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A Portrait of the Artist
By Melinda Newman
CONGRATULATIONS ON BEING BILLBOARD'S 2003 CENTURY AWARD WINNER!

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HOT SPOTS

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Fashion designers are offering music celebs freebies in the hopes that being seen will create a scene at cash registers.

53 AIDS Awareness Booster
A record 2 billion people saw Cape Town’s “46664” AIDS fundraiser broadcast. Performers included U2’s Bono.

56 Fefe’s Feat
Fefe Dobson is Canada’s latest rocker to make musical waves south of the border, with her self-titled Island Def Jam debut.

Awards!

BMAs: 50 Cent Leads Finalists

BY WES ORSHOSKI
Omnipresent gangsta rapper 50 Cent leads the field for the 2003 Billboard Music Awards. He’s a finalist in six categories, including album of the year, artist of the year and rap artist of the year.

The Queens, N.Y., native’s debut “Get Rich or Die Tryin’” (Shady/Aftersmath/Interscope) has sold 6.3 million copies in the U.S., according to Nielsen SoundScan. The album was fueled by party anthem “In Da Club,” a candidate for Hot 100 single of the year.

Rap, R&B Dominate Grammys

BY MARGO WHITMIRE
LOS ANGELES—R&B/hip-hop acts dominated the 46th Annual Grammy Awards nominations, which were announced Dec. 4 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles.

Neptunes producer/recording artist Pharrell Williams, who—along with OutKast, Jay-Z and Beyoncé—leads the nominations with six, said, “I’m

Elliott: Running At Full Throttle

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA
Missy Elliott does not believe in taking time off. Since the release of her fourth studio recording—the double-platinum “Under Construction”—nearly one year ago, Elliott has maintained a non-stop schedule, writing and producing for numerous other artists.

Some might see this as overexposure. Elliott is not among them. “Yes, you can be overexposed,” Elliott says.

Sales Down, Retailers Up

Merch Covers Album Skid

BY ED CHRISTMAN
NEW YORK—Album sales through the Thanksgiving weekend were off 3.4% from last year, but most music retailers are still optimistic about how the selling season will play out.

Merchants expect a merrier Christmas than labels because many have diversified into other merchandise.

Also, a key measurement of holiday performance—same-store sales—is expected to rise, because about 1,000 music-carrying stores have

the rules have changed

bandmerch

www.bandmerch.com

www.americanradiohistory.com
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### Quotes of the Week
"We've easily lost a quarter of a million dollars on Jay-Z's new 'The Black Album.' In total, EMI Music Publishing has lost tens of millions (to piracy)."

**Martin Bandier**

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**Sarah McLachlan**

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**QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

"We've easily lost a quarter of a million dollars on Jay-Z's new 'The Black Album.' In total, EMI Music Publishing has lost tens of millions (to piracy)."

**Martin Bandier**

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ALICIA KEYS
"The Diary of Alicia Keys is a stunner, a blend of hip-hop with warmth and feeling as well as instant soul classics." - Rolling Stone

The first album was historic...a record 5 Grammys and 10 million albums sold worldwide. Now, she's back! The diary of Alicia Keys, an extraordinary collection of songs from the heart and soul of a very special young woman.

RUBEN STUDDARD
Soulful

He's The American Idol of 2003. He instantly achieved superstar status with his first single "Dancing Without Wings," a hit that shot straight to #1 on the R&B charts and #2 on Billboard Hot 100. He's just been featured on the covers of Entertainment Weekly, People, Us Weekly, Jet Magazine, Newsweek, and Rolling Stone. Now, Ruben Studdard's album, Soulful, is ready to soar!

ROOM ON FIRE
THE STROKES

"The most highly anticipated sophomore set since The New Testament." - Spin

With their new album Room On Fire, The Strokes reestablish themselves as the standard by which all others are judged. This album is being hailed by critics everywhere.

LUTHER VANDROSS
Dance With My Father

"Dance With My Father" One voice towers above the rest. This album debuted at #1 on the Billboard Top 200 Album chart and has sold more than 1.5 million copies in the U.S., making it fast selling artists over the critically acclaimed album, hailed as "the album of his life" by The New York Post, has already won two major American Music Awards.

ROD STEWART
Volume II took the world by storm earning a Grammy nomination and selling 4 million copies worldwide. Now, The Great American Songbook Volume II sensationally follows up with 14 stunning tracks including "Time After Time," "Smile," and "I'm In The Mood For Love" plus memorable duets with Cher and Queen Latifah! This great album is already platinum in just one week!

WYCLEF JEAN
Fox News' Roger Friedman says "With this album, Wyclef is winning a combination of Stevie Wonder and Bob Marley." From Hip Hop to R&B to Classic Soul to Reggae, this is Wyclef Jean's milestone album featuring guest stars Missy Elliott, Monica, Carlos Santana, Pati LaBelle, Redman, Scarface, Wayne Wonder, Eoleptant Man and more! This great album has the critics raving.

CLAY AIKEN
Billboard magazine calls Measure of A Man the best pop album of 2003. The album debuted at #1 on the best selling charts. Nominated for 2 American Music Awards, Clay Aiken's debut album is now double platinum in just two weeks!

MAROON 5
One of the new artist stories of the year! The band sold out their US headliner tour on the heels of one of the year's biggest hits, "Harder To Breathe." With hit records like 'This Love' and "She Will Be Loved" to come in 2004, the sky is the limit for this debut album.

KELLY CLARKSON
"Her range is awesome: the own Pop, R&B, Country and Gospel. America was right to idolize her!" - People Magazine

The multi-Platinum, Grammy Award winning artist entered the charts at #1 with After The Storm. Included are the #1 single "So Gone" plus the hot new single "Knock Knock" produced by and featuring Missy Elliott. Also includes the future hit duet with DWY, and one with Tyrese.

ANNE LENNOX
The original DIVA returned in 2003 with this career-defining album. Acclaimed the best reviewed album of 2003, shot to the top of the Billboard charts, with the highest debut ever in her career. "Will next year's Grammys be the Annie Lennox show? Legends will be tough to beat." - Rolling Stone

Every track on Ronin is a winner. It may be the best album of the year!

AMERICAN IDOL:
The Great Holiday Classics

For the first time ever, the biggest Idols from both seasons appear on one CD! Ruben Studdard, Clay Aiken, Justin Guarini, Tamra Gray, plus a bonus disc of two holiday songs from Kelly Clarkson! This is sure to be the biggest Holiday album of 2003!
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New-School Fashion Vies To Outfit Artists

Use of Free Goods Rises To Gain Priceless Exposure

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA and RASHAUN HALL

In the ever-tightening nexus between fashion and music, the right artist wearing the right clothes is money—for the artist and clothing maker.

The realization is driving the revival of a trend that top brands like Tommy Hilfiger, Polo, Girbaud and Timberland successfully pioneered years ago—freebies.

"You really can't put a price tag on celebrity PR," 2T(x)ist VP of sales Ralph Beyda says. "People can associate with Justin [Timberlake] and 50 Cent, and they want to wear the same things as their favorite performers."

Fashion is such a major component to artists and their lifestyles, adds Jon Cohen, co-founder of Cornerstone, a marketing and promotion company. "After the music, the 'look' is next."

Today, it's all about product placement. Such clothing lines as Ben Sherman, Levi's, Zoo York, Orchard Street, DVS, Ence, 3Ries, Puma, Diesel, Spitwax and D&G are willing to heap products on hot artists to connect with their fans.

And artists see: to be down with the idea. From alternative rock and dance/electronic to (Continued on page 62)

Despite Tough Times, New Mags Eye Niches

BY CARLA HAY

NEW YORK—Magazines of all kinds are facing tough times, but music glossies have a particular problem: As the market gets worse, the competition gets stiffer.

A number of new consumer music magazines have launched this year, hoping to thrive in the shadow of more established names by tightly focusing on niche markets.

But to some analysts, an increasingly crowded marketplace suggests that a shakeout might be in the offing if the magazines lose sight of their audiences.

Among the newcomers, Tracks, a magazine aimed at music fans aged 30-plus, and MTV's self-titled publication are creating the most buzz. According to the respective magazines, Tracks' first issue has 100,000 in circulation; MTV magazine has a circulation of 300,000.

But with a circulation of 1.3 million, Rolling Stone is still on top of consumer music magazines. Vibe follows with 831,188 circulation, trailed by Spin, The Source and Blender. All are headquartered in New York.

Three of the five claim ad-page increases this year, with Blender posting the biggest leap—34%—compared with the same period last year. Spin has seen the biggest decline; ad pages were (Continued on page 73)

Coke Deal Is Real Thing For U.K. Music Charts

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—The most American of soft drinks is adding fizz to the U.K. pop charts.

The Official U.K. Charts Co. (OCC), which compiles the country's singles and albums sales charts, has inked a two-year sponsorship deal with Coca-Cola, effective Jan. 1, 2004.

The U.S.-based company will sponsor the official U.K. singles and albums charts, plus a forthcoming downloads chart due to launch early next year.

OCC director Omar Maskatiya declines to disclose the financial terms of the agreement. Industry sources value the two-year deal at £1.5 million to £2 million ($2.6 million to $3.5 million). Maskatiya says payment will be made partly in cash and partly in marketing support.

MARRIAGE OF BRANDS

The industry will benefit "from what a big brand can provide," Maskatiya says. "Coca-Cola is looking for a long-term involvement with the music industry," he adds. "What attracted us to this deal is that they were not simply paying to be associated with the charts but that they seem to have a game plan with music."

Coca-Cola spokesman Rafael McDonnell calls the charts "the benchmark for the U.K. music industry."

He adds: "Coca-Cola is pleased to be working together with the whole of the industry to promote sales of singles, albums and legal downloads."

The agreement is one of several music-related initiatives that Coca-Cola plans to launch to U.K. consumers in 2004.

Maskatiya says the industry was "looking for something friendly to all the sectors of our licenses" when searching for a sponsor.

Coca-Cola not only fits the bill, he says, but could provide the means to expand the profile of the charts.

OCC is a joint venture of the British Phonographic Industry and the British Assn. of Record Dealers.

Profits from the charts operations are split between the two partners.

The previous sponsor of the charts was (Continued on page 62)
Piacy Rate Drops In EU
Trading Of Illegal Physical Goods Dipped 2001-2002

BY LEO CENDROWICZ

BRUSSELS—The trade of counterfeit music and movies within the European Union has dropped significantly between 2001 and 2002, according to a new report.

The report arrives as new rules imposing harsher punishments for counterfeiting and piracy are due for the EU to agree upon by next year.

The study, compiled by the European Commission, reveals that in the EU, the number of CDs, DVDs and videocassettes seized tumbled to 12 million in 2002 from 40 million in 2001.

This drop in physical piracy can be attributed to the increase of downloading from the Internet and to custom action against the trafficking of blank CDs, said the EC, the EU’s executive body.

While the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry’s office in Brussels welcomes the report’s findings, Frances Moore—the IFPI regional director for Europe—says the figures do not tell the full story and that there is no sign of a respite on the piracy front in 2003.

“Seizures of pirate audiovisual products declined to 12 million in 2002, but over 25 million have already been seized in the first six months of 2003,” Moore says.

COPYRIGHT REFORM

EU customs authorities are grappling with an incredible quantity of pirated and counterfeit goods coming into the community.

“This situation threatens to get worse after EU enlargement next year, when the union’s new borders will touch some of the top pirate nations in the world: Russia, the Ukraine and Bulgaria,” Moore says.

Russia is high on the IFPI’s list of countries that need to seriously tackle piracy issues. Russia—with a street market for pirated products estimated at $350 million—is the second-largest market for pirated goods in the world, after China.

The IFPI has expressed disappointment regarding the Russian Parliament’s recent decision to put on hold what it calls “the already long-delayed, critical amendments to the Copyright Law.”

This legislative step was aimed at bringing Russia in line with international standards by reforming the country’s copyright system.

Moore says these measures are steps in the right direction, but the real legislative breakthrough will come when the EU adopts the pending Enforcement Directive, which will give a more efficient framework to combat piracy and counterfeiting.

“Within the community there is also a major problem with CD-ROM piracy,” Moore says. “The industry is pressing for a strong and effective Enforcement Directive to help tackle piracy in all its forms inside the EU.”

The European Parliament’s Legal Affairs and Internal Market Committee voted Nov. 27 in favor of the proposed Enforcement Directive. This paves the way for a formal vote by the Parliament early next year.

Janelly Fourtou, the French Member of European Parliament who drafted the report, tells Billboard that she is eager to have the package adopted before the EU takes on 10 new members in May. She will delay the full vote until February or March to ensure EU governments are already behind it.

Fourtou’s proposal includes movies, music and software, as well as patents, copyrights, trademarks and registered designs.

Her report is similar to the EC’s proposal in Japan, which claims that pirates and counterfeiters could be jailed, fined and have their bank accounts frozen. The move paves the way for legal measures against Internet file-sharing networks.

But there is a crucial difference: the EC proposal said criminal proceedings would be launched only if they did so “en masse.”

Fourtou’s report scraps these words, so that sanctions can be applied even when a private individual breaches copyright by casually downloading music from the Internet.

GETTING TOUGH

Meanwhile, the EU adopted rules in July to boost the power of customs authorities to seize goods they suspect are counterfeit.

In January, the EC unveiled a separate plan to tackle the increasing waves of counterfeit goods entering the EU, making the law and outlining tougher punishments for those convicted.

MILEPOSTS

BIRTHS

Girl, Dasha Lyric, to Deborah and Darius Brooks, Aug. 19 in Forest Park, III. Father is a gospel recording artist.


Girl, Lucy Hope Solomon, to Jenny Kravat and Michael Solomon, Oct. 17 in New York. Father is co-founder of Musicians on Call and a manager with Brick Wall Management.

MARRIAGES

Wynnonna Judd to D.R. Roach, Nov. 22 in Leiper’s Fork, Tenn. Bride is a country recording artist. Groom is the bride’s bodyguard.

DEATHS

Bernard Brightman, 82, of complications from lung cancer, Nov. 9 in New York. Brightman founded jazz and blues imprint Stash Records in 1975. The label may be best remembered for its popular and slightly sensational series of compilations—“Reefer Songs,” “Copolatin Blues,” “Street Walkin’ Blues”—that pulled together vintage tracks with sexual and drug-related themes. Brightman also prolifically recorded modern jazz performers ranging from swing-era greats to avant-gardists like David Murray.

Wesley “Speedy” West, 79, of undisclosed causes, Nov. 15 in Broken Arrow, Okla. One of the first virtuosos on the pedal steel guitar, West began his career with the Western swing bands of Spade Cooley and Hank Penny in the late ‘40s in Southern California. He became a session mainstay at Capitol, where he recorded a series of instrumentalws with guitarist Jimmy Bryant. In 1960, he produced Loretta Lynn’s first record, “I’m a Honky Tonk Girl.”

James Carter, 77, of complications from a stroke, Nov. 26 in Chicago. An ex-convict whose 1959 field recording was a key track on the Gateway All-Stars’ “O Brother, Where Art Thou?” soundtrack. Carter was a member of a Mississippi chain gang when folklorist Alan Lomax recorded him leading a conga section on the song “The Louisiana Blues.” “O Brother” producer T Bone Burnett unearthed the track in the Lomax archives and used it as the soundtrack’s leadoff song. Carter received royalties for his work and flew to Los Angeles for the 2002 Grammy Awards, where “O Brother” was named album of the year.

Larry Douglas, 61, of a pulmonary embolism, Dec. 2 in Thousand Oaks, Calif. Douglas worked for Epic for 17 years, most recently as its VP of promotion. He retired from his 31-year career in promotion—which included stints at Windsong and RCA—In 1995 after he was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. Douglas is survived by two children and a grandson, Jesse Velt.

IFPI Latin America Launches TV Ad

BY LEILA COBO

MIAI—The Latin American branch of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry has financed the production of a TV ad showing how music piracy affects more than just business.

The 50-second ad began airing this week on commercial TV channels throughout Latin America. It is the first time that IFPI Latin America has financed production of a commercial for pan-regional distribution.

The spot was produced by Punto Ogilvy, the Miami-based branch of advertising giant Ogilvy Mather, and is airing at no cost on the Claxton network, which carries HTV and MuchMusic stations throughout the region.

The commercial is the latest in a series of widespread media efforts by IFPI Latin America to counteract piracy. Last year, IFPI produced a series of short “news spots” featuring established artists speaking out against piracy. This time around, the focus was completely different.

“I didn’t want a commercial about artists,” says Raúl Vázquez, regional director of IFPI Latin America. “The idea behind this is that piracy affects normal people—people who work in shops, secretaries, truck drivers. If we featured an artist, we would go back to the same point: that the artist is the one affected by piracy. That’s not true. The artist is just one part of the equation.”

The IFPI commercial features the image of a graphic equalizer that collects music as the instruments drop out of the soundtrack.

“Every time you buy a pirate CD,” a caption reads, “You lose a singer, a drummer, a guitarist, a bass player.”

The end of the commercial features a list of jobs lost to piracy. According to the IFPI, in the past five years, 70,000 music-related jobs have been lost to piracy in the (Continued on page 62)
THANKS FOR MAKING
RADIO HISTORY
AN EXCLUSIVE NATIONWIDE ALBUM PREMIERE
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BEFORE IT HIT THE INTERNET...
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SHERYL CROW, FRED DURST, DAVID FRICKE, JIMMY IOVINE,
BILLY JOEL, ALAN PARSONS, GERALDO RIVERA

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FCC Gets More Time; RIAA Serves More Suits

BY BILL HOLLAND
WASHINGTON, D.C.—This week in the nation's capital, a bill is giving the Federal Communications Commission more time to review ownership rules, while a West Coast court decision could benefit the Recording Industry Assn. of America, even as that agency unleashes more suits.

Approval in the pending congressional omnibus appropriations bill would extend the period between FCC ownership rules review from two to four years. The extension was introduced as an amendment earlier this year by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee.

At a July hearing, Republican and Democrat FCC commissioners agreed that such an extension would give the FCC the time and resources to do a more thorough job of reviewing its ownership rules.

Although Congress has adjourned, Hill leaders may be called back this month to vote on the omnibus bill, providing 2004 funding for many government agencies.

Meanwhile, a judge for the Northern District of California has ruled that the lawsuit between Pacific Bell Internet Services and the RIAA be moved from San Francisco to the District of Columbia.

Pac Bell, a division of SBC Communications, sued the RIAA in July to block some 200 subpoenas. The RIAA filed the subpoenas to get the identity of Pac Bell customers who allegedly engaged in copyright infringement. Pac Bell claims that the trade group violated the Constitution by improperly serving the subpoenas.

The judge ruled that as a victory for the RIAA, as the trade group has won similar cases in other courts. "It throws a significant monkey wrench into SBC's case," RIAA president Chris Smith claimed.

Judge Susan Illston abstained from considering Pac Bell's motion for declaratory relief. She said that not transferring the action to D.C. "would encourage forum shopping in subpoenas matters [and] contravene the courts' preference for adjudicating Constitutional rights in the context of a concrete case."

The RIAA on Dec. 3 filed 41 new lawsuits against Internet users who allegedly download songs on peer-to-peer services. It is the third wave of lawsuits since September. A total of 382 P2P users have been sued. All had uploaded more than 1,000 copyrighted music files.

An RIAA spokesman says that the group has reached monetary settlements with 229 users and that more than 1,000 individuals had voluntarily promised to stop copying music.

The spokesman says the RIAA plans to send warning letters to 90 more users that they face infringement lawsuits.

Misner Takes Development Role

Nathan Misner has joined VNU's Music & Literary Group as director of integrated marketing and business development.

A lifelong music fan, Misner has been a devout Billboard charts follower. In his new position, Misner is responsible for leading the brand marketing, publicity, integrated sales promotions and sales development for Billboard Information Group, including Billboard sister publication Airplay Monitor and Kirkus Reviews.

Misner comes to Billboard from a joint venture between Barnes & Noble and West Egg Publishing. There, he served as associate publisher overseeing ad marketing and sales development, brand development and partnership marketing, circulation and subscriptions.

His past publishing experiences include Iced Media, which he co-founded, and Miller Publishing, where he served as media ventures director working on the Vibe and Spin brands.

Misner is a graduate of Santa Clara University. Based in Billboard's New York office, he reports to John Kilcullen, president and publisher of the Billboard Information Group.

HP Plans Digital Music Entry

BY BRIAN GARITY
Look for Hewlett-Packard to join the fray of computer hardware makers that are getting into the digital music business.

HP is expected to unveil a digital portable player and accompanying download service during the Consumer Electronics Show in January 2004 in Las Vegas, sources confirm.

Consumer rollouts of the products is slated for first-quarter 2004.

The HP service will compete with similar offerings from the likes of Dell, Apple and Gateway. Such companies are looking to music services to help drive sales of portable digital devices like Apple's iPod, which typically retail for $250 and higher.

There is no word yet on whether HP will develop its own products or team with other companies. HP currently distributes as its default jukebox player MusicMatch, which has its own download store in place.

The service—powered by a co-branded download store for HP rival Dell—declined to comment.

Stanley Gold stepped down Dec. 1 from the board of Walt Disney Co. The move came a day after the exit of vice chairman Roy Disney. Both executives had long been called for chairman/CEO Michael Eisner to leave the company, Disney specifically complained that the chairman/CEO had failed to raise ABC’s prime-time ratings or establish a clear succession plan. Disney, 73, would have been forced to retire soon because of a new rule requiring directors to retire at the age of 72. The Walt Disney Co. would not comment.

IDT Entertainment is buying home video distributor Anchor Bay Entertainment Group for approximately $60 million. Handler Co. announced that it would sell Anchor Bay Nov. 25. Ted Green, a former CEO of Sony Wonder, will lease Anchor Bay's new CEO. Anchor Bay's existing management team will stay in place, and it will continue to be based in Troy, Mich. IDT Entertainment is a subsidiary of IDT Corp. and has controlling interests in the animation companies Film Roman and Mainframe Entertainment.

The deal is expected to close by the middle of the month.

Munder Inc. CEO Ira Gott has changed the name of his label to the Inc Records. An executive says that he decided to change the name of his Def Jam-distributed imprint to "lead things in a positive direction." Backed by the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network, Island Def Jam Group chairman Lyor Cohen and the Inc artists Jo Jo and Ashanti, Gott made the announcement at a Dec. 3 press conference in New York.

After six years at the helm of Innocent Records, Hugh Goldsmith will exit as managing director of the Virgin U.K. imprint at the end of the year. He will continue to work with the London-based label as an A&R consultant and is setting up a new structure. The label will continue to operate with Sara Freeman as label manager. She now reports directly to EMI record- ed Music U.K. chairman/CEO Tony Wadsworth. Goldsmith set up Innocent as an imprint of Virgin U.K. in 1997, after leaving his position as managing director of RCA Records U.K.

A federal judge has ordered the city of Miami to pony up $36,000 in reimbursements for extra security needed during a controversial concert that took place four years ago. When Cuban band Los Van Van was booked to play a show at the Miami Arena in 1999, its appearance drew criticism from Cuban exiles and local politicians, who publicly called for protests to prevent the show. Extra police were needed the day of the concert, and court promoter Debbie Ohanian was forced to pay the cost or lose the venue. Ohanian sued the city, saying the cost amounted to a tax on unpopular speech. Federal judge Joan Lenard agreed in a ruling last week, saying the payment had a "chilling" effect on free speech. The city may also be liable for court costs and Ohanian's attorney's fees.

Manhattan Civil Court judge Donna Reckten has ruled in favor of New York University in its eviction proceedings against Greenwich Village, N.Y., patrolman Leslie Rowen. Rowen, who is not registered as a tenant of a co-op unit at 105 Greene St., is fighting his eviction for non-payment of rent.

The court awarded the unit to the university for $185,000 in back rent that was owed as of Jan. 15, 2003, the court found.

Zoe/Rounder Records has released Kathleen Edwards’ “Live From the Bovery Ballroom” on a DVD Plus disc, a hybrid CD/DVD Video. The dual-sided disc features two videos on one side and three audio-only tracks on the other. Premiered dual-sided hybrid discs included the Callings’ “Wherever You Will Go/I Admire” (RCA), a DVD-VC familiarly released in 2002. While that package carried the warning "not recommended for in-dash car audio systems" because of the disc's thickness, “Live From the Bovery Ballroom,” measuring 1.48 millimeters thick, will play in all CD and DVD players, according to Dexter Dierks, founder and co-CEO of DVD Plus International, the Stommel, Germany/Sydney-based global holder of DVD Plus patents.

Los Angeles-based indie dance label Electric Monkey is moving forward with a pared-down staff. The company will continue with owner Michael Sklifow as GM. The label, which scored a No. 1 club hit this year with “Lei Lo Lai” by the Latin Project, plans to release “Amour Amer” by Joel and “Love Shines” by Big Advice in January. Among those exiting the company are A&R VP VAHC Jesse Lombardi, VP of product management/marketing/artistic relations Casey Dunmore and head of media relations Natalie Svider.

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MARTINA MCBRIDE

I DOWNLOAD

(Legally.)
Music industry consolidation has been a fact of life now for the past several years, but like most long running
soap operas, the denouement appears finally to have arrived. But
looks also can be deceiving.

After several near misses rivaling the Perils of Pauline, Sony and Bertelsmann announced the proposed merger of their music units. Then, Time Warner finally settled on a suitor.

As senior writer Brian Garrity noted in his story last week, the decision to sell Warner Music to an investment group fronted by Edgar Bronfman Jr. sets the stage for a new order.

But it's doubtful that this is the final act in this melodrama. Whatever, the current state of affairs hardly seems to be in music's best interest.

Far from leveling the playing field, the merger and the sale appear to result in an even more lopsided market, dominated now by two big players, instead of one.

Sony/BMG and Universal Music Group each will control about 25% of the pie. The new Bronfman group and EMI, the other large independent label, will be reduced to junior players. Each will have about 12% of the market, and thousands of smaller independent labels will divide up the remaining quarter.

From a purely corporate view, we can understand Time Warner's decision to sell to Bronfman. The company needs to raise cash pronto to pay down debt and couldn't afford a drawn-out and potentially unsuccessful bid to win regulatory approval for a merger with EMI. But the deal is shortsighted nonetheless.

Not only is it unlikely to stimulate competition and lead to a level playing field, but the current situation also sets the stage for the development of a Coke-or-Pepsi-type music market.

In an interview with Billboard, Bronfman insisted that he could find the kind of cost savings that will blunt the economies of scale enjoyed by UMG and now Sony/BMG.

"The industry's problems are not going to be solved by any merger," he told Garrity. "[They] will be solved by new formats and new products and new ways of making connections in a commerce-enabled way."

We applaud his entrepreneurial spirit. The industry, which fell embarrassingly behind the curve on digital music, could sorely use some out-of-the-box thinking. But the odds-on bet is that the two big players will dominate the market—if only by sheer size alone. And just as Coke and Pepsi do in the soft-drink business, they'll effectively keep smaller competitors under their thumbs.

Bronfman's only real hope is that digital music explodes. Independents are at a huge disadvantage when it comes to marketing and competing for shelf space at retail. The Internet could solve that problem. But that's a lot to hang a $2.6 billion deal on. Thus, another round of mergers seems inevitable.

Those who lamented that the Big Five labels might shrink to four, or three, can forget it. Right now, too, is the operative number. So will it be Coke? Or Pepsi?

Merger Merry-Go-Round
Holiday Music Sets The Mood

It's the most wonderful time of the year! And that means new holiday music. Although it is against everything I hold sacred to listen to Christmas music before Thanksgiving, as soon as the turkey is finished, I can't wait to throw on the new offerings.

**Belle Winans**, *My Christmas Prayer* (Movement Records/Hidden Beach): Gospel great Winans' warm and inviting voice is perfect for Christmas songs. Largely comprised of hymns instead of secular tunes, this album celebrates the true meaning of the holiday. The traditional arrangements fare better than some of the smooth-jazz-oriented songs, but it's a collection full of winners. Winans' co-write, "My Christmas Prayer," appears twice, once with Matchbox Twenty's Rob Thomas and again with Winans' mother, Delores. That may be gilding the Christmas lily, but its message of hope bears repeating.

**Various artists**, "A Very Special Acoustic Christmas" (Lost Highway): The latest in the series of Christmas albums whose proceeds benefit the Special Olympics, this edition is a superb collection of country and bluegrass heavy hitters, with Norah Jones thrown in for good measure. Top-notch is Alan Jackson's wistful "Just Put a Ribbon in Your Hair," Dan Tyminski's "Frosty the Snowman," and Patty Loveless' spare "Come All Ye Faithful." Buying this disc is a great way to celebrate the season of giving.

**Various artists**, "American Idol: The Great Holiday Classics" (RCA): Stop the madness! Of course, that won't happen until there is not a crumb left to be gleaned from the "American Idol" franchise. The voices—whether it be Clay Aiken's, Tammy Gray's or Ruben Studdard's—are fine, but the killer is that the arrangements are completely generic and boring, if not downright cheesy. Even though the first disc is only 10 songs deep, Kelly Clarkson gets her own two-song bonus disc, which features the project's best tracks, "Oh Holy Night" and "My Grown Up Christmas List." Harry Connick Jr., "Hurry for the Holidays" (Columbia): Here's the album for cool cats and hipsters. Connick swings through several seasonal standards here. His arrangements are snappy and tight, making this the perfect album to play at that Christmas cocktail party. At 16 songs, the CD is a bit long, and Connick's four originals could have been the first to go, but just try not to tap.

(Continued on page 19)
Kelly’s Historical ‘Steps’

Chart-Topper Mirrors Dance-Oriented Predecessors

BY GAIL MITCHELL

R. Kelly’s “Step in the Name of Love” personalities staying power. Following a 44-week trek, the title completed its ascent to No. 1 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs & Tracks chart last week (Singles Minded, Billboard, Dec. 6).

In the process, the tune claimed honors for the longest trip to the top of that chart during the Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems/SoundScan era. The song’s saga began in October 2002, when the track (first entered the chart after radio picked up on it from Kelly's bootlegged “LoveLand” album. After 20 weeks, the tune shifted to recurrent status. But with its inclusion on the bonus disc accompanying Kelly's March 2003 release, "Chocolate Factory," the song re-entered the chart at No. 40.

The charting popularity of “Step in the Name of Love” mirrors that of several R&B dance-oriented predecessors.

In the ’80s, Chubby Checker, Little Eva and the Captials scored crossover hits with such titles as “The Twist,” “The Loco-Motion” and “Cool Jerk,” respectively. In 1979, Rufus Thomas persuaded folks to “Do the Funky Chicken” and “(Do the) Push and Pull.” The disco-raging portion of the ’70s produced Van McCoy’s “The Hustle” and Chic’s “Le Freak.”

A decade later, U.V. shooed Washington, D.C., onto the dance map with “Da Butt.”

Though not tied to a particular dance, C+C Music Factory promised it was “Gonna Make You Sweat (Everyday) CrossTown” in 1989, while during that same year Lisa & Cult Jam implored “Let the Beat Hit ’Em.” The following year, Kelly and Public Announcement partnered on “Slow Dancing (Hey Mr. DJ).”

Like these songs, “Step in the Name of Love” taps into the R&B audience’s long-term love affair with dancing. As noted on streetswing.com, stepping—or being nominated in Kelly’s birthplace, Chicago.

Rooted in African-American culture, steppin’ was known in the 1940s as the “Offtime Dance,” a slowed-down jitterbug. During the ’50s, of course, the stomp was popular.

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BAD BREAKS

Of course many core ’90s acts aren’t delivering relevant rock product today because … they broke up. Billboard’s year-end charts from the mid-’90s show that many headlining bands—including Tool, The Smashing Pumpkins, Collective Soul and the Red Hot Chili Peppers—no longer exist. Other acts encountered personal tragedies that brought about their end—like Nirvana, Alice in Chains and Sublime.

Also, the rise of modern AC in 1996 gave listeners on the upper end of rock’s demo a place to go and bands like Counting Crows, Blues Traveler and Hootie & the Blowfish a new home.

Another thing modern AC took from modern female artists. While Alanis Morissette, Tori Amos, Sheryl Crow and Sarah McLachlan still have followings, they’re not being heard at modern rock.

UNDER THE RADAR

Active WJJO Madison, Wis., plays the Offspring and Green Day, and PD Mike Stern says the two bands have “very quietly become two of our most important library artists. You wouldn’t put them up with bands like Metallica and Korn, but when we go through an auditorium test and we decide what 250 songs are going on the air, there’s 10 from each of them.”

Helping many of the early ’90s acts weather the storm is their original sound. “Everyone writing music at the time was trying to be the next level imitators,” Groves says. “The Offspring and the Chili Peppers all had theirs but survived because they are the real deal.”

While some acts like U2 and Radiohead have evolved to remain relevant to rock radio, that isn’t always necessary. “The Offspring and 311 have done just enough to not tread on trodden ground,” Cross says. “In the case of something like the Offspring, it’s compelling and hooky, so it’s comforting when a band comes out with something like that that’s interesting.”

Continued evolution, while staying true to their sound, is what Proft says has kept those bands relevant.

“They’re not closing their minds to times that have changed and music that has changed,” he says. “If you listen to 311’s [1993 debut], compared to what’s out now, it has changed. But in the same sense, the artists have stayed true to what they’ve always wanted to do.

“With our format, where artists can come and go so quickly, these artists have found their sound. When you hear a 311 song or an Offspring song, you know it’s them. Bands like U2 changed their sound so much at times that you wouldn’t even know it was U2. But I can hear five chords of a 311 song and know it’s them.”

Gamble says. “If you listen to the Offspring’s new single and go back to their first single, there are some definite similarities, but you know it’s them.”

Gamble says. “If you listen to the Offspring’s new single and go back to their first single, there are some definite similarities, but you know it’s them.”

Cross says that lack of evolution can sometimes be a negative, though.

“Any of those bands that put out a song will by and large get a little bit of exposure on it. We’ll see what happens with Courtyard Love. Has she done something different enough to win over new fans? Or is she really just appealing to the same people she appealed to seven years ago? If she is, that’s probably a bad thing, because a lot of those people moved on in life and aren’t listening to modern rock radio stations anymore. And if they are, they’re not the passionate listeners.”

“Although they’re bringing new people into the fold with the music they’re putting out, I don’t know that it does us a lot of good to really pound it,” Cross continues. “To play it and acknowledge it, yeah, but at that point, it’s up to the record itself to see if it has legs.”
A new court ruling is shining a spotlight on the murkiness of copyright law.

The U.S. District Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit held Nov. 6 that unauthorized use of extensive video footage of Elvis Presley for a "rockumentary" was not a fair use.

The case, Elvis Presley Enterprises v. Passport Videos, affects everyone who makes and watches video biographies, such as VH1's "Behind the Music," "E! True Hollywood Story" and A&E's "Biography."

The decision sets the stage for a potential collision of First Amendment and copyright issues, according to intellectual-property lawyers.

The ruling also suggests that makers of video biographies may have a harder time establishing a fair-use defense than print biographers.

In this case, Passport created a 16-hour video documentary titled "The Definitive Elvis." The video was sold at retail outlets for $99.

The biography featured copyrighted TV and other video clips. The plaintiffs—which include songwriters Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller and Steve Allen's widow, Jane Meadows Allen—own copyrights to TV footage of Presley's appearances on shows hosted by Allen and Ed Sullivan.

They also own rights to Presley's songs, still photographs and footage of his 1968 comeback special. "Passport" was not able to get permission from all of the plaintiffs to use various clips for its rockumentary.

The plaintiffs sued for copyright infringement and sought an injunction barring Passport from selling the documentary.

The lower court granted the preliminary injunction. The Ninth Circuit affirmed the ruling, over vigorous objections of the lone dissenting judge.

"Passport crosses the line by making more than mere references... and by [showing] significant portions of these copyrighted materials," the majority opinion states.

The decision is controversial because makers of "unauthorized" biographies may not be able to get or afford permission to use performance clips, songs, etc., so they'll have to rely on the fair-use defense of the Copyright Act.

But what constitutes fair use remains one of the toughest, most fact-specific questions in copyright law today.

"There are very few, if any, legal bright lines," says Jay S. Handlin, a partner with Howrey Simon Arnold & White in Los Angeles.

That means people don't know in advance what they can or can't do.

The Ninth Circuit's copyright analysis suggests that a scholarly work or a historical analysis would be more likely to qualify for the fair-use defense than a commercial video documentary.

The opinion could be read to mean that only very brief snippets of performance footage constitute fair use, experts explain.

But it's hard to see how anyone could make a serious video biography of a musical artist, especially a great live performer such as Elvis or Bruce Springsteen, without using extensive performance footage and letting the performances speak for themselves.

In the context of print biographies, cases deciding what's fair use have been some of the most important—and controversial—copyright decisions during the past 20 years.

In Harper & Row v. Nation Enterprises (1985), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that "The Nation" magazine's unauthorized use of only 390 words from a 200,000-word, soon-to-be-published autobiography of Gerald Ford wasn't a fair use.

Because the material the magazine used went to the "heart" of the book: Ford's pardon of Richard Nixon.

Similarly, the 1987 decision in Salinger v. Random House ticked off many biographers and publishers.

There, the Second Circuit stopped the publication of an unauthorized biography of J.D. Salinger because the biographer made extensive use of several unpublished letters by Salinger.

Now that video biographies are such a cultural phenomenon, the Elvis decision could have the same kind of impact.

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In our January 24th issue, Billboard will spotlight Midem, the leading international music trade show for music publishers and record companies. We'll preview Midem's 38th annual conference, taking place January 25-29, including MidemNet, the digital music event.

Make sure your business is part of the issue everyone will be reading in Cannes—and in over 100 countries worldwide!

SKILLET COOKS UP HEAVIER ROCK SOUND

The best rock bands have a way of evolving in such a way that keeps fans continually interested. Skillet has mastered that art and remains an appealing musical chameleon, alternately churning out rock, modern worship and electronica, anchored by lead vocalist John Cooper's inventive songwriting. The group's newest offering, "Collide," finds bandmates Cooper, his wife, Korey; Ben Kasica; and Lori Peters exploring a heavier rock sound than 2000's "Alien Youth."

"We had done the electronic thing for three records," Korey Cooper says. "We were happy with 'Alien Youth' and it was selling, but for the next record we decided to go way less on the keyboards and a lot more just straight rock. And obviously Paul Ebersold [3 Doors Down, Sister Hazel] coming into the picture as producer shaped the sound."

John Cooper says the band's current lineup also spurred change. "Skillet is kind of coming into an identity of its own. It's not just John and Korey's band or John's songs. I think Ben and Lori had more influence on this record."

Kasica says, "We have grown as a band. I'm happier with the sound of 'Collide' than other Skillet albums we've done."

The band remains on Memphis-based Ardent Records, but it is in discussions with a mainstream label to take it to the general market. "We do believe we have a message that we want more people to hear," John Cooper says. "Not just Christian young people but non-Christian young people."

Peters says the band is looking forward to the See Spot Rock tour, which puts it on the road next spring with 12 Stones, Pillar and Big Dismal.

JONES DEPARTS POG: Terry Jones, one-fourth of Word's popular girl group Point of Grace, is leaving to devote herself full-time to her husband and three children. Jones and fellow group members Shelley Breen, Heather Payne and Denise Jones have been performing together for 13 years. Terry Jones will continue performing with the group through March 1, 2004. After her departure, longtime friend Leigh Caphill will step in to fill the fourth spot.
Gospel's Holiday Presence

Kirk Franklin released an exclusive CD for Kmart featuring new remixes of some of the platinum-selling gospel artist’s biggest hits Nov. 17. “Kirk Franklin: A Season of Remixes” — which includes remixes of “Why We Sing,” “Lean on Me,” “Revolution” and “Lovely Day” — is part of a nationwide promotion that will run through the holiday season and could signify the latest retail trend from major gospel names.

On the occasion of its 10-year anniversary as a recording choir, EMI Gospel released “The Best of Donald Lawrence & the Tri-City Singers: Restoring the Years.” Nov. 18. The 10-year retrospective includes such top-selling favorites as “Seasons,” “Never Seen the Righteous” and “When Sunday Comes” (featuring Daryl Coley), along with two new cuts — the title track and “The Presence of a King.” With rumors that Donald Lawrence has signed an exclusive pact with Columbia, the release could well be Lawrence and the choir’s last on EMI. He and the choir will, however, perform “The Presence of a King” on T.D. Jakes’ BET Christmas special slated to air Dec. 17.

The season’s holiday TV fare also includes “Gospel Superfest Holiday,” spot-lighting an all-star lineup that includes Take 6, Karen Clark-Sheard, Byron Cage & New Birth Church, Dottie Peoples, Natalie Wilson & SOP, Dr. Ed Montgomery, the Rev. Timothy Wright and Keith “Wonderboy” Johnson. Slated to air in national syndication through Jan. 4, 2004, on more than 175 stations across the country in addition to PAX-TV, the Word Network and TBN, the two-hour special — the brainchild of United Televisi-tion founder Dr. Bobby Cartwright — was taped in September at Atlanta’s Civic Center.

INDUSTRY BEAT: With the success of the “Fighting Temptations” soundtrack, Music World is looking to ensure its continued dominance on the gospel charts with a 2004 product rollout that leads off with the Jan. 6 release of Rambyah’s self-titled debut. He is backed by hit gospel producers PAJAM and featured on the soundtrack, the Detroit-bred female singing group comprising includes “Do You Know,” the Jan. 13, 2004, sophomore release from Michelle Williams, who recently took over for Toni Braxton in the lead role of “Aida” on Broadway.

In the meantime, a growing number of independent labels are flourishing at gospel radio. Among those making the most noise are Juana’s Eddie Ruth Bradford, Meek Records’ Turks & the Caicos Choir, Avatar’s PONs and Born Again’s Broderick Rice.

In other industry news, gospel exec Avin Williams (formerly of Music World) has signed a distribution deal with Compendia for its first project: gospel saxophonist Angella Christie’s “Draw the Line.” Also, with the release of “21 Days,” former NBA forward-turned-bassist Waymon Tisdale makes his debut on the gospel scene. “We thank God for the opportunity to spread the word in a whole new way,” he says.

Kelly

Continued from page 16

bop-influenced 1950s, it was tagged “the Walk” to symbolize partners’ slow walking in time to the music around the dancefloor. Then in the 1960s, the term “step- pin’” was introduced. Popular with African-American fraternities and sororities on college campuses, step-

The Beat

Continued from page 15

The label’s one-two punch

Shericre Staten, Tracy Bryant, DeLaurenn Burton and Stephanie Bonner is already getting a good deal of buzz. But Music World is leaving little to chance.

The Beat

Continued from page 15

your toes to “The Happy Elf.”

Kenny Chesney, “All I Want for Christmas Is a Real Good Tan” (BNA): Hot country sensation Chesney weighs in with an album that will appeal to his legions of fans (it debuted at No. 6 on the Billboard Top Country Albums chart). Chesney and his co-producers, Buddy Cannon and Norro Wil-

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your toes to “The Happy Elf.”

Kenny Chesney, “All I Want for Christmas Is a Real Good Tan” (BNA): Hot country sensation Chesney weighs in with an album that will appeal to his legions of fans (it debuted at No. 6 on the Billboard Top Country Albums chart). Chesney and his co-producers, Buddy Cannon and Norro Wil-

On the occasion of its 10-year anniversary as a recording choir, EMI Gospel released “The Best of Donald Lawrence & the Tri-City Singers: Restoring the Years.” Nov. 18. The 10-year retrospective includes such top-selling favorites as “Seasons,” “Never Seen the Righteous” and “When Sunday Comes” (featuring Daryl Coley), along with two new cuts — the title track and “The Presence of a King.” With rumors that Donald Lawrence has signed an exclusive pact with Columbia, the release could well be Lawrence and the choir’s last on EMI. He and the choir will, however, perform “The Presence of a King” on T.D. Jakes’ BET Christmas special slated to air Dec. 17.

The season’s holiday TV fare also includes “Gospel Superfest Holiday,” spot-lighting an all-star lineup that includes Take 6, Karen Clark-Sheard, Byron Cage & New Birth Church, Dottie Peoples, Natalie Wilson & SOP, Dr. Ed Montgomery, the Rev. Timothy Wright and Keith “Wonderboy” Johnson. Slated to air in national syndication through Jan. 4, 2004, on more than 175 stations across the country in addition to PAX-TV, the Word Network and TBN, the two-hour special — the brainchild of United Televisi-tion founder Dr. Bobby Cartwright — was taped in September at Atlanta’s Civic Center.

INDUSTRY BEAT: With the success of the “Fighting Temptations” soundtrack, Music World is looking to ensure its continued dominance on the gospel charts with a 2004 product rollout that leads off with the Jan. 6 release of Rambyah’s self-titled debut. He is backed by hit gospel producers PAJAM and featured on the soundtrack, the Detroit-bred female singing group comprising includes “Do You Know,” the Jan. 13, 2004, sophomore release from Michelle Williams, who recently took over for Toni Braxton in the lead role of “Aida” on Broadway.

In the meantime, a growing number of independent labels are flourishing at gospel radio. Among those making the most noise are Juana’s Eddie Ruth Bradford, Meek Records’ Turks & the Caicos Choir, Avatar’s PONs and Born Again’s Broderick Rice.

In other industry news, gospel exec Avin Williams (formerly of Music World) has signed a distribution deal with Compendia for its first project: gospel saxophonist Angella Christie’s “Draw the Line.” Also, with the release of “21 Days,” former NBA forward-turned-bassist Waymon Tisdale makes his debut on the gospel scene. “We thank God for the opportunity to spread the word in a whole new way,” he says.

Kelly

Continued from page 16

bop-influenced 1950s, it was tagged “the Walk” to symbolize partners’ slow walking in time to the music around the dancefloor. Then in the 1960s, the term “step- pin’” was introduced. Popular with African-American fraternities and sororities on college campuses, step-
Diversity, Credibility Prove To Be Hallmark Of BMAs

BY SUSANNE AULT

LOS ANGELES—Performers at the Billboard Music Awards will represent musical styles as varied as this year's chart-toppers. Beyoncé—whose first two singles "Crazy in Love" and "Baby Boy" from her hip-hop solo debut, "Dangerously in Love," have reached No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100—will be one of the headliners, performing the new single, "Me, Myself and I." Veteran rocker and 2003 Billboard Century Award honoree Sting will span a generation and several musical styles to perform "Send Your Love," the first single from his newest album, "Sacred Love." The upstart "American Idol" genre will also make its mark with Clay Aiken under the spotlight, BMA producer Michael Levitt says.

"We're making sure that the diversity of the artists represents all the different genres that are repped in the magazine's charts," Levitt explains. That facts-and-figures focus is why artists like to be included in the BMAs, Levitt adds. "It represents credibility," he says. "The awards are based on the charts, which can't lie. That makes the BMAs legit.

"Because the BMAs fall near the holidays, Levitt also expects billed acts to capture the attention of this season's CD shoppers. The show will feature less theatrics than what has been seen in recent awards shows, Levitt notes. "There's fewer bells and whistles," he says. However, he adds that the performances will include enough splash to appeal to audiences. For instance, Evanescence will play its Modern Rock hit "Bring Me To Life" at Las Vegas' neon graveyard. Also important is the combination of veteran and rookie performers, Levitt says. Shania Twain is making a return appearance. She will sing "She's Not Just a Pretty Face" from her latest album, "Up!" The project has been on the Billboard Pop Country Albums chart for more than a year.

No Doubt is also a fan of the BMA stage. This year the group will play its latest track, "It's My Life.

Other repeat visitors include Pink and R. Kelly. Backing her Nov. 11 release "Try This," Pink will sing "God Is A DJ." R. Kelly, whose "Step in the Name of Love" is No. 1 on the Billboard Hot R&B/Flip-Hop Singles and Tracks chart, will perform, as well newcomers Black Eyed Peas and Foo Fighters.

"We wanted to expose top-level artists that have yet to perform on the show. Viewers can look forward to the biggest singles of the year but also songs that are taking the charts by storm," Levitt says.

Keeping Billboard Music Awards Fresh In Packed Field

BY CHRIS MORRIS and RAY WADDELL

LOS ANGELES—The Billboard Music Awards (BMAs) are part of a packed field of televised awards presentations this year. But that hasn't daunted the veteran production team of the 14th annual BMAs, which will be staged Dec. 10 at the Grand Garden Arena in the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas.

Michael Levitt, producer of the show with Paul Flattery, notes, "This year there have been more awards shows than ever preceding ours—several new awards shows added and several old awards shows repositioned to land in front of our airing.

"Initially, that created some concern, but I'm thrilled to say that the labels and the talent have really risen to the occasion and come out in full force. We have done a great job at keeping the level of talent high and keeping the bar high creatively.

"Ten chart-topping acts will appear on the show—more live performers than ever before (see story, this page).

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BY KEITH CAULFIELD

LOS ANGELES—One of the highlights of this year's Billboard Music Awards will be the crowning of Artist of the Year. The award recognizes an act's combined performance on The Billboard Hot 100 and The Billboard 200 and is a true indicator of who reached the most fans during the year.

It's also the award that Carey recently appeared to win. Here's a look back at the acts that have received the coveted award since the BMAs began airing in 1990 and where they are now.

1990 NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

This Boston quintet was the first act honored with the Artist of the Year trophy. The group charted six Billboard Hot 100 singles that year, including the No. 1 “Step by Step,” as well as four albums before disbanding in 1994.

Donnie Wahlberg and Joe McIntyre now focus on acting. Wahlberg most recently appeared in the NBC series “Boomtown.” McIntyre had a recurring role in “Boston Public,” and in 2004 he’ll appear in the film adaptation of the hit off-Broadway show “Tony n’ Tina’s Wedding.” He’s also released three solo albums.

In 1999, Jordan Knight released his self-titled debut on Interscope, which spawned a top 10 Hot 100 single. Danny Wood has joined Empire Music Works, which will release his third album, “Second Face,” in May. Knight also works as a real-estate consultant.

1991 MARIAH CAREY

In 1991, Mariah Carey spent 11 weeks at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 with her self-titled debut album and racked up four Hot 100 No. 1 singles. Carey followed up with her second album, “Emotions,” which capped an already impressive year for the artist.

Since then, Carey has had her ups and downs—including an emotional breakdown—but she’s still a ranking diva. Since winning the Artist of the Year Award, Carey has released 11 albums, including the No. 1 “Music Box,” “Daydream” and “Butterfly.” All told, Carey has racked up 15 No. 1 Hot 100 singles, more than any female artist in history.

1992 & 1993 GARNETT ROXANN

The first back-to-back artist of the year winner, Garth Brooks, essentially rewrote music history books in the ‘90s. In the two-year span during which Brooks won the award, he scored three No. 1 Billboard 200 albums and three other top 20 sets: his self-titled debut, “No Fences” and “Beyond the Season.” Since “In Pieces,” Brooks has released eight more albums, all of which reached the top 10 on The Billboard 200, with five hitting No. 1. In all, he has sold more than 100 million albums, making him the top solo artist in U.S. history.

In 2001, Brooks announced that he would only tour again after his youngest daughter turned 18. He lives in Oklahoma and writes film scripts.

1994 ACE OF BASE

Swedish vocal quartet Ace of Base ruled the singles charts in 1994, notching three top 10 singles, including “The Sign.” That track spent six weeks at No. 1 on the Hot 100 and was taken from the album of the same name. It legged two weeks atop The Billboard 200 in April 1994 and a whopping seven months in the top 10. Ace of Base has released four studio albums since “The Sign,” including its most recent, “Da Capo.” The group does not currently have a U.S. label.

1995 TLC

In 1995, TLC (made up of Tionne “T-Boz” Watkins, Rozonda “Chilli” Thomas and Lisa “Left Eye” Lopes) spent much of the year lodged in the top 10 of The Billboard 200 with its “CrazySexyCool” album. Perhaps even more impressive, the group earned four top 10 Hot 100 singles in 1995, including two No. 1’s: “Creep” and “Waterfalls.”

1996 ALANIS MORISSETTE


Morissette released two more No. 1 albums and is completing work on her new set, “So-Called Chaos,” which is due in early 2004.

1997 LEANNE RIMES

In 1997, LeAnn Rimes chalked up three top 10 Billboard 200 albums, including the No. 1’s “Unchained Melody/The Early Years” and “You Light Up My Life—Inspirational Songs.” Rimes also spent nearly half of 1997 in the top 10 of the Hot 100 with the single “How Do I Live.” That track spent 69 weeks on the Hot 100—more than any other single in history.

Since that breakthrough year, Rimes has gone on to release six more albums, including her latest, “Great- est Hits.” The Curb set debuted at No. 24 on the Dec. 6 Billboard 200 chart.

1998 USHER

Usher blanketed the airwaves in 1998 with three singles, all of which hit the top 10 on the Hot 100: “N Nic & Slow,” the second single from the album “My Way,” spent two weeks at No. 1 in February 1998. More telling, in January 1998, Usher had two different singles chart concurrently in the top 10 of the Hot 100.

Usher built on his “My Way” success with the release of his third studio album in 2001, “8701.” The Arista set charted three top three Hot 100 singles, including two No. 1’s: “U Remind Me” and “U Got It Bad.” Usher is slated to release his fourth studio effort March 16, 2004.

1999 BACKSTREET BOYS

Suggesting that 1999 was a banner year for the Backstreet Boys would be an understatement. The quintet’s “Millennium” album debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 that June, selling more than 1.13 million units in its first week. At the time, it was the biggest first-week seller in the SoundScan era. The Jive set spent 10 weeks at No. 1 and has sold more than 12 million units in the U.S. alone.

That year was also the Boys’ most successful on the Hot 100, where the group earned four top 40 singles, including the ubiquitous “I Want It That Way.”

Since 1999, the group has released two more albums. Now most of its members are working on solo projects. Nick Carter released his self-titled solo debut in late 2002, and he will appear in the upcoming film “The Hot,” Brian Littrell founded the Brian Littrell Healthy Club for Kids in 1999 and is working on a Christian album. Earlier this year, Kevin Richard- son starred on Broadway as Billy Flynn in “Chicago,” and this fall he reprised the role in London’s West End.

Howie Dorough, who is working on a Spanish/English album for BMG Latin, continues to raise funds for the Dorough Lupus Foundation. He recently said that he hopes to work on a new album in early 2004. A.J. McLean, via his rock star alter-ego persona Johnny No Name, and he completed a short theater tour in 2000.

2000 & 2001 DESTINY’S CHILD

The second back-to-back winner of the artist of the year award, Destiny’s Child, has been a constant presence on the charts since the trio’s debut in 1997. But the Columbia group (with Beyoncé Knowles, Kelly Rowland and Michelle Williams) broke through in 1999 with “Say My Name.” It spent three weeks at No. 1 on the Hot 100.

That success, two other hit singles and the No. 5 album “The Writing’s on the Wall,” clinched the award for the group in 2000. Destiny’s Child spent the years since then, for part, to four top-10 Hot-100 singles. Since then, all three members have launched solo projects. Rowland collaborated with rapper Nelly on the single “Dilemma,” which spent 10 weeks at No. 1 on the Hot 100 in 2002. Rowland released her own top-20 charting album in late 2002. That same year, Williams bowed with “Heart Of Yours,” which hit No. 1 on Top Gospel Albums.

In 2003, Knowles took over the charts with her “Dangerously In Love” album—which debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200—and two Hot 100 No. 1s: “Crazy In Love” and “Baby Boy.”

2002 NELLY

Nelly was inescapable on radio in 2002. He charted six Hot 100 singles, including two No. 1s on the Hot 100 that spent a combined 17 weeks atop the chart. His second album, “Nellyville,” debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 and spent a month at the top.

In 2003, Nelly racked up more than 100 hits, with “Air Force Ones” reaching No. 3 and his collaboration with P. Diddy and Murphy Lee, “Shake Ya Tailfeather,” spending a month at No. 1. Nelly released the remix album “Da D Braves” “Daddy’s Home” Nov. 25.
BY MELINDA NEWMAN

NEW YORK—For a man who says that his ambition was "simply to make money playing music," Sting has succeeded far beyond his wildest dreams.

Between his career with the Police and as a solo artist, he has sold a combined 100 million albums and singles, according to A&M, his label. The number is a bit too large for him to get his head around, he admits, but it sounds right.

Today, his career and his lifestyle are something most people can only dream about: eight homes scattered throughout the world, tens of thousands of fans that scream his name in concert and membership in that elite group of artists known simply by one name.

Adding to that achievement, Sting is this year’s recipient of the Billboard Century Award. The honor acknowledges the creative achievement of an artist’s still-developing body of work.

Although a star for 25 years, Sting remembers very well his life before the Police and fame.

"It’s important that I spent a lot of time being a real person before I became a celebrity," he says. "I was 27 before anything happened. I’d taught, I had a kid. I was married and had had a variety of jobs that had nothing to do with show business.

"So in a way, that allowed me a perspective on success and the fantasy of the hyper-reality of fame and success. So I’ve managed to keep it in perspective ... I think," he says.

Sting was born Gordon Matthew Sumner Oct. 2, 1951, in the shipping town of Wallsend, England. As he eloquently writes in his new memoir, "Broken Music," which hit No. 12 on the New York Times Best-sellers List last fall, he felt alienated as a child. Although his parents loved him, their unhappy marriage cast a pall over Sting and his younger siblings. His later love of literature only widened the chasm between him and his working-class roots.

From a young age, music provided solace. By his early 20s, his musical explorations led him to join several bands, where he honed his skills first as a bass player and later as a vocalist.

In an often-told story, Gordon Solomon, bandleader of the Phoenix Jazzmen, bestowed Sting’s nickname after he saw the young artist wearing a yellow and black sweater.

THE POLICE LINEUP

In 1977, Sting joined drummer Stewart Copeland in the Police. The act was soon completed by guitarist Andy Summers.

In less than six years, the trio grew into one of the globe’s biggest bands, consistently selling out stadiums the world over and topping charts internationally with its constant stream of hits. But the relentless touring and infighting took its toll on Sting, who walked away from the band while it was at its zenith.

In 1985, he released his first solo album, "The Dream of the Blue Turtles." His subsequent solo projects have each built on its popularity. "Brand New Day" arrived in 1999. Having sold more than 7 million copies worldwide, it is his best-selling solo release yet.

He dedicated his latest album, "Sacred Love," to late Billboard editor in chief Timothy White. Released in September, it has already sold almost 2.5 million copies globally.

Whether with the Police or solo, Sting’s often haunting lyrics reflect his beguiling intellect and fierce curiosity. His bass playing remains graceful and poignant, while his supple voice soars over the notes.

That, combined with his penchant for experimenting with different rhythms—from the reggae influences of the Police to the world beats of his recent albums—have given Sting a rare currency in the music world. He’s an artist who never relies on formula but consistently delivers pop anthems that connect with the masses.

He has won 15 Grammy Awards—10 as a solo artist and five as a member of the Police. The Police were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame earlier this year.

Sting’s passions extend well beyond music. He has acted in many movies, including "Quadrophenia," "Dune," "Stormy Monday" and "The Bride," and he has appeared on Broadway in "The Threepenny Opera." Additionally, he and his wife, Trudie Styler, have raised millions of dollars through their Rainforest Foundation, which aims to preserve the world’s rain forests.

His philanthropic work will be feted in February, when he is honored as MusiCares’ Person of the Year by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

In an interview conducted here during two days in mid-November, Sting laughs easily and often. Not a robust belly laugh but little outbursts of contentment, the laugh of someone who fully appreciates everything he’s earned and takes nothing for granted.

He’s charming, voluble and more than willing to expand on his past, even when it’s an unhappy memory.

The first part of the interview takes place in a room above a rehearsal space at SIR Studios on Manhattan’s West Side. Sting and his band are practicing for a 21-city tour that is already sold out, even though it doesn’t start until January.

The second part of the interview occurs the next day, after a book signing at Barnes & Noble that drew more than 200 fans and left him feeling, he says, "emotional."

He goes straight into a rehearsal for his performance on the Victoria’s Secret fashion show.

"Call it shallow, but there’s something about skinny girls in high heels in their frillies," he says. "I don’t know what it does to me, but it does something."

As he leaves rehearsal at the Lexington Armory, an autograph seeker asks Sting if he’s ever collected anyone’s signature. He smiles, says he has Frank Sinatra’s, but shakes his head as he climbs into the sedan, saying, "Now even those guys are trying to interview me!"

Sting will receive the Century Award Dec. 10 at the Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas. He will perform on the live Fox-TV broadcast.

Jeweler/sculptor Tina Marie Zipp-Evans, who has custom-crafted the award for past recipients, will design the trophy for Sting as well.

Now in its 12th year, the inaugural award was given in 1992 and was named for the eminent 100th anniversary of Billboard in 1994. White created the award in conjunction with then-publisher Howard Lander.
Your first piece of music education was sitting at your mother’s feet while she played the piano. She also exposed you to rock’n’roll and show music. How did that affect your musical development?

I’ve always been a fan of music, but I didn’t start playing until I was a teenager. I started playing in a band called “Strange,” and I continued to play music throughout my career.

After discovering your mother’s infidelity, you took refuge playing the piano at your grandmother’s. Is that the first time you realized that music could alleviate your sadness?

Yes, I was close to her and she was very supportive of my musical endeavors.

In “Broken Music,” you recall thinking when you were 7 years old that “I will travel the world, I will be head of a large family, I will own a big house in the country, I will be wealthy and I will be famous.” Is that as if you wrote the blueprint of your life at 7?

Yes, I was already determined to pursue a career in music.

Strange, isn’t it? I had a lot of time to think and a lot of time to fantasize, because I was left alone so long. These are probably only a number of my fantasies. I probably wanted to be a submarine commander, or a four-star general or something military. I was a fantasist, I still am.

After discovering your mother’s infidelity, you took refuge playing the piano at your grandmother’s. Is that the first time you realized that music could alleviate your sadness?

I’m not sure I realized it at the time, but I think I did it as a way of self-medicating with music. The music at the time was very much about love and it was kind of rock’n’roll, so I suppose. [laughs]

My grandmother called it “broken music;” that always stuck with me. I found in my research that broken music is also an archaic phrase for music written for parts. Like in the 16th century, broken music was what they called music for different instruments.

You were accepted at St. Cuthbert’s, an elite grammar school in Newcastle, which only increased your sense of alienation from your parents. But it spurred your love of reading, which clearly informs your music.

I came from a pretty tough background. There were no books in my family home. But I always aspired to that idea of having books. If there’s one thing I’m inquisitive about this day and age, it’s not records actually, it’s books. I’ve kept every book I’ve ever owned in various libraries throughout the Northern Hemisphere.

That’s why you need eight houses—

For all your books.

That’s why I need them. I’ve got stuff from school, college—dog-eared paperbacks that fall apart in your hands or you take them off the shelf.

Do your kids read your books?

No, they don’t go near my books (sheepishly laughs). I never give a book away—never you get it back.

Like most musicians, the Beatles had a profound effect on you. Why?

They came from a similar background to me, from a northern industrial town, a seaport. They had a similar education to me: They were working-class kids with a middle-class education. I recognized that. They also wrote their own songs, which was unusual. Songs up to that point had usually been written by Tin Pan Alley.

That idea that they could write their own material gave a whole generation of English people permission to try to do the same thing. The first songs I wrote just aped the Beatles or Bob Dylan.

Another pivotal moment in your musical development was when you saw Jimi Hendrix on “Top of the Pops” and then live at the Club A Go-Go in Newcastle. Is it true that that was the first time you saw a black man in person?

Yeah, really. I might have seen them on the telly, but I’d never seen them in the town. He was like from another planet. He played left-handed. He had this hair that was like a giant brain. He was wearing clothes that were from the 16th century. Very heroic. Actually, he looked very elegant. The way he played, I mean, Jesus, it was loud too [laughs]. The club was tiny. It was packed. The entire country saw Jimi Hendrix on “Top of the Pops,” and he came to town literally a week later.

You picked up the guitar before the beatles.

By accident I picked up [the bass] one day. Some instinct told me this was my route, a quieter strategy than to be a guitar hero. Some instinct told me that you control the top of the band and the bottom of the band. You control the harmony of the band, you control the dynamic of the band. I was ambitious [laughs].

It’s very difficult to play bass and sing. How did you train yourself to do it?

I realized I could play anything if you slowed it down. I do it, I still practice. I play scales every day, a few arpeggios. I sit and practice the guitar more than I would the bass—not that you want to hear me play the guitar. I’m obsessed with it. After a few years, I got the partitas for solo violin and solo cello and started to play on the guitar. It was a reading exercise, but also sitting with a sheet of music in front of you and watching the composer make decisions is slightly different from just listening to it.

There’s a great mind at work. It humbles you, it teaches you. You can often steal ideas, and they won’t complain—[laughs]. It’s a fantastic adventure that continues and will continue. The more you find out, the more you realize what an ever-receding mystery music will continue to be. That’s why it’s religious for me.

There’s a continuing exploration.

I’m also lucky in that I always manage to work with musicians better than myself. It’s the truth. I have a very musical mind, but it tends to stop at my wrist sometimes. My job as a writer is to engage their skill and their enthusiasm and to challenge them somehow. My skill is in arranging music or in giving people the parameters in which they can be creative. I’ll reel them in if it’s too much, but I like to tell them to play whatever they feel, because you can never anticipate what they can give you when you have that caliber of musician.

You were a journeyman in several bands early on: Earthrise, the Newcastle Big Band, the Phoenix Jazzmen and then Last Exit. What did that teach you about playing live?

I was playing them myself, I was playing them as a vehicle for me, my songs, whereas before it had been Stewart’s.

There was a club date in Birming-}

Imagining how it could really be reached.

It was sort of a last chance. If this one didn’t work, the momentum of the band would have disappeared, and we would have just vanished from the face of the earth. The chemistry of the band, the rapport, the audience—was absolutely right. We got a great review, and it just gave us the courage and conviction to carry on. I remember all of those early dates much more than stadium tours that all seem the same. I remember CBGBs; I could describe it to you now. My son played there the other week. [Sting’s son Joe is in a band called Fiction Plane.]

Is that weird for you?

Yeah, it’s an out-of-body experience. I mean, it’s fantastic. I’m immensely proud. I’m like, “How does he do that?” DNA, it works. Evolution, too.

From the start, the Police were a rock/reggae hybrid. Why that combination?

Reggae isn’t easy to play, and the Police had a sophisticated rhythm section that could play reggae as well as rock’n’roll and oscillate between the two.

There was a kind of irony at work in doing that. It was kind of amazing to have great slabs of rock’n’roll sandwiched between ska and reggae.

After releasing a one-off single called “Call Out,” you recorded “Outlandos d’Amour.”

We recorded this album very cheaply. In fact, the first two Police albums together cost, I would say, about £5,000. It was a very primitive studio and it was way out of town, and we would work in the downtime while another band was sleeping. When they tromped off at night, we’d go in there and work until the early hours. Like thieves in the night.

We even used other people’s multitrack
CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY

congratulates our friend and client

Sting

on receiving

Billboard’s 2003 Century Award
Did you ever apologize? I’m doing it now.

Until you started making the album, Stewart was pretty much writing everything. Then you came in, and it became almost all you.

That’s what started the rift that ultimately broke up the band.

I wrote just about every song on "Outlandos d’Amour," and I didn’t think there would be any royalties from this record, to be honest with you. But when there were royalties from this record, obviously I got more than anyone else. So to try to redress the balance, I split up percentages. But that didn’t really work. The other two wanted to write songs, and then that [meant that] for an album, there were 30 songs to sift through instead of 10 or 12.

And ones that wouldn’t be suited for your voice.

Well, it just became exhausting. It was just too difficult to have to deal with all these songs and have to say, “Well, this song isn’t very good.” It’s like telling someone their girlfriend isn’t very pretty or that their mother wears army boots. It’s an exhausting process that became a nightmare.

Also, we were in a band that had a particular signature with three instruments, and that worked for us very well, but my ambitions were to be writing songs that were a little more adventurous or varied.

What was it like the first time you heard “Dance of Love” on the radio? It’s a little like the first time you’ve had sex, literally. Because you write songs in the privacy of your home playing to the cat or dog, and then you hear it on the radio and you realize people across the nation are listening to your song. I think I was painting the ceiling in my flat in London. Fell off the ladder. I called Stewart, who was listening as well, and we kind of giggled incomprehensibly on the phone. It was a while before we made any sense at all, but there we were, on the radio for the first time.

How do you feel when personal words and thoughts you have connected with so many people? I don’t take it for granted. I write songs initially to amuse myself, because it’s an instinct to do it, and then I play them to a member of a family, my wife or my kids, and then for a member of the band. But once I get to the record company and to a radio station and out into the world, boy, it’s kind of ridiculous, so I don’t really . . . I try not to think about it too much.

“Zenyatta Mondatta” had your first overtly political tune on it, “Driven to Tears,” which you wrote after seeing Third World devastation on TV. What made you go from writing inside yourself to taking on a more political statement?

I don’t think I’d ever tackle a political issue unless I had some kind of metaphysical vehicle to describe it with. I remember watching the television, and there was some terrible famine in Biafra, and the children were skin and bone. “Driven to Tears” came to me because I was literally reduced to tears. Without that phrase or that refrain, I wouldn’t have written the song.

Similarly much later, when I wrote a song called “The Bog Art (Of Biafra),” about the Disappeared in Chile. [These are the thousands of Chileans presumed killed by Gen. Augusto Pinochet’s security forces during his 1973-1990 rule.] The metaphor of women dancing with photographs of their loved ones who had been murdered really touched me, and it made sense, whether you knew the political situation in Chile or not.

In the end, we did play in Chile with the mothers of the Disappeared, and they danced with me and Peter Gabriel in the stadium that their sons had been murdered in. It was one of those shining and also wonderful moments in my career.

How do you feel when a song like that takes on such a bigger meaning?

It’s kind of scary, and you feel a huge responsibility to say the right thing. To do the right thing. To not let yourself down. To be responsible, I suppose. Responsible to the situation you’re trying to express. It’s not just a love song about an abstract couple. This is a real tragedy about real people, so you have to keep that in mind. You have to respect them, respect their pain.

“Ghost in the Machine” is about alienation, and yet out of this album bursts the joyous “Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic.”

Yeah, I think that song is totally inappropriate for this record actually [laughs]. I’d written it a long time before. I wrote it when it was the Police band in London. I brought it out of a bag that seemed to be bottomless at the time, [and] that really pised the other two off because I seemed to have an endless supply of songs and pretended I’d just written it, and, of course, it had been written a good five or six years before. It didn’t really fit with the rest of the album, although it was a big hit. It justifies its position.

In 1981, you played Madison Square Garden and sold out it. Do you remember that night?

At that time I think it had gone to my head a little bit. Even though I say I had my feet on the ground, the success had been so meteoric, I was a little bit swollen-headed. We all were. So it was, “Of course we’re playing Madison Square Garden. Where else would we play? Shea Stadium!” And sure enough, the next gig we did in New York was Shea Stadium.

Before that, it seems like you wrote the rule book for rock bands because your then-manager, Miles Copeland, had you hopping in the van and playing everywhere. What were those early days like?

None of us had any time to spend any of the money we’d earned. We were still living in the van, still living in cheap hotels. We were a very frugal band [laughs]. Those first couple of albums we [had] were hugely successful, but none of the money had filtered through. The first check I got was a (performing-rights society) check for £30,000. I thought I’d never see that amount of money in my entire life. You could buy a house for that.

None of Ken done at the Radio? What’s the band’s perspective of the person who’s destroyed, not the destroyer.

As you mature as a songwriter, you grow away from the concept of giving me-, me-type songs to writing songs where you see the other person’s point of view. You become almost like a mini-playwright in that you’re writing songs for women to sing or a viewpoint of the third party in a love triangle, and that’s a mark of maturity—that you’ve stopped really writing about yourself.

Your next solo album, “. . . Nothing Like the Sun,” followed your mother’s death. Many of the songs are very female-oriented, including “They Dance Alone.” Was that on purpose?

When my mummy died, it was obviously on my mind a lot. I didn’t decide I would write a record about women or female archetypes, but it just sort of happened naturally—just as it always does. I never have an agenda or a plan when I make a record, just whatever’s on my mind or whatever I’m processing will turn up on the record in some recognizable fashion. But I only recognize it at the end of the day.

So you don’t go into albums with an agenda, but do you have a goal to share some kind of philosophy or concept?

That’s all I really have an intention to do . . . to demonstrate that I’m making progress as a musician, as a communicator, as an arranger, producer, lyricist, singer-songwriter. I want the listeners to be aware that I’m on a journey and that they’re welcome to go along with me if they want.
The next album, "The Soul Cages," deals with your father's death.

My mom and dad died within eight months of each other and, again, I didn't intend to write an album that was about that. That's what was happening inside, and "Soul Cages" came out. I got more feedback on "The Soul Cages" than any other record. At least three people today at the book signing came up and said how much "Soul Cages" meant to them. That makes me feel heartened that it connected with people at the right level and they understood it. It was my least-understood record, generally—critically—when it first came out, and the least commercial, but it has a longevity, which I like to attribute to the fact that it's a real record.

The big hit on that album was "All This Time," which is an interesting contradiction because the lyrics are often despondent, yet the music is quite jaunty. There are other times you've used that, like on "Can't Stand Losing You."

It's a trick I've used a lot, and I say it's a trick in having sad lyrics with a happy tune. I'm not quite sure why it works for me, but there's a subtle irony there too. But, you know, "Lonely" is a song about alienation yet it's an incredibly jolly tune. We'd have hundreds of people yelling it and screaming it and having a great time singing about how lonely they are. There's a paradox there, isn't there? I don't quite understand it, but it works. I think ambivalence is always an important characteristic.

Your next album was "Ten Summoner's Tales," which was a play upon both Chaucer's "The Canterbury Tales" and your last name. The lyrics on your albums are peppered with literary and mythological references; Nabakov, Scylla and Charybdis, Mammon ... you never underestimate the intelligence of your audience, do you?

Well, no. I met a lot of them today, and they all seemed pretty intelligent to me and well-read, and you don't have to know who those people [in my songs] are. These aren't Cliff Notes for a literature test. But again, there's an irony there at work. To put things like that in a pop song amuses the hell out of me. It's not about being clever. People ask me "What's a Nabakov?" and I maybe direct them to the local book store so they can find out.

Because you're not going to lend them any of your books.

No way, especially not my first edition of " Lolita."

Is anyone's interpretation of your songs even wrong?

No, of course not. It's always right. Unless someone interpreted "Fields of Gold" as a lascivious marching song and then I might say, "Hang on a minute, Fritz. You got the wrong end of the stick here."

"Mercury Falling" found you experimenting with different time signatures and seems slightly off-kilter; was that going through your mind here?

It was kind of a re-essaying process. I thought I was just trying something different, [to] go back to some roots. There are a lot of tributes to soul music on that record. That was a kind of winter record. That's me in my woods in November [points to a picture in the CD booklet]. That's Gideon, Trudie's old dog, the wolfhound. He's beautiful. Trudie froze his sperm. She froze some of mine, too [laughs].

In 1999, you released "Brand New Day," which really was a new start for you.

It felt like that. It was made in the run-up to the Millennium. There was a lot of doom and gloom with that 2YK or ZYG or whatever it was, the world was going to end, blah, blah, blah, and I thought, "Well, this is all a crock of shit. We should be optimistic." I always think that's a good strategy in life, no matter what. So I sang "Brand New Day." I did extremely well for me. It's our biggest-selling record.

"Desert Rose" is a song about longing. The amazing thing is that even though most of us don't know what Cheb Mami is saying on the record, his vocals help convey the feeling.

They do. We heard the track, and I knew I wanted some Arabic singing on there. I played him the melody and he wrote the lyrics, not understanding any English. When he came back, I asked him what they were about, and he said he was singing about a longing for love and peace and all that stuff. So I said, "That's really what I'm singing about." . . . How strange, yet how obvious.

On that album you tied in with Jaguar, which is something you'd never done before. That brought tremendous exposure to "Desert Rose."

It wasn't a commercial for Jaguar originally. It was the video, and the director wanted us in a car, and he chose the new Jaguar. Then my manage-ager at the time took our video to Jaguar and said, "What do you think?" They flipped and said, "We'd like to use that as our commercial." They said, "How much do you want?" We said, "Well, we don't really need any money, it's like promotion for our single." So it was a kind of symbiotic, mutually ben-eficial kind of thing.

I caught some flak for it, but for the same thing I didn't think any more cars were sold in the world—maybe a few Jaguars. And I've planted enough trees in my life to feel good enough about my ecological footprint. All of us use fuel. I've used more than my fair share, but I've planted a lot of trees.

What did that teach you about alternative marketing and that you can't just rely on radio?

There was a time when you could be worried about being overexposed. That was a big thing: "Don't overexpose yourself, you'll be finished." Now the case is that you're either overexposed or you're not exposed at all. I really believe that. There's so much competition for people's entertainment dollars. If you want to put your product out there, you have to go out and sell it.

"Sacred Love" was your first album in the post-9/11 world. Did that make it more difficult to create?

Well, they're not technically a couple. It was interesting because at the time [we made the record], we'd had 9/11, we'd had the war in Afghanistan, we were building up to this war in Iraq . . . I'm not sorry to see Saddam Hussein gone at all, he was a pig of a man, but he could have been taken out another way.

But that scenario definitely gave the album a kind of urgency. I was swept up in the paranoia that was being fostered on us every day, that he could destroy us in 45 minutes, that we had chemical war around the corner and nuclear weapons. So that gave [the album] a sense of urgency, I think. I'd bear getting older and older. So there's a sense of urgency about it.

In the DVD for "Sacred Love," you talked about how you usually still will around and the idea for a song will come to you. Is it usually the lyrics first?

No, it's usually the music first now. For a long time, I used to have a refrain and I'd just figure out from there, and then I'd do the music then. But now I tend to finish the music, structure it and don't even think about the lyrics until I've fin-ished structuring, my theory being that if you structure the music correctly, it's already telling you a narrative. All you have to do is translate that from abstract into characters, or words that people say, or mood. And it's an interesting, if alienating, bit like fishing: You're never quite sure what you're going to come up with.

I walk around waiting for a nibble, and you get a fragment of something and you join it to the fragment of something else you got the day before and piece it together like a jigsaw and end up with a song. It's a very mysterious and, thank-fully, successful process, but you have to be patient.

This is your third project co-pro-ducing with Kipper. How do you like to work with a producer?

I always think the term "producer" is a very kind of plastic thing. How do you define production? It's defined by the limitations of the artist. Some producers write the songs, play the songs, perform the songs. They do everything, depending upon how little their artists can do. [The Police's] producers were essentially engi-neers; they didn't arrange the music, they engineered it. They made the drums sound like drums and the guitars sound like guitars.

Kipper is more creative in that sense. He is a musician, and he's part of that process. I used to program myself for many, many years, and it's very time-consuming. I wasn't writing songs any more, I was programming. So to have someone who's very adept at program-ming and to give you sound ideas and inspiration and instant feedback is a wonderful thing. He's the first producer who's had that facility.

What has been the biggest change in technology that has affected how you make your music?

Digital technology, obviously, in many ways has slowed the process down, because there are so many choices you can hold onto without making a firm decision. In the old days, you just had to play the song and play it right and that was it. So you could make an album in a couple of days. It's also quite difficult to make digital technology sound warm and enfolding. That's a skill we're developing. It's interesting for someone like me. It means I can really get inside the music and maybe never come out of it, so I always put a stop date on my record and say, "On this certain date, this rec-ord will be finished."

How do you stick to that?

We have a tour booked [laughs].

You start another world tour in January. What's it like for you when you step out on the stage?

It’s like being reborn. You step out from the darkness into this world, where everybody's pleased to see you, and you sing and you soar above the audience. There's no feeling quite like it. I'm very happy doing that, as long as I can place that with my priv-ate life, my family life. Largely I get it right, but, you know, sometimes I get it wrong.

What do you still want to say musically?

I don't know the answer to that. I may have nothing more to say, I really don't know until I've tried it. I've just finished an album, I just finished a book. I'm sort of empty of ideas or inspiration, really. I'm going to go around the world for two years, so I'm sure there will be some stimulus that will allow me to think maybe I can try it one more time, but I don't assume anything.
I believe in getting quality music in a way that's fair. It takes so many people to produce a CD; illegal downloads deprive every one of those people. You get paid for the work you do, right?

MANDY MOORE

I DOWNLOAD

(Legally.)
Eight-string guitarist Charlie Hunter and electronic drummer Bobby Previte frequently play full improvisation gigs at the Knitting Factory's Tap Room in New York when their touring schedules allow. It’s simpatico excursion music that can spin into any direction at a moment’s notice—a funky vibe speeded into rhythm drive with psychedelic dynamics, then turning a corner and sinking into a lyrical ballad.

Recently, the pair invited trumpeter Randy Brecker to join in, and, even though they had never played together before, he swung through the dance grooves and avant motion with ease.

Hunter and Previte have captured their exhilarating magic on “Come In Red Dog,” released Dec. 3 by Ropeadope Records. “We recorded eight hours of live music, then Bobby edited it down to 50 minutes of songs,” says Hunter, aka Red Dog. “We build songs from the ground up.”

Previte (Tango Leader) says, “We’re like a quartet. Charlie plays the basslines and guitar parts, and my left and right hands with the electronic effects are like two people.”

As of 2003, his band includes saxophonist Greg Osby in October in Europe, he brings his trio Dec. 16-21 to Yoshi’s in Oakland, Calif., then reunites the long-dormant T.J. Kirk project (with guitarist Will Bernard and John Schott and drummer Scott Amendola) for two shows Dec. 26-27 at San Francisco’s Great American Music Hall.

INDIES RISE UP: While major labels face economic challenges resulting in roster cuts, independents continue to pick up the slack. Old-timer and younglings alike have been doing their share of heavy lifting—introducing new talent as well as resurrecting old print rarities. The following is a coast-to-coast sampling of recent indie riches:

Documenting the vital Chicago jazz scene, Delmark Records—one of the oldest independents still owned by its founder, Bob Koester—released new albums by Fred Anderson, Malachi Thompson and Josh Abrams. The Chicago chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences recognized Koester Nov. 6 with its Chicago Heroes Award at a gala ceremony that also honored tenor saxophonist Von Freeman.

Also in Chicago, Acid Jazz Records re-released new straight-up discs by Henry Johnson (Organic), featuring Nancy Wilson and Alan Broadbent (“You and the Night and the Music”).

Newcomers on the scene include Nardis Music and Preservation Hall Recordings. The former is a groove imprint launched by Liquid 8 Records in partnership with Ben Sidran, who will be delivering his new CD in first-quarter 2004. The label kickoff begins this month with funky drummer Clyde Stubblefield’s debut, “The Original.”

Based in New Orleans, Preservation Hall swings open its doors Jan. 27, 2004, with three releases documenting the jazz bands of the famed Crescent City venue.

Archer Records in Memphis released local vocalist Kelley Hunt’s debut of soul/R&B-styled jazz, “Raindance,” while New York’s Half Note Records issued pianist Onaje Allan Gumbs’ fine “Return to Form,” recorded live at the city’s Blue Note jazz club, and violinist Miri Ben-Ari’s latest project, “The Temple of Beautiful.”

Several indies continue to mine the vaults: Mosaic Records recently released the seven-CD collection “The Complete Verve Roy Eldridge Studio Sessions” (available solely through the label at mosaicrecords.com); Dreyfus Jazz dusted off two out-of-print Birdology titles, Jackie McLean’s “The Jackie Mc Attack Live” and Jimmy Johnson’s “I’m a Jockey” and the Palo Alto Jazz catalog has been resurrected by Serious Records, which is remastering discs from the mid-’70s through the mid-’80s by such artists as Denny Zeitlin, Pepper Adams, McCoy Tyner, John Scofield and Elvin Jones.

And Fresh Sound New Talent celebrates its 10th anniversary of recording emerging artists Dec. 17 by showcasing an all-star group including pianist Xavier Davis, trumpeter David Weiss and saxophonist Myron Walden at the Jazz Standard.


San Francisco vocalist Chardiee heats up the cold season with “This Christmas” (Declaire Music), highlighted by a samba-grooved “Winter Wonderland” and a steamy “Baby, It’s Cold Outside” and an “Harvey for the Holidays” (Columbia),...
Duff Proves She’s Not ‘So Yesterday’ On Tour

BY SUSANNE AULT

LOS ANGELES—Pop might not be the genre du jour at radio, but tour organizers believe Hilary Duff can still be a performing success. The teen star sold out her first run of headlining gigs in 17 dates Nov. 17-30 in less than 30 minutes, reports Craig Bruck, her booking agent at Evolution Talent Agency.

Additionally, from Dec. 1-16, she is appearing on 11 radio-station Christmas shows featuring multiple acts. Many of those concerts are selling strongly. They include sold-out shows Dec. 5 at Los Angeles’ Staples Center for mainstream top 40 KISS annual Jingle Ball and Dec. 11 at New York’s Madison Square Garden, presented by mainstream top 40 WHIZ, says Scott Finck, VP of promotion at Duff’s label, Hollywood Records.

From her previous stint as the star of Disney TV series “Lizzie McGuire” and its film companion “The Lizzie McGuire Movie,” Duff has a built-in fan base, Bruck and Finck note.

Plus, her debut album, “Metamorphosis,” has sold 1.2 million copies since its August release, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Its first single, “So Yesterday,” peaked at No. 15 on the Billboard Mainstream Top 40 chart.

DIFFICULT TIME FOR POP

Still, Finck says there was concern regarding Duff entering the pop field at a time when many of its stars have peaked.

“We absolutely faced a wall of doubt and dissonance when we started on this record [at radio],” he says. “We didn’t have a point of reference.”

Even so, John Ivey—VP of programming for Clear Channel/Los Angeles and PD for the city’s KIIS and adult top 40 KGU—suggests that with acts like Backstreet Boys and ’N Sync on the sidelines, fans are primed for an artist like Duff.

“The [pop] genre needed to take a little bit of a break. It comes in cycles, where the first [act] wins, the second one does pretty well and then, past that, everything falls off,” Ivey says. “We know that all that has passed, the door has opened a bit for acts like Duff.”

Other expected holiday radio show sellouts that will have Duff on the bill include the KRBE Jingle Jam Dec. 4 at the Reliant Arena in Houston and the Very Big Christmas tour Dec. 2 at the Uptown Theatre in Kansas City, Mo., presented by XM.

The seven non-radio Duff shows were tagged with a $20 to $30 ticket. With multiple acts on the bills, the radio shows are priced in the top markets from $40 to $290.

‘DUFF COULD HELP TOP 40’

Jon Zellner, Infinity VP of programming for Kansas City, believes Duff could prove to be a boon for the top 40 radio format. Listeners must tune into their stations to find mainstream acts like Duff, he says.

Although R&B dominates top 40, Zellner notes that pop “is not played anywhere else except top 40. Hilary [and similar genre artists like] Michelle Branch have emerged over the last year. That’s a sign that top 40 is going in the right direction.”

Ivey adds, “For top 40, she’s a very needed artist. The CD, the TV and the movies—the she’s becoming a big deal fast.”

Some music executives wonder whether Duff will be able to juggle her TV, film, recording and concert interests.

“At this point, she seems to be balancing,” Ivey says. This is in contrast to a multi-faceted artist like Jennifer Lopez, who “has never toured, so you can see where the focus is there.”

Bruck adds, “We are trying to figure out how her commitments in the TV and film world.”

Duff is planning on headlining more dates in 2004 at large theaters. She is also starring alongside Steve Martin in the film “Cheaper by the Dozen,” which hits theaters Dec. 25.

Finck adds that radio momentum will continue with the December release of Duff’s next single, “Come Clean.”

Finck believes that Duff will want to maintain a varied entertainment career because it has broadened her audience.

Unquestionably, she has the 12- to 16-year-old set and their parents because of “Lizzie McGuire,” he says, “though the 18- to 24-year-old demo really raised their hand for the record, too.”

For that reason, Duff’s concert style is designed to appeal to an older, bigger crowd. “She performs with a rock band. It’s not as poppy as you would think,” Bruck says. “It’s an intense and exciting show.”

KRBE Houston PD Tracy Austin adds, “Before making a record, the appeal had been moms and their daughters. I think that will continue to expand” with her new music career.”

Simon & Garfunkel Keep Their Customers Satisfied

BY RAY WADDELL

If anyone questioned whether the Simon & Garfunkel tour would be anything less than a blockbuster, the answer is clear. The 42-date outing has sold virtually every ticket available in the early going.

The first 14 dates reported to Billboard Boxcore grossed an impressive $22.4 million and drew 209,679 people. Twelve of the 14 shows registered as sellouts.

“I think this tour is an extraordinary testament to how timeless these songs and performances were on these records when Simon & Garfunkel were together to start with,” says John Scher, manager of Art Garfunkel.

“These songs by Paul [Simon] and performances by Paul and Artie clearly have struck a chord in people’s lives.”

The tour—a collaborative effort between Scher and Simon’s manager, Jeff Kramer, along with booking agencies William Morris (Garfunkel) and Creative Artists (Simon)—is averaging a whopping $1.6 million per night at the box office.

That’s enough to make it one of the top-grossing tours of 2003, even though it did not get under way until October.

Scher says he and Kramer felt strongly enough about the tour’s potential to set up a “reasonably aggressive” plan to play major markets and large arenas. “We had a well-thought-out ticket scaling but one we knew could only be supported by a strong desire from the public,” Scher says, referring to ticketings ranging from $30 to $250.

“Did we know it would be this over the top? One could only wish.”

Tour producers were cognizant of fair ticket pricing, taking market size into consideration. The Wachovia Arena grossed a building record of $733,827 from a sellout of 9,258. “We were very impressed with the management and the promoter [Metro Talent] for taking a look at our market and trying to do things right,” says Long. “This was a slam-dunk.”

This was a tour that promoters, venues and fans all have been eagerly anticipating. “I’m not surprised at all that it’s doing so well,” says Rick Franks, executive VP of national booking and director of the Midwest division for Clear Channel Entertainment. “I got to the front of the line, and I couldn’t be happier.”

Other promoters are equally enthusiastic. “This is the hottest tour of the past couple of years,” says Jerry Mickelson, co-president of Jam Productions, whose S&G dates include Oct. 24-25 sellouts at Chicago’s United Center (Ill.; $3.7 million) and Oct. 26-27 sellouts at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul, Minn. ($3.2 million).

“I always thought there would be a big demand for this show,” Mickelson says, “but it turned out to be a huge demand.”

Franks’ Oct. 18-19 dates at the Palace of Auburn Hills (Mich.) grossed $3.2 million. “It was over the top,” he says. “They sounded fabulous, and the crowd was so loud you couldn’t hear yourself, non-stop for 2 1/2 hours.”

TOUR ‘A PIECE OF HISTORY’

That the tour has pleased the crowd—and promoters—almost goes without saying. “These shows have been truly remarkable,” Another Planet president Gregg Perloff says. Perloff’s company promoted several S&G shows, including two at HP Pavilion in San Jose, Calif., that grossed $4.2 million from Nov. 4-5 shows. The San Jose stop is the top-grossing engagement to date.

For Perloff, though, the success of this tour transcends financial considerations. “This is a piece of history for our time, spanning several generations,” Perloff says. “We’re talking about some of the best songs ever created, and when you hear them perform them and see how the harmonies work and who sings what part, you realize what a brilliant act this is.”

At the Pepsi Center in Denver, S&G grossed $1.7 million Oct. 30, with no tickets available for a month going into the show, according to John Scheck, director of booking. The show created quite a buzz in the Denver market, Scheck says.

“It was something a lot of people never thought they would see, and then it lived up to expectations,” Scheck says. “It was a phenomenal show and a good day all the way around.”

Additionally, he says, “[production manager] Mark Spring did a good job advancing the date, so we didn’t have any problems with the sight-line kills. There was a tree on stage [as part of the set] that we were a little concerned about, but we didn’t end up with any of the issues we sometimes get with older crowds.”

According to Scher, the audience has “skewed a bit younger than we thought it would be. We thought the crowd would be exclusively 40-pluss, but we’re selling an significant number of tickets to people in their 20s and 30s, as well as a number of families.”

The Everly Brothers provide support, placed uniquely in the middle of the Simon & Garfunkel set, which Perloff calls a shrewd move in pacing.

“That’s a brilliant move; paying homage to the Everly Brothers in the middle of their own show.”

Perloff believes this tour will (Continued on page 31)
### ARTIST

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<td><strong>AEROSMITH &amp; KISS, PORCH GHOULS</strong></td>
<td>Pepsi Arena, Albany, N.Y, Nov. 28</td>
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<td><strong>SHANIA TWAIN, EMERSON DRIVE</strong></td>
<td>Savo Center, St. Louis, Nov. 25</td>
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<td><strong>PHISH</strong></td>
<td>Wachusett Spectrum, Philadelphia Nov. 20</td>
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<td><strong>AEROSMITH &amp; KISS, AUTOMATIC BLACK</strong></td>
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<td>Madison Square Garden, New York, Nov. 24</td>
<td>$311,888 14,699 Clear Channel Entertainment</td>
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<td><strong>ALAN JACKSON, JOE NICHOLS</strong></td>
<td>Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Mich, Nov. 21</td>
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<td><strong>JAGUARES, SONORA SANTANERA, BOBIA</strong></td>
<td>Long Beach Arena, Long Beach, Calif, Nov. 29</td>
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<td><strong>TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA</strong></td>
<td>E.J. Thomas Hall, Akron, Ohio, Nov. 16-17</td>
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<td><strong>PHIL LESH &amp; FRIENDS</strong></td>
<td>Orpheum Theatre, Boston Nov. 23-25</td>
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<td>Fox Theatre, Atlanta Nov. 18</td>
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<td>Ryman Auditorium, Nashville Nov. 17</td>
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<td>Paul E. Tsongas Arena, Lowell, Mass, Nov. 23</td>
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<td>Rose Garden, Portland, Ore Nov. 16</td>
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<td>$206,837 11,393 Clear Channel Entertainment</td>
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</table>

### Touring Music

**Simon & Garfunkel**

**Continued from page 30**

In a letter to the people of the world, Solidarity Simon & Garfunkel's place in music history, "I think this tour will elevate them to the upper echelon of great artists of the last 40 years," he said. "In the past it has almost seemed like they never got the credit they deserved."

That will change, according to Perloff. "I think this tour will place them at the very top of the list, along with the Beatles and Rolling Stones."

The tour has dates on the books through Dec. 21 in Tampa, Fla., with the potential to go into 2004. "We're in very preliminary discussions about extending dates into next spring," Scher says. "There is a possibility we could continue and do more. We're getting interest from all over the world."

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Timing, TVT Right For Lil Jon’s Success

BY RASHAUN HALL

Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz can thank TVT’s tenacity for the act’s successful year. The Atlanta-based trio of Lil Jon, Big Sam and Lil Bo have taken their gospel of crank to the masses with their TVT sophomore set, “King of Crunk.”

The album, released in October 2002, has gone on to sell more than 1.4 million units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

“I don’t know if we thought it would take off to the point that we thought we would win an American Music Award, two Source Awards and have all of the other success that came as a result of the album being so well-received,” says Bryan Leach, TVT VP of urban A&R.

“We went into it knowing that it had the potential to be big. Even before we started recording, the whole idea was to make a Southern version of [Dr. Dre’s] ‘The Chronic,’ so expectations were high,” Leach says.

Although the album debuted at No. 56 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart, the label remained committed to the project.

“The first album was the same way,” Leach explains. “We only did 40,000 the first week, but we had 10 weeks of steady numbers, and we grinded that out.”

After releasing two albums independently, the trio signed a deal with TVT Records. Its first TVT release, “Put Ya Hood Up,” went gold, selling more than 602,000 units.

WORKING FOR THE LONG TERM

“We went into [this album] knowing we were dropping in a tough time,” Leach says. “We were dropping in the fourth quarter, but everybody believed in the album. We knew it wasn’t about the first-week numbers, even though they were pretty good. I think we did 70,000.”

It helped that Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz were among a group of Southern-based hip-hop acts who gained mainstream attention this year. “TVT as a label was at the forefront of that whole movement,” he adds. “We already had a gold album under our belt from Jon’s last album. A lot of the same people that didn’t understand the last album fell in line this time, because there were all these other [Southern] artists doing it. Some of the same doors that were closed on us had to be opened when all these other artists came up.”

The group owes much of its success to “Get Low,” its collaboration with labelmates the Ying Yang Twins.

“’Get Low’ was really what catalyzed us to platinum,” frontman/producer Jon says. “The combination of us and the Ying Yang Twins, as well as the tempo of the record—which was more uptempo than any other record we had put out before through TVT—just worked.”

The single peaked at No. 2 on The Billboard Hot 100 and the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart.

“The timing was right,” Lil Jon adds. “Bone Crusher and David Banner had come through and opened the doors a little more. They made people more aware of crank music and the South. It was all of that shit at once.”

OTHER IRONS IN THE FIRE

Capitalizing on the group’s success, TVT recently released “Part II,” a CD/DVD combo.

Released Nov. 25, the project includes two “Get Low” remixes—the merengue mix and another remix featuring Busta Rhymes and Elephant Man. It also has two previous unreleased cuts: “I Don’t Play That,” featuring TI. and 8Ball, and a remix of “Put Yo Hood Up,” featuring Roy Jones Jr., Chyna White, Jadakiss and Petey Pablo.

The DVD contains a video diary chronicling the group’s rise to fame.

Next up, the trio will be featured on TVT’s “Crank & Disorderly” compilation. Due Dec. 9, the set also features tracks from TVT newcomer Pitbull, Three 6 Mafia, Lil Flip, Trina and YoungBloodz, among others.

According to Leach, the group plans on returning to the studio in January 2004 to record its next studio album, due in late summer next year.

“Seeing what [Jon] did with the ‘Get Low’ remix and how he’s not afraid, as a Southern artist, to explore other genres is just a tease as to what is about to come on this next album,” Leach says.

In addition to new Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz set, Jon is in great demand as a producer. He has already contributed tracks to new albums by Usher, Bravhearts, Mob Deep and Mystikal, among others.

And Jon doesn’t just do music. He has lent his voice to MTV’s made-for-TV movie “Vulcano High.” The trio will make its feature-film debut next year in Jessy Terrero’s “Soul Plane.”

BMG Adds Value To Holiday Campaign

Retailers are embracing BMG Distribution’s seventh urban holiday visibility campaign. Using the slogan “Music is the Gift for All Seasons” for a second year, BMG launched its two-phase campaign Nov. 14.

Campaign components include:

- Price-and-positioning, light boxes, window and wall displays and listening stations
- Added value comes in the form of DVDs, posters, calendars and samplers handed out with the purchase of two or more of the featured titles

Phase one spotlights albums by Anthony Hamilton, Luther Vandross, Wyclef Jean, Nick Cannon and Youngbloodz. Phase two features Alicia Keys (Dec. 2), Kelis and Ruben Studdard (both Dec. 9) and Joe (Dec. 16). The promotion wraps Jan. 9, 2004.

The campaign’s second phase also integrates a cable-TV blitz on BET and MTV. Supplementing the entire push is a Web site incorporating CDs, DVDs, e-cards and music streams.

“The Music is the Gift for All Seasons” sweep blankets the country’s primary urban markets from Philadelphia to New York to Houston. Participating indie retailers include VIP Records. Serious Sounds, North Georgia Compact Disc and Vision Quest.

BMG’s national marketing staff is headed by VP of marketing Michael Terry with manager of urban marketing Tami Jones and marketing coordinator Beverly Hogan.

ON THE RECORD:

Trey Songz, an artist under producer Troy Taylor’s (Arresta Franklin) B2K Songbook Entertainment banner, has signed with Atlantic Records... "Bravebird" is the title of the sophomore set by former Epic artist and Groove Theory co-principal Amel Larrieux. It is out Jan. 20, 2004, on BlissLife Records.

Speaking of sophomore albums, Glenn Lewis is "Back for More" in February. The Epic/Sony Urban Music album’s title track, featuring Kardinal Offishall, is also the lead single. Lionel Richie is in the studio working on a new Island Def Jam album due next year... En Vogue returns Feb. 24 with "Soulflower." Joining original members Cindy Herron and Terry Ellis is singer/songwriter Rhona Bennett, who has a recurring role on "The Jamie Foxx Show," penned the trio’s first single, "Losin’ My Mind." The new album is being released on 33rd Street Records, distributed by Bavie’s Entertainment for Funky Girl/Beat Exchange Records.


B2K SWEEPSTAKES: An instant-win contest has been developed to help promote Epic act B2K’s upcoming film and soundtrack... "You Got Served." In true "Willie Wonka"-style, five golden CDs will be sent out with the record’s initial run. Those who open the case and find the golden CD will win a grand-prize trip to Las Angeles to meet the group. A no-purchase-necessary, second-chance random drawing is also being staged, with 100 winners receiving an autographed poster.

An upcoming B2K tour is in the offing, starting this month. Junior Varsity will join the group on seven dates. The teen duo—CP and C Champ—will open for B2K in Atlanta (Dec. 25); Baltimore (Continued on page 35)
 Nazario Breaks Jinx On Billboard Latin Albums Chart

By Leila Cobo

There's been a dry spell for women on the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart. Since the beginning of the year, only one female artist—the late Celia Cruz—has topped the list.

As far as pop is concerned, no woman has been at the top in terms of sales since the female act Las Ketchup's self-titled debut and Shakira's "Greatest Hits" both topped the chart in November 2002.

But last week, Ednita Nazario broke the jinx.

The veteran Puerto Rican singer's 20th album, "Por Ti," made a surprising debut at No. 1 on the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart and on the Heatseekers chart, the first time she's topped either one of them. The album, which sold a disproportionate amount of copies in Puerto Rico, is No. 10 on this issue's Top Latin Albums chart.

Beyond being a landmark for Nazario, "Por Ti" illustrates a change in the direction of female Latin pop.

Not only is the album far more acoustic-minded and rock-driven than traditional pop, it was written almost entirely by women.

"Maybe it's a cyclical thing," Nazario says, noting that there are no other female pop acts on the chart. Cruz, at No. 26, is tropical, while Ana Gabriel, at No. 27, has a ranchera album.

"Maybe labels aren't paying too much attention," she adds. "Maybe it's the language. Women are generally victims in songs. I take another position: a position of control and importance. That's particularly attractive, especially for today's woman, who is more dynamic."

Nature of the Cycle

While mainstream music has always had strong female figures, women have played second fiddle to men in the Latin realm.

Sure, there are superstars like Shakira, Gloria Estefan, Thalia and Paulina Rubio—for a grand total of four. But there's a serious lack of Latin female teen idols à la Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears or Beyoncé.

In contrast, mainstream music has a slew of female stars, including Spears at No. 3 and Hilary Duff at No. 4 on The Billboard 200. Sheryl Crow, Sarah McLachlan and Missy Elliott are in the top 20.

"I honestly think it's a cycle," says Jorge Pino, president/chairman of EMI Latin USA, whose roster includes Thalia and Soraya. "In this cycle, we've seen young men appear but not young women. And I see very clearly that there's a need for a young female act."

Both Thalía and Soraya are EMI priorities. Thalía is expected to release a greatest-hits album in early 2004, while Soraya is still working her self-titled album, released last May and entirely written by her.

Pino's upcoming young, female artist is a 15-year-old named Natasha who plays a blend of pop/rock and writes her own songs. Her debut album is expected in the spring.

Nazario: My Mission is to Say Things Differently from Everyone Else

Sony is also looking for a strong female act; it, too, is focusing on a singer/songwriter type.

In a way, Shakira was the blueprint," says Sony Music International Latin America senior VP of A&R Angel Carrasco. But since then, no one has had that kind of impact."

One of Sony's female priorities is Natalia Lafourcade. The young Mexican Latin Grammy Award nominee whom Carrasco describes as a typical singer/songwriter. Lafourcade has sold extremely well in Mexico. In the U.S., she is now a priority for the company and is being pushed on radio.

Marketability Issue

The quest for a female act, Carrasco says, isn't a response to the chart.

"You're always looking, and if it comes, it comes," he says. "But men usually come first."

There are several reasons for this trend. Most important is that in the Latin realm, women, who are the big music buyers, tend to gravitate toward romantic material.

"Teenagers buy male records, and that's a sure thing for labels," says songwriter Claudia Brant, who wrote several of the tracks on Nazario's album, including current single "Si No Me Ama" (co-written with Luis Fonsi). "I think they buy women's albums when they really see them as an idol."

But the commonly accepted notion is that finding a female idol is far more difficult than finding a male one.

"They need to have a certain look," one executive says. "And finding that full package—someone who can sing, who writes and is beautiful—isn't easy.

For these reasons, the same source says that labels tend to put more weight behind male acts."

But the recent interest in women who can write and play an instrument may open the door for new female acts. Sony by fellow Sony's Lafourcade and EMi's Natalia, Universal is grooming singer/songwriter Alí Jey, who released her debut album in 2002, while BMG has Lizzy.

The coming year will also see new releases from major established female artists, including Paulina Rubio and Jennifer Peña.

They represent two ends of the spectrum. After years of moderate success, Rubio became a superstar with her 2000 album "Paulina," a pop romp that included "Yo No Soy Esa Mujer," an anthem of female liberation. Peña, a vocal powerhouse and seasoned performer, appeals to a vast number of Mexican-American teens in the same way Selena did before her.

Formidable label support was crucial in getting these two artists off the ground. But a new message is also important.

"My mission is to say other things," Nazario says. "Things that are different from what everyone else is saying. That's why I look for people and things whose point of view tends to be feminine."

"Univisio, I know there are great male composers who can sing things from a female point of view," she adds. "But a woman can say it in a different way. Perhaps men still have this romantic vision of women as fragile beings who have to be protected. And with all due respect, that's an archaic vision."

J&N Continues Holiday Tradition With Hits Discs

Indie label J&N has released its now-traditional collection of hits for dancing in the holiday season. "Merengue Hits," "Reggae Hits," and "Bachata Hits" were released in stores Nov. 25. It is their 11th year in the market.

This time around, however, there are more titles—"Reggae-Hits," "Merengue-Hits," and "Tipico-Hits," and were also introduced.

J&N president Juan Hidalgo says this is the label's first foray into the Mexican music market. "That's what's selling," he says.

J&N has also departed from its traditional marketing approach by launching a far more extensive TV promotional campaign than those of previous years. The new effort includes spots on the Telemundo, Mun2 and Telefutura networks.

The bulk of the 300 spots will be on Telemundo, where J&N has traditionally advertised. But J&N will target Mun2 for the reggae hits collection, while Telefutura will be used to reach the Mexican audience.

"We are selling one concept: the hits," Hidalgo says. "When people see the spot, the only variation is the music. That helps me get [brand] recognition for the project."

In addition to this hits collection, the "Venezuela Salsa" collection, released in December, and J&N has launched compilations of brand new music.

Each installment features the titles "Merengue de Hoy," "Bachata de Hoy" and "Salsa de Hoy." The first set was released in October, with a second batch slated for February 2004.

The De Hoy discs include new singles that have yet to be released on albums.

The notion, Hidalgo says, is to fight piracy by offering music that is not available anywhere else.

The compilations also feature tracks by lesser-known artists that are just breaking into the market.

"They give me their songs, and at least they have that song in the market," Hidalgo says. "It gives them an opportunity to break into the market and to develop."

Each installment of the De Hoy discs is released approximately every three months.

New Pastures for Ponce: Singer/actor/TV host Carlos Ponce has signed a management deal with EarthTown Entertainment, the management company created by former Crescent Moon Records president Mauricio Aburto.

Ponce was formerly handled by Estefan Enterprises. The artist's plans for 2004 include negotiating a new publishing deal and a new recording deal that will target both the English and Spanish-language markets.

Ponce released a CD/DVD collection of greatest hits on EMI Latin this month, but his lifetime recording contract with the label recently ended. His publishing is also up for grabs.

Ponce is currently reporting on film, TV, music and fashion for "Entertainment Tonight." EarthTown is based out of Houston.

In brief: Universal Music Latino has signed former MusiCares Alicia Machado to a recording deal. Machado, who is Venezuelan, will release a commercial pop album that includes at least one track written by her fellow Venezuelan Princo de Vita. The album is slated for release in spring 2004.

"It's a great opportunity to work with someone who has been such an influence in the genre," Machado says. "I'm excited to be able to work with them on the project."
### Latin Pop Albums

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>A.B. Quintanilla II &amp; Kumbia Kings</td>
<td>La Historia Continua</td>
<td>La Historia</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Various Artists</td>
<td>Historia Del Siglo XXI / Vol. 1</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Celia Cruz</td>
<td>Grandes Exitos</td>
<td>EMI Latin</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Caracas</td>
<td>Su Historia</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Los Tigres Del Norte</td>
<td>De Nuestra Tierra</td>
<td>Warner Bros</td>
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### Tropical Albums

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<td>El Corazon Que Late</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Victor Manuelle</td>
<td>Tu Historia</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Alejandro Fernandez</td>
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### Regional Mexican Albums

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# LATIN POP AIRPLAY

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<td>&quot;Melodia&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Jenesys&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;EMI Latin&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Michelle&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Yo Me Dije&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Luis Miguel&quot;</td>
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# REGIONAL MEXICAN AIRPLAY

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# TROPICAL AIRPLAY

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# RADIO AIRPLAY

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# REGIONS

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* Regional music is electronically monitored 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week. Songs ranked by audience impression. Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems broadcasts a panel of 100 stations (CBS Radio, Pop, Hot, Regional) in the U.S. and Canada (excluding Mexico) to represent the regional Mexican music audience. A record which has been on the chart for more than 30 weeks and/or receives no exposure airplay is removed from the chart. Results below the top 40 are compiled via PROMOTION, MEGAMUSIC, and/or Brand Manager's discretion. *
**Golden Oldies Get Polished For Chart Action**

**BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA**

Everything old is new again.

For nine weeks, beginning in the Oct. 4 issue of Billboard, remakes of Elvis Presley's "Rubberneckerin" and the Rolling Stones’ "Sympathy for the Devil" claimed the top two spots on the Billboard Hot Dance Singles chart. The lengthy run ended in the Dec. 6 issue, when "Sympathy" dropped one slot to No. 3. In this issue, "Rubberneckerin" remains in pole position, with "Sympathy" at No. 4.

The Oct. 4 issue also saw "Sympathy" debuting at No. 1 on the Hot 100 Singles chart. In the process, it bumped "Rubberneckerin," which debuted in the pole position the previous week.

Ironically, Hilary Duff's "So Yesterday" was No. 3 on the same chart.

So yesterday, indeed. The original versions of both "Rubberneckerin" and "Sympathy" date back to 1968.

"We are bringing what was cool and hip yesterday into the here and now," says Joe DiMuro, executive VP of BMG Strategic Marketing Group. "This is a great way to reach a new younger audience—without alienating your core audience.

In addition to the Paul Oakenfold restructurings of "Rubberneckerin," BMG enjoyed similar success last year with the Junkie XL remixes of Presley's "A Little Less Conversation."

While these remixes receive minimal radio airplay at best, they are embraced by Madison Avenue. This was the case with "Rubberneckerin" and "Conversation," which were licensed for use in Toyota and Nike TV ads, respectively.

"A commercial has a million times more impact than club play does on remixes like these," notes Brian Chin, a former Billboard dance columnist who now consults in A&R research for Atlantic and in reissues for Sony Legacy and other labels.

BMG and ABKCO, which issued the Rolling Stones remixes, are not alone in their quests to uncover those heritage recordings that are potentially ripe for the remixing. Universal Music Enterprises (UME) and Verve Music Group, among other companies, are revisiting their catalogs, too.

"We're not releasing these remixes instead of, but in addition to," says Jeff Moskow, VP of product management and consumer marketing at UME. "It is our way of showing that these tracks are still relevant today.

Early next year, UME will issue Diana Ross & the Supremes' "The #15," which includes a bonus track: the Almighty remix of "You Keep Me Hangin' On." (The U.K.'s Almighty production outfit has also been tapped to remix "Love Child" for a future release.)

Also being considered for 2004—the 45th anniversary of Motown—is a "Motown Remixed" project.

Moskow and others interviewed agree that the remixes being done today do not exploit the original recordings. If anything, "much respect to the original versions."****

Being respectful of what came before was essential to the greening of "Verve Remixed" and "Verve Remixed 2," acknowledges Verve Music Group A&R director Dahlia Ambach Caplin, who co-produced both collections with Jason Olaine.

"We can't just let producers do whatever they want to the original recording," she says. "We must consider the concept and the idea behind each song's original intent.'

To illustrate, she points to Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit," which was remixed by Tricky. "That track could have only been remixed by Tricky."

Similarly, Almighty's Martyn Norris mentions words like substance, emotion and musicianship when talking about "You Keep Me Hangin' On."

"These elements had to be retained in the remix—but with a DJ's approach," Norris says. "So, in addition to contemporary house drums, Norris used the Funk Brothers' original baseline, the signature "newsflash" guitar riff ("of course, padded hard left to right") and Benny Benjamin's explosive drum pickups.

What is Almighty does, he explains. "We bring the song, in its entirety, to the clubs, while maintaining the original integrity."

This was key for a group like the Rolling Stones, which personally requested the remixes for "Sympathy." ABKCO senior VP Jody Klein says. "Since the track was originally a club record, we brought in producers who could add insight."

Earlier this year, Mind Train/Twisted/ The Right Stuff did the same thing with Yoko Ono's early-'80s underground dance hit, "Walking on Thin Ice.

Remixes of the track reached the summit of the Hot Dance Club Play chart and peaked at No. 25 on the Hot 100 Singles chart.

More recently, in the U.K., restructurings of Elton John's 20-year-old "Are You Ready for Love?" topped the U.K. pop and airplay charts.

Throughout, one thing remains certain. Most of these records were originally created in a pre-video era. So, a song had to stand on its own—without the help of a visual component.

"Because they didn't have stimulating visuals accompanying the song, artists had to work harder to make records that kept listeners interested," Mind Train managing director and longtime Ono collaborator Rob Stevens says. "The writing and production process was different then," he adds. "Different—yet very much last-longing. Timeless."

**Psst! Don't Look, They're Here Already**

While many are counting down the hours until New Year's Eve, we are already living in 2004. Musically, that is. Already, our CD piles are stacking up with much-anticipated first-quarter releases.

Consider this week's column a sneak peek into those discs you need to know and care about.

Let us begin with **Zero 7**. Two years ago, the British duo—Sam Hardaker and Henry Binns—debuted with "Simple Things." This sublime collection proved to be the postcard-perfect soundtrack for chilling out. At year's end, the album could be found on many music critics' annual top 10s.

On March 9, Quango/Palm will release the act's follow-up, "When It Falls." These two arePlat and hoping for something completely different from what came before will be disappoint- ed, while those desiring an equally relaxed journey will be overjoyed.

Indeed, Zero 7 maintains its musical position, which comfortably sits somewhere between Air and Massive

**Attack.** The set also finds the two- some retaining the vocal stylings of Sia Furler, Sophie Barker and Mozee—while adding Danish newcomer Tina Dico to the proceedings.

Compile selections include "Passing By," "Sommersault" and "Morning"

"Moon Safari" in 1998, Air has effortlessly confounded its followers by simply following its own beat.

In 2000, Air scored the music for Sofia Coppola's movie "The Virgin Suicides." If "Moon Safari" was sweet and light (and which it was), then "The Virgin Suicides" was decidedly contemplative. Then came the very Pink Floyd-inspired "10,000 Hz Legend."

For "Talkie Walkie," Air has brought together the best elements from its previous albums. At times whimsical ("Alpha Beta Gaga"), haunting ("Run") and cinematic ("Alone in Kyoto"), "Talkie Walkie" is a winner.

In a first for Air, all vocals are provided by Godin and Dunkel themselves—with Dunkel handling the bulk of the microphone duties.

And then there is** Kylie Minogue**. The Australian singer's new Capitol album, "Body Language," lands in the U.S. Feb. 17.

Upon first listen, one cannot help but wonder, "What was she thinking?"

Her most successful album to date. "Fever"—thanks to the indefatigable "Can't Get You Out of My Head"—finally endeared her to most Americans. Then what does she go ahead and do? She makes an underground record.

But "Body Language" is not an underground record. Spend ample time with it, as we did, and it becomes very clear that Minogue is definitely onto something here.

Songs like "Sweet Music," "After Dark," "Still Standing" and lead single "Slow" flourish over time. Forgiving immediate, in-your-face pop jams, Minogue has instead delivered a bold collection of songs that intertwine Missy Elliott/Timbaland-hued beats and sparse electro stylings.

Will Americans respond with open arms? While it's too soon to tell, it is worth noting that "Body Language"—released overseas Nov. 17—debuted at No. 6 on the official U.K. albums chart.

It is safe to say that her U.K. label (Parlophone) was very likely hoping for something a bit higher. Fingers crossed.
### Billboard Dance Singles Sales Chart

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<th>Artist</th>
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<td>Dee Jay Black featuring DJ Skillz</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Waiting For You (THICK DICK, PASSENGER, 29 PALMS, D. CARTER)&quot;</td>
<td>Sean</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;Believe&quot;</td>
<td>Mark &amp; G. R. Faiola</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;Rock the Bells (HOLLYWOOD/MAQ-QUILL MIX)&quot;</td>
<td>Motel Lane</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>&quot;Nothing's Changed&quot;</td>
<td>Remi</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;When I'm Waiting&quot;</td>
<td>The Packin' stencil</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;Baby Boy&quot;</td>
<td>Beyoncé feat. Sean Paul</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood&quot;</td>
<td>Nina Simone</td>
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### Billboard Dance Radio Airplay Chart

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<td>&quot;Since I Left You&quot;</td>
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<td>Beyoncé feat. Sean Paul</td>
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<td>&quot;I'm Just Here For You&quot;</td>
<td>D'Angelo</td>
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<td>Coldplay</td>
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<td>The Packin' stencil</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood&quot;</td>
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### Billboard Top Electronic Dance Music Chart

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<td>&quot;Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood&quot;</td>
<td>Nina Simone</td>
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Data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.
Listeners Welcome Return To Substance

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE
and PHILLIS STARK

NASHVILLE—Could such qualities as substance, grit and edginess be making a comeback among country music’s male stars?

After years of pretty, polished new artists who sometimes displayed more style than substance and were often sanitized for our protection by their labels, some industry observers say the tide seems to be turning.

This is evidenced, they say, by a rash of new artists—such as DreamWorks’ Jimmy Wayne, Mercury’s Billy Currington and RCA’s Jeff Bates—who sing about their painful upbringing. It’s also evidenced in such recent stars as the male-friendly Montgomery Gentry, Trace Adkins (who has battled alcohol problems), “Nashville Star” winner Buddy Jewell (who formerly abused drugs and alcohol) and Keith Urban (who included a song about his former cocaine addiction on his current album).

Each of these acts comes from a background that is more outlaw than silver spoon, and they’ve developed the chops as songwriters to reveal their experiences in potent country songs about alcoholism and other edgy topics.

“We’re getting to a point where people are allowing songs that are real to get through,” RCA Label Group chairman Joe Galante says. “Post-9/11, people are very reflective about what’s happened in their lives, and they value certain things more than ever before. A lot of these songs really strike at your heart and are life lessons. People respond to that.

“That’s the great thing about country music; we’re not just singing about falling in love, being 18 years old and shaking your booty.”

SUN FROM EXPERIENCE

Currington drew from his experiences with an alcoholic father to pen “Walk a Little Straighter,” which peaked at No. 8 on the Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart in October.

The artist has spent the past six months traveling the country on a radio tour and playing shows. He says, “I’ve had so many people come up to me and say, ‘I really connect with these songs because I see that you wrote them. You’ve lived them, and you connect with these songs.’”

Wayne and Bates have also resonated with listeners. Wayne’s first single, “Stay Gone,” reached No. 3, and new single “I Love You This Much” is No. 22 this issue. Bates’ debut, “The Love Song,” reached No. 8 this summer.

Programmers say such acts have largely been good for country radio.

“The format always benefits when real and distinctive male artists rise to the top,” KPLX (the Wolf) Dallas assistant PD Smokey Rivers says. “You can’t get away at business if it has some dirt and sweat on it.”

Galante says listeners react to artists who have lived what they are singing. “Jeff [Bates] and Jimmy [Wayne] especially are living testaments to overcoming so many problems in life,” he says. Bates is a former drug addict who did jail time for theft. Wayne had a violent upbringing spent in and out of foster homes.

DreamWorks principal executive James Stroud says “more male artists seem to be connecting with life experiences set to music.”

KZLA Los Angeles operations manager R.J. Curtis says such acts and their real-life songs are good for the format because “these themes can appeal to male listeners, and we are challenged in that demo. As long as the artists and the labels keep it real, it’ll be a good evolution.”

Bates and his peers are determined to “keep it real” because they see truth as the essence of great country music: “If singing about some of these things [drugs, jail] tells a truth that anybody else can connect with, that’s what country music was about to begin with,” Bates says. “Artists and writers are beginning to go back to that again. We all have a wealth of true-life stories that other people can relate to. It’s not always pretty. It’s not always happy, but it’s always real, and people need that.”

BUT WILL IT BRING BACK MEN?

The preponderance of such acts recalls the days when Merle Haggard, George Jones and other hard-living artists kept listeners’ attention with their real and relatable songs.

“It’s a throwback to the songs of life,” Stroud says. “When you look at Johnny Cash and Merle Haggard and those great writers back then, everybody connected with [their songs] because what they were singing they lived, they believed in. It’s sort of cyclic. When you look at Jeff, Jimmy and Toby Keith, those artists are expressing what they believe in. They’re not candy-coated. They’re not [the cookie-cutter artists that we were guilty of signing] for so many years.

But at a time when country radio has lost many of its male listeners, there’s little evidence that these artists are bringing men back to the format—at least not yet.

“This trend hasn’t really gained any traction yet. It’s still early,” Curtis says. “There haven’t been enough of these songs yet that have been huge hits. Having said that, I hope Nashville doesn’t start cloning these themes just because they may be working. The reason songs like this used to work and seem to be working again is because the artists and the stories were real.”

Radio consultant Joel Raab says, “There are a lot of strong, authentic artists, but so far, no one has [approached] the level of Garth Brooks or Lionel Richie.”

That’s true in terms of sales as well. As of Nov. 26, Wayne had sold 125,000 copies of his debut album, which peaked at No. 7 and has been on the Top Country Albums chart for 23 weeks. Bates’ debut has sold 54,000 copies since its May 20 release, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Currington’s debut, on the chart only nine weeks, has sold 43,000 copies.

The most successful of these artists to debut this year is Columbia’s Jevi

Rodney Atkins Sports The Timberland Look

Curb Records artist Rodney Atkins has signed an endorsement deal with apparel company Timberland.

Atkins will wear Timberland’s clothing and shoes on all of his upcoming TV appearances, including his New Year’s Eve performance at the Music City Bowl in Nashville, which will be televised on ESPN.

The company’s other celebrity endorsers include actors George Clooney and Ashton Kutcher, according to Atkins’ manager, Phillip Kovac. While Atkins is hardly a household name, Kovac says he got around that hurdle by “explaining to [Timberland executives] who Rodney was and where we wanted to go with him.”

He also says the artist fits the company’s market-expansion plans.

“They’ve been very involved in the urban market and now want to start spreading into the urban market,” Kovac says. “I met with one of the executives at Timberland and started talking about Rodney and the country market and how important it was to make it stretch out into that area. They agreed, so I sent them some information on Rodney. They fell in love with the record and with Rodney after they talked to him.”

Kovac says Timberland is “a good fit with the Rodney style,” which he describes as “suburban America.”

EMERSON REMEMBERED: A benefit concert for the family of the late Jack Emerson will be held Dec. 12 at Nashville’s Mercy Lounge. Performers will include John Hiatt & the Goners, Sonny Landreth, Steve Earle, Jason & the Scorchers and Billy Joe Shaver. Emerson founded the Praxis International and E-Squared Records labels. He died Nov. 22 (Billboard, Dec. 6).


The company has also hired Stephanie Green as director of public relations. She previously was with GC Management and Glen Campbell Enterprises.

Further reinforcing the dearth of female artists in the format, the lineup for the Country Radio Seminar’s New Faces Show for 2004 will feature five solo male artists. They are Dierks Bentley, Pat Green, Buddy Jewell, Craig Morgan and Jimmy Wayne.

The event is scheduled for March 5 in Nashville. The acts were picked by radio broadcasters who have attended CRS in the past. The show has been a launching pad for numerous country stars.
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*Note: Nielsen SoundScan, Inc. All rights reserved.*
### Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks

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<td>Toby Keith</td>
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<td>Blue County</td>
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### Billboard Top Bluegrass Albums

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<td>December 13, 2003</td>
<td><strong>YOU CAN'T TAKE ME AWAY</strong></td>
<td>Scotty Emerick</td>
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<td>December 13, 2003</td>
<td><strong>BROKENHEARTSVILLE</strong></td>
<td>Joe Nichols</td>
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<td>December 13, 2003</td>
<td><strong>HONESTY (WRITE ME A LIST)</strong></td>
<td>Josh Turner</td>
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<td>December 13, 2003</td>
<td><strong>WALK A WINDY ROAD</strong></td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
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<td>December 13, 2003</td>
<td><strong>HELP ME OUT</strong></td>
<td>Buddy Jewell</td>
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MISSY ELLIOTT
This is Not a Test
PRODUCERS: Missy Elliott, Timbaland
The Gold Mind/Elektro Entertainment
52905
RELEASE DATE: Nov. 25
Well on her way becoming one of hip-hop’s grand dames, Missy Elliott packs plenty of rhythmic jams, sexual tension and lyrical introspection onto her latest CD. Whether jiggling the needle on the party meter (“I Pass That Dutch”), “Jump It Up” featuring Kelyfi or steam-up the proceedings (“Iz What I’m Talking About”) with R. Kelly, Elliott continues to think outside the box. Leave it to her to pen an ode to female sexual liberation on the tongue-in-cheek “Toys” (“I don’t need no help in pleasing me”). Also joining Elliott are Mary J. Blige, Elephant Man, Monica and Denise Mint. Elliott’s thought-provoking lyricism and distinctive rapping style shine brightest on the bling-bling-dissing “Wake Up” (with Jay-Z), the inspiring “I’m Not Perfect” (with the Clark Sisters) and the old-school-flavored love ballad “It’s Real.” —GM

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE
Live at the Olympic Auditorium
PRODUCER: Rick Rubin
Epic TR 85314
RELEASE DATE: Nov. 25
While Rage Against the Machine was hands-down one of the most powerful live bands ever to play in concert, on disc it seemed to get slightly less venomous with each new album. Live, though, that power was always—always—there. “Live at the Olympic Auditorium,” recorded at the group’s final two shows in September 2000, is proof. Witness the crowd roar between every song and absolutely erupt during the intro to “Calm Like a Bomb” or “People of the Sun.” Ultra- ture would be a better way to describe the, well, ultra-violent audience. Particularly dis- tressing, however, is the mutiny of frontman Zack de la Rocha’s occasional curting. Captured a month before de la Rocha announced his departure, “Live at the Olympic Auditorium” is nonetheless an important, ear-shredding docu- ment—no album that broke new musical ground and spawned countless imita- tors. It’s the type of album that will help give rise to the myth of rage for future generations. An amazing DVD arrives Dec. 9.—WO

MADONNA
Remixed & Revisited
PRODUCERS: various
Maverick/Warner Bros. 46824
BG 21, the inspirational
Oddly a holiday offering, Madonna’s “Remixed & Revisited” asks: What if “American Life” had been a ‘90s retro- album?” It was a do-or-die approach, since Madonna’s surreal and preachy lyrics were married with boring, techno-beep production by knob-twiddler Mirvish.

DIXIE CHICKS
Top of the World Tour Live
PRODUCERS: Dixie Chicks, Lloyd Maines
Open Wide/Monument/Columbia C2K 50794
RELEASE DATE: Nov. 21
The truest test of an act is its ability to deliver live, and the Dixie Chicks do this in spades, as heard on this double CD from their recent tour. Make no mistake, from the opening thump of “Goodbye Earl,” these gals know something about attitude and style. And when Natalie Maines opens her mouth to sing, amazing things happen. Hits like “There’s Your Trouble” and “Cow- boy Take Me Away” sit fine next to such authentic fare as the bluegrass ram- page “Tortured, Tangled Hearts,” the stone country “Hello, Mr. Heartache” and the powerful “Cold Day in July.”

ALICIA KEYS
The Diary of Alicia Keys
PRODUCERS: various
J Records 82876-55712
RELEASE DATE: Dec. 2
No matter how successful or his debut is, every artist worries about the dreaded sophomore jinx. Alicia Keys has no need to worry about that. The songstress handily tops “Songs in A Minor,” her much-heralded 2001 debut with “The Diary of Alicia Keys.” A self- described “old soul,” Keys channels spirituals of ‘60s and ‘70s soul for “Swan,” “Be Mine” and the blues-y “Heartburn,” she blends soul and funk with pleasing results. Need more proof? Check out head single “You Don’t Know My Name.” Produced by Red One and West. The track en- bodies a nostalgic vibe with a street edge. She even tries her hand at cov- ering classics by Gladys Knight and Dionne Warwick with “If I Was Your Woman/Man.”

MUSIQ
Soulstar
PRODUCERS: Musiq Soulchild, Carvin Haggins, Ivan “Orthodox” Barra
Def Soul BO001616
RELEASE DATE: Dec. 9
Musiq sticks to his tried-and-true formula of catchy, narrative lyrics and sweet soul melodies on his third set for Def Soul. Laid-back “Golden Days,” a rumin- gory produced by Musiq’s production team CarMuir, the track features an infectious, bass-heavy groove that will have couples getting together on the dance- floor. The title track and “Give Me Love” also showcase Musiq’s true soul. The for- mer features sweet guitar licks and a smooth groove, and the latter sounds like the singer’s homage to Maze. “Soulstar” does have its misses, the concept for “womanology”—using a Monopoly meta- phor to tell the story of woman’s struggle—is creative, but the overall effect falls flat. Similarly, his cover of the Rolling Stones’ “Satisfaction” is a wank- esque reworking of the original with a wimpy, 4/4 beat.

KORN
Take a Look in the Mirror
PRODUCERS: Korn, Jonathan Davis
Immortal/Epic EK 90581
RELEASE DATE: Nov. 21
Once again, an Internet leak marred the launch of a new Korn album. But “Take a Look in the Mirror” is strong enough to withstand the blow. Being the band’s first self-produced disc, “Mirror” reflects the quintet’s issues “All” without being a carbon copy of it. “Break Some Off” will make fans joyously bounce off the walls. David Silveria’s machine-gun percussion is backed by bassist Fieldy and the relentless attack of guitarist Head and Mr. You. Jonathan Davis frequently sounds off with a death- metal roar—but a brutal turn even for his band of agonized wailing. Things get a little repetitive in the disc’s second half, and the mixing should be cleaner. But several brunches keep it from slid- ing into monotony: a hidden track to love live cover of Metallica’s “One” from MTVU-car and rapper Nas guesting on “Play Me,” for instance. A bonus DVD includes amusing snippets of the band hanging out with a stuffed sheep, no less.—CL

JOHNNY CASH
Unearthed
PRODUCER: Rick Rubin
American/Last Highway BO10101679-02
RELEASE DATE: Nov. 25
In one of the most inspired pairings of producer and artist in recorded music history, Rick Rubin and Johnny Cash found each other at the right time for both. In this posthumous collection pri- marily of cuts culled from a remarkably prolific 1994-2003 collaboration, the depth of Cash’s artistry and Rubin’s sup- port become even more impressive. Not only a profound songwriter, Cash was also a fearless interpreter of his own and others’ work, with no limits whatsoever. At nearly 80 cuts over 5 CDs (four discs comprise previously unreleased material, the fifth is a single-disc best-of), “Unearthed” is too expansive for the space allowed here, though some cuts are impossible to ignore, such as his indulgent of self-righteousness. “No

R&B/HIP-HOP

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Soulstar
PRODUCERS: Musiq Soulchild, Carvin Haggins, Ivan “Orthodox” Barra
Def Soul BO001616
RELEASE DATE: Dec. 9
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ELEPHANT MAN
Gangsta Co
PRODUCERS: various
VP/Athentic 83661
RELEASE DATE: Dec. 2
Last year, Elephant Man was beat up by that holiday party? Well, look no further than this red-hot dancehall debut by Jamaica’s

CONTROVERSIAL

ESSENTIALS: Releases deemed by the editor to deserve special attention on the inverse of martial music and/or Billboard chart potential. VITAL REISSUES: Reissued albums of special artistic, archival and commercial interest and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. PICKS: New releases predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format: CRITICS’ PICKS: (+) New releases regarded as of great potential. Nights recommended because of their musical merit. All albums commercially available in the U.S. are eligible. Send album review copies to Michael Poletto and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (Billboard, 770 Broadway, 6th floor/New York, NY 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate business.

www.billboard.com
BILLBOARD DECEMBER 13, 2003
**SINGLES**

Edited by Chuck Taylor

**POP**

- **CROWNING CROWS** She Don't Want Nobody Near (3:08)
  **PRODUCER:** Brendan O'Brien
  **WRITERS:** A. Duritz, B. O'Brien
  **PUBLISHERS:** various

- **RUBEN STUDDARD** Sorry 2004 (4:02)
  **PRODUCERS:** the Underdogs
  **WRITERS:** M. Mason, D. Thomas, R. Jackson, T. Dixon, E. Dawkins
  **PUBLISHERS:** various

**COUNTRY**

- **LORRIE MORGAN** Do You Still Want Me to Drink That Drink (Frank) (3:20)
  **PRODUCER:** Richard Landis
  **WRITERS:** B. Lawson, J. Matthews, R. Dean
  **PUBLISHERS:** EMI April, ASCAP, Zomba Millenium/Agatha Moom Music, SESAC

**DANCE**

- **WIDELIFE WITH SIMON DENNY** All Things (Just Keep Getting Better) (2:47)
  **PRODUCERS:** Rachid, Ian J
  **WRITERS:** R. Webhi
  **PUBLISHER:** not listed

- **DEP**

**AC**

- **DARYL HALL & JOHN OATES** Getaway Car (3:30)
  **PRODUCERS:** Daryl Hall, T Bone Walk
  **WRITERS:** B. Mann, G. Haase
  **PUBLISHERS:** U-Watch Records (CD promo)

- **HALL & OATES** continue to turn their surprising 2002 comeback into a true career revival with one iron-solid AC hit after another.

**ERASURE**

- **HITS!** The Videos
  **Mute/Sire 97024**

**MOBY**

- **19 B Sides + DVD**
  **22 27173**

**MOBY**

- **HOLIDAY**
  **MICHAEL BUBLE** Let It Snow
  **PRODUCER:** David Foster
  **143/Reprise 9362-48599**

**MOBY**

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**BILLBOARD**

**BILLBOARD PICTURES**

**BILLBOARD DECEMBER 13, 2003**
PUBLISHING: Alan L. Walter is promoted to senior VP of finance for Famous Music Publishing Cos. in Los Angeles. He was VP of finance.

RECORD COMPANIES: Caroline Bazbaz is promoted to national director of rhythm/crossover promotion for Arista Records in New York. She was national manager of rhythm/crossover mix-show and dance promotion.

Maroon Goes Gold
"Songs About Jane," the debut for Octone/Records act Maroon5, was recently certified gold by the Recording Industry Assn. of America. Celebrating the feat at the group's sold-out show at Roseland in New York, from left, are band members Adam Levine, James Valentine, Jesse Carmichael and Ryan Dusick. James Diener, Octone Records president and J Records VP of A&R/marketing for RCA Music Group; band member Mickey Madden; J Records founder and RCA Music Group chairman Clive Davis; Ben Berkman, Octone head of promotion/marketing; and Octone GM David Boxenbaum. Octone issued "Songs About Jane" in June 2002; J Records picked the album up a short time later.

Now, Hear This ... KEVIN JOHANSEN
Artists to Watch

Kevin Johansen records tunes in English and Spanish, songs that are so eclectic that on his album "Sur o No Sur," he feels compelled to describe them in such terms as "cumbia flamenca," "Zydeco rush" and "hip pop." That eclecticism has earned Johansen raves and sales in Argentina, where "Sur o No Sur" was released by indie label Los Años Luz and where the single "Down With My Baby" was used in the soap opera "Resistiré." Local success piqued the interest of Sony Argentina, which signed Johansen earlier this year. Sony Norte released "Sur" Nov. 18 in the U.S. and Mexico and is hoping that Johansen's cosmopolitan music and persona will appeal to a wider audience. It would make sense: Born in Alaska to an American father and an Argentine mother, Johansen has spent his life between continents. He even recorded four indie albums in New York in the 1990s. "Sur" is being marketed through college radio stations, and Johansen is coming to the U.S. in February 2004 for a bookstore tour.

Reunited, And It Feels So Good
George Michael, center, has inked a new worldwide recording deal with the U.K. arm of Sony Music, the same company he unsuccessfully sued in 1992 to release him from his recording contract. The singer celebrated the deal and his return to the label at a London restaurant with Sony Music U.K. chairman/CEO Rob Stringer, right, and his manager, Andy Stephens. Michael is currently recording "Patience," his first album since 1996's "Older." It is expected to be released in early 2004.

Corgan Gets Blindside
Touch And Feel Are Fetish’s Stock In Trade

BY CHRIS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—For nearly a quarter of a century, Vinyl Fetish has maintained its profile as an L.A. record retailer by staying true to its name.

“They love vinyl,” co-owner Andy Franzle says of his sometimes fanatical customers. “It’s a feeling.

“You can’t pull out a CD or a DVD or an MP3 and fondle it and check out the grooves and smell the vinyl. There’s a whole ritual to vinyl.

“It’s about pulling the record out. It’s about wiping it off, checking out the artwork,” Franzle says. Local DJs Joseph Brooks and Henry Peck opened Vinyl Fetish on La Brea Avenue in 1979. The pair moved the store to its longtime location on trendy Melrose Avenue in 1980.

Vinyl Fetish flourished in the early 1980s, when Brooks and Peck ran popular New Romantic club the Veil at punk night spot the Cabby De Grande in Hollywood.

The original owners sold the store to Mike Stewart in 1986. He now owns the business with Glenn Soga and Franzle, who joined the staff in 1987 as a manager/buyer.

TRIED-AND-TRUE FORMULA

Though the principal music format shifted during the store’s existence from the LP to the CD, Vinyl Fetish’s record stock remains 60% vinyl LPs and 40% CDs, with an emphasis on certain narrow, but popular genres.

“We stock pretty much to the same formula,” Franzle says. “We’ve always had that core base of punk rock, industrial, Gothic—always. We never really strayed from that format, and that’s why people would always check us out if they were looking for that type of stuff.

“It’s like I tell people: Pretty much anything that your parents hated, we sold. If you were into any of those genres, you found a home here.”

—ANDY FRANZLE, VINYL FETISH

Though the clientele and the offerings have remained consistent through the years, Vinyl Fetish has changed with the times.

In 1997, while still operating the 1,500-square-foot Melrose store, Vinyl Fetish opened a second, 2,000-square-foot location on Vermont Avenue in the Los Feliz area of L.A.

In late 2002, the Vermont store folded, and its stock was moved into a newly opened 2,000-square-foot location on Cahuenga Boulevard in Hollywood.

Four months ago, Vinyl Fetish finally shuttered its Melrose outlet and brought the stock from that operation into its Cahuenga “superstore.”

“It’s too much money going in and out to run two stores,” Franzle says. “You have to consolidate nowadays... We really couldn’t have stayed on Melrose because of the size of the store.”

Vinyl Fetish’s current location may seem like an odd choice. While the store is in the heart of a high-traffic area, with neighboring businesses like intimate club the Hotel Cafe and new clothing boutiques like Blest, it’s also just a block-and-a-half from retail behemoth Amoeba Music.

Franzle explains: “We actually figured that since [Amoeba] came in and powered up, we’d move on this block and try to see what might flow our way. It’s a little bit strategic.”

In addition to current and used product, Vinyl Fetish does a healthy business in collectibles. While some items carry a high price tag, Franzle says, “Most of our stuff is below the $100 mark. It used to be a little higher, until eBay softened a lot of things.”

Vinyl Fetish now stocks a couple of hundred music-DVD titles. Ancillary items—T-shirts, buttons, patches, posters—have become a larger part of the store’s business.

(Continued on page 49)
IDN Grows Slowly But Surely Through Word-Of-Mouth

Innovative Distribution Network (IDN) president David Fritz’s relationship to his firm’s parent, Alliance Entertainment, predates the formation of the company he now heads. In 1997, Fritz was an attorney at prestigious New York firm Grubman Indursky & Schindler. He started his own label, Triage Entertainment, and released a compilation, “Mob Hits,” that became a TV-marketed success. Seeking to take the album to conventional music retail, Fritz approached his friend Eric Weissman, who then headed Alliance. The giant one-stop picked up the set, though at that point Alliance—which had recently emerged from bankruptcy—had no indie distribution firm; it hadfolded its INDI distribution arm when it filed for court protection.

Fritz says with a laugh, “I had known what I know now, I never in a million years would have done a deal with Alliance. Even though I was a lawyer in the entertainment business, I didn’t pick up the nuances of [the difference between] a one-stop vs. an actual independent distributor.”

When IDN was founded in 1998 with former INDI exec Todd Van Gorp as president, “Mob Hits” became the distributor’s first big title.

In late 1999, Fritz joined Alliance as head of special products. He brought the “Mob Hits” concept with him and developed several successful sequels; he also helmed several compilation projects for clients like McDonald’s. At the same time, Fritz says, “I was helping Todd behind the scenes... From the very start of IDN, I was helping Todd in drafting distribution deals.”

When Van Gorp left the distributor this spring for a regional post at WEA (Billboard, Feb. 22), Fritz moved over to IDN as head of business affairs; he has since assumed the title of president.

“From a business-development standpoint,” Fritz notes, “I brought to the table a different experience, rather than the true straight-distribution set of tools. [As an attorney] I know a lot of people from different walks of music life.”

IDN has developed slowly since its inception four years ago. While INDI handled literally hundreds of labels, its successor today represents just 38 labels or label groups.

The distributor has signed several new exclusive deals this year. It most recently picked up The End Records, a Salt Lake City-based metal label previously distributed by Telegraf Distribution (which is fulfilled by IDN); Nashville hip-hop label Rock Solid Entertainment, which was formerly under the EMI umbrella; and Out of Bounds Entertainment, a Sacramento, Calif., hip-hop imprint once with Bayside Entertainment Distribution.

IDN is also exclusively distributing New York home-video company Semikor Networks.

“One of the areas we’re expanding in is DVD. Semikor owns a catalog of old films, and we’re going to be releasing those old films at a midprice level, with two or three films on the same release,” Fritz says. “Retail is loving it because of the price point.”

Fritz is also eyeing other audio and home-video labels, regardless of genre, that can bring in first-year gross sales of $1 million.

“[As a distributor, we’re not genre-specific],” he says. “If you’re focused only on one area, if there’s an opportunity you want to take and it’s not in that area, I think you lose those opportunities.”

Fritz says he realizes that IDN—despite its close ties with Alliance’s powerful one-stop—is still one of the youngest and lowest-profile of all national indie distributors, and he is striving to get the word out about the company.

“What I’ve been doing is going big-game hunting—letting other labels know we’re out there,” Fritz says. “The problem I see for IDN is that most people don’t even know that it exists [as an alternative] when a company seeks to change its distribution partner.

“I’m hitting the streets, and I’ve been taking meetings with everybody under the sun about what we do, who we are and who we distributors, so that [people know] we’re not just this division within a bigger company but actually that we stand on our own, that we have quality labels that we distribute,” Fritz says.

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VEG Renews, Expands Its Credit Facility

Hey! I'm just back from two weeks of vacation, so I have some housecleaning to do.

The Virgin Entertainment Group has renewed and expanded its revolving credit facility with Fleet Retail Finance, sources say.

The facility, which initially was for three years beginning in November 2001 and would have run until 2004, has been extended through November 2006.

The retailer had been experiencing some sluggishness with payments to a small group of labels but now appears to be up to speed.

In fact, Virgin just rehabbed its San Francisco store, which will serve as a prototype for the chain going forward. And that's something, considering that Virgin already has some of the best stores in the U.S. Look to next issue's Billboard for more details.

GOING UP: Hastings Entertainment had a bang-up time while I was out, revising its earnings forecast upward when it released financial results Nov. 24, prior to the opening of the market.

And unlike Trans World, which suffered a 50-cent-per-share price drop when it revised its earnings upward, the Hastings stock gained nearly $1 on the news. At the end of the day Nov. 24, the stock closed at $4.65, up from $3.68, which gives the chain a market capitalization of $54 million. As of Dec. 3, share price stood at $4.44.

In case you are not aware, Hastings reported that it lost $3.8 million, or 34 cents per share, on total sales of $112.8 million in its fiscal third quarter, which ended Oct. 31. That's down from the $6.6 million loss, or 58 cents per share, it reported last year, when sales were $86.5 million.

But the good news for investors is that the company projects it will earn 45 cents to 50 cents per share for fiscal 2004. That's up from earlier forecasts of 27 cents to 32 cents per share.

A 2.1% same-store gain boosted the company's performance in the last quarter. While selling and administrative costs rose slightly, most of the increase was because of accounting adjustments in the way the company records vendor allowances and discounts.

Hastings previously did not manage costs as well as it would have liked. CFO Dan Crowe concedes, but those problems have been fixed, so the bottom line can increase. For example, the distribution center, including processing returns, is now operated more efficiently.

At the end of the quarter, the chain had drawn down $51.5 million from its $80 million revolving credit line, which is supplied by Fleet Retail Finance and CIT Group/ Business Credit.

PUBLICLY SPEAKING: The Handleman Co. reports second-quarter earnings of $10.2 million, or 41 cents per share, down from $13.7 million, or 52 cents per share, last year. Revenue dipped to $269.9 million from $303.2 million.

In addition to a downturn in music sales, one of its largest customers—Kmart—has been closing stores, and the Troy, Mich.-based company sold Madacy back to its founder.

Handleman continues to sell off non-core business, saying that it expects to reap $50 million from the sale of its Anchor Bay home video label. Terms were not disclosed, but press reports say the buyer is IDT Media.

The company posted $12.3 million in operating income, compared with $17 million for second-quarter 2002. The decline in operating income was principally because of lower sales in the U.S., operation and the sale of Madacy Entertainment in May.

That sale impacted gross margin, as the proprietary product issued by Madacy historically has achieved a higher gross margin. Consequently, gross margin for the second quarter was 20.5% of sales, compared with 22.1% in the same time frame last year.

But the Madacy sale also helped lower selling, general and administrative (SG&A) expenses. For the second quarter, SG&A expenses were $43.1 million, or 16%, of net sales, compared with 50% in 2001, or 16.5%, last year.

In a statement, Handelmen chairman/CEO Stephen Strone said, "Sales and earnings in [the company's U.S. operation were] below expectations for the second quarter." But the ongoing U.K. and Canadian operations continue to grow, he added.

In addition, he pointed out that music industry sales have recently begun to improve and the release schedule looks strong, so for the holidays, the company is "cautiously optimistic" going forward.

LIST BUILDING: Jim Kelly, formerly with Zia, is working as a consultant for one of the majors and is looking to send a questionnaire to independent merchants.

Consequently, in an attempt to build a mailing list, he is asking all independent merchants to e-mail him at jimmkel22@comcast.net or call him at 609-653-8931 and supply him with the store address, e-mail address, phone number and key contacts.

Actually, I wouldn't mind having that info myself, so why don't you copy it to echristman@billboard.com.

Fetish

Continued from page 47

Some of Vinyl Fetish's clothing business took a hit after Sept. 11, 2001, when tourism declined. "They would come in and buy 10 T-shirts from me," Franze says. "They'd buy my $14 T-shirts and go sell them for 50 bucks."

He says that with a decrease in overhead, thanks to consolidating the Vinyl Fetish locations, "we're increasing every month, so things are looking up."

Fetish believes that the store will hold its own, even with the neighboring competition of Ameo, thanks to Vinyl Fetish's loyal customers and a generation of new recruits.

"There's a lot of young kids, and a lot of them are the punk kids who have a dad who has some Clash albums, or Pistols, or Buzzcocks or Ramones, and now they're getting into it," he says. "You can tell they actually dig collecting."

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LOS ANGELES—“This is the holiday shopping season, and most marketing campaigns for season-themed videos are in abundance. Studios are supporting a range of holiday titles that appeal to all ages, as well as new projects aimed toward niche audiences.

Buena Vista Home Entertainment’s (BVHE) key holiday title is the live-action 2002 theatrical release “Santa Claus 2” (Nov. 18. $22.99 VHS/$29.99 DVD). The company is also offering new, straight-to-video titles “Winnie the Pooh: A Very Merry Poo Year” (Nov. 4. $14.99 VHS/$19.99 DVD) and “Rolie Polie Olie—Olie’s Winter Wonderland” (Nov. 4. $19.99 DVD).


“We cover the gamut in terms of our holiday offerings,” BVHE senior VP of marketing Gordon Ho says. He says that holiday marketing is centered on “The Santa Claus 2,” which is being supported by a larger advertising campaign than those it launched for “Lilo & Stitch” and “Pearl Harbor.” He notes that ads will reach 95% of households 22 times by Christmas.

The DVD version includes a set-top game, director commentary, a behind-the-scenes feature, a gag reel and deleted scenes.

Many retailers are using the title as an anchor in their holiday promotions. “Santa Claus 2” is this year’s big holiday title on DVD, says Brian Lucas, spokesman for the Minneapolis-based Best Buy chain. “We are going to have a special wall display highlighting this and other holiday releases.”

CLASSIC RELEASES

Warner Home Video (WHV) also released two classic Christmas titles Oct. 7 that will be heavily promoted through the holidays.

The two-disc anniversary DVD of “A Christmas Story,” available in widescreen or full-frame formats for $26.99, contains a new making-of documentary, commentary, interactive trivia and games. The widescreen DVD debut of “Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation” ($19.98) has a new commentary with the cast and crew.

WHV’s VP of DVD marketing Michael Radiolf says that the Macy’s flagship store in New York will decorate its Christmas windows in a theme surrounding “A Christmas Story” and will also advertise the release of the DVD. WHY is also working with Target to release an exclusive gift pack with the DVD and a Ralphie bobblehead, named after the movie’s lead character.

Radiolf says, “We feel [the movie] has become a Christmas classic in the league of ‘It’s a Wonderful Life.’ Marketing for ‘Christmas Vacation’ focuses on TV and print advertising.

Classic Media’s much-loved Christmas TV specials “Santa Claus is Comin’ to Town,” “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” and “Prissy the Snowman” ($9.98 VHS/$19.98 DVD) are all benefiting from extensive repromotion campaigns this year.

The company has teamed with Walgreens on a co-promotion for “Santa Claus is Comin’ to Town.” The store will sell exclusive “Santa Claus” merchandise including plush toys and holiday ornaments. Walgreens’ holiday circulars will carry a theme around the title.

Del Taco will be selling Classic’s DVDs at its stores nationwide. “Santa Claus” plush toys will be included in its kids’ meals starting Dec. 5. Classic Media head of home video Robert Mayo says, “Next year is the 40th anniversary of the first time ‘Rudolph’ aired on CBS, and we are looking forward to re-upping with a number of partners.”

HIT Entertainment’s Sept. 30 release “Bob the Builder: A Christmas to Remember” ($14.99 VHS/$16.99 DVD) is also being promoted through food companies. Kids cereal is featuring Bob the Builder on its boxes, as are Beach’s fruit snacks.

A NICHE CHRISTMAS

Two urban-themed holiday titles are also on retail shelves. UrbanWorks Entertainment’s “The Night B4 Christmas” (Oct. 21. $9.99 VHS/$12.99 DVD) is an animated film that tells the story of an elf who dreams of making it in the music industry. Hart Sharp Video’s “Santa, Baby” (Oct. 7. $9.99 VHS/$14.99 DVD) is about a girl whose wish from a magical prance helps her father, a song composer, get his writer’s block.

UrbanWorks VP of sales and marketing Quinnsey Newell says “The Night B4 Christmas” will air on the Cartoon Network four separate times beginning Dec. 5. The company will also advertise on the BET, Nickelodeon and ABC Family networks and will mount street promotions at parks and schools.

Hart Sharp president Joe Amodei says, “With this new format [DVD] that continues every year to outsell what we have projected it to sell, there is room for some new holiday titles,” he explains. “We want to appeal to different demographics.” Hart Sharp has also released “Happy Holidays with Bing and Frank” (Oct. 7. $14.99 VHS/$19.99 DVD).

BBC Video also hopes to appeal to lovers of British programming with its “Rotary’s Christmas Carol” (Oct. 7. $14.98 DVD). BBC, which WHV distributes, will run an ad for the video on the BBC Jumbotron in New York’s Times Square, and CBS will air the program Dec. 20.

Comic Books Go Digital For DVD Series

Smack! Blam! Crash! Comic-book fans can now get closer to their favorite illustrated superheroes with Digital Comic Book (DCB), a new form of DVD entertainment combining comic books and film.

DCBs present comic books in the form of a film by blowing up each comic book panel to full-screen images and providing sound effects and actors to voice the text. Each DCB can be viewed on a DVD player or as a digital data file on a PC or Mac computer.

Miami-based Intec Interactive began producing DCBs by bringing attention back to comic books and to appeal to a new generation of interactive consumers.

“We wanted to create a new form of reading/viewing,” Intec president Claudio Osorio says. “E-books failed to capture the masses, because they only worked on PCs. Most people get very tired of reading long documents on a screen.”

Intec partnered with comic-book publishers CrossGen and Marvel to license excerpts of their DCBs, which has already released 20 titles in two waves Sept. 15 and Nov. 7, which included volumes of Daredevil, the Hulk, X-Men and Scion. The next group of titles will be released early next year.

Each DCB includes such bonus features as footage from that comic book’s original issue. Marvel volumes also include a special offer for three free comic books.

In the future, Osorio will release DCBs day-and-date with their regular comic-book counterparts.

This and that...


Home Vision Entertainment and American Cinematheque have joined in a nonexclusive acquisition and distribution deal. Home Vision will acquire projects by Cinematheque for theatrical distribution, as well as distribute Cinematheque acquisitions on DVD... The Disinformation Co. (creators of news Web site disinfo.com) and Ryko Distribution have signed an exclusive distribution deal. The first release

SBC Yahoo to provide DSL subscribers with a customized version of Movielink. For Movielink subscribers will also be given $10 worth of Movielink rentals.

Movielink continues to expand its film offerings. It has acquired a number of literary adaptations also produced by the BBC. The deal kicks off with several unabridged versions of Shakespeare’s plays. Consumers can currently download versions of “Hamlet,” “Henry V,” “Julius Caesar” and “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

British Spies Are Coming: Fans of such fast-paced, multi-plot TV programs as Fox’s “24” should be on the lookout for the Jan. 13 release of “MI-5 Volume 1” ($49.98) from BBC Video.

The show began airing on the A&E network this summer and stars British actors Matthew Macfadyen, Keeley Hawes, David Oyelowo, Peter Firth and Jenny Agutter. It tells the stories of spies in the British service division of MI-5. The DVD includes such extras as cast and crew interviews and behind-the-scenes footage. Each episode also contains 15 minutes of extra footage.

“MI-5 is very topical, especially in the world of terrorism that we live in at the moment,” Oyelowo says. “If it’s so close to home, you will get something new out of it every time you watch it on DVD.”

BBC is advertising the title in numerous print outlets and is also trailerizing it on the Feb. 24 video release of “Matchstick Men” (Warner Home Video). The third installment of the show is being filmed.
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>THE SANTA CLAUSE 2</td>
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At 35, L.A.’s Village Recorder Is Still Going Strong

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

Celebrating its 35th anniversary, the Village Recorder in West Los Angeles, founded in 1968 by composer Geordie Hormel, remains a vital recording facility in an industry beset by consolidation.

“There’s palpable energy in this old Masonic temple,” says Jeff Greenberg, CEO of the Village. “I don’t know how it happened or where it came from, but it’s here.”

In the past year alone, the Village has hosted artists and producers including Rickie Lee Jones, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Mariah Carey, India.Arie, No Doubt, James Taylor, Jack Johnson, Dido, Usher, Mysa, The Shins, and Sarah McLachlan.

Recent film scores recorded at the Village include “Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World” and “Cold Mountain,” while “Concert for George,” the tribute to George Harrison recorded at London’s Royal Albert Hall last year, was mixed there. Previous scoring projects include “Almost Famous,” “There’s Something About Mary,” “Moulin Rouge” and “The Shawshank Redemption.”

The Village is also a rarity in its accommodation of radio broadcast, in addition to music recording and film scoring. “Since March, we’ve been doing all of the live music for ‘Morning Becomes Eclectic’ on public radio KCRW’s popular, nationally broadcast music program,” Greenberg says. “We’ve had every cool band in history.”

It hasn’t always been this good. True, the Village can boast a client roster few recording studios can match, including the Rolling Stones, Steely Dan, Sly & the Family Stone, the Allman Brothers Band, Neil Young, Pink Floyd, and Fleetwood Mac, which recorded “Tusk” there. The facility has also been on the cutting edge of recording technology, being among the first with 24-track capability and, later, digital multitrack recorders.

But by the early 1990s, the Village was no longer in the vanguard; Hormel considered closing the studio. In 1994, however, at his daughter’s insistence, Hormel brought Greenberg on board as CEO to overtake a redesign. With legendary engineer/producer Al Schmitt hired as a consultant, Greenberg made sweeping changes in equipment, staff and design. The results are self-evident.

More Pro Tools HD systems are among the new equipment, including, in the Pro Tools HD/3ProControl-based Studio F, a surround-sound system designed by Vincent Van Haaff of Waterland Design.

In Studio D, a Neve 88R, with 1081 remote microphone preamplifiers, was installed in October 2002, during a break in Guns N’ Roses’ two-year residency for the cryptic “Chinese Democracy” album.

“We did some modifications on the Neve VR Legend in Studio B, which sounds gorgeous,” Greenberg adds. “Studio A has a lot of maintenance work, and we completely rebuilt the vintage [Neve] 8048, from bottom to top, so it’s probably one of the best vintage consoles ever.”

The all-Neve status of the Village—with the exception of the ubiquitous Pro Tools—is another rarity, given the dominance of Solid State Logic among large-format consoles.

“A lot of studios committed to a certain type of console,” Greenberg says, “so that in an eight-mile area in Los Angeles, you’ve got one particular brand of console, which doesn’t differentiate anybody from anybody else much.”

The 35th year of the Village Recorder has been a good one. Greenberg summarizes, through the nurturing of creative interaction among artists—several of whom maintain private studios here—and staff.

“There’s an amazing environment,” he says. “That becomes apparent when Rickie Lee Jones is in the lobby and meets Bill Frisell and, sure enough, they’re collaborating on one of the best records I’ve heard in a long time [‘Evening of My Best Day’]. People seem to love the place.”

Chris Dunn has acquired the assets of Dreamhire, a rental company specializing in professional audio equipment. Now operating as Dreamhire LLC, the company had been part of the Zomba Music Group, which itself was acquired by BMG Entertainment in 2002. It is no longer affiliated with either company.

When Zomba’s acquisition by BMG was completed late last year, Dunn saw an uncertain future for Dreamhire. “We don’t fit in with their general modus operandi,” he recalls thinking. “I suspected they may end up shutting us down.”

With that suspicion in mind, Dunn made a successful bid to purchase the assets of the company. Dreamhire is currently vacating its headquarters on West 25th Street in Manhattan, in the same building as Battery Studios—also part of Zomba—and relocating to another commercial recording facility, Right Track Recording, at 506 W. 38th St.

“It has been so good for us to align ourselves with a studio, when we were working with Bat-
Malaysian Gov’t Backs Price Control Act

BY LEO CHRISTIE

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia—The Malaysian government has rejected the local recording industry’s pleas to reconsider its plans to fix retail prices of locally manufactured video CDs (VCDs) and CDs.

Malaysia’s parliament passed the Price Control Act in an effort to curb widespread piracy in Malaysia (Billboard, Oct. 11). Government officials met with record industry executives and retailers recently and encouraged them to give their opinions regarding the scheme.

Sulaiman Mahboob, secretary-general of the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry, attended the meeting. He reiterated that the government would not rescind its decision, despite appeals from the Recording Industry Assn. of Malaysia (RIM).

Industry leaders who attended the meeting say their criticisms fell on deaf ears. They want a new study on current and future pricing to be conducted to provide the government with a clearer picture of the situation.

“We have questioned the validity of the data submitted by an independent accounting firm that led to the conclusions drawn by the ministry in recommending the lower pricing,” RIM GM T.S. Lam says.

RIM has questioned the validity of pricing information collected by the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry. “It isn’t accurate by a long shot,” Lam says. “It doesn’t fairly take into account the cost of marketing, production and distribution.”
### JAPAN

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<td>AI GA YOBORU</td>
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<td>GENKYUUKUHAI NADENIKIKUE</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>NO WAY TO SAY</td>
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<td>TURN ME ON</td>
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<td>MA RIVALE, FIESTA LATIN</td>
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### SWITZERLAND

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Hits of the World is compiled at Billboard/London.
BY LARRY LeBLANC

TOKYO—A morning showcase at a Toronto night spot secured a joint-venture record deal for 18-year-old Canadian pop-rocker Fefe Dobson.

Universal Music Canada president/CEO Randy Lennox was seriously impressed when he saw Dobson perform at a Burlington, Ontario, restaurant this spring.

So he coaxed Island/Def Jam president Lyor Cohen and Island/Def Jam senior VP of A&R Jeff Feaster to fly from New York to Toronto two days later to see her.

The showcase at popular Toronto club the Reverb began at 11 a.m., a mere half-hour through the first song, Cohen was hooked. "Her feet didn't touch the ground," he recalls. "I saw magic there."

A mere half-hour later, the label executives and Dobson's management struck a deal on the sidewalk outside the club. Under its terms, Island/Def Jam and Universal Music Canada would jointly sign the singer for the world.

"We had the contracts closed a week afterward," Lennox says. "She is somebody special."

Cohen agrees. "I really feel that she's necessary for the world. She is oozing something so terrific and important; something that has a lot of pain associated to it.

"The signing has resulted in the Dec. 9 release of Dobson's self-titled Island/Def Jam debut album in North America.

"Dobson's first U.S. single, "Take Me Away," was No. 27 on the Billboard Mainstream Top 40 chart in the Dec. 6 issue of that magazine.

"In Canada, "Bye Bye Boyfriend" was released in July and peaked at No. 23 on the Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems rock chart in August. It was followed by the Sept. 9 release of "Take Me Away," which made the Nielsen BDS Top 40, rock and AC hot charts. Both videos have also received heavy rotation on Canada's MuchMusic and MusicPlus video channels.

"BY BREAKING THE MOLD"

While the album's lyrics touch on pop topics—relationships and parental conflicts—Dobson's music, with elements of grunge, punk and dancefloor pop, is uncharted territory for an Afro-Canadian performer.

Paul Jessop, Toronto-based VP of national promotion at Universal Island/Def Jam in Canada, says he recognized there could be hurdles at Canadian radio and Dobson's rock-based style, "particularly with rock stations saying, 'Young black female? Not our demo.'

"Universal accordingly decided to first target Canadian rock radio with "Bye Bye Boyfriend," one of the album's editor-tracked songs that fits the format and got radio support. MuchMusic PD Sheila Sullivan is an avid Dobson supporter. "We're really into her, and our audience is reacting to her," she says. "Her music doesn't feel manufactured, which is refreshing."

"Dobson grew up in the Toronto suburb of Scarborough, the daughter of a Jamaican father and a mother of Irish/English descent.

"Her mother, she recalls, would play records by Michael Jackson, the Bee Gees, Donna Summer and Lionel Richie, while her older sister was a Nirvana fan.

"My dad never lived with us," Dobson says. "So I never had the black side in my life. If I had my dad in my life, I might have soaked up different influences. I'm the only dark child in the family."

When Dobson was 13, she heard "Neon Ballroom" by Australian rock act Silverchair. The album inspired her to start serious about songwriting:

"That album made me realize you shouldn't be afraid to write your feelings on paper and put it to music."

"When she was 15, Zomba Records Canada signed Dobson to a development deal. But Dobson says Zomba did not agree with her musical direction. As a result, the artist and label went their separate ways.

"Dobson was "really driven as a young girl," recalls former Zomba Canada A&R head Bonnie Fedrau, now an artist-management consultant. "She's got serious talent."

Toronto-based producer/guitarist Jayson Luke recalls that when he first met Dobson at the time of the Zomba deal, they immediately wrote a song together. "As a writer and a producer, I had been waiting for someone like Fefe who has an edge."

Dobson and Levine worked with co-producer James McCollum (Levine and McCollum are both members of Prozac and the Philosopher Kings) for two weeks, writing and recording the album.

"The album worked out the way I planned it," Dobson says. "I had a lot of control. I worked with producers they chose."

The set was slated for a September release in North America but was held back to take advantage of building airplay. The label wanted to "widen the reach of this record," says Dobson. "This album is about 2004."

To secure releases in other territories, Dobson will stage showcases in Germany, France and the U.K. in January. Dobson's Toronto-based manager, Chris Smith—who also handles fellow Canadian Nelly Furtado—sums up the measured approach to Dobson's career, saying: "We are not going for that big push. This is a lifetime career setup, not an album setup."

stop pop shop, but we're still the most- watched music program in Britain." Peters took his new post at the BBC Sept. 1 and scheduled the first edition of the restyled "All New Top of the Pops" for Nov. 28 as an extended one-hour special. He calls the new show "weekly event TV."

"It's not just a passive watch. It's right here, right now. If you miss it, I want you to think, 'Darn, I missed Top of the Pops,' " he says.

The changes Peters has made include introducing a regular presenter to replace the rotating hosts, plus new sets, graphics, a new theme tune and an interactive element. The last allows viewers and avid listeners to vote online for their favorites and want to see the show on.

TO POP OR NOT TO POP?

Peters describes the new format as "a family entertainment show about popular music."

The U.K. sales charts will dictate the playlist, he adds. The U.K. industry backing for that preference for keeping things "pop" remains to be proved.

One London-based national TV radio plugger who asked to remain anonymous says: "I'm worried ["TOTT"] might prey on 'pop' when it needs to get its credibility back with credible producers and credible bands. And is a very talented producer, but I'm surprised by the decision."

Steve Wadsworth, president of music marketing company SWAT, until recently he was managing director of Zomba International.

If I was producing the show, I'd choose those records that had been around the longest," Watson says.

"Top of the Pops" chooses its acts on chart position, and there's a lack of credibility on records making it into the top five, whereas of an act's in the top three for 10 weeks, then they have a huge impact internationally," he says.

Whether Peters is able to arrest falling ratings, "TOTP" remains a valuable property to BBC Worldwide, the arm of the corporation charged with selling domestic product abroad.

"This brand works on TV," says Anna Brown, director of youth brands, "because, as with everything in this industry, there has to be an advantage to the artist."

"Anywhere in the world you happen to be, you can record a 'Top of the Pops' performance, which can be broadcast in 120 countries as and when it charts," Brown notes.
**Iceland Label Ups Its Exposure**

Smeckleysa Signs Pair of Distribution Deals For Its Acts

**BY OLAF FURNISS**

LONDON—Icelandic record company Smeckleysa is looking to boost its international profile after inking new distribution deals for the U.K. and other international territories.

At the same time, it has signed the International rights (excluding the U.S., Iceland, the U.K. and Ireland) for highly rated punk metal act, Minus to Sony Independent Networks Europe (SINE). The move is expected to lead to other Smeckleysa acts being licensed by SINE.

"I've known Smeckleysa for a long time, and I've really liked their work," SINE senior VP Mark Chung says. "It's the only label that has consistently developed new artists in Iceland, and it has the potential to develop further."

London-based Chung confirms that in the future, SINE aims to work together "on a broad base" with Smeckleysa.

Smeckleysa was founded in 1988. Its eight owners include label manager Ásmunder Jónsson and former members of Icelandic act the Sugar Cubes, including vocalist Björk.

**THINKING GLOBALY**

Its eclectic domestic roster includes Minus, former Shortlist Music Prize winner Sigur Rós and left-field pop act Ske, which won in the best song category at the annual Icelandic Music Awards in February 2002.

Smeckleysa’s back catalog features 150 albums, of which some 25% are jazz or classical recordings.

The label’s U.K. GM, Anna Hildur, thinks the SINE deal will help establish Minus as a global act. The band is licensed to Victory Records in the U.S.

"We’ve been working toward this deal for a long time," Hildur says. "It’s an excellent opportunity to see how far we can take Minus, and the support from the SINE office is great."

In 2002, Smeckleysa opened an office in the U.K. with a view to giving its signings a greater international push. "We have world-class A&R skills in Iceland, and now we want to broaden our market," Hildur says.

The label is currently negotiating U.S. distribution. Its releases are sold stateside through Pinnacle’s export service and an online shop, which the label says generates some £40,000-£50,000 ($69,000-$86,000) worth of business per year.

**RETAINING INDIE STATUS**

The U.K. is seen as a primary overseas market for Minus. The band completed its second U.K. tour of 2003 Dec. 2 and is set to release the single "AngeI in Disguise" through Pinnacle Jan. 18, 2004, followed by an album in early February.

International releases will roll in March, with firm commitment already from Sony Music Germany.

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AIDS Event

Continued from page 53

across 166 territories.

The show was also Webcast live on the 46664.com site by Italian Internet communications company Tiscali and through a string of online partners across the world.

“The concert is just the start,” Cecil-

ron says. “In February, we’ll release a
double live CD and DVD of the event in
cape Town. Then in June, we’ll fol-
low it with an album of new tracks
specifically recorded for the 46664
campaign.”

Cecillon says a label deal for
the releases will be announced shortly.

Among the 42 performers who
waived their fees to appear in Cape
Town were Beyoncé, Bono, Bob Geld-
of, Eurythmics, Anastasia, Peter Gabri-
el, Mr. Dynamite, the Corrs and
members of Queen.

Their contributions will appear on
the live CD and DVD, along with Man-
dela’s speech to the 40,000 concert
attendees. The show was held at Green-
point stadium, in sight of Robben
Island, where Mandela was incarcer-
ated for 18 years under South Africa’s for-
mer apartheid regime.

MUSIC TAKES CENTER STAGE

The 46664 campaign (Billboard, Nov.
8) takes its name from Mandela’s prison
number. The day before the con-
cert, he accompanied the stars of the
show to the island and showed them
his old cell.

“Musicians played an important
part in the campaign to liberate our
country,” Mandela said at Green-
point. “This time, I am asking them
to join forces to free our world from
HIV/AIDS and bring hope for the
new millennium.”

The veteran politician added that
AIDS was no longer just a disease.
Like apartheid itself, it had become
a human-rights issue.

According to Cecillon, 13 tracks
have already been recorded for the sec-
ond “46664” album. It may grow to
double CD, he adds.

The album has been overseen by
Eurythmics’ Dave Stewart. Among
those who have written and recorded
new songs are Bono, Sting, Queen
Neptunes, Ms. Dynamite, Anastasia,
Paul McCartney, Timbaland and South
African star Johnny Clegg.

Among the tracks on the album
will be the campaign’s theme song, “4664
(Long Walk to Freedom).” Co-written
by the late Joe Strummer, Stewart and
Bonno, the track is already available
for download at 46664.com and by calling
various premium phone numbers in
more than 50 territories around the
world.

“A means of delivering music on
a global scale,” Cecillon says, “it’s a
first, and indications are that the ini-
tiative is being taken up strongly.”

Stewart says, “The concert is im-
portant, but it’s only a start. For me,
what matters most is the way Nelson
Mandela gave us his prison number
and invited us to turn such a nega-
tive image into something positive and
how we take that forward.”

African artists on the bill includ-
Baaba Mial, Youssou N’Dour,
LadySmith Black Mambazo,
Angélique Kidjo and local South
Africa stars Clegg, Bongo Mafin
and Yvonne Chaka Chaka.

“Africa’s image in the rest of the
world is one of war, poverty and dis-
ease,” N’Dour says. “It was important
for us to hold the concert in Africa,[t]o
show the world we are fighting to
do something positive about it—and
invite them to join us.”

Queen guitarist Brian May paid
tribute to his late colleague, Freddie
Mercury. “We lost Freddie to AIDS,
and that fired our desire to help,” he
said at a media briefing.

“We lost a beloved,” May said,
“and it feels like he’s here with us in
this campaign.”

To coincide with World AIDS Day
Dec. 1, all of Queen’s studio and live
albums were made available for dig-
tal download for the first time.

The 18 albums (as single tracks or full
albums) can be found at online
retailers in the UK and Europe.

All record royalties for the first
week of sales are being donated to
the Mercury Phoenix Trust, the char-
ity that raises awareness and money
for AIDS relief in Mercury’s memo-
ry. EMI says it will match that dona-
tion.

Price Control

Continued from page 53

The new legislation means that
from Jan. 1, 2004, retail prices of
locally manufactured CDs will be
set 30% lower than current prices.
Prices of imported CDs will not be
affected.

According to statistics provided
by RIM, music and movie piracy
dropped dramatically following an
aggressive anti-piracy campaign
that the Malaysian government ini-
tiated in second-quarter 2003.

RIM also claims that legitimate
music sales improved by as much as
40% between June and August this
year compared with the correspon-
in sales momentum suffered a severe
blow when the government announced the new price structure in
mid-September,” Lam says.

The sluggish sales are largely a
result of the price-control scheme,
Lam suggests.

“Most consumers would rather
wait a couple of months to get their
favorite CDs for 30% less with the
new price structure, as the savings
are substantial,” he notes.

Local labels report that they are
taking various defensive measures
to cope with the effects of the price
cuts, including staff cutbacks,
lowering investment in domestic
recordings and revising marketing budgets.
Songwriters & Publishers

Publishers Seek Greater Film/TV Revenue

By Jim Bessman

The first in a two-part Billboard survey

Declining mechanical revenue in this era of digital piracy means that film and TV placements have taken on a greater role during the past year in augmenting music publishers’ traditional income. As MPL Communications senior VP of promotion and new product development Bill Poirracci elaborates, “Everybody in this industry realizes that synch rights and licenses are clearly a major part of our revenue stream. In fact, you can’t turn on the TV anymore without hearing a recognizable song in a commercial.”

Such “recognizable copyrights,” Poirracci adds, not only can afford the publisher “immediate identification with a product” but also allow viewers an emotional fulfillment from “reflecting on songs they know.”

As Paul McCartney’s publishing company, MPL is lucky to own plenty of popular McCartney tunes. But it’s always been “quality over quantity” in terms of licensing them, Poirracci says. Still, MPL has begun looking to place more McCartney songs in film and TV outlets, particularly new and lesser-known titles as well as the classics. Poirracci notes that among three McCartney songs placed in the movie “The In-Laws,” one was the previously unreleased “Love for You.” But MPL also holds McCartney standards and show tunes, and Poirracci points to such “prime songs” as Bobby Darin’s “Beyond the Sea” in “Matchstick Men,” Freddy Cannon’s “Palisades Park in “Contes of a Dangerous Mind” and “Good Life” by new MPL writer/artist Leslie Mills on the “What a Girl Wants” soundtrack.

At EMI Music Publishing, film soundtrack division VP Alison O’Donnell echoes Porirracci’s words on the heightened significance of film and TV usage.

“Because the industry has changed so dramatically, they offer a remarkable opportunity for us to keep our catalog current and in the minds of the record-buying public,” she says. “People see these films and shows and want that music. And since artists aren’t hanging on the charts for months on end like they used to, these [soundtracks] give us an opportunity to put songs out there that we haven’t had before, keeping them alive for my children and hopefully theirs.”

While O’Donnell cites noteworthy EMI film soundtrack placements in such films as “Bad Boys II” “Lost in Translation” and “The Lizzie McGuire Movie” (as a publisher with two little girls, this movie and soundtracks meant a lot to me, because it reaches my children and they friends directly), she especially salutes the immense publisher’s successful young-year in TV—mainly, its presence in two particularly music-intensive shows.

“Because EMI has so big, the producers of ‘American Idol’ came to me in the very first season and said, ‘Let’s try to make using your songs work,’” O’Donnell says. “It was very challenging because they didn’t have a lot of money, but at the end of the day, we realized how important a show like ‘American Idol’ could be to our copyrights—that a generation of kids could be exposed to songs and they wouldn’t normally be exposed to.

“So we’ve made sure that the producers have hundreds of our songs available,” O’Donnell continues, “and that they know it’s easy for us to license them and for the contest-ants to choose from: There’s such a quick turnaround, and the kids may find that one song is out of their vocal range and have to quickly choose another.”

Again applauding EMI’s wide-ranging holdings, O’Donnell says that she’s able to work with “American Idol” judges and supervisors in conceiving theme shows based on EMI-heavy music genres.

“Of the first we did was a Motown show, because we publish the Jobete catalog,” she says. “So last year, we arranged for a Motown episode showcasing Holland-Dobier-Holland songs and starring Lamont Dozier as the first celebrity judge.

“This season we’re hoping to get Ashford & Simpson to judge and also work with the kids.”

O’Donnell adds that Neil Sedaka has been approached to be a guest judge and featured songwriter and that other EMI-guided theme shows could involve big band, country and movie music. Additionally, she notes a heavy EMI presence on last year’s “American Idol” star Clay Aiken’s debut album.

It’s a great way to reach the youth of our generation,” she says. “How else can someone hear ‘Heat Wave’ or ‘I Heard It Through the Grapevine’ or ‘Baby I Need Your Loving’? This show reaches out for kids who would never hear these songs unless they listen to their grandparents’ oldies stations—and they’re being performed by young people who are their own idols.”

EMI catalog also has a major presence in the “American Bandstand”-based fictional “American Dream TV” series, in which contemporary artists portray pop legends.

“Not only do we release original catalogs, but we suggest artists who would be beneficial to the show,” O’Donnell adds, citing episodes where Lil’ Kim performs Shirley Ellis’ “The Clapping Song” and Monica performs “My Guy” as Mary Wells. “We’ve had amazing songs performed by amazing artists, so it’s a great way for our catalog to stay current and for the artists to be in a prime-time TV slot.”

Part 2 will appear in the Jan. 10 issue.

Sager Still Active Onstage And In Songwriting

Songwriters can derive inspiration from unusual sources, as Carole Bayer Sager can testify.

When introducing the second song in the inspiring set she delivered last month at Feinstein’s, she revealed that her songwriting career came about as a result of her childhood interest in, of all things, ventriloquist.

The song was “You’re Moving Out Today,” the British hit from her self-titled 1977 debut album. Co-written with Bette Midler and Bruce Roberts, the tune dismisses a lover with the words “pack your toys away.”

“It seemed to me like songwriting was the next step after the ventriloquist,” Sager explains. She recalls how the toy replica of popular 1950s TV voice-thrower Paul Winchell’s dummy Jerry Mahoney was another way to say things for me that I couldn’t say for myself—and without having to take full responsibility.

No surprise, then, that the highly esteemed but admittedly timid songwriter has also shied away from the stage. Her Feinstein appearances were her first in New York in 25 years.

“I’ve had a lot of tears around performing all my life,” she says, “but this came up, and I thought, ‘I must have grown as a person through all the things that can and do happen in our lives.’”

She acknowledges that her reluctance to perform in front of an audience has likely contributed to a relative lack of recognition of her songwriting credits.

“Even people who know my work in a sort of cumulative way go, ‘Wow! I didn’t know she wrote this.’” Sager continues, noting that her show has been designed to “honor all the incredible collaborators I’ve worked with.” They include Melissa Manchester, Peter Allen, Christopher Cross, Neil Diamond, David Foster and Albert Hammond, along with ex-husbands Marvin Hamlish and Burt Bacharach.

The diversity of her co-writers has only added to her virtual invisibility, she believes.

“So I’m sort of putting together all pieces of me—because I wrote so differently with each one,” she says.

Currently Sager has been writing with younger collaborators including Wade Robson, Andreas Carlson and Britney Spears, as well as some of the greats I missed the first time around, notably Carole King.


“We were signed to the same publisher [Screen Gems], but I never got to write with her because she was married to [her songwriting partner] Gerry Goffin. I asked, and she said they just wrote with each other. But a couple of years ago we wrote ‘Anyone at All,’ which she sang on the ‘You’ve Got Mail’ soundtrack, and [also with Foster] ‘My One True Friend,’ which Bette Midler sang on the ‘One True Thing’ soundtrack.

“We’re signed to the same publisher [Screen Gems], but I never got to write with her because she was married to [her songwriting partner] Gerry Goffin. I asked, and she said they just wrote with each other. But a couple of years ago we wrote ‘Anyone at All,’ which she sang on the ‘You’ve Got Mail’ soundtrack, and [also with Foster] ‘My One True Friend,’ which Bette Midler sang on the ‘One True Thing’ soundtrack.

“So I’m sort of putting together all pieces of me—because I wrote so differently with each one,” she says.

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Other veterans with whom Sager has recently collaborated include Donald Fagen and Carly Simon, for whom she wrote “Nobody Does It Better” with Hamlish.

“These are icons of songwriting and artists who are still as great as they were at the beginning,” says Sager.

Meanwhile, Sager has compiled the just-released “It’s Still Okay to Dream” album (Atlantic) benefiting Save the Children. It features songs from artists including King, Simon, Sting, James Taylor and Paul Simon. She and Kenny “Babyface” Edmonds co-wrote the album’s title track, which Babyface performed; specially and Foster co-wrote the lead track “Prayer,” sung by Celine Dion and Andrea Bocelli.

“So I’m keeping quite active—and love writing,” says Sager, who now publishes through Warner/ Chappell-administered All About Me Music (BMI). “I don’t see myself as a full-time performer—and I don’t want to lose touch with being able to be onstage to begin with.”

She hasn’t lost touch, either, with what first led her to writing songs.

“I bought a Jerry Mahoney puppet a year ago on eBay,” she says with a laugh, “but I haven’t used it yet.”

Words & Music

By Jim Bessman

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BILBOARD DECEMBER 13, 2003

www.americanradiohistory.com
First CD 'From The Girls' Is For The Girls

It is only fitting that the first CD to bear the Oxygen TV network's name is a compilation of female artists. The New York-based, female-targeted Oxygen was made a deal with Nettwerk America Records that will result in the Jan. 13, 2004, release of "Oh! From The Girls." The CD features 15 tracks from female solo artists and bands led by female vocalists. The CD's songs include Sarah McLachlan's "Angel," Dido's "Thank You," Stacie Orrico's "Stuck," Aimee Mann's "Calling It Quits," Avril Lavigne's "I'm With You," the Pretenders' "I Stand by My Friends," and Sixpence None the Richer's "Don't Dream It's Over.

There are also two previously unreleased live tracks: Tori Amos' "Cornflake Girl" and Macy Gray's "Come Together," both of which were recorded at the artists' respective Oxygen Custom Concerts this year (Billboard, May 31).

Equally important to the music is the cause behind the album: Its proceeds will benefit Oxygen's Oh! Get the Money charity, which raises money for female entertainment.

"Nettwerk approached us to do a female-oriented CD," Oxygen VP of talent relations and music programming Julie Insogna explains. "They wanted to tie it into a charity that was related to women, and they figured Oxygen was a natural place to go. They also liked that Oh! Get the Money wasn't a 'typical' charity.

As for choosing which artists would be on the compilation, Nettwerk co-founder Mark Jovett says, "The natural proximity was to focus on female singer/songwriters. We tried to be as democratic as possible and have artists that people would embrace."

In an example of company synergy, the album features artists who are also signed to Nettwerk Management, a sister operation of the Nettwerk label. The Nettwerk-managed acts include McLachlan, Dido, Lavigne and Sixpence None the Richer.

Insogna says that although Nettwerk handled the bulk of the A&R responsibilities and costs for the album, Oxygen made sure the network had a say in the artists selected for the CD. "Some of the artists initially picked didn't really represent our brand," Insogna elaborates. "The artists might have been too pop or too adult contemporary, so we had to make sure that all of the artists made sense to our viewers."

Marketing of "Oh! From The Girls" will encompass Oxygen's on-air promotions, Internet campaigns and Oxygen Sweepstakes that will include giveaways of the CD. According to Oxygen, the network reaches 49 million U.S. cable households.

Insogna says the network will not rule out the possibility of a sequel to the CD. "We're always looking for an opportunity to get the Oxygen brand name out there."

IN BRIEF: Two music-video directors have left A Few Miles North Producing for new representation. Charles Jensen has signed with Culver City, Calif.-based production company Anonymous Content, while Erik White is now with RW Entertainment in Los Angeles.
Independent marketing companies like Filter and Cornerstone are very aware of this. “It must be a strategic partnership,” Filter co-founder Alan Saritana says. The perception of the clothing brand and the recording artist must be the same.

“You can’t have one associated with this and the other associated with that,” he explains. The ability to cross-promote is important.

On the recording side, Filter, which also publishes a magazine of the same name, has worked with the Rapture, the Vines, the Chemical Method, South, Björk and Coldplay, among others.

Filter’s fashion accounts include Eltine, Ben Sherman, Fred Perry, Triple S Soul and Levi’s.

ORGANIC PARTNERSHIPS

In “organic” brand/artist partnerships like these, it is important that neither party is exploited, says Cohen, who publishes The Fader magazine with his Cornerstone co-founder, Rob Stone.

“Fashion is out of music,” Cohen says. “So, we will take a brand and connect it with those who would normally embrace it. We would never push a brand on a band—or vice versa.”

In Cohen’s world, Converse and Levi’s work especially well with alternative rock bands.

Filter and Cornerstone work with their fashion clients in creating promotional samplers/giveaways. A recent Ben Sherman compilation produced by Filter included tracks by Coldplay, the Rapture, Dandy Warhols and others.

A company like Converse Canada takes its “look” very seriously. Justo Artigas, VP of public relations at the Italian fashion house, acknowledges the importance of working with “special artists” in an understated way.

“You want to dress up a person to bring life to the clothes,” he offers. “There is value in that.” Artigas’ artist roster includes fashion-conscious R&B/pop artists Eve, Monica, Pink, Beyoncé and Alicia Keys.

Urban fashion houses like Enyce have also bought into this concept.

PRODUCT PLACEMENT

The New York-based band has been seen on the backs of such acts as DMX, “N Sync, 50 Cent, Backstreet Boys, Nas and Ja Rule.

“We find our way into TV, music and films,” says Coca-Cola’s chief executive officer, David Benick. “We’re looking at making the celebrity the focal point of the product placement. We’re thinking of the brand as the focal point.”

“We have to find a way to identify with them and show them that we’re the same people. We’re making sure that the people we want buying the product are also seeing that the product in mainstream pop culture. We have to be wherever they are.”

China Flowers says.

“That was the way we were going in terms of marketing strategy. We wanted to place it with as many people as possible. It was a market with limited options.”

Flowers says.

“Product placement is one of the biggest parts of marketing to get your brand out there.”

The 7-year-old line, which caters to men and women, soon began seeing placements translate into sales. “In 98 or 99, we started to correlate product placement with sales,” Flowers says. “If the consumer actually saw a piece on an artist, the sales would go up on that piece. Maybe 5% or 10% — not too much — but the big- est artist, the Orchard Street sales.

“Since the line has totally gone mainstream,” she adds. “I live in Mont- clair, N.J., which is predominately Jew- ish, and there are just as many white kids there wearing Enyce as there are black kids.”

While Enyce has become a con- sumer staple, new fashion brand Orchard Street is just making its mark on the industry.

Founded in 2001, the brand— which makes T-shirts, sweatshirts, and hats—is quickly beginning to make the celebrity rounds.

R&B/pop artists like Jay-Z, Sean “P. Diddy” Combs and the Roots, while product placement has taken brands like Enyce into the mainstream, Orchard Street has other goals.

“It’s wonderful that [artists] are wearing our stuff, and it’s always good to see, but we’re not necessarily using that to then take us to the department store. Anything.”

The representative says. “We want to stay in the realm that we’re in now.”

The Orchard Street brand first hit the national radar when Jay-Z wore one of its signature T-shirts in Pharrell’s “Frontin’” video.

“Was that probably the first big, big thing,” the representative says. “Prior to that, Black Thought [of the Roots] was going to experience a backlash, but we certainly didn’t see Coca-Cola as a ‘dangerous’ brand,” says Coca-Cola’s chief executive officer, David Benick. “It’s a family brand, and the demographics of the show go way beyond the under-12-year-old [group].”

A BBC spokesman adds: “The deal comes in with producer credits as laid down by the BBC. We’re comfort- able in terms of sponsorship mentions. Coca-Cola is not a brand that would be vetoed [under the BBC guidelines].”

The current commercial is slated to air on Claxton for the next three months. Local IFPI offices are pitching the spot to other net- works in their respective countries, according to IFPI’s chief executive officer, David Benick. “We think it’s a family brand, and the demographics of the show go way beyond the under-12-year-old [group].”

A BBC spokesman adds: “The deal comes in with producer credits as laid down by the BBC. We’re comfort- able in terms of sponsorship mentions. Coca-Cola is not a brand that would be vetoed [under the BBC guidelines].”

IFPI Latin

Continued from page 10

Latin region, not including the Caribbean.

“The commercial directly ad-dresses the impact that piracy has on employment in the indus-try,” Vázquez says. “We alluded to that fact. But this commercial directly delivers a very clear message that piracy generates unemployment.”

Although individual Latin countries have aired anti-piracy ads before, a pan-regional campaign is relatively new.

Today, Vázquez says, IFPI has a concrete media strategy in place in the entire Latin region. The idea is not only to develop and launch campaigns but also to mount a con- certed follow-up.


d www.billboard.com

BIllBoARD DECEmBer 13, 2003

www.americancadiohistory.com
Hail King Z, Queen Duff

If we crown rap lion Jay-Z the king of the Thanksgiving charts, it would only be fair to cast teen star Hilary Duff as the week’s queen.

In a holiday stanza that was odd but not dull, the post-turkey traffic cut erosion for Jay-Z’s “The Black Album” from 38% in week two to less than 10% on the current charts. The resulting 260,000 copies sold is enough to put the album back atop The Billboard 200 while it holds for a second week. “The Black Album” moved 308,000 copies.

Meanwhile, the soundtrack from her film “The Lizzie McGuire Movie” makes a 20-place jump (76-56, up 76%). These two albums combined account for 267,000 copies, with that Duff is the best-selling act on this issue’s chart. With a torrent of media activity, including her participation in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade telecast, her “Metamorphosis” more than doubles its prior-week sales, easily snaring the Greatest Gainer trophy (18-4, up 132%).

Meanwhile, the soundtrack from her film “The Lizzie McGuire Movie” makes a 20-place jump (76-56, up 76%). Those two albums combined account for 267,000 copies, with all of that activity...

Over the Counter

By Geoff Mayfield
gmayfield@billboard.com

224,000 coming from “Metamorphosis.”

Add in 32,000 for her Christmas album (No. 4 on Top Pop Catalog and No. 9 on Top Holiday Albums), plus 9,500 from the “Lizzie McGuire” TV album, and the Duff franchise spills past 308,000 copies.

Aside from the Macy’s parade, MTV ran a special about Duff’s tour that ran four times during the tracking week. She starred with sister Haylie Duff in the Nov. 23 episode of “American Dreams,” while Disney Channel trotted out a "Lizzie McGuire" marathon during the holiday weekend.

AMPLE, NOT FULL: Music stores might call this a Thanksgiving with most of the trimmings but no stuffing. Albums sold for the week are up a hearty 23.7% over the prior week but down 4.3% from the holiday week of last year.

Considering how steep the top of the chart looked a year ago, Thanksgiving 2003 results are almost satisfying.

Shania Twain’s chart-topping total a year ago, for example, was a formidable 625,500 copies, compared with 260,000 this week for returning champ Jay-Z. Tim McGraw had The Billboard 200’s

(Continued on page 66)

Let’s ‘Limbo’ Some More

For the first time since 1982, the Beatles, Elvis Presley and Chubby Checker have all had chart entries in the same calendar year.

Let It Be . . . Naked” (Capitol) by the Beatles falls 5-17 on The Billboard 200 this issue, “Elvis: 2nd to None” (RCA) slips 60-68 on the same chart and “Limbo Rock (Remixes)” (Tec) by Checker appears on three different charts: Hot 100 Singles Sales (where it is No. 50), Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales (where it ranks No. 28) and Hot Dance Singles Sales (where it debuts at No. 5).

Sixty-two-year-old Checker (born Ernest Evans in Andrews, S.C.) hasn’t had a hit single since 1988, when he co-starred with the Fat Boys on a remake of his biggest hit, “The Twist (Yo, Twist!!)" peaked at No. 16.

Checker’s chart career now spans 44 years, six months and three weeks, counting back to the May 1959 debut of his first single for Cameo/Parkway, “The Class.”

The latest effort from Checker is an update of a song that spent two weeks at No. 2 in 1962. The original “Limbo Rock” is Checker’s third-biggest hit, behind “The Twist” and “Foxy Time.”

The credit on the new single reads Chubby C & OD (on the dance chart, Inner Circle is also listed). Rap duo OD is the team of Jamaican-born Jermaine Brown and Russian-born Havannes Dilakan. The single was produced by Gary Lefkowitz and Mike Rogers.

‘BEER BEFORE BAR’: Toby Keith is No. 1 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks for the 11th week this calendar year. That’s the longest any artist has visited pole position in a calendar year since 1972, when Freddie Hart spent 11 weeks on top with three different singles.

Keith’s “I Love This Bar” (DreamWorks) is No. 1 for the fifth week (see Singles Minded, page 70). In June and July, he had a five-week run with Willie Nelson on “Beer for My Horses.”

Last year, Keith racked up seven weeks at No. 1, second only to Alan Jackson’s eight weeks as head of the class. In 2001, Keith led the way with nine weeks, ahead of Lonestar’s eight. In 2000, Keith was also in first place, tied with Tim McGraw and Faith Hill with five weeks each.

“HEY TO THE FIFTH: Alphabetically and chronologically, “Hey Ya” (Arista) is the fifth No. 1 song to start with the word “hey.” The first four are “Hey Baby” by Bruce Channel (1962), “Hey Paula” by Paul & Paula (1963), “Hey Jude” by the Beatles (1968) and “Hey Won’t You Play” Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song” by B.J. Thomas (1975). That means it has been 28 years since a No. 1 hit has started with the word “hey.”

It has only been two years and 10 months since OutKast was last No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100. The duo’s “Ms. Jackson” reached the summit in February 2001.

Unless Kelly’s “Milkshake” (Star Trak/Arista) makes a leapfrog move, OutKast could own the top two songs as early as next week. The pair’s “The Way You Move” moves 4-3 this issue.

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**Top 20 Hits:**

1. JOHN MAYER - Heavier Things
2. LADY GAGA - Bad Romance
3. JENNIFER LOPEZ - On The Floor
4. R. KELLY - #1's
5. CHRISTINA AGUILERA - Kept Us Hanging
6. THE BEATLES - Let It Be...Naked
7. JESSE J - Price Tag
8. NICKI MINAJ - Super Bass
9. TAYLOR SWIFT - Mean
10. KELLY CLARKSON - Stronger
11. MILEY CYRUS - Can't Be Tamed
12. EMINEM - Love The Way You Lie (Part II)
13. JUSTIN BIEBER - Never Say Never
14. KATY PERRY - California Gurls
15. AMY WINEHOUSE - Footprints In The Sand
16. LIAM GALLAGHER - Like A Rock
17. RITA ORA - The Boyfriend Song
18. TAYLOR SWIFT - I Knew You Were Trouble
19. JENNIFER LOPEZ - On The Floor
20. JESSICA SIMPSON - These Boots Are Made For Walkin'
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The Billboard 200 A-Z (Listed by Artists)

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Over The Counter

Continued from page 63

Hot Shot Debut with 601,500 copies on a list where 24 titles sold more than 100,000 during Thanksgiving '02, while No Doubt has the top new entry today on a chart with 21 albums over 100,000-plus.

Those comparisons are daunting and suggest that this year's Thanksgiving album sales should have fallen even shorter than they did from last year's benchmark. But into the bottom half of The Billboard 200, and the picture gets brighter.

Every album from No. 108 to the bottom chart shows more than the album at the same rank one year ago. The difference at No. 200 was a half-life—less than 800 units between the chart's floor this year and where it stood a year ago—but add up all those little margins for 92 titles, and it helps soften the shortfalls even more.

This contrasts with the pattern we saw during the first few months of the year, when the average sale of a No. 1 album looked strong compared with the chart-toppers of 2002 but almost every title from No. 2 on came up short. Importantly, stronger numbers at the bottom of the chart are a sign that music retailers overall picture is healthier than it was during the first seven or eight months of 2003.

Things could look even rosier, as the sophomore album by Alicia Keys should surpass a half-million copies, with a shot at 600,000, compared with a 2002 week when Tawny led the big chart with 317,000.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN: Piracy concerns motivated Jay-Z’s "The Black Album" to jump from a No. 28 release to No. 14 and albums by

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TIS THE SEASON: Christmas tunes are beginning to sprinkle some of our singles charts as stations across the country get into holiday mode. Almost one-third of the stations that report to the Adult Contemporary chart have gone all-Christmas, some doing so weeks before Thanksgiving. Because of this shift in musical focus, the only three bulletted songs in the top 20 of the AC chart are holiday songs, with Jim Brickman featuring Kristy Starling’s “Sending You a Little Christmas” leading the way at No. 11.

OutKast’s “Hey Ya!” moves to No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 and gains 13 million listener impressions to earn Greatest Gainer/Airplay honors for the third time in five weeks.

The track is now at 121.5 million impressions, while the duo’s concurrent radio single, “The Way You Move,” steps 4-3 on the Hot 100 with an audience of 98 million listener impressions.

Besides the two OutKast tracks, Arista places a third song among the Hot 100’s top four, as Kelis’ “Milkshake” flies 12-4.

This is the first time a label has held two of the top four slots on the chart since the July 21, 2001, issue, when Arista also turned the trick with Usher’s “U Remind Me” at No. 1, “Hitt Em Up” (Dopey) by Blu Cantrell at No. 2 and 112’s “Peaches & Cream” at No. 4.

Arista also had a stretch of weeks with three of the top four Hot 100 singles in 1995 and 1996 and the only label to accomplish this since Warner Bros. did so in the Aug. 16, 1986, issue.

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BROAD VS. NICHE

The market outlook in 2004 is positive overall for most music magazines, according to media analyst Neil Asher, Zinnamon media executive VP/director of communications.

“The finances for general-interest magazines like Rolling Stone will remain steady or have slight increases, but the big percentages gains will be with the niche magazines.”

“A lot more advertisers are going for the smaller magazines that have a circulation of 30,000 or less,” Asher continues. “because these magazines have a specific audience that a broader magazine may not have. But it really depends on the advertiser’s needs.”

The music magazine market isn’t so saturated that it will shrink, Asher adds.

“Blender is proof that you can come in and make some noise even when people say that it’s a risky business to start a new magazine in a crowded marketplace.”

Veteran music publicist Bob Merlis says, “What I like about Blender is its huge record reviews section. Tracks has great potential for success. Asher says: “A lot of people over 30 are underserved by radio, and a magazine like Tracks will be a way to expose them to new music.”

Tracks editor-in-chief Alan Light says, “We don’t want to think in terms of young or old artists, but artists who will have an important legacy. Unlike the Top 40 competitors, however, targeted magazines live or die by their niches. Spin’s recent decline, for example, may be related to the up-and-down popularity of modern rock, which is currently declining on record-sales charts compared with the booming ‘grunge’ era of the 1990s.

When Spin started putting acts like Creed and Matchbox Twenty on the cover three years ago, it may have started an identity crisis and downward spiral, says Samir Husni, head of the magazine program at the University of Mississippi.

Spin editor-in-chief Sia Michel says that this year, the magazine has focused on reinforcing its modern-rock image by featuring on the cover acts like the White Stripes, Dashboard Confessional and the Strokes.

“We’ve gone back to what’s really important to our audience,” she says. “It’s not always about who’s selling the most records and who’s going platinum.”

Michel describes Spin readers as “opinion leaders who want to be the first to hear about new artists, or they want to be the first to have the latest videogame.”

Vibe’s transformation from a niche magazine to a thriving mainstream publication can be attributed in large part to the rise of hip-hop in pop culture, Husni says.

Vibe editor-in-chief Mimi Valdes says that the foundation for Vibe’s success with readers is its unique editorial content.

“I also think that especially in journalism about urban music, writers tend to live the lifestyle, and that really comes across to our readers.”

Valdes notes that in recent years, Vibe issues with hip-hop/rap artists on the cover have tended to outsell those featuring R&B artists.

She says that one of Vibe’s biggest editorial changes in the past year has been a switch from two-page stories to longer stories that give readers more in-depth coverage. For 2004, Valdes says that Vibe will have more non-music features.

Husni says he is unimpressed with the MTV magazine. “The magazine isn’t really doing anything different from what other music publications are doing.”

Husni suggests that MTV should overhaul the magazine to better embody the MTV brand and image.

“Your content is what you’re selling, and journalism is really marketing,” Husni says.

RECORD ISSUE

The venerable Rolling Stone went through its identity crisis before finding itself again through a redesign and an editorial tweaking.

“Rolling Stone had tripped and lost its way, but it has bounced back beautifully,” Husni says. “They’ve created marvelous editorial that you can’t find in any other magazine.”

Rolling Stone’s Dec. 11 issue—anchored by “The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time”—hailed in more than 160 advertising pages, the largest in the magazine’s history according to Rolling Stone publisher Rob Gregory.

“It’s our first increase in ad pages since 2000,” says Gregory, who attributes the magazine’s growth to a new marketing strategy that was launched last year.

The strategy had three crucial elements: The magazine slashed its music-industry ad rates to aid record labels in the face of a retail sales decline in decades. It revamped its design and content to appeal more to its target 18- to 34-year-old demographic. And it increased the number of “event” special issues it publishes each year.

Former FHM editor Ed Neelham, who was appointed Rolling Stone managing editor in July 2002, says he opted for fine-tuning instead of a dramatic overhaul.

“We added more color and more photos. We made the music features more relevant to our audience. The main difference is we started to focus more on how covers were going to sell the magazine.”

The revamped Rolling Stone has generated its share of criticism. Some have complained that the magazine has gone “soft,” been dumbed down and become more sexually exploitative.

“I see this as a little controversy isn’t a bad thing,” Neelham says. “Rolling Stone’s strength is also our weakness: Our readership is so diverse that sometimes people get indignant when they see things in Rolling Stone that don’t coincide with their tastes.”

Magazines

Continued from page 9

1. ROLLING STONE

Owner: Wenner Media
Launch year: 1967
Editor-in-chief/publisher: Jan Wenner
Publisher: Rob Gregory
Frequency: 26 times per year
One-year sub. rate: $12.97
Single-copy price: $3.95
Paid circulation: 1.3, down 0.6% from the previous six-month period.
Year-to-date ad pages: 1,055, up 3.6% from the previous year-to-date period.

2. VIBE

Owner: Vibe/Spin Ventures
Launch year: 1993
Editor-in-chief/publisher: Kim Valdes
President: Ken E. Gibbs
Publisher: Carol Watson
Frequency: 12 times per year
One-year sub. rate: $11.95
Single-copy price: $3.50
Paid circulation: 311,158, up 1.6% from the previous six-month period.
Year-to-date ad pages: 1,264, up 7.6% from the previous year-to-date period.

3. SPIN

Owner: Vibe/Spin Ventures
Launch year: 1985
Editor-in-chief/publisher: Sia Michel
Associate publisher: Michael Zywak
Frequency: 12 times per year
One-year sub. rate: $11.95
Single-copy price: $3.99
Paid circulation: 527,384, down 1.8% from the previous six-month period.
Year-to-date ad pages: 660, down 14.1% from the previous year-to-date period.

4. THE SOURCE

Owner: The Source Enterprises
Launch year: 1988
Editor-in-chief/publisher: Kim Osiro
CFO: Jeremy Miller
Frequency: 12 times per year
One-year sub. rate: $12
Single-copy price: $3.99
Paid circulation: 501,743, up 2.8% from the previous six-month period.
Year-to-date ad pages: 1,179, down 0.9% from the previous year-to-date period.

5. BLENDE

Owner: Dennis Publishing
Launch year: 2003
Editor-in-chief/publisher: Andy Pemberton
Publisher: Malcolm Campbell
Frequency: 10 times per year
One-year sub. rate: $7.97
Single-copy price: $3.99
Paid circulation: 83,819, up 4% from the previous three-month period.
Year-to-date ad pages: 673, up 34.1% from the previous year-to-date period.
Missy Elliott
Continued from page 3

“As an artist, though, you just have to weigh it out and find what works best for you. Of course, there’s also such a thing as underexposure. “I find it a blessing that my name is everywhere,” she says.

HIGH PROFILE
And by “everywhere,” she means just that. These days, she is a veritable franchise.

There’s Elliott the pitchwoman: She has appeared in high-profile TV ads—recently for Vanilla Coke and the Gap. In the latter campaign, she paired with Madonna.

The actor: She appears in the new movie “Honey.” And playing herself, she turned up in a recent episode of UPN TV show “Eve,” for which she also penned the theme song.

And the clothing designer: Elliott is creating a clothing line for a major fashion company, according to Violator Management president Mona Scott, who oversees the artist.

On various Billboard charts Elliott surfaces—as writer, producer or featured guest artist—on such tracks as Monica’s “Knock Knock,” as well as Elliott Jean’s “Party to Damascus.”

But is she paying a price for that kind of exposure where it counts most—the charts?

Her collaborations with Monica and Jean did little to boost those two tracks. “Knock Knock” never made it past No. 80 on The Billboard Hot 100, and Jean’s “Party to Damascus” peaked at No. 65.

In the meantime, her own track, “Pass That Dutch,” the lead single from her new album, must be making her label nervous.

In eight weeks on The Billboard Hot 100, the single never rose higher than 27 on the chart and has been steadily declining. It rested last week at 48, down from 38 one week ago and 33 the week before that.

At the same time, such R&B/hip-hop artists as Beyoncé, Ludacris, Chingy, YoungBloodZ and OutKast have dominated the top 10.

Now the real test will be market reaction to “This Is Not A Test.” Her new Gold Mind/Elektra set hit the streets Nov. 25 (one day earlier internationally).

In this issue, the album debuts at No. 13 on The Billboard 200 and No. 3 on Top R&B/hip-hop Albums.

Elliott, who helms the Gold Mind imprint, describes her new album as “an extension” of “Under Construction,” which she considers a tribute to old-school beats and rhythms.

To illustrate, she points to “Construction” tracks like “Gossip Folks,” “Work It” and “Back in the Day” (which featured Jay-Z). On “This Is Not A Test,” Elliott once again collaborates with producer Timbaland, her longtime musical partner. The album also features guest turns from among others, the Clark Sisters and Elephant Man.

ADDRESSING ISSUES
“I wanted to address some issues this time around,” Elliott says.

Enter the track “Wake Up,” which finds Elliott again collaborating with Jay-Z. Elliott says she used the track to express thoughts on material possessions.

“A fly person doesn’t need anything but self-respect and appreciation to be fly,” she explains. “At the end of the day, all the material possessions don’t mean a thing.”

Elliott acknowledges that most artists do not want to set themselves up as role models for their fans. Her reasoning is simple: “Because we make mistakes.”

But artists like Elliott do become role models for many And at some point, they share their views with the world, as is the case with “Wake Up.”

In October, Elliott increased her profile as a role model when she became the national spokesperson for Break the Cycle, a nonprofit organization that works with youth to end domestic violence.

Elliott says she is committed to making her position known about domestic violence: she is leading a $5 million national campaign to raise funds and awareness for the group.

Why this organization? “My mother was in an abusive relationship with my father from the time I was born until I was 13,” Elliott says. While Elliott describes these years as extremely difficult, she stresses that she received love from both parents.

Still, “it was difficult, it was an unhealthy home. I would like to see others not have to go through what I did,” she says.

So far, the lifetime cable network has lent its support to Break the Cycle. According to Elektra VP of marketing Suzanne Burge, Elliott and Break the Cycle will be partnering soon with other media outlets in key markets.

“Elliott wants to spread the word about this important organization,” Burge says. To further show her support, Elliott will donate a portion of the proceeds from her upcoming Where’s My Girls At tour.

MISSY EVERYWHERE

Despite some concern about overexposure, Elliott’s celebrity factor remains very high. She has enjoyed victories this year at several prestigious awards ceremonies, including the Grammy Awards, the MTV Video Music Awards, Teen Choice and Soul Train.

In October, she appeared with Alicia Keys and Eve on the cover of this year’s Women Who Rock issue of Rolling Stone. She also appeared on the cover of Vibe’s recent 10th anniversary issue.

In the weeks leading up to the album’s release, Elliott appeared on “Saturday Night Live,” “The Tonight Show With Jay Leno,” the American Music Awards, the Vibe Awards, MTV’s “Total Request Live” and BET’s “106 & Park,” among other TV shows.

The artist also appeared on her hip-hop countdown show, “Direct Effect,” which hosted the “This Is Not A Test” trivia contest. The winner received a home DJ system.

Elliott is also maintaining a presence on the new media front.

Upcoming is a concert and interview on launch.com and a Sessions@AOL performance. Other Internet initiatives are in the works.

Ultimately, “everybody wants a piece of her.”

“l’m a songwriter first, I’m a producer and then artist. I’m just doing what I do.”

Billboard Music Awards
Continued from page 3

He’s also vying for the Hot 100 male artist of the year and R&B/hip-hop artist of the year honors.

The rapper’s nearest competition comes from Beyoncé and R. Kelly, both of whom are finalists in five categories. The two artists face off in the Hot 100 single of the year category with “Crazy in Love.” and “Ignition,” respectively.

Beyoncé, who will perform at the show, is also vying for the new artist. R&B/hip-hop new artist. Hot 100 female artist and digital track of the year trophies. Controversy-soaked Kelly, meanwhile, is also up for the artist of the year, R&B/hip-hop artist, Hot 100 male artist and Hot 100 pro-
ducer of the year awards.

The awards show, now in its 14th year, will air live at 8 p.m. ET Dec. 10 and on a tape delay on the West Coast (see awards presentation story on page 20). Fox will broadcast the ceremony from the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas.

Breakthrough dancer-singer Sean Paul and the Dixie Chicks are up for four trophies each, while hip-hop newcomer Chingy, Justin Timberlake and 3 Doors Down are in line for three awards apiece.

Hosted by Ryan Seacrest of “American Idol,” the show will include performances by No Doubt, Foo Fighters, Clay Aiken, Shania Twain and Sting, who will be presented with the 2003 Billboard magazine’s highest honor for creative achievement (see story, page 20).

Finalists and winners are culled from charts in the Billboard “Year in Music” spotlight, with ranks reflecting overall performance on the weekly Billboard charts from December 2002 through November 2003. The weekly charts are determined by sales data from Nielsen SoundScan and radio information compiled by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems.

Following is a list of finalists for awards scheduled to be presented on the show:

BEYONCE: FINALIST IN FIVE CATEGORIES

Broadcast Data Systems.

Following is a list of finalists for awards scheduled to be presented on the show:


Art of the year: 50 Cent, R. Kelly, Sean Paul, Justin Timberlake.

Pop artist (duo/group): 3 Doors Down, Dixie Chicks, Linkin Park, Matchbox Twenty.

New artist of the year: Beyoncé, Chingy, EnVoenixence, Justin Timberlake, R&B/hip-hop artist of the year: 50 Cent, Aaliyah, Jay-Z, R. Kelly.


R&B/hip-hop new artist of the year: Beyoncé, Chingy, Floetry, Heather Headley.

Rap artist of the year: 50 Cent, Chingy, Fabolous, Sean Paul.

Rock artist of the year: 3 Doors Down, Audioslave, Disturbed, Trapt.

Modern rock artist of the year: Audioslave, Chevelle, Foo Fighters, Linkin Park.

Country artist of the year: Dixie Chicks, Toby Keith, Tim McGraw, Shania Twain.


Hot 100 male artist of the year: 50 Cent, R. Kelly, Sean Paul, Justin Timberlake.

Hot 100 female artist of the year: Aaliyah, Christina Aguilera, Ashanti, Beyoncé.

Hot 100 duo/group artist of the year: 5 Doors Down, Matchbox Twenty, Santana, Dixie Chicks.

Hot 100 producer of the year: R. Kelly, the Neptunes, Timbaland, Steven “Lenny” Marsden.

Best-selling single of the year: “God Bless the USA,” “American Idol” finalists; “This Is the Night?” Bridge Over Troubled Water’s “Bridge.”

Kid Rock Featuring Allison Moorer; “Flying Without Wings”/“Superstar.”

Ruben Studdard.


Internet artist of the year: Josh Groban, Norah Jones, Dave Matthews, Rod Stuert.

Billboard Century Award: Sting.
Retail Sales

Continued from page 3

closed their doors this year, making it easier for the remaining stores to boost that benchmark.

Online sales, while expected to grow this year, were generally not a factor during the holiday weekend.

“There was a borderline great weekend; music was very strong,” says Brett Wikard, president of the 10-unit Bull Moose chain in Portland, Maine. “We were up 107% last year and 103% this year, but we have only 2% in online sales.”

The Hastings Entertainment chain, Musicland, Trans World, and others also announced an increase in sales for the holiday weekend, which kicked off with the Friday after Thanksgiving, also known as Black Friday.

“It looks like the early news on the holiday selling season is that there will be one,” he says. “We were happy with the Thanksgiving weekend,” says Gerry Lopez, president of the Handleman Retail Group, and the president of the Retail Entertainment Resources, the raking operation of Troy, Mich.-based Handleman.

“Sales were up on a same-store basis, although overall sales are down because all the closed stores,” he adds.

Handleman racks Kmart and Wal-Mart, among other chains. Kmart closed 300 stores in January, Rick Gahana, president of the seven-unit Home’s in Nebraska, reports the chain enjoyed 20% same-store sales increase for the weekend.

While avoiding specifics, Bob Higgins, chairman/CEO of the 940-unit, Albany, N.Y.-based Trans World Entertainment, says he was pleased with overall sales for the holiday weekend.

Highland, the 950-unit Musicland in Minneapolis, company spokeswoman Laurie Bauer reports that store traffic is outpacing last year.

“The good news is that people are buying, and the mild weather across the country is helping,” she wrote in an e-mail to Billboard. “People are shopping and not just for the sale items but other gifts as well, including holiday music, new music and movie releases and trivia calendars.”

Meanwhile, such chains as Soundwaves in Houston and the Virgin Entertainment Group in Los Angeles report flat sales. Newbury Comics in Brighton, Mass., and the Gallery of Sound in Wilkes Barre, Pa., are among those reporting lower sales than last year.

But for some merchants, even a decrease in sales isn’t all bad news. Newbury Comics CEO Mike Dreese says the chain was down about 15% during the holiday weekend of last year.

“We were up against a ‘top 50 for $9.99 sale’ last year,” he says. “So while volume is down, profits are up. CD sales were down 19%, but CD profits were up 7%. P&L-wise we will be great, but our unit volume will leave some of our vendors with sad faces.”

Indeed, some distribution executives privately indicate that they are worried about the numbers that they see, particularly from the discount department store chains, like Wal-Mart, Kmart and Target, which they say had weak numbers for their top 50.

On the other hand, distribution executives say that the bright spot appears to be catalog sales were strong through the weekend, leading some to project that it will be a catalog Christmas.

Some one-stop merchandisers report strong reorder sales on Dec. 1, particularly on catalog. Steve Harkins, VP of music at Marmaduke, says he enjoyed a “Walking a Bloodbath” for the chain flat for the weekend, Zindler reports.

Hastings says that while music sales were strong, books and DVD sales were very strong, helping the chain achieve a single-digit comparable-sales gain.

Indeed, while some chains promoted music, the big traffic builder this year appeared to be aggressively priced DVD players. In addition to chains like Circuit City, Best Buy and Wal-Mart, even merchants like Trans World and Musicland were featuring DVD players in their circulars.

Trans World had one priced at $49.99 after a $20 mail-in rebate, while Musicland had one at $29.99 and Wal-Mart had a combo DVD/VHS player at $79.99.

“People couldn’t get DVD players cheap enough—that’s where the war was, that’s where the madness was,” says Joe Nardone, VP of the 11-unit Gallery of Sound. “That made [music] a little less attractive.”

For music, Circuit City was the most aggressively priced, holding a $29.99 sale for every single album title in the store all day Friday, Nov. 28. The other chains picked their spots. For example, Best Buy had five superstar titles at $7.99 for the first six hours of Black Friday, with stores opening at 6 a.m.

It also had the 20th Century Masters from Universal priced at $4.99. Tower Records had those titles at $5.99 and featured about 50 new titles for five hours each on Thanksgiving Day and Friday morning.

Virgin Entertainment Group president Glen Ward labeled pricing “a bloody bath” because of Circuit City’s gambit, but others agree with Hastings Entertainment chairman/CEO John Marmaduke. He says that pricing was pretty rational, with the exception of Circuit City.”I don’t think pricing will be any more insane than 2002,” he says.

In fact, Handleman’s Lopez says he is encouraged by the prospect for the holiday weekend, considering the “measured pricing of the holiday weekend. Some merchants were aggressive, but they were not out of control.

Indeed, most merchants chose only to get aggressive in their brick-and-mortar outlets and didn’t have the same offers available at their online stores. On the other hand, free shipping was prominently touted at many sites.

Looking at this month, Lopez says, “I am encouraged by the consumer being back in stores.

Marmaduke says that should continue with the improving economy. “It will be a catalog Christmas, especially for DVDs.”

Likewise, Wikard says Bull Moose is very optimistic. “The overall fall has been really strong, and we have a great surge of stuff coming out, with a lot more people coming into the store.”


grocery

just happy to be recognized. It’s a great feeling. God really is showing us so much.

Coming in just behind the leaders with five nods, Evangeline’s Amy Lee said she was “overwhelmed and very excited. We’re not used to being a band that’s recognized, so it’s good.”

Her group is up for album of the year and best new artist, among other categories.

Also honored with five nominations each were 50 Cent, Missy Elliott, Eminem, Ricky Skaggs, Justin Timberlake, Luther Vandross, Warren Zevon and the Neptunes’ Chad Hugo.

Sarah McLachlan and Dido were also on hand to announce nominees and will compete against each other in the best female pop vocal category for “Fallen” and “White Flag,” respectively.

Pop newcomer Stacie Orrico, who announced the best rap album nominees onstage, is up for best pop/contemporary gospel album. “I’m very grateful to be recognized on the same stage as people like Sarah McLachlan and Dido,” she said.

Of his nomination for “Celebrity,” which is up for country song of the year, artist/songwriter Brad Paisley—who announced the best female country vocal performance nominees—said, “It’s always a great feeling.

Paisley is also nominated for best country instrumental performance for “Spaghetti Western Swing.”

Also on hand to announce nominees were Kenneth “Babyface” Edmonds, Moby, MC Lyte, new-comer Jason Mraz and Steve Vai, who is up for best rock instrumental performance for “Essence.”

Nominated four times each are Erykah Badu, Willie Nelson, conductor José Serebrier and Jack White, who—as along with bandmate Meg White of the White Stripes—is up for album of the year.


The 2004 Grammy Awards will take place Feb. 8 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles and be broadcast live by CBS.

For a select list of nominees, see pages 76-77. The full rundown can be found at grammy.com.

Grammy Awards

Continued from page 3

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Nominations For 46th Annual Grammy Awards

Note: More or fewer than five nominations in a category is the result of a tie.

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NEW AGE

‘We Want Our Music Used In Every Manner, Shape Or Form’

BY CHUCK TAYLOR

Martin Bandier has been in music publishing for nearly 30 years. It’s a business he extols with pride.

In 1986, when Bandier was involved in the acquisition of CBS Songs (along with Charles Koppelman and financier Stephen Swid), “people stared at their shoes,” he recalls. “They didn’t have any confidence or the feeling they were doing anything important. The department was the burial ground for record executives who had served their time.”

Today, as chairman/CEO of EMI Music Publishing in New York, the world’s largest music publishing company, there are plenty who would not mind walking in Bandier’s shoes. Last year, the company generated revenue exceeding $500 million.

In its six-month financial results ended Sept. 30, 2003, the publishing arm of London-based EMI Group had revenue flat at $342.8 million—amid an overall global industry downturn of 10.4%.

In addition to such classic catalog signings as Lou Reed, Queen, Carole King, Rod Stewart and the Motown songbook, EMI Music Publishing holds rights for material from Jewel, Norah Jones, Diane Warren, Jay-Z, Matchbox Twenty, Asia Keys and Sting.

When inducting Bandier at this year’s Songwriters Hall of Fame Awards—where he received the Patron of the Arts award—Motown Records founder Berry Gordy said, “Marty is always full of ideas—big ideas. He is always looking for creative ways to overcome the challenges we face all day in today’s music business. Marty and I met more than 30 years ago and I liked him then, and I love him now.”

Q: With companies changing hands, do you foresee EMI Music Publishing absorbing the publishing arm of another major?

A: We could not do that; I suspect we’d have difficulties with the regulators, given the size and scope of EMI. We can buy bits and pieces and divisions, but I just don’t think we could buy a huge company without being scrutinized.

Q: Amid industry consolidation, how important is it for EMI Music Publishing to remain its own entity?

A: I think it’s important for anyone in the music publishing industry to have a sense of independence. We’ve always conducted ourselves in a manner, first and foremost, for the benefit of the owners of this company—the shareholders of EMI—but equally on par, the authors and the composers that we represent.

Music publishing is not only the creative aspect, but it’s about auditing record companies, the performing rights societies, whoever is using our music, and making sure that we and our authors and composers are being paid properly. I report to the chairman of the EMI Group [Eric Nicoli], not the head of the recorded music group, which means that our writers and composers and authors and artists can have a sense of comfort that our decisions are made for their benefit instead of the record business.

Q: The music business is exploring every avenue to place songs, including film, TV, commercials, games and ring tones. How vital is this to your continued financial stability?

A: In 2000, 57% of EMI Music Publishing’s revenue came from mechanical income; this year that figure will be 51%. That represents a combination of a declining recorded music market but also the tremendous amount of time and energy devoted to alternative sources of revenue, through video and computer games, karaoke, motion picture and TV plugging—and having 100 songs on “American Idol” last year. That didn’t happen by accident. We want our music used in every manner, shape or form, and we just want to be paid a fair amount of money for it.

Q: Do ring tones have the same potential in the U.S. as they have shown in other markets?

A: The use of ring tones has supported our Japanese and Southeast Asian companies and put them into profit modes that would make people scratch their heads. In Japan, each user of a cell phone averages 20 ring tones. Do I think it will be that big here? No, but we tend to run years behind Asia in the mobile marketplace, so there’s definite potential.

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