EXCLUSIVE

MISSY

Hip-Hop’s First Lady Of Innovation On Her New Album, Her Work With Timbaland, And Who’s Got Next

THE BILLBOARD Q&A

THE NEW JAY-Z?

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INSIDE THE RIAA’S P2P WAR

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and more.

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Physical Illness
If the Majors Don’t Act, Large Accounts Will Soon Follow Handelman

As soon as Handelman Co. announced that it was exiting the music business, some label sales and distribution representatives immediately asked aloud, "Where's the next shoe going to drop?"

Of course, there aren't too many accounts as big as Handelman all around, but there are enough other large music accounts whose future appears uncertain for one reason or another that that dreaded question is certainly valid.

Handelman's fate became known June 2. On June 3, a Reuters story seemed to suggest that the next shoe will be Virgin Entertainment Group. A senior executive at Vornado, which bought the chain as a joint venture with the Related Cos., said its Times Square Megastore will shut down in first-quarter 2009, the same time frame that the chain's 14th Street store is scheduled to close down, according to the Web site of the Winick Realty Group, a real estate broker that is shopping the site's lease.

Those two stores make up almost half the chain's $200 million in volume. Can the chain's other eight stores survive as a $100 million entity? Who knows? VEG executives didn't return phone calls by press time. Even though for the last year the chain has been putting out press releases touting a turnaround, a quote in the Reuters story seemed to suggest the Megastore's days are numbered. "We bought the Virgin business to wind it down to get hold of the real estate," said Sandeep Mathrani, Vornado executive VP and head of its retail real estate division.

Meanwhile, the futures of Borders Group and Circuit City are uncertain because both chains are on the block. If they are sold, who knows what will happen to them. Let alone if they will remain large players in music.

The irony of Handelman shutting down and Virgin Megastore potentially closing is that we have now moved from losing chains that are in trouble, like Musicland and Tower, to losing a music merchandise store that still has $200 million in shareholder equity on its balance sheet, according to its last financial results for the period ending Jan. 31, and potentially losing one that paints itself as a successful turnaround. What next, profitable chains shutting down, figuring the only way they can cash in will be to liquidate?

That's where we are headed. The last chain's labels continue to defensively manage the physical side of their business. Major-label executives say they envision a future where physical still has a place. But the perception that digital is killing physical is so much stronger that it is actually helping to kill physical. If you look at Handelmann's balance sheet, you would be surprised to learn that it is paying interest rates of 12% on its bank loan and furbegymns that it couldn't find a replacement lender, an asset-based one that should have been happy to charge 6%. But none of that happened because the banks hear the major labels talking about digital delivery all the time.

Now, the labels are beginning to help kill physical. Handelman clearly had a big question mark over its long-term future. But wasn't it such bad shape that it had to be liquidated right now? The labels helped the Handelman board make that decision by defensively managing credit to the account, even as the basic squeezed it from the other side.

Now, all label credit managers are putting each other on the back, celebrating that they will get paid in full, instead of facing a Handelman Chapter 11 two or three years from now. But how many sales would they have achieved if the company remained operational for two or more years? Anderson is taking over Wal-Mart, but will one alone equal two? What about the other accounts that Handelman serviced: As Shopko or Sears/Kmart wonder about a replacement for Handelman, will they entertain whether they should keep music as part of their inventory at all?

Once upon a time, the majors would have considered all that when deciding how to deal with an account like Handelman, but those no longer matter because sooner or later the promise of digital must deliver, or so they believe.

Sure, digital is the industry's future. But how much sooner would the transition have been—and could still be—if the labels made a decent attempt to prop up physical for a while longer. What would have happened if the majors had agreed on a CD evolution or replacement technology three years ago when retail asked them to? What would have happened if the major labels actually took their head out of the sand and heard the consumer tell them—over and over again, louder each time—that the CD is not worth more than $10 retail? So once again, I ask: Are the majors really willing to let physical sales dribble away to nothing, without a smart fight?

---
> MADONNA GETS MOBILE BOOST

Madonna's new album "Hard Candy" will be preloaded or carried alongside Sony Ericsson handsets in 27 countries, through a new agreement struck between Warner Music International and the cell phone manufacturer. High-profile marketing campaigns will support the music-enabled handsets in each market, WMI said in a statement.

> VAN HALEN TOUR GROSSES $93 MILLION

Though not without setbacks, the Van Halen reunion tour ended up a massive success, wrapping June 2 in Grand Rapids, Mich., with a total gross of more than $93 million and close to 1 million in attendance from 74 shows. The trek marked the first time that original singer David Lee Roth performed with the band in more than 23 years. Van Halen's handlers say it was the top-grossing tour in the band's history.

> OPENING PARTIES SET FOR GRAMMY MUSEUM

The Grammy Museum will open its doors in Los Angeles in December with a weeklong celebration of the history of music. The party kicks off Dec. 3 with a VIP reception and will culminate in festivities recognizing the Grammy Awards' 50-year legacy, according to organizers the Recording Academy and AEG Live. Other functions will include a gala fund-raising concert the following night, educational tours and a special launch ceremony Dec. 6, when the museum officially opens to the public.

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**JINGLE BELLE**

Candie's Helps Launch Hayden Panettiere Single

Fashion brand Candie's didn't have to look far to find its new pop-music "it girl." "Heroes" star and Candie's spokeswoman Hayden Panettiere. As part of the latest deal linking its teen clothing line to a young female music act, Candie's will help promote the song "Wake Up Call" from Panettiere's forthcoming album from Hollywood Records.

While financial terms were not released, Hollywood says Candie's will absorb the "majority of the cost" of the single, which will include a multimillion-dollar ad buy on cable and network TV, a print campaign and a music video.

The ad campaign will begin at the end of July while the song will be released digitally Aug. 5. "Wake Up Call" will appear on Panettiere's still-untilted debut album, which is slated for 2009.

Panettiere announced an advertising and marketing pact with Candie's in February. The brand's incorporation of her music into the campaign follows in the footsteps of its deal last summer with Interscope and Fergie, whose songs "Big Girls Don't Cry" and "Glamorous" were promoted in Candie's TV commercials.

The brand also used Hilary Duff's "Wake Up" and "Super Girl" as part of an ad campaign in 2005-06. In the Fergie and Duff ads, the performer received a chryon at the start of the spot identifying her, the song and the title of the album featuring the track.

Panettiere has had a long history of using female music stars in its advertising. Earlier campaigns have featured Destiny's Child, Ashlee Simpson, Ashanti, Ciara and the Dixie Chicks.

"When we look for our talent, we always look for the 'it girl' in pop culture," says David Mander, chief marketing officer for Iconix Brand Group, parent company of Candie's. "We really feel our customer connects with music... it's a great formula."

While best-known to audiences as world-saving cheerleader Claire Bennet on NBC's "Heroes," Panettiere's record deal with Hollywood preceded her prime-time success from the past two years, according to Hollywood Records senior VP of marketing, Ken Bunt.

"We had to work within her crazy schedule to determine what direction she wants to go with her music," Bunt says. "Wake Up Call" is a reggae-flavored pop song that was written by Andreas "Quizz" Romdhane and Josef Larossi, who have previously written tracks for Geri Halliwell, Diana Ross, Il Divo and Westlife.

"They gave us a couple of songs, and when we heard this song we knew immediately," Mander says. "It's a girl power summer anthem... you can understand all the words and jam with it on the radio. It's the kind of song that really gets in your head."

The print campaign, music video and TV spot will all take place within the context of Iconix's overarching back-to-school campaign advertising Candie's shoes at Kohl's department stores. In the TV ad, Panettiere performs the song at a club in front of a crowd of fans—all wearing Candie's shoes. Panettiere eventually rallies the audience out into the street.

"What was exciting for us was really featuring Hayden as a musical artist," Mander says. "A lot of people know her as an actress, and in this she's really seen as a top pop star."

The ad will air on "anything that appeals to our Candie's demographic of 18- to 24-year-olds," Mander says, including Fox, the CW and MTV. It is entirely possible, then, for Panettiere's video for "Wake Up Call" to appear on MTV simultaneously following the ad featuring the song.

The video and commercial were shot by Chris Applebaum, who has previously directed videos for Duff, Rianna and Jessica Simpson—as well as Paris Hilton's bikini-clad hamburger-slurping commercial for Carl's Jr.

"Candie's has long been known for its cheeky approach to advertising—"a print campaign in 1997 featured actress Jenny McCarthy sitting on a toilet in her Candie's shoes. In the "Big Girls Don't Cry" video, Fergie stands by a backyard clothesline and removes a pair of underpants with "Candie's" emblazoned on the rear in sequins—..."
Loading The Vault

Wolfgang's Vault Adds Live Recordings From Universal Music

A new licensing pact between Wolfgang's Vault and Universal Music Group is the latest in a series of moves by the online live-music mecca to expand its trove of vintage concert recordings and other music-related assets.

Under the agreement with UMG, its first with a major, San Francisco-based Wolfgang's Vault will add live shows from such acts as Lynyrd Skynyrd, Bob Marley and Jimi Hendrix. The deal includes previously unreleased live recordings from the mid-'60s through today, covering "hundreds of UMG performers and thousands of live performance concerts," Wolfgang's Vault founder Bill Sagan says.

"The downloadable content deal with UMG is for 10 years, with a streaming deal stretching into perpetuity," Sagan says. Eventually, the recordings will be offered as CDs and vinyl under Universal's direction, he adds.

Universal Music Enterprises president/CEO Bruce Resnikoff says the deal is an important step toward marketing live material from historic UMG artists. "For the first time, we will be able to give longtime fans a chance to relive those musical experiences and see a chance to hear the original performances in a quality, authorized format rather than bootlegs or poor digital versions."

Sagan launched the Wolfgang's Vault Web site in 2003 after acquiring the pipe later promoter Bill Graham's cache of memorabilia and concert recordings for $5 million. Since Billboard last spoke with Sagan more than two years ago, the company has acquired the King Biscuit Live radio show archives, the Silver Eagle and Cross Country archives of vintage country performances, the Record Plant archives and legendary sound engineer Dinky Dawson's "Dawson Sound" live archive.

Wolfgang's Vault has also cut a deal to record, stream and sell audio and video of San Francisco's Noise Pop Music Festival and has signed more than 20 acts, in addition, it bought the rights to Crockett magazine, producing 52 Web-only "issues" annually, as well as live performance scheduling service Mojave.

Finally, the company bought a controlling interest in Rock Island, Ill.-based Daytrotter, which records live performances and posts them online for downloading and streaming.

Meanwhile, Wolfgang's Vault has also sold "t-shirts, posters and other memorabilia," he says. The site recently recorded its 44,187th order, which excludes concert downloads.

Wolfgang's downloads include only full-length performances. "This is the live performance that happened that night," Sagan notes. "If you get the benefit of that if you go in and buy a track," Sagan says. "Having said that, there are those that disagree with me."

Concerts longer than 30 minutes cost $9.98 for a 256kbps download. Those shorter than 30 minutes sell for $5.98, while some one- or two-song performances are priced at $3.98. The site sells vintage performances by acts including fleetwood Mac, The Kinks, Iggy Pop, Linda Ronstadt, Lou Reed, Mott the Hoople, Steve Miller and Warren Zevon.

EXTRAMP

Wholesalers Poised To Fill Void Left By Handelman's Departure

The expected liquidation of 72-year-old Handelman Co., another landmark in the music industry's shift to digital distribution, will open up opportunities for some leading wholesalers while it forces adjustments among other, smaller distributors.

In the first step of a process that will ultimately put all of the company's operations on the block, Handelman has sold off its music inventory and other assets related to its Wal-Mart business in the U.S. to Anderson Merchandisers. Handelman also agreed to sell its Canadian subsidiary to Anderson.

The company says it will help continue to serve other music accounts like Sears/Kmart, Shopko, Pumida and Best Buy until each can get a replacement supplier.

After exiting the North American music business, "it's likely we will continue to monetize our assets, wind down our operations, pay off our lenders and vendors, and any funds left over will be distributed to shareholders," Handelman CEO Al Koch says.

Sources say that Anderson has passed up on the other accounts services handled by Handelman. One wholesale executive says that the Handelman and Anderson decisions free up a lot of business for the marketplace and will cause much discussion among wholesalers as to which accounts to chase.

Among the wholesalers expected to join the pursuit, Alliance Entertainment stands to benefit the most as it is the only one capable of racking music on a large scale. It already racks 400 Knott stores and provides category management for Barnes & Noble and Circuit City. Others like Top Hits and Allegro, which rack smaller accounts—as well as Earpuc, which services military stores—might see this as an opportunity to take on larger accounts. The super one-stops, Baker & Taylor and Super D, might also see this as a chance to extend their businesses. Handelman's Best Buy account represents the most significant development for the indie community. Three years ago, the Minneapolis-based consumer electronics chain cut down on its music and video vendors, choosing to funnel all music through the five major-owned independent distribution companies as well as Handelman, Koch Entertainment and Super D.

Most independent distributors chose to go through Handelman because it gave the added benefit of using Best Buy as a growing ground that sometimes resulted in product also being placed in Walmart and the other discount department stores.

Now, indie distributors like Redeye, Sombrero Distribution and Music Video Distributors must figure out their next move. One indie distributor says that Best Buy is directing wholesalers to choose between Super D and Koch Entertainment. That wholesaler says it plans to return to selling Best Buy directly, but that it could take months to set up. In the meantime, his company will turn to one of the two recommended companies.

Meanwhile, the majors see the Handelman/Anderson deal as a good move for the industry. With the business endering, "now you will have one strong player whereas before there was the potential of dealing with two weaker accounts," Universal Music Group Distribution president Jim Urli says.

The ramifications of the wind-down of Handelman's racking operation will have a far greater impact in the indie community, where labels are worried about their Best Buy business and whether they will get new profit returns. "The weaker accounts could drown if too much comes back, says one industry veteran who is not authorized to speak for his company. Another warns that Handelman still has a lot of stock in its warehouse.

Koch responds that "We will work it out with Best Buy, such a way that everyone will be safe including vendors."

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BMI CONGRATULATES OUR 2008 ACM Awards Winners

Carrie Underwood: Top Female Vocalist
Rascal Flatts: Top Vocal Group
Brooks & Dunn: Top Vocal Duo
Jack Ingram: Top New Male Vocalist
Taylor Swift: Top New Female Vocalist
Lady Antebellum: Top New Duo or Vocal Group
Tim McGraw: Vocal Event of the Year
Kristian Bush, Byron Gallimore: Single Record of the Year
Miranda Lambert: Album of the Year
Mike Wrucke: BMI Catalog of the Year

vianda lambert nÎke Wrucke ALBUM OF THE YEAR 4411.11.81.11
The Collective Expands Into Music With Mad Mac Acquisition

Management/production company the Collective has acquired Rob McDermott's Mad Mac Entertainment as part of launching its music arm, Collective Music, which will represent Linkin Park, Selena Gomez, Taylor Momsen, Meriweather and Resident Hero.

The day-to-day running of the division will be led by McDermott and Jordan Berlant, the former GM at 10th Street Entertainment who has developed marketing strategies for Motley Crüe, The Bee Gees, Clint Black and the Cranberries. Berlant will retain a strategic relationship with 10th Street, including developing and producing a theatrical version of Motley Crüe's autobiography "The Dirt." As a result of the new partnership, the Collective's indie film division is now tasked with seeking financing for the film.

"The lines between the forms of entertainment are getting more and more blurred, and we wanted to be in a space where we could be of full service to the artists we represent," Berlant says.

Berlant and McDermott rose to the top of their respective companies through Santurce, the Latin music outlet that became part of the EMI Music Group in 2001. Under the Santurce umbrella, they formed the Latin music division of EMI Music Publishing, which later became known as EMI Latin.

"The Collective's relationship with the artist and the consumer is something that we're very, very, very close to," Green says. "We want to create opportunities by leveraging that relationship—and what better way to do it than in the music space?"

While strategies have been created for the film, "the notion of a 360-degree relationship is kind of the offing with a company like ours, which can provide touring, licensing and clearly marketing," Green says. "Our agenda is most in line with the artist, opposed to any other business relationship... I don't know exactly what our digital plan looks like—whether it's a digital record label but the notion of giving artists the opportunity to exploit the technology that's available makes sense."

"The Collective has a presence in TV, film and comedy. Films produced by the company include "Big Momma's House 2" and "Are We Done Yet?" while the TV side is responsible for HBO's "The Pimp Chronicles" and MTV's "Wild 'n Out."

The Collective's talent-management clientele includes actors Emile Hirsch and Dennis Hopper and comedians Martin Lawrence, Eddie Izzard, John Leguluzmo and Katt Williams.

So what does this all mean for media clients of the Collective? In a word, leverage.

"If there's a huge movie that's looking for a song from Linkin Park, and we also happen to be putting an actor in the movie... it serves the client very well," Green says. "There's a lot of cross-pollination. The company is all about pop culture—we're completely integrated."

Some of the Collective's clients already have a link to film and TV. Menken, a star of the CW's "Gossip Girl," and Gomez is on the Disney Channel's "Wizards of Waverly Place."

The company's work on other entertainment platforms can benefit Collective clientele become "multimedia artists instead of just music artists," McDermott says.

Recently, Collective Music added other up-and-comers, like Chester French—from Pharrell Williams' Star Trak Entertainment label—and Hollywood Records' Valor as clients.

At a time when the music industry is struggling with unprecedented challenges, why are Green and the Collective taking the plunge into that realm?

"I think historically... there have been pivotal moments where there have been technological innovations that create all kinds of new opportunities, but in doing so, there's been a lot of chaos," Green says. "Old models get broken and new models born."

"We've been in the business longer than most. We're living in that time and place, and rather than put your head in the sand and wallow, I prefer to open my eyes and my ears and my brain and look for opportunities."

Financial terms of the acquisition of Mad Mac Entertainment were not disclosed. Collective Music will be based in Los Angeles, in the offices of the Collective.

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MENCIA

Humor Hits The Road

Live Nation Steps Up Comedy Promotion With Mencia Tour

Live Nation Comedy quietly sold its millionth ticket for 2008 last month, even as it prepares to launch what could be one of the year's top-grossing U.S. comedy tours with Carlos Mencia.

Carlos Mencia: At Close Range, which kicks off July 26 at the Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison, Colo., is a graduation of sorts for the star of Comedy Central's "Mind of Mencia." Scheduled to hit more than 80 North American cities by year's end—and with potential to grow to more than 100, according to Live Nation comedy touring president Geoff Wilkins—the outing may well outdo Mencia's 2006 Punisher tour, which grossed more than $10 million.

The Mencia tour will also be the latest chapter in the expanding comedy promotion aspirations of Live Nation. Live Nation Comedy is also promoting most of Chris Rock's 2008 tour and all the dates for Kate Williams, who at press time had gone more than 100 shows. Last year, Live Nation Comedy promoted 417 shows and sold 866,000 tickets, Wilkins says; already this year, those numbers are up to 654 shows booked and more than a million tickets sold.

Though Live Nation's music business dwarfs its comedy revenue, the entertainment giant is reaping the benefits of a national circuit it has built, "where we can take performers from small clubs to small theaters to midsize theaters," Wilkins says, adding that "there's very few [comedians] that get beyond the 2,500-seat range."

Live Nation promoted some of the dates on Mencia's Punisher tour, which was sponsored by Comedy Central Live and handled mainly by independent promotions firm Icon Entertainment. Icon founder Joe Melocha, who booked the current tour with Creative Artists Agency's Matt Blake, joined Live Nation two months ago as comedy touring VP. This time, Live Nation is the exclusive promoter of all the dates, with Bud Light as presenting sponsor.

With Comedy Central's comedy sponsorship, "we got to expand to a lot of new markets and they helped support those markets in areas that we had no experience in," Melocha says. "Close Range puts Mencia among "a handful of people that are doing super-serious business," Wilkins says. While he declined to project per-night attendance, the tour is hitting arenas, theaters and amphitheaters, including two nights at Los Angeles' 6,600-seat Gibson Amphitheatre.

Mencia insisted on keeping ticket prices low, at an average of $44.50 regardless of section. Live Nation's tour promotion doesn't extend to merchandise, which Mencia sells himself.

Tickets for At Close Range went on sale just as Mencia, and Comedy Central, began promoting the fourth season of "Mind of Mencia," which started May 21. The channel will run promotions for the tour all summer and has already promoted it online, Melocha says. Mencia's national TV exposure has allowed him to penetrate markets as diverse as Bismarck, N.D.; Billings, Mont.; and Green Bay, Wis., all of which are on the tour schedule. Green Bay sold out immediately, Melocha says, and a second date has been added.

Mencia's relationship with Bud Light goes back several years, when the beer brand backed Mencia's Three Amigos tour with Pablo Francisco and Freddy Soto. In addition to sponsoring his current tour, the company has featured Mencia in its commercials (as it did during this year's Super Bowl) and at private events.

The beer brand will also be worked into some video elements in Mencia's show, in what the comedian calls "nonstandard" commercials because they're "a little too edgy."
BO DIDDLEY
1928-2008

Rock legend Bo Diddley might be gone, but his
signature beat will go on forever.

Diddley died of heart failure June 2 in Archer, Fla.,
at the age of 79. He suffered a stroke last spring
and had a heart attack last August, from which
he never fully recovered. He had been under-
going rehabilitation near his Florida home.

Born Ellas Otha Bates McDaniel on Dec. 30, 1928,
in McComb, Miss., Diddley holds the distinction
of being the only musician in history
to have a specific musical beat, or rhyth-
mic pattern, named after him. The "Bo Diddley
beat" blends equal parts rock'n'roll rhythm
and gospel shout in its "bomp, ba-bomp, ba-
bomp, ba-bomp-bomp" pattern, which has be-
come an enduring staple of popular music.
His songs, a tasteful blend of blues and R&B
elements, were among the earliest true rock-
n'roll recordings.

Diddley was an early advocate of fuzzy, dis-
torted guitar sounds. They perfectly com-
plemented his frenetic songs, which were played
on a homemade square guitar as the artist was
deeded out in dark sunglasses and a black hat.
Similarly, his rhythmic, boastful vocal style,
best heard on 1959's "Say Man," predicted rap
by several decades.

In his 1950s heyday, Diddley recorded such
sensational rock songs as "I'm a Man," "Who
Do You Love?", " Mona" and "Road Runner," all of
which have since become essential learning
material for rock and blues bands and have
been covered by countless leading artists.

Buddy Holly borrowed Diddley's beat for his
hit song "Not Fade Away," and the Rolling
Stones' version of that song, with its unusu-
ally simple rhythm section, became the band's
first major British hit single.

"He was a wonderful, original musician who
was an enormous force in music and was a big
influence on the Rolling Stones," Mick Jagger
says. "He was very generous to us in our early
years and we learned a lot from him. We
will never see his like again."

"Listening to Bo Diddley, you could convince
yourself that the only thing you need to create
great rock'n'roll is a tremolo guitar, a killer beat
and one-and-a-half chords," Elvis Costello says.
"Many tried and some have failed, but nobody
did it like Diddley."

The members of the Clash were enormous
Diddley fans and chose him to open their
first American tour in 1979. In 1981, he had a
memorable cameo as a pawn shop clerk in the
Dan Aykroyd/Eddie Murphy comedy "Trading
Places," and in 1989, he was introduced to
a new generation of fans when he appeared
at a Rolling Stones all-star concert at Wembley
Stadium.

Although Diddley toured regularly into his
late 60s, his recorded output for the past 30-
plus years has been sparse, save for a late '80s
live album with Rolling Stones guitarist Ron-
nie Wood. He was inducted into the Rock
and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987 and awarded a
Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1998.

"Bo Diddley was the man who constructed
the sound we all grew to revolve around... and
a vision of simplicity delivered through effort-
less expression and sense of humor," says lon-
time Diddley champion Billy F. Gibbons of ZZ
Top. "Many times, Bo made a point to say, 'I'll
always be around,' and we know he will."

Diddley is survived by his brother, the Rev.
Kenneth Haynes of Biloxi, Miss.; his children,
Evelyn Kelly, Ellas A. McDaniel, Tammi D. Mc-
Daniel and Terri Lynn Foster; 15 grandchildren;
15 great-grandchildren and three great-great-
great-grandchildren. A private wake was planned
for June 6, with a public funeral service the follow-
ing afternoon. A Diddley memorial, featuring
members of his touring band, was scheduled
for June 7 at the Martin Luther King Jr. Multi-
Purpose Center in Gainesville, Fla.
CASTING THE NET

The RIAA Provides An Inside Glimpse Into Its Battle Against Illegal File Sharing

Deep inside the national headquarters of the RIAA is a purple room. Tinted windows shade the faces of young men and women working behind computer screens. They are part of the team investigating the illegal sharing of music files over peer-to-peer (P2P) networks, and they protect their identities carefully.

Such precautions are a reflection of the charged environment in which the RIAA is operating. The trade group views anti-piracy enforcement as vital to the recording industry's future.

But some university administrators complain that record companies unfairly target their campus networks to find infringers. Some judges have questioned whether proof of users making music files available in a P2P network's "shared folder" is sufficient evidence of copyright infringement. Emotions have run so high that death threats target RIAA lawyers and executives haven't been unheard of.

Despite the RIAA's efforts, data suggests that demand for pirated content remains strong. A recent NPD Group report estimates that 19% of U.S. Internet subscribers and older download free music, from P2P services, barely less than the 20% reported when the RIAA began its user litigation campaign in 2003.

While it is all but impossible to gauge how much additional illegal downloading of its enforcement actions may have deterred, the RIAA remains determined to clamp down on Internet piracy. Billboard visited the trade group's Washington, D.C., offices for a demonstration of how it tracks down file sharers.

In their world of "hash" files, and virtual handshakes, the investigatar's computer software will never cease to be dark and sinister. The search begins simply—with a song.

THE STASH

An RIAA investigator and technology specialist, who asked for anonymity, clicked the keyboard on his laptop. The LimeWire interface appeared on a large screen. New York-based LimeWire LLC touts its Web site that its software is "the fastest file-sharing program on the planet." The site offers a free version of its software, but it also offers the revenue-generating upgraded version for around $20. LimeWire is one of many software programs that run over the Gnutella file-sharing network.

To root out illegal file-sharing activity, the RIAA works with Maryland-based MediaSentry, which has developed customized programs that also operate over the Gnutella network. MediaSentry has a list of recordings owned by RIAA-member companies, and like any P2P user, can search for a music file by song title.

MediaSentry then collects alphanumeric "hash" codes it discovers online that are associated with these recordings. LimeWire and similar programs will identify how many users are sharing the same file as identified by the hash code. The combination of song titles and hash codes listed in the growing database are the foundation and starting point of all RIAA investigations.

When a consumer rips a song from a CD and gives the digital file a name, the computer hardware, ripping software, and other digital data together create a digital file identified by a distinct hash code. If the user rips the same song with an older computer—even with the same software—the file will have a different hash code. The slightest change in the music source, computer hardware, ripping software, and P2P protocol, file name or length of recording will change the hash code identifying the resulting MP3 file.

For example, while searching for a Madonna song at the RIAA offices, dozens of users were sharing the same Madonna title over LimeWire—but six users were sharing the digital files with identical hash codes. Since it is highly improbable there can be only one user who would have the exact combination of equipment and timing to create identical hash codes, investigator says, the six users are likely sharing copies of the same file that one person originally uploaded to the Internet and that was later downloaded and shared by others.

When MediaSentry observes that an MP3 file of a particular song is available for sharing over a P2P network but the hash code doesn't match one in its database, the company downloads the file. Then it runs the file through a digital fingerprinting system operated by Audio Magic to verify that it is an RIAA-member recording, which has been fingerprinted by the record company when the recording was made. If the file is in fact a copy of the recording, MediaSentry saves the hash code in its database. What MediaSentry and RIAA investigators do next depends on whether they're preparing a take-down notice for a university or planning to pursue litigation against an individual.

TAKE IT DOWN

Copyright holders cannot possibly sue every copyright infringer. But they can notify an Internet service provider when a user is infringing a copyrighted work. The ISP is required under federal law to block material from the Internet after receiving a take-down notice from the copyright holder, as long as the notice complies with requirements set out in federal regulations. Many universities have their own computer networks, and as such, act as ISPs.

A take-down program begins with the RIAA's list of about 700 current, popular titles of recordings owned by its member companies. The list is compiled—and continually updated—from Billboard and online music services' sales charts. The user-litigation program uses many more titles, but the RIAA won't disclose the number. Once the MediaSentry search for a title identifies a hash, the software then tries to match it with popular hashes shared among P2P users listed in the database. "We look for the most popular hashes," the investigator says. "It's then very unlikely that the person ripped it from his or her own CD collection and is making it available for the first time.

It's more likely this person has downloaded it from somewhere else. The hash can't be one we've seen many times before if somebody ripped it for the first time.

Once the popular hash is identified, the MediaSentry program makes contact with the user through a "TCP handshake"—essentially a conversation the Web server and the Web client, like LimeWire, via the Internet transmission control protocol.

"Are you online and do you have this hash code?" the program asks. If the user's program says "yes," then the user is tagged. Just one digital file is enough for the RIAA to send a take-down notice. The user doesn't have to be
sitting at the computer to be sharing a file. LimeWire and similar programs continue to share files over the P2P network as long as the computer is on, the program is open and the file-sharing component is on.

MediaSentry records the IP address, the name of the company or university that owns the ISP, the date and time of the handshake, the user name and the infringed title. The company sends it to the RIAA. RIAA personnel then review the information, manually prepare the take-down notices and send them to the university.

"There is an idea that we target certain universities," the investigator says. "That is completely incorrect and, technically, not possible. We find what we find by song and through public means; we don't try to get into a university's internal system."

**MEET JOHN DOE**
The RIAA uses litigation to target some of "the most egregious users we find," the investigator says.

This process, too, begins with the song search, but entails the collection of far more data on an individual user than is required for a take-down notice. After MediaSentry finds popular hash codes, the company's software—just like LimeWire—allows a search of all the files the user is sharing.

The company collects the list of music files the user is sharing, identifies songs that belong to RIAA-member companies and downloads the files. MediaSentry also collects very detailed text logs as evidence of its activities throughout the entire processed Salom network. The ISP associated with an IP address is easy to identify. The American Registry for Internet Numbers, a nonprofit organization, provides the information via a search on its Web site.

MediaSentry sends the information to the RIAA, which has a staff that listen to each downloaded file to verify the identify of the song. The RIAA notifies the ISP to preserve the evidence connected to the IP address. The record companies then file a lawsuit naming "John Doe" as the unnamed defendant.

Once they file the suit, the labels may then have the court issue a subpoena for the ISP to identify the registered user for the IP address. That person then replaces John Doe as the defendant.

The RIAA has sent tens of thousands of cease-and-desist letters and take-down notices to commercial ISPs since 1996 and to universities since 2003.

Since the user litigation program began in 2003, labels have filed more than 10,000 lawsuits to recover lost revenue. In addition, more than 6,000 letters have been sent to university administrators, asking them to forward the offers of pre-litigation settlement to the file sharers who used the university networks.

Only one suit has reached trial. Jammie Thomas, who was found liable by a Minnesota jury for infringement, is waiting for the federal court's decision on her request for a new trial.

ics they hope will make legal content more attractive. And new initiatives on the horizon, such as a proposed surcharge on Internet service providers to monetize P2P traffic, could threaten MediaDefender even further.

Moreover, some say that MediaDefender's effectiveness has been inconsistent.

"We weren't getting the results we really wanted," one major-label source says. "It didn't always work." The company stands by its effectiveness, citing data from an NPD Group survey from the first quarter of this year that found 8% of respondents saying they bought a full-length CD after failing to find the song they were looking for on free file-sharing sites.

MediaDefender CEO Randy Saaf admits that the company's music-related activity has "leveled off," but calls any sharp decline an "exaggeration."

"Music decaying remains a fundamental way of hindering piracy on a P2P network," he says. "There's only four big music companies, so there's only so many directions you can grow."

In response, MediaDefender is trying to transform its technology into a marketing tool. Last year, it partnered with Atlantic Records to distribute music from newcomer Piles through P2P networks, sponsored by Sprint. The company has inserted various other viral videos through P2P networks since, such as one with Ford Motor.

But Saaf says few labels have jumped on the marketing opportunity. In the meantime, MediaDefender's troubled parent ArtistDirect revealed in February that it retained RIAA to explore "strategic alternatives" that include a possible restructuring, merger or even a sale of the company. —Antony Bruno

Label sources say their anti-piracy strategies have evolved from a defensive posture to a more proactive one, investing in new services they hope will make legal content more attractive.
SweetSpots

Madonna Tour Tickets Off To Brisk Sales Start

The much-anticipated North American on-sales for Madonna's upcoming Sticky & Sweet tour hit full force the first weekend in June, including high-profile stadium shows in four U.S. markets.

Those projecting immediate sellouts were incorrect. Those expecting disaster were way more incorrect. When it's all said and done, Madonna will break her own record as the top-grossing tour by a female artist, likely generating well north of $200 million in ticket sales.

That she can accomplish this in such a limited time frame is even more remarkable.

With the most recent run of on-sales, shows in Oakland, Calif. (Nov. 1), Las Vegas (Nov. 8) and Denver (Nov. 11) all sold out, with second shows added for Nos. 2, 9 and 12 in those respective markets.

Sales were also very strong, but not yet to sell-out level. For stadium shows in Houston (Nov. 16), Los Angeles (Nov. 6) and Miami (Nov. 26).

In Vancouver, Madonna's first North American stadium on-sale for Oct. 30 BC Place Stadium moved 50,000 tickets in 20 minutes.

Record sellouts in Toronto at Air Canada Centre for Oct. 11 & 12 and Montreal at the Bell Centre on Oct. 22, called for second shows in both markets to be added on Oct. 19 and 23, respectively.

Previous sellouts include three shows at Madison Square Garden in New York on Oct. 6-7 and in performances in Boston (Oct. 15) and Chicago (Oct. 26).

Meanwhile, Europe is still sizzling. Demand for tickets in Paris for Madonna's Sept. 20 performance led to a second show for Sept. 21. The Zurich show at the Military Airfield Dolderhof (Aug. 30) topped the 70,000 mark in sales. Tickets remain for the tour opener in Cardiff, Wales, on Aug. 23, as well as shows in Nice (Aug. 26), Berlin (Aug. 29), Amsterdam (Sept. 2), Dusseldorf (Sept. 4), Rome (Sept. 6), Frankfurt (Sept. 9) and London (Sept. 11), but sales are believed to be very good in all these markets.

With only a few shows left to go on sale in North America and Europe, followed by Mexico and South America, tour producer Arthur Fogel, chairman of global music for Live Nation, says he's "thrilled with sales and points out that there is plenty of time remaining.

"Some of these North American shows are five or six months away," Fogel says.

Fogel declined to provide specific numbers, but his mood the Monday morning after the latest round of on-sales indicates that numbers were not much more solid. Live Nation announces sellouts with sellout announcements, so even a show that has been announced as clean likely still has moved many thousands of tickets and is all in the black.

"The fact is, was another strong weekend with all shows still going to go," Fogel says. "We are in great shape, and I couldn't be happier."

IN YOUR FACE: Our Antony Bruno reports that Live Nation unveiled a Facebook application that lets music fans search for and buy concert tickets directly from their profile on the popular social networking site.

The application is an extension of the growing My Live Nation Web site, which lets users create customized concert searches based on their favorite artists by reading their digital music libraries. According to Bruno, the Facebook application is simply a widget of the same, but allows other Facebook users to see each other's concert calendars, acting as a viral marketing tool for the widget as well as the concerts listed in it (billboard.biz, May 29).

Music fans can register for My Live Nation at liventimation.com and can then easily add My Live Nation to their Facebook profiles.

The development, like Ticketmaster's association with Live, makes concert promotion a much more efficient prospect. Rather than a blanket newspaper ad or even the more focused radio promo that have drawn fans to concerts for years, this application tells people that have said they are interested in a band that this band is coming, and then sells them a ticket. It's the ultimate in a targeted promotion, a "heads up" to someone who wants to know. This definitely takes a lot of the guesswork out of marketing, and anything that makes it easier to buy a ticket is a good thing.

There is a buzz-building component here that would help any show. But there is also a sort of "preaching to the choir" aspect, too. If every band had enough hardcore fans to fill an arena, there wouldn't be much need for old-school promoters. However, the difference between a sellout and a half-house for most shows is pricing and promoter instincts that convince fence-straddlers to get in and go. That has not changed.
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Shoes And Tunes
Katy Perry To Get A Lift From Steve Madden Campaign

Steve Madden is stepping into music marketing again.

The footwear and apparel retailer is launching an in-store and online marketing campaign dubbed Steve Madden Music that will spotlight a recording artist every month or two, Billboard has learned. First up is Katy Perry, whose Capitol Music Group single "I Kissed A Girl" exploded 21-5 this week on the Billboard Hot 100 after selling 175,000 digital downloads. Also in the pipeline is S-Curve artist Little Jackie.

Although Perry and Little Jackie record for EMI Group labels, Steve Madden Music is seeking similar partnerships with other labels as well. "The music business is very parallel to the shoe business," founder/design chief Steve Madden says. "They're after the same girl that we're after. Even the mind-set of trying to make a hit shoe or a hit record is the same. People always want to know what's cool. I figured if [Sean "Diddy" Combs] and Russell [Simmons] could get into my business, then I could go into theirs."

For Capitol, the Perry promotion follows its partnership last year with Victoria's Secret for the exclusive U.S. CD release of the Spice Girls' "Greatest Hits."

Capitol chairman/CEO Jason Flom says the label is keen on considering more such promotions. "If you're a brand and you're reading this, we're open for business," he says. "We want to work in fun and creative ways with brand partners to get emotional connections with artists."

The new Steve Madden campaign will include an unusually immersive in-store component. On June 9, the retailer will tape a live performance by Perry at the Steve by Steve Madden store on New York's Lower East Side, then air the performance at its 70 stores around the country with video screens and provide an audio feed to its remaining 28 stores.

During the duration of the Perry promotion, which will run for at least a month, video-equipped Madden stores will also show the video for "I Kissed a Girl," and all stores will play Perry's Capitol debut, "One of the Boys" (June 17). The stores will also display sign promoting the album and her status as a featured artist.

The campaign will extend to a new Web site, stevemaddennonmusic.com, which will include the in-store performance in streaming video, as well as links to buy "I Kissed a Girl" and "One of the Boys." A download of the single will be given free to customers who spend a yet-to-be-determined amount. The roughly 800,000 registered users of the retailer's stevemadden.com home page will receive e-mail alerts about the album's release date, with a link to purchase it online.

Madden will cover the cost of producing the in-store events, while artists will agree to be outfitted with a selection of Madden footwear during the promotional period, according to David Passick, a former manager of Maxwell, Don Was and Herbie Hancock. Passick is advising the retailer on the campaign.

Steve Madden is the latest apparel retailer seeking to lend its brand a boost by linking itself to pop stars. Urban Outfitters features a monthly playlist on its Web site that streams songs by-of-the-moment recording artists.

American Eagle Outfitter recently announced it would underwrite its own New American Music Union Festival later this summer (Billboard, May 31). And Tommy Hilfiger is in its third year of staging "The Hilfiger Sessions," a series of live concerts pairing new and established artists. In April, Hilfiger launched tommyx.com, which streams the concerts for free.

Steve Madden, too, has done its share of music programming, such as sponsoring concert tours and holding a music talent search contest. The company also has a strong link to the music business via nonexecutive chairman Walter Yetnikoff, former head of CBS Records.

Bar Brawl
Two Majors Check Into Rehab
The F-word and S-word are again causing a brawl.

This time it's not a fight over radio broadcasts that the FCC finds objectionable. Now it's over old versions, new versions and edited versions of "Sittin' at a Bar" by Atlanta-based quintet Rehab. And the fight is being fueled by the bane of most artists: an old production deal that has left the band with little recourse when it doesn't like changes to its album and album artwork. Several years ago, Rehab assigned all rights to Sony (Epic).

This type of setup means that artists are not direct parties to the contract with the label. As a result, they typically have little or no legal rights in connection with how those recordings are changed or marketed.

Most artists that later find some success after their production deals. The companies often take 40%-60% of the artist royalties received from the label. If the production company goes defunct, sometimes it's hard for the artists to get all or any part of the royalties.

But Kamran says Rehab's fight is not over money; it's over artistic integrity.

"Sittin' at a Bar" was on the 2000 Epic release "Southern Discomfort." The record wasn't a hit at the time. Epic dropped the band and entered a termination agreement in 2003 with Destiny. The major still owns the master rights.

Rehab continued to tour. The song reportedly became a sort of anthem in bars around the United States. Just listening to part of the song currently on iTunes explains why.

"Now I'm sittin' here talkin' to you/drinkin' and feelin' like Sun/Chorus: I'm sittin' at a bar on the inside/ waitin' on my ride on the outside/ she broke my heart in the trailer park so I jacked the keys to her fuckin' car and crashed that piece of shit and then stepped away."

As the song found nearly 1 million listeners across the Internet, Kamran says he began trying to make a new deal with a major label, speaking with execs at Epic and Universal Republic. He says that Epic execs hadn't been aware of the growing popularity of the song. The band recorded the old song and signed with Universal Republic last month.

Now, Epic has a clean version — without the f-and s-words — that it's servicing to radio and offering through iTunes. Kamran says that Epic also edited other tracks on the album without permission, retitled the album "Sittin' at a Bar" and changed the cover artwork to depict people at a bar.

Kamran is arguing with Epic, raising breach of contract claims. He asserts that Epic did not obtain permission to edit all the tracks from the album — even though the label did send a letter to Destiny to edit the single. Since Destiny never responded, Epic may have had the right to make the changes under the contract.

Kamran says he represents Destiny and Rehab, but adds that "Destiny is gone." As a result, Danny Boone, current and co-founding member of Rehab, really has no recourse against Destiny, he says.

Meanwhile, Universal Republic is also servicing the song to radio and selling the album. Kamran says it's causing "confusion" in the marketplace. So the brawl is also spilling over to the two major labels, which each claim in letters that the other may be making misrepresentations in its marketing materials.

Kamran admits that Boone receives less money from the Epic version of the song, but says it's a "moral issue." He's making the "this is not cool" argument against Epic's edits and changes.

Whatever the outcome, the Rehab saga again shines the spotlight on the importance of contract terms in those very first deals that artists sign. Perhaps there could have been a provision in the production deal and the label deal granting the artists the right to "step into the shoes" of the production company if for when that company closed its doors.

But then again, there are likely thousands of artists who would love to be having Rehab's problems right now: two majors working the artist's song to radio.

Legal Matters
SUSAN BUTLER

This week's legal column is written by Susan Butler, a practicing attorney in Hollywood. For more information on Susan, please visit www.legalmusician.com.
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Get Up, Stand Up
Few Latin Artists Mobilize For Immigration Reform

"Podemos con Obama," an all-Spanish-language video in support of Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, features more than 20 Latin music acts saying things like "Obama is different" and "Obama is the future."

But buried among them is a more pointed comment from Alejandro Sanz (who is a U.S. citizen): "We need immigration reform."

In the past year, Latin acts have increasingly expressed vocal support for a wide array of causes, from the eradication of child exploitation and poverty, peace efforts in Colombia and environmental issues.

And among the newcomers to the movement, one cause has been conspicuously absent: support for immigration reform and illegal immigrants in the United States.

The omission is glaring, not only because so many Latin artists that are now citizens of this country initially came here as illegal aliens, but also because many of the people who support their music are here illegally and under siege. Indeed, fear of immigration crackdowns have had a direct impact on Latin concert attendance and album sales, according to promoters and retailers.

Why then haven't Latin artists mobilized behind these issues?

"It is not as common for Latin artists to speak out on political issues as much as Anglo artists," says producer Andres Levin, who conceived and produced the Obama video. "It's not that acts don't support immigration reform, he says. "I think they haven't found the vehicle to do it." While many figures in the Latin music industry say they favor immigration reform and sympathize with the plight of illegal immigrants, not many have organized broader efforts to back these causes, although several have written songs that touch on the issue.

"Speaking out on the issue means having the courage to take on a lot of social and political responsibility and maybe it is something artists are not prepared for," says Julie Garza, PD for WYMY (La Ley) Raleigh, N.C.

One of the few voices who has is popular Univision Radio personality Eddie "Pilin" Sotelo, who was central in organizing mass marches in 2006 in Los Angeles, Miami and other U.S. cities, drawing the participation of Los Tigres del Norte and other Latin acts.

Another exception: popular Latin Christian singer Marcos Witt, who last year gathered hundreds of thousands of signatures, getting the word out via YouTube, radio, press and his own shows.

Encouraged, Witt approached between 10 and 15 major Latin acts that were touring at the time, and asked if they too could ask fans to sign petitions asking for immigration reform during their shows. All said yes. But when the time came to actually get the job done, not a single one came through.

"I don't think it was malicious," Witt says. "But I was disillusioned. I think it was really a lack of empathy with the plight and pain that illegal immigrants are feeling now."

An example of that plight: On May 12, immigration agents arrested nearly 300 workers at an Iowa meatpacking plant, the largest single-site immigration raid in U.S. history. For the first time ever, 270 of those arrested were sent to prison to serve sentences prior to being deported, leaving children and families in the lurch.

"As Latinos, the effects of these raids is clear," Witt says. On his end, Obama video producer Levin says he plans to make shorter, concentrated pieces that tackle some of the issues mentioned in his video.

Obama and Sens. Hillary Clinton and John McCain all voted in support of the immigration reform measure that was defeated in Congress last year. Witt supports McCain, who was the sponsor of the original 2006 immigration reform bill that was passed by the Senate but was blocked by a House-Senate conference committee.

The Billboard Q&A

Santoalla keeps finding new outlets for his creative muse. His groundbreaking sensitivity continues to nurture Latin rock acts from Cafe Tacvba to Juanes, even as he balances production work with film scoring. (An upcoming project of his is the film adaptation of Jack Kerouac's "On the Road.") Santoalla's own band, Bajofondo Tango Club, is releasing its first proper album in four years, "Mar Dulce," July 15 on Decca/Surco. Bajofondo is also planning a dance show based on Bajofondo's music, which mixes tango with electronics, rock and hip-hop. He will be named a BMI Icon June 12 at the society's annual Latin Awards dinner.

What are you doing today?
I'm working on a song that we're going to do with Maria Monte for a Brazilian film. It's a title song for a movie (titled "Era Uma Vez No Rio") that I'm also working on a version of our next single for "Mar Dulce" for some territories... and just starting to try some stuff on the new "Babel" director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu movie I've been working on. It's his next project. It doesn't have a title. I did a Brazilian movie with "The Motorcycle Diaries" director Walter Salles and Daniela Thomas that just played at Cannes and won an award. It's called "Linea de Paso."

What is happening with Surco?
We are in the process of finishing our 10-year relationship with Universal and about to embark on a new deal with Universal. We'll still have a joint venture and partnership. We have a couple of new signings that we feel very strongly about that I can't name, but it's a girl and it's a guy and both are based here in the United States and both are bilingual... we're trying to explore what we can do with Universal, since we all know how the record industry is these days. If we can do more stuff, considering I'm in other types of ventures... I have a book publishing company and I do music for films.

So with all this we were trying to imagine maybe a wider deal with Surco for our next round, not just records but maybe all these other avenues are now to be explored.

Is the so-called "Latin alternative" movement as strong as it was in the '90s?
All those things go through phases... in terms of the Latin alternative scene, I look to it as a wider thing, not just the music. I like to think that we are in a very special historical moment in our culture... because of demographics, because of the penetration the U.S. has worldwide and because that penetration is carried with a component of its DNA, which is Latin. For all those reasons, we have a platform for a cultural presence worldwide that we never had before--Latinas. After a first phase of more stereotyped projection of our culture through the music, we came to a new phase in which we have more and more Latin talent that comes from another angle that is getting pushed to the limelight. I'm talking about precisely Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, Guillermo del Toro, Alfonso Cuaron, Gael Garcia Bernal, someone like us or Alberto Iglesias the composer... it's an incredible time to be a Latino, worldwide.

Ayla Ben-Yehuda

Not Witt's End

U.S.-based Latin Christian singer Marcos Witt (see Latin Notes, left) is finding that his movement has advocates around the world. Earlier this year, Witt performed a concert at the Simon Bolivar Park in Bogota, Colombia, that drew more than 35,000 fans. The taped show will be released as a CD/DVD, titled "Sobrenatural," Aug. 18 via Witt's label Canzon, distributed by Venemusic.

That's What Friends are For

After hooking up in between panels at the Billboard Latin Music Conference, Wisin & Yandel and Enrique Iglesias have recorded an edition of Iglesias' single "Lloro Por Ti" and filmed a video in Los Angeles. The track, whose original version is on Iglesias' all-hits album "95/08" (Universal Music Latino), will be worked to radio as a single in the coming months. Wisin & Yandel's collaboration comes on the heels of the Latin 50's revamped "Center Stage" compilation, which debuts at a 25-slot on a remix of "Rider Part II," available exclusively on thislatin50.com.

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PENSION TENSIONS

Italian Indies Fear Jump In Social Security Costs

MILAN—Italy's independents are mobilizing against government plans that they claim could kill off an industry which is already dying.

The dispute centers around government agency ENPALS' decision to extend its social security contributions scheme for artists. Since ENPALS launched in 1947 to administer entertainments workers' social security/pension payments, it has collected contributions from Italian vocalists and bands, based on a percentage of their concert fees in Italy.

The contributions—up to 33%—are in cash. When they are not claimed by artists, they become permanent. However, ENPALS is now introducing an additional contributions system for artists, based on physical record sales.

The labels' pitch is that they, rather than artists, have to pay these contributions—which ENPALS wants—back-dated to Jan. 1, 2004.

ENPALS' Rome-based director of performance and contributions, Ferdinando Montaldi, says the reform is "an attempt to improve the financial situation of retired recording artists." From the 1990s onward, ENPALS had made unsuccessful attempts to extend contributions to recording acts. However, it was an unsuccessful attempt to extend contributions to recording acts. However, it was a failed attempt to extend contributions to recording acts. However, it was a futile attempt to extend contributions to recording acts.

ENPALS successfully appealed that judgment in 2003 and the new "royalty"-based scheme was subsequently developed following consultation with what was then Italy's main labels body FIMI.

The claim that the scheme could kill off independents came in a statement from indie labels body Audiocoop, which is leading the protests along with artists' union Unione Artisti-Unionpress.

The latter claims the scheme could cripple many small independent companies operated by its members. "The parameters appear to be made to measure for the majors," UA-U head Roberto Pietrangeli says, also speaking on behalf of Audiocoop.

The new ENPALS minimum contribution is €0.70 ($1.13) per track per featured artist on shipments of up to 30,000 copies as declared to authors rights body SIAE, which collects mechanical royalties from Italy.

That contribution rises in bands to a maximum of €717 ($1,113) per track for more than 500,000 copies, as recorded by SIAE.

Pietrangeli claims the new scheme penalizes labels selling well less than 30,000 of their albums, particularly smaller Indies lacking the financial resources of the majors.

Although neither ENPALS nor Audiocoop/UA-U have estimated the total amount of money involved, both sides agree it is potentially huge, involving thousands of albums and artists.

The current reform was set out in December 2003 by then Minister of Labor Roberto Maroni. However, action wasn't taken until Feb. 19, when ENPALS wrote to all Italian labels announcing that the new contributions would be retrospectively applied, with a May 16 deadline for payments to be received.

After indie-label protests, ENPALS extended the deadline to July 16 and agreed to hold interim discussions with labels.

"We agreed to the delay largely so companies could update their software for the calculations," Montaldi says. He adds that ENPALS recognizes the payment bands "were established at a time when record sales were higher," and a future review might be considered.

Marie Limongelli, president of Italy's other main independent labels body PMI—whose members split from IFPI affiliate FIMI in July 2005—attributes the delay to subsequently aborted plans to absorb ENPALS into the national pension system and "the slowness of Italian bureaucracy." While PMI agrees "in principle" to the scheme, Limongelli will meet with ENPALS and the Minister of Labor in the hope of having the rates revised, as will the country's third independent labels body, AIP.

But while the Indies seek talks with the government to resolve their issues, the majors have distanced themselves from that stance.

"As far as we're concerned," FIMI president Enzo Mazza says, "the issue was resolved with the Maroni decree in 2003."

Pumping On Your Stereo

U.K. Music Mags Tune In To Power Of Radio

LONDON—Hold the front page: Two of Britain's biggest music magazines are getting into the radio business.

First was Bauer-owned monthly magazine Q, Britain's biggest-selling music magazine with a circulation of 151,350, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC). On June 2, it relaunched its Q Radio service—previously a DJ-free automated play-out service—on DAB digital radio in London, digital TV platforms nationwide and online.

On June 24, IPC Media-owned music weekly NME (circulation 64,033) will launch NME Radio on similar platforms, with additional temporary FM availability via limited local licenses.

Both stations will adhere loosely to the modern rock format and are being keenly anticipated by labels.

"The potential for both is huge, because

GLOBAL NEWSLINE

MOBILE MUSIC CLIMBS IN JAPAN

Steady growth in sales of ringback tones and mobile-based full-track downloads helped power a 6% rise in digital music sales in Japan to 120.8 million units in first-quarter 2008, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan. In value terms, digital sales—mobile and PC-based downloads—rose to 22.5 billion yen ($215.5 million) in January-March, up 28% from the same period in 2007. Although mobile-based master ringtone sales fell 16% to 51.1 million units with trade value down 13% to 5.9 billion yen ($56.5 million), ringback-tone sales rose 18% to 22.6 million units, with value up 47% to 19.9 billion yen ($182.6 million). Sales of mobile-based full-track downloads—Meanwhile, rose 48% to 34.4 million units, with value up 58% to 11.4 billion yen ($109.2 million). PC-based music downloads rose 34% to 9.9 million units, with value up 50% to 2.1 billion yen ($201.7 million).

"Steve McCutcheon"
Music mags Q and NME are looking to scroll their initials across the U.K. radio landscape. Both brands are known worldwide," says Parlophone U.K. head of radio Kevin McCabe, who plans acts including Radiohead and Coldplay. "If you sit in a record company meeting anywhere in the world, ears prick up when you say you've got the cover of either."

Nonetheless, the new stations face a fight to win audiences in the keenly contested U.K. modern rock sector, currently dominated by FM digital network XFM (which had 103.3 million listeners in the first quarter, according to RAJR) and digitally only BBC 6 Music ($20,000).

Q Radio programmer director Nic Blaxill, a former BBC 6 Music head of programs, says his station will initially feature just one live show, a daily evening program hosted by former XFM DJ Samanthi, but also feature pre-recorded "unique content" from the likes of Coldplay and R.E.M. at launch. Blaxill says his ambition is to increase Q's audience from the 282,000 listeners the automatic device had in Q1, although he declined to name a target figure.

NME Radio is produced under license by London-based DX Media, headed by managing director/programming director Sammy Jacob, the man who launched XFM London in 1997. His station will feature live programming from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., live sessions and regular news updates and from the NME editorial staff. A show by high-profile British comedian Ricky Ger-

BANDS ACROSS THE WATER

Aussie Concert Biz Adds Asian Appeal

LONDON—Australian promoters are looking to Asia to help attract more international artists Down Under.

Sydney-based Chugg Entertainment managing director Michael Chugg says Elton John's recent Aussie tour provided a template for an expanded Australian-Asian tour circuit that will cut costs and boost ticket sales.

"With more cities opening up, you'll see both the Australian and the Asian tour circuits growing," Chugg says. "It'd be good for audiences and promoters—and artists will rethink the way they tour Australia and the places they include in their itineraries."

John became the first Western superstar to play northern regional cities Townsville (North Queensland) and Darwin (Northern Territory)—both closer in flying time to Singapore than Sydney—following Live Nation-promoted shows in Singapore and Hong Kong. The shows attracted capacity crowds—11,000 in Nation Hong Kong-based senior VP for PanAsia booking for music.

Michael Jacobson, executive chairman of Sydney-based promoter Jacobson Entertainment, says offering 10 cities rather than five through the region will help "spread costs and put bid on ticket prices." Corporate sponsorship is easier to get in Asia, he adds, absorbing up to 30% of promoters' costs.

Insiders also cite the opening of new, high-tech Asian and Australian venues in the next 12 months as a likely driver of demand for international touring acts. Venues include the 18,700-capacity Olympic Basketball Arena, which recently opened by Australia-based AEC Ogden. "We are working on major concerts and sporting events there to make it a prime destination," AEC Ogden chairman Harvey Lister says.

Other new venues will include the 55,000-seat National Stadium in Singapore, the 15,000-capacity Perth Arena and 12 new indoor arenas in India, in addition to several new casino venues in Macau, where Jacobson sees there is "insatiable demand for intimate concerts and theatrics."

Not everyone is so enthusiastic, however. Melbourne-based Paul Dainty, chairman of Dainty Consolidated Entertainment, which brought Guns N' Roses (June 2006), Il Divo (October 2008) and Iron Maiden (February) Down Under in recent years, cautions that getting an act to appeal to countries with disparate musical tastes remains a problem.

"Asia can be a hard market," he says. "Generally, it's a lot of work for not a lot of return."

And not all Asian promoters see a role for their Australian counterparts in the region. Insiders say Asian promoters generally shy away from profit-sharing deals with outside entrepreneurs who have limited knowledge of the local market.

"Unless they can bring, for example, a major sponsor to the table, they don't really add any value," Ironside says.

Even Steve Sybesma, CEO/executive director of Shanghai-based China West Entertainment, which has taken Inbubus (March) and James Blunt (May) to China off the back of Australian visits, has his doubts. He chose to deal directly with those artists' U.S. agents rather than collaborate with an Australian company.

"There's a perception in the West that China is close to Australia," he says. "When, in fact, it's probably about as close as Los Angeles."

Additional reporting by Steve McClure in Tokyo and Berwin Song in Beijing.
Road Warriors
Newbury Comics, Eurpac Try Off-Site Stores

Every once in a while, music merchants like to get out of the store. But sometimes they like to take the store with them, too.

In June, from the 12th through the 15th, to be exact, Newbury Comics will run a store at the Bonnaroo festival in Manchester, Tenn., although the Brighton, Mass.-based chain will be there under the auspices of Lala.com.

How did this marriage come to pass?
Lala.com co-founder Bill Nguyen says he went to the festival three years ago, fell in love with the experience and wanted to become a part of it. "When I heard that Tower Records, which used to run the festival's music store, went out of business, it broke my heart," he says. So I went to the Bonnaroo people and said, 'We want to do this, although we are definitely not that kind of store. We will find a partner.'"

So it reached out to Newbury Comics, which is now handling the store for the second year in a row, as well as running the autograph-signing tent that is right next door. The goal of both companies, of course, is branding.

This year, the chain's GM Duncan Browne is in charge of brainstorming the store for the site, which is housed in a tent rented by Lala.com that also includes a presentation of the site's services.

While Newbury Comics has sold CDs at concerts, it has never done anything on this scale before last year's festival, an event Browne now describes as a learning experience. Last year Newbury shipped racks to the site; this year, staffers will make the racks there. Also, "we bought a lot of stuff that didn't sell last year, like catalog product unrelated to who was performing," Browne says. "This year, we are carrying CDs and DVDs only from artists who are performing. About 98% of the product is things we carry in our stores, but there are a few unsigned bands and regional bands that we don't carry, so we reached out to them to get product."

And for groups like Pearl Jam, the store will have some copies of "Ten" or "Vs.," but the emphasis will be on the band's more unique stuff like "Easy Street," because fans won't find that in every store in America, Browne adds.

"We also bring assorted lifestyle and trend product that we typically sell but pared down so it's appropriate for a festival," Browne says. "This year, the store will carry about 500-700 SKUs including things like T-shirts, bandannas and sunglasses."

Browne reports that Newbury has spent the last six weeks, on a part-time basis, preparing for the show, laying down the floor plan and interviewing staff to see who will work the event. "Last year we picked people, but it's good to give everyone a chance," he says.

But as it is, the dozen or so staffers manning the store will likely only get to see an occasional set of their favorite bands. That's because the store is open for 14 hours per day and requires a lot of staffing to keep the shrinkage down and maintain order at the signing tent. In fact, some staffers even sleep in the store at night to make sure it's still there in the morning.

Trouble with customers either stealing or getting unruly waiting in line to get their CDs signed is the last thing that Eurpac Home Entertainment VP of purchasing and marketing, Kenny Fly to worry about when he does an in-store. That's because Eurpac sells music to stores run by the U.S. Navy.
"We arrange for artist in-stores all the time on ships and at bases," Fly says. "The service people are great for in-stores. They are used to waiting in line, and security is not an issue for us."

In fact, for Fleet Week (May 21-28) in New York, Virginia Beach, Va.-based Eurpac arranged for an in-store on a naval ship and also rented a theater for a screening of the new Indiana Jones movie, thanks to the Paramount home video label.

The in-store took place on the U.S.S. Kearsarge, a Marine helicopter carrier, docked on Manhattan's West Side pier. On the May 22 street date of Usher's "Here I Stand" album, Zomba brought the artist aboard the ship for a signing and a meet-and-greet.

"It was a nice twist on the in-store and it's a way to give something back to our armed service people," says Eurpac's VP of sales, Bob Anderson.

Fly reports that several hundred copies of the album were sold at the ship's store, where the signing took place. In addition, Usher received a tour of the ship, so that even the crew that was working got a chance to meet him.
Even better, the whole event was filmed by "Access Hollywood" and was broadcast by the Armed Forces Network.

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Something For Nothing
Free Shows Draw Sponsors Seeking Hip Demos

Three years ago, Brooklyn music fans Sarah Hooper and Alexander Kane decided that their monthly party at a small club called Southpaw just wasn't grand enough for their liking. "We started throwing out ideas," Kane says, "and we both immediately hit upon the same concept—a series of free outdoor shows." Deciding against taking the nonprofit route or partnering with a city agency, the pair instead determined to seek sponsorship dollars from corporations eager to reach a hip, young demographic. And thus, the JellyNYC Pool Parties were born.

For the last three years New Yorkers have headed to a giant, dry swimming pool in Brooklyn's Greenpoint neighborhood every Sunday afternoon to check out JellyNYC's stellar lineup of indie acts, all for free (although volunteers do ask for donations in front of the venue). The series has managed to attract some big names in the past: Blondie Redhead, Ted Leo and Band of Horses; this summer the Hold Steady, the Breeders and Black Lips are all scheduled to play.

"Our goal has always been to make the concerts about both the talent and the audience," Hooper says. "We wanted to create memories, and we always took the fun factor into account. We were tired of huge, alienating, crowded shows."

Hooper says a sense of fun and a desire to keep costs low always drove the project. "We kind of saw ourselves as being Robin Hood figures, taking corporate dollars to do cool things for kids," Kane says. "We might pay the bands a little less than other promoters, but we are giving them an opportunity to play in front of a great audience. We never want people to feel like we are ripping them off."

"When we work with these brands, we lay it all on the table, because we know what the people who come to the shows are going to respond to," Kane says. Mobile company Hello "wanted to display giant phones, for example, and we gave them the feedback that those might not be the right fit for this audience. We have to strike a balance between making sure the sponsors are able to activate the audience and keeping our integrity."

That sort of open exchange of ideas and knowledge of their target market is one of the reasons many sponsors, including Dewar's whiskey, are happy with their relationship with JellyNYC. Dewar's has been the exclusive spirit sponsor for JellyNYC's Pool Parties and the South by Southwest event Austin Garage. "In both, we've organically integrated ourselves and reached an aesthetic that resonates with JellyNYC's audience," Dewar's brand manager Michael Calabrese says.

Another sponsor, energy drink Red Bull, is also pleased with the benefits of the Pool Parties. "Our relationship has helped us retain and reinforce the relationship with a demographic we have targeted and will continue to," spokeswoman Libby Tierney says. "It is a great partner and we look forward to maintaining and developing it in the future."

While JellyNYC's Pool Parties have had success attracting national acts and sponsors, the model can also translate to smaller, more local markets. For the last four summers, PDX Pop Now has showcased Portland, Ore., bands at the free three-day all-ages festival. The event has drawn national press coverage and usually attracts nationally known local acts like the Thermals and Blitzen Trapper.

"The whole thing is funded by local business sponsorships," PDX Pop Now board member Cary Clarke says. "We have historically limited ourselves to working with local businesses, and we've found that we have enough consistent support from them to not have to look outside the community for money."

Clarke says the fact that the festival attracts a younger crowd is a key part of the appeal for many sponsors. "A lot of our sponsors are record stores and coffee shops, and they don't usually attract teenage kids to their businesses, especially the local record stores," he says. "It's a great opportunity for them to pull in kids who might not have spent much time in their stores. It helps them to cement their position as an integral part of our local music community."
THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Labels Explore Variable Pricing To Boost Digital Sales

Arguably the No. 1 item on record labels' to-do list for the year is, "Establishe variable pricing for digital downloads." As luck would have it, the No. 1 item on the to-do list of digital music services not named iTunes is converting their library to digital rights management-free sales. So it comes as no surprise that the labels have made an openness to variable pricing a prerequisite of any DRM-free licensing negotiations.

That digital music sales are not yet compensating for falling CD revenue is no secret. Whether experimenting with the pricing of digital music will make any difference remains to be seen.

According to a recent survey by analysts at IDC, music is not exactly a high priority for U.S. households. A full 25% of respondents say they spend nothing on average each month on music in any format. Another 23% report spending less than $10 per month on average, while 27% say they spend between $10 and $25 per month. Fewer households spend more than that.

CDs remain the most popular source of music, at 37%, followed by FM radio (31%) and dropping sharply to paid online music services (8%). Peer-to-peer services follow closely behind at 5%. For those who did pay for music, 33% downloaded between 10 and 50 songs in the six months preceding the survey, while 26% downloaded less than 10. "Digital music services in aggregate...have yet to fully leverage their potential in becoming the next medium of choice for music purchases," IDC analyst Susan Kervickian says. "Variable pricing is one way to make that happen."

The idea behind variable pricing is to make more money from those 33% who downloaded up to 50 songs in six months by slightly raising the price on certain tracks, while at the same time convincing those who only downloaded 10 or fewer to buy more by slightly lowering the price of those songs.

How that's done is where the science kicks in, which is why even those labels pushing for variable pricing must aggressively be still in the test phase. The latest is Warner Music Group (WMG), which last month began a trial of a dynamic pricing system from Digone.

The company's system recommends raising or lowering the price of a track and/or album based on a variety of factors. In some cases, new releases selling very well may get priced higher, but so might catalog items appealing only to the die-hard fan willing to pay more. In other cases, the system recommends lowering the price of even new releases to spur more sales.

Digital service PassAlong, which operates its own branded digital music store as an attractive back-end technology to several others, two months ago completed a test of the Digonex variable pricing system conducted with Canadian label Nettwerk.

Once per week for 16 weeks, the service altered the price on around 2,000 tracks participating in the trial based on the suggestions from Digonex. Singles were priced at 99 cents, 66 cents and 33 cents, with albums priced more granularly.

According to PassAlong CEO David Jaworski, the system on average priced full albums $1.18 less than what other services were selling them for—between $4 and $6. Singles pricing also fell on average. However, revenue from the tracks included in the program increased an average of 12%, with some individual singles' sales spiking up to 500%.

"We had albums that weren't selling at all before the pilot that started generating revenue every week," he says. "What's more, as the price of a hot single rose, the price of the album dropped, which encouraged more album sales. There'd be a point where people who would only buy two or three tracks bought the entire album," Jaworski says. "They really came shopping for those two or three tracks."

However, the test did not include single sales for more than 99 cents, so the jury is still out on whether variable pricing or "elasticity" can support more expensive pricing.

Jaworski says PassAlong will conduct another test soon that includes more pricing tiers, as well as more music from major labels. And it is not commenting on whether PassAlong is part of the WMG trial.

While other digital music services either have variable pricing in place today—such as Amazonmp3—or plan to begin testing it in the near future as part of new DRM-free deals—such as Napster—the real impact of the strategy won't be felt until the market-leading iTunes comes onboard or its rivals step out of its shadow in a meaningful way.

Aside from a brief flirtation with a $1.29 price point when EMI Group launched DRM-free downloads on iTunes, Apple CEO Steve Jobs to date has resisted straying from the 99-cents-per-song strategy for fear of confusing customers. Although the company has already started pricing TV shows from HBO at different levels, it is unlikely that development represents a shift in its music strategy.

In the meantime, the music industry hopes the one-two punch of DRM-free music and flexible pricing will help empower its competitors.

"In conjunction with DRM-free downloads, it gets to be a compelling value proposition," Kervickian says. "Transitioning to a variable pricing doesn't need to be static. There's lots of room for experimentation. There's still plenty of room for change."

ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK

To this day, the clock radio is still considered the only successful example of integrating two formerly separate products into one. But even that isn't sacred anymore. The new, straightforwardly named Aluratek Internet Radio Alarm Clock With MP3 Player lets users access 10,000 internet radio stations worldwide for free. It also can stream music from a connected PC, play tracks from a connected MP3 player or USB drive and contains FM radio thing, for those not into the whole digital revolution.

The device includes an integrated amplifier, head- set plug, RCA jacks for external speakers and a remote control. It retails for $150 and is available from various online retailers.

BITS & BRIEFS

BOOLED UP

Legendary funk bassist Bootsy Collins has recorded an exclusive song for the soundtrack to upcoming boxing videogame "Don King Presents: Prizefighter" from 2K Sports. The soundtrack contains 70 songs, which is a lot for a sports title, and it includes rock, rap, metal and soul music. Collins' track is titled, appropriately, "Prizefighter." Other tracks involved include Blue Oyster Cult, George Clinton, Iggy Pop, Run-D.M.C., Suicidal Tendencies and Survivor.

PHONING IT IN

Phone manufacturer Kyocera Wireless is teaming with Virgin Mobile USA to turn its mobile phones into VIP tickets to the Virgin Mobile Festival, taking place Aug. 9-10 in Baltimore. But this is no mobile ticketing effort. Rather, 15,000 Virgin Mobile customers who buy the new Special Edition Wild Card phone from Kyocera will gain access to the guest lounge at the two-day concert—the special-edition handset itself grants admission. The special-edition phone costs $100 and will be sold through July 31 at Best Buy Mobile stores. It also comes with 50 free music downloads from eMusic and a one-year subscription to Spin magazine.

WILD CARDS

SanDisk introduced a new line of memory cards created especially for mobile phones. They are specially optimized to facilitate faster side-loading speeds when transferring music or other content from a computer to the mobile phone. Video transferred to the cards can also be quickly transferred to social media and other video-sharing Web sites, and an included MobileMate acts as a USB port adapter for transferring files captured on a phone to a personal computer. They come in 2 GB, 4 GB and 8 GB capacities, which vary from microSD cards to the larger Memory Sticks.

HOT RING MASTERS

SHE GOT IT

For 24/7 digital news and analysis, see billboard.biz/digital.
We're committed to the culture and what affects people's hearts. That was one of the things I learned from Jay-Z.
The Music Industry May Be Rapidly Changing, But MISSY ELLIOTT Is Keeping Pace In Her Own Unique Ways.

MISSY ELLIOTT PHOTOGRAPH BY WARWICK SAINT, DANCERS PHOTOGRAPH BY MEENO

MISSY “Misdemeanor” ELLIOTT

has made the most of her time in the spotlight. Since getting her start alongside fellow Virginia native Timbaland in 1997, she’s won five Grammy Awards; written big hits for everyone from Aaliyah, Mariah Carey and Janet Jackson to Fantasia, Keyshia Cole and Trina; and released a string of successful solo albums.

1997’s “Supa Dupa Fly” (1.2 million U.S. sales, according to Nielsen SoundScan), 1999’s “Da Real World” (1.1 million), 2001’s “Miss E... So Addictive” (1.8 million), 2002’s “Under Construction” (2.1 million) all went platinum-plus. Her last two efforts, 2003’s “This Is Not a Test!” (700,000) and 2005’s “The Cookbook” (645,000), have posted solid numbers but never reached the heights of their predecessors.

Last year was the 10th anniversary of “Supa Dupa Fly,” and in October, Elliott found herself the subject of a tribute alongside Who-dini, Snoop Dogg and A Tribe Called Quest at VH1’s fourth Hip-Hop Honors.

Even though some online pundits grumbled about Elliott, who turns 37 on July 1, being held in that kind of company, VH1 thought she was a no-brainer for inclusion.

“There’s that stigma that if you didn’t come out before the ’90s, you aren’t worthy of being honored yet,” VH1 senior director of music programming Michelle “Breeze” Johnson says. “But the thing with Missy, more so than others, is that she literally facilitated the careers of so many others. We felt she was worthy of being honored even though she hasn’t been in the game 30-some years.”

Beyond the music, Elliott has been a master of her brand. She has an apparel and shoe line with Adidas, Respect M.E., and was the face of an innovative Doritos ad campaign inspired by mash-up culture (Billboard, Aug. 24, 2007).

“Missy is in a category of her own. She is a businesswoman at the end of the day but she’s also done right in her world as a music maker,” manager Mona Scott-Young says.

“The great thing about Missy is she’s an innovator and she has a global following,” adds Atlantic Records president Julie Greenwald.

“She’s an artist in the truest form and people turn to her for change because she is known to take music to the next level. She’s always paved the way for new sounds. She isn’t afraid to take risks and it’s a big pay-off for her. She’s just never afraid.”

Elliott is hoping to prove them right once again with her seventh studio album, tentatively titled “Block Party” and due in August via the Gold Mind/Atlantic. The oft-delayed set, which was originally slated for May, features production from Soulidiggz, Sanjah’nz, Pharell, T-Pain, Pointguard and Timbaland.

Tracks on the album include the Jasmine Sullivan-assisted “Like When You Play the Music”; the drum-heavy “Hip-Hop Don’t Die”; the sensual “Milk & Cookies,” on which Elliott lightheartedly harmonizes about her capabilities in the bedroom; and “Best Best,” the set’s first single. A video for “Best Best” will be filmed next week and released online and to music TV networks.

To help reintroduce Elliott to the marketplace, Atlantic included two new songs, “Ching-a-Ling” and “Shake Your Pom Pom,” on the “Step Up 2 the Streets” soundtrack in March. The tracks, which will be reprised on “Block Party,” have already sold a combined 236,000 copies digitally.

According to Greenwald, additional marketing plans include an online contest to find dancers who will appear in some of Elliott’s upcoming videos and a worldwide tour starting in October.

Elliott will also release a promotional album in mid-summer, “Fanominal,” which was titled by fans in an online vote and will include exclusive tracks and videos. And, in keeping with the new album title’s theme, Elliott will host a couple of block parties around the July 4 and Labor Day weekends.

The artist who was one of the first to dip into the now ubiquitous reality show market with UPN series “The Road to Stardom” in 2005, will return to the small screen to judge MTV show “Dance ‘Til You Drop,” set to air later this year.

Meanwhile, Universal Music Publishing Group has just sealed a deal to administer Elliott’s rights in past, current and future compositions that she’s co-written. Among the hundreds of songs covered by the deal are those she’s performed as well as hits she’s co-written for Clar (“,” 2 Step), Monica (“So Gone”), Timbaland (“Cop That Shit!”) and many others. UMPG plans to crank up the marketing of her catalog, especially targeting music supervisors for movies, TV, advertising and videogames.

On a break from finishing up “Block Party,” Elliott chatted with Billboard about her new projects, her thoughts on the state of hip-hop, why she doesn’t keep up with digital downloads and ringtones and how she keeps herself a hot commodity.
You recently held a contest where your fans were able to submit titles for the upcoming album. Have you chosen one yet?

I actually chose two. I'm releasing a preview to the album in the summer titled "Fanceman." When I saw all the people that entered the contest, I was overwhelmed. So I'm dedicating that one to my fans because they've rolled with me since day one. I'm still up in the air about the name for the actual album, but for now it's "Black Party." The reason for that is because there are a lot of dance joints on there. It's one of those albums you can play out in the streets.

Last week, you were eight songs in on the album. How far along are you with it now? It's pretty much done. I probably have one more song to do. I want to keep the album short and sweet. I don't want one of those albums where you have 20 tracks but only two joints rock.

What should we expect from it?

This album is probably more musical and melodic than my previous ones. A lot of my albums are really hip-hop-driven, with touches of other music genres. But this album is hip-hop, with a sort of U.K. hip-hop sound to it.

Can you talk about the influence of go-go on the new songs? I love go-go. It has somewhat of an African twist to it with the drums. Something about it feels really good. I have friends that live in Washington D.C. and back in the day I didn't understand that music at all. It sounded like a bunch of trash cans. It wasn't until I went to see the D.C.-based group Red Essence at a club.

I tell you, I've been to a trillion clubs, but none like a go-go club. People are in there dirty dancing. It was hot. It's a whole different ballgame. Ever since then, I've been wanting to do a go-go record. Go-go's been around for so long but it's never made it across the country or across the world even. The world hasn't had a chance to see D.C. people get off on their music. That's why I did the track "Shake Your Pom Pom," Which is most definitely go-go-esque.

Aside from that, are there any other go-go-based songs? It's funny you ask, because I just asked the production team Soundgagga if they can do another go-go beat for me.

What are some of your favorite songs on the album so far?

"Best, Best." I love that one. It's not your typical R&B record. It's more like club R&B with a U.K. hip-hop sound to it. It's a feel-good record, but at the same time super sexy. It reminds me of when I did "Hot Boyz." It got that same feeling. "Hip-Hop Don't Die" is another one of my favorites. I love it because I just went in on that record. I don't think I've ever made a record that deep. It was straight rapping like old-school hip-hop. I'm usually more comical than that. Plus, it makes sense considering the state of hip-hop.

Timbaland continues to be a major collaborator of yours. Does it ever feel like you've outgrown the partnership and want to branch out?

It's deeper than this music industry thing for Timbaland and I. There's a chemistry between us that will never leave. Like Janet (Jackson) and Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. Like Michael Jackson and Quincy Jones—that kind of chemistry. Not to say it can't work if you get with someone else. But just because a producer's hot, it doesn't mean it will automatically work. People always ask if we're still working together, and the answer is we will always work together. He's always going to be involved, even if it is just on one record. That's my brother. I respect and honor what he says.

You've co-signed on recent J Records signee Jasmine Sullivan, who is on the album. Do you think about the comparisons she's being getting to Lauryn Hill?

It's not a bad thing that she's being compared to Lauryn. When you hear Lauryn, she gives you a different type of feeling. That's what Jasmine does. She's a beast. I've always told people when the beast is unleashed, the world is going to run. I've known her since she was about 13 years old. Someone brought her to Timbaland and I to sing, and the funny thing is that even back then when I heard the same voice she has now—a young girl with a mature voice comparative to a lady that's 37 years old and recently been divorced. She sings with lots of conviction. But she was signed to Jive at that time and they had no direction for her. Still, I always felt like she's one of those people that come every 10 years and change music. And she's not my artist, so I don't have to say that. I've just watched her grow, and she's the real deal.

Who else are you working with?

I don't like to just jump on records unless I like the artists, whether they are established or brand new. With that said, I like Estelle. I'm trying to figure out a way to get her on my album now. There's also this new girl that I did a record for whose name is Alju Jackson. I am also planning on working with Kelysha Cole on her follow-up album, which she's working on now.

What are your thoughts on the current state of hip-hop?

Well, if anyone knows me, they'd know I try not to listen to the radio or watch TV. I've been doing that since my very first album. I think you can be easily influenced by other music, and before you know it you start doing records that sound like someone else just because you think it's music that's working. I hear a lot of great songs. And then I hear some that aren't so original and creative. Back in the day artists had their own styles. You couldn't say Dr. Dre sounded like Rakim, or Salt-N-Pepa sounded like MC Lyte, or Big Daddy Kane sounded like Erick Sermon. These days, people try to follow a formula because they see it's worked for others. But that keeps them from being original and creative, or at least not as original and creative as it used to be before.

How do you keep up with the times, considering people don't buy physical albums anymore?

That's a whole other ballgame. I was listening to Chico DeBarge the other day and started to wonder what happened to people who wanted to get the track list and the credits and the lyrics to songs. We don't have those longevity artists anymore because they cater to the times, focus on ringtones and don't put efforts into making a great full album. I think people might want to buy albums again if artists stop catering to the times and start making music that makes people want to go out and buy them again. But, it might be a while before that happens since things are so accessible with computers and downloading.

How do you feel about deals like the one Jay-Z cut with Live Nation, or Radiohead pretty much giving its album away online?

What you're telling me is news to me. I stay in an area that is so wooded: there's nothing but bears. I'm so disconnected from all of that. All I do and strive for is to make good music. I feel like if you do that, then the music industry will change on its own, and preferably in your favor. But I can't be the savior of music. All I can do is keep making music and be as original as I can possibly be. God gave me the talent to be able to recognize good music and good artists. I'm happy with that.

Even when we aren't hearing your songs in the radio, you still stay relevant with producing, songwriting and deals like the Dorothea campaign and your Respect M.E. clothing line with Adidas. So, even though you claim to be disconnected, you still work the system pretty well.

That's the great thing about it: that I'm not just an artist. I produce, I write, I have Adidas... so I can still be out there even if you don't hear a straight record from Missy. And I thank God I'm in a position like that.

**MODEL OF CONSISTENCY**

In the past decade, five of Missy Elliott's six albums have gone top 10, and she's scored three No. 1s on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs.
GIRL TALK Has Built A Thriving Indie Following For His Sample-Centric Music In A Copyright Grey Area. Will His Next Album Push The Legal Envelope Even Further?

BY MICHAEL D. AYERS

JUNE 14, 2008  www.billboard.biz
It's just about midnight on a Friday night in Vassar College's student union, located in the sleepy Hudson River town of Poughkeepsie, N.Y. Throngs of late teens and early 20-somethings are packed in a 500-person ballroom; a local DJ crew is on a small raised stage at one end, warming up the crowd. One floor below, in a nondescript meeting room, Gregg Gillis, aka Girl Talk, is leisurely drinking beer and chatting among a small group of friends, debating the merits of the movie "Drumline." No instruments are being tuned, nor is he going over any set lists. Any preshow jitters are nonexistent, but he does have a preshow ritual.

The Pittsburgh native pulls out a box of plastic wrap and starts to encase the laptop he'll be using in a clear, tight plastic sheath. "It's to protect it from sweat and beer," he says, treating the one piece of equipment he uses like leftovers.

Moments later, representatives from the sponsoring student organization enter the room, followed by the campus security guards. They're already scared of things getting out of control, citing that the campus wasn't prepared for something like this. They had to set up a remote room, with a live video feed to compensate for the demand. Gillis patiently decries them about what's likely to go down. He's used to people hanging all over him, and he prefers his stage packed. "They expect this to happen," he states matter-of-factly. "For me, it's in between a concert and a party, in a condensed version."

About 20 minutes later, Gillis pushes and shoves his way to the small area where he'll plug in his laptop. The loud, repetitive chant of 'beats' echoes, and as he gets deeper within the crowd, his boisterous looks, long, stringy hair, and baggy jeans make him blend in effortlessly. Only when a student representative clears the stage does the audience realize what he truly looks like. And then he's surrounded again. For the next hour-and-a-half, guilty pleasures (Elton John, Kelly Clarkson, classic rock, Aerosmith, Wings) and hip-hop hits (Clipse, Notorious B.I.G.) mash up and flow together as if they were always intended to, igniting the crowd into a frenzy. Both guys and girls dance atop speaker monitors, shedding clothes as the night progresses.

An obscure mixing program called Audio Mulch is the life-line of Gillis' music, as it allows for multiple WAV file snippets to be open at once. He can play with mixing options as well as time signatures, creating unique pop songs with barely recognizable hooks—in real time. For that reason, Gillis has been labeled as a mash-up artist, who draws heavily on the recorded work (samples) of other artists for his source material. Danger Mouse rose to fame in 2004 by employing similar techniques, when he blended the Beatles' "White Album" with Jay Z's "Black Album" to create what he called "The Grey Album"; he also served a cease-and-desist order by the Beatles' label, EMI, prompting retailers to pull the limited run of physical copies that were being sold. Danger Mouse then vaulted to mainstream success with Gnarls Barkley and numerous production gigs; Gillis has become a hotly demanded live act.

For Gillis, anything is fair game in terms of sampling, and by poaching from all genres and decades, his work resonates with fans of all walks. His 2006 breakout album, "Night Ripper," did this to great effect, garnering critical success from mainstream and indie press. He discovered that a traditional label, managers, recording and studio expenses, and even major distribution were unnecessary. Gillis was even sought out to handle

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**Monster Mash**

The Girl Talk scholars on Wikipedia identified nearly 20 samples in the first track from his 2006 album "Night Ripper," some of which appear for only a second or two; ironically, a half-dozen of those sampled tracks contain samples of their own, adding an extra layer of complexity to the music.

**"ONCE AGAIN" — 2:40**

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*Sampled by Girl Talk*
remixes for such established acts as Of Montreal, Grizzly Bear, Simian Mobile Disco and Peter Bjorn and John. The only problem: None of the estimated 200 samples on "Night Ripper" were cleared. The album, released on the Bloomington, Ill.-based Illegal Art label, went on to sell 20,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and its growing acclaim led to bigger and more lucrative live bookings for Gillis, who can now command upwards of $20,000 for a 30-minute set. In 2007 alone, he played 194 gigs, including 26 college as well as a handful of private events.

Now, a new Girl Talk album is about to materialize in the next couple of weeks, hinging on in the cut-and-paste aesthetic introduced on "Night Ripper." But at what expense has the artist's ascent occurred? What about the copyright holders of the music he's sampling? Aren't they entitled to licensing revenue?

**COPYRIGHT WARRIORS?**

At the beginning of the decade, Gillis hooked up with Illegal Art, the brainchild of an anonymous grad student who calls himself "Phil E. Farnsworth." The label provides a relatively small distribution outlet for those who create music solely via sampling methods. It originally started in 1998 as a one-off to handle "Deconstructing Beck," an album that culled together samples of various Beck tunes to create 13 new songs.

But after "Deconstructing Beck," lawyers came calling, and lawsuits were threatened. "It made me aware of the problems, the larger issues," Farnsworth says. "And we felt a sense of obligation to promote that type of music, which is our focus now—developing artists whose primary mode of expression is using samples."

Illegal Art releases are typically produced in small batches, distributed by NAIL/Allegro in North America. The volume has usually been small enough so as not to deter a pressing plant from agreeing to make copies. But after "Night Ripper" broke and demand soared, NAIL stopped working the project rather than face the wrath of copyright holders. (The company remains the exclusive U.S. distributor for other Illegal Art titles.)

"They dropped the title due to nervousness and we then used other several distributors, who we work on with an ad hoc basis," Farnsworth says, declining to name them. "Distribution for our higher-profile titles becomes somewhat limited due to distributing being overly cautious."

"A pure mash-up CD is one where the artist manipulates and changes the original work so that it's really unrecognizable," NAIL/Allegro CFO Vince Micalef says. "This degree of change is what protects them under the fair use doctrine and the concept of interpretation. But Girl Talk's releases don't go far enough. Whether or not they violate somebody's rights, we don't know. It's a grey area. It's a great record and we would have loved to have sold it, but it was sufficiently grey that it's effectively our capital on the line."

What money Illegal Art has made in the last few years is reinvested into the operation. "It's very similar to a typical book publisher," Farnsworth says. "They'll make money off one book but lose money on four others. We kind of operate the same way. We'll make money on Girl Talk, but we reinvest everything we make. We're interested in promoting what we do rather than pocketing money."

Gillis is the first to admit he's not a savvy businessman. "I'm growing into being more serious about it," he says. "But I don't want to be. And maybe that's not a good thing. I don't keep records for my money that well. I don't sell T-shirts and such as much as I should. I just keep up with it as much as I can."

Last year, he bought a few new laptops and a projection screen. But as far as investing in Girl Talk "the business," that was the only real overhead Gillis encountered. He pays a small percentage of his live revenue to his booking agency, the Windish Agency, and sells out for publicity from Chicago-based Pitch Perfect PR. "Where it's at now was never an aspiration," he says. "I love it, and I am going to enjoy it. But it's ridiculous how many people come out to the shows."

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**LET'S PUSH THINGS FORWARD**

Titled "Feed the Animals," Girl Talk's new record is something he's basing upon his concerts. "In my mind, it's a highlight reel of my live show since last year," he says. "The core ideas are there, but what takes me a long time is just actually pushing them together. On record, it's like a different art form." He anticipates using more than 300 samples; there could be 20 different samples in a 10-second sequence. This time, he's putting more of his own beats spliced within the sample mix.

According to Gillis, despite what will be a considerable demand, gearing up for a traditional release date doesn't make sense; there's just no need for it. He'll release "Feed the Animals" on the Internet in a pay-what-you-want format, with a CD for orders a bit later. Without the need for a marketing plan, promotional tie-ins, advertising campaigns, press tours and album release shows, "Feed the Animals" contains the DIY ethos, but with limited expectations or even any need of results. While Radiohead and Nine Inch Nails may need to recoup costs after releasing music in this fashion, Gillis simply doesn't have much to recoup.

At first, Illegal Art and Gillis were mulling a rolling-scale royalty system where sampled artists would receive a small percentage of revenue. One idea was to enact a system that mirrors the compulsory license fee for a cover version, where each track would earn 9.1 cents in royalties. Another was to open the whole thing up to fan voting to decide how much a given artist would receive. Should an act decide not to claim its royalty, Illegal Art would donate it to charity.

"One of the things we're wrestling with is that if we were to put forward a royalty system, are we implying that the work isn't or shouldn't be classified as fair use?" Farnsworth asks. "If it is fair use, which has always been the ground we've stood on, then there is no need for a royalty system.

But the whole concept was eventually scrapped, after Illegal Art's lawyers "advised us that it would weaken our fair use position if someone took us to court," according to Farnsworth. He still sees fair use protection as "a big deterrent against potential legal action, but admits, "We're a very small organization. If someone wanted to make our life miserable, they could."

If the Girl Talk experience sounds disjointed, that's because to a large degree it is. For example, while the industry standard has been always to supplement a studio recording with touring, for Gillis albums are never the focus. "The way I view it, it's a hobby," he says of making a record. "My job right now is my shows, you could say."

Of late, after a weekend's set of gigs, Gillis spends most weekdays working on his live set for the next round of touring. "I only sample things I like musically first and foremost. The pool won't shrink; it will just come from new areas," he says. "I feel like there's more bands and musicians in 2008 than there ever has existed before. And probably more hit singles in 2007 than ever existed. Maybe not in terms of sales, but as far as how people see music as the most widespread. That's sort of the give-and-take of the Internet."

When it comes to those shows, Gillis isn't required to do out any rights money. The clubs take care of that for him when they pay SESAC, ASCAP and BMI their yearly rights dues. "We do so many different types of events here with lots of recorded music in between for weddings, corporate events, snowboard and ski films, comedians, speakers and lots of concerts," says Cheryl Ligouri, who manages the Fox and Boulder theaters in Boulder, Colo. (Gillis has not played those venues.) "It's just easier to know we are covered and the songwriters are getting their due. With Girl Talk, I would think if you pay all these companies, you would need to be covered for more."

In the months ahead, Gillis will be playing major summer festivals like Lollapalooza and All Points West before launching a full tour this fall.

And that's his definition of success. "In the early days, it was like, 'If we can be accepted legitimately, if we can show up anywhere and be treated reasonably, as a band with a laptop playing remixes, then I succeeded,' " he says.

Now that it's a reality, Gillis just wants to keep the focus on the music. "When I first made music and knew that Illegal Art existed, I knew they were about pushing the boundaries," he says. "I understood the ideas but didn't really understand the details until I released my first album. Over the years, Illegal's artists are motivated to push copyright laws; I'm interested in that, but I don't want that to be the forefront. I want it to be the music."
The O'Jays music touches each of our hearts, they share their love with us and we are never far apart. Faithfully and forever their music reaches our souls, over the years it never grows old.
The O'Jays give back... Helping their community. Each and every year... Sharing their success with us Majestically like Engineers.

© Walter I. Ray, Jr.
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SOUL, THE TRIO BRINGS FORTH 'THE ESSENTIAL O'JAYS' FOR LONGTIME ADMIRERS AND NEW FANS ALIKE

BY GAIL MITCHELL

The O'Jays on 'Soul Train' during '70s heyday of Philly soul. From left are WALTER WILLIAMS, WILLIAM POWELL and EDDIE LEVERT.
“Give the People What They Want” is just one of the O’Jays’ many signature hits. But its message also doubles as the secret behind the trio’s remarkable 50-year career. In that time, the O’Jays have sung their way to legendary status and helped put Gamble & Huff’s Philadelphia International label on the global map thanks to such hits as “Back Stabbers,” “Love Train,” “For the Love of Money,” “Livin’ for the Weekend,” “Let Me Make Love to You,” “Stairway to Heaven” and “Used To Be My Girl.” Anchored by Eddie Levert’s raw, fervent vocals and Walter Williams’ suave, oasis-cool tones, the O’Jays have kept folks sweating on the dancefloor and in the bedroom. And while the untimely death in 1977 of fellow original member William Powell left an irreplaceable void, the group has continued to uplift the soul with talented assistance from singers Sammy Strain, Nathaniel Best and current member Eric Nolan Grant. “The O’Jays are the epitome of R&B groups because they never did what has killed off many other R&B groups,” comedian and Premiere Radio Networks syndicated personality Steve Harvey says. “They never split off. The O’Jays just kept on being the damn O’Jays.” And they’ve always stayed current, syndicated radio host Tom Joyner says. “I give much of that credit to Eddie’s boys, Gerald and Sean, who were musicians in their own right,” he says. “They wouldn’t let the group come out with anything lame. And the group really has something for everyone: Walter’s coolness, Eddie’s classic sex appeal and Eric’s youthful style.” Levert and Williams credit their success and longevity to three main factors: the members’ God-given voices, their fortuitous pairing with songwriter/producers Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff and being under the tutelage of choreographer extraordinare Charles “Cholly” Atkins.

In the beginning, five McKinley High friends decided to form a vocal group in 1958 in Canton, Ohio: Levert, Williams, Powell, Bobby Massey and Bill Isles. “In those days, the school hallways and the men’s room walls were marble,” recalls Williams, who first met Levert when he was 6 and Levert was 7. “Those walls gave off...” continued on >>p34

Philadelphia International Records and Legacy congratulate the legendary O’Jays on their 50th Anniversary in music.
How the O'JAYS changed my life

by Ron Fair
Chairman, Geffen Records

In the winter of 1990, I was promoted to Senior Vice-President of A&R at EMI Records New York. One day out of the blue, Sal Lucio (president of EMI) headed me into his office. "What do you know about the O'JAYS?" he asked. I didn't know much, so I burst out singing, "People of the world, join hands, get on the love train, love train." "They smile in your face, all the time they wanna take your place, the backstabbers, backstabbers..." Sal looked at me like I was nuts. I really knew the O'JAYS were the hooks of their big hits. Then Sal said, "Get a ticket to Cleveland — you're responsible for delivering the new O'JAYS album." What happened next — would change the way I hear music, change my career, and change my life.

Back in '91 I was a brash young record man, drunk with my first few hits, flying by the seat of his pants. Around this time, a music publisher working the Bob Dylan catalog (Tina Sloan) gave me a great R&B demo of a Dylan song — "Emotionally Yours." I was fascinated by this song from the album "Emperor Balalaika." It was soulful, had tremendous gospel chord changes and (with some skillful) incredible lyrics. I called Eddie Levert and introduced myself, "Hi, I'm Ron Fair, I'm the new Senior VP of A&R, I love Dylan. Please listen to this Bob Dylan song — and by the way, I'll be in Cleveland tomorrow." Armed with my Dylan demo, Stevie Wonder, Gamble & Huff and some golden noses, I arrived at Travel Studies. Eddie Levert & Walter Williams, Jr., were omniscient gods in their studio. Deep, soulful, imaginative and intricate harmonies flowed out of them as easy as laughter. Everything I thought I knew about recording and arranging voices was immediately irrelevant. It was my date with destiny.

Our taste-encouraging was not all roses. It took time for the O'JAYS to understand me, and I had to be patient. They played me two records that later became number one R&B hits. - "Don't Let Me Down" and "Keep on Lovin' Me." But I was stuck on this Dylan song, "Emotionally Yours." I told Eddie & Walt — "It's cultural fabric — Dylan & the O'JAYS. What could be better?"

Finally, they agreed to try it with their producers TerryStubbs & the late Dwayne Mitchell. It was a train wreck. They all rushed the boat. They didn't really know the song. I forced my way to the piano and started teaching it to Eddie & Walt line-by-line. Eddie was on my ear, Walt was on my left. My Gamble-Robi meets McCartney-barmitzvah-gospel-piano-playing took the song into a whole new direction. Terry & Dwayne bathed it and tried to shovel me off the piano bench. So I released my voice and said, "can I please have one SQUARE INCH TO GROOVE?" I was dead serious, they all fell over laughing. Eddie on my right ear, Come Baby Rock me, come baby roll me... then Walt on the left, "Come Baby Baby Baby..." I was on my right ear, "Come Baby Rock me, come baby roll me..." together in harmony — "I will always be... Emotionally Yours." It was a direct injection of concentrated royal blue-blood R&B, descending from Philly Internationals and the genius of Gamble & Huff. The O'JAYS drilled their voices directly into my skull. It was an electric shock treatment of musical power and soul I will never forget.

We decided to record "Emotionally Yours" as a gospel arrangement. I was obsessed. I hired Oumar Hamid on drums, Victor Bailey on bass, and the late Richard Tee on piano and organ. I arranged the strings, and a horn section. Eddie & Walt sang it gloriously. We hung out every night, two R&B legends and skinny white A&R man. We were inseparable. Every session was hilarious fun, a master class in record production. The song needed a choir. So I thought — why not make a giant event out of it — an all-star choir, film it, and get it on the news — The O'JAYS, Bob Dylan, and all-star choir. "*O'JAYS* — Power Station — news crawl... so in walked the late Phyllis Hyman, Jawatha Apeax, Martha Wash, Gwen Guthrie, Evelyn Champagne King, Sarah Dash, Gamble & Huff, Chase Houston, James Williams, Ray Goodwin & Brown, Keith Sweat, Eric Gales, Hannie James, Wallis Downey, Sammy Siemens, E.J. Taylor, Fonda Flowers, Lutishya Overby, Marc Overby, Leon Shriver, and the late Bernard Levert (rip.). I had no clue how to get everyone to sing together, so Gerald kept to the podium. In two hours, he had arranged and conducted the get-reverberating choir part; the OJHM crew9 every minute. I mixed the record over and over with Humberto Gatica. Hunt got fed up with me saying "more emotion, more emotion..." After I broke down weeping, I knew the mix was finished.

Then I was struck by paralyzing fear. I said to Eddie & Walt, "what if urban radio won't play a gospel record... We need to RE-RECORD IT — R&B IT. *You crazy, mom..." Eddie & Walt laughed. But I could not stop. So off to San Francisco we went, to re-record "Emotionally Yours" from scratch with Ronald Michael Walden. I somehow convinced the idea that we would release it as a "double-A side" with the gospel version ARI and the R&B version, and on top of it, make two videos. I appeared in the Gospel video as the piano player. Clearly, I was out of my mind.

We titled the album "Emotionally Yours." The first single, "Don't Let Me Down" went to number one. The Dylan song came out second. I memorized Richard Tee's piano part note-for-note and performed with the O'JAYS and on the Aragon Hall Show. I was having the time of my life. Little by little, "Emotionally Yours" climbed the R&B chart, reaching number five in the summer of 1991. Even after the chart and the airplay peaked, "Emotionally Yours" continued on. In August of '91, Rolling Stone published an article — "Single of the Moment — O'JAYS Score With Dylan Tune." My notion of "cultural fabric" had succeeded. The amazing dream was the O'JAYS performance of "Emotionally Yours" at the 50th Anniversary of Bob Dylan at Madison Square Garden. I was on stage, playing Richard Tee's piano part, with a young Sheryl Crow, Chase Houston, and Koolie Lumars among the choir; Steve Cropper, Duck Dunn, Jim Keltner in the rhythm section banging away. "Emotionally Yours" fell right behind Stevie Wonder's "Blowin' In The Wind" on the second biggest Dylan song ever on the R&B chart. "Emotionally Yours" went gold and was the O'JAYS biggest album ever. After it produced their classic album "Home for Christmas" and by then Eddie & Walt's recording technique had become my own.

Had it not been for Eddie Levert & Walter Williams (and that magic summer of '91) I would not have had the confidence to walk into a studio at anytime, with any singer and press the record button. My knowledge to an unsuspecting vocal genius, the teen-aged Christine Aguilera was influenced by the O'JAYS. Because what I learned from them, what was passed down lick-by-lick and hit-by-hit — was so much a part of me, it became a part of today. When I say over the talk-back mike, "It's double that harmony for Nicole Scherzinger, Fergie, or Queen Latifah, or me..." Eddie on my right ear and Walt on my left. When Keyshia Cole and I did our thing on an number-one R&B records, it was the experience gained with the O'JAYS that gave me the authority. I would never have been able to produce records with Mary J. Blige without Eddie & Walt benefiting my wings. When I taught the mix of Mary J. Blige's "No More Drama," (Billboard's longest-running number one R&B record — 15 weeks) I could not wait to play it for my teachers: Eddie Levert & Walter Williams, Jr.

The O'JAYS spirit still finds me at every recording session. I can hear Eddie's voice, "you crazy... mom..." Every time I tell a singer "Bazzy... Achieve!!" or "Let's build a bridge of that all-ah, double it and triple the harmony..." to this day, seventeen years later, it's Eddie on my right ear, Walt on my left.

Eddie & Walt: thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the laughter, all the lessons, and the beautiful music. I am eternally grateful.

Love,
kind of echo and our harmonies sounded real good. We used to flirt with the girls and sing instead of study. That's where it all started."

Then known as the Triumphant, the quintet sung on local radio and also in the church choir where Williams' father was the choir director.

"Walter’s father taught us how to approach a song, how to really sing it," Levert recalls. "You start in the basement, go to the first, second and third floor and then go through the roof. We've been using that philosophy our whole career."

The son of a local Greek grocer heard the guys harmonizing one day as they were passing by the store and later arranged for the group to go to Cincinnati where King Records' Sid Nathan gave the high school juniors contracts and renamed them the Mascots. Among the songs the group recorded at the time was "Miracles."

"The Mascots were invited to do a sock hop in Cleveland where they met DJ Eddie O'Jay. He later took the group to Detroit where it signed with Dayton Records. The Dayton single "How Does It Feel," distributed by Apollo Records, did well locally. It was during this period that the group, referred to now as "O'Jay's boys," was rechristened the O'Jays.

A move to Los Angeles netted the O'Jays a deal first with Little Star, which released their 1963 single "Lonely Drifter," then with Imperial Records. For Imperial, working with producer H.B. Barnum, the group earned its first national R&B hit (No. 28) with "Lipstick Traces (On a Cigaretto)" in 1965. Notching No. 12 on the R&B chart in 1966 with "Stand In for Love," the O'Jays segued to Bell and their first top 10 hit in 1967 with "I'll Be Sweeter Tomorrow (Than I Was Today)." By this time, Isles had left the group.

Having left Los Angeles and moved back to Cleveland, the O'Jays got busy honing their craft on the chitlin' circuit, performing at such venues as the Royal in Baltimore.

Continued on >>p36

“Love Train’ signifies everything we [he and partner Leon Huff] wanted to do with the O'Jays and the other Philadelphia International artists—send a musical message of love to help bring people together.”

—KENNY GAMBLE, SONGWRITER/PRODUCER

“Livin' for the Weekend’ and ‘For the Love of Money.’ The O'Jays always let me come onstage and perform ‘Money’ with them. I have the steps down so well that Eric [O'Jays member Nolan Grant] better watch out!”

—TOM JOYNER, SYNDICATED RADIO HOST
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"For the Love of Money" just has such a timeless groove and lyrics. I don't care whether you're 20 or 60... put it on right now and you'll get the same result. Everyone will get on that dancefloor."

—MATTHEW KNOWLES,
MUSIC WORLD ENTERTAINMENT PRESIDENT

singers have since stepped in: Sammy Strain from Little Anthony & the Imperials, Nathaniel Best and current member Eric Nolan Grant, who joined the group in 1995. Leaving Philadelphia International after the top five R&B hit "Let Me Touch You," the O'Jays signed with EMI.

Several more R&B hits ensued, including "Have You Had Your Love Today," "Don't Let Me Down," "Keep On Lovin' Me" and a gospelly-flavored cover of Bob Dylan's "Emotionally Yours." The trio also recorded a holiday album, 1991's "Home for Christmas."

Geffen chairman Ron Fair, then EMI senior VP of A&R, recalls, "Sitting at the piano showing Walter and Eddie how I wanted the song to go, I had the benefit of working with two of the most massive geniuses of singing. Working with them changed my life. They taught me about soul and how to record vocals. There isn't anybody I've worked with, from Fergie to Christina Aguilera to Mary J. Blige and Keyshia Cole, who hasn't benefited from what Eddie and Walter taught me."

Matthew Knowles, who signed the O'Jays to his Music World Entertainment label and released the "Imagination" album in 2004, cites the group's willingness to try new things as another key to its longevity. "I love that they were willing to do something different on that album, working with Jam & Lewis and other contemporary producers."

Beyond the career-building songs of Gamble & Huff and their vocal prowess, another O'Jays mainstay has been their energetic concert performances. For this, they credit Tony Award-winning dancer and infamous Motown choreographer Cholly

continued on >>p38
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from >>p36

Atkins, who put the guys through rigorous rehearsals starting in 1973.

"He rehearsed us six days a week to the point where it became second nature," Grant says of Atkins, who died in 2003. "When you hear something in a song, your feet know they should be doing this or you know you should be singing that."

"Once we get with him, there was no looking back," Levert adds. "His words still echo in our minds: 'You may get a hit record today, but a hit act lasts forever.' And the O'Jays are a true testament of that."

Still a live show draw, the group continues to give people what they want, averaging six months on the road or about 50-52 70-minute shows per year, according to co-manager Roz Ryan. "Walt and Eddie's stamina at 60-plus years is better than most young people's."

Gamble adds: "The O'Jays will be able to sing as long as they want to sing. That's what attracted me and Leon Huff to the group. We wanted them to sound good in the studio, but also be great performers onstage. That's what helps sell a record."

Even after being with the group for 13 years, Grant is still amazed at Levert and Williams' showmanship. "I can't believe they're still doing this at this stage in their careers. They still compete. Ed and Walt don't lay down; they just don't." Songwriter/producer Teddy Riley and Mint Condition frontman Stokley Williams have played on bills with the O'Jays and Riley says, "They not only put on an incredible show but it's their lush harmony that always influenced me. That's where Guy [Riley's group] came in, stealing a little of their harmony progression because we wanted to be like them."

"Bringing energy and old-school entertainment to the stage...that's the stamp they've put on me as a musician, writer and singer," Mint Condition's Williams says.

Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2005, the O'Jays have amassed a host of gold and platinum single and album awards. Their classic performance of "For the Love of Money" was introduced to a new generation of fans when the song became the theme for Donald Trump's reality show, "The Apprentice." Their music has also been featured on "The Sopranos" and "The Simpsons." Another iconic O'Jays hit, "Love Train," was inducted into the Recording Academy's Hall of Fame in 2006. Artists from Angie
“There’s ‘Stairway to Heaven,’ an incredibly emotional song about life. But man, ‘For the Love of Money’ is a cold jam too. These are two totally different songs; however, the songs’ spirit—like all O’Jays music—speaks to the conditions we’re in and life experiences.”

—STEVE HARVEY, SYNDICATED RADIO HOST

“Most of the time, I don’t watch other groups perform. But I wanted to watch the O’Jays’ show on [radio host] Tom Joyner’s cruise when they sang ‘Forever Mine.’ They just tear the house down with that song.”

—TEDDY RILEY, PRODUCER

“Back Stabbers” was the first song I worked on with the group. Before I came on, they just used a rhythm section. Then they decided they wanted to fill it in and dress it up with horns and other instruments.”

—DENNIS WILLIAMS, O’JAYS MUSICAL DIRECTOR

“Family Reunion” brings back fond memories of growing up, like learning to ride a bike or my aunt trying to make me eat liver and onions. While she tried every condiment known to man, O’Jays music would be playing in the background.”

—STOKLEY WILLIAMS, MINT CONDITION SINGER
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With Hits, Synchs And An Arty Persona, The Ting Tings Are Starting Something

LONDON—U.K. indie-rock duo the Ting Tings hit No. 1 on the Official U.K. Charts Co. listings in May with the supremely catchy single "That's Not My Name" and self-produced debut album "We Started Nothing"—but their U.S. campaign isn't about playing catch-up.

"We sold out the Troubadour in L.A. really quickly," says drummer Jules de Martino, songwriting partner to singer/guitarist Katie White. That response to the act's 10 date June mini-U.S. tour is a sign that the stateside buzz is genuine, as is an iPod commercial featuring the song "Shut Up and Let Me Go" (Billboard, May 10).

"We Started Nothing" was released June 3 in the United States via Columbia, which initially shipped 65,000 units. A May 20 digital release—alongside a vinyl version through indie retailers—has shifted 9,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"Obviously the Apple iPod commercial really helped," New York-based Columbia senior director of marketing Nina Webb says. "But we really started this the right way by making sure they were at South by Southwest. People saw their energy, passion and the way Katie just completely throws her whole being into her songs."

De Martino says the Ting Tings emerged "accidentally" from failed band Dear Eskimo, which was signed to Mercury U.K. in 2004 but dropped before releasing a planned album.

"That experience left them distasteful," he says, but the duo's response was to throw live music parties at the artists' community area it was based in Manchester. Ultimately, London-based band manager Stephen Taverner persuaded the duo to tour the United Kingdom with the songs that grew out of those sessions.

"We're just very lucky we met each other and got through that really awful period in our last band," de Martino says.

Sony Music Group Label chairman Rob Stringer went to see the act play in Salford, and last May the band signed a joint deal with Columbia in the States and the United Kingdom.

"It's not a U.K. pickup, so we have to be strong partners because they're off to a great start here," Webb says.

The album has a global release, with the exception of Latin America. Following their first visit to Japan, the Ting Tings play U.S. live shows (booked through Little Big Man) starting June 5.

"We've had better experiences thinking you can hold something back for any part of the world," Sony BMG U.K. VP of international Dave Shack says. "Those days are long gone—everybody's got to discover them for themselves."

After European festivals including Glastonbury, the Ting Tings return stateside for Lollapalooza in July and another tour in the fall.

The act performed June 6 on "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" and is set for an iTunes Live From SoHo session June 17 in New York. The video for "Shut Up and Let Me Go" will have its world premiere June 13 on MTV. The song was serviced to U.S. alternative radio June 3—as an album track, it began garnering radio play in May and climbed to No. 55 on the May 24 Billboard Hot 100.

"They're definitely a pop act," Webb says, "but right now they're more seen as alternative and indie."

The U.K. No. 1 "That's Not My Name" will be the third single stateside, although campaigns in both markets began with "Great DJ" and Webb says the label is fine with stations that still want to play that "discovery track."

"Great DJ" was released as a U.S. download March 4. It debuted March 18 on MTV2 Subterranean and secured a First Look feature April 16 on MTV's "TRL"—"before the iPod commercial was even launched," Webb says.

Synchs deals have placed "Shut Up and Let Me Go" and "That's Not My Name" on hit Fox drama "Gossip Girl," while "Great DJ" is on the soundtrack to the "American Teen" movie and will feature in a Dodge car commercial in Italy.

The U.S. buzz has also been helped by the Ting Tings' artistic side. In November, they played shows in Berlin, Manchester, London and New York where fans could paint blank sleeves that tiles the wall, which were then given away for the independent limited vinyl release of "Fruit Machine."

They now plan to file the stage with sleeves featuring the date and handwritten set lists of the June U.S. dates, making them available for $3 each as alternative vinyl album covers at the following show.

De Martino says the act's whole approach has been a response to what fans want. For example, while "That's Not My Name" is an MTV Network priority in Europe, in France the label switched to "Shut Up and Let Me Go" because of audience reaction.

"There shouldn't be any rules," de Martino says. "We've been celebrating the fact that we've had a No. 1 album and No. 1 single doing it that way."

THE TING TINGS
**MORE U2**
A wealth of rare material will be found on reissues of the early U2 albums "Boy," "War" and "October" due July 22 via Universal. Each album will be available as a remastered single CD, a deluxe set with a second disc of extras and on vinyl. "Boy" features the previously unreleased tracks "Speed of Life," "Saturday Night," and "American Woman." The new edition of 1981's "October" boasts a series of tracks taped live in London and Boston, while 1983's "War" is bolstered with the previously unreleased track "Angels Too Tied to the Ground."

**TORI GOES INDIE**
Tori Amos has ended her tenure with Epic Records and has chosen the path of independence for her next work. Tori is unveiling new and exciting ways of getting her music to the masses without the boundaries and limitations of the major music companies. "I'm starting a new project," she says. "I want to be more in control of my music and my image."

**REELIN' IN THE YEARS**
Morrissey is planning a September release for his ninth studio album, "Years of Refusal." The 12-track set, produced by Jerry Finn, will be released by Polydor in the United Kingdom and in an as-yet-undecided Universal label stateside. At some point before the album release, Sony BMG plans to release Morrissey's 1995 album "Southpaw Grammar" with remastered audio, three previously unreleased tracks and new artwork.

**DUST IN THE WIND**
Veteran indie rock outfit Calexico will release its next album, "Carried to Dust," Sept. 9 via Touch & Go. The project sports guest turns by Iron & Wine's Sam Beam, with whom Calexico collaborated on a 2005 EP, "Tortoise Bassist Doug McCombs and Pieta Brown. The album is the follow-up to 2006's "Garden Ruin," which reached a career-best No. 3 on Billboard's TopHeatseekers chart.

**VENEGAS**
Latin
BY LEILA COBO

Julieta's New Jam

Venegas Expands Worldwide Base With 'MTV Unplugged' Set

Mexican chanteuse Julieta Venegas went from a quirky underground darling to a mainstream pop queen thanks to her 2003 breakthrough album, "Sí." The Sony BMG set has sold 148,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, a far cry from the 21,000 copies lodged by her previous effort, 2000's "Limon y Nata." Venegas followed that up with "Limón y Sal," which topped the 120,000-unit mark and was also successful in countries as far-flung as Italy and Germany.

Now, the singer/songwriter/multi-instrumentalist is seeking to solidify her international appeal with an "MTV Unplugged" set. "We want to expand her audience," says Sony BMG Norte VP of marketing Paula Kaminisky. "Doing the MTV set is a very logical step for her at this time. She began in one market, she's expanded, and now this set is all her hits exhibited with great credibility. That's the marketing approach we're taking with this album."

Venegas' "MTV Unplugged" will be released June 17 in more than 15 countries, including the European markets in which she broke last time as well as new countries like Brazil. Her incursion into those markets is partly linked with the artists with whom she collaborates on "Unplugged," including Brazilian star Marisa Monte, Spanish rapper La Maña Rodriguez and Academy Award-winning composer Gustavo Santolalla, Venegas' former producer.

Venegas produced the album, a first for her, along with cellist/arranger Jacques Morelenbaum, who long worked with Tom Jobim and Caetano Veloso.

"What I liked about "Unplugged" was the possibility of changing format," Venegas says. "I felt a bit trapped by that alternative format of guitar, bass and drums." Instead, what Venegas did was conceive her set for a big ensemble—14 musicians—including a string quartet, a wind quartet and a series of unlikely instruments like banjo and marimba. While much of this may sound too "artsy" for a commercial pop album, Venegas and her music are that unusual combination that has mass and niche appeal and can be promoted in multiple ways.

For example, Kaminisky says, Venegas' catalog is routinely mined for commercial synchs, and her songs have been used for TV campaigns by the likes of JC Penney (currently airing), Old Navy and Nissan. On June 5, "Unplugged" was projected on a screen in New York's Times Square in tandem with its premiere on MTV Tr3s and MTV Latin America. Rhapsody, her deal with MTV, will make the album available to subscribers a week before its release and promote Venegas heavily through positioning and banners.

But the most impressive promotion is in Venegas' native Mexico, where Sony BMG and her management company have created a massive deal with Sony Ericsson. Simultaneously with the physical release of the album, several tracks from "Unplugged" will be preloaded onto an undisclosed number of Sony Ericsson phones. Although Sony BMG declined to confirm the number, sources place it at close to half a million units.

Sony Ericsson is also sponsoring the Mexico leg of Venegas' tour and supporting it and the album with a major advertising campaign that includes TV and radio ads. The tour kicks off July 6 in Durango and intersperses Mexico and International dates with a 13-date theater tour in the United States that begins Aug. 7 at the Ogden Theatre in Denver. Venegas will also play dates in New York and Boston in July.

Although the States, Mexico and Spain are priority regions for the album, Venegas is slated to promote the set in every single territory where it is released, Sony BMG Mexico managing director Miguel Trujillo says.

Venegas says she doesn't view her evolution "as a before-and-after. I see it precisely as an ongoing process. And including songs from all my albums on 'Unplugged' is a way of bringing everything together. My music has always made sense to me and the direction I've taken has been natural."

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**HARD SILENCE**

The members of U.K. rock band Feeder were determined to make their sixth studio album, "Silent Cry," sound harder than the fifth.

The band's 2005 album "Pushing the Senses" (Echo), which reached No. 2 on the Official U.K. Charts Co. album listing, drew comparisons to Coldplay for its less in-your-face approach. But frontman Grant Nicholas says the band "missed doing big guitar songs."

"This one was a very natural record to make, and it's definitely a rock album," he says. The band put new track "Miss You" on its Web site (feederweb.com) March 3 to give fans a taste of the new material. It was downloaded 8,030 times the first day. Other tracks have since been...
Night Of The Hunter

English Retro-Soul Artist Follows Up A Belated Success

When an artist takes some 20 years to achieve an International audience and Grammy Award recognition, he's entitled to call his album "The Hard Way."

That's the name of the Hear Music/Fantasy debut of English soul traditionalist James Hunter, due June 10 in North America. Hunter spent the late '80s treading the boards as lead singer with British R&B live favorites Howlin' Will & the Vee-Jays before releasing his solo debut, "...Be- lieve What I Say" (Acetone), in 1996. But his commercial breakthrough didn't come until a decade later.

Hunter's 2006 word-of-mouth success, "People Gonna Talk," released on New York-based indie Go via a worldwide licensing deal with Rounder, has now sold 69,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It topped Billboard's Top Blues Albums chart in June 2006 and spent 56 weeks on the survey; it was also nominated for a best traditional blues album Grammy.

The singer/songwriter/guitarist hails from Coleshill in Essex, 60 miles east of London. He admits cheerfully that if he had known the exact formula of newly written retro-soul that brought about his breakthrough, he would have put it into action earlier.

"The basic compo- nents of what we do were always there," he says, citing such inspirations as R&B fron-tiermen Jesse Belvin and Sam Cooke. Hunter is character- istically upbeat about "The Hard Way," which he sees as cut from a similar—if slightly more refined—cloth as "People Gonna Talk." Liam Watson produced both albums.

The new album, which had a May 5 street date in the United Kingdom, is "by turns posh and rougher, but we also made it a bit ‘caveman,’" he says with a laugh. The album was recorded, largely in live band performances, at the analog Toe Rag studio in London and features a guest appearance by New Orleans figurehead Allen Toussaint.

The great piano player is seen enthusiastic about Hunter on a six-minute electronic press kit that Hear Music/Fantasy has made available. Los Angeles-based Jef- frey Specter, product manager for Con- cord Records, of which Fantasy is a part, says early U.S. media reaction to the album has been "overwhelmingly positive."

The album will be available simultane- ously in Starbucks locations and at tradi- tional music retailers in North America. The first U.S. radio single will be "Don't Do Me No Favors," and Hunter and his band will perform June 9 on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien."

Extensive touring is planned on both sides of the Atlantic: After supporting Willie Nelson on his seven-date U.K. tour in May 6-14 and playing his own shows in London and Amsterdam at the end of that month, he swung into North America for dates in June and July. Hunter is booked for North America by Monterey International and in the United Kingdom by Movinmusic.

Hunter, published by Stoketone Pub- lishing, says he was greatly encouraged by the shelf life of "People Gonna Talk" and the "broad spectrum" of admirers it attracted. "We go for old end young, and everything in between," he says. "If it was good enough for Sam Cooke..."
**6 QUESTIONS with ALISON MOYET**

by LARS BRANDLE

Alison Moyet and Vince Clarke have seen so little of each other since the electro duo Yazoo went their separate ways in 1983 that Moyet reckons they caught up recently for the first time in 16 years. Now, however, the pair—who enjoyed a string of top five U.K. hits with “Only You,” “Don’t Go” and “Nobody’s Diary”—will be seeing plenty of each other. Yazoo (or Yaz as it is known in the United States) began its Re-Connected tour May 26 in Copenhagen, and dates extend across Europe and the United States throughout July, “In Your Room” (Mute), a four-disc collection of remixes, b-sides, a DVD and the band’s two albums “Upstairs at Eric’s” and “You and Me Both,” is out now in the United Kingdom and Europe. Moyet’s latest solo disc, “The Turn,” drops stateside on Dec 7.

1. **It’s been a quarter-century since Yazoo last played together. Why reunite now?**
I would have done it a million times over in the last 10 years. It was unfinished business. Performing is like the pleasure point of the three areas we work in—writing, recording and then doing it live. We only did about 24 gigs for the first album, but never did any for the second. And these songs are a big part of my catalog. It fell at a time when [Clarke’s] Erasure were having a break, and it was just serendipity.

2. **How did the reunion come about?**
Before I put out my last album I was thinking, “I really want to sing these songs live.” I e-mailed him, and he said as much as he liked the idea, he was in a committed musical relationship. You can’t go back and shag the ex-wife for old times’ sake. It’s a bit like that, as much as we were never biblically, obviously. Then I got an e-mail from [Mute Records founder] Daniel Miller saying, Vince had been in touch with him and had had a change of heart and did I still fancy doing a Yazoo gig?

3. **Will the performances be recorded for DVD/CD release?**
I’m sure the powers that be will be considering that. If there’s one thing I can be sure about, this could be the only existing. There’s no long-term career plan. It’s not about milking it. It’s just about what’s happening now. Next month it could be all over again.

4. **Are you still recording solo works with W14?**
No. I was with W14 just for the one album. The last four albums I’ve made, I’ve just licensed them to record companies. I never wanted to get into that thing where they have you and you don’t have them. After my experience with Sony, although I had many great years with them, there’s a stage where they have less faith in you and they don’t release you. It’s a hideous place to be. I don’t get upset with people when they want to move on. I do get upset when they want to move on and won’t let you move on.

5. **Does an artist need to be more business-savvy today?**
Yeah, you do. You just have to realize you’re getting into a marriage with no possibility for divorce from your position. When I started out, I was 20 and signed all sorts of things—I didn’t know what they were and they caused me all sorts of problems later in life. Now I do deals where I say, “You’re going to pay me to make this record but it’s only a license.” On the last couple of deals, I always put a clause in saying if Yazoo were ever to have a chance of going, I’d always have to be free for that.

6. **British women are on a hot streak in the United States. Are there any that you currently rate?**
Of them all, Amy Winehouse is the true all-round talent. She’s a flawed talent, but that’s what makes her interesting. Singers are far more interesting when they get older. I preferred Madonna’s "Ray of Light" [to] any of her earlier stuff.

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**HIp-HOP by MARIEL CONCEPCION**

**Side Hustle**

The Cool Kids Score With Old-School Rap Sound

The past few months have been very good to Chicago's Cool Kids.

After emerging from MySpace onto the national scene last summer, the group recently scored its first chart ink with EP "The Bake Sale," which debuts at No. 8 on Billboard's Heatseekers chart, No. 15 on Top Independent Albums and Top Digital Albums, and No. 152 on the Billboard 200.

The EP was initially released on the duo's own C.A.K.E. imprint last October but is out now via indie label Chocolate Industries, to which Cool Kids signed late last year.

The set includes tracks like the 808-heavy "What Up Man" and "88," on which they quote Nas, rhyming, "Do the smurf, do the wop, baseball bat/ Rufftop like we bringing 88 back."

"It definitely makes us feel good to know that people care about this group the way we do," Chocolate Industries creative director Seven Berald says. "Because we're a small label, we sign people because we like them and we're ready to take a risk. But we never know what the record's going to do. When fans show a genuine interest, it's super exciting."

The Cool Kids joined forces in 2005, when Evan "Chuck Inglish" Ginsberg found Antoine "Mikey Rocks" Reed on MySpace. Since then, they've been releasing tracks via the social networking site and reaping the benefits of associations with Diplo (who offered to put out a mixtape of unreleased tracks, "Totally Flossed Out," which eventually arrived on C.A.K.E.) and DJ A-Trak (who issued the 2007 single "88"/"1 Rock" on his Fool's Gold label).

Further mainstream inroads were made late last year when their song "Black Magic" appeared in a Rhapsody TV ad. The track has sold 45,000 digital downloads in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"Our sound is basically us not wanting to go up musically and still trying to make music that excited us when we were younger," Ginsberg says. "It's just us having fun with music. I think that's where we shine, because we don't have an intention of creating a particular sound."

Beyond online banners and radio spots, Chocolate Industries is making sure Cool Kids are on a hectic tour schedule that includes opening for M.I.A., spot dates on the Rock the Bells tour, a European run and an appearance at Lollapalooza in Chicago in August.

Before year's end, the group is planning to release its full-length Chocolate Industries debut, "When Fish Ride Bicycles." To kids fans over, a new mixtape, "That's Stupid," is being planned for a summer release on coolkids.com.

"To this day, I'm not sure what's happening. I just feel blessed that what I wanted to do is really starting to come to life," Reed says of the group's recent success. "It's been a long road of making smart decisions and doing what our conscience tells us instead of questioning ourselves. It feels good because I know with everything that's come, we worked hard for it. We're working even harder now and we won't have it any other way."
THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

ALBUMS

ROCK

ALANIS MORISSETTE

Flavors of Entanglement

Producer: Guy Sigsworth

Maverick Records

Release Date: June 10

The original version of "Jagged Little Pill" was a nuanced, introspective record that explored the complexities of personal relationships and the 自然的痛苦. This album marks a return to those themes, but in a more mature and sophisticated manner.

MONTGOMERY GENTRY

Back When I Knew It All

Producer: Blake Chancey

Columbia Nashville

Release Date: June 10

This album features a blend of traditional honky-tonk and country music, showcasing the group's strong vocal harmonies and well-crafted songs.

SOLOMON BURKE

Like a Peel

Producer: Steve Jordan

Shout Factory

Release Date: June 10

This album is a tribute to the late Solomon Burke, featuring covers of his classic songs by contemporary artists.

SUPERGRASS

Diamond Hoo Ha

Producer: Nick Launay

Astralwerks

Release Date: June 10

This album sees the band exploring new musical directions, blending elements of pop, rock, and experimental music.

THE FRATELLIS

Here We Stand

Producer: The Fratellis

Independence

Release Date: June 10

This album continues the band's unique blend of rock and indie music, with songs that are both catchy and thought-provoking.

LAZAR

Lalah Hathaway

Self Portrait

Producers: Various

Startracks/Concord Music Group

Release Date: June 3

This album is a collection of soul and R&B tracks, showcasing Lalah Hathaway's powerful vocals and songwriting abilities.

LATIN

SERGIO MENDES

Encanto

Producer: Sergio Mendes, William肌

Starbucks/Concord

Release Date: June 10

This album is a celebration of Latin music, featuring collaborations with a variety of artists and a mix of traditional and contemporary styles.

SOLOMON BURKE

Like a Peel

Producer: Steve Jordan

Shout Factory

Release Date: June 10

Despite great talent, few original soul artists have been able to remain busy and vital through the decades. Be it from lack of interest, bad management, or a declining market, Solomon Burke has been few and far between. Since releasing "Timeless," the Brazilian bossa nova master team

THE BILLBOARD

JUNE 14, 2008

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Copyright material

MY MONTGOMERY

JACKET

Evil Urges

Producers: Jim James, Joe Chiccarelli

ATO

Release Date: June 10

This album marks a departure from the band's previous sound, with elements of rock, folk, and experimental music.

The FRATELLIS

Here We Stand

Producer: The Fratellis

Independence

Release Date: June 10

Although the Fratellis saw major chart success in the United Kingdom with their previous albums, this release marked a return to their independent roots.

JUDITH ROSS

Unintelligent

Producer: Various

JACKSON

Release Date: June 10

This album features a mix of rock, pop, and alternative tracks, highlighting the artist's versatile talent.

WJT

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Copyright material
Will.i.am, on a collection of summery updates of the classics, as well as some new tracks. Updating such well-known songs as Antonio Carlos Jobin’s “Waters of March” (talk-sung here by Ledi’s) is a great proposition for exposing the music to new audiences. Though it’s hedonistic, the update will endure as long as the originals. Guest artists including Natalie Cole and Amerigo Gazaway lend the album’s highlights, “Arese,” corrubs with rhythmical rock —“LAX,”

**JAZZ**

**CASSANDRA WILSON**

**Loverly**

Producer: Cassandra Wilson

Blue Note

**Release Date:** June 10

While Cassandra Wilson emerged in the early ’90s as the foremost “new standards” siren for reimagining contemporary pop music in the jazz vein, her musical pulse was informed by vocal precedents who swung and scatted within the tradition. After widely divergent collections in recent years, she reenters the standards zone with “Loverly.” Unlike other vocalists who let the music’s inherent melodic strength carry the show, she transforms the old tunes into her own heartfelt vision, such as when she reimagines “Georgia on My Mind” with a deftly syncopated groove and gives “Black Orpheus” a luscious new shine. On the latter, guitarist Christian Scott adds a few more chords, and the result is a beautiful serpentine guitar solo. Other top-tier support comes from pianist Jason Moran (brilliantly surprising breaks) and master percussionist Lekan Babalola (unique rhythm specialists). The solo, notably, is a sampled soul groove. Indeed, the result is a beautiful serpentine guitar solo.

**BLUES**

**JANIVA MAGNESS**

**What Will Love Do?**

Producers: Dave Darling, Janiva Magness

Alligator

**Release Date:** June 10

Janiva Magness has the kind of voice you could imagine playing at a store or in a commercial—ABY

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Simpson’s New Sound

Pop Queen Turns Heads With Debut Country Single

Suffice to say there was healthy skepticism at country radio and on Nashville’s Music Row when word began circulating last year that Jessica Simpson was recording a country album. While country hits by Ben Jovi (with Sugarland’s Jennifer Nettles) and Jewel, as well as credible efforts by the Eagles and Darius Rucker, have gone a long way to change opinion about so-called “carpetbaggers,” any out-of-genre act that decides to record a country album is met with a critical eye (and ear). At least by early indications, Simpson is on her way to swaying opinion in her favor. Her first single, “Come On Over,” makes a historic debut at No. 41 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart this week (see story, page 59). A flirtatious, uptempo song, it was co-written by Simpson with Rachel Proctor and Victoria Banks. “The fun thing about the song is that anxiety of wanting the guy to come over right then and there,” Simpson says. “Everybody’s felt that before.”

Columbia Nashville VP of promotion Jimmy Rector says radio is responding positively to the single. “More than anything, people are pleasantly surprised. A lot of people didn’t want to like it, but when they heard it, regardless of pre-conceived notions, they realized this is a really good record.”

One unnamed programmer went as far as to tell Rector, “God help me, I really like this song. That’s the reality of what we were facing,” Rector says. Comments like that surprised Simpson, who remembers thinking, “Oh, my gosh, people want to hate me,” when first told of radio’s feedback. “That’s kind of hard to grasp, but at least they’re supporting it. At least they know good music and they play good music. I can’t believe the single’s doing what it’s doing.”

Meanwhile, a clip for “The Business” hit BET’s “106 & Park.” The rapper performed his hit single, “Rap City,” this week at BET with a full-length album about to arrive. Berg is about to deliver the video to “106 & Park.” The rapper produced his entire album, which features Eyedea, Twista, Collie Buddz and Amerie. Courtland Adams says re-introduced him to the public. “He’s booked for radio (promo) through June and is performing at J&R World’s Summerfest and iTunes’ Black Music Month event,” Adams says. “We’ve been getting as many requests as we’ve been asking for at this point, and we’re in talks with several summer tours.”


Berg was the first experiment in Epic’s EP first, album later campaign; the “Almost Famous” EP was to Nielsen SoundScan. Its single, “Sexy Lady,” had already become a solid hit before the EP’s release, peaking at No. 16 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and selling 380,000 digital copies. But a full-length album was pushed back indefinitely.

Then in January, Berg showed up on “Sexy Can I,” which has sold 1.4 million digital downloads and reigned the rapper’s presence in the marketplace. Epic wanted the track to be the first single from Berg’s full-length, but the rapper says he “didn’t want to push the pigeonhole as the ‘Sexy’ guy.” Instead, he took the song to Nielsen SoundScan. Its single, “Sexy Lady,” had already become a solid hit before the EP’s release, peaking at No. 16 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and selling 380,000 digital copies. But a full-length album was pushed back indefinitely.

TX LEAGUER

While it started out as a cost-saving measure, Texas mainstay Cory Morrow is more than satisfied with how his new album, “Vagrants & Kings” (Sustain/UMG), which features his own band in the studio, turned out. The album, released May 20, debuted at No. 1 on Billboard’s South Central Regional Heatseeker chart in the June 7 issue and fell to No. 2 this week. Since release it has sold 3,000,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Recorded at Morrow’s Austin home, the new set is less about him and more about his band. “We really went after this as a group,” he says. “The decision to use his band was initially a financial one. It just seemed like it would be easier on the wallet if we did it in-house, but as we started doing it, it became apparent to me that we can be doing this for a long time because I liked the way it turned out.”

“106,000 copies,” Morrow says of his band’s contributions. “It’s got real feeling and that’s what I want. It was an accidental discovery.”

Morrow has built a loyal fan base in Texas and plays more than 150 shows per year, he still hopes to find a national following. “The dream is to take the music to the people and not be limited to where you can find those people,” he says. “I look in the mirror and I know I’m doing the right thing with my career and my life,” she adds. “It’s a great place of comfort.”
**Sensible 'Seduction'**

**Kaskade Divides And Conquers With New Album**

A new strategy is partly responsible for dance artist Kaskade's best first-week sales frame. The Chicago-born, San Francisco-based DJ/producer has been slowly building to a boil the old-fashioned way, with more than 140 gigs annually and word-of-mouth buzz, and last week, "Strobe/Seduction" (Ultra) debuted at No. 7 on Billboard's Top Electronic Albums chart and sold 3,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

For first single "Move Me," a collaboration with underground producer sensation Deadmau5, the artist's team took cues from pop acts and chose not to release the entire remix package prior to the album release, as is customary in the dance world. Instead, they posted a single radio edit on iTunes and a single DJ-length mix on dance specialty download site Beatport.

Kaskade, whose real name is Ryan Raddon, says he and his manager, Stephanie LaFera of Little Empire Music, "noticed that a lot of people who we were remixing, like Justin Timberlake and Britney Spears, were doing this, and it makes so much sense looking back on it now. Putting just one song up, not lots of versions and remixes, made it very easy for people to make sense out of, and builds anticipation. And we put the extended DJ mix on Beatport, whereas before we just put it out there at once. We didn't strategize and cater to different listeners. I think that sparked a lot of interest."

Raddon says that he sold close to 7,000 downloads of just the radio edit on iTunes in pre-release, and "I think those people went back and bought the album."

The producer, whose lush style of vocal electronic music wins him hosts of female fans, had another secret weapon too: "Sex and the City." "Strobe/Seduction" track "1 Like the Way" was selected for the soundtrack to the hit film, which he only discovered upon reading the press release. "It was completely unexpected. I just purchased the CD," he says. "It's so cool to see my name in there, and I'm psyched to see the movie and how the song will be placed. [The soundtrack] is very mainstream stuff, so to be in the presence of the other artists is an honor. And I do think people are discovering me through it. I read the comments on iTunes."

Will the placement, which follows up a spot on the "The Devil Wears Prada" soundtrack in 2005, further increase his female fan base?

"Pretty soon I'm not going to allow dudes into my shows," he says.

---

**Maino**

Although he recorded "Hi Hater" more than a year ago, MC Maino finally cracked Billboard's Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart with it last month.

The track is the first single from his Sept. 30-released Atlantic debut, "If Tomorrow Comes," but was originally recorded while the Brooklyn-born rapper was a Universal Records artist in 2007.

"Hi Hater" peaked at No. 93 last week and has sold 5,000 digital downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"I talked about 'Hi Hater' last year," Maino says. "But then I left Universal for Atlantic and had to cross my fingers that no one used the song's concept."

A video for the song was released in March and has amassed 350,000 streams on Maino's MySpace site.

The rapper and his team began their promotional efforts with his New York fan base before spreading throughout the Northeast.

"We're sending him out on a northeastern promotional tour in March, then to L.A., and the Carolinas to meet with people and interact with radio."

Maino will be a MySpace featured artist this month, and according to St. Hubert, several viral videos are in the works, including the "Hi Hater" tutorial dance and man-on-the-street clips where fans describe what the track means to them.

Maino is also filming a "ZIP codes" webisode for Atlantic, which will be shot in his Brooklyn neighborhood. These videos will hit the Web in the next few weeks via Maino's MySpace page, YouTube channel and mainohustlehard.com.

Maino joined Universal in 2005 after garnering significant buzz with his independent single, "Rumors." But he departed two years later to sign with Atlantic in November 2007. "If Tomorrow Comes" touts rappers T.I. and BG as features thus far, while producers GQ Beats, Mr. Rogers and Cool Dre have contributed tracks. "I stayed away from a bunch of features because this is my first album and I want people to hear me," Maino says.
**Usher Takes 'Stand' With Year's Second-Best Sum**

Usher roars out the gate with 443,000 first-week sales for his new album "Here I Stand." As the only title this week to surpass 100,000, he easily stands atop the Billboard 200. This marks the second-largest sales week thus far of 2008, exceeded only by the 463,000 pulled when Mariah Carey's "E=MC²" reached stores to mark the largest opener in her career.

The launch of Usher's new album is nothing to scoff at, but this does mark a decline from initial weeks of his 2004 blockbuster, "Confessions," which quickly became that year's best-selling album. Not only did "Confessions" surpass 1 million units in its first week, it also beat the new album's starting sum in its second and third weeks in stores (486,000 and 463,000, respectively). It has sold 9.4 million copies to date, with nearly 8 million of those sold in that year alone. In fact, "Confessions" was a prime reason why 2004 was the only year since 2000 when album sales showed year-over-year growth.

Don't think for a minute that Usher rested on his laurels. He set up the album's arrival with "Love in This Club," which has sold 1.7 million downloads and led the Billboard Hot 100 for three weeks. His release-week schedule found him planning "Good Morning America" and visiting MTV's "TRL" and BET's "106 & Park," and he promoted the pump earlier with a May 17 appearance on "Saturday Night Live" and a stop on the finale of "Dancing With the Stars."

That TV blitz greatly resembles the rollout that brought Carey's new album to market, with one notable difference. Shortly before "E=MC²" landed, she made two visits to ratings champ "American Idol." That show's heavy draw could very well explain her opener starting 20,000 copies larger than Usher's.

**SHIFT HAPPENS:** The vigorous growth of the digital song market is among several factors affecting this decade's decline in album sales. A la carte digital tracks almost met parity with album volume in 2006, when Nielsen SoundScan tallied physical and digital albums combined at 588.1 million, compared with 581.9 million song downloads. Last year, 844.1 million digital song transactions outweighed album sales by nearly 6%, but even in that year of transition, the average sales week for a No. 1 album still surpassed that of a best-selling digital song. No more.

Through the end of May, the 2008 average at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 stood at 188,795, compared with 204,076 on Hot Digital Songs. That's in contrast to the same point of last year, when the top-selling album averaged 210,742, versus 163,818 for the top digital song. By the end of 2007, the No. 1 album beat the No. 1 digital song by an even larger margin, 312,803 to 173,578, with the full-length category fattened by strong opening weeks for Kanye West's "Graduation," Alicia Keys' "As I Am" and the Eagles' "Long Road Out of Eden," plus December muscle exhibited by Josh Groban's "Noel."

As previously reported here, one of the surprise stories of 2007 was that despite that year's 15% dip in album volume, the average week at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 actually stood above that of 2006, which finished at 273,400 (Billboard, Feb. 16).

This year's top-selling album averages 16.3% less in a week than it did a year ago, larger concerns looming lower on the chart.

The average at No. 10, for example, stands at 13,997 compared with 64,301 a year ago, a slide of nearly 27%. Just five years ago, the average at No. 10 through the same number of weeks of 2003 was 72,673.

**DISTURBING NEWS:** Disturbed's "Indestructible" led Nielsen SoundScan's Building chart, released June 4, and is on course to bow at No. 1 next week on the Billboard 200. It will be the third chart-topper for the Reprise/Warner Bros. act. The band will lead a busy top 10, with new efforts from Weezer, Ashanti, Journey, and the "Now 28" compilation all looking to start high.

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**MARKET WATCH**

**Weekly Unit Sales**

**OverALL UNiT SALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year-To-Date</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albums</td>
<td>199,772,000</td>
<td>171,816,000</td>
<td>-11.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Tracks</td>
<td>355,121,000</td>
<td>400,800,000</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>355,121,000</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>549,784,000</td>
<td>577,616,000</td>
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**Weekly Album Sales**

(*Million Units*)

**DIGITAL TRACKS SALES**

- **'07**: 355.1 million
- **'08**: 400.8 million

**SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT**

- **CD**: 173,564,000
- **Digital**: 19,634,000
- **CASSETTE**: 159,000
- **Other**: 415,000

---

**CAtALOG ALBUM SALES**

- **'07**: 78.1 million
- **'08**: 76.2 million

---

**CHART BEAT**

---

**'SEX' Sells**

The "Sex and the City" movie soundtrack—which features the film's Jennifer Hudson—shakes onto the Billboard 200 with 66,000 at No. 2. It's the highest debut for a multi-movie theatrical film soundtrack since "Get Rich or Die Trying" also started at No. 2 in November 2005.

**CAPITOL GAINS**

With Coldplay at No. 3 and Katy Perry at No. 5 on the Billboard Hot 100, Capitol Records occupies two slots in the top five for the first time since Sept. 19, 1990, when Hammer's "Have You Seen Poiso" and Poison's "Everybone Bop" represented the label.

---

**JAZZ NOTES**

The fourth entry in the "Verve/Remixed" series—boasting reworkings of tunes by James Brown, Nina Simone and others—bows at No. 2 on Top Contemporary Jazz Albums. All of the franchise's previous editions started at either No. 1 or No. 2 as well.

---

For weekly ending June 7, 2008. Earnings on compact discs are based on wholesale price. All information current as of June 6, 2008. For more information, visit billboard.com/chartbeat.

---

**To view complete chart data, visit** billboard.biz
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<tr>
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<td>50-56</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
BETWEEN THE BULLETS silvio@billboard.com

HOT 100 SAYS 'VIVA' COLDPLAY
Coldplay cops the biggest Hot 100 hit of its career. First single "Violet Hill," at a new peak of No. 5, is featured in the group's latest TV promo. "Viva La Vida," at a new peak of No. 9 on Modern Rock, rebounds 66-53 on the chart, propelling it to No. 10 on the Hot 100 with 10% gains in airplay and sales. The band's best showing on the Hot 100 prior to this week was with "Speed of Sound" (No. 8) in May 2005. — Silvio Pietrobruno

HOT 100 IN THE NEWS

'LIKE WHO' TOUCHING MY PHONE?'

The song topped the charts in September and has finally made its way to the top 40 radio, sparking tremendous下载 activity in the process.

Overall, digital downloads surpassed 60,000 in the process.

The group "LIKE WHO" TOUCHING MY PHONE?'

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The group "LIKE WHO" TOUCHING MY PHONE?'

THE HOT BILLBOARD 100 RANKING

The Hot 100 chart is based on both airplay and sales. The No. 1 slot is based on the highest combined performance of the week. The chart is updated every Monday and runs in Billboard magazine's print edition on Wednesdays. The chart is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.
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<tr>
<th>Hot 100 Airplay</th>
<th>Hot 100 Digital Songs</th>
<th>Adult Contemporary</th>
<th>Modern Rock</th>
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<td><strong>Artist</strong></td>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bleeding Love (LEONA)</td>
<td>Leona Lewis</td>
<td>2008-14-01</td>
<td>Love in this club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Just got started lovin' you</td>
<td>JET</td>
<td>2008-14-01</td>
<td>Whatever it takes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A memory</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>2008-14-01</td>
<td>It's not my time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch my body</td>
<td>2 øz</td>
<td>2008-14-01</td>
<td>Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whatever it takes</td>
<td>Usher</td>
<td>2008-14-01</td>
<td>Whatever it takes</td>
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<tr>
<td>I love you, girl</td>
<td>2 øz</td>
<td>2008-14-01</td>
<td>I love you my love</td>
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Data for week of JUNE 14, 2008 | For chart reprints call 646.654.4633 | Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data | 53
### TOP R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>WEEKS</th>
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<th>R&amp;B/HH</th>
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<td>AL GREEN</td>
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<td>REGINA BELLE</td>
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<td>The Real Thing: Words And Sounds Vol. 3</td>
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### TOP BLUES ALBUMS

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<th>R&amp;B/HH</th>
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<th>Label</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>JIMMY CLACK</td>
<td>Son of a Preacher Man</td>
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<tr>
<td>JIMMY CLACK</td>
<td>Baby, Please Don't Go</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>JIVE</td>
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<tr>
<td>JIMMY CLACK</td>
<td>Mary Had A Little Lamb</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>JIVE</td>
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<td>JIMMY CLACK</td>
<td>The Thrill Is Gone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>2002</td>
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<td>JIMMY CLACK</td>
<td>Little Red Rooster</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2002</td>
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</tbody>
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**AL GREEN LAYS IT DOWN**

As expected, Usher's "Here I Stand" rockets to No. 1 with Greatest Gainer honors following his early bow last issue. But praise also falls upon R&B legend Al Green as he cracks the top 10 of Top R&B/HH Hip-Hop Albums for the first time since 2003 and has his best debut on the Billboard 200 with the arrival of "Lay It Down." Green's showing at No. 3 on R&B Albums marks his highest chart landing since "Al Green Is Love" hit No. 1 in 1975. Coming in at No. 9 on the big board with 34,000, it is his best rank since "I'm Still In Love With You" reached No. 4 in 1972. Since 2000, Green has placed two other studio sets in the top 20 of R&B Albums—2003's "I Can't Stop" (No. 9) and 2005's "Everything's OK" (No. 19). —Ralph George
### HOT R&B/HIP-HOP AIRPLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lookin Boy</td>
<td>Estelle</td>
<td>Universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Put On</td>
<td>Tyga ft. Kevin Gates</td>
<td>Def Jam/RCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I Remember</td>
<td>Estelle</td>
<td>Universal</td>
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### HITTIpREDICTOR

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Go to [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz) for complete chart data.
## Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs

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<td>Here I Am</td>
<td>Rick Ross Featuring Nelly &amp; Avery Storm</td>
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<td>I Got Money</td>
<td>Suga Suga Suga</td>
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<td>Love In This Club Part II</td>
<td>Usher Featuring Young Jeezy</td>
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### Top Country Albums

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<td>BILLY RAY CYRUS</td>
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### Top Bluegrass Albums

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<td>TRAVIS TRITT</td>
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<td>BILLY RAY CYRUS</td>
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### TV Stirs Gains, Flew Flies In

A return of "Alan Jackson: Invitation Only" on CMT during the tracking week pulls the Georgian’s “Good Time” set up approximately 1,000 copies, good for the Greatest Gainers crown on Top Country Albums.

The spurt pushes the album back into the top 10 (16-9), where it’s spent all but one of its 13 chart weeks since its No. 1 start in the March 22 issue. Concurrently, special GAC military-themed Memorial Day programming, in which Jason Michael Carroll appeared, lifted his “Wanted in the Country” 17%, good for Pacesetter honors (57-50). Hot Shot Debut applause: is noted at No. 67, where new vocal trio One flew South’s “Last of the Good Guys” arrives with 1,000 copies. Lead single “My Kind of Beautiful” hit radio programmers’ inboxes during the tracking week.

—Wade Jessen
### HOT COUNTRY SONGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Artist</th>
<th>IMPRINT &amp; MARKET</th>
<th>PROMOTIONAL Labels</th>
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| 1   | I'LL CHEAT MY HEART OUT | Brad Paisley | JIVE /
| 2   | DON'T CLIMB OUT OF MY LIFE THROUGH THE WINDOW | Brad Paisley | JIVE /
| 3   | WE'RE TRYIN' | Tim McGraw | MCA /
| 4   | LIFE IS A RIVER | Sugarland | LYRIC /
| 5   | I'M GONNA RIDE IT | Blake Shelton | EMI /
| 6   | BORN TO RUN | Tim McGraw | MCA /
| 7   | DON'T CALL ME LADY | Blake Shelton | EMI /
| 8   | EVERYTHING IS LONELY | Tim McGraw | MCA /
| 9   | WHEN I CALL YOUR NAME | Tim McGraw | MCA /
| 10  | THIS IS THE BEST | Tim McGraw | MCA /
| 11  | ALL I CAN THINK OF | Brad Paisley | JIVE /
| 12  | WHEN I'M GONNA GET YOU BACK | Brad Paisley | JIVE /
| 13  | DON'T CLIMB OUT OF MY LIFE THROUGH THE WINDOW | Brad Paisley | JIVE /
| 14  | I`LL CHEAT MY HEART OUT | Brad Paisley | JIVE /
| 15  | DON'T CLIMB OUT OF MY LIFE THROUGH THE WINDOW | Brad Paisley | JIVE /

### HITPREDICTOR

#### ARTIST/TITLE: BONUS

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### R&R COUNTRY DAILY UPDATE

**JESSICA SIMPSON SAYS HELLO TO COUNTRY**

Among solo artists with no prior history on Hot Country Songs, popster Jessica Simpson makes the highest debut in the Nielsen BDS era (since January 1990) as *Come On! Come On* makes a splash at No. 41 with 2.3 million impressions at 67 monitored stations. Prior to Simpson's bow, the highest Nielsen BDS-era starts by solo rookies happened when Brad Cotter's *I Meant To* (May 2004) and Miranda Lambert's *Me and Charlie*

BETWEEN THE BULLETS: jessicasmith.com

Talking (October 2004) posted No. 42 debuts. Cotter and Lambert gained initial thrust as competitors on *Nashville Star,* where Lambert was a finalist in the 2003 season and Cotter won the contest in 2004. Simpson's prior chart history includes eight hits on the Billboard Hot 100 tally between 1999 and 2006. The label hasn't announced a title or release date, but look for Simpson's country album sometime this fall. —Wade Jason

JESSICA SIMPSON SAYS HELLO TO COUNTRY

**JESSICA SIMPSON SAYS HELLO TO COUNTRY**

Among solo artists with no prior history on Hot Country Songs, popster Jessica Simpson makes the highest debut in the Nielsen BDS era (since January 1990) as *Come On! Come On* makes a splash at No. 41. With 2.3 million impressions at 67 monitored stations. Prior to Simpson's bow, the highest Nielsen BDS-era starts by solo rookies happened when Brad Cotter's *I Meant To* (May 2004) and Miranda Lambert's *Me and Charlie*
### Hot Latin Songs

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### Billboard Latin Albums

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For complete chart data, visit [www.billboard.biz](http://www.billboard.biz)
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<td>ElPerro</td>
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### Hot Dance Club Play

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<td>WANNA BE STARTIN’ SOMETHIN’</td>
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<td>El Diadohay</td>
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<td>Juan Gabriel</td>
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*Data for week of JUNE 14, 2008*
### Japan Albums

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### Euro Digital Songs

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### Greece Albums

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Data for week of JUNE 14, 2008 | CHARTS LEGEND on Page 64

Go to www.billboard.biz for complete chart data
### Top Christian Albums

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No. 1

**BAND OF HORSE**

1. Here I Stand (Label: Here I Stand)

**TOP INDEPENDENT**

1. **ARTIST** [**Nielson SoundScan**]

**TOP DIGITAL**

1. **ARTIST** [**Billboard**]

**TOP WORLD**

1. **ARTIST** [**Billboard**]

**TOP 20**

1. **ARTIST** [**Billboard**]

**TOP ADULT CHARTS**

1. **ARTIST** [**Billboard**]

**SINGLE CHARTS**

**Singles**

1. **ARTIST**

**SALES CHARTS**

1. **ARTIST**

**AWARD CENTS LEVELS**

1. **ALBUM CHARTS**

**ALBUMS**

1. **ARTIST**

**Radio**

1. **ARTIST**

**Radio Airplay Singles Charts**

1. **ARTIST**

**Recurrent Rules**

1. **ARTIST**

**Top Selling Singles Composed of National Sample of Acts**

1. **ARTIST**

**Configurations**

1. **ARTIST**

**Interpredictor**

1. **ARTIST**

**Dance Club Play**

1. **ARTIST**

**Ultimate album sales chart**

1. **ARTIST**

**Top selling artists chart**

1. **ARTIST**
**TOP HEATSEEKERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label &amp; Status</th>
<th>Net Sales</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
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<td>Epic/Red Octane</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Domino</td>
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<td>Virgin</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Party</td>
<td>Hollywood</td>
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<td>Running Back To You</td>
<td>Elektra</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Colors And Sounds</td>
<td>Jive</td>
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<td>Destiny</td>
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<td>The Age Of The Understatement</td>
<td>Endale</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Abney Park</td>
<td>Coming To Terms</td>
<td>Lojinx</td>
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<td>Atlantic</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>RCA</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Barenaked Ladies</td>
<td>Tiffany Evans</td>
<td>WEA</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>No Really, I'm Fine</td>
<td>East West</td>
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<td>Love In The Time</td>
<td>Yellowback</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>Till Death Do Us Part</td>
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**TASTEMAKERS**

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<td>Kintsugi</td>
<td>Barsuk</td>
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<td>Love In The Time</td>
<td>Till Death Do Us Part</td>
<td>East West</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REGIONAL HEATSEEKER #1s**

- **NORTH EAST**
  1. 21st Wonder & Buckshot - H2O
  2. Spiritualized - Nothing To Prove
  3. H2O - Nothing To Prove
  4. Spiritualized - Nothing To Prove
  5. MGMT - Nothing To Prove
  6. Charlotte Sometimes - Nothing To Prove
  7. Barenaked Ladies - Nothing To Prove
  8. The Black Keys - Nothing To Prove
  9. Spiritualized - Nothing To Prove
  10. Barenaked Ladies - Nothing To Prove

- **SOUTH ATLANTIC**
  1. Saving Abel - Saving Abel
  2. Charlotte Sometimes - Nothing To Prove
  3. Barenaked Ladies - Nothing To Prove
  4. Willy Clark - Nothing To Prove
  5. Breaker Boy - Nothing To Prove
  6. The Black Keys - Nothing To Prove
  7. Barenaked Ladies - Nothing To Prove
  8. Spiritualized - Nothing To Prove

**BREAKING & ENTERING**

Austin psych-rock outfit Black Angels fly at No. 26 on Top Heatseekers with second album "Directions To See A Ghost." It's the first charting effort for the act, which released its first set, "Passover," in 2006. Find out about the Angels this week at billboard.com/breaking.

**PROGRESS REPORT**

Michelle Williams, "We Break the Dawn" After releasing two gospel albums, the Destiny's Child member shifts to pop music as the first single from her forthcoming set bows on Hot Dance Club Play at No. 47. Her third album, "Unexpected," is due later this summer.

**HEATSEEKERS**

The heat-seeking albums: The Converge album "No Heroes" bows at No. 13 on the Heatseekers chart. Other new titles scoring on the Heatseekers chart include "Preacher's Wife" and "Gia" from the movie "Preacher's Wife," "The Black Keys" self-titled set, "Barenaked Ladies" new effort, and "Mr. James" by The Black Keys.

For more on the Heatseekers chart, see billboard.com/heatseekers.
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| Song 1 | Song 2 | Song 3 | Song 4 | Song 5 | Song 6 | Song 7 | Song 8 | Song 9 | Song 10 | Song 11 | Song 12 | Song 13 | Song 14 | Song 15 | Song 16 | Song 17 | Song 18 | Song 19 | Song 20 | Song 21 | Song 22 | Song 23 | Song 24 | Song 25 | Song 26 |
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RECORD COMPANIES: EMI Music upps Cynthia Sexton to executive VP of global brand partnership, licensing and synchronization. She was senior VP of strategic marketing and licensing at EMI Music North America.

Provident Music Group appoints Zach Prichard production coordinator and Jennifer Pape royalties administrator. Prichard was vault coordinator, and Pape was copyright and licensing coordinator at Sony BMG Music in Canada.

Columbia Nashville names Alex Valentine director of Southwest regional promotion. He was manager of Southwest regional promotion at Arista Nashville.

Arista Nashville taps Cheri Lynn Martin as manager of Southwest regional promotion. She was most recently self-employed in independent promotion.

PUBLISHING: Warner/Chappell Music names Sean Patrick Flahaven VP of theater and standards repertoire. He was GM/director of music and marketing at Theatrical Rights Worldwide.

London-based Cutting Edge, a leading provider of music to the UK film industry, taps David Hockman as nonexecutive chairman. He was the former chairman/CEO of Sony/ATV Music Publishing and PolyGram Music Publishing.

DISTRIBUTION: Alternative Distribution Alliance promotes Bill Taylor to senior director of production. He was director.

TOURING: British promoter/festival organizer Stuart Galbraith, founder of Killianjaro Live, has joined the board of the United Kingdom's Bloodstock Open Air metal festival.

MEDIA: CMT in Nashville elevates Margaret Comeaux to senior director of music and events production. She was director.

MTV Networks Benelux and Nordic executive VP/managing director Dan Lightwood stepping down as managing director of MTV Networks Germany. He now oversees the day-to-day operations and strategic direction for MTVN's brands in Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOOD WORKS

CABLEVISION CEO'S BAND BENEFITS NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION
By day, Jim Dolan keeps busy as president/CEO of Cablevision and chairman of Madison Square Garden. By night he lets loose as guitarist/vocalist for blues-rock band JD & the Straight Shot. On June 24, in conjunction with the release of its sophomore album, "Right On Time," the band will perform at the Royce Theatre in Los Angeles to benefit the National Kidney Foundation of Southern California. "It's a good cause and it's right in line with the kinds of things that I've been doing with the band," Dolan says, noting that his group plays an annual benefit concert in New York for the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research. Joining JD & the Straight Shot at the June 24 concert will be Eagles member Joe Walsh, who guests on the band's forthcoming album, "Joe and I are good buddies," Dolan says. "He's agreed to come and play with us and lend his name to the event." Dolan has already pledged $25,000 to the cause.

The band will accept other donations for the National Kidney Foundation's Harold Owens Fund. Owens, who serves as director of the MusiCares Foundation, is on dialysis and on a waiting list for a transplant. Concert tickets cost $50-$150 and can be purchased by calling the foundation at 818-783-8153.

INSIDE TRACK

From left, MTV Networks Music Group entertainment president and logo president Brian Graden, "Dirty Sexy Money" actress Candie Crawford, Cyndy Lauper and logo executive VFHM Lisa Sherman enjoy Logos's NewNowNext Awards. The event airs July 7. Photos courtesy of C00d

John Mayer performed at VH1's annual Wireless Enterprise Symposium in Orlando, Fla. The "WE" brings together industry leaders and consumers to display and formulate the future of wireless technology. From left are Artie White/Backstreet Boys VP account director Ben Glodstone, MAC presents sponsorship coordinator Jessica Bautier, Mayer, MAC Presents president Marcie Allen Cardwell, RM show manager Amy Jones, MAC Presents event coordinator Erin Parker and RM senior director of marketing Paul Kaehlsch.

MASTOS OF THEIR DOMAIN
Max Weinberg: rock-solid drummer for Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band, comic foil and bandleader on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien," snappy dresser and ... an expert intermediary between bands and producers. Turns out that Weinberg's son is a big fan of metal act Mastodon, which was mulling a producer for its next Warner Bros. album. When the E Street Band hit Atlanta in April, Weinberg put Mastodon in touch with Brendan O'Brien, who produced the new E Street Band album, "Magic." "A couple days later, it was like, 'All right, you're going to meet him on Monday and see if everyone lives.'" Mastodon drummer Brann Dailor tells Tellus. "We had that conversation, and it was obvious that it was all good. The fact that he lives and works right around the corner from my house is even better!" The as-yet-unliled album, which should be out before the end of the year, is likely to feature a 15-minute track dubbed "The Last Baron."

CARAMEL-COATED
Veteran singer/actress Irene Cara is relaunching her pop career in tandem with a new all-girl band, Hot Caramel, Track has learned. The group's debut single, "How Can I Make U Luv Me," was co-written and produced by Cara and will hit U.S. radio in the coming days. A full-length album, "Irene Cara Featuring Hot Caramel," is expected in late summer.
The stars were out for the 33rd annual American Women in Radio & Television Gracie Allen Awards held May 28 in New York. The awards recognize exemplary programming created by and about women in all facets of electronic media including radio, TV, cable and Web-based media. From left are actress Ali Larter, TV personality, Suze Orman; actress Kelly Rutherford; TV personality Giuliana DePondi Rancic, who hosted the awards; and actress Jill Hennessy. Photo courtesy of John Baur/John Baur Images.

ASCAP CONCERT MUSIC AWARDS
The 19th annual ASCAP Concert Music Awards were held May 22 at the Times Center in New York. ASCAP member and radio host/performer Peter Schickele hosted the event, which recognized the achievements of ASCAP's 2008 concert music honorees. Those honored this year were Academy-, Pulitzer- and Grammy Award-winning composer John Corigliano; Chanticleer music director Joseph Jennings; Buffalo Philharmonia and Virginia Symphony music director JoAnn Falletta; and 2008 Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Lang. Photo courtesy of John Baur/John Baur Images.

RIGHT, ABOVE: JoAnn Falletta, left, and New York State Council on the Arts executive director Heather Hitchens.

RIGHT, BELOW: 1999 Pulitzer Prize winner Melinda Wagner presents composer David Lang an ASCAP Award.

ABOVE: From left: Chanticleer music director Joseph Jennings, ASCAP and director of concert music Frances Richard, composer/radio host Bill McGlaughlin and composer John Corigliano.

BELOW: From left: Young Composer honorees Timothy Andres, Angel Lam and Sean Frer.
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CTIA WIRELESS I.T. & Entertainment 2008
In the burgeoning global movement advocating sustainable living, John Passacantando is helping lead the charge as executive director of Greenpeace USA. One person deeply influenced: Ken Wilson, Contract magazine’s 2005 Designer of the Year. Years later, the architect and former client—now friends—reunite to discuss the benefits, challenges and global necessity of going green.