 this week.

IN MEMORIAM: Beck, Conor Oberst, Beth Orton and Grandaddy will perform at a memorial concert for Elliott Smith Nov. 3 at Los Angeles' Henry Fonda Theater. Also appearing will be Rilo Kiley, Radar Bros. and Future Pigeon. The concert will be preceded by a screening of the documentary "Strange Parallel," which features Smith. Funds raised go to the Elliott Smith Foundation for Abused Children. Tickets are $20.

The 34-year-old Academy Award-nominated Smith killed himself Oct. 21 (Billboard, Nov. 1).

DEALS: "American Idol" contestant/Curb Records artist Kimberley Locke and jazz singer Diane Schuur have signed with Los Angeles-based Stiletto Entertainment for management. Stiletto's clients include Barry Manilow, who produced Schuur's last album... Chris Robinson, formerly with the Black Crowes, is signing with Vector Recordings (Billboard Bulletin, Oct. 28) ... Rob Shore, former VP of Sanctuary Music Group, has joined I.I. Business Management as partner and will head the company's New York office (Billboard Bulletin, Oct. 28).

Simpson: Major Deals for the 'Newlywed'

New Label Fits Jean Fine

Davis Deal Bows With Singer's 'Preacher's Son'

BY RASHAUN HALL

NEW YORK—After three solo albums and sales of more than 3 million units, Wyclef Jean decided it was time for a musical change in direction and a new label to take that shift home.

"I just wanted to focus on music," Jean says. "I don't have a format to my madness. I'm not the kind of cat that finds out what beats are rocking in the clubs and then finds their producers [to make those beats for me] to put my voice over. If something is getting 100 spins on the radio, I don't want to have to adjust to that sound, I have the feel sound. It's a very rebel sound. Sometimes, that conflicts with a company. A company is looking for you to do a certain thing, but I did that already."

"Where my head space is at now, and with everything that's going on in the world, all I could do was look up to people like Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, [Bob] Marley and Jimi Hendrix," he adds. "The music that they did transcended time. So I decided to focus on albums that transcend time and [will] still mean something 200 years from now."

Jean, whose first three albums were released on Columbia, inked an imprint deal with Clive Davis' J Records in 2000 for his Clef Records (Billboard, Sept. 30, 2000). The Nov. 4 release of "The Preacher's Son!" is his debut for Clef/J Records.

"Clive Davis is someone I've had a relationship with through the years, and my [best] songwriting comes from..." (Continued on page 16)
"Three or four weeks after I signed, I went to Clive and told him I had the album done and ready to play for him," he says. "I had 50 joints; he just had to pick. After that, we got into the creative aspect of what I was trying to say on one record and how we could make another record more of an event. My cousin [producer] Jerry Wondr and I worked on the record, and Clive played a serious role in helping us facilitate a more focused direction, so it wasn’t all over the place."

With a list of guest appearances that includes Patti Labelle, Elephant Man, Santana and Missy Elliott—not to mention the influence of Davis—you could draw comparisons between "The Preacher’s Son" and Santana’s "Supernatural."

But Jean begs to differ.

"As a songwriter, I always loved to work with artists," he explains. "I’m a songwriter first. So, every time I write a song, I never think of me singing it. I think of me playing the guitar and just vibing. So, I always think of who would be perfect for the song."

"In that aspect, all my albums are event albums," he adds. "All of them have mad guests on them. So, I wouldn’t really say it was like ‘Supernatural,’ but in the sense of an event record I could see why people might say that. And any time I’m compared to Carlos Santana is a compliment to me."

To preview the album, Davis hosted industry listening sessions in New York and Los Angeles.

"You have to be very careful before you play, in effect, every cut from an album, because it’s an artificial listening setting whereby you’ve really got to have the goods," Davis says. "People’s attention spans are usually not that long, especially in the early evening after they’ve spent a day at work. So, you’ve got to feel that what you’re playing is really exceptional."

"I did it because when an artist has had a few albums out, everyone in the industry would have trouble saying that this is a major breakthrough to a whole different level," he adds. "It was for that reason, to show that although this artist is talented and you might have liked him or admired him, his artistry is going to be a hole new level. I felt that this album would survive that ultimate test."

With a new label home, Jean also has full confidence in the album.

"You always want a record to do well," Jean says. "I want everyone to pick up ‘The Preacher’s Son.’ I don’t give a fuck if you get it from cyborg-net, or bootleggers in NYC if you physically go and pick it up in a store; it’s one of them joints that you need to put on right before you go to sleep."

"Instead of putting on the TV in that last hour before you go to sleep, put on ‘The Preacher’s Son,’ because that shit is a mini-movie in itself."

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Mescaleros Piece Together Strummer’s Swan Song

BY WES ORSHOSKI

When an undiagnosed congenital heart defect claimed Joe Strummer’s life last December, legions of music fans were left not only stunned but feeling as though the life had been sucker-punched out of them as well.

To these people, Strummer was not just a singer, but a hero of gigantic proportion.

Considering how hard the 50-year-old ex-Clash frontman’s passing hit strangers, it must have been even more difficult for his family, friends and former bandmates.

But his widow, Lucinda, would have none of that. At her insistence, literally two weeks after Strummer’s death, Martin Slattery and Scott Shields—the band Strummer played with during his last five years—were back in the studio piecing together the album they and Strummer were working on when he died. The fruits of their and others’ efforts were delivered Oct. 21 with “Streetcore” (Hellcat/Epitaph), Strummer’s third album with the Mescaleros.

While Slattery and Shields were certain there would be a posthumously issued Strummer album, exactly what it would include was a bit of a mystery at first.

A handful of tracks was captured at two previous sessions, the second of which was wrapped just days before Strummer’s death. But the band was probably going to have to augment those with an instrumental and a few live tracks, Slattery figured.

Thankfully, he says, noted producer Rick Rubin had cut a pair of sparse acoustic tunes while Strummer was sitting in on the 2002 sessions for Johnny Cash’s last studio set, “American IV: When the Man Comes Around.”

And it’s those tracks—a cover of Bob Marley’s “Redemption Song” and the Cash tribute “Long Shadow”—that give “Streetcore” its expected poignancy and bittersweet bent.

A heart-tugger for sure, “Long Shadow” finds Strummer singing of facing your demons, of climbing the mountain, of casting a long shadow on the ground over a “Ring of Fire”-recalling steam-train rhythm. Although written for Cash, it’s a fitting, cosmic epitaph for both.

“J’ve told people that I thought it was the best song that he ever wrote—and I’m sure that’s gonna open the floodgates,” says Hellcat chief Chris LaSalle, who was with Strummer the night he finished the track. “But I remember seeing that look on his face [that night], like, how proud he was of it.”

TIGHTER, MORE FOCUSED

While the sometimes sprawling songs on his previous Mescaleros set, 2001’s “Global Go-Go,” were often a product of a spontaneous outpouring of inspiration, “Streetcore” was meant to follow a more straightforward, mainstream-leaning approach.

And in their tighter, leaner arrangements, many of the songs that make up the balance of “Streetcore” showcase that direction.

“It was more into the kind of Brill Building [approach],” Slattery says. “Really kind of getting stuck into—and making it work over—a three- to four-minute period, as opposed to a 20-minute period.”

STAYING THE COURSE

Over the course of the band’s final tour last year, and during its two studio stints for “Streetcore,” it appeared as though the unit’s future was bright. Strummer was feeling more fulfilled than ever before.

“He started saying things like, ‘This is the fuckin’ best shit I’ve ever been involved with,’” Slattery says. “And Joe doesn’t just say those things.

In fact, when Strummer’s former Clash bandmates Mick Jones and Paul Simonon approached Lucinda about backing her husband on the tracks he left behind—that is, the reunion Clash fans have wanted for two decades—she declined.

“She’s really kept his mentality with regards to the record; it would have been very easy for her to accept an offer from [Eurythmics] Dave Stewart to help, or Rick or Mick and Paul,” Slattery says. “But she was quite strong about Scott and I carrying on as much as possible and not bringing in the history.”

In terms of cohesiveness, Lucinda—who also even made a few key mixing calls—seemed to make the right decision, as Slattery and Shields arranged, wrote and produced the Mescaleros’ work equally with Strummer.

A few of the tracks on “Streetcore” were born out of late-night jams. On the last night the band was together, it cut “Midnight Jam” as Strummer cheered it on, jumping up and down, shouting, “Fuckin’ great!”

Strummer was to add vocals after the band’s break for the Christmas holidays, but he died Dec. 27. Instead of leaving it as an instrumental, Slattery slathered dialogue from Strummer’s BBC radio program over the music.

Reflecting on his time with Strummer, Slattery says the singer always instilled a sense of invincibility in those around him.

“Whether you were going around the world, or just walking about Soho, when you were with him, you felt like you were in a gang,” the multi-instrumentalist says. “He was into the tribal thing, the pose; he was really into that, and it felt great being a part of it.”
BMG Classics Gives RCA Red Seal A Fine Tuning

RCA Red Seal—which for quite some time has been the least active of the classical majors—has been reviving its engines.

First out of the gate Oct. 7 was an Ensemble Modern recording of several works by American original Steve Reich, including "City Life," "New York Counterpoint," "Eight Lines" (octet) and "Vio- lin Phase."

On Oct. 21, the label released two discs by noted conductor Nikolaus Harnoncourt, one of RCA Red Seal's new signings. The first Harnoncourt discs are the Bruckner Ninth Symphony and Smetana's tone poem "Ma Vlast," both with the Vienna Philharmonic. The Bruckner title includes a Super Audio CD performance of the symphony and a workshop concert in which Harnoncourt discusses his performance choices for the work's last, unfinished movement.

The label follows its frontline releases with several budget-priced boxes on Nov. 4. These titles feature some of the best-known recordings from the RCA vaults, including the complete Beethoven symphonies conducted by Arturo Toscanini and Yuri Temirkanov's survey of the complete Tchaikovsky symphonies with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

After several name and organizational changes during the past few years (including the appointments of Stefan Piendl as senior VP/COO and Gilbert Hetherwick as VP/GM), the BMG classical division—whose mainstay imprint is RCA Red Seal—has reverted back to the name BMG Classics. Could these transformations signal a re dedication to the classical market?

"Absolutely," Hetherwick affirms. "And our commitment now is completely to core classical music—all crossover is now in the hands of our sister company, Arista Associated Labels, under the direction of David Wyner."

With the signing of Harnoncourt as well as the continued roster presence of such artists as violinist Nicolaj Znaider and mezzo-soprano Vesselina Kasarova, Hetherwick estimates that Red Seal will release no more than 15-20 front-end titles per year.

On the reissues front, the label will begin bundling CDs with DVDs in spring 2004 as well as launch a new mid-line series, "RCA Red Seal Classics Library," featuring gems from its famous catalog.

MINNESOTA'S BIG BASH: Following in the footsteps of other prominent American orchestras, the Minnesota Orchestra is celebrating its November centennial by releasing its own retrospective. Its 12-CD compilation of previously unissued material spans 80 years of the ensemble's history, from its inaugural recording session in 1924 to a 2002 broadcast with the orchestra's new music director, Osmo Vansöld, who began his tenure with the orchestra this fall.

The orchestra is celebrating the (Continued on page 19)
RZA Writes Music For Another Medium, Tarantino’s ‘Kill Bill’

When screenwriter/director Quentin Tarantino chose rapper RZA to write music for his current movie, “Kill Bill Vol. 1,” it may not have seemed like an obvious choice for a director who generally packs his film soundtracks with retro pop music and relatively obscure artists.

RZA—who is also a member and producer of Wu-Tang Clan—tells *Billboard*, “Quentin says that I produce my albums like movies. So he wanted to bring that technique to ‘Kill Bill Vol. 1.’ I like using a lot of sound effects.”

The movie’s soundtrack—released Sept. 23 on A Band Apart/Maverick Warner Music Group Soundtracks—features two RZA songs: “Due to Owen Ishii” and “Crane/White Lightning,” a collaboration with Charles Bernstein. RZA also scored some of the music for the film, which opened Oct. 10 in U.S. theaters and debuted at No. 1 during its opening week.

The rapper performed at the “Kill Bill Vol. 1” after-party for the film’s New York premiere, which was held Oct. 7.

“Kill Bill Vol. 1”—a Miramax Films action picture—stars Uma Thurman as a former assassin who must battle other assassins while on a mission to get revenge on her former boss named Bill. Lucy Liu co-stars in the movie as Owen Ishii, the title character in RZA’s soundtrack song.

On the song, RZA says a biography about the character. “What’s cool about the song,” he notes, “is that it’s rapping with no drums; just an orchestra. The Owen Ishii character is very violent but beautiful, and I think that music—rap with an orchestra—matches that contrast.”

For “Crane/White Lightning,” RZA says, “That was for a scene in the movie that was supposed to have a Metallica song. But that didn’t work out, so Quentin told me he wanted a song with a great buildup.”

Other songs on the album include Nancy Sinatra’s “Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down),” Santa Esmeralda’s 10-minute cover version of the Animals’ “Don’t Let Me Be Miserable,” Isaac Hayes’ “Run Far Run” and Tom Jobim’s “Hotels’s Battle Without Honor or Humanity,” which is the dramatic instrumental music heard in commercials for “Kill Bill Vol. 1.”

Since Quentin wrote the first page of the script, RZA comments, “The knows he wanted ‘Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down)’ in the movie.”

The rapper says of his working with Tarantino, “I first met him a few years ago. He gave me the script to ‘Kill Bill,’ and at first he didn’t know at which capacity I’d be involved. At one point he wanted to bring me in as producer for the soundtrack, but as time went on he decided to produce it.”

Tarantino and A Band Apart co-founder Lawrence Bender were the soundtrack’s executive producers.

RZA says, “The first day we got into the nitty gritty of working together, he told me, ‘I spent all week listening to Wu-Tang Clan, and I honestly admit I trust you.’ I think he wanted me to add the kind of flavor to the soundtrack that people wouldn’t expect.

“When we were working on the movie’s music,” RZA continues, “Quentin would come in with his vinyl record collection and play music that he thought would be inspiring.”

Maverick GM Daniel Savage says that although the “Kill Bill Vol. 1” album isn’t the type of soundtrack to yield hit singles, it was nevertheless marketed aggressively. Savage notes, “We did a lot of street marketing, and the soundtrack had high visibility at the New York and L.A. premiers. We also had soundtrack listening parties at clubs in the top 20 U.S. markets.”

In addition, the record label struck deals to have the soundtrack get in-store play at such retail chains as Puma, Diesel and Urban Outfitters. A national contest at Puma included giveaways of the album.

Maverick serviced the soundtrack to college radio, and the label hired independent firm Filter Marketing to do targeted street and online campaigns.

RZA says, “The opportunity to do this soundtrack’s music really opened my mind up to a lot of other things. When I was mixing my current album, ‘Birth of a Prince,’ released Oct. 7 on Sanctuary Records, that was even affected by the movie-making technique.”

RZA also believes that more filmmakers should take a chance on hip-hop artists doing film scores.

“Any good film score knows how to characterize the music with the characters. Hip-hop producers and artists have the musical talent. Rap is all about storytelling, just like the movies.”

Although music for the soundtrack to “Kill Bill Vol. 2” has yet to be decided, the album is set for release Feb. 3, 2004, on the same record label as its predecessor. Miramax will release the second film Feb. 20 in U.S. theaters.

Classical

Continued from page 18

The conductor’s arrival in a more whimsical way with a limited-edition Van der Heide bubble-arm doll available to live-concert attendees.

The Centennial CD Collection is available through the orchestra’s Web site, minnesotaorchestra.org.

A NOUER 100 CANDLES: Boston’s Jordan Hall—the crown jewel of New England Conservatory—is also celebrating its centennial.

One of the most acoustically perfect venues in the U.S. (if not the world), Jordan Hall first opened its doors Oct. 20, 1903. Since then it has hosted the Boston premiers of such world-renowned artists as the Budapest String Quartet, Arthur Rubinstein, Pablo Casals, Marian Anderson, Yo-Yo Ma and Renée Fleming.

Let’s hope the next 100 years bring more recordings from Jordan Hall, so that non-Bostonians can get a taste of the space’s glorious, inimitable sound.
BY SUSANNE AULT

LOS ANGELES—After rolling out the Crown Royal Kings of Comedy tour to sold-out arenas, creator Walter Latham hopes the laughs extend all the way to the bank this year.

Like Kings of Comedy, the Crown Royal Comedy Soul Festival road trip stars stand-up comics. It has added musicians for the first time.

Earth, Wind & Fire and the Isley Brothers are sharing the bill with such comedians as Bruce Bruce, Earthquake and Rickey Smiley.

Spanning 20 major-market dates, the Comedy Soul Festival kicks off Nov. 13 at the Philips Arena in Atlanta and wraps Dec. 28 at the Oakland Arena in Oakland, Calif. Tickets range from $35 and $75.

The 1999 arena run of Kings of Comedy—which spawned the Spike Lee-directed film “The Original Kings of Comedy”—attracted about 10,000 people per arena show, according to Latham, CEO of Latham Entertainment.

Combined with its 1998 theater incarnation, the two editions collectively grossed $37 million, he adds.

Latham says the Comedy Soul Festival is following that successful path. “All indications are that it will be a sellout across the board,” he says.

Latham’s company produces films (like “Kings of Comedy”) along with tours, including the Queens of Comedy series.

Latham says that the company’s core African-American fan base tends to be late ticket buyers. So he sold 10,000 tickets sold across the 20 dates during the first day of its Oct. 3 on-sale, “you have something that’s hot,” he says.

Even with those positive indicators, though, he’s happy to keep the Comedy Soul Festival limited to 20 dates.

There are plans in 2004 to release a filmed version, similar to “Kings of Comedy,” likely as a DVD or TV special. “You need to keep it short and sweet,” Latham says. “You don’t want it to kill your second wave of opportunity.”

But Kings of Comedy and the Comedy Soul Festival are not carbon copies. While Earth, Wind & Fire and the Isley Brothers are established acts—on par with Kings stars Steve Harvey, Cedric the Entertainer and Bernie Mac—Comedy Soul’s comics are up-and-comers in the stand-up world.

Ronald Isley of the Isley Brothers had his doubts about the Comedy Soul lineup.

“We’re friends with Steve Harvey and Bernie Mac, but some of these comedians that Walter is using are new comedians,” Isley says.

But Latham says the current acts are just as big as Cedric the Entertainer was when he was first on tour with the Kings of Comedy.

While he believes in Earth, Wind & Fire points out that “musicians and comedians have a lot in common—they both entertain people.”

Confidence in the Comedy Soul concept led Latham to “go on the line and guarantee Crown Royal [the title sponsor] 70% overall attendance,” he says.

Rob Warren, VP of marketing at Diageo-North American Whisky, which distributes Crown Royal, is equally sure that the festival will be a success.

After Crown Royal kicked off its partnership with Latham Entertainment on Kings of Comedy, Warren recalls telling Latham, “We like this relationship with you. You deliver the biggest comedy programming events we’ve ever seen. When you’re ready to go back on the road with a product, call us.”

In exchange for the sponsorship, Crown Royal is primarily covering the tour’s marketing expenses. It is advertising the tour with visual displays inside Crown Royal retail and by sending e-mails to the 750,000 registered members of its Web-based benefits club, Society of Crown.

Already, Crown Royal has pacted with Latham Entertainment to launch a second installment of the Comedy Soul Festival tour at a time to be determined. A different mix of performers will likely be featured.

Warren admits it is tough to detect a direct link between exposure to Kings of Comedy shows and spiked product sales. But he nevertheless sees a financial upside in hooking up with Latham’s tour endeavors.

“We have done post-event research [through the Web site and at show venues], and [attendees] show strong affinity for Crown Royal. They recollect that Crown Royal was the sponsor. That’s why we are back again [with Latham],” Warren says.

“Bringing in legendary musical groups to the tour should broaden the consumer base for Crown Royal products. Crown Royal has a very good African-American following,” he says, adding that acts like Earth, Wind & Fire and the Isley Brothers appeal to all groups of people.

Bryan Blaum, GM of the Compaq Center in Houston, reports that the Nov. 15 show there should near its capacity of 10,600. He agrees that the Comedy Soul Festival “takes Kings of Comedy to a new level. It appeals to a broader audience.”

Other venue managers report slow ticket sales, but say that Latham’s track record should deliver packed houses come showtime.

“I trust [Latham’s] instincts very much,” says Peter Patton, GM of the Gund Arena in Cleveland, which hosts the concert Nov. 22.

“A month out from the date Patton says, “Sales are low, but I'm still optimistic [it] will have a strong finish.”

Clear Channel Out; I.M.P. In At D.C.-Area Shed

BY RAY WADDELL

A pair of Washington, D.C., promoters has taken over the venerable Merriweather Post Pavilion in a rare case when independent producers replaced a corporate promoter at a venue.


The contract was signed with the Woon Co., which owns the pavilion. Merriweather opened it in 1967 as the cultural hub of the planned town of Columbia, halfway between D.C. and Baltimore.

I.M.P. has a history in the venue, having promoted shows there from 1996 to 2002 through an agreement with then-leaseholder Nederlander. The Nederlander contract transferred to Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) through its SFX acquisition, with CCE promoting shows at Merriweather exclusively in 2003.

Seventy-five miles from Columbia, CCE owns and operates the Washington, D.C. market’s other shed, the $25 million, 25,000-capacity Nissan Pavilion in Bristol, N.J. Celar Door Concerts opened the venue in 1995. SFX acquired Celar Door in 1998.

Some content that CCE consciously separated from the Merriweather shed shows to its own venue. Nissan hosted 28 concerts in 2003; Merriweather hosted 19.

The CCE campus obviously sees things differently. Last year, the Merriweather’s schedule—booked by CCE—included Kenny Chesney, a two-day jazz fest, Brooks & Dunn, the Upsetters, the Dave Matthews Band, 50 Cent, Maroon 5 Group, Jackson Browne, Iron Maiden, Mariah Carey, 311, Radiohead, Tom Amos, the Liquid Sprite tour and Crosby, Stills & Nash.

“We’ll let that schedule stand on its own legs,” says G. Wilson Rogers, senior VP/GM for the South region. Rogers oversees the company’s efforts in the region, including Nissan Pavilion.

Still, on the billboard, Billboard Boxscore number one, the CCE shed vastly outperformed Merriweather. Nissan reported 27 shows that drew 417,198 and grossed $13.9 million. Merriweather reported 11 shows that grossed slightly less than $3 million and drew 96,506.

“We’re looking forward to having [I.M.P.] as partners at the facility,” says Wayne Christmann, senior VP for Columbia Management and managing agent of the House Co. for the Merriweather property.

Hurwitz says the venue had long been the premier place to play outdoors in the market, “so much so that Clear Channel wanted to control another amphitheater in the D.C. market when they had one already [Nissan Pavilion].”

“But in this case it wasn’t as simple as just buying it,” Hurwitz continues. “They had a landlord to deal with, and that’s why their usual strategy didn’t work.”

They didn’t fool the landlord, the acts or the public,” Hurwitz adds. “There are two ways to deal with competition: You either try to control the situation, or you do a better job. I plan on doing the latter.”

Hurwitz says he talked with managers and agents that had offers for, or had, the venue. He adds that Merriweather was still open.

“For [CCE] to pretend this place didn’t exist or to try and do some sort of planned obsolescence strategy, I think people were pretty insulted that Clear Channel thought everyone would buy their version of the world,” Hurwitz says.

Rogers takes the high road when discussing the shift at Merriweather.

“The House Co. issued a request for proposals, we responded and we’re disappointed that our response wasn’t taken,” he says.

CHANGES AFOOT

Christmann sent the House Co. is planning a multi-phase, multimillion-dollar capital improvement project for Merriweather.

Long-term plans may involve making a year-round facility as opposed to a seasonal one. Christmann hinted that the venue may become enclosed.

“We’re looking at maintaining an entertainment facility within the arena that Merriweather exists,” says Christmann, referring to the 60-plus-act outdoor facility that is home to the venue.

Meanwhile, Hurwitz plans on being active but selective at Merriweather. With extremely deep pockets, an unmatched network of sheds and the lion’s share of the outdoor concert business, CCE is fierce competition.

And with 10,000 lucrative reserved seats at Nissan, as opposed to 5,200 at Merriweather, the former offers a substantially higher gross potential in most cases.

Hurwitz says he won’t get into a bidding war to attract acts to Merriweather but says it is the best fit for many bands.

The D.C. shed situation is one that agents are clearly interested in.

“I will play for the right promoter. On the right day,” says Matty Diamond, president of Little Big Man Booking, agency for such acts as avril Lavigne, Jason Mraz and Coldplay. 

“After the December, I.M.P. will promote the Dec. 14-15 Simon & Garfunkel shows at MCI Center in D.C.,” both of which are sold out.
MCI Center's Paul Joins Azoff's Co.

MCI Center entertainment booker Jared Paul will be joining AzoffMusic Management. Paul will work closely with mega-manager Irving Azoff at the company's Los Angeles headquarters as a personal manager.

Paul previously served as director of entertainment for Washington Sports and Entertainment, owner and operator of the MCI Center in Washington, D.C.

Additionally, Paul will oversee a new division of the company that will develop strategic joint ventures to manage artists with other managers.

Calling the move a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," Paul says he is looking forward to working with Azoff, one of the legends in the business, as well as exercising his creativity. "That will be a change for someone who in the past had to rely on other people to bring me shows," Paul says. "I will be working hand in hand with Irving and his roster of acts, involved in all aspects of artists' careers."

Tours and such: Orange County, Calif., rock band Lit has announced a string of West Coast tour dates beginning Nov. 16 at the Sub Ballroom in Moscow, Idaho. The band has been in the studio for the past several months recording its fourth release, tentatively titled "Weapons of Mass Distortion."


Seattle rockers Vendetta Red begin their first headlining tour Nov. 11 at the Bluebird in Denver. S.T.U.N. and Armor for Sleep are supporting. Paolo Palazzola with CAA is Vendetta Red's booking agent.

High Life: Clear Channel Entertainment's Rich Levy, VP of booking for national sales and marketing, says the Miller Pure Night Out tour was a big winner this year. "I knew such artists as Snoop Dogg, Ludacris, Chingy, Evan Dando, Rhett Miller, Glen Phillips from Toad the Wet Sprocket, Trapt, Seether, Smile Empty, Souista Rhyme, DWE, etc., to 1,000-capacity venues in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago," he wrote in an e-mail.

Tickets were priced between $5 and $7, including service charges and facility fees.

"The difference between these shows (and other, similar sponsored small-venue tours) was that the public could actually purchase tickets to them," Levy said. "The events were for those aged 18 and over, as opposed to 21 and over. They were not given to a particular radio station. Far less intrusive. Far more about bringing value to the consumer, which I am trying to make my own."
Glory Celebrates New Soul Generation

BY GAIL MITCHELL

The next generation of soul artists that the niche being mined by Glory Records.

The New York-based label’s entry into the market is “Neo-Soul United,” released Sept. 2. The 12-track compilation is distributed by Solid Steel Hits. It celebrates what Glory founder and classic soul music lover Natalie Esposito calls the “rich diversity and amazing quality of the new generation of soul artists.”

Esposito began researching the underground soul realm a year ago. Comprising songs marinated in funk, gospel, hip-hop, jazz and ragtime, the collection features performances by up-and-comers as Lizzy Fields, Michael Bohnan, Kelli Sae, Ellis Hall, Cee Cee Michaels and Cooly’s Hot Box.

Several of the acts, including Fields, Sae (a vocalist with Incognito) and Cooly’s, also have solo albums in current release on other labels. Hall is signed to Ray Charles’ crossover label with a first single, “Gotta Get the Money.” The single cracked the Billboard Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart at No. 98 in the Oct. 25 issue.

Dedicated to building steady sales, Glory scored a coup when Carlos Adams, product manager of urban music for Virgin Megastores USA, selected its album to be part of a high-profile, 60-day national campaign (September-November), alongside projects by Dwele and Obie Trice, plus a 2Pac reissue. The campaign includes price-and-positioning, a listening station and a Vibe magazine ad.

Virgin corporate policy does not permit staffers to comment on store campaigns. But to gauge the building buzz on “Neo-Soul United,” it can be noted that the track “Build a Fire” by Bohannon claimed the No. 2 most- played position on the AOL/Net/Spinnr top 25 chart for the week ending Oct. 26. (Spinnr.com provides music broadcasting content to AOL and Net/Spinnr.)

Another track, Lasanya Gunter’s “Endlessly,” finished at No. 10 for the same week. Six songs from the compilation are in rotation on spinnr.com.

In addition to spinnr.com, other alternative routes have been pressed into service. These include DMM Music—a music supplier of in-store play for Gap and other large chains, XM satellite radio and leading community/collage radio stations.

“On the way I am going after accounts is unusual,” Esposito says. “Instead of spreading the product to as many accounts as possible in the hope of having a big first week, I am placing the product at a few select accounts in the top markets. A steady sales pattern is very important to me, more so than a big first week with a massive drop afterward.”

“Far the word-of-mouth has been the biggest force behind the continuous interest for the project. That is very encouraging to me.”

“Neo-Soul United” was released at the end of October in France (through Nocturne). It will be available in November in Germany (Zomba) and Japan (Manhattan Records).

Initially a one-woman show, Glory Records’ staff now includes consultant John Costanza and newly named co-president Ted Esposito. Natalie’s husband was formerly director of sales at Giant Step, early home of Motown artist Donnie.

“Sales projections are very conservative,” says Esposito, who has worked in the restaurant and finance industries. “And my overhead is low, so the current climate doesn’t really affect me.”

A special one-hour show devoted to “Neo-Soul United” aired this month on Paris’ top urban radio station, Generations FM. And according to Costanza, a couple of video directors “who believe in the project,” have offered to do a low-budget video, but nothing is concrete yet.

In the meantime, Esposito is looking for corporate sponsors to underwrite a national tour.

“Not having a background in the music industry keeps me very open-minded,” she says. “If I can make my investment back and help launch the careers of a few artists, I’ll be very satisfied.”

Artist Factory Production Up

Company Inks First Major Artist-Development Deal With Azeza

The Artist Factory has parted with Azeza Records to work in tandem with the latter’s R&B singer/songwriter Crea.

The deal is Atlanta-based Artist Factory’s first major long-term artist-development project since opening its doors earlier this year (Billboard, May 10). Last week, Artist Factory founder Hiriam Hicks announced that the company is now overseeing all managerial duties for Jermaine Dupri the artist.

Phoenix-based Azeza Records was established in 1999. Eric Cheroke is label president. He helms a pop-rock roster that includes veteran acts the Toadies and Robin Trower, as well as newcomers Chomsky and John Price.

Crea is the first artist signed to the label’s R&B roster. Urban/pop songwriter/stylist Billy Miles has since been added to the lineup. Azeza executive VP of A&R Gary Katz (formerly with Warner Bros.) signed Crea to the label. She makes her solo debut with “Mysty” in first-quarter 2004. Her first single is “U Lied.”

URBAN VILLAGE: Jan. 26, 2004, has been designated Urban Day at MIDEM 2004 (Jan. 25-29 in Cannes, France). MIDEM will also hold its second annual Urban Music Village. Once again, the focus will be on rap, hip-hop, R&B and gospel music.

On tap are a brand-new urban lounge featuring various acts, a series of concerts and a special urban-themed conference. Last year’s inaugural event attracted such performers as Wyclef Jean and producers and artist-managements firms representing the U.S., the U.K., France, South Korea, New Zealand and the Netherlands. For details, contact Francine Chin at 212-370-7493.

MUSICAL BITS: Angie Stone will host American Urban Radio Networks’ annual holiday special, “It’s Christ-
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**Music R&B/Hip-Hop**

**Behind The Curtain At Source Awards**

While there was plenty of entertainment onstage this year’s Source Awards, there was also plenty of activity backstage.

Independent label of the year nominee Baby D talked up “The Shining,” his forthcoming major-label debut on Epic.

“On my album, I’m just trying to introduce people to the South the way I see it,” said Baby D.

“I’m not knocking no other Southern artist, but I feel like they haven’t really brought the people into the South and showed what we do.”

Due Feb. 17, 2004, the album is the follow-up to “Doin’ It My Way” (Big Oomp). Source Youth Foundation Image Award recipient Crazy Legs announced that he and the rest of the Rock Steady Crew recently inked an endorsement deal with Fila, a Rock Steady sneaker is on the way.

According to the famous break dancer, a percentage of the proceeds will benefit various community programs.

**Ghastface Killah** was also pro-

**Steaming Light On The South**


Hosted by the Source co-founder/rapper Raymond “Benzino” Scott, the 90-minute DVD/CD compilation features exclusive footage from past Source Awards shows.


Released Oct. 21, the “Beef” soundtrack features new music from Tech N9ne, Jay Felony and P.O.D, as well as classic tracks by Ice Cube and N.W.A. The set’s lead single, “Let’s Go (It’s a Movement),” features Warren G., KRS-One and Lil’ Ai.

Lastly, as I reported exclusively last week in *Billboard* Bulletin, Dizzler’s lead single “Let’s Go (It’s a Movement),” features Warren G., KRS-One and Lil’ Ai.

Murphy Lee looks to follow in the entrepreneurial footsteps of fellow St. Lucia Nelly. Murphy Lee says he plans on launching Red Hot Rippers, a line of spicy potato chips, in the near future.

**HERE & THERE:** In other Source Awards news, The Source Entertainment (parent company of The Source magazine) and MELEE

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**Beats & Rhymes**

By Rausha Hall

hall@billboard.com
Latin Touring Heats Up

Venues, Promoters Get Wise To Growing Population

BY SUSANNE AULT

LOS ANGELES—The Maná 2003 tour is geared up to be not only the hottest Spanish-language tour in the U.S. this fall but a surefire concert success by any genre’s standards. “They’re playing venues [of] between 10,000 and 30,000 seats. We expect all the shows to sell out,” says Allison Winkler, booking agent at Creative Artists Agency, which represents Maná, Enrique Iglesias and Alejandro Sanz, among other major Latin acts. “This is a big tour in general—it’s not specific to English or Spanish. They’ll sell more tickets [on this 20-city tour] than many Anglo bands at any level.”

During the past few years, tour organizers say they have started perceiving Spanish-language acts as potential mainstream U.S. stars instead of simply niche, regional players.

Joining the Latin concert schedule this fall is the LoMelXimo de la Musica tour, which marks the first major title sponsorship of a Spanish-language tour by McDonald’s. Next year will usher in Sanz and Iglesias’ largest U.S. tours yet. “While [Latin] music has been popular for years, the Hispanic population is growing in the U.S. So the Latin [concert] scene is just getting more pronounced,” says Emily Simonitsch, senior VP of special markets at House of Blues Concerts.

The growth of the U.S. Latin population is a major reason why these tours have risen in significance. Hispanics have edged ahead of African-Americans as the nation’s largest ethnic group, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Cities with large Latin communities include Los Angeles, New York and Miami, and in the past couple of years, Atlanta, Las Vegas and Raleigh, N.C.

Venue managers, promoters and agents are catering to this expanding audience. New major buildings, such as Los Angeles’ Kodak Theatre and Las Vegas’ Caesars Palace Colosseum, hosted Latin artists for the first time in 2003. Pepe Aguilar sold out two of his three Aug. 22-24 Kodak shows, and Alejandro Fernandez sold out his Sept. 15 Vegas Date.

The strategy behind the revamped (Continued on page 3)

Latin Retailers Ahead Of Curve

Innovative Practices Keep Stores Healthy

BY LEILA COBO

Latin music retailers have been one of the few bright spots in an otherwise difficult music retailing landscape. Buoyed by strong new albums by artists such as Luis Miguel, Grupo Montez De Durango and Juanes, as well as creative marketing, sales in many Latin outlets have increased in recent months. In some cases, they are slightly higher than they were one year ago.

In fact, some chains, including Ritmo Latino and Latin Music Wherehouse, have opened new stores during the past year and plan to expand further.

For example, Los Angeles-based Latin Music Wherehouse, an independent chain owned by Antonio Prajin, has opened eight new stores this year on the West Coast. By year’s end, a total of 20 locations should be open, according to his son, George Prajin.

George Prajin, president of the family-owned Z Records, also helps his father run the retail operation. “The big guys are getting out [of the business], so there’s openings for the little guys,” says Prajin, referring to the closure of many Tu Musica stores.

The father-son duo has taken advantage of the opportunity. When the closures of Tu Musica outlets were imminent, the Prajins contacted the respective landlords about opening Latin Music Wherehouse outlets in the same locations.

(Continued on page LM-4)
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& CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
Touring
Continued from page LM-1

Forum in Los Angeles (under new SMG management since this summer) is to book more Latin acts (Billboard, Sept. 27).

Also, in February of this year, the Gwinnett Center opened in the Atlanta suburb of Duluth. It aims to invest heavily in Latin programming.

"[Atlanta] is one of the fastest-growing Hispanic communities in the country," says Preston Williams, Gwinnett's GM, who immediately rebooked Latin band Los Temerarios after a recent, well-attended show at the arena.

Los Angeles' Universal Amphitheatre and New York's Madison Square Garden continue to book many of the country's Spanish-language shows. The two respectively devote 30% and 20% of their annual bookings to Latin shows.

Clear Channel Entertainment noticed the Latin growth and partnered with Mexican media company Televisa in 2002 to advance the promotion of Latin shows in the U.S. The company then reorganized its Latin division to ramp up its national promotion of Spanish-language shows.

"We're using Clear Channel billboards to promote these shows. That was not traditionally done," says Jason Garner, VP of booking at Vivelo A CCE/Televisa Co. regarding promotion of such tours as Maná and Luis Miguel.

"We are using the tremendous tools that we have to help these acts grow and bring them into new markets." He continues that "via our involvement with radio, we're trying to expose Anglo stations to Latin acts.

We're trying to show Anglo programmers that [their] likely sizeable Latin audience is listening to Maná." That rise in commitment to Spanish-language acts has led to smarter, more effective U.S. touring, he says.

"House of Blues, Clear Channel and AEG—all three of these [major concert-promotion companies] and some of the larger independents have taken a strong, proactive approach to these bands and implementing the same business acumen that they have toward the Anglo community over the last 30 years," says Darryl Eaton, a booking agent at CAAs. "Over the course of the last few years, many of these Latin bands had the opportunity to work with much more professional organizations, which has resulted in better marketing, increased exposure and greater ticket sales."

A perfect example of this improved support, CAAs Winkler says, is the current coordination for Sanz's 2004 tour. At an estimated 20 shows running April-May, the road trip will double the size of the singer's last U.S. tour. A not-yet-announced sponsor has been attached. The event supports Sanz's September release, "No Es Lo Mismo."

This is rare diligence projected toward a Latin artist about to tour the U.S., Winkler says. "Everything was very strategically planned between us, the manager, the label, the agency, the publicist and the sponsor—it's a true team effort."

Another illustration of increased recognition of the U.S. Latin audience is McDonald's LoMCXimo tour. Vivelo's Garner says. Starring edgy rock en español bands, including Molotov and El Gran Silencio, the outing plays the Verizon Wireless Theater in Houston Nov. 13, the Hammerstein in New York Nov. 14, the James L. Knight Center in Miami Nov. 15 and Universal Amphitheater in Los Angeles Nov. 23.

"It is just an incredible display of a brand taking the time to understand a target demo and going after it 150%," Garner says.

More sponsorship of Spanish-language acts is on the way, he says, explaining that "you're starting to see corporate America being much more interested as Latin acts play more established venues—venues that the Rolling Stones and U2 play. It makes it easier for Anglo sponsors to understand [Latin] business," says Garner.

INDIES WORRIED

One side effect of major touring organizations advancing their support of Latin acts is that some independent Latin promoters feel threatened.

"Some promoters are worried about Clear Channel taking over," says Anthony Lopez, the attorney for indie Latin promoter Marcus Bros.

But business for the company, which specializes in Latin acts with smaller, more regional followings than that of Maná or Sanz, has nevertheless increased with CCE around, he says.

Thanks to press interest to satisfy the rising Latin U.S. population, performing-arts centers have become more welcoming to regional Latin artists, he explains.

Pepe Aguilar was the first Mexican regional act to perform alongside the L.A. Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl in 2002, in addition to being the first Latin act at the Kodak in August. Marcus Bros. was behind both shows.

"We've been able to open markets that were closed to us before," Lopez says.

Also, Aguilar will play the Hammerstein Ballroom in New York Nov. 8.

On top of the pumped-up popularity of both national Latin acts like Maná and such regional Latin artists as Aguilar, there is also an entirely new strain of Latin music taking hold in the U.S.

Reggaeton, a mix of hip-hop, reggae and salsa, is a rising Latin-flavored genre in the U.S. The Garden's first Reggaeton Summerfest drew a healthy 14,000 people in its first installment in September. Its production company, NuLife Entertainment, is planning to roll out annual editions of the show.

Regarding the Reggaeton Summerfest headline, the bilingual Calderón, NuLife CEO Alex Pena says, "His music has increased [in popularity] so much in the U.S. that he has gained interviews on urban radio and Anglos stations in New York.

The key factor fueling Reggaeton—and Latin music in general in the U.S.—is that Latinos are now the largest minority—that helps," Pena says. "This is appealing to the masses. This is something that could be huge."

AGLESIAS: MAJOR U.S. TOUR DUE IN 2004

For more information on its upcoming tour, visit www.billboard.com.
Biz Tries To Boost Online Activity

By John Lannert

As the U.S. Latin record business lurches forward, industry executives are eyeballing e-commerce opportunities to juice sales, even though online tallies of CDs have so far been anemic.

Sources say that in the past year, for example, univision.com, the most-visited Hispanic Web site in the U.S., has generated sales of less than 100,000 units. Another source notes that mega-retailer amazon.com has sold small amounts of Latin product.

What will crimp online sales in the near term, vendors and marketers say, is Latinos’ lack of credit cards, as well as their unfamiliarity with shopping online.

Among Latin households with annual income between $30,000 to $50,000, 58% hold credit cards, compared to 78% for Anglo families, according to a recent study by the Pew Hispanic Center and the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Another study, by the UCLA Center for Communication Policy, found that in all age groups, use of the Internet less than non-Latinos.

“The credit card has been an issue [since Univision’s online division was established in 2000],” says Colin Maclean, director of e-commerce at Univision Online. The reluctance of credit card companies to issue plastic to Latino consumers has forced Univision to seek payment through cash or money orders.

But MacLean is quick to point out that the rapid growth in credit card usage among Latinos during the past 18 months is expected to reach “a critical mass level high enough where that should be a secondary concern, not a primary concern as it is now.”

Phil Newmark, president of Newmark Communications—a media placement company that is aggressively marketing projects involving Latin artists—also believes that business will pick up, especially among younger Latinos accustomed to state-side credit practices.

A key factor for a Web site to successfully market its product, Newmark adds, lies in its ability to attract active buyers.

“The reason that you want to market on the Internet is ease of purchase—you don’t have to go get in your car, drive somewhere and worry about where you are going to park,” Newmark says. “But do you have to tell people where to go and give them instructions on how to get to a Web site, as you would have to do to find a retail store. That means buying advertising in traditional media. You have to make that commercial a call-to-action spot.”

Univision has considerable weaponry to reel users to its Web site, which attracts an estimated 8 million viewers per month. In the site’s arsenal is an array of media placement locales, or non-music-related stuff.”

MacLean further notes that Univision aggressively tries to educate its users. “When you come to our site, you can find articles on how to shop online and about credit card security,” he says. “There are all kinds of helpful hints on the issues that surround a new online shopper.”

To increase volume

Such traditional Hispanic vendors as Ritmo Latino, the largest indie Latin retailer in the U.S., have fewer avenues of exposure for their Web sites than Univision. And what they do have is distinctly low-tech, such as T-shirts, signs and newspaper ads.

Ritmo Latino president David Massry acknowledges that sales at ritmo-latino.com “have been slow.” Massry figures that volume would increase if the labels became more active in promoting and marketing their artists on his Web site. He says sales would rise if the labels were to provide a value-enhanced element to their CDs.

Massry estimates that 50% of his online sales are by regional Mexican artists, with the majority of the balance being pop acts. About 30% of his sales come from buyers who do not live near one of the 37 Ritmo Latino stores located around the U.S. Massry prices his online product at or slightly below prices in his stores.

One CD that sold well, Massry notes, was “Tortilla Party,” which contained taped segments from a popular but rather risqué New York radio show called “El Bacoón de la Mahana.”

“People wanted to have the CD,” Massry says, “but they didn’t want to be seen buying it in the store.” The $9.99

(Continued on page LM-5)
Retailers
Continued from page LM-1

“You want a record, you don’t have to order it. I have it.”

Like the Pajuns, Lazo benefits from owning his one-stop and having it located next door to his store. If a client wants an album and he doesn’t have it in stock, he simply goes to the warehouse and gets it.

Although Museo del Disco, which operates out of a single location, is 7,000 square feet of space, it only stocks music; there are no videogames or arcades.

Lazo is also hoping to expand his online operation. Sales at musendeldisco.com jumped 57% from last year, and he plans to step up promotion for the site. Among other initiatives, prospective buyers will be able to hear every song on each featured disc.

But sales of Latin music are not only prospering at specialty outlets.

The Latin sections of Tower Records stores nationwide, and particularly in markets like Dallas and Fresno, Calif., have seen sales increases for the past two to three months, according to Tower’s national Latin market coordinator, Monica Ricardez.

Part of the growth can be attributed to the loss of competition. But in addition, Ricardez attributes her sales spikes, among other things, to a more effective method of supplying product. Tower now works with a centralized purchasing system that ensures all stores have major releases.

“We’ve been more brainy in how we do our negotiations and how we market to the consumer,” Ricardez says. “We’ve tried to increase our presence out there in the main consumer base, specifically for Latin. At the moment, we’re looking for different media in which to advertise, and we’re trying to focus titles according to the genre and the market.”

In addition, Ricardez says, Tower has increased its bilingual signage and is physically stocking more Latin music in its stores. And like other retailers, it has also revved up its special events.

“We’re trying to do a lot of in-stores, whether small, low-key or big,” Ricardez says.

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Online

online price tag, which was $4 cheaper than in the stores, probably helped spike sales as well.

John Echevarria, president of Universal Music Latino, U.S. and Puerto Rico, praises the music-driven Web sites and says that his label—the largest distributor of Spanish-language product in the U.S.—is planning to develop a department dedicated to e-commerce.

“We are going to be very active in both the old and new online markets,” Echevarria says. “In the old online market, there is a huge potential that we know exists for online physical product sales. And in the new one, we know that sooner or later, our kids are going to be legally downloading.

Potential download sales as they pertain to sales of physical CDs is an unknown factor in Univision’s game plan. A subscription streaming service and a download service are expected to be on the site within three to six months.

For the moment, however, MacLean observes that current online CD sales might not be impressive, but the monthly growth rates have not been less than 200%. He confirms that prices for CDs, whose fulfillment is provided by Alliance Entertainment Group, fall somewhere between a mass merchandiser and a specialty record retailer. MacLean hastens to underscore that univision.com—unlike his online counterpart—offers a deep catalog and immediate product availability “at a value price.”

VALUE PROVIDES SALES

Like Ritmo Latino, Univision sells a lot of product to users who do not live near a retail outlet. Such value-added discs as the enhanced CD of Los Tigres del Norte’s “Hermesca” provide additional sales for the Web site. Regional Mexican artists are the site’s top sellers, followed by pop and rock acts, then tropical artists.

MacLean boosts the visibility of recording talent through e-mail newsletters sent to users that “number in the seven figures.” In addition, Univision VP/GM Bruno López oversees an assortment of chat rooms, listening parties, fan clubs, forums and contests devised to keep users coming back. All online chats with recording stars are taped for subsequent airings on such popular Univision TV programs as “Despierta América!” and “El Gordo y la Flaca.” A recent chat with Ricky Martin drew 5,000 users.

Another online feature is “Nuevas Caras,” which exposes new acts to the users.

“We’re around to help anybody who has a decent artist,” López says. As for advertising, MacLean notes that record club Columbia House— itself an increasingly robust online vendor—has been a solid client. The labels have spent little money on advertising, but that is increasing. MacLean stresses that a label’s exposure on the site will not be affected by the level of its ad spending.

MacLean is equally sanguine about the future of online CD sales. He says the increased usage by Latinos of credit cards and computers—Univision has a long-term deal with Gateway to boost computer sales—along with Univision’s improving methods of marketing to its users, are positive indicators that the best is yet to come.

“The success story is just starting,” MacLean declares. “We’d like to tell our consumers that there is added value to the products that they’ll get, and they can sign up ahead of time and get insight on the artists and be involved in the chat sessions.

“Our ability to let people speak among themselves in the forums, to allow our entertainment editors to continue to write great stories on the artists and to have that all connected to our sales opportunity is something that we’ve seen tremendous value in,” he continues. “And we’re going to keep moving in that direction.”
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<td><strong>Las Románticas De Cuisillas</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Lo Que Te Cuesta Minutos Te Haces La Dormida</strong></td>
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<td>LADRON</td>
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<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
<td>RICKY MARTIN</td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>Almas Del Silencio</strong></td>
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<td>MALVINA FLY</td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>OBRA MAESTRA</strong></td>
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<td>JOAN JETT</td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
<td>ARJONA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
<td>DON OMAR</td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>El Perdón</strong></td>
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*Billboard Top Latin Adjustment. Prices reflect retail sales, and are equivalent prices, which are protected from wholesale prices. Greatest Gainer shows charts largest una increase. Pacesetter indicates biggest percentage growth.*
Armani Conjures 'Night' For Its Second A|X Disc

By Michael Paoletta
mpaoletta@billboard.com

Armani Exchange knows its customers well. Earlier this year, the fashion retailer, in association with Naked Music/Astralwerks/EMI Music, said the dance/electronic compilation “A|X Music Series Volume 1” at its various stores.

Now Armani Exchange is launching the second installment in the A|X Music Series. Subtitled “Bring on the Night,” the soulful house collection has been superbly beat-mixed by DJ/producer Frankie Knuckles.

“Club music is very important for the A|X brand,” Armani Exchange senior director of PR/marketing events Patrick Doddy says. “Our client [base] is young. They go out all night and still look good in the morning.”

Similarly, Emporio Armani has its own compilation series, geared toward an older demographic (Billboard, Aug. 16).

Available at all U.S. stores and online, the 11-track “A|X Music Series Volume 2: Bring on the Night” retails for $12.50.

It spotlights classic tracks like the Absolute’s “I Believe” and Knuckles’ own “The Whistle Song.” Also included are two new songs from Knuckles’ forthcoming artist album, “A New Reality”: “Matter of Time” and “Bac N Da Day” featuring, respectively, Nicki Richards and Jamie Principle.

According to Doddy, the concept for this second volume—which was produced by Seattle-based Neverstop Music—was born out of the current fascination for all things ’80s.

“We wanted this to be a celebration of nightlife—and who better than Frankie Knuckles to capture that?” Doddy says. “Frankie has influenced so many, and he always puts a modern spin on classic house sounds.”

This compilation, Doddy notes, is “like a history of house music for our customers.”

Knuckles adds, “It offers exposure of my particular style of house music to a younger, fresher audience that, for the most part, may know the roots of house music but never really experienced it.”

“With this CD,” he continues, “they’ll be able to take a piece of it home—and, if nothing else, have a reference point.”

Furthermore, with the lack of radio airplay and other media attention on dance music, Knuckles believes fashion houses like Dolce & Gabbana and Armani A|X are great barometers for new trends in fashion and music.
**Billboard Hot Dance Singles Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Last Week's Position</th>
<th>This Week's Position</th>
<th>Chart Type</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>What U Do 2 Me</td>
<td>Superchumbo</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Better World</td>
<td>Agella Featuring Jocelyn Brown &amp; Latasha Holloway</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fly Again (Scumfrog Mixes)</td>
<td>Kristine W</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand (Remixes)</td>
<td>Jewel</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Just So You Know (Remixes)</td>
<td>Holly Palmer</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Send Your Love (Remixes)</td>
<td>Sting</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Leil Lai Loi</td>
<td>The Latin Project</td>
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<td>Bringin' On The Heartbreak (Remixes)</td>
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<td>You Promised Me (Tu Es Foutou)</td>
<td>In-Grid</td>
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<td>Future Fiction</td>
<td>Seth Lawrence</td>
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<td>Soul Splashing</td>
<td>Venon Ham</td>
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<td>Georgie Porgy</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anything (Gabriel &amp; Dredsten Mixes)</td>
<td>Franz American</td>
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<td>I Feel Love</td>
<td>Blue Man Group Featuring Venus Ham</td>
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<td>16</td>
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**Billboard Hot Dance Club Play**

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<tr>
<td>Keepin' It Funky</td>
<td>Superchumbo</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladies</td>
<td>The Scumfrog</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Love You</td>
<td>George Porgy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anything (Gabriel &amp; Dredsten Mixes)</td>
<td>Franz American</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>I Feel Love</td>
<td>Blue Man Group Featuring Venus Ham</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Hot Dance Club Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>My Love Is Always</td>
<td>Saffron Hill</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Hot Dance Club Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Boy (Remixes)</td>
<td>Beyoncé</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jaleo (Roger Sanchez Remix)</td>
<td>(Sonic Groove)</td>
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<td>Milkshake (x-Press &amp; DJ Zing Mixes)</td>
<td>Keats</td>
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<td>Shelter</td>
<td>Alex Nesly</td>
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<td>Long Way Home</td>
<td>Mark Sherwood</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Just About Had Enough</td>
<td>Beat Hotfitters Featuring Austa</td>
<td>12</td>
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**Billboard Top Electronic Albums**

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<tr>
<td>Never Let Me Go (remixes)</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Top Electronic Albums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>Justin Timberlake</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Top Electronic Albums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No One</td>
<td>Cee-Lo</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Top Electronic Albums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Let Me Go (remixes)</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Top Electronic Albums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>Justin Timberlake</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Madonna</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
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<td>No One</td>
<td>Cee-Lo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never Let Me Go (remixes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>Justin Timberlake</td>
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<td>No One</td>
<td>Cee-Lo</td>
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Byrd Cooks Up New Food Product Line

BY PHILLIS STARK

NASHVILLE—After a dozen years as a successful country singer, Tracy Byrd's career is cooking. But he'll soon be serving his fans in a whole new way.

Byrd has teamed with Chicago-based brand-development company Vista Management to launch a line of spices, rubs and marinades bearing his name and likeness. The products, which will be sold under the brand name Tracy Byrd's Tiny Town Products, will be available Nov. 1 in 1.350 Wal-Mart stores.

Byrd will also have a cookbook out next month. Nov. 7, "Eat Like a Byrd," published by Nashville-based Interactive Blvd., includes Byrd's favorite recipes, many of which utilize his marinades and seasonings.

The product line's initial launch will include four marinades that can also be used as dipping sauces and six dry seasoning blends. Byrd is donating 5 cents from every bottle sold to Children's Miracle Network.

Vista is already considering such product extensions as barbecues and smokers.

A NATURAL FIT

Recording first for MCA Nashville and now RCA, Byrd has charted nine titles on the Billboard Top Country Albums chart, including the double-platinum “No Ordinary Man,” and four gold titles. He has notched 12 top 10 singles in his career. Two of them, “Holdin' Heaven” and last year’s “Ten Rounds With Jose Cuervo,” hit No. 1.

“I got my [first] record deal when I was 23 years old, and I told my manager then that I wanted a 20-plus-year career,” Byrd says. He notes that if he achieves that goal it will be partly “because we had the insight to get ourselves involved in other areas besides music.”

Byrd says this product line was a natural for him, because he loves to cook.

“Business opportunities come your way a lot,” he says. “Most of the time, they don’t make a lot of sense. But in this case, it’s the type of venture that can go hand in hand with my music career. I had a thriving music career when he got involved [with food products] and later became known as ‘the sausage king.’

The foray into food is not Byrd’s first product tie-in. He has achieved strong brand-name recognition in the outdoor-products world during the past eight years through numerous endorsements and tour sponsorships with Mossy Oak Hunting Apparel.

“It’s important to spend a lot of time researching where you may have key market value and stay with a brand that fits your demos,” Byrd says. “Hopefully, that will also complement your record sales.

“You have to be willing to put in a lot of extra time to help build your name in other ventures,” he continues. “But I enjoy this, and I hope my new business ventures will allow me to work a certain number of shows each year while still providing a good living for my family. I don’t want to go out and work 200 dates a year just to keep a roof over our heads.”

According to Byrd, Tiny Town also plans to sponsor his tour in 2004. It has proposed including a bus on the tour that will give out product samples and hold cooking demonstrations.

WILLING TO WORK

Vista Management chief marketing officer Greg Kirrish says that tour sponsorship “creates many opportunities, including bus and truck signage, stage and venue signage, parking lot events and concession sales.”

Kirkish, who previously helped Dwight Yoakam’s firm which produces its own food product line, says Byrd’s performance and public appearance schedule also provides great avenues for promotion.

Kirkish says Byrd is willing to put in the work required to promote the line. Unlike some celebrities who “think that by just putting their name on a product it will jump off the shelf.” Byrd is different.

“He’s very hands-on and passionate about the brand. Tracy is not just a business figurehead,” Kirrish adds. “He’s involved with all the details, and he demands high quality. Those characteristics are what’s needed for sustained consumer product brand growth.”

The cookbook, meanwhile, will be available in bookstores and online retailers, as well as through the Web sites eatlikebyrd.com and travelyourway.com, according to Interactive Blvd. president Stephen Linn.

There will be a wider push in the spring “gearin’ up for Memorial Day and summer cooking on the grill,” he says.

Linn sees Byrd’s success and longevity in the industry as an advantage in marketing and promotions.

“We don’t have to introduce him to the market—they already know him, listen to his music and have a relationship with him,” Linn explains. “By leveraging his relationships and draw, we are able to better market the book.”

Like Kirrish, Linn has seen Byrd’s commitment to the product.

“Cooking and expanding his professional horizons are exciting for Tracy, and he is putting himself into this project,” Linn says. “For Tracy, ‘Eat Like a Byrd’ and the seasonings are not just lending his name and showing up for a photo shoot. He’s taking a real part in this. He’s already begun talk- ing about the book in national TV appearances. He’s committing time for the seasonings and signings at retailers.”

Linn says Byrd is scheduled to be on cooking shows, and he is taking extra time for radio and TV appearances as he tours. He is also working on concerts and promotions for as far out as next spring, when retailers and book stores will have promotional displays set up.

“Tracy is really working to make ‘Eat Like a Byrd’ a success, and this effort is invaluable to successful promotion,” Linn adds.

“In a sense, it’s a new release, and one he truly believes in. It’s just that you can’t put this one in your CD player.”

Nashville Veterans Partner To Rep Artists

Music business veterans David Macias and Doug Merrick have teamed up to form Nashville-based Merrick-Macias Management.

Country acts Suzy Bogguss, Hal Ketchum and BR549 and jazz artist Danny Jiosa are their first clients.

Macias is president of Emergent Music Marketing, a company he launched nearly three years ago that specializes in sales, marketing and distribution (through Sony/RED) for small labels.

He will continue that venture and says he plans to add more Emergent staff soon. Macias previously managed Rich Robinson of the Black Crowes.

Merrick has been road manager for numerous acts, including John Hiatt, the Gin Blossoms, Ricky Skaggs and Trace Adkins. He has also served in a management role for Sherré Austin. Prior to teaming with Macias, Merrick had been managing Ketchum and Jiosa solo.

“My background is so much about the road,” Merrick says. Contract clearances, and the interaction of artists, radio, publicists, buyers and promoters on the road are among his specialties.

Macias says he chose management because it seemed like a good idea to diversify.

“There will never be a digital replacement for a live performance,” he says. “Creative people are always going to be an important part of [the equation], and certainly playing a role in helping them to guide their efforts [felt] like something that would be worthwhile.”

Merrick says the company’s only mandate for signing acts is “to believe in them musically and in their potential in the marketplace.”

ON THE ROW: Deb Haus is promoted to VP of marketing and artist development at Sony Music Nashville. She was previously VP of artist development.

In other Sony News, the company has signed Jessi Alexander to its Columbia imprint. Her debut album, produced by Gary Nicholson and Mark Wright, is due next spring.

Like Kirrish, Kirnish has seen Byrd’s commitment to the product.

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Who was one of three judges in the show’s first season, has bowed out this time, citing a heavy touring schedule and family priorities. He heads to the studio in January with producer Lloyd Maines to record his fourth album for Sony, which will be released in the spring.

Meanwhile, Robison’s brother Bruce Robison and Bruce’s wife, Kelly Willis, released a seven-song holiday set. “Happy Holidays,” Oct. 28 on Bruce’s own Bear’s Nest Records. It is available to some Texas retailers and at both artists’ Web sites. They will perform the songs on a seven-date Christmas tour of Texas venues.

Dixie Chicks will release a live DVD and two-CD set from their Top of the World tour Nov. 25 on Open Wide/Monument/Columbia Records. Both releases are titled “Top of the World.”

Actor/director Tim Robbins has been tapped to host the “Johnny Cash Memorial Tribute,” which will be televised Nov. 15 on CMT (Billboard, Nov. 1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>IMPRINT &amp; NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL</th>
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<th>Peak Position</th>
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<td>SHANIA TWAIN</td>
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<td>Unleashed</td>
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<td>And The Crowd Goes Wild</td>
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<td>TIM McGRAW</td>
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<td>Tim McGraw And The Dancehall Doctors</td>
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<td>Wave On Wave</td>
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<td>LYLE LOVETTE</td>
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<td>My Baby Don't Tolerate</td>
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It's important to note that the Billboard rankings are subject to change based on various factors such as sales, radio airplay, and streaming. The table above reflects the rankings as of the specified week. Billboard provides a weekly chart that ranks albums based on their performance. The chart takes into account sales, streaming, and radio airplay to determine the ranking of albums. The Hot 100 is one of Billboard's most iconic charts, and it ranks songs based on their popularity in the United States. Similarly, the Top Country Albums chart ranks albums based on their sales and streaming performance.
**NOVEMBER 8 2003**

**HOT COUNTRY SINGLES & TRACKS**

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**NOVEMBER 8 2003**

**TOP BLUEGRASS ALBUMS**

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**NOVEMBER 8 2003**

**HOT COUNTRY SINGLES SALES**

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**Top 100**

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ALBUMS
Edited by Michael Paolletta

POP

- MANDY MOORE
Coverage
PRODUCER: John Fields
EPIC 90127
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 21
Mandy Moore seems a world away from her 1999 single, the chirpy single, “Candy.” In the four years since, the poised 19-year-old has become an acclaimed film actress and is well on her way to major Hollywood-player status. She has wisely gone the mature (yet still fun) route for her latest album, a surprisingly fabulous covers set. Moore readily admits that she was not previously familiar with many of the songs on “Coverage,” though she sincerely admires all of them. Who knew Moore could pull off a thrilling cover of Joan Armatrading’s “Drop the Pilot”? Or a zippy rendition of Blondie’s “One Way or Another”? Her pop pureness shines through on XTC’s “Senses Working Overtime,” while her voice finds new depths in John Hiatt’s “Have a Little Faith in Me.”—KC

- BARENAKED LADIES
Everything to Everyone
PRODUCER: Ron Aniello
PICTURE: AR209
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 21
Though loved for their witty silliness, Barenaked Ladies are a little too goofy for goofiness’ sake on their latest album, “Everything to Everyone.” Such tracks as the frenetic “Shopping” and polka-inflected “Upside Down” are rather like the group trying to turn the discombobulation into a novelty effort. There is also an ode to a monkey. “Another Postcard,” that seems like a rehash of the group’s breakout hit, “One Week,” from 1998 album “Stunt.” The few serious songs included make more of a lasting impression. “Celeb”, which examines society’s favorite obsession, is catchy and clever. With its banjo instrumentation, “For You” is offbeat but rolls out a moving, country-styled melody nonetheless.—SA

THE RAPTURE
Echoes
PRODUCER: DFA
STRIKKER RECORDINGS/DFA/UNIVERSAL 800012683
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 21
In the early ‘80s, New York’s club scene was peppered with clubs like the Club, Danceteria and Peppermint Lounge, which had non-existent music policies. In other words, clubgoers would hear a lively mix of disco, punk, funk, rock and new-wave stylings. Today, Brooklyn, N.Y.-based quartet the Rapture joins England’s Basement Jaxx in playing a role in re-establishing the vinyl aesthetic and musical freedom. In the process, these acts are putting “life” back into “nightlife.” Club kids and all levels applaud the feature, as its Happy Mondays-hued 2002 single, “House of Jealous Lovers” (included here), continues to wreck dancefloors.

R&B/HIP-HOP

- LOON
Loo
PRODUCER: various
Bad Boy B00008892
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 21
The pretty-boy rapper is just as much a staple of hip-hop as the thug MC. Following in the former tradition is Bad Boy’s Loo. After scoring success with P. Diddy’s “I Need a Girl (Part Two),” the Harlem, N.Y. native finds the spotlight with his self-titled debut. Lead single “How You Want That” is an appropriate introduction. Featuring Kelis, the Yogi-produced track, which is both infectious and bass-heavy, serves as a fine backdrop to Loo’s sexually charged romp. The rapper shows his softer side with “Down for Me” (featuring Mario Winans, which ironically—or not—is very reminiscent of both versions of “I Need a Girl.” Filled with more tales of wild nights and wilder women, the album is a fitting debut from a “bad boy” like Loo.—RJ

LATIN

- JUAN GABRIEL
Inocente de Ti
PRODUCER: Gasavo Farías
Bjc / U.s. latte 829750453
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 21
Mexican icon Juan Gabriel has never been known for subtlety. But even by his own standards, his latest studio album is, well, slightly over the top. Is this a bad thing? Not always. If there is any-one who can carry off flamboyance, it is Juan Gabriel. The opening “Inocente de Ti,” with its slightly disco-fied beat, is very ’70s, but fun. That is, until the final flourish, when he acquires the drama of a Broadway musical number. And so it goes. “Como Te Quiero Mi Amor” also has a Broadway feel, and “Amor Profundo” is a mix of retro rock’n’roll and disco strings. But such songs are well-crafted and exuberant. Step slightly over that line, through the overwrought “Yo Te Recuerdo”—and the result is kitsch.—LC

- SIN BANDERA
De Viaje
PRODUCER: Auro Baquero
Sony music misc. 86521
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 21
Mexican duo Sin Bandera made a splash last year with a debut album that blended R&B and Latin pop sensibilities. For its sophomore effort, the group, whose two members hail from Argentina and Mexico, has changed its name Sin Bandera—or No Flag, continues down that musical path, with mixed results. Sin Bandera is a talented dual-spired-down, and their acoustic arrangements and vocal harmonies are overwhelmingly exquis-ite, as in “Libro por Ti.” But the rest of the album is not consistently strong enough to pull off the slow, similarly (Continued on page 34)

CONTRIBUTORS:
Suzanne Ault, Bradley Bambarger, Keith Caufield, Leila Cobb, John Dilliberto, Gordon Eby, Deborah Evans Price, Rashaan Hall, Call Mitchell, Chris Morris, Wes Orshoski, Michael Paolletta, Chuck Taylor, Christa L. Titus, Ray Waddell. ESSENTIALS: Based on the review editor’s estimates of special attention on the basis of musical merit and/or Billboard chart potential. VITAL RESSOURCES: Rehearsed albums of special interest. Archival and commercial interest and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. PICKS: New releases predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding chart. CRITICS’ CHOICES (#): New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. All columns commercially available in the U.S. are eligible. Send album review copies to Michael Paolletta and single review copies to Chuck Taylor (Billboard, 770 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or the writers in the appropriate feature.

BILLBOARD NOVEMBER 8, 2003 www.billboard.com

www.americanradiohistory.com
temporal renditions. One after another, the songs lose steam. But the album’s treasurable surprise is to be found in tracks like the invigorating “Can-
cion,” with its edgy, funky feel, and “Te Esperar,” with its surprising change of vibe and tempo.—LC

WORLD

► SOLAS
Another Day
Seamus Egan/Dean Sheehy
PRODUCER: Seamus Egan
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 21
After the electronically-litended designs of previous album “The Edge of Silence,” Solas gets back to basics, which for this Celtic ensemble of virtuosos is anything but easy. Mixing traditional Irish tunes with some well-chosen covers and a handful of originals, Solas manages to be contemporary without being overly reliant on technology. Its music is built on tradition, and even a cover of Dan Fogelberg’s “Scarecrow’s Dream” sounds as if it came from an emerald isle of the past when the sun was on top of Scania. Whether raving it up (“Bird in the Tree”), trading licks with guest banjoist Bela Fleck (“Mississippi Blues”) or weaving in the electric guitar reverb on founder Seamus Egan’s heartrending title track, Solas never strays far from its Celtic roots, yet never sounds like a retread band.—ID

GOSPEL

► NATALIE WILSON & THE S.O.P.
Choice
Choice Life
PRODUCER: Joe “Flip” Wilson
Gospel Centric 7 575710053
RELEASE DATE: Sep. 28
Wilson and her 19-voice ensemble return with their first offering since their 2000 debut. While “Good Life” showcases the act’s knack for instant musical accessibility and state-of-the-heart content (that earlier pro-
ounced them into the small elite of new acts to keep a close eye on), it also dis-
plays the self-awareness and sure-foot-
edness that only comes with time and experience. The end result confirms
the first album’s highest promise and more. Wilson wrote 11 of the 13 songs, and she still applies edgy, street-wise sensibilities to funky R&B/gospel: the unstoppable hookey “Free” and “Put Back Joy.” A gentler flow emerges on stirring ballads (“No Harm in Christ” and “Healing Real”). Confidently hold-
ning on to her past as she grows in new directions, Wilson carves a place for herself and S.O.P. as one of gospel’s truly important acts.—GE

CHRISTIAN

► BILLY RAY CYRUS
The Other Side
PRODUCER: Billy Joe Walker Jr.
Word/Curb/Warner Bros. WCDB-868274
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 28
Warner Bros., Christian division, Word, has had tremendous success with Randy Travis’ two gospel albums. The eager audience that embraced Travis’ efforts will be well-served by this superb new collection of country gospel songs by Cyrus. His strong, warm baritone breathes life into these faith-filled songs with honest emotion and heartfelt passion. Cyrus penned the title track, a glorious tribute to the riches of heaven. For the other cuts, he relies on some of country’s top writ-
ers, including Victoria Shaw and Austin Cunningham. “Always Sixteen” celebrates the power of enduring love: “I Need You Now” is a poignant por-
trait of Jesus Christ. “Face of God,” “I
Love You This Much” and a soulful cover of “A Change is Coming” are among the other standouts on this appealing record that should interest fans of country and Christian music.—DEP

CLASSICAL

★ GIL SHAHAM
The Faure Album
PRODUCER: Da-Hong Seeto
Canary Classics/Artemis Classics 1239
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 7
A former Deutsche Grammophon won-
derkind, violinist Gil Shaham is now one of classical music’s major-label af-
filiation. Yet he shows forward-
minded vitality by inaugurating his own, Artemis-distributed Canary Classics impress with a long cherished album devoted to the rich, fin-de-siecle strains of Gabriel Fauré. Shaham avoids all the Faure competition in the ranks by fash-
ioning a thoughtful program that in-
cludes only the French composer’s first Violin Sonata and famous pieces like “Berceuse” and many mellow, rarities and the masterful Piano Trio (in league with pianist Akira Eguchi and cellist Brinton Smith). Beyond the imaginative program, Shaham’s bold tone and the full, upfront recording by Da-Hong Seeto help this album score over such excellent rivals as Isabelle Faust on Harmonia Mundi.—BB

VITAL REISSUES

ZZ TOP
Cherry Smokes & BBQ
REISSUE PRODUCER: James Austin
ORIGINAL PRODUCER: Bill Ham
Rhino 871867/73935
RELEASE DATE: Oct. 21
Hot on the heels of their recent RCA release “Mescalero,” the Texas triumvi-
rate of Billy Gibbons, Dusty Hill and Frank Beard get the boxed-set treat-
ment. ZZ Top’s three-decade-plus progress from boogie-blues behemoth to technofunk icon is charted in a four-disc collection that neatly hits all the high points. Extras include a handful of tracks from Gibbons’ pre-Top un
unit the Moving Sidewalks and a selec-
tion of rarities, among them 12-inch dance remixes of some of the band’s best-known numbers. Gibbons has issued the compilation in two pack-
ages: a conventional box and a simple replica of a Lone Star State chicken shack, “Beach” comes with cut-out fig-
ures of the band and a flip book. A tasty slab for ZZ fans.—CM

SINGLES

Edited by Chuck Taylor

POP

MADONNA: Nothing Falls (3:59)
PRODUCERS: Madonna, Mirwais Ahmadzai
WRITERS: Madonna, G. Sigworth
PUBLISHERS: WB/Webo Girl/Universal Polygram, ASCAP
Maverick/Warner Bros. 101230 (CD promo)
As Madonna returns to a pop style default—thanks to her contribution to Britney Spears’ fast-climbing “Me Against the Music” —this album “American Life” one more swing with “Nothing Falls,” another col-
laboration with Mirwais Ahmadzai. As
much as we would love to hail this song as Lady M’s inspired return, the song instead illustrates everything that makes the current project a grind. Instrumentally, it’s all maypole Sid Vicious
ballads, the hook is merely redund-
ant, not catchy. A catchy, raving beat rather not enough to color a gray template make. No mistake, we have faith that Madonna will pull it together once she under-
stands that her talents lie in keeping cho-
ruses and musical fantasies —and not in using her position as a puppet for tune-
less, new-age preaching. Because it’s always the music that carries the mes-
 sage, not the other way around.—CR

DAVE MATTHEWS Save Me (4:33)
PRODUCER: Stephen Harris
WRITER: D. Matthews
PUBLISHER: CRC/Gray, ASCAP
RCA 82876 56197 (CD track)
Dave Matthews is wildly popular among the same kind of Dockers-wearing crowd that adored Hootie & the B. Tooth-
less last decade. His droll singing, drowsy demeanor and straight-line melodies never dare to challenge the minimum requirement of most pre-
school frat girls: good, for something
long enough music while the bed-
room Procedure. That may be the end some fans over and again, enough is enough if the idea is for mass consump-
tion. There are sleeper songs and then there are snoozers—and this song is sad and maudlin to the point of rigor mortis. Despite the addition of a guest gospel vocalist, “Save Me” is so boring that it could be written as a tranquilizer prescription. Surprisingly you could manage a little feeling, Mr. Matthews.—CT

COUNTRY

► CLINT BLACK
Spend My Time (3:39)
PRODUCER: Clint Black
WRITERS: C. Black, H. Nicholas
PUBLISHER: Blackened Music, BMI
Equity Music Group EMM 0001 (CD)
Spend Black has always been somewhat of a modern-day philosopher in a black cap. His songwriting has long spent appeal to listeners because of their uni-
versal themes and poignant observa-
tions. (Think “Walkin’ in the Sun” or “Better Man,” “When My Ship Comes In,” “The Shoes You’re Wearing.”) Continu-
ing in that vein, he succeeds beautifully with this gorgeously wrought doo-wop de-
but on his Equity Music Venture. A mesmerizing ballad co-written with his talented longtime collaborator scribe
Nicholas, the lyric challenges the listen-
er to check out how one’s time is spent and appreciate the value in every-
ment. When Black says, “I’m going to spend my time like it’s going out of style,” he’s moving the line far-
ther than a country mile” in that warm, soulful baritone, he sounds like a man who has carefully considered the words. Already garnering support from country programmers, this record pro-
vides Equity with a strong launch and signals an exciting new chapter in Black’s already impressive career.—DEP

ROCK

★ THE DARKNESS I Believe in a Thing Called Love (3:36)
PRODUCER: Pedro Ferreira
WRITERS: J. Hawkins, D. Hawkins, Poulton, Graham
PUBLISHER: not listed
Atlantic Records 301349 (CD promo)
In 1986, the Darkness could have ruled America. The band’s hit “I Believe in a THING CALLED LOVE” is dusty and at times painfully self-indulgent, a guest vocal from Cher on “Bewitched, Bewitched” provides a breezy, lightweight campy mo-
ent of relief. Its teasing, mildly scan-
dalous lyric and the pair’s light-hearted give and take breathe deliciously new life into the Rodgers & Hart classic—one that will provide AC radio with a solid score. God bless Cher, one of few artists capable of showcasing believable el-
geance with a catty wink. Good stuff.—CT
Hip-Hop A Hot Flavor

Drinks By Simmons, Nelly, Ice-T Cater To Fans

BY RASHAUN HALL

Energy drinks have become big business during the past few years. So it’s no surprise that hip-hop entrepreneurs like Ice-T and Russell Simmons are thirsty to participate in the trend.

Along with Nelly, they have launched hip-hop-inspired energy drinks this year. While each has its own identity—Nelly’s Pimp Juice, Simmons’ Def Con 3 and Ice-T’s Liquid Ice—they’re all after one thing: the almighty hip-hop dollar.

“I believe I can make anything better than anyone when it comes to acting, clothes, products,” Ice-T says. “I was like, ‘Hell yeah, I can make the best energy drink on the market.’”

The rapper launched Liquid Ice with his partner, Multimedia Inc., in August. Featuring two flavors—electric blue and frosted chrome—Liquid Ice is available in an 8.3 oz. size for $1.99-$3.49. The drink is available nationwide at selected convenience stores.

EYEING HIP-HOP FANS

Simmons and his Def Con 3 energy soda wanted to specifically reach hip-hoppers.

“There hasn’t been any beverage that has really developed an organic, true, emotional relationship with the hip-hop community,” says Jennifer Louie, marketing VP at Russell Simmons Beverage Co.

Drinks like Red Bull, Rockstar, Monster Energy and SoBe have been successful with the skateboarding/alternative sports community, Louie observes, but there hasn’t been an energy drink that has successfully captured the embrace of the hip-hop sector.

Launched in July, Simmons is already making history with his beverage. Russell Simmons Beverage Co. is the first minority-owned company to launch nationally with convenience store chain 7-Eleven. Beverage Aisle magazine also touted Def Con 3 as a future player in the beverage industry.

The energy-drink market has made an impact and is here to stay, Louie says. “However, soda is still the No. 1 category in the beverage industry. Even though energy drinks are a billion-dollar industry, it is not at all close to what soda represents in the beverage world.”

To separate his product from the competition, Simmons uses a best-of-both-worlds approach.

Simmons developed the concept of the “smart” energy soda, a combination of energy drink and soda. Def Con 3 is available in a 12-oz. can for $2 and comes in one flavor. It was important to Simmons to market a drink that was healthy. “Russell is a health fanatic. (Continued on page 36)

Merchant’s ‘House’ Is Custom-Marketed

BY WES ORSHOSKI

Natalie Merchant giggles while recalling the low expectations she and her former bandmates in 10,000 Maniacs had for their debut release.

“But! It sold more copies than there were people in our hometown. And we were so impressed by that,” she recalls.

Twenty years and some 14 million records later, Merchant had similarly low expectations for her new album, “The House Carpenter’s Daughter.”

The set is a collection of traditionals and contemporary folk tunes. It’s self-released on Myth America Records, the label she recently created with her manager, Gary Smith.

“House Carpenter” is being sold to a handful of accounts directly from Smith, driven solely by word-of-mouth and a press campaign that by former Merchant standards is almost nonexistent.

But less than a month after its release, the album had surpassed its break-even point of 50,000 units. To date, it has sold some 65,000 copies (Continued on page 36)

Next: Web Idols

Select-A-Star Contests Hosted On Net

BY MATTHEW S. ROBINSON

BOSTON—With the popularity of “American Idol” and other star-making shows, it was only a matter of time before such interactive programs made the leap to the Internet.

Now, aspiring artists from all over the country have the opportunity to be heard by music lovers they might never have been able to reach otherwise.

The most prominent participant in the new movement is AOL, which is using its considerable online presence to help music fans connect with new artists.

Through its First Break program, AOL offers members the opportunity to award demo deals to previously unsigned artists.

In addition to a deal with Atlantic Records, the artists selected will appear on the popular Sessions@AOL program and will receive a one-year membership to online musicians’ network Tonos.

“It’s increasingly challenging to (Continued on page 37)
AFIM’s Proffitt Moves Over To Viastar Holdings

Courtney Proffitt received an offer she couldn’t refuse, so she is stepping down from her post as executive director of the Assn. for Independent Music. Proffitt, who joined AFIM in May 2002, previously held sales positions at BMG. She informed the trade group’s board Oct. 17 that she would be taking the post of senior VP of distribution and national sales director for Viastar Holdings (Billboard, Nov. 1).

“It fell in my lap,” Proffitt says of her new job. “Everything seemed to be the right fit. I loved working with AFIM, but this was right up my alley. Once you’re a salesperson, you’re always a salesperson.” Based in Phoenix—near Tempe, Ariz., where AFIM was headquartered during Proffitt’s tenure—Viastar is a diversified indie media company that operates Electric Kingdom Distribution and a studio facility, A.V.O., among other holdings.

While Proffitt’s departure puts immediate pressure on AFIM’s board to come up with a replacement, the timing probably could have been worse.

Though nothing is etched in stone, it is assumed that AFIM’s 2004 convention will again run in conjunction with the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers confab, as it has for the past two years. NARM’s convention will move next year to August from its usual spot in March.

Proffitt says that a meeting between NARM and AFIM is scheduled for Nov. 7 in San Diego, the site of next year’s conventions, to discuss plans.

“We’re not in a huge crunch time planning for a big convention,” Proffitt notes. “We’re in the rolling-long part of the year.”

She’s convinced that the trade organization will not have any trouble finding a replacement, given the large pool that’s available.

“Given the way this business is at the moment, there’s got to be somebody out there with the talent and ability who’s currently out of a job,” she says. Asked what she thought she has achieved during her 18 months on the job, Proffitt says, “AFIM has gotten stronger as an overall organization. I’ve helped with increased visibility in the music community.”

WHAT NEXT? Communications to AFIM will be fielded in the interim by board chairman Clay Pasternack at 440-333-2208. Day-to-day operations will be covered by Pasternack, Bruce Iglauser and Duncan Browne of the AFIM executive committee.

AFIM will now seek its third new executive director in two years.

The departure of Proffitt, AFIM’s only paid employee, comes at an uncomfortable time for the trade group.

Its membership has declined since its March convention in Orlando, Fla.—the second since it ceased being a stand-alone annual event—which saw only 60 AFIM members and 200 joint NARM-AFIM members in attendance.

Many in the industry have questioned the 31-year-old organization’s relevance in today’s highly consolidated business, beyond the services it offers to startup companies (Billboard, July 5).

MOVES AT PUTUMAYO: Putumayo World Music in New York has announced staff additions and promotions.

Angela Herens is joining the label as senior VP/GM. She was formerly senior VP of marketing and promotion at Koch Entertainment Canada in Toronto.

Additionally, Susan Rosenberg, previously Putumayo’s VP of sales and marketing, has been promoted to senior VP of sales and marketing.

Mike Cusaneli, formerly a buyer at the Music Gallery, is coming on board as national sales manager.

With Herens’ exit, Mark Costain has been promoted to director of marketing for Koch Entertainment Canada’s audio division. He was previously senior label manager. Beth Gibbs is moving up from VP to senior VP of Koch Video.

Additional reporting by Larry LeBlanc in Toronto.

Merchant’s ‘House’

Continued from page 35

since its Sept. 16 release, according to Smith—a triumph on manylevels for the acclaimed singer.

NOVEL SALES TACTIC

What makes the achievement remarkable is that it was done through a one-way sales approach. Because Smith and Merchant do not have the staff or the warehouse space to accept returns, every sale of “House Carpenter” has been final.

Getting retailers to agree to that wasn’t easy, Smith says. To make the project less risky, he dropped the price. In return, he was given promotional support: endcap positioning, listening-post placement, inclusion in circulars.

And while many initially viewed the purchase of “House Carpenter” as a gamble, several retailers—including Borders Books & Music—have begun ordering more copies.

The album’s success shows that established, multi-platinum artists who feel out of step with the majors have more options than they may realize and that they can indeed leave that environment and sell their work themselves—even if on a smaller scale.

But Merchant wasn’t out to prove anything with “House Carpenter” or its unique sales approach. She simply needed to operate on a smaller scale.

One year ago, Merchant left Elektra, her home label for two decades. Despite being courted by that label and other majors, she opted for the DIY approach.

“I am at a position in my career that I don’t really need to sell records to survive,” she points out. “I just need to make records to satisfy myself creatively.”

When she left Elektra, Merchant was expecting her first child and was seeking a lifestyle change that would eliminate the rigorous touring and countless interviews she’d become accustomed to while promoting what she calls “big budget pop records.”

Merchant and Smith originally wanted to release the album exclusively on her Web site. While they eventually sold more than 7,000 copies online, they wanted to expand the offering to fans who do not own a computer.

Smith did a little homework on Merchant’s last album, “Motherland,” and he discovered that more than 40% of its U.S. sales came from five accounts—amazon.com, Borders, Barnes & Noble, Best Buy and the one-stop Alliance Entertainment Corp.

Smith reached out to each, as well as to Don VanCleave, head of the Coalition of Independent Music Stores, and began negotiating one-way deals.

“Most [retailers] said, ‘No, we can’t do that,’” Smith says. “Then we found a way in which we could get the price point low enough and they would include a certain amount of marketing, so that made it pretty safe for most people.”

Because retailers are getting the title at a low price, Merchant has even slashed the price of the disc on her site by $2 to $14.98.

“It’s funny, I wrote an e-mail to Gary about bringing the price down, and I was like, ‘Thanks for making less money for me,’” she says with a laugh.

“House Carpenter” has been free of the pressure that has accompanied her previous albums, Merchant says. Merchant and her touring band recorded the tracks that constitute the album during two days at the end of their trek. The singer merely wanted to capture a slew of songs they had been playing on tour. She never really thought that it would become more than a souvenir of their time together.

“There was no build up to ‘We’re making a record.’ We just thought, ‘Let’s record these songs because they sound so great,’” she explains.

Once she and Smith decided to release the project, Merchant tweaked the recording by adding vocals and overdubs. The project progressed organically, in tandem with her pregnancy.

“We weren’t on anybody else’s schedule,” Smith says. “So things can take a lot longer than they should, because we don’t have those pressures.”

That easy progression has fit perfectly with Merchant’s new role as mom to a 5-month-old daughter. She says she has lost all ambition for the music industry’s “obsession with escalation.”

Merchant now feels less like a pop star than ever before, adding that her career runs a distant second to being a parent.

“I’m in a really fascinating period of life,” she says. “I sort of feel like I need to alone for all the years that I didn’t understand how profound this is.”

Hip-Hop

Continued from page 35

and won’t promote any product that he himself does not drink,” Louie says.

GIVING BACK

Like many of Simmons’ commercial endeavors, Def Con 3 aims to give back to those who purchase it. Russell Simmons Beverage Co. plans to give 2% of the gross from the sales of Def Con 3 back to community programs and to the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network. A disclaimer printed on the can declares this intention.

“Russell has also made a commitment to give all of his personal profit from the soda for the first year—up to $10 million—to community programs,” Louie adds.

Regardless of the ventures’ success, Simmons wants to move beyond energy drinks.

“We’re not disclosing what that is, but it will always be something healthy, unique and that gives back to the community. That’s the philosophy of the Russell Simmons Beverage Co.,” Louie says.

Meanwhile, Ice-T will launch Royal Ice malt liquor. But he is not worried about the potential backlash rappers have typically faced when promoting alcohol. (Criticism has been aimed at such associations because of hip-hop’s young demographic.)

“There should be no negative effect with the launch of Royal Ice,” he says. “The products are different, but we do hope to bring the malt liquor back to mainstream, in the bars, etc.”
Newbury Will Distribute CC's 'Instant Live' CDs

Clear Channel has chosen Newbury Comics to distribute its "Instant Live" albums to music retail. The CDs are recordings of live performances sold at the company's venues immediately following concerts.

Newbury Comics will make the albums available through its recently formed Toothface Distribution, an online wholesale distribution company.

Web Idols

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develop new artists in today's saturated media environment," Atlantic co-president Craig Kallman says.

ENGAGING FANS

In May and again in June, AOL posted songs from five unsigned artists. At the end of each month, AOL customers voted for their favorite artists.

The winning artists from each month then competed against each other, with AOL customers again voting for the winner.

"First Break is a natural extension to our core programming, which starts with discovering new music," says Mike Rich, AOL executive director of programming. "The program builds on our ability to expose new talent by engaging our enthusiastic base of music fans."

The winner of the inaugural First Break competition was the group Last Week from Long Island, N.Y.

"AOL has really helped to get us the big break we've been working toward," vocalist Matt Reich says.

But the emerging field of Web talent contests is not only for the big boys. Artist/attorney Daphne Clark launched Create-a-Superstar (createasuperstar.com) from her law office in Providence, R.I.

"Being an entertainment attorney, I was concerned about what was going on in the industry," Clark explains. "I felt that consumers wanted a more direct relation to the process and that they were being kept out."

FORGING A NEW PATH

Inspired by the "American Idol" phenomenon and discouraged by the limitations of mainstream radio, Clark set out to forge a new path for emerging artists.

The winner of the first Create-a-Superstar competition was Boston-based artist Omega Red, the nephew of singer Donna Summer.

"We consulted a number of industry folks, and everyone told us that he was the one," Clark says. "They said he had the star quality of Jay-Z, and I felt that he was the strongest candidate to represent hip-hop."

In addition to selecting the songs on Omega Red's first album, "Juggernaut" (which was released on Clark's 3rd Eye Records), fans also helped design the packaging and PR campaigns for their new musical champion.

What makes this program different from "American Idol" is that fans are involved in every aspect of selecting the winner, Clark says.

Through daily live chats with Omega Red, more than 50,000 fans have become involved with everything from tour venues to label contacts.

Though a second artist is scheduled to join the program early next year, Clark promises to keep fans informed about their first "superstar."

"We plan to add a new artist about every quarter," she says, adding that the site is currently accepting submissions from a variety of genres.

Clark says that larger labels that are considering marketing their emerging artists through Create-a-Superstar have expressed interest in her Web site.

The majors have actively supported Tower with credit throughout the entire process and continue to be upbeat in their assessment of the situation.

The independent labels have been more cautious in providing credit. They realize that Tower has long been the biggest champion of indie product and want to stand up and be counted in the chain's hour of need. On the other hand, a Tower Chapter 11 would have immense ramifications within the indie sector.

So far, Tower has stayed off Chapter 11, and if its auction ends with a suitor willing to pay enough to satisfy the bondholders, the banks and the majors, then there will be a happy ending for all.

Of course, if the bidding doesn't bring in enough, the ending might not be so happy.

In its last filing in June, it looked like there was no going back if the Tower gambit to sell the chain fails. And there will be no new SEC filing to allow suppliers the opportunity to reassess the situation.
More Live Pearl Jam

By Jonathan Cohen

Pearl Jam is closing out its decade-plus association with Epic with a bang. The label will issue the double-disc, 3½-hour DVD “Live at the Garden” and the long-in-the-works, double-disc rarities set “Lost Dogs” Nov. 11.

Pearl Jam fulfilled its Epic contract with the 2002 album “Riot Act” and is weighing its options for a new deal (Billboard, Oct. 25, 2002).

The DVD is an excellent snapshot of the where the band is today in terms of its full live prowess,” Epic senior VP of marketing Piero Giramonti says.

“Live at the Garden” was taped July 8 at New York’s Madison Square Garden. The show closed out the three-month Riot tour and found Pearl Jam unleashing a 30-song, three-hour set.

Highlights included a guest appearance of Ben Harper on “Daughter” and “Indifference,” pre-Pearl Jam act Mother Love Bone’s “Crown of Thorns” and the Who’s “Baba O’Riley.”

Though there were no on-screen tributes for potential pot-selling Garden was the ideal choice, says Litz Burns, one of four Pearl Jam crew members who filmed every show on the trek.

“The band played exceptionally well, both emotionally and technically,” she says. “The audience was great and full of energy.”

The DVD’s bonus features include a 5.1 surround audio mix, the option to watch five songs from drummer Matt Cameron’s vantage point, a montage of guest appearances from throughout the tour and a video blending two live takes of the controversial “Riot Act” track “Bushleaguer.”

Dave Alder, senior VP of product and marketing at Virgin Entertainment Group North America, expects the DVD to do well but notes it will compete against high-profile DVD releases from such acts as Foo Fighters, Bruce Springsteen and George Harrison.

Giramonti says the label is promoting “Live at the Garden” and “Lost Dogs” with a mainstream music print campaign and TV ads targeting cable sports and music networks.

A DVD trailer is available on the band’s Web site (pearljam.com) and beginning Dec. 1, DirectTV’s Freeview will air an edited video version of the DVD upwards of 300 times. Promotional spots that cross-promote “Lost Dogs” will begin airing in late November.

In January 2004, American Airlines will show clips from “Live at the Garden” during U.S. flights; it will also devote an audio channel to the DVD and “Lost Dogs.”
## Billboard Top DVD Sales

**Title** | **Label/Distributor** | **Price**
--- | --- | ---
**NUMBER 1** | The Lion King (Platinum Edition) | 24.98
*2* | The Matrix Reloaded (Widescreen) | 22.98
*3* | The Matrix Reloaded (Pan & Scan) | 19.98
*4* | Holes | 22.98
*5* | 2 Fast 2 Furious | 22.98
*6* | Scooby-Doo & The Monster of Mexico | 14.98
*7* | The Italian Job | 22.98
*8* | Stitch the Movie | 22.98
*9* | Strawberry Shortcake - Berry Merry Christmas | 12.98
*10* | Dragon Ball GT: Annihilation (Uncut) | 19.98
*11* | Dragon Ball GT: Salvation (Uncut) | 12.98
*12* | Sleeping Beauty (Pan & Scan) | 14.98
*13* | Bionic Light: Mask of Light | 19.98
*14* | The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (Widescreen) | 19.98
*15* | Dragon Ball GT: Annihilation (Edited) | 14.98
*16* | The Lord of the Rings: Two Towers (Widescreen) | 19.98
*17* | Dragon Ball GT: Salvation (Edited) | 12.98
*18* | The Lizzie McGuire Movie | 22.98
*19* | Dragon Ball GT: Salvation (Edited) | 12.98
*20* | Spider-Man 2 (Widescreen) | 12.98
*21* | It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown (Widescreen) | 24.98
*22* | Rugrats: Halloween | 12.98

## Billboard Top VHS Sales

**Title** | **Label/Distributor** | **Price**
--- | --- | ---
**NUMBER 1** | The Lion King (Platinum Edition) | 24.98
*2* | The Matrix Reloaded | 22.98
*3* | The Matrix Reloaded | 19.98
*4* | Holes | 22.98
*5* | 2 Fast 2 Furious | 22.98
*6* | Scooby-Doo & The Monster of Mexico | 14.98
*7* | The Italian Job | 22.98
*8* | Stitch the Movie | 22.98
*9* | Strawberry Shortcake - Berry Merry Christmas | 12.98
*10* | Dragon Ball GT: Annihilation (Uncut) | 19.98
*11* | Dragon Ball GT: Salvation (Uncut) | 12.98
*12* | Sleeping Beauty (Pan & Scan) | 14.98
*13* | Bionic Light: Mask of Light | 19.98
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*16* | The Lord of the Rings: Two Towers (Widescreen) | 19.98
*17* | Dragon Ball GT: Salvation (Edited) | 12.98
*18* | The Lizzie McGuire Movie | 22.98
*19* | Dragon Ball GT: Salvation (Edited) | 12.98
*20* | Spider-Man 2 (Widescreen) | 12.98
*21* | It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown (Widescreen) | 24.98
*22* | Rugrats: Halloween | 12.98
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES: Tara Griggs-Magee is named executive VP of gospel for Sony Urban Music in New York. She was senior VP/GM of Verity Records.

Jason Owen is promoted to VP of media and artist relations for Mercury/MCA Nashville. He was senior director of media and artist relations.

Jim Flammia is promoted to VP of media and artist relations for Lost Highway Records in Nashville. He was senior director of media and artist relations.

Mark Robinson is promoted to senior VP of business and legal affairs for Koch Entertainment in New York. He was VP of business and legal affairs.

Paola Kaminsky is named VP of marketing for BMG U.S. Latin in Miami. She was marketing director of BMG Argentina.

Jive Records names Joanne Grand as senior director of rock format promotion and Lori Berk as director of publicity in New York. They were, respectively, senior director of national rock promotion for TVT Records and national director of publicity for MCA.

DISTRIBUTION: Tom O'Malley is promoted to executive VP of Universal Music & Video Distribution in Universal City, Calif. He was CPO.

Sally Adams is named VP of acquisitions and development for Ventura Distribution in Los Angeles. She was director of new product development for Time-Life Video.

Going Global

Kimberley Locke, a finalist in the most recent "American Idol" competition, made a special guest appearance on the South African version of "Idol" in Johannesburg. Locke was in the country to participate in the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation Africa AIDS Walk. She is working on her debut studio album for Curb Records. Pictured, from left, are South African "Idol" finalist Posleteso Seijosingoe, Locke and finalists Jacques Terre Blanche and Anke Pietrangeli.

Cheesy Souvenirs

Joining such acts as Phish, Pearl Jam, the Dead and Incubus, Primus has been selling downloads of each of its shows on its recently launched reunion tour, Tour de Fromage. Beginning Nov. 7, the band will begin posting shows from the tour—which kicked off in October and wraps at the end of November—at primitive.com. After Nov. 7, new concerts will be posted online 48 hours after their completion. Fans will also be able to download artwork for CD jewel cases. At each stop, Primus—led by bassiston tour—also be playing two sets. During the second one, the band performs its 1991 "Sailing the Seas of Cheese" album in its entirety. The tour is the first to feature the band's original lineup in seven years.
Goodbye  Recalling the time he spent with Elliott Smith, Jon Spencer Blues Explosion drummer Russell Simins says, “The best moments I’ve shared with Elliott are seeing him smile when we were playing music together. When he knows it’s kicking in, and I’m behind the kit, and he’s playing bass or guitar, or we’re writing a song in the studio and he’s into the drums I’m playing, or he’s into the music, and he just looked at me and smiled. He wasn’t always in the best of ways, but when we’d lock eyes, he was feeling it and loving it.” Smith, 34, killed himself Oct. 21. He left behind a slew of recordings. Among those, Simins says, are a few recently captured at the drummer’s New York studio. Smith, pictured at this summer’s Field Day Music Festival at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., was working on an album reportedly titled “From a Basement on the Hill.” His former DreamWorks A&R man Luke Wood says it is an extraordinarily diverse effort that ranged from “phenomenal, experimental soundscapes to the most intimate guitar vocals.” There is no word yet on what will happen to the recordings. (Photo: Theo Wargo/Wireimage.com)

Now, Hear This … SOUND TRIBE SECTOR 9  Artists to Watch  Sound Tribe Sector 9 is not your average jam band. Although the instrumental unit is a staple of that sometimes clichéd, festival-laden scene, its unique organic dub sound and propensity to push creative electronic boundaries make for consistently thrilling live sets. “Live at Home,” a 23-track compilation of experimental ambient/electronic works—most of them created individually by the five members of the group—was self-released in May. Garry Hughes (Björk, Baaba Maal) is producing the band’s second, currently untitled studio album, due in spring 2004. Finishing touches are being applied around this year’s remaining tour dates.  BARRY A. JECKELL

Miss America Gets Fletcher Foster’s Vote  For Fletcher Foster, the Miss America pageant is serious business. Foster, the senior VP of marketing at Capitol Records in Nashville, was a judge for what he calls an “emotionally draining” week-long contest, which culminated Sept. 20 in the nationally televised awards show.

When he was first approached about judging—after meeting a Miss America board member at the going-away party for former Recording Industry Assn. of America chief Hilary Rosen—Foster says he was “leery about the whole process,” particularly the week-long commitment. But when he polled his friends, everyone encouraged him to do it.

He likens Miss America fans to Barry Manilow devotees: “Everybody is one, whether they admit it or not.”

While only the final night of the competition is televised, judges work hard all week interviewing the 51 state winners (including Miss District of Columbia) and grading them as they compete in talent, swimsuit and evening-gown competitions.

The pageant has attracted its share of controversy over the years, particularly the swimsuit segment. But Foster emerged from his judging gig with respect for the organization.

While he admits “the swimsuit element still gives it that beauty-pageant stigma,” Foster says, “the Miss America pageant is reinventing itself and it has, over the years, tried to keep up with the times and the changing face of women in America.” He points out that the event is primarily a scholarship program.

Foster was pleasantly surprised by the number of contestants who chose the declining role of music programs in schools as their “platform” or cause. Overall, he says, this year’s candidates—which included a 22-year-old with a Ph.D. — were “incredibly smart.”

But what impressed Foster most was the heavy workload of the winner. Last year’s Miss America, Ericka Harold, described “the 20-hour workdays she endured and being in three cities a day. She wrote all her own speeches, whether it was for a kindergarten class in the morning, legislators at noon or a women’s group at 5 p.m.” Foster says, “The endurance level is really intense, and you have to be fit.”

Foster was home only 20-30 days the whole year, including three days at Christmas. Foster observes, “It would be difficult for some of our artists to keep up with a schedule like that.”

While many of the contestants sang or played instruments for the talent portion of the competition, Foster had to keep in check the keen ear developed from his years of record-company experience, noting that most of the contestants aspire to be attorneys, doctors and journalists, not professional musicians.

But his artist-development experience did come in handy in helping narrow down the contestants who had a star quality and “sparkle and onstage,” regardless of their career aspirations.

He says the winner, Ericka Dunlap, was someone “who could walk into a room, take over and be able to turn heads, and that’s what we’re all looking for in our business.”

PHYLIS STARK
Anka Licenses To Thrill

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—One side of the ailing music business remains robust, according to Paul Anka: the licensing side.

And he would know.

The legendary writer/performer of such late-'50s/early-'60s teen classics as “Puppy Love” and “You Are My Destiny,” not to mention such grown-up fare as “The Tonight Show Theme” and “My Way,” has seen continued usage of these copyrights peak with recent film and commercial placements.

“My Way” had two of the biggest [commercial] licenses of last year with eBay and AXA,” Anka says, adding that “Puppy Love” was used by Phillips, pet-food company PetSmart utilized “Destiny” and Coors picked up “She’s a Lady,” which was originally a 1971 smash for Tom Jones. “And some young guy started a show in Japan—‘Golden Bowl’—using 14 Anka tracks every Saturday night in English!”

Anka, now 62, jokes that “I’m the only guy to start out at 16 who has to stand there at 60 and sing those adolescent songs like ‘Puppy Love.’” But the BMI writer, who publishes through his Paulanne Music company (Chrysalis owns his pre-1973 catalog), gladly recognizes that the fruits of his songwriting have “kept my life together.”

He also owns his masters, thanks to a $250,000 investment in 1961 to buy them from ABC/Paramount prior to signing with RCA.

“I was touring with [1957 hit] ‘Diana’ as a kid with [artists like] Buddy Holly and Jerry Lee Lewis, and RCA saw an international appeal and wanted to sign me because of their [global] distribution,” continues Anka, who also writes in Italian, Japanese, French and Spanish.

“In the beginning you write every day,” he reflects, “but after 45 years, I write mainly for specific projects. But I’m always refining things I’ve started.”

A good case in point is “My Way,” which he revises every year for use in “American Idol,” The Frank Sinatra standard has taken on a life of its own. Jay-Z covered it last year using a sample from Anka’s recording, and Anka is always asked about the immortal Sinatra version.

“I said, ‘Yeah, give him a license,’ and it was later used in ‘Goodfellas.’” Anka recalls. “I really got what he was doing, and he used a pickup band of jazz musicians I know.”

Anka is optimistic about his profession’s future.

“You need music. You need what we do,” he says, adding, “The music industry has always been in transition and will never, ever go away.”

Now touring 38 weeks annually, Anka says he’s sold 300,000 units of his four-disc boxed set “Greatest Hits of the ‘50s, ‘60s and ‘70s and Newly Recorded Love Songs” just from gigs. But Anka remains an active songwriter—and publisher.

“I stay in touch with movie directors and ad agencies and see what’s coming up,” he says, noting that his songs have been used in 30 or so movies during the past decade. “Puppy Love,” he adds, is scheduled for use in the upcoming romantic comedy “Love Actually,” as a Canadian feature.

Anka also reports co-writing a new song with David Foster. “Endlessly,” just recorded by Josh Groban with Laura Pausini.

“As the Tonight Show Theme” was used on Car悲 Crab Trap, after files were transferred from the MX-2424s using Apogee converters.

“I hate to leave the Pro Tools domain,” Alagia says. “I would love to go to Pro Tools directly next year, if possible.”

Neuberger says, “Following that, I continued to mix at a facility I built together with Terry Fryer called “RFL Studios.”

Third Wave Productions,” Work at Chicago-based Third Wave, which included additional stereo mixing, 5.1-channel mixing for the DVD and limited theatrical release and DVD authoring.

“We started at John’s studio,” Neuberger says. “Then later in the process, I would take those files and put them up on my Pro Tools and make artist revisions, edits, mix songs that hadn’t been mixed to date and then do surround mixing. We were in Pro Tools from then on, which worked extremely well in terms of handing off sessions from mixer to mixer.”

Neuberger and Alagia delivered to artists a CD of their performance within 30 minutes, speeding the process of choosing songs for the CD and DVD. They also set up an FTP site for Web-enabled artist approvals.

In post-production, Neuberger mixed tracks and manned them to video, encoding and delivering them to 10A, which featured several exclusive streams after the festival.

“We put our heads together on this show a lot more than before,” Alagia summarizes. “For the first one, we were just winging it. We didn’t really know what we were getting ourselves into.”
Japanese Retailers Oppose Import Ban
Stores Fear Act Would Give Labels Too Much Power

BY STEVE McCLURE

TOKYO—Japanese record companies want the government to give them the right to ban recorded music imports— a prospect that has alarmed retailers here.

Industry sources confirm that the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan (RIAJ) is lobbying the Japanese government’s Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry to make changes to existing legislation that would give labels the right to block imported repertoire.

The RIAJ declines to comment on the issue, but retailers fear that giving record companies that right would allow labels excessive leverage over music stores.

“We are seriously concerned about the implications of a blanket restriction on imports,” HMV Asia-Pacific president Paul Dezelisky says.

The labels’ concerns center on the possibility of Japanese repertoire being exported from other Asian countries, such as mainland China and South Korea, to Japan.

Faced with a declining market at home, record companies see these emerging markets as holding great promise.

China, with its huge population, is viewed as the market with the greatest long-term potential. But South Korea is the hottest topic right now. That country will remove its remaining restrictions on Japanese music Jan. 1, 2004 (Billboard, Oct. 4).

Japanese labels operate a government-approved fixed price system for recorded music. South Korea and China have no such constraints, and Japanese labels have expressed concerns about cheaper “gray imports” of Japanese repertoire pressed in those territories flooding the home market.

Sources say that the RIAJ, along with other

UMC Prices Please

BY LARRY LeBLANC

TORONTO—Canadian retailers are eagerly anticipating the effect on sales of a new Universal Music Canada price-reduction program.

On Sept. 3, UMC announced it would drop its suggested list price to $14.98 Canadian ($11.43) on virtually all front-line CDs. The Canadian initiative is similar to Universal Music Group’s JumpStart program in the U.S. (Billboard, Sept. 13).

About 85% to 95% of all Canadian music merchants had signed up for the new terms as of Oct. 1, UMC president/CEO Randy Lennox says. “That sent us a strong message that they wanted to pursue this.”

UMC’s program was designed to scrap its $19.98 Canadian ($15.24), $29.98 Canadian ($23.47) and $21.98 Canadian ($16.77) manufacturer-suggested prices in Canada.

GOOD RESPONSE

Retailers began offering lower-priced front-line and catalog CDs to consumers Oct. 1.

Trade prices for UMC front-line product were dropped to $11.09 Canadian ($8.46) from $13.05 Canadian ($10.28) and $15.07 Canadian ($11.50). Midprice titles fell to $7.09 Canadian ($5.41) from $9.70 Canadian ($7.40). At the same time, UMC’s introductory trade price for titles by new artists dipped to $7.09 Canadian from $7.98 Canadian ($6.69).

When signing up for the lower trade prices, Canadian music merchants had to guarantee lower in-store pricing of UMC product in their stores.

Unlike their U.S. counterparts, the Canadian merchants did not have to promise UMC specific amounts of prime in-store floor space, and the lower pricing was immediately reflected on catalog titles.

“Universal listened to us and treated us with respect on this [pricing] issue,” says Jim Baker, a buyer at Sunrise Records, which has 32 stores in Ontario.

HMV Canada president Humphrey Kadaner applauds UMC for making a positive market change. “Once we had our discussions with Universal, we bought into the program and quickly implemented it in the stores,” he says.

HMV Canada operates 100 stores nationally. Its market share in Canada since Oct. 1 has climbed 4.9% to 33%-34%, Lennox says.

(Continued on page 46)
**November 8, 2003**

### Hits of the World

#### Japan

**NEW**
1. HOKOSAYUSEN/NOU<br>2. SHINOHASAKA<br>3. K-TOTTOOTER<br>4. DOUBLE<br>5. MELISSA<br>6. ROKU TO KURO TO KOTTO DE KOTTO<br>7. YUKI NO HANA<br>8. DEKKE<br>9. VIVA * ROCK<br>10. HIROHIDE AKIYAMA<br>

**TOP HITS**
11. HITS<br>12. 10<br>13. 30<br>14. 20<br>15. 16<br>

#### United Kingdom

**NEW**
1. BE FAITHFUL<br>2. WHERE IS THE LOVE?<br>3. ROCKIN' ON HEAVEN'S DOOR<br>4. TURN ME ON<br>5. BABY BY BABY<br>6. SUPERSTAR<br>7. SO YESTERDAY<br>8. MAYBE<br>9. INTO YOU<br>10. NEW 

**TOP HITS**
11. I'LL BE THERE<br>12. Maybe<br>13. NEW<br>14. NEW<br>15. NEW

#### Germany

**NEW**
1. WHERE IS THE LOVE?<br>2. BE FAITHFUL<br>3. TURN ME ON<br>4. ROCKIN' ON HEAVEN'S DOOR<br>5. NEW<br>6. NEW<br>7. NEW<br>8. NEW<br>9. NEW

**TOP HITS**
10. NEW

#### France

**NEW**
1. HEY OH<br>2. WHITE FLAG<br>3. PACHANGA<br>4. NEW<br>5. NEW<br>6. NEW

**TOP HITS**
11. NEW

### Canada

**NEW**
1. SOMETHING MORE<br>2. ONE MORE TIME<br>3. SOMETIMES<br>4. LOW<br>5. SUNRISE<br>6. BABY BOY<br>7. SO YESTERDAY<br>8. RUBBERNECKING<br>9. BYE BYE FRIEND<br>10. NEW

**TOP HITS**
11. NEW

### Spain

**NEW**
1. UNO MAS UNO SON SIETE<br>2. ENCONTRADAS<br>3. PEÇOS COLLECTION<br>4. GUITY<br>5. PERVERSO<br>6. FRANTIC<br>7. HOY<br>8. CRAYZY IN LOVE<br>9. BABY BOY<br>10. NEW

**TOP HITS**
11. NEW

### Australia

**NEW**
1. RISE UP<br>2. WHERE IS THE LOVE?<br>3. NOT ME NOT I<br>4. WHERE IS THE LOVE?<br>5. WHERE IS THE LOVE?<br>6. NEW<br>7. NEW<br>8. NEW

**TOP HITS**
10. NEW

### Italy

**NEW**

**TOP HITS**
8. NEW

**HITS OF THE WORLD**
- Billboard
- www.americanradiohistory.com
**Sinead Offers Look At 'Secret Place'**

Sinead O'Connor has released what she says will be the final album of her career on Hummingbird Records. The lengthy title of the two-CD set, ‘She Who Dwell in the Secret Place of the Lord’, indicates a move to a more religious direction.

Most High Shall Abide the Shadow of the Almighty, a quote from the Bible, indicates that she is concentrating on her theological studies and pastoral healing. The first disc features a hodgepodge of unreleased demos, rarities and cover versions withRelease FLAC

**Biscuit**

New Zealand singer-songwriter Bic Runga has taken up residence in Paris to coincide with the European release of her second album, 'Beautiful Colliion'. (Sony). An iconic star at home, Runga's career has never come easy. Recording of her debut album 'Drive' (released in 1997) was postponed before she recovered after being hit by a drunk driver. The album was delayed again when the then-19-year-old Runga scrapped sessions produced by former Crowded House bassist Nick Seymour and insisted on producing herself. Ultimately, 'Drive' went platinum (15,000 units) seven times over to become the biggest-ever selling local album. The follow-up caused more concern for Sony New Zealand, as the diminutive singer of Malayasian/Maori descent again rejected numerous versions before delivering the record in mid-2002. A year later, the album remains in the New Zealand top 20 and has exceeded sales of the first album. "Beautiful Collision" was released in the U.K., Ireland, Germany and Switzerland in September; releases in France, Holland and Japan are scheduled for November.

**Common Currency**

A weekly scorecard of albums simultaneously attaining top 10 chart status in three or more leading world markets.

**GLOBAL**

**FAN-TASTIC:** When editors of respected UK music magazine Q recently counted up the votes in its readers poll for best album of the past 15 years, an unlikely candidate cropped up: Augie March's 2000 debut album, "Sunset Studies" was never even released in the UK, yet fans of the cult Australian act demanded its inclusion. Orchestrated write-in campaign or not, it created a buzz. The Melbourne five-piece is touring the UK this month, and next month it releases internationally on Polydor album "Strange Bird", a generally considered rocker in Flaming Lips' Grandaddy mode. **STEVE ADAMS**

**INDIAN SUPERSTAR CHARGED:** Daler Mehndi, the most successful artist of the North Indian "bhangra" genre, is facing arrest over alleged immigration violations. Mehndi's elder brother, Shamasent Singh Mehndi, has also been charged with taking 1 million rupees (r25,000) to organize phony UK and US visas. Indian police have issued a warrant alleging that the racket is part of an immigration scam in which Punjabis pay to be included as part of a bhangra troupe touring Western countries and then remain illegally. Delhi-based Mehndi burst onto the scene in the mid-'90s with his hit song "Bolo Ta Ra Ra" released on Warner licensee Magnasound. The album of the same name sold 1 million units. He then signed to Universal for two albums, and his latest, "Mauja Laa Da," was released on his own Delhi-based label, DM Music, this summer. **NIV BHUSHAN**

**HEAVENLY TRANSFER:** In one of the biggest transfers in the Greek music industry, Alistis Protaspiti, one of the country's most popular singers, has joined independent label Heavenly. After a 20-year stint with PolyGram/Universal. Her debut album for the label, "Voices of My Heart," will be released Nov. 17. The album was recorded live during her 2002 concerts with the Prague Symphony Orchestra at the Athens Concert Hall. Protaspiti is scheduled for forthcoming tour dates in the U.S., the UK and Russia. The Greek artist has reportedly sold 800,000 albums to date. **MARIA PARAVANTES**
Raising AIDS Awareness

BY LARS BRANDLE

LONDON—International artists are joining MTV in a multimedia campaign to raise awareness of the impact of HIV and AIDS in South Africa.

The “46664” initiative takes its name from the prisoner number of former South African president Nelson Mandela when he was jailed under the apartheid regime in his country.

Mandela is the figurehead of the new campaign. He was in London for the Oct. 21 launch of 46664, which will deliver a concert, CD, DVD and organize a global petition on AIDS.

“Today in Africa is claiming more lives than the sum total of all wars, famines and floods and the ravages of such deadly diseases as malaria.” Mandela said at the launch. “We must act now for the sake of the world. AIDS is no longer a disease; it is a human-rights issue.”

The Nelson Mandela Foundation, which will manage money from the campaign, develops strategic alliances to foster community action in South Africa.

International ISP Tiscali, BBC World Service, Virgin Atlantic, FedEx and South African national broadcaster SABC are providing financial support or services to the campaign.

MULTI-ARTIST CONCERT

“We will join in this partnership with all our resources,” say Bill Roedy, president of MTV International. Roedy chairs the United Nations Global Business Council on HIV & AIDS.

The centerpiece of the initiative is a three-hour, multi-artist concert to be held Nov. 29 at Greenpoint in Greenpoint, London. Performers will include U2, vocalist Bono, Beyoncé, members of Queen, 50 Cent, the Corrs and the Eurythmics.

A 90-minute edit of the show will air Dec. 1 on MTV channels worldwide (the U.N.-designated World AIDS Day). SABC will televise the show live domestically; Tiscali will Webcast it live internationally.

MTV is offering the TV package free to other broadcasters. The European Broadcasting Union and the Asian Broadcasting Union will distribute it in 80 countries.

“The hope is that this will be the largest-ever call to action against HIV and AIDS,” Roedy says. “It has the potential to be the most-watched show ever.”

Johannesburg-based Real Concerts will promote the show locally. It will be executive-produced by Queen manager Jim Beach and former EMI Records U.K. president/CEO Jean-François Cecillon, chairman of U.K. marketing firm Music Matrix.

The 46664 initiative was developed by Eurythmics member Dave Stewart, who wanted to help musicians support the fight against AIDS in Africa.

Stewart recruited fellow musicians Brian May and Roger Taylor of Queen earlier this year to record new material to be used to benefit the Nelson Mandela Foundation’s AIDS work.

The first fundraising song to be made available is “46664 (Long Walk to Freedom),” co-written by the late Joe Strummer, Stewart and Bono.

Performed by Bono, Youssou N’Dour, Abdel Wright and Stewart, it is one of two songs available for download at 46664.com, priced $1.99 each. Consumers can make donations and hear the songs by calling various premium phone numbers published on the site.

Paul McCartney, Beyoncé, Ms. Dynamite, Timbaland and Paul Oakenfold are featured on new material to be rolled out through online music services.

A CD including the new material will debut in early 2004, while a DVD featuring the entire concert will also be released. No decision has been made on a label for either.

Gabriel

Continued from page 43

quality on DVD than they ever could on VHS.

EMI and WMV have been working together on the U.K. marketing campaign, says Steve Davis, director of marketing at EMI catalog and Liberty at EMI Recorded Music U.K. and Ireland.

There are certain media opportunities where it works very well, particularly in magazines, press and all communications with the trade. Davis says. But, he notes, the conceptual TV advertisements that are based on the album cover are “too cluttered to fit the DVD into the message.”

Joint campaigns are also being set up in other territories worldwide, an EMI source said.

In Germany, the track listing of the second CD was changed at the request of EMI Germany to include some German-language tracks that Gabriel recorded in the late ’80s.

Gabriel hopes the “Hit” campaign will stimulate sales of last year’s studio album, “Up,” “even though everyone else seems to have given up on it.”

Imports

Continued from page 43

industry bodies, is seeking a legal way of banning imports of Japanese product while continuing to allow imports of non-Japanese product.

“We fully support the RIAA’s efforts to find a way to stop the import of low-priced Asian versions of J-pop [Japanese pop music] releases and their effort to build a legitimate market in China for these products,” Dezelsky says.

A blanket restriction on imports, Dezelsky says, “would have a negative impact on retailers and the music industry as a whole.”

“GRAY IMPORTS”

Tower Records Japan president/CEO Akio Moriwaki says he is also concerned about the possibility of imports but feels a compromise will be reached.

“Nobdy wants to make this into a big issue,” Moriwaki says. But he warns that if “gray imports” start flooding the Japanese market through discount stores and other nontraditional outlets using the latest J-pop releases as loss-leaders, specialist music retailers may have no choice but to abandon the fixed-price system.

“As discussions on this are ongoing, we hope that a compromise can be found,” Dezelsky says.

One possibility is that if the government grants labels the right to control imports, labels will sign contracts with retailers, allowing them to import non-Japanese product.

The total wholesale value of import-processed audio software was $28.8 million yen ($328 million) in calendar 2002, according to Ministry of Finance data.

In Japan, imports of prerecorded audio software are generally priced cheaper than similar product manufactured under license by Japanese labels.

A key reason for the success of Tower, Virgin and HMV in Japan has been their wide selection of import-processed product.

Tower Records Japan estimates that import accounted for roughly half of its annual sales. Most of those imports are sourced from local licensees of overseas labels. The same situation exists at other Japanese music retailers handling imported product.
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Advertising

Continued from page 1

as Universal Music Group (UMG) vows to triple its consumer ad spending in conjunction with its Jumpstart program. With the initiative, UMG reduced front-line pricing to $12.98 from $17.98-$18.98 and eliminated all discounts and cooperative advertising funds.

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Yet for all the talk about an increase in consumer advertising, “I am not seeing any upturn,” says Bruce Kirkland of Tsunami Entertainment, a marketing and management company based in Los Angeles. “I think the dollar spend on marketing is going down, not up. The marketing offices are closing.”

Consequently, artist managers and labels are being forced to look for alternative ways to drive sales. In particular, they seek the additional funding and exposure of brand-marketing partnerships, Kirkland says.

“Some are generated from the label and some from beyond, but it’s almost impossible to promote superstar releases nowadays without any strategic marketing alliances,” he says.

Kirkland points to Duracell’s recent alignment with Bon Jovi that features the act in a commercial for the battery (insert). The campaign has a retail tie-in that allows Duracell buyers to get a discount on the band’s albums at certain select accounts. “It’s the way the manager has to think nowadays,” says Kirkland, who is a partner of the Bon Jovi management team.

J Records executive VP of worldwide marketing and sales Tom Corson says the labels are thinking the same way.

“The [marketing] budgets that labels have are dwarfed when compared to the packaged goods industries,” Corson says. So, “we have a lot of partners—liquor, beverage and car companies—who are also looking to leverage their brand.”

VALUE ADDS

Given the scarcity of dollars, Corson says one of his main goals in designing a marketing campaign is to look for additional benefits in putting together media buys. “There are so many different ways to cut your dollars, and there are so few dollars to cut that everything has to have a value add,” he says. “It’s about making one plus one equal five, and that’s the science we are working with.”

To this end, David Hazan, executive VP of sales and marketing at Wind-up Records, looks for partnerships with corporate advertisers, where the label’s artists “can provide enough size and consumer demand to supplement advertising spends. But the company’s JumpStart initiative is also designed to enable its labels to increase advertising expenditures. This may be accomplished by eliminating the payments of cooperative advertising funds, a growing—and, some say, out-of-control—expense in label marketing budgets.

This tactic is being closely watched by competitors. Like UMC, they are experiencing the rising costs of cooperative advertising as retail consolidates, leaving larger entities with more clout to extract dollars from the labels.

To the chagrin of all label executives, cooperative advertising funds are resulting in a disproportionately high price for products allocated to price and position, with little left over to buy media to drive sales.

UMG kicked off its JumpStart consumer advertising campaign in the Oct. 17 edition of USA Today.

Cliff O’Sullivan, senior VP of marketing and artist development at Universal Music & Video Distribution, says the campaign is still a work in progress, but he explains that the initial strategy is to tout the company’s “new low prices,” rather than push individual albums.

The UMVD branding campaign comes in addition to the tripling of each UMG label’s consumer advertising spend to promote their own releases, which will also reinforce the new low-price branding campaign. UMVD’s branding campaign will use a combination of TV and print.

In addition to USA Today, the company will advertise in Rolling Stone, Vibe and XL as well as on MTV, VH1, MTV2 and Fuse, according to O’Sullivan.

Besides mainstream media, UMVD will place ads in the 10 largest alternative weeklies, as well as the 50 largest independent weeklies. There will also be a separate country-music campaign.

Paul Burgess, senior VP of sales and marketing at TVT, is monitoring the UMG initiative to see how the pricing changes will affect his label’s retail sales.

He notes that TVT titles match UMG’s prices when TVT partakes in pricing-and-positioning programs. “We are paying for the retail programs, and they are getting them for free,” says Burgess. “My titles will be competitively priced while I have programs, and then when I am off, I am $4 higher.”

That concern has prompted him to address the situation with some accounts.

Forget about the price, says Craig Balsam, co-owner of Razor & Tie. “The most interesting thing is whether the Universal plan is going to make inroads on the way music is marketed.”

But, Balsam says, UMG’s JumpStart begs the question: Is it the beginning of the end for cooperative funding?

Also, he asks, will the industry at large start doing a lot more advertising to drive sales? If other labels follow, will the consumer be overwhelmed by all the choices?

It is also possible that UMG’s increased advertising might not motivate the customer, Balsam says.

It is possible that the widely held belief among label executives that more consumer advertising will benefit the industry by driving customers into stores. Currently labels spend about 3% of revenue on consumer advertising, executives say.

“With a developing artist that has some radio airplay, labels tend to spend dollar-for-dollar of non-radio media and cooperative advertising,” one label exec says. “But when it comes to a bigger artist, the spending is more like 50 cents on media and $1 on cooperative.”

TV advertising can range in cost from $5,000 to $500,000. The labels also rely heavily on direct-response (DR) TV ad campaigns using 800 numbers. The largest of these campaigns can easily top $1 million.

But with the emergence of MTV2 and Fuse, it’s possible to advertise inexpensively, says Elsa Gary, president of the Gary Group, a Santa Monica, Calif.-based advertising agency. “Both are bought national, and they are very affordable.”

TV NETWORK ADS RISE

TV advertising by labels is definitely on the Upswing, while other media play less of a role, marketing executives say.

Baker says. The A&R Sound Chain, which has 22 stores in Western Canada, immediately complied with the new UMG pricing. The audio and hardware chain—known for its aggressive front-line pricing—also moved to treat product by other suppliers similarly.

UMG has been in a “dialog with everybody,” VP of purchasing Lane Orr says. “We took an internal price decrease, and we also implemented Universal’s price decrease. We dropped catalog [prices] by between 10% and 15%, depending on the vendor.”

That, however, is hard to confirm. Nielsen-Monitor Plus breaks out music-industry advertising data by record labels but does not make this information public.

According to the company, the music industry spent $514.3 million on consumer advertising in 2002, down from $721.4 million in 2001. Those figures include TV, print and radio advertising.

But the data—like the January-July numbers cited earlier—may overstate advertising because it is tabulated using rate cards, while the majority of the music industry’s TV advertising is DR, which is often discounted to 20%-50% of normal rates. It is difficult to make year-over-year comparisons because overall rates have been increasing. At the same time, less expensive DR advertising is on the upswing.

“Direct response is always important in considering your media mix, because that’s where you get your bang for the bucks,” says Balsam, whose Razor & Tie label is a leader among TV music marketers.

“A lot of labels are really trying to get some new ad and get impressions in a cost-effective way. And it drives sales, which brings in revenue to fund the advertising.”

But as labels turn to DR commercials, it becomes difficult to tweak the desired airtimes for everybody.

In general, as a DR advertiser, the buyer only gets a 30%-50% clearance rate, according to Kevin Gore, executive VP of sales and marketing at Warner Strategic Marketing.

As a result, if a commercial must run during a certain period because of a time-sensitive situation like a release date or a concert appearance, a more effective but more expensive regular commercial time-buy should be considered, Gary says.

Also, if labels want to tag retailers in TV commercials, they must buy at the regular rate.

TV marketing is not the only form of advertising on the upswing with labels. Also gaining favor is the Internet, J’s Corson says, noting, “That often is the cheapest and most efficient for one-to-one marketing.”

In addition to all the guerrilla marketing, whereby cyber street teams pose as unaffiliated fans and tout their favorite bands on popular Web sites, labels have been increasing “spends on targeted Internet advertising.”

Wind-up’s Hazan says.

But they are avoiding the traditional Internet advertising like banners and giving more for click-through ads and key-word searches—“anything that draws eyeballs to your product,” Razor & Tie’s Balsam says.

While peer-to-peer marketing is on the upswing and represents the biggest opportunity for labels, it is still probably the most under-funded marketing tool, Tsunami’s Kirkland says.

Meanwhile, print media and radio ad spending appears to be on the decline. Whether a record is from an established or a developing artist, the media vehicles don’t necessarily change—retail-store push, print and radio advertising.

In fact, Corson says, “You are not going to buy your way into breaking a developing artist.”

UMC Prices

Continued from page 43

Universal now has a huge advantage, Baker says. But if the other record companies have product they are selling for close to $19 (Canadian)/$7.60, it is going in the front ranks too, he adds.

KEEPING TABS

UMC’s competitors are monitoring the new policy, under which front-line product is selling at $12.98 Canadian ($9.90) and $14.98 Canadian ($11.43). “Other companies just want to get past this quarter while trying to stay competitive,” a senior buyer at Pindoff Record Sales, which operates the 92-store Music World chain nationally, says.

With the reduced pricing structure, UMG’s new pricing strategy is working, says John Jahn, VP of cooperative advertising funds and all discounts. “It is now focusing on direct-to-consumer advertising.”

“If they are going to take the majority of [former] co-op funds and go to television, we will all benefit.”

Baker says. The A&R Sound Chain, which has 22 stores in Western Canada, immediately complied with the new UMG pricing. The audio and hardware chain—known for its aggressive front-line pricing—also moved to treat product by other suppliers similarly.

The store became an “instant hit among everybody,” VP of purchasing Lane Orr says. “We took an internal price decrease, and we also implemented Universal’s price decrease. We dropped catalog [prices] by between 10% and 15%, depending on the vendor.”

December


Dec. 10 Billboard Music Awards, MGM Grand Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas. 702-798-3152.


January

Jan. 8-11, International CES Convention, presented by the Consumer Electronics Assn. (CEA), Las Vegas Convention Center. 866-333-7999.


Jan. 25-29, MIDEM 2004, Palais Des Festivals, Cannes, France. 33-014-190-8951.

Submit items for Events Calendar to Mango Whitmore at mango@billboard.com.

For the Record

In the article “Mellecamp Decrees War” (Billboard, Nov. 1, 2003), Ben Bergheim, the president and CEO of Mellen camps, a publicist, Bob Merlis, referred to a political posting on Mellen camp’s Web site, his quote should have read, “He did this to catalyze discussion.”
Locals Immune To Image Issue

Between Congress and the consumer press, radio's public image has taken quite a beating in the past few years. Nevertheless, when Billboard Nashville bureau chief Phyllis Stark spoke with broadcasters, many said that the hostility of some law- 
makers, journalists and artist groups toward radio hasn't trickled down to the station level.

In fact, many believe that when you take away the political and interest-group voices, music radio consumers are happy with their local radio stations. "I certainly don't meet with local clients or listeners that say, 'Wow, what's wrong with radio these days?'" says Wes McShay, operations manager of Clear Channel/Huntville, Ala.

If radio does have image problems, says WKV Knoxville operations manager/PD Mike Hammond says they must be in certain markets and not nationwide: "In my market, radio is seen as a great community partner." He adds that it is embraced by listeners and advertisers. Most programmers say they are able to rise above the nega-
tive chatter.

McShay says that the national debate in the press and Congress "has had little, if anything, to do with how I do my job on the local level."

But broadcasters agree with the group heads who recently addressed this issue at the National Assn. of Broadcasters show in Philadelphia. They claim radio's critics have overlooked many of the positives in the industry.

WUBE Cincinnati VP Tim Closson specifically cites radio's "ability to be local, its entertainment value, portability and its dedication to charitable promotions."

Hammond points out that in times of crisis, "radio still does what it is intended to do: respond in [an] emergency to get the word out."

Ed Salamon, executive director of Country Radio Broadcasters, says, "Perhaps because most of the good things that radio does are done locally, these are seldom recognized by the national media."

Keymarket Communications VP of programming Frank Bell says, "For radio to turn around the public's perception, it must return to its roots and somehow re-emphasize its two most unique selling propositions."

He identifies those as localism and portability. Stations need to maintain their strong community ties and reinforce that the listener can take those community ties with them "pretty much anywhere in its coverage area with very little cost or effort."

XM AT A MILL:
The last in-depth look at satellite radio in these pages (Billboard, June 7) had analysts saying that critical mass for public acceptance of the technology would happen when subscrip-
tions to XM and Sirius total a million. XM alone met the mill mark just weeks shy of its Nov. 12 two-
year anniversary.

For a sense of con-
tent, Greystone Com-
munications and Van-
ke Group note that it took 12 years for satel-
lite TV to reach that milestone.

HIGHER RESPONSE: Arbitron reports progress on improving response rates for its Portable People Meter. The radio ratings firm has been working with Billboard sister com-
pany Nielsen Media Research on PPM testing in Philadelphia. The current research has identified two new sampling and recruit-
ment techniques where response rates increased significantly over prior techniques.

Next up is further tests to ensure turnover rates that maintain sample quality while holding costs at an acceptable level.

Unlike the current diary method of surveying listeners, the PPM is a small, pager-sized device that mea-
sures the listening of the user as it is carried around.
European Market
Continued from page 1

multilingual, multicultural and multi-regulatory issues. Moreover, it will face intense competition from already established music e-tailers and other U.S. rivals.

There’s a big race for Europe. In the first half of next year, we expect four to five of the big U.S. names in Europe,” says John Rose, London-based EMI Group’s executive VP.

LAUNCH DATE
Industry sources say Apple had originally hoped to launch iTunes in Europe by the end of this year, but plans were delayed.

Speaking at the Apple Expo trade fair Sept. 16 in Paris, Apple founder and CEO Steve Jobs revealed that the company was actually targeting a European launch in 2004.

“That was the first time it was publicly announced that we hope to bring it into Europe at some time next year. And that’s the official information,” says Alan Hely, Apple Europe’s U.K.-based spokesman.

Hely adds that he cannot provide more details because of the legal dispute between Apple Computer and Apple Corps, the Beatles’ record label.

The two are at odds regarding the use of the Apple brand name.

According to sources, Apple’s plans were delayed when it realized the complexity of the market.

One besoin or any other U.S.-originated digital-music service hits Europe, it will face stiff homegrown competition.

There are already entrenched players such as Microsoft portal msnico. php, www.msn.co.uk and France’s Fnac. MTV Networks Europe and Italian Internet music service Tiscali also operate pan-European services.

Additionally, many U.S. digital music stores as RealNetworks’ Rhapsody and Roxio’s new commercial version of Napster plan to enter Europe next year.

Sources predict that pioneering online music bookseller amazon.com will also join the fray.

One of the main European players is U.K.-based On Digital Distribution (OD2), the company co-founded by rock artist Peter Gabriel, which has so far cornered Europe’s digital-music sector.

It has done so by joining forces with Microsoft, Apple’s rival in the home-commerce market.

OD2 co-founder and CEO Charles Grimsdale welcomes the competition.

“I feel positive about Apple’s plans; the market needs competition, because it helps inform consumers that there are legal alternatives,” he says.

MAJOR EFFORT
OD2’s experience in Europe could be inspirational for Apple and it exemplifies the difficulties in setting up shop in the region.

For the past two years, OD2 has acquired the necessary rights and provided the back-room and hosting services to retailer clients like hmv.co.uk, msn.co.uk and Tiscali.

In all, OD2 has about 20 such clients in 10 European countries and uses Windows Media Technology as its distribution platform, Grimsdale says.

It offers more than 220,000 digitized tracks from all five majors and various indie labels, compared with Apple’s 400,000 in the U.S. It has the license for another 500,000 titles, but they need to be converted into digital files.

Initially, OD2 affiliates sold tracks through monthly subscriptions; it has since shifted to Apple’s strategy and obtained rights from its clients to sell individual downloads à la carte as well.

“Up to 30% of the [OD2] affiliates have added the a la carte offering, and we’ve seen a 900% increase in revenue for those stores,” Grimsdale says.

He acknowledges that it has been a major effort going from country to country to win recording rights.

“Unquestionably, three years ago, labels were wary of releasing any type of licenses that would allow anyone to burn CD copies of their tracks or download to portable players,” he says.

Indeed, European music online operators say they are negotiating with rights owners and that the various royalty collecting societies in every one of the European Union’s 15 states is something akin to negotiating a minefield.

Despite efforts to streamline how digital tracks can be purchased, the process is anything but standard.

That all this means for the music business—and whether it signals the start of a comeback for single sales—is open to debate.

EMI Music Marketing executive VP Phil Quaranta says he isn’t reading the tea leaves just yet—echoing a sentiment expressed by many label executives, who say they are not ready to rush to judgment.

Quaranta says he is just happy that consumers are seeing a value in music.

“Any way we can drive a consumer to purchase music as opposed to taking music is a win for the industry,” he notes.

Growth of digital track sales comes as consumer interest in commercial online music services is growing and more players are moving into the market.

But many sales and distribution executives at the majors contend that contrasting digital track sales and physical singles sales isn’t a straight comparison.

SHIFTING MARKET?
The singles market, much to the dismay of physical retailers, has been in a state of decline for many years. Because major labels have concerns regarding sales cannibalizing album sales, only a limited number of these titles are available for sale.

Meanwhile, online selling of physical singles has access to a universe of more than 500,000 tracks at 99 cents each.

At the very least, analysts see digital consumption trends as an indicator of growing market acceptance of the nascent online music services.

But a broader view suggests that the trend works in a different way to market where individual song purchases and digital distribution will play a much bigger role in the industry’s profitability equation.

Regardless of the perspective, label and technology executives say the growth of track sales online shows that the industry is starting to fulfill a consumer demand that was previously only being satisfied by unlicensed, peer-to-peer networks.

Recent growth in the digital tracks market can be attributed to the rise of PC download sales—particularly from Apple Computer’s iTunes Music Store.

This issue marks the first week that reported sales include a full week of PC downloads through iTunes. The 857,000 tracks sold is a 25% increase from the prior week when 685,000 tracks were sold.

PC purchases through iTunes made an even more dramatic impact on digital track sales the week before with only a partial week of sales reporting.

Following the debut of iTunes on the PC, which came in the middle of the Nielsen SoundScan reporting period that ended Oct. 19, digital track sales jumped 70% to 685,000 from 396,000 in the prior week.

The gap between physical and digital on individual songs has been narrowing as weekly sales for the most popular digital tracks continue to grow.

On the Billboard Hot Digital Tracks chart this issue, each of the 25 tracks ranked were purchased more than 1,000 times—a first. (In all, 32 songs were sold more than 1,000 times last week.)

In another first, two songs on the Hot Digital Tracks chart this issue posted sales of more than 4,000—the aforementioned “Hey Ya!” and “Stacy’s Mom” from Former Watermelon Crawl (9 Curves/EMC), which sold just shy of 4,100 copies.

MORE PLAYERS TO COME
Interest in digital tracks and albums will likely rise as more players enter the market, label and Internet executives note.

In the latest wave of launches, Roxio bowed its new Napster service Oct. 29 amid high expectations.

Meanwhile, Dell has teamed with MusicMatch for a new co-branded music service that entered the market Oct. 7.

The Round Rock, Texas-based computer maker also bowed a line of portable music player devices, the Dell DJ, designed to compete with the Apple iPod.

Interest in already existing digital music offerings is growing too. RealNetworks reports more than 250,000 subscribers to its digital music services as of the end of the third quarter. Comparable figures were unavailable.

MusicNet says its total subscriber numbers through AOL are now at about 185,000, up from 100,000 in July. A MusicNet subscription costs $8.95.

Digital Tracks
Continued from page 1

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MusicNet says its total subscriber numbers through AOL are now at about 185,000, up from 100,000 in July. A MusicNet subscription costs $8.95.
Album Sales Climb Again

It’s like the 90’s all over again—except without Nirvana, the “Titanic” soundtrack and all those pesky cassettes—as album sales beat those of the same week of 2002 for the seventh week in a row.

With Rod Stewart playing the role of Pied Piper, enjoying his biggest-ever Nielsen SoundScan week, this is the longest stretch of growth over comparative prior-year sales since third-quarter 2001, when an eight-week run of U.S. album volume gains got snapped by the terror attacks of Sept. 11.

From that point to the end of 2001, the gap between that year’s album sales and the boom that was 2000 got wider (Billboard, Oct. 25). The lag continued from the start of 2002 through the week ending Sept. 7 of this year, a drought during which only the fluctuations of holiday dates accounted for the few occasions when album sales beat those of the same week of the prior year.

This seven-week run is reminiscent of the robust growth that Nielsen SoundScan numbers revealed through most of the 90s, but the ride comes to a halt next issue, when music stores compete with the week that the soundtrack from Eminem’s “8 Mile” arrived.

During that 2002 frame, not only did “8 Mile” start with 702,000 copies, but new titles from Christina Aguilera, Nirvana, Rascal Flatts and Torte Amos also landed within The Billboard 200’s top seven rungs, with those four titles adding, collectively, another 841,000 units of new business to the mix. Still, even with five new titles bowing inside the top 10, sales tailed those of the same week in 2001 by 8.5%, a snapshot of how tough a year 2002 was.

This year’s Oct. 28 slate brought us the new outing by the Strokes, which should be the next Hot Shot Debut with about 105,000, based on first-day reports from retailers, while R.E.M. and Gerald Levert are also primed to reach the top 10. Even so, this crop is destined to fall short of the “8 Mile” yield.

Let’s just hope that when all is said and done, next issue’s lighter chart volume represents a speed bump, and not a wall.

STANDARD TIME: If you were a fan of Rod Stewart’s rock classics like “Maggie May” or “You Wear It Well” or disco-era hits like “Da Ya Think I’m Sexy” you have ever imagined a day when the feisty singer would not only record American standards but also prosper from doing so?

Turns out that his 2002 J Records bow, “It Had to Be You... The Great American Songbook,” was quite the building block. (Continued on page 54)
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<td>ROD STEWART</td>
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<td>ANTHONY HAMILTON</td>
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**GREATEST GAINERS**

- ROD STEWART
- ANTHONY HAMILTON
- SOUNDTRACK
- AVarious Artists

**ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL**

- CLAY AIKEN/SONY BMG ENTERTAINMENT
- ROD STEWART/AE
- EAGLES/REPRISE
- OUTKAST/ATLANTIC
- LUDACRIS/REPRISE
- LOON/DEF JAM RECORDINGS
- DIDO/EMI
- JAGGED EDGE/DANITE
- BARBRA STREISAND/REPRISE
- HILARY DUFF/REPRISE
- CHINGY/REPRISE
- NICKELBACK/REPRISE
- MADDY MOORE/REPRISE
- 3 DOORS DOWN/REPRISE
- DAVE MATTHEWS/REPRISE
- R. KELLY/REPRISE
- MARQUES HUNTINGTON/REPRISE
- STING/REPRISE
- BEYONCE/REPRISE
- JOHN MAYER/REPRISE
- LIMP BIZKIT/REPRISE
- SOUTH PLAIN/REPRISE
- ALAN JACQUES/REPRISE
- DMX/REPRISE
- OBIE TRICE/REPRISE
- EVANESCENCE/REPRISE
- BETTE MIDLER/REPRISE
- LIL JUN & THE EAST SIDE BOYZ/REPRISE
- BAD BOY'S DA BAND/REPRISE
- VAN MORRISON/REPRISE
- RUSH/REPRISE
- LINKIN PARK/REPRISE
- VARIOUS ARTISTS/REPRISE
- NORAH JONES/REPRISE
- MICHAEL MCDONALD/REPRISE
- JOHNNY LANG/REPRISE
- 50 CENT/REPRISE
- COLDPLAY/REPRISE
- MURPHY LEE/REPRISE
- MARTINA McBride/REPRISE
- SIMON & GARFUNKEL/REPRISE
- 2PAC/REPRISE
- SEAL/REPRISE
- ROD STEWART/ATLANTIC
- ANTHONY HAMILTON/REPRISE
- SOUNDTRACK/ATLANTIC
- AVarious Artists/REPRISE

**AS OF NOVEMBER 8, 2003**
Over The Counter

“...The Great American Songbook Volume II” arrives at No. 2 with an opener of 212,000 copies, handsonly beating his best previous Nielsen SoundScan week by almost 100,000.

But prior best came when the first standards package began at No. 4 with 115,000. That title, by the way, earns Greatest Gainer honors, advancing 95-46 (up 73%) thanks to its position at No. 1.

What's next? “As Time Goes By,” including “The Oprah Winfrey Show.”

That exposure also benefits Stewart’s new Warner Strategic Marketing anthology, which more than doubles its prior-week sales to re-enter at No. 125. But that company’s big noise this week belongs to a hits package by another veteran act, the Eagles.

At No. 3 with 162,000 copies.

The new Stewart and Eagles sets each end up with larger openers than their first-day numbers seemed to indicate. The former, in fact, bolstered by a strong showing at Costco stores, falls less than 13,000 units shy of chart lider Clay Aiken, who has a second-week dip of 12,000.

The Eagles fatten their first week with almost 17,000 direct-to-consumer sales.

A younger artist also posts a larger week than her first-day numbers suggested, as another Winfrey guest, Mandy Moore, enters at No. 14. Although she has had two other SoundScan weeks higher than this 55,000-unit start, this is a higher Billboard 200 peak than on radio's radar for a while. He has appeared on no less than eight singles that reached Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks, including cuts by JME, Ty, TOni Braxton, LSG and his label's founder, P. Diddy.

Loon's current single, “Down for Me,” has a radio audience of 16 million at No. 28 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks.

Marques Houston debuts at 18 with his "MH" set (51,000). While this is Houston's solo bow, he previously was with the R&B act JMS (formerly Immature). Houston first charted as a solo artist earlier this year with the single "That Girl," through T.U.G./A&M/Interscope.

Since then, however, Houston shifted to T.U.G./U.Electra. The latest track, the R. Kelly-produced "Chillin'," is at No. 12 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks, with 30 million in audience.

Something Corporate's third effort, "North" (No. 24, 41,500 units), earns the band its best sales week ever.

Its last album, "Leaving Through the Window," started with 12,000 copies in May 2002.

A release-week visit to "Jimmy Kimmel Live" and MTV2’s "New Faces of Rock" and "Advanced Warning" programming helped build Something's awareness, as did a summer tour with 311.

SMOKE RISES: Smokie Norful is two for two on Top Gospel Albums, earning his second No. 1.

The new "Smokie Norful: Limited Edition" also reaches higher ground on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums (No. 24) and The Billboard 200 (No. 96) than his first album achieved. "I Need You Now" peaked at No. 26 on the former, No. 154 on the latter.

Additional reporting by Keith Caulfield in Los Angeles.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>NOVEMBER 8, 2003</th>
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**Notes:**
- Billboard's Hot 100 is a chart that ranks the best-performing songs in the United States, published by Billboard magazine. It is based on sales and streams of songs in the United States.
- The chart is selected by Billboard's own editors, based on data collected from multiple outlets.
- The chart is divided into several categories, including Pop, Rock, Country, and R&B/Hip-Hop.
- The chart is updated weekly and is one of the most influential music charts in the world.
### Billboard Top Blues Albums

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<td>SOUNDTRACK</td>
<td>Martin Scorsese Presents The Best Of The Blues</td>
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<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Get The Blues Vol. 2</td>
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<td>STEVE RAY VAUGHAN AND DOUBLE TRouble</td>
<td>The Essential Steve Ray Vaughan And Double Trouble</td>
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<td>JIMI HENDRIX</td>
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<td>STEVE RAY VAUGHAN</td>
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<td>A Musical Journey</td>
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<td>ERIC CLAPTON</td>
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### Billboard Top Reggae Albums

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<td>WAYNE WONDER</td>
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<td>BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS</td>
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<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>The Biggest Raggae Dancehall Anthems 2003</td>
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<td>BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS</td>
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<td>EASY STAR ALL-STARS</td>
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### Billboard Top Gospel Albums

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<td>23</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Hearts On Fire LEGACY</td>
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who wouldn't wanna be at no. 1
Despite this interval, McLachlan’s ethereal voice and haunting lyrics have already been warmly ushered onto the airwaves. First single “Fallen” debuted at No. 1 on the Hot Digital Tracks chart, and on Adult Top 40 it is No. 10 this issue.

“A lot of different kinds of music have dominated the airwaves for so long that hopefully now there is a place for me,” McLachlan says.

“I felt like the day Lilith Fair ended, the door slammed shut and all of a sudden there were Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake and angry white male bands,” she recalls. “I thought, ‘I’m glad I’m taking a hiatus here. There’s no place for my music at all.’”

Lilith Fair, the heralded female singer/songwriter-driven concert series founded by McLachlan and her manager Terry McBride (CEO of Vancover-based Network Music Group), launched in 1997 and ran successfully for three years. Participating acts included Jewel, Indigo Girls, Sheryl Crow, Natalie Merchant, Enya, Badu and Dixie Chicks.

**POIGNANT TRACKS**
But with the early success of “Fallen,” the door seems to be opening.

“For artists who show true artistic talent, the climate couldn’t be better,” Arista president/CEO Antonio “La.” Reid says.

“The climate is bad for predictability. The climate is bad for disposable hits. The climate is amazing for singer/songwriters who are doing compelling records,” he observes. “We have huge ex-

**McLachlan**
**Continued from page 1**

pectations for “Afterglow.”

Anchored by “Fallen,” a strings- and piano-laden song about making and recovering from mistakes in life and love, “Afterglow” contains numerous single-worthy tracks and remarkable musical and lyrical moments.

“Answer” is a song about finding the things in your life which is reminiscent of the bare “I Love You” from “Surfacing.” It focuses on McLachlan’s soothing voice.

“Push” delves into the give-and-take between two people do in a relationship and features a melodic, calming accompaniment. Airy background vocals form the backdrop to “Time,” a track about the confusion of love.

Strings and percussion clash in “Stupid.” The song focuses on a relationship gone bad through the catchy lyric: “How stupid could I be? I can’t see / that you’re not good for me / it’s the only one I see.”

Another standout track is “World On Fire,” about living in today’s confusing world.

“If there is any one song that is about my identity, it is certainly that,” says McLachlan, who is published by Sony/ATV Songs, Tye Music (BMI).

That song was about, “What is this world we are bringing our children into? Are people flying planes into the World Trade Center, and they are blowing up buildings everywhere,” she says. “It is all the small things that make the world. Smiling at the lit-

tle old woman or helping her across the street or teaching your children the right things in life and to understand compassion and empathy for other people.”

McLachlan adds that outside of that track, the album really does not touch on her mother’s death or the birth of her daughter, India.

“It takes me a long time to process information and experiences and be able to look back on them objectively,” she says. “That’s why I couldn’t write about India or my mother now. It’s too close still.”

What she was able to share, she explains, was “human relationships and what they do to people. That’s a topic that I keep going back to. They do some pretty messed-up stuff and they do some pretty incredible things, too. They’re a constant source of inspir-

ation that we can all relate to.”

She adds that the record might sound best when “played very loud, very late after drinking too much red wine.”

Such songs about love and relationships have been successful for McLachlan, a three-time Grammy Award winner.

“Surfacing” peaked at No. 2 on The Billboard 200 and has sold 5.4 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It spawned the hits “Aila” (which reached No. 3 on The Billboard Hot 100), “Angel” (which peaked at No. 4), “Building A Mys-

tery” and “Sweet Surrender.”

The 1999 live album “Mirrorball” reached No. 3 on The Billboard 200 and sold 2 million copies. It featured the hit the “I Will Remember You.”

**MARKETING BLITZ**
Mclachlan has already embarked on a new promotional blitz to reach established and new fans.

She has been performing and doing interviews at major radio stations across the country and will appear on 12 TV programs throughout Novem-

ber. They include talk shows hosted by David Letterman, Jay and Ellen DeGeneres, “Today” and “Live With Regis and Kelly.”

She will tour in support of the album next year, first going to Europe, Australia and Japan and then focusing on North America in the summer.

“Surfacing” was a No. 1 hit on Apple’s iTunes Music Store, which is also offer-


“We will also do an AOL session, which will go live around the end of October, an artist spotlight at Yahoo and video streams on MSN,” Lowen-

berg says. “Our target demographic is 25-49, but there is no reason that 14-, 15- and 16-year-olds can’t discover Sarah and become fans.”

Lowenberg adds that it will be diffi-

cult to cross “Fallen” with the top 40 radio from modern adult stations.

“Top 40 radio does not play the Sarah McLachlan of the world,” he says. “It has, however, been much easi-

er to reintroduce her to existing fan base. When you hear her voice again after six years, it’s like hearing an old friend again.”

Numerous adult top 40 program-

mers are already finding McLachlan at the top of their most-requested lists. They say that alongside such releases as the Dixie Chicks’ “Goodbye Little Girl” (Atlantic) and Jewel’s “0034” (Atlantic), listeners are ready to hear quality female singer/songwriters on the air-

waves again.

“We have massive action on the phones for ‘Fallen’ and have had reaction to singer/songwriters like Dido,” says Greg Strassell, PD for adult top 40 WBMX Boston. “It does exist when Sarah’s music is released. It is a matter of quality AC stations are excited to have the queen of the format back.”

Retailers anticipate strong sales throughout the holiday season. Virgin Megastore senior VP of product and marketing Dave Alder predicts that his customers will respond “very warmly” to “Afterglow.”

“A record that is good for fans is true. It’s a good indicator is to com-

pare her to the Dido album, which has done very well off the back of strong radio play,” he says.

“Both of these releases are definitely pieces of quality work and have a wide appeal in demographic and reach,” Alder continues. “‘Fallen’ has helped Sarah reach new listeners that proba-

bly weren’t aware of her last releases or were too young for her.”

McLachlan hopes people will enjoy the record, though she waves off potential criticism.

“My guideline for success—and this is really a truthful guideline for whether I am really proud of this record, if I am proud of the record, which I am, and I let it go,” she says. “If other people like it, then that’s a big bonus for me.”

**McLachlan Pondering Life After Lithium**

**Teens**
**Continued from page 6**

Yet moderator Omar Waqow, execu-

tive director at online community backchat.com, said, “I’m sure people are wondering why he admitted it often can be a crap shot when trying to create an “authentic experience” that will lead to teens part-

king with their money.

“My gut is that there is no way to do this,” he said. “You get lucky, Teens are incredibly fickle. You might get it, you might not.”

**Hooters**
**Continued from page 5**

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labels about potentially signing UC3. Radio Express has released the “It’s a Party” single to 1.500 radio and music formats in 30 coun-

tries. That number includes 500 urban and pop stations in the U.S. The single was produced by Eric “Free” Smith.

He joins fellow producers Grip Smith (no relation) and Joe Blake on UC3’s debut album, “I’m That Girl.”

The title track, described as a girl-

power anthem, was a concept sug-

gested by McViel. The album is due in first-quarter 2004.

Currently in the midst of cele-

brating its 20th anniversary, Hoot-

ers boasts more than 350 restaurants in 13 countries. Most famous for its Hooters Girls hostesses, the chain currently employs 15,000 females.
Producers

A.B. Quintanilla and Cruz Martinez of the Kumbia Kings, who partnered with EMI Latin for King of Bling, andsync to Santaolalla and Anibal Kerpel, who have long operated Surco Records in partnership with Universal.

Although 30 to 50 deals are crafted alike, their intent is much the same. Labels team with successful producers to tap into their capacity to identify talent in specific areas. The producers want greater creative and economic control of artists they truly believe in, as well as a guaranteed outlet for these artists’ productions.

In fact, several of these producers—including Perez, Livio and Alfano—have such a vested interest in the acts they sign that they also manage them.

“My intention wasn’t to go signing famous artists,” says Perez, who has been the Billboard Hot Latin Tracks producer of the year twice in the past three years. “I have so many young, talented people coming all the time [into the studio]. That I always felt there was a need, and the major labels really don’t have a department [dedicated to giving] young talents a chance.

Perez says with several labels before teaming last year with Universal Music Group for the RPE joint venture. Universal owns 51% of the company—Perez has the remaining stake—and funds the production, marketing and promotion of all product. Distribution is through Universal Music & Video Distribution, which handles Univision releases.

Under the deal, Perez can also produce other acts for other labels. “It’s a match made in heaven.” Univision Music president/CEO Jose Behar says, “I could never afford to bring him on as an A&R guy, so why not bring him on as a partner.”

Last year, RPE launched its first act. Area 305, and gained heavy airplay for at least three singles. The act is working on its next album and is managed by Perez. A second pop act, Michelangelo, is targeted for release next year.

UNIVERSAL’S DEALS

The notion of having an outside A&R source was also the rationale behind the creation of Alfanno Music last year.

“Allianco is not coming out of the blue. He’s looked for talent up and down,” says John Echevarria, president of Universal Music Latino, who owns a 51% stake in the label to Alfano’s 49%

The two-year agreement calls for Alfanno to deliver three productions per year, with each receiving $50,000 up-front production, marketing and promotion costs, while distribution is taken up by UMDV.

Although the financial particulars of the deal weren’t disclosed, sources say Alfanno is getting upwards of half a million dollars per year for his productions.

Alfanno Music’s first signing was pop singer/songwriter Jorge Correa “Teresco,” whose debut album was released in August. Alfanno not only wrote or cowrote the bulk of Correa’s album but also manages his career and plans to manage future acts released on his label.

At the same time, Alfanno, like Perez, is free to continue writing and producing tracks for other acts outside of Universal.

WE BELIEVE IN ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

“If we don’t make money immediately but see the band is growing, that’s OK.”

—GUSTAVO SANTAOLALLA, SURCO RECORDS

Last month, Universal inked another joint-venture deal, with rap label Guitarr Brothers Music.

Under the new partnership, Guitari will sign, produce and develop artists with financing from Universal, which will distribute the releases. The two-year deal calls for three studio albums per year.

Although it would appear that such alliances could dilute his label’s resources, Echevarria says the opposite is true.

“It opens up the company to new marketing windows and a different sort of A&R.” Echevarria says, “It’s very possible that many artists who don’t know how to get close to a major label like ours feel comfortable with a smaller label.”

Executives agree that the chances of success for such partnerships depend to a large degree on the level of cooperation between the major label and the producing label. The former cannot simply put out albums without ensuring the latter’s interest and commitment.

Last year, Universal funded another joint-venture, R&B music label Night Man Records, of which it owned half. After disappointing sales, the label folded earlier this year.

When all involved are on the same page, the results can be exceptional. For example, Perez also manages his father’s partner, the legendary dedication they place on an album is far more intense,” says Walter Kolm, VP of marketing for Universal Music Latino, noting producers’ penchant for handling the acts they sign.

Livio’s new Megamusic Records—which is not a partnership with a major—takes things a step further; the label will manage and book artists, who will also be signed to his publishing company.

The longest-standing example of producer-driven joint venture is Surco Records, an alternative label created six years ago by Los Angeles-based producers Santaolalla and Kerpel.

Through it, the two sign, produce and develop acts; Universal markets, promotes and distributes them worldwide.

Although Surco maintains very close ties with its acts, it doesn’t manage them.

“We build the budgets with [the label’s approval],” says Santaolalla, who in September won three Latin Grammy Awards. “They believe we are the experts in music, and I believe they are the experts in selling records.”

But while the Surco label is a pure alternative music label, the label’s degree of success varies wildly. Its acts include bigger stars like Molotov and Juanes as well as such modest sellers as Uruapan La Velas Puerca.

“We do believe in artist development,” Santaolalla says.

“And if we don’t make money immediately but see the band is growing, that’s OK.”

Blues

Continued from page 5

soundtracks or single-artist compilations with the series brand.

Overall, however, retailers report soaring interest in the blues in the immediate wake of the PBS shows.

“Our blues sales are up over 200% for that period,” says Kevin Cassidy, executive VP of sales & operations at West Sacramento, Calif.-based Tower Records.

Tower mounted a major blues sale in its 91 stores beginning in August, weeks prior to the Sept. 28 start of the PBS series.

Cassidy reports that the chain experienced a rise in sales not only of non-haired product by such featured series artists as Son House but also for endcaps new titles by contemporary artists like James Blood Ulmer and for such DVD titles as “Blues Story” (Shout Factory) and “American Folk Blues Festival” (Hip-O).

“When you see things selling in a [unit range of the high 200s] in a couple of weeks that have sold the same in the previous three months, you’re seeing some impact,” Cassidy says.

“There are well over 100 titles that sold 45 or more pieces in the last three weeks,” he adds. “That kind of stuff just builds.”

Susan Scott, blues category manager for Tower’s Music in Ann Arbor, Mich., says the chain experienced a 50%-60% increase in the genre following the series.

But Scott notes that the major jumps were for artists like Keb’Mo’ and Muddy Waters, who pulled down major screenplays in the stores.

In the past few weeks, the number of blues titles sold jumped by between 450% and 500% at the 23 Virgin Mega-stores in North America, according to Vince Szydlowik, senior director of product for the L.A.-based chain.

Of the 20 titles on Virgin’s blues chart, 80% carry the series brand. Szydlowik says they are benefiting from a pair of endcaps in the stores.

The Scorsese shows have not been a bonanza for their featured acts, though.

One artist, Marcia Ball, who appeared in Clint Eastwood’s film about you, is only selling 200,000 or 500,000 units on the project, that is a huge burden,” he adds.

Despite these problems, it is clear that TV projects are becoming increasingly important to studios. Executives say that TV show creators and producers are becoming more involved in the DVD releases and that TV releases are increasingly seen as a marketing tool for TV distributors seeking to establish a franchise.

The success of TV series on DVD comes at a time of increasing growth in the DVD industry as a whole.

According to statistics released by the Digital Entertainment Group (DEG), 215 million DVD software units shipped to retail in third-quarter 2003, a 40% increase over the same time period last year.

TV DVDs

Continued from page 8

“It is a time-consuming process for older series,” says Gordon H. senior VP of marketing for Vista Home Entertainment. “Given the window of time that we have, we have to figure out what we can do.”

Some studios are simply not releasing projects because of the frustration of clearing music.

“As the TV market gets more competitive, becoming more difficult to clear music,” says Jeff Baker, VP of franchise marketing for Warner Home Video. “We want to include original music. Now we may not be releasing the best result.

Studios are also weighing the cost of clearing music vs. a project’s potential unit sales. Veteran TV producer Paul Brownstein says that in the VHs era, a music license might cost about 6 cents per song per video. That has risen to 10 to 15 cents per song per project, and TV series packages on DVD also cost less than they did on VHS, he says.

Staddon adds that it could cost more than $1 million to license music for a complete series (TV releases).

“On the hardware front, the DEG, in conjunction with the Consumer Electronics Association, says that more than $4 million DVD players were sold in the third quarter, which is a 37% increase over third-quarter 2002.

The TV DVD Conference was sponsored by Video Store magazine, the DEG and Billboard sister publication The Hollywood Reporter.

Bobby will represent one style. Corey Hahn will represent another.
**Trama**

Continued from page 8

Spain and Portugal — will launch in the U.S. A distribution deal with Ryko is pending.

"When we started the label, we knew from the very beginning of having a different business model," Szajman says. "With the rise of the Internet and DVD support, we understood that [the company] had to be more than just music. We knew that music and image would come together in the future."

"Like Boscoli, Boscoli acknowledges that Trama's business is not built just on the music, but on the content, music and visuals," he notes.

**Lions Gate**

Continued from page 6

Sundance acquisition "The Cooler" and "Shattered Glass."

Artisan, meanwhile, is releasing "Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights" in February. The studio is also working on a theatrical film "The Punisher" in April.

The new company's home entertainment arm will benefit from Arti- san's extensive relationships with such major retailers as Wal-Mart and Best Buy, which carry Artisan's theatrical DVD releases and children's video brands like Barbie, Rescue Heroes and Clifford the Big Red Dog. Artisan family titles are also distributed through its Family Home Entertainment (FHE) division.

Though executives from Lions Gate Home Entertainment, Artisan Home Entertainment and FHE could not comment on the deal and its ramifications, per a non-disclosure agreement, each company's CEO spoke of the deal's benefits in a statement.

"Lions Gate and Artisan have complementary strengths and an over- all approach that will benefit our product only through Minneapolis- based Best Buy's 14 Canadian stores and the 105 outlets of its Future Shop subsidiary. The deal with Best Buy was cut by Michael Cohl, CEO of Toronto- based TGA Entertainment and long- time Stone promoter. Executives at the camps that dis- tribute the band's records, ABKCO and Virgin, indicated that they did not have any involvement in the deal. In Cana- da, ABKCO distributor Universal Music Canada declined to comment on the entertainment at Best Buy (Billboard, Oct. 18). "There is more to come, but I can't tell you about it yet," he says.

Since its launch, the Rolling Stones product — including CDs, DVDs, videos- tapes and accessories — from their stores indefinitely, beginning Oct. 28. HMV Canada operates 100 stores. People who buy the new CDs are crediting their HMV store Music world chain, and Sun has 32 stores in Ontario.

"Four Flicks" will be available in Canada only through Minneapolis- based Best Buy's 14 Canadian stores and the 105 outlets of its Future Shop subsidiary. The deal with Best Buy was cut by Michael Cohl, CEO of Toronto- based TGA Entertainment and long- time Stone promoter. Executives at the camps that dis- tribute the band's records, ABKCO and Virgin, indicated that they did not have any involvement in the deal. In Cana- da, ABKCO distributor Universal Music Canada declined to comment on the

"When I'm in the studio, I'm really only thinking about Brazil, not the rest of the world."

While Porto is surprised by her global success, she acknowledges that she might have something to do with her highly melodic and harmonious music, as well as with Trama's methods of marketing and promotion.

"Trama supports the Internet," she says. "It's a great way to keep in touch with people and fans around the globe."

In the Oct. 10, 1998, issue of Bill- board, Trama was the focus of a cover- story. "Our dream was to be a multi- national company — to be recognized as a company generating and giving opportunities to a new cast of Brazil- ian artists," she says.

"And while we respect the older guys like Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil, there is a new generation of Brazilian artists that must be shown to the world," she adds. "It is our job to do just that."

**Rolling Stones**

Continued from page 6

The tour may be best remembered for its equal-opportunity approach to routing. It is one thing to play four times in South Florida, five times in Chicago and six times in Boston. But Cher also put up big numbers in such markets as Trenton, N.J.; Bridgport, Conn.; Des Moines, Iowa; Moline, Ill.; Reading, Pa.; and Memphis.

"Every place we could possibly put this show, we've played it," Warwara says. "We did two shows in Council Bluffs, Iowa. We played Billings, Mont., twice in three months."

Scott adds, "I think she felt like if people still wanted to come see [the show], this would be their last chance. There was no difference in response from the crowd, whether it was Billings or New York."

So what was the tour's secret in spite of its hiccups from large markets to the hinterlands?

"Ticket pricing and the quality of the show Cher delivers," Warwara replies. "We had no ticket prices over $75, and the show is incredible."

For all its longevity, the Cher Fare- well tour may still have some life in it yet. Cher plays Las Vegas' MGM Grand Arena Jan. 2-3, 2004, with K.C. & the Sunshine Band and Village Pe- ple, and some are hoping she may take the tour overseas.

"I know she wants to go to Australia and New Zealand, and I know she'd love to go to Europe and show this off," Warwara says. "Anything is possible, but nothing is confirmed."

Scott says, "Cher needs a break, and she's looking forward to that break. Then we'll see if anybody is interested." But when she does, she is done. She is likely done touring for good. "I really do believe this will be her last tour," Scott says. "She will perform, but she's not going to get on a bus and schlepp around America."
‘I Want To Make A Difference In Everything That I Do’

BY RASHAUN HALL

While Jay-Z talks about retiring as an artist, his business partner, Damon Dash, seems to just be getting started.

The 31-year-old native of New York’s storied Harlem area began his entrepreneurial career when he, friend Kareen “Biggs” Burke and Jay-Z launched Roc-a-Fella Records in 1995. The label was created with Dash as CEO after they were unable to land a recording deal elsewhere for the rapper.

Since then, Dash and company have linked with Universal Music Group’s Def Jam division and turned the imprint into one of the industry’s most respected forces.

With his final album due Nov. 28, multi-platinum-selling Jay-Z continues to be Roc-a-Fella’s flagship act. But the label’s current roster also boasts such hit artists as Cam’ron, Dirt McGirt (aka O’ Dirty Bastard), M.O.P., Beanie Sigel, Memphis Bleek and Kanye West.

Earlier this year, Dash announced plans to transcend the label’s hip-hop roots with the creation of the Roc Music division (Billboard, June 28). Headed by Roc-a-Fella/Roc Music VP Kenny Burns, Roc Music will focus on R&B, rock, alternative and pop. The new label’s signings include rocker Samantha Ronson and R&B singers Rell, Nicole Wray and Allen Anthony.

“Damon’s work ethic is incredible,” Burke says. “He’s passionate about his business and is no-nonsense 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Above all, he’s an executor.”

Dash also has branched out with fashion, film and philanthropic endeavors. His Rocawear fashion line is a multimillion-dollar venture. His production company, Roc-a-Fella Films, has been responsible for such films as “Backstage,” “State Property” and “Paid in Full.” Future projects include “The Woodsman” with Kevin Bacon, Kyra Sedgwick, Mos Def and Eve. Now he is setting up his own studio, Dash Films. He even has his own brand of vodka, Armadale.

So, while Jay-Z may be hanging up his microphone, Dash seems to be doing everything but picking one up.

Q: Is this really it for Jay-Z?

A: I think it’s whatever Jay wants. He’s been doing albums consistently for the last 10 years. He’s given up everything we could want from a hip-hop artist—controversy, battles, good music, singles, underground. He’s actually been the franchise at the Roc, and at this time if he feels he needs to take a rest or retire and enjoy life, I think he deserves it.

As a fan, I’m definitely a little bothered because I think he’s the best rapper that ever lived. So it’s a double-edged sword, but I’m happy to see him enjoy his life.

Q: With him retiring, what is the future of Roc-a-Fella?

A: We’re going to take over the whole planet. We’re not going to only contain ourselves to hip-hop. We’re not going to have only one successful artist. Hopefully, we’ll have 10. I want to do rock, I want to do soul, I want to do alternative. I want to definitely keep up with the hip-hop, I want to do underground, I want to do pop.

I don’t think we should be contained to just one style of music. At the same time, I don’t want to have albums out just for the sake of having them out. I want to make a difference in everything that I do. I want to do the best of everything.

Q: You’ve mentioned before that you have similar goals in terms of Hollywood. What drives your desire to break into that system?

A: It makes sense. We’ve done music and fashion. And in true form, they won’t let me in, so I have to make my space. They won’t just trust me as a businessman and as someone that is a constant connoisseur of quality, validity and profit.

On another level, a lot of the independent filmmakers have never had the opportunity to make money from their talent. I want to also give them the opportunity to do that. As big as Roc-a-Fella is, we’re just one big independent on every level.

Q: How does it feel knowing that despite all your successes, some will still question your clout as an entrepreneur?

A: I’m used to it now. Every time that happens, it makes it better for me, because that means I have to learn the game a little better, I get hungrier and it gives me a little bit of drive. It also makes things more lucrative for me because I control things. So, it’s a double-edged sword. It’s more work for me, but in the long run I’ll know the game a little better.

Q: You are one of the few music executives who has successfully diversified into non-music interests. Why was that important to you?

A: There are a couple of different reasons. Number one, I’m a cakeaholic. I love making money, and I love spending money. I don’t want to go broke. I don’t want to be one of those dudes you see on TV on those “Where Are They Now?” shows. I have to pay my taxes. So, I have to create opportunities to support my habits. It’s new money, so I’m having fun with it.

On a social level, I feel that everything I do sets an example for the rest of my culture. I open doors, and everything I do, people pattern. So, I can show you how to make money on every level but also show people like myself, someone from an urban environment who didn’t have an education or nepotism working for them, that they can make a space and control things. I also want my culture to have that kind of confidence in itself.

A lot of people I work with try to act like I work for them, and I’m like, “Dog, you all work for me.” I’m making you the money. You’re exploiting my culture and my talents. So, I should be the one making the money.” A lot of times they lead you to believe that they’re the ones doing you a favor and that they can treat you any old kind of way. Then they take the credit for the things that you do.

I think it’s important for me to lead by example to embarrass those who try to take advantage of the weaker. I’m sick of the cornballs and the squares dictating what goes on in the bigger picture.

Q: What are your thoughts on file sharing as it relates to hip-hop?

A: It sucks. We’re already being bootlegged so much, it’s not a good thing. If we could find a way to contain the bootlegging and the artist could profit from it, it would be a good thing because we would be cutting out the middle man—the retailers—and selling things for a proper price.

Until then, being at Universal, we’re taking a big hit. It’s not a great time to be in the music business from an artist’s perspective.

Q: Do you think that the industry is taking the right steps to turn things around?

A: I don’t know. That’s why I started doing fashion and movies. In the music business, it’s a good thing to try and do other things.

Q: What’s next for you?

A: I have a lot of films coming out. I also have a magazine called America Magazine, and I’m thinking about making up a new dance.

www.billboard.com

A Q&A With Damon Dash

Damon Dash: Career Highlights

2002: Launches Armadale Vodka
1999: Develops Team Roc community outreach program
1999: Creates Rocawear fashion line
1999: Organizes Hard Knock Life tour, which grosses $18 million
1995: Founded Roc-a-Fella Records with Jay-Z

So I have to put together my own studio—Dash Films—and all kinds of movies because I don’t only want to do one kind of movie.

I want to open the door for everyone, not just the urban culture but for everyone within the movie community that appreciates good movies that have some degree of integrity, some social consciousness and just a respect for the art of movie making.

In doing that, I have to research, make sure that I’m properly on my grind and respect the environment because it is something new [for me]. I also want to make sure that I get the advice of people I respect in this business.

Q: What do you think about the industry taking the right steps to turn things around?

A: I don’t know. That’s why I started doing fashion and movies. In the music business, it’s a good thing to try and do other things.

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