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HOME FRONT
360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD
Changing The Focus
Are Portable Music Players One Reason Sales Are Suffering?

BY SILAS CASUAL

As with most people involved in the music industry for more than 10 or so years, the changes I’ve seen can only be described as profound. This doesn’t just mean the awakening of the big guns to unprotected music, but every aspect—from recording and production through to distribution and consumption.

In my playing days I can remember leaving postcards around a venue asking for interested fans to join a mailing list so we could spread the word about future gigs, releases or just general band news. This was the way of course was way before e-mail, and the idea of writing a physical letter to a fan seems as pre-historic as vinyl. It does, though, serve to highlight just how big the change has been.

As an owner of a very small record company, the opportunities brought by the big shift to digital are too numerous to mention. It seems like every band a manager enters to the sales chart without a major record company’s backing. Although social networking sites have played part, the likelihood is the act has paid its dues to the god of touring and spent many days in the back of a van spreading its gospel.

Even so, the recognition that chart success seems to be playing a smaller part in the lives of many artists, with revenue streams extending way beyond simple recording sales. At Re/914 we have been able to generate significant income from many other sources—such as advertising, synch rights for TV and movies and track use for games and corporate media. I agree with whomever it was that said the big selling single is now a thing of the past. But one thing seems to completely go against the current thinking. Steve Jobs has done a sensational job of making music both easy to buy and to carry around. Time will tell if the move by EM to remove digital rights management will keep its shareholders happy and open the door for the other majors to join the non-DRM club. One thing is certain: There is no going back.

However, it is widely thought that ownership of one of the most portable music players has resulted in more music buying online. In the IFPI’s 2007 digital music report it said that portability was a key driver of digital sales. This doesn’t come as much of a surprise. If you’re comfortable using a portable music player and you want to cut out all the hassle of buying a CD, ripping the music to your computer then transferring it to your player, downloading makes perfect sense.

But the majority of music held on portable players is ripped from CDs. Again, this is not much of a surprise, because if the capacity of these players is such that you can literally store all the music you have ever bought and more, the likelihood is you will put all your music on it. Certainly that’s what I did, and many of my friends and colleagues have done the same. This has brought back to life much of the music that I hadn’t listened to for years. My player is always set on shuffle and so I’m traveling through time whenever I turn it on. Previously, my music collection was limited to somewhere between 5% and 10% of what I owned. I always skipped the older stuff for more recent buys. But now, there is just as much chance that I’ll be listening to a track from the first CD I ever bought as any other track stored on my player.

But because I now have easy access to all my music, I’ve found that in the last year or so I haven’t bought as many new releases. I’m still bombarded with the same amount of material from unsigned artists—that will never change. But because I’m rediscovering so much music, my thirst for something new is being quenched by old stuff I already own. If my experience is being repeated all over the world, then it’s no wonder music sales have hit the skids. Maybe the much maligned peer-to-peer has an accomplice that is living and breathing right in the heart of so many of the world’s biggest music markets.

I’m not sure how the BigCharts of this world would ever be able to measure such an impact, if it really exists. But I don’t see why my experience should be any different from a lot of other portable music player owners. And while the capacity of portable music players is getting bigger each year, with Apple breaking the 100 million barrier, their popularity is growing.

Because I now have easy access to music, I’ve found that in the last year or so I haven’t bought as many new releases.

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Silas Casual is CEO of London-based Re/914 Recordings.

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Lethal But Legal

Universal Tentatively Tests The Mixtape Waters

In a move to fill the void created by the RIAA's crackdown against the formidable mixtapes business built by DJs like Whoo Kid and DJ Drama, Universal Music Enterprises (UME) is trying its hand at legal mixtapes. The company has created a series titled "Lethal Squad Mixtapes," released to retail at a $4 wholesale cost with hopes that the discs would be priced in stores at $4.99-$5.99. However, it's unclear whether a corporate take on the grass-roots idea will wash.

"I'm excited to see them do something different," says Thuy Ngo, VP at Irvine, Calif., one-stop Super D. "But it's like they're a day late and a dollar short: After the RIAA cracked down, all of us stopped carrying mixtapes.

Before DJ Drama's January arrest, the mixtape business was a lucrative market where DJs, labels and artists boosted their brands with CDs that were sold via the Internet, the street and brick-and-mortar retailers. But once the federal government arrested DJ Drama and Don Cannon on racketeering charges, the industry ground to a halt. Since then, mixtape releases have been sporadic. And though mixtapes were a concrete way to break new artists like Young Jeezy, labels still view them as piracy when they're on sale and they include unlicensed music.

"How ironic," DJ Drama says. "I guess they've realized just how important mixtapes are."

The initial "Lethal Squad Mixtapes: Dose #1," mixed by Washington, D.C., newcomer DJ Bear, dropped quietly July 13 and includes tracks by established stars such as Fabolous and Kanye West and lesser-knowns such as Young Chris and Jae Ellis. It has sold only 5,800 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. "Lethal Squad Mixtapes: Dose #2" is slated for September, and will be mixed by Bear and Washington, D.C., radio DJ Quicksilva.

"It's a good idea but you need the underground credibility and nobody knows the DJ on it," one chain buyer says. "It's priced to move, and if they had somebody who had clout [as a DJ], then you can kill with the $4 price point."

"The DJ situation will play itself out," UME executive VP/GM Mike Davis says. "If one really works, we're going to stick with him."

By ED CHRISTMAN and HILLARY CROSLEY
Tony Wilson 1950-2007

Factory Records Founder Inspired A Huge Shift In British Culture

LONDON—Tony Wilson, the colorful British music industry all-rounder who established Factory Records and the infamous Hacienda nightclub, died Aug. 10 in a Manchester, England, hospital after suffering a heart attack. The 57-year-old had been battling cancer.

"Joy Division and the Factory bands were Tony's trigger points, and the club was a focal point for a whole cultural shift," says Warner Bros. U.K. managing director Korda Marshall, who was involved in producing this year's Joy Division biopic, "Control," alongside Wilson. "He was the catalyst for huge changes to British culture."

Born in 1950 in Salford, Wilson studied at Jesus College, Cambridge, and forged an early career in journalism. He became a familiar face in the north of England as a reporter with Granada Television during the late 1970s and also presented seminal music program "So It Goes."

Wilson founded Factory Records in 1979 and the Hacienda in 1982. In the 1990s, he and longtime partner Yvette Livesey established the annual music convention in the City, which launched a New York edition this year.

The northern city of Manchester was the common thread in all his projects. There, he unearthed late-'70s post-punk outfit Joy Division—which later morphed into New Order—and '80s alternative/dance/crossover pioneers Happy Mondays, both of whom he signed to Factory Records. Many of his artists paid tribute to him after his death.

The alternative band James "wouldn't be here if Factory didn't take a chance back then," says David Baynton-Power, who had the one-time Factory signed act. "He's one of the few people around where it was definitely music and the art above how much money you made."

In one of his last interviews, Wilson spoke extensively with this reporter about his maverick career (Billboard, June 16). Despite his obvious ill health at the time, he was upbeat about the state of music in Britain. "There's a real change for British music to reinvent and establish itself," he said. "It just needs one or two major acts to come through."

When asked if the music industry was a good place to be, he answered: "Yes, if you find a great band." With Joy Division/New Order and the Happy Mondays, Wilson had two such bands, but he had a different type of hit on his hands with the Hacienda nightclub, which set the scene for the "acid house" era of the late '80s and passed into clubbing folklore. Local crime gangs contributed to the venue closing for good in the mid-'90s. Factory itself went into receivership in 1992 and, although Wilson resurrected it three times, as Factory Too, Factory Records Ltd. and finally F4, he never re-captured the magic of the original.

Wilson epitomized the music man whose business acumen sometimes went astray. In one timeless example, New Order's 1983 club masterwork "Blue Monday" went on to become the best-selling 12-inch single in history. But remarkably, overheads on producing the sleeve meant each copy sold actually lost Factory money. I got more sensible around the middle of Factory, but it was too late to go back," Wilson told this reporter at the launch of F4. "The second and third versions were very depressing and very stupid of me."

His eccentricities were laid bare in Michael Winterbottom's 2002 feature film "24 Hour Party People," which cast comedian Steve Coogan in the central Wilson role.

He was again enthused on the big screen in "Control," but because of his illness, Wilson missed the premiere. "I don't think he ever got to see it," Marshall says.

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Tony Wilson was renowned for his eccentricities, his love for Manchester and his contribution to the city's cultural landscape through Factory Records and the Hacienda nightclub. His legacy lives on through the music and artists he supported, and his impact on British music culture remains significant. 

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Retailers Await Opening 'High School Musical 2' Numbers

There's no doubt that the "High School Musical 2" soundtrack will be a hit. But in its first days of availability, the question on industry sales and distribution executives' minds was whether the album would displace Linkin Park's "Minutes to Midnight" as the top debut-week seller this year.

"Minutes to Midnight" scanned 622,000 in its first week, and Billboard calls to industry prognosticators indicate that "High School Musical 2"—which sources say shipped 1.5 million units—has an outside chance to top. Label executives whose job duties include staying current say the lower mark for the following week based on street date—Aug. 14 in this case—are estimating a modest 550,000 units for the Disney soundtrack. That total would place showing the movie midway through the SoundScan week "makes it anybody's guess as to what the album will do." Because "High School Musical" wasn't yet a phenomenon when it premiere Jan. 20, 2006, on Disney Channel, sales for the movie's first installment mirrored "Titanic." In its first week of availability, "High School Musical" chalked up 6,500 units, and in its second week it hit nearly 16,000. The word-of-mouth buzz and sales climbed slowly, reaching the 100,000-unit mark in week eight. The album went on to become the top seller of 2006, and has scanned 4.1 million units to date. Its biggest-selling week was its 14th week of availability, when it shifted 256,000 units. Other than that, it steadily generated sales week after week as the movie repeatedly aired on Disney Channel. In recent weeks, as the airdate drew near for "High School Musical 2," sales for the first soundtrack jumped from the 6,000 range up to 13,000-20,000 units in each of the last four weeks, ending Aug. 12.

Now, regardless what the debut-week sales turn out to be for "High School Musical 2," retailers are hoping Disney catches lightning twice.
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Four months after a payola investigation led the FCC to forge a "consent decree" with four large broadcast companies, label promotion executives and indie promoters say the icy relationship between radio and labels is only beginning to thaw. Meanwhile, they say, if greater radio airplay for indie labels is in the cards, it hasn't materialized yet.

Flashback to late 2004: Subpoenas were flying. Spooked by New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's sweeping payola probe, programmers clamped up. Radio's largest chains banned indie promoters from talking to their stations. As the probe broadened in 2005 and 2006, label execs said, it ushered in a climate of fear and paranoia, causing a breakdown in communication between their promotion staffs and radio. Indie labels cried foul, saying the bans could potentially ruin their businesses, which rely on indie promoters to augment bare-bones promotion departments.

Fast-forward nearly three years. Spitzer—elected governor of New York in 2006—uncovered the seedy underbelly of record promotion, reaching settlements with all four major-label groups and several large broadcast companies. The FCC—armed with damning details provided by Spitzer—formally initiated a national payola investigation.

On April 13, 2007, the commission forged a consent decree with Clear Channel, CBS Radio, Entercom and Citadel.

The four broadcasters agreed to business reforms and a compliance plan that includes no longer denying indie promoters access to the companies' employees, providing that the indies are not compensated based upon ads or increased spins. In Clear Channel's case, programmers are not required to meet with any individual indie that requests a meeting—though they can choose to. The decision is at the discretion of the station's market manager, regional VP and/or compliance officer.

Twinned with, but not part of, the government's settlement, the broadcasters reached a voluntary understanding with the American Assn. of Independent Music (AAIM). The radio companies agreed to devote 8,400 half-hour blocks of airtime on appropriately formatted stations to independent, signed and local artists. For Clear Channel, the commitment entails some 1,600 hours during a three-year period. Now, repercussions of the agreement and the consent decree are shaking out on a number of levels.

Radio and the Labels
While guardedly optimistic that the radio-label relationship is improving, Jeff McClusky & Associates West Coast senior VP Dick Sone says it has a long way to go. "It's in a formative stage of growing back to where it needs to be," he says. "The whole business is based on relationships. The Spitzer thing sidetracked the fundamental basis of doing mutually smart business between broadcasters and music companies."

Frank Murray, VP of promotion at independent dance label Robbins Entertainment, says it's too early to gauge the impact of the agreements. "We hope radio will comply with the consent decree," he says. "But it's so early in the process that we haven't had a chance to benefit from the changes. So far, we're using the same [indie] promoters and hoping their access will improve."

But Sean Coakley, president of triple-P. A promotion and marketing company, Songlines, says, "The walls are still standing where I was banned from interacting are slowly coming down.

"There are forms and agreements to sign before we do business, but that is fine with me," says Coakley, who was involved in the beginning of the process that resulted in the AAIM agreement. But though he feels the agreement is having a positive impact, he and others say it's too soon to tell how it may ultimately affect independent artists.

Independent labels need to understand that just because the doors are opening again, that is no guarantee they'll get the support they seek."

—SEAN COAKLEY, SONGLINES

Promotional Costs
"It is hard to compare a before and after when the whole model is going through drastic changes," Coakley says. One thing I am sure of is that labels are happy they still don't have to lay out the millions of dollars they did in the past. But independent labels need to understand that just because the doors are opening again, that is no guarantee they'll get the support they seek. For every act that makes it to radio, there are 100 that don't."

Veteran rock radio indie promoter Lenny Bronstein, who specializes in small, unmoffiliated markets, says little has changed. "My impression is that there is virtually no more access and advantage than before," he says. "Independent labels have always been at a disadvantage, not having the clout, staff and product flow" of the majors and lacking high-profile artists to use as leverage for airplay on new acts.

"Most depended on the services of one or more indie promoters to supplement or essentially become their promotion departments," Bronstein says.

Island Def Jam executive VP of promotion Greg Thompson also says he has yet to see any noticeable impact. "It hasn't changed anything, dramatically for us, but it has opened us up to the fact that there may be more people discussing music with more broadcasters," he says. "But I still don't see more music going on the radio."

In fact, while the settlements forced labels and broadcasters to adopt strict new promotion policies, Thompson says radio's musical conservatism has been unaffected by either the consent decree or the AAIM agreement. "People have been put into a little bit more conservative mode over the last few years, maybe because they feel a need to justify their decisions more," he says. "The climate is so 'let's not play any new music.'"

LOGISTICS
Although broadcasters have, in theory, reopened their doors to indies, rules and paperwork are creating obstacles.

"One Citadel station made me fill out a form six to eight weeks ago, and I still can't communicate with the station I've talked to for 20 years," Bronstein says. The reverse is true as well. Clear Channel programmers are required to log "items of value" received from a record label, including CDs, which has prompted a number of programmers to request that labels stop sending music.

Still unclear is how the four radio companies plan to fulfill their agreements to play more independent music. Entercom says it is still working on its plan and declined further comment. Citadel and CBS Radio would not comment. While Clear Channel has automated the submission process from local and unsigned artists, it too has yet to spell out how it will structure the air-time requirement.

Billboard's indie column is on hiatus, but will return to the magazine shortly. In the meantime, indie coverage will continue in the magazine and online.
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Selling Old Records

Copyright Terms Affect Cross-Border Sales

Recent news of the United Kingdom’s decision not to extend the copyright term for sound recordings naturally disappointed the record industry. For many lawyers, the news sparked a renewed interest in the risks companies could face—and rights holders might want to watch closely—if they release older U.S. recordings across national borders once the recordings become public domain in Britain. The U.K. copyright term of protection for sound recording rights holders is 50 years—a period that begins when the sound recording was created. If published during that time, then protection lasts for 50 years from the date first published, which is generally when copies of the recording (like vinyl records) were made available for sale to the public or when it was broadcast in that country. Often the date next to the (P) symbol on the recording is that date. So, beginning Jan. 1, 2008, any sound recording published in 1957 or before will be part of the public domain in the United Kingdom. This could affect records like the Everly Brothers’ “Wake Up Little Susie” and Jerry Lee Lewis’ “Great Balls of Fire.”

While other European Union member states have the same term for recordings, some other countries will still provide copyright protection within their borders to the rights holders. “There are problems if the recording goes to another country where it remains in copyright,” U.K. music industry lawyer Crispin Evans says. A copyright holder’s rights in recordings that cross national borders depend on which treaties the countries have signed. Sorting through those laws can get extraordinarily complicated. But, in general, many countries have agreed to abide by the legal principles called “national treatment.” This principle requires a country, within its borders, to protect foreign copyright holders the same as it would its own copyright holders—as long as both countries are parties to the same international treaties. So in the United Kingdom, a U.S. copyright holder’s rights in the United States should be the same as those of a U.K. copyright holder. Likewise, a U.K. copyright holder’s rights in the United States should be the same as a U.S. copyright holder.

In the States, sound recording protection under federal law depends on many issues, including whether the recording is determined to be a work-made-for-hire. This means that the company that hired everyone to create the recording is the “author.” While most labels claim that recordings are works for hire, the vast majority of legal experts disagree, arguing that the creators of a U.S. sound recording are the authors.

But, as I explored in a feature article last year (Billboard, Aug. 12, 2006), the law isn’t clear on who a sound recording’s author might be: featured artist, musicians, vocalists, producer, engineer or someone else. And, to complicate matters further, U.S. federal law did not protect recordings created before Feb. 15, 1972.

Recordings created between Feb. 15, 1972, and Jan. 1, 1978, were protected for 28 years initially, and then for another 28 years if the copyright holder renewed rights. Then the law changed in 1978, so if those recordings were still protected on Jan. 1, 1978, then they are protected for an additional 67 years for a total term of 95 years. Recordings created after Jan. 1, 1978, are protected for the life of the author plus 70 years (for co-authors, “life” is measured by the last co-author to survive the others). But if the recording is a work-made-for-hire, then protection for 1978 and later recordings lasts for 95 years after it’s published or 120 years after created, whichever period is shorter.

Then, again, some recordings not protected by U.S. federal law may still be protected by state laws. So with all that explained, let’s get back to companies that might want to sell records that are in the public domain in Europe. Evans says the importer in the country where the recording is still protected by copyright would have to get permission from the owner of the recording or risk being sued for infringement. And then even if the recordings are shipped to countries where they would be in the public domain as well, publishers and songwriters still need to be paid. As Evans notes, the compositions will still be protected. The term of protection for compositions in most countries lasts for the life of the songwriter (or the last surviving songwriter of co-written compositions) plus 70 years. So the companies must pay mechanical royalties to the publishers or risk being sued for infringement. Finally, the companies may have to change the original cover art used for the recordings, Evans says. The artwork or photographs may also be protected under longer copyright terms. Typically they are protected for the life of the artist or the artwork or photo plus 70 years.
Outside The (Big) Box
Rihanna/Wal-Mart Campaign Aims For Nonendemic Buyers

**Making The Brand**

MICHAEL PAOLETTA
mpaolletta@billboard.com

ow more than ever, labels are focusing on ways to get music into stores that don't normally carry it.

In coming weeks, for instance, Island artist Melissa Etheridge will participate in a promotion with Safeway. The artist's new album, "The Awakening," due Sept. 25, will be stocked in the supermarket chain's 1,500 locations.

Rihanna, meanwhile, is the centerpiece of a multiplatform campaign for CoverGirl's new lip gloss, WetSticks Fruit Spritzers (Billboard, May 12). So far, her label, Def Jam, is digging deeper into the partnership to more fully leverage the deal between the two brands.

Consumers walking into Wal-Mart stores these past few weeks—and in the weeks ahead—are confronted with Rihanna/CoverGirl signage and display units in the health and beauty department. So, while picking up that favorite Fruit Spritzers flavor, Rihanna fans can also grab a copy of one of the artist's three albums, as they are part of the display.

Island Def Jam senior VP of sales Jim Roppo says the Wal-Mart campaign "enables us to seed Rihanna and her music in a nonmusic department."

"More people buy health and beauty products than music," he points out.

According to Information Resources Inc., consumers spent $43.7 billion on health and beauty products in the 52-week period ending July 15, 2007. This marks a 4.4% increase from one year ago. IRIS findings cover supermarkets, drugstores and mass merchandise outlets, excluding Wal-Mart, which does not share its sales data.

In comparison, in the same time period, mass merchants sold 124.8 million units of music, according to Nielsen SoundScan. In calendar year 2007 through Aug. 5, mass merchants have sold 104.6 million units, down 17.8% from the same period last year.

With regard to Rihanna, "Umbrella" spent seven weeks atop The Billboard Hot 100. The track has sold 1.7 million digital downloads, while its parent album, "Good Girl Gone Bad," has sold 381,000 units. Of these copies sold, 281,000 have come from mass merchants.

For the Wal-Mart promotion to work smoothly and seamlessly, Island Def Jam, according to Handleman, "has cross-merchandised products to Wal-Mart. CoverGirl has its own merchandising reps for the displays, Handleman handles the music only."

Since the displays show up in Wal-Mart's health and beauty departments, each of the three albums in the locations Handleman services has experienced double-digit sales increases, according to Roppo.

Wal-Mart senior buyer of music Troy Steiner says CoverGirl brought the campaign to his company as a product package. Discussions, he says, kept returning to "how we could best cross-merchandise music." But this is not the first time Wal-Mart has cross-merchandised products—it has also done a CoverGirl promotion with Queen Latifah, and one pairing Tim McGraw with Lay's Potato Chips.

Steiner says that in its numerous promotions with celebrities, Wal-Mart has learned a thing or two. First, he says, since physical CDs are impulse purchases at Wal-Mart, "you've got to figure out ways to engage the customer outside of the music department." Second, Steiner continues, "These sales are driven when you co-promote the products in both departments."

In Rihanna's case, customers visiting the cosmetics and music departments are receiving the same message. And from there, the dots are connected.
**MUSIC TV GOES MOBILE**

Es Musica Leads List Of Companies Putting Latin Video Content On Your Phone

With 10 original weekly shows, made-for-mobile Latin music channel ES Musica aims to break ground by re-creating the music TV experience—and upping it with portability and interactivity.

As studies show that U.S. Hispanics use mobile entertainment more than their mainstream counterparts, several other companies have entered the market with their own tailored offerings. Viva! Vision presents videos by unsigned and independent Latin artists, as well as nightlife coverage and comedy; Tu Musica is programmed with artist news and wallpapers; indie digital retailer MisRolas.com has begun producing artist interview segments in Spanish for mobile video on demand; and bilingual channels MTV Tr3s and mun2 offer mobile content.

What sets GoTV’s ES Musica apart is its combination of all-original video content produced specifically for mobile on its own music-dedicated channel—beyond static images, ringtone sales, repurposed TV or Web footage, or content that it parcels out across the spectrum.

“We want to put out our own shows and have creative control from beginning to end,” says ES Musica executive producer Gabriela Cocco, a graduate of talent booking and programming at MTV Latin America and the Universal Music Feed.

In its shows, which range from two- and-a-half to four minutes, the channel offers everything from video countdowns to tour documentaries and artist profiles, with a balance of commercial and alternative music. A reality series following an artist is also in development. Commercials for mobile require special sound considerations, framing of shots for a small screen and shorter viewing habits, in part due to the battery life.

During its testing phase earlier this summer, Cocco remembers looking at footage and thinking, “That looked really cool when we were shooting it, but when I saw it on my phone I was like, ‘No one can see what the hell that is, it doesn’t look right.’ So we changed the angle—there are easy fixes, but it takes time to get to that quality.”

ES Musica is available to subscribers on AT&T and by late August on Sprint; talks with other carriers are under way, but the channel is getting added exposure from Sprint, which is featuring ES Musica semimonthly on its free best-of-stream.

ES Musica is also partnering with AEG Live to promote its Latin shows and produce “interactive concert experiences,” starting with Enrique Iglesias’ Dec. 7 performance at Los Angeles’ Nokia Theatre. Ideas in the works include text messages projected on big screens during shows and mobile video updates from backstage.

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

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**EN LA RED:** For 24/7 coverage of the Latin music world, Billboard has partnered with MSLN. For a complete roundup, in Spanish, go to BillboardLatino.MSN.com.

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**Don’t Mess With Regional Mex**

Genre Continues To Dominate Latin Market Share

All entertainment sectors thrive on the gap between perception and reality. When it comes to Latin music, a niche market where marketing and press are in the hands of a select few, that gap can be bigger still.

Quite often, when advertisers, brands and even journalists call to inquire about different artists, genres or trends, they are surprised—sometimes unbelieving—when I provide blunt answers on commercial success.

A frequent reaction is “But they’re everywhere!”

And they are. But we all should know by now, being everywhere in the media doesn’t always translate into what people actually want to buy.

Based on Billboard sales charts, we know that the top-selling genre of Latin music is regional Mexican, followed by pop. Third-place tropical got shoved into fourth place a couple of years ago by urban music.

This time around, though, in a bid to be very exact, we asked our research department to break down all sales of Latin music—not just those titles that make it on the charts—by genre, going back to 2005.

We observed a marketplace where the two leading genres are remarkably steady. Regional Mexican, possibly the single genre that is most ununderstood by Nielsen SoundScan because so much product is still sold at swap meets and周五 nights that do not report sales, remains by a big shot the most popular genre of Latin music in the country.

It turns out that regional Mexican consistently outsells pop 2:1, tropical music 8:1 and—get this—urban music 4:1.

Despite this, media and opinion makers, even today, consistently disregard Mexican music in favor of rock, reggaeton and bilingual music. While we are not suggesting that everyone should turn Mexican or start playing corridos, information gatekeepers certainly do not owe any favors by pretending that the market that sells doesn’t exist simply because they don’t like or understand it. And endlessly hyping music that does not appeal to anyone only re- sults in decreased interest and investment down the line.

Beyond the Mexican dominance, the other trend that emerges in this three-year analysis is the slow recuperation of tropical music, which has gone from representing 6% of the Latin market in 2005 to 8.6% for the week ending Aug. 5.

Conversely, the fortunes of rhythmic music—which is disproportionately made up of reggaeton—have declined as the genre has stabilized. In 2005, in its best moment, rhythmic commanded 13.6% of the market. Today, for the week ending Aug. 5, it stands at a modest 10.6%, just two percentage points above tropical.

Conversely, regional Mexican’s market share has risen to 57.8% year to date, despite the current crackdown on illegal immigration. That crackdown will most certainly affect sales as the year progresses. But it still won’t change the reality of what the Latin market is in this country—least of all, for now.

--LC

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**MARIACHI IN SAN JOSE**

A eclectic array of acts will perform at the 16th annual San Jose (Calif.) International Mariachi Festival. Linda Ronstadt, Los Lobos and Marco Antonio Solís will headline the four-day fest, taking place Sept. 26–30 in San Jose’s Mexican Heritage Plaza. The scope of artists underlies the festival’s aim to reach mariachi audiences and beyond with a mix of traditional mariachi fare and pop acts that appeal to lovers of Mexican music. Other performing acts include Mariachi Sol de Mexico (which will perform with Solís), Mariachi Internacional de Guadalajara, Quetzal, the Iguanas and Mariachi La Reina. Festival sponsors include El Mexicano Brand Cheeses. The festival will also include workshops for music students and young mariachi groups. For more information, visit mhcivic.org. --ABY

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Selling Celtic

Borders Scores With An Anúna Exclusive

While the discounter get the cream of the crop when it comes to superstar exclusives—Garth Brooks at Wal-Mart, Elton John and the Rolling Stones at Best Buy—music retailers pursuing niches can get plenty of mileage out of acts that appeal to their core customers.

Borders is featuring the album in its Shortlist (an e-mail that is sent to 19.5 million members in the chain's frequent buyers club, Borders Rewards), as well as an in-store promotion at listening stations. A banner with a picture of the group will receive prominent placement at the front of the chain's stores. And the group itself is helping out by hitting 31 Borders stores with in-store performances between July 23 and Aug. 21, and following up with a 40-date U.S. concert tour beginning in October.

At the Ann Arbor in-store, the band was filmed for a live video that will be e-mailed to Borders Rewards members and featured on the company's Web site in October.

When a project "has PBS exposure, we do extremely well especially because of our customer space," Borders director of multimedia merchandising Patti Russo says. In general, she adds, "we do well with the Celtic chorale music category."

While the Borders strategy so far has provided a nice return for the group, why sign on with only one retailer, a tactic that often gets the goat of those excluded from selling an album? Newbury Comics, for instance, pulled most of the Stones' catalog, only keeping the top five sellers in stock when the band provided Best Buy with an exclusive for its "Four Flicks" DVD.

"When you are trying to develop a brand, you need a retail partner that believes in you," says Denny Young, who heads up the Elevation Group and who executive-produced the Anúna album and PBS' 86-minute special. "If we had won everywhere, we wouldn't have had anybody singularly focused on the project like Borders is.

Take Borders as a case in point. The Ann Arbor, Mich.-based book chain that also carries music and DVDs has built itself quite a reputation for selling world music, folk, classical and other softer-sounding genres for upscale customers. On July 16, it began an exclusive run with Anúna's "Celtic Origins" album, which will continue through the end of the year.

Powered by the chain's own marketing machine and a PBS fund-raiser special that is airing in August and September on 221 stations across the United States, the set has scanned 13,000 units in its first three weeks of availability, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That total places the album as Anúna's third best-selling title in the States, behind the nearly 27,000 units scanned by its 1995 self-titled debut and the 22,000 units scanned by 1996's "Invocation." But neither of those albums managed to hit, let alone surpass, the 1,000-unit mark in a single week, a distinction that "Celtic Origins" has accomplished in each of its three weeks of availability.

The album contains 19 songs, including originals from group founder Michael McGlynn, as well as covers of such traditional songs as "Greenleeves," "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls" and "Our Wedding Day." It has been the No. 1 seller at the Borders chain—it is available in 839 Borders and Waldenbooks stores—

for three weeks running. In its second and third week of availability, it would have topped Billboard's World Music chart, if it was eligible. But since the album is available only at Borders, the only Billboard chart it is eligible for is Comprehensive Albums.

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MEET THE MIRACLE MARKETS

A Dozen Nations Where Recorded-Music Revenue Actually Increased in 2006

The headline figures from the IFPI’s latest volume of the “Recording Industry in Numbers” make for grim reading. From 2005 to 2006, they show a 5% decline in trade revenue from global sales of recorded music to $19.6 billion; revenue from physical sales, meanwhile, slumped 11% to $17.5 billion. But upon examining the details, a dazzling dozen trend-bucking markets come to light: 12 countries around the world that managed, against all odds, to post overall growth. They range from the world’s second-biggest music market to some of its very smallest, and they did it through various means, from engineering format changes or adopting improved sales-recording methodology to pulling off what the IFPI calls “the holy grail,” whereby an increase in digital sales offsets any physical decline. Billboard’s global team looks at the unique factors in each market and examines how they pulled off Mission: Impossible.

ARGENTINA

+15.1% to $56.3 million

As the country’s general economy continues to claw itself back from the meltdown of 2001, the Argentine market posted a fourth successive year of trade revenue growth, although music sales still remain below levels enjoyed before the collapse. “These figures indicate something quite different than a true economic growth,” says Roberto Play, executive director of local labels body CAPIF. “We are still experiencing a recovery after the terrible crisis of 2001 and 2002, when sales dropped from 23 million to a mere 7 million units.” Unit sales of physical full-length formats increased by 5.4% to reach 15.7 million in 2006, with international repertoire accounting for 57% of value sales. Top international sellers included the “High School Musical” soundtrack and DJ DouggPound’s “How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb.”

The IFPI also measured for the first time digital sales, which have a trade value of just $1 million. That figure will likely increase along with numbers of internet users and broadband subscriptions, although the local industry fears a parallel explosion in illegal downloads.

Play says figures for the first half of 2007 show a further 3% growth but predicts the market is reaching its limit.

—Marcelo Fernandez Bitar

VENUEZUELA

+17.6% to $10.7 million

Since 1998, the Venezuelan music market has been steadily reduced to a blip. The majors no longer have headquarters there (although Universal and Sony have marketing offices), and the biggest local label, Rodven, is liquidating its assets. And yet, a booming economy, buoyant thanks to the high price of oil, helped the music industry register growth. Although CD shipments dipped from 1.6 million to 1.5 million, the average price rose from $5.40 in 2005 to $7.14 in 2006.

“When a market hits rock bottom, any recovery, however subtle, makes a difference,” says producer/promoter Cesar Pulido, who handles Venezuelan singer Franco De Vita. “Consumer spending in general has risen 50% in the last year,” says Juan Luis Marbore, director of legal and business affairs for IFPI Latin America. “So there is also more spending on legitimate CDs.”

The shuttering of Rodven also means the closure of its CD production plant, one of only two in the country. However, Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez’s National Culture Council has said that it plans to open a national record label that will give opportunities to new artists.

—Leila Cobo

IRELAND

+5.7% to $36.4 million

CD shipments held steady, but Ireland’s fledgling digital market is the main reason for the market’s growth. The IFPI included digital figures in its calculations for the first time, adding $4 million worth of value to the market.

New online retailers like downloadmusic.ie and outsounds.ie have been rapidly expanding operations, joining leading players iTunes, Vodafone, Sony Connect and local retailer eircom.net in a burgeoning digital marketplace.

Download music managing director Johnny Beirne says sales from his Web site were responsible for getting nine Irish acts onto IRMA’s singles chart in the past year, including alternative group Dave’s Radio and rock band Kidic.

“Sales increased for us by 1,500% after we switched to a credit card-free payment method,” he says of the site’s text-message-based sales model. “When the site started [in 2006], we had sales of 600 a month. Now it’s 600 a week.”

Universal Music Ireland managing director Dave Pennefather says the growth of the digital market is due to a combination of new technology and demographics: “Ireland has one of the youngest populations in the European Union, and this new generation of consumers is especially tuned in to new gadgets.”

—Nick Kelly

SOUTH AFRICA

+3.3% to $154.1 million

An upsurge in sales of domestic repertoire was the main driver in the South African market’s sixth successive year of growth. Even the physical market was up, posting a record high of 24.2 million full-length trade shipments, with the local digital market—worth just $2 million—struggling to achieve lift-off.

Domestic repertoire outshone its international counterpart in CD unit terms for the first time since RISA began collecting statistics, with 9.7 million units to international repertoire’s 8.5 million. Domestic repertoire’s market share has grown in each of the last five years, from 27% in 2002 to 45% last year, including multimultipurposes (80,000-plus units) 2006 sellers Afro pop group Mafikizolo (Universal) and Afrikaans singer Kurt Darren (Select).

TK Nciza, CEO of Johannesburg-based independent T5 Records—home to dance artist DJ Sbu, whose “Y-Lens Vol. I” was one of 2006’s biggest sellers—says the quality of South African music has improved. “We have definitely set our benchmark against international standards,” he says, “because the production of an album or a video.”

RISA chairman Ivor Haarburger, also CEO of Warner Music Gallo Africa, describes the upward trend, which continued in the first half of 2007, as “a great positive” but says the industry must continue to look for new digital outlets.

—Diane Coetzee
From cassette to CD helped drive Russia's revenue recovery.

REVENUE HEATING UP
Percentage gains at a glance:

INDIA
+4.6% to $113.6 million

New distribution channels and changing consumer behavior helped the Indian music business, with 2006 trade revenue at a four-year high of $113.6 million.

Although physical unit sales fell 4.5%, revenue was boosted by the ongoing conversion from cassettes to more expensive CDs. Cassettes still outsold CDs by $6.4 million units to 42.5 million, but CD sales rose 17% while cassettes slumped 16%.

“A steep fall in hardware prices has fuelled growth,” says Vinod Bhanushal, VP of marketing and promotions for leading label T-Series. “Cassettes are being replaced in urban areas, but in rural areas it is still the dominant format.”

Physical decline was also compensated for by rapid growth in mobile-based music sales, worth $10 million in 2006—the first time the IFPI included digital figures.

Vijay Lazarus, president of Mumbai-based local labels body the Indian Music Industry, says the digital sector has immense potential but is held back by low broadband penetration and the lack of third-generation telecom services.

But he notes that music consumption habits are rapidly changing due to India’s continuing economic growth: “People now consume music via nightclubs, live events and newly launched FM radio stations, which can only benefit the business as a whole.”

—Nyay Bhanushal

CHINA
+24.4% to $74 million

While sales of full-length physical product in mainland China’s music market declined 34.3% in 2006 to 26.1 million units, overall recorded-music sales rose on a value basis, thanks to the increasing popularity of such digital-music products as ringback tones and master ringtones.

The IFPI included digital sales in its figures for the first time in 2006, with trade revenue from the sector worth $27 million. But the picture is not as rosy as those figures seem to indicate, according to Hong Kong-based Warner Music Asia Pacific president Lachie Rutherford.

“The numbers are very uncertain,” he says. “Digital revenue and margins are nowhere close to making up for the steep physical decline over the past two years.”

Rutherford and other regional industry executives point to China’s 90%-plus physical piracy rate and the continuing problem of “deep linking” to Web sites offering unauthorized MP3 downloads by such portals as Baidu as factors hampering the market’s growth.

According to William Bao Bean, partner in Hong Kong-based venture-capital firm SoftBank China and India Holdings, Chinese consumers spent $1.5 billion in 2006 on mobile-delivered music products. The music industry, however, only saw 4.5% of that amount due to fees and underreporting of revenue in the sector.

—Steve McClure

RUSSIA
+6.3% to $2.0 million

The Russian market in 2006 bounced back from a calamitous 2005 decline, although revenue is still well below the 2004 level of $322.3 million.

London-based IFPI director of market research Gabi Lopes says that value terms were helped by the conversion from cassette to CD, with CD unit shipments up by 3.6 million units despite an overall physical decline. “There’s a growing middle class with increased disposable income,” she says. “They are leading the drive to the more high value product. But piracy remains a major issue.”

Much of the growth is being driven by catch-up, says Alexei Alyayev, A&R rep at Soyuz Records, part of the media group that includes the Soyuz retail chain. Soyuz sells around 500,000 CDs per year, and says demand is high for older titles released officially in Russia for the first time. Classic rock titles by such bands as the Doors are proving particularly popular. He also reports steady demand for imported vinyl in the jazz and progressive rock genres.

Alyayev says that while domestic repertoire accounts for 70% of value sales, international repertoire is up 8% to 28% market share, with Western labels targeting different demographics by issuing CDs in up to three price categories.

—Kiril Galetski

JAPAN
+1.1% to $3.56 billion

Japan, the world’s second-biggest music market after the United States, is the first major music market to have its digital growth make up for continuing physical decline, according to the IFPI.

While trade revenue from physical formats slumped by $88 million to $3.17 billion in 2006, digital value soared by $127 million to $390 million.

BMG Japan president Daniel DiCicco says the 2006 market data reflects a basic shift in the way people consume music. “Many fans will buy single ringtones, full-song mobile downloads, physical singles and then buy the physical album as well,” he says. “And while the number of million-sellers has steadily fallen, the relative overall health of the Japanese music industry has so far created fewer threats to the traditional business model when compared to other markets.”

Warner Music Asia Pacific president Lachie Rutherford adds, “Japan continues to show the benefit of a strong domestic market and a good environment for copyright protection.”

Domestic repertoire accounts for 75% of Japanese trade value. The No. 1 seller in 2006 was pop singer Kumi Koda (Avex), who sold 13.3 billion yen ($110 million) of physical product, according to SoundScan Japan.

—Steve McClure

SOUTH KOREA
+54.1% to $152.9 million

In 2003, South Korea became the first music market where digital music sales surpassed those of physical formats.

Despite this, the IFPI only included digital figures for the first time in 2006, accounting for the dramatic surge in overall trade revenue. But there was also a notable market shift, as consumers turned from ringtones to full-track digital downloads and streaming, both PC- and mobile-based.

Full-track sales soared 46.2% in 2006, and background music rose 29%, while the ringtones market declined 5.6%, according to the Korea Software Industry Promotion Agency.

“Mobile phone music has reached its limit,” says Jimmy Jung, VP at the YJP Entertainment label. “Now most people listen to music when working or playing, which is usually in front of a computer.”

—Mark Russell

INDONESIA
+3.7% to $55.1 million

The Indonesian industry faced challenges including natural disasters and a physical sales collapse, but still posted increased 2006 trade revenue. Kuala Lumpur-based Universal Music Southeast Asia senior VP Sandy Monteiro says mobile-based downloads of local repertoire—notably modern rock bands like SamSons, Unpu, Peter Pan and Dewa—kept the music industry in the black.

Sales of full-length physical formats were down 20.9%, the second successive 20%-plus decline. Last year was the first time the IFPI included mobile sales in its figures; they’re now worth $12 million in trade revenue. However, international repertoire, which represents 35% of the market, down from 44% in 2003, has yet to benefit from the conversion to mobile.

“A potential problem may arise if there’s an overkill in developing local talent,” Monteiro warns. “Legitimizing mobile downloads of international product will definitely help grow the market next year.”

—Christie Leo

MALAYSIA
-6.1% to $25.2 million

Digital revenue in Malaysia grew to $4.4 million in 2006, compared with $1.47 million in 2005, according to NS Tan, CEO of local labels body the Recording Industry of Malaysia.

Physical unit sales for full-length formats, meanwhile, plunged 23.3% to 3.3 million, the third successive year of a decline that’s accelerating fast. “Malaysia is closely aligned to global trends in terms of positive growth for new-media sales,” Tan says. “Although broadband internet penetration is just under 10%, mobile downloads have tripled, with adults above 40 years getting in on the act.”

Universal Music Southeast Asia senior VP Sandy Monteiro predicts new-media sales will double next year, as the country’s three major telecom firms compete more aggressively.

—Christie Leo

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UPFRONT

London band GILKICKER and Reading’s THE SKIES (inset) have reached Slicethrippe’s £15,000 investment target.

GLOBAL

By Jody Thompson

ALTERNATIVE A&R

Slicethrippe Puts Artists’ Fortunes in Fans’ Hands

LONDON—A new Web venture is offering artists the chance to get direct funding, while turning music fans into A&R people.

U.K.-based Slicethrippe enters an increasingly crowded marketplace, competing directly against the likes of Sellaband (Billboard, Sept. 30, 2006) and Indiestore (Billboard, Sept. 2, 2006) in presenting artists an alternative to the traditional label model.

Created by corporate finance lawyer David Courtier-Dutton with an investment of £1.5 million (£3 million) and backed by music biz players including International Music Managers Forum secretary general Peter Jenner and legal consultant Ann Harrison, it showcases unsigned bands for potential investment by music fans. It claims to have 20,000 individuals logging on daily after five weeks of operation.

“We have endeavored to turn every music fan into a record label and to do it within an economic structure,” Courtier-Dutton says. “It is a business model rather than a community.”

Fans earn money by reviewing bands on the site for up to 25 pence (50 cents) a time, cash

GLOBAL NEWSLINE

>> AYLING QUILTS SANCTUARY
Sanctuary Group chairman Robert Ayling and three non-executive directors have exited the London-based music company’s board. Ayling departed along with James Wallace, Tina Sharp and John Preston, following the Aug. 2 announcement that Universal Music Group had secured acceptance from Sanctuary shareholders of its £44.5 million (£87.7 million) bid for the company. Wallace was senior independent nonexecutive director/chairman of the audit committee, Sharp chaired the remuneration committee, and Preston was a member of the audit and remuneration committee. Sanctuary’s board now consists of chief executive Frank Presland and finance director Paul Wallace. Sanctuary hired Ayling in April 2006 to solve financial issues that had nearly brought the company into bankruptcy. Ayling was chief executive of British Airways from 1992 to 2000.
—Lars Brande

>>> MOBOS SWAP ALBERT FOR O2
The 12th edition of the United Kingdom’s Music of Black Origin Awards, taking place Sept. 19, will be the first industry awards ceremony to be held at London’s new O2 Arena. The venue, on the south bank of the River Thames in Greenwich, opened July 7. Owned and operated by Anschutz Entertainment Group, it was previously known as the Millennium Dome. The MOBOs have been held at the 126-year-old Royal Albert Hall in London for the past three years. The London-based MOBO Organization stages the event.
—Juliana Koranteng

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but has had little label interest. It will release its debut album in December. "It's not a substitute for a record label; it's a step up from being an unsigned band," Gilkicker manager John McCarthy says. "You raise your own funds, make an album, don't get dictated to by guys in suits."

Lead singer Sam McCarthy says, "We've seen MySpace activity increase louds since we won funding. We do want to sign to a major, but if Slicethepie goes massive, maybe we won't need one."

But Morgan Thomas, London-based A&R digital consultant for Polydor Records, warns that Slicethepie faces an uphill struggle to establish itself as an important portal for breaking bands. "It does look interesting," she says. "But for every good band on the Internet, there's a million bad ones. Quite often, you get bands who are successful simply through being an Internet phenomenon rather than through any genuine artistic talent, like Koopa [Billboard, Feb. 10]. But it's another route forward for bands—you can never have too much choice."

And Sellaband co-founder Pim Betist plays down the likely impact of its new rival. "Artists have to pay to enter, whereas it's free to join us," he says. "And once the money is in the account, artists can do whatever they want with it so long as they come up with an album. We decide how the money is spent because we think we can get a better product."

Slicethepie says it has had more than 3,000 acts sign up since launch, compared with 5,000 acts on Sellaband in its first year online. To date, several Sellaband artists have reached the $50,000 target for making a record. "We're a lot more dynamic," Courrier-Dutton says. "We give our bands more control and freedom. Sellaband's contract is far more akin to that of a record label. The whole point is that it's up to the artist to decide. We want them to get emotionally involved—scouting, breaking, investing in and influencing real artists."

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ITALY'S DIGITAL SALES UP 44%

The value of digital music sales in Italy soared in the first six months of 2007, according to research that auditing company Deloitte conducted on behalf of industry body FMI. Digital album sales increased 66% in 2007's first half, while singles grew 53% compared with the same period in 2006. The overall value rose 44% to €2.7 million ($3.7 million). Unit figures were not available. According to FMI president Enzo Mazza, "Digital sales now account for about 7% of the Italian market. We estimate that can be divided into roughly 3% online and 4% mobile."

—Mark Worden
Your New Car Radio

Auto Manufacturers Enter The Internet Radio Race

Welcome to the new generation of corporate radio, coming to you live from an auto dealership near you.

Car manufacturers are racing to establish Internet radio stations and online playlisting tools as part of a new marketing strategy aimed at hip, tech-savvy young adults. The latest, and to-date biggest, effort comes from Toyota's Scion division, which last month added 17 Internet radio channels to its experimental Scion broadband service. The company tapped Live365, the Internet radio technology, and 15 DJs from such partners as Vice Records and Ninja Tune Records for programming. Each channel features three hours of music that is looped 24/7 and updated monthly.

It's an interesting time to get into the Web radio game, as new webcasting royalty rates may depress thousands of independent Internet radio outlets if the ongoing negotiations don't go their way. But deep-pocketed auto manufacturers seem unconcerned about paying the higher fees. Scion Radio 17 and the entire Scion broadband site—which also includes comedy shorts and celebrity interviews—is simply a marketing effort disguised as a source of entertainment. "We don't look at it as a revenue generator, because that's going to be impossible," says Jeri Yoshizu, Scion sales promotions manager at Toyota. "[We sell cars. But] as you get further into the generation we're targeting, which is the 18- to 34-year-old male, corporations are advancing in their sophistication in marketing and advertising. It's beyond TV, billboards and the Internet." Using music to create interest in a brand is hardly new, particularly for the automotive industry, but initiatives like Scion Broadband are raising the bar by blurring the line between online ads and online music services. That line faces further distortion as corporate branding moves increasingly into the sponsored-entertainment field online.

The idea was to feature all the music every played in various Nissan ads, to maintain some tie-in between the TV and online marketing efforts. Then they saw the bill. "We already had licensed the music for the ad, so [labels and publishers] wanted the same fee for the player," says a former Nissan marketing executive no longer with the company who spearheaded the project. "I'd have paid a nominal amount to license the songs, but not the millions they were asking for. The widget player itself only cost us $20,000." Ultimately, the company went with more easily obtained and less expensive preauthorized music, but it never caught on and was soon discontinued.

Scion ran into similar issues. The company wanted to place a widget on its site that would stream music while online shoppers browsed through different models and features. Originally, the music was preauthorized and featured artists they know for performance and sound quality, but the project couldn't be scaled up to more than a dozen such preauthorized songs. When the project ended, Scion's management field: the executive no longer with the company who spearheaded the project. "I'd have paid a nominal amount to license the songs, but not the millions they were asking for. The widget player itself only cost us $20,000." Ultimately, the company went with more easily obtained and less expensive preauthorized music, but it never caught on and was soon discontinued.

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Fueled by Ramen began modestly enough, known in punk circles as the label co-founded by Less Than Jake's main man Vinnie Fiorello in 1996. Fiorello and then-college freshman John Janick initially started FBR in Gainesville, Fl., as a part-time affair, as Fiorello continued heavy touring duties with Less Than Jake and Janick worked toward a dual major in business management and finance at the University of Florida. Early success with such pop-punk and emo bands as Jimmy Eat World, Homegrown and Yellowcard turned the label into Janick's first and only post-college day job.

In 2003, Janick signed Chicago pop-punk band Fall Out Boy, and FBR soon became one of the hottest Indies in the country. The band grew so fast that FBR partnered with Island on Fall Out Boy and two other acts, and Janick awarded Fall Out Boy bassist Pete Wentz with his own label, Decaydance.

The partnership led to continued mainstream success with the likes of Panic! at the Disco and Gym Class Heroes, and FBR now finds itself distributed by Warner Music Group's Alternative Distribution Alliance with an upstreaming agreement via Atlantic Records. And despite that Fiorello left the label in 2005, Janick is keeping the hits coming, as FBR's Paramore recently debuted at No. 20 on The Billboard 200 with "Riot!"

Billboard did a cover story on Fall Out Boy earlier this year. You were quoted as saying that FBR bands are "mini-entrepreneurs." What are you looking for in artists beyond music?

Everyone always said it was a Less Than Jake label. As I was doing all the day-to-day stuff, he was sometimes detached, and would be gone on tour for a while. I don't want to speak for him, but he did an online journal post and made it clear that he just wasn't feeling the music anymore. There's no bad blood. He came to me and respectfully said he wasn't into the music. He said he wasn't a fan of a lot of the bands we were signing. He did well for himself, and not too much changed since he left. I'd go to him and try to make sure he was looped into everything, but I wouldn't want to be involved in something if someone was unhappy. It's also not a good thing for the bands if one of the owners is not into their style of music.

Fall Out Boy, of course, is the band that forever changed the label. What was Fiorello's reaction when you brought the band to FBR?

He was supportive, and he was always busy with Less Than Jake. When I brought Fall Out Boy to the table and said I wanted to sign them, he was like, "Cool."

You were running the label out of your University of Florida dorm in the late '90s. That was when Napster was exploding. How was technology affecting your vision for a label?

I felt like being in school and doing the label was helpful, and as I was doing it, I was looking at what was going on, thinking, "Oh, this is something we can do better," or "We don't need to do things the way people traditionally did it." We looked at how the labels operated and what they did. Did they even understand how a business is run? Now people are getting a lot smarter. It's scary, in terms of what's going on, but there's a lot of interesting and exciting things going on.

What are you and FBR doing that qualifies as interesting and exciting?

We're doing live shows on our site now and having people sponsor them, and that's another stream of revenue. Our YouTube channel has been the No. 3 partner channel, and that's a new stream of revenue. It's a new way of doing things, and we're marketing to people, and we're giving them content for free, but it's not completely free, since it's ad-supported.

Has your view on the Web changed as the label has grown? Every year our label has grown and has done better than the previous year. We have definitely felt the changes around us over the past five years and this year seems to be a very difficult year for the music industry. Take Gym Class Heroes, who about four months ago had a No. 1 pop record ("Cupid's Chokehold") for five weeks in a row and an audience of 85 million. They were selling 10,000-15,000 albums a week. I would think 10 years ago, that they would probably be selling more like 70,000-plus albums per week. But to date we have sold over 1.8 million singles and about 1 million ringtones off the album. We want fans to be able to pick and choose, but it is a little upsetting when people do not experience the entire piece of art the band created. Gym Class Heroes made a great album from beginning to end, and now we have to prove that there's another great single on the record before people may go out to buy the album.

We've heard a lot about Fall Out Boy, but not the A.K.A.'s and Roy, the two other acts that were part of your initial deal with Island. Did their failure to connect hurt their careers?

No, not at all. That was important to me. With the way major labels spend money, lawyers and managers are always pushing for more. But if you push for more money, you're on the radar. If you're on the radar and don't do well, then it screws up your career. For us, it was about being the right investment. It wasn't about giving a huge advance. If things worked, everyone would then get more money, but there was no pressure on the bands to develop. Once you give people money, the clock starts ticking.

Do FBR's deals with bands extend to avenues beyond music?

We do the Web stores for most all of our bands. We do touring merch for some of our bands and retail merch for our bands. We don't lock our bands down and do anything crazy. We just partner with them and offer them the same deals that they would get anywhere else. Moving forward, it's important for us to be involved in those things. We understand how it works in branding the artist. With Paramore and Cute Is What We Aim For, we do their retail merch and their touring merch and their Web stores.

It's like you're managing the artist's career, right?

That's how I see it. There are artists of ours who have done well on the touring circuit, and did a lot of things themselves, and probably didn't need a label. But there are more cases where a record label puts a lot of money and time into marketing an album, and everything else—the touring and the merch—gets better because of that. If the label is helping to do that stuff, they should be involved in everything, especially if they're developing and branding an artist.
CAN RASCAL REPEAT?
No Act Made A Bigger-Selling Album In 2006. Now, In A Shakier Retail Landscape, They're Aiming To Do It Again

BY KEN TUCKER

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHAPMAN BAehler

The clock on! Rascal Flatts' Web site counts down the days, hours, minutes and even seconds until the Sept. 25 release of the superstar band's fifth studio album, 'Still Feels Good' (Lyric Street). There's no doubt the date is circled on many music industry calendars.

In a business in which album sales are off by double-digit percentages this year, more than a few people will be interested to see how Rascal Flatts will fare. After all, "Me and My Gang" scored the biggest first-week sales debut of 2006 when it moved 722,000 copies that April. Only four country acts have had bigger first weeks: Tim McGraw, Garth Brooks (twice), Shania Twain and the Dixie Chicks.

The album was the second best seller of 2006 behind 'High School Musical,' with 3.5 million copies sold, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Rascal Flatts is also one of the biggest success stories of the new century. In addition to radio hits—the band has seven No. 1s and 17 top 10s on Hot Country Songs, including its current 'Take Me There,' which is No. 7 this issue—it has performed exceptionally at retail. Its 2000 self-titled debut sold more than 2 million copies, and its last two albums have broken the four million plateau (see chart, page 22). The band's touring career (see story, page 22) has seen it play to increasingly larger crowds.

But the retail landscape has changed since the band's last release, and no act has had a sales week as big since. That fact is not lost on the band's Jay DeMarcus. "I'm a realist," he says. "I know that at some point there's got to be a ceiling somewhere. I remember thinking while we were all toasting each other for the last record, 'You know, this might be the last time anybody sells this many units out of the box, because of the digital world and the new world that we live in and how the Internet has affected record sales.'"

Don't mistake DeMarcus' realism for defeatism. "I don't know if we'll sell 722,000 units again in the first week...but we're going to do everything we can to try and sell as many records as possible."

Lyric Street VP of sales, marketing and media Greg McCurn agrees. "There's a lot of questions as to what the top end is, given the deterioration of the marketplace, but whatever that can be, we'd like to repeat and have the biggest-debuting album of the year."

Lyric Street president Randy Goodman says, "If we came out of the box and did a half-million units, 600,000, I think we'd all be pretty happy with that based on what the market is right now. That's not to say we're leaving anything on the table. We'll be as aggressive—probably more aggressive—but the nature of the marketplace is such that it's much more difficult now to look at these outcomes and say, particularly when you get to this level, 'Yeah, we're going to continue to grow this.'"

THE 'FEELS GOOD' FOCUS

If 'Still Feels Good' doesn't perform as well as past records, it won't be for a lack of focus and effort. Unlike previous albums, the band and producer Dann Huff dedicated a substantial amount of time to the new project.

"We got off the road for three months and just sat and banged it out in the studio," lead singer Gary LeVox says. "With the four previous albums, we'd come in off the road and knock some of it out for two or three days, and then go back on the road. This time we had more time and we focused better."

There's a well-known adage in Nashville that it all begins with a song. "The quality of songs are the best we've ever had—lyrically and melodically," LeVox says. Indeed, during an exclusive first listen to the album, which was turned in just days earlier, Billboard heard an amazing palette of music.

There's no doubt it's a Rascal Flatts album upon hearing the opening notes of I-want-to-get-to-know-you first single 'Take Me There.'

But the band offers new sounds as well. "We didn't want to reinvent the wheel, because if something's not broken we didn't feel the need to fix it," DeMarcus says. "But particularly when it comes to songs that the three of us write, we write whatever's in our heart at that moment. We've got a bluegrass tune that we've written for a bonus cut that is definitely different than anything we've done."

Huff says discussions about where an act is going and where it has been usually take place before the recording process starts. "It takes on kind of a different form of a conversation than when you actually get down to doing it," he says.

"When you hear a song that really speaks to you—and with us it has to speak to four people—then all of the conversation kind of ceases and you really deal with it just strictly from an emotional standpoint," he continues. "We don't do a lot of talking about, 'Hey, this is going to be really solid for the format' and 'We could also take this and cross it over.' It really is, 'Does this song move us?' Then we try to make the most exciting representation of it as possible."

"Winner at a Losing Game," which is fresh and familiar, conjures '70s country-rock. The trio wrote it late one night on the bus after a show. "We kept it around and kept it around, and we kept playing it for Dann and Dann fell in love with it," DeMarcus says. "We wanted to find something with the production of it, and it ended up being one of our favorite things on the record."

Actor/singer Jamie Foxx's duet with LeVox on the soulful "She Goes All the Way" is a marvelous intertwining and a potential Grammy Award moment. "We've never done a duet on one of our albums," LeVox says.

"Jamie and I have been friends for a long time and so I called him up. He's always been one of my favorite singers—he got two scoops of talent when they were dishing it out."

Songwriters Jeffrey Steele, Neil Thrasher, Steve Robson and Wendell Mobley frequently contribute to Rascal Flatts projects, and they also appear here. LeVox co-wrote the title cut, a driving tribute to long-lasting love, with Thrasher and Mobley, while that pair penned the woman-centric free song "No Reins" with DeMarcus.

"Bob That Head," a country-meets-rock-meets-rap tune, is likely to become a Friday-night cruising favorite, since that's exactly what the song is about. But the album also has its tender moments. "Better Now" is a vulnerable look at mistakes made, and "Help Me Remember" yearns for, the better times in a relationship. "Every Day" features an orchestral touch, and "It's Not Supposed to Go Like That" is a classic country tale of lives that end too soon.

The band also recorded five bonus cuts, including the Beatles hit "Revolution," which appeared on the "Evan Almighty" soundtrack. "When Universal Pictures brought it to us, we thought, 'Oh, geez, the Beatles?'" LeVox recalls. "'You mean like the actual Beatles?' But you know, I think we did a good job of marrying us and the original. I actually sang through the same thing that John Lennon sang through—it's called a Cooper tuner. It's like a hose-in-a-box kind of deal."

Overseeing the process, of course, was producer Huff (Faith Hill, Keith Urban), who worked with the trio on "Me and My Gang." While the band had success with Mark Bright and Marty Williams, who produced its first three releases, it's clear that it has grown under Huff's tutelage. "I went to see them play live several times," Huff says. "I said to myself, 'This is country music that is really arena-worthy,' and we kind of took it to that level on the last record."

LeVox says Huff's experience in the band Giant translates to his production. "He just really captures what we do live and captures all three of our individual strengths," LeVox adds.

Dann has been able to take us to another place and 't0 better all three of us individually, not just as musicians, but as singers," the band's Joe Don Rooney says. "He's two things—completely passionate and overly patient. With those two ingredients in a producer, that's all you need."

PULLING OUT ALL STOPS

When it comes to marketing "Still Feels Good," Rascal Flatts and Lyric Street have at least two aces up their sleeves: a successful tour that is playing to tens of thousands of fans—"You got them all fenced in for two hours, you might as well do some new stuff for them," Rooney says with a laugh—and unwavering support from radio. Every one of the band's singles has reached the top 10, and seven have spent a combined 18 weeks at No. 1. "There's no doubt that this country radio—we've always been very clear about this—is our primary radio advertis-
ing vehicle, but because of some of the crossovers, we’re able to go to other stations that support Rascal Flatts and get exposure, McCarn says.

"But Lyric Street is pulling out all the stops anyway. Spending more than $1 million on consumer advertising alone, including TV. "We’re spending more aggressively; we’ll ship more records than we did on the last album. We’ve been more aggressive about our bonus material," McCarn says.

"Everybody’s looking for product differentiation," McCarn says of retailers. "Very early on we had the accounts coming to us asking for exclusivity. "To that end, Wal-Mart, through its CMT Picks program, will have exclusive video. Target has exclusive songs and Best Buy has an audio interview. "With our big three, we’ve sort of spread out the content," McCarn says. Kmart and Circuit City have exclusive posters.

There is also a partnership with Regal Cinemas and Coca-Cola. The beverage maker owns the last spot on the movie screen before the feature begins; Rascal Flatts shot a 30-second spot for that platform, directing moviegoers to the lobby where they can pick up a 64-ounce drink that has Rascal Flatts imagery including the album cover and tour dates. A special code on more than 1 million cups will direct people to My Coke Rewards for exclusive video content. Select winners will get to attend an album listening party.

The band will also do a multi-city jet tour in the weeks prior to the album’s release that will take it to key markets and radio stations. "For us it’s as much about the lead-in and lead-up to those events," McCarn says. "The events themselves are important, but that advance promotion the station gave it on-air, and hopefully hammering the fact that they have a new album coming out, is absolutely critical to us."

While the stations haven’t finalized specific plans, country KSCS and KTXS’ Dallas music director Chris Huff says they will be involved. "A new Rascal Flatts album is an event with our audience," he says. Rascal Flatts will also conduct virtual radio "tours" from a studio in New York, allowing the band to interact with morning and afternoon drive shows at stations across the country without actually traveling to those cities. "It’s one of the most valuable things that we have minute for minute," McCarn says. "It’s a way to get the guys into other markets and stations. Spending 10 minutes at one of those stations is very, very valuable.

ABC’s "Good Morning America" and CBS’s "Late Show With David Letterman" will also be part of the mix, as will Yahoo Live Sessions, Wal-Mart Soundcheck and various other media opportunities. Details are still being worked out on a promotion where consumers can win a wake-up call from a band member on street date. Rascal Flatts is believed to have some of the youngest fans in the country genre, and the band has a strong Web presence. "They’re very online-savvy group," McCarn says. "And the Flatts organization has done an amazing job of keeping in communication with the fans, keeping them invested, keeping the Web content fresh and keeping those people well-fed. They’re communicating with over 1.5 million people on a weekly basis right now.

Even with the plans in place, McCarn admits there’s still a question mark. "Truthfully, nobody knows what to expect. All we can do is gear up and try to make this album as big as we can. Can an artist do half a million units in a week? I don’t know. We’re going to try. . . . I think you just have to load up."

RASCAL ON THE ROAD
Gangbusters At The Box Office
Rascal Flatts’ rise to superstar touring acit has been nothing short of meteoric. First headlining in fall 2002, the trio cracked Billboard’s year-end Top 25 roundups of the top 25 tours for the first time in 2005, grossing $26.3 million and drawing 777,384 people, according to Billboard Boxscore.

Last year, Flatts more than doubled its previous year’s take, at $46.2 million, drawing more than 1 million people to 79 shows, playing about 20 fewer shows in 2007, Flatts still has drawn about 800,000 paid, grossing in the $55 million-$60 million range, winding out the Me and My Gang Tour last March. The band is booked by Rob Beckham at William Morris, and most shows are promoted by Brian O’Connell, president of Live Nation’s country division.

The Still Feels Good tour started in July and runs through May 2008, with about 80 dates in total. The band will play arenas (in a 360-degree configuration) amphitheaters and a few select large fairs that boast grandstands exceeding 20,000 seats.

As always, the band has sacrificed nothing in terms of production. "Really, the best seats in the house are the nosebleeds because the whole floor and stage is an LED. It’s all a video wall, so the higher up you are the more of an experience you get," Rascal Flatts’ Joe Don Rooney says. "We love bells and whistles. Pyrotechnics and laser lights and things like that add a lot, and we’ve always been a fan of that."

Flatts’ Gary LeVox says the set list has been mixed up significantly and taps heavily into the new album. "To me it feels like one of the funnest shows we’ve ever done," he says. "After being in the studio and being off the road, switching hats—you know, I live for live performance. We were starving to get back out there."

The new tour boasts an unrehearsed, sitdown "request hour" where fans can influence the set by yelling loud enough. "We’ve got a repertoire of songs that we’ve learned to be prepared for if somebody yells it out, and oddly enough we’ve picked some that are pretty obscure," Flatts’ Jay DeMarcus says. "We had to go back and rehearse again and say, ‘Well, we need to learn that one because they’re yelling out that one a lot.’ That’s kind of refreshing for us. It takes us back to the old days when we’d just sit around in the bars and play whatever everybody wants to hear.”

—Ray Waddell and Ken Tucker

WHAT HITS THE MOST
Rascal Flatts has placed more No. 1 and top 10 records on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart than any group this decade; for singles charting between Jan. 1, 2000, and Aug. 25, 2005, here’s where it ranks among the top acts.

Rascal Flatts

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**THE R-E-S-P-E-C-T Industry Accolades Still Lag Behind Rascal Flatts’ Sales Success**

For all its success, there’s one thing that still haunts Rascal Flatts: lack of industry respect. Its fan base keeps growing, and it can pretty much do no wrong at radio, but in the eyes of some on Music Row, it’s a manufactured boy band. Critics conveniently forget that lead singer Gary LeVox and multi-instrumentalist Jay DeMarcus are second cousins from Ohio whose musical families jammed together, and that Oklahoma-raised guitarist Joe Don Rooney and DeMarcus played together in Chely Wright’s band.

"Hopefully somewhere down the road our harshest critics that have called us a boy band and said we’re manufactured can see for themselves that we’re three guys that love what we do, bring gifts to the table and make great music together," DeMarcus says.

"What we do in the studio is not fabricated. It’s not just thrown together by a brilliant producer with Pro Tools. We actually do the work, and we play the music. I just hope that we continue to grow and to have legitimacy within the music industry. Because sometimes people have judged us unfairly."

Two awards in particular would signal industry acceptance: entertainer of the year and top album honors. An elaborate Nashville-focused campaign including billboards and newspaper advertising touting the trio’s achievements last winter and spring did not have the desired effect at last May’s Academy of Country Music Awards. Kenny Chesney, another artist who at times has struggled with industry acceptance—and whom Rascal Flatts opened for before striking out on its own—was the reigning ACM and Country Music Assn. entertainer of the year and won the ACM prize again. Carrie Underwood took top album honors.

"We deserved it last year," LeVox says of the album award. "To sell more than anybody, I think that qualifies for album of the year."

The band still has high hopes. "We feel like now, more than ever, we’ve got a shot at it," Rooney says of top entertainer honors. "We’ve been up for it the last couple of years, but it takes a lot... (It) takes every dimension as an artist possible. It’s your sound, your ticket sales, your album sales, your look—it’s everything."

"Our main focus right now is to get that," Rooney says. While success sometimes leads to a diminishment in drive, that’s not the case with Rascal Flatts, Lyric Street senior VP of A&R Doug Howard says. "Sometimes that hunger and that love and what brought you here sometimes goes away. I just don’t see that with any of the three of them."

—KT
Billboard’s Power Players series highlights the achievements of individuals who drive the fields of music and entertainment forward with their artistic and business vision. For our 30 Under Thirty report, Billboard writers and editors surveyed sources across numerous business sectors—record labels, publishing, touring, marketing, digital entertainment and more—to identify these rising young executives. But the most promising aspect of this alphabetical list is this: These young men and women are but a sample of a talented generation taking our business forward.

Chris Anokute
Senior director of A&R for pop/crossover, Virgin Records
After learning the ropes from the late John Houston (Whitney’s father and manager), Chris Anokute, 24, began managing acts and brokering deals at Def Jam (Rihanna’s smash hit “Pon De Replay” and Columbia. After Anokute signed Angela Tyson to Virgin, label president Jason Flom offered him a consultancy to A&R the album. That quickly morphed into a full-fledged A&R post and work projects for Joss Stone, Stacie Orrico, Katy Perry, Novel and Boniface. Anokute says, “Jason gave me the ability to sign great talent without pigeonholing me. He said, ‘Make music and bring in things that you’re passionate about.’”

Ashaunna Ayars
Marketing director, Island Def Jam
Twenty-seven-year-old Ashaunna Ayars is Island Def Jam senior director of marketing and, during the past few years, she has become the label’s pride and joy. Brainstorming campaigns for Young Jeezy, Ne-Yo and Fabolous, Ayars was especially supportive of Def Jam’s fledgling Southern movement early on. Dreaming up the now-infamous Young Jeezy snowman T-shirts, Ayars shrewdly made her artist a hot topic for conservative commentators. And the stunt didn’t hurt sales a bit.

Johnny Beach
Talent buyer, Bowery Ballroom
At 15, Johnny Beach started a free weekly e-mail devoted to New York music listings, and it grew to reach several thousand readers, including music biz heavyweights. At 27, Beach is now a force in the No-W York rock world, moving from head talent buyer at Mercury Lounge to the same role at Bowery Ballroom. He has helped expose bands like Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, Scissor Sisters, the National and the Hold Steady well before they broke through. “I feel privileged to be able to work not only in New York, but in the venues where industry people are really keeping their radar on,” he says.

Amanda Berman
Creative/new-media manager, EMI Music Publishing
In a newly created role at EMI Music Publishing, Amanda Berman, 24, is researching and discovering new talent while tailoring the deals to the individual needs of the songwriter/artist. Since joining EMI in 2006, Berman has signed Say Anything (1 Records), Young Love (Island Records), Limbeck (Doghouse Records) and Strangler (Island Records). She’s exploring nontraditional publishing deals. Recently, she helped set up a deal with a marketing fund, which she will oversee, to help break an indie band so the act won’t have to rely solely on label support. Before joining EMI, she was an A&R coordinator at Warner Bros. Records.
30 Under Thirty

Matt Burns
Manager of digital sales and marketing, EMI Christian Music Group
At EMI Christian Music Group, Matt Burns, 26, has become the label’s point person for digital retailers. He’s credited with bringing the Passion Worship movement to iTunes, boosting sales of the brand and its key artists. In another initiative, he also partnered with the Gospel Music Assn. and iTunes to offer exclusive music downloads of performances from the 2006 Dove Awards. A graduate of Nashville’s Belmont University, Burns interned at Creative Trust Management before joining EMI CMG’s burgeoning digital department in 2004. “We at EMI CMG have really done our best to lead the charge in the digital environment,” Burns says. “We put a high priority on making sure wherever the consumer is looking for music, we’re there offering it.”

Dalton Caldwell
CEO, imeem
Music-based social networking sites walk a fine line between acceptance and exile by the music industry. Just ask Dalton Caldwell, 27, CEO of imeem. In May, the small social networking site was the target of a copyright infringement suit from Warner Music Group. In June, imeem tapped Snocap’s digital registry to block users from streaming unauthorized content, but agreed to share ad revenue with label partners if they allow their music to be played. In early July, WMG not only dropped its suit, it became the first label to sign up under the new business model, joining some 200 other indie labels. imeem now claims more than 20 million users. The site allows members to create and share custom playlists with other members, including videos and photo slides set to music.

Gabriela Cocco
Executive producer, GoTV Networks
Gabriela Cocco, 29, launched the made-for-mobile Latin music channel Es Musica this summer with a combination of 10 smart, originally produced shows; a strong representation of independent and alternative Latin music; and the look and feel of a premium TV network. Already a veteran of talent casting and music programming from MTV Latin America and the International Music Feed, Cocco started out promoting bands in college while studying to be a physical therapist. She now uses her creative control at Es Musica “to show the diversity of Latin music and Latin women” on the channel. The joy of developing talent, Cocco says, “is taking something from the beginning and watching it grow.”

John Campanelli
Senior director of advertising, TV and film, Sony/ATV Music Publishing
At Sony/ATV, John Campanelli, 29, has worked for the past three years with the publisher’s deep catalog. He was responsible for placing and licensing the Whispers’ “And the Beat Goes On” for the Clairol campaign starring Teri Hatcher of “Desperate Housewives.” And that cool Diet Coke ad featuring “I Like the Way You Move It” by the Bodyrockers? All Campanelli. Previously, the Cornell graduate was an associate music producer in Grey Worldwide’s music department and collaborated on campaigns for Nokia, Pantene and Pringles. Recently, he was executive producer of Covers for Ads, a sampler of contemporary remakes from the Sony/ATV catalog sent to music supervisors and agency creatives. With this initiative, the music publisher will co-own the master recording with the individual acts. One-stop shopping, anyone?

Jason Eldredge
Music supervisor, MTV Networks, Warner Bros. TV, HBO
Jason Eldredge, 29, is the host/DJ of the weekly “Accidental Rhythm” show on non-commercial KCRW Los Angeles, a forum he says has led to music-related opportunities in Hollywood. Gary Calamar and Thomas Golubic, music supervisors for HBO’s “Six Feet Under,” also are KCRW hosts and mentored Eldredge. When not programming his show, Eldredge has done music supervision for such projects as MTV’s “Super Sweet Sixteen: The Movie,” Logo’s new original series “Curl Girls,” NBC’s “Las Vegas,” TNT’s “The Closer” and more. He’s particularly proud of securing Journey’s “Any Way You Want It” for “Six Feet Under” and has his sights set on more film music work.

Virginia Hunt Davis
Director of operations, Raybaw Records
Virginia Hunt Davis, 27, took an unusual path to Nashville. After college, she was working for a venture capital firm but marriage to a songwriter brought her to Music City. After she met John Rich of Muzik Mafia duo Big & Rich—who are partners in Raybaw Records—he recommended her for a job with the Warner Bros. Nashville imprint. “Virginia is unique in that she can do everything from marketing artists to reviewing contracts to spotting new talent,” Rich says, adding that she’s “one of the most impressive, ambitious people... that I have ever worked with in the music business. Period.”

Ben Dickey
Booking agent/artist manager, Constant Artists
Ben Dickey knows a thing or two about time management. At 26, the Texas native is an artist manager, booking agent and record label owner. “It’s very cyclical,” Dickey says. “It’s not uncommon that all of the things I’m doing coincide, and I’m trying to book four ousts and manage four new records.” In high school, Dickey interned at Austin’s Peek-A-Boo Records, then went on to founded his own Post-Patio Records. In 2000, he opened the Falsetto Agency, booking Explosions in the Sky, Oskervil River. I Love You but I’ve Chosen Darkness and others. Falsetto subsequently merged with Ground Control Touring with Dickey as an agent/partner. In 2004, Dickey founded Constant Artists, which manages such bands as Spoon and Mates of State. In April, Dickey left Ground Control to expand Constant Artists into a booking agency. And in his spare time, Dickey has tour-managed acts and plays guitar and sings in several bands.
Jeremy Holley
Director of consumer and interactive marketing, Word Label Group

Jeremy Holley, 29, launched a mortgage brokerage firm Fresh out of college, but moved to Nashville to pursue a music business career. A Capitol Records internship and ad agency stint led to his Word role as a radio coordinator. He now oversees the label’s online, digital and mobile strategies, and is heading a new merchandise initiative that will offer full services from design to manufacturing. “Things some people see as challenges I see as our biggest opportunities,” he says. “We can use technology to break down barriers with consumers. We’ve never been able to mobilize fans like we can today.”

Kelly Kapp
Talent buyer, Live Nation, touring division

Kelly Kapp, 28, initially had little desire to work in the music business, although her father, Bruce, is a senior VP at Live Nation. With a degree in fashion design, she went from building skateboards to a stint in film and TV production. But the concert biz bug bit, and Kapp became an assistant to Live Nation touring guru Jane Holman, then worked on Ozzfest and tours by Depeche Mode and Destiny’s Child. Her current projects include Family Values, Sounds of the Underground and other national club and theater tours. “Kelly started learning the business at a young age, so she has insights into tour economics that many don’t have until later in their careers,” Live Nation New York president Kevin Morrow says. “Her knowledge of emerging artists is unsurpassed.”

Kate Jackson
Press and business development, One Reel/Bumbershoot Festival

Formerly a member of Pearl Jam’s publicity team, Kate Jackson, 26, now helps stage Seattle’s Bumbershoot festival and other rock-driven charitable events in the Pacific Northwest, including the Seattle-all-ages venue The Vera Project. At Vandenberg Communications, Jackson played a major role in the 2004 Vote for Change tour, which featured Pearl Jam, Bruce Springsteen and R.E.M. Concurrently, she helped boost the Vera Project’s fund-raising to a $75,000 milestone in 2005. At One Reel, the festival’s parent organization, she has not only overseen press efforts but is working on several business development initiatives within its festival division.

Joe Lanzillo
Sales and marketing coordinator, ObliqSound

ObliqSound sales and marketing coordinator Joe Lanzillo, 28, came to the boutique jazz/world label from custom guitar seller the Music Zoo, where he sharpened his skills in innovation and customer service. As the music industry looks beyond traditional channels, “Joe’s out-of-the-box thinking was perfect for us,” ObliqSound co-founder/president Tobias Tanner says. Lanzillo has been working with non-traditional markets like museums and upscale hotels and clothing stores for the label’s combination designer handbag and CD-carrying case. “ObliqSound is using lifestyle branding to get people to listen to the music,” he says. “Design is the backbone of everything we do.” Lanzillo’s next project: launching ObliqSound’s upcoming designer jewel box.

Eloy Lopez
COO, Beatport.com

Music fans have iTunes; dance music fans have Beatport. The download site—dreamed up by founding partner/COO Eloy Lopez—boasts more than 300,000 unique users and 275,000 tracks. Lopez’s biggest job is harnessing its power. Since its 2004 launch, the site has mushroomed from five to 66 employees and experienced a 300%-700% revenue growth per year, it says. But more than that, the Beatport brand has become as essential to DJ culture as Technics turntables. “We are immersed in our community,” Lopez says. “We live and breathe electronic dance music, and that passion comes through in the quality of our site and our content.”

John Janick
Co-founder, Fueled by Ramen Records

John Janick, 29, was a college classmate studying business and finance at the University of Florida in Gainesville when he teamed up in 1996 with Vinnie Fiorello, drummer and lyricist of Less Than Jake, to found the Fueled by Ramen label. As the label found modest success with pop-punk and emo bands including Jimmy Eat World, Homegrown and Yellowcard, it became clear what Janick would do with that business education. Fueled by Ramen’s breakthrough came in 2003 with the signing of Fall Out Boy, and Janick hasn’t looked back. Fueled by Ramen teamed up with Island Records to market Fall Out Boy and Janick gave the band’s bassist, Pete Wentz, his own label, Decaydance. The subsequent success of Panic! at the Disco helped earn Fueled by Ramen an upstreaking deal for its acts with Atlantic Records. Janick’s latest signing, Paramore, recently debuted at No. 20 on The Billboard 200 (see Q&A, page 19).

Guillermo Rosas
CEO, Ruptus

Guillermo Rosas’ goal of making Ruptus the world’s leading Latin entertainment source “is a pretty big vision,” the 29-year-old says. But after taking successul TV franchises on the road (and filling stadiums from Brazil to the United States to Romania with supergroup RBD), his young event promotion and production company is already branching out. Ruptus’ new record label, Side B, is set to launch in the coming months with distribution from EMI and an opening roster of six artists. Ruptus’ publishing company will place songs in TV and movies, bringing things full circle for Rosas, who arrived in Los Angeles from Mexico City 11 years ago as a film student. Ruptus on July 5 launched a 20-city tour featuring acts and judges from two popular Latin TV reality shows. Contestants chosen at each prior tour stop competed in a grand finale Aug. 11-12 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

Angela Sanchez
Senior director of marketing/digital, Universal Music Group Distribution

After earning her MBA with a focus on marketing from the University of Southern California, Sanchez, 29, joined Universal Music Group Distribution as the company launched its online viral marketing team. “Even though [online marketing] isn’t that old, Angela has been working in the space for a long time,” UMGD executive VP/CMO of digital distribution Amanda Marks says. Reporting to UMGD VP of digital marketing Adam Flick, Sanchez focuses on customer relationship management systems, merchandising and more. “She has been part of the growth and development of the direct-to-consumer [online] marketing business...and she is helping us spread its reach into the burgeoning mobile world,” Marks says.
Reza Sarrafieh
National director of urban promotions, Interscope
You never know when opportunity will come knocking. Reza Sarrafieh, 27, knows this firsthand. He was sitting tables at a Los Angeles restaurant in 2004 when Interscope senior VP of urban promotions Garnett March asked him to be his assistant. The one-time political science major jumped at the invitation. "I've always loved music, but to be so involved with it like this is a whole other thing." Two years later he moved to Cleveland as the label's Ohio Valley regional guru. Less than a year later, he was summoned back to Los Angeles to take on his national urban promotion post. March, his mentor, received honors in 2005 for his urban promotion savvy.

Benjamin Weiss
Assistant GM, Sovereign Bank Arena
In his six years with facility management firm Global Spectrum, Ben Weiss, 29, has climbed the ranks and now is assistant GM of Sovereign Bank Arena in Trenton, N.J. With his knowledge of sales and event management, Weiss has a bright future, Global Spectrum COO John Page says. "We are targeting him as a future general manager at one of our many facilities," Page says. Weiss works directly with Sovereign Bank Arena GM Jeff Schumacher to secure new events at the 10,500-seat facility. "He's been open and allowed me to sit in on booking calls," Weiss says, "which will help me learn how to advance into the GM position.”

Christian Stavros
A&R, Columbia Records
Christian Stavros, 26, is working closely with new co-chairman Rick Rubin to discover and sign new talent to Columbia and drive the company's digital A&R initiatives. As part of that endeavor, he has participated in the college scouting program Walking Eye, which has already signed two bands. "The best part of A&R is finding something you never thought would work, like a band of 18-year-olds out of Los Angeles that has never played a show before," he says. A protégé of veteran major-label marketing director Lee Stimmel, Stavros recently returned to New York after a stint in London with Sony BMG's international marketing training program, where he worked with the company's Red Ink imprint, home to acts including Jula Feeney, Nicky Wire and the Rifles.

Jason Turner
Associate attorney, Lassiter, Tidwell, Davis, Keller & Hogan
A two-year internship at Warner Bros. resulted in a record promoter and artist management experience all help explain why Jason Turner, 28, is an optimal entertainment lawyer. But Turner also is an experienced musician who has helped his Nashville firm develop its brand. His "go-getter attitude" is what partner Jordan Keller says led him to hire Turner in 2006. "He has a knack for finding clients and experience that has been very valuable to my practice," Keller says. Turner, who has country and Christian clients, is also the attorney of record for the Backstreet Boys in their suit against boy band magnate Lou Pearlman, who was recently indicted on five counts of fraud.

BP
Marketing/promotions manager, Sunnyside Records
Bret Sjerven, 25, joined indie Sunnyside Records earlier this year as marketing/promotions manager to develop multichannel marketing plans. He previously had worked on indie label digital distribution at Virtual Label. His goal at Sunnyside: getting crossover jazz artists greater exposure in the "open-minded indie market." He says, "I'm in a unique situation where I can bust down perceptions of what jazz is with curious listeners who are going to blogs and magazines looking for something different. My job is to convince young listeners that jazz can be cool." Sunnyside founder/president Francois Zalacain says, "Bret is the necessary link to the younger generations that are [open] to all forms of music, from Björk to Jacques Coursil."
INDIE PUNK LABEL RAISES $1 MILLION FOR CHARITABLE CAUSES THROUGH SISTER LABEL SUB CITY

SPECIAL FEATURE
"Hopelessly Devoted to You Too," the 1998 compilation from Van Nuys, Calif.-based indie label Hopeless Records, had the sort of cheeky, smirking title typical of classic punk rock. It plugged the label's name while lifting its title from Olivia Newton-John's schmaltzy 1978 hit from "Grease." Perhaps by coincidence, it also nicely summed up the future plans of Louis Posen, the label's founder/president, even if he didn't know it at the time. A year later, that compilation surpassed the 100,000 mark in sales, according to Posen. With a new milestone reached, Posen recognized that he could do something more than just merely release recordings by some of his favorite underground bands. He could start another label devoted to helping those in need.

continued on >>p30
"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give"
- Winston Churchill

Congratulations Hopeless and Sub City on raising over $1 million for charity!
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We wanted to make it clear to fans that when they buy a release, 5% of the list price is going to the charity they see on the back of the record.

—LOUIS POSEN,
HOPELESS/SUB CITY RECORDS

“We realized at that point we were reaching a lot of people and that there was a unique opportunity to do something positive with that reach,” Posen recalls. “There’s some revenue being generated here. This is great for the artists, this is great for music and the fans, but there could be something great also for people that are in need and don’t have the opportunities that we do or our artists do.”

Out of that thought, Hopeless sister label Sub City was born. Its name is a play on words incorporating its mission statement of subsidizing nonprofit organizations along with a nod to the underground scene that spawned its artists.

Fast forward eight years and Hopeless/Sub City has reached another milestone. It has donated more than $1 million to more than 50 nonprofit organizations with proceeds generated by Sub City’s releases and the label’s annual Take Action tour, all while continuing to thrive in the recording industry’s unstable environment. Not bad for a scrappy company with 10 employees that makes its home in one of the least glamorous parts of the San Fernando Valley.

The label will celebrate that feat Aug. 26 at the Troubadour in West Hollywood, with performances by Hopeless/Sub City acts Amber Pacific and All Time Low, as well as a special performance by students from Project Mus2Ed, the charity benefiting from the event’s proceeds.

“We’re so grateful to everyone at Hopeless for helping us to help these kids and support these kids and their goals and dreams,” Project Mus2Ed founder/executive director Charyn Harris says.

To fully grasp Sub City’s philanthropic roots, it’s necessary to trace Posen’s own story. After growing up in an exclusive neighborhood in the hills of Los Angeles, he moved to the Valley to attend film school at California State University-Northridge. At the age of 19, the aspiring filmmaker was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa, a rare disease in which the retina of the eye progressively degenerates resulting in eventual

continued on >>p32

Above: Hopeless/Sub City band /SUBKADDISFLY. Inset: RONNIE WINTER of Virgin's RED JUMIPSUIT APPARATUS, which headlined the last Take Action tour.
Jo Ann and Joe Oster salute Louis Posen and Sub City.
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RUCKUS SOCIETY
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blindness. Undaunted, Posen continued his studies and pursued a film career and branched out into music videos. He directed seven clips in all for acts including veteran punks NOFX and Guttermouth.

When the latter act was between labels, Posen offered to release a 7-inch single for the band from his Van Nuys garage. "I guess they felt the video shoot was organized enough that they trusted me to release those songs for them," he says.

Since those humble beginnings, Hopeless and Sub City have released more than 130 titles by more than 20 different acts with sales exceeding more than 3 million units, and has spawned such major label bands as Thrice, Avenged Sevenfold and Melee. All the while, Posen's condition hasn't gotten in the way.

"To me, not having eyesight does not mean that you don't have vision," 36-year-old Posen says. "In some weird way it has enabled me to be more focused and not be distracted visually by things."

PUNK PHILANTHROPY

The concept of punk-rock philanthropy does not appeal to everyone. Posen found out early on. "When we launched Sub City there was a mixed response," he recalls. "The people who are philanthropic-minded were very excited about it and the people who are naturally pessimistic were pessimistic about it. When we first started there were some organizations that weren't interested in being connected to punk rock or punk-rock releases and I remember doing some early interviews [in which the interviewer] thought it was a publicity stunt or something that wasn't genuine in trying to make a difference."

Eventually, however, Posen was able to convince people that his aim was true. Fittingly, the first organization to benefit from a Sub City release was the Foundation Fighting Blindness. "I have been involved and my family has been involved with them for many years before Sub City, so it was a natural progression that they would be a beneficiary of one of our efforts," says Posen, who has gone on to become a national trustee of the organization.

The philanthropic element has also been a draw to Sub City. When Posen was negotiating to sign Thrice in 2000, the band was given the choice of signing to Hopeless or Sub City. "Givers what Sub City is all about, it was a pretty easy choice," drummer Riley Breckenridge says. "The desire to become involved came from gratitude on our part to be able to do something that we felt was passionate about for a living. We felt really, really lucky to even be signed to a label and to be able to tour."

With each Sub City release the artist chooses the benefiting charity, an arrangement that Posen believes allows that act to "be intimately involved" with the concept and spreading the message about the organization. The label picks charity for its compilations and events. It doesn't ask its business partners, including distributor Warner Music Group's Alternative Distribution Alliance to kick in matching funds.

"We don't ask them to financially contribute, but there's no question that they are contributing by being good partners and enabling us to do what we do," Posen says.

That the charitable contributions are limited to Sub City and its artists also provides more clarity for the fans.

"We wanted it to be clear to the fans that when they buy a release, 3% of the suggested retail list price [including 2.5% from artist royalties and 2.5% from the label] is going to the charity they see on the back of the record and in the literature in the insert and they know that's coming from the label and the artist and it's based on gross, not on profit," Posen says. "So they can be very clear what the donation is, where it's going and who's giving it."

Punk rock's roots are often associated with nihilism and anarchy. As Johnny Rotten famously whined in the Sex Pistols' "God Save the Queen," there is "no future for you." Yet the breed of bands signed to Sub City have a different take on the punk ethic. "When I
It's about getting out and making people in the punk and hardcore community aware that you can make a difference.

—RILEY BRECKENRIDGE, THRICE

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on their milestone!

Ben, Willie, Rob, Scott and JoAnn
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A look at the Gulf Coast region's live entertainment scene is a good news/bad news situation in the wake of Hurricane Katrina's devastation two years ago. Blues musicians through the French Quarter; the Superdome and New Orleans Arena are up and running; and Biloxi, Miss., is rocking. Other Gulf Coast markets like Pensacola, Fla., and Mobile, Ala., are attracting dates; casinos are booking talent again; and new markets are emerging with nice new venues, like the 9,400-seat Wharf Amphitheatre in Orange Beach, Ala. The bad news is that important Big Easy venues like the multicapacity UNO Lakefront Arena, the 1,780-seat Orpheum Theatre and the 2,700-seat Saenger Theatre are still not operating post-Katrina.

When shows are put on sale, however, they seem to do well across the region, particularly in Biloxi, where Katrina body-slammed the Mississippi Coast Coliseum. The much-loved venue is $20 million into a rebuilding budget that will top out at about $27 million. Biloxians, a rowdy and resilient bunch by nature, are responding. "Live entertainment is doing great here," MCC assistant GM/booker Matt McDonnell says. "Some of the bigger tours have not come back yet, but we are getting plenty of calls," McDonnell says. "With a few more big concerts, we will be back better than before Katrina."

The MCC has seen record numbers at its Crawfish Festival and Summer Fair, both produced in-house. Ringling Bros. was up more...
Fans and ticket holders line up outside the refurbished Louisiana Superdome for the 2007 Essence Music Festival. At right, JOSS STONE performs at the 2007 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival at the Fair Grounds Race Course.
	han 60% in gross sales with strong merch per cap over the 2005 show. CPR Fest, an alternative rock radio show, drew more than 11,600 in attendance, and the July 27 Tim McGraw/Faith Hill show was sold out in advance.

CRESCENT CITY CONUNDRUM

The City of New Orleans is more of a mixed bag. This year's New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, produced by Festival Productions and AEG Live, drew an estimated 375,000 people, up more than 12% and grossing more than $20 million. Producers of this fall's Voodoo Music Experience in October say ticket sales are up more than four times from this time last year. The Big Easy "continues to support live entertainment in all forms," according to Doug Thornton, regional VP for SMG, which runs the Louisiana Superdome and the adjacent New Orleans Arena, rebuilt for $193 million and $7 million, respectively. The complex has been active since reopening 15 months ago, with the NFL's New Orleans Saints and the Arena Football League's New Orleans Voodoo coming off sold-out seasons.

"The Essence Music Festival [July 5-7 at the Superdome] had a strong return to New Orleans, nearly matching their 2005 numbers," Thornton says. "The Police recently sold out the arena [June 30] and Nickleback has strong sales for their show in August." Thornton says that "only one or two" shows have not met expectations, "but they were shows that were not doing that well in other markets."

Across town, the UNO Lakefront Arena still is shut down, though plans call for the doors to open in May 2008 with Disney on Ice's High School Musical.

"We've just had some issues trying to get this place rebuilt," UNO Lakefront Arena GM Marco Perez says. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the state have come to "serious, whoppin' hit," according to Perez. "We had to replace the entire exterior and roof, and now we're replacing in tier seats, sound, lights, scoreboard, everything," he says.

The cost to repair the arena is about $25 million, primarily funded by FEMA with a small percentage coming from the state of Louisiana.

"It has been a humongous roller coaster ride, and I'm still on the ride," Perez says. "But we definitely need to reopen. New Orleans has always been known for entertainment and we've always had our share of the entertainment industry. But we're missing a big piece, that 1,000-5,000 capacity audience, typically the MTV generation, the middle-of-the-road audience that right now is bypassing us because we're closed."

Indeed, in New Orleans, it's either play small or play big. The 1,000 capacity House of Blues has been fairly busy since reopening in 2006. HOB Club New Orleans talent buyer Sonny Schneidau says business is "slowly but steadily improving."

"There are still a handful of agents out there that are skeptical about the market, but I think for the most part everybody's back trying to route stuff through here," Schneidau says.

Les Claypool, Hawthorne Heights, skinny Puppy, Deftones, Flogging Molly and Modest Mouse all played the New Orleans HOB in May and June to packed rooms. Schneidau adds that the Jazz Fest crowd this year was back to normal. "The first year they came back in '06 it seemed like a lot of local people, and this year it felt more like Jazz Fest," he says.

Perez believes once that UNO Lakefront Arena opens its doors, the venue will be busy. "It was the perfect size before and now I think it's an even better size for two reasons: the industry is definitely going in that direction, and I also think the New Orleans market is really geared for that size."

Overall, the New Orleans market continues to be somewhat of an anomaly. "While the city of New Orleans has a slightly reduced population base, the individual spending and disposable income levels seem to be very strong," Thornton says. "I believe we are on the radar screen of most agents and managers."

Schneidau adds, "The message to our friends in the agency business is, 'Keep 'em coming.'"
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SAVING THE MUSIC
Philanthropy For Gulf Coast Musicians At Full Volume BY EVIE NAGY

When Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in August 2005, the music community immediately swung into action. The most visible initial relief efforts were star-studded, big-production benefit concerts, while countless bands and musicians hosted local events and/or started relief funds. Two years later, one of Katrina's lasting cultural effects has been the displacement of area musicians, keenly felt in New Orleans, the birthplace of jazz and generations of musical pioneers. The projects below, among many others, are actively working for the restoration of the Gulf Coast's rich musical resources.

MUSICRISING (musicrising.org)
Created by U2's the Edge, producer Bob Ezrin, Gibson Guitar chairman/CEO Henry Juszkiewicz—along with support from Guitar Center Music Foundation and the Recording Academy's MusiCares—MusicRising's goal is to replace the millions of dollars' worth of musical instruments and gear that was lost in 2005. MusicRising donations enabled the historic New Orleans' Preservation Jazz Hall to reopen in 2006, and this past spring, the organization hosted an auction of memorabilia that raised more than $2 million.

MUSICIANS' VILLAGE (nolesmusiciansvillage.org)
New Orleans natives Harry Connick Jr. and Branford Marsalis teamed up with Habitat for Humanity International and New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity to create a new neighborhood for New Orleans musicians who lost their homes to Hurricane Katrina. With more than half of the 70 planned homes completed, the village's centerpiece will be the Elin Marsalis Center for Music.

SWEET HOME NEW ORLEANS (sweethomeneworleans.org)
Sweet Home New Orleans is a collective of non-profit agencies that provide outreach, case management, relocation assistance and other services to displaced and struggling New Orleans musicians. The Future of Music Coalition and Air Traffic Control recently presented a second annual concert to benefit Sweet Home New Orleans partners, featuring the Indigo Girls, OK Go's Damian Kulash, My Morning Jacket's Jim James and others.

JAZZ FOUNDATION OF AMERICA (jazzfoundation.org)
Since 1989, the JFA has been helping jazz and blues musicians in crisis, providing help with rent, food and medical assistance. When Katrina hit, the JFA rallied to take on hundreds of additional cases, and has secured such sponsors as ETrade Financial to take up the cause of musicians affected by Katrina. In 2006, the JFA provided more than $250,000 worth of manufacturer-donated instruments (including replacing Fats Domino's flood-damaged piano), created more than 3,100 living-wage gigs and helped hundreds of displaced musicians secure long-term housing.

A RHINO NEVER FORGETS
Rhino is honored to work with many amazing organizations as we continue to raise funds and awareness for those affected:

- The Rhino Katrina Clean Up Team, an employee-founded volunteer group, which has made four service trips to Biloxi and New Orleans working with Hands On Network & Hands On USA
- The I Believe To My Soul CD with Starbucks benefiting the Red Cross.
- The From The Big Apple To The Big Easy DVD with MSGE benefitting Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund, Habitat for Humanity, MusiCares and Children's Health Fund
- "Houses in a Box" with all of Warner Music Group and Habitat for Humanity

We realize there is still much work needed and want our friends on the Gulf Coast to know that we aren't done yet!

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Your Definitive Source for Industry Information
The objective of Wooley Entertainment is to have an event once every two months to help kids still suffering from the Katrina disaster. The monies raised from the events will all go to the Project Katrina Kids Org. lead by Destiny Wooley. In addition to the performance we will also film the event and create a DVD which will be distributed with all the revenues also going to the project Katrina Kids non-profit org. Wooley Entertainment would love to work with entertainers including comedians and musical talents all over the world who are interested in this cause. We are prepared to pay the artists and treat them with the respect that they are accustomed to including flying them 2nd class and providing first class room and board, and although we know that we cannot afford the real worth of these stars we do appreciate the love that they will be showing the kids from the Katrina disaster who are still displaced and suffering all over the United States. In closing we should note that we are currently sponsored by advertisement heavy weights such as Nike, Coca Cola, Billboard Magazine and Enterprise Rental Car with the help of G5Entertainment/D3 Productions/BT Group & 6301 Entertainment. We would like to use your vehicles in our ads, national and international. We would put your logo and name on our ads, commercials, t-shirts, etc. Special thanks to Erica Pedreguera and her staff at Nike, Dolemite-N-MTF. "Bad Boy Acting Bad", Nappy Roots, T-Mo of Goodie Mob, Cleat Wooley, Alan Wooley, Destiny Wooley, Ms. Wooley, Frank Pinnock, Kevin Johnson, LaDon Hollis, Billy T., Drac Jackson. JULY 21, 2007 IN BATON ROUGE, LADOLEMITE, MTF, NAPPY ROOTS, 225-892-1433 FOR INFO AUG. 25 AT BELLA NOCHE' IN BATON ROUGE, LA R&B SINGER JON B, MTF PRINCESS FROM CRIME MOB SANTALINA: SPRTIE MSN, SBR BOYS, J-DOG, SPONSORS: AD THIS NAME(www.whomag.net AND HIP HIP JOURNALISM ASS. MERCEDES- BENZ OF BATON ROUGE, LA.
While the Gulf Coast is known for producing powerful artists and appreciative music fans, the region has never been all about huge grosses and massive sellout crowds.

Still, the Gulf has always been a solid concert market, particularly New Orleans. "It is safe to say it has a great market, and there are just no hard feelings, now, veteran promoter and Beaver Productions president Don Fox says, referring to New Orleans, a market he has promoted concerts in since 1965.

"The only place really to do a concert here in the city right now is the New Orleans Arena downtown, which is obviously the bigger building in the city," Fox says, lamenting that smaller-capacity venues like the Saenger Theatre, Orpheum Theatre and UNO Lakefront Arena still have not re-opened following Hurricane Katrina nearly two years ago.

"With the Saenger closed and the Orpheum closed and not knowing when they're going to open, if ever, it's tough," Fox says. "Lakefront Arena, I'm waiting for that. At least then we'll get that 5,000-7,000-capacity room, which a lot of acts are playing these days. That will obviously bring more shows to New Orleans."

As it stands, New Orleans' loss in shows is currently surrounding market's gain.

"Right now, I'm taking stuff up to Biloxi (Miss.) and Baton Rouge (La.)," Fox says. "Biloxi is fine. The building is back open; we just did a big radio show there, CPK Fest, which did really well.

The Gulf Coast overall has "rebonded in a tremendous way," according to Russell Dossan Jr., president of New Orleans-based promoter Blue Deene Entertainment.

"With the reopening of all the major casinos and employment opportunities, people can and do spend money on entertainment," Dossan says. Blue Deene has produced shows in Pensacola, Fla.; Mobile, Ala.; Orange Beach, Ala., and Biloxi. Such acts as Korn, Hinder, Taylor Hicks, Hank Williams Jr., Lynndy Skynryd, ZZ Top, Aaron Lewis and others all have either sold out or topped expectations, Dossan says.

Others see similar results on the fest level. Randy Phillips, CEO of AEG Live, co-producer of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, says the 2006 edition "proved how resilient the residents of the Gulf Coast are by breaking attendance records and attracting superstar-level entertainment like Bruce Springsteen, Jimmy Buffett, Dave Matthews, Bob Dylan and more. The fact that this year's Jazz Fest was even bigger only underscores the irrepressible spirit of the people and their love of good food, great vibes and amazing music. In this respect, New Orleans is back with a vengeance."

William Morris Agency VP Greg Oswald, agent for Hank Williams Jr. and Lynndy Skynryd, says the Gulf is "absolutely on his radar" when it comes to touring. "Hello, I remember when I didn't even know where the Gulf was," he says. "Now there are some real market down there, the primary ones being New Orleans and Biloxi. But you can swing around and play Pensacola and do hard tickets in all three of those markets."

Red Mountain Entertainment is promoting a lot of shows in the region, including plenty at the new Wharf Amphitheatre in Orange Beach. Red Mountain partner Gary Weinberger says shows are doing well there, with Rowdy Frydys, two Widespread Panic dates and Brad Paisley all selling out, and ZZ Top, Poison and Steve Miller Band selling well.

According to Dossan, the Saenger has "no definitive renovation plans or scheduled opening. "So being without a traditional theater in this market means some shows will continue to pass us up," he says.

Fox does believe that New Orleans is coming back. "But it's a slow road," he adds. "I anticipate within the next year things will be somewhat back to normal. Things are moving in the right direction, and the future has promise. It will just be a different landscape."
Yung Joc's Young Crowd
Bad Boy Rapper Gears A For Low-Up For His Core Fans: Kids

Bad Boy rapper Yung Joc just wants to have fun. And judging by the success of his first two singles last year, so do his listeners. His "It's Goin' Down" — a ditty about clothes and cars that even spawned a "joccin' dance — spent eight weeks atop the Hot & HIP Hop Songs chart and helped the rapper become Warner Music Group's No. 1 songwriter artist, according to the company. The similarly catchy follow-up, "I Know You See It," reached No. 5 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs.

But a third single, "Dope Boy Magic," which awkwardly cast Joc as a drug kingpin, failed to catch on. So on his sophomore album, "Hustlenomics," Joc is tailoring his rhymes to the younger fans he attracted with "It's Goin' Down" while attempting, not to lose sight of the core hip-hop audience. Due Aug. 28, the set is led by the single "Coffee Shop," on which he implores, "Girls, please don't do drugs.

"I always hear parents tell me, 'My 5-year-old daughter loves you.' That's why I didn't want to talk about drugs when I talked about being on this record," the Georgia native says. "That's not what people expect from me. "Coffee Shop" is fun because I know the kids feel me. The song's title is really about me being everybody's baby. I used to cut hair, sell clothes. These are women's bags, accessories, cars, whatever, so my hustlin' headquarters is the coffee shop."

"Coffee Shop," featuring a high-pitched Lil' Caidel-like chorus and hip-hop drummers, is No. 10 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs. The video features Joc dressed at least four different characters varying height and weight, a la Eddie Murphy's turn in "The Nutty Professor."

Joc is enjoying extra visibility thanks to his cameo on T-Pain's on-ramping hit "Buy U a Drank (Shawty Snappin')," and also appears on Lloyd's "Get It Started."

"I'm an artist and I'm on tour, and I said we definitely had to do something together," Joc says. "He came to me in the studio and said, 'There's no way we're going to finish this album without you on it.' He let me hear five seconds of 'Buy U a Drank.' I went into the booth and knocked out three verses.

And in an effort to beat the sophomore jinx—which Joc says happens because most MCs don't have enough material to choose from—he's been recording since his debut, "New Joc City," dropped in 2006. Unlike on the first album, several big-name producers (the Neptunes, Cool & Dre, DJ Quik, Jazze Pha and Coll'Park) and guests (the Game, Snoop Dogg, Rick Ross and T.I.) appear on "Hustlenomics.'"

The subject matter is mostly light, with such songs as "Cisive Smile" (about a car grill that looks like a wide-toothed grin). But the theme of violence looms over "Cut Throat," a reminder that hip-hop can't always be fun and games.

That did help try on the mind of Bad Boy as it prepares its marketing plan. While the label's chief marketing officer Eric Wong says "Joc is for the kids," he is also ensuring that the "Coffee Shop" video reaches the older-skewing MTV and MTV2. In addition, Joc is appearing on this summer's Screamfest tour alongside T.I. and Ciara.

Wong dismisses the popular notion of "It's Goin' Down" took Bad Boy by surprise, and as such, the album didn't fully capitalize on branding deals. This time, promotions are in place with A&R and other major mobile carriers, and Joc is appearing in a Rockport shoe print campaign with singer Lyfe Jennings and actor Wood Harris.

Also or tap is the launch of Joc's own potato chips via Rap Snacks and a jewelry line through Icebox, the pieces for which he will design himself.

"Hustlenomics" will be Bad Boy's first release available in the Mobi Video Interactive format, allowing for the inclusion of both HD-the scenes footage, an artist interview and software for fans to create custom "Coffee Shop" remixes and ring tones.

"This game is about relationships and storytelling," Joc says. "And 'Buy U a Drank' is definitely the setup I needed. I'm very happy people are finally reacting to me as a go-to guy."
MUSIC

Global Pulse

J. LO'S NEW JAM

Six months on the heels of Spanish-language album "Coma Ama Una Mujer," which reached No. 10 on The Billboard 200, Jennifer Lopez is returning to English for "Brave," due Oct. 9 via Epic. First single "Do It Well" has already impacted radio stations in New York and Los Angeles. The album will feature collaborations with such performers as J.R. Rotem, Ryan Tedder, Mid9r Mafia and Bloodshy.

—Jonathan Cohen

IT TAKES TWO

Following their Grammy Award-winning duet earlier this year, Tony Bennett and Stevie Wonder are hatching plans for a full-scale album collaboration. Bennett told billboard.com that he and Wonder are "just now sketching out" plans for the album, with no firm timetable yet for the recording. "I know he wants to do a jazz album," Bennett said. "I'm interested in that myself!"

—Gary Graff

WAIT FOR THE CURE

Originally due in early 2007 and then bumped to the fall, the new Cure album will now not see the light of day until next spring, according to a Geffen representative. Frontman Robert Smith is still recording material for the planned double-disc set but ran into a time crunch with an impending North American tour on the books. The outing begins Sept. 13 in Tampa, Fla.

—Jonathan Cohen

SIGN 'EM UP

Danish rock act the Raveonettes have left Columbia and are shopping for a new U.S. label to release their fourth album, "Lust Lust Lust." The set is due Nov. 5 internationally. "It's going to be a lot easier for us to get all of the things we want, which means vinyl releases, 7-inch singles and all of the cool stuff," frontman Sune Rose Wagner says.

—John Benson

Marquess Rule

Europe's Charts Dance To German Band's Latin Rhythm

Marquess' European border-breaking Latin rhythm originates from an unlikely source: All four members of the Spanish-language act actually hail from Germany.

The Starwatch label handecl Marquess' June 29 album release "Frenetica," which reached No. 5 in Germany, No. 1 in Switzerland and No. 13 in Austria. Single "Vayamos ComparANDO" cracked the top five in these three territories and peaked at No. 4 in Finland.

"With the single, we reached gold within a very short time in Germany and it is the summer hit of the year," Starwatch managing director Hans Fink says. The label, Fink adds, "will establish Marquess as a leading German pop act."

Starwatch is an exclusive label agreement between MM Merchandising/Media, a subsidiary of German commercial network ProSiebenSat.1 Group, and Warner Music Group Germany. Warner is licensing in "Frenetica" for a fall release in a dozen countries, including Scandinavian markets, Greece and Romania. Independent label ARS will release the album in Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.


—Wolfgang Spaher

SUGAR HIGH: Italy's Negramaro is proving a sweet success story for its label, Sugar. The pop/rock band has steadily built its fan base at home, with "Mentre Ti Mordo Scorre" breaking out to win the best Italian act category at the 2005 MTV Europe Awards. Negramaro's latest release, "La Finestra," reached new heights in Italy, where it has rarely left the top three since entering at No. 1 in early June. The set also peaked at No. 95 in Switzerland.

Now Sugar is planning to launch Negramaro abroad. "We're looking at recording a Spanish-language album containing versions of their best work so far, in order to give them an entree into the Spanish-language market," says Sugar president Caterina Caselli, whose label roster includes Andrea Bocelli and Elisa. "In spite of the success of their previous projects, they approached this project with great humility, recording dozens of songs before selecting the final 14 tracks that appeared on the album."

Caselli adds. Negramaro is published by Sugar, and its booking agent is Milan-based Barley Arts. —Mark Warden

VIGOROUS DIY: The Vigos are embracing the "do-it-yourself" philosophy, and getting some interesting results. In June, the melodic British alternative rock group became the first unsigned band to be featured on the World magazine's monthly covermount CD, and the band's track "Victory March" reached the masses in the United Kingdom through a Channel 4 trailer. And in an unusual marketing twist, a Vigos T-shirt will appear in British youth soap "Hollyoaks." in October to coincide with the group's tour of university venues. The show's plot features one of the characters attending a Vigos gig.

"We manage ourselves, do everything ourselves, our own design and our own merchandising," drummer Mat Vigour says. "We arrange our own gigs, and will be producing our next recording ourselves."

Making use of social networking sites MySpace, Bebo and Facebook, the band has built a following in South Korea, where it will tour in September. The Vigos are holding on to all rights and will form their own publishing company and label as soon as they earn enough to do so. —Gary Smith

Moving At His Own Pace

Klein Makes Sweet Music During Rare New York Stand

In early June, pianist/composer Guillermo Klein made a rare U.S. appearance with his big band, Los Gauchos, at New York's Village Vanguard for two weeks. Such a lengthy stretch at the venerable club is usually reserved for the likes of veteran drummer Paul Motian and eclectic guitarist Bill Frisell—not a relatively unknown maestro in his late 30s who only comes stateside once per year.

The Argentine-born, Barcelona-based Klein was a West Village mainstay from 1994 to 2000, with his weekly residency at the club Smalls serving as an incubator for Los Gauchos' collaborative forays. In this setting Klein worked on his shape-shifting, chliché-free compositions teeming with rich harmonies, rhythmic wamps and memorable melodic hooks. Since relocating first to Buenos Aires, then in 2002 to Spain, Klein has quietly continued to write for the band, even though many in the group have become key personnel in other acts. For example, saxophonist Miguel Zenon is a veteran of the Klein Collective, while drummer Jeff Ballard is an integral member of Brad Mehldau's trio.

But all the Los Gauchos principals freed their schedules for the Vanguard date, where Klein was experimenting with new material. After the stint, the music was documented in New York's Avatar Studio for his fourth Sunnyside Records album, scheduled to be released in first-quarter 2008. Many of Klein's spirited pieces at the Vanguard developed idiosyncratically in a suite-like format, as solo premises opened up into choral themes, pockets of lyricism, dissonant horn swells, tempo fluctuations, staccato rhythms, light-hearted dances and high-voltage guitar shocks.

"Guillermo is one of those rare talents who is breaking the mold and going into a completely different place," Sunnyside founder president Francois Zala- cain says. "Plus, he has his priorities. He hates pressure, like going on extensive tours. He's selective. He doesn't want to burn out."

So Sunnyside is content, Zala- cain says, to let Klein de- velop at his own pace.

Village Vanguard owner Lorraine Gordon marvels at Klein's talent. "I'm very en- amored," she said at the end of a week-one set. "I'm thrilled to have him play here. His music makes my temperature rise. I have faith in it, and I want to hear more."

After Klein's first appearance at the Vanguard—a weekend stretch in June 2006—Gordon invited him back for two weeks. "I knew one week wasn't enough for him to develop his ideas with his band," she says. "And it wasn't enough time for the public to fully grasp what he was doing. It takes a full two weeks to understand an artist who has a lot to say."

More a composer than a soloist, Klein shines as a piano unknown coming into prominence. So too does Lafayette Gilchrist, who has been opening ears in saxophonist Davis Murray's Black Saint Quartet, re- placing the late John Hicks. With his distinct blues-steeped piano voicings graced by a Thelonious Monk-like unpredictability, he recently released "Lafayette Gilchrist 3" (Hyena), a seven-tune gem of captivating originals. The CD is a 2007 jazz revelation.

SOUL SINGIN': The late Jaki Byrd's previously un- available 1978 live solo piano show at Keystone Korner in San Francisco has been released as "Sun- shine of My Soul" (HighNote). Gone since 1999 and largely forgotten, the singular-voiced pianist with a knack for kaleidoscopic improvisation mentored many artists, from jazz upstart Jason Moran to new-classical/ opera composer Bruce Wolossoff. This res- urrected date bears testament to Byrd's brilliance and wit.
JAZZ BY DAN OUELLETTE

Bossa In Her Blood
Luciana Souza Explores Brazilian Roots On Verve Debut

Bossa nova has been in Luciana Souza’s blood since she was a child growing up in São Paulo, Brazil, in the early ’60s as the daughter of two of its innovators, Walter Santos and Tereza Sousa. So, after six critically acclaimed albums where her expansive, home-grown Brazilian musical vocabulary converged with American jazz, the three-time Grammy Award-nominated Los Angeles-based vocalist returns to the wellspring and explores bossa nova from a different slant on “The New Bossa Nova,” produced by her husband, Larry Klein, and due Aug. 21.

On her Verve debut, in addition to two originals, she re-visions classic pop with the bossa groove, applying her distinctively cool and romantic touch to tunes by Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, Sting, Randy Newman, Elliott Smith, Steely Dan and James Taylor, who joins her in a duo setting on his “Never Die Young.”

“These songs aren’t from the Brazilian tradition, but they have amazing melodies and are written by excellent songwriters,” Souza says. “We wanted to make them feel classic, so we played them with the constancy of rhythm and sway to lift the melody, reveal the poetry and color the nuances. Every song sounds like it could have been written as a bossa nova.” As a prime example, she cites the Beach Boys’ “God Only Knows” that she renders as a gentle prayer.

“The New Bossa Nova” marks the first time Souza has enlisted a producer, and the sessions feature a full-fledged jazz band: tenor saxophonist Chris Potter, guitarist Romero Lubambo, pianist Edward Simon, bassist Scott Colley, vibraphonist Matt Moran and drummer Antonio Sanchez. “Larry let me concentrate on singing, and the band serves as a bridge,” Souza says. “They’re all from the jazz tradition, but they also know Brazilian music.”

Souza admits, though, that the improvising could be construed as confining. “Romero doesn’t solo, and Antonio played the brushes for four days, but we all found so much freedom within that limited scope. I wanted to find the essence of each song and bring it to life within the bossa nova parameters.”

And she has no doubt that the CD fits under the jazz umbrella. “Look at the jazz pedigree of the players,” Souza says. “The producer is fully a jazz artist, and the singer has a masters of jazz composition. So, it’s jazz but so much more: Brazilian, pop, smooth jazz, world. I always think of myself onstage as a jazz artist because of the liberty it gives.”

Souza was signed by Universal Jazz France after her successful run at Sunnyside Records. Her first Grammy nomination for best vocal jazz album came in 2003 for her “Brazillian Duos” CD recorded in 2001. After she was nominated, there was a bump in sales, followed by a series of strong weeks around the time of the Grammy Awards show. According to Nielsen SoundScan, the album has sold 16,000 copies, an impressive figure for a jazz release.

But while Sunnyside didn’t have international distribution in such hotbed jazz countries as Japan and Germany, Souza’s Universal deal will open her music to new markets. She will do a full-fledged European tour in November, with dates in Germany, Italy, Spain and England. Prior to that, Universal will feature her in showcases in Madrid, Lisbon and Paris. And in between the two overseas tours, she’ll be playing dates stateside.

“Signing with Universal allows Luciana to do the showcases in places where she hasn’t played before as a leader,” says her manager Louise Holland, president of Vision Arts Management. “With the CD now being available in Japan, we’ll be setting up dates as well.”

Some 13 years after Pink Floyd’s name last appeared on a new studio album, the group’s legacy still has a powerful echo. The widely influential British band’s first album, “The Piper at the Gates of Dawn,” most of which was written by the late Syd Barrett, will be reissued Aug. 27 in Europe by EMI and Sept. 3 in the United States to mark the 40th anniversary of its initial release.

A deluxe three-CD edition will contain stereo and mono mixes, plus other rare and unreleased material from the era. Packaging for the set has been designed by longtime Floyd collaborator Storm Thorgerson.

Keyboard player and founding member Rick Wright, who has maintained a low profile throughout the band’s history, spoke with Billboard about the anniversary, Floyd’s enduring impact and his own recent work.

What are your impressions after hearing the first Floyd album again?

It was very interesting. There’s this big difference between how we played live at the time and how we made the record. The most amazing thing was to be at Abbey Road making it and have the Beatles next door recording “Sgt. Pepper.” I now know why “Piper” had an influence on so many bands. I can hear punk stuff going on in there. The way Syd wrote was a huge influence on so many people.

Does this album represent Syd Barrett at the height of his powers?

[“Piper”] was his creative period, although I have to say there’s some pretty amazing stuff on his two solo albums. He had an incredible way of looking at things. I remember sitting down with him one day and he wrote a song in 10 minutes. As an aspiring songwriter, I couldn’t believe it. The chords weren’t in time, because he was thinking only of the rhythm of the words and the melody. They weren’t in 4/4 time or 3/4—they were all over the place.

What was it like reviving Barrett’s songs when you played in David Gilmour’s band on his 2006 tour?

I sang “Arnold Layne” live for the first time ever since it was written, and it was fantastic to do. But we never actually performed it live at the time, and I don’t believe we ever performed “See Emily Play” live. When David Bowie came and guested when I was playing with David, he said when he [first] heard Syd, he realized he could sing in an English accent.

The cult of Pink Floyd shows no sign of diminishing. What’s your take on it?

Oh, God, I don’t understand it. All you writers need to talk about that. I know we’ve made some great songs and great music, but I can’t tell you why we’re so popular. There are some dedicated Syd fans who think Floyd finished when he left the band.

Did the Pink Floyd reunion at Live 8 give you any new perspective on the band and its legacy?

Many people are dreaming of the band getting back together again because we did Live 8. Because of all the arguments and stories that Roger Waters has had with me, and with David, it was wonderful that we actually got up there and did it together. But we did learn something. It would be very hard for the four of us to go and do a world tour, simply because our ideas are so different musically.

Are you working on any solo projects?

I’ve got various ideas. I’m going to do an instrumental album, based on the piano, and I’ve [got] loads of stuff recorded. It depends on how I treat the piano, and whether I need other musicians to play on it. I’ve got the compositions down. But it’s not imminent—hopefully next year.

SOUZA

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The Kids Are Alright
Teenage DJs Become Unlikely Stars On Global House Scene

You'd think DJ Danny Krivit was Jay-Z, the way young Chris Martinez gazed at him. The 15-year-old and his 18-year-old brother, Steve Jr., didn’t move from their spots smack in front of the makeshift DJ booth aboard an Aug. 5 Circle Line party cruise around Manhattan.

For three hours, the 50-year-old, more bald-then-bling Krivit dug deep into the deep well of classic vocal house, while his DJing partner for the evening, Joe Clausell, accentuated its percussive elements. Both switched over the mixer, twisting the EQ knobs in classic New York style, alternately dropping the bass and bringing out the highs. The Martinez brothers reacted to every tweak and mix, Chris clutching his heart for the confessional R&B vocals, Steve Jr. gripping the cross around his neck during “Stand on the Word,” a Joubert Singers gospel track.

“House music definitely speaks to our spiritual side, of course,” Steve Jr. said the following week. “That’s why they call it ‘soulful house,’ because it speaks to your soul.”

The Martinez brothers—actually, the Martinez Brothers—aren’t just young house music fans, which alone would be special. They’re also the hottest properties on the international DJ-turning-circuit, an accelerating, unprecedented phenomenon in what has been, up to now, an older man’s game. This year alone, they’ve played every major venue in New York, as well as France, Portugal and Canada, and “turned down more offers than we can count,” Steve Jr. says.

“That’s what’s blowing everybody’s mind,” says accomplished D/J-producer Dennis Ferrer, who releases the boys’ original music on his Objektivity label and serves as their industry mentor. “They’re the generation of hip-hop. To see dance music being embraced by these kids, it’s a great thing for us older folks. These kids might be able to turn the tide.”

With hip-hop mired in materialism and angst, and house music graying more every year, the soft-faced, Bronx-born brothers are a panacea for both. They look street but talk church, and play everything from minimal techno to crooning soul with the freight-train energy of Punkmaster Flex. They blend young style with old values, and are close to their DJ father, Steve Sr., who insists, along with Ferrer (who they say is “like an uncle”) that all touring stops when school starts in September. (Chris will be a high school sophomore, Steve Jr. a junior at Hunter College.)

“My main thing is that they grow up to be fine young gentlemen. In our business, that’s rare,” Ferrer says. “I want them to be professionals. School is the most important thing. If their grades fall, their gigs get cut.”

Benny Soto, promoter of the Krivit boat party, says, “Nothing as important as them has come out of New York in so long. They make tremendous excitement. They create energy. We really want them to succeed.” The “we” he refers to is the greater house community of New York, a historically insular crew that’s loathe to rally around any one, especially two kids who weren’t even born when nightclub temple Paradise Garage was open.

“I just think it’s everybody opening up, saying, ‘Listen, these kids are a shot at taking this to a bigger market and demographic,’ and almost living vicariously through them also,” Ferrer says. “It’s a manifestation of all these different feelings for us.”

Opening ‘Doors’
New Casting Crowns Album Means Big Business For Christian Retail

Most artists can’t wait to give up their day job when they get a record deal. But Casting Crowns frontman Mark Hall isn’t; your typical artist and Casting Crowns doesn’t operate like the typical platinum-selling act.

As the band prepares for the Aug. 28 release of “The Altar and the Door,” Hall still works at Eagle’s Landing First Baptist Church in Atlanta as a youth pastor. The others also have key church roles, thus the group tours only Thursday through Saturday to make sure the band is present for Sunday and Wednesday church services. “Everybody is still doing what they were doing, and I think we’re even more involved than we were,” Hall says. “It can be demanding, but it’s what God has called us to do.”

Dividing time among family, church and a burgeoning music career hasn’t hurt Casting Crowns’ momentum. Since the band’s self-titled debut bowed in September 2003 on Beach Street/Reunion Records, the set has sold 1.4 million units in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The group’s sophomore effort, “Life’veor,” has shifted 950,000.

Hall is known for penning songs that not only encourage church members but also challenge them to examine how they live their lives as Christians. He does so again on “The Altar and the Door.” “The name of the record is the key to the whole thing,” Hall says of how the faith and conviction Christians feel in church often dissipates in the real world. “We want to live for God. We want to please him with what we do and worship him with the way we live.”

The first single, “East to West,” set a record at Christian radio, receiving 78 adds in the first week. This issue it’s No. 4 on Billboard’s Hot 40.
Christian Songs chart.

Casting Crowns will hit 36 cities on a fall tour with the band Leeland and newcomer John Wallen. Ticketmaster and iTunes are partnering with the label to promote the trek. When consumers purchase a ticket, they'll get a sampler featuring all three acts.

"A lot of times our Christian music acts can't get this kind of attention at iTunes or with Ticketmaster, and what we saw was the opportunity to promote the tour and tell people about the new record at the same time," Provident Label Group senior VP of marketing and sales Ben Howard says.

Hall says the group is also customizing promotions for the major Christian retail chains. Consumers who purchase from Berean will get a free T-shirt, while LifeWay customers will get a free copy of Hall's book, "Lifetimes." At Family Christian Stores, whenever someone purchases "The Altar and the Door," a copy of Casting Crowns' first CD will be sent to a soldier in Iraq, and the purchaser can write a personal message to be sent with the disc.

Since its debut, Casting Crowns has quickly become Christian music's top-selling act, and "The Altar and the Door" is expected to be one of the most in-demand titles during the fourth quarter. "They've continued to be successful because they've stayed on course," Howard says. "They haven't lost their focus on the church. People are drawn to their message, and they've stayed true to that focus."

Currently on the Summer Storm '07 tour with labelmates Norman Brown, Marion Meadows and others, Broyson says singers of his generation are concerned with upholding a legacy and preserving a standard. "My style hasn't changed, and neither has people's desire to hear singers work their craft," he adds. "The decision to make this album [primarily] new material was conscious. I felt I could make a record that would be well-received by my core fans and would also allow me to be heard in a contemporary setting among the younger ilk."

As for Moore, she's recording an album that Peak expects to release in February 2008. The singer, married to fellow artist Kenny Lattimore, scored several R&B hits in the '90s including "Lover's Taken Over," "It's Alright" and "Cherish's Got a Man." Rounding out Peak's urban jazz roster are instrumentalists Brian Brown and Gerald Albright plus R&B/jazz singer Will Downing. The latter's Peak debut "After Tonight," (Nov. 6) marks Downing's comeback after spending the better part of the year battling the muscular disease polymyositis.

The title track from his album goes to urban AC radio Sept. 25. Though she declined to reveal specifics, Howard says she is eying a couple of male R&B groups for Peak, which averages five to six releases per year. "We're always looking and not just focused on established acts," Howard adds. "If we're excited by someone who comes to us, we'll make room."

A few months ago, I heard a reggae song called "Weh Dem A Do" on the radio but had no idea whose haunting voice was singing it. I eventually tracked down and e-mailed the contact for the artist, whose name is Mavado.

And then I waited, and waited . . . and waited. Finally, about a month later, Mavado's manager called me back and I caught up with the artist at a West Indian restaurant in New York's West Village.

Mavado's debut album on VP Records, "Gangsta for Life," dropped this summer, and his single, "Dying," is spinning heavily on R&B/hip-hop WGHT (Hot 97) New York. Slouched in a booth, the tanky artist (real name: David Constantine Brooks) quietly shared that he's not obsessed with death, though his songs talk a lot about it, and that he's ready to give Sean Paul some mainstream competition.

"I want to be on MTV," Mavado says. "I want to be a reggae pop star.

The Kingston, Jamaica, native first met reggae icon Bounty Killer when he was 15, and he is still affiliated with the heavyweight's circle. Under Bounty's tutelage, Mavado, who took his name from the highbrow watch company, says he has learned to be sure of every business move he makes in order to build a solid career. And while his songs are melodious (and perfect for summertime festivals like Caribanna and New York's West Indian Day Parade), his lyrics are rife with violence.

Mavado's talks about death may stem from a serious run-in with the Jamaican police. According to the MC, when he turned himself in to the Kingston police earlier this year on charges about which he refused to elaborate, an officer tried to throw him through a glass window. Bracing the fall with his hand, Mavado lost three of his fingers, which were reattached during a hospital visit. But once at the hospital, the police said Mavado escaped.

"The police say I'm wanted for a couple of things," says Mavado, who is still allowed to enter Jamaica. "And they tried to throw me through the window and get rid of me but I didn't go through. They say in life you must deal with death. So in the midst of life, you're in the midst of death."

Mavado associates himself closely with 2Pac, citing a bit of "So Many Tears" on his album, "2Pac has been my idol for so many years," Mavado says. "He was a lot different than all of the other rappers because he had a different style and he lived it.

When I checked up on 2Pac's life, most of the things he went through are the same things I'm going through now, like haters and problems with the...
In 2004, U.K.-based Memphis Industries released the sample-heavy, intentionally lo-fi and daringly jarring "Thunder, Lightning, Strike," the Go! Team's debut full-length. The buzz was deafening, so in 2005, the label entered a joint venture with Sony BMG, for the album internationally, with subsidiary Columbia inheriting it as a traditional licensee in the United States.

It's a turn of events that every band dreams of—unless that band is the Go! Team.

The brainchild of Ian Parton, the Go! Team was never supposed to be mainstream. Parton set out to make "dirty" pop songs—danceable, catchy tunes that were enveloped by chaos and besieged by left turns.

"It wasn't ever going to be a polished, radio-friendly outfit," Parton says. "That's why I went with Memphis. I would bring in a mix and they would tell me to go back and make it drier. That was a good sign."

The so-called "team" was actually a one-man operation for several years. Setting up in his parents' kitchen and working almost entirely on his own (brother Garrett helped with engineering), Parton dug through old records and started combing all his "favorite things," from detuned no-wave guitars to Motown brass, old-school hip-hop beats, action-movie soundtrack music and cheerleading chants.

His work was refreshingly original and, despite Memphis Industries' lack of financing at the time, the singles released leading up to "Thunder" made their way around the world. Parton, who says that "the plan was always to be a gang," put a band together in a matter of weeks in 2004. The live instrumentation and vocals were the final touches his music needed, and the sextet was off.

"Thunder" was nominated for Britain's prestigious Mercury Music Prize in 2005, but was still unavailable stateside. Sub Pop head of radio promotion Sue Busch had contacted Memphis Industries earlier about giving the album a home domestically, but had to pass once the depth of its sample list became clear.

"At that point in time we just didn't have the muscle to pull it together and get all the samples cleaned. It was just way too much money," Busch says.

But Memphis Industries co-founder Oliver Jacob saw an opening. He knew Parton was independent-minded, but "Sony put a ridiculous deal on the table and we saw the opportunity to get proper funding for the band and get them out of their day jobs. We decided on a joint venture for the one album, knowing it would help get Ian to a stage where he could later do a lot of smaller deals around the world with indie labels."

Parton says they were careful from the get-go. "We made sure we had lots of approvals. And there were quite a few things we turned down to pass them off," he says. "Sony thought we weren't interested in selling records, but that wasn't true. We're just anxious about being presented a certain way. There were things they wanted to do that seemed a bit desperate. So we'd say no."

But what might be called a buying-in-without-selling-out strategy paid off. Though Columbia sold only 48,000 copies of "Thunder" in the States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, the album has sold a quarter-million in international sales, according to Memphis Industries.

And now Jacob and Parton are celebrating the band's territory-by-territory deals with "riel-up" indie labels, plus a move in the States to Seattle-based Sub Pop.

Busch says Memphis Industries "get in touch as soon as the contract with Sony was up and the band was up for grabs again." This time, a faster Sub Pop and a much more manageable sample list for new album "Proof of Youth," due Sept. 10 in the United Kingdom and Sept. 11 stateside, meant the label wasn't going to let the Go! Team get away.

"The last few years have been very good to us, and we were able to come to the table with much more to offer," Busch says. "Their taste and the way they approach things, which is sort of guerrilla-indie style, is more in line with what we do here."

The Go! Team kicks off a 10-date U.S. tour in October, hits Europe in November and then heads to Japan in December. Lead single "Grip Like a Vice" is now making its way to specialty and college stations. 

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MAJOR HEAT WAVE

Hot Hot Heat Finds Itself At Home On Sire

It was "childhood romance" that led Canadian rock outfit Hot Hot Heat to sign with Seattle's Sub Pop in 2001, according to lead singer Steve Bays.

"We grew up in a small town and didn't know anything about the music industry or major labels," he recalls. "All I knew was that Nirvana had signed to Sub Pop, and I thought that was cool."

Although Hot Hot Heat got its start as a screamo band, by the time it made contact with Sub Pop, its sound had mutated into what would soon be known as dance-punk. The band stood at the forefront of a movement that would explode on the indie rock scene within another year.

Sub Pop head of A&R Tony Kiewel realized the band members were wet behind the ears and signed them to a "short deal," feeling that "they deserved to be able to grow. From the very start we had the sense this was a band that was destined to be on a bigger stage."

The label launched Hot Hot Heat with an EP, "Knick, Knack, Knock," and when full-length debut "Make Up The Breakdown" was released in 2002, Hot Hot Heat was already the new darling of the indie scene. The record has sold 280,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"When that blew up, it was our biggest seller since Nirvana," Kiewel says. "It still probably ranks at No. 6 or so on our sales list."

Major labels started circling, and Bays says the band saw all the interest as "a lot of fun. You just want to keep moving forward. Although we saw the pros of being on an indie, we wanted the money to record songs the way we wanted to, and we wanted to get the music out to a more general audience."

But after inking with Warner Bros. imprint Sire, 2005's "Elevator" stalled at retail, shifting 75,000 fewer copies than its predecessor.

"I don't know what results we were hoping for exactly, but our main goal is always just to earn the ability to make the next record, and we've done that," Bays says.

New album "Happiness Ltd.," which arrives Sept. 11, is a polished, mostly uptempo alternative rock affair and may prove a better fit for modern rock radio than the more pop-oriented "Elevator." "I wouldn't change labels right now," Bays says. "The team we have is really good, and we're still interested in reaching that larger audience."

Kiewel thinks Warner is doing "a fantastic job" for Hot Hot Heat and points to the label's success with such acts as the Flaming Lips and Built To Spill, which mainly attract an indie rock audience. "For Built To Spill, their transition from an indie was almost flat," he says. "Most bands aren't going to stay straight to gold just from that major-label move."

But for Hot Hot Heat, arenas are the goal. "There are a lot of bands that I wouldn't advise to leave the indie world for a major," Bays says. "But we don't want to play clubs. We love the big audiences."

—SV
**ALBUMS**

**HIP-HOP**

**TALIB KWELI**

**Ear Drum**

Producers: various Blacksmith/ Warner Bros.

Release Date: Aug. 21

Ellman, Galactic

Anti-Release Date: Aug. 21

On 2003’s “Ruckus,” Galactic enlisted producers Oen the Automator to bone down the group’s jam-bandiness and focus on Stanton Moore’s thumping, looped beats. “Corner” is sort of like that record’s older cousin, as it finds Galactic enlisting a monster guest list of MCs to rock over its densest grooves to date. You’d think the results would vary more than they do: Lyrics Born is in full machine-gun mode on the metallic ear-rattler “The Return,” while the Loot’s Boots Riley turns “Hustle Up” into a party anthem with a twang of rage, and Gift of Gab glides on “The Corner” with no seeming effort. Still, the hock here is manning such vocal talent with authentic NOLAisms: the reinvigorated Juvenile and the Soul Rebels Brass Band make for a startlingly sharp mash-up on the title track, and Trombone Shorty and Big Chief Monk Boudreaux lock automatically into their humid but no less mighty grooves.—JV

**GALACTIC**

**From the Corner to the Block**

Producers: Count Ben

FRISSEL later embossed some with horn and string arrangements, while bassist Viktor Krauss entered into the potpourri of sounds to firm up the rhythmic foundation. The result is a soundscape bonanza fused with a melange of jazz, country, dub reggae, funk, rock and ambient music. Highlights include the blues-smearied “Louisiana Lowlows,” the chilled “Swamped,” and the reverberating title track.—DO

**ROIL KILEY**

**Under the Blacklight**

Producers: Jason Lader, Mike Elizondo, Rilo Kiley

Warner Bros.

Release Date: Aug. 21

On its proper Warner Bros. debut, Rilo Kiley follows up the success of 2004’s “More Adventurous” with a slickly produced, electric batch of songs on “Under the Blacklight.” The track set ranges from bouncy, shimmering disco (‘Breakin’ Up”), to hazy shoe-gaze (‘Dreamworld”) and sleeky, Heart-Inspired funk (‘The Moneymaker”). Lyrically, always-astute frontwoman Jenny Lewis tackles everything from Los Angeles’ porn to underground cyberspace, all the while sounding as charmingly sweet-voiced as ever. Ultimately, the change in direction will likely raise a few eyebrows among some diehard fans, which isn’t to say the songs here aren’t noteworthy in their own right. In any case, the irresistible, ‘60s-inspired pop of “Silver Lining” is Rilo Kiley at its finest and should please even the most cynical of critics.—JM

**POP**

**JONAS BROTHERS**

**Jonas Brothers**

Producer: John Fields

**Hollywood**

Release Date: Aug. 7

While teens Joe, Kevin and Nick Jonas have yet to establish a top 40 presence with the fortitude of similarly cast punk/pop bands, don’t bother telling MTV or Radio Disney fans. Their Columbia debut, 2006’s “It’s About Time,” moved more than 40,000 copies, but already new tracks “S.O.S.” and “Hold On” are top 10 at Radio Disney. The album is a pristine production of consistently singable no-nonsense pop. In addition to the aforementioned singles, lovey-dovey ballads “When You Look Me in the Eyes” and “Hello Beautiful” nourish youthful hormones, while “I’ll Be a Reason For You” finds the singer facing personal demons, while “Let’s Get Drunk and Fight” will likely be a singalong favorite at concerts and on jukeboxes. “If I Could Only Fly,” the song Haggard sang for Tammy Wynette’s memorial service, is handled well with assistance from Lee Ann Womack.—KT

**JAZZ**

**FLORETON**

**Floratone**

Producers: Tucker Martine, Lee Townsend

Blue Note

Release Date: Aug. 14

Throughout his career, guitarist Bill Frisell has worn a coat of many colors, ranging from red-seared rock in John Zorn’s mid-’80s “Cobra” game pieces to his earth-toned roots music fascination following his 1997 bluegrass-jazz “Nashville” masterpiece. But he’s never participated in the freewheeling kind of creative convergence spotlighted on “Floratone.” Frisell’s loosey-goosey approach is carried on by collaborating with drummer Matt Chamberlain on a playground of sprawling spontaneity that co-producers Tucker Martine and Lee Townsend then sliced, stitched and looped together into 11 grooved songs.

**LATIN**

**JEREMÍAS**

**Un Día Más En el Gran Circo**

Producer: Sebastian Krys

Universal Music Latino

Release Date: Aug. 14

“Pues me encanta caminar por el paraíso en que nací,” dice Jeremías, y los seguidores comparten ese instante. Y es que su nueva obra “Un Día Más En el Gran Circo” es un verdadero fenómeno en el mundo de la música latina. Jeremías ha dado un giro a su estilo musical, incorporando elementos nuevos que lo hacen aún más interesante. El álbum es una mezcla armónica de sonidos que van de la trova cubana a la música pop. Jeremías destaca en cada canción, demostrando su versatilidad y habilidades virtuosísticas.

**AS I LAY DYING**

**An Ocean Between Us**

Producer: Adam Dutkiewicz

Metal Blade

Release Date: Aug. 21

Metalcore star As I Lay Dying explained that the loose theme behind “An Ocean Between Us” addresses the divide between public expectations and the band’s own idea of success. It takes this idea to heart with such titles as “I Never Expected” and the defining “This Is Who We Are,” along with pushing into new sonic directions that abandon the somewhat linear atmosphere of breakthrough album “Shadows Are Security.” The band drops in pleasant surprises like a ripping guitar solo during the menacing “Comfort Betrays” and a pounding, melodic bridge on the title track instead of the expected breakdown. “Within Destruction” is brooding and sorrowful, while “Worn Upon Ourselves” is a startling burst of mirthlessness that rips a page from the Dillinger Escape Plan. Whatever the differences between As I Lay Dying’s personal desires and what its fans demand, this album surely acts as a bridge.—CLT

**TRAVIS TRITT**

**The Storm**

Producers: Randy Jackson, Travis Tritt

Category: 5 Records

Release Date: Aug. 21

Randy Jackson’s claim that it qualifies as “blue-eyed soul” is a stretch (not enough falsettos), but Travis Tritt’s new set certainly has some funk-flirting moments: most blatantly, the Richard Marx cover “You Never Take Me Dancing” and audacious beefcake-bump-and-grind “Rub Off On Me,” borderline porn for housewives with barely embellished R&B backup singers stretching out the climax. More typical is a bluesful batch of Southern-rock marital strife, turning notably intense in kicked-out-of-the-house Nickelback cover “Should’ve Listened” and audacious in-the-next-room screw William Jr. cover “The Pressure Is On.” Beyond that, a gospel number about God and liquor, a celebratory two-step swingin’ like Skynyrd, more Marx boogie lighted tight with tra-la-las and plenty of sentimental Dianne Warren and Roberts’ sad song. Very good album, but Randy: Songwriting partners like these add up to an AC or AOR move.—CE

**JOE NICHOLS**

**Real Things**

Producers: Mark Wright, Brent Rich

Universal Records South

Release Date: Aug. 21

Joe Nichols’ fifth release of original music is a pleasant collection of country songs that finds him channeling everyone from Merle Haggard (on several tunes) and Ronnie Dunn to George Strait and Randy Travis. Made up of mostly midtempo songs, the album conjures the loping style of Don Williams at his best.

“Looking For You” by Yo La Tengo, released on “I Am Turntable,” explores the possibilities of using turntables to create a unique sound. The track features a slow, minimalist arrangement with only a few instruments, creating a sense of space and movement.

“Between the Lines” by The Muppets, released on “The Muppets (Season 4),” is a lighthearted and fun-filled song that features the Muppets’ distinct voices and personalities.

“Wanted” by Hank Williams Jr., released on “The Essential Hank Williams Jr.,” is a classic country song that features Williams Jr.’s iconic voice and a powerful guitar riff.

“Underwater” by The Muppets, released on “The Muppets (Season 4),” is a catchy and upbeat song that features the Muppets’ distinctive voices and personalities. The song has a fun and playful vibe.

“Who Are You When I’m Not Looking” by The Muppets, released on “The Muppets (Season 4),” is a thought-provoking and introspective song that features the Muppets’ unique personalities.

“Rub Me the Wrong Way” by The Muppets, released on “The Muppets (Season 4),” is a fun and light-hearted song that features the Muppets’ distinctive voices and personalities.
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etic than most pop radio ballads, it’s on the rest of the album where the biggest rewards are found.—ABY

CRUZ MARTÍNEZ PRESENTA: LOS SUPER REYES
El Regreso de los Reyes
Producer: Cruz Martínez
Label: Warner Music Latina
Release Date: Aug. 14

After his much-publicized breakup with longtime creative partner A.B. Quintanilla, with whom he’d launched the phenomenally successful Kumbia Kings nearly a decade ago, Cruz Martínez releases his debut as a solo bandleader. Although Martínez has the rights to the Kumbia Kings name, he’s chosen to call his group Los Super Reyes on this first album. But the sound of the troupe remains linked to the Kumbia Kings in its mix of Mexican cumbia with abundant doses of funk, some R&B and pop, as well as a few English tracks. The songstanzas are soulful ballads and fast-paced, disco-shoebammers like first single “Muévelo,” an easy club hit with Middle Eastern strings. But those looking for a clear departure or a brand-new sound aren’t going to find it here.—LC

ELECTRONIC
CARIBOU
Andorra
Producer: Dan Snaith
Merge
Release Date: Aug. 21

Like lighting a million sparks to illuminate a room, Caribou mastermind Dan Snaith treats together lovers of good ideas to craft one pretty song after another. Each track on “Andorra” revolves around different rhythmic ideas, from the sunny, 50’s-styled jingle bells on opener “Melody Day” to the cold-fi beambox of “Irene” to the shoegaze-y, eclectic splendor of “Eli.” Snaith then seems to add or subtract from each sequence with snippets of melodies, filling the gaps with synthesizer, his relaxed vocals and even an orchestra (“Desieree”). This effort sounds lovingly and intricately assembled and, while it comes off a bit sleepy at times, it’s hard to resist so many smart melodic structures. Consumed in a busy lounge or with a pair of head phones, this set is a safe bet for any listener.—KM

REGGAE
TOOTSS & THE MAYTALS
Light Your Light
Producers: Zadig, Toots Hibbert
Fantasy
Release Date: Aug. 28

Big-voiced reggae pioneer Toots Hibbert uses “Light Your Light” to powwow with friends, revisit some road staples and pay respect to fellow Jamaican musical giants (Clement “Coxsone” Dodd, the Skatalites). The first two tracks are very much vehicles for Derek Trucks (“Johnny Coolman”) and Bonne Ratt (“Pretend”), and it’s not until a cover of Otis Redding’s “Pain in My Heart” that you fall into the funky Kingston groove. However Tootsified, Ray Charles’ “I Got a Woman” suffers from oversaturation of the late singer’s legend—even if Hibbert is better-suited than most to pull off such a bold cover. Sweetened by classic roots-reggae female backing vocals, the prayer-like “See the Light” and the nostalgic “Do You Remember”—both barely midtempo—and a take on the Skatalites classic “Guns of Navarone” are the unlikely highlights from this inconstant outing.—WO

LEGENDS & CREDITS
EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)

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

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

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

THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

POP
BACKSTREET BOYS
Inconceivable (3:36)
Producer: Emmanuel "Judge" Folds
Writers: J. Cates, E. Kinkaku, L. Robbins
Publishers: various Live

Many acts whose greatest success was in a previous era attempted resurrection by aligning with du jour producers, hoping to prove how capable they are of “evolving”—often resulting in a square peg in a round hole. Thankfully, Backstreet Boys continue to sanction their innate strengths: permanent-ink melodies and incomparable harmonies. “Inconceivable” was written by the team that delivered Nick Lachey’s hit “What’s Left Of Me” and the result is an eloquent ballad fitting their priceless catalog. Make no mistake, 25-year-olds who found true love in BSB a decade ago will swoon over their return (sadly, sans former member Kevin Richardson). Top 40 is likely to overvalue its youth demo and dismiss this, but who needs it anymore? Backstreet’s back, and as illustrious as ever.—CT

PRINCE
Guitar (3:37)
Producer: Prince
Writer: Prince
Publisher: NPG/Columbia

Prince is ready to rock in and he’s not holding back. On “Guitar,” he unleashes his most electric single since “Purple Rain.” Dumping R&B for blistering rock, the track marries an overdriven, early-’80s riff with grinding blues licks, a la Hendrix, as one wild solo chase another over crashing drums. “I love you baby, but not like I love my guitar,” the crooner sings with a devilish smile as honeyed multi-track vocals pour some sugar over the raw mix. Pop and R&B radio may gasp at this electrifying, live-sounding guitar hero workout, but it’s unlikely anyone will resist its musical genius and sheer sonic power.—SP

R&B
DAVID BANNER
FEATURING LIL WAYNE, AKON, BINOOP DOGG
Speaker (3:50)
Producer: L. Crump
Publishers: various

SRC/Universal Motown

David Banner’s multiple talents and philanthropic efforts have established him as one of hip-hop’s brightest, best-loved artists. Production credits have teemed him with a who’s who of contemporary acts, his acting chops landed him a role in the upcoming “Incredible Hulk” and an animated series on Cartoon Network and his huge heist has led to restoration efforts for victims of Hurricane Katrina and assistance for youth in his native Jackson, Miss. Despite such a busy schedule, Banner managed to unite top artists Lil Wayne, Akon and Snoop Dogg for club-friendly “Speaker.” Each artist takes a round doing what they do best, resulting in a party favorite that will add to Banner’s hit catalog. With next album “Greatest Story Ever Told” readying for a third-quarter release, Banner is already set up for his next round of success.—CT

RAY LAVENDER
My Girl Gotta Best Friend (4:23)
Producer: A. Thiam
Writers: R. Lavender, A. Thiam

TRISHA YEARWOOD
Heaven, Heartache and the Power of Love (3:48)
Producer: Garth Funds
Writers: C. Mills, T. Sillars
Publishers: MAC/Still Working for the Woman, ASCAP

ENSING/Pine Wine, BMI
Big Machine

Trisha Yearwood’s bow on Big Machine is a musical tour de force that serves as a clear reminder of her status as one of country music’s first ladies. The singer’s rich, sultry vocal is as affecting as an achingly vulnerable ballad as it is here, ripping through a raucous uptempo tempo number. Penned by Clay Mills and Tia Sillars, the tune about life and love provides Yearwood a feisty platform to work her vocal magic. During her tenure with MCA, she defined an era via such career-shaping hits as “She’s in Love with the Boy” and “How Do I Live.” This potent single demonstrates that the best could be yet to come.—DEP

WILL I.AM
I Got It From My Mama (3:57)
Producer: Will I.Am
Writer: Will I.Am
Publisher: not listed

Interscope

While sexify lyrics are a weighty topic in hip-hop circles, “I Got It From My Mama” is so destined to be a mantra to grip pop culture at large that we beg exception to good taste in favor of sheer infectious moxie. The debut solo outing from William is comically genius, as the Black Eyed Peat super-producer sings and raps about the generosity—or not—of genetics in determining a lady’s physical charms. Accompanying videoclip is hedonistically ribald and again riotously amusing, as Will sits on a beach (and quite literally) points to those attributes that equate hottest among a squadron of writhing bikini-clad minxes. Back to class! Calling card is going to be rated PG-13 this year, perhaps to the chagrin of schoolmarm’s, but there’s nothing avoiding: “Mama” is about to blanket airwaves like a tidal wave.—CT

THE WHITE STRIPES
You Don’t Know What Love Is (You Just Do as You’re Told) (3:54)
Producer: Jack White
Writers: J. White, M. White
Publisher: Peppermint Stripe, BMI
Third Man/Warner Bros.

Teetering between brittle and melodic is what the White Stripes do best, and the second single from “Icky Thump” strikes a sweeter balance than the previously released title track. The duo wows their White magic with minimal instrumentation, ascending one punctuated chord at a time into a curling electric guitar lick, gently scolding. “You’re not hopeless or helpless, and I hate to sound cold.” While the song is potent enough sandwiched between stronger parts of the album, the sheer muscle of the first single leaves “You Don’t Know What Love Is” a possibly weaker contender for radio. That said, the Stripes are still more solid than the majority of their chart brethren.—SK

www.americanradiohistory.com
UGK Keeps Hip-Hop On Top; 'Pepper' Bowls L.A.

For the second week in a row, the No. 1 album on The Billboard 200 belongs to an act that saw its first chart entry under a different moniker 15 years ago. The twist is we're talking about two different chart-toppers.

This time, the throne belongs to the group that charted early as Underground Kings, but known for most of its career as UGK. With a career-best Nielsen SoundScan week, the duo replaces Common on No. 1.

Underground Kings first entered Billboard's album chart in late 1992, as "Too Hard to Swallow" went on to peak at No. 14 on the Heatseekers and No. 37 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums. Earlier in 1992, the Kings credited a single called "Something Good" to UGK. The duo reverted to those initials when 1994 album "Superglue" reached stores. This ranks UGK's fifth top 10 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums, but its first No. 1 on that list, as well as its first top 10 on The Billboard 200.

The new "Underground Kings" starts with 160,000 copies. Its previous sales week happened when 2001 set "Dirty Money" entered the chart at No. 18 in late 2001 with an opener of 98,000, but its highest prior peak on that list belonged to 1996 album "Ridin' Dirty," which opened at No. 15 on 67,000 copies.

With newcomer 'Plies' starting at No. 2 (96,000 units), this marks the first time since the Sept. 17, 2005, issue—when albums by Kanye West and Tony Yayo bowed—that new rap entries owned The Billboard 200's top two slots.

That will not be the case next issue, as the soundtrack to Disney Channel's "High School Musical 2" is warming up in the bullpen for what might be the largest sales week in the first eight months of 2007 (see page 6).

NEW TOYS: Earlier this year, Linkin Park's "Minutes to Midnight" became the first No. 1 album to be available in the Music Video Interactive format at This issue's bow at No. 5 by the Jonas Brothers inaugurates another interactive configuration, as their Hollywood debut is available only on CDVU+

Discs from the new configuration play on normal CD players, but when launched on a computer, the new "Jonas Brothers" reveals printable photos, videos, lyrics and album credits.

The Jonas Brothers spent a week on The Billboard 200 with an earlier album. Exactly one year ago, the group's Daylight release through Columbia, "It's About Time," entered at No. 91 with 10,000 sold. This new self-titled outing sells 69,000 in its first week.


Aside from drawing two sold-out crowds, the event attracted widespread coverage in Los Angeles newspapers and on evening newscasts. Consequently, the Fab Four's fabled album more than doubled its sales in the L.A. metro market, posting a 108% gain in that locale, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Los Angeles accounts for 13.3% of the album's sales during the tracking week, as the set bullets 24-20 on Top Pop Catalog Albums. In the prior week, L.A. stores accounted for almost 7% of the album's U.S. sales.

HE MADE IT: The rap duo's debut top No. 1 on Hot Gospel Songs at Billboard.com, as 'We're Gonna Have More Fun' peaked at No. 1 with a gain of 128 plays. The five-spot jump is the Kings' first east to the cover since '87 when B.O.B began tracking gospel radio on April 23, 2005.

MARKET WATCH

A Weekly National Music Sales Report

Week of October 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of Sales</th>
<th>Digital Albums</th>
<th>Digital Tracks</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>8,089,000</td>
<td>892,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Week</td>
<td>8,274,000</td>
<td>892,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Week That Was</td>
<td>3,356,000</td>
<td>542,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>-14.1%</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
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*Digital album sales are also included within album sales.

**SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>306,170,000</td>
<td>249,555,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>17,938,000</td>
<td>28,607,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassette</td>
<td>809,000</td>
<td>207,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>961,000</td>
<td>617,000</td>
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</table>

The Billboard 200

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST / ALBUM / DISTRIBUTING LABEL / SOURCE</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Chart Peak</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BUCK DOOLEY</td>
<td>Underdog King</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLIES</td>
<td>The Real Testament</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Hannah Montana 2 (Soundtrack) (Meet Miley Cyrus)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JONAS BROTHERS</td>
<td>Jonas Brothers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUNDBUCKET</td>
<td>Hair Spray</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FERGIE</td>
<td>The Dutchess</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KOHN</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkin Park</td>
<td>Minutes To Midnight</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAN KINGSTON</td>
<td>All The Right Reasons</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICKELEBACK</td>
<td>Good Girl Gone Bad</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
<td>Taylor Swift</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIHANNA</td>
<td>Lost Highway 1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAROON 5</td>
<td>It Won't Be Soon Before Long</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRINCE</td>
<td>Planet Earth</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPUL</td>
<td>Epiphany</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAD PAISLEY</td>
<td>Every Second Counts</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIM MCGRAW</td>
<td>Let It Go</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVRIL LAVIGNE</td>
<td>The Best Damn Thing</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KELLY CLARKSON</td>
<td>My December</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL BUBLE</td>
<td>Call Me Irresponsible</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMBANDAL</td>
<td>High School Musical</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAUGHTER</td>
<td>Doughty</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOSH GROBAN</td>
<td>All The Right Reasons</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE WHITE STRIPES</td>
<td>Icky Thump</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUSTIN TIMP</td>
<td>FutureSexLoveSounds</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FABULOUS</td>
<td>From Nuthin' To Somethin'</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLBY CALCAT</td>
<td>Coco</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
<td>Some Hearts</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOBY KEITH</td>
<td>Big Dog Daddy</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALY &amp; AJ</td>
<td>Insomniac</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIG &amp; RICH</td>
<td>Because Of You</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SMASHING PUMPKINS</td>
<td>Zeitgeist</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUEL</td>
<td>Angels &amp; Devils</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARAMORE</td>
<td>Riot!</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. KELLY</td>
<td>Double Up</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETWEEN RAISING HEAL &amp; AMAZING GRACE</td>
<td>Between Raising Heal &amp; Amazing Grace</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBIN THICKE</td>
<td>The Evolution Of Robin Thicke</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RASCAL FLATTS</td>
<td>Me And My Gang</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL W. SMITH</td>
<td>Stand</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUGARLAND</td>
<td>The Sweet Escape</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Drawdown Fool charts for the first time since 2004, selling 10,000 units.**

**Former "American Idol" contestant—now "Hold the Boulevard"—has his first official solo debut (8,000).**

---

**Metal quartet, currently on the road with the band on tour next year, secures second chart entry with 9,000 sold.**

---

**Fueled by a new singer (trendy Morris) and new drummer (fiercely determined). Album starts with 15,000.**

---

**Band returns with its fourth studio effort, a new singer (trendy Morris) and new drummer (fiercely determined). Album starts with 15,000.**

---

**The Road And The Radio**

---

**Memory Almost Full**

---

**The Remind**

---

**The Con**

---

**The Black Parade**

---

**A Hundred Miles Or More: A Collection**

---

**The Stage Names**

---

**Full Circle**

---

**Revel In The Day**

---

**Transformers: The Album**
**HOT 100 AIRPLAY.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Label)</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY</strong> (FUELED BY RAMEN)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>MAKE ME BETTER</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>BEAUTIFUL GILRS DON'T CRY</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>THE WAY I ARE</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>UMBRELLA</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>HEY THERE DELILAH</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>SHAWTY TAY</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>BUY A DRANK (SHAWTY SNAPPING)</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>HOLD IT GO</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>A BAY BAY</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>I'M A SLAY</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>CRANK THAT (SOULJA BOY)</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>TEACHME</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><strong>WHO KNEW</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>BIG THINGS POPPIN (DO IT)</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>SAY SOMETHING</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td><strong>NEVER WANTED NOTHING MORE</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td><strong>THE SWEET ESCAPE</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
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**ADULT TOP 40.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Label)</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>HEY THERE DELILAH</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>SAME OL' GAME</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>HOME</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>FALL OUT BOY</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>YOU CAN'T STOP THE BEAT</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>THE LION KING</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>DON'T STOP BELIEVIN'</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>WHEN THERE WAS LAVENDER</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>MISSING YOU</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>JUST A LITTLE HIGHER</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
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**ADULT CONTEMPORARY.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist (Label)</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Rank</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>ROCKSTAR (PART 2)</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>THE MORNING AFTER</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>WHAT I'VE DONE</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>RIDE OR DIE</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>ALL AT ONCE</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>I'M GONNA LEAVE</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>WE'RE NOT MAKING IT</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>KEEP MEmir</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>POP LOCK &amp; DROP IT</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>EVERYDAY</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
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**MODERN ROCK.**

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<th>Rank</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>DEFENDERS</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>NEVER TOO LATE</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>BLEED IT OUT</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>STREET CORNER SYMPHONY</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>ALL I WANT TO DO</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>FALL OUT BOY</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>MISSING YOU</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td><strong>NEVERMIND</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>ALL THE SAME</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data for week of AUGUST 25, 2007 | For chart reprints call 646-654-4633 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 53
| POP 100 AIRPLAY | TITLE | ARTIST | LABEL | WEEKS | CHART грантов | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|-----------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WE'RE NOT BUYING | T.I. | T.I. | JAY-Z & SHAWTY SNAPPIN' | 38 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| THE WAY YOU LIE | EMINEM & BANE | EMINEM & BANE | EMI (USA) | 27 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| I'M NOT OKAY | SIA | SIA | 1973 RECORDS | 26 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| FABULOUS | RIHANNA | RIHANNA | SRP/DEF JAM | 25 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| HOVER | SNOOP DOGG | SNOOP DOGG | ZUMA RECORDS | 24 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| BOP | YUNG JOC | YUNG JOC | KONVICT/NAPPY BOY/JIVE/ZUMA | 23 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LET IT GO | TAYLOR SWIFT | TAYLOR SWIFT | BIGMachine/REPUBLIC | 22 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LOYAL | J. COLE | J. COLE | DREAM WORLD/ATLANTIC | 21 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MORE THAN WE CAN HANDLE | ADAM LAMBERT | ADAM LAMBERT | SCRUBB | 20 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| DADDY'S CHEESE | DEJAVU | DEJAVU | TANGOLS | 19 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| TAKE ME (TO THE CHOPPA) | YARDIAH | YARDIAH | RED Distribution | 18 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LEAKED DANCE | DANCE | DANCE | DANCE | 17 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| BLACK | G-Eazy | G-Eazy | EPIC | 16 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| WE'VE GOT THE WORLD | COLADEA | COLADEA | COLADEA | 15 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| WE'RE NOT BUYING | T.I. | T.I. | JAY-Z & SHAWTY SNAPPIN' | 38 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| THE WAY YOU LIE | EMINEM & BANE | EMINEM & BANE | EMI (USA) | 27 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| I'M NOT OKAY | SIA | SIA | 1973 RECORDS | 26 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| FABULOUS | RIHANNA | RIHANNA | SRP/DEF JAM | 25 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| HOVER | SNOOP DOGG | SNOOP DOGG | ZUMA RECORDS | 24 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| BOP | YUNG JOC | YUNG JOC | KONVICT/NAPPY BOY/JIVE/ZUMA | 23 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LET IT GO | TAYLOR SWIFT | TAYLOR SWIFT | BIGMachine/REPUBLIC | 22 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LOYAL | J. COLE | J. COLE | DREAM WORLD/ATLANTIC | 21 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MORE THAN WE CAN HANDLE | ADAM LAMBERT | ADAM LAMBERT | SCRUBB | 20 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| DADDY'S CHEESE | DEJAVU | DEJAVU | TANGOLS | 19 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| TAKE ME (TO THE CHOPPA) | YARDIAH | YARDIAH | RED Distribution | 18 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LEAKED DANCE | DANCE | DANCE | DANCE | 17 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| BLACK | G-Eazy | G-Eazy | EPIC | 16 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| WE'VE GOT THE WORLD | COLADEA | COLADEA | COLADEA | 15 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| WE'RE NOT BUYING | T.I. | T.I. | JAY-Z & SHAWTY SNAPPIN' | 38 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| THE WAY YOU LIE | EMINEM & BANE | EMINEM & BANE | EMI (USA) | 27 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| I'M NOT OKAY | SIA | SIA | 1973 RECORDS | 26 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| FABULOUS | RIHANNA | RIHANNA | SRP/DEF JAM | 25 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| HOVER | SNOOP DOGG | SNOOP DOGG | ZUMA RECORDS | 24 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| BOP | YUNG JOC | YUNG JOC | KONVICT/NAPPY BOY/JIVE/ZUMA | 23 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LET IT GO | TAYLOR SWIFT | TAYLOR SWIFT | BIGMachine/REPUBLIC | 22 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LOYAL | J. COLE | J. COLE | DREAM WORLD/ATLANTIC | 21 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| MORE THAN WE CAN HANDLE | ADAM LAMBERT | ADAM LAMBERT | SCRUBB | 20 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| DADDY'S CHEESE | DEJAVU | DEJAVU | TANGOLS | 19 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| TAKE ME (TO THE CHOPPA) | YARDIAH | YARDIAH | RED Distribution | 18 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| LEAKED DANCE | DANCE | DANCE | DANCE | 17 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| BLACK | G-Eazy | G-Eazy | EPIC | 16 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| WE'VE GOT THE WORLD | COLADEA | COLADEA | COLADEA | 15 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

**Notes:**
- **POP 100 AIRPLAY:** Tracks that10 top 40 on the Hot 100 charts are not eligible for the Hot 100 Airplay chart.
- **R&B/Hip-Hop:** Tracks from the Adult R&B/Hip-Hop charts are not eligible for this chart.
- **Hip-Hop Singles:** Tracks from the Hot 100 Airplay chart are not eligible for this chart.
- **Country:** Tracks from the Country Airplay chart are not eligible for this chart.

**Source:** Billboard, August 25, 2007

**Data for week of AUGUST 25, 2007 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 64**
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### NEWCOMER PLIES OPENS LARGE

Plies' single "Shawty," featuring fellow Floridian Nelly, debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 and topped the R&B/Hip-Hop chart. The rap artist has added rackspace in the penthouse, marking the best sales debut for a new R&B or hip-hop artist this year. Rich Boy set that distinction when his self-titled album sold 112,000 copies in March.
### R&B/HIP-HOP Airplay

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<td>John Legend (Def Jam)</td>
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### RHYTHM & PREDICTOR

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Go to [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz) for complete chart data.
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**Data for week of August 25, 2007 | For chart reprints call 646-654-4633**

Visit www.radioandrecords.com to 3 go up for your free daily Country Radio Bizlist.

RadioRecords.com
### LATIN AIRPLAY POP

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### CHARTS LEGEND

For chart data, visit billboard.com.
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## Single Sales

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### Album Charts

**Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan, Inc.**

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**Purpose of the Album Charts:**
- The charts provide a snapshot of the most popular albums in the United States, based on sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.
- The data reflects the performance of albums across various platforms, including physical, digital, and streaming sales.

### Singles Charts

**Chart Type:**
- Top 30

**Purpose of the Singles Charts:**
- These charts rank the most popular songs in the United States, based on a combination of physical sales, digital downloads, and streaming plays.

### Tastemakers

**Purpose of the Tastemakers:**
- This section highlights artists and albums that are shaping the music industry, reflecting the opinions of influential figures in the music world.

**Note:** For detailed information, refer to the full issue of the publication from which this excerpt is taken.
MONITOR COMPILED -

1. FLIGHT OF THE CONCHORDS
2. THE RECEIVING END OF SIRENS
3. GRATEFUL DEAD

PATZI PONTI

1. ELVIS: 68 COMEBACK SPECIAL
2. FAREWELL I TOUR, LIVE FROM MELBOURNE
3. ALL EXCESS

1. THE BEST OF PANTERA: FAR BEYOND THE GREAT SOU THEM.
3. LINA DE ORO

1. LIVE IN DUBLIN
2. VIDEOS FROM THE CELLE: THE ATLANTIC YEARS
3. ANYWHERE BUT HOME

---

ARTIST

1. VH1
2. BET
3. MTV

---

ARTIST

1. THE RED HOT CHILLIES AND THE NOCTURNL
2. THIS IS SOMEWHERE

---

ARTIST

1. GRACE POTTER AND THE NOCTURNL
2. THE Distant Future (EP)
3. The Earth Sings Mi Fa Mi

---

ARTIST

1. WITHIN TEMPTATION
2. The Heart Of Everything
3. The Poise

---

ARTIST

1. ROYAL BLOOD
2. Writer's Block
3. Lucky Gray

---

ARTIST

1. RODRIGO Y GABRIELA
2. Dressed Up As Love
3. The Way Of The Flat

---

ARTIST

1. GOOGL BORDELLO
2. Super Taranta!
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. COLD WAR KIDS
2. Robbers & Cowards
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. ALEJANDRA GUZMAN
2. Reina Del Conocimiento: La Historia
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. LOS HUMILDES VS. LA MIGRA
2. Los Humildes Vs. La Migrana
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. RODGOD HEMP
2. Speak For Yourself
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. TIERRA CALiente
2. Enamorado De Ti: Edicion Especial
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. SERGIO VEGA
2. The Heart Of Mexico
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. PATTON OSWALT
2. Wewolves And Lostpigs
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. ROBBEN FORD
2. Truth
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. IN THIS MOMENT
2. Beautiful Tragedy
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. FAMILY FORCE 5
2. Business Up Front/Party In The Back
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. MARK RONSON
2. Version
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. THE RED CHORD
2. Prey For Eyes
3. THE RED CHORD

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ARTIST

1. JUSTICE
2. Cross
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. RAPHS
2. Los Fantas
3. THE RED CHORD

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ARTIST

1. BLESSETHFALL
2. His Last Walk
3. THE RED CHORD

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ARTIST

1. ST. VINCENT
2. Marry Me
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. EDELE
2. Iphthah ic
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. DOWN A K.A. KILO
2. The Definition Of An Ee
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. MAYOAY PARADE
2. An Lesson In Romance
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. ALL TIME LOW
2. Put Up Or Shut Up
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. ZARIBARO BARRA
2. En Vivo
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. MAYS
2. Deliver Us
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. MUTEMATH
2. Muteheart
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. FAIR TO MILDAND
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. EVERGREEN TERRACE
2. Workboxer
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. EMERSON HART
2. Cigaretes & Gasoline
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. MADINA LAKE
2. From, Through Us, To You
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. LOS TERRIBLES DE NORTE
2. 30 Corridos. Historias Nortenas
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. JOSE LUIS PERALES
2. Y Como Es E?
3. THE RED CHORD

---

ARTIST

1. COUNTRY MOUSE CITY HOUSE
2. Inside In / Outside Out
3. THE RED CHORD

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ARTIST

1. COMEBACK STRONG
2. The Bigger Picture
3. THE RED CHORD

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DATA WEEKEND:

NEW ZEALAND folk-comedy duo Flight of the Conchords laughs all the way to the No. 2 spot on The Top Heatseekers chart with their new Sub Pop EP "The Distant Future." Discovering artists making their breakthrough chart runs each week on Breaking & Entering, an illustrated weekly chart, New Zealand's top 10 chart.
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Max Roach, 83


Considered one of history's most influential drummers, Roach was born Jan. 10, 1924, in New Land, N.C., and moved to Brooklyn, N.Y., as a child. Raised in a musical family, he started drumming with gospel bands at age 10 and played with Duke Ellington at 16.

Roach recorded more than 70 albums, working with such luminaries as Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Charles Mingus, Sonny Rollins and Dinah Washington. In 1952, he co-founded the Modern Jazz Quartet with Mingus and released the groundbreaking live album "Jazz at Massey Hall," also featuring Bud Powell, Parker, Gillespie and Mingus.

A longtime civil rights advocate, Roach in 1960 released the seven-section "We Insist! Freedom Now Suite," which explicitly discussed the African-American struggle for equality. Roach's future wife, Abbey Lincoln, contributed vocals. In 1966 he released "Drums Unlimited," containing several tracks composed solely of drum solo; the album caused a stir in the music industry and remains one of the few records of its kind.

In later years, Roach performed solo shows and recorded duets with such experimental musicians as Cecil Taylor, Abdullah Ibrahim and Anthony Braxton. He also wrote for the theater and performed with hip-hop artist Fab Five Freddy and the New York Break Dancers.

He was honored for his work on a number of occasions, receiving a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant, cited as a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters in France and given an honorary doctorate degree, including degrees from the University of Bologna, Italy, and New York's Columbia University. He also served on the faculty of the University of Massachusetts.

Roach is survived by three daughters and two sons.

**DEATHS**

Merv Griffin, 82—a game show mogul, talk show host, songwriter, singer and actor—died Aug. 12 of prostate cancer in Los Angeles.

Griffin interviewed more than 25,000 people as host of “The Merv Griffin Show” from 1962 to 1986 and built a business empire that included casinos and radio stations after creating “Jeopardy!” (1964) and “Wheel of Fortune” (1975), the two most popular game shows in history...

...But Griffin’s prolific, successful career also branched into the music industry. The San Mateo, Calif., native spent the ‘40s singing on a self-titled, nationally syndicated radio show, founded Panama Records, and making the first American album recorded on magnetic tape, 1946’s “Songs by Merv Griffin.”

Griffin scored a chart hit in the ‘50s with “I’ve Got a Lovely Bunch of Cohorts,” which sold 3 million copies. But he is best-known musically for having written the “Jeopardy!” theme. The simple “Jeopardy!” music, which has also become popular as a ringtone, reportedly earned him $80 million in royalties. (He also wrote the theme to “Wheel of Fortune.”)

Griffin is survived by his ex-wife, Jillian; a son, Anthony; a daughter-in-law, Tricia; and two grandchildren, Farah and Donovan Mervyn.

—Jessica Lenzman

Joey Bonner, 73, former executive and independent promoter, died July 8. Born Joel Lawrence Bonner in Peters-son, N.J., Bonner got his start in pro-

August 18, 2007
EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: Sony BMG Music Entertainment appoints Colin Willis to senior VP of field sales for the United States, he was senior VP of sales. Island Def Jam Music Group promotes Mike Chester and Gary Trozz to national directors of pop promotion, Chester, who recently served as director of West Coast promotion, will manage the Southwest region and oversee West Coast pop promotion. Trozz was Midwest regional promotion manager; he will be responsible for the mid-Central corridor and Midwest pop promotion.

Universal Motown Records names Tracy Zamot to senior VP of publicity and media relations. She was VP of publicity at Virgin Records.

Jordan Entertainment Group in New York appoints Damon Stewart to VP of radio promotion. He was executive VP of urban music at JIVE Records.

Walt Disney Records promotes David Agnew to president. He retains his position as executive VP/GM of Disney Music Group (formerly Buena Vista Music Group).

PUBLISHING: Sony/ATV Music Publishing taps Peter Brosky as executive VP of business and legal affairs and Jan-

ice Brock as VP of the office of the chairman and strategic marketing. Brosky was senior VP of business and legal affairs at BMG Music Publishing, and Brock was VP of the office of the chairman and external communications at EMI Music Publishing.

EMI Music Publishing in New York appoints Dylan Jones VP of corporate communications and marketing. He was senior director, based in the company’s London office.

TOURING: MSG Media in New York names Chris Monteleone VP of distribution marketing for MSG interactive, which oversees digital and wireless operations for Radio City Music Hall, Madison Square Garden, the Wamu Theater at Madison Square Garden and the Beacon Theatre. He was director of digital development and sales at Rainbow Media.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

WEST'S 'GRADUATION' PARTY FOR CHICAGO YOUTH

The Kane West Foundation, which encourages youth to stay in school, will hold a fund-raiser Aug. 24 at the House of Blues in Chicago. In addition to a silent auction, the event will spotlight a full concert from West, who will be joined on stage by celebrity guests. The evening will also include a tribute to Ariel Capital Management founder/CEO John Rogers. Concert proceeds will benefit the Kane West Foundation and the Kane West Scholarship Fund at Chicago State University.

LIFEBEAT GOES SMALL SCREEN

Viewers of ABC's "General Hospital" are surely aware of music industry nonprofit AIDS organization LIFEbeat, as it has received numerous script mentions on the soap this month. LIFEBeat figures heavily in the Aug. 23 episode, which features Rick Springfield in his recurring role as Dr. Noah Drake. In a dual role, Springfield also plays hospital patient/rock star Eli Love. LIFEBeat plays heavily in the episode, which finds Springfield (as Love) performing "Who Killed Rock 'n Roll," from Springfield's forthcoming album, due next year.

INSIDE TRACK

LIL’ JON NOW WRITES THE SONGS FOR UMPG

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The hip-hop/rock hybrid features a
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On hand for the signing were UMPG
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Urban Creative Affairs Ethiopia Habtemariam and marketing executive VP Burt Waughs.

BMC Records newcomer Sarah Johns performed songs from her forthcoming debut album, "Big Love in a Small Town," at Nashville's famed Station Inn. From left are Sony BMG senior director of A&R Jim Cafino, Johns' manager Eryk Woolsey, country singer Mat Tiller, Johns, Sony BMG Chairman Joe Galante and Sony BMG executive VP Burt Waughs.

Hollywood Records trio the Jonas Brothers, whose sophomore self-titled album was released Aug. 3, recently sold out New York's Beacon Theatre. Shown before the show from right are lead singer Joe Jonas, bassist/songwriter/producer Nick Jonas, Taylor's niece Ecm Sain and Kevin Jonas.


GOODWORKS

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"BABY TIME" FOR DIFRANCO

First on the heels of the completion of her first career retrospective "Canon," due Sept. 11, Ani DiFranco is preparing an album of new material for first-quarter 2008, Track has learned. The as-yet-untitled disc is DiFranco's first new studio effort since last year's "Reprive" and also her first since becoming a mother. (Daughter Petah Lucia was born in January.)

DiFranco tells Track she has already started recording new songs at her New Orleans studio with partner/engineer Mike Napolitano, who co-produced "Reprive." DiFranco, who refers to Napolitano as "baby daddy," says the album is being done in "baby time." In other words, DiFranco says, "I don't have uninterrupted hours anymore, so it's probably going to be a more protected process than usual. But that will give me time to reflect on it prior to the release, which is a new thing for me and probably a good thing, too."

According to DiFranco, the new album includes some "baby-inspired" songs and reflects a heightened awareness of global warming. "I've only recently come around to that as a political priority," she says. "I'm recognizing that we're dooming our children if we don't address it now."
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