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While we acknowledge that bringing slower-developing artists home has become more difficult, the rewards mean artist development needs to be embraced with great vigor.

The payoff is that sometimes, a call from a reporter who either has extensive knowledge of the field being discussed, or who has given genuine thought to the story’s topic, leads to an exhilarating discussion that enlightens, even if only by adding new perspective.

Such a conversation happened late last year when Jeff Leeds, reporter for The New York Times, told me how many music executives have complained that artist development—for a sure bet even in a booming environment—had become an increasingly daunting task in a decade where album sales have fallen in all but one year. Some of us at Billboard had heard that same tone in recent years, so Leeds’ call struck a chord.

He and I wondered whether there was meat on those bones. Had changes in pop culture, as well as the way music is consumed, rendered the launch of a new artist’s career an even ifffier proposition than it had been in the music industry’s golden years? Or, were these grips just excuses to cover poor performance or misplaced priorities? And, how might Billboard’s charts illuminate those questions?

We enlisted Billboard analyst Keith Caulfield, most of our chart managers and reams of Nielsen SoundScan data to examine 16 years of chart performance by artists who either started their careers on the Top Heatseekers chart or whose first albums bypassed that list by opening in the top half of The Billboard 200. The first fruits of that analysis are found in an article in this issue (see page 26).

Expect coverage soon, based on the same body of data, from The New York Times. And, within the next two weeks, Billboard will begin offering a white paper that includes granular data on more than 6,000 albums from more than 1,000 artists, culled from 1992 to 2006, as well as tables of analysis that we simply could not fit into this issue’s story.

The condensed answer to the artist development quandary is that labels have a much easier time getting newcomers’ albums to launch in the top half of The Billboard 200— and even in the top 10— than they did in the ‘90s. But, along the way, it has become all the more difficult to cultivate slower-starting rookie albums to No. 100 and higher, and more the pity, because even in this era of diminished album sales, artists who cultivate more organically tend to sell better than those who start with a flash. You can look it up when our white paper comes out.

While we acknowledge that bringing slower-developing artists home has become more difficult, the rewards that come from such efforts mean artist development should not only remain an ongoing priority, but one that needs to be embraced with great vigor.

Although consolidation of retail and radio might hinder regional growth that once helped smaller careers become large ones, SoundScan still offers its subscribers the same granular data that helped such acts as Pearl Jam, 2Pac, Radiohead, Faith Hill and Sarah McLachlan gain national powerhouse status. And, it seems the same new-media platforms that make the vast U.S. market seem like a smaller place could also be used to implement pinpoint marketing that has been marginalized by consolidation.

To help us along, look for a résumé soon of the page that houses Billboard’s Top Heatseekers chart, with an enhanced view of regional uprisings. And, acknowledging that the ways consumers experience music in these modern times has altered the role of album charts, we are considering bringing a chart to the magazine in the next five years, and more recently, incorporate digital streaming and on-demand Internet plays into The Billboard Hot 100.

The changes happen because we pay attention to our readers’ wants and needs. And, like you, Billboard can’t afford to stand still.

Feed Back

Canadian Missed

It was interesting to read in the Aug. 11 issue about your new Canadian correspondent. However, you didn’t give his contact information in the article or in your masthead.

Please print?

Al Mair

MH: Communications

Torontoa

FOR THE RECORD

The Bits and Briefs item regarding Synchro Spheric Live in the Aug. 11 issue should have mentioned that artists can also stream their performances through the service in real time, in addition to uploading prerecorded footage.

Ed. Note: Apologies for the oversight.

Robert Thompson, our head of the border go-to guy, is happy to be reached at robertthompson@sympatico.ca.

Write US

Share your feedback with Billboard readers around the world. Send correspondence to editor@billboard.com include name, title, address and phone number for verification. Letters should be concise and may be edited. All correspondence published may become the property of Billboard, which shall own the copyright in same or part, for exploitation.

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While we acknowledge that bringing slower-developing artists home has become more difficult, the rewards mean artist development needs to be embraced with great vigor.

This may seen an odd admission from a guy who has been a journalist for more than the 21 years I’ve spent at Billboard, but handling more than my fair share of calls from the front porch, I’d concede that some reporters can be a pain in the tush. Some are not as prepared as they should be; some have a preconceived notion of what the story is before they interview sources. But, please don’t run too far with that. I said “some,” not “many” or “most.”
The rumble of hungry bellies isn't the only notable sound you'll hear at fast food chains these days.

More and more, quick-service restaurant companies are folding music into their marketing and promotion initiatives. In recent weeks, McDonald's, Burger King and Taco Bell have each introduced music platforms that cater primarily to the youth market.

McDonald's launched a concert tour, Burger King is testing a digital rights management-free digital download promotion with EMI Music in the United Kingdom, and Taco Bell is treating young indie rock bands to free wireless routers in giving them more exposure (see list, below).

"Music has always been used as a promotional tool by fast food chains," says Giles Harris, head of music and brands at EMI Music U.K. and Ireland. Indeed, in recent years, McDonald's has featured N Sync, Britney Spears and Destiny's Child in special promotions. Historically, though, Harris adds, "they tended to focus on movies. But these days, music is less simplistic and labels are looking for new distribution channels and revenue streams."

And in general, says Robert Pastikoff, president of brand consulting firm Brand Keys, "brands are using music emotionally to connect with today's youth. The hope is that brand loyalty will follow."

On average, 16- to 24-year-olds visit fast food restaurants 21 times per month, according to Sandelman & Associates, a food service marketing research and consulting firm in San Clemente, Calif. Among the same age group, heavy users of quick-service restaurants make 44 visits per month. And in reaching the coveted youth demographic, accessibility and convenience are key.

"Today's campaigns are customer-driven and occur where our customers are already engaged with the brand," says Douglas Freeland, director of U.S. marketing and young adult programming at McDonald's. "It's not just about putting up banners at a concert."

Bournelessly execute McDonald's Live, the restaurant chain worked with event marketing agency TBA Global, which handled artist negotiations. The Burger King pilot promo—which, depending on its success, may subsequently be launched in other territories around the world—is a direct result of a recently initiated strategic partnership between EMI Music and Chicago-based digital media agency VerveLife, which specializes in creating customized online media consumer experiences for global brands.

In this business arrangement, EMI opens its DRM-free digital music catalog to VerveLife's global brand partners. Burger King is the first of VerveLife clients to partake of EMI's riches. According to VerveLife founder/CEO Justin Jaminet, most clients today are interested in DRM-free content. "They understand the DRM-free concept to the extent that it means their customers can play content on any device," he says. "They like that kind of interoperability." His clients also like that they can track their return on investment at the same time that customers are customizing their own experiences.

In this way, brands are building more direct relationships with their customers, with music providing the tie that binds. "We view music as a relationship builder," says Taco Bell marketing manager Will Bortz. "If a brand can use Taco Bell's clout to help it grow bigger, then we become a part of that success," Bortz says. "Everyone wins."
IN THE CARDS

Will iTunes Gift Cards Help Or Hurt Physical Retail?

In a move to enhance its already prodigious stature as a music merchandiser, Apple will lead a test this fall that places artist- and album-specific iTunes gift cards in brick-and-mortar retail stores.

The iTunes gift cards, according to label and retail sources, will each feature a specific album cover against an Amaryllis DVD-sized cardboard back that can be merchandised in CD racks or on walls at counters. Albums by Maroon 5, Norah Jones and Eddie Vedder are under consideration for inclusion in the tests, which will run at Safeway, Starbucks and Best Buy. Though Wal-Mart and Target have been approached, there is no word on whether those merchants will participate.

The test creates a dilemma for the majors. On one hand, executives like the possibility that the gift cards could get music into stores that don't carry it now. They also like the increased exposure for their artists. And in stores that currently carry music, they foresee a role for the gift cards as music selection and CD sales are reduced due to store closures, inventory re-alignments and the format's oncoming obsolescence.

iTunes is pitching its album-specific gift cards, which will feature the Apple and iTunes logos, as a way to get more music in existing shelf space at stores that already carry music. Since the gift cards are not activated until a customer brings them to the register, there is no inventory carrying charge, something that will appeal to retailers.

"It may be a way to get deep SKUs back into stores," one major's distribution executive says. And when CD sales ultimately weaken, he says, anything that encourages music buying is to be welcomed.

But other executives worry the gimmick might in fact accelerate the demise of the CD. The strategy will also enhance the prominence of Apple, which is already perceived to be heavy-handed in wielding its clout with labels.

"It sounds like a way to help Apple get 50% market share," one senior label executive says. A senior distribution executive adds, "It's ridiculous for Apple to negotiate with retailers on our behalf."

Another distribution executive wonders why music retailers carrying CDs would go along with the idea, since it could drive more traffic to iTunes at the expense of brick-and-mortar merchants. iTunes didn't respond to requests for comment.

Meanwhile, sources suggest that single album gift card titles would be priced between $11.99 and $14.99—above iTunes' main album price point of $9.99—but each could come with music videos and ringtones. It's unclear if the labels would get their traditional wholesale cost of $7 per album or if they would take a hair cut. But the overall pricing model needs to provide enough cushion for not only the labels, but also allow Apple, the brick-and-mortar retailer, the gift card activation companies and a rackjobber—if one were needed service the nontraditional retail accounts—to get their cuts too.

For all his uneasiness over the idea, one executive concedes, "You have to give it to iTunes for trying to press their dominance in interesting ways."

DIGITAL

Running Interference Against iTunes

Digital Music Initiatives Attempt To Nibble Away At Apple

The digital music wars are entering a new phase. Several digital music service providers—including MTV's Urge, Rhapsody, Verizon Wireless, Wal-Mart and Yahoo Music—have unveiled new forays designed to shine light on their struggling services in the shadow of Apple's still-dominant iTunes.

While no individual effort is likely to disable Apple from its No. 1 position, all are clearly efforts to chip away at its commanding lead. According to data from NPD Group, Apple controls 73.7% of the retail digital-music market, with more than 3 billion tracks sold since it went live. iTunes is also the third-largest music retailer of any kind, surpassed only by Best Buy and Wal-Mart.

REALNETWORKS, MTV, VERIZON WIRELESS

In what is the most significant move, the three providers have joined forces to offer one integrated digital music platform that includes Rhapsody's technology and music, editorial content and playlist programming from MTV's Urge and wireless distribution via Verizon Wireless. MTV brings strong market muscle—to the tune of $230 million during the next five years—to mention its on-air channels—some well-received blogs and other editorial resources that should improve on Rhapsody's content. Verizon brings a mobile extension, something market leader iTunes still lacks. And Rhapsody brings the most popular subscription services on the market, its existing subscribers and back-end mobile technology.

The big bet, however, is on integration. Verizon will re-place its Web-based digital music store with the new Rhapsody service, and will send a copy of every song downloaded to a Verizon phone to the user's Rhapsody account. And Rhapsody subscribers will be able to transfer subscription-based music to Rhapsody-compatible Verizon phones once they're introduced later this year. But don't expect to download subscription tracks over the air from Verizon phones just yet. On paper it's a strong alliance that emphasizes each partner's strengths and eliminates their weaknesses in what MTV Networks president Van Toffler called a "perfect storm of capabilities. Whether they can execute it is another story.

WAL-MART

The big-box retailer has started a PR initiative to highlight the availability of digital rights management-free (read: iPod-compatible) music from EMI and Universal Music Group. This is a partially-c propose big deal for Wal-Mart, which has not been able to translate its digital success as a physical retailer to digital music. While it is responsible for about 22% of physical CD sales, Wal-Mart has less than 2% market share among music services, despite undercutting the competition. Protected tracks are 11 cents cheaper than on iTunes, while DRM-free tracks are 35 cents cheaper.

However, this probably won't matter much until Wal-Mart can sell all its music without DRM, not just music from EMI and UMG. Also, the conservative company insists on selling only 32-bit versions of songs that otherwise would earn a parental advisory notice.

YAHOO MUSIC

Yahoo has unveiled plans to launch a Web-based music player that will allow current and non-subscribers to stream music from the service without requiring them to download the full Yahoo Music Unlimited software.

While its music portal receives more than 25 million unique hits per month, the Yahoo Music Unlimited subscription service continues to struggle for mass-market attention, just like every other subscription service out there. According to Yahoo Music GM Ian Rogers, the idea is to give its broader Internet community access to the same tools as subscribers and eventually convert them into paying members. Non-subscribers can hear only 30-second samples, while members can listen to the entire track.
GREAT SEASON, GREAT YEAR!

Innovative licensing solutions that encompass digital distribution of music with more than 10,000 radio broadcasters across America and national television and cable networks including ABC, HBO, Disney, Lifetime and PBS.

More than 500 new licensing agreements for digital music delivery platforms, now leading the industry with licenses covering more than 4,300 digital media outlets.

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See It Hear First™ podcasts, offering top new talent the opportunity to be heard by thousands of industry professionals and fans around the world.

The only performing right organization honored with a special Tony® Award for support of musical theatre.

BMI

THE CHOICE OF THE WORLD'S BEST SONGWRITERS
UPFRONT

BY RAY WADDELL

NEW YORK SHOWDOWN

Concert Promoters Compete For A Slice Of The Big Apple Pie

For touring artists, no play is more important than New York play. And competition among concert promoters in NYC has never been more heated than it is right now.

"It is the most competitive it's been here in 30 years," newly appointed Live Nation New York president Kevin Morrow says.

What's at stake is hundreds of millions of dollars from live music in New York. In 2006, 1,152 New York shows, drawing some 4 million people accounted for $258 million in grosses reported to Billboard Boxscore. And the hundreds of unreported club dates and shows within the New York metro area would add millions of dollars to that total.

But now, that sum is being spread out.

"In the last 18 months the New York City touring market has definitely changed," Madison Square Garden Entertainment president Jay Marciano says. "The competitive landscape has opened up." In the 1990s, Debsi-Slater was the dominant promoter in New York, later competing aggressively with Metropolitan Entertainment in New York and New Jersey. Back then, the Big Apple was largely a two-promoter town.

In the past 12 months, however, the competitive landscape has definitely changed. Debsi-Slater is now fighting for airtime with other promoters.

New York is a battle ground for promoters. In the last 12 months, hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of dollars have been invested in deals with New York through the hiring of Tim Hinsey for the independent distributor's
group.

WHO'S BOOKING WHERE

A Look At New York Promoters And Their Venue Affiliations

AEG LIVE NEW YORK

Books the Highline Ballroom and owns/operators the Nokia Theatre in Times Square (2,000 capacity).

LIVE NATION NEW YORK

Owns or books exclusively the Blender Theatre at Gramercy Park (600), the Warsaw (950), the Fillmore (1,000), Hammerstein Ballroom (2,750), Roseland Ballroom (1,750), Jones Beach Theater (14,000), PNC Bank Arts Center in Holmdel, NJ., and other venues, and does many shows at Randall's Island, the Garden, the Theatre at Madison Square Garden, Radio City Music Hall, Nassau Coliseum and other area venues.

THE BOWERY PRESENTS

Has exclusions at Bowery Ballroom (575), the Mercury Lounge (150), Terminal 5 (3,000), Williamsburg Music Hall (550) and is active at the Garden, Radio City and other open venues.

METROPOLITAN TALENT

Books the Concert Hall at New York Society of Ethical Culture (825) and is active at the Garden, Radio City, Continental, Nassau and all other open rooms in the city.

A Look at promoting in the Big Apple

"It's not so much that our primary focus is trying to be the king of the castle in New York," Rathwell says. Indeed, the biggest battle may be between Live Nation and the Bowery Presents. Adding spice to that story is that Bowery Presents partner Jim Glancy is a former president of Live Nation New York, and since departing last year has led the charge in the Bowery Presents' rapid growth. The Bowery Presents has grown from a club-level promoter to a company that presents numerous shows at large venues like Madison Square Garden, Randall's Island and Radio City Music Hall.

Glancy plays close to the vest when it comes to discussing the Bowery Presents' role in the New York marketplace. "We're not hiding from what we're doing, but we don't talk about how we stack up against the competition or where we want to be, because that's our business plan, not everyone's business plan," he says. "The facts are that we're promoting a lot of shows by great artists and having a great time doing it, we're opening a couple of rooms this fall, and that's pretty much the story."

The Bowery Presents, Live Nation and AEG all have a range of exclusive venue deals. But the three main arenas in the New York metropolitan area—the Garden, Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum and Continental Airlines Arena—are all open buildings that can work with any promoter. The new Prudential Center Arena, set to open this fall in Newark, N.J., will be booked exclusively by AEG Live.

From Scher's perspective, his competitors have tied their fortunes to their venue arsenal, opening new rooms and rebranding others. "History teaches us there are not going to be more shows just because there are more venues," he says.

"You've got a decision to make. Do you want to invest millions of dollars into a really solid arena that for the most part in New York you don't own, you lease, to jump into a competition that the end result could be—we think will be—a zero sum game?"

"We feel going forward that our mandate is to be the promoter in this marketplace that is the most flexible and will do the right thing for the artists and not have an allegiance to any one facility," he says. "When an act chooses to play for us, it's not one of hundreds of shows we're doing and we're not pressured to fill a particular room."

WHEN AGENTS ATTACK

Competition among buyers creates a seller's market and affords agents options. So when promoters compete, agents and their clients win. "The agents are going to have a field day," Scher says.

"Everything is bid up. Werts as best we can to stay out of that fray."

In the event of a bidding war between promoters, ticket prices could potentially go higher, particularly at the arena level. "There are one or two agents that will really play every offer of each other, but most of the agents know what they want and what each guy brings to the table," Morrow says. "I don't see a lot of driving the money up and up in promoter wars. In New York it's really a venue play or a certain promoter that's been there for you in the past."

With club shows, "more of what happens at that level is the agent says, "The ticket is $22, you can't go over it," Rathwell says. "So it's really incumbent on what the promoters do to get the unbids to live within that ticket price."

In that case, the promoter must show what else it can bring to the party in terms of venue, marketing and promotion. Promoters also promise to bring fees and upfronts for the artists. "Ultimately, we must pay our artists in the right situation," says Kirk Sommer, William Morris agent for such acts as the Killers and Paolo Nutini. "There is a number of variables in determining the right situation. One determined is, it is a function of availability and routing. The more options the better."
**CW's 'Gossip Girl' Brings More Hits To TV**

The show is a product of teen marketing agency Alloy Entertainment in association with Warner Bros. Television and CBS Paramount Television. Chop Shop Music owner Alexandra Patsavas, who was the music supervisor for "The OC" and currently does the same for "Grey's Anatomy" and other shows, will apply her deft music skills. As with "The OC" and "Grey's Anatomy," and other shows on the CW (see story, below), music will feature heavily into the lives and plot lines of the main characters. For instance, promo spots for "Gossip Girl" — viewable on the CW and the Internet — feature Fergie's "Glamorous" and Aqualung's "Something to Believe In."

Patsavas says these two acts are representative of the show's music. "What 'The OC' did for indie rock, we'd like 'Gossip Girl' to do for pop," she says. The pilot episode of "Gossip Girl" spotlights music by Rihanna, the Mooney Suzuki, Hanson, Amy Winehouse, Angels & Airwaves and others.

"I'm relying on old favorites while exploring current pop music," Patsavas says. "And since the show revolves primarily around high school students in New York, we'll definitely be using some New York-based bands. But these kids listen to the radio, too," she adds. "So, there will be that music, too."

Patsavas and the CW VP of music Leonard Richardson acknowledge that there is much space for music on a show like "Gossip Girl." In addition to licensed tracks, the show features the sounds of production team the Transcenders, who composed the show's overall music, including the theme song.

Taking a cue from the advertising world, the CW has also started inviting artists to its offices to meet with producers and music supervisors. This new initiative recently launched with a performance and meet-and-greet by Vanessa Carlton. "We're looking to do more of this," Richardson says. "It brings us closer to managers, agents, labels and music publishers."

For the upcoming TV season, Nicole Scherzinger is the "face and voice" of the CW's image campaign. The Pussycat Doll sings the original song "Get into It" in a music video created and produced by the network. 2006 CW "faces and voices" belong to will.i.am and Fergie.

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**CW's Music Mission**

Network Puts Songs In The Forefront

"Gossip Girl" (see story, this page) isn't the only CW series that will prominently feature music this fall.

"Music is incredibly important to the CW network," the network's VP of music Leonard Richardson says. While "settling the tone of each show," the music must also "provide viewers with the most up-to-date sounds," Richardson adds. "That's the challenge and the drill of this network."

Another new CW show, "Reaper," features songs by Tim Armstrong and Avril Lavigne in promo spots. "Aliens in America," meanwhile, is being promoted with the help of the Fratellis.

Fans of returning CW shows "Top Model" and "Beauty and the Geek" will hear, respectively, tracks by Rihanna and Rooney in promo plugs.

Throughout its programming, Richardson says, the CW uses "music ad cards" at the end of shows that promote featured artists and point viewers to cwtv.com, where they can get more info about music they've just heard.

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**Tickets To Ride**

**What's At Stake If Ticketmaster And Live Nation Split**

Ticketmaster's pre-emptive strike in the form of an internal e-mail calling a new deal with Live Nation "doubtfull" could signal a new world order in the critical live-event ticketing space.

The stakes are incredibly high for both sides, and the industry has been anxiously awaiting repercussions of what by all accounts have been tense negotiations (Billboard, July 28). Now an internal Ticketmaster memo, first broken on billboard.biz Aug. 25, suggests the 10-year-old contract between Ticketmaster and Live Nation is thin ice, and will not be renewed when it expires at the end of next year.

Likely fallout for the two companies, and for their customers, shakes out as follows:

**Live Nation**

More than the millions of dollars per year that service charges from ticketing can generate, Live Nation's endgame is probably more about the value of connecting with fans, ticket-buyer intelligence and data, and the inherent value in marketing and sponsorship that holds. If Live Nation controls its destiny in selling fans tickets, it could own the keys to the customer kingdom.

Live Nation has appeared to be setting itself up to handle ticketing in-house. Last year, the company acquired a 51% interest in Music Today, the acknowledged leader in the direct-to-fan space through artist e-commerce and fulfillment and artist fan club ticketing. Live Nation has also significantly ramped up its livenation.com to the point that its unique visitors are approaching 5 million per month, second (if distantly) only to Ticketmaster's 21 million unique monthly visitors as a live-entertainment destination.

Sources close to the situation say that Live Nation not only wants to increase the 10% allotment to sell tickets in-house granted by Ticketmaster, but also wants to sell most if not all of its Ticketmaster tickets under the Live Nation banner, essentially shepherding the Ticketmaster brand for Live Nation events.

**TicketMaster**

If a deal is not worked out, Ticketmaster faces a world without the biggest of its 9,000 clients, one that represents about 10% of Ticketmaster revenue. Sources close to the relationship say Ticketmaster sells between $4 million and $15 million in tickets per year to Live Nation events, generating about $100 million in service-charge fees for Ticketmaster, which saw revenue of nearly $1 billion in 2006.

Ticketmaster seems to be reconciling itself and its employees to life without the largest promoter in the world. "We are now conducting our business with the clear understanding that our partnership with Live Nation is more than likely coming to an end," the memo states. "We will continue to fulfill our obligations under the agreement until it expires."

Ticketmaster is still overwhelmingly the dominant force in ticketing. Through strategic acquisitions of such Web-based fan-driven sites as echomusic and iLike, and an ongoing legitimizing of the secondary market, Ticketmaster has itself greatly strengthened its Web-based relationship with fans. Additionally, Ticketmaster parent IAC has purchased a large stake in mega-management firm Front Line, giving Ticketmaster a de facto relationship with artists it has not enjoyed in the past.

**The Fans**

The real winner here may be the fans. No matter what happens, the entire industry is moving toward increased levels of service, more targeted marketing, a wider menu of touch points with artists and an improved concert experience. All this comes at a price, but fans have shown they're willing to pay for better access.

But with more than a year left on the contract and millions of dollars at stake, it would not be a total shock if Live Nation and Ticketmaster were to somehow find a common ground. If not, both companies will be forced to deal with a revolution in how ticketers, promoters, venues and artists connect fans with the live experience.
GREAT SEASON, GREAT YEAR!

This year as in every year, BMI songwriters and composers took home the majority of the industry’s most prestigious awards.

- Academy of Country Music: 71%
- American Music Awards: 73%
- Billboard Music Awards: 57%
- Billboard R&B/Hip Hop Awards: 67%
- Blues Music Awards: 100%
- Country Music Association: 67%
- Down Beat Jazz Critics Poll: 73%
- Grammys: 52%
- Rhythm & Blues Foundation*: 86%
- Rock & Roll Hall of Fame*: 68%
- Tony® Awards: 100%

...and this year they were also honored with the Library of Congress Gershwin Prize, Musical America’s Composer of the Year and the Polar Music Prize.

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ED CHRISTMAN echristman@billboard.com

Why Labels Should Set Minimum-Price Restraints

Since a recent Supreme Court ruling overturned a precedent-setting case holding that minimum-price restraints violate antitrust regulations regardless of the circumstances, specialty music retailers and wholesalers have been busy rethinking their pricing policies to see if the majors will revisit the pricing issue.

Naturally, I asked each major that very same question after the June 28 ruling, and every one of them told me that their lawyers are studying the court decision. That decision involves a suit filed by the Kay's Kloset accessories chain, alleging that manufacturer Lee- gin Creative Leather Products violated antitrust regulations when it refused to sell to the retailer because it discounted goods below the manufacturer's suggested minimum price. The District Court and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the chain, but the Supreme Court overturned those rulings.

Even with that ruling, retailers should be aware that horizontal price strategies—ones where competitors like all major labels agree on a set price—are still illegal under Chapter 1 of the Sherman Act. But what the ruling does is allow for the "rule of reason" to be applied on whether setting a vertical price restraint—an agreement between a major and retail—could now be ruled legal if it promotes interbrand competition. But if that vertical price restraint is found to restrain trade, it could still be ruled illegal.

In other words, it doesn't legalize minimum-price restraints, but it does make antitrust pricing practices harder to prove, by allowing a vendor to make a case that its pricing moves enhance competition.

The Supreme Court ruling, at the very least, inspires theorists to, well, theorize. For example, some music specialty merchants contend the ruling lays the groundwork for labels to set minimum pricing for CDs which would not only benefit retailers and labels but consumers too. One traditional music retailer goes so far as to say that since music specialty merchants have already offset the price war by diversifying into other product lines, they no longer need minimum pricing for CDs. Besides, the discounters' music sales and profitability are suffering too, one retailer says, and they might welcome price restraints as well. So unless labels do something to protect the space devoted to CDs, sales numbers will keep shrinking, and music selection will shrink for consumers too.

Another source in the music specialist camp points out that, in its ruling, the Supreme Court noted that vertical price restraints can stimulate interbrand price competition and encourage retailers to invest in services or promotional efforts that aid the sale of one manufacturer's goods against a rival manufacturer. For instance, a jazz label could make a case that the imposition of minimum pricing would stop discounters like Circuit City from hurting the business of such merchants as Borders and Barnes & Noble that stock a broader array of jazz titles.

That would provide a service to shoppers as well as the label's artists, who can be assured that their deep catalog titles at least have representation at retail.

Ruling that the music industry, one could speculate that discounters sometimes get a free ride from independent retailers and music specialty chains that help break developing artists. Going forward, minimum-price restraints might help in a situation in which labels have a hard time getting indie merchants and regional music-specialty chains to pay attention to their particular baby artist. A label could promise indie and small-chain merchants that they help break the artist, it will impose minimum-price restraints so discounters can't control the marketplace for that artist. Such a move would ensure that merchants that help break an artist get a chance to share in the upside sales.

Some broadened the argument that minimum pricing can be legally justified by pointing to the devastation that has occurred in the marketplace since the Federal Trade Commission ruled against minimum-adverised pricing strategies in 2000. Mike Dreese —who, by the way, doesn't believe labels should institute minimum-price strategies—nonetheless makes the argument on behalf of those who do by stating that Wal-Mart, Target and Best Buy have succeeded in almost destroying the specialty music account base and are now setting the rules for the industry. If minimum pricing were implemented, it would keep the discounters from finishing off the minimum-pricing merchants that have limited selection, have such dominance that labels now spend more money on supporting low retail prices and much less advertising the availability of the product, he says.

Still, Dreese wonders whether the imposition of pricing restraint will ultimately matter at this stage of the game. "Can Dr. Frankenstein revive the corpse of music specialty retail?" he asks.

Next week: Why the labels won't set minimum-pricing restraints.

Making The Brand
MICHAEL PAOLETTA mpaolett@billboard.com

Loungin' At Lollapalooza
Brands Make Their Presence Felt At Chicago Festival

Amy Winehouse was there. So were Lupe Fiasco, M.I.A. and members of the Roots, Kings of Leon and Spoon.

This colorful cast was on hand Aug. 3-5 at the ck INZU Music Lounge at the Hard Rock Hotel Chicago. In town for Lollapalooza, the acts trekked over to the second annual Calvin Klein-branded Music Lounge when they needed a break from the crowded, hot festival grounds.

During the day, the Music Lounge served as the home base for artists and celebrities who needed to recharge and relax. By night, the Lounge evolved into the Blender Sessions, with live performances from the Polyphonic Spree, Motion City Soundtrack, Plain White T's and White Rabbits.

Created and designed by Brian Felt, owner of entertainment marketing company BMF Media Group, the Music Lounge offers a no-pressure environment in which bands and brands can connect. While ck INZU was the title sponsor, other sponsors included Calvin Klein Underwear, PF Flyers, Sara Lee and Cafe Bustelo, which used the Music Lounge to help launch its new Bustelo Cool premium espresso beverage.

IT'S A WRAP
To better grasp the needs of brands, we invited Calvin Klein Fragrances global director of public relations Ashley Barrett, Calvin Klein Underwear marketing director Emily Bonhos, Sara Lee Food Beverage director of marketing development Sara Mathew, Cafe Bustelo parent company Roundel Coffee Roasters marketing director John Paul Souto and Hard Rock Hotel Chicago director of sales and marketing Joe LaBreche to share their thoughts.

What did you hope to achieve by taking part in the ck INZU Music Lounge?
Barrett: The [lounge] was an opportunity to generate buzz and press coverage for the [ck] brand, get the product into the hands of tastemakers and create a memorable experience for our guests.

Mathew: [This] provided us with a unique opportunity to directly engage with consumers through easily accessible snacking experiences involving such products as Ball Park franks and State Fair corn dogs. Aligning these specific brands with an experience that is fun, interactive and memorable is a great way to keep these brands and products top of mind with consumers.

Souto: We wanted to reach a younger consumer demographic—the same ones that are savvy and are used to drinking good coffee.

LaBreche: We wanted to utilize the strength of ck INZU's brand awareness and introduce Hard Rock Hotel Chicago to their fans.

Bohonus: We are always exploring new marketing ideas and felt one-on-one dialogue with media and music industry influencers was an innovative and exciting approach.

Since Lollapalooza, how have you measured the return on investment from the lounge?
Barrett: One of our main goals was to generate press coverage for ck INZU, and we have seen great results, particularly amongst the entertainment press and high-profile blogs and Web sites that our consumers frequent.

Souto: We have received many inquiries for both Cafe Bustelo and Bustelo Cool [from] artists and media. We also met beverage distributors at the event who now want to sell Bustelo in other markets.

Bohonus: [This] was the ideal setting for us to establish word-of-mouth buzz about our new line for men, Calvin Klein Steel, and our naked thing for women.

In your overall business dealings, what types of branded partnerships work best and why?
Barrett: It's not entirely about the product or lending our brand name to an event. It's about creating an experience.

Mathew: Partnership alignments must be organic and offer the consumer a positive added-value opportunity.

Souto: The Music Lounge was the perfect fit for us because we were in the same circle as other brands that have a younger, hipper and "cool" audience.

LaBreche: It is our goal to strategically align ourselves with brands that have similar operating philosophies and represent a product that appeals to like consumers.

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**Tourasaurus**

New Production Turns Prehistoric Reptiles Into Rock Stars

In the world of concert production, Jake Berry is known as simply the best. He’s the backstage guru that has overseen mega productions in stadiums and for acts including the Rolling Stones, U2, Tina Turner and Cher.

Now Berry is the production director on a tour that has arena managers from coast to coast talking. Walking With Dinosaurs—The Live Experience. After playing 10 sold-out weeks in Australia to 300,000 people, Walking With Dinosaurs is visiting North American arenas in a tour put together by ArenaNetwork. Based on the BBC TV show, the tour is produced in the United States by Bruce McTaggart. And it’s putting up some huge numbers at the box office. The Spokane (Wash.) Arena, for example, grossed $1.5 million with it. “We sold every single ticket when a place doesn’t have a loading dock,” Berry says. “We have to build one and roll them out because these dollys are nearly 30 feet long.”

The production must hang about 116,000 pounds of light, sound and scenery. Load-in is 12–14 hours, generally on Tuesday, the day before a run of performances begins.

“All the lighting focus is done during the night, and we also have a lot of video to program,” Berry says in full-blown production director speak. “There are challenges to video because the projectors are so high up. There’s a program called a flying Platinum that warps the picture to make it fit.”

The dinosaurs themselves are technical wonders, the largest of them maneuvered by high-tech puppeteers and hidden drivers” so that they not only walk among patrons, but react to their screams with a menacing glint and a powerful roar. The show is theatrical in its presentation, with “spectacular” lighting from John Raymond. The set designer is Peter England, known for ballets and operas. “I have a term. It’s a little bit of theater and a little bit rock, so I call it ‘Broad Rock,’” Berry says.

In configuration, the program is set up similar to an ice show, with 150 feet of staging area in front of a large curtain. “These creatures walk around the arena to you, and you remain seated,” Berry says.

Stars include Arkylsosaurus, Stegosaurus, Utahraptors, Liliensternus, Torosaurus, Plateosaurus, Allosaurus, Brachiosaurus and, of course, the big guy, T-Rex. None of them have a problem with green MRKs.

In the most basic of terms, the story begins when the Earth was home to the “supercriss- neters” Pangea, during the Paleozoic and Mesozoic eras. Hundred-million-year story short: continents split, dinos arrive, rule, evolve, meteor hits, game over. Berry does a much better job explaining and is obviously warm to the topic. “He’s seen pretty much everything on tour, but he still gets excited about this show.”

“Jim’s 54 years old. I learned more in the first 45 minutes about dinosaurs than I’ve ever known in my entire life,” Berry says, adding, “I was never into dinosaurs before.”

So what attracted him to this project? “I was planning to enjoy a few months off, but every once in a while there are things that come along that don’t exactly make your career but push you to another level,” he says. “At one time I was doing the greatest heavy metal bands in the world and having a great time doing it. Then I had the great opportunity from [promoter] Michael Cohl to work with the Rolling Stones, which led to U2 and to a certain degree Tina Turner and Cher, which took me to what I’d like to think is the pinnacle. Then all of a sudden you get offered a new and exciting project which nobody else has done. I find it very cool.”

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**UPFRONT**

On The Road

Ray Waddell rwaddell@billboard.com

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Héctor Lavoe, dead for a decade, is today the most popular name on Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart, thanks to "El Cantante," the film based on his life, starring Marc Anthony.

The film's Sony BMG soundtrack, on which Anthony sings the songs that made Lavoe iconic in his short lifetime, has sat at No. 1 on the chart since its release one month ago, having sold 60,000 copies to date, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

At Nos. 9 and No. 18, respectively, on the same chart are "El Cantante: El Original" and "A Man and His Music," both out on the legendary Fania Records.

Later this year, Machete Music will release an album of urban versions of Lavoe tracks.

Needless to say, the Lavoe boom is in direct proportion to the film's popularity and the popularity of the star portraying him. But it has also coincided with a slow resurgence in interest in salsa music, along with reissues of the Fania catalog, which Emusica Music bought last year.

"Interest was growing even before the excitement of the movie started," Emusica director of marketing Michael Rucker says. "We positioned the catalog out in the marketplace similar to how Motown was positioned: as a deep, rich catalog. And you get the benefit of remastered recordings," he adds, noting that since March 2006, Emusica has remastered 260 of the approximately 1,300 albums the Fania catalog contains.

The company has also turned to nontraditional marketing and repackaging to sell the music. This summer, for example, the label began releasing Fania compilations overseen by well-known DJs from specific cities in an effort to make the music relevant to targeted communities. DJ Rumor put together "Fania Live '01 From New York." The DJ Le Spam compiled "Fania Live '02 From Miami" drops Sept. 25. And Sake's "Fania Live '03 From San Francisco" will be released Nov. 1.

There is also a Fania compilation sold at Starbucks, plus aggressive Internet marketing of the reissues.

"Without a doubt, though, the biggest boon for the label has been "El Cantante." From a public relations standpoint, you couldn't talk about the movie without talking about Fania Records and Hector Lavoe," Rucker says.

Among Rucker's first moves in anticipation of the film's release was ensuring that the pertinent sites would pop up on the first page of any Internet search. Then, there was the question of what specific music to market.


Marketing strategies for the sets included theatrical advertising in theaters that were showing "El Cantante" and distribution of 100,000 digital download cards during the Puerto Rican Day Parade in New York. Itunes had the digital exclusive for "El Original" for a week, and the album rose to No. 3 on the store's Latin charts.

"The great thing we've learned is it never is too early or too late to connect with this music," says Rucker, who is already at work on a Celia Cruz "Woman and Her Music" set. Its November release will coincide with the Cruz musical that will begin its New York run in September.

THE BILLBOARD

"Down," winner of the 2007 Billboard Latin Music Award for reggaetón song of the year, is a soulful blend of reggaetón and R&B that shed new light on a genre that had long been associated with simply dancing. Its author is Wise (real name Gabriel Cruz Padilla), who shares credit on the track with Rakim & Ken-Y (who performed it) and producer Rafael Pina. Wise, who has written for RBD and Toby Love, is now preparing to release his own album, "Gold Pen," and is working on several other projects, including ones with new group W7 and Hector "El Father."

Can you define your music? I would say it's urban music. It's kind of a restructuring of what's pop within urban. And we're applying it to reggaetón because we need to expand that genre. As far as lyrics are concerned, they're a bit more street, more open. I think people want to hear lyrics that make sense but that young listeners can easily identify with, as if it were a conversation.

Where do you see reggaetón going? The way I understand it, what's coming is urban music. There are major reggaetón acts who will continue to be there. But the genre will expand, and something new will come that I see as a mix of pop and hip hop. And it can continue to be danceable, because the rhythm has to be there. But it also has to have a lot of feeling, which doesn't necessarily mean romanticism.

How about your album, "Gold Pen." It has many reggaetón names on it. Will it be reggaetón? It's my album as a composer and producer. My collaborators include Lenny Torres and Tany, but also acts like Elvis Crespo. It's an album that goes beyond just reggaetón and is very influenced by hip-hop. —LC
Guitar Tabs
Publishers Disagree On Best Biz Model

What happens when someone features guitar tabs on a Web site so musicians can learn to play their favorite songs? The posting is probably copyright infringement since publishers have licensed very few guitar tab sites. But publishers are facing even more pressing questions than whether they should sue the unauthorized sites: What is the best business model to compete with the free, unauthorized sites, and do current publishing contracts even cover the necessary rights to post tabs to the authorized sites?

The sale of print versions of guitar tabs is a multimillion-dollar business. Although publishers' revenue is confidential, a source with a print publisher crunched some numbers for me based on information from a NAMM report, the company's own revenue and the source's estimate of competitors' revenue. According to a NAMM report, the North American print music market generated $539 million in retail sales in 2006. My source estimates that about 48% of that amount ($258.7 million) was related to songs in about 2.7 million songbooks. About 16% of the song portion of the revenue was likely attributable to guitar tabs, thereby generating roughly $41.4 million in retail revenue from about 40 million individual guitar tabs. With wholesale prices typically 45%-50% of the retail price, print publishers likely received $18.6 million, $20.7 million in 2006 from print guitar tabs, which they then shared with songwriters and their publishers.

Currently, only three commercial guitar tab sites appear to be authorized by a large number of publishers. Each sells tabs as digital sheet music: FreeHand (FreeHand Systems), Musescore and Steeple MusicChords (Hal Leonard and Music Sales U.K.). Meanwhile, sites that may contain unauthorized tabs keep growing. From July 6 to July 2007, unique monthly visitors grew for Ultimate-Guitar.com from 1.4 million to 2.4 million, and for 911tabs.com from 473,000 to 1.1 million, according to comScore Media Metrix.

In an attempt to compete with the free sites, Musicnotes acquired a previously unauthorized site, MXtabs.net, with plans to license the site's database of tabs and add others, offer them for free and share ad revenue with publishers. Among the publishers who licensed their music for the site were BMG Music Publishing, Famous Music, Bug Music and PeerMusic.

But when Musicnotes made a deal with the Harry Fox Agency in May so that publishers could opt in to the licensing deal for MXtabs, Hal Leonard reacted negatively. It e-mailed some publishers to urge them to think carefully before licensing the "free" business model, which may include amateurs (i.e., not necessarily accurate) guitar transcriptions of songs. Musicnotes posted the letter and its reply on the MXtabs site, which has not yet launched its service.

It's unclear whether the action to the dispute is holding up the site. But the debate is unlikely to be resolved soon. It boils down to two questions. First, is all the illegal sites, should tabs be offered for free on ad-supported sites even though "free" may feed into consumer demand for more free music, thus devaluing music? Or should legal action against unauthorized sites and educational efforts be the strategy for publishers while building per-download or per-use sites for tabs?

While the industry discusses the best digital approach, here's another question: Do any print publishers even have the contractual right to post guitar tabs to sites as opposed to selling them as downloads?

Historically, a songwriter's publisher or the songwriter/artist licensed print rights to print publishers, like Hal Leonard, Music Sales, Cherry Lane and Alfred Publishing. But those contracts typically specified that the only right granted was the right to reproduce the compositions in the form of printed sheet music. The music industry really hasn't dealt with "display" rights.

Copyright law grants exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, publicly perform or display, and to make a derivative of the copyrighted work. Making and selling CDs and digital downloads triggers the reproduction and distribution rights for compositions. Broadcasting and streaming recorded songs involves the public performance right. But there hasn't been much of a market for "displaying" compositions to the public, as one would display a work of art. So probably very few—if any—contracts even grant a display right in compositions.

This right will ultimately have to be addressed, as the popularity of guitar tab sites that display notations of the songs increases.

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Auto Loans a little hard to swallow? Here's some fast, over-the-counter relief.

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To Wiki, Or Not To Wiki?

Open-Source Tool Is A Double-Edged Sword For Music Sites

The wild world of wikis gained another member this week. Music video TV channel Fuse is launching a music artist wiki site where fans can post information, photos, videos and reviews about any artist they wish. The company will add exclusive content of its own to each artist profile, drawing from its database of interviews, live concerts and other footage captured via the TV channel.

In doing so, Fuse is entering a crowded and controversial space that is filled with successes and failures alike. A wiki is an online collaborative tool that lets anyone make edits, add or remove text and in some cases upload multimedia like photos or videos to articles about a given topic. The largest and perhaps most well-known wiki source is Wikipedia, which is one of the top 10 most-visited Web sites in the world.

This open-source approach to information is a double-edged sword. On one hand, entries benefit from the knowledge and expertise of sometimes thousands of readers who constantly monitor and update the topics that interest them most. On the other hand, it doesn't take much for one person to spread misinformation, either through ignorance or by design.

In most cases, the vast community of wiki users quickly root out inaccuracies and make corrections before any real damage is done. But it's harder to eradicate spin. A CallTech grad student recently created a Wikipedia Scanner designed to track users who make anonymous edits on Wikipedia entries. In many cases, the anonymous edits were made by the subject of the article and some tracked back to the music industry.

It's no unusual for publicity reps to post the official bio of an act on its wiki page, be it on Wikipedia or more niche music wiki sites like MusicWikiGuide and Last.fm. But Internet sleuths tracked more questionable edits back to the IP addresses of several major labels. Examples include deleting negative comments others had made and adding obvious marketing text to album descriptions.

According to Sean Caron, chief strategy officer of Web marketing consulting firm IDemic, this is a common practice that corporations use to pursue a fruitless effort to control their online image. "People can sniff out marketing talk a million miles away," he says. "If someone tries to edit their own artist's entries to put them in a positive light, people are just going to avoid it because it's counter to the spirit of the whole genre. The thought that you can control your brand these days is just absurd. Whether you like it or not, people are saying things about you in various public forums."

The risk of a wiki turning into either a record label mouthpiece or a forum for artist bashing has kept several potential music wiki sources from entering the game. Virtually every digital music subscription service operating today says it's mulling the idea, but has not yet settled on a specific strategy. The only one to even try it, Napster, shut it down in a matter of months. When the company relaunched its Web site last May, it made a big deal out of a user-generated artist-based wiki service called the Narchive. The original plan was to give members free rein on what they posted, but company officials say, "it just didn't work" for fear of artist profiles being defaced by negative comments.

Napster switched to more of a moderated message board format that gave the company more control over content, but it never attracted the traffic expected and closed shortly after. Fuse VP of digital media Beth Lewand hopes to avoid these issues by making Fuse's wiki site more than merely a source of information, but a shared community where like-minded fans can share their experiences with their favorite artists.

"We're not taking the academic approach like Wikipedia," she says. "It's more accessible and designed to be fun—a place to not only post facts, but also express yourself." The company also wants to work with record labels, tour venues and record stores to contribute as well. It will be interesting to see how Fuse juggles the music industry's desire to use wikis as a source of promotion (and propaganda) with fans' desires for something useful and real. "The difficulty is that most companies doing this want to control the message all the time," Caron says. "They don't want wikis to operate the way they should, which is to have a forum where people can pretty much say whatever they want. That just scares the crap out of them."
OUT OF SYNC

U.K. Protests Rise Over TV Royalty Deal

LONDON—The Performing Rights Society’s (PRS) decision to radically change the way it distributes royalties for music played on TV has sparked howls of protest and divided its membership.

In February, the board of directors at the U.K. authors' collecting society opted for a new two-tier system weighting royalty rates in favor of music aired during prime time.

Previously, PRS members received the same rate per minute of music 24/7 and the introduction of the new system, which came without prior membership consultation, angered many.

"The decision-making process was very undemocratic," says PRS member Paul Farrer, whose credits include BBC/NBC quiz show “The Weakest Link” and 2005 movie “Domino.” "It has created an air of distrust between the board and the members it is representing."

The new initiative took effect in April, and members felt its first impact in their July royalty statements. Since April, music played in peak 6 p.m.-midnight slots has been earning nearly twice the amount of royalties paid during the other 18 hours.

“I feel very strongly that we should have been consulted more,” says PRS composer member Olivia Dixon, founder of TV/film composers organization Screened Music Network. “I would have liked to have discussed a possible three-tier [prime-time/nighttime/daytime] system.”

PRS claims it is falling in line with most authors' societies practices worldwide, while a representative says the board will review the policy's effects "after analyzing a year's worth of distributions..." The body declined to comment further.

But at its annual general meeting June 28 in London, PRS chairman Ellis Rich said 19% of PRS members receiving payments in the July royalty distribution would be affected by the change, but two-thirds of them would only see a difference of plus or minus £5 ($10). He acknowledged some members' discontent, but called the old system "untenable" and said that polling 50,000 members would "lead to organizational paralysis."

However, Farrer insists that "in the past, there would have been a big debate about this." He has now set up a dedicated Web site, composersforafairdeal.com, with a digital petition calling for the board to either cancel the new scheme or put it to a full membership vote.

"The decision-making process has created an air of distrust between the board and the members it is representing."

—PAUL FARRER, PRS MEMBER

Friends of Erika Jayne congratulate
ROLLEROASTER
the first release of Erika Jayne which got to the top of Billboard's Hot Dance Club Play chart.

When does “Stars” come out?

FRIENDS OF ERIKA JAYNE
Spanish Exploration
Labels Build Bridge To U.S. Indie Sector

GLOBAL

By Howell Llewellyn

MADRID—Spain’s independent labels are hoping to ramp up their business activities in the United States thanks to a ground-breaking government/music business alliance.

Eight Spanish indie companies met American counterparts during a three-day trip to New York (July 16-18), organized by the industry ministry’s foreign trade institute ICEX, label’s body Promusicae and indie label group UFI. They aimed to build relations with the U.S. indie sector and lay the foundations for licensing/label deals.

“It was excellent—a huge success,” says UFI VP Mark Kiccat, also director of Madrid indie Everlasting Records. Kiccat adds that “no closed deals were done” during the visit, but says return visits are planned in 2008 and predicts that “many companies will get licenses, releases and gigs in the U.S.” through the initiative.

The trade mission was the first fruit of a music sector plan ICEX drew up with 81-member Promusicae and 43-member UFI in 2006. ICEX funded each of the Spaniards traveling to the tune of €940 ($1,310).

“For some time we have wanted pro-active government support for the recorded-music sector,” Promusicae president Antonio Guisasola says.

“This trip marked the first step toward what should be a fruitful business exchange.”

ICEX, Promusicae and UFI are arranging an indies visit to China in November with similar aims. ICEX has additionally committed to funding a Spanish stand for Promusicae and UFI at South by Southwest in 2008, the first time Spain will be represented at the confab.

American companies involved in the trip—organized by New York–based public relations company MG Lid.—included Beggars U.S., Caroline Distribution, eMusic, Koch Distribution, MTV Urge, the Orchard, RED Music and Ryko Distribution.

“The U.S. guys understood that the business flow was from here to there,” Kiccat says. “They were not trying to sell stuff to us; they went out of interest, not financial incentive. The most interesting thing was the level of digital business in the U.S. indie sector. Beggars U.S. told us about 30% of their business is digital—in Spain it averages 2%-3%. U.S. digital deals will be important for us.”

The U.S. companies that attended the meetings said they found them useful, but were unsure how much concrete business would come from the discussions.

Tony Bruno, New York–based VP of marketing at distribution/artist development company Red Music, says the experience “was like a reconnaissance mission, rather than a hard sell,” although he adds that it had raised his awareness of the Spanish independent sector. Judy Cantor-Nawas, New York–based Latin and world music programming manager for Urge/MTV Networks, says she will keep in touch with the Spanish companies about upcoming releases.

“There is certainly an audience to be found here,” she says. “Digital music presents an opportunity for Spanish indie labels to market their music here at a new level.”

UFI estimates that Spanish indies’ combined domestic market share was 15.2% in value terms during 2006, when, according to the IFPI, the trade value of the market was $126.9 million. Current leading independent label acts range from hip-hop/ROUGH wrinkled the Versus Orchadi (AOA Music) to pop/rock band the Sunday Drivers (Musshroom Pillow) and eclectic flamenco/rumba collective Ojos de Brujo (Diquila Records).

Julian Sanz, director of Madrid indie label Discos Necesarios, says he will return to New York under his own steam in October to look for an office.

“Want my kitchen in Spain and my restaurant in America,” he says. “I am determined to do business there and am confident many Spanish indies will [soon] sign distribution and licensing deals in the U.S.”

Additional reporting by Mark Sutherland in London.

IFPI Germany in 1998.

Stefan Michalk will step up from deputy managing director to take the helm of the associations, reporting to chairman Michael Haentjes.

Zobik plans to concentrate on running German collecting society GVL, which acts on behalf of performing artists and record manufacturers. He joined Berlin–based GVL as managing director in 1998.

Steeley Dan opened the Billboard Live music club Aug. 18 in Tokyo to an enthusiastic crowd.

Singer Donald Fagen promised to “play some tunes from the past going back into the deep ’70s.” And the band did just that, delivering an 80-minute set that included “Aja,” “Time Out of Mind,” “Dirty Work” and “Josie.”

Founding members Fagen and Walter Becker were supported in the $30-seat club by their regular 10-piece band.

The veteran American rockers will open all three of the new Billboard Live clubs in Japan. Starting Aug. 26, the band will perform six dates at the Osaka club, followed by three dates at the Fukuoka club beginning Sept. 3.

Fred Varcoe

**GLOBAL NEWSLINE**

**>EMI TO CANCEL LSE LISTING**

EMI Group expects to delist from the London Stock Exchange Sept. 18 as it prepares for a new era under the ownership of private equity firm Terra Firma.

On that date, Sly Bailey, Kevin Carton, Peter Georgescu and David Londoner will step down as nonexecutive directors of the company. Nonexecutive chairman John Gildersleeve will remain with EMI until he delists, after which time he will also resign.

Terra Firma, led by CEO Guy Hands, recently won its proposed £2.4 billion ($4.9 billion) takeover bid for EMI, beating out longtime suitor Warner Music Group.

Terra Firma says its offer is now “unconditional in all respects.”

—Lars Brandle

**>MERLIN SPELLS OUT FOUNDING BOARD**

Merlin, the rights body for the independent record sector, has formally launched after electing its inaugural board.

Merlin’s board members for North America are Independent Online Distribution Alliance founder/CEO Kevin Arnold, Long Live Crime Records founder/CEO Susan Ferris, Koch Records president Bob Frank and Tommy Boy Records chairman/CEO Tom Silverman. A Canadian representative will be confirmed soon.

European members are Wagram Music president Stephan Bourdoiseau, PIAS Group co-president Michel Lambert, Beggars Group chairman Martin Mills, Epitaph Europe managing director Hein Van der Ree and J7 CEO Horst Weidenmueller.

The rest of the world is represented by Tardus Music president Mark Kneebone, BULA Music director Clive Hardwick, Columbia Music Entertainment adviser Takashi Kamide, Zu Shu Entertainment founder Yongge Shen and MCD Entertainment president Eduardo Muszkat.

The board members, who will be in place for two years, join permanent directors Alison Wenham, president of the Worldwide Independent Network, and Merlin CEO Charles Caldas, who is a non-voting board member.

—Andrew Paino

**>ZOMBIK EXITS GERMAN INDUSTRY BODIES**

Peter Zobik, managing director of BPW and IFPI Germany, will exit the Berlin-based industry bodies, effective Sept. 15. He will continue to serve as a consultant.

Zobik joined labels body BPW in 1977, and has served as its managing director since 1982. He added duties at
KINGS OF THE HOMAGE

Tribute Bands Become Big Business In U.K.

LONDON—When Pink Floyd performed “Wish You Were Here” at Live 8 in July 2005, the re-formed band spoke for many of its fans. But fortunately, those unable to attend that one-off event have other options. This summer they could have heard the same track re-created perfectly in the prestigious surroundings of London’s 5,500-capacity Royal Albert Hall, except this time it was performed by the Australian Pink Floyd Show.

Liverpool-based promotion firm CMP Entertainment, which handles the band’s business, reports that the 30-plus 2007 shows has emerged to tap into the tribute band market. Although admitting it has yet to make a profit after three years of operation, Glastonbudget marketing director/co-organizer Chris Dunn says attendance has doubled each year, reaching 4,200 at this year’s May 25-27 edition.

“We have new-band nights, but the tribute nights are busier,” says Amanda Crichton, owner of the Standard, which has AC/DC, Led Zeppelin and Blondie tribute bands booked for September. “Business is business, and it’s good business at the moment.”

But Melvin Benn, managing director of British live music powerhouse Festival Republic (formerly known as Mean Fiddler Music Group), says that while the market has a thirst for musical impressionists, only a handful can sustain genuine success.

“There are a limited number that have genuine craft pulling in the crowds, while there is an absolute army of bootleg bands and copycat bands which really are run of the mill,” he says. “It’s not a direction we will go down” in booking acts.

But where the most successful tribute bands are concerned, Dunn says a trickle-down effect for the original acts.

“I don’t think tributes do original bands any harm at all, because it keeps their music rolling out longer,” he says. “If you like that set and that material, go buy the original CD. It’s great promo.”

4,200 Attendance at this year’s Glastonbudget Festival in Leicestershire
So I’m talking to Dion about his new album “The Son of Skip James” (out in a couple of months, check thestrong.com), another fabulous blues record following his critically acclaimed “Brixton in Blue,” and he’s telling me about this song “The Thunderer,” which is about St. Jerome.

Now St. Jerome was not exactly your typical saint. He was kind of the Simon Cowell of monk-ville—you know, a sort of 1st-century “On the Waterfront” Karl Malden.

He displayed no saintly patience with fools, heretics, nonbelievers, pagans, rivals or anyone he considered immoral. And he would openly and loudly criticize and humiliate them at every opportunity.

But he goes away with this “thus shalt have no other American Idol before me” behavior because he translated the Bible from both the Greek and Hebrew into the official Latin, which the pope still uses.

I bring this up because his line, “Ignorance of the scriptures is ignorance of Christ,” transcends what might have been a typical sermon-of-the-day one-liner by the weight of his having translated those scriptures one word at a time, if you catch my drift.

Since all religious text is symbolic to me and all religion metaphor, the story of St. Jerome becomes instructive in the story of what happened to the record business, the radio business, the music industry and what’s left of our pathetic culture in general.

What became of the boss who could tell it like it is, knowing he had the experience and the talent and the vision and the accomplishments to fearlessly challenge the status quo, to reach for greatness because he himself could help create it?

Telling an artist their song had to be better because he, the boss, was a songwriter.

Telling a producer the mix had to be better because he, the boss, was a producer.

Telling a radio programmer to play better songs because he, the boss, was a radio programmer.

Now what do we have? Guys telling guys to cut the budget because he, the boss, is an accountant.

Whoops. See you on the radio.
Gregg Latterman knows a thing or two about success.
Choosing to leave his profession as a lawyer, Latterman decided to focus on his true passion: music. In 1993, he started Aware Records in an attempt to expose the best little-known regional bands in the United States. To accomplish this, Aware began releasing compilations featuring these artists. The success of the compilations led to Aware becoming a label in earnest. Better Than Ezra, Vertical Horizon and John Mayer, among others, have all been affiliated with the label. These days, Mayer, Five for Fighting, Cat Kearney and Kyle Riabko call the label home.

Though he prefers to stay out of the business side of things, focusing instead on discovering and signing artists, Latterman brokered a deal with Columbia Records in 1997 (renewed five years later) that grants the major access to the independent's cache of grass-roots artists. The business arrangement also gives Aware access to Columbia's greater promotion, marketing and distribution. The relationship has helped Aware acts like Train, Five for Fighting and Mayer see greater success.

In 1999, Latterman decided to expand his business model by opening the doors to A-Squared Management, whose clients include Liz Phair, Motion City Soundtrack, Kearney, Brandi Carlile and the Fray.

In the midst of a hectic summer touring season, Latterman sat down with Billboard to discuss the state of the music industry— as seen through the eyes of a music lover.

**Aware knows a thing or two about breaking artists. How do you and your team accomplish this?**
I don't care about anything other than finding bands that I believe in, that are good people and that I think are incredible artists. Those are the people we want to be in bed with and work with for a long time. If you have that, all you can then do is look at all the different ways to expose an artist. You definitely have to know as much as possible— about any act you want to sign. So, when you look them in the eye and say, "Come with me. We're going to break you. I'll do whatever it takes," there is a high chance that you're going to break them. Because I can't sign bands anymore and not break them. It's the most painful thing that exists—to tell a band you're going to break them, but don't break them.

**How can you be sure that you'll be able to do that?**
It starts with the artists. Can they write their own songs to a high level? It's really about drive, too. It's also passion. John Mayer still has the same look in his eyes that he had when I first met him. Which is, he lives to play for people. Whether he's being paid or not, he just gets off on playing for people. And that's a true artist to me.

**What does it take on the label side to ensure that an artist is going to continue to demonstrate growth?**
It's sort of the same thing it's always been, which is exposure—but the right exposure. It used to be only about radio and video. Now it's radio, video, Internet, touring and all those other things that have to happen. It used to be you'd have a big radio hit and everything else would catch up. Now you have to have everything in place to even have a chance of selling a million records.

**Is TV an important component of that strategy?**
It's as important now as radio and video. You need to have it to push everything forward. TV is essential today, whether it's helping you get exposed or taking you to the next level like the Fray. But it's not just shows like "Grey's Anatomy." It's shows on TNT, it's movies on Lifetime. It's stuff that you probably don't even feel. The "Grey's" is a big, big thing. So I work on those, but I also work on the small stuff and the medium stuff. Like with Mat Kearney, his first single was on TNT promo spots for a year. It was the most valuable thing ever. You probably heard it three times and didn't even know you were hearing it. But little things like that end up being a big thing.

**How is Aware's relationship with Columbia Records?**
Love it. And I love [Sony BMG CEO] Rob Stringer more. We just broke the Fray worldwide because of Rob. We're not about breaking bands just in the United States now. If we break a band, to sort of make up for the lower sales, we have to break them around the world. Brandi Carlile, right now, is looking at breaking around the world. The Fray are huge in the U.K.

**You have been working with Reverb to green your tours. What exactly does Reverb do for you?**
You basically add on top of the ticket price what I call a "green fee." So if you bought a Fray ticket for $29.50, that $5.50 goes in our little environment bank. And then we're able to use that for biodiesel or anything we want to. With the Fray, I believe that added up to about $140,000. What's cool is that we took that extra money from the Fray ticket sales and we're hiring an employee for Reverb [to help with the Fray's green initiatives] for this year. We also put some money in a fund to green other smaller tours. It's very cool, because we're able to take a band that has the financial wherewithal, and not just do stuff for the Fray, but help other bands and make Reverb stronger.

**What made you start Aware?**
I love music, and I wanted to figure out a way to find bands that I actually liked and try to expose them without having to use radio and video. That's why I started the compilations, trying to find the best of the regional artists to put on one CD. It was like a national sort of pipeline to get music to people. And then I became the guy that knows how to get [music] on radio, video and TV. That's how it started. Unfortunately, compilations don't do much anymore. But that's how it started— just me trying to release the music that I love.

**What is your wish for the future of the industry?**
Just that people should continue to remember why they like music. In this world of instant gratification, hopefully people will keep buying full albums or downloading full albums and not make it a singles world. I also believe it's important to keep things special and not overexpose everything. At the same time, it's what you take and don't take. It's not that you take everything, but that you take the right stuff...
In the fall of 1993, such superstars as Billy Joel, Mariah Carey and Jackson siblings Michael and Janet were welcoming new faces like SWV, Ace of Base and Tag Team into the top 10 of The Billboard Hot 100. Garth Brooks, Nirvana, Cypress Hill and a reinvigorated Meat Loaf were among the acts placing No. 1 albums on The Billboard 200. Far below the charts, and barely on anyone's radar, a rookie singer/songwriter's debut album crawled out of the gates. For two-and-a-half months, the album clocked fewer than 500 copies per week, according to Nielsen SoundScan; for the following month-and-a-half, less than 1,000 per week. Indeed, released in August 1993, Sheryl Crow's "Tuesday Night Music Club" was in stores a full six months before it even splashed ink on Top Heatseekers, a chart devoted to artists who have yet to appear in the top half of The Billboard 200. The album reached No. 98 on the big chart in April 1994, but would bounce up and down for the next three months, falling as low as No. 196 before third single "All I Wanna Do" took hold. The song became a multi-format smash, reaching No. 4 on Modern Rock and No. 2 on the Hot 100, with multiple-week streaks at No. 1 on Mainstream Top 40 and Adult Contemporary. In the Oct. 1, 1994, issue—more than a year after release—the album clocked the first of its dozen weeks in the top 10, nine of those happening in 1995, after "All I Wanna Do" won the Grammy Award for record of the year. But, suppose Crow had been born 14 years later. Would she still have found a multiplatinum career? Amid consternation from labels that artist development has become a more daunting task in this decade of dynamic change, and criticism from some observers that the task has become a lost priority, Billboard conducted an exhaustive study of Nielsen SoundScan data on more than 1,000 new and developing artists who reached the top half of The Billboard 200 for the first time from 1992 to 2006. Our findings raise questions about the fate that might befall a singer/songwriter who sets up shop in 2007. Compared with 10 or 15 years ago, it is dramatically less common to take an album that starts slowly and turn it into a hit. And that's unfortunate because our analysis shows clearly that today, artists whose first chart action bubbles on the Heatseekers chart generally outperform those that start higher on The Billboard 200. >>>
From 1992 through 1994, 60% or more of all artists breaking through to the top half of The Billboard 200 earned their first chart ink on Heatseekers. By the mid-'90s that balance shifted to more artists starting on The Billboard 200—and it held on through last year, with more than 100 artists who hit the top half of the big chart for the first time, less than 5% started on the Heatseekers tally.

Artists break higher on the charts than ever before, depending on how you slice the numbers, with more breakthrough acts debuting in the top 100 of The Billboard 200 in the past two years (‘05 and ‘06) than in 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996 combined.

All those artists debuting in the top 100 might be a good thing, were it not for a sobering trend: As more and more artists debut higher on the charts, their sales are falling. In 1993, for example, there were only 29 first-week perceivers who began at the top of their breakthrough albums averaging 1.2 million copies per title. Ten years later, in 2003, the 67 new artists who began in the top half of the big chart averaged only 659,000 per title. The 72 acts from the class of ’04 made an average of 670,000, and the next year, that yield dipped precipitously, as 80 hypenized artists—those debuting in the top half of The Billboard 200—averaged a little more than 500,000.

And this isn’t simply a factor of overall sales being down. While the decline in album volume certainly contributes to the trend, prior to 2006, this decade’s threshold at No. 100 was on par with where it stood in the early to mid-’90s. The average weekly sales of the No. 100-selling album hovered between 12,000 and 14,000 units in each year from 2002 to 2005, about the same range as the years 1992-97. (See chart, page 30, for new trends in more current data.)

Meanwhile, the average sale of the breakthrough albums by Heatseekers graduates remains vigorous. The five that grew from Heatseekers in 2006—the Fray, Flyleaf, Hinder, Gnarls Barkley and OK Go—averaged 1.2 million, the highest average in four years for a Heatseekers graduating class, and a higher average than graduates of 1992 or 1993 realized. (See chart, at the bottom of page 29.)

Would a latter-day Crow have been among the increasing number of rookie artists who start their careers in the top half of The Billboard 200? And if she were, would a multiplatinum career follow that splash? Or, given the paucity of albums to graduate from Top Heatseekers in recent years, would an album that develops as slowly as “Tuesday Night Music Club” get lost in the shuffle?

“I think the fundamental difference in the world as it existed at that time and the world as it exists today,” says Al Cafaro, chairman of A&M Records when that label broke Crow, “is that record companies, like A&M—and there were many record companies that operated similarly—had the mind-set, the infrastructure and the resources to do things for new and developing artists for longer periods of time than they can today. The question is not as much, Could an artist like Sheryl Crow be successful today? because I think she would be. The question is, Who is going to provide the early resources, the early direction, and the infrastructure for that artist to be able to sustain itself/herself/themselves within the climate of the existing record business, which is extraordinarily about moving on to new opportunities?”

Cafaro left A&M in early ’99, when PolyGram was folded into Universal, and is now co-CEO of Metro-Politan Hybrid, one of many companies tweaking the music industry model. Cafaro’s current company combines a record label with concert promotion and artist management.

“The difference is infrastructure,” Cafaro says. “Record companies no longer have the time, the money and the staffing to provide that infrastructure around an artist early on that can help maximize the impact of the dollars that are being spent on that artist’s behalf.”

To investigate the numbers, Billboard interviewed more than two dozen current or recently employed executives with first-hand knowledge of artist development budgets and strategies. Some of the causes of these trends—retail consolidation, for example, or shrinking label budgets—may not surprise. But the reasons why these changes are affecting artist development—and some of the strategies that are working to overcome these trends—are striking.

Market Factors
RADIO AND RETAIL CONSOLIDATION

The radio consolidation floodgates swung wide open in 1996 with passage of the Telecom Act, which triggered unprecedented buying and selling prompted by the culmination of limits on the number of stations one company could own nationally, while allowing broadcasters to own up to eight stations in radio’s largest markets.

Meanwhile, on the retail front, the game has changed drastically.

“Back in the day, you could find bands that broke regionally,” says Jim Kaminski, who was the longtime head buyer for Tower Records’ store in downtown Manhattan. “Radio was smaller back then. You had independent stores that would stock things on a regional basis.

“Now with centralized buying, cable TV and a unified radio, the media is more standardized and the U.S. is more like the U.K., where things happen really fast and explode out of the box, and then fizzle faster. We have turned the U.S. market into a monolith that is just one-dimensional.”

Independent stores and regional chains, known for embracing developing artists, are critical in helping labels develop artists market by market, so that eventually baby bands would garner enough sales to convince the big boxes to take a chance.

That process was easier in 1991, the year that Billboard began using SoundScan data to determine chart placement. Billboard estimates that, at that time, with the traditional chart, a record should sell at least 1000 copies to be ranked; each chain had 100 stores or more—aggregating to a 47% market share. Some 6,000 independent stores yielded a 15% market share, 8,000 mass-market stores took a 23% market share, and the record clubs and mail-order companies had a 13% share.

Today, following mass consolidation, price wars and bankruptcies—most recently underscored by the 2006 closures of Musicland and Tower Records—Billboard very roughly estimates there are about 1,400 traditional chain music stores with about a 6% market share; roughly 1,600 independent stores with a 5% market share; and 2,000 album sales including TEA (track-equivalency albums, or equating every 10 tracks sold by one artist with an album sale) are at a 24% market share; other nontraditional retailers like record clubs, Amazon, Starbucks and concert album sales account for about 8%; some 7,000 mass-merchant stores yield approximately 31%; and about 2,000 consumer electronic and book stores with about a 26% market share.

Market-moving share has shifted to larger chains, and they generally prefer to join a success story, rather than create one. Such stores as Wal-Mart and Target like to see sales expectations above 50,000 units across other retailers before they even considering ordering a title.

“I remember records that direct accounts did not buy into until they reached a certain sales level,” says Randy Goodman, president of Disney Music Group’s country label Lyric Street. "Those were ‘retail records,’ and that’s how people talked about them and perceived them. But there are so few retailers anymore, that where you sell your tonnage is also where you begin. "With the advent of SoundScan, [album releases] are more like movie openings,” Goodman adds. “If you don’t start strong, accounts get freaked out and you don’t have a compelling story to tell radio. No matter where you start out, you are probably going to have a pretty high first week—of 50,000, 60,000 the second week. If you’re not starting out with some significant number, that kind of decline will drop you completely off the chart, and then boom. It’s over with in less than a month.”

Carl Mello, head buyer for New England regional chain Newbury Comics, says, “All support for records that don’t immediately take off drives us up very quickly. Nowadays, the day after a record comes out, people will already be saying a record is already dead. You either get a record that works right away or you get nothing at all.”

Pat Monaco, executive VP of sales and field marketing for Universal Motown Records Group (UMRG), says that same pressure is being imposed on them.

“There has been this emphasis that you have to start out high and you need to do everything for that first week to get the high debut, because all you’re going to do thereafter is drop,” he says. “I will tell you what is lacking: the ability for records to maintain. Once a debut is out, there is a feeling, more times than not, that the path of that record is nothing but down.”

LABEL BUDGETS

It takes careful planning, diligence and belief in an artist to overcome such obstacles. Unfortunately, consolidation and shrinking label budgets can make that difficult.

“Those labels have consolidated so much,” one major-label A&R executive says. “You have situations like...
three major labels in one record company now. That means three marketing teams and three promo teams, and three international teams are crammed down to one. It's a pipeline issue. You take the superstars and combine them into one roster, and you absolutely have to deliver those. There's just not room to focus on those developing artists in the ways you once did.

Continuing layoffs and consolidation at the major-label level have hurt in less obvious ways as well. "Distribution is a huge partner in breaking an artist, from finding space at retail, fighting for opportunities and using the college marketing team," the A&R executive says. "We talk about it a lot. We used to have alternative marketing people in the distribution company in every major market. Now that runs into one college marketing team."

Every executive Billboard spoke with placed artist development as a priority. "Look, we're very interested in artist development," RCA Music Group executive VP/GM Tom Corson says. "It's just that the stakes are high, the price of poker is way up, anteing in is intense."

"Everything is more difficult in today's market," Interscope Geffen A&R/Octone head of sales and marketing Steve Berman adds. "This becomes more about putting our resources in the proper place. It's about understanding each artist and the potential lanes for marketing that exist, and shifting the marketing spend accordingly."

Still other executives were upfront about the need for more vision. "The problem is, a lot of execs in the music biz are short-sighted to a certain extent," Virgin senior director of A&R for pop/crossover Chris Anokute says. "They think for tomorrow but not five years down the road. Whenever you build an artist, you have to think long term. Sometimes it takes the third single on the first album to break an artist. Now, they're just singing songs. Instead of singing songs, you have to sign artists."

"There is no artist development anymore," says Rick Valenquez, partner in RikRaf Entertainment, a management company that represents Latin rhythm artists. "We're turning in the final product because the labels don't have A&R, especially on the Latin side. They want the final album done and turned in. If it sticks, it sticks. If it doesn't, they move on to another artist."

**FACTOID**

**14.5M**

Of all the albums that have appeared on the Billboard 200, the best seller is Alanis Morissette’s 1995 Maverick/Warner Bros. debut, Jagged Little Pill, which has sold 14.5 million copies, making it the third-best-selling album in SoundScan history.

**SLOW AND SWEET**

In the '90s—ah, the good old days—breakthrough albums that debuted high could outsell those that took time to build. No longer is that the case. As overall sales fall across the industry, it's the artists and albums that take their time to crack the top 100 of The Billboard 200 that are selling best.

**A DIFFERENT MEASURE OF SUCCESS**

While digital and mobile sales have yet to make up for the decline of physical sales on an industrywide basis, it's clear that songs that can now break in ways that aren't Billboard 200-centric.

"I don't know if it's necessarily harder to break acts," Corson says. "I think it's harder to sell albums, and because there are so many other different avenues to expose artists—with tracks and iTunes and online and digital and mobile and so forth—and then blogging and all sorts of sites and cultures and shared services and fan-oriented, consumer-oriented, user-oriented content developing—I think it's harder to galvanize those things because if you are just looking at music sourcing by the consumer, it is very segmented and fragmented."

"The research says that people are consuming music more than ever," Sony BMG Sales Enterprise president Jordan Katz says. The Billboard 200 "really does reflect just one facet, and the fact that it reflects is becoming less a reflection of consumer behavior. Perhaps if you looked at all of the revenue streams of how people purchase music, you would see a different pattern."

Berman says, "When you look at what digital tracks have become in the last few years and you look at mobile, you look at other ways of measuring success outside of the traditional CD sales."

Indeed, current examples of this are easy to find. T-Pain's two albums have sold a combined 1.1 million, but he has sold 3.5 million digital songs and 3.3 million ringtones. Sean Kingston's self-titled album has sold 112,000 in two weeks, but he has already sold 798,000 digital songs and 1.1 million ringtones. Huey's "Notebook Paper" album has sold only 69,000 since it was released in June, but he has sold 979,000 digital tracks and 1.4 million ringtones. Mims' "Music Is My Savior" album has sold 273,000 since it was released in March, yet he has sold 1.8 million digital songs and million ringtones. And Usk's album "Beat 'N' Down Yo Block" has sold 180,000 since it was released in October 2006, but he has sold 1.9 million digital songs and 2.3 million ringtones.

Or, take the example Jive/Zomba set with Lil Mama, seeding the market with a fast-selling video and digital track of "Lip Gloss."

"We shot a not-a-high-budget-but-the-right-budget video, with the right concept that has made a direct hit to her audience," Zomba senior VP of sales and marketing/GM Tom Carrabba says. "It's become one of the top 10 most-viewed videos on Yahoo and AOL, we got a lot of play over at BET, and we got play at MTV and "TRL." But guess what? We sold a ton, too.

"We don't have an album out, but we sold 50,000-60,000 videos on iTunes with minimal airplay, 10 million audience when we peaked," he adds. The digital track has sold 488,000 units to date, according to Nielsen SoundScan, while the "Lip Gloss" ringtone has racked another 312,000 sales on Nielsen RingScan.

While Zomba records Lil Mama's album, due Oct. 22, Carrabba anticipates coming with another video to keep her awareness percolating. Not to dismiss the revenue opportunities of ringtones and digital tracks, but it seems most labels still hope to parlay such gains into the larger potential payday of album sales.

"When you're building the artist's story, you have to start feeding the content as early as possible so that people start understanding and learning about that artist," Interscope's Berman says. "In the traditional model, radio remains the most important tool that we deal with, but there are so many ways that people get exposed to music in the new world that we're living in. On certain acts, we'll want that music out there as early as possible . . . We will hold a record longer now to build up the marketing and the excitement around an artist, to hopefully have as high a debut as possible."

**A DISTRACTED MARKET**

The biggest change affecting artist development—and album sales in general, many executives say, is an increasingly distracted consumer. "Their options have multiplied," Sony BMG North America president COO Charles Goldstuck says. "When you were young, you could watch that "Late Night with David Letterman Show" and that was nothing else you were going to be doing that night.

"That was true of every kid in America. Everybody watched the Beatles on that show; there was nothing else taking their attention away. Today, there is so much that splits the attention span of every consumer, young or old."
Sony Music executive VP Lisa Ellis and Warner Bros. Records executive VP/GM Darmuid Quinn are among those who reach for medical lexicon to describe a consumer stretched by the day's innumerable entertainment options, invoking the term "Attention Deficit Disorder."

Ellis says, "I think the consumer has ADD. You constantly have to be a moving target. The consumer is no longer in one place. You have to be more strategic, and you have to be more places."

"There's a first-week mentality that pervades a lot of entertainment properties, not just music," Quinn says. "There's a lot of mind-set change, and I think it has to do with the sort of ADD quality that everybody seems to have these days.

"There's so much coming out and it's like, 'OK, what's happening now?,' and two days later it's out of mind and they're on to the next thing," Quinn adds. "It's even getting hard, on rock bands and pop acts, to sustain after that first week. It's a rare day you see what happened to Michael Bublé [recently] where [his album] went from No. 2 to No. 1.

The array of new-media products, coupled with the advent of digital distribution, creates a challenging environment, RCA's Corsaro says. "It's a singles market and music has become kind of disposable and transient, but there are also competing products between games and films, DVDs and whatnot. And in the online world, it's so competitive. You are fighting against every kind of media.

"The multithasking that I watch my kids do, who are 16 and 18 ... they can be sitting on their computer doing their homework listening to their iPods, and IM'ing people and on the phone and accomplishing most of it. But what are they invested in?

"I think their investment in brands and experiences is a very different proposition," Conson says. "I'm talking mostly young people here, but it does have a halo effect that bleeds over into other segments and demos. People have less hours in the day and they are asked and tasked to do more, and with more competition for the entertainment dollar and for your attention."

**A BAD Rap?**

While no genre is immune from the larger trends outlined in this piece, Billboard's number-crunching revealed that the stakes are highest for new rap artists.

"You beat people in meetings says, 'If this rap record doesn't come on high, we're out here. We might as well be a billboard and put it to the side of the road,'" UMG's McAnally says. "There's no belief that the records can move up later.

Goldstick says, "In the hip-hop world, everything is from here, and I think the average hip-hop consumer wants something when it is fresh and new, and three months later they have moved on."

"I think a lot of the new hip-hop and R&B acts have been forced to, and designed to, come out of the gate competitive with everybody else," Ellis says. "It's not culturally the kind of genre where you get in a van and drive around the country, the way a rock band can."

The Inc. founder/CEO Irv Gotti says, "Hip-hop is urgent. Hip-hop doesn't have shelf life. You have to create that energy in the first couple of weeks of the release, and I don't really see that changing."

In each of the years from 1992 through 2006, R&B/hip-hop has been the category that saw the most artists launch their careers in the top half of The Billboard 200, but that yield is diminishing. There were 27 R&B/hip-hop first-timers who began at No. 100 or higher in 2006, the category's lowest tally since 1997.

But more striking? New R&B/hip-hop acts are particularly affected by the trend away from slow builds, to fast starts. Of the 38 acts that graduated from Heatseekers in 1992, 18 were urban acts, more than any other category, while another 17 did so the following year.

From 1994 to 1999, R&B/hip-hop averaged only seven graduates per year, and during the next seven years, that average plunged to 1.4. Columbus artist Lyfe Jennings is the lone R&B or hip-hop artist to graduate since the start of 2005.

**Growth Stories**

Of course, that's not to say there aren't still artist development success stories (see chart, above). Sony Music's Ellis cites Jennings' first album, "Lyfe 268-192," as a recent example of incremental growth. Released in August 2004, it reached the Heatseekers chart a couple of weeks later in the Sept. 9 issue and etched its first Billboard 200 ink at No. 193 in the Oct. 2 issue. It didn't peak at No. 39 until the Sept. 2, 2006, issue, reaching platinum status along the way.

"We put the album out before the airplay, sold a couple of thousand units and it just build from there," Ellis says. "He was out, very modestly, in a van with his guitar and a sound system. He wasn't flying around first class, and would play anywhere someone wanted to pay attention to him. By the top of 2006, he was a platinum act."

"To do it that way, the artist obviously has to have the talent and the wherewithal to build and get people to care. We saw the Web site hits, the fan mail there, and we were gaging their growth from real fans rather than industry people." Artist development doesn't always begin stateide.

"From where I sit, trying to sell non-American music in America, I am at the moment feeling rather encouraged," says Max Hole, Universal Music Group International executive VP of A&R and marketing/president of its Asia Pacific region. "We have Kanae, Snow Patrol and Amy Winehouse all breaking big in America. In the case of Amy Winehouse and Snow Patrol, it's on second albums. I would call all of those career artists."

**FACTOID**

30.5%
The album that first reaches the top 100 for a graduate or bypass act is usually the best seller of one's career.

Of the 1,287 acts tracked for this report, only 14.8% would sell a larger total with a second album.

**The class of '94 has the highest yield in this category, with 30.5%, followed by the class of '95 with 27% and '97 with 24%. That percentage was lower than 20% in each of the remaining years.**

Interscope's Berman thinks patience and persistence can reverse an album's downward trend, so long as the music delivers. "We launched big on the All-American Rejects. We had a top 10 debut on second album "Move Along" and were thrilled out of our minds.

"Then the record dropped and dropped, but we didn't stop working it. We worked single after single after single, and we woke up one day and found we're almost at 2 million records. I think there are a lot of examples of artists in all genres where the music does cut through. You persevere and keep working it and you can be successful. I think [Epix] did a great job with the Fray. Look how well Octone has done with Flyleaf."

Goodman says Lyric Street signed Trent Tomlinson five years ago, but didn't release his "Country Is My Rock" album until March 2006. "We're trying to be more intentional about getting an artist comfortable, making sure that an artist knows who he or she is musically and what kind of records need to be made. Then it takes us so long to develop these singles at radio to get to any real critical mass.

"With Trent, we dropped the album when the single went top 20, but it never made it to the top 10. It took us another 39 weeks to get the second single near the top 10. In the meantime we had two accounts, based on how they handle inventory, take the title out. We had to go back and say to them, 'This is still a vital and ongoing title,' and strike a deal to get them back in the project." Sales for the album stand at 242,800.

Marty Diamond, head of booking agency Paradigm's New York office, says, "I work with Sara Bareilles, a new artist who bowed seven weeks ago at No. 45 on The Billboard 200 in the July 21 issue. 'Great start, but you know what? She's been on tour with Aquafunk. She's been on tour with Mika. She's on tour with Rocko. She is going to be on tour with Maroon 5. She is going to go out with Jon McLaughlin. [Bareilles] hasn't been on the radio yet. It's just starting, but it's been a patience play."

In this fact, this week marks the seventh artist of 2007 graduating from Top Heatseekers (for more on this, see Over The Counter, page 57) to the upper half of The Billboard 200, with A Fine Frenzy making a 131-96 leap on the big chart.

Virgin has been purposefully methodical in its breaking of the act, essentially a one-woman-vehicle, Seattle native Alison Sudol. According to Capitol Music Group's Executive VP/President Lee Trink, the label has sidesteped giant marketing spends. Instead, it has created buzz by inviting industry for intimate performances at Sudol's mother's house, showcasing the album's depth by licensing multiple tracks to TV and covering such usual bases as iTunes and MySpace.

"This is all putting a nice foundation here word of mouth promotion, Trink says. "It shows how this album has progressed. The second week was the only one that went backward."

Now Virgin has parlayed the growth into A Fine Frenzy's selection as a VH1 You Oughta Know artist- video rotation is expected to peak up next month-and planning bookings on national TV.

"Things that don't go right outside of the gate have to be given a slow, methodical approach ... understanding where your consumers are," Trink says. "If they're hard to get to, you have to take a slower approach to get to them."

**Assistance provided by Charles Riley. Data compiled by Keith Caufield. Additional reporting by Ayala Ben-Yehuda, Lars Brande, Ed Christman, Jonathan Cohen, Mariel Conception and Gail Mitchell.**

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Left For Dead
By Many Fans,
DAFT PUNK
Has Revitalized
Its Career
—And Maybe
Dance Music—
In The Process
BY JONATHAN
COHEN

Amid ocean breezes and the wafting scent of Nathan's hot dogs, more than 12,000 people are packed into a minor league baseball stadium on a hot August night in Coney Island. Buoyed by the palpable anticipation in the air and, no doubt, an array of choice pharmaceuticals, the crowd roars as the lights dim around 9:30 p.m.

Stoned kids who can't talk, but are plastered with ear-to-ear grins, push their way up close. Guys in baseball caps and "I'm kind of a big deal" T-shirts jockey for position. Fists are pumped, and there is much dancing. This may all look, feel and sound like a good old-fashioned rock 'n' roll show, but there are no guitars, drums or even vocalists to be found at KeySpan Park on this night.

Instead, the main attraction is French techno act Daft Punk, whose two members barely acknowledge the audience from their perch inside a giant pyramid on the stage, their hands manipulating unseen devices below. They pummel the throns with booming beats and devilishly mashed-up versions of songs drawn from their three studio albums. A state-of-the-art lighting rig and an eye-popping video component take things to another dimension. Oh, and they're dressed in full robot regalia. It was a show-going experience many would later say was the best they'd ever seen.

How did it happen? How did a pair that seemed irrelevant after its 2005 release—commercial disaster "Human After All"—wind up with one of the most talked-about concert tours in years, having not even performed live in a decade?

"I think especially in the U.S. it took some time for people to get to know the music," says Daft Punk's Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo the afternoon following the Coney Island tour closer, granting Billboard a rare peek into the inner workings of the duo. "In Europe, house and electronic music was more of a ghetto and a small scene. But now it is spread all over, on the radio and in supermarkets. Nobody even asks the question, 'What is house? What is techno?'

"People got to know our name and what we were doing and now, maybe we represent something about that scene," he continues. "It's like a snowball that was rising...an invisible snowball that has just happened to arrive now."

Daft Punk was an invisible snowball in its own right when the act came out of nowhere in 1997 with the album "Homework," a benchmark for 20th-century electronic music that became an international sensation thanks to such songs as "Around the World" and "Da Funk." De Homem-Christo and partner Thomas Bangalter did their best to perform the music live at the time (sans masks or disguises), but they were dissatisfied with the results and declined offers to go back on the road after another relatively successful album, 2001's "Discovery."

Then came "Human After All," which was savaged by critics and sold a tenth of what its predecessors did. ("Homework" is at 605,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, with "Discovery" at 584,000. "Human" has moved just 75,000 units.) But the offers kept filtering in, including an invitation with a mid-six-figure payday from Coachella booker Paul Tollett to co-headline the 2006 festival in the California desert. Sources say Daft Punk had turned down $500,000 to play the event a few years earlier.

"We were ready to play again, but [accepting the Coachella offer] allowed us to actually do it," Bangalter says. "Knowing that now we could do things we couldn't do when we played in a 1,000-person venue triggered crazier ideas and the ability to make them happen."

"They took all that money and put every dollar into that stage show," Tollett says. "We spent another $40,000 ourselves on extra pro-
But can one show really resurrect a band's career? Tolfet says absolutely. "The show was so great that word-of-mouth just took over," he says. "As a guy who witnessed Coachella, they were definitely coming back and bringing multiple friends with them."

Enter John Pleeter, the group's agent at Creative Artists Agency, who set up an eigth-date North American arena tour for 2007 that included a headlining slot at Lollapalooza in Chicago early this month. Based on Bill Board estimates, it briefly grossed in the neighborhood of $3 million and played to more than 60,000 fans, excluding the Lollapalooza crowd.

"We could have done multiples in some of these markets. We really underplayed," Pleeter says. "The philosophy behind it, in as far as the show goes, was to use the marketplaces and leave people wanting more."

That strategy was even more effective in Europe, where Daft Punk played five shows earlier this summer.

"The thing we focused on was what you get out of the show: an intense experience of music, lights and robots, with a thin line between fiction and reality," Bangalter says. "That is really the concept of this tour, which was not to mix the stuff we were doing 10 years ago. We wanted to leave an imprint of an intense experience."

Now Daft Punk finds itself with few peers in the world of electronic music. The closest competition comes from DJ Tiesto, who, like Daft Punk, recently sold out the Los Angeles Sports Arena and commands six-figure paydays worldwide. The Chemical Brothers and Underworld, who rose to prominence around the same time as their French counterparts, also still do good business on the road, but are years removed from the kind of buzz Daft Punk is now enjoying.

Both of those groups are playing short North American tours this fall to support new studio albums, which is about as much as their booking agent, Gerry Garrard of Chaotic Inc., is willing to commit to without risking financial ruin.

"It is very expensive to do this," says Garrard, who has worked the Chemical Brothers and Underworld for years and also booked Daft Punk up through Coachella 2006. "Most electronic acts are very hard not to take tour support because they don't like borrowed money. When they come to America, all they can hope for is to break even. Everywhere else in the world, they get paid more."

That said, Gerrard thinks Daft Punk has worked up the U.S. dance music audience into a frenzy just in time for his clients to really take advantage, and he fully expects both of his groups to return for more shows in 2008.

"For years people have been telling us to give it up," he says. "They ask, 'When are you going to go back to the rock music?' But I never gave it up, and everybody thought it was crazy. Now, [live electronic] has finally exploded, and Daft Punk are the lightning rod we've been waiting for. If it would have taken one more year, I don't think the Chems or Underworld would have come back at all. In their minds, I think they're giving it one more go. But I think they'll be overwhelmed by the response."

The Chemical Brothers in particular will be utilizing an LED curtain that Gerrard says is "more advanced than what U2 used on their last tour. They bought some other pieces of equipment that have never been seen before, and that really helps in America. I don't even know if you can rent these things."

Striking while the iron is hot is also a priority for Capitol, which licenses Daft Punk's recordings for North American release from Virgin France. "The buzz on this ban is louder than when 'Homework' came out," Capitel VP of marketing Dan Cohen says. "They're at a level that is pretty unparalleled."

The label is eying a late- November release for "Daft Punk Alive 2007," a live album taken from a June show in Paris, the tour version of "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger" will be released as a limited edition with a bonus cassette directed by Olivier Coursy that will incorporate fan footage shot during the Coney Island gig.

By a stroke of good timing, Kanye West's new single "Stronger" samples the original version of "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger." The West song is No. 5 on The Billboard Hot 100 in just four weeks and is also atop the U.K. singles chart. "The song is really great, and we really like it," de Homem-Christo says. "When we met him, he was a fan as much as we are fans of his work. It was like as if we had collaborated with him in the studio."

Capitol is hoping "Stronger" will keep Daft Punk on the minds of consumers straight into a one-off performance at Las Vegas' Veerosau Festival in late October and then the re- release of "Alive 2007."

"Digital sales are increasing substantially as the [Week] single gets more radio play," Cohen says. "I'm sure there are people who heard about Daft Punk because of that song."

Indeed, downloads of the Daft Punk original have made double-digit percentage increases in the past four weeks, according to Nielsen SoundScan. Better still, weekly sales for the song have been in the top 10 of the past 11 weeks. Buzz is also growing for the film "Electronica," a homage to low-budget science fiction movies that builds on the robot motif. In it, two crew members fill the roles Bangalter and de Homem-Christo play onstage. The movie is something of a cult favorite in France, where it has been playing to packed midnight screenings, and just premiered last week in New York. Additional U.S. screenings will roll out through late September, and Vice will release it in January on DVD. Still, amid Daft Punk mania, Bangalter and de Homem-Christo are being careful to retain the mystique they've worked so hard to build. For one, despite the overwhelming visual aspect of the recent tour, there will not be a live DVD to accompany "Alive 2007." "That's the way we want to leave it right now," Bangalter says. For another, the pair won't put a timetable on when it will play more US shows or return to the studio to begin work on a fourth album.

"The cool thing is that we're always trying to do something that hasn't been done, or ultimately, that we aren't doing ourselves yet," Bangalter says. "That's what we felt about the film and this tour. It's challenging to get back in the studio and work with ideas we haven't expressed before. Some ideas take time, but some just take a few weeks, so we'll see."
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FROM IDOL TO ICON
AS THE ROLE MODEL FOR MUSICAL SUCCESS,
PAUL ANKA'S REIGN SPANS GENERATIONS

There's longevity in the music industry—and then there is Paul Anka. Entering his 50th year in the business, the 66-year-old Ottawa native, who first came to fame as the pre-eminent rock era teen idol with his 1957 chart-topping single "Diana," has somehow managed to stay current through every succeeding decade, most recently scoring a surprising hit album in 2005 with "Rock Swings." That disc was so successful in turning modern rock hits like R.E.M.'s "Everybody Hurts" and Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" into hip, big-band swing tunes that it reached No. 2 on Billboard's Top Jazz Albums chart. Anka has now followed it with "Classic Songs, My Way," a set of favorites including his own classics "You Are My Destiny" (with protégé Michael Bublé) and "My Way" (with Jon Bon Jovi, who quoted from it in his band's hit "It's My Life") as well as such sterling modern fare as Cyndi Lauper's "Time After Time" and Marc Cohn's "Walking in Memphis."

The Aug. 28 release also heralds a new chapter in Anka's recording career, as it's his first for the Decca label. "I met him when he was inducted into Canada's Walk of Fame—and I was completely charmed by the man," Universal Music Canada president/CEO Randy Lennox says. "He had just finished "Rock Swings," and within a matter of minutes we were chatting about his potentially coming to Universal worldwide—which has evolved that way jointly out of Universal Canada and Universal Music Group International."

Lennox notes that UMG chairman/CEO Lucian Grainge was himself a huge Anka fan. "Paul being Canadian, it made a lot of sense to sign him from here," Lennox continues, "but it's quite collaborative between Lucian's people and us and Paul."

The resulting "Classic Songs, My Way" is the perfect complement to "Rock Swings."

"He's a joy to work with, the ultimate professional," Decca Label Group GM Paul Foley says. "He's seen it all, done it all, knows the business inside out and has been doing it longer than all of us. He wants to be successful and knows what it takes to stay relevant in today's market and the digital world—and he's been able to do it."

Of the new album, Anka says, "I deviated in doing ballads and more contemporary pop songs." He points to his choices of Duran Duran's "Ordinary World" and Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now." "I got Jeremy Lubbock [arranger on his for Chicago, Whitney Houston and Barbra Streisand] and approached the Killers ['Mr. Brightside'] and Cyndi Lauper and made their songs in the same production style of Rock Swings."

Anka served as executive producer on Bublé's 2003 debut album, which mixed traditional pop standards with more modern ones like Anka's "Put Your Head on My Shoulders." So he saw an opening for his own swing album.

"I didn't want to exactly duplicate the Buble concept of doing standards," he says. "I figured, 'Let's get a little more aggressive with songs from the '80s and '90s—songs that are 'standards of today.' If you will. Let me go in and experiment, and if it sounds good, we'll continue and if not we'll throw it out.' But it was motivating for me to do something fresh and new that hadn't been done in total as a concept."

Seeking music that its five daughters had grown up with, Anka considered some 200 songs gleaned from Billboard's international chart listings from the 1980s to the present using criteria that the artist and song had to be substantial—and it had to feel natural, he says. "Songs with a great structure, if it's got substance, ultimately it works. 'Teen Spirit' was a bit of a leap, same with the Cure ('Lovesongs'). But if a song's got structure, anybody can do something."

Anka chose to cover his own songs on "Classic Songs, My Way," he adds, because others had requested he do so in the last couple of years. He wanted to duet with Bublé because of their past association. "Destiny was..."
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from >>p.18 - the one we liked, and felt it would fall into the pop-jazz John Clayton arrangement style," he says, referring to an arrangement on "Rock Swings" and the new album.

"You Are My Destiny" was a No. 7 pop single in 1958 for Anka, one of a slew of early teen-idol hits also including "Diana," "Puppy Love," "Put Your Head On My Shoulder" and "Lonely Boy." A teenager himself when he first hit, the Lebanese-Canadian had learned to sing in the Choir at St. Elijah Syrian Orthodox Church and also learned to play piano.

At 13 he was leading a vocal group called the Bobbysoxers. Ambitious from the get-go, he won a trip to New York by collecting Campbell's soup can labels, then traveled by himself to Los Angeles, where he sought a record-company audition when not selling candy bars during intermissions at the Civic Playhouse. After listening to the Cadets' classic hit "Stranded in the Jungle," he approached their failed blues/R&B label Modern Records, where he became the label's only white artist.

Back in New York, he met with legendary arranger/producer Don Costa, then-chief A&R man at ABC-Paramount Records. Costa was so impressed with the now-16-year-old's lead sheet for "Diana" that it became his first single for the label, selling more than 10 million copies and opening the flood gates for more original songs based on real experiences that his young peer audience could relate to.

But his songwriting soon proved a boon for other artists as well. Buddy Holly's hit with "It Doesn't Matter Anymore" panned the way for similar successes. The pinnacle, most notably, was Frank Sinatra's 1969 signature song "My Way" (Anka had acquired the rights to the French song and wrote the English lyric) and Tom Jones' 1971 hit "She's a Lady."

But Anka had long since taken a more mature turn, having debuted in 1959 at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas and became the youngest performer to headline New York's Copacabana at age 20 a year later.

He left ABC-Paramount for RCA Victor in 1962, in an unprecedented move, he took his masters and publishing with him. He wrote the theme song for (and acted in) the epic World War II movie "The Longest Day." And he composed the theme to "The Tonight Show."

The advent of the Beatles and the musical changes they wrought virtually wiped out Anka's recording career, like that of many of his contemporaries. But he was able to continue his nightclub career, maintain his strong base in Europe and Asia (he moved to Italy in 1964 and won the San Remo Song Festival with his hit "Ogni Volta") and focus on songwriting.

"My Way" was the turning point of his career. He would have his own hits in the 1970s, including the 1974 chart-topping "(You're) Having My Baby." In the 1980s, he nicked the top 40 with "Hold Me Till the Morning Comes," featuring Peter Cetera on backing vocals. His 1990s output included the 1996 Spanish-language album "Amigos" and "Body of Work," which featured duets with the likes of Sinatra and Celine Dion.

Meanwhile, Anka was active in helping launch the careers of several major artists.

"He had a pretty integral part in getting Steve Goodman and John Prine started," recalls Kris Kristofferson, who met Anka in 1971 on a plane to Chicago. "He said he'd just recorded a song of mine and invited me to his show in some big hotel. I was playing a funny little club with Steve, and I went to his show and he came over and saw the last night we did, and he was really knocking out with Steve's stuff."

Kristofferson particularly liked a song called "Sam Stone" that Prine had written.

"Steve said, 'You got to come hear the guy who wrote it,' " Kristofferson continues. "So we all went to the Earl of Old Town: The club was closing and Prine was asleep in a booth with his wife, and we woke him up to audition in an empty club for just me and Paul Anka. But he got up and started singing songs, one after another, that were just killers. So Paul flew John and Steve to New York and I put them on my show at the Bitter End. Jerry Wexler was there, and he signed John to Atlantic and Paul signed Steve to Buddah [his label home in the early 1970s]."

For Kristofferson, fellow songwriter Anka "was something to aim for." Buble recognizes him as "one of the few artists who's a genuine triple threat: writer, singer and entertainer."

Songwriters Hall of Fame chairman/CEO Hal David cites Anka's induction in 1993. "He has remained one of our all-time giants," David says. "As a singer/songwriter, he has become a great international star."

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As a recording artist, songwriter or both, Paul Anka has appeared on the Billboard charts in every decade since the 1950s. Anka began as a teen idol with such hits as "Diana" and "Puppy Love," but he later emerged as a powerhouse songwriter, responsible for perennials including "(You're) Having My Baby," Tom Jones' "She's a Lady" and of course, Frank Sinatra's signature song "My Way."

Along the way, Anka has helped other artists start out. He invited fellow Canadian David Clayton-Thomas to appear on an episode of '60s rock'n'roll TV performance series "Hullabaloo" that he hosted, giving the future Blood, Sweat & Tears frontman a life-changing experience that made way for great things to come.

He facilitated the signings of John Prine and Steve Goodman, and was instrumental in discovering another successful fellow Canadian, Michael Bublé. Anka was executive producer of Bublé’s debut album. Bublé returned the favor by accompanying Anka on a remake of his teen idol classic "You Are My Destiny" on Anka’s new "Self Songs, My Way" set.

Anka’s career as an artist has been marked from the beginning by a rare insight and understanding of the music business, which he has applied consistently in maintaining his high stature within it. In this exclusive Billboard interview, Anka reflects on how his artistic creativity and business savvy established and prolonged his 50 years in music.

Is there a key to your continued success?
Surrounding myself with the best people—musicians, arrangers—is certainly part of it. That’s something that was reinforced for me by Sinatra. Once you have that base, and if you’ve got drive and integrity in what you’re doing, then you’ve got to know how to make sure that you’re getting a shot as a creative person. I’ve been a creative person first—not just a singer and a performer.

You’ve also been a shrewd music businessman.
That doesn’t necessarily guarantee longevity. But it gives you a solid foundation and independence and respect when you walk through the door and say you’ve got an idea.

How were you able to not only escape from the confines of your initial teen idol stardom, but also consistently manage to fit in with what’s current?
You have to be in tune with what’s happening (musically) and deal with people who are part of change—because timing is everything. After [1983 hit] “Hold Me ‘Til the Mornin’ Comes,” which I wrote with David Foster, I had to decide what to do next. I did the [1996 Latin pop hit] "Amigos" album with Ricky Martin and Juan Gabriel and Julio Iglesias and every top Hispanic act in Spanish—just before the whole thing hit with Ricky [Martin]. Then came "A Body of Work" [1998] with Frank Sinatra and Celine Dion, so I’m always trying to...continued on >>p.44

Paul, you’re the best! That’s my verdict.
I am proud to be your friend
and honored to be your lawyer.

Robert Shapiro
Since “Diana” you did it “your way”..... and what a wonderful way it has been!

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think ahead with whatever has integrity and quality and might be of interest.

Even in this context, 2005’s “Rock Swings,” swing covers of rock songs, seems like a major departure. How did you get there?

Again, it was the timing: Robbie Williams, Jamie Cullum (and especially) Michael Bublé—the way that hit. And David (Holly) was part of that process, so you’re in that ballpark and can sense where you have a chance of making noise with something like it.

But a lot of it is a natural transition, like a reporter becoming a journalist [the young Anka studied journalism and briefly worked at the Ottawa Citizen]. I remember talking with Bobby Darin and meeting Sinatra and saying to Bobby, “This can’t last. What’s next? Do we put on tuxedos and do Vegas?” Remember, there was no Beatles when I started. It wasn’t a media-driven society. Hard rock hadn’t hit yet. You’re growing out of your teenage pants, now what do you aim for?

So you start making the evolution with songwriting—with “It Doesn’t Matter Anymore” for Buddy Holly, and “The Tonight Show” theme and getting your chops at 18, 19, 20, and then being in the movie [the 1962 World War II blockbuster “The Longest Day”] and being around people like Sammy Cahn and Frank Sinatra, and if you have talent, you work your craft and you grow.

Can you expand on how your songwriting and composing affected your career development and longevity?

My confirmation of being a writer came first with “It Doesn’t Matter Anymore,” and then with “The Longest Day” (Anka also wrote the movie theme), and then “The Tonight Show” theme, which is where I said I would always be a creator first. But “My Way” was the real kick in the ass in realizing, “You’ve grown up now. You’re here to stay.” I had made an evolution. You’re a kid, and it’s tough. Look at Britney Spears. It’s not easy if you don’t have the intellect—and it smart to really evaluate the trappings of success. I sympathize with today’s teen idols. One flop and you’re out of business.

But you grow up and away you go. Those songs [that I wrote] as I evolved helped cement my confidence that I knew what I was doing. I brought in David Clayton-Thomas and helped other artists and had my Spanka Music Corp., publishing company—what I had James Brown’s catalog in Europe. That’s how you stay in the mix and keep your ear in it.

So are you doing any writing now?

I’ve written something for Foster, and approach [songwriting] every month. But I realize I’m so involved in getting this album done, and then before that I had just got out of “Rock Swings,” and those before that I was just out of Michael [Bublé’s debut album]. I mean, how much can a brain take?

What about future recording?

[Universal Music Group International chairman/CEO] Lucian Grainge wants a third album. I don’t know what the concept will be, or if it will be all new songs.

Is there time for anything else?

I’ve just been signed by St. Martin’s Press to do my memoirs. They heard my interview on Howard Stern [promoting “Rock Swings”] and all the people who called in. I’ve entertained doing it over the years and have had other offers through William Morris—but I’ve been waiting for people to die! But everybody feels good about it, and I have to deliver it next September. So I have that and the albums.

You always cite Sinatra as a major influence. Were there any others who deserve mention for their contribution to your success?

[Arranger/producer] Don Costa was my A&R director until the day he died. [New York manager/booker] Irving Feld—my mentor—was my first and only manager, and my partner. Buddy Howell, who is deceased, ran General Artists Corp. My friends Steve Wynn and Donald Trump.

—Jim Bessman
To a dear friend...

Congratulations on your 50th year in show business.

Kirk K.
My Dear Friend,

KEEP GOING!!!!!!!

Love you,
Arnon Milchan

CONGRATULATIONS
PAUL ANKA
On your 50 years of Success
We wish you 50 more!

Sincerely,
Sinatra
THEATRE

PARTY FAVOR

ANKA'S NEW ALBUM COINCIDES WITH MAJOR CELEBRATION

As Decca Label Group S. G. M. Paul Foley notes, the timing is right to launch Paul Anka's "Classic Songs, My Way" in a big way.

"The new release has some new music and incorporates some of his classics," Foley says "so we can launch it as part of his 50th-anniversary celebration.

Foley looks to kick off the celebration with a special event at the Rainbow Room in New York or a Jazz at Lincoln Center's Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola.

"We have a commitment from Home Shopping Network for the week after release, and there will be a direct-response TV campaign and all the usual stuff at retail," Foley says. "We have to reach his audience, which clearly is baby boomers."

But when Foley attended a recent Anka show at the Mohegan Sun Casino in Connecticut, he was amazed to find an audience ranging in age from 25 to 75.

"He's still the ultimate showman," he says, noting that another show at the venue will be filmed in September with guest artists including Tony Jones, with the goal of using it for the December PBS pledge drive and a first-quarter 2008 DVD release. Also forthcoming is a career retrospective on CBS News' "Sunday Morning," Foley says, "which is what you need—to let him sit down and talk about his career and who he worked with."

In Anka's native Canada, "Classic Songs, My Way" is being released in a regular single-disc jewel case as well as a special '50th Anniversary Edition,' also containing a bonus disc with 20 of his greatest hits (remastered for the first time) and packaged in a deluxe gold foil Digipak. The bonus disc will be available in the United States exclusively at Wal-Mart and Sam's Club.

—Jim Bessman

BILLBOARD ASKED PAUL ANKA TO CHOOSE FIVE FAVORITE SONGS FROM ACROSS HIS 50-YEAR CAREER

ANKA'S
TOP FIVE

1. "PUT YOUR HEAD ON MY SHOULDER" — "It's technically my best-written and most emotional song, and the first inkling in the '50s of my future growth."

2. "MY WAY" — "It was important to Frank [Sinatra], and I went through so much emotional soul-searching in writing it—and it was a real sign of maturity for me and a turning point in my career."

3. "DO I LOVE YOU?" — "It was a big hit for Donna Fargo and did pretty well for me, but it's just a song I enjoy singing and has a good, strong lyric that I like."

4. "HOLD ME 'TIL THE MORNIN' COMES" — "It's my favorite of all the songs I've written with David Foster and a top five [AC hit] for me in the '80s, and just a well-constructed song."

5. "I'M NOT ANYONE" — "Because of technology I can sing it onstage and on record with Sammy Davis Jr., who was my friend and a great inspiration. I learned so much about how to perform from him, and it's just a great moment when I duet with him onstage."

—JB
Paul,

Congratulations on your 50th year in the music business!

Your many songs have brought joy to millions of people around the world. You have certainly lived life "YOUR WAY".

We have enjoyed friendship with you and your family for many years. We hope to share many more. You are the best.

Dennis and Phyllis Washington
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—Delia Orjuela, AVP Latin Music, BMI

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Black Eyed Peas Main Man Tests Solo 'Waters'

When Interscope Geffen A&M chairman Jimmy Iovine suggested the idea of a solo album earlier this year, Black Eyed Peas leader will.i.am was caught off guard.

"I'm thinking, 'Why would I do a solo project?'" he recalls. "I could just do an album with the Black Eyed Peas. It's a bar full of solo artists. I knew whatever I did had to be more than just a solo album."

That is "Songs About Girls," due Sept. 25, a multimedia explosion of ideas that not only features music—15 tracks, including the club-banging first single "I Got It From My Mami," and "S.O.S.," which he wrote for the Live Earth concert—but also an hour-long movie that incorporates videos for eight of the album's songs. Additionally, "Songs About Girl's will house a new Internet platform, Dipdive, that provides access to exclusive additional content and is designed so users can share profits from anyone who picks it up from them.

And, will.i.am has teamed up with Musicacura to power his own online music store at will.i.am.com, which will offer digital rights management-free MP3s.

"Will is this extreme that just doesn't stop," says Iovine, who's partnering with will.i.am on Dipdive. "Will has a lot of music in him, a type of music we can't do with the Peas, and this gives people another look at who Will is."

As he began working on the project, will.i.am (real name William Adams) had a solid idea of what he did—and didn't—want to be as a solo artist: "I wanted to be a producer, a songwriter and a vocalist and a rapper—to wear all the hats," he says. And even though he has an extensive, Grammy Award-nominated production resume that includes Mary J. Blige, Justin Timberlake and Peas singer Fergie, he didn't want "Songs About Girls" to be a standard producer's kind of album.

"I didn't want it to go to all these people and say, 'You want to do a song with me?' and such and such," he says. "I didn't want to do a solo record that's not really a solo record, just me with a whole bunch of people on it. I wanted it to be a real solo attempt, a project with a continuous theme that was connected all the way through."

The storyline—which tracks an up-and-coming hip-hop producer's relationship with a girlfriend—was inspired by real events, specifically a seven-year relationship that began about the same time as the Black Eyed Peas in 1995.

The movie portion of "Songs About Girls" stemmed from that shared desire to do more than merely make an album. So the artist took a crew to Brazil and created a scriptless piece "about trying to make a movie, and the movie never gets made. It was a lot of fun."

For Interscope, there may be some question of whether will.i.am is as well-known as Fergie, whose solo album, The Dutchess, has sold more than 3.5 million copies worldwide. Interscope president of marketing and sales Steve Berman is confident that fans know who he is.

"The profile is so strong," Berman says. "He's done such a tremendous job in building the brand of the Peas and he's also done a great job in identifying himself within that. What we're trying to do is take advantage of that and build the exposure around him."

"I Got It From My Mami" is off to a strong start at radio, with nearly 1,600 multiformat spins in just its second full week. A major iTunes launch for the project is planned to begin the third week of August, and a MySpace listening party was taped at the same time to roll out just in front of date. Myriad TV appearances on network and cable are planned for release week, and will.i.am will be part of an extensive Gap ad this fall that will cross-promote "Songs About Girls." Several different versions of the album, with extra tracks and other bonus material, are planned for retail outlets.

The Peas will also be on the road for an international tour starting Sept. 4 in Israel, and Berman says plans are being hatched for a major Internet campaign via the Dipdive platform and other cyber outlets. "We have these waves of viral activity," Berman says. "He really is such a tremendous artist in understanding how to reach fans and touch fans in the Internet space. Our feeling is he's made such a great piece of art here, and it's kind of our responsibility now, in this new world outside of traditional ways of exposing music, to get it exposed in as many different places as possible."

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Twice Upon A Time
Hard-Fi Aims For Sophomore Success

Hard-Fi frontman Richard Archer displays an infectious confidence in his new songs as the alt-rock band—one of the United Kingdom's biggest—gears up for the release of its sophomore set, "Once Upon a Time in the West" (Necessary/Atlantic).

"There are 11 tracks on this album, and 11 could be singles," Archer says of the follow-up to the band's multiplatinum U.K. debut. "We've always believed in every track. You've got to write about what speaks to you, what's in your heart and what needs to be said."

The album was recorded in the BMG Music Publishing-signed band's west London studio and bows Sept. 18 stateside, following the Sept. 3 U.K./international rollout.

"Initially, we had a strategy to release it in the United States in January 2008 because of the band's requirements in Europe and their touring plans," London-based Atlantic U.K. president Max Lousada says, "but the general response has been so overwhelming, we had to change the plan."

The album's anthemic tunes display influences ranging from the Clash to the Rolling Stones and Motown, but it's the electro-rock swagger of lead single "Suburban Knights" that has taken Hard-Fi into new radio markets in its homeland.

"We really didn't expect it to start crossing over and getting play on mainstream stations," Archer says. "It's one of the darker, edgier tracks on the record."

National top 40 station BBC Radio 1 has been heavily featuring the single, as have modern rock outlets XFM's three stations and the national MTV and MTV2 channels.

Atlantic Records U.S. senior VP of pop/rock marketing Dane Venable believes "Suburban Knights" will provide a similarly strong stateside launch following its Aug. 1 release to radio. "The first single absolutely has huge potential here," he says, noting early support from modern-rock stations KITS San Francisco and KROQ Los Angeles, which featured the song as its Catch of the Day.

The band's July 2005 debut, "Stars of CCTV," has sold 800,000 copies in the United Kingdom, according to Atlantic, with 28,000 U.S. sales since its March 2006 release, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"Stars of CCTV" eventually topped the Official U.K. Charts Co. albums list

The song has also jumped to number 1 in the United States. The artist does not yet have a booking agent.

—Mark Russell

Skull Skill
South Korean Reggae Artist Head, Shoulders Above Rivals

Skull is a true rarity from a South Korean music market dominated by bubble-gum pop stars. The 27-year-old reggae star, who sports long dreadlocks, a growling voice and an oversized taffo of Africa, has stepped out alone from duet Stony Skunk and begun to rouse interest in the United States.

His latest single, "Boom Di Boom Di," reached No. 4 on Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales chart. The track, which is digitally available via iTunes, was lifted from Stony Skunk's catalog, and has been remixed and translated into English. Digital riddims controls all of Skull's recordings in English outside of Korea.

"I consider reggae music fighting music," Skull says. "The strong message of reggae music has the power to change people's minds and influence how they live."

The singer is signed worldwide to Seoul-based YG Entertainment and managed by Morgan Carey, brother of Mariah, who has orchestrated the launch in the U.S. market.

Carey says he is focused on building Skull's credibility in a grass-roots manner, positioning him as an orthodox reggae singer. Interest is building in Korea. "Now I'm not getting anymore comments on how he ought to get a haircut," Carey says. Skull is published by YG Entertainment/EMI World Publishing.

A three-song maxi-single, featuring collaborations with Mighty Mystic and Syren, will be issued Aug. 21 in the United States. The artist does not yet have a booking agent.

—Mark Russell

Hello, Operator: Australia's Operator Please has not been kept on hold. The Gold Coast teen band's debut single, "Just a Song About Ping Pong" (EMI Music Australia), entered the Australian Recording Industry Assn. chart at No. 15 in early August, after picking up nationwide support from Triple J radio. The song has also generated more than 1 million hits on YouTube.

Sydney-based Scorpio Management co-director Rebekah Campbell says the five-piece has a unique sound. Scorpio cultivated the band's alt-rock fan base Down Under through support stints with Arctic Monkeys and Kaiser Chiefs, along with festival dates. The strategy is to be repeated in the United Kingdom, where the act will play the Reading and Leeds festivals as part of a three-month tour in support of the Aug. 20 single release through London-based Brille Records. Brille has worldwide licensing rights to the act, and is negotiating with labels in Europe, the United States and Japan. New York and Los Angeles showcases are lined up for late October, Campbell says.

Operator Please is self-published and booked in Australia through Harbour Agency and in the United Kingdom by Helice Skehrs. The act's debut album, "Yes Yes Vindicine," is due in November in Australia and in other territories in February.
**Everything Is Beautiful**

Judd's Ray Stevens Tribute Attracts Country Stars

Barry Poole has a lot to be thankful for these days: a fledgling and so-far-successful radio career, his first major cut as a songwriter, a new album and a move to a healthier lifestyle. If his name doesn't sound familiar, it's because he's better-known as a country-turned-songwriter-turned-actor. His most recent hit, "The Twist," has been a massive success, and his upcoming album "The Twist of My Time" is expected to continue his rise to stardom.

The star-studded collection includes Ray Stevens, Vince Gill, Charlie Daniels and Phil Vassar, just a few of the acts that appear on the album. Some of the songs included are "The Twist of My Time," "Slow Twistin'," and "Limbo Rock."

"I've been fortunate enough to make a little money and put some aside for my daughter's education," Judd says. "There comes a time when you've got to give a little back."

Judd, who has been doing morning radio on country station WQYK Tampa, Fla., for two years, says he's glad he made the move. He even did his show while spending 100 days in Los Angeles taping VH1's "Celebrity Fit Club." (He lost 40-plus pounds.) "It was brutal," he says. "People were laughing at me all the time."

Meanwhile, the up-and-coming star has been working on his latest album, which includes a song with Judd called "The Twist of My Time." The album is expected to be released later this year.

**Questions with Chubby Checker**

Chubby Checker is a household name, known for his hit song "The Twist." He's had a long career in music, and his influence is still felt today.

**Mr. Watson, come here, I want to see you.**

"It's that famous moment of discovery, spoken by telephone inventor Alexander Graham Bell to assistant Thomas A. Watson, that Chubby Checker most likens to his musical legacy."

**Before Bell, there was no telephone. Before Chubby Checker, there was no dancing apart from the beat," he says, referring to his 1960 No. 1 hit "The Twist."

"In two minutes and 42 seconds, when I sang on 'American Bandstand' and did the dance—which is like putting out a cigarette with both feet or wiping off your bottom with a towel to the beat—the world forever changed the way it danced," Checker says.

While still his signature song—and the only title to reach No. 1 in two different years (it did so again in 1962)—it's far from Checker's only chart achievement. In all, Evans−who refers to his musical persona in the third person—has sold 250 million albums worldwide and charted 35 times on The Billboard Hot 100, including top 10s "Pony Time," "Let's Twist Again" and "The Fly." In 1961 and "Slow Twistin'," "Limbo Rock" and "Popeye" in 1962. In 1966, "The Twist" was reborn as a No. 16 hit with rappers the Fat Boys.

This month, Checker, 65, extended his chart span to more than 48 years with his entrée at AC radio: "Knock Down the Walls" on TEEC Records, which hit No. 30 August 3. And continues to increase in spins. The cheeky uptempo track—whoes underlying message calls for reliance on a higher power—is playing on 12 AC stations and one each at top 40 and triple-A.

While on the road in Houston, Checker checks in with Billboard:

**So how does it feel to be back—again?**

"It's a miracle. All of my success is from the 20th century. Most artists who got their play from another era live on because people love their past successes. But this song is a 21st century contribution to the music industry, and I tell you, it's a blessing from God."

**How did "Knock Down the Walls" come about?**

In 2001, I released "Chubby Checker's Sixty Minute Workout," an aerobics album that no one paid attention to, and "Knock Down the Walls" was on it. My producer, Gary LeVox, thought there was more to it and had me come in to the studio and rerecord it acoustically to a guitar. I'm too stupid to write a song like that, but I was inspired.

Gary [with Mike Rogers] produced urban, urban AC, rock and top 40 mixes so that everybody could give this song a chance. I am the best of white, black, brown and everything you can put in one package. I address the entire human family.

Meanwhile, after 40 years, you continue to tour.

The best way to describe what Chubby Checker does is outrageous. You've heard of the '66 Mustang Cobra? That's us, running as fast as the Porsche 928. We go onstage and kick some nasty butt. My people are all ages: grandmothers and their kids and their kids. Everybody knows Chubby.

You've also branded your name with a line of food products, including a candy bar, flavored popcorn, hot dogs, steaks, even bottled water.

When I'm not on the road, I'm at home in the business world with thelastwrist.com. We've got the world's only Checkerboard chocolate bar that blends milk, white and dark chocolate. So I've kept busy selling beef jerky and hot dogs—but music continues to be the tender part of my soul.

You've noted that it's bothersome to be so well-known for "The Twist" when you had numerous other hits. Have you made peace with your namesake song? Walt Disney is stuck with Mickey Mouse. The two are just never going to get away from each other, even though there's Snow White, the Seven Dwarfs, Donald Duck and Goofy. The only thing I was ever concerned about is that "The Twist" is just one character I have.

So what ambitions remain for Chubby Checker?

I'd love to play with Justin Timberlake or Be-yoncé, because every time these kids throw their arms up in the air or move their feet, they're doing my dances. I have a connection with these young people. I'm one of the best performers that ever lived. I don't mean to sound big-headed, but I know what I can do onstage. Since 1966, we get out there and it's all over.
Oh Oh It's Magic

Christian-Themed Disney Festival Celebrates Its 25th

Steven Curtis Chapman, Third Day, Smokie Norful, Chris Tomlin, Newsboys, Salvador, Brian Littrell and BarlowGirl are among the acts slated for Disney's Night of Joy, to be held Sept. 7-8 in Orlando, Fla. This is always one of the Christian music community's favorite events, and this year Night of Joy marks its 25th anniversary. In recent years, Suzuki, Chevrolet, Chick-Fil-A and other companies have embraced Christian music, but Disney was one of the first corporate sponsors to delve into the faith-based music arena.

Walt Disney World publicist Dave Herbst worked the very first Night of Joy, and remembers wondering who would come. He recalls posing the question to Leon Patillo, the event's first headlineAct.

"I remember his response like it was this morning," Herbst says. "For one glorious evening," Leon told me, "the walls of denominationalism will come tumbling down." I was driving toward the Magic Kingdom amidst church busses and vans emblazoned with every denomination of Christianity I'd ever heard of. And, to be honest, some that I hadn't heard of. They came and they made Night of Joy an instant success. We had a sellout that left Rudy Reece, the marketing person who'd gotten the idea to do a contemporary gospel event, and me high-living on Main Street U.S.A. For us, it was a night of exceedingly great joy."

Not only did Disney partner with the Christian music community to create a new festival, Mickey's bosses made a radical move in that they booked Christian rock acts, which at the time weren't being accepted; among the pioneering bands to play the event were Petra and WhiteHeart.

"It was actually pretty rad, particularly the rock part of the musical equation," Herbst says. "After all, this was taking place in the early 1980s, when many Christians regarded rock'n'roll as unacceptable. Yet here we were, serving up not just Christian rock, but Petra — perhaps as provocative an act as there was. Bob Hartman, who founded the band, has told me that the flaw for his group didn't occur until 1997 when they did the album 'This Means War.' That was four years after they first played Night of Joy." Night of Joy was also conceived as a way to draw locals to Disney and continue to attract Floridians as well as visitors from all over the world. "The diversity of musical styles presented, combined with the fun of our theme park attractions, was a winning recipe that we decided to make a keeper," Herbst says. "Our talent-seeking people have annually put together a lineup that is high quality, popular with our audience and reflective of a broad range of musical styles."

Disney has partnered with EMI Christian Music Group to create a special commemorative 25th-anniversary CD that attendees will receive at the event. "It will feature some of this year's artists," Herbst says. "And liner copy about the history of Night of Joy inside a silvery and blue package celebrating our 25 years."

ROUND TWO: Essential Records and Third Day recently partnered with Atlanta's WFSH (the Fish) to host a screening of "Inside Third Day: The First 10 Years." The event heralded the launch of Third Day's "Chronology, Volume Two" (2001-2006). "The 18-track audio disc features some of the Georgia rockers' biggest hits as well as previously unreleased live tracks from the Wherever You Are tour. The second disc is a DVD that will include 'Inside Third Day: The First 10 Years.' Third Day's "Chronology, Volume One," released in March, has sold 89,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Classical Score

ANASTASIA TSIOULCAS astioucas@billboard.com

A new disc by LEIF OVE ANDERSEN will commemorate Tchaikovsky's birthday.

Crowd Favorites

Fall Schedule Loaded With Top Acts Revisiting Famous Repertory

Popular classical works performed by popular artists. That's the rather risk-averte line that some of classical music's biggest labels are largely toing this fall as they prepare their core classical release schedules. Piano projects figure heavily into EMI Classics' upcoming core classical schedule. Evgeny Kissin, who recently changed recording homes from RCA Red Seal/Sony BMG Masterworks to EMI Classics, presents his debut on his new label in a pairing of the Schumann Piano Concerto and the Mozart Piano Concerto No. 24, joined by conductor Colin Davis and the London Symphony Orchestra (Aug. 28). On the
same day, EMi releases a Leif Ove Andsnes disc that commemorates the Sept. 4 centenary of composer Edward Grieg’s death. The album pairs a new Andsnes recording of the Ballad in G minor, Op. 24, with Andsnes’ previously issued reading of the Piano Concerto in A minor and some of the composer’s Lyric Pieces.

EMi Classics’ distinct trend continues Oct. 2 when the label issues the latest recital by 26-year-old American pianist Jonathan Bliss in an all-Beethoven program that includes the Sonatas No. 8, Op. 13 “Pathétique”; No. 15, Op. 18 “Pastoral”; No. 27, Op. 90; and No. 30, Op. 109. Also on that date, Gabriela Montero’s new album appears in stores. While its title is still to be determined, the disc contains a collection of favorites by Handel, Albiono and Purcell, among other composers. Flattered through Montero’s improvisations, as well as improvisations based on Vivaldi’s even-popular “The Four Seasons.” Speaking of that Vivaldi chestnut—and again on the same date—EMi Classics releases violinist Sarah Chang’s reading of the work, performed with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, which is making its EMi debut.

On Sept. 4, Sony Classical artist and long-time chart favorite Joshua Bell (the violinist who garnered quite a bit of mainstream media attention earlier this year by busking during rush hour in a Washington, D.C., metro station) unveils John Corigliano’s “Red Violin” concerto. He recorded it with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and conductor Marin Alsop, as well as Corigliano’s Violin Sonata (performed with pianist Jeremy Denk).

The concerto is an outgrowth of Corigliano’s popular and Academy Award-winning score to the 1998 film “The Red Violin”; Bell, who recorded the violin tracks for the movie, has widely toured a suite version of the movie’s music in the years since.

One of the world’s hottest young conductors and the newly named music director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, 26-year-old Venezuelan Gustavo Dudamel relives his second orchestral disc Oct. 9 with Deutsche Grammophon: This time, it’s Mahler’s Symphony No. 5 with Dudamel’s Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra.

A new signing to Deutsche Grammophon, the rich-voiced young Canadian soprano Measha Brueggergosman performs in a new recording of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony along with bass Rene Pape, conductor Franz Welser-Most and the Cleveland Orchestra (DG, Sept. 25). Another Beethoven album on DG arriving this autumn is the latest recording by pianist Helene Grimaud, performing the “Emperor” Concerto with the Staatskapelle Dresden conducted by Vladimir Jurowski (Oct. 9).

Finally, Decca releases Tchaikovsky’s music for the ballet “Swan Lake” performed by the Kirov Orchestra led by Valery Gergiev this fall. The full recording arrives Oct. 9, while a single-disc highlights album streets Nov. 13.

I get to really be me this time,” says Lil’ Mo, who wrote nearly all the songs on the 17-track album. “It takes me back to when I was thinking when I did my first album. I just wanted people to know I could sing.”

Working with a team that includes former J Records urban promotion chief Ken Wilson, Lil’ Mo is busy stacking her promotional dominos (“Don’t get caught up in sales, word-of-mouth is the best promo- tion”). She’s setting up a radio promo tour, participating in BET’s Wrap It Up trek and hopes to tour next year with current “The Color Purple” star Fantasia. “This album is a growing process. No one took Usher serious until his third album. Maybe that will happen with me.”

In Brief: Epidemic Records, established by production duo Cool & Dre (the Game, Fat Joe, 50 Cent), has secured distribution through Skeleton Key Entertainment/EMI’s Imperial Records. First release: Miami rapper Joe Hound’s “Misery Loves Company” (Oct. 23), featuring the single “She Likes It.” Lil’ Mo, a co-writer of Nelly’s “Grillz”—a song honored at ASCAP’s Pop Music and Rhythm & Soul Awards ceremonies—is in the studio with汪耀 and Omarion, Paul Wall and So So Def/Def Jam artist Jarvis.

Snap, Crackle and ‘Pop’

With a wink to those who remember the Cure, Blondie and New Order, and a smile to people who love an accessible candy-sweet tune, Mexican electro-pop trio Belanova is releasing its third album, “Fantasia Pop,” prepared on all fronts.

Building on the success of its 2005 effort, “Duces Beat”—which has sold more than 200,000 copies in Mexico, according to trade group Amprofon, and 60,000 in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan—Universal is releasing “Fantasia Pop” in the States and Latin America the week of Sept. 10.

Instead of the almost yearlong lag between the last album’s Mexico and U.S. releases, the label is “attacking both territories at the same time.” Universal Latino label manager Rafael Ebelo says, with single “Baía Mi Corazon” released everywhere the last week in July.

“This is a band that’s on a different level now,” Ebelo says. “They are very [concentrated] on their international career, and the U.S. is a big part of it.”

That also means a unified West Coast/East Coast strategy, so that stations in the East that are less influenced by Mexican radio playlists aren’t playing catch-up.

“When a single hits the West Coast, we’d be working a different single in the East,” Ebelo notes. “In the East Coast we had to introduce a brand-new band, while the West was moving fast with the singles.”

Five singles later, “Everybody knows who Belanova is and is aware of their success, and we don’t foresee that problem,” he says.

Just to be sure, the band will promote in New York, Miami and Puerto Rico, as well as appear on Univision and video channel shows from the get-go. Belanova is already booked for five radio festivals in the West, with another two in the works on the East Coast.

As its last album, “Fantasia Pop” gift-wraps singer Denisse Guerrero’s childhood va- cials and lyrics with energetic synth and bass from programmer/keyboardist Edgar Huerta and bassist Ricardo Arreola.

Producer Cecilorro Lopez is also back, fusing the catchy pop hooks with memorable textures, this time with splashes of new wave and electro-punk, and even a piano ballad with accompaniment from Argentine rock legend Pito Paez.

“It’s another shade of Belanova, and maybe now we feel like using more guitar and more organic sounds,” Huerta says. “It’s part of the maturity you get as a group.”

The Guadalajara act draws inspiration from retro electronica to the Killers and Fischer- spooner, and applies a more naive, poppy touch. “You can say very profound things in simple language that is within everyone’s reach,” Guerrero says.

The group had a song, “Eres Tu,” on the Latin-American version of last year’s “High School Musical” soundtrack. But MTV Tr3s senior VP of talent Jesus Lara says the group’s fans span a wide age range.

“They have a brilliant, tongue-in-cheek, disco-pop feel to them,” Lara says, combined with “straightforward, feel-good lyrics [that] tend to connect rather easily.”

Belanova’s broad appeal has made its music ripe for licensing. Singles from its two prior albums were used in campaigns for Mitsubishi and Pizza Hut (which featured the band in a commercial scarfing down Cheesy Pops pizza).

This time around, Sony Ericsson is launching its new W580 cell phone in Mexico pre-loaded with three songs from “Fantasia Pop” and commercials featuring the group’s music, band manager Alex Enriquez says. The mobile phone company has also signed on as a tour sponsor, according to Enriquez.

In addition, Guerrero will be a spokes- woman for Procter & Gamble’s Wella-Von hair color line, with commercials featuring sin- gle “Baía Mi Corazon” timed for the album’s release. And as the label seeks to extend those branding opportunities stateside, the group is gearing up for a tour expected to get under way in February, beginning with the United States and Mexico.
The McGraw Factor

Two Acts On StyleSonic Make Country Chart Debuts

Hollywood to Nashville, made up of David Tolliver and Chad Woods, and Lori McKenna have three things in common. They’re signed to Tim McGraw and Byron Gillmore’s StyleSonic Records, their albums were produced by McGraw and Gillmore, and they toured with McGraw and Faith Hill. Oh, and both acts debut this week in the top 20 of Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart.

By selling 8,000 copies, Halfway to Hazard’s self-titled StyleSonic/Mercury debut came in at No. 14, while McKenna’s “Un-glamorous” (StyleSonic/Warner Bros.) sold 6,300 units, which placed her at No. 19, as well as at No. 1 on Top Hearersearches.

In both cases, radio was not as much of a factor in exposing their music as it is with most country artists.

Universal Music Group Nashville executive VP of sales, marketing and new media Ben Kline says the impact of the opening slot on McGraw and Hill’s tour forced the label to rethink traditional wisdom (read: significant radio airplay) and release the album earlier than it normally would.

While the Kentucky-born duo’s debut single, “Daisy,” peaked at No. 39 on Hot Country Songs in July, weeks before the album hit stores, Halfway to Hazard opened 10 shows on the main stage where it was exposed to roughly 123,000 rabid Hill and McGraw fans. The act also played an outdoor stage as fans streamed into the venue on 30-plus SoulSoul dates.

The tour was an “unbelievable opportunity,” Kline says. “It’s not often that a brand-new artist gets to be seen by the core country consumer. We didn’t want to wait for a song to climb the charts to put the album out there.”

The label was also aggressive on the Internet, specifically on social networking sites. “We really tried to create that one-to-one relationship with fans early on,” Kline says.

McKenna, meanwhile, opened 18 shows, playing for slightly less than 260,000 fans, according to Billboard Boxscore. Her music will eventually be worked to triple-A, country and other adult radio formats, but she’s not getting significant airplay right now.

Warner Bros. Nashville senior VP of sales and marketing Peter Strickland says his label’s approach for McKenna was “press-driven.” In addition to features in national and local print outlets, McKenna appeared on ABC’s “Good Morning America” and the network’s “Nightline” did a feature on her. The label also made a focused push, including print ads, in stores and radio interviews, in McKenna’s home territory of Boston and the Northeast.

While Kline says the label is happy with the debut, he notes, “It’s a marathon, not a sprint.”

Strickland has a similar outlook. He says selling 6,300 units in one week is a big deal for an artist whose four independent albums have sold a combined 54,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

“Not getting significant airplay right now is not coming in with new music and being on a label’s radar.”

“Halfway to Hazard

The movie, which Lanois co-directed with Adam Samuels and Adam Vollick, premiered Sept. 5 at the Toronto International Film Festival.

“At first, I thought we could at least make an educational film that would be useful to somebody interested in this line of work—just to see how the interactions happen between people in the studio,” Lanois says. Networking the film is not structured like a standard documentary. “But Vollick captured some actual performances on camera, and it’s even interesting to me as he walks around and shows the cameras, the wires and the equipment.”

“Here Is What Is” also features reflections from fellow U2 collaborator Brian Eno and a glimpse at studio sessions for Lanois’ next album, which will feature the Band’s Garth Hudson on four songs. The goal, Lanois says, is for the film to be picked up by a distributor and hit theaters early next year, in tandem with live performances in select cities and the release of the aforementioned album.

Lanois is a “free agent,” having most recently recorded for Anti-. But he’s open to working with that label again for the new project. “I may ask [Anti-head] Andy Kaulkin if he’s interested in putting out more record,” he says. “But I’ll finish the record first. Whoever is excited about being onboard, it will be an interesting journey.”

In the midst of finishing “Here Is What Is,” Lanois has been writing songs for the next U2 album with Eno and the band in France and Morocco, a process documented in the film. Although the two producers have worked separately with U2 for years, this is the first time both men are collaborating with the band simultaneously.

“It feels like the ‘Achtung Baby’ period, when everybody was really hungry to do something fresh,” Lanois says of the material so far. “They haven’t been overly committed and they’ve done everything. But the thing they should never assume they still own is the ability to be original and invent something that’s never been heard before. “I’m not coming in with new values of the month or waving a magic wand,” he continues. “I don’t have an abridged name. But my eyes are burning a hole through their hearts, and I’m inviting them to come to where I come from.”
THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

ALBUMS

ROCK

THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS
Challengers
Producers: Phil Palazzolo, John Collins, A.C. Newman
Manager: Release Date: Aug. 21

“Challengers” won’t surprise anyone familiar with the New Pornographers’ prior work, but it still manages to be interesting and enjoyable. Despite its nearly formulaic adherence to the group’s established brand of jangly harmonious rock, the record is enthralling in its own right, as lead songwriter A.C. Newman and Dan Bejar continue to explore new avenues within their chosen musical neighborhood. The staccato organ blasts and sing-along chorus of “All the Things That Go to Make Heaven and Earth” sound vaguely familiar, but the pulsing tremolo guitar of “Failure” and the varied textures of mini-epic “Unguided” tread new territory. Everything is imbued with Newman’s satirical-lyricism and complex melody—think the brains of Brian Wilson and Burt Bacharach with the energy of the Go-Go’s—and that’s a good thing.—TC

BEN HARPER & THE INNOCENT CRIMINALS
LifeLine
Producer: Ben Harper
Virgin
Release Date: Aug. 28

Only 18 months after his ambitious solo double-disc, “Both Sides of the Gun,” Ben Harper returns with his eighth studio album—his best in years. Recorded with the Innocent Criminals at the end of a long world tour, “LifeLine” is a gorgeously under-produced, laid-back, acoustic-based album—the minimalist vintage feel recalls Van Morrison and Bill Withers. Groove-heavy cuts like the mellow “In the Colors” and “Needed You Tonight” add a breezy R&B vibe, while gospel-backing vocals sweeten upbeat standouts like “Say You Will” and “Put It on Me.” Saving the best for last, the closing title track offers a soulfully pulsing man-with-guitar confession—slow-burning with melancholy strength. More satisfying than its predecessor, “LifeLine” is a classic-sounding album that reminds us of the power and beauty of simplicity.—SP

LYLE LOVETT & HIS LARGE BAND
It’s Not Big ’Til It’s Large
Producers: Lyle Lovett, Billy Williams
Lost Highway
Release Date: Aug. 28

The secret of Lyle Lovett is that it’s hard to tell what the secret is, in much the same way that the title of this record is funny, although it’s hard to put a finger on why. But it’s probably enough to say that Lovett is among the planet’s most rhythmically consistent songwriters, and anyone enamored of his idiosyncratic history will find nothing wrong with “Large.” Fans of his gospel leanings will be extra pleased: The record opens with the insistent rave-up “I Will Rise Up” and closes with “Ain’t No More Cane,” both of which take full advantage of Lovett’s churchy inclinations, though faith is redemptive in the former, necessary in the latter. Satisfyingly intact is Lovett’s perfectly crisp voice, his band’s good-natured, big-booted Texas twang (best let fly, ironically, “in Up in Indians”) and his ability to break hearts with a mathematical minimum of words and images.—JW

M.I.A.
Kala
Producers: various
Interscope
Release Date: Aug. 21

Even more so than her arresting 2005 indie debut, “Arular,” M.I.A. comes off as a globe-trotting activist on sophomore effort “Kala,” draping myriad Third World sounds over club-happy beats. She’s a revolutionary leading a class war on “Paper Planes” and pounding the door of a Hummer on “Bamboo Banga,” all while disguising a political message with richly textured electronic sounds. She quotes the Pixies, samples the Clash and turns a Bollywood show tune ("Jumma") into a string-driven elsewhere. Sheerly, she squeezes a groove out of the crisscrossing rhythms of “20 Dollars” and lets the murky, African bassline "Mango Pickle Down River" envelop her. Amazingly, she still does this all with charmingly home-made-sounding production values. Perhaps that’s why superstar producer Timbaland sounds out of place on “Come Around,” his sex-obsessed verses momentarily killing M.I.A.’s multicultural buzz.—JM

HIP-HOP

SWIZZ BEATZ
One Man Band Man
Producers: various
Full Surface/
Universal Motown
Release Date: Aug. 21

The hip-hop producer’s album has become a dubious proposition, undermined by cred-diminishing, guest-saturated vanity projects. The well-credentialed Swizz Beatz doesn’t entirely redeem the format on his first solo foray, but he does better than most on a deftly executed and effective set—12 tracks in slightly more than 38 minutes. It works because Beatz approaches the album as an artist as much as a producer; he produced just five of the tracks, letting up-and-comers like Snaps and Neo Da Matrix handle the rest. Eric Mc-Cane fares the best of the young bunch, pushing the buoyant, Kanye West-styled “Top Down” with a duet ofsamples from Major Lance’s “Girl, Come On Home.” The self-proclaimed One Man Band hasn’t reinvented anything here, but he hasn’t done any damage, either—especially not to his hit-making rep.—GG

POP

PAUL ANKA
Classic Songs, My Way
Producers: Paul Anka,
Alex Christensen
Decca
Release Date: Aug. 28

On the surface, it’s a punch line: 66-year-old crooner attempts a Tony Bennett return to cool by covering Van Halen and the Killers in big band style. But maybe because of his hit songwriter’s ear or his five young daughters, Paul Anka’s interpretations (here and on 2005’s “Rock Swings”) aren’t campy—they’re insightful. Who knew that Cyndi Lauper’s “True Colors” had the lyrical cadence and melodic pop to work as a fingers-napping Count Basie style-show opener? Or that Duran Duran’s “ Ordinary World” could conjure an Edward Hopper iconography tableau as effectively as Sinatra’s “One for My Baby”? Hearing Anka sing “Mr. Brightside” is like catching your dad watching “Flavor of Love.” But piloted by thoughtful arrangements and Anka’s still-youthful, fully intact voice, “Classic Songs” bridges the generation gap like blue jeans and iPods.—KM

EMILY KING
East Side Story
Producers: various
Lifeline Productions/J
Release Date: Aug. 28

One of this year’s more auspicious debuts is by 22-year-old Emily King. The New Yorker delivers a soulful collection of songs that resonates as much from her lyrical skill as an ornamental storyteller as from her tasty mélange of R&B, hip-hop, folk, jazz, rock and pop. Watering some of the age of 16 and influenced by her jazz duo parents, King possesses a penchant for outlining complex situations using simple yet ear-pleasing melodies and relatable imagery. The biographical “Cold Orbital” draws on the some-times painful experiences she encountered as the daughter of an interracial couple, while heartless capitalism is the focus of the soul- and folk-infused “Business Man.” King’s emotive vocals and second-nature musicianship shine on “Walk in My Shoes” (a bonus track version features Lupe Fiasco) and a passionate turn on Bill Withers’ “ Ain’t No Sunshine.”—GM

LEDISI
Lost and Found
Producers: various
Verve Forecast
Release Date: Aug. 28

During the last decade, Ledisi has consistently wowed audiences in tiny clubs and concert halls, which raises two questions: First, why did a major take so long to sign her; second, would her in-person effervescence translate to disc? On her Verve Forecast debut and third CD overall, Ledisi dispels any doubts with 15 R&B originals that showcase her prowess as a powerhouse vocalist as well as her songwriting maturity. The CD opens and closes with Ledisi live on the funky “Been Here,” between which she gets soulfully cool, upbeat grooving and ecstatically unrestrained. Highlights include the spanning-beat “Today,” the smoothly lyrical “Get to Know You,” the scat-charged “Upside Down” and the album’s baladi gem, “Lost and Found (Find Me).”—DO

CASTING CROWNS
The Altar and the Door
Producer: Mark Miller
Beach Street/Reunion
Release Date: Aug. 28

On Casting Crowns’ third studio album, the Georgia-based band demonstrates the musicality and insightful songwriting that have made it an accessible Christian music sensation. Frontman Mark Hall has a gift for penning songs that avoid clichés and obvious platitudes, instead thoughtfully examining the complexities of living a Christian life. He does so again on such compelling songs as “Slow Fade,” a ballad about how small missteps and moments of compromise can lead to a downs’ward spiritual spiral. “What This World Needs” is a hard-rocking look at society’s ills, while “Prayer for a Friend” serves as a perfect showcase for the warmth and integrity in Hall’s voice. First single “East to West” is already a major hit at Christian radio, and there are plenty of songs here that should maintain Casting Crowns’ momentum in the format.—DEP

THE SECTION QUARTET
Fuzzbox
Producers: Linda Perry, Jon Brian
Decca
Release Date: Aug. 21

The Section Quartet is hardly the first instrumentral, or even string, ensemble to specialize in versions of rock songs. But the Los Angeles troupe could make an argument for being the best. There’s no question the selections are compelling—led by Z. Zegarski to the Strokes and Failure—and the arrangements are certainly accomplished if not necessarily ambitious. Plucked strings re-create the rhythmic attack of the Strokes’ “Juicebox,” and the quartet’s renditions of Radiohead’s “Paranoian Android” and Soundgarden’s “Black Hole Sun” make them sound like they could always have been chamber pieces. For all those virtues, however, the prevailing reaction is . . . why? It’s hard to imagine choosing any of these II treatments over the originals, and the familiarity makes it too distracting to be useful background music. With playing of this caliber, the quartet should be focusing on more original avenues of expression.—GG

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SINGLES

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OLIVER MTUKUDZI
Tsimba Itsoka
Producer: Oliver Mtukudzi
Release Date: Aug. 28

Tuku’s new album has been a force in world music since first gaining attention in his native Zimbabwe in the late ’70s, and the body of work he’s compiled since is a living tribute to his excellence. “Tsimba Itsoka” is beautiful music — alive with subtlety, emotionally listening and teeming with pointed social commentary. The metaphor that underpins this album is footprints. Tuku asks what sort of footprints do his listeners leave in their world, a question whose relevance reaches far beyond Zimbabwe. The message rides sublime musical arrangements. Note the saxophone embellishments on “Kupedza” and “Vachakun-onokera,” jazzy insinuations adding yet another color to his polyphonic vocabulary. —PV

DRUMS

KISS
Producers: Alex Coletti, Roger Coletti

If its predecessor captured Kiss at its pinnacle, “Kissology Vol. 2” documents the awkward growing pains the band experienced during its middle years, when Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley recruited replacements for Ace Frehley and Peter Criss, and eventually ditched their trademark costumes and makeup. And that makes for good drama, which the band smartly doesn’t shy away from addressing. The rift between bandmates is painfully apparent during a telling 1979 interview with the late Tom Snyder. And the inclusion of clips like “I Love to Love” and “Gino” makes this set surprisingly strong and essential. While the live footage is inconsistent (particularly egregious is a 1989 show from the Crazy Nights tour), it really doesn’t even matter. Makeup, no makeup, Vin- nie Vincent or no Vinnie Vincent, this is like crack for Kiss fans. The fix is sweet. Bring on Vol. 3 — DWO

VITAL REISSUES

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Vee-Jay: The Definitive Collection
Producers: Michael Riba, Derek Dressler
Release Date: Aug. 14

Soul music from the ’50s and early ‘60s is provided with the release of “Vee-Jay: The Definitive Collection.” If you’re into getting down with the jazzy insinuations and soulful tunes, this is the release for you. Some highlights: “I Can’t Help Myself” by Four Tops, “It’s Too Late” by Smokey Robinson, and “Baby Please Don’t Go” by Ben E. King. It’s a one-stop soul shop. — GM

A FINE FRENZY
Almost Lover (4:28)
Producer: L. Burton. H. Crayon
Writer: A. Sudol
Publisher: Amstrong

Universal

Graham Colton’s up-com ing “Here Right Now” finds the artist dropping the Graham Colton Band moniker he assumed on 2004’s “Drive.” The first single reflects this change by sounding more personal than most of what Colton has done before, as hestruggles with the difficulty of sti ll touring. Colton pairs with John Fields, and the result is a catchy pop sound that the producer is known for, having produced Switchfoot and Backstreet Boys. The song gleams with acoustic guitars and a heavenly string section bor rowed from Howie Day’s “Col lide.” Don’t be surprised to hear “Best Days” defining a dramatic moment on Colton’s album. Hopefully easy on the ears. — TG

ROCK

NINE INCH NAILS
Capital G (3:50)
Producers: Trent Reznor, Atticus Ross
Writer: T. Reznor
Publisher: Leaving Home/TUF, ASCAP

A rock star gripping about the president is old hat. A rock star singing from his nemesis’ perspective is another story. Trent Reznor first prophesized, “I pushed a button and elected him to office. He pushed a button and it dropped a bomb”—his summation of how Dubya got his mitts on this country. Nine Inch Nails’ mastermind then assumes a role that seems to be a call for restoring the recognition that melody creates catalysis—not the gimmicks that personified much of her earlier output this decade. First single from upcoming “Brave”—follow-up to her March No. 1 single—“Coma una Mujer” is a satisfying, frenzied pop-urban pearl beffiting top 40 hits from Rihanna and Kat DeLuna. This was made to follow the footsteps of a new generation of pop songs, but there’s no shame in that. Since “Waiting for Tonight” has served up a song with such potential to rally long-term play, not to mention imminent remixes for the dancefloor, let’s hope her successful return sans rapper will signal to all that it’s high time for change—for good. “Do It Well,” well done.—CT

JENNIFER LOPEZ
Do It Well (3:07)
Producers: Ryan “Alias” Tedder, Cory Rooney
Publisher: Write 2 Live, ASCAP, Stone Diamond, BMI

Epic

Not even husband Marc Anthony can transform Jennifer Lopez’s tissue-papervocal prowess into a work of art, but he seems to have restored her recognition that melody creates catalysis—not the gimmicks that personified much of her earlier output this decade. First single from upcoming “Brave”—follow-up to her March No. 1 single—“Coma una Mujer” is a satisfying, frenzied pop-urban pearl beffiting top 40 hits from Rihanna and Kat DeLuna. This was made to follow the footsteps of a new generation of pop songs, but there’s no shame in that. Since “Waiting for Tonight” has served up a song with such potential to rally long-term play, not to mention imminent remixes for the dancefloor, let’s hope her successful return sans rapper will signal to all that it’s high time for change—for good. “Do It Well,” well done.—CT

KENNY “BABYFACE” EDMONDS
Fire and Rain (4:01)
Producer: Kenny “Babyface” Edmonds
Publisher: not listed

Mercury

The new album from master singer/songwriter Baby face, “Playit,” delivers a collection of covers from equally illustrious hit composers: Eric Clapton, Dan Fogelberg, Jim Croce, Bread and, on the first single, James Taylor. The unexpected irony of Mr. Edmonds’ reading of the classic “Fire and Rain” is just how much he and JT sound alike—without any affectation from Face. Musically, it stays true to the original, led by acoustic guitar, further demonstrating the artist’s prowess as a musician and rep as one of the most polished producers of our time. A plush homage to the ’70s, further proving Babyface’s timeless talent.—CT

TRIPLE-A
RAUL MALO
It Only Hurts Me When I Cry (2:48)
Producers: Raul Malo, Evan York, Jay Weaver
Writer: D. Yarbouk, R. Miller
Publisher: not listed

NewDoor/UME

Raul Malo stands the test of time as a velvet-coated majestic musician, through his tenure with the Mavericks, offerings of Cuban music and now, a collection of classic country compositions. “It Only Hurts Me When I Cry” is a sparkling composition from cross-generational Dwight Yoakam and Roger Miller and a top 10 country hit for the former (in 1991), is timeless trang, offering a clicking sax, chugging percussion and composite live-recording vibe. Ever-artful, Malo delivers on a new level—again—as if we needed further reason to humbly bow to him. So inspired.—CT

THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS
As Walt Disney's soundtrack to "High School Musical 2" opens at No. 1 on The Billboard 200 with the year's second-largest sales week, let me serve fair warning: I'll issue a severe tongue-lashing to the first smart aleck who says, 'Is that all it is?'

That leaves the opening salvo by Linkin Park's "Minutes to Midnight" as the biggest sales frame of 2007—at least until rappers 50 Cent and Kanye West and country star Kenny Chesney stage a steel-cage match with their Sept. 17 releases.

Even more impressive, it's the second-largest start by any soundtrack in the 16 years Nielsen SoundScan has tracked sales, second only to Eminem's "8 Mile," which opened at No. 1 with 702,000 sold in 2002.

Further, 615,000 marks the largest SoundScan week for any TV soundtrack.

By now, it has been well-chronicled in Billboard and all over the media that the original "HSM" was one of the surprise stories in entertainment last year, both as a ratings driver for Disney Channel and a catalyst for album sales.

At first, the accounts that sell music certainly underestimated how quickly the first "HSM" album would take off, and who could blame them? Even the Disney label had been conservative in its projection.

Consequently, there was an early window when demand completely outstripped supply, so for a while, the soundtrack had a much higher portion of digital sales than a children's title would normally carry.

That physical product lag was short-lived, and soon it became obvious that "HSM" would become the best-selling album of 2006. Released Jan. 10, it rang 3.7 million in 2006, edging the runner-up title, Rascal Flatts' "Me and My Gang," by 239,000 copies during the calendar year.

The original album also had the distinctions of being the first soundtrack from a TV movie to reach No. 1 on The Billboard 200 and the first from a cable channel to do so.

The Disney machine has made those fears old hat by now, as the first two soundtracks from "Hannah Montana" and now "HSM 2" each followed suit.

But this bow still renders a bit of chart history. With "Hannah Montana 2/Meet Miley Cyrus" hitting 4-2 on a 10% gain, this marks the first time that the Walt Disney label has owned the top two slots on The Billboard 200.

Aside from "8 Mile," only two other soundtracks clocked bigger weeks than "HSM 2" in the SoundScan era. "The Bodyguard" and "Titanic" each had two weeks north of 615,000; the latter sold 848,000 at its zenith, while the set from Whitney Houston's "Bodyguard" reached 1.1 million during Christmas week of 1992, the first album with a SoundScan stanza of 1 million or more.

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE: If we had tried to plan it this way, it just never would have worked. Only by coincidence do we see an act gradu- ate from Top Heatseekers in the same week the magazine runs a story detailing how difficult it has become to work a developing artist into the top half of The Billboard 200 (see story, page 27).

As the weekend showings of "High School Musical 2" were undercounted with that new album's release, so, too, did the sales estimate for "HSM". Even the Disney label has owned the top half of the Billboard 200.

Some industryites speculated Disney Channel's quoteweekly showings of "HSM 2" might spur enough late-week action to take the new album to a start of 800,000 or more (Billboard, Aug. 25).

As it is, the sequel's album opens with 513,000 copies, in line with what chart forecasters predicted when charts reported first-day numbers.

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**Market Watch**

**Weekly Unit Sales**

**Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)**

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<th>Week</th>
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<tr>
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**Digital TRACKS SALES**

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<td>257,033,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
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<td>Cassette</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>579,000</td>
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**OVERALL UNIT SALES**

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<th>Week</th>
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<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>335,064,000</td>
<td>287,757,000</td>
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**SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT**

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<td>Cassette</td>
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<td>212,000</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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\n
**YEAR-TO-DATE SALES BY ALBUM CATEGORY**

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<td>204.5 million</td>
<td>+15.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>172.2 million</td>
<td>+1.5%</td>
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<td>06</td>
<td>130.5 million</td>
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<tr>
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<td>130.5 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>115.6 million</td>
<td>+10.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>115.6 million</td>
<td>+10.9%</td>
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\n
MODERN LIVING

Kid Rock gets ink on Modern Rock as "So High" bows at No. 25, his first entry on the chart since November 2001. Foo Fighters get their fifth No. 1 for the same list, as "The Pretender" reaches the top in just three weeks, the band's 'easiest climb to Modern Rock's Top 5.'

SCHOOL'S OUT

High School Musical 2" sets new Hot Digital Songs records for most songs (nine) and most debuts (eight) from one album. Sound familiar? Both previous records were set last year by the soundtrack to the first "High School Musical."

OH, DANNY BOY

"It Don't Mean a Thing If You Feel the Licks" enters Top World Music at No. 10. That's the Irish singer's 25th title on that chart, which extends his lead for the most albums placed on World Music. All but four of those have reached the top 10.

Over the Counter

GEOFF MAYFIELD

'High School Musical 2' Heads More Than One Class

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 57

www.americanradiohistory.com
### Billboard 200 Chart Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Week 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>MICHAEL W. SMITH</td>
<td>Stand</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>PINK</td>
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<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>12 STONES</td>
<td>Anthem For The Underdog</td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>PAUL PLESLEY</td>
<td>Dually</td>
<td>EMI Westworld (&lt;10,000)</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>R. KELLY</td>
<td>Between Raining Hell And Amazing Grace</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>GWEN STEFANI</td>
<td>Double Up</td>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>The Evolution Of Robin Thicke</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>GLEN HANSARD</td>
<td>Songs For A New World</td>
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<td>Reckless</td>
<td>Stille&lt;br /&gt; (&lt;10,000)</td>
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<td>65</td>
<td>THREE DAYS GRACE</td>
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<td>VELVET REVOLVER</td>
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<td>Capitol (&lt;10,000)</td>
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<td>78</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>BOUNDARY WAVE</td>
<td>Halfway To Hazard</td>
<td>Boundary Wave (&lt;10,000)</td>
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<td>SHOP BOY</td>
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<td>TITLE</td>
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**POP 100 AIRPLAY**

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<tr>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIVE IT TO ME</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A BAY BAY</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>LET'S GET IT ON</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARTY LIKE A ROCKSTAR</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIVE IT TO ME</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>A BAY BAY</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>LET'S GET IT ON</td>
<td>22</td>
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### R&B/Reggae Albums

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<td>1</td>
<td>The Body</td>
<td>T.I. &amp; Monica</td>
<td>Polystar</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Torch</td>
<td>Jordin Sparks &amp; Nick Cannon</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Truth</td>
<td>Common &amp; Ms. Jade</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Clouds</td>
<td>Bobby V &amp; Carla Campbell</td>
<td>Koch / EMI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A Time To Love</td>
<td>Ginuwine &amp; Nelly</td>
<td>Stax / Universal Motown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The One And Only</td>
<td>Chris Brown</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>In My Life</td>
<td>Shemar &amp; Missy Elliott</td>
<td>Island / Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>You Got It</td>
<td>Mac Miller &amp; T-Pain</td>
<td>Jive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Lloyd &amp; Minnie Driver</td>
<td>Jive</td>
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### Rap/Hip-Hop Albums

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Buck &amp; Cryme</td>
<td>Young Buck &amp; Cryme</td>
<td>Cash Money</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Konvicted</td>
<td>Young Jeezy &amp; Trina</td>
<td>Konvict / Nappy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Definition Of A Day</td>
<td>Yo Gotti</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>My Life</td>
<td>Meek Mill &amp; Yo Gotti</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<td>T.I.'s Dedication</td>
<td>T.I.</td>
<td>Cash Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Something To Talk About</td>
<td>Lil Wayne</td>
<td>Cash Money</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>R.I.P.</td>
<td>Bobby V &amp; Carla Campbell</td>
<td>Koch / EMI</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Steelo</td>
<td>Tyga &amp; Yung Nation</td>
<td>Dababy</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>In My Life</td>
<td>Shemar &amp; Missy Elliott</td>
<td>Island / Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The One And Only</td>
<td>Chris Brown</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Charts

- **Top R&B/Reggae Albums**: Various artists
- **Top Rap/Hip-Hop Albums**: Various artists
- **Top Reggae Albums**: Various artists

For more information, visit [Billboard’s website](https://www.billboard.com).
### HOT R&B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Let Me Go&quot;</td>
<td>Shawty &amp; J.T. Money (Level 3)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Can't Tell Me Nothing&quot;</td>
<td>T.I. ft. Ne-Yo (Def Jam/IDJMG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;I'm Still Loving You&quot;</td>
<td>Ginuwine (Interscope)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;Make Me Better&quot;</td>
<td>Barbie (Kanye West/Def Jam)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>&quot;Don't Make Me Wait&quot;</td>
<td>Ciara (Jive/Zomba)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;Big Things Poppin' (Do It)&quot;</td>
<td>DaBaby (Virgin/EMI)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;Until I Find Another&quot;</td>
<td>J.Cole (Def Jam/IDJMG)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Beautiful Girls&quot;</td>
<td>Keyshia Cole (Interscope)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>&quot;Shape&quot;</td>
<td>Ne-Yo (Def Jam/IDJMG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;Let's Talk&quot;</td>
<td>Jill Scott (Atlantic)</td>
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### RHYTHM AIRPLAY

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<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;If I Had&quot;</td>
<td>Boyz (BMG)</td>
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<td>Jill Scott (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>&quot;The People&quot;</td>
<td>BOSSMAN (BMG)</td>
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<td>&quot;Reach Out&quot;</td>
<td>R. Kelly (BMG)</td>
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<td>&quot;Just For You&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;I'm Still Loving You&quot;</td>
<td>Ginuwine (Interscope)</td>
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<td>&quot;Can't Help Myself&quot;</td>
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### ADULT R&B

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<td>&quot;Hold You In My Arms&quot;</td>
<td>Jamie Foxx (Atlantic)</td>
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<td>&quot;One Last Time&quot;</td>
<td>Nelly (Epic)</td>
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<td>&quot;Lose Without U&quot;</td>
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### R&B/POP SINGLES SALES

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<td>T.I. ft. Ne-Yo (Def Jam/IDJMG)</td>
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<td>&quot;Make Me Better&quot;</td>
<td>Barbie (Kanye West/Def Jam)</td>
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<td>&quot;Don't Make Me Wait&quot;</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;Big Things Poppin' (Do It)&quot;</td>
<td>DaBaby (Virgin/EMI)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Until I Find Another&quot;</td>
<td>J.Cole (Def Jam/IDJMG)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>&quot;Beautiful Girls&quot;</td>
<td>Keyshia Cole (Interscope)</td>
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<td>&quot;Shape&quot;</td>
<td>Ne-Yo (Def Jam/IDJMG)</td>
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### HITPREDICTOR

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<td>Keyshia Cole (Interscope)</td>
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Data for week of SEPTEMBER 1, 2007 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 72
### HOT LATIN SONGS

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<td>MIL CORAZON</td>
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<td>MÁS HERIDAS</td>
<td>Los Tucanes de Tijuana</td>
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Driven by play on Eastern stations and Puerto Rico, former No. 42, has its 4th leader for 2007.

### LATIN ALBUMS

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<td>Los Bukis &amp; Los Bukis</td>
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Data for week of SEPTEMBER 8, 2007 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 72
**LATIN AIRPLAY**

**POP**

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<tr>
<td>RASTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y SI TE DIGO</td>
<td>(FROM CENTURY 21 / ASCII)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MI GENTE</td>
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**REGIONAL MEXICAN**

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**LATIN ALBUMS**

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**REGIONAL MEXICAN ALBUMS**

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**TOP ELECTRONIC ALBUMS**

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**DANCE AIRPLAY**

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**DANCE CLUB PLAY**

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Data for week of SEPTEMBER 1, 2007.

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data.
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ALBUM CHARTS

Sales data compiled from a comprehensive pool of U.S. music merchants by Nielsen SoundScan. Sales data for CD/DVD sales is compiled by Broadcast Data Systems. Chart data is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan from a national subset of core stores that specialize in those genres.

- Albums with the greatest sale percentages are included.
- Where included, this award indicates the title with the chart's largest unit increase.
- Where included, this award indicates the title with the chart's biggest percentage growth.

Singles charts are compiled from Nielsen SoundScan's database of U.S. music merchants.

ALBUMS

RECENT CHARTS

- Soundtrack for "The Book of Eli" debuts at #1 on the Billboard 200 chart. The album includes music from the film, featuring artists such as Coldplay, Beyoncé, and Daft Punk.
- "The Muppets" soundtrack debuts at #2 on the Billboard 200 chart. The album includes music from the Disney film.
- "The A Team" soundtrack debuts at #3 on the Billboard 200 chart. The album includes music from the Netflix series.

NEW Releases

- "The Social Network" soundtrack debuts at #4 on the Billboard 200 chart. The album includes music from the David Fincher film.
- "The Guard" soundtrack debuts at #5 on the Billboard 200 chart. The album includes music from the Martin McDonagh film.

TOP SALES CHARTS

- "The Weeknd" debuts at #1 on the Billboard 200 chart. The album includes the hit single "Blinding Lights.
- "Coldplay" debuts at #2 on the Billboard 200 chart. The album includes the hit single "Up With the L腾飞.
- "The Chainsmokers" debuts at #3 on the Billboard 200 chart. The album includes the hit single "Call You Mine.

TOP DIGITAL ALBUMS

- "The Weeknd" debuts at #1 on the Billboard Hot Albums chart. The album includes the hit single "Blinding Lights.
- "Coldplay" debuts at #2 on the Billboard Hot Albums chart. The album includes the hit single "Up With the L腾飞.
- "The Chainsmokers" debuts at #3 on the Billboard Hot Albums chart. The album includes the hit single "Call You Mine.

TOP ARTISTS

- "The Weeknd" debuts at #1 on the Billboard Artist 100 chart. The artist includes the hit singles "Blinding Lights" and "Up With the L腾飞.
- "Coldplay" debuts at #2 on the Billboard Artist 100 chart. The artist includes the hit singles "Up With the L腾飞" and "The Scientist.
- "The Chainsmokers" debuts at #3 on the Billboard Artist 100 chart. The artist includes the hit singles "Call You Mine" and "Don't Let Me Be Sad."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>DVD/High-definition (Title)</th>
<th>Release Date</th>
<th>Label/Manufacturer</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**TOP DVD SALES**

   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Warner Home Video
   - Format: DVD/High-definition
   - Region: All
   - Price: $14.98

2. *Disturbia* - Shia LaBeouf/Joseph Gordon-Levitt
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment
   - Format: DVD/High-definition
   - Region: All
   - Price: $14.98

3. *SALES DATA* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: DVD/High-definition
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

**TOP TV SALES**

   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment
   - Format: DVD/High-definition
   - Region: All
   - Price: $19.98

2. *Disturbia* - Shia LaBeouf/Joseph Gordon-Levitt
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment
   - Format: DVD/High-definition
   - Region: All
   - Price: $14.98

3. *SALES DATA* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: DVD/High-definition
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

**TOP VIDEO GAME RENTALS**

1. *PS2: NCAA Football 08* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Electronic Arts
   - Format: PlayStation 2
   - Region: All
   - Price: $9.99

2. *Transformers: The Game* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Activision
   - Format: PlayStation 3
   - Region: All
   - Price: $9.99

3. *God of War II* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Sony Computer Entertainment
   - Format: PlayStation 2
   - Region: All
   - Price: $9.99

4. *SALES DATA* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Video Games
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

**TOP HEATSEEKERS**

1. *Lori McKenna* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Nonesuch/Universal Music
   - Format: CD
   - Region: All
   - Price: $9.99

2. *Paul Van Dyk* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: EMI Group
   - Format: CD
   - Region: All
   - Price: $9.99

3. *Flight of the Conchords* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Sony BMG
   - Format: CD
   - Region: All
   - Price: $9.99

4. *Chingona* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Sony BMG
   - Format: CD
   - Region: All
   - Price: $9.99

5. *SALES DATA* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Music
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

**TOP TRENDMONGER**

1. *Wearin' It Out* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Sony Music
   - Format: CD
   - Region: All
   - Price: $9.99

2. *SALES DATA* - Various Artists
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Music
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

**TOP VIDEO STORES**

1. *Walmart* - Various Locations
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Video Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

2. *Best Buy* - Various Locations
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Video Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

3. *SALES DATA* - Various Locations
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Video Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

**TOP MUSIC STORES**

1. *Walmart* - Various Locations
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Music Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

2. *Best Buy* - Various Locations
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Music Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

3. *SALES DATA* - Various Locations
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Music Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

**TOP DVD STORES**

1. *Walmart* - Various Locations
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: DVD Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

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   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: DVD Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

3. *SALES DATA* - Various Locations
   - Release Date: 10/24/2011
   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: DVD Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

**TOP VIDEO GAME STORES**

1. *Walmart* - Various Locations
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   - Label: Various Labels
   - Format: Video Game Stores
   - Region: All
   - Price: Various

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   - Label: Various Labels
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Data for week of September 1, 2007

Charts Include: CS (First Country Songs), MMB (Top 10 Songs) LP (Top 10 Long Plays) FT (Top 10 Foreign Tracks) TITLE (Brian's - Licensing Org) 5 Sheet Music Dist, Chart, Position

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data

Charts Legend on Page 72
HELP WANTED

Koch Entertainment seeks National Account Manager - Koch Entertainment, the leading and fastest-growing independent music company in the US, is searching for a National Account Manager for the Seattle/Portland area. Successful candidate will have 5-7 yrs experience in the record business, retail and sales background imperative. With broad product knowledge, you will service all accounts assigned, serve as liaison between accounts and labels, and create and implement promotions and advertising. Superior all-around skills required.

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Phone: 661-753-9734, Fax 661-259-2169

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- How to measure and monetize your investments
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CONFIRMED SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Pete Blackshaw, Chief Marketing Officer, Nielsen Buzzmetrics
Doug Cole, Director of Entertainment Marketing, HP
Eric Hirshberg, President, Chief Creative Officer, Deutsch Los Angeles
Bob Jeffrey, Chairman and CEO, JWT
Laura Klauberg, VP, Marketing Shared Services, Unilever Cosmetics Int’l
Guy McCarter, SVP/Director, Entertainment Marketing, OMD/Optimum Ent.
Tom Meyer, President, Davie Brown Entertainment
Doug Scott, Senior Partner & Executive Director, Branded Content and Entertainment, Ogilvy North America, New York
Hamet Watt, Founder and CEO, Next Medium

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EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE
Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

Show Dog Nashville names Allison Jones VP of A&R. She previously held the same title at Universal Music Group Nashville.
PUBLISHING: Universal Music Publishing Group names Bob Aird managing director for the company’s integrated operations in Australia. He held the same title at Universal Music Publishing Australia.
Cherry Lane Music Publishing promotes Eric Lerner to coordinator of synchronization licensing and James Williams to senior contract administrator. Lerner was royalty accounting assistant, and Williams was contract administrator.
BMI appoints Jamil Walker to associate director of editorial services and media relations. He was publicity coordinator at Zomba Label Group/Interscope Records.

JONES REICH GASTON WEISS

MEDIA: Digital media network ConcertTV in New York names Scott Reich VP of programming. He was VP of multiplex programming at VH1.
MTV Latin America names Fernando Gaston VP of content for MTV and VH1 Argentina. He was senior VP of channels of media company Classon’s pay TV services.
mtvU in New York promotes Chris McCarthy to VP of marketing and strategic development and names Andrew Federici VP of online properties. McCarthy was senior director and head of marketing, and Federici was director of proprietary portals at InterActiveCorp.
TOURING: Facility management firm Global Spectrum appoints Benjamin Weiss GM of the Mullins Center in Amherst, Mass. He was assistant GM at the Sovereign Bank Arena in Trenton, N.J.

RADIO: MJ Interactive, supplier of software tools and Web content for radio station Web sites, elevates Lily Somilleda to affiliate sales manager. She was affiliate sales representative.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS

DOING IT FOR THE KIDS
Willamette Week’s Musicfest NW 2007 four-day music festival—set for Sept. 6-9 at various clubs in and around the Portland, Ore., area—will donate proceeds from festival wristband sales to the Rock and Roll Camp for Girls and the Oregon Music Hall of Fame. Proceeds from sales of the festival’s accompanying compilation CD, "Musicfest NW Vol. 2," which features tracks by Spoon, Deerhunter and others, will also be donated to the two kid-focused music programs. For more info, go to musicfestnw.com.

HIP-HOP’S FREEDOM FIGHTERS
Mos Def and Talib Kweli will headline the 10th annual Black August Hip Hop Project Concert, to be held Aug. 26 at the Nokia Theatre Times Square in New York. A project of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Black August aims to facilitate exchanges between international communities by promoting awareness about the social and political issues affecting young people. For additional info, go to m8gm.org/blackaugust.

INSIDE TRACK

DODGE DRIVES KIDZ BOP TOUR AROUND THE WORLD

According to those close to the situation, the upcoming Kidz Bop world tour will be presented by Dodge Grand Caravan (surely aimed at the parents of the kids in the audience). In partnership with Vee Corp., the tour—billed as the first rock concert designed for kids—commences Oct. 12 in Davenport, Iowa, and will hit more than 80 markets.

Info about the Dodge Grand Caravan will be available at all venues, and a music video, produced by Kidz Bop for Dodge, will be shown during the preshow and intermission.

Additionally, and separate from the Dodge music video, concert attendees will be able to create their own music video as part of the Let the Music Drive You contest, also sponsored by Dodge and hosted on kidzbop.com. The grand-prize winner’s family receives a 2008 Dodge Caravan SXT.

HIP-HOP, RB STYLE

Having conquered the Latin pop world, Mexican sextet RBD are venturing into (drum roll, please) hip-hop. Sources tell Track that the group is following up its 2006 English-language debut, "Rebels," with a new, expanded edition of the disc. Slated for release early next year, the new "Rebels" contains three new hip-hop-influenced tracks, courtesy of producer Jack Splash, who has worked with Cee-Lo, Alicia Keys, John Legend and Jennifer Hudson.

THE UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK’S MUSIC VISIONARY AWARD LUNCHEON

Music industry titans gathered at the Pierre Hotel for the UJA-Federation of New York’s Music Visionary Award Luncheon honoring BMG Label Group chairman/CEO Clive Davis. More than 50 industry leaders from the worlds of music, entertainment, communications and business honored Davis at the record-breaking philanthropic event, which raised more than $1 million to make available innovative music programs for New York’s underprivileged youth. Photo, courtesy of Larry Busacca/GA/WHITEHOUSE.COM


RIGHT: Clive Davis with Academy Award-winning actress and Arista artist Jennifer Hudson, whose performance of two of Davis’ greatest hits received a standing ovation.
INSIDE TRACK

THE HOURS DO PRADA

Track hears that British band the Hours will touch down Sept. 7 at the Prada shop in New York’s Soho neighborhood. It will be the band’s first performance in the United States—and it coincides with Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in New York (Sept. 5-12). Surely, the duo—Antony Genn and Martin Sexton—will treat fashionistas to numerous gems from its debut album, “Narcissus Road,” that A&M issued earlier this year in the United Kingdom.

(A U.S. release is scheduled for fall.) Following the band’s Prada performance, LCD Soundsystem leader James Murphy will keep the party going with a DJ set.

Design-conscious tastemakers will know this is the second year that Prada is hosting a concert during Fashion Week. Last year’s event at the Italian design house’s Rem Koolhaas–designed Soho store featured the Raconteurs. In its six years, Prada’s Soho epicenter, in addition to selling clothes and accessories, has become a cultural center that hosts numerous film screenings, dramatic readings and the Waist Down: Skirts by Miuccia Prada exhibition. Of course, on Sept. 7, the store will be infused with an incredibly groovy rock vibe. See you there.

SESC has signed Gary Burr for exclusive representation. With major country, Latin and pop hits under his belt, Burr is one of the nation’s most successful and versatile songwriters. His hit parade includes cuts by artists ranging from George Jones and Patti Loveless to Bling Bling. His wife, Aquilesa, and Ricky Martin. From left, are Burr, SESAC writer/publisher relations associate VP Tim Fink and SESAC writer/publisher relations director Sharron Nene.

Capitol/EMI in conjunction with Jive Records Platinum, replaced 20 of Fats Domino’s past awards with reproductions of the originals that were destroyed when Hurricane Katrina ravaged the artist’s Lower 9th Ward neighborhood two years ago. They were presented to Domino during an event at Tipitina’s French Quarter Club. From left are EMI Music Marketing senior director of A&R Mike Reagor, RIAA director of artist and industry relations, and gold and platinum program Laura Baud. RIAA, executive VP/general counsel Steven Marks. Domino and the Tipitina’s Foundation executive director Bill Taylor.

The band Raconteurs has performed with Maceo Parker and Prince’s band, while the band’s first album coincides with the launch of the artist’s “Superfly Kung Fu” album. For more information, visit starbucks.com, record store, or go online.
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